



# Community Outreach Summary

OCTOBER 11, 2011

## Background

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This document summarizes the results of the various community outreach activities conducted by the Citizens Visioning Committee (CVC) during August and September 2011 to seek input on the committee's draft recommendations—as contained in the Johnson County 2030: Living Our Vision report (Review Draft: July 2011). Key components of the outreach process included:

- **Speakers Bureau Forums**—CVC members presented the draft recommendations to and sought input from numerous community members and stakeholders representing a broad range of interest groups. Forums or small group meetings were conducted as follows:
  - Northeast Johnson County Chamber, August 16
  - Lenexa Rotary, August 19
  - Johnson County Planning and Zoning Commission, August 23
  - Human Services Agencies, August 24
  - Chamber President's Council, August 25
  - Overland Park Rotary, August 29
  - Western Johnson County Rotary, August 31
  - Johnson County Rotary, September 1
  - Johnson/Wyandotte County Council of Mayors, September 7
  - League of Women Voters, September 10
  - El Centro, September 12
  - Overland Park Chamber, September 13
  - Cosmopolitan International of Johnson County, September 15
  - Young Rotarians of Overland Park, September 7

Attendance at the forums ranged in number from a handful to more than fifty, for an estimated total of well over 100 combined participants (not all participants signed in). Three additional forums are currently scheduled: Overland Park South Rotary, September 21; NAACP, October 1; and DeSoto Rotary, October 7,

- **Online Community Workshop**— an Online Community Workshop was hosted on the project website ([www.JohnsonCountyvision2030.com](http://www.JohnsonCountyvision2030.com)) for the duration of the outreach period to provide additional opportunities for input on the committee's draft recommendations.
- **Community Forums (2)**—two Community Forums were held in early September to provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about the committee's draft recommendations, ask questions of committee members, and to provide their input.

Participants in the above activities were asked to provide input on two key questions: 1) What are your priorities in each area? and 2) Is there something you think is missing from the draft recommendations?

Feedback on these questions was recorded using a 2-page comment form along with a parallel online survey (non-scientific) that was included as part of the Online Community Workshop. Additionally, verbal feedback and questions from participants was recorded during the Community Forums and the Speakers Bureau forums. Over 300 formal responses were recorded through the Online Community Workshop and the comment forms collected during or after the Speakers Bureau Forums.

## Feedback Summary

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This summary represents a synthesis of feedback received during the combined community outreach efforts and will be considered by the CVC as they work to refine the draft vision document over the coming months. Feedback is organized as follows:

- **General Comments**—this section highlights common themes that emerged from open-ended comments provided during the Speakers Bureau Forums, Community Forums, and Online Community Workshop.
- **Theme-Specific Feedback**—these sections convey input received regarding the prioritization of the recommended actions related to each theme as well as any common themes that emerged from responses as to what was “missing” as part of the Online Community Workshop and comment form.

Each section also includes a set of recommended revisions/discussion items as a starting point for the based on the input received for the committee’s consideration.

### GENERAL COMMENTS

#### Common Themes:

- Poverty is not really addressed – or separation of class—more focus on changing demographics
- Concerns for the aging – needed amenities, transportation, affordable housing
- More emphasis on reinvestment in aging infrastructure, sustainable development, waste reduction
- Need for a new courthouse has been previously studied and should be addressed
- Define “evidence-based” outcomes, plans, programs
- Need to improve communication about county services and what the county actually does
- Opportunities for consolidation of functions and services should be emphasized (government, schools, etc.)
- Not clear why health and human services was combined with law enforcement? Both are major issues on their own.
- Not clear why libraries are included with ‘A Culturally Rich and Active Community’ when they also serve an important role in education and workforce development
- Transportation should be more strongly addressed
- Report is not consistent in its recommendations for continued funding of different activities—lack of specificity in a particular area may be interpreted as lack of support (e.g., libraries).
- Consider adding a closing section on “Challenges to achieving the Vision”

### ECONOMIC VITALITY

#### Priority Actions:

Recommended actions were ranked by participants in the following order of priority. (1 = Highest priority, 3 = Lowest priority)

- I. Continue to play a supportive role in area economic development efforts (61.9%)

2. Explore the creation of an organization focused on promoting workforce development (52.0%)
3. Encourage workforce diversity (57.5%)

**Common Themes:**

- Importance of education and training for quality jobs offering livable incomes
- Importance of having quality jobs available in Johnson County
- Team with existing schools (Johnson County Community College, KU) and businesses for job training
- Play a leading role in areas economic development efforts, not just supportive
- Concern about being able to support an additional organization – could the county support other organizations that already do this?
- Clarify definition of workforce diversity

**EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION**

**Priority Actions:**

Recommended actions were ranked by participants in the following order of priority. (1 = Highest priority, 3 = Lowest priority)

1. Coordinate legislative initiatives related to maintaining state funding (48.0%)
2. Collaborate on opportunities to support and enhance educational funding (47.0%)
3. Conduct periodic education summits (71.8%)

**Common Themes:**

- Importance of great public education – it attracts and retains quality residents, creates a strong workforce thus creating a stronger economy, encourages businesses to invest here, etc.
- Quality education is not just a result of proper funding, quality teachers, curriculum, etc. is also vital
- Provide education for specific trades (mechanic, plumbing, masonry, etc.) and for specific needs like special education and early education
- Not only is it important to have funding but it is also imperative that the funding is used efficiently and appropriately
- Involve businesses in educational funding and partnerships – field trips, etc.
- Is this a county role?

**A SAFE, HEALTHY, AND CARING COMMUNITY**

**Priority Actions:**

Recommended actions were ranked by participants in the following order of priority. (1 = Highest priority, 7 = Lowest priority)

1. Support high quality public safety and emergency services (47.4%)
2. Promote high levels of coordination among public safety agencies and other service providers (24.0%)
3. Maintain an active role in social, health, and human service programs (20.3%)
4. Enhance efforts related to prevention and early intervention (18.8%)

5. Implement best practices in advancing technology and evidence-based programs (24.7%)
6. Allocate resources based on evidence-based outcomes (23.8%)
7. Aggressively pursue grant opportunities (33.8%)

**Common Themes:**

- Emphasis on the importance of public safety
- Avoid duplication of services, consolidate services where possible and work with the cities
- Affordable housing helps with diversity and inclusiveness
- Clarify recommended action #4

**A SUSTAINABLE PATTERN OF GROWTH**

**Priority Actions:**

Recommended actions were ranked by participants in the following order of priority. (1 = Highest priority, 6 = Lowest priority)

1. Adapt land use and transportation policies to meet the needs of a changing population (45.6%)
2. Invest in multi-modal transportation (22.6%)
3. Evaluate current sewer financing structure (24.2%)
4. Explore the creation of a range of conservation tools (28.2%)
5. Promote coordinated growth in unincorporated areas (20.8%)
6. Lead by example with regards to sustainability initiatives (21.2%)

**Common Themes:**

- Housing diversity is not emphasized enough (aging population, workforce housing)
- More emphasis on better transit options for all ages – including bike paths, light rail, and other creative options that fit Johnson County’s needs (like door to door transport for the elderly)
- More emphasis on reinvestment in established areas – utilize vacant buildings and already developed lands
- Coordinated growth should be emphasized

**EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT**

**Priority Actions:**

Recommended actions were ranked by participants in the following order of priority. (1 = Highest priority, 7 = Lowest priority)

1. Promote an open and transparent process (26.5%)
2. Evaluate and implement the most efficient means of providing programs and services based on evidence-based practices (25.8%)
3. Strengthen the voice of Johnson County government and the community within the region (16.8%)
4. Encourage civic engagement (18.2%)
5. Convene a process to review current levels of government (20.4%)
6. Establish a review schedule to track the implementation of the vision plan (19.7%)

7. Develop and support leadership that reflects the diversity of the county (23.6%)

**Common Themes:**

- Should we guarantee an open and transparent process or just promote it?
- Not only create the process to meet about consolidating services but actually make it a recommended action

**A CULTURALLY RICH AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY**

**Priority Actions:**

Recommended actions were ranked by participants in the following order of priority. (1 = Highest priority, 5 = Lowest priority)

1. Support programs and services that are inclusive and accessible (31.3%)
2. Identify new funding options to support increased access to parks and recreation (22.7%)
3. Identify new ways to engage all sectors of the community (26.3%)
4. Develop a flexible model for library services (26.1%)
5. Encourage the identification of broad-based sustainable funding mechanisms for the arts (31.3%)

**Common Themes:**

- Libraries also relate to other themes – they support education for all ages, need stronger language to support the libraries financially
- Support new museum
- While nice to have, the topics addressed as part of this theme overall should have a lower priority compared to the others – people are more concerned with basic needs, employment, homelessness, etc.

**GENERAL FEEDBACK**

Overall, how well does the draft Vision Report reflect your vision for Johnson County?

- Very well (8.9%)
- **Well (43.8%)**
- Neutral (34.9%)
- Somewhat (9.3%)
- Not very well (3.2%)

**WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?**

- 72.5% Government
- 16.2% Other
- 4.1% Private Business
- 3.1% Retired
- 2.4% Non-profit
- 1.0% Education
- 0.3% Student
- 0.3% Elected Official

**WHERE DO YOU LIVE?**

- 27.4% Overland Park
- 25.4% Olathe
- 8.7% Unincorporated Johnson County
- 8.3% Lenexa
- 7.5% Shawnee
- 6.3% Gardner
- 4.0% Leawood
- 3.2% Prairie Village
- All others locations were under 3%