



The Ford Institute for Community Building Bandon Community Vitality Gathering

November 17, 2010

Community Café Flip Chart Notes

The Community Café exercise provided an opportunity to explore the results of the Bandon Community Vitality Inventory. The Inventory gathered community perceptions around five areas that support communities in becoming vibrant places to live, work, and play. These areas represent the skills, resources, and social capital needed to develop community assets and attract resources.

Participants were invited to join one of five community cafes, corresponding to areas of focus in the Inventory:

- 1) Community Culture and Inclusion
- 2) Shared Direction and Action
- 3) Working Together Effectively
- 4) Community Organizations and Networks
- 5) Community Leadership

At each café, time was spent responding to the following questions to clarify why the area of focus is important, explore what the Inventory results indicated about Oakridge-Westfir, and brainstorm ways to support the community in building its capacity to work together successfully to get things done.

World Café Challenge Questions:

- 1) Review Community Vitality Inventory results. (12 minutes) What do the results of the questionnaire in this area of focus tell you about your community?
- 2) Identify areas of importance. (12 minutes) Are there one or two things in this area of focus that feel particularly important to address as a community?
- 3) Brainstorm support activities. (12 minutes) What would help to strengthen your community's capacity in the one or two areas you have discussed? List specific types of support, resources, or activities that would help you to be successful, (e.g.; training (leadership, organizational effectiveness, use of technology, community organizing/development etc.) facilitation of a community visioning/planning project, resources to build a community network, collaborative leadership coaching etc.) Please be as specific as you can.

Café Group Results

1) Community Culture And Inclusion

Define the Issue:

- The group defined culture as: Shared values and lifestyle – The challenge being to identify Bandon's culture and support inclusion by all.

Review Inventory Results:

Bandon Inventory shows: (sent out to over 200 with 63 responding)

- √ Positive self image
- √ Newcomers are invited to participate
- √ Strong sense of belonging
- √ Community attracts people with skills and experience

Brainstorm Solutions:

- Strive to understand perception of inclusion and exclusion
- Many people come together for Cranberry Festival and then go separate ways. Try to maintain participation through other projects and activities.
- Reach beyond city limits
- Compensate for lack of internet beyond city limits
- Identify more common denominators
- Focus on communication – electronic and printed
- Develop “youth friendly” communication
- Ask people their opinions. Provide forums for conversation and input.
- Reach out to people (including those not active in the community)
- Offer more open events and opportunities for interaction

2) Shared Direction & Action

Define the Issue:

- Bandon has a lot of visions, but not a shared vision
- There was a plan, but it is out of date
- There are a lot of starts of a plan, but not a lot of finishes

Review Inventory Results:

- √ People are encouraged to participate in planning
- √ Groups actively facilitate projects
- √ Resources are identified and leveraged to carry out community projects and services

Brainstorm Solutions:

- Determine who will facilitate/lead the planning process

- Identify who will develop the shared vision?
- Include many individuals, groups and viewpoints
- Facilitate an organized and resourced planning process
 - Champion, coordinator, resource people
 - Buy-in and communication with all groups/sectors of the community
 - Effective, inclusive communication
 - Activities/events that encourage participation
 - Development and communication of resulting plan
 - Support and follow-through for actions
 - Ongoing communication about vision and plan

3) Working Together Effectively

Define the Issue:

- Duplication of efforts
- Dispersing information throughout the community
- Communication and coordination between social service organizations
- Awareness of mission, services of organizations
- Scheduling of activities (calendar)
- Need for better volunteer coordination
- Service organizations and business coordination
- Need to get youth involved
- Need more inclusive involvement
- Need priorities (plan)
- Forums for hearing people
- Deal with differences of priorities and concerns in a respectful, productive manner

Review Inventory Results:

- √ Reaching consensus is important
- √ Despite differences, people are willing to work together to get things done
- √ People step back from own interests in support of community (mixed views)
- √ People are skilled in dealing with conflicts. (mixed views)

Brainstorm Solutions:

- Focus on getting more inclusive involvement
- Develop better social service coordination (need facilitator)
- Create a new 10 year plan (facilitator neutral)
- BANDON CARES – strengthen capacity and expand focus of Bandon Cares
- Encourage conversations around what is important to community members and work through differences.

4) Community Organizations & Network

Define the Issue:

- Need for better communication, coordination and collaboration amongst community groups.

- Volunteer support, coordination and sharing
- Communication about activities and calendar
- Need for more support for networks (Bandon Cares)
- Need to develop and strengthen business networks
- Better synergy between business community and service groups

Review Inventory Results:

- √ Sprit of cooperation
- √ Community orgs function effectively
- √ Local orgs provide needed services
- √ Networks do not have the resources needed
- √ Organizations work together to leverages resources (mixed views)

Brainstorm Solutions:

- Develop, implement, maintain and promote community calendar.
 - Coordinator to manage calendar
 - On-line access for groups to post activities
 - Posted agendas
- Categorize projects with incentive to collaborate
- Volunteer coordination, support and sharing (on-line and through printed communication) including specific job description. Provide training and volunteer day.
- Training and technical assistance to organizations (including consultants/trainers)
- Build capacity of Bandon Cares – expand to community network

5) Community Leadership

Define the Issue:

Core of leaders exist in Bandon but there is a lack of communication and coordination.

Review Inventory Results:

- √ Local organizations have skilled leadership.
- √ Some disagreement about quality of communications between leaders and public on issues
- √ Some question as to how open civic leadership is to new ideas, initiatives and concerns

Brainstorm Solutions:

- Main focus is on developing communication capacity
 - Teach communication skills
 - Provide clear information – try to dampen rumor mill
 - City announcement board
 - Work with newspaper for more coverage
 - Coffee with counselors
 - Elected and appointed officials hold meetings in diverse, public spaces.
 - Technology – better and more use

- Leadership development
 - Leadership training for 25-40 year olds
 - Advanced leadership skills training
 - Facilitation/organizing skills

Report results

A representative from each café made a summary report to the full group, briefly presenting why participants thought this area of focus was important, what the questionnaire indicated, and strategies or approaches they believed would support the community to become more vital.

Open Dialogue

Areas of focus:

1. Communication
 - Opportunities to be involved need to be communicated (transmitted and received) by everyone
 - Assess effectiveness of both transmission and reception of messages
 - Improve electronic communication
 - Are we communicating what people are interested in hearing?
2. Economy
 - Support for businesses (business development, retention)
 - Connection between residents, organizations and business
 - Entrepreneurial skills and support
 - Family wage jobs
 - Keep youth here and have jobs for them to return to
3. Community vision and plan
 - Community wide process – inclusive
 - Facilitated and structured process with widespread buy-in
 - Define community to include areas both inside and outside city limits
4. Connect business community with government, schools and nonprofits – remove silos.

Support measures that would help community to accomplish the areas identified in the inventory and the community gathering, including:

- Volunteer management training and support
- Facilitator to help support collaborations, communications and bringing the community together.
- Facilitation, community organizing training
- Communication – support for building better communication including message, relationship with media, electronic tools, etc.
- Community visioning and planning – professional facilitation assistance
- Help to build inclusion of more residents (outside city limits, range of ages, economic or culturally diverse populations).
- Youth engagement (leadership, volunteering, jobs)

- Bandon Cares – support to take to next level, build its capacity to lead, coordinate, communicate, and convene, including visioning process.
- Technical assistance to nonprofits
- Economic development: Expertise to help move forward with economic development plan and strategies and to secure resources and regional support.
 - Rebuild cheese factory
- Assistance in communicating about all 3 legs of community vitality (interaction between economic and social). (Economic Development Forum)

Next Steps:

The Community Vitality Inventory and gathering are intended to assist the Bandon community in identifying areas needed by individuals, organizations and businesses to work together for the benefit of everyone in the community.

The Ford Family Foundation will also benefit from the community input as they develop their plans for support in the next phase of the Ford Institute programs. As the pilot community, Bandon's participation will contribute greatly to helping the Institute form its future programs.

We look forward to sharing with you new opportunities through The Ford Family Foundation early in 2011.