Community Conversations with Orion Township Public Library

In April 2016, Orion Township Library Director and Board President attended training with the Harwood Institute to help us learn how to gather information about our community’s aspirations through Community Conversations. We held ten Community Conversations between June and November.

We believe that we need to hear from more people, but we are pleased to already see strong patterns in what we have heard so far. Participants told us their aspirations for their community are: it needs to have green spaces, have good schools and library, have diversity, have all types of activities available to become involved in, have needed resources available, be a safe place for all people, and have good transportation.

There were three main issues participants felt were in our community. Communication seemed to be the biggest issue which impacted everything discussed.

1. **Safety**—especially with children including bullying, drug/alcohol abuse, suicide. Taking care of less fortunate with hunger, education and affordable childcare. Some participants said, “Schools can’t do everything, community is needed,” and that we “don’t spend enough time or money on education.”

2. **Transportation**—good roads and the ability to get around. Some participants felt that the “growth is too rapid, roads are not brought up in enough time for new drivers” and wondered “bad growth, good growth, where is the balance?”

3. **Communication**—where to turn to for resources, what’s going on in the community, awareness of issues in community. Some participants said “[if you’re] not touched by problem, don’t know it exists” and that there is a “lack of awareness where to go for what is needed.”

We are fortunate, unlike many communities across the country, in that participants trust the elected individuals in Orion Township are doing what they feel should be done to better our community.

This is what we heard in our conversations. Does it resonate with what you feel about our community? Please come to our wrap-up session at the Orion Township Public Library on **March 1, 2017 at 6:30p** to share your ideas and work with the library to figure out how we can hear from more people and take action on issues the community cares about. Please RSVP to Joyce at 248-693-3000 ext. 302 or jbecker@orionlibrary.org. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to contact Library Director, Karen Knox at 248-693-3000 ext. 305 or kknox@orionlibrary.org with your feedback.