

# HOW WILL WE WORK & LEARN IN 2020?

**Preliminary Report**  
**October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010**

Nearly 300 residents from Owensboro and across Daviess County spent a full day talking together about how we will Work and Learn in 2020. Residents who had made the decision and commitment to be involved came together to work in small groups to create a vision for the community in the areas of Work and Learn. They talked about goals and actions to achieve the community's vision and made personal commitments.

Throughout the day, participants used keypad polling and groupware computers to identify room-wide themes and collective priorities. This preliminary report gives the vision statements, vision themes, goals and long-term actions generated in the Town Meeting.

This 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meeting® builds off the priorities set by citizens at the 2007 Town Meeting and the work done by four sub-groups after the town meeting.



Residents of Owensboro-Daviess County gathered at the Sportscenter on Saturday, Oct. 23, 2010, for a conversation about the future of our community.

## **Progress in the Last 3-5 Years**

- Growth of downtown development (restaurants, riverfront, amenities, etc.)
- Highway 54 development – more places to shop and eat
- Enhanced transportation infrastructure via airport and riverport expansion and public transportation (GRITS)
- Improved recreational opportunities – parks, Greenbelt
- “There is a sense of ownership and belonging.”
- Educational opportunities increasing (WKU-O, community college programs, arts for kids)
  - “Impressed with opportunities for children. Incredible.”
- Increased transparency of local government
  - “Cooperation between city and county government has greatly improved.”
  - “There is a gigantic improvement in providing a voice to government.”
- Quality healthcare / new hospital
  - “It gives me confidence when my family or myself go there (OMHS). I feel confident in my care.”
- “We are a very helping community – caring for each other”
- “Town Hall meetings are unique and progressive.”

## **Building on Our Success**

- Be respectful and communicate effectively using active listening between leaders and citizens.
- Reach agreement of clear goals with regular status reports on progress.
  - “Think of ‘we’ instead of ‘me’ when making decisions”
- Communication is key: “Listening and working together to overcome differences.”
- Active participation – “We need to know that our opinions matter. We feel discouraged when our feelings aren’t heard. We need to know people are listening.”
- Conduct outreach initiative to involve a diverse population of citizens on public issues.
  - “Promote inclusiveness of all voices.”
  - Involve youth in new and effective ways for them
  - “Better effort needed to motivate people to become involved.”
- Utilize new forms of communication (e.g. social media) to convey messages to a diverse population
- Work with existing groups to collectively solve problems (e.g. Neighborhood Alliances)

## Town Meeting Participant Demographics

Gender	Participants	Owensboro-Daviess Co.	Where do you live?	Participants	Owensboro-Daviess Co.
Female	53%	52%	City of Owensboro	67%	59%
Male	47%	48%	City of Whitesville	0%	0.7%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			Elsewhere in Daviess Co.	22%	40.3%
African-American/Black	8%	4%	Outside of Daviess Co.	11%	
Asian American	2%	0.3%	<b>Educational Level</b>		
Caucasian/White	89%	94%	Less than High School or GED	7%	19%
Hispanic/Latino	1%	1%	High School Diploma or GED	11%	38%
South Asian	0%	0.2%	Some College or Tech School	21%	21%
Other	1%	1%	Associate Degree	8%	6%
<b>Age of Adult Population (over 18)</b>			Bachelor or Post Grad Degree	52%	17%
18-24	13%	12%	<b>Employment Status</b>		
25-34	12%	17%	Employed, working full-time	41%	
35-44	8%	21%	Employed, working part-time	8%	
45-54	20%	19%	Not employed; currently looking for work	3%	
55-64	26%	12%	Homemaker or Retired	27%	
65+	22%	19%	Student	15%	
			Other	7%	
			<b>Attended 2007 Town Meeting</b>		
			Yes	35%	
			No	65%	



People from all backgrounds and experiences came together to share their thoughts and hear the voices of others ... and commit to making their vision and goals become realities.

### Town Meeting Background

A diverse steering committee was created to guide the development of the strategy, content and design of the meeting to ensure that it is credible, fair and embedded in the community. The strategic options for each of the five goals were vetted by stakeholders, leaders and focus groups of citizens.

This meeting is made possible by the hundreds of volunteer hours by committee members, table facilitators, theme team members, and other volunteers, such as the ushers and registration people.

AmericaSpeaks is a nonprofit organization that engages citizens in important public decisions that impact their lives. They are honored to be part of the We The People Town Meeting for our community. As our partner, they have guided the development of this 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meeting with the hope that engaged citizens from all walks of life and political persuasions can set a direction for Owensboro-Daviess County.

### Personal Commitment

At the end of the meeting, participants discussed short term actions and their own personal commitments to achieve the goals discussed during today's meeting. **Visions, Goals and Long term actions for Work and Learn are on the following pages.**

Look online at [www.wethepeople-townmeeting.org](http://www.wethepeople-townmeeting.org) for the complete preliminary report soon. We the People will maintain communication with participants and demonstrate progress through newsletters, emails and website.

## How will we Work in 2020?



### Work Vision Statement:

In 2020, we work in a thriving economy that provides vibrant jobs, living wages and quality of life. We are among the best in the U.S. The community capitalizes on opportunities in growth industries such as health care and biotechnology, while providing support for new and existing businesses with creative incentives and assets, including a business accelerator. Downtown provides an exciting service industry with cultural amenities that attract visitors and young people, as well as long-time residents.

### Work Vision Ideas

- Downtown is vibrant and builds on varied cultural interest (e.g., bluegrass, etc.) and the river – an attraction for visitors AND locals.
- We have a significant population of young “creative class” adults. “Expanded social opportunities for young adults.”
- Small business is supported with tax incentives, incubators and investment capital.
- We have a vibrant business and service economy providing home-grown businesses with living wage jobs and is still “one of the best places to live in the U.S.”
- Green jobs and the environment are a part of our vibrant economy.
- Owensboro is a transportation hub – airport, riverfront, buses, etc.
- A group of related industries builds on each other (e.g., healthcare, biotech, pharmaceutical, agriculture etc.) with great collaboration with regional universities.
- Our hospital is a regional magnet providing state-of-the-art care for heart and cancer patients.
- “Owensboro is the healthiest community in the country.”
- We have more businesses with higher incomes. Wages are more than sufficient to support a family.

## How will we Learn in 2020?



### Learn Vision Statement:

In 2010, we have a culture of high expectations for students, teachers, parents – everyone in our community. We have enhanced educational opportunities at all levels – early childhood, K-12 and higher education. We have talented and dedicated teachers as well as caring and involved parents. Our students graduate from high school prepared to thrive. We have more residents with college degrees and a higher education system that is accessible to all.

### Learn Vision Ideas

- We have improved pre-K, with preschool required for all children; standards raised for day care; more early childhood development opportunities; and parent skill training
- There are more citizens with a college degree. This has been achieved by creating: A higher education system, providing access to everyone, regardless of ability to pay; more on-line classes; strong transitional system from high school to post-secondary (dual credit programs, internships, research opportunities)
- Owensboro has the BEST teachers in the nation. Passionate and well-educated.
- “We have reached a 95 percent graduation rate from high school”
- Students are fully prepared to thrive in a higher education environment
- Health, nutrition and wellness are priorities in local schools
- All students have access to current and cutting edge technology
- More parental involvement
- “A culture that demands higher expectations of the level of education provided to its citizens.”
- We are teaching more life, social and soft skills throughout all grades
- “Education should be more about how to think, collaborate and communicate etc. We need to teach life skills like financial literacy. We need personable education.”

# HOW WILL WE WORK IN 2020?

## HOW WILL WE LEARN IN 2020?



<p><b>Work Goal 1:</b> <b>Education for Real World</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate with real world application in agriculture, technology, health care and arts</li> </ul> <p><b>Long Term Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate among business, industry and education entities to provide experiences to help students pursue career options</li> <li>Provide more interactive career services within the school systems</li> <li>Develop a mandatory entrepreneurial course for high school students to encourage innovation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Goal 2:</b> <b>Business Friendly</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a business-friendly environment to attract and retain businesses</li> </ul> <p><b>Long Term Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Streamline and simplify planning and zoning process” – better communication and education of permitting process, etc.</li> <li>Create a cooperative environment in which business leaders/ community have input into all levels of general, postsecondary and vocational education</li> <li>Increase level of public and private funds devoted to economic development</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Goal 3:</b> <b>Green Industries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More research and development in green industries (agriculture, health, energy, etc.) to lead to more jobs</li> </ul> <p><b>Long Term Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobby for local, state and federal incentives for green business development</li> <li>10-year goal of all buildings (including downtown) to be LEED certified; community should create and seek out incentive programs to provide assistance</li> <li>Partnership between communities and universities to train workers in green industries – national producer within 3-5 years</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Work Goal 4:</b> <b>Incentives for Continued Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create incentive programs, scholarships for continued education (finishing high school, associate’s degree, college or post-graduate, continuing adult education)</li> </ul> <p><b>Long Term Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of special incentive programs for non-traditional higher education students (e.g., childcare, flexible schedule)</li> <li>Continue to develop regional education incentive programs (e.g., GRADD workforce, scholarship program)</li> <li>Incentives for businesses who pay for employees’ education</li> <li>More financial assistance for ALL prospective students</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learn Goal 1:</b> <b>Passionate Teachers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train and recruit motivated, talented, passionate teachers ...</li> </ul> <p><b>Long Term Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamline process to terminate ineffective teachers</li> <li>Raise standards for teacher preparation during college training</li> <li>Provide better funding for poor performance schools</li> <li>Dialog with teachers to find out what will motivate them</li> <li>Continuous evaluation of teachers throughout their career</li> <li>Set high standards for teacher and administrator performances and systems to support them</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learn Goal 2:</b> <b>Preschool for ALL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop affordable preschool for ALL children.</li> </ul> <p><b>Long Term Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More preschools that are NAEYC accredited</li> <li>Increase public and private financing to achieve goal of preschool for ALL and K-12</li> <li>Research and adopt successful strategies from other areas that have universal preschool</li> </ul>
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