



REGIONAL FORUM SERIES 1

Blount County

Idea Consolidation Record

This document shows how similar ideas created at each table were combined for keypad polling. These ideas were quickly combined during the meeting to allow for shorter lists to poll upon, so they were a best effort to get the intention of the ideas provided. In some cases, the exact wording of one idea was used because it best captured the intention of all similar ideas.

For some meetings, the ideas were too different to combine enough to fit on one slide, and there is a longer list, split between two slides. Remember, the polling prioritization provides only a snapshot of priorities of those in the room, not a conclusive vote on any ideas.

In the lists below, the summary idea is in bold, with the similar ideas that were combined into the summary idea below. The summary ideas are the ones that were used for keypad polling.

Blount County

Regional Strengths

Recycling opportunities

- Recycling opportunities

Increased sense of regional communication and cooperation

- Increased sense of regional communication and discussion.
- Willingness to cooperate, open minded people

Diversified by having urban and rural opportunities along with native citizens and new residents

- Diversified by having urban and rural opportunities along with native citizens and people moving into the area.

Strong pride in culture and appalachian heritage and rural character; a personal interest in the area

- Patriotic, proud of culture and heritage.
- Great cultural and scenic identity.
- People care about the area, strong sense of volunteerism, personal interest in the area.
- Public involvement in governmental processes.
- open spaces, farm land, and churches
- Rich heritage - great history
- Appalachian heritage is important

Low cost of living

- low cost of living, 4

Independent county identity without interference

- best place to live without interference from other counties/cities
- independent county identity with an independent will and lawmaking ability

Benefits of natural resources like regional identity, tourism and recreation

- Natural beauty of rivers and mountains provide a regional identity to the nation
- Natural Beauty

- Tourism, natural areas, only free national park
- Lake Systems
- Good area for tourism based on environmental assets
- Benefits of natural resources
- Recreational opportunities - mountains, rivers, etc
- Low taxes
- Low taxes
- No income tax
- Low taxes - all across the board

Technology institutions - ORNL, UT, tech corridor - providing important research and entrepreneurial spirit

- Small businesses, entrepreneurial spirit, takes advantage of technology surrounding us, a lot going on, important research.
- ORNL
- Technology corridor, UTK - Oak Ridge connection

Geographic location and transportation system

- Transportation network is strong, central location for industrial base for the greater Southeastern US.
- centrally located destination & national accessibility to other places, interstate infrastructure, 5
- geographic location and transportation infrastructure
- Connectivity of our road networks
- Transportation system, connectivity between communities and connection to the national system

Regional Challenges

Need to attract visitors to the area and welcome them to go home after they spend their money.

Gap between rich & poor

Lack of crisis services

Voter apathy throughout

Few transportation choices - e.g., public transit, ped/bike

- Public transportation is not available
- lack of sidewalks, pedestrian accessibility, public transportation, other ways to get around aside from the car, 6
- poor public transportation, crowded roads
- Public transportation between Knoxville, Oak Ridge and the airport and within major cities

Lack of affordable housing

- Affordable housing.

Maintain local independence in decision making e.g. counties and municipalities operate independently, protect personal rights

- Protecting each communities autonomy
- Protect our personal rights and our freedoms and property rights
- inappropriate Use of eminent domain
- sounding the alarm that PlanET jauggernaut is about to gobble up their personal property rights
- need to give the people in Blount County through a referendum a choice when any regional plan is to be implemented because sustainable development is not always appropriate for everyone
- keeping all county and municipality governments independent of the others

Maintaining our environment, including air and water quality

- Maintaining our environment, air quality.
- air & water quality; protection of natural resources, 4
- Pollution of streams, air, etc.

Lack of land use controls

- Land use controls

Shared responsibility in maintaining local roads

- Improvement of local roads shared by multiple jurisdictions.

Education is low quality and poorly funded

- Education improvements such as public school system (K-12).
- Overcrowded public schools
- Not willing to adequately fund and value public education.
- Education level of the workforce - availability of High School vocational training
- quality of k-12 education

Lack of quality jobs and job training

- Jobs that pay decent wages are scarce (\$10-\$12/hour jobs not adequate).
- Unemployment
- Job Market - creating quality jobs, job availability, need to develop more good jobs, an emphasis on green jobs
- Available job and trade training

Public health issues e.g., drugs, obesity

- Overall substance abuse problem
- Childhood obesity epidemic
- Personal health
- Drugs and crime

Too many small business regulations

- Too many regulations for small business.