

Public Input Visioning Meeting Summary



2022

Texarkana, Arkansas
Comprehensive Plan
April 2022 Public Meeting
Summary

Meeting Date: April 28, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.



Summary

Overview

A public input visioning meeting was held on April 28, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. The meeting took place at the new Texarkana Recreation Center at 1 Legion Drive in Texarkana, Arkansas. Residents, community members, organizations, city staff, elected officials, and other members of the public were present at the meeting.

Estimated Attendance: 67 people

The meeting began with an overview/presentation of the comprehensive plan by Juliet Richey (lead project manager) with Garver, and an update from Mr. Jay Ellington (City Manager, Texarkana, Arkansas) regarding updates to City Initiatives. Also, to receive community input and inform the public. The gym was divided into stations that included the following:

1. Visual aid boards
2. Visual Preference Boards
3. City Comment Maps (Street Connections and Texarkana, Arkansas General Comment Map)

Most stations provided information about the comprehensive plan and process as well as offering participants a chance to provide feedback and preferences regarding what they would like to see in the city.

Over 50 attendees participated in an interactive visioning poll during the meeting.

Synopsis of Station Comments

Infill Housing Development

The Infill Housing Development board provided examples of single-family residential housing units, and the visual preference board asked which housing types would encourage townhome-style development in appropriate areas in the city. Participants favored the small lot of single-family residential (detached) units. Other housing options with some attraction were the single-family (attached) townhome units and the small lot single-family residential with a shared driveway.



Small Lot Single Family Residential Example

Alternative Housing Options

Many participants selected the Tiny Home Development and Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) examples. Very few liked the idea of the cluster housing example.

Trail Connections – Nix Creek Trail Extension

Many participants liked the idea of the Nix Creek Trail Expansion concept. This proposed trail extension would utilize the existing Hwy 71/Hickory Street bridge to cross the railroad by restriping the road to remove the bike lanes and widening the sidewalk to become a shared-use path/trail. This would allow for two-directional travel for pedestrians and cyclists between the trail and the Texarkana Recreation Center south of the railroad without crossing traffic on Hwy 71 and Hickory Street.

I-30 Development

Participants liked the concept of the interstate access road that allows a roadway alignment that could increase economic development with potential access to the I-30 area near the Four States Fair Pkwy and the I-49 interchange. This concept can also be tailored to adapt to the unique layout of future development proposed within these areas.

Ideas and Priorities

Comments for the Ideas and Priorities Board mentioned the following:

- **Ideas and Priorities:**
 - Better marketing for the new Recreation Center and city meetings, building a new sports complex for the youth (i.e., Benton, AR Athletic Complex, for example)
- **Opportunities:**
 - School Partnerships to offer local career opportunities and develop plans to implement workforce and economic development with local education institutions in the tech, industrial, and manufacturing sectors.
- **Concerns:**
 - Extending the Nix Creek Trail from Legion to Roberts would involve relocating some of the homeless community along the trail. A cleanup request was mentioned for East 9th Street/82 with the Tri-State metal debris on the street.
 - Not hiring black contractors as they receive a fair share of opportunities, there are poor black and white residents who cannot participate, and homeownership was listed as a concern.
 - Creating new infrastructure and improving the existing ones should be done simultaneously, focusing more on enhancing/rehabbing existing structures.



Visual Preference Board: Infill Housing Development



Visual Preference Board:
Affordable Housing Options

Synopsis of Station Comments (cont.)

Additional Community Comments (Noted during Public Meeting)

- Resident 1: Parking is an issue with tenants from Airbnb's parking on other residents' properties.
- Resident 2: Sports Complex that provides football fields instead of the overflow of baseball and soccer fields in the Texarkana community. A diverse range of sports was recommended, especially for families in the black community who may want to put their children in different sports than the recreation and parks program allows.
- Resident 3: More options for affordable starter homes and multi-family units in the city. No place for young adults who want to move back to the city to live that is affordable.

City Comment Map

- Participants provided input/comments on the General Comment Map that displayed a large map of the City of Texarkana, Arkansas. The comment map allowed participants to over specific feedback across the city. It encouraged participants to provide issues, concerns, or general comments on the map and some of the feedback included:
 - The Smith-Key apartment community should have more than one (1) bedroom apartment unit and be more affordable. The city should provide more housing options and street improvements.
 - One comment mentioned flooding near the houses around north of Ray Street.
 - Booker T. Washington School is considered Washington Community Development Center.
 - Near Preston Street near Carver Court Apartments – Potential site for Texarkana League of Champions future multi-football field complex could be. The resident recommended that the league be part of the American Youth Football Charter.
 - Decrease industrial development near family clusters and no housing developments near industrial structures.
 - In Ward 4, a comment mentioned there could be better-synchronized signals.
 - A resident mentioned Abandoned Houses are everywhere across the city.
 - In Ward 5, next to Ed Worrell Park, there is a space where one comment mentioned that it could be a possible space for soccer fields.
 - On Redtor and Jefferson Ave., it needs an additional turning lane for the southbound traffic on Jefferson.
 - The entire TIF District should be zoned C-4.
- An aerial photograph of a city grid in Texarkana, Arkansas, used as a comment map. Several handwritten notes on colored paper are placed on the map. A blue note at the top right says 'Smith Key 140 units 100 units 100 units 100 units'. A yellow note in the center says 'Washington Community Development Center'. Another yellow note on the left says 'Location near and west of (see) Street'. A green pen is visible on the right side of the map.
- A close-up aerial photograph of a different section of the city grid. It shows a yellow note that says 'Soccer field' and a blue note that says 'Soccer field'. A green pen is also visible on the right side of the map.



Street Connection Map

Participants provided input/comments on the Street Connection that display a large map of City of Texarkana, Arkansas streets and roadways. Feedback was encouraged for anyone to provide issues, concerns, or general comments on the street connections map and some of the feedback included:

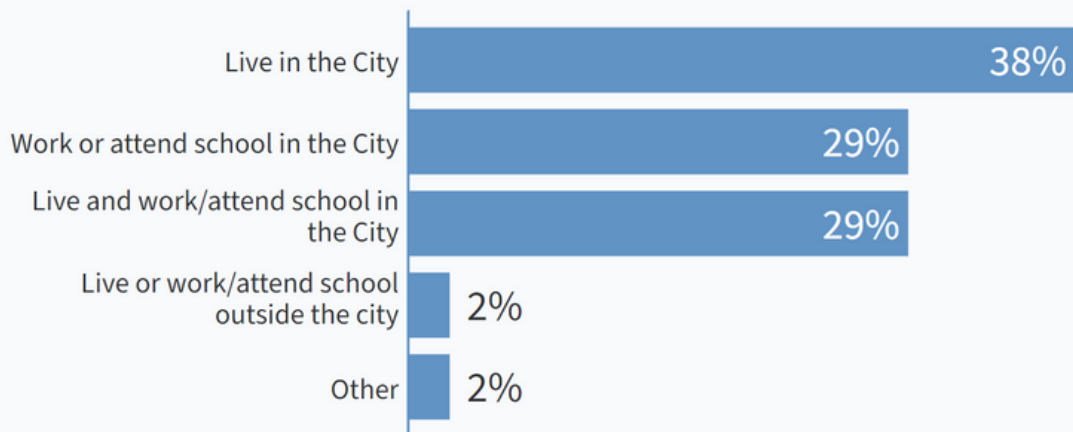
- Adding a Flashing Red or Yellow Light to slow traffic on Hwy 67.
- Abandoned and blighted homes with clutter near Arkansas High School community.



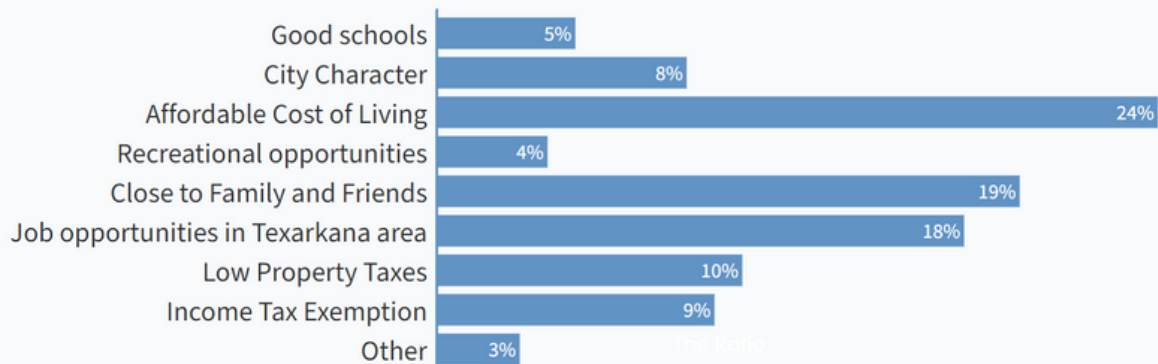
TIF District
Area

Interactive Poll Results

Do you live or work in the City of Texarkana, AR?

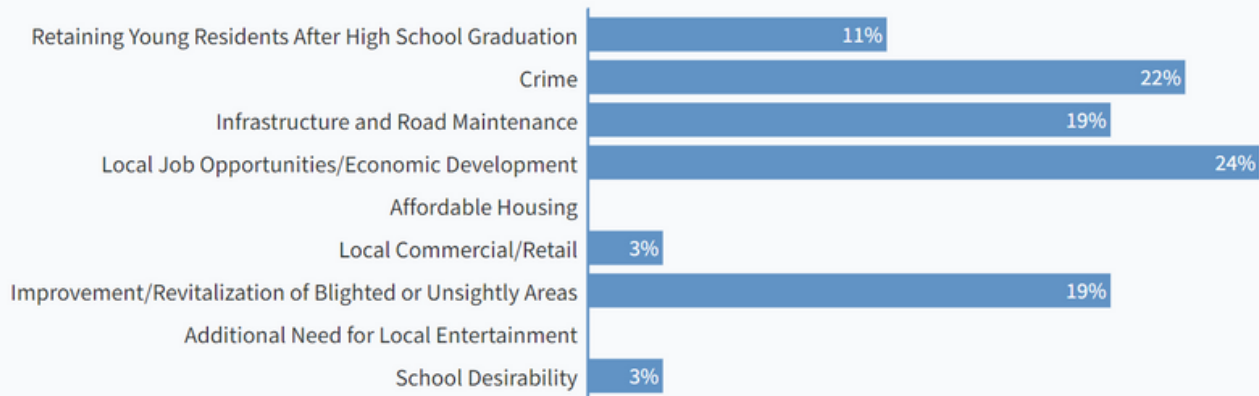


Why did you choose to live or work in Texarkana? (please choose all that apply)



Interactive Poll Results (cont.)

What do you feel are major challenges facing Texarkana, AR, in the next 20 years?



What do you think is Texarkana's greatest opportunity for the future?



Interactive Poll Results (cont.)

Looking into the FUTURE, the City needs to focus on:
(please choose all that apply)

