



2024-
2025

TableTalk REPORT

CENTRAL FLORIDA
FOUNDATION

Introduction

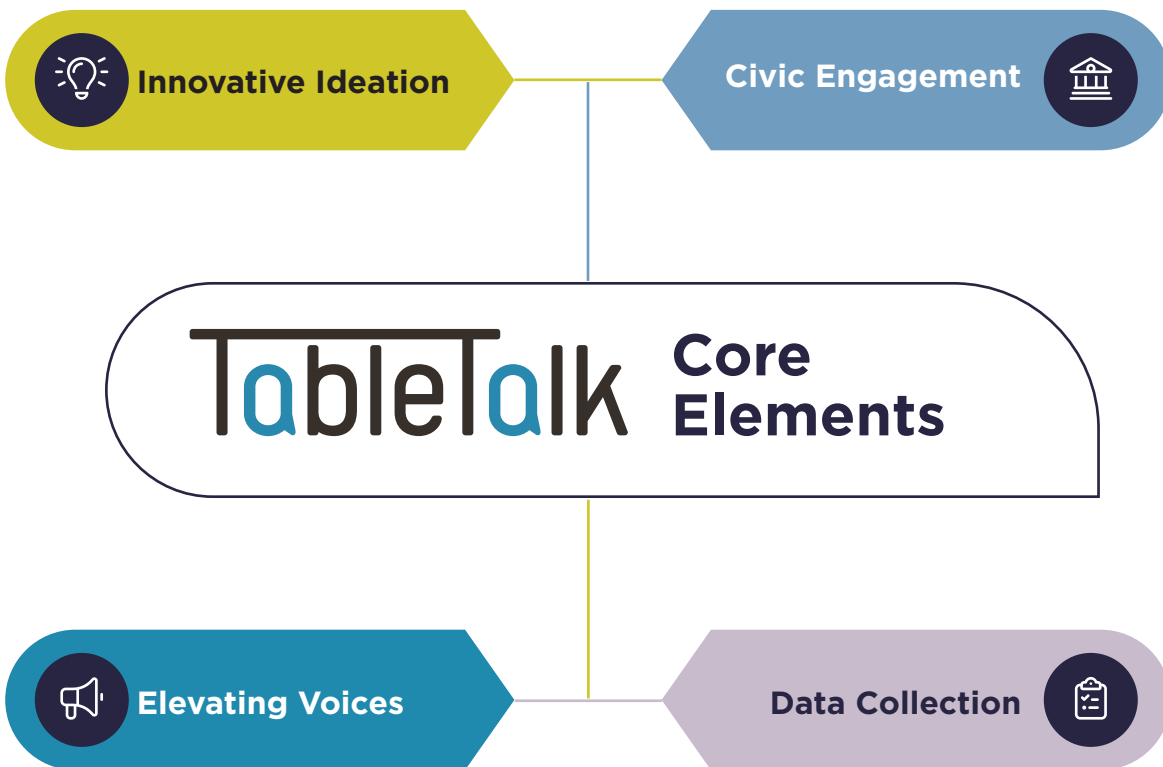
Launched by Central Florida Foundation in 2019, TableTalk is an initiative centered around candid, small-group conversations by Central Floridians. TableTalk gets ideas flowing about all the different ways — big and small — each of us can make Central Florida a better place. Through conversation, we encourage each other, create connections, and build community.

**It doesn't stop
with TableTalk,
but rather begins.**

At its core, TableTalk embraces four core components: innovative ideation, civic engagement, elevating voices, and data collection. These elements together allow our community to come together, converse, and have tangible outcomes.



Credit: Willie J. Allen, Jr.





Conversations were guided by 3 suggested questions.

Participating organizations were asked to select a topic for discussion. If no topic was already in mind, a Thrive Focus Area aligning with the organization's focus was recommended. These questions, however, were only suggested, allowing organizations, who knew their communities best, to determine the final questions posed to participants.

TableTalk

SUGGESTED TABLE QUESTIONS

1. What's going well in this space?
2. What is a challenge preventing more progress in this space? Think of 1-3 challenges.
3. How can we take action to address one of these challenges?

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cffound.org/tabletalk
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#cfftabletalk



THRIVE CENTRAL FLORIDA

Our blueprint for moving forward together.



COMMUNITY
& SOCIAL
CONNECTION



EDUCATION



ECONOMIC
STABILITY



HEALTH &
WELL-BEING



LIVABILITY

Grantee	Conversation Focus	Grantee	Conversation Focus
Black Empowerment & Community Council	Urgent need for a resource center in Osceola County	Pathlight Home	Permanent supportive housing and case management needs
Dave's House	Housing solutions for individuals living with mental illness	Peace and Justice Institute	Historic community representation in Sanford's development
Familia Resilience Center*	Stigma around mental health in Latin community	Qlatinx*	Empowering and healing of marginalized community members
Fusion Fest*	Promoting awareness and spaces for cultural organizations	Senior Resource Alliance	Support and housing resources for women over 60
Interfaith Council of Central Florida	Gaps in interfaith interaction across the region	The Nurture Place	Need for providers who represent underserved populations
Orlando Center for Justice*	Immigrant communities face fear and lack of resources	UCF's College of Community Innovation and Education	Engaging residents to define livability in their neighborhoods
Osceola County Council On Aging	Resources that support the independence of Osceola seniors	Victoria Helping Veterans	Stable housing and access to educational resources for veterans
*Conversations held in multiple languages			

Conversation Highlights

Victoria Helping Veterans emphasized the need for affordable childcare, stable housing for veterans, and better access to educational resources to ensure long-term success.

Black Empowerment & Community Council [BECC] highlighted the urgent need for a resource center in Osceola County and committed to serving as the hub for nonprofit resources, while also creating more opportunities for networking and discussions on topics such as economic

development and grant preparedness.

Peace and Justice Institute held its conversation at the historic Hopper Academy in Sanford. The main discussion was centered around ensuring the historic Black community is not only represented but an active voice in shaping the developing area.

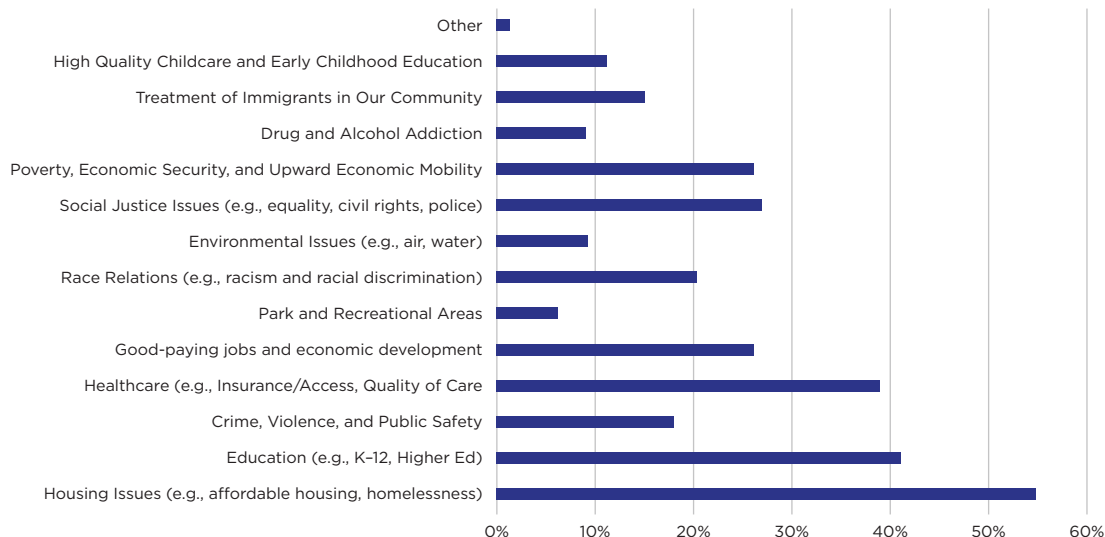
Interfaith Council noted gaps in interaction among faith communities in Central Florida and stressed the importance of "interfaith literacy," including the use of more inclusive language to reflect diverse traditions.

Survey Results

Participants completed an anonymous survey that asked questions about their feelings on certain topics and about their Table Talk experience. Overall, there were 263 survey responses from across 40 conversations.

Three Issues Most Important for the Community to Address

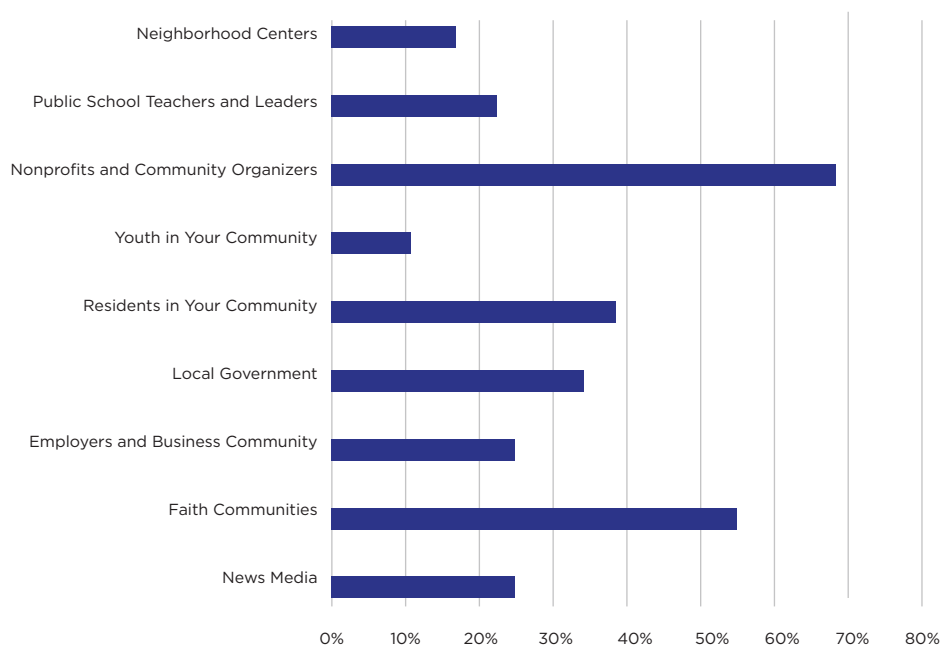
■ Percentage of Participants



In 2023, housing, poverty and good-paying jobs ranked first, second, and third, respectively. Housing is once again ranked the number one issue for our community to address.

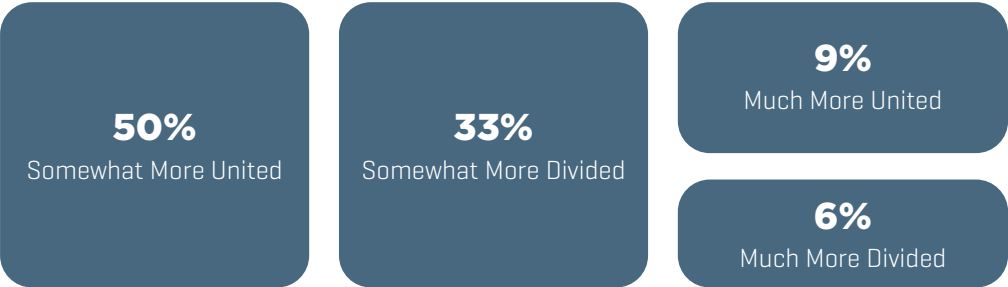
Three Groups with the Most Impact on Making the Community a Better Place

■ Percentage of Participants



In 2023, nonprofits, faith communities and residents ranked first, second, and third, respectively. This year, the top three groups determined as having the most impact of improving communities remain the same.

Community Sentiment on How Our Region Approaches Top Issues



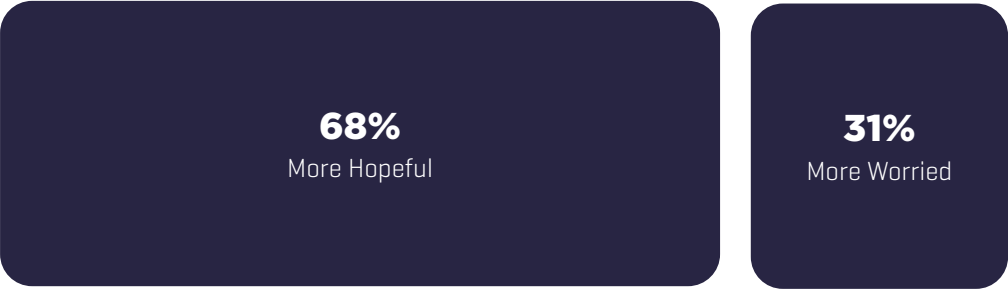
"Somewhat More United" is up 5% since 2023

Feelings on Participant's Ability to Make an Impact



Across all answers, there is a decline in the amount of impact participants feel they can have on the community.

Feeling Hopeful or Worried About the Next Five Years



In 2023, 76% of participants felt "More Hopeful," indicating a decline in optimism.

Survey Demographics

Participants were asked to fill out an anonymous survey. Based on these surveys:

- over half of all participants were between the ages of 35–54
- about 75% of participants were female
- the largest ethnicity represented was white/Caucasian, with Hispanic and Black/African American as the second and third largest, respectively
- about 60% of participants have children under the age of 18
- the vast majority of participants had never participated in a previous TableTalk

Table Notes

Each table host was asked to take notes and reflections during the conversation and share them with Central Florida Foundation. Here are a few excerpts from notes we received.



Credit: Willie J. Allen, Jr.

"Me parece de gran importancia esta gran iniciativa para reunir a la comunidad y trabajar juntas en equipo."

I find this initiative to be of great importance for bringing the community together and working as a team.

"Fue una experiencia muy bonita la reunion de hoy. Gracias por este espacio para brindarnos informacion valiosa."

Today's meeting was a very lovely experience. Thank you for this space to provide us with valuable information.

"Quiero agradecer sinceramente la invitacion a esta reunion tan importante. Es un honor para mí poder compartir mis experiencias y, sobre todo, contribuir a construir un mejor vecindario para todos. Estoy convencido de que, trabajando juntas, podemos lograr grandes cambios positivos. Gracias por esta oportunidad de colaborar y aportar al bienestar de nuestra comunidad."

I sincerely want to thank you for the invitation to this very important meeting. It is an honor for me to be able to share my experiences and, above all, to contribute to building a better neighborhood for everyone. I am convinced that, by working together, we can achieve great positive changes. Thank you for this opportunity to collaborate and contribute to the well-being of our community.

"At the Peace and Justice Institute TableTalk, we learned that the community is empowered and inspired when they are included in the history and future planning of historic buildings. Sanford is a passionate community. The mayor and a commissioner were in attendance and their connection with the residents is visible. Many of the attendees had a personal story related with the historic Hopper Academy, and the conversations with tablemates breathed life back into the heart of the building."

We believe that we were able to get a great hyper-local turnout due to our unique marketing efforts. We assembled a team of over 20 volunteers to walk around the neighborhood where the event took place and hung door hangers on their front doors. We printed about 350 door hangers and passed them all out. Additionally, we made strategic partnerships with local organizations whose mission was relevant to our event, such as the Georgetown Steering Committee.

A future event spurred from the TableTalk. The Georgetown Steering Committee, Sanford Museum, and PJI will host a screening of "The Six Triple Eight." We learned one of the women in attendance was in this historic all Black battalion in WW2, which is the topic of the film."



Credit: Willie J. Allen, Jr.



Credit: Asia Trend Magazine



Credit: Asia Trend Magazine



Credit: Willie J. Allen, Jr.



Credit: The Nurture Place

Next Steps

As with any initiative, CFF takes time to reflect on what we have learned and how this will inform future efforts. Here are the next steps that have come out of TableTalk.

01

Surveys and Notes Inform CFF's Strategy and Focus

Our Community Investment Team takes into consideration the concerns and ideas that come out of each TableTalk conversation.

02

A Continued Commitment to Civic Engagement

TableTalk is an exercise in coming together, discussing ideas, and understanding each other, even if we have differing opinions. This is an essential part of any thriving community.

03

TableTalk 2026

The next TableTalk is slated to take place in October 2026. This newest iteration of TableTalk, which included a more community-led approach, will continue to evolve. The experience will focus on its four core components, while finding new ways to invigorate our region with new ideas that are fueled for action. We are excited to share more details in June 2026.





Credit: Emily Wray



Credit: Willie J. Allen, Jr.



Credit: Emily Wray



Credit: Rafe Barretto



Credit: Emily Wray



Conclusion

The TableTalk 2024-2025 initiative demonstrates the power of conversation to shape community priorities, amplify diverse voices, and inspire collaborative solutions. Over four months, Central Florida residents came together in more than forty candid discussions, facilitated by local organizations who tailored the dialogue to reflect the unique strengths and challenges of their communities. We thank the many organizations that hosted these conversations, including those that participated without receiving grant funding. Their involvement reflects a strong commitment to civic engagement and to creating space for dialogue that benefits the entire region. These gatherings reaffirmed that when people are given space to listen, share, and imagine together, meaningful insights and connections emerge. The conversations highlighted several ongoing priorities. Affordable housing, economic stability, and access to good-paying jobs once again rose to the top as the most urgent needs. At the same time, participants raised new issues, including mental health, immigrant support, interfaith understanding, and the importance of cultural representation. These discussions reflect the wide range of needs in Central Florida and ensure that many voices are part of shaping the future. Survey results show that residents, nonprofits, and faith communities are recognized as key drivers of progress. This affirms the powerful role that all people play in shaping change. Real transformation is not only led by large institutions or policy makers, but also by neighbors, community leaders, and partners who bring their lived experiences and a shared commitment to building a better future. While the findings point to areas of concern such as gaps in access to resources, worries about the future, and a sense of division among some groups, they also offer reasons for hope. A majority of participants reported feeling more hopeful about the next five years, and many expressed a strong belief in their ability to make a meaningful difference. These expressions of optimism reflect the enduring spirit of Central Florida: resilient, collaborative, and committed to progress. Looking forward, Central Florida Foundation will continue to use TableTalk as a way to bring people together. These conversations not only shine a light on challenges but also inspire new ideas and collaborations. The results of this year's TableTalk remind us that progress starts with dialogue. By sitting at the table together, we can keep building a Central Florida that is stronger, more connected, and better for everyone.

TableTalk

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to create a civically active, community-focused experience for Central Florida.