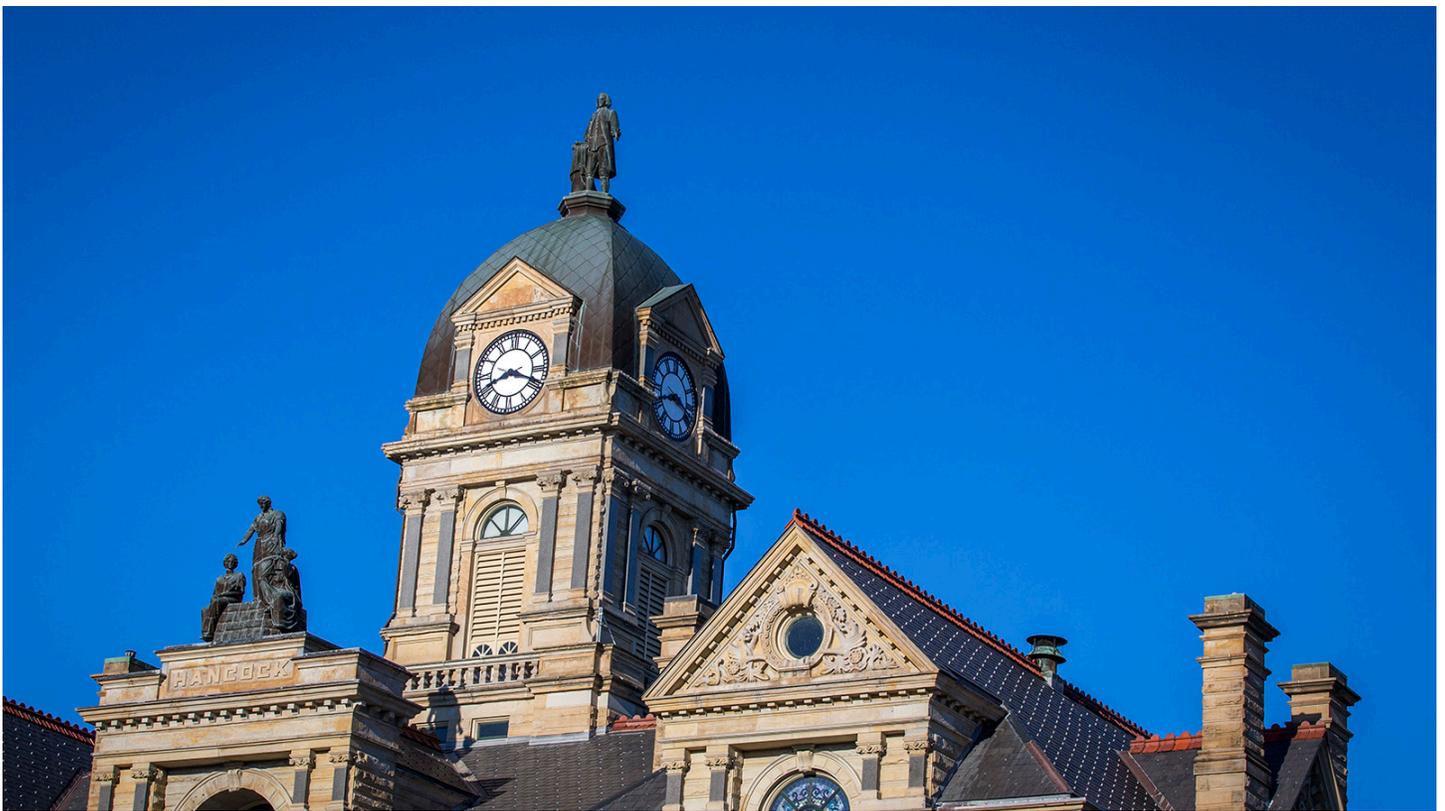


Report to the Community

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS 2017



Conducted by



THE COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

FINDLAY - HANCOCK COUNTY



**United Way
of Hancock County**

LiveUnitedHancockCounty.org

INTRODUCTION

In Fall 2016, The Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation (TCF) and United Way of Hancock County (UWHC) agreed to partner to ask those we serve - those who live, work, learn or play in Hancock County - about their hopes and aspirations for the community. Both organizations had previously conducted community outreach efforts, but the decision to bring resources together created a more efficient and effective process. We undertook this initiative with two goals in mind:

- to validate the current alignment of grantmaking with the needs and priorities of community members and
- to identify gaps in response to the community's expressed needs.

We owe a debt of gratitude to each person who took the time from work, school and other activities to be a part of this project. Without you, we would not have the valuable data or a plan of action to make change. Thank you all!

PROCESS

In previous outreach endeavors, a full cross-section of our community was not engaged in the process. Both organizations committed to reaching under-heard voices in addition to those who usually weigh in. TCF and UWHC worked together to talk to service recipients, in addition to service providers, to get direct feedback and more representative data.

We heard from 1,058 people: 602 people participated in conversations and an additional 456 people provided feedback by written survey. We gained new perspectives through engagement with such groups as: University of Findlay international students; Century Health clients; Children's Mentoring Connection youth; Hancock County jail inmates; Marathon Petroleum Corporation's diversity and inclusion team; staff and board of the Black Heritage Library and Multicultural Center; National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) youth; drug court participants; and Jacobs Primary School *Leader in Me* students.

“Don't be too proud. No one should be afraid to ask for help from their neighbors.”

Anonymous Conversation Participant

RESULTS

More than 20 community members facilitated 70 conversations all across Hancock County. At the end of each conversation, the results were reported to the University of Findlay, whose students were guided by staff in aggregating the data. The following is a breakdown of each question and the responses, which have been categorized and alphabetized. The results were then boiled down to five major themes of concern:

Housing

Mental Health/Substance Use

Transportation

Workforce/Financial Stability

Safety

1. What kind of community do you want?

- Accessible food
- Affordable and available transportation
- Affordable social activities for all
- Affordable, available child care
- Clean
- Diverse/accepting/inclusive
- Drug free
- Good paying jobs
- Healthy
- Holistic approach to care
- Less crime
- Mental health help
- Safe
- Safe, affordable housing
- Strong and safe schools (with special needs resources)
- Sustainable/green

2. What are two or three things you think are standing in the way of the kind of community you want?

- Available detox center and recovery home
- Crime
- Drug issues
- Educate/communicate about what is happening/where to get help
- Government bias (cater to businesses or groups of people)
- Homelessness
- Lack of diversity/racism
- Lack of safe, low-cost transportation
- Lack of safe, low-cost housing
- Lack of social opportunities for teens, kids, families, and young people
- Medical costs
- Resources for handicapped and hearing impaired
- Services for abused kids and kids of addicts
- Zoning issues

3. How do these issues affect you personally?

- Access for handicapped persons
- Addiction/ Substance abuse
- Bullying
- Lack of childcare
- Crime
- Domestic violence
- Food
- High recidivism
- Housing
- Lack of family unit (including kids raised by family members/grandparents)
- Living wage
- Mental health
- Preschool
- Transportation

4. What do you think it means to have a good life?

- Access to resources
- Feel safe
- Good health
- Good relationships (friends, family, neighbors)
- Have enough food
- Living wages
- Safe housing
- Structure/stability
- Things to do for kids and families

5. What kind of community would you need for everyone to have the chance at a good life?

- Access to resources, increased support
- Education (trade school, work skills, life skills, financial literacy)
- Good jobs
- Less crime
- Low-cost, available transportation
- Open to diversity (more tolerance)
- Programs in schools (Bridges Out of Poverty, Quest, Leader in Me, DARE+,etc.)
- Safe
- Social opportunities for all (free or low cost)
- Treatment of addiction

6. What kinds of things are keeping us from having this kind of community?

- Affordable housing
- Accessible childcare/preschool
- Affordable school experiences (sports, music, art)
- Drug testing for services
- Flood issues
- Head in the sand (not happening here)
- Help with addiction
- Lack of community (busy, don't care, not in my backyard mentality)
- Lack of mental health resources
- Livable wages
- Rural/county areas are forgotten
- Too judgmental toward those who are different
- Transportation available 24/7/365

7. What services should be added in our community to help people?

- Addiction/Substance abuse help
- Affordable childcare
- Affordable housing
- Elder care/services
- Food
- Health clinic
- Job/Career training
- Life skills
- Literacy
- Mental health
- More arts and culture
- Safe haven for kids, men's shelter
- Transportation

8. What do you think can be done to make a difference?

- Affordable preschool
- Break the generational entitlement
- Educate about different cultures, orientations, identities, etc.
- Education about drug use, mental illness
- Foster/mentoring (parents, family, kids)
- Help for people on cliff
- Help Jacobs School (needs more resources)
- Public transportation
- Social activities for young people, kids
- Talk to people who are impacted
- Teach how to write grants

9. Who do you trust to take action on these issues?

- Agencies who assist those in need
- Businesses
- Churches
- City/County
- Groups working together to accomplish things
- Not government
- Police
- Schools
- The Community Foundation
- University of Findlay
- United Way of Hancock County

CONSIDERATIONS/LIMITATIONS

The results listed above are a snapshot of a point in time in Hancock County. All of the data was collected over the summer of 2017. We recognize that needs may change seasonally and depending on the happenings in the community at the time of data collection.

Our goal was to hear from 1,000 Hancock County residents. We reached our goal, but were not able to hear from as many people in-person as we hoped. As we revisit the Community Conversations process in the coming years, we hope more people will add their voices to the conversation.

We were successful in hearing from a representational group when compared to the county's race/ethnicity, marital status, and most age/income levels. In the future, we need to take additional steps to reach individuals age 12 and under, males, those without a college education, and individuals who earn below \$25,000/year.

As we shared in the conversations, not knowing if a service or program exists is the same as it not existing at all. The data is presented as it was heard from the community, even though we understand some of the items mentioned are already being addressed.

GAP ANALYSIS

Following the Community Conversations process, TCF analyzed existing services and cross-checked them with the needs reported during conversations to compile the following analysis.

Need	Gaps
Adult (20+)	Opportunities for middle-aged people
	Parenting and parent support classes
	LGBT support
	Ethnic products/services
Arts	More affordable programs
Disability Services	Special needs services for kids in the "gray" area
	Better IEP(individual education plan) system and communication within schools
	Affordable activities for the whole family
	Services/opportunities for those with autism
	Support for caregivers
Early Childhood (0-5)	Increased wheelchair accessibility
	Affordable care
	Care for 2nd/3rd shifts
Financial Assistance *	Universal preschool
	Financial planning/literacy support
Food Security *	Peer support/education
	More Community Gardens
	More canned food drives
	More nutritious giveaway food
Housing *	Nutrition and cooking classes
	Lack of safe and affordable
	Metro housing accepted
	Difficulty meeting security and utility deposits
	Lack of emergency housing (especially for men)
	Places that allow pets
	Affordable housing outside of Findlay
Affordable senior housing	
Information Referral	No wrong door policy out of date
	Better communication of services and entertainment (an app)
	One central community calendar
	Schedule community meetings (city council) on weekends and evenings
	Work with schools/law enforcement/social service agencies to identify at-risk families to get info out
Mental Health *	Place for emergency/immediate treatment
	One agency that can service the entire family
	Service providers able to treat all people/all sexual orientations
	Support groups (more at more accessible times)
Physical Health *	Youth support (self-esteem building, suicide prevention)
	LGBT support
	STD clinic
	Free health clinic
	Optometrist at The Family Center

Recreation	Lack of social opportunities for kids/teens/families
	Youth or community center
	Afterschool STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) programs
	Diversity focused events
	Low-cost events
	Alcohol-free events
	Free outdoor activities (splash pad, skating rink, etc.)
	Free indoor sports space
	Better shopping
	Affordable arts activities
	Activities for seniors with disabilities
Senior Services (65+)	More senior activities (dancing)
	Safe and affordable senior housing
	Safe and affordable nursing homes
Substance Use *	More beds in rehab facilities and a detox center
	Better insurance coverage
	Break the stigma - increased community education and support
	A place for addicted mothers and newborns
Teen (13-19)	Needle exchange program
	Non-sports related programs
	Resource officers/police stationed in school
	Diversity club (LGBT)
	Support for children with incarcerated parents
Transportation *	Affordable afterschool STEAM programs
	Accessible rides for 2nd, 3rd, weekend shifts
	Need public transportation/bus system
	On-demand ride ability (Uber, Lyft)
	More pedestrian/bike friendly
Workforce Development *	Lack of handicapped parking downtown
	Trade training for all ages
	Co-op programs for high school students
	More full-time, full-benefits positions
	Mentorships/apprenticeships
	Assistance for transitional people and minorities
	Opportunities for those with felonies
	Break the stigma around manufacturing jobs
	More job fairs
Free resumé building/interviewing classes	
Youth Services (6-12)	Development of soft skills
	Access to available programming (information not shared by schools)
	Organizations not working together, redundancy
	More non-sports offerings
	Resource officers/police stationed in school

* *Collective Impact coalitions are actively working on each of these areas.*

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The Community Foundation

As a result of the conversations, the Foundation identified four areas on which to focus its work during 2018-2019: housing, mental health/substance use, transportation, and workforce/financial stability. Through the competitive grantmaking process, the Foundation will give funding priority to coalition-driven solutions in each of these areas.

Special grant opportunities will address four areas not being addressed through the Collective Impact process: childcare, community activities, diversity and safety. Up to \$50,000 per area will be available. Two areas will be highlighted in 2018, and the remaining two will be the focus of the Foundation's special grant opportunities in 2019.

Additionally, the Foundation will work to raise awareness within our key stakeholder groups to elevate the issues and engage donors in support of each. Throughout this process, we will work closely with coalition members to best understand the current state of each area of concern, as well as strategies being developed to address them.

We are already inspired and have begun to make grants to address several of the gaps. As opportunities come up, and as we plan, we will continue to utilize these results to drive our work. Thank you for your time in this project.

United Way of Hancock County

Challenges with substance use, mental health care, reliable transportation and affordable housing are the top concerns of Hancock County residents as summarized from Community Conversations held in 2017. United Way of Hancock County will address these concerns through funding and advocacy.

Five million dollars over the next five years will be set aside from UWHC's annual campaign for the Financial Stability Initiative grant opportunity. UWHC believes by addressing the areas of workforce readiness, financial empowerment and youth investment, at-risk households dealing with these issues will have the opportunity to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge to create a healthy and self-sustaining lifestyle.

United Way of Hancock County's advocacy role will vocalize the need for tiered transition related to state and federal benefits as opposed to cutting-off benefits when a family no longer qualifies due to a slight increase in wage. This type of system change fosters an environment for self-improvement through reward of effort.

This process affirmed that there are more needs than the Foundation and United Way have the capacity to support. However, we can do more if we join together as a community to address each area.

"Coming together as a community is the most important thing.

If people feel like they belong, they give back."

Anonymous Conversation Participant