

Livability Lab Update: Connecting Community

Thank you to the Livability Lab attendees for completing the survey about the launch day. The feedback was clear: the power of community was front and center on September 10! Many people commented on the strength of the cross-sector involvement—with individuals representing businesses, service organizations, resident groups, and others connecting and building goals together.

Here's a brief video from the launch day that captures some of the participants' enthusiasm for the process:



We recently received the following question on our Livability Lab Facebook page: How is it possible to get involved when some in the community couldn't attend the launch due to their work schedule? The answer is: The launch was just one day out of many! From the months of gathering community input to the invitation welcoming residents to the 100-day Challenge, the Livability Lab Framework was created through the many voices of Muskegon County—and is an ongoing effort that continues to build connections along the way. Get involved, stay involved! Visit LivabilityLab.com for more information.

THE LIVABILITY LAB FRAMEWORK: UNPACKED

Continuing our exploration of the [Livability Lab Framework](#), here is a little more about the Livability Elements, featured in blue on the framework.



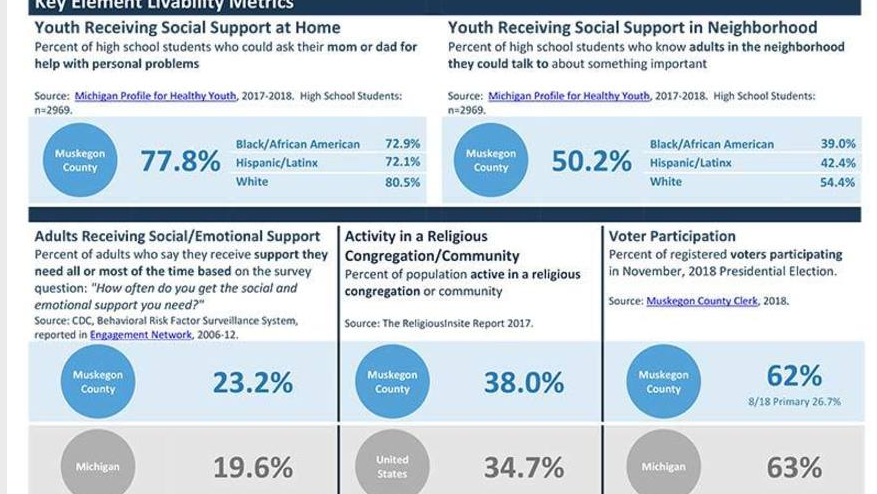
Over the months preceding the launch of the 100-day Challenge, feedback from the community helped form the central vision of the effort:

"Creating a system that ensures livability for all Muskegon County residents"

It was a big, audacious goal! In prime Muskegon style, we didn't shy away from a challenge. The community chose to move toward our future thoughtfully and as a whole, with an awareness of the interconnectedness of all things. That is how the framework developed into a circle; there is no single direct line from one to the next, but more of an orbit where many things together affect outcomes of livability.

The blue Livability Elements are community priorities identified as necessary for all individuals and families to prosper and reach their full potential. When you click on the Livability Elements in the interactive framework, you see the definition of each and examples of the measurable outcomes that can be monitored over time to reveal if the Livability Element is growing in a positive direction toward the vision.

For example, clicking on "[Social Connections and Trust](#)" takes you to this page:



As we continue to implement the Livability Lab process for identifying root causes, setting tasks, and taking action, we will chart the progress, review the findings, and continue moving forward with our big, audacious goals.

This is Muskegon County, where a long history of creativity, grit, diversity of people and perspectives, and a willingness to take bold risks provide us with all we need to reach our livability goals.

SPOTLIGHT ON: TEAM 6

Strengthen Child Care Opportunities



Strengthen Child Care Opportunities is one of 19 Challenge teams launched at the Livability Lab on September 10

Team 6 has a 100-day Challenge project of creating a community network and a plan for child care opportunities in Muskegon County. The team also plans to work on filling a need in the community by creating a microcenter hub that provides training for home-based child care providers and a drop-in child care center for caregivers whose work hours are outside of the traditional 9 to 5 PM.

The Livability Elements they are targeting are Education and Economic Opportunity. The Community Conditions are Child and Dependent Care, Countywide Collaboration and Alignment, Livable Employment Opportunity, and Workforce Development.

The team identified these root causes to address:

- child care is not affordable for many families
- families aren't taking full advantage of subsidies
- process to apply for families is difficult (and for providers)
- not enough subsidized slots available
- insufficient number of high-quality child care slots available
- not located where families are
- reporting/paperwork
- requirements interfere with caring for infants/toddlers
- need more effective infrastructure to support coordination
- insufficient funds for child care providers (current model is not sustainable for many small businesses), costs of insurance and paying staff are out of line with fee for service
- because of costs/income, difficulty hiring and retaining trusted staff

This energetic, cross-sector group has pushed the boundaries of traditional child care offerings and is designing innovative ways to ensure our families are supported and their needs are understood. It's important that residents can confidently go to their jobs feeling secure with trusted, affordable providers, and that our children are raised in a positive environment best suited for their needs. You're going to want to follow this team's progress—good things to come!

We look forward to hearing more about the successes of the Team 6 Challenge at the celebration event on January 23!

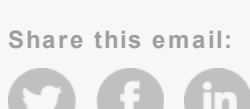
Are you following the Livability Lab on [Facebook](#)? If not, please do! It's a great way to keep up with the 100-day Challenge throughout the week, share information, ask questions, and add comments.



Supported by the Muskegon Community Health Innovation Region. More information can be found at www.LivabilityLab.com.

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