

A thought.

As I ponder the issue of summer nights, I am convinced of how good it has been for the down town and all of Rapid City. I witnessed it in 2008, and every year since. My first observation and thought in 2008 was, what a great way to re-build community, and what a great way to bring identity to our down town. With the advent of Main Street Square, I saw the event as a lead in for the square that was being designed and built. As I have seen the event mature, especially with my being on the Council, I have seen benefits and problems. The number one conclusion I have is that we need to keep Summer Nights alive and as a supported and consistent part of our community. However, with the development, has come concerns and problems, along with an involvement of more than one player in the mix.

With the following expressed issues:

Retail businesses have repeatedly said they lose business with the street closing and loss of parking.

Several Main Street retail businesses in the 600 block have expressed they do not want Main Street closed.

These businesses are there year around, Monday through Saturday, and have obligations including taxes to pay and meet.

Main Street Square has been completed now for three years and has offered and become a significant part of Summer Nights.

Many of the businesses state they have not been included in the planning and development of the Summer Nights program.

I recommend the following:

That Summer Nights include the areas, with vehicular exclusion as follows:

7th Street - between Main St. and St. Joe

Art Alley - between 6th St. and 7th St.

6th Street - North of Main St. to approximately the alley right of way or approximately to 6th Street entrance to the parking garage.

An extensive plan, effort and implementation for pedestrian safety will be developed by the Rapid City Police Department, in coordination with the Summer Nights Applicant and Main Street Square.

Jerry Wright