



create
HUNTINGTON



FINAL REPORT AND FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN | JULY 2017 – JUNE 2022

STEPUP CREATE HUNTINGTON

IMPACT STUDY AND STRATEGIC
PLANNING PROJECT



Photos thanks to Bulldog Creative Services, Cabell-Huntington Convention & Visitors Bureau, The Herald-Dispatch, and Toril Lavender.




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Create Huntington **IMPACT**

Artists Lorin Michki and John Farley: funding for an exhibition called “(re)discovery,” at Gallery 842 in downtown Huntington. The artists exhibited drawings, paintings, prints and other works that explore questions of the human condition. Proceeds from the work sold benefited the Cabell-Huntington Coalition for the Homeless.

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HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF CREATE HUNTINGTON

The Beginning

Create Huntington began in 2006 when former Mayor David Felinton, the late 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. Focus groups were conducted to review economic trends and discuss a direction for the city. The initial discussions were designed to learn more about what people cared about, local community assets, and how the city of Huntington could best adapt to the global economy.

These initial focus group discussions led to three conclusions as stated in the first strategic plan for the organization in 2009:

- 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.

"Create Huntington was started to focus on livability and attracting and retaining a creative class in Huntington instead of trying to bring in big companies. The economy is changing! Make the community livable, and people will want to live here and stay here."

- Dave Felinton, Former Mayor

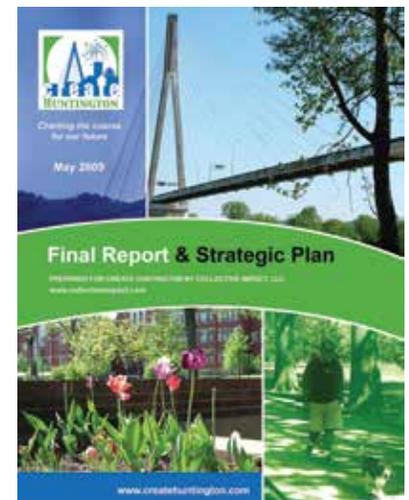
The initial mission of *Create Huntington* was defined as: "*Create Huntington* works to empower citizens to improve community livability so that Huntington is successful in the global economy." This is done by:

- 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.

Eight Years of Progress

Over the past eight years, *Create Huntington* has been in the forefront of citizen engagement efforts and advancing activities to strengthen social capital in the city. In 2009, the organization was established as a 501c(3) corporation. The initial strategic plan, adopted in 2009, was focused on citizen engagement and broad-based development in the City of Huntington. Goals and strategies were outlined within eight different domains which included:

- Health and Well-Being of Huntington Residents
- Community Infrastructure
- Economic Development (business development and entrepreneurship)
- Culture and Quality of Life
- Natural Resources
- Building Social Capital
- Image and Attitude
- Systems' Effectiveness (joint planning and coordination with other development efforts)



Informed by an assessment of community capacity, a survey of community residents, and discussion groups with key stakeholders in the community, initial strategies focused on promoting entrepreneurship, reducing drug-related crime, cleaning up the city, improving recreational opportunities, supporting cultural opportunities and the arts, and building social capital through citizen engagement.

Since its inception, *Create Huntington* has mobilized citizens to participate in discussions about how to improve their community. These “Chat n’ Chew” sessions have resulted in several new businesses, community projects, and events that have improved the city and built social capital. “Chat n’ Chew” topics have included but are not limited to recycling, bike and pedestrian improvements, revitalization of the shops at Heritage Station, a better connection between Marshall University and downtown Huntington, solar technology, community art projects, holiday events, historic preservation, downtown redevelopment, a bike sharing program, charitable ways to give, supporting small businesses, the homebrew festival, and sustainable agriculture (farm to table initiatives).

The organization has also instituted a mini-grants program to help support the many good ideas emanating from these discussions. Mini-grants have provided seed dollars to build social and cultural capital in Huntington by supporting a variety of volunteer driven community projects. **The mini-grant program has provided support for initiatives such as the Huntington Dog Park, Chess Tables in Ritter Park, the West Virginia 5K Championship, Create Lovington, Rails and Ales Craft Beer Festival, Critical Mass, the Huntington Music and Arts Festival, Cinema Under the Stars, #801BAM pop-up art display, the Jewel City Rollergirls, community gardens, art exhibits, the Huntington Sustainability Fair, Bike Surf Huntington, concerts featuring local musicians, and other projects.** During the seven-year period (2010-2016), over \$22,500 has been invested in 54 community projects supported through *Create Huntington’s* mini-grants program.

Over the past eight years, local community conditions, arts and cultural opportunities, and the general landscape of the city of Huntington has changed for the better. Residents have a more positive image of the city and attitudes toward the community have improved dramatically. The Create Huntington Board of Connectors has been represented in additional collaborative efforts with city government and Marshall University as well. Most notably, a recent Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) planning grant focusing on crime prevention and economic development in the city’s downtown area has resulted in a plan for community revitalization¹ and funds are being sought to implement development projects outlined in the BCJI plan. BCJI funds have also been identified to further support Create Huntington’s efforts to strengthen citizen engagement and build social capital in the city.

The city of Huntington completed their 2025 Comprehensive Plan in 2013 with input from over 500 people including the leadership of *Create Huntington*. Many of the priorities in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan are consistent with *Create Huntington’s* goals over the past eight years including:

- Land use, zoning, housing, community design, and historical preservation,
- Economic growth areas (Highland, Fairfield, downtown and other preferred development areas), and
- How Huntington connects (priority pathway connections, bike and pedestrian paths and sidewalks, storm and water infrastructure, green space, and pop up community spaces).

The city is also the grand prize winner of the *America’s Best Community* competition; and *Create Huntington* has been invited by city officials to continue to provide them with feedback on how the city can be improved. This crosspollination among city government, Marshall University, and *Create Huntington* is increasingly bringing together local officials, higher education resources, and grass roots citizen efforts necessary to produce opportunity and innovation in the Jewel City.



Over \$22,500 has been invested in 54 community projects supported through Create Huntington’s mini-grants program.

¹ Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Research Report and Implementation Plan for the City of Huntington, 2015.

STEPUP CREATE HUNTINGTON - IMPACT STUDY AND PLANNING PROJECT

After eight years of work, the Create Huntington Board of Connectors believed it was time to move the organization to a new level of community engagement. In order to do this, *Create Huntington* launched the *StepUp Create Huntington: Impact Study and Strategic Planning Project* in July 2016. The project objectives are:

- Revisit *Create Huntington's* role in the community – its vision, mission, core values and priorities - in light of the current and anticipated future environment.
- Assess strengths, challenges, opportunities, threats, and capacity of *Create Huntington* as an organization.
- Identify and assess the impacts made in the community over the past 8 years since *Create Huntington's* inception.
- Re-engage and rejuvenate the leaders and citizens within the City of Huntington to help *Create Huntington* focus on the future vision and priority needs and opportunities in the community.
- Continue to strengthen social capital among key stakeholders and community members through engagement in a participatory process.
- Refresh the *Create Huntington* brand, including revisions to the logo, website, etc.
- Update and revise *Create Huntington's* strategic plan with new strategies to provide the organization with a roadmap into the future.
- Conduct a *Create Huntington* Summit (#VveBAM Block Party) at the end of the project to unveil the new *Create Huntington Strategic Plan*, to celebrate successes together, and to kick-off next steps. Dr. Cornelia Flora, Emeritus Professor at Iowa State University, is scheduled as the keynote speaker for the event.

Create Huntington wishes to continue being in the forefront of citizen engagement and positive change and hopes to be able to better position the organization to move forward in a coordinated and deliberate way. The Create Huntington Board of Connectors are excited about the possibilities for the next five years and believe the community-driven strategic plan for the organization will help them achieve many additional positive results in the community.

A team of current and former members of the Create Huntington Board of Connectors came together to guide the *StepUp Create Huntington: Impact Study and Strategic Planning Project*. The Planning Team was instrumental in planning all project activities, engaging stakeholders, and reviewing project findings and recommendations. The Planning Team was comprised of the following individuals: Tim Bailey, Keebie Gilkerson, Elliot Lewis, Dave Lavendar, Natalie Thompson, Ian Thornton, and Bruce Decker.

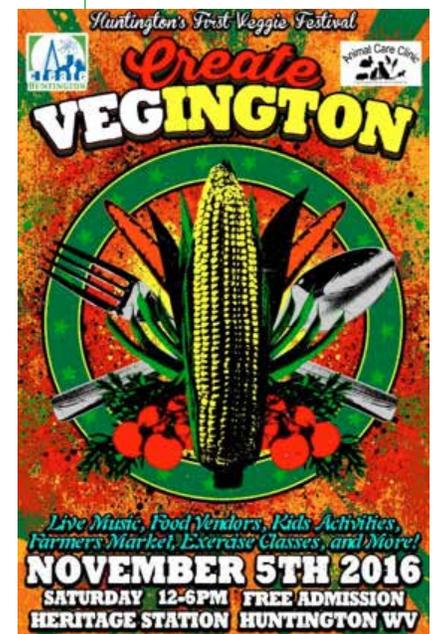
The *StepUp Create Huntington* project included a number of assessment and community engagement processes to allow the Board of Connectors to evaluate progress in the city over the eight years *Create Huntington* has been active and collected information from community residents that informs the organization's new strategic plan and future directions. Stakeholder engagement strategies have included:

- A community survey of 579 community residents
- Facilitated discussions with 3 groups of key stakeholders – 28 participants
- StreetSpeaks interviews conducted at community events with 377 community members
- A community engagement event (*Create VEGington* #VegBAM) – the first veggie/vegan festival in the city with over 500 participants
- Interviews with 29 selected key informants

In order to measure changes in community conditions over the past eight years, a survey designed to assess community capacity first completed by persons active with *Create Huntington* in 2008 was again completed by current and past Board of Connectors members and other identified key leaders in the city. The capacity survey was designed in 2008 to quantify the level of community capacity present in the city across seven

2016-2017 CREATE HUNTINGTON'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Christina Bailey
- Tim Bailey
- Kim Baker
- Kristy Joy Browning
- Mike Crawford
- Keebie Gilkerson
- Elliott Lewis
- Tiffany Lopez
- James Maddox
- Jill Meadows
- Justin Murdock
- Jyotsna Patel
- Jacqueline Protor
- Bill Rosenberger
- John Short
- J. Deacon Stone
- Dan Taylor
- Ian Thornton
- Amy Ward



domains. The 2016 responses to this survey were compared to the responses obtained in 2008 in order to assess how perceptions of community capacity have changed over the eight years *Create Huntington* has been active in the Huntington community.

The Create Huntington Board of Connectors held a full day, facilitated retreat on January 28, 2017 to review the findings from the comparative analysis of community capacity (2008 vs. 2016) and the stakeholder engagement activities outlined above. The Board agreed on a number of new strategies to be included in the new strategic plan. These strategies are outlined in a subsequent section of this report – *Five Year Strategic Plan for Create Huntington 2017-2022*.



Create Huntington **IMPACT**

Blues man Chris Sutton: helped to compete in at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, TN in 2014. Sutton went on to found the Huntington Blues Society, and has since toured Nepal, India, Italy, and England. He is also the organizer of the sixth annual Diamond Teeth Mary Blues and Arts Festival.

Boulevard Avenue: founded Tudor's Biscuit themed album which helped pay for WV all-star band to complete this unique project.

Ona: helped pay for production of their first album that was recorded with Bud Carroll of Trackside Live. Since funding, Ona has been recognized in three national publications including NPR's Heavy Rotation.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A brief review of the literature informing citizen engagement, social capital, and community economic development was conducted to help frame strategies for *Create Huntington* and provide a better understanding of some of the key factors influencing local engagement and development processes. The literature review focused on four areas that are particularly relevant to the work of the *Create Huntington* organization.

Social Capital and Community Engagement

“People get very upset when they think change is being imposed on them from the outside or that change is being imposed that is alien to what they think is important.”- Michael Woolcock

The quote from an online blog by Michael Woolcock, lecturer in public policy at Harvard Kennedy School of Government and Lead Social Development Specialist with the World Bank’s Development Research Group in Washington, D.C., focuses attention on the importance of community engagement as an important aspect of community economic development. Woolcock argues the literature on social capital and development, provides a recurring message that social relations provide opportunities for mobilizing other growth-enhancing resources, that social capital does not exist in a political vacuum, and that the nature and extent of the interactions between communities and institutions hold the key to understanding the prospects for development in a given society.² He and many other researchers and economists argue that civic engagement is closely tied to building social capital within the community and paves the way to community economic development. Stocks of social capital, such as trust, norms, and networks, tend to be self-reinforcing and cumulative. Successful collaboration in one endeavor builds connections and social assets that facilitate future collaboration in other, unrelated tasks. As with conventional capital, those who have social capital tend to accumulate more.³

“Although some...continue to believe that healthy economies create vibrant communities, in fact, the reverse is more often the case. A strong community is a pre-requisite for creating a healthy economy because it alone produces social trust.”

- Jeremy Rifkin, *Economic & Social Theorist and Adviser to the European Union*

In his book, *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam credits a West Virginian - Lyda J. Hanifan, State Supervisor of Rural Schools in West Virginia - with introducing the concept of social capital more than 100 years ago. Explaining the importance of community participation in enhancing school performance, Hanifan invoked the concept of social capital, describing it as: “Those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit. If [an individual comes] into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community.”⁴

Putnam and other social theorists make a distinction between bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding capital relates to the social ties that link people together with others who are primarily like them along some key dimension. In general, one’s social support network defines bonding social capital. Bridging capital is related to social ties that link people together with others across some boundary that may divide society (like race, or class, or religion). Bridging social capital occurs when members of one group connect with members of other groups to seek access or support or to gain information. Bonding social capital is generally easier to build than bridging social capital; however, it is generally the bridging capital that contributes most effectively to community economic development.⁵

The importance of engaging a wide diversity of people in community development efforts is recognized by practitioners engaged in this work and by developed nations worldwide. A website developed by the city government in Victoria, Australia provides a wealth of information about community engagement and an extensive list of engagement strategies. Strategies include public conversations, surveys, interviews, and many other ways to secure input from local citizens. The benefits for both stakeholders and communities are also outlined and these include: opportunities for a diversity of opinions to be heard, identification of priorities important to people, ownership of solutions, increasing a sense of belonging to the community, and empowering people to be proactive.⁶

Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a community engagement approach that is recognized in the literature as a building block for community and economic development. One approach to asset-based development is found in the work of John McKnight

² Woolcock, M. and Narayan, D; *Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research, and Policy*, The World Bank Research Observer, 2000.

³ Putnam, R. *The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life*, The American Prospect no 13, 19993.

⁴ Hanifan, L. J. (1912). “The Rural School and Rural Life”. *West Virginia School Journal* (4): 204–7.

⁵ Paxton, P. *Social Capital and Democracy: An Interdependent Relationship*, *American Sociological Review*, 2002.

⁶ <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement/introduction-to-engagement>

and John Kretzmann. This technique is used to discover a community's capacities and assets and to mobilize those assets for community improvement. The process focuses on the strengths of a community and how to bring those strengths to bear in community improvement activities. For example, a typical needs assessment may ask, "What is the problem?" In contrast, an asset approach asks, "How can our community assemble its strengths into new combinations, new structures of opportunity, new sources of income and control, and new possibilities?"⁷ McKnight and Kretzman in their discussion of asset-based community development describe six types of assets found in any community:

- the skills of local residents
- the power of local associations
- the resources of public, private and non-profit institutions
- the physical infrastructure and space in a community
- the economic resources and potential of local places
- the local history and culture of a neighborhood⁸

Other research prominent in the literature also supports engaging local community residents in community economic development by examining what is right about the community instead of focusing on what is wrong. The 1993, research by Cornelia and Jan Flora examined the characteristics of entrepreneurial communities. The researchers found those communities that were most successful in supporting a healthy sustainable process of community economic development had a considerable degree of social infrastructure (the group-level, interactive aspect of organizations or institutions), and this social infrastructure is the key to linking individual leadership to physical infrastructure and to facilitating community development.⁹

Multiple types of capital were defined from the research conducted by the Floras. These "community capitals" establish asset-based domains to assess local resources and identify those community assets that might be leveraged for community economic development. In 2003, the types of capital within communities was further developed into the "community capitals framework". In addition to identifying the capitals and the role each plays in community economic development, this approach also focuses on the interaction among seven types of capital as well as how investing in one type of capital produces returns in other capitals.¹⁰

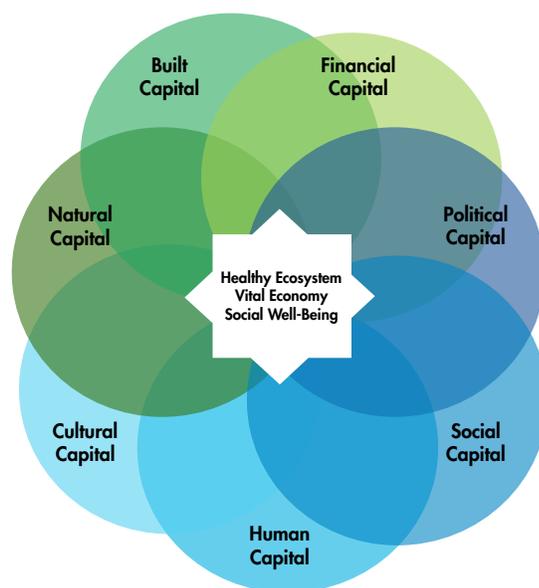
Recent discussion with Cornelia Flora to inform this report confirms the community capitals framework is being used in many countries as a way for local communities to examine assets and think more creatively about strategies to improve their community.

Dr. Flora uses an "appreciative asset mapping" approach in communities she has worked with to identify what those communities value and what resources they have that can be leveraged to improve local community conditions.¹¹ Appreciative inquiry involves several key components including:

- The Power of Storytelling
- Recognizing the Wisdom of Others
- The Importance of Curiosity in our Quest for Doing Better
- The Value of Hearing Stories
- The Primacy of Conversations and Dialogue¹²

Some of the key questions local communities examine through this approach include:

- What do you like most about this community?
- When have we worked together successfully?
- What do we do that makes us healthy?
- What have we, ourselves done together to improve our community in the past?
- What did we forget?



⁷ Community Engagement Guidebook, Minnesota Department of Health.

⁸ McKnight, J. & Kretzmann, J. Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community, 1993.

⁹ Flora, C. & Flora, J. Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure: A Necessary Ingredient, Annals of the American Society of Political and Social Science, Vol529. 1993.

¹⁰ Flora, Flora, & Fey, 2004.

¹¹ Telephone discussion with Cornelia Flora, Professor Emeritus, Iowa State University, March 2, 2017.

¹² Using Community Capitals to Develop Assets for Positive Community Change – A Workbook, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development and the Community Capitals Learning Network.

The entrepreneurial social infrastructure is also examined with communities as this promotes citizen-driven community development. Some documented characteristics of the entrepreneurial community include:

- People like each other
- People can disagree with one another without being disagreeable
- Churches that work together
- Community public facilities such as swimming pools, public golf courses, parks, etc. as opposed to private
- The community conditions (what was going on?) when these public facilities were developed
- A local newspaper that covers alternative ideas and approaches

Dr. Flora also emphasizes the importance of involving everyone (or at least as many people as possible) in the discussion. This inclusiveness is supported by the literature related to complex adaptive systems as well. When people from different fields, disciplines, or cultures intersect and engage one another, creative new ideas and innovative solutions are often the result.¹³

Complex Adaptive Process

One of the considerations for communities engaged in community economic development (CED) which should be considered is an increasing recognition in the literature that CED is a complex adaptive process. As such, the principles underlying complex adaptive systems influence development at the local level. The literature about complex systems as applied to CED suggest that top-down interventions and deductive planning will either not make much difference or have an unpredicted and perhaps counter-productive effect.¹⁴

A systems approach to community engagement, assessment, and planning is called for since a linear approach to development is based on an underlying false assumption that an action will reliably result in a predictable and known outcome. This linear thinking about CED is inconsistent with what we know about how complex systems influence development. Local groups focused on community engagement and development processes operate within what Stacey describes as “the zone of complexity”. This is the zone of high creativity, innovation, and breaking with the past to create new modes of operating.¹⁵

Adaptive Leadership

The type of leadership that might be promoted within the community is another important area for consideration as the *Create Huntington* organization moves forward in future years. The literature suggests the type of leadership that is most conducive to supporting local innovation and emergent solutions to community problems is adaptive rather than technical.

Technical leadership which is often how leaders are viewed only produces good outcomes when (1) technical expertise is required, (2) the consequences of actions are predictable, and (3) some central authority is in a position to assure necessary action is taken.¹⁶ Changing community conditions for the better is often not a well-defined process, answers are not known in advance, and many different agents (stakeholders) are often involved that bring different perspectives to possible solutions.¹⁷ These problems require an adaptive approach - innovation and learning through feedback loops that inform possible action. Adaptive leadership is a necessary component; this type of leadership involves managing the conditions that enable those people and organizations interested in addressing complex social issues to figure out and undertake solutions that require changes in their ways of thinking and working together.¹⁸

Peter Senge, Director of the Center for Organizational Learning at MIT’s Sloan School of Management believes leaders of adaptive processes are designers, stewards, and teachers. Senge states the role of leadership within a learning organization is managing “creative tension” - the gap between current reality and vision which can only be resolved by either working to change current reality over a sustained period or by lowering the vision to be more in keeping with the current state of affairs.¹⁹ Another way of thinking about the type of leadership effort required is to consider the differences between traditional “strategic planning” and what is often referred to as “strategic thinking”. As Henry Mintzberg, Canadian academic, management consultant, and author states: “While strategic planning is well suited for technical challenges, when we are faced with adaptive challenges, we should rely on strategic thinking”.²⁰

¹³ Johansson, F. The Medici Effect.

¹⁴ Innes, J. & Booher, D. Indicators for Sustainable Communities – A Strategy Building on Complexity Theory and Distributed Intelligence, 1996.

¹⁵ Stacey, R. *Strategic Management and Organisational Dynamics: The Challenge of Complexity*. 3rd ed., 2002.

¹⁶ Kania, J. & Kramer, M. Embracing Emergence: How Collective Impact Addresses Complexity, 2013.

¹⁷ Kania, J. & Kramer, M. Embracing Emergence: How Collective Impact Addresses Complexity, 2013

¹⁸ Heifetz, J., Kania, J., & Kramer, R. Leading Boldly, Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2004.

¹⁹ Senge, P. *The Fifth Discipline – The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, 1990.

²⁰ Mintzberg, H. *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*, Harvard Business Review, 1994.

Importance of Meaningful Information

The conversation with Dr. Flora that has informed this review also emphasized the importance of measuring what is done through community engagement and development processes to demonstrate progress and sustain momentum over time. Meaningful indicators of progress must be developed by those persons engaged in the work. It is important to ask: *How do we measure what we do?*²¹

The importance of meaningful information is also supported in various models for community economic development.²² Many of these models for CED that have proven to be effective include explicit steps to develop some type of community indicators that allow the participants in the process to monitor what they accomplish over time. This is generally not a formal evaluation process – what is important is that the information collected has meaning for the community.

“It is never the volume of information that matters. It is only the meaning of information that makes it potent or not. When information is identified as meaningful, it is a force for change.”

- Margaret Wheatly,
Organizational Consultant

Create Huntington IMPACT

Green Jam and Huntington Sustainability Fair: helped pay for organizing one of the first large-scale sustainability fairs in the area that featured nearly 100 local green projects such as local bicycling and recycling, MU sustainability efforts and local community gardening.

Leah Levy: Grant awarded to Levy’s Huntington Middle School project to fund more than 40 students’ ukuleles that were played as part of Levy’s senior capstone at Huntington High School.

Bike Surf Huntington: Huntington’s first citywide bike share program. Bikes were available at various locations around the city, including Pullman Square.

Cinema Under the Stars: Utilized a matching grant to help the shops at Heritage Station fund their nearly free (\$1) monthly family movie series that obtains rights to show films at Heritage Station.

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²¹ Telephone discussion with Cornelia Flora, March 2, 2017.

²² Some of the models for CED incorporating measurement as an essential step include: The Tupelo Model defined by Dr. Vaughn Grisham, Future Generations Model for Rural Development, the FSG Collective Impact Model, and Community Design Innovations.

IMPACT OF THE CREATE HUNTINGTON ORGANIZATION – 2009 TO 2017

The impact of Create Huntington on the community was measured in two ways:

1. Growth in perceived community capacity over eight years (2008-2016),
2. Responses of community members and key informants to questions about the organization's impact within the city.

The comparative analysis of community capacity scores in 2016 as compared to those in 2008 found that capacity as perceived by key informants knowledgeable about the community increased across all seven domains assessed. Although positive changes in community capacity may be attributable to a number of factors, the analysis confirms that the perception of community leaders previously and/or currently involved with the Create Huntington organization about local conditions within the city is much more positive in 2016 than it was in 2008.

“Create Huntington gives people a platform to offer new ideas. It has given people a voice and conduit to propose solutions.”

- Interviewee

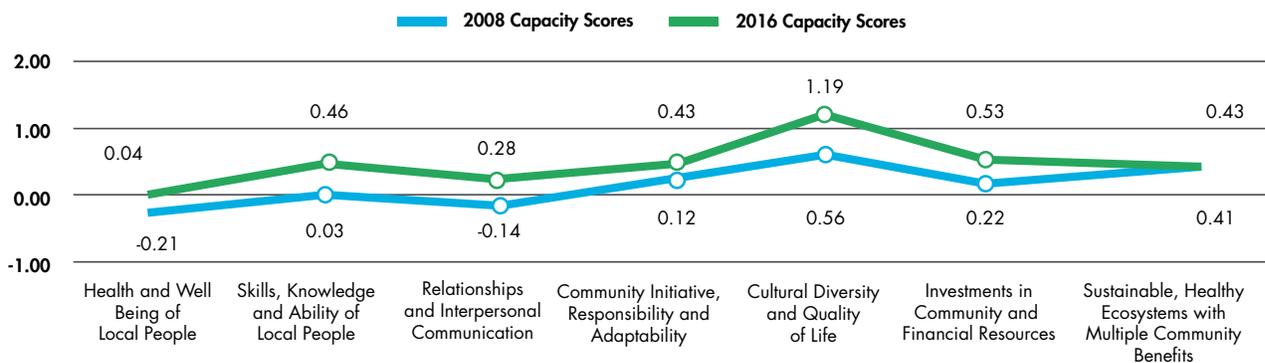
In 2008, capacity related to cultural capital and natural capital were seen positively while other domains of capacity were perceived by the key informants knowledgeable of the community as lacking. Low levels of human capital and social capital were seen by the 2008 key informants as particularly problematic. The average capacity score within domains related to health and well-being of residents and relationships and communication was in the negative range in 2008 indicating little or no capacity that could be tapped for community development.

The responses of the key informants in 2016 reflect a much more favorable view of community capacity related to available stores of human capital, social capital, and cultural capital in Huntington. Average scores are considerably more positive within domains associated with these capitals reflecting a growth in community capacity over the past eight years.

The complete report related to changes in community capacity during the period Create Huntington has been active is included in Appendix 1.

Increasing Levels of Community Capacity in Huntington 2008 to 2016

Possible scores range from -2.0 to +2.0



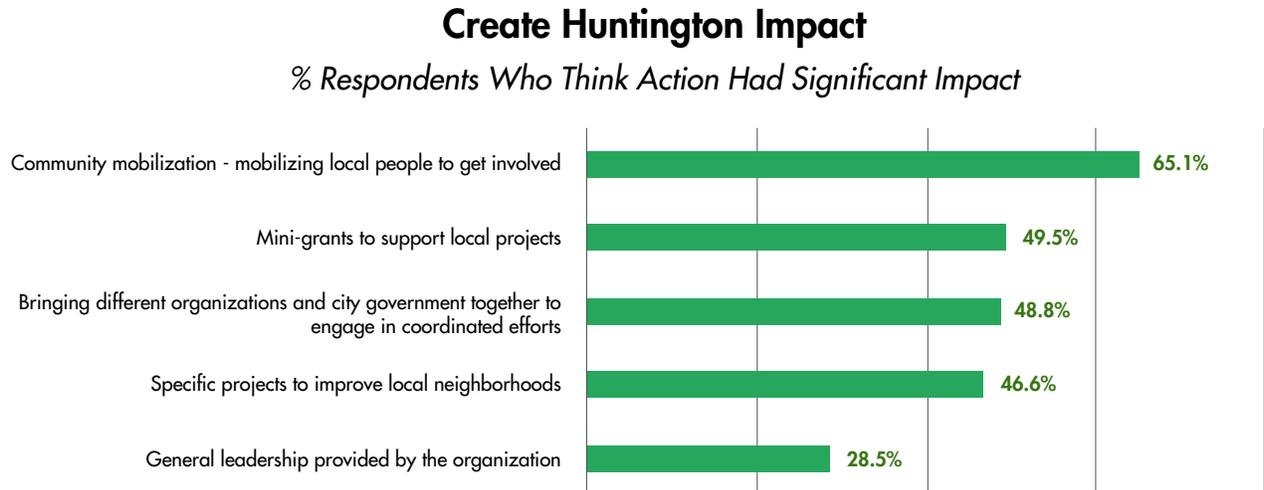
80% of the 281 community survey respondents familiar with the organization agreed that Create Huntington has “definitely played an active role” in making Huntington better.

Those persons responding to the survey were asked about the most significant ways Create Huntington has impacted the city. Two of every three respondents (65.7%) who said they were familiar with the organization (281 people) indicated they believe Create Huntington has mobilized community residents to “get involved” with local projects that have improved the community.

Approximately half of these survey respondents also attribute additional impacts to *Create Huntington* including:

- Mini-grants have supported projects in the community to improve the quality of life for residents,
- The organization has brought individuals, organizations, and city government together to engage in coordinated efforts, and
- Create Huntington has been responsible for many projects that improve local neighborhoods.

Responses to the 2016 community survey about the impact of *Create Huntington* are summarized in the table below:



When the 28 people who participated in discussion groups were asked to talk about the impact of *Create Huntington* over the past eight years, these persons identified several ways the organization has directly impacted the city including: generating good ideas, supporting community projects, and increasing social and cultural capital within Huntington. Other more indirect impacts on Huntington were also discussed such as: empowering citizens, changing attitudes to be more positive about the community, and promoting healthier lifestyles. Interviews with 29 key informants mirrored the opinion of those persons completing surveys and participating in group discussions. Positive impact was described by interviewees in areas related to:

- Empowering people
- Promoting grass roots initiatives
- Changing negative attitudes and perceptions of Huntington
- Increasing pride in the community
- Providing a platform and voice for people with ideas
- Building stronger networks that increase social capital

“Create Huntington is an advocate for success – a promoter of innovation. The mantra in the town is: Make no Little Plans. Create Huntington is the embodiment of that. Talking about Create Huntington lifts my spirit.”

- Steve Williams,
Mayor of Huntington

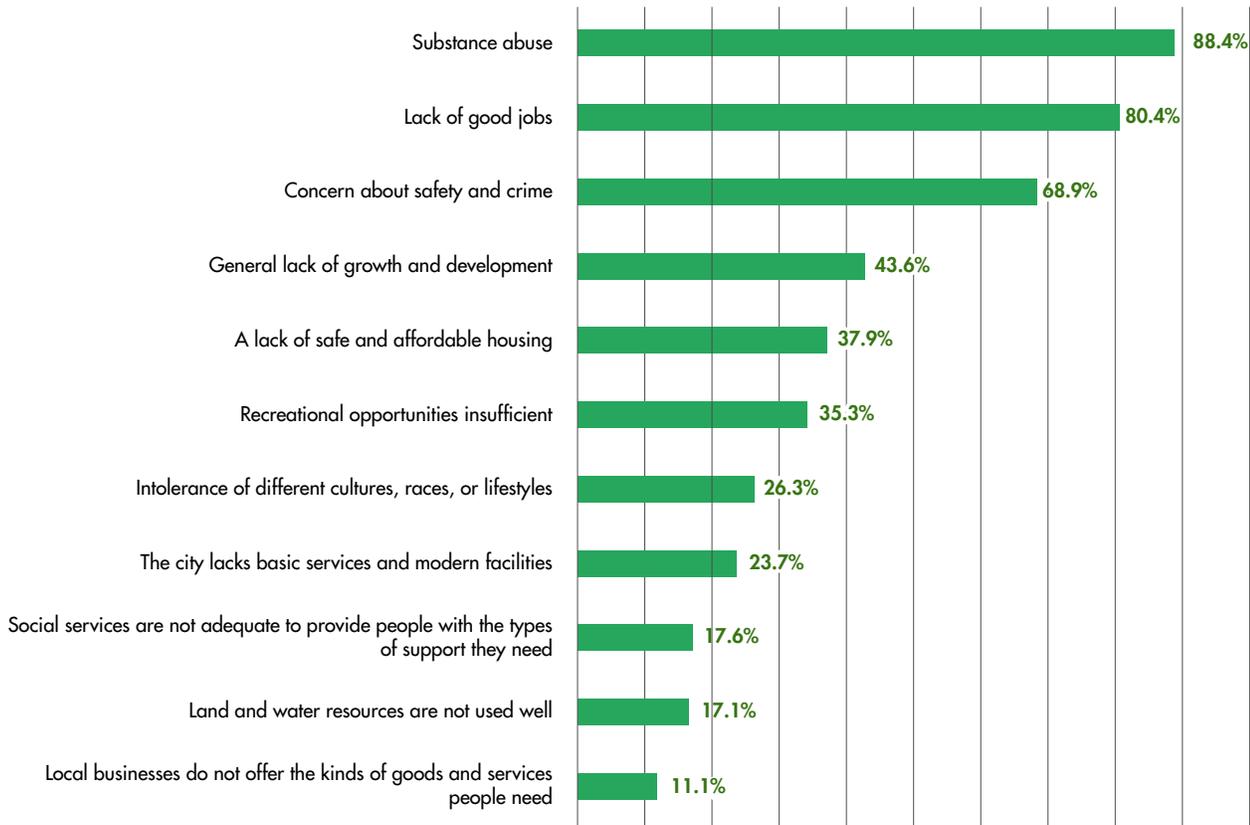
Key Findings from the Community Survey to Inform Planning

579 community residents completed the survey about community conditions and 396 of these people said they had heard about *Create Huntington*. More than three in four (76.4%) survey respondents said they have seen improvements in Huntington in recent years that make the city a more desirable place to live and 57.9% believe Huntington is "headed in the right direction." Only 12.4% indicated they did not think the city was moving in the right direction.

When asked, what issues keep Huntington from being an even better place to live, substance abuse (identified by 88.4% of respondents) and the lack of good jobs (80.4%) were the most frequently mentioned issues of concern. See chart.

Issues Keeping Huntington from Being Better

N=578



Other notable findings from the broad-based community survey include:

- 89.5% indicated the downtown area has become more attractive over the past several years.
- Approximately 3 of every 4 (71.7%) survey respondents said they believe local citizens have opportunities to be involved in shaping the city's future.
- 73.5% said they would like to get more involved in efforts to make Huntington a better place to live and work.
- About half (46.3%) of the people completing the survey reported they had personally been involved in development efforts.
- 32.4% said they have attended a "Chat n' Chew" session convened by *Create Huntington*.

Overall Themes and Conclusions from the Stakeholder Engagement

Information collected from community members through discussion groups, surveys, and interviews lead to the following cross-cutting themes or conclusions. These conclusions and recommendations are held by notable majorities of the stakeholders contributing their views and opinions about current community conditions in Huntington.

- The City of Huntington is headed in the right direction – nearly all stakeholders see progress in recent years.
- Issues related to drug abuse continue to be a barrier to development and improved quality of life.
- Attitudes about the City are changing and there is increasing pride in community.
- *Create Huntington* is viewed positively by people familiar with the organization.
- There appears to be a consensus that *Create Huntington* has contributed to more positive attitudes among residents about the future of Huntington.
- Those people familiar with *Create Huntington* believe the organization has been a catalyst for a wide range of community improvements.
- The “Chat n’ Chew” process is an effective and valuable engagement strategy and community stakeholders think it should be continued and expanded.
- Mini-grants are supported by all stakeholder groups and stakeholders think the mini-grants have been responsible for many projects to improve the city and provide events that bring people together.
- Small business development and entrepreneurship is cited by stakeholders as something that should continue and *Create Huntington* is generally seen as an incubator for increased entrepreneurial activity in Huntington.
- Removal or renovation of abandoned and dilapidated buildings in the city is cited as a problem and attention to this is supported across all stakeholder groups.
- Development of good jobs for local people that can be sustained in a more innovative emerging economy is a priority.
- Some (particularly representatives of minority populations) in the overall Huntington community see *Create Huntington* as a closed network of upper/middle class people.
- Stakeholders think *Create Huntington* needs to better publicize accomplishments and reach out to a wider diversity of city residents.
- *Create Huntington* is seen as being responsible for increasing cultural opportunities – people contributing their views acknowledge a growing arts and music scene.

“Overall impressions across all of the StreetSpeaks survey locations was that *Create Huntington* is a needed organization and should focus more on its promotion and brand awareness.”

- StreetSpeaks Surveyors

Create Huntington IMPACT

McClelland Park: A beautification effort that helped residents take back a corner of McClelland Park (27th Street Park in Highlawn neighborhood) that had been used as a place to deal drugs.

Jewel City Rollergirls: Huntington’s first and largest flat-track roller derby team. The grant helped the JCRG expand and grow its scope of influence.

Community Gardens: Grant helped fund community garden plantings in various locations throughout Huntington.

Porch Unplugged: Grant helped fund *Porch Unplugged* series sponsored by Joe Troubetaris. This is a local house show series that highlights singer/songwriters from Huntington and around the country.

Stakeholder recommendations for the future focus of *Create Huntington* as an organization include:

- Increase outreach into local neighborhoods perhaps through “Chat n’ Chew” sessions convened by local neighborhood leaders.
- Continue to promote entrepreneurship and small business development.
- Meet with new business owners to increase awareness of the Create Huntington organization.
- Solicit more broad-based community feedback about issues, particularly from working class people and minorities.
- Increase visibility through a physical location for *Create Huntington*.
- Continue focusing on activities that promote community engagement, mobilization, and network building.
- Continue to engage people through promotion and coordination of community events and activities.
- Publicize accomplishments of grassroots efforts and the value of citizen-driven projects.
- Work closely with city government and Marshall University to share goals and coordinate efforts.
- Conduct an annual “summit” to share plans for the city and celebrate the successes of the organization and improvements in Huntington.
- Further develop the mini-grant program to support projects, events, and activities that contribute to quality of life within the city.
- Support and promote continued efforts to better connect Marshall University to the larger city environment.
- Develop a structure that can actively engage more residents and community leaders in the ongoing work supported by *Create Huntington*.
- Actively support and participate in other development, engagement, improvement, and revitalization efforts underway in the community.
- Be more strategic and build organizational capacity to sustain *Create Huntington* and increase its accomplishments over the long term.

“Double down on community engagement, get more community involvement, partner with neighborhood associations.”

– Community Survey Respondent

“Encourage more conversation and find new ways to engage people. Communicate what we do and work with the City to share goals.”

– Tim Bailey, *President*
Create Huntington Board of Connectors



CREATE HUNTINGTON MISSION

To empower citizens through connections so that Huntington is appealing in its environment, successful in growing its economy and sustainable for the future.

CREATE HUNTINGTON VISION

Huntington is a place where citizens actively identify needs and readily search for solutions to make the city a better place to live, work, and play.

CREATE HUNTINGTON CORE VALUES

Create Huntington is focused on civic improvement through citizen lead projects and support. We do this by connecting like-minded people and encouraging creative solutions to the issues around us.

- We believe the citizens of Huntington are the best power for bringing about positive change in our community.
- We work to actively engage our citizens in order to create a strong local economy and to be a better place to live.
- We value innovation, creativity, and diversity in our community and wish to see these characteristics woven into the fabric of our city.
- We wish to see Huntington grow as a regional destination and, through the efforts of our citizens, be the premier place to live, work, and play in both the Tristate and West Virginia.



GOAL AREAS AND STRATEGIES

I. Programs, Services, and Facilities

Short Term Strategies – Year One

- Restructure and continue “Chat n’ Chew” sessions to increase attendance, community engagement, and accessibility. Explore offering monthly or bi-monthly; offer live chat/streaming opportunities, rotate/change locations, change the time, and develop an attendance recognition award.
- Create physical and virtual “Chat n’ Chew” chalk boards and post throughout the city to generate interest, topics, and presenters.
- Expand and showcase the Mini-grant program through earned media, testimonials, and developing a process and materials to promote and market accomplishments.
- Design a “Best Of” program and process to recognize and incentivize innovative mini-grant projects.

Longer Term Strategies– Years 2 through 5

- Sponsor citizen-led “pop-up” tactical urbanism events to continue to inspire change and social capacity.
- Research revitalizing the art entrepreneurial café.
- Explore developing and hosting adaptive leadership training opportunities for the community.
- Explore shared office space with other community partners.

II. Marketing, Branding, Relationships, and Communications

Short Term Strategies- Year 1:

- Complete the organizational branding refresh process with a selected media consultation firm.
- Develop and implement a new website to ensure it is more functional and includes online payment and email features.
- Increase organizational visibility through sponsorship of events, advertisements at Pullman Square and other community locations, and exhibits at fairs, festivals and community events.
- Require recognition/placement of the *Create Huntington* logo on mini-grant materials.
- Develop a consistent message and internal talking points for the board to use to increase understanding about the mission and roles of *Create Huntington* in the community.
- Host an Annual Summit to showcase progress and outline future directions.

Longer Term Strategies – Years 2 through 5:

- Schedule presentations at neighborhood associations and other community meetings.
- Develop a new brochure and awareness materials, including placement of the logo on public structures.
- Create a comprehensive communications plan.

III. Human Resources and Culture

Short Term Strategies- Year 1:

- Develop stronger strategic partnerships with local businesses, the faith community, and non-profit organizations.
- Ensure *Create Huntington* is represented on other key stakeholder boards and organizations.
- Schedule regular liaison update meetings with the City of Huntington and Marshall University.

Longer Term Strategies – Years 2 through 5:

- Develop a structure (Create Huntington Network) consisting of “doer’s” and helpers to expand the organizations’ volunteer and leadership base.
- Review the staffing and operations structure of similar organizations in other cities and propose recommendations and scenarios for board consideration and future planning.
- Research securing AmeriCorps/Vista interns to provide staff support.
- Explore hiring contractual staff to provide ongoing staff support to grow and sustain the organization.

IV. Governance, Leadership, Financial, and Legal

Short Term Strategies- Year 1:

- Update the organizational bylaws to align with the strategic plan.
- Explore professional development opportunities for the Board of Connectors.
- Research and make recommendations to secure Directors and Officers Insurance.

- Clearly define written roles of responsibilities of the board of connectors to utilize as part of the nomination and recruitment process.
- Diversify the Board of Connectors to include student representation from Marshall University and representation from local business leaders and the various neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Convene annual Board of Connector's retreats to update the strategic plan.

Longer Term Strategies – Years 2 through 5:

- Design and implement an orientation process, including officer training, for the Board of Connectors.
- Complete an annual self-assessment process for the board of connectors to identify governance strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Establish a development committee to explore funding, grants and long-term sustainability plans.
- Continue bi-annual signature fundraising events (Create Lovington and Create VEGington.)
- Develop and approve an annual budget and non-profit tax reporting processes.
- Develop annual fundraising impact reports and event "templates".
- Develop meaningful indicators of citizen engagement and social capital (a scorecard) for use by the Board of Connectors in measuring progress.

Create Huntington IMPACT

Brandon Mitchell's House Show Venue: grant helped Brandon Mitchell's house show venue Funky Towne buy a sound system upgrade to his space that hosted nationally traveling punk rock acts as well as vegan picnics, punk yard sales, record exchanges and more.

Mil-Ton Farms: Create Huntington and Cafe Huntington gave grants to Tim and Stephanie Appleton of Mil-Ton Farms to help them automate their family farm. They sell to Wild Ramp, the Putnam County Farmers Market and other local places.

Juneteenth Festival: grant to Donte Jackson in 2014 to restart the annual African-American festival Juneteenth that celebrates the end of slavery nationwide. The modern version of the fest is a neighborhood festival that highlights African-American heritage around the country. Locally, the festival included live music, theater, food and craft vendors and more.

#1100BAM: Huntington Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) project in 2015. The mini-grant helped to cover the expense for six (6) local bands who played for two nights during the "build a better block" community visioning and input event.

A SCORECARD FOR THE FUTURE - SUGGESTED INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

The *Create Huntington* Board of Connectors plans to develop a set of indicators that will allow them to monitor changes related to community engagement and building stores of social capital over time. The following is a list of possible measures *Create Huntington* may wish to include in its “community scorecard”.

Indicators of Engagement and Outreach	Possible Measures
Attendance at community events	Number of persons attending community events, festivals or celebrations.
Attendance at “Chat n’ Chew” sessions	Number of people attending “Chat n’ Chew” discussions.
Number of people attending Chat n’ Chew discussions	Percent attendance at community events, festivals, or celebrations by minority populations.
Socio-demographic diversity of participation in community events	Percent attendance at community events, festivals, or celebrations by youth, college students and seniors. Percent attendance at community events, festivals, or celebrations by economically challenged populations.
Racial and ethnic diversity of participation in community discussions	Percent attendance at community discussions by minority populations. Percent of community discussions held in minority neighborhoods.
Geographic diversity of participation in community discussions	Number of neighborhood associations sponsoring Chat n’ Chew session or other type of community discussion. Number of neighborhood leaders serving on or linked to Board of Connectors.
Outreach and Invitation	Number of newspaper articles encouraging attendance at community events or discussions. Number of social media posts encouraging attendance at community events or discussions.
Indicators of Social Capital	
Participation in local elections	Percent population over 18 yrs. of age who vote in city election.
Membership in civic, social or youth organizations	Number of people who are members of one or more civic, social, or youth organization.
Volunteer work to better community.	Number of persons volunteering to help with community improvement projects.
Service on a board or committee of a non-profit charitable organization	Number of persons serving on a board or committee for a non-profit charitable organization.
Donations to local charities	Amount raised by United Way campaign.
Membership in civic and social clubs and organizations	Number of members in one or more social or civic club/organization.
Declining incidence of violent crime	Violent crime rate. (violent crimes per 10,000 pop.)
Multi-cultural community events in the city (bridging events)	Number of events held that attract a diversity of people from different races, ethnicities, age groups, etc.

Note: Indicators suggested above can be collected from secondary data. Community engagement and social capital can also be measured periodically through community survey, interviews, and discussions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For making this project possible, we acknowledge the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the City of Huntington, and Marshall University for their support of the *StepUp Create Huntington Impact Study and Planning Project*. The Board of Connectors also wants to thank the City of Huntington Foundation for their support and the many local businesses and community residents that provided funding for our efforts through an online GoFundMe site and a fundraising event held at the V-Club (Create Loveington) on February 13th, 2016. We also greatly appreciate everyone else who has supported our efforts over the years and during this current planning project. Their continued support is greatly appreciated. Finally, thanks go to Collective Impact LLC team of consultants for leading the planning sessions, engaging stakeholders, compiling the needed information, researching the issues, writing the final report/plan documents, and moving the Planning Team forward throughout the process. The consulting team was comprised of the following individuals: Becky King, Steve Heasley, Denina Bautti-Cascio, and Kevin Jones.



APPENDIX 1 – GROWTH IN COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Comparative Analysis of Perceived Community Capacity in Huntington | 2008-2016

Introduction and Purpose

Create Huntington, Inc., a local community organization in Huntington, West Virginia has been actively engaged in building capacity within the city of Huntington over the past eight years. As part of the *StepUp Create Huntington Impact Study and Strategic Planning Project*, members of the Collective Impact team conducted a capacity assessment of the community. In order to assess how the level of capacity and stores of capital have changed over the past eight years, key informants active in the *Create Huntington* organization and other development initiatives in the city were asked about their perception of 35 local community conditions. The same survey tool was used in October of 2008 with a similar group of key informants at a time when the *Create Huntington* organization was emerging and beginning to engage community members in discussions about how to improve the city and local quality of life.

The survey tool is designed to provide a measure of capacity as perceived by survey respondents across seven different areas of influence (domains) that collectively define local community capacity. Further information about how the survey is designed and how respondent responses are scored is provided in the appendix.

By comparing survey results from 2008 with those obtained in 2016, perceived capacity for positive changes in the Huntington community can be determined. Since a number of different planning and development initiatives have been carried out over this eight-year period, changes in community capacity measured by the survey tool are not solely attributable to *Create Huntington*; however, community engagement activities and community improvement projects implemented by *Create Huntington* during this period undoubtedly have contributed to the higher levels of perceived capacity and improved local attitudes about Huntington's future.

The seven capacity domains addressed through the key informant survey are generally aligned with the Community Capitals Framework developed by Cornelia Flora and Jan Flora, Emeritus Professors at Iowa State University. Five of the seven capitals are addressed through the survey tool (built capital and political capital are not assessed). Human Capital and Social Capital are assessed through two different domains included in the survey. The capacity domains and their corresponding area of capital are:

Human Capital

- Health and Well Being of Local People
- Skills Knowledge and Abilities of Local People

Social Capital

- Relationships and Interpersonal Communications
- Community Initiative, Responsibility and Adaptability

Cultural Capital

- Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life

Financial Capital

- Investments in Community and Financial Resources

Natural Capital

- Sustainable, Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits

A score for each of the seven capacity domains is calculated based on the responses of the key informants to questions aligned with each of the domains. Possible scores range from -2 to +2. Scores in the negative range tend to indicate that community capacity is lacking and needs to be built within that domain and a positive score indicates that the survey respondents believe there is capacity present within the domain that could be tapped for local development. Higher scores indicate higher levels of capacity as perceived by survey respondents as a group.

Characteristics of the Survey Respondents

The key informants offering their opinion about community capacity in Huntington were similar in 2016 to those in 2008. Respondents represent development professionals, local elected officials, local business owners, and concerned citizens knowledgeable of the *Create Huntington* organization. In 2008 34 key informants participated in the survey and in 2016 the survey was completed by 28 key informants.

Collectively, survey respondents possess many years of knowledge about the Huntington area. 70% of respondents in 2008 reported

having lived in Huntington for more than 20 years and over 50% of the 2016 respondents have lived in the city for more than 20 years. The key informants also report having lived in other locations outside the Huntington area. Nearly 90% reported they have lived in other cities or locations outside Huntington both in 2008 and again in 2016.

Findings from Comparative Analysis of Community Capacity

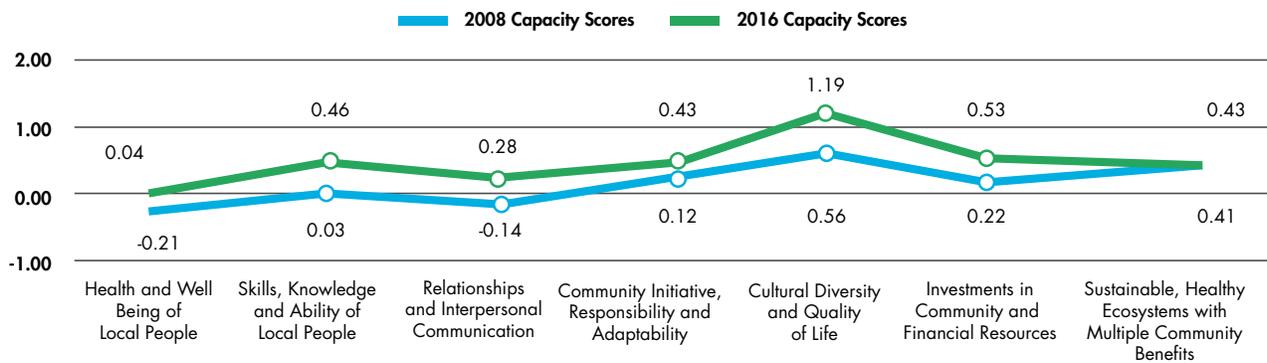
Survey responses indicate the perceptions of key informants about community capacity in Huntington have become much more positive over the past eight years that *Create Huntington* has been active. In 2008, capacity related to cultural capital and natural capital scored highest while other domains of capacity were perceived as lacking. The capacity domains related to Human Capital and Social Capital were seen by the 2008 key informants as particularly lacking. The average capacity score within the domains related to health and well-being of residents and relationships and communication was in the negative range in 2008 indicating little or no capacity that could be tapped for community development.

The responses of the key informants in 2016 reflect a more favorable view of community capacity related to stores of human capital and social capital in Huntington. Average scores are considerably more positive within those domains associated with human and social capital reflecting a growth in community capacity in these areas over the past eight years. The area of community capacity seen by key informants as most improved is related to cultural capital.

In 2016 the average capacity score for the Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life Domain was +1.19. Capacity scores over +1.0 would be considered high and indicate stores of cultural capital present in the community.

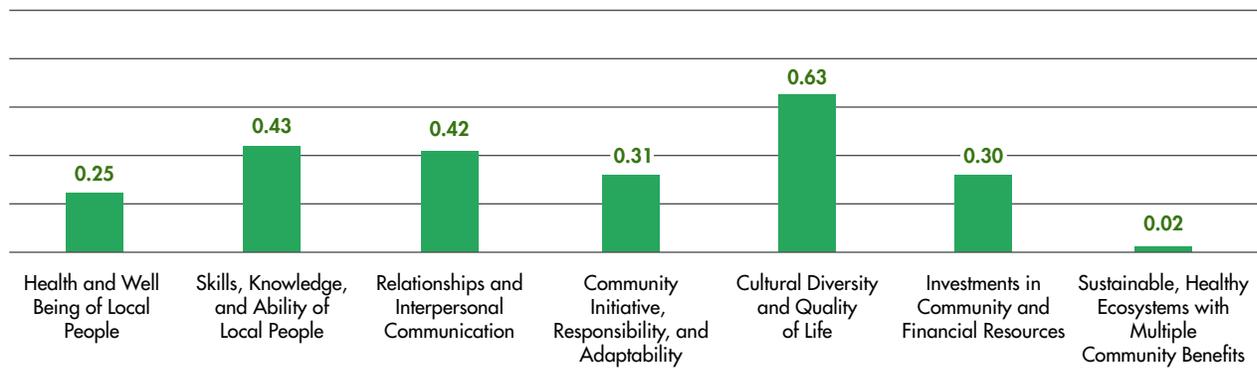
Increasing Levels of Community Capacity in Huntington 2008 to 2016

Possible scores range from -2.0 to +2.0



The perceived high levels of cultural capital may be attributable to the emphasis by *Create Huntington* on establishing a more creative culture and increasing access to arts and music opportunities within the city. The chart below summarizes the increased levels of community capacity in Huntington over the past eight years as perceived by the key informants. Based on the key informant opinions, community capacity has increased within every domain assessed over the past eight years. Gains in capacity scores over the eight-year period that *Create Huntington* has been active range from a 0.02 increase in the average score for the domain associated with natural capital to a 0.63 increase in cultural capital.

Increase in Average Capacity Score by Domain 2008 to 2016



Key Informant Opinions about Impact of Create Huntington

In addition to assessing perceived levels of community capacity, the 2016 survey of key informants included several questions about the impact of the organization.

Respondents were asked:

Do you think Create Huntington has had a significant impact on community engagement related to involving local citizens in projects to improve Huntington over the past eight years?

A majority (52%) of the informants responded “yes definitely” and (44%) said they believe *Create Huntington* has had such impact “to some degree”. The remaining 4% (one person) said they were not sure.

When asked about the impact of *Create Huntington* in other areas, the key informants had similar views.

- 52% think the organization “has been responsible for building community relationships and connections among local citizens, organizations, and agencies that has led to improvements in Huntington over the past eight years”; and an additional 40% believe *Create Huntington* has built relationships and connections “to some degree”.
- 52% also definitely think “*Create Huntington* has been able to positively impact people’s image and attitudes about Huntington”; and 36% agree with the statement “to some degree”.

Summary

The scores assigned to each domain of capacity based on the survey responses of key informants provide a measure of perceived capacity across 7 domains and 5 of the community capitals. The capacity scores describe the perceived level of one type of capacity as contrasted to another within the city of Huntington. By assigning a numeric score, it is easier to identify domains of capacity that are perceived as being present in the area and also identify those domains where attention needs to be paid to building additional capacity.

Based on the survey responses, persons knowledgeable of the *Create Huntington* organization believe community capacity has increased within all domains and a high percentage of these key informants attribute these gains (at least in part) to the activities of *Create Huntington* over the past eight years. Particularly high levels of cultural capital appear to be present within the city and there is also increasing strength expressed within the domain of investment in community and financial resources.

Domains of community capacity related to human capital (health and well-being of local residents and the skills and knowledge of local people), and social capital have also increased since 2008; however, continued emphasis on these domains of community capacity is warranted.

Explanation of Methodology for Scoring Capacity Domains

Key Informants were asked to complete a survey in order to measure beliefs held related to 35 measures of local capacity. The

capacity survey is composed of a series of 35 statements. Each of the seven domains of community capacity is measured by five statements contained in the survey. Survey respondents were asked to evaluate each statement based on their personal knowledge of the larger community and choose the degree to which they agree or disagree with the 35 statements using a five point Likert-type scale. Responses for each statement can range from “strongly disagree” to strongly agree”.

Individual survey responses were analyzed to produce a composite score for each of the thirty-five variables. For purposes of analysis individual responses were scored from -2 to +2. Responses were scored as follows: “a response of strongly disagree was assigned a value of -2, disagree was valued at -1, neither agree or disagree is a neutral response and received 0 value, a response of agree was valued +1, and strongly agree was assigned a value of +2. The average of the assigned values for all respondents was then used as the score for each individual statement (variable). Finally, an average score was calculated for each of the seven domains by averaging the scores of the five variables related to each domain.

The overall score for each domain is based on the average of the score for each of the five variables. Domain scores can range from minus two (-2.0) if all respondents strongly disagree with all five statements to plus two (+2.0) if all respondents strongly agree with all five statements. For any individual statement, it is highly unlikely that the average response will approach either -2 or +2. In general, positive domain scores indicate capacity is present and negative scores indicate the community lacks capacity in the area defined by the domain. Higher scores are interpreted as indicative of higher levels of capacity.

The level of capacity present within the local community for each domain is only reflective of the opinion and knowledge of those persons completing the survey. Since the survey was not administered in a way that provides for a statistically valid sampling of all community residents, survey results are not necessarily reflective of the opinion of the general population of Huntington. Levels of community capacity indicated by survey results obtained from key informants can be used to assess progress over time and help identify areas where building local capacity might be beneficial to local development efforts.



APPENDIX 2 - SOURCES OF DATA

- Planning Team Meeting Notes: August 4, 2016, September 19, 2016, and December 12, 2016
- *StreetSpeaks Survey/Interviews:*
 - Tri-State Homebrew Festival, October 5, 2016
 - Marshall University Tailgate, October 15, 2016
 - Downtown Pullman Square, October 22, 2016
 - Create VEGington #VegBAM, November 5, 2016
- Community Survey – November, 2016
- Stakeholder Discussion Group Summaries:
 - Former Create Huntington Board, November 7, 2016
 - Current Create Huntington Board, November 7, 2016
 - Community Discussion, November 9, 2016
- Key Informant Interviews, November 7 - 9, 2016
- Key Informant Capacity Survey Report, January 12, 2017
- Create Huntington Board of Connectors Retreat Summary, January 28, 2017
- Review of Literature and Interview with Dr. Cornelia, Flora, Emeritus Professor at Iowa State University
- Review of Other Huntington Plans and Studies – Plan2025: The Future of Huntington, Huntington Innovation Plan (HIP), and Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Plan.

Create Huntington IMPACT

HMAF 2015: Huntington Music and Arts Fest expanded to eight events in five days all over the city including West Edge, Heritage Station, Pullman Square, The Lantern, V Club and other venues aside from Ritter Park. The events, including the Art on the Edge, drew more than 700 people to those events around the city while the main fest drew in 750 people from all over the region.

#801 BAM: The event, dubbed “801BAM,” focused on a preliminary plan to address crime and economic development in the downtown as well as a discussion led by a nationally-renowned planner on how different types of land development affect the city’s revenue streams. Featured live music by Brad Goodall, food trucks and an art exhibit hosted by Two-Headed Dog Collective, a new organization that has a mission of providing nontraditional venues for local artists to showcase their work.

Chess Tables at Ritter Park: local resident John Floyd teamed up with the Greater Huntington Park and Recreation District to create a chess/checkers playing area in the Stone Circle at Ritter Park. The tables were added to the park’s Stone Circle, which was formed during the 1930s for a sunken sculpture garden project which never materialized.

June 2016 Flood: provided funding to support clean-up and disaster relief efforts through Ritter Live Free Concert Series. Through this free, family-friendly concert event at Ritter Park Amphitheater, donations which normally would be split among the bands, went to support flood relief efforts in southern West Virginia.





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