

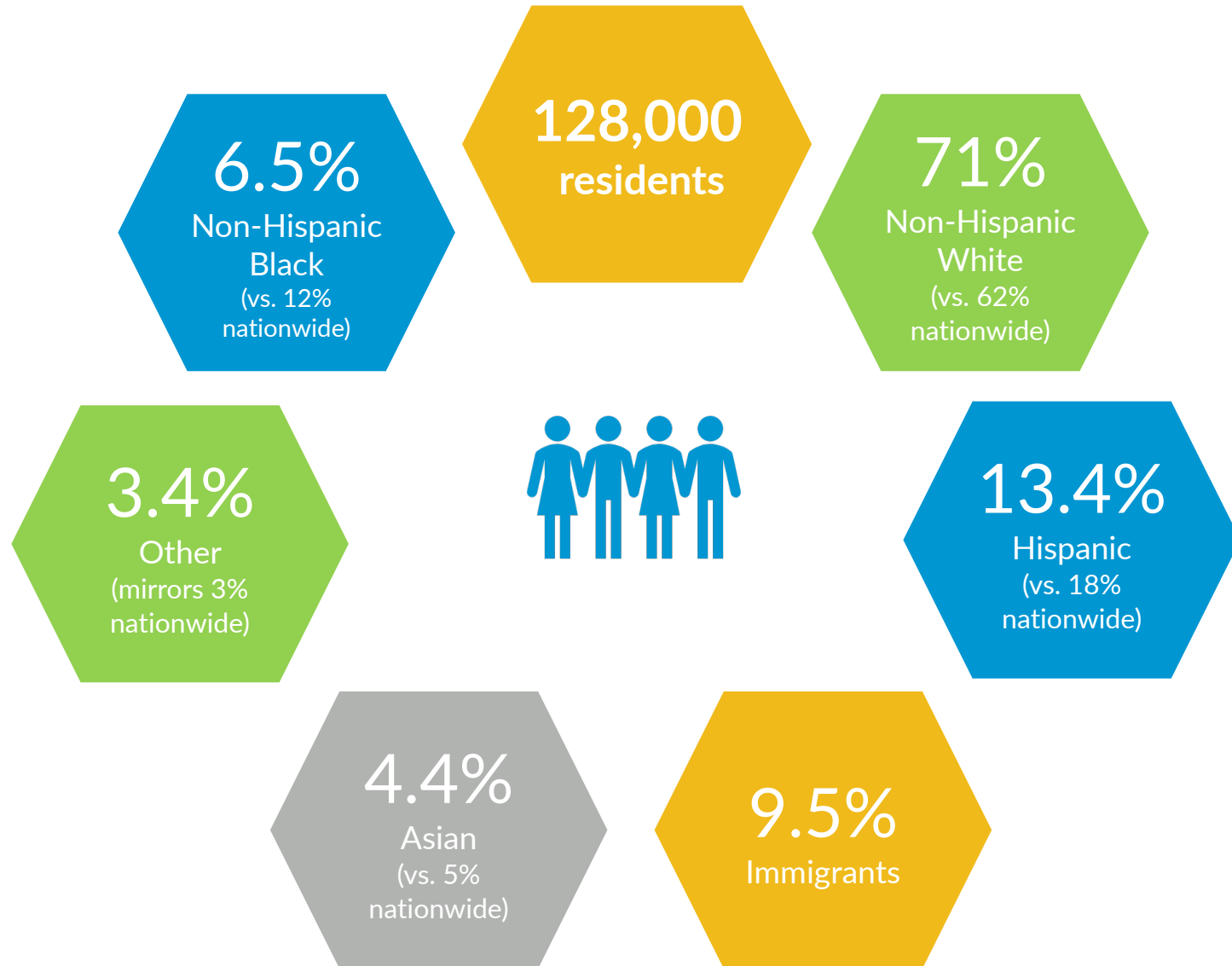


Welcome to the Sebastian County Data Walk!

Community

What is it like to
live in Sebastian County?

Who lives in Sebastian County?



Snapshot of Children in Sebastian County

30% Households have children



Children in poverty



23%

Sebastian County

24%

Arkansas

20%

US

Children in Foster Care

1,093

2017



745

2010

Growing inequality in Fort Smith

Though incomes are increasing,
so is the poverty rate.

Median household income:

\$37,000 in 2012

\$42,000 in 2017



Poverty Rate

Sebastian County

22.5% in 2017



20.5% in 2012

Arkansas

18.1% in 2017

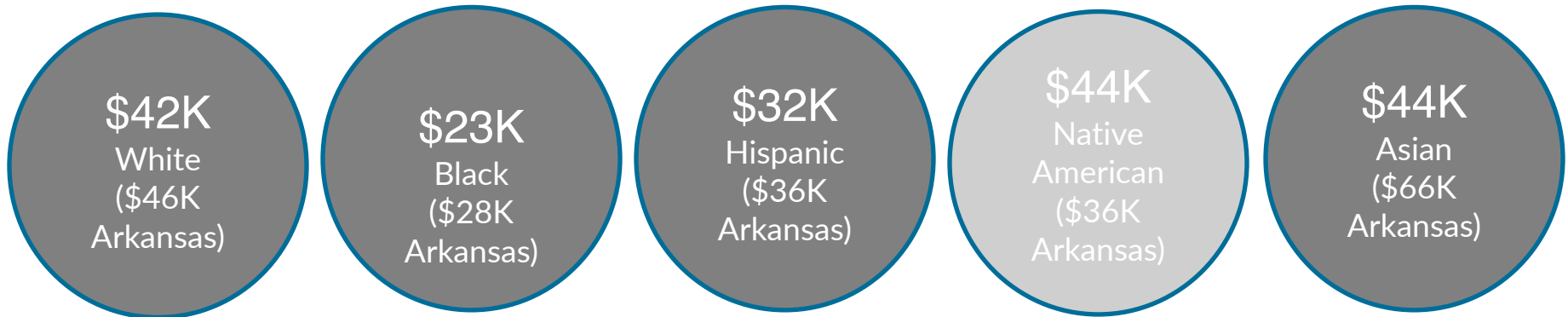


18.7% in 2012

Lower income than the state, and wide racial disparity



Median household income lower than Arkansas, and major racial disparities



Food Insecurity in Sebastian County

Food Insecurity in Sebastian County

Food Insecurity is the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.

20,970
residents are
food insecure
(16%)

1 In 4
children are
food insecure

13,000
students receive
free or reduced
lunch

Who needs and accesses Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)?

The SNAP benefit per meal in Sebastian County is \$1.86

The average cost of a meal is \$2.10, 13% more than the SNAP benefit

Households that receive SNAP



16%

Sebastian County

13%

Arkansas

12%

U.S.

Sebastian County compared to peer groups

Group 4: Moderately high food insecure urban counties with highest housing cost burden

Moderately
high food
insecurity
(16 percent)

Slightly below
avg.
economic
health,
slightly above
avg. physical
health

Highest
housing cost
burden

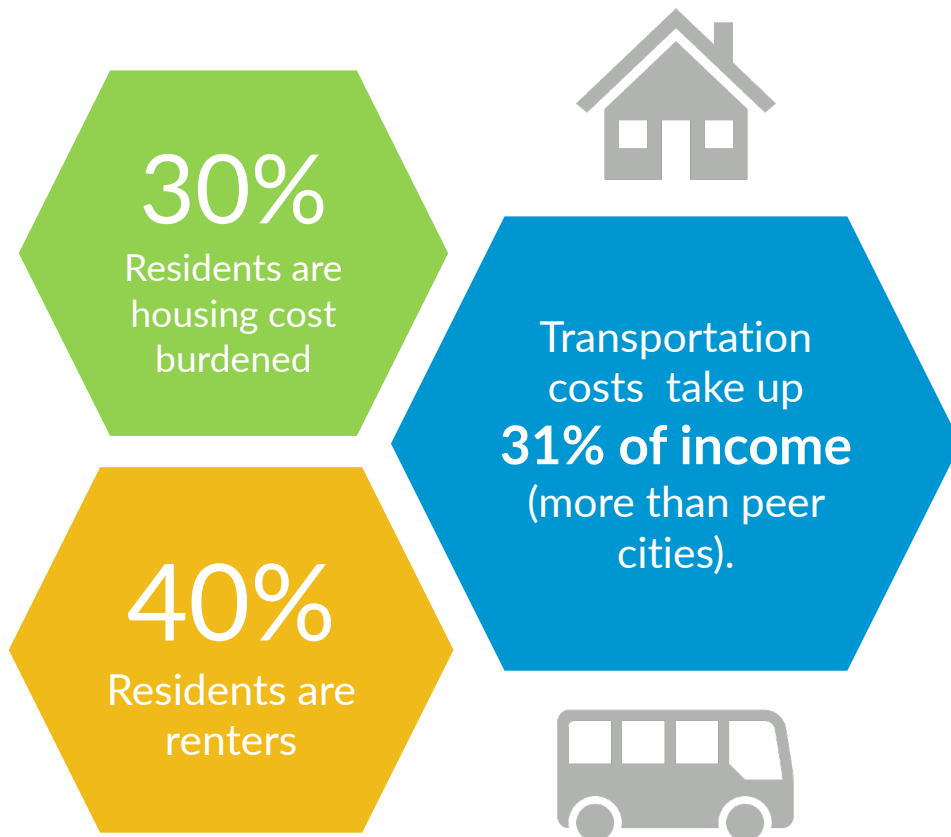
Residents
tend to be
more diverse
& educated

Peers:

Richmond, VA
Pulaski County, AR
Baltimore County, MD
Sedgwick County (Wichita), KS
Bossier Parish (Shreveport), LA
Travis County (Austin), TX
Los Angeles County, CA

Food Insecurity as a Symptom of Larger Trends

High housing costs contribute to food insecurity



Working at minimum wage (\$9.25 per hour), a worker would need to work **44 hours per week year round** to afford a one-bedroom apartment.

A person would need to make **\$13.40** an hour or an income of **\$27,872** a year to afford a two- bedroom apartment, compared with **\$17.96** in peer cities.



Jobs



Unemployment rate

3.7%

Sebastian County

3.9%

Arkansas

5.5%

Peer Counties

While unemployment is low, those with lower educational attainment face higher rates

75%

do not have a college degree (vs. 70% nationwide)

Most common occupations and median wages

Office and Administrative Support
\$14.26

Production Occupations
\$12.81

Sales
\$11.45

Food Preparation and Serving
\$9.36

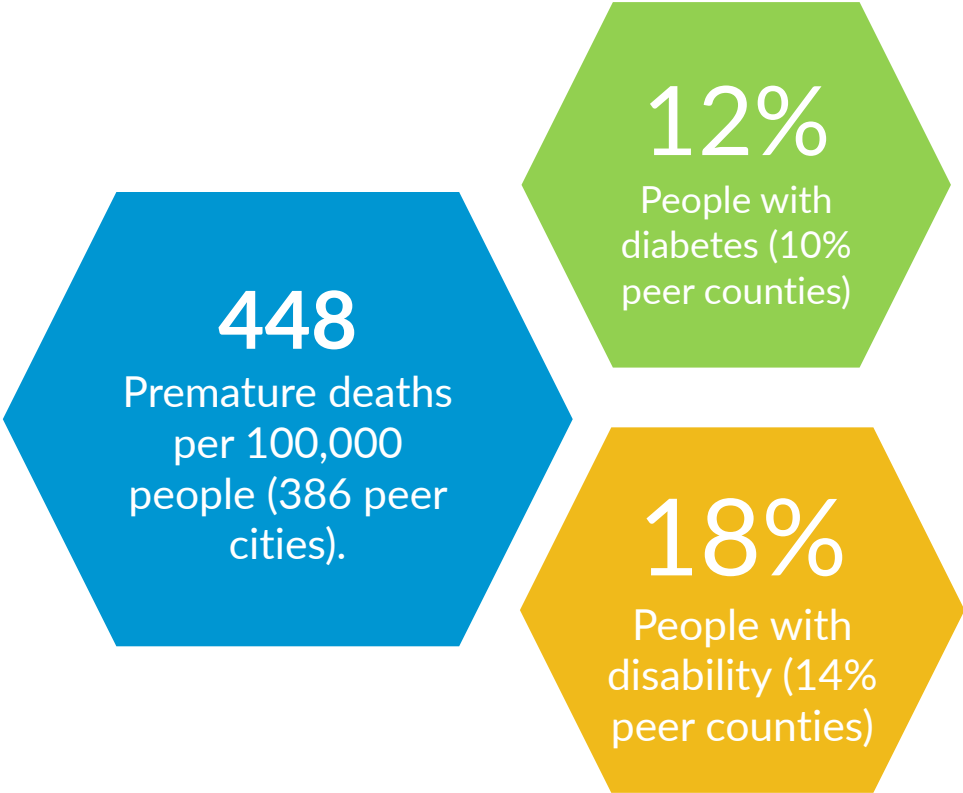
Transportation
\$14.56

Healthcare Practitioners
\$25.16

Food insecurity is associated with poor health

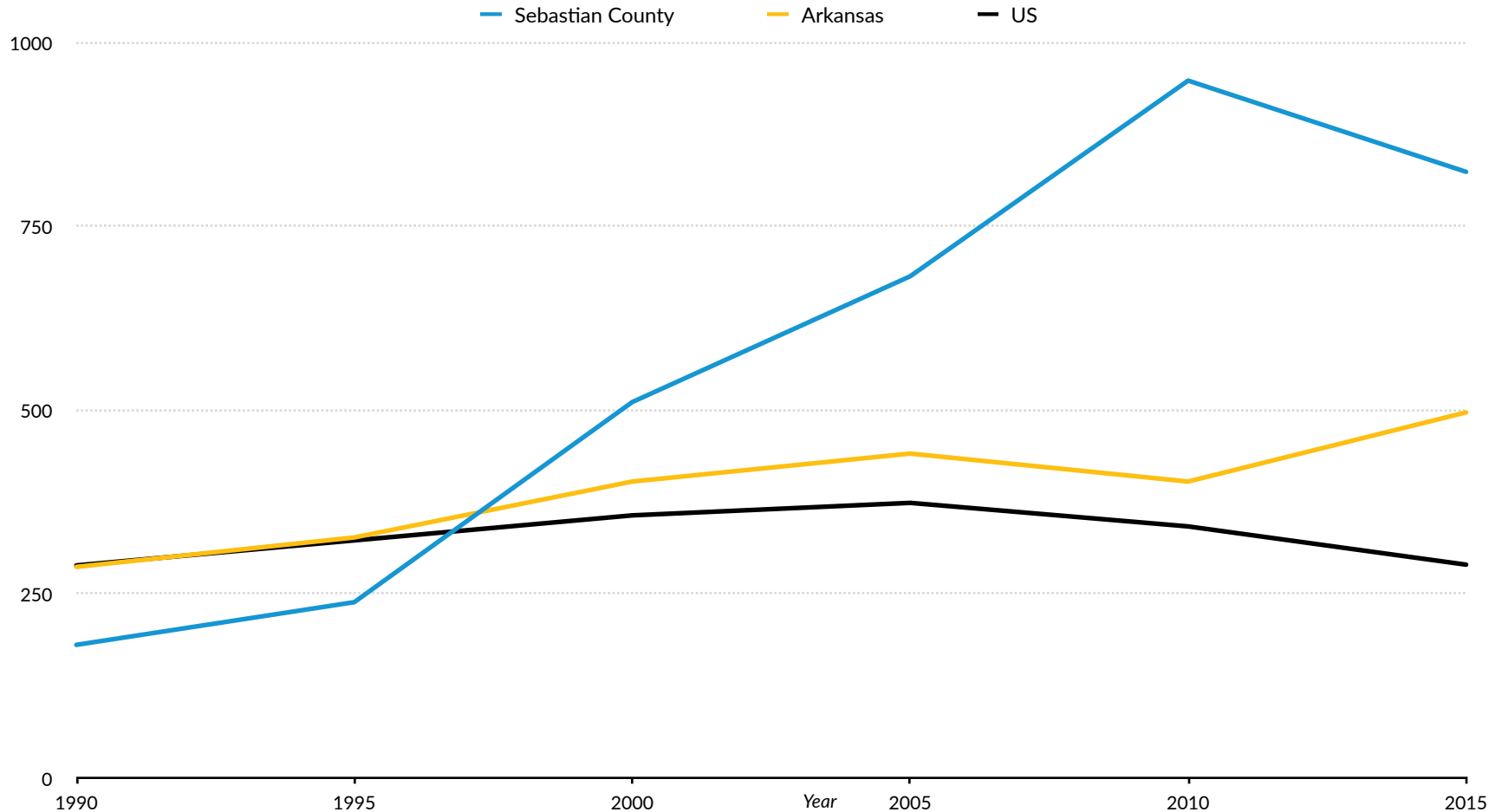
Sebastian County has slightly lower rates of people with no health insurance (9%) than its peer counties (10%).

But, Sebastian County fares worse in diabetes rates and disability rates.

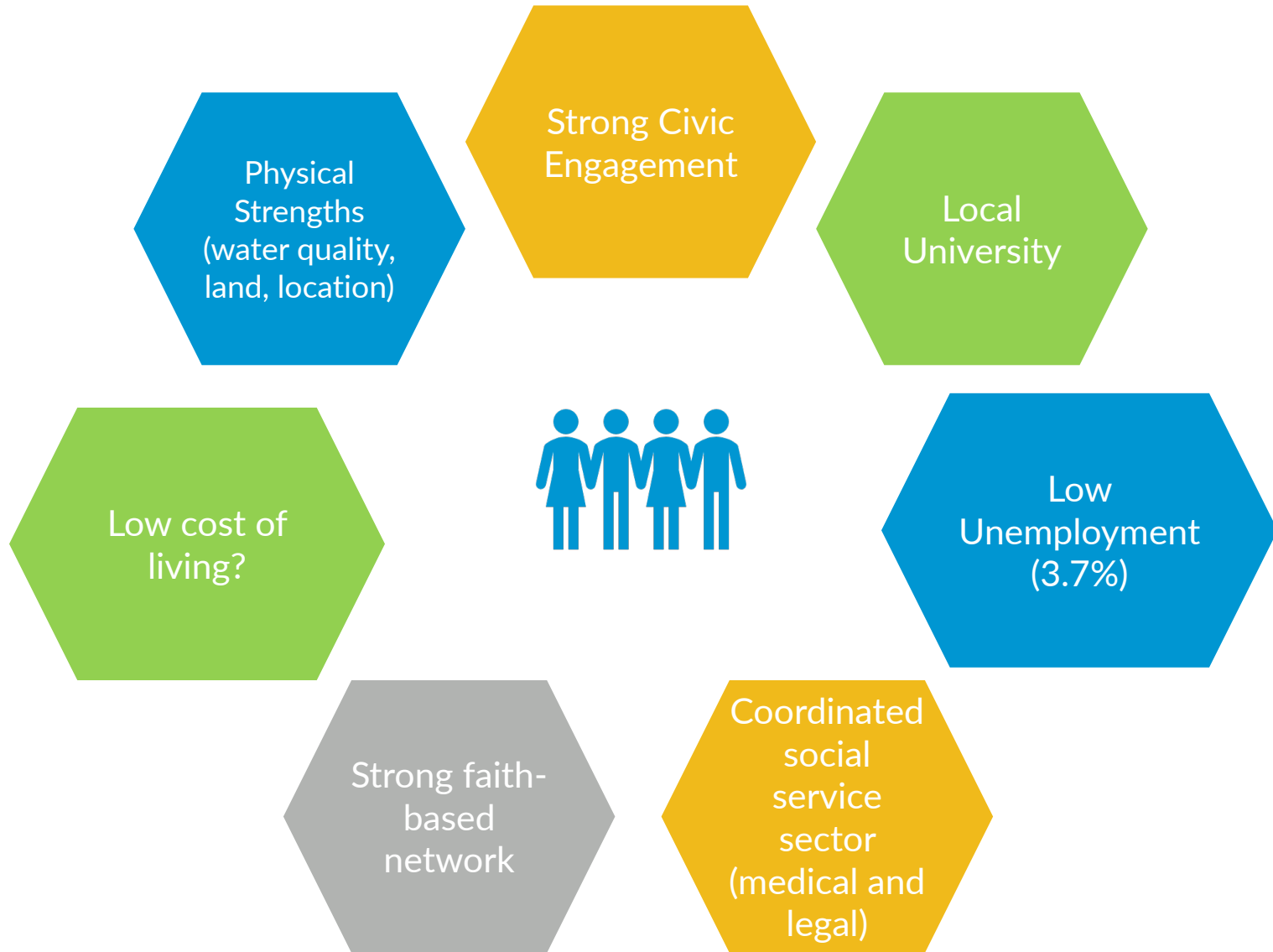


Many families in Sebastian County may be affected by incarceration

Prison admissions rates (per 100,000 residents)



Playing to Sebastian County's Strengths



Imagine



Develop a service, program, or policy change that would help improve access to healthy foods for adults and youth in your county



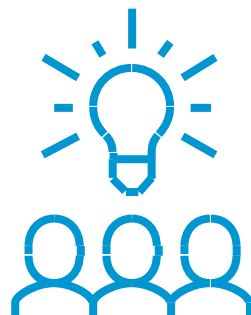
Guiding Questions

What community challenge does it address?

What is it called?

Who is it designed for?

What would it take to implement it?



Five Actionable Strategies

BRING MORE VOICES TO THE TABLE

Social Stigma Racist Incidents Bullying

Low Income/Minorities Left Out of County Investment Decisions

Ensure Decision-Making does Not Further Disadvantage

Are We Working Towards Reducing Disparities?

IMPROVE COORDINATION ACROSS EDUCATION SECTORS

Build Networks that Coordinate transitions

Identify those in Need Provide Continuous Service

Actionable Strategies (continued)

INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION WITH HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Persistent Gaps in Healthcare

Senior Care and Disabled Care

Vicious Cycle of Oral Health and Nutrition Challenges

Mental Health Care

INCREASE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Major Barrier to Accessing Food, Jobs and Health Care

Include Residents AND Health Care Providers in Planning

New or Expanded Subsidies

Actionable Strategies (cont.)

PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INCARCERATED

- Only One or No Degrees of Separation

- Limited (Perceived) Education or Job Training Options

- Pay Inmates for Work

 - Hurts Families While a Member is Jailed

 - Hurts Inmate Once Released

 - Generational and Familial Food Insecurity

- Create Holistic Strategies that Include City Leaders, Non- Profits, Caseworkers and Employers. 100 Families

 - Support Networks for Affected Families

 - Trauma-Informed Strategies to Address Complexities and Intersecting Needs

Op-Ed Immediate Recommendations

- A new downtown mural that empowers tolerance and inclusion
- Well-known human rights and role model speakers hosted by UAFS, US Marshal Museum and the Library
- Race Equity and Implicit bias training proactively presented in the workplace rather than court ordered
- Make Social equity a higher priority in our schools.
- An embrace of Juneteenth as a community celebration and the MLK Parade as one of the best events of the year.

Op-Ed Longer-Term Recommendations

- A local **Commission on Poverty** taking a deeper dive into affordable housing, renter protections, improved public transit and cradle-to-grave social support
- **Emissary Dialog** with peer communities. Austin, Baltimore, Bossier City, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Richmond and Wichita have similar food insecurity and housing burden problems like we do. *What is working for them might work for us.*
- Revitalize **Hub Communities** designed for walkability. All around Fort Smith are niche neighbors with long forgotten potential that are ripe for incentivized development of start-up business, small business expansion and franchise.
- Rethink how we conduct city business. Each neighborhood knows its **Natural Born Leaders**. Deputize them as formal delegates that participate in larger community conversations.

Momentum is needed in two directions:
leadership down and grass roots up

In simpler terms, working together,
with resolve,
to create a level playing field.