



*Charting the course
for our future*

May 2009

Final Report & Strategic Plan

PREPARED FOR CREATE HUNTINGTON BY COLLECTIVE IMPACT, LLC
www.collectiveimpact.com



www.createhuntington.com

“Jewel City” Contest Winners



STACY MCCHESENEY

In the early 1900's, river boats and/or steamers travelled up and down the Ohio River. Due to a lack of modern navigation resources, the crew adopted nicknames for towns that best reflected their character. These names were used as a point of reference on their journey. Huntington was called the “Jewel City” for its emerald green landscape and wealth of natural resources.



While development and revitalization of our hardscape is important, we must focus on responsible, conscientious and sustainable land use practices. We must not only restore the urban landscape, but integrate greenscapes into new development to address aesthetic and environmental issues. Not only would the “Jewel City” be emerald green again, but our natural resources (water and timber) would be enhanced, our air quality would most likely improve and we would be promoting our contemporary resource - social capital.



PATTI PRICE

I have heard it was called the “Jewel City” as a takeoff of “Jewel of the Nile” since it was such a beautiful city located on the river.

To be that beautiful city on the river again, I suggest an “old town” development of well-lit streets, unique shops, art gallery, bakery, jewelry shops, clothing, gifts, specialty restaurants and coffee shops in vacant buildings on 3rd & 4th Avenues to compliment Pullman Square. We already have some of these types of businesses – let’s attract more. It will also enhance the Old Main Corridor.

Have the businesses stay open late on Friday and Saturday to invite those coming to events and movies downtown. Get new holiday decorations for downtown. This may not seem important however it is good for public relations and marketing to have the city “pop” during the holidays. Make Huntington beautiful again; clean it up, especially the alleys; hire the additional law enforcement needed to deal with crime; and continue efforts to cleanup and revitalize the riverfront park. All local elected officials should strive to promote a cooperative attitude to get things accomplished for our city. The people in Huntington will be encouraged and want to get involved if we see positive accomplishments.

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CREATE HUNTINGTON PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Huntington initiated the Create Huntington Project to help move the city forward and empower its citizens to effect change in their community. This project followed several years of early work to build the necessary relationships and continuous learning environment to support more organized efforts. The City obtained funding from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation to catalyze community and economic development in Huntington and chart a course for becoming a creative community.

Create Huntington engaged Collective Impact, LLC to conduct the community and economic development assessment and strategic planning project.

The project was undertaken to do the following:

- **Understand the city’s community and economic development assets and needs,**
- **Adopt a common vision for Huntington’s future,**
- **Connect existing teams, projects, and efforts throughout the city,**
- **Develop a strategic plan to help move the city forward, and**
- **Empower citizens to effect change in their community.**

The project was carried out from August 2008 through March 2009. As part of the assessment and strategic planning project, a diverse team of stakeholders came together to guide the process. The Planning Team was comprised of representatives from various stakeholder groups in the city.

“The Create Huntington community and economic development assessment and strategic planning project is an initiative to bring all stakeholders (residents, businesses, Marshall University, non-profits, government, etc.,) together onto the same page to improve the City of Huntington.”

- Herald Dispatch

The community and economic development assessment and strategic planning project is considered a starting point to help key stakeholders in the City of Huntington understand the assets and needs in the community and shape the future direction of the city.

A creative community is one that taps the ideas and energies of its citizens in ways that move the community forward. When community residents are engaged in the planning they are much more likely to be engaged in the doing. It is this citizen engagement that generates the energy necessary for creative community action. In order for the project to be a success, it was important to hear directly from Huntington residents and other stakeholders in the city.

As part of this project, the Create Huntington team implemented *Huntington Speaks*, a citizen engagement strategy that included community discussions and a community survey. Other activities completed as part of the project included a review and analysis of existing data, a community capacity assessment, the development of a community profile, and the creation of an organizational structure for Create Huntington. The project resulted in a strategic plan for the development of a creative community. The plan and related project materials are available on the Create Huntington website at www.createhuntington.org.

“My involvement with Create Huntington is one of the most meaningful things I’ve done. I’ve met interesting, engaged people who inspire me to do more and who are now my firends. People ask me why I spend so much time volunteernig for Create Huntington. I do it for purely selfish reasons: I truly believe we can and will make Huntington the type of place I want to live.”

- Thomas McChesney, Create Huntington Planning Team Member

Acknowledgments

For making this project possible, many thanks to the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation for their financial support of this effort. Additional thanks go to the City of Huntington for its tremendous leadership of this effort. Exceptional gratitude is expressed to the Create Huntington Planning Team for providing ongoing guidance, leadership, and hard work throughout the project. A very special appreciation is extended to the many residents, businesses, non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, and members of the Marshall University community who offered their expertise and experiences by participating in community discussions and completing surveys. Their input has been essential to understanding the issues in Huntington and to shaping the goals and strategies within this report. Finally, thanks go to Collective Impact, LLC and its team of consultants for leading the planning sessions, engaging stakeholders, compiling the needed information, researching the issues, and moving the Planning Team forward throughout the process.



CITY OF HUNTINGTON OVERVIEW

The city of Huntington was named for Collis P. Huntington, a railroad entrepreneur who founded it in 1870. Huntington was established to support the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad which terminated there at the time. The town of Guyandotte (first settled in 1799) predated Huntington and became a part of the larger city. During the Civil War, Guyandotte cast its loyalties with the Confederacy. When Guyandotte was captured by Union forces much of the original town was burned to the ground.

Marshall University is located in Huntington. The present day University began as a subscription school known as Marshall Academy in 1837. After the Civil War, Marshall Academy was re-opened by the newly established state of West Virginia as Marshall College to train teachers and the college grew to university status.

The city historically suffered from repeated flooding including the Great Flood of 1937 which devastated the city and left 6,000 residents homeless. A flood wall was then constructed to protect the city. Access to major markets by rail resulted in rapid growth between 1880 and 1930. The city's population increased during this period from a little over 3,000 people to more than 75,000. By 1950 the population exceeded 86,000. This rapid growth was supported by the coal, chemical, and glass industries; however, the city's industrial base declined during the latter half of the twentieth century resulting in a steadily declining population over the past fifty years.

The current day city serves as a regional medical center with two major hospitals and the Marshall University Medical School. The city is also very much a college town serving as home to 14,000 students attending Marshall University.



The latest population estimate by the U.S. Census Bureau (2007) for the city of Huntington is 48,982 persons. At the time of the 2000 census, 17.8% of the population was under the age of eighteen years and 18.0% of the population was over the age of sixty five years. The population of the city reflects a lower percentage of young people and a higher percentage of elderly people than is the case for the state as a whole (22.2% of the statewide population is under age 18 and 15.3% is over the age of 65). There were 22,955 households in Huntington and 12,230 families at the time of the last census. The population of the city is 98.5% White.

Average household income in Huntington during the period 2005-07 was \$43,067. This is lower than the state average of \$48,104 and substantially less than the national average of \$67,799.



CREATE HUNTINGTON OVERVIEW

Create Huntington began in 2006 when former Mayor David Felinton, Dr. Stephen Kopp, President of Marshall University, and a group of concerned citizens came together to discuss the best way to improve Huntington's economic future. Five focus groups were conducted to review economic trends and discuss a direction for the city. The focus groups convened around the topics of Family Life, Technology, Culture and the Arts, Community Development, and Tourism. The process was designed to learn what the citizens of Huntington cared about, the city's strengths as a community, and how Huntington fits into the future of the global economy.

Three basic themes emerged from these discussions:

- **Huntington needs to focus on attracting people, as well as companies, to the city.** In the future economy, there will be fewer companies employing workers and more “free agent” workers farming out their skills, talents, and ideas to companies. Workers are able to work from anywhere in the world, thanks to technology advances in communication. They will choose to live in communities where they are inspired, have access to intellectual resources, and their families are valued. Livability is key. Every worker that moves to a community stimulates economic development through their need for additional goods and services, and by attracting large companies to come and work with them and the teams they form.
- **Connections between the City of Huntington and Marshall University are vital to the future.** Because research and ideas are the currency of the future economy, Marshall University is essential to Huntington's success. For Marshall to be successful, the community must educate and support students and provide a livable atmosphere that attracts the world's best thinkers and researchers. A community that is connected to the arts, respects diversity in thinking and culture, and embraces new ideas is necessary to retain graduates and attract qualified faculty.
- **Creativity is essential to a prosperous economy.** If ideas are the future economy, then creativity must be an essential component of our future plans. The community must be visibly connected to the arts and celebrate the unique.

A community-wide meeting was held in November 2006 to share the forum results with the community. At the same time, Huntington was learning that Warner Brothers would film portions of the “We Are Marshall” movie in Huntington. These factors, combined with the success of the Pullman Square Development, began to catalyze citizen engagement in new and exciting ways. But some of the work was duplicative and struggling without resources.



The Create Huntington team decided to pursue grant funding to develop a community plan that would point disjointed activities in a unified direction. In December of 2007 the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation awarded the City a grant of \$50,000 to develop a community wide vision and plan and formalize a structure for Create Huntington. With the grant funds, Create Huntington has been able to explore the successes of other progressive communities and contract with Collective Impact, LLC to facilitate the community and economic development assessment and strategic planning process.

Create Huntington works to empower citizens to improve community livability so that Huntington is successful in the global economy. This is done by:

- Facilitating the development of a community vision for progress and shepherding citizen projects so that they are moving in the direction of that shared vision.
- Connecting citizens with resources, tools, and each other so that community projects are completed collaboratively and efficiently while building social capital.
- Ensuring that there is a holistic approach to community and economic development that emphasizes input and participation by citizens.
- Providing a “think tank” atmosphere for exploring and sharing new ideas and promoting their application in our community.

The Create Huntington Network is the community collaborative that serves the City of Huntington. It is made up of many individuals and diverse organizations coming together to work on common goals to achieve improvements in the community’s well-being. The Create Huntington Network includes community residents, businesses, the Marshall University community, government and non-profit organizations, the City of Huntington, and others that are interested in improving the city and moving it toward a creative and prosperous future. The Create Huntington Network consists of eight community teams organized by the same domains that were used in the assessment and planning project and were used to organize the strategic plan. Each of the community teams has co-team leaders and a mission/

“We need to engage lower educated and lower income residents in the Create Huntington Network. Their input was not strongly represented in the project and their perspectives and participation are important and will be greatly valued.”

– Create Huntington Planning Team Member

purpose statement. Community teams meet on a monthly basis to share information, provide updates, coordinate resources and processes, and implement specific components of the strategic plan that are identified within each respective domain.

Create Huntington partners have engaged in very specific learning and development activities together. They opened up these opportunities to the community at-large and began to expand their knowledge of and thinking about community and economic development. These early activities included or grew to include:

- Exploration of West Virginia’s Community Development Model
- Team visits to Morgantown, West Virginia, Paducah, Kentucky, and Tupelo, Mississippi
- Hosting community discussions and leadership trainings with Dr. Vaughn Grisham
- Structured conversations about community issues of importance
- Chat-n-Chew Sessions
- Citizen implementation of community projects

In April 2008, Bruce Decker of Collective Impact, LLC presented West Virginia’s Community Development Model to a group of people interested in learning more about the process of citizens working toward improving their community. The Community Development Model was developed by a broad base of public and private community development experts and community representatives having a stake in healthy, vibrant, West Virginia communities. The West Virginia Community Development Hub facilitated the creation of the model and continues to use it to achieve its mission of connecting communities to a network of resources and opportunities so that each can accomplish its vision for the future.

The Community Development Model describes the various components that exist in West Virginia’s community development system. It is an organized visual representation of the existing community development system in the state. The components in the model include visioning, capacity assessment, strategic planning, community coaching, engaged citizens, leadership development, organizational development social capital development, and resource development. The model is used to help communities experience the

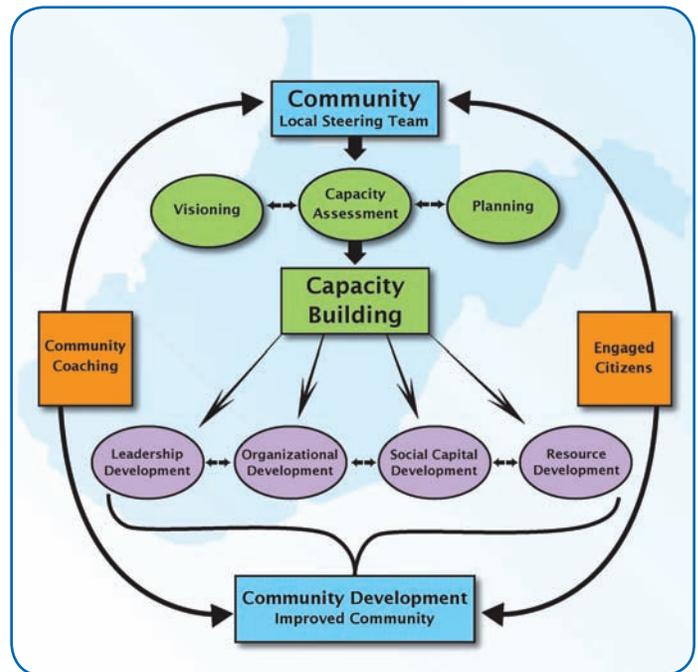


Figure 1 - Community Development Model



system in a more coordinated approach and ensure that communities have access to an array of tools and needed assistance as they address community and economic development. This model recognizes the value of engaged citizens in the community and economic development process. This model also recognizes the importance of using community coaches to assist the community in assessing their level of preparedness to achieve their vision, identifying and accessing needed resources, and providing or locating technical assistance.

Create Huntington partners visited several cities to learn first-hand how they had grown and developed by building on their assets. Visits were made to Morgantown, WV, Paducah, Kentucky, and Tupelo, Mississippi.

Morgantown shared its experiences developing the riverfront area and connecting West Virginia University and the city of Morgantown. Paducah shares a common geographic layout, a rich arts culture, and economic history with Huntington. Paducah has successfully recruited various artists to locate within its city using an array of incentives. Tupelo Mississippi has a long history, since the 1930's, of very intentional community development based on a belief that investment in citizens' individual education, leadership development, and strong local organizations lead to community and economic development.

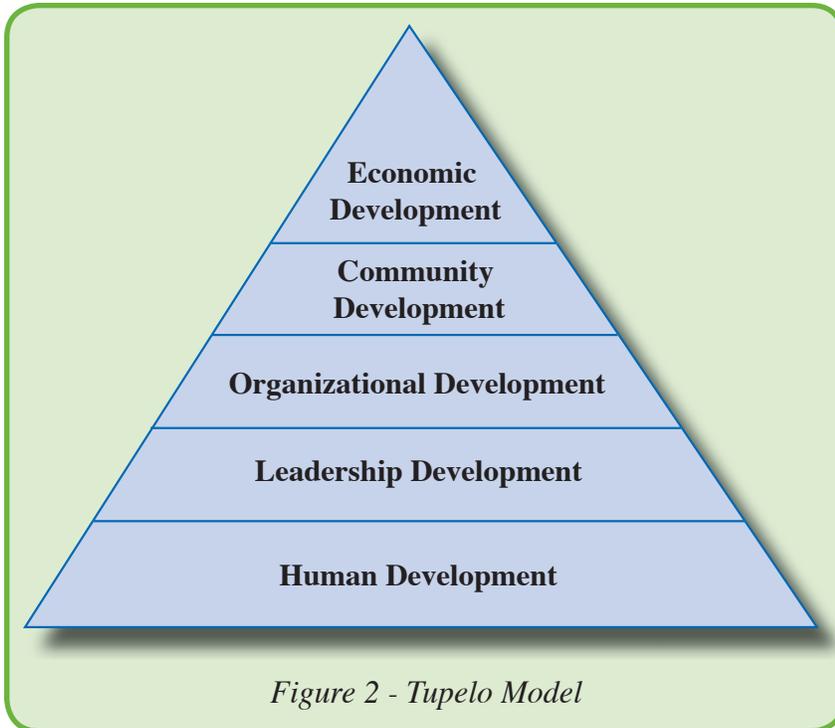
In 2005, Create Huntington sponsored a community meeting with Dr. Vaughn Grisham, Director of the McLean Institute for Community Development at the University of Mississippi. This meeting was attended by nearly 100 citizens. Dr. Grisham talked about how Tupelo has developed and the responsibility of a city's citizens for its strength, beauty, and success. Dr. Grisham challenged those present to take immediate action to clean up trash, beautify neighborhoods and store fronts, and to take demonstrable pride in what they have in Huntington.

Create Huntington helped the community begin discussing change by serving as a neutral facilitator on a variety of community issues including city beautification, youth engagement, creative community development and promotion of the arts. These discussions were held in a variety of different forums including Creative Salons, focus groups, panel discussions, and planning sessions.

“Participating in the ‘Chat ‘n Chew’ meetings revealed to me the website: ‘Why Huntington’. Now that I have been back here a few years I realize how wonderful it is to be not only a part of a community but to be able to make a positive difference. I have been able to work directly with City, County, and State officials towards improving the quality of life in this area.

Why Huntington? Big enough to be important but small enough to be involved.”

*- James Bowen, Author, ‘Why Huntington?’ Website Article
www.whyhuntington.com*



“The intellectual journey resulting in Create Huntington gives solid support to the idea that creativity and enthusiasm drive successful communities.”

- Ostie Mathisen, Create Huntington Planning Team Member

Chat-n-Chew was initiated by Thomas and Stacy McChesney and other community volunteers as they looked for a way to institute a regularly scheduled, on-going forum for community conversations. Chat-n-Chew sessions are held weekly in the Pritchard Building Lobby, 4th Avenue, Huntington. They are described as “an opportunity to gather and discuss ways to help improve Huntington”.

Out of these conversations more than two dozen citizen driven community projects were developed. Citizens are actively working to address such issues as city cleanliness, youth leadership, and crime prevention. Community activities have resulted in the development of a community garden, numerous beautification projects, the opening of a downtown art gallery, downtown entertainment and arts events, and marketing and promotion of Huntington’s assets.

The Create Huntington Network was launched at the Create Huntington Summit in May 2009. At the Summit the findings from the Create Huntington assessment and strategic planning project were unveiled, the strategic plan report documents were disseminated to participants, the Create Huntington Network was initiated, and Dr. Grisham provided a motivational address.



Create Huntington Project Planning Team

A diverse team of stakeholders came together to guide the community and economic development assessment and strategic planning process in Huntington, West Virginia. The Team was instrumental in engaging stakeholders to participate and helping to plan and implement project activities. The team reviewed the project findings and made recommendations for areas of improvement.

The Planning Team was comprised of the following individuals (in alphabetical order by last name):

- Liza Caldwell, President, Dingus Run Properties
- Byron Clercx, Chairman, Art and Design, Marshall University
- Lynn Clercx, Realtor Prudential Bunch and President, Clercx Worx
- Richard Cobb, Neighborhood Advocate, Adopt-a-Block
- Tyson Compton, President, Cabell Huntington Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Fran D'Egidio, Pharmacist, Cabell Huntington Hospital
- Anne Durham, President, Mountainside Media
- David Felinton – former Mayor, City of Huntington
- Richard Gus Drumm, Landscape Architect, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Charles Holley, Planning, City of Huntington
- Brandi Jacobs-Jones, Director of Administration and Finance, City of Huntington
- Kim Lewis, Executive Director, Goodwill Industries of KYOWVA Area, Inc.
- Ostie Mathisen, Vice-President, First State Bank
- Stacy McChesney, Marketing Manager, Heiner's Bakery
- Phoebe Patton Randolph, Architect, Edward Tucker Architects
- Audy M. Perry, Jr., Esquire, Huddleston Bolen LLP
- Michael Sells, President, Planning Evolution, LLC
- Bill Toney, former Executive Director, Huntington Municipal Development Authority

Create Huntington Assessment and Planning Project Overview

The community and economic development assessment and strategic planning project was funded by Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, administered by the City of Huntington, and coordinated by

Community and Economic Development Domains

1. Health and Well-Being

- a. Healthy People
- b. School Readiness
- c. Educational Attainment and Access
- d. Community Safety
- e. Family Stability
- f. Economic Security

2. Community Infrastructure

- a. Housing
- b. Facilities
- c. Utilities
- d. Transportation and Roads
- e. Communications
- f. Internet/Technology

3. Development Resources

- a. Financial Investments
- b. Local Financial Resources
- c. Legal Resources
- d. Business Development
- e. Access to Outside Resources
- f. Resource Mobilization
- g. Business Diversity
- h. Cultivating Entrepreneurship
- i. Building on Local Resources

4. Culture and Quality of Life

- a. Heritage
- b. Arts
- c. Recreation
- d. Spirituality

5. Natural Resources

- a. Air
- b. Water
- c. Soil
- d. Minerals
- e. Biodiversity
- f. Land Use

6. Social Capital

- a. Shared Vision
- b. Leadership
- c. Citizen Engagement
- d. Planning
- e. Ability to Solve Problems
- f. Internal Connectedness
- g. External Connectedness

7. Image and Attitude

- a. Sense of Place
- b. Seeking Innovative Ways to Improve
- c. Sense of Hope
- d. Pride in the Community
- e. Focus on Possibilities and Solutions
- f. Action Oriented

8. System Effectiveness

- a. Access to Services and Resources
- b. Awareness of Services and Resources
- c. Service and Resource Provider Interaction

Create Huntington. Collective Impact, an independent consulting firm, facilitated the assessment and strategic planning process.

The Planning Team identified project domains to organize the information gathered, frame the goals and strategies of the strategic plan, and structure the Create Huntington Network. The domains and sub-domains were developed using the Community Development Hub's Capacity Assessment Domains as a basis from which to build.



The chart on the previous page lists the domains and the sub-domains chosen to represent what was important to know and understand about the City of Huntington in order to support healthy community and economic development.

The community and economic development assessment and strategic planning project was conducted from August 2008 through March 2009. Collective Impact facilitated the process and provided planning, data collection, data analysis, and report development services.

Four planning sessions were held with the Planning Team. These were facilitated sessions held in August, September, and November of 2008 and in March of 2009. The Create Huntington Summit was held in May 2009.

The assessment and strategic planning project relied on the following principal sources of information:

- Knowledge and guidance from the Planning Team
- Information gathered through community discussions with primary stakeholder groups
- Data collected from a 'Clip and Return' survey published in the Herald Dispatch
- Data collected through an Internet-based community survey
- Data collected from a paper version of the Internet-based community survey distributed in key locations throughout the city
- A community profile developed for the project
- A review of related data and reports, and
- A capacity assessment

Guidance was offered by the Planning Team at the four planning sessions. The first session focused on identifying domains for organizing the project work, project promotion, and citizen engagement strategies. At the second meeting, the Planning Team identified the content for community discussions and survey questions and identified related data and reports for review and summary by Collective Impact. At the third and fourth meetings, Planning Team members reviewed project findings, planned the Summit, produced image and branding ideas for the final report, and identified the structure that would allow Create Huntington to support the work of community teams to implement the strategic plan.

The Create Huntington team implemented *Huntington Speaks*, a citizen engagement strategy that included community discussions and a community

survey. Community discussions were held in October 2008. Four discussions were held with different audiences in the City of Huntington. These audiences represented primary stakeholder groups and included residents of Huntington, the business community, non-profit organizations and governmental agencies, and the Marshall University community.

A total of 117 people participated in the four community discussions, including 14 business representatives, 32 non-profit organizations and government agency representatives, 8 Marshall University students and faculty, and 53 city residents. In addition, 17 people completed the ‘Clip and Return’ survey that was printed in the Herald Dispatch in January 2009. Participants discussed issues regarding the current environment in the City of Huntington, the vision for Huntington’s future, ways in which entities can better work together, ways to transform the city into a creative community, and perceived strengths and challenges within the city.

Each community discussion was facilitated by the consultant team from Collective Impact, and ideas, suggestions, and comments were recorded. A summary of each individual community discussion was prepared, as well as an overall summary that identified common themes and issues across the different perspectives represented by participants.

An extensive community survey was designed with input from the Planning Team to gather relevant data about the City of Huntington’s current community and economic development system. The survey was also designed to capture information about how key stakeholders in Huntington view the City.

The survey was accessed by local residents over the Internet during October, November, and December 2008. Paper versions of the survey were made available and data collected was entered into the online survey database. In addition to analysis of overall survey responses, data was captured that allowed for the survey responses to be reviewed and analyzed by respondent type and by neighborhood. Analysis of survey responses by type of respondent allows for some conclusions about how different types of stakeholders see city issues. For example, do residents see issues differently than businesses? Similarly, by sorting survey responses by neighborhood, variations in responses could be analyzed to determine if people living in one part of the city perceive issues differently than those in another part of the city.

“We’re seeing a fundamental shift in our community’s appetite for change. People are no longer content to wait for someone else to make things happen. They are rolling up their sleeves and taking action to secure the future they want for themselves and for their families.”

– Anne Durham





A total of 378 people responded to the survey. The *Summary of Results and Findings from Community Survey* provided as a separate report to the Planning Team should be reviewed for information about the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and more detailed analysis of survey findings.

As part of *Huntington Speaks*, Collective Impact sponsored the Neighborhood Voice Contest. \$250 was donated to the neighborhood that had the most participants attend the resident community discussion on Monday, October 27th at 5:30 p.m. at the Jean Carlo Stephenson Auditorium located at City Hall. A \$100 award went to the neighborhood coming in second place in the Neighborhood Voice contest.

The first place award went to the South Side neighborhood association and the second place award, with only one less participant, went to the Highlawn Neighborhood Association. The award is to support a local neighborhood project (i.e., beautification, logo development, etc.). The winning neighborhoods were acknowledged at the Create Huntington Summit at the end of the project in May 2009.

Collective Impact joined efforts with the Create Huntington Image Committee to sponsor the Jewel City Contest. In the past, Huntington was referred to as “The Jewel City.” This title had not been used frequently or widespread over the past several decades. Sponsors were seeking innovative ideas regarding how to help Huntington recreate the brand image of being “The Jewel City.”

Four participants were selected as winners of the Jewel City Contest. They include: Stacy McChesney, Matt White, Phoebe Randolph, and Patti Price. Each of the winners received \$50 and an additional \$250 on behalf of the winners was given to the Create Huntington Image Committee to be used in rolling out the Jewel City promotion campaign. This campaign is to be implemented by local high school and Marshall University students. The winners were invited to “tell their story” at the Create Huntington Summit at the end of the project in May 2009.

Other activities completed as part of the project included a review and analysis of existing data, a community capacity assessment, the development of a community profile, the creation of an organizational structure for Create Huntington, and the initiation of the Create Huntington Network. The project resulted in a strategic plan for the

development of a creative community. The plan and all related project materials are available on the Create Huntington website at www.createhuntington.org.

Key Neighborhood and Socio-Demographic Findings

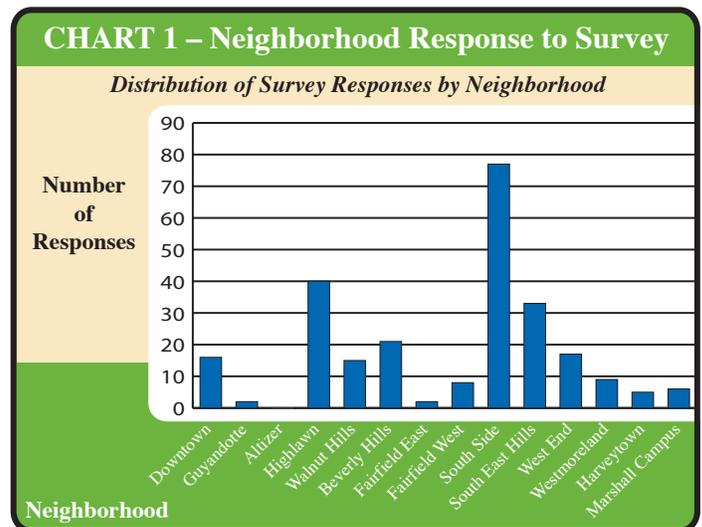
A community profile addressing socio-demographic characteristics of the city of Huntington was developed by Collective Impact, LLC for Create Huntington. This information was further delineated by specific neighborhoods within the city based on responses from the community survey sorted by neighborhood of residence.

Huntington is a socially diverse city made up of fourteen distinct neighborhoods. Survey responses reflect some data provided by residents of each of these neighborhoods; however, the low income, higher crime neighborhoods are generally underrepresented in survey responses.

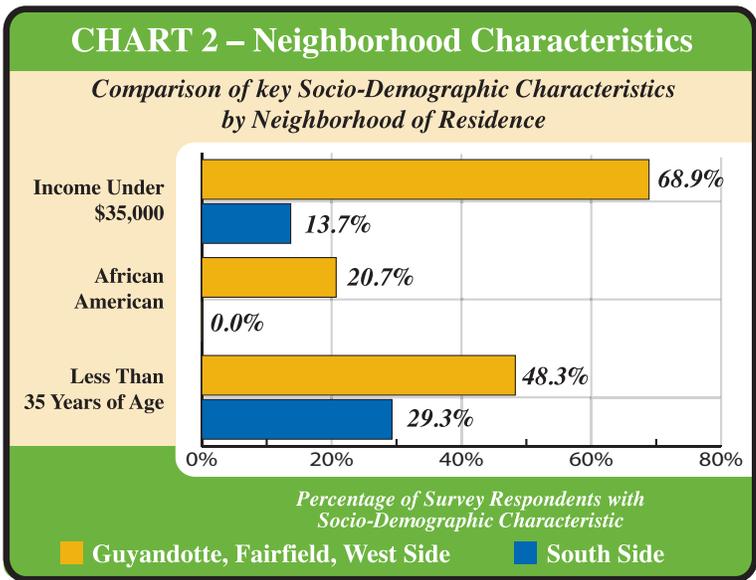
The survey response rate by neighborhood is shown in Chart 1.

At the time of the last census (1999) Huntington had a higher rate of families in poverty than the state as a whole and a much higher rate than the nation. Huntington also has a higher crime rate than most areas of West Virginia. Even though the city of Huntington has experienced higher rates of poverty and crime in recent years than may be the case in the state or nation as a whole, personal per capita income corrected for inflation in Cabell County has increased steadily since 1970. This is, of course, may not be the case within some neighborhoods within the city and further examination of current conditions specific to known low income neighborhoods may be useful.

Although a detailed statistical analysis is not possible by neighborhood given the limitations of available data, it is reasonable to assume that disproportionately high rates of crime and poverty are present in neighborhoods identified as “least desirable” by survey respondents.



Survey Respondents find South Side to be the most desirable neighborhood in the city and they see Guyandotte and Fairfield East & West as the least desirable neighborhoods in which to live.



Information compiled by Collective Impact, LLC for Create Huntington identifies the most desirable Huntington neighborhood as South Side. The least desirable neighborhoods are: Guyandotte, Fairfield East and West, and West End.

A comparison of key demographic characteristics of survey respondents living in the most desirable neighborhood with those living in the least desirable neighborhoods of the city indicate that residents of Guyandotte, Fairfield East and West, and West End have lower incomes, they are more racially diverse, and there are less people under the age of 35 years.

Some of the more significant conclusions that can be drawn about perceptions of city residents based on the neighborhood where they live are summarized below.

- City residents perceive the Downtown neighborhood as less safe and as lacking in good housing.
- Residents of higher income neighborhoods (South Side) reported being involved in community affairs “a lot” more than those residing in the lower income neighborhoods (Guyandotte, Fairfield West, Fairfield East, and West Side).
- Good recreational opportunities appear to be more available to South Side residents than is the case for lower income neighborhoods.
- Residents of the lower income neighborhoods believe people have less hope about the future than those residing in the South Side neighborhood.
- People living in the South Side neighborhood express more “pride in community” than those living in the lower income neighborhoods.
- When asked about skills and abilities needed by local people, skills in community organizing and in seeking employment were selected at higher rates by respondents who live in the more challenged neighborhoods.

The disparities in the way people living in different neighborhoods see life in Huntington and the relative lack of involvement from lower income neighborhoods in the Create Huntington effort should be addressed by strengthening and supporting neighborhood associations within the city.

Vision for the Future of Huntington

Discussion group participants were asked to imagine that it is twelve years into the future (2020) and they were then asked to describe the community, economy, and quality of life in Huntington as they would like to see it.

Themes that emerged from this exercise describe Huntington as:

- A city with clean and safe streets and neighborhoods.
- A city that is free of crime.
- A city that is free of illicit drugs.

Discussion group participants see bike lanes throughout the city and further development of the downtown and riverfront areas. Survey respondents envision a prosperous and progressive city in the future. Other words chosen by numerous survey respondents to describe their vision of Huntington include: Beautiful, Clean, Vibrant, Hope, Growth, and Safe. Residents have a vision of a lively city with friendly people in the downtown area both day and night. This vision includes an innovative and creative community with numerous festivals, street artisans, and displays that highlight Huntington's history and diversity.

According to survey results, fall is the season most enjoyed by the majority of Huntington residents. Reasons cited for selecting fall as the favorite season of the year tended to be related to the good weather and the beauty of the city parks at that time of year due to the colorful and vibrant foliage. The second most favorite season is spring. Many respondents that chose spring as their favorite season in Huntington said the city is beautiful in the spring with flowering trees (cherry blossoms, dogwoods, azaleas, etc.) and new growth after a long winter, etc. Both seasons were also identified as having numerous



I see “a bustling city that is well maintained; where empty storefronts are the exception. Public traffic is heavy and vendors extend their businesses onto the street. The riverfront is developed with buildings and food vendors.”

– A City Resident



events, fairs, celebrations, and activities. It would be advantageous for Create Huntington to take advantage of these seasons to promote and realize its vision for the future.

Summary of Project Findings and Goals/Strategies

A synthesis of findings related to vision, needs, assets, and identified priorities for Huntington is summarized in this section. Recommended goals and strategies follow the summary for each of the domains adopted by *Create Huntington*. Some goals will require a sustained effort over time and the investment of additional resources while others may be achieved in a shorter period of time through continued engagement of local citizens and existing community agencies and institutions. Major goals and strategies are outlined below. These are supported by information gathered through the community survey, discussion groups, the assessment of local capacities, and the review of prior plans and studies.

A brief “*At-A-Glance*” report is available for dissemination. The report summarizes the more relevant findings and recommendations that are discussed here in more detail. Action planning spreadsheets will also be provided to assist *Create Huntington* in defining more detailed steps necessary to address local goals and strategies.



DOMAIN 1: Health and Well-Being

Identified Community Needs:

- Availability of good jobs
- Safety and security
- Additional law enforcement
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment services

Identified Community Assets:

- Low cost of living
- Educated workforce
- Healthcare services
- Early childhood programs
- Education and training opportunities

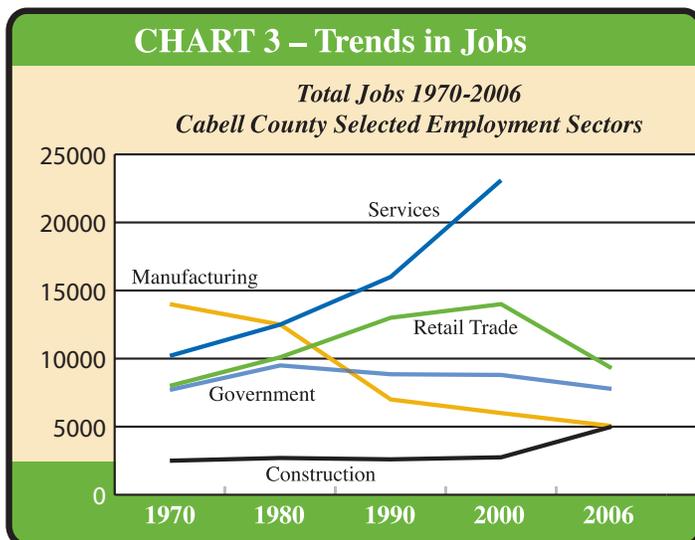
Vision for the City of Huntington

- Healthy people who are physically fit.
- Good jobs for all that are willing to work.
- A city free of crime.
- A safe city that engages youth in positive activities.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

Survey Participants Say:

- Availability of good jobs is seen as the greatest challenge by survey respondents
- Other challenges for Huntington identified by survey respondents include:
 - Safety and security of Huntington residents
 - Substance abuse services
 - Public education
 - Law enforcement



Discussion Groups Say:

- Drugs and crime are the greatest challenges for Huntington.

Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- Crime and drug sales are problematic.
- Graduation rates need to be improved.
- Inappropriate use of hospital emergency rooms needs to be reduced.
- Health care is not affordable for many city residents.

We have a serious growing drug problem in Huntington. This drug problem branches off into other crimes such as theft, prostitution, and forgery.

- Survey Respondent

Capacity Assessment Says:

- Huntington lacks capacity within the domain of health and well-being of local residents.
- Persons responding to the capacity assessment identified physical fitness and economic security as issues for many local residents.

GOAL 1.1: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF “GOOD JOBS” AVAILABLE TO CITY RESIDENTS.

Recommended Strategies:

- Provide entrepreneurial training sessions for those persons wishing to start a small business in Huntington.
- Develop partnerships with Marshall University that promote training opportunities and entrepreneurship within the city.

GOAL 1.2: REDUCE DRUG RELATED CRIME.

Recommended Strategies:

- Continue to focus additional law enforcement efforts on high crime neighborhoods.
- Engage local citizens in high crime neighborhoods in neighborhood watch type volunteer programs.
- Establish partnerships between local law enforcement and Marshall University Department of Forensic Science.
- Support the implementation of the federally funded Weed & Seed community-based strategy to achieve the greatest impact possible and assure sustainability of efforts beyond initial grant funding.

GOAL 1.3: INCREASE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL CITY RESIDENTS.

Recommended Strategies:

- Increase opportunities for youth to volunteer in meaningful community programs.
- Increase internships for youth in local businesses, agencies, and institutions.
- Encourage Marshall University to offer more community education programs that are open to all city residents.

DOMAIN 2: Community Infrastructure

Identified Community Needs:

- Road maintenance
- Rehabilitation and/or demolition of empty buildings
- General cleanliness and attractiveness of parts of the city

Identified Community Assets:

- Health care facilities
- Marshall University
- Museums
- Parks
- Public transportation

Survey Participants Say:

- Roads are not well maintained.
- Broadband services are not affordable for many residents.
- Affordable housing is a problem for some residents.

Discussion Groups Say:

- Rundown buildings in the city need to be rehabilitated or removed.
- Cleanliness of the city is problematic.

Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

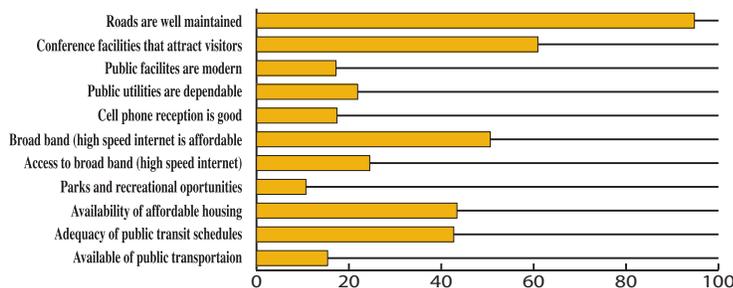
- Downtown areas are not pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- An East-West “greenway” should be developed for pedestrians and bikes.
- There is a lack of easy and attractive access to the Ohio River.

Vision for the City of Huntington

- Good roads that are well maintained.
- A clean city free of empty buildings and abandoned properties.
- A green city that encourages pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

CHART 4 – Community Infrastructure Challenges



Percent of Respondents Who See Issue as a Challenge for Huntington

A high percentage of survey respondents see “Well Maintained Roads” as a challenge for the city of Huntington.

A face lift is needed from city limit to city limit – not just downtown. Demolish the empty buildings, no matter who owns them.

- Survey Respondent

- Availability of new and rehabilitated single family housing needs to be increased.
- There is a willingness among downtown property owners to have downtown buildings converted to upscale rental units.

Capacity Assessment Says:

- Huntington has a positive level of overall capacity in the area of community infrastructure.
- Persons responding to the capacity assessment believe local health care facilities and schools are modern and well equipped.

GOAL 2.1: REHABILITATE OR DEMOLISH EMPTY BUILDINGS WITHIN THE CITY OF HUNTINGTON.

Recommended Strategies:

- Examine options for providing additional local and/or state tax credits for rehabilitation and use of existing buildings.
- Provide workshops and training opportunities for local property owners to familiarize them with state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits.
- Review prior plans for conversion of downtown buildings to upscale rental units to determine relevance in present housing markets.
- Enforce local ordinances related to abandoned buildings.
- Explore “self-help” rehabilitation and demolition strategies that engage citizens as part of the solution.

GOAL 2.2: IMPROVE THE GENERAL CLEANLINESS OF CITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Organize volunteers in regular and on-going city-wide cleanup.
- Institute an adopt-a-block or adopt-a-neighborhood clean-up effort similar to the adopt-a-highway program.
- Address the graffiti problem throughout the city by using innovative approaches that have been successful in other communities.
- Establish an organization to mobilize volunteers and coordinate city-wide cleanup projects in an ongoing sustainable way.

GOAL 2.3: INCREASE ACCESS TO ALL AREAS OF THE CITY BY PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLE TRAFFIC.

Recommended Strategies:

- Establish bicycle lanes on city streets.
- Develop additional bicycle paths and foot paths throughout Huntington.

- Develop an East-West Greenway to promote access to the city by bicycle.
- Connect existing trails and paths throughout the city into a comprehensive trail system.

GOAL 2.4: IMPROVE THE CONDITION OF STREETS AND ROADS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Explore brick street renovation projects to repair city neighborhood streets and address historical preservation.
- Work with the city to identify priority streets and roads that are in dire need of repair.
- Explore “self-help” street repair and improvement strategies that engage citizens as part of the solution.
- Erect attractive signage and enhance landscaping at principal “city gateways” including east west highways, bridges, and viaducts.

DOMAIN 3: Development Resources

Identified Community Needs:

- Access to additional resources and investment from outside the local area.
- Use local resources better.
- Increase access to financial capital.
- Assistance with new business development.

Identified Community Assets:

- Marshall University
- Good healthcare services and modern hospitals
- Modern well-equipped schools
- Vacant buildings and warehouses provide opportunities for development

Survey Participants Say:

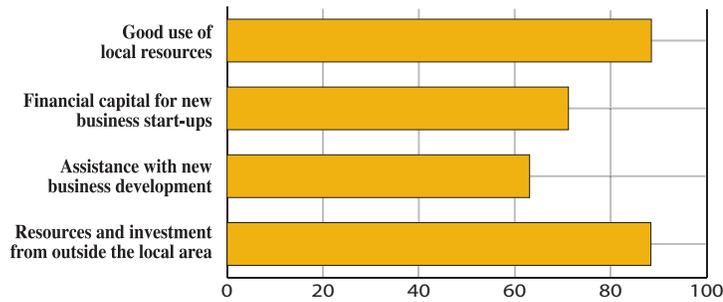
- Financial capital is not available.
- Current resources are not used well.
- Assistance with business development needs to be provided.

Vision for the City of Huntington

- A thriving small business community.
- An entrepreneurial spirit that encourages growth.
- A city that attracts investment.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

CHART 5 – Development Resources Challenge



Percent of Respondents Who See Issue as a Challenge for Huntington

Discussion Groups Say:

- There is a lack of capacity and incentives for small business development.
- Current tax structure does not encourage business development.
- Support development of bed and breakfast establishments, restaurants, and shops.

Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- Establish a Business Incubator Center and promote entrepreneurship.
- Convene a Business Advisory Committee for local school curriculum.
- Promote business-work initiatives in local schools.
- Local employers have identified basic reading and math skills, internet skills, and training in basic computer programs as areas where the local workforce needs to be improved.
- Marshall University has a major impact on the local economy.

Capacity Assessment Says:

- Some capacity currently exists in Huntington for economic development.
- Community facilities such as hospitals and schools are modern and well-equipped.
- There is a perception that Huntington does not attract its share of federal and state resources.
- The loss of manufacturing jobs and shift to service sector jobs is a reality that needs to be considered when development plans are made.

GOAL 3.1: PROMOTE AND SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

Recommended Strategies:

- Develop a business incubator center to encourage entrepreneurs and provide training for small business development.
- Establish economic development partnerships between and among the city of Huntington, Marshall University, and local secondary schools to promote entrepreneurial activity and develop incentives for small business development.
- Work with downtown merchants to provide discounts or other incentives to Marshall University students to shop in the downtown area.

Huntington needs to be a 'green' hub. By that I mean we need to be a leader in West Virginia when it comes to sustainability (recycling, energy, efficiency, and other environmentally friendly initiatives).

- Survey Respondent

GOAL 3.2: ATTRACT OUTSIDE INVESTMENT.

Recommended Strategies:

- Develop a marketing campaign focused on assets of the city including: quality of life, Marshall University, healthcare facilities, local schools, attractive parks and neighborhoods, etc.
- Examine opportunities for federal or private investment in Green technologies and alternative energy.
- Explore changes in local and/or state tax policies to provide incentives for small business development in the city.
- Conduct an analysis of federal and state resources available to small cities to determine if there are opportunities for additional funding of development projects.
- Research opportunities available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and implement “shovel-ready” strategies.

DOMAIN 4: Culture and Quality of Life

Identified Community Needs:

- More exposure and publicity of arts programs is needed.
- There is a need to make better use of Huntington’s history and arts to establish a “destination draw” that attracts visitors to the city.

Identified Community Assets

- Spiritual values
- Preservation of historical significance and heritage
- Availability of recreational opportunities
- Access to music and the arts

Survey Participants Say:

- There is a strong focus on spiritual values.
- The city is historically significant.
- Opportunities for recreation are available in the city.
- There is a viable arts and music community within the city.

Discussion Groups Say:

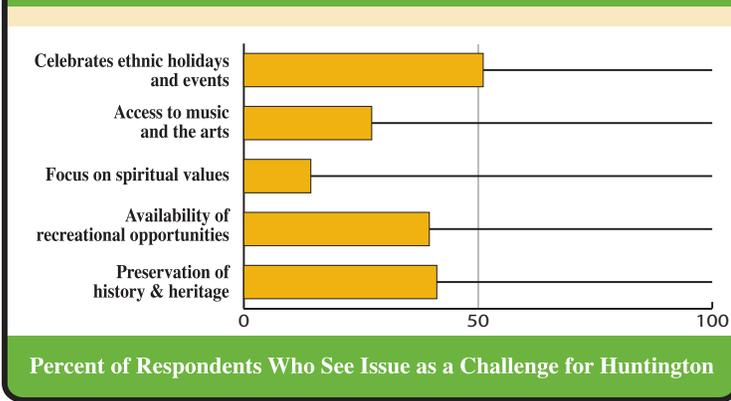
- Cultural opportunities available in the city are not well publicized.
- Artists should be attracted to the city by supporting shops, galleries, studios, etc. tailored to the needs of the arts community.

Vision for the City of Huntington

- A city that promotes the arts.
- A thriving arts community and arts-focused district in the downtown area.
- A city that values its historic properties and heritage.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

CHART 6 – Cultural Challenges



- Outdoor cultural events need to be held more frequently.

Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- Designate historic preservation districts within Huntington.
- The cultural capital present within the city could be leveraged to draw additional people to the downtown business district.

Capacity Assessment Says:

- Cultural capital is seen quite positively by local residents and capacity in this area is present at a significant level.
- Huntington residents have opportunities to enrich their lives through music and art.
- Recreational opportunities are lacking for many residents of the city.

GOAL 4.1: ESTABLISH HUNTINGTON AS A CULTURAL DESTINATION.

Recommended Strategies:

- Expand the number of cultural events held in indoor and outdoor venues.
- Market the historical significance, arts, and music of the area to increase tourism.
- Support entrepreneurial opportunities related to history, arts, and music. (see Goal 3.1)
- Highlight the historical significance of the Ohio River and rail transportation.
- Establish an arts district in the downtown area.
- Work with Marshall University to increase opportunities to display and showcase art, music, theater, etc., throughout the downtown area on an on-going basis.
- Work with local “artisans” to coordinate events and display and showcase art, music, theater, etc., throughout the downtown area on an on-going basis.

GOAL 4.2: EXPAND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

Recommended Strategies:

- Develop pedestrian and bike trails throughout the city. (see Goal 2.3)
- Place bike racks in downtown shopping area.
- Develop more river-based recreational opportunities. (boating, kayaking, canoeing, crew, etc.)

DOMAIN 5: Natural Resources

Identified Community Needs:

- Additional green space
- River cleanliness
- Clean up of abandoned properties

Identified Community Assets

- Ohio River and potential for riverfront development
- Quality of soil and drinking water
- Environmental capital that can be drawn upon for development

Survey Participants Say:

- Soil quality is seen as a positive.
- Clean drinking water is abundant.
- Development of the riverfront is seen as a challenge for the city.
- Cleanliness of the river is an area of concern.

Discussion Groups Say:

- More green space is needed within the city.
- Huntington needs to establish a “river walk”.

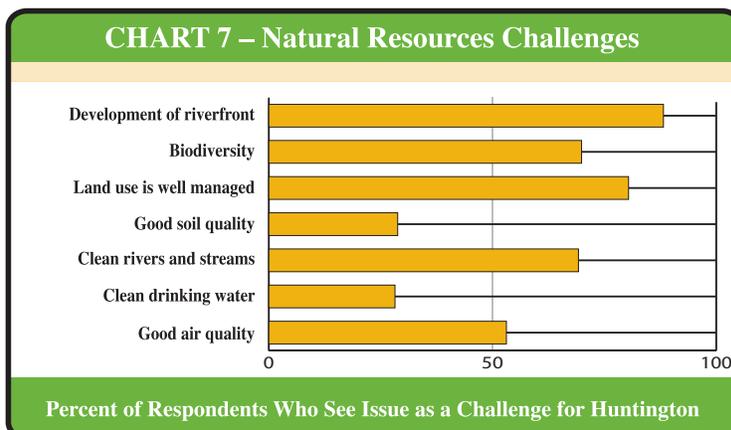
Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- The city should maintain an inventory of abandoned or obsolete properties within Huntington.
- Enhance the urban river greenway within the city.

Vision for the City of Huntington

- A bustling riverfront district and “river walk” that attracts visitors.
- A city that celebrates and is a good steward of its abundant natural resources.
- Clean air, clean water, and clean streets.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review



Capacity Assessment Says:

- Positive levels of capacity appear to be present in areas related to natural resources and healthy eco-systems within the city of Huntington.
- Local industries are seen by some as not being environmentally friendly.

GOAL 5.1: FURTHER DEVELOP THE RIVERFRONT AREA OF THE CITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Establish a “river walk” that includes an urban greenway and additional green space.
- Encourage development of environmentally friendly shops and restaurants along the Ohio River.
- Establish a team to explore options for riverfront development.

GOAL 5.2: PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY USES FOR ABANDONED OR EMPTY PROPERTIES WITHIN THE CITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Inventory abandoned and empty properties within the city.
- Work with property owners and neighborhood associations to convert empty lots to attractive green space.
- Work to develop community gardens throughout the city.

DOMAIN 6: Social Capital

Identified Community Needs:

- Build additional leadership skills.
- Socially diverse residents of the city do not always work well together.
- Further develop relationships between Marshall University and the larger city.
- Strengthen neighborhood associations and recruit neighborhood leaders.
- Increase involvement of citizens at all levels in local neighborhood projects.
- Develop a shared vision for Huntington across all sectors of the city.

Identified Community Assets

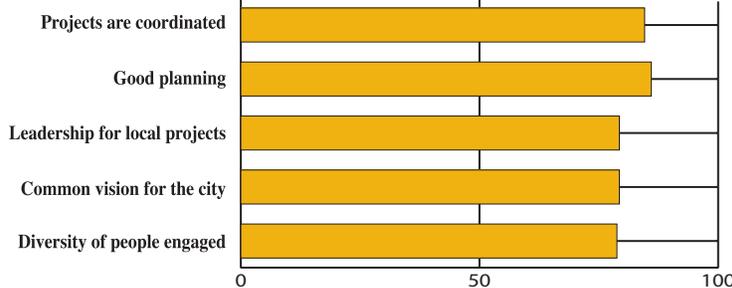
- Friendly people
- Good people to people interaction
- Many people are willing to volunteer their time to improve their community

Vision for the City of Huntington

- Engaged citizens working together for the common good.
- Active neighborhood associations improving local conditions.
- Numerous joint projects involving the City and Marshall University.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

CHART 8 – Social Capital Challenges



Percent of Respondents Who See Issue as a Challenge for Huntington

Marshall University students need to feel included in the community. The community doesn't respond to them in terms of their interests.

– Discussion Group Participant

Survey Participants Say:

- There is no common vision for the city.
- The diversity of people involved in projects to improve the city needs to be increased.
- Leadership is lacking for local projects.
- Projects are often not planned well.
- Skills in strategic planning and community organizing need to be improved.

Discussion Groups Say:

- There is a need to provide leadership training.
- Ask people to get involved by personal invitation and contact.
- Highlight, publicize, and celebrate successes.
- Recognize people who participate in efforts to improve local neighborhoods and the city at large.
- Involve city government, businesses, and community organizations in welcoming MU students.
- Establish a shared vision for the city across a broad and diverse citizenry.

Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- Issues of social capital were not addressed in prior plans and studies reviewed.

Capacity Assessment Says:

- Social capital needs to be built in Huntington.
- Trust among city residents needs to be increased.
- Confidence in city officials is lacking.
- Tolerance for differing points of view needs to be increased.

Have a City of Huntington and Marshall University Summit (the appropriate heads of each) to discuss ways that would facilitate a true working relationship. Involve the MU Student Body leaders as well. There is so much expertise at Marshall in so many areas. We could use this in ways yet to be determined. The possibilities are endless.

- Survey Respondent

Huntington is currently in a renaissance period. As citizens are empowered, volunteer groups are tackling projects, public and private entities are working together, and the dream of a creative, progressive and economically viable city is becoming reality.

– Phoebe Patton Randolph

GOAL 6.1: STRENGTHEN AND DEVELOP NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS SO THAT THEY ARE ACTIVE, ENGAGED, AND WORKING TO IMPROVE LOCAL CONDITIONS WITHIN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE CITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Engage residents of lower income neighborhoods in discussions about the future of their neighborhood.
- Recruit neighborhood leaders.
- Provide training to enhance skills in leadership, planning, and community organizing.
- Hold neighborhood celebrations and events and encourage people to exchange views and ideas related to neighborhood issues.
- Use the Neighborhood Institute as a vehicle to organize, strengthen, and develop associations in each neighborhood in Huntington.

GOAL 6.2: STRENGTHEN TIES BETWEEN MARSHALL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND FACULTY AND THE LARGER HUNTINGTON COMMUNITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Provide greater representation from the University within city government.
- Establish a meaningful dialogue between the Huntington community and the Marshall University community about joint projects and ideas that are mutually beneficial.
- Continue the Old Main Corridor project to link the downtown area to the Marshall campus through enhanced landscaping and lighting, bicycle lanes, public art, and incentives for small-business owners.

DOMAIN 7: Image and Attitude

Identified Community Needs:

- There is a lack of new and creative ideas for addressing local issues.
- Many Huntington residents do not have pride in their community.
- There has been a lack of action in the past to address local concerns.

- Too much negativity and pessimism.
- Local attitudes reflect resignation and a focus on past mistakes.

Identified Community Assets

- Create Huntington
- Cabell Huntington Convention and Visitors Bureau
- New investment and development at Marshall University and Pullman Square

Survey Participants Say:

- We need more creative solutions and innovative ideas.
- Focusing on possibilities is a challenge for the city.
- Following through with putting plans and recommendations into action has been a challenge.

Discussion Groups Say:

- The image of the city suffers from a lack of cleanliness, empty buildings, and out of date signage.
- Overcoming negative attitudes and a poor self image are challenges for Huntington.
- Celebrate and appreciate effort, involvement, and positive results.
- Be open, honest, and cooperative.

Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- Enhance the self-esteem of city residents.
- There is an inaccurate negative image of the city among people who live outside the Huntington area.

Capacity Assessment Says:

- Overall, enhanced local capacity related to issues of image and attitude would benefit Huntington.
- Many local residents do not seem to look forward to the future.
- There is a willingness among Huntington residents to volunteer their time to work on community improvement projects.
- Some community organizations are recognized as effective in getting people to work together.

Vision for the City of Huntington

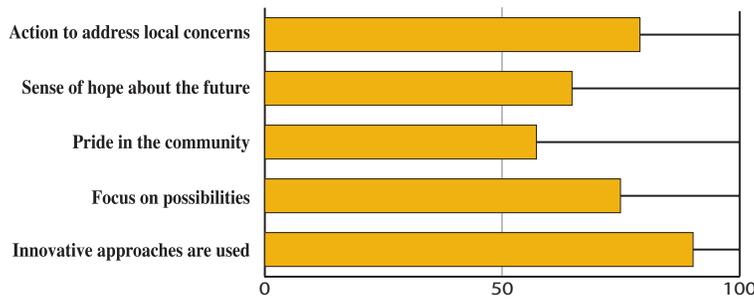
- An engaged citizenry that is excited about Huntington's future.
- A clean city that residents take pride in.
- A can do attitude permeating throughout the city and in every neighborhood.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

Huntington needs to be pristine clean. No litter, storefronts kept up, and up to date signage.

– Community Discussion Participant

CHART 9 – Image & Attitude Challenges



Percent of Respondents Who See Issue as a Challenge for Huntington

“When people come to visit I want them to say “this is a really nice town” and not think: Man, this town is going downhill.”

- Survey Respondent

GOAL 7.1: PUBLICIZE AND CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS AND SUCCESSES.

Recommended Strategies:

- Increase the number of positive stories about the City of Huntington and recent accomplishments within the city in local print media.
- Recognize all efforts of local leaders and citizen groups through proclamations, news stories, and community events.
- Develop a marketing campaign focused on promoting a positive image and perception of Huntington. (see Goal 3.2)
- Work with the local media (newspaper, television, etc.) to encourage positive stories and articles about the city and Create Huntington’s efforts.
- Work with the convention and visitor’s bureau to find innovative ways to promote the city and its assets.
- Recreate and promote the historical brand image of “The Jewel City.”

GOAL 7.2: EXPECT THE BEST FROM EACH OTHER AND YOUR CITY.

Recommended Strategies:

- Encourage a personal commitment from individuals to recognize positive behavior in one another.
- Support citizens to share the positive assets of Huntington when describing the city.
- Expect agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals to cooperate and share information for the betterment of the city.
- Encourage one another to dream about what is possible and to work together to achieve it.
- Help each other to focus on assets and solutions rather than problems and deficits.

DOMAIN 8: System Effectiveness

Identified Community Needs:

- Community wide organization to focus attention on city beautification and ongoing cleanup projects.
- Many city residents do not feel they have access to needed community services.
- Residents are not well informed about services and community resources that are available within Huntington.
- There is a perception that local agencies and organizations do not work well together with city government in a coordinated manner to meet the needs of the community.

Identified Community Assets

- Marshall University faculty and students.
- Good relationships and high levels of trust among service providers.
- Existing collaborative groups and networks such as the Cabell Family Resource Network, Inc., the Regional Chamber of Commerce, Cabell-Huntington Coalition for the Homeless, Inc., etc.

Survey Participants Say:

- People in Huntington are not well informed about the array of community and economic and human services and resourced available.
- Many residents do not have access to needed services.

Discussion Groups Say:

- A non-profit organization is needed to focus upon community beautification and sustain efforts to improve the appearance of the city.
- An on-going cross systems umbrella organization is needed to support community development.
- Business and economic development resources at Marshall University should be better connected to the city.
- The Forensic Science Department at Marshall should be more closely connected to the Huntington Police Department.

Vision for the City of Huntington

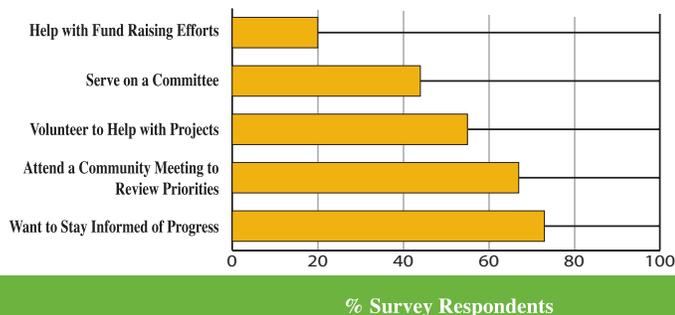
- Community development in Huntington is seen broadly and the development system is well connected across all aspects of community life.
- Service providers and organizations are well integrated with local development efforts.
- The human services system is responsive to the needs of all Huntington residents.

Sources: Community Discussions, Community Survey, Local Capacity Assessment, and Related Data Review

Only 22.6% of survey respondents indicated they believe local agencies, community organizations, and city government work together well to improve the quality of life in Huntington.

CHART 10 – Citizen Involvement

Continuing Involvement with *Create Huntington*



Review of Previous Plans and Studies Says:

- Prior plans and studies reviewed do not address the system effectiveness domain.

Capacity Assessment Says:

- There are some organizations and structures in place that encourage community service systems to work together.
- Volunteerism is an area where capacity exists.

GOAL 8.1: COORDINATE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AMONG BUSINESSES, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS, GOVERNMENT, MARSHALL UNIVERSITY, AND LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HUNTINGTON.

Recommended Strategies:

- Establish the Create Huntington Network in a way that promotes coordination of planning and action to improve the quality of life in Huntington by forming eight teams based on identified domains.
- Identify leadership and short term goals and strategies for attention by each network team.
- Provide communication tools and a structure to assure that team goals and strategies are communicated throughout the network.
- Continue to encourage citizen engagement and dialogue through structured sessions such as “Chat-n-Chew” and communicate ideas generated throughout the Create Huntington Network.

GOAL 8.2: USE THE CREATE HUNTINGTON NETWORK TO MOVE TOWARD CONTINUOUS INTEGRATION OF SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORTS WITHIN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS.

Recommended Strategies:

- Direct each community team of the Create Huntington Network to regularly explore opportunities for integration including organizational mergers and strategic alliances, shared administration and staff, blended or pooled funding, integrated communication processes and technology systems, information sharing, etc.

- Encourage all organizations, companies, and systems in the community to explore meaningful ways to integrate their efforts to be better positioned to pursue their missions.
- Explore opportunities for city government to more fully coordinate efforts with Marshall University, Cabell County, and the tri-state region.
- Share integration strategies, successes, challenges, and opportunities with other teams in the Create Huntington Network on an on-going basis.
- Highlight successful outcomes of integration efforts regularly for celebration purposes and to promote continuous learning.

Sources of Data

- Planning Team session summaries
- Discussion Groups and Clip and Return Summary and Observations
- Discussion group verbatim responses
- Summary of Results and Findings from the Community Survey
- Verbatim responses to open ended survey questions
- Review of Previous Plans and Studies – Summary of Priorities and Findings
- City of Huntington West Virginia – A Community Profile of Current Conditions and Local Capacity
- Community Capacity in the City of Huntington West Virginia – Report of Survey Findings Collected from Create Huntington Participants
- Secondary Data Sets Including:
 - o 2000 Census – U.S. Bureau of the Census
 - o 2006 American Communities Survey – U.S. Bureau of the Census
 - o Quarterly Workforce Indicators – U.S. Bureau of the Census
 - o 2005 Behavioral Risk Factors Survey – WV Bureau for Public Health
 - o 2005 Vital Statistics - WV Bureau for Public Health
 - o 2006 Uniform Crime Report – Federal Bureau of Investigation
 - o Various tables and data sets compiled by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau for Economic Analysis
- Wikipedia On Line Encyclopedia



Collective Impact, LLC consulting team:

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Steven B. Heasley, *Owner, Heasley Consulting*

“Jewel City” Contest Winners

PHOEBE RANDOLPH

Huntington’s nickname “The Jewel City” came from the river men who worked on the early riverboats that traveled along the Ohio River. They called Huntington this because of its bright lights and tall buildings that made it shine like a jewel as they approached in the night.

I believe we can recreate this image of our city by redeveloping our riverfront parks into safe, beautiful, and inspirational places for recreation, entertainment and enjoyment. By placing a series of brightly colored lights that shine down on the water on each of our main bridges, (the Sixth Street Bridge and the 31st Street Bridge), we can create a beautiful and memorable experience for those traveling by car, boat, or just relaxing on the riverfront. Using light to define the image of our city also means that we can address the issue of safety and security while adding an aesthetic feature to the downtown area.

MATT WHITE

Having lived in Huntington my whole life (29 years), I have never heard the term “Jewel City”. I asked several other lifelong Huntington residents and got the same blank stare. So, it sounds like the city of Huntington needs to embark on a marketing campaign. Others I interviewed are curious and would like to hear all of the stories behind this intriguing name, not just one story. I’m sure there is a history, a series of events, geography, or just plain timing...that lead this community to coin the phrase “Jewel City”.

This is a turning point for the city of Huntington. Let’s recognize the accomplishments of our past and at the same time create our own opportunities. Let’s embark on a marketing campaign. Create Huntington is laying the foundation, but 50 people attending a meeting is just a fraction of the opinions out there. We are watching as Create Huntington tries to unite our community in ways many of us have never seen. The people attending the Create Huntington meetings are the leaders of this town. I challenge them to do more than create a vision for the city. I challenge them to reach out to as many people as they possibly can, so everyone’s vision may be realized.





Charting the course for our future



www.createhuntington.com