

The Planning Process

In February 2016, the entire staff of Tipton County Public Library engaged in an Exploration Day for Staff In-service Day. Staff researched best practices, and then they visited various libraries and businesses in central Indiana to discuss and observe customer service, space use, community engagement, and services. Each Team made a report on their findings and recommendations to the Admin Team.

June through August of 2016, Cherie Spencer, Director, and Jason Fields, Assistant Director, attended the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation to learn the skills associated with community engagement and community conversations.

In September and October, Cherie and Jason conducted five guided community conversations, including one with the library staff. More than forty people attended these conversations, and they spoke openly about what the communities of Tipton County need.

Statement of Community Need

We prepared a summary of comments from the community conversations, and we found that comments easily fell into one of four categories: Open and Welcoming, Opportunities, Leadership, and Values.

The responses from community members at the community conversations, coupled with staff research and observations, were the basis of the library's Goals for its Long Range Plan for 2017-2021. The library is committed to serving the needs of its community.

Please see the following pages for the summary documents.

Community Conversations Summary -- October 2016

Issues Identified as Most Important

Lack of resources, such as businesses and shopping

Very difficult to share information within the community

Complacency

Not welcoming to all community members

Not thriving economically

Not enough opportunities for young leaders and families

Not enough to draw people in -- keep and sustain the citizen base

QUALITY OF LIFE: activities, amenities, housing

Follow-through from leaders

Job opportunities

Need new growth

Strategic partnerships

Engagement beyond comfort zone

Red Tape: it's too hard to get anything done

What kind of things could be done that would make a difference?

Better communication, informing people, resolving gossip issues

Create a plan for promoting growth in the community

Create an entrepreneurship program

Encourage parents to value education

More community conversations / open forums

Find ways to deal with trouble-makers (those who block progress)

Encourage new businesses

Create amenities to bring people here

Create opportunities for young leaders

Have large programs/events

Have a local cable station

Have an organization to welcome newcomers

Expose citizens to broader experiences

If we came back together in 6 months or a year, what might we see that would indicate that these changes had started to happen?

A more prosperous downtown

Grants for community improvements

Better informed community

A local TV presence

More positive newspaper

More community events

Central community information source

Better promotion of what the community has to offer

Open and Welcoming	Opportunities	Leadership	Values
Open to new ways of doing things	Progressive	Need to work together	Town pride
Open to new ideas	New businesses	Need more than just a small group in charge	Peaceful
Welcoming to new people	Jobs	People encouraged to get involved	Supportive
Welcoming to all people, diversity	More than a drive-through town	Tired of good old boys network running everything	Family
	Vibrant Town Square	Need local government follow-through	Safe
	Events that engage citizens	Leadership development, especially young people	Strong
	Local businesses are supported	All parts of community represented (county & town)	Caring
	Activities for all ages	Leaders need to prepare for the future	
	Reasons for young people to stay	Leaders need to be open to growth	
	Parks and recreation -- trails	Strategic partnerships between organizations	
	Involvement for everyone	Services to help people:	
	Economically thriving	shuttle, housing, mental health care, laundromat	
	Better communication:		
	between leaders and people,		
	and between organizations		