ANGOLA COMMUNITY FORUM REPORT

Angola Hometown Collaboration Initiative

In the **summer** of **2017**, **Angola** was selected to be part of the Hometown Collaboration Initiative (HCI) program offered through the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs for communities of 25,000 people or less. As a part of the initiative, the **Angola** team conducted a community forum at the Angola High school on March 15, 2018. About 97 community members participated.

The purpose of the forum was to seek thoughts and insights on the survey results and the community's existing plans, and to capture ideas on how to build on the quality of life, economic and leadership assets of the community.

During the forum, attendees participated in three rounds of discussions, where they were asked about quality of life items critical for making the community an attractive place to live in the future, strategies to achieve their vision of a thriving economy and how to create a new generation of leaders and get more people involved in community improvement activities.

Our Team

The **Angola** HCI team consists of a diverse set of community members interested in fostering collaboration to make Angola even better. The team has been meeting since **June 2017** preparing to select a building block on which to focus. These include developing a new generation of leaders, growing small business and entrepreneurs and enhancing community design and public spaces.

In addition to the forum, the HCI team surveyed local community members with nearly **1.,000** responses received.

Stay Informed!

Find the latest HCI information, meeting minutes, and reports at www.indianahci.org/Name

Place Making

During the Place Making round, community members were asked what three Place making items are critical in making **Angola** an attractive place to live in the future. Each table reported their top three strategies and then all forum participants voted individually for the top three ideas they would like to see acted upon.

Parks and Trails	53
Sidewalks on 127 (Wayne St.) and US-20	41
Bike lanes on new and existing roads	7
Funding to finish trail to Pokagon	3
Crosswalks	2
Splash pad	0
Dog Park	0

Downtown	29
Decrease truck traffic on US-20	15
User-friendly parking	6
Twinkle lights	3
Walkways	2
Collaborate with Trine	2
Bike racks	1

Arts & Culture	55
Taste of Angola Festival	16
Activities for young adults- bands, festivals	10
Community communication hub for events	13
Carlin Park stage, community theatre opportunities	3
Ribfest	3
Intergenerational project	3
Bring foreign cuisine to Angola	3
Group of volunteers from community, Trine	2
Food truck block party	1
Events that bring people together	1

Tourism & Attraction	9
Lake resort, revive Bledsoe's Beach, casino	8
Community bulletin-boards	1
Update wayfinding signs	0

Other	2
Apartments Downtown	2

Pie chart:
- Parks and Trails: 36%
- Downtown: 20%
- Arts & Culture: 38%
- Tourism & Attraction: 6%
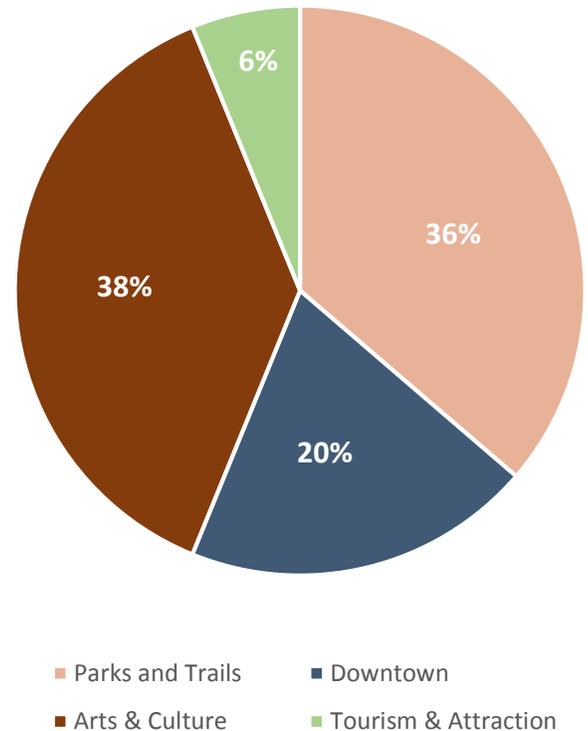
Leadership

During the Leadership round, community members discussed and answered three questions looking at the survey results and brainstorming how we can foster leadership. The answers to those questions are discussed on the following pages of this report.

What are some of the best ways to create a new generation of leaders in the community?

- Invite youth to participate in more community events and boards
- Expand Mayor's Youth Council
- Workshops on leadership skills, personality type, business etiquette
- Lunch-n-learn series
- Shadow leaders or business professionals for a day
- Mentor emerging leaders
- Teach interpersonal and emotional skills
- Internships for youth
- Tap young peoples' strengths

- Show appreciation for current leaders
- Promote and expand current assets such as:
  - Junior Achievement
  - Impact Institute
  - Young Professional's Network
  - 4-H, Scouts
  - Youth groups
  - Literacy Coalition
  - Big Brothers, Big Sisters
  - Enterprise Center

Leadership

Leadership underlies the ability of a community to shape its own future, to create positive change. Strong communities are built by many people with effective leadership skills making a difference in our families, our schools, our businesses and organizations.

Community residents also discussed questions related to the survey results. You can find the survey report at www.indianahci.org/Angola.

> Aside from a leadership program, what strategies should be undertaken to expand active participation of community members in community improvement activities?

Communication

- Web stream public meetings
- Increase civic engagement efforts
- City of Angola app
- Two-way communication between leaders and community members
- Host annual public forum

Volunteering

- Volunteer matching service
- More volunteering with schools and youth
- Encourage employers to give employees paid time off to volunteer, mentor
- Promote current volunteer opportunities

Inclusivity

- Set a tone of respect
- Integrate lake associations into community
- Have a "Welcome Wagon" with resources about our community

Job Training

- Skilled trade initiative
- Better utilize resources:
  - Enterprise Center
  - Impact Institute
  - Junior achievement
- Job shadow opportunities with local industries

Economy

During the Economy round, community members were asked:
- How can we support existing businesses and those who want to start new businesses?
- What specific economic development strategies would help us achieve the vision you have for our Economy?

After each table reported out, all forum participants voted individually for the their top three strategies.

A Vision of Angola with a Thriving Economy from Forum Participants

- Shopping local
- Vibrant downtown businesses
- Community information and business resource hub
- Adequate childcare and housing for workforce

Suggested Economic Development Strategies

Small Businesses	51
Angola Shark Tank	12
Do more to support local businesses	15
Pop-up shops	4
Small bus. Scavenger hunt	9
Town ambassador, leave positive reviews	8
Business fair	1
Entrepreneur classes	2
Fill empty store fronts	0
Market to younger demographic	0
Downtown business expo	0
Provide info on tax breaks, funding	0

Education & Workforce Development	19
Basic Life Skills Training	17
Collaborate more with Trine	2
Create more opportunities for younger individuals	0

Leadership/Collaboration	7
Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE)	6
Promote leadership, mentoring opportunities	1
Facilitate collaboration among organizations	0
Mentorship among local businesses	0

Housing and Childcare	5
More childcare	3
Affordable housing	2

Promotion and Awareness	40
Resource hub of community resources	40
Information for new residents, businesses	0