

Dear Businesses of Fairfield,

February 6, 2017

In April, 2017, the website and blog *RealSmallTowns* will be publishing the inaugural issue of its complimentary print magazine.

For those of you unfamiliar with the work of *RealSmallTowns*, its mission is to reframe the dominant narrative about rural America (losing population, clannish, and conventional to a fault,) while creating a network of small, rural towns that defy these classifications.

Through storytelling and the sharing of good ideas, *RealSmallTowns* highlights small communities that are thriving both economically and socially. In a time when many towns are dying or fading in vitality, these towns have found a way to blend the rural values of a hard-work ethic, neighborliness and strength of character with an openness to new people and fresh ideas. Their resilience is a result of people working together to create strong local economies with many independently-owned businesses, embracing sustainable practices in agriculture, energy and food systems, and creating strong communities where the stability of past generations makes room for new thinkers, entrepreneurs and artists who can now share in the pride and ownership of their town.

RealSmallTowns reveals the leading edge in rural America —helping to inspire other small communities that may be struggling, creating an informational network of progressive small towns around the country, and offering a more nuanced narrative of rural America for those who live in the city.

The first issue of the *RST* magazine will feature Fairfield as one of 3 highlighted towns.

In an effort to reach as wide an audience as possible, the publication will be free to the public with 25,000 copies distributed in cafes and coffee shops, libraries, food co-ops, bike shops, boutiques, and hospitals throughout the Midwest. 80% will land in cities within a day's drive from Fairfield. (Minneapolis, MN; LaCrosse, WI; Madison, WI; Milwaukee, WI; Chicago, IL; Traverse City, MI; Grand Rapids, MI; Cleveland, OH; Dayton, OH; Columbus, OH; Iowa City, IA; Cedar Rapids, IA; and Des Moines, IA.)

Despite being free, the magazine will be printed on high quality paper, “perfect bound” (not stapled on the spine), and artist-designed. In short, it will be high quality and the first of what we anticipate to be a series collector's item.

But in order to keep our commitment to a free publication, we need business sponsorship to support the layout and printing costs. Knowing that small businesses often run on very lean budgets, we have come up with what we hope to be a win/win solution:

If we can secure 9 or more “marketplace” ads —the least expensive option (\$250) and normally located at the end of the publication— we will create a “Fairfield Marketplace” page, which will be placed in the center of the magazine, alongside the story on Fairfield. If you are interested in having your business featured in the website directory as well, we are offering a package deal of print and website for \$350.

We believe that the work of *RealSmallTowns* is relevant to the pressing issues of our time and will benefit the towns that are featured on the site and in the magazine as well as the broader public.

In that light, we hope you will consider supporting this work with a print ad, directory ad, or both!

In Community,
Sheila Sherwin
RST Director and Editor
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Attached below, please find:

- 1) A 12 page "sample" magazine (the full issue will be 48-52 pages.
- 2) A sample "Town Marketplace" page.
- 3) A media kit for anyone who might be interested in a print ad larger than the marketplace. Any ad $\frac{1}{4}$ page or larger comes with free representation on the website. Please contact Sheila Sherwin for more information.