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COMPREHENSIVE VISION



VISION AND GOALS

A vision statement represents collective thoughts and ideas that residents and community leaders have about the future of Texarkana. Multiple methods were used throughout the planning process to gather input from the community about their vision for the future of Texarkana. The collective input from these various methods drove the major decisions of the plan.

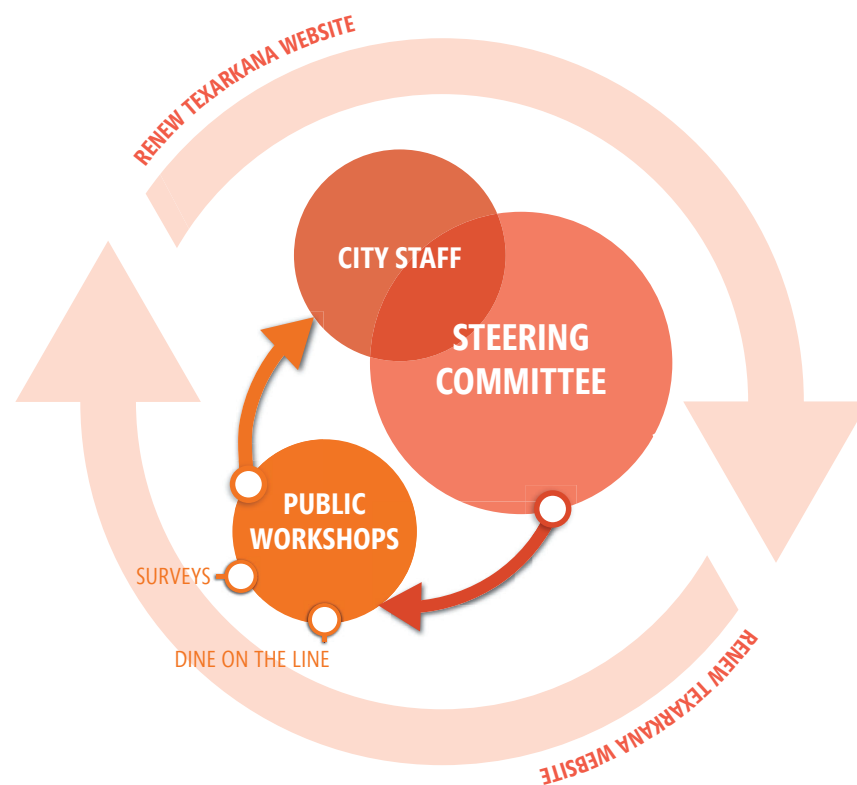


Figure 3.1 | Visioning Process Diagram

CITY LEADERS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



In the early phase of the planning process, a steering committee was established to oversee the planning process. The role of the Steering Committee is to provide guidance and insight on the process and to ensure that the view and concerns of the community were effectively addressed. Members of the Renew Texarkana Steering Committee included representatives from Texarkana city staff, MPO, and local stakeholder groups.

The Texarkana, Texas City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission were also involved in the development of Renew Texarkana. These groups were regularly briefed on the plan progress and many representatives attended the public workshops.





STEERING COMMITTEE

Steering Committee

Bob Bruggeman
Mayor

Jay Davis
Planning & Zoning Member

Tarisha Duson
Housing Authority of
Texarkana TX

ReaDonna Jones
Texarkana MPO

Frederick E. Joyce, III.
Planning & Zoning Chairman

Jean H. Matlock
Ward 1 Councilmember

Lee Medley
President of Main Street
Texarkana

Derrick McGary
Former City Council

Supporting Staff

Shirley Jaster
Interim City Manager

Kyle Dooley
Deputy City Manager

Dustin Henslee
Public Works Director

David Orr
Planning & Community
Development Director

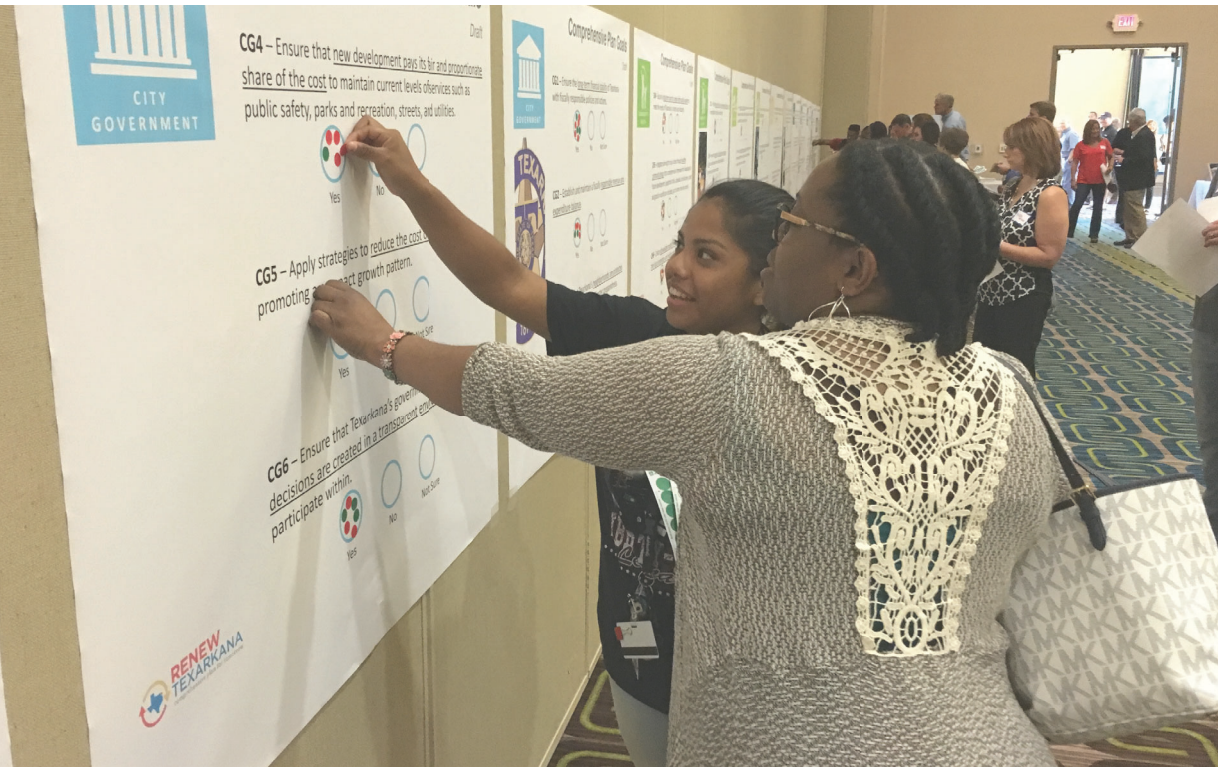
Robby Robertson
Parks & Recreation Director

Jerry Sparks
Economic Development
Director

Debbie Burk
Zoning Administrator

Daphnea Ryan
Planner II

Holden Flemming
Planner/Farmers' Market
Manager



PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Over the course of the plan development, three public workshops were held at the Texarkana Convention Center. These workshops were advertised with public notices, email blasts, and the Renew Texarkana Project website.

- September 20, 2016: During this first public meeting, the project team introduced the comprehensive plan update process and sought input on the draft plan goals. Approximately **100** people attended this meeting.
- November 15, 2016: During the second public meeting, alternative scenarios for a city-wide framework, neighborhood revitalization and downtown revitalization were presented and attendees were able to indicate their preferred scenarios. Approximately **150** people attended this meeting.

Attendees were also given a survey about their community character preferences at this meeting. The key takeaways from the results of the survey indicated that abandoned buildings were the most common concern in older neighborhoods and that improving aesthetics at the Bowie County jail in downtown was important.

- April 20, 2017: During the final public meeting, three interactive breakout stations were set up related to the proposed downtown plan, city-wide parks and trail plan, and neighborhood plan. All meeting attendees spent about 20 minutes at each of the stations. Engagement techniques included keypad polling, sticky dot exercises, and a questionnaire. Approximately **70** people attended this final meeting.

The three workshops had over 300 attendees combined. Notes, ideas, and suggestions were taken from each meeting and incorporated into the plan. The level of participation in Texarkana helped move the project forward and provided citizen insight to city wide and neighborhood needs.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

From the stakeholder engagement and interviews, nine goal themes were defined to guide the Texarkana Comprehensive Plan process. The nine themes are: Community Character, Mobility, Economic Development, Environmental, City Government, Community Health, Design & Aesthetics, Downtown, and Residential Neighborhood. Each goal theme has an associated symbol that is used whenever the goal is referenced in the plan. These themes were presented to the community at the first public workshop and the goals were voted on based on importance.

Out of 54 strategic goals 19 had more than 60 votes. These 19 goals have been identified as some of the most important goals to the community. Figure 3.2 illustrates these results. The polling identified that revitalizing downtown, redeveloping main street, enhancing all modes of transportation, and providing quality services were the top priorities for the community. The following pages summarize the full results of the meeting.

100% of respondents want to:
 Establish a quality pedestrian environment with streetscape amenities such as: benches, shade trees, wayfinding signage, bike racks, trash receptacles and lighting which creates an energy towards revitalization.

99% of respondents want to:
 Redesign State Line Avenue to create a local treasure, by helping to define bi-state history, connecting Texarkana USA together, promoting new redevelopment and growing our local tourism industry.

99% of respondents want to:
 Promote redevelopment & revitalization of Downtown for the successful enjoyment of all in Texarkana.

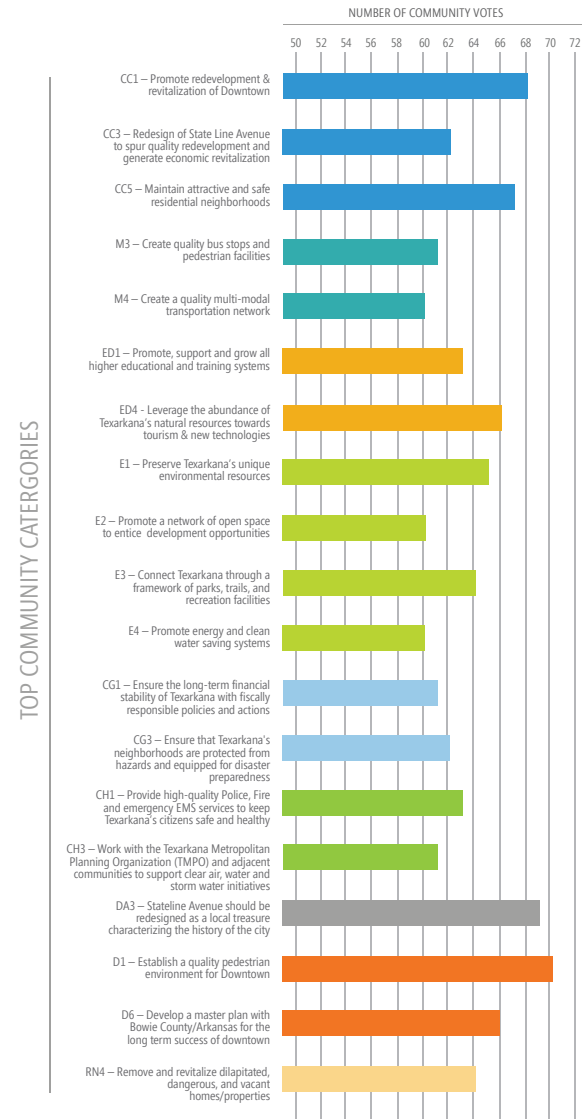


Figure 3.2 | Public Meeting #1 Primary Findings

THE 9 VISION/GOAL THEMES

Community Character

The character of a community encompasses what makes a place unique and is important for attracting and retaining residents and businesses. Over 95% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



95%

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- CC1 – Promote redevelopment & revitalization of Downtown for the successful enjoyment of all in Texarkana.
- CC2 – Preserve existing East Texas pine trees and plant more in proposed new development, so we do not lose the native pine character.
- CC3 – Promote the redesign of State Line Avenue to spur quality redevelopment bringing this important corridor back as a tourism element and generator for economic development.
- CC4 – Repurpose and preserve our older high-quality commercial buildings for new uses.
- CC5 – Maintain attractive and safe residential neighborhoods.
- CC6 – Support the I-30 commercial corridor by having new high-quality standard for signage and billboard regulations. (Defining no new pole signs and advertising billboards.)

Mobility

Mobility is an important aspect of quality of life; the ability to travel efficiently to work, school, or other activities and to economically move goods makes a community attractive for residents and businesses. Over 97% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



97%

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- M1 – Move people across and through Texarkana with a variety of modal types on a comprehensive transportation network (automobiles, buses, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.).
- M2 – Maximize all opportunities to enhance Texarkana's locational advantage in their transportation network (grow airport, railroad and trucking distribution systems).
- M3 – Create quality bus stops and pedestrian rest stations along primary walking/biking corridors which includes: benches, trash receptacles and wayfinding signage.
- M4 – Create a transportation network where residents can walk, bicycle and use other forms of non-motorized transportation for exercise, recreation and to get to daily destinations.
- M5 – Promote a Transportation Plan that keeps heavy truck traffic on the perimeter of the community and does not promote heavy cross-town truck movements.
- M6 – Create a transportation network that establishes a network of multi-modal street types each having a different cross section and functional need.

Economic Development

Opportunities for intensifying economic development in Texarkana exist in several industries and parts of the city. Over 96% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



96%

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- ED1 – Promote, support and grow all higher educational systems (college, community college, vo-tech, etc.) which will advance the employee upward into higher quality employment resulting in better pay and additional economic development.
- ED2 – Promote growth in logistics, technology and distribution types of businesses which take advantage of Texarkana's transportation network.
- ED3 – Look to grow residential housing Downtown which will then create supporting development resulting in new employment opportunities.
- ED4 – Leverage the abundance of Texarkana's natural resources (water and wood pulp) toward creating new technologies and industry.
- ED5 – Grow our tourism, convention and family celebration job clusters as Texarkana has the history, unique bi-state location, outdoor sporting and affordability elements to offer.
- ED6 – Leverage relationships and growth at TexAmericas Center / Red River Army Depot toward new jobs and supporting development in Texarkana and the region.

Environmental

Preserving open space and promoting environmentally-sensitive practices is important for community resiliency. Over 97% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



97%

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- E1 – Provide for the realistic preservation of Texarkana's unique environmental resources.
- E2 – Promote a network of open space encompassing private and public developments within Texarkana.
- E3 – Connect Texarkana through a framework of parks, pedestrian trails and recreation facilities that respond to community needs and match population demographics.
- E4 – Promote using LED lighting for the exterior of new commercial developments and street corridors, replacements and in downtown as a cost effective and energy saving tool.
- E5 – Provide a city-wide recycling program linked together with waste management for cardboard, glass, plastic, metal cans and other items that are cost effective.
- E6 – Promote energy and water saving systems for new and renovation construction projects.



City Government

A fiscally-sound and transparent city government is critical to establish trust in a community. Over 96% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



96%
POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- CG1 – Ensure the long-term financial stability of Texarkana with fiscally responsible policies and actions.
- CG2 – Establish and maintain a fiscally responsible revenue and expenditure balance.
- CG3 – Ensure that Texarkana’s neighborhoods are protected from hazards and equipped for disaster preparedness.
- CG4 – Ensure that new development pays its fair and proportionate share of the cost to maintain current levels of services such as public safety, parks and recreation, streets, and utilities.
- CG5 – Apply strategies to reduce the cost of city services by promoting a compact growth pattern.
- CG6 – Ensure that Texarkana’s governmental leaders and their decisions are created in a transparent environment for all to participate within.

Community Health

An emerging topic in creating quality communities is public health; communities can promote initiatives to make communities healthier through addressing air quality and active transportation. Over 97% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



97%
POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- CH1 – Provide high-quality Police, Fire and EMS services to keep Texarkana’s citizens safe and healthy.
- CH2 – Promote the distribution of locally grown and produced food via our Downtown Farmers’ Market, neighborhood gardens and other local operations.
- CH3 – Work with the Texarkana Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO) and adjacent communities to support clear air, water and storm water initiatives.
- CH4 – Secure a long-term plan for ample high-quality water to meet the needs of Texarkana’s citizens and industry.
- CH5 – Integrate planning for local citizens through healthy community design into a comprehensive framework for Texarkana’s future development (pedestrian trails, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, parks and good air-quality are included, just to name a few key items).
- CH6 – Create safe walkable routes for children to access on foot their local elementary and middle schools (sidewalks & trails).

Design & Aesthetics

Quality design of streets, neighborhoods, and commercial development make a community more appealing to residents, businesses, and visitors. Over 94% of workshop attendees agree that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



94%
POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- DA1 – Use the native dense landscape of East Texas to create buffers between land uses that need separation.
- DA2 – Design our typical suburban developments for equally safe movement of pedestrians, bicycles and automobiles.
- DA3 – State Line Avenue should be redesigned as a local treasure, by helping to define bi-state history, connecting Texarkana USA together, promoting new redevelopment and growing our local tourism industry.
- DA4 – Design all new streets and look to retrofit existing streets that have a walking population with pedestrian sidewalks at a minimum of 5' wide.
- DA5 – Create opportunities to retrofit and/or revitalize areas in Texarkana with similar planning and design tools that have been used in the University Planned District (near Texas A&M Texarkana campus).
- DA6 – Establish public sector projects Downtown that are created to result in a direct private development action (cause and effect relationship).

Residential Neighborhoods

Stable neighborhoods that are safe, attractive, and active make the overall community more desirable. Over 97% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important to Renew Texarkana.



97%
POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

- RN1 – Create a program to improve the image of in-town residential neighborhoods by building such items as: neighborhood entry features with community name, pedestrian sidewalks, buffers, history markers and other items.
- RN2 – Work to get homes out of the danger of flooding and do not allow redevelopment in flood prone areas.
- RN3 – Establish Neighborhood Improvement Plans for in-town neighborhoods to create a comprehensive set of recommendations for revitalization and preservation.
- RN4 – Remove dilapidated, dangerous and vacant homes from all neighborhoods. Market these lots for redevelopment and/or consider them for new public parks.
- RN5 – Use higher density residential types as a land use transition between single family and commercial developments.
- RN6 – Increase the number of street lights and make street repairs in our in-town neighborhoods to improve safety and increase citizen's quality of life.

Downtown

A vibrant, thriving downtown helps make communities more attractive. Over 96% of workshop attendees agreed that these goals were important for Renew Texarkana.



96%
POSITIVE FEEDBACK

GOALS

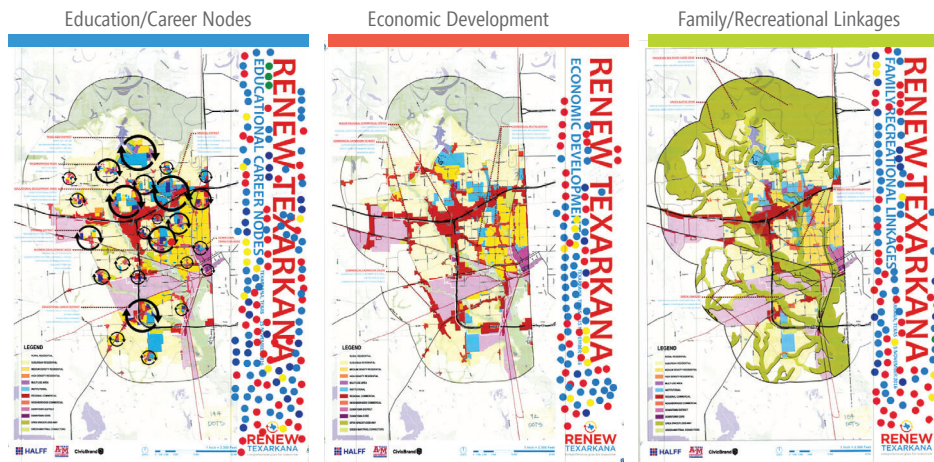
- D1 – Establish a quality pedestrian environment with streetscape amenities such as: benches, shade trees, wayfinding signage, bike racks, trash receptacles and lighting which creates an energy towards revitalization.
- D2 – Create a business incubator Downtown that is focused on technology start-up companies. Locate it where there can be other opportunities for downtown synergy.
- D3 – Establish Downtown as a neighborhood. Strategically add a variety of housing types to create a resilient, active, and safe neighborhood.
- D4 – Use green spaces (typically parks) as a catalyst for creating new downtown development. Quality parks that are well designed and positioned become an amenity for many downtown land uses.
- D5 – Define Downtown as a fun exciting place to be, and therefore program Downtown with special community events for all in Texarkana. They may include: Downtown Art Walk, Oktoberfest, Christmas, Easter Egg Hunt and others.
- D6 – Develop a Master Plan with Bowie County for the Downtown Bowie County Sheriff's Annex and Jail. That plan should propose to screen elements of the building, paint the building a natural color, eliminate all razor wire from view and create a quality entry setting worthy of being in downtown (at a minimum if it is to stay downtown).



PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2

At the second public meeting, attendees were given the opportunity to respond to a questionnaire about their thoughts on the alternative scenarios for the city-wide land use plan, neighborhood plan, and downtown plan. The majority of respondents thought it was important to increase educational and employment opportunities as well as attract economic growth. Commonly noted elements that respondents wanted to see in the Rose Hill neighborhood included removal of abandoned structures and more street lights. In Downtown, respondents felt strongly about making the area around the County Jail more aesthetically pleasing and safer.

CITY WIDE SCENARIOS



LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Excellent focus on growing employment opportunities
Greatest Potential
Promotes neighborhood growth
Nice balance between North & South

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

More focus to downtown needed
Better connectivity needed

LIKES OF COMMUNITY

New commercial opportunities
Excellent regional mobility
Strong relationship to Texarkana's natural locational advantage

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Limited neighborhood definition
Extremely Car Oriented
Less pedestrian & multi-modal capabilities
Less focus on natural amenities

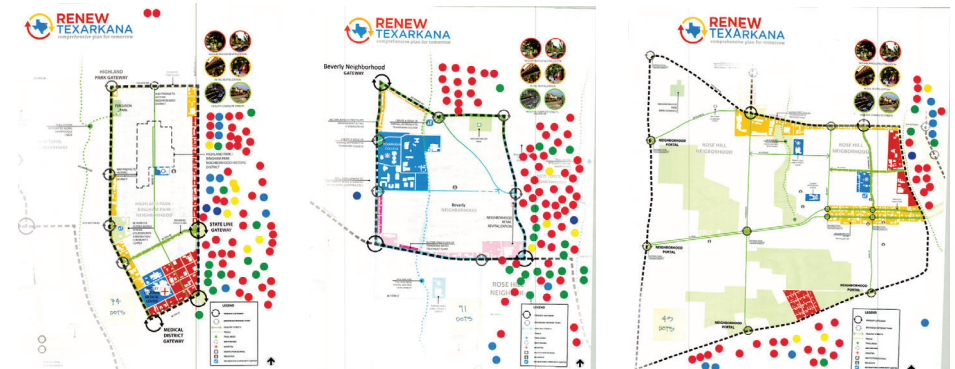
LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Strong connection to the environment
Trails & Parks opportunities
Greatest connectivity options

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Limited space for development
Limited discussion of employment opportunities

NEIGHBORHOOD SCENARIOS



LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Historic
Smaller more connected neighborhood
Business revitalization
Green Streets Connection
Walkable

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Limited area for new residential
Limited public space opportunities

LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Strong education focus
Smaller more connected neighborhood
Good trail & park opportunity
Walkable to neighborhood commercial
Good gateway locations

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Needs more business revitalization

LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Good revitalization of corridors
Good connectivity to downtown

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Disconnected by many barriers
A lot of adjacent industrial uses
Many vacant properties

DOWNTOWN SCENARIOS

Central Downtown Core



LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Good centralized core development
Increases parking capacity

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Not connecting all of downtown
Parking garage not well screened
No gateways for Downtown

Linear Main Street Downtown



LIKES OF COMMUNITY

3rd street good opportunity for redevelopment
Good connectivity
Great gateway locations
Promotes entertainment and arts uses for Downtown

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Too Linear
Doesn't encompass enough of historic Downtown

Southern Revitalization



LIKES OF COMMUNITY

Excellent screening of jail
Great modification to front street
Public space creates catalyst for new development

DISLIKES FROM COMMUNITY

Neglecting other parts of Downtown
Moves focus too far south
Poor connection to historic buildings

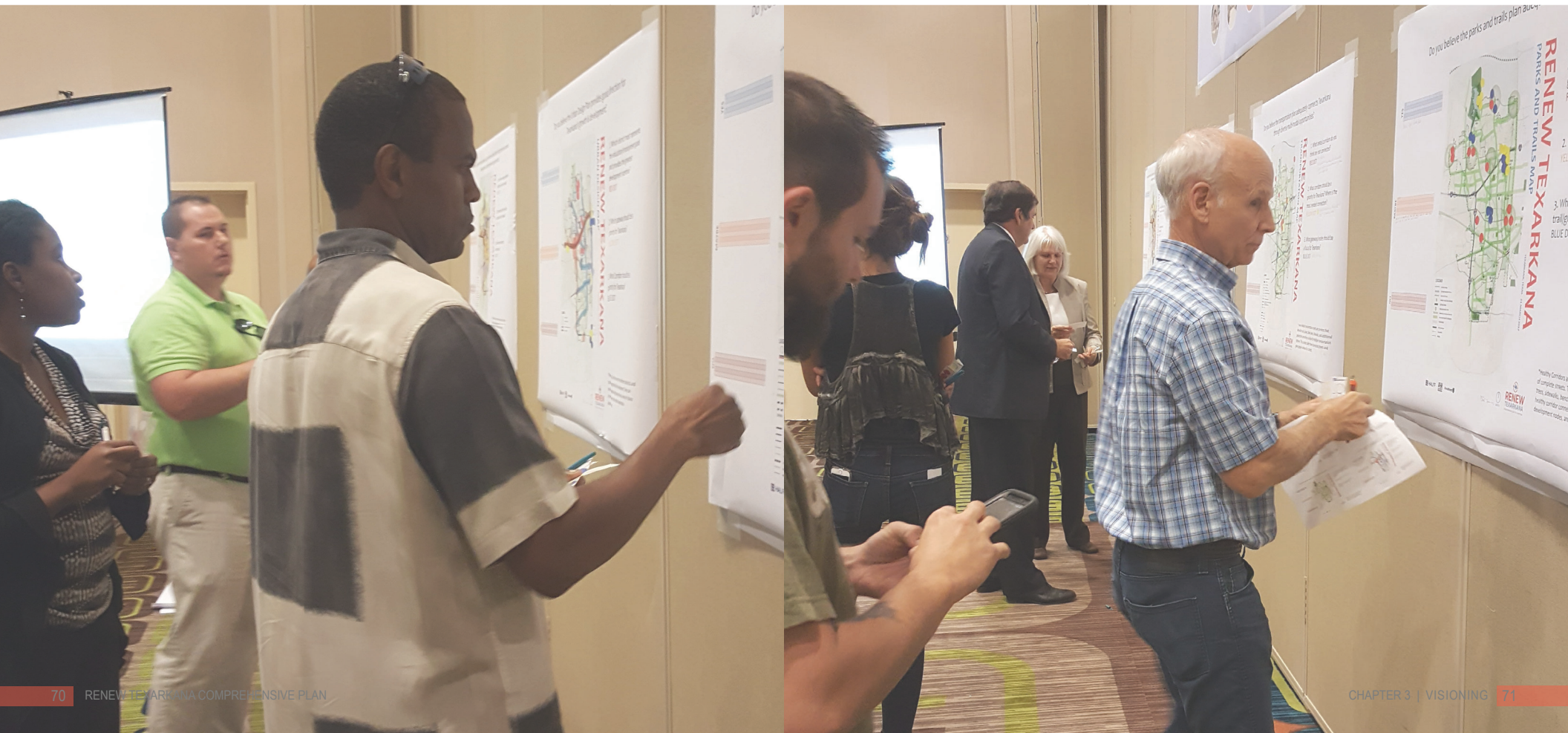
Public Workshop #2 Findings

From each of the scenarios the primary likes/dislikes of each plan were noted. The main themes heard from each of the scenarios were then taken to develop preferred designs for the comprehensive plan. The third public meeting went over all of the finalized options and details to establish priorities for each segment.



PUBLIC WORKSHOP #3

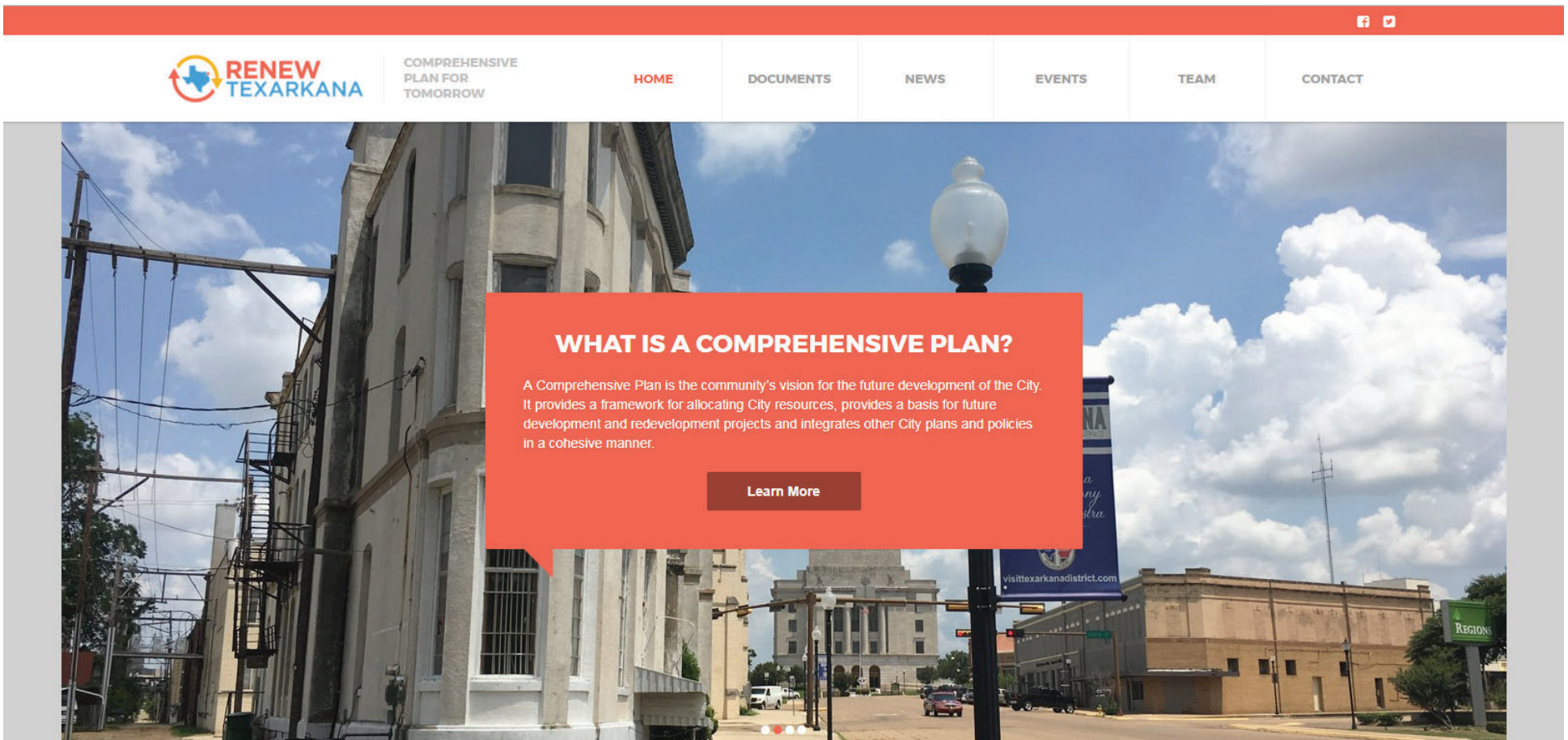
The third public meeting presented revised preferred scenarios and asked for input on priorities for each plan. The meeting was separated into 3 groups: City-Wide, Neighborhoods, and Downtown. All meeting attendees were able to go to each group and express ideas, concerns, and likes for each area within Texarkana.



PROJECT WEBSITE

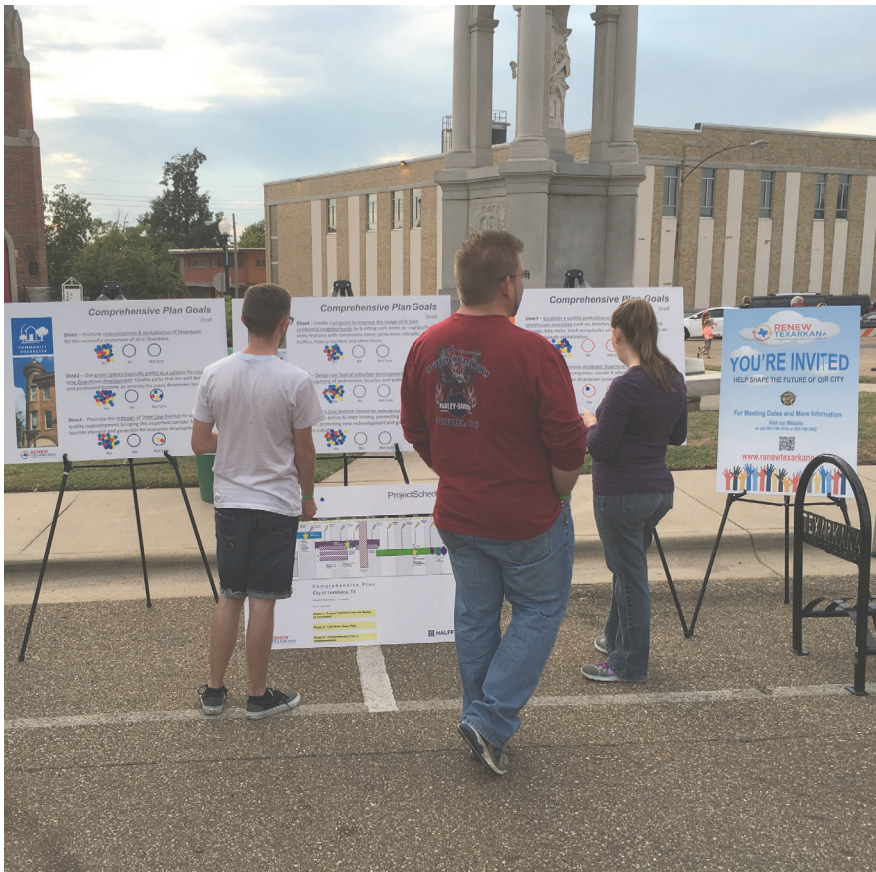
The project website, www.renewtexarkana.com was developed to provide information, collect input, and announce meeting opportunities. The website home page described the comprehensive plan process. There were also tabs that announced when events/meetings were going to occur and where documents could be viewed. Public and stakeholder meeting materials were uploaded so that, over the course of the project everyone could

have access to the project materials. Over 6,740 people visited the project website over the course of the project allowing additional community members to be reached. Contact info was also provided so that the city and comprehensive planning team could be available if the public had any questions or concerns.



OTHER ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS - DINE ON THE LINE

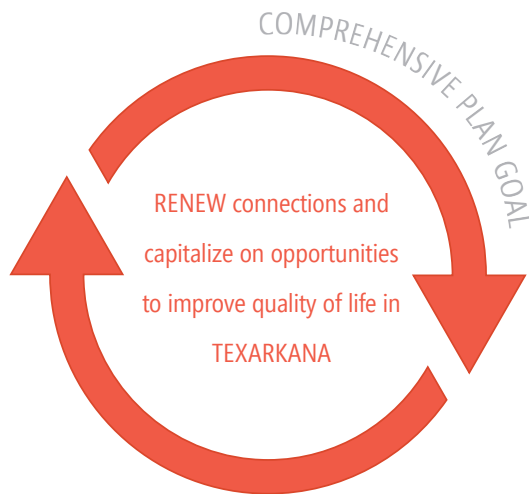
Each year, the Main Street Texarkana organization puts on an event that brings together residents of both Texarkana, Texas and Texarkana, Arkansas to dine on the state line. At the October 2016 'Dine on the Line' event, the project team brought the same boards that were at the first public meeting. The goal was to determine preferences for the draft community goals and engage more of the community.



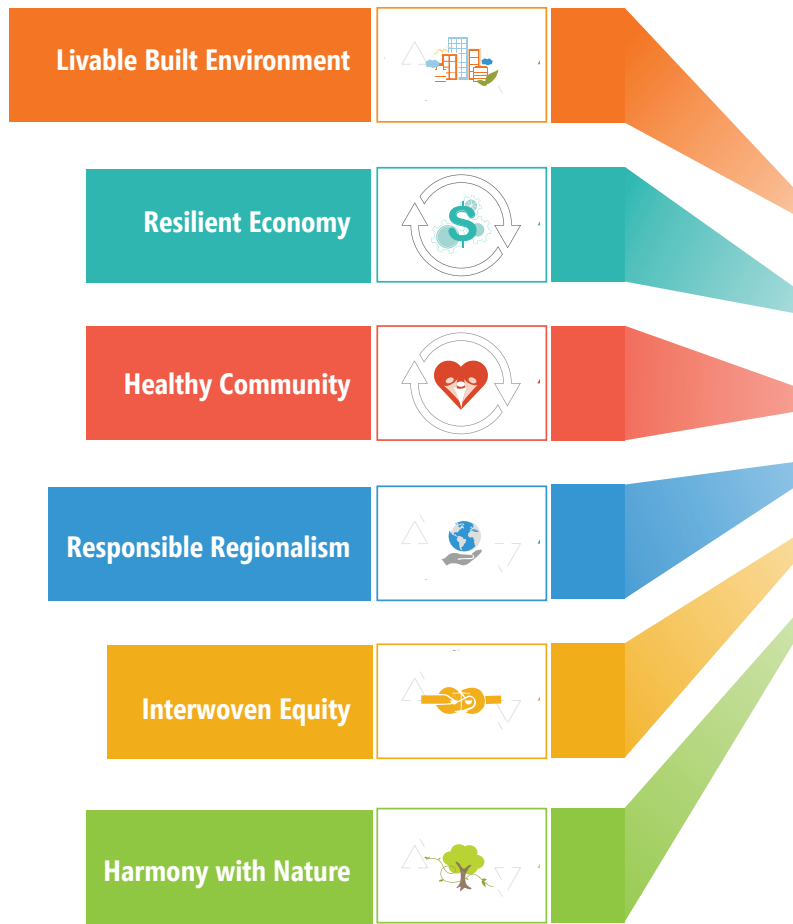
VISION AND GOALS

A vision statement represents collective thoughts and ideas that residents and community leaders have about the future of Texarkana. From the series of public and stakeholder meetings the Texarkana Comprehensive Plan looks to accomplish the following:

- Renew a stronger relationship between neighborhoods and downtown;
- Renew a broad variety of mobility choices;
- Renew a safer social bond within the community;
- Renew a path of continued education and employment;
- Renew a cleaner relationship with our environment; and
- Renew a resilient regional strength with Texarkana, AR and surrounding communities.



SUSTAINABLE COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN PRINCIPLES



SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES IN TEXARKANA

Community leaders in Texarkana agree that the primary driving force for Renew Texarkana should be to incorporate sustainability in all elements of the plan including the goals, policies, and recommendations. Using the American Planning Association’s ‘Sustaining Places’ framework as a guide, the Renew Texarkana plan was developed to address six principles of sustainability throughout the plan document.¹ The six principles are described below:

- **LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:** “Ensure that all elements of the built environment, including land use, transportation, housing, energy, and infrastructure, work together to provide sustainable, green places for living, working, and recreation, with a high quality of life.”
- **RESILIENT ECONOMY:** “Ensure that the community is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health and to initiate sustainable urban development and redevelopment strategies that foster green business growth and build reliance on local assets.”
- **HEALTHY COMMUNITY:** “Ensure that public health needs are recognized and addressed through provisions for healthy foods, physical activity, access to recreation, health care, environmental justice, and safe neighborhoods.”
- **RESPONSIBLE REGIONALISM:** “Ensure that all local proposals account for, connect with, and support the plans of adjacent jurisdictions and the surrounding region.”
- **INTERWOVEN EQUITY:** “Ensure fairness and equity in providing for the housing, services, health, safety, and livelihood needs of all citizens and groups.”
- **HARMONY WITH NATURE:** “Ensure that the contributions of natural resources to human well-being are explicitly recognized and valued and that maintaining their health is a primary objective.”

In order to represent clearly how Renew Texarkana incorporates sustainability, the project team developed an icon to represent each of the six principles. Wherever a policy or recommended action relates to one of the six principles, the associated icon will appear. Additionally, at the beginning of each of the subsequent chapters, a call-out box defines what aspects of sustainability that particular chapter addresses. Finally, a glossary at the end of the plan document notifies plan users where they can find references to each of the six sustainability principles throughout the plan document.

¹ Godschalk and Rouse. PAS Report 578: Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans. 2015. <https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/online/PAS-Report-578.pdf>.