

QUESTION 3

“What do you see as opportunities for Joplin?”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An opportunity is a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something. Joplin has a unique environment that is conducive to allow for many positive possibilities. Pursuing the opportunities present in the community will allow the city to transition from status quo to a brighter future. Without judgement as to which opportunity is the most important to pursue, there is a circular formula for a community to thrive. The “quality of place” or the City’s “live-ability” which is defined in part by the strength of public safety services, strength of education providers, access and presence of desired amenities, unique and fulfilling life experiences, robust entertainment options, and a positive community image can provide the opportunity to attract people. People attract jobs and jobs create opportunity for economic mobility and prosperity. Please reflect on this formula as it is critical to understand where resources should be invested that will allow the community to take advantage of its available opportunities.

An overwhelming amount of survey respondents would like the city to pursue opportunities related to economic development, enhanced amenities such as parks/trails and a vibrant downtown, and expanding entertainment options. Investing in these opportunities has the potential to positively change the trajectory of the community.

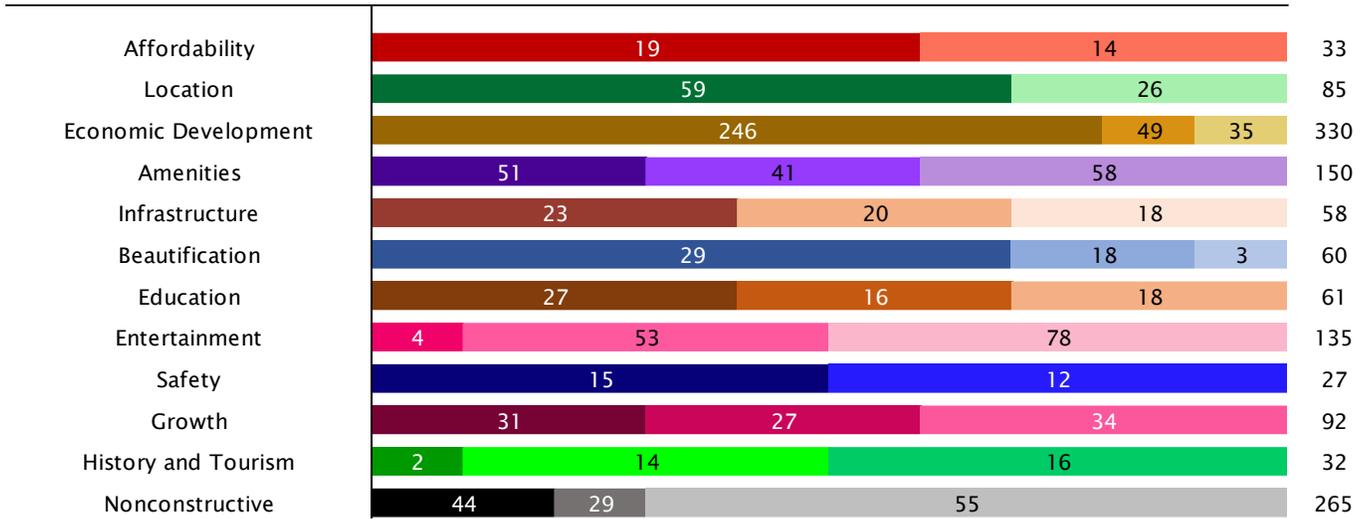
Through partnerships with the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Joplin Alliance, the City has a strong foundation and structure to improve economic development efforts. Did you know Joplin is ranked #14 in the country for working in the manufacturing industry? As a community, we should thank the leaders that have contributed to Joplin’s growth and celebrate our economic development success. As we look forward to new opportunities, the City would be bolstered and strengthened by pursuing knowledge-based employers, serving the underserved entrepreneurs and small business owners, and creating a diverse environment of additional employment options.

Amenities and entertainment options provide places or experiences that can help improve the community’s “live-ability”. The community has passionately engaged in future planning for Ewert Park, Memorial Hall, and the Parks Master Plan. Through these efforts the City will have a roadmap to pursue community supported projects that will enhance the City’s amenities and entertainment resources. The community supported projects will require citizens to financially support delivery of these projects by approving additional funding.

Place attracts people, people attract jobs, jobs create opportunity for prosperity, and this will change the trajectory of the community by moving past the status quo to a brighter future.

QUESTION #3 GRAPH

What do you see as opportunities for Joplin?



Common Themes

- Cost of Living
- Central Location
- New Big Business
- Connectivity and Parks
- Upgraded for Growth
- Reduce Blight
- Promoting Universities
- More Cultural Events/Activities
- Crime Reduction
- Economic
- Hospitality
- Anti-mask Comments
- Affordable Housing
- Proximity
- Entr. & Small Business Opps
- More Employment Opps
- Convention Centers
- Improved technology infra.
- Cleaner Streets/Environment
- Variety
- More for Youth and Families
- New Attractions & Activities
- Create Thriving Downtown
- Improved Public Transit
- Landscaping & Trees
- Quality
- Public Safety Growth
- Population
- Mining and Route 66
- Diversity
- Promoting Amenities
- Chamber/Council
- Nonconstructive (general)

Top Bar

Bottom Bar

DETAILED SUMMARY

COMMON THEMES

- DRAW OF AFFORDABILITY
- DRAW OF LOCATION
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- AMENITIES
- EXPANDING/UPGRADING INFRASTRUCTURE
- BEAUTIFICATION
- NONCONSTRUCTIVE
- EDUCATION
- EXPANDING ENTERTAINMENT
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- GROWTH
- HISTORY/TOURISM

DRAW OF AFFORDABILITY

Joplin residents enjoy the current low cost of living and see opportunity for higher income earning individuals to spur the local economy. There is also a consensus on the affordable housing in the community and expanding on it for middle class to lower income families. Some feel there is also an opportunity, due to the low cost of living, to attract retirees. Joplin activities, entertainment and recreation is cheap and accessible. A few residents also see our low tax rates as a positive

DRAW OF LOCATION

The central location of Joplin creates an opportunity in various ways. The first opportunity is the traffic that comes through Joplin as it is the crossroads of the U.S. This could be an easy attraction for frequent travelers, as well as a promotional tool for businesses with high transportation or distribution traffic. Its central location also allows for easy travel to almost anywhere in the U.S. This is also

due to the city's proximity to highways and ease of access to travel near and far. Not only is the central location ideal, but an overall location in close proximity to other popular hubs and destinations could be used to draw in consumers and new residents from surrounding areas to live, work and play. Many believe Joplin should become a destination for entertainment, food, and events.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Many residents note that Joplin has the opportunity to bring in new business to the city, both big and small. For a large portion of the population, manufacturing and industry jobs feel very important to expand on due to the skillsets they already have. Another portion wish to see the city utilize the land the community has for development purposes to bring in newer big business that they often travel out of town to visit, such as a larger variety of entertainment and retail. Specifically, many residents wish to see a new Hy-vee grocery store. Residents see the low cost of living, open land, vacant

buildings, and proximity to new graduates from our schools as incentives for new businesses (both manufacturing and technology) to build here. They also see this as a way to increase employment opportunities. While some residents note there are good opportunities already, a large portion desire to see a boom in opportunities, as well as the quality of employment and higher paying opportunities.

Alongside big business, residents see great opportunities from small business owners and entrepreneurs, whether this be in retail or the food or tech. industries. They would like to see greater cooperation with the City of Joplin municipality to make start-ups easier and provide more incentives for small business owners to move here. This ideology goes directly hand in hand in hand with the opportunity residents see for thriving downtown culture and economy.

AMENITIES

There is a large desire to see an expansion of community bike trails. To residents, Joplin has an opportunity to draw in young families and professionals with a healthier initiative from the trails and the addition of any recreational activities they bring. Many compare the opportunity to expand on trails similar to how NW AR created and promoted their trail systems. In addition to this recreational activity, residents wish to see greater care and growth of community parks for families and entertainment.

Residents heavily noted the wish for venues, namely a community convention center, to draw in events, entertainers and people/economic boosts from surrounding

hubs. Economic boosts would also be an asset to the community as the city grows its downtown and Main Street areas to draw in new business and attractions. Many wish to see a growth in night life, activities for youth and a promotion of downtown culture similar to the hubs in the surrounding region.

EXPANDING/UPGRADING INFRASTRUCTURE

Expanding and upgrading city infrastructure for the purpose of growth resonates with respondents. They see an opportunity to stay ahead of repairs and needs as the population grows and hope to see changes where necessary such as road diets on walkable streets and 4-lane roads for more congested ones. Along with these changes they hope to see greater traffic control and streetlight capabilities on streets such as 32nd or Range Line. In relation to traffic control infrastructure, residents wish to see an expansion and upgrade of the local transportation system, such as the airport, trolleys and expanded walkability for those who wish to reduce car usage or cannot drive. Residents also desire to see improved internet capabilities and technology infrastructure in correlation with the hope to bring in modern business and technology related start-ups.

BEAUTIFICATION

Residents see a need to clean up the city. That means landscaping and public green spaces, as well as the continued addition of trees in the tornado zone. It also means a reduction of littering, specifically near high traffic or panhandling areas, on streets or in parks, a reduction of neighborhood blight and dilapidated or vacant buildings downtown.

Beautification campaigns provide an opportunity for residents to take pride in their community and neighborhoods, as well as entice visitors and potential businesses.

NONCONSTRUCTIVE

Nonconstructive statements consist of comments such as “None”, “Everything”, etc. These comments are either non specific or derogatory and do not contribute directly to the question. Other statements include derogatory comments regarding the Chamber, City Council, and politically motivated remarks that do not contribute to the question. Many of the comments are not constructive in that they relate to COVID-19 and the mask mandate and not directly to the future of Joplin. There are many comments for and against the mask mandate as this survey was released at the time the mandate was put into place.

EDUCATION

Promotion and support of the education system in Joplin is considered another opportunity for the community. Residents believe a combination of the variety, accessibility, and affordability of this system should be an incentive for families to move here and young adults to seek further education here. The city has multiple universities that also act as economic boosters in the way they bring students in. Residents would also like to see a rally around the college atmosphere for MSSU, as well as create a culture that we are a “college town”. An improvement citizens see that could be made to the current educational system is creating more opportunities for young children to receive quality education. A subset of individuals see opportunities to educate the

community on current social equity issues such as diversity or homelessness.

EXPANDING ENTERTAINMENT

Post pandemic residents hope to see an increase in events such as Third Thursday, cultural events, an encouragement of the arts community and uptake of adult entertainment outside of bars and restaurants. They see an opportunity to be a hub of entertainment for concerts, shows, increased entertainment for families and youth such as children’s museums or science centers, and safe places for teenagers to attend and spend their free time. Attractions such as a new theatre, farmer’s market, sporting events, etc., could be used to spur the local economy and draw in families and young professionals.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Residents believe a reduction in crime and drug rates could incentivize more people to not only come to the city but to stay or tour. They also see an opportunity to support public safety and increase police presence, including additional staffing.

GROWTH

As the community has developed out of recovery from the 2011 tornado, residents see an opportunity to keep propelling towards innovation and progressive ideals that move the community forward. They see many opportunities for a population growth and the subsequent economic growth that would bring, as well as an economic development as big retail companies that could be brought into the city. Embracing progressive ideals gives the community an increase



diversity and inclusion, grow it's resources and become a hub to the region.

The proximity to our highways and central location could be used to promote Joplin. Many citizens responded without specification that they saw a potential for the growth of the community.

HISTORY/TOURISM

Once again residents see an opportunity to use Joplin's proximity to the highways and central location to catch tourists as they pass through and incentivize them to spend money here. To do this, residents hope to see greater promotion of the amenities Joplin does have, as well as it's rich history based on Route 66, Bonnie and Clyde, mining, our parks, restaurant culture, etc. With an addition of other attractions and new events, this effort would continue and contribute to growth, economic development and entertainment. Residents see an up and coming arts community and wish to see encouragement for this sector. Continuing to utilize the community's hospitable culture also encourages those visiting for healthcare purposes to visit from surrounding hubs and encourage economic development.

