

QUESTION 5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“What would you like to see change in Joplin over the next 5, 10, and 15 years?”

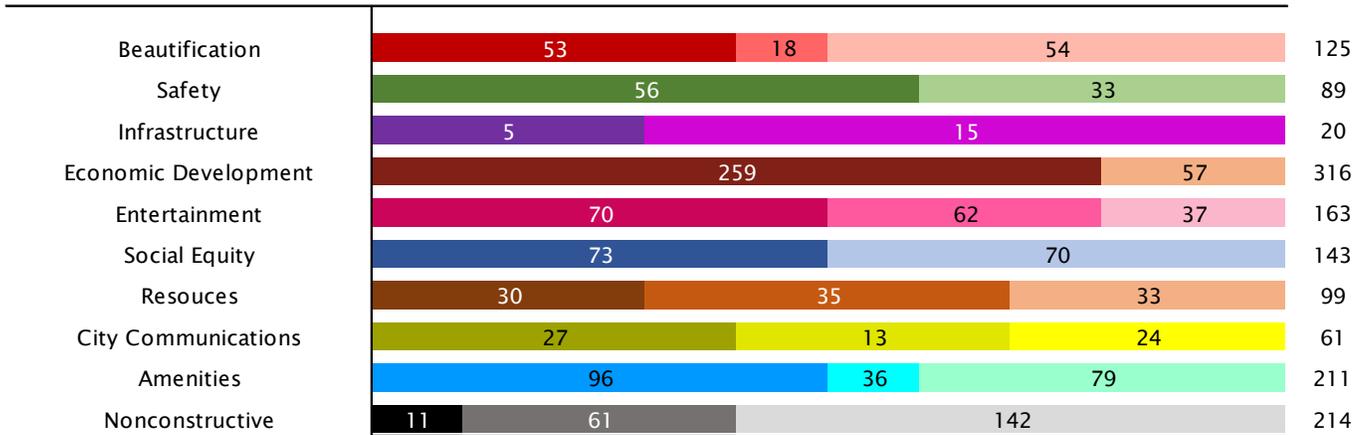
Different than the earlier questions asking about current challenges, this question was asked to elicit responses about the future of Joplin. The earlier questions provided a tremendous response with feedback that directed the community to improve economic development, invest in amenities, deliver entertainment options, pay attention to crime and maintenance, protect our cohesiveness and many other helpful responses.

In addition to those responses, this question yielded responses that were present in the other questions but not yet addressed. There is a desire to see a “beautification” of Joplin. Improving the outward presentation of our community can make a statement to future residents and investors that Joplin is a community of opportunity and not decline. Community beautification can take many forms such as cleaning up our streets and parks, enhancing landscaping and green spaces, but also removing blight. Beautification is also possible if it is embraced by residential and commercial developers. Cities can require higher standards for new building and landscape designs through improved ordinances. Partnerships with existing residents and businesses should be pursued to create an implied community standard. Improving standards provides encouragement and accountability to the community as a whole.

Arts and cultural activities will amplify beautification efforts. Joplin is fortunate for the visionaries that made an investment into the community through the development of the Harry M. Cornell Arts & Entertainment complex. Beautiful scenes and extraordinary experiences will enhance the ‘quality of place’ and attract new residents or even those who felt it necessary to leave because of the absence of those amenities. Did you know that nationally, according to the Americans for the Arts organization, that the nonprofit arts and culture industry generated \$166.3 billion of economic activity during 2015? This activity also supported 4.6 million jobs and \$27.5 billion in revenue to local, state, and federal governments. Supporting arts and cultural activities must be one of the many strategies for Joplin to continue to pursue in the future.

QUESTION #5 GRAPH

What would you like to see change in Joplin over the next 5, 10, and 15 years?



Common Themes

- Reduced Blight
- Landscaping and Trees
- Cleaner Streets and Parks
- Reduced Crime and Drugs
- Public Safety Support
- Improved Public Transit
- Improved Streets/Sidewalks
- More Businesses
- Higher Paying/Quality Jobs
- More Community Events
- Family & Youth Entertainment
- Arts & Young Adult Entertainment
- Increased Diversity & Inclusion
- Decreased Homelessness
- Talent Retention
- More for Low-Income Asst.
- Education
- Branding and Promotion
- Tourism
- Communication
- More Parks and Trails
- Convention Centers
- Thriving Downtown
- Anti-mask and COVID
- Chamber and Council
- Nonconstructive

Top Bar



Bottom Bar

DETAILED SUMMARY

COMMON THEMES

- BEAUTIFICATION
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- ENTERTAINMENT
- SOCIAL EQUITY
- NONCONSTRUCTIVE
- RESOURCES
- CITY RELATIONSHIP
- AMENITIES

BEAUTIFICATION

Residents would commonly like to see a reduction blight in both commercial and residential areas. There is a desire to see increased value and pride in neighborhoods that will encourage growth in the community and provide a sense of pride. Decreased blight would contribute to promoting Joplin and excite the next generations to move to the city and begin businesses and families. Respondents would also like to see increased landscaping and greenery in public places such as parks, walkways and green spaces near public facilities to improve the look and feel of the community. Not only do residents wish to see landscaped public spaces, but they wish to see clean ones as well. There is a common theme that Joplin streets and parks are dirty and littered. People would like to promote a beautification campaign that gives the city a cleaner and greener look that makes Joplin more appealing to live, work and play.

PUBLIC SAFETY

In coming years residents see a decreased

crime and drug rate in which they feel safe to raise their families. In contribution to decreasing rates there are some groups that wish to see neighborhood watches grow and receive increased training and education to provide support for the police force as well as their neighbors. It is commonly noted that the community should support and uplift the police department in order to encourage increased training and safety externally, but also that providing this support could lead to a greater police force that continues to grow in size.

INFRASTRUCTURE

There is a desire for expanded and increased public transit. Residents hope to see more routes that run for longer periods of time in our trolley and MAP systems. For residents that work overnight shifts or in Joplin's industrial park there is no public transit that allows drop-off and pick-up times during these hours, which means that even if they are qualified for that position but do not currently have their own vehicle or means of transport that these positions go unfilled. The

need for overnight public transportation applies to the community as a whole and not only the industrial park. There is also a desire to see improved city infrastructure moving forward with repairs and maintenance of roads and sidewalks. Infrastructure repairs and maintenance contribute to the placemaking effect Joplin residents currently desire.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Joplin residents hope the future brings a major growth for economic development by bringing in new big business, creating an environment for small business and entrepreneurs. There is an overall desire to see many of the major retail and entertainment businesses that surrounding cities have. This includes Hy-vee and other grocery stores, Menard's, Dillard's, etc. Residents currently leave town to shop their favorite places and for those who believe in the future of Joplin, they would rather see their money spent in town and contribute towards the economy. With business growth people also hope to see more small businesses and start-ups that encourage innovation and bring in young professionals and families. This business growth would create more quality jobs with higher pay opportunities. Many residents state that while there are currently plenty of job opportunities in Joplin, they do not always suit the skill sets of the workers available to fill them. There is especially a desire to create an environment for new graduates from Missouri Southern State University so that they stay in town rather than leaving to up and coming areas like Northwest Arkansas.

ENTERTAINMENT

In the next 5, 10 and 15 years residents want

to see an increase in community activities and events for people of all ages. It is also important to them that these events be available for all income levels. They want to see more festivals, fairs, cultural events, arts and entertainment for children, families, teens, and adults both young and old. They acknowledge that the arts community is growing and hope that the community continues to encourage this sector and support local artists and entertainers.

SOCIAL EQUITY

Residents hope the future of Joplin holds a more open and inclusive community for everyone. Specifically many people wish to see a reduction in racist ideology and a more diverse population, as well as support for minority owned businesses. There is also a desire to see more inclusion the LGBTQ+ community and an expansion on pride and education to youth on inclusion. Along with increased diversity, residents hope to see decreased homeless rates and panhandling. They believe the community needs educated on resources available for the homeless. With a decrease in homelessness and panhandling in high traffic areas, people believe families will be more prone to considering Joplin as a place to live and work and feel safe raising their families.

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. Some residents would respond with “see previous answers”.

RESOURCES

Residents are hungry for ways to maintain talent retention in the area and hope that the future holds more resources to do so. These resources are an overlap of upgraded infrastructure, amenities, quality education opportunities, a variety of entertainment and affordable housing and healthcare. On the flip side, they also hope to see more resources for low-income families before they fall into a cycle of poverty. These resources would help train individuals in basic skill sets with computers and hard skills that allow them to be eligible for higher income earning positions. These resources would also help provide food, safe childcare for those working to make life improvements and higher education opportunities. Joplin citizens see a large need for various education sources in current city issues, diversity and inclusion resources, education in social equity, funding for more school programs to get youth prepared for college, technology related skills and job preparation, and more diverse curriculums in the schools. These resources would require across the board collaboration between the public, private and non-profit sectors.

CITY RELATIONSHIP

There is a belief that in the future the community

and City could do a better job branding and marketing itself as not only a place to live, work and play but to visit and enjoy time off with family and friends. Whether people visit during cross-country treks and make a stop off of the highways or are traveling into Joplin from surrounding hubs, residents want to see Joplin promoted as an attraction with various things to do and see. Many people currently travel out of town to regions like Kansas City, Branson or Northwest Arkansas and want Joplin to be seen as a competitive market and entertainment hub. An increase in tourism from this effort would also boost the local economy and further provide reasons for new families and young professionals to look at Joplin when choosing a place to grow.

People would like to better understand processes and decision making that occurs at the City level. Many feel there needs to be more transparency from the City to the public, improved education on ongoing issues, more outreach similar to the Listening Tour results and a great presence online to keep updated on events that are going to occur. Some residents feel they only find out things that happen at the City or events in the community after they occur and miss out understanding issues, making their voices heard and participating in community events. This greater education would allow them to take more interest in current issues and spread awareness on what is really happening at the City level.

AMENITIES

Residents want to see Joplin have a convention center and other gathering places and venues that can host all of the shows and events they hope to see in the future. Many express their sadness regarding Memorial Hall and hope to see

something in its place large enough to entice big name entertainers and encourage events that bring the community together to begin to heal from adversity and division the community has faced.

For the purpose of retaining talent and keeping families in the community, residents would like to see an expansive trail network in Joplin. These trails could contribute towards recreation and entertainment, health initiatives, transportation and overall placemaking and quality of life. Parks are another parallel amenity that residents wish to improve and expand upon for the purpose of recreation, entertainment and beautification. Growth of both of these amenities would position Joplin to be more competitive in the future and allow the city to be more innovative and modernized so that it does not get left behind. A thriving downtown and Main Street is also an amenity that residents see as a tool for economic growth, placemaking and another incentive to draw in youth families and professionals while giving current residents more to do. Downtown culture would include more nightlife in the future, interesting restaurants and food trucks, boutiques and shopping opportunities and places to host events and entertainers for shows.

