

Date: March 8, 2024

To: Elected Officials of Seminole, Orange, and Osceola Counties

From: Central Florida Foundation on behalf of the 2023 TableTalk Participants

CC: All Residents of Central Florida

Subject: A Call to Action - Opportunities and Challenges from Your Constituents

BY THE NUMBERS

2,000 **PEOPLE SHOWED UP**

6 **COUNTIES REPRESENTED**

72% **OF PARTICIPANTS CONVERSED WITH SOMEONE NEW**

MOST COMMON TOPICS



ECONOMIC STABILITY
33%

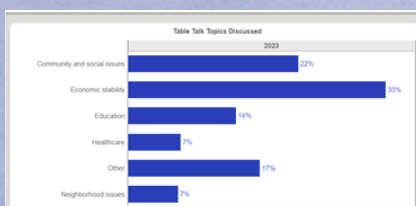


COMMUNITY & SOCIAL CONNECTION
22%



LIVABILITY
13%

Visit the TableTalk Survey Results Dashboard by clicking below.



Survey and Dashboard by

On October 19, 2023, thousands of Central Floridians participated in a day of conversation called TableTalk, an initiative of our region's community foundation, Central Florida Foundation. In its 4th year, this unique experience consists of small group conversations that take place across Central Florida counties with topics based on the Thrive Framework focus areas. At its core, TableTalk is an exercise in civic engagement and solutions-based discussion that produces a report reflecting the current concerns and mindset of your constituents. Importantly, it showcases what's going right and what might need attention, which is what this letter is meant to share with you today.

The survey findings from Central Floridians paint an encouraging picture, with 76% showing a brighter outlook for the future. This boost in optimism stems from a shared commitment to unity, common objectives, and a growing awareness of community concerns. There's a noticeable drive to collaborate and adapt to inevitable changes, driven by a deep-seated passion for tackling significant social issues. Moreover, participants expressed contentment with local leadership and acknowledged the community's grasp of prevailing challenges. Nevertheless, obstacles like political discord, limited collaboration, and resource constraints persist. Despite these hurdles and the slow pace of progress, there's a palpable resolve to surmount challenges and pave the way for a more promising future.

The Questions

Table participants were asked 3 questions that were posed through the lens of their chosen Thrive Framework focus area.

What is going well in this space?

What are 2-3 challenges preventing more progress in this space?

How can we take action to address one of these challenges?

Challenges and Opportunities

Some of the areas identified by the survey respondents mirror the findings of the Central Florida Community Landscape report with

top issues including economic stability which encompasses housing, transportation, and good jobs, healthcare, including mental health, and education.

Conversational Trends and Ideas

The following is a list of trends and ideas we saw from the conversations that were had in October. Some trends and ideas are broad and overarching; others are niche and specific. While we understand that not all of these topic areas can be implemented into specific action plans by city and county leaders, we wanted to share some recurring topics, and in some cases specific ideas, that were generated or discussed in the conversations. We've organized this list by Thrive Framework focus areas, however these ideas can overlap and integrate more than one area.

Economic Stability

Conversational Trends and Ideas

- Changing zoning to allow for different housing types
- Framing transportation for accessibility
- Universal basic income
- Empower more black businesses and entrepreneurs
- Job programs that also focus on personal growth
- Emergency drop-off centers for single parents who need to work on days when there are unplanned school closures or illness
- Peer support networks for single mothers
- Revitalizing abandoned buildings, land, and strip malls

Healthcare

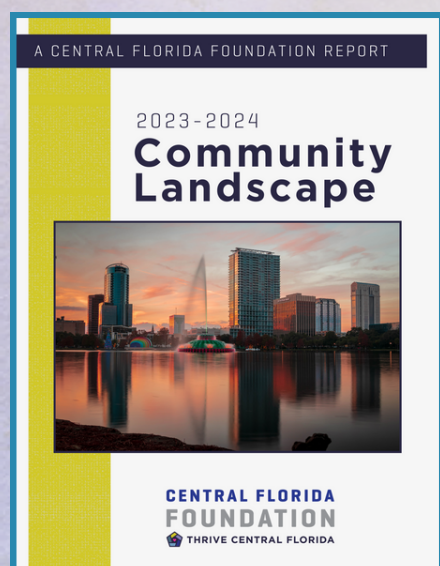
Conversational Trends and Ideas

- Subsidized health insurance and other benefits through chambers of commerce
- More focus on healthy communities, eating right and nutrition in schools
- People who help connect others to social services and healthcare

Education

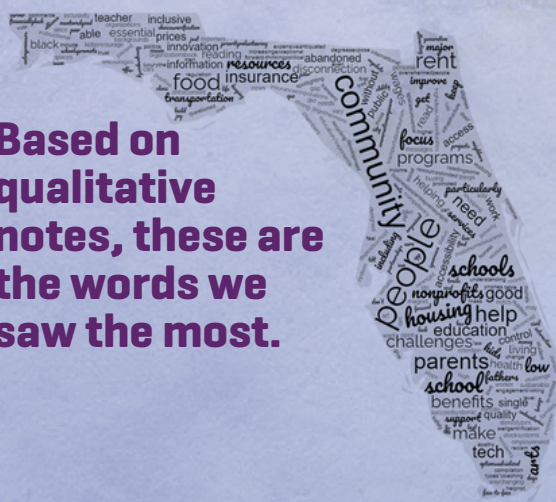
Conversational Trends and Ideas

- Expose more people to technology and innovation in an inclusive way
- Improved communications on public school offerings, including magnet schools
- Encourage parents who do not send their children to public schools to access educational diagnostic testing
- Encourage families to read, "even if it is just menus"
- Strengthen the reading gap in school by building a supportive alliance of reading organizations
- Establish book pal programs
- Improved communication about the public library system and its offerings



Access Community Landscape report by clicking the image above.

Based on qualitative notes, these are the words we saw the most.



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Microgrants are a great way for people in organizations of all sizes to take a spark on an idea and turn it into something tangible.

-Sandi Vidal
Central Florida Foundation



Learn more about these nonprofits and hundreds more in the Nonprofit Search database.

Livability

Conversational Trends and Ideas

- Promote or establish art-based mobile projects in order to reach more neighborhoods and communities
- Promote positive news stories
- Use TDT taxes to improve access to arts, public spaces
- More neighborhood beautification, such as murals
- Community app with restaurants, theaters, museums and other local attractions for easier access to information
- More focus on solar panels and recycling
- Education and incentives for conserving energy
- Make mass transit more accessible and safe with walkable bus stops with lighting
- More trees in lower-income neighborhoods

Community & Social Connection

Conversational Trends and Ideas

- More places that encourage people to gather
- Create safe spaces for civil discourse
- Find ways to encourage more civic engagement, especially voting
- Build trust through communication
- Encourage voting and volunteering through public service announcements

TableTalk Microgrants

To help fuel any sparks of ideas that came out of October's conversations, Central Florida Foundation opened its annual TableTalk Microgrant program for any participants who felt they had a viable idea that would improve our region. If an individual had an idea that was selected for a grant but was not associated with a registered 501(c)(3) organization, the Foundation successfully paired ideas with an aligned nonprofit. This year, \$30,000 in grants were awarded to Central Florida nonprofits through this initiative.

Ideas Fueled by a Microgrant

Here are a few of the ideas supported through this program.

- Monthly dinner discussion with members of different faiths to promote meaningful dialogue
 - Nonprofit: Muslim Women's Organization
- Stipends for students working on outreach and Spanish-language elements for the Florida Community Resource Map
 - Nonprofit: Florida Community Innovation
- Program development for athletes with disabilities
 - Nonprofit: Gliding Stars of Central Florida, Inc.
- Development of a Habitat U Youth Summit to promote money management skills
 - Nonprofit: Habitat for Humanity Greater Orlando & Osceola County
- Creation of an LGBTQ Widow Support community
 - Nonprofit: Modern Widows Club, Inc.

TableTalk Steering Committee

Rachel Allen
Chantel Aquart
Uneeke Armani
Anderline Bredy
Jennifer Dobbins
Jennifer Evins
Mark Freid
Marcia Goodwin
Lisa Kelley
Ricky Ly
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Nate Robertson
Yvette Shelton
Commissioner Mayra Uribe
Samuel Vilchez
George Wallace
Larry Williams
Lasheena Williams
Lavon Williams
Austin Wilson
Emily Wray

In Closing

As our elected officials, and thereby community leaders, our hope is that this letter and its resources provide valuable insight into how you understand your constituents and their concerns, mindset and ideas for the future.

Here's what we're asking you do as a result of this letter.

1. Read the Community Landscape report and review the opportunities and challenges.

Goal: Identify ways to align the community's concerns, mindset and ideas with city or county plans.

2. Take the opportunity to connect with your constituents on the contents of this letter.

Goal: Strengthen community relations through acknowledgment.

3. Commit - or recommit - to collaboration.

Goal: Close siloes by working with other organizations from the public, private and independent (nonprofit) sectors to encourage a collaborative approach to solving complex social issues - and publicly highlight your city or county's commitment to it.

We appreciate your attention to this letter, the subsequent reports and your anticipated actions taken as a result.

Together, we can make Central Florida an even better place to call home.

TableTalk Support

Florida Blue 



Think Integrated
Valencia College
Students of the Media
Communications Degree Program at
Full Sail University and Emily Wray
The Baldwin Family Fund at Central
Florida Foundation
Walgreens
Massey Services
Withum
Heart of Florida United Way

**Signed,
Central Florida Foundation on behalf of
the 2023 TableTalk Participants**