

8 Emerging Themes Arcadia/DeSoto Community Conversations

SMALL PROJECTS TO GO BIG

1. Beautification of Arcadia (DeSoto County)

- a. Community Cleanup (support current efforts & create more opportunities)
- b. Better Arcadia & DeSoto County Day (plan projects throughout City & County same day)
- c. Support efforts toward the resurgence of the Downtown Business District

2. A Safe and Peaceful Arcadia and DeSoto County

- a. Support citizen relationship development with Law Enforcement (City and County)
- b. Provide training for Elementary, Middle and High School students on positive existence and relationship building (Civility) – No bullying!
- c. Collaborate on experiencing religious services and programs of all faiths to understand all viewpoints.

3. Nonprofit, Business, Resident and Economic Opportunities to Support DeSoto County

- a. New restaurants, bowling, theater, support Opera House renovation & programs
- b. Organized and supported Youth Center (Collaborate with a Downtown storefront for 1 night week/month for youth center and share costs)
- c. Expand Medical Education and Employment Opportunities
- d. Community support of community projects (\$100 - \$1000 for a small projects)
- e. Facilitate regular monthly meetings with Nonprofit Agencies
- f. Frequently bring community together for a variety of aspirational events (i.e., SRLD, support Friday night lights events)
- g. Internships for College/High School/Elementary – teachers and other professionals
- h. Sponsor youth and NPA lead programs at Library meeting rooms to elevate resources connecting, collaborating, read to children, learn technology, youth gain required community service hours, extended Library hours may need to be financially supported (Library Manager is favorable to this idea)

4. Technology/Digital Access for All

- a. Attract Technology Service Providers for buildout of broadband infrastructure
- b. Technology training & career development (South Florida College students, Digital Navigators and CareerSource Suncoast)
- c. Develop communications and marketing efforts to reach all, online, social media and written presence, community calendar,
- d. Upgrade technology with Elementary, Middle School and High School facilities
- e. Create a Digital Newspaper that has a 1-page hardcopy available, or partner with current publications for special section- “If you want to know, here’s where you go”

5. Family Fun Friendly Events with Sustainability

- a. Outdoor Movies, speakers, outdoor bowling, festival atmosphere
- b. Events with a regular and Sustainable Schedule
- c. Expand the DeSoto Library relationship through events to the entire community.
- d. Fishing Night at the IFAS facility
- e. Turner Center – Skating Night
- f. Saddle Club at the Mosaic Arena
- g. Support the creation of a Young DeSoto Leadership Group
- h. Youth Recreation Center development

6. Preserve Historical Essence of the Community and Grow with thoughtful Engaged Planning

- a. Maintain and improve Downtown Historical Arcadia
- b. Help plan guidelines for future growth and develop zoning options
- c. Increase affordable housing options for all
- d. Fountains, murals, and art walk
- e. Mapping Society

7. Support Advanced Focus on Education Enhancement

- a. Infuse creative ways to ensure reading on Grade level by 3rd Grade
- b. Training and Support Provided to current and future teachers
- c. Student Support and Leadership Training
- d. Support School District needs (Elementary, Middle and High School, Administration and Board)
- e. Support South Florida College Education and Training Opportunities
- f. Support options for new High School construction in conjunction with District and State Financing grants.

8. Reconnect with Students, Parents, Teacher and Administration for Educational Support

- a. Re-establish in school before and after school volunteer readers program
- b. Needs for additional classrooms and/or schools at the elementary and middle school level
- c. Support student-oriented recreation and enhanced education efforts (i.e., brain bowl events, land use planning, chorus & band competitions and performances, support higher education opportunities)
- d. Love our school projects (school beautification done by students, parents, teachers, business, community and administration from the schools)
- e. Creative teacher recruitment and support to stay (housing support, teacher in service and training)
- f. Family training for parent involvement
- g. Behavioral support programs at schools