

**Hometown Collaboration Initiative
Pathway Project: Project Proposal**

- 1. Name of HCI Community/County:** Brown County, Indiana
- 2. Title of your proposed Pathway Project:** Brown County Leadership Cooperative
- 3. What specific HCI Building Block did your HCI team select:** Leadership Building Block
- 4. Describe the key activities your team undertook during the Building Block Phase of HCI.**
 - a. Briefly list and describe the specific activities your HCI team undertook during the Building Block Phase:**

The Brown County HCI team participated in six 3-hour sessions of leadership training during the Building Block Phase:

- Learning about community leadership
 - leaders and events in the development of the Brown County community
 - concepts of community leadership (what is leadership, the importance of effective leadership, necessary leadership skills)
- Identifying our own leadership style
 - understanding personal attributes
 - how to work with different personalities (Real Colors)
- Leading through interpersonal communication
 - understanding the importance of communication skills
 - building rapport
 - enhanced listening and speaking skills
 - barriers to listening and speaking
 - various communication media
- Managing conflict
 - conflict escalation
 - responses to conflict
 - managing conflict
- Getting involved in the community
 - how to work with others effectively
 - understanding group dynamics
 - team formation
 - working with volunteers
- Serving on nonprofit boards and commissions
 - working effectively
 - structure and key characteristics of effective boards

- b. Indicate your team's key achievements during the Foundation or Building Block Phase and how they have shaped your proposed Pathway Project:**

Our primary achievement during the Foundation and Building Block phases was learning to work effectively as a team. Our group is diverse in background, experience and age.

Learning to channel varied thought processes took time, but after nine months we have learned to value our diversity and use it to develop plans and solutions that have mostly unanimous appeal.

We also reviewed multiple studies and proposals from the last twenty years to understand previous project priorities for the county. Understanding the history of previous projects prepared us to survey county residents to determine current community priorities. Priorities in the areas of leadership, placemaking and economic development were:

- develop a leadership program; improve the interpersonal skills of current leaders; and provide leadership training and assist in building skills of emerging leaders including youth
- increase access to local foods; increase parks and trails; and provide more activities for youth
- create an economic development plan; expand access to technology; promote and retain existing business; and provide housing in the \$100,000-140,000 range

We presented the survey results and facilitated further discussion at a public forum. Based on these community assessments, we concluded that Brown County would benefit by having leaders who understand and practice the key concepts in effective leadership, and we selected Leadership for our Building Block. During the leadership training process we realized that the ability to create positive change in Brown County is dependent upon engaging more residents in leadership roles, developing a larger pool of youth and young adult leaders, and engaging them all in a community visioning process. To that end, we propose to develop the Brown County Leadership Cooperative (BCLC), composed of our current HCI team members and current and future community leaders recruited from future BCLC projects.

c. Provide information on the level of participation of original members. How many new members were added during the Building Block phase?

The original team consisted of between ten and twelve active members. Four additional people joined prior to the community forum. Fourteen members remained involved in the Building Block phase. Only two elderly team members chose not to participate in the Leadership Training.

Thirteen additional people were added for the leadership training, bringing the number participating to twenty-seven. The team identified members of the community who might benefit from leadership training and who could help train others. We wanted to connect leaders in diverse sectors and geographical areas of the community, maintaining as much age diversity as possible. A list of possible participants was developed that included people in each township, the town of Nashville, and people in the business, nonprofit, government and education communities. We asked that the participants be open to learning and

collaboration, and would attend at least five of the six sessions. Thirty-seven people were invited to participate in the Leadership Training sessions, and thirteen accepted; seven have remained involved since completing the Building Block.

5. What does your HCI team propose to do as part of your Pathway Project? In particular, address the following in your write-up:

a. Identify and describe your Pathway Project. What important local need, concern or opportunity is your project seeking to address?

The community surveys showed that citizens perceive that the leaders in our county are lacking in the areas of information sharing, inclusivity, and competence (especially with regard to strategic planning and self-evaluation). This analysis shows that our community could greatly benefit from the development of a pool of well-informed, collaborative, and responsive leaders. In an attempt to increase our community's capacity to accomplish a broad range of goals, our project proposal is the development of the Brown County Leadership Cooperative (BCLC).

The BCLC will have three main objectives:

- to engage and assist collaborative community leaders
- to improve the competency (leadership skills) of those in leadership positions
- to model proven engagement and planning activities through identified community projects

Our vision is to partner with a diverse group of current and aspiring leaders to form a more collaborative Brown County that reflects the needs and values of its citizens.

The BCLC will improve communication and foster collaboration between stakeholders and leadership by replicating and expanding HCI's proven community engagement process. We will work to connect current and aspiring leaders around common goals and projects, opportunities for resource sharing, and effective methods of communication. The cooperative will be aligned with the needs of the community through research and engagement activities. The BCLC will also develop a website to provide information about community projects, explain the planning process, and gather feedback.

The BCLC will work to improve the competency and effectiveness of individuals and organizations by promoting the use of proven planning and review processes such as the PDSA Model (Plan, Do, Study, Act), SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), and strategic planning. The Leadership Cooperative will use these planning and review processes throughout its own development and in all of the projects it supports. Having a "common language" of planning and self-assessment will help streamline planning and improvement efforts across the county, as well as make communication and collaboration easier.

To demonstrate the effectiveness of a shared planning process that is based on targeted community engagement, the BCLC will promote and support a collaborative community project. Our first project will be in the area of food, as access to high quality, affordable food was the number one priority in both the community survey and public forum. By supporting a collaborative food project, we will have an opportunity to showcase the effectiveness of our engagement and planning processes, while addressing a need in the community.

b. Indicate the major goals your team is planning to pursue as part of its Pathway Project. In addition, describe the strategies you will pursue to achieve each of the stated goals.

We believe empowering community leaders is the key to the future success of Brown County. The governing bodies of our county and the various towns and townships within it are limited in their capacity, experience, or willingness to tackle some the basic and pervasive problems faced within our county. Because of this, many of the most beneficial changes within our county have come from the work being done by nonprofits, change groups, and volunteers.

Our first goal is to support and foster collaboration between new and existing leaders with the development of the Brown County Leadership Cooperative. The BCLC's efforts will be centered on bringing the community together to essentially replicate the HCI process. We intend to maintain and grow our group of interested community members into a committed leadership group that will address community needs as they are identified.

We intend to address those needs one category of need at a time (i.e. as food, water, and shelter) utilizing the steps of research, analyze, engage, ideate, take action, and reflect. **Thus, the second goal is to begin the work of the BCLC by focusing on food.** Step one of this goal includes the research and analysis phases of this process which will begin by identifying and gathering together of all those currently working in the area of food. Facilitating a conversation to understand the current status of food needs in the community will lay the groundwork for a possible collaborative food project. Using proven planning processes and strategies, we will offer support and guidance towards developing a "common language" **(Goal #3, creating the "common language").**

Following a thorough and collaborative analysis of food needs in our county, we will share the collected information with the community through marketing and information pieces, as well as a website developed as part of our Pathway Project (Step 2 of this goal). This will be the catalyst for the community conversation (Food Summit) that will be conducted as part of the engage and ideate phases. The engagement activities and events will be planned and developed to reflect the various target populations within our diverse county. The BCLC will be promoting the importance of community engagement as a fundamental part of any community planning effort (Step 3 of this goal).

The results and information gathered through the engage and ideate phases will be compiled and reported to the community through a variety of methods. After completing an analysis of the county's food issues and assets, we will work with a broad group of interested individuals to develop possible collaborative solutions.

The fourth goal is to put into action solutions addressing food challenges. In the action phase, we will choose one or more collaborative food projects that address the identified prioritized needs. We will provide seed money and support to ensure the success of the chosen project or projects. However, we do not plan for the project to be a BCLC project. Our goal will be to inspire a collaboration that is managed and sustained by a cooperative group of food leaders; again, similar to the way HCI provides a process that leads to a project but is not managed by HCI.

Our final goal is to implement a sustainable process for tackling our community's complex challenges. Once the food project has been successfully completed we will conduct a reflective analysis of how the process could be improved. We will then choose another category of need and repeat the engagement and planning processes, implementing any improvements. The hope and intent will be to add a new set of collaborative leaders to become members of the BCLC with every category of need that is addressed.

c. Explain how the collaborations you have built with one another as an HCI team, along with the partnerships you have built with other groups in your community/county, have helped guide the selection of your Pathway Project and its major goals:

Our HCI team is, by design, a diverse representation of the Brown County community. We were very deliberate in choosing members to represent business and industry, government, education, non-profit and civic, faith-based, and economic development sectors. Of our twenty-eight team members, there were: two elected officials (county auditor and county council) and five others were candidates in this election cycle; two appointed county officials (redevelopment commission); three members of the Community Foundation board, including the board chair; the past president and several members of the League of Women Voters; three mental health professionals; four educators; two members of the local historical association; two members of the strategic planning board of a local entertainment venue; the leader of the local food network; three members of the arts community; and one township trustee. In addition, several of the above mentioned people are business owners. Two members are on the Quality of Place attraction team of the Ready Communities Initiative, a subgroup of the Regional Opportunity Initiative. Ages of the team ranged from twenty-five to ninety.

As we worked through the leadership training process, we realized that collaboration and communication were critical for the future success of our HCI team and any future projects we hoped to undertake. We believe that the relationships that have been established

through our HCI process will enable us to reach out and include many of the nonprofits, the school corporation, the faith community, and the local government in the leadership cooperative process. Realizing that our diverse team has become a collaborative working group, we understand the value that a larger collaborative group could bring to Brown County.

d. List what activities of the organizations/agencies that have been part of your HCI effort during the Foundation and/or Building Block phase(s) will be actively helping with the Pathway Project. Additionally, list new organizations/agencies that have been recruited to help implement various Pathway Project activities.

The HCI team will use what it learned during Leadership Training to collaboratively develop an organizational structure for the BCLC. A strategic plan, procedures and by-laws, and a sustainability plan will need to be developed. BCLC has the support of the Brown County Redevelopment Commission (RDC) and the Community Foundation. The RDC has provided the local match for project funding. The Community Foundation has agreed to be a repository for any grant funds, and assist with the review of grants as they have an established application and decision process.

The Brown County School Corporation has agreed to provide space for public meetings, and possibly assist in the development of a BCLC website. Members of the board of Leadership Brown County (LEAP) are interested in working together to involve their graduates in community projects. We have the support of the Nashville Arts and Entertainment Commission and Peaceful Valley Heritage in any future projects in those arenas.

Our list of partners in the food sector has yet to be fully developed, but will likely include: our food pantry, Mother's Cupboard; local growers; our CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture); restaurant owners; school corporation officials; farmers market vendors; faith-based food pantries; non-profits that provide food resources; the local seed bank (Seed Brown County); grocery stores; organizers of our local Back-Pack program); as well as the Community Foundation, elected town and county officials, township trustees, Brown County Redevelopment Commission, Purdue University Extension service (for outreach space and facilitator resources), and Leadership Brown County (LEAP). As we move into a new community sector, we will research the organizations and volunteers in that sector, and work to recruit representatives from each area. The success of the cooperative depends on extensive community engagement and collaboration. We believe that the relationships that have been established during our HCI process will enable us to reach out and engage people throughout the county.

e. As a separate document, develop a timeline of your team's Capstone Project activities. What will be done and over what period of time? [See the final pages of application for the

recommended format for detailing your timeline. An example of a project goal and activities is provided as a guide].

Goals, Objectives, Timeline

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (activities)	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV
GOAL 1. Support & foster collaboration between new & existing leaders by establishing the Brown County Leadership Cooperative											
GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES											
1. Model the use of proven planning processes in the organization and planning of the BCLC	X										
a. Develop mission, vision, goals & values of the Cooperative	X										
b. Develop a unified message for the community that describes the BCLC & its goals	X	X									
c. Establish an organizational structure (governance) with committees, obligations, ground rules, etc.	X										
d. Identify skill sets needed for success	X										
e. Determine procedures for member outreach and recruitment	X	X									
f. Develop plans for sustainability & funding sources	X	X									
2. Identify nonprofit partners in the community & discuss working relationships	X	X									
a. Meet with Brown County Community Foundation (BCCF) to discuss fiscal arrangements and potential 'home' for the BCLC	X										
b. Meet with LEAP to discuss a partnership using new graduates for community projects	X	X									
c. Meet with BCCF to discuss assistance in our granting process	X	X									
3. Begin development of a webpage to share the mission & projects of BCLC		X	X	X	X						
a. Identify a partner that would be willing to host our webpage, i.e. RDC or BCCF		X									

b. Determine funding for webpage		X	X	X	X						
c. Develop a plan to keep the information current	X	X	X								
d. Identify a webmaster for the organization		X	X								
e. Develop a plan to maintain a database of organizations/contacts & their interests		X	X	X							
4. Begin development of a branding and marketing strategy for BCLC		X	X	X	X						
a. Develop an 'elevator' pitch for the community		X	X								
b. Determine how information on BCLC will be shared with the community		X	X								
GOAL 2. Introduce a common language for planning & improvement that can be used for every "project" and improves competency, transparency & effectiveness of community leaders											
GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES											
1. Identify the stakeholders and potential partners in an identified category of need (FOOD)		X	X								
a. Identify & contact individuals & organizations working in the food sector in Brown County		X	X								
b. Gather information on/from those groups to assess services & products currently provided (food inventory)		X	X								
c. Compile the information into a preliminary report on food resources & needs in Brown County			X								
d. Share the report with those in the food sector			X								
e. Host a roundtable discussion to collect input from those stakeholders			X								
2. Develop leadership capability through support for planning and execution			X	X	X	X	X	X			
a. Engage & support the food stakeholders in a collaborative analysis & visioning process				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
b. Facilitate a discussion using SWOT analysis to identify areas of need within food sector (resources & priorities)				X	X						
c. Assist in compiling the information & developing a report to be shared with the				X	X						

community												
d. Identify gaps in data that need to be filled by community input				X	X							
e. Develop a marketing plan & timeline to disseminate the report & gather feedback				X	X							
1) Provide website information & updates throughout the process				X	X							
2) Provide articles & letters to the editor for the Democrat newspaper				X	X	X						
3) Use social media to disseminate information throughout the process				X	X	X	X					
GOAL 3. Increase collaboration and communication between leaders and citizens												
GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES												
1. Conduct a variety of community informational activities to share the food inventory information & identify community priorities				X	X	X	X	X				
a. Develop paper & electronic surveys & other engagement materials					X	X	X					
b. Use a food questionnaire at locations that disseminate food, i.e. groceries, Mother's Cupboard, farmers markets, etc.					X	X	X					
c. Determine target populations, target neighborhoods & best way to reach them					X	X	X					
d. Develop news releases & website updates					X	X	X	X				
e. Assist in organizing & hosting a food summit if needed							X	X				
f. Re-evaluate food SWOT based on community input								X				
g. Determine community priorities based on all the information gathered								X				
h. Develop an updated food report for the community & disseminate widely								X	X			

GOAL 4. Support and assist identified community projects that reflect the needs and priorities of the community												
GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES												
1. Fund community supported food project(s)										X	X	X
a. Develop criteria & application for BCLC- supported food project(s)									X	X		
b. Solicit grant proposals for food sector projects based on community priorities									X	X		
c. Identify potential projects through the Community Foundation grant process									X	X		
d. Determine funding & other possible sources of funding									X	X		
e. Fund project(s) & assist with implementation where necessary												
f. Market the projects being funded										X	X	
g. Conduct internal & external review & reflection to determine improvements to process											X	X
GOAL 5. Communicate and expand support for the Leadership Cooperative												
GOAL 5 OBJECTIVES												
1. Share success of projects with community											X	X
2. Maintain directory of co-op volunteers											X	X
3. Sustain and expand the website											X	X
4. Continue to look for partnership opportunities											X	X
5. Plan for additional growth & funding sources (Gift VII & Partnership)												X
6. Provide links to available community resources												X
7. Provide links to community information & events												X

5. f. Describe how you plan to sustain the work of the HCI team beyond the Capstone Project.

The Community Foundation has agreed to act as the fiscal agent for the Leadership Cooperative. There exists an active relationship between the Foundation and HCI, as well as between the Brown County School Corporation and HCI. Multiple members of the HCI team are members of the Community Foundation board, the school corporation administration and the Regional Opportunities Initiative (ROI) Ready Communities Quality of Place Advisory team. One of the goals of that project is to reinvigorate the Brown County 'Partnership,' a group of local stakeholders who represented all aspects of the community.

During the years that the Partnership was active, many projects were successfully launched and sustained in the community. We will solicit the support and assistance of the Partnership moving forward.

Multiple governmental and nonprofit agencies are interested in improving the quality of Brown County leadership and the planning processes that are used. We continue to have the support of the Brown County Redevelopment Commission. The Redevelopment Commission (RDC) hopes to sponsor a 'leadership series' in 2019. We intend to collaborate with the RDC where possible.

Our HCI team is committed to continuing the process we started almost two years ago. Grants are available for small community projects through the Community Foundation and the Fabulous Fifty Women. The ROI Quality of Place Initiative and Lilly Gift VII Initiative both have funding available for local planning, improvement and leadership projects. We will pursue local funding when needed projects are identified. The BCLC will not be an entity that requires a great deal of financial support, but rather more human capital to be successful.

g. Share details about your budget. The budget should include the proposed \$5,000 funding from OCRA, as well as the \$5,000 cash match that your team has committed to the HCI program.

Program Costs	Grant Request	Cash Match	In-Kind	Total
Website Construction	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
Outreach (food sector communication and marketing)	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$1,500
Community Engagement (food summit or similar events)	\$0	\$500	TBD	\$500
Seed money for food project(s)	\$3,500	\$2,500	\$0	\$6,000
Future development (website, capital expenses, and future projects)	\$0	\$1,000	TBD	\$1,000
Total Program Costs	\$5,000	\$5,000	TBD	\$10,000

6. Contact information of the person submitting this application:

Name: Jan Mills

Click or tap here to enter text.

Telephone Number: 812.200.6438

Click or tap here to enter text.

Email Address: janhmills@gmail.com

Click or tap here to enter text