



905 West Chicago Avenue
 East Chicago, Indiana 46312
 (219) 392-4225

www.foundationsofeastchicago.org

FOUNDATIONS STRATEGIC PLAN BECOMES AN ACTIVE TOOL FOR GRANTMAKING

March 2008 marked the beginning of using the Foundation’s Strategic Plan as a means of focusing grant dollars on critical issues. An explanation of how 50 residents and 110 grantees heard about and discussed the Strategic Plan is explained in the attached document.

Fifty people joined the staff and Board members at a Town Meeting held at St. Patrick Church March 11, 2008. That meeting marked the end of a long strategic planning process which began at a Town Meeting held last June at St. Stanislaus School, where community

residents voiced their ideas regarding East Chicago’s issues.

The Foundations of East Chicago three year Strategic Plan was presented to the community with break out sessions focusing on the two highest priorities of the Strategic Plan; Education and Public Safety. A lively discussion among participants energized the attendees. Topics of both Education and Public Safety groups reflected a resounding theme that the adult community needed to be engaged with East Chicago’s issues in order to remedy long lasting concerns. On March 17, 2008, the Foundations continued the dialog with grantee partners. At that meeting, more than 110 gran-

Representative Town Meeting concerns included:

Core 40 Issues/Requirements	Parental Participation is Important	School Administration/Teachers
<p>How can we help schools get off of probation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attendance-parents need to be empowered • churches can help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attendance is important - Core 40 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach parents what is their responsibility and what are priorities • the community must be supportive • the schools are lowering the bar on uniforms, we are giving the power to the kids • commitment is needed at all levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - city - churches - parents • a monitoring system is needed • friendly environments are needed at the school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PAC (Parent and Community) at Central - 2nd Tuesday of the month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low attendance at school board meetings • they must believe in the students • teachers are not all certified • teachers are not engaged • only 4 honor diplomas in 2007 • What do we do for the kids already here? • What do we do for the kids just coming in? • good quality and affordable pre-schools are needed • handbooks could be copied to DVD • kids starting a letter writing campaign

tee partner members came to review the Foundation’s Strategic Plan and its impact on the grantmaking process. Issues remain although reduced grant dollars are available dollars resulting from the City of East Chicago actions to stop Foundation gaming funding. Again, after a presentation acknowledging the Strate-

gic Plan’s emphasis on Education and Public Safety, two focus groups discussed community issues that may be addressed through a spring/summer “Request for Proposal (RFP)” initiative. Areas of discussion included:

Education

Areas of Concern:	Issue:
Development/Early Years	Keeping kids healthy
	Prepare youth for school - developmental learning (toys, puzzles, games)
	Teaching parents how to play with and teach their children
	“Whole Child” - develop programs that fit the child’s learning abilities
Individual Growth	Address breakdown in family structure
	Have person available for youth to talk to
	Helping youth and families develop assets for life
	Holistic Health (body, mind and spirit)
Parental	Early parental education
	Engage parents in their student’s education
	Getting parents and children to value education
	Parent community involvement
	Parent consequences
	Parent networking system
	Parents becoming tutors and become active in school
	Parents need to become accountable to system
School Years	Academic support (preparing for graduation)
	Avoid youth from falling through the cracks
	Educational resource centers
	Outreach programs
	Safe schools
	Tutoring/mentoring
	Volunteerism

Public Safety

Areas of Concern/Issue:

The group expressed the following concerns in the community:

- youth safety
- gangs
- seniors and health
- leadership development
- budget/finance
- healthy environment
- public safety
- gang violence

Staff informed the group that the FEC is thinking of doing RFP's regarding community, family and safety issues.

Strategic Plan

Due to the change in the environment, the funding dollars have been restricted. According to the community, education and public safety are major areas to be addressed.

Group Comments

FEC was commended on their ability to turn their strategy around to accommodate the decrease in funding. Is it possible for FEC to regain their strength in funding? Can housing be included in public safety? Will FEC have enough funding to get projects done or close them down? Collaborations are needed with organizations working together. FEC has a tremendous impact on the community, but, need to provide a breakdown of each organization in order to have a collaboration. A grant should be written to install cameras in all the schools. Where are the parents?

A database is needed to list target audiences and organizations to be used as a referral service listing the organization name and the public safety area of the organization.

Top Priority Concerns

The group came up with several top priorities as listed below:

- 1) Education and awareness of environmental health (air).
- 2) Intervention with kids, host all day youth conferences with definitive age groups.
- 3) Education on community policing, satellite policing, crime watch, domestic violence (need more presence in East Chicago), the youth do not feel comfortable going to police, teachers or principals for help, their should be secondary sources, people are immune to gun fire, people need to call police immediately, the community needs to be re-sensitized.
- 4) Organizations should talk to parents about different public safety resources that are available.
- 5) There should be youth supervised activities that are education related on various interventions.
- 6) FEC should go across the country to see how other areas handle similar concerns and get consultants to come in with the police department and organizations to sit down and come up with a solution, and engage the parents and the community.