

impact

INDEPENDENCE
COUNTY ▀

VISION: Consistently **reimagine the city** and its future through relevant projects, grants and initiatives that **build on past** traditions and history of success to **pioneer the preferred future** of Independence County, characterized by intentional and sustainable **economic prosperity, educational preparation** that cultivates talent, the **healthiest minds** and bodies, and places that **inspire people** and **promote happiness**.

impact

INDEPENDENCE
COUNTY

196
HOURS

ENGAGING

772
INDIVIDUALS

Including leaders in healthcare, oral health, non-profits, banking, planning and development, regional and state tourism and community development, government, workforce development, construction, and state agencies.

Additionally involved were K-12 school teachers, administrators, and nurses, childcare providers, parents, college administrators, students, major employers, small business owners, utility providers, realtors, public safety officials, entertainment/attraction owners and directors, and residents at large from neighborhoods across Independence County.

Engagement techniques: surveys, fairs, focus groups, one-on-one meetings, virtual meetings, leadership trainings, and open community gatherings.

The Chamber led these complex collaborations using the Strategic Doing method, which staff are certified to lead.

STRATEGIC DOING

What could we do? What should we do? What will we do?

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

VISION: Intentionally grow the community, allowing us to maintain our small town feel, but improve quality of place by expanding opportunities and offerings for our residents and visitors.

Develop a unified strategy and secure a sustainable funding source to incentivize new business and business expansions in sectors that have the greatest potential to create new jobs, raise incomes and elevate standards of living.

Enhance support and deploy resources to grow small businesses, including outreach to underserved populations (minority, women-owned, etc.)

Enhance the quality of life in the region by addressing community assessed needs and policies that impact them: housing, entertainment, restaurants, centralized community development/information hub, outdoor recreation access, and indoor recreation.

Expand services that support workforce retention and economic well-being.

Develop education and employment initiatives that create, sustain, and retain a viable workforce.

Further develop tourist attractions and support events that result in overnight stays to maximize the economic benefits of tourism.

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

VISION: Prepare students for optimal success.

Strengthen and address broadband connectivity for all students, teachers, and families

Deliver innovative education and retain qualified educators resulting in growth for every student

Guide Pre-K - 16 career discovery and create value-added educational programs that attract and retain post-secondary students, preparing all students for careers

Develop education initiatives that create a viable workforce

Prioritize social-emotional learning (SEL) and intentional teaching of prosocial and helping behaviors

Increase quality and availability of childcare

Utilize Public Education Foundation to focus on high impact initiatives that support a multitude of students

Implement diversity, equity, and inclusion programming and practices to better serve and orient minority families

Build a culture of reading

HEALTHY LIVING AND WELL-BEING

VISION: Become the healthiest county in Arkansas, committed to keeping residents active and physically and emotionally well.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: Provide a variety of opportunities to get all residents outdoors and physically active.

SOCIAL WELLNESS: Reimagine opportunities for providing socially active lifestyles for residents at every stage of life.

KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

OPPORTUNITIES: Increase knowledge of and access to health and wellness opportunities and social events.

INSPIRE HEALTHIER CHOICES: Create educational and other opportunities that inspire residents to make healthier choices.

SOCIAL COMPETENCE & EMOTIONAL MATURITY: Increase the number of children that enter kindergarten socially on-track and ready to learn by prioritizing social-emotional needs and learning (SEL) curriculum and intentional teaching of prosocial and helping behaviors.

PHYSICAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT: Increase the number of children that enter kindergarten physically on-track and ready to learn by expanding access to screenings and providing more opportunities for families to build gross and fine motor skills.

ORAL HEALTH: Increase the proportion of low-income children

who receive preventive dental services by expanding oral health knowledge among early educators and families, connecting families to local dentists, and easing barriers to accessing dental care.

SUBSTANCE USE: Increase the number of community programs and projects that focus on substance use research, prevention, and treatment.

MOBILITY: Increase support for the expanded development of the greenway trail system and proactively support the development of public transportation to increase community access.

IMAGE: Improve the appearance and image of Independence County.

REGIONAL MEDICAL HUB: Support the growth of regional healthcare organizations

PLACEMAKING

VISION: Increase the quality of life for residents by developing and connecting community amenities.

Support the development and promotion of community events, resulting in improved quality of life for residents.

Develop the Batesville area into a regional sports hub.

Improve access to waterways and support rentals/outfitters.

Improve outdoor recreation and leisure space, resulting in improved quality of life for residents.

Create a community of local adventure guide services.

Continue the development of historic downtown Batesville.

