

Brown County HCI: Community Forum Results

March 7, 2018

ROUND 1: PLACEMAKING

- **Table 1 – Strengthen Downtown**
 - Provide internships and downtown volunteer opportunities for local students that focus on culture and heritage (including Pioneer Village)
 - Establish downtown association
 - Emphasize early history & culture (Artist Colony of Midwest)
- **Table 2 – Parks and Trails**
 - Community activity center
 - Community resource center
- **Table 3 – Youth Center/Gathering Place**
 - Survey youth – empower them, validate opinions
 - Public forum for youth to express desires
 - Solicit sponsors/community collaboration
- **Table 4 – Parks, Trails and Public Space**
 - Community center – safe place to gather; link existing services with sidewalks, trails, tours; extend Salt Creek Trail
 - Bicycle trails, connection methods for existing offerings
 - Promote Brown County as health and wellness area – cohesive strategies to connect resources
- **Table 5 – Local Foods**
 - Affordable restaurants; local food too costly
 - More healthy food options, i.e. farmers markets, grocery stores, “community sale days”
 - County-wide food plan
- **Table 6 – Local Foods**
 - Community garden
 - Improve farmers markets & quality of food in restaurants
 - Encourage the CVB to recruit quality restaurants
- **Other**
 - Themed trails
 - Biking trails
 - Access and utilization of state park
 - Fee reductions

- Access to childcare
- Affordable housing
- Market unique and locally handmade products
- Employability
- Job training

ROUND 2: ENHANCING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

1. How can we support existing businesses in our community?

Table 1

- Promote eco and agrotourism (gardens, forests, woodlands, local foods)
- Identify and promote awareness & communication (daily & weekly) of local business activities (Thunderbird Auto Show, live entertainment)
- Create environment that allows businesses to thrive (infrastructure – fire protection, broadband)
- Focus on quality of life that attracts people & tourists

Table 2

- Create an economic development plan
- Improve infrastructure – broadband, water/sewer, roads

Table 3

- Enhance community websites by linking with all other county websites

Table 4

- Resident discounts
- Made in Brown County 'Passports'
- More high school internships – strengthen the program
- Open house or exchange to connect residents with businesses
- Encourage businesses to stay open late, i.e. *First Fridays*
- Encourage Chamber of Commerce to survey local businesses for needs

Table 5

- Encourage Chamber of Commerce membership
- Improve county's infrastructure – sewer & broadband
- Area Plan Commission needs to be more flexible & pro-business
- Patronize and support local business

Table 6

- Assist in developing a business network that allows for convenient networking for busy owners (convenient method might be web meeting)
- Market local businesses as much as we do tourism

2. What can we do to help people who want to start a business in our community?

Table 1

- Simplify regulatory processes
- Provide start-up funds (tax increment financing)
- Provide map of existing and planned broadband coverage & expand access to broadband

Table 2

- Create economic development plan
- Improve infrastructure – broadband, water/sewer, roads

Table 3

- Enhance community websites by linking with all other county websites

Table 4

- Raise awareness of Career Resource Center opportunities; connect to schools
- High school business plan competition
- Pop-up incubator

Table 5

- Create “anchor sites” in business economic development zones – provide infrastructure
- Tax abatements for new company start-ups

Table 6

- Improve infrastructure – broadband, water quality, fire protection
- Start mentoring bureau that provides mentoring in marketing, web design, legal, finance, etc.

3. As a table, what do we feel are the top 2-3 economy-related strategies from our discussion?

Table 1

- Promote eco and agro tourism – contributes to quality of life
- Identify access to broadband – provide map of current & planned coverage
- Identify & promote awareness of (daily/weekly) business events & activities

Table 2

- Create an economic development plan
- Partner with companies (including trades) in the region for internships
- Job training

Table 3

- Enhance community websites by linking with all other county websites

Table 4

- Affordability and access to businesses for local residents
- Outreach to high school students – internships and business competitions
- Survey businesses to identify needs

Table 5

- Implement a county-wide infrastructure plan (sewers and broadband)
- Area Plan Commission needs to be more flexible and pro-business

Table 6

- Assist in developing business network
- Market local businesses as much as tourism
- Provide business mentoring through a business bureau for county
- Improve infrastructure – broadband, fire protection, water quality

RESULTS FROM THE FLIP CHARTS

PLACEMAKING

- Youth center (gathering place) – 17
 - Survey youth
 - Forum with youth
 - Solicit sponsorships
- Parks and public places
 - Extending and connecting trails – 7
 - Community Center or resource center – 5
 - Coordinating existing programs
 - Enhancing opportunities for health
 - Volunteer team
 - Grant opportunities
- Local food
 - Agro tourism – 6
 - Improve farmers market – 3

- Actively seek new restaurants – 3
- County-wide food plan
- Work with restaurants and grocers for ‘local day’
- Strengthen downtown
 - Internships for students – 5
 - Establish downtown association – 2
 - Emphasize early history as ‘Art Colony of Midwest’ – 3

ECONOMY

- Broadband – 14
- Create map of current and future broadband coverage
- Improve infrastructure (roads, water quality, sewer, fire protection, broadband) – 11
- Establish a business bureau
- Create economic development zone – 3
- Enhance and link community website with all other county websites – 8
- Promote eco and agro tourism – 5
- Create economic development plan – 8
- Provide more opportunities for internships with local businesses for students
- Assist business owners to establish a business network
- Encourage Chamber of Commerce membership
- Discounts for locals in local businesses
- Pop-up business incubator
- Market local businesses as much as tourism
- Recognize gaps in existing businesses and recruit desired new
- Business survey to assess needs
- Incentivize through taxes

PROMOTE A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVITY

- Develop a master plan which includes a communication long-range plan
- Encourage collaboration between local leaders (town, county and other groups)
- Develop a ‘master calendar’
- Create a Brown County Partnership (roundtables)
- Use HCI to bring leaders together to study gathered data
- Workshops
- Integrated communication

- Survey of communication needs and preferences
- 'Happy Hour' gatherings
- Train Brown County students regarding local leadership opportunities
- Work to break down gender and age barriers
- Welcome new residents
- Hold collective government meetings (town, county, RDC, etc)
- Hold government meetings at schools and other public venues around county to encourage diverse participation
- Designate different culture days & events
- Inclusivity includes educational attainment, tenure in community, age, demographics, ethnicity, gender
- Invite town and county residents to meet together
- Provide mentoring opportunities for locals and newcomers across age groups

EXPAND AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY

- Use social media to reach more people
- Hold cultural events that focus on other cultures
- Encourage Leadership Brown County to meet more than once a year and to collaborate with CVB and others
- Expand school curriculum to include diversity education
- More engagement opportunities for new leaders
- Define groups – economic, education, ethnic, beliefs, lifestyle, socioeconomic focus
- Community immersion days
- Ethnic food expos and festivals, highlighting local traditions
- Recognize our demographics and encourage cross-group interaction
- Music festivals and programming (Lotus Fest)
- Display art and history photos
- List and feature local artists
- Designate different culture days (story-telling, art, music, food)
- Intergeneration appreciation
- Hang national flags on Bear Wallow Road
- Sports competitions
- Story telling (from other cultures)

IMPROVE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS OF CURRENT LEADERS

What Skills ?

- Leadership
- Listening/patience
- Preparation
- Presentation
- Communication/honest dialog
- Collaboration
- Transparency
- Electronic communication
- Plays well with others
- Visioning
- Knowledge of position
- Responsibility
- Respect/civility
- Planning
- Being proactive

How ?

- Training
- Active listening
- Pre-planning and communication
- Accountability
- Roberts Rules of Order
- More public input at meetings
- Workshops with community liaison/mentorship
- Community immersion
- Transparency
- Electing experienced officials/recruit for professionalism
- Checklist of skills needed and verification of abilities
- More public forums to meet leaders and voice concerns
- Team building
- Identify current elected officials with bio and contact information

FORM LEADERSHIP NETWORKS

How ? What Kind?

- Consolidate town and county RDC
- Develop county business bureau
- Unigov
- Quarterly meetings between township and county government
- Promote NGO networks
- Unified artists network
- Develop branding alliance
- Rebuild/reorganize Brown County Partnership
- Support from elected leaders to create and develop a network (ad hoc group) that meets monthly – 1 rep from each county organization
- Student 'shadowing' of elected leaders and student internships
- Consistent leadership collaboration between county and town
- Encourage networking and communication between county and town departments
- Social, civic, governmental partnership – Forum
- Leadership Brown County opportunities for youth
- More education for all citizens on how county functions
- Provide additional leadership opportunities for graduates of Leadership Brown County
- Form Leadership Brown County alumni group
- Volunteer network for fire department leadership