

Citizens for a Strong Oshkosh

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Notes from the CSO Conversations Held 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Beckets Oshkosh) Thursday, September 12, 2013

(These notes capture the items noted on the flip charts during the community conversation.)

1. Oshkosh in the Future: What do you want to see?

- More financial institutions
- Professional businesses
- More awareness of why sustainability matters
- Stronger neighborhoods (social and improved housing)
- Higher on education listing in K-12 schools
- Less crime activity/more support and awareness, especially north and south
- Vibrant downtown with easy access
- More diversity in leadership
- Continued development of river walk
- Crime—address it, face it, control it, because it is getting worse
- UWO rise in ranks (quality and size)
- More outdoor recreation (bike paths)

- Comprehensive platform to address poverty
- School system driver of economic development

2. What do we need to change immediately?

- Drugs
- Crime
- Perception
- Community self-esteem
- Promote Oshkosh
- Continue momentum
- Teacher retention—it's too low
- Crossing guards, we need more immediately
- River walk on south side, needs improved
- Selective of choices
- Higher level of participation
- Coordination between city/council and school district

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- m) More diverse employment base
- n) Public/private sector produce good paying jobs

3. What are we good at? (Points of pride)

- a) New school
- b) EAA
- c) New hotel
- d) UWO
- e) Farmers Market
- f) River walk
- g) Leach
- h) Arts/Art Walk/Gallery Walk
- i) Branding
- j) Sustainability
- k) Libraries (public/Polk)
- l) Civility Works

4. Good things about Oshkosh

- a) Events
- b) Bus System/Transportation System
- c) Diverse Musical Range
- d) Tough Mudder
- e) EAA
- f) YMCA
- g) Boys & Girls Club
- h) Education
- i) Warming Shelter
- j) Senior Center
- k) Activities for kids
- l) Caring community
- m) Waterfront
- n) Strong United Way
- o) Community Foundation

5. Why does Oshkosh have poor self-esteem?

- a) Mall/Airport (Oshkosh didn't get it)
- b) Appleton Boom
- c) Self-image from locals (others not from here complain less.)
- d) 74 percent of townies complain/complaining ethic
- e) Neenah with Pride....Why don't we have that?
- f) Streets in bad shape; or so people think. This is not true.

6. How to improve self esteem

- a) Promote that more residents and graduates stay
- b) Promote that retirees stay
- c) Promote that people come back; great place to raise families
- d) Fair distribution
- e) Promote local businesses
- f) Promote good things in community
- g) Downtown is an opportunity
- h) Need to understand history in Oshkosh
- i) UWO students as champions
- j) School system can reach community, citywide PTO step in right direction
- k) Embrace technology (things like voting) and social media
- l) Positive approach
- m) PR campaign to improve self-esteem
- n) Incorporate good events
- o) 1:1 conversations
- p) Spread conversations through Ambassadors
- q) Ambassadors for Oshkosh
 - 1) Facebook page

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- 2) Visit-report crime rates and how low they are in comparison
- r) Find way to connect in community
- s) Celebrate success
- t) Take Farmer's Market to next level
- u) Use a City Card/Every local gets city card for shopping and dining
- v) Promote world class events like Chiluly event and bands like Rusted Root
- w) Inform others of things they can do for community and how to get involved
- x) Learn how to volunteer and be active
- y) Promote civic engagement
- z) Celebrate success and promote philanthropist activities
- k) Create a smaller PR group
- l) Promote neighborhood pride
- m) Eat local days
- n) Volunteer crossing guard and other things
- o) Resources, find out what already exists and promote them
- p) Text blast from mayor on how awesome Oshkosh is
- q) Yell "Oshkosh is Awesome" at random
- r) Conduct neighborhood tours
- s) Home tours
- t) More engagement from everyone is this room

7. Going Forward

- a) Smaller groups, more focused, include local government
- b) Educate
- c) Become vehicle for civic engagement
- d) Create achievable goals
- e) Become actionable
- f) Don't complain; do something. Adopt that motto?
- g) Focus more on neighborhood schools and how they can help
- h) Increase demographic reach of people under 30 (Propel)
- i) More face to face communication and conversations
- j) Tap into retirees

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