

Imperial ECAP Imperial Community Vision Conversation Abbreviated Summary – April 4, 2017



Nearly 20 Imperial community members participated in the first ECAP Imperial Community Conversation held on April 4th at the Gymnasium. The Imperial Discovery Tool closes April 9, 2017.

Upcoming Community Meetings - all at Imperial-Greenwood High School

- April 11 - Discovery Tool Results
- April 18 - Prioritization
- May 2 - Next Steps Towards Action

Challenge: Ask others to join – encourage more participation in both the online discovery tool and community conversations.

Preliminary Expectations Identified: Participants were asked to share what they expect to happen as a result of going through the ECAP Process, what they would like to see happen, and what they would love to see happen.

- *Expect* – Awareness, good ideas, plan/people come in and create Action Plan – someone to work plan, open and honest answers of true issues, see community involvement.
- *Like* – More people involved – city council, county commissioners, school representatives, city administrator/manager, people to serve, broader representation, leadership training, ships going the same direction – a common vision.
- *Love* – Results, not just talk but projects get done, love to see all areas leadership collaborate in process, more business owners participate, decision makers and stakeholders attend, more Hispanic people represented, youth engaged.

Highlights of the Conversation

Imperial Impressions - To begin looking at what people like about living and working in the community/region, the attendees answered a series of questions.

- *What do People Like about Imperial?* Family friendly (safety, reputation, education, activities), Big Sky (openness, clean air, small vs the city), rural atmosphere, community pride, family connection, help each other, education, community college, customer service (personal relationships that will go extra mile to find things), self-sufficient, vibrant downtown, location, variety churches, hospital/medical.
- *What are the Strengths of Imperial?* Care about youth – encourage, infrastructure (pride downtown/wide streets), job opportunities, lots of young families, good leadership (all levels), Community support/pulling together, Chase County Fair, FFA, Economy- Stable.

Introduction and Conversation around the Eight ECAP Characteristics: Explored how participants see the eight characteristics in the community. Many examples were given and highlighted below.

- *Community Vision* – Progressive- pool project that was a school/city effort and teammates program. Opportunities to strength – hospital, communication between groups (city, school and other organizations), who sets vision now?
- *Culture of Change* – Many examples identified including job opportunities, churches adopted to include Spanish services, technology (laptops issued through schools), progressive (businesses thriving, lot of people shop at home), support new businesses, hired a community economic developer. Opportunities to strengthen – address housing prices.
- *Leadership* – Evidence that entrepreneurial leadership include cornerstone property, housing grants, proposed and passed LB 840, ministerial association, leadership of business, collaboration, parental values are strong, supportive community, freedom foundation. Opportunities to strengthen include public leadership – board positions go unfilled, few people run for public office.
- *Sense of Place* – Evidence includes safe, community pride, parental values/work ethic, family geared towards, people that have grown up here – come back and have selected, care – support generously – fundraising. Opportunities – Imperial is a hub for the area. People come to community – promote and market more outside of Imperial. Medical – pediatric.
- *Infrastructure* – Imperial has strong infrastructure including streets, sidewalks, new housing development, new sewer/drainage, available land, fiber in the new development, school. Opportunities to enhance – fiber and outside of city limits.
- *Digitally Connected* – Strengths include: two internet providers, two cell phone providers, schools can do online classes, library provides internet 24/7, the new development has fiber. Opportunities to strengthen include price (expensive), lacking bandwidth, not reliable, someone who can set up and use technology – support businesses. Concern: If broadband not addressed, will not be able to bring youth back or attract, keep businesses.
- *Entrepreneurial Support Systems* – Evidence includes bank open to ideas, access to capital – stake in community, mentoring process, public policy (city council has been supportive of policies that are reasonable). Opportunities to strengthen – technology/webpage support – all – need expertise; help with business plans, government assistance, understanding the road blocks.
- *Education/Workforce IQ* – The adoption of LB 840 supported college building, TIF, 5th year program – high school/associates degree.