



# Mercer County: Better Together

*Success through collaboration.*

**#MCBT**

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## **MCBT Seeks Feedback at Countywide Summit**

Mercer County, IL – August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – Over the past six months Mercer County: Better Together (MCBT), has worked to learn the values, hopes, concerns and ideas of county residents through a variety of means. Using community surveys, public engagements and a series of community forums, MCBT gained insight into who county residents are, why they have chosen Mercer County as their home and their ideas for the future. Using a planning process called *Community Heart & Soul*, common themes from data are used to build statements for each community, then Mercer County as a whole. At the end of August, MCBT will be celebrating accomplishments while looking for feedback on these county and community statements.

The “Discover Mercer County” summit will be an open-house style event held at the Merchants’ Building at the Mercer County Fairgrounds from 2-5pm on Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>. Each Mercer County community will have a station set up showcasing their community’s unique assets and draft *Heart & Soul* statements; a Mercer County-oriented station will also be on hand to display countywide assets and the countywide draft *Heart & Soul* statements. Attendees will receive a free meal and have the opportunity to connect with representatives for Mercer County as well as each of its eleven communities. Those who engage with all eleven community stations as well as the countywide station and provide feedback on their own community’s statements will be eligible to win prizes.

“The fairgrounds seemed like a natural gathering place,” said McEwen. “Through forums and outreach, most communities identified the fair and fairgrounds as assets of Mercer County.”

The goals of the summit are:

- Celebrate the progress of the planning process thus far
- Encourage review and feedback on draft community & countywide *Heart & Soul* statements
- Help residents learn more about the assets of each Mercer County community

Once complete, these statements will help determine future action steps; they will be the criteria on which choices are made on both community and county levels. Drafts of these statements have been created for review.

“It’s crucial that residents can see themselves reflected in these statements,” said MCBT Project Coordinator Kyle McEwen. “*Heart & Soul* statements are the roadmap to future action in not only each community, but the county as a whole. We encourage everyone to come out to the summit and give us their feedback because we want action steps to accurately represent our population.”

If residents are not able to attend the summit and wish to provide feedback, they may contact MCBT Project Coordinator Kyle McEwen by phone, via email or by mail using the contact information below.

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