

Sulphur Springs Comprehensive Plan Community Survey #1 Recap Document

As part of the engagement efforts for the Sulphur Springs Comprehensive Plan, an online survey was conducted to gather community input about the City of Sulphur Springs today and where it is envisioned to be. The survey was open from March 27th to June 13th, 2025.

The survey was accessible through the following channels, ensuring broad community participation:

- Project Website: <https://engagekh.mysocialpinpoint.com/SulphurSpringsCompPlan>
- QR Code & Direct Link: Shared at the Community Open House
- Public Outreach: Promoted through events, mailing lists, and social media

Survey

With 275 responses, the survey sought feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, areas of opportunity and threats/ challenges. Additionally, an interactive map was used to gather respondents' location-specific input about their experiences in Sulphur Springs.

The following provides a summary of the key insights gathered from the survey.

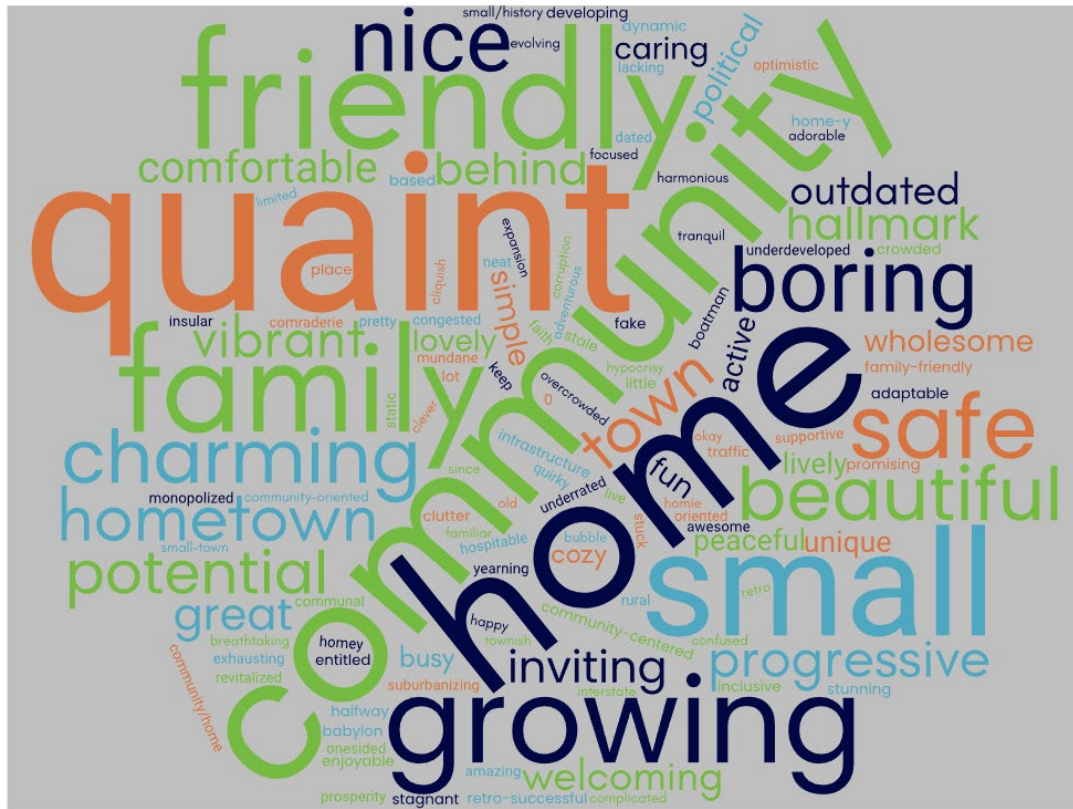
Demographics of Survey Respondents

Of the respondents, an overwhelming number identify as white women in the 40-44 age group, who are residents within the city's limits.

- 92% (253) of respondents live in Sulphur Springs (City limits & ETJ); 8% (22) of respondents live in another city.
- 66.55% (183) of respondents work in Sulphur; 33.45% (92) work elsewhere
- Respondents 30% (82) identified as male; 70% (191) identified as female
- The majority of respondents identify as White
- Average respondent: 45 years old

Visioning Sulphur Springs

Survey respondents were asked, “**One word to describe Sulphur Springs**”. The word cloud below shows participants' responses, with the larger words showing common themes and words used:



Survey respondents were asked, “***How do you envision Sulphur Springs 20 years into the future?***”. Key takeaways include:

1. Preserving the Small-Town Feel:

- Many people currently value the welcoming, “home-y” atmosphere and want to retain the small-town charm.

2. Community Engagement and Activities:

- Increase community events like parades, gatherings, family activities, and night life.
- Implement community gardens and more parks for recreational activities.
- Build facilities such as swimming pools, soccer, basketball, baseball, and football clubs.

3. Enhancing Dining and Shopping Options:

- Desire for restaurants and grocery stores that offer variety and affordability (e.g., Golden Corral, Chipotle, Smoothie King, Freddy's, Target, Aldi, Sam's Club).
- Growing downtown with more diverse businesses and better traffic flow.

4. Infrastructure Improvements:

- Better roads and sidewalks, improved infrastructure including walking trails, parks, and cleaner neighborhoods.
- Addressing congestion and enhancing transportation options like bus or trolley services.

5. Affordable Housing and Living:

- Develop more affordable and decent housing options, including apartments.
- Support for individual needs like single moms, childcare, and affordable housing that matches income levels.

6. Economic Development and Local Job Opportunities:

- Growth in local job opportunities, maintaining local work, and encouraging entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Bring in larger retailers to provide jobs and stimulate economic growth.

7. Inclusivity and Community Support:

- Emphasize diversity, inclusion, and supporting various socioeconomic statuses.
- Promote community involvement and pride, offering activities for all ages.

8. Keeping the Community Safe and Sustainable:

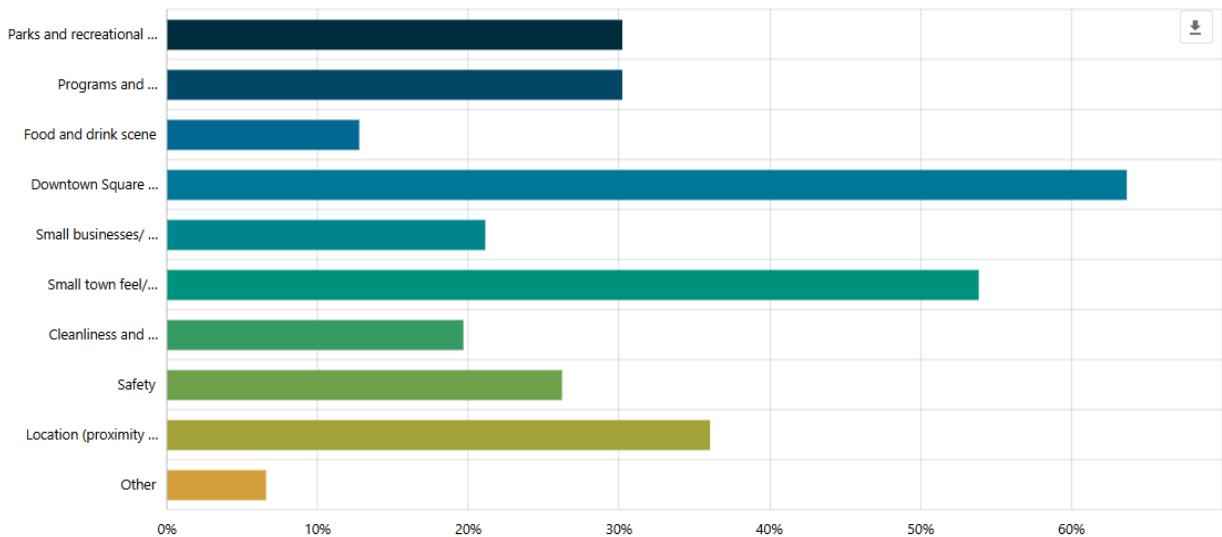
- Focus on building a safe environment with low crime rates.
- Support for developing eco-friendly spaces and sustainability.

9. Future Vision:

- Thoughtful growth balancing modern amenities with small-town values.
- Creating a destination town that attracts visitors while preserving its identity.

Strengths

What are three of Sulphur Spring's greatest assets or strengths as a city today?

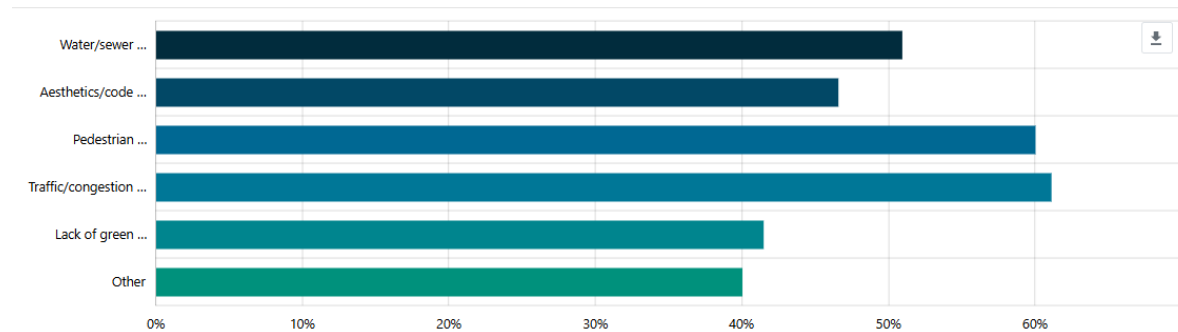


- 63.64% of residents agree that **the Downtown Square** in Sulphur Springs is one of the city's greatest assets.
- Sulphur Spring's **small town/ know your neighbor feel** is favored by many, voted by 53.82% (148) respondents.
- 36% (99) of respondents voted that the **city's proximity to I-30** is one of the strongest assets.

Responses marked "other" included comments not related to the strengths of the city.

Areas of Improvement

What are three areas of Sulphur Springs do you think need the most improvement?



Responses for the area of improvement were fairly evenly voted upon. The responses that edged above others are:

- Traffic congestion 61.09% (168)
- Pedestrian infrastructure, 60% (165)
- Water/sewer infrastructure, 50.91% (140)

Responses marked “other” included comment themes of:

1. City Management and Planning:

- Some residents feel that city management makes decisions without considering the average citizen.
- Desire for a more friendly atmosphere for startups and small businesses, especially extending beyond the square. After leaving the square, the character and quality drops drastically.
- Concern over the focus on downtown beautification while neglecting outer parts of the city.
- Infrastructure to support more internet providers.
- Prioritizing wheelchair accessibility in all buildings and restaurants.

2. Amenities and Facilities:

- Lack of swimming pools and other recreational facilities.
- More fishing opportunities are requested.
- Request for a community program that is not just at the Downtown Square and non-park related.

- Need for more entertainment options for all ages, especially activities for children and teens.
- Suggestions for a dog park, better public trails, and an event center for concerts.
- The lack of tourism attractions. There is a need for an event center for concerts and museums. This would also keep revenue flowing in the city.

3. Shopping and Economic Growth:

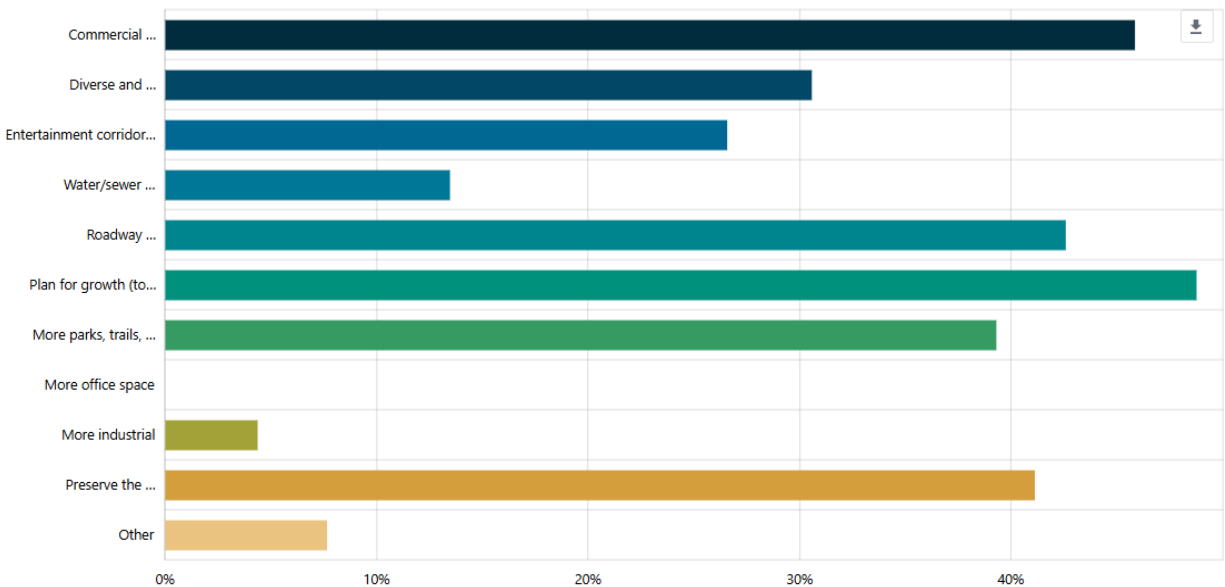
- Desire for more grocery stores and affordable shopping options.
- Variety of restaurants, not just fast-food.
- Suggestions for more unique small businesses instead of chains and large corporations.
- Need for a variety of retail stores to attract shoppers and keep people in the area.
- Calls for economic growth with shops and facilities within walking distance from central areas.

4. Housing and Community Services:

- Need for affordable housing, better traffic infrastructure, and programs to help with mental health and addiction.
- Calls for more public services like police, fire, and EMS, as well as facilities to support the homeless population.

Greatest Opportunities

What are three of Sulphur Spring's greatest opportunities for the future?



Responses for areas of opportunity were also more varied. Opportunities voted on the most include:

- Plan for growth 48.73% (134)
- Commercial development 45.82% (126)
- Roadway infrastructure 42.55% (117)

Responses marked “other” included comment themes of:

1. Youth Services:

- A significant desire for more activities and facilities for children and teens.
- Suggestions to build a new city pool and create businesses that cater to kids' activities.
- Quality coaches and programs are needed for extracurricular activities that consider family wellness.
- Need to enhance schools and extracurricular programs.

2. City Management and Services:

- Need for better coordination between the city and the school district.

- Concerns about keeping property taxes manageable and avoiding extreme value increases.
- Calls for balanced growth focusing on shopping, employment, and entertainment opportunities.
- Residents feel the necessity for better infrastructure, including sidewalks and community pools.

3. Healthcare and Safety:

- Improvements needed in local hospital and emergency room services.

4. Community and Environment:

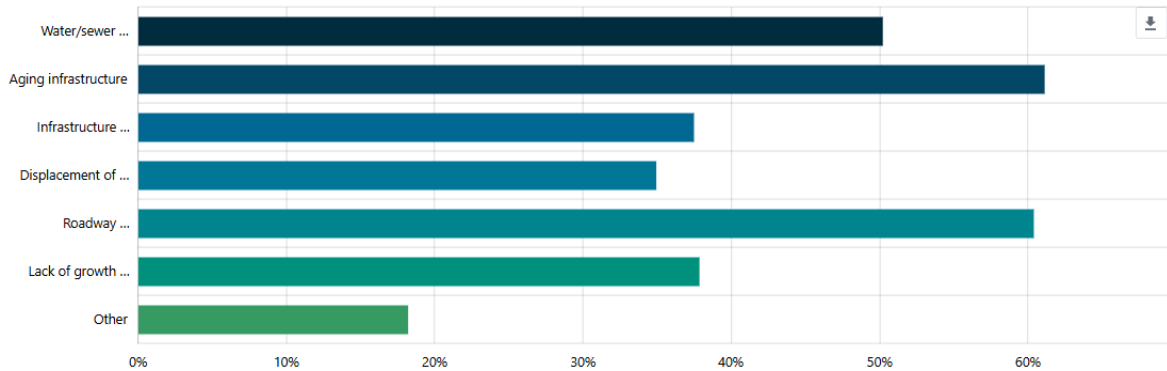
- Calls for using code enforcement to clean up rundown neighborhoods and reduce blight.
- Concerns about the impact of commercial development on the town's character.

5. Infrastructure and Roads:

- Ongoing issues with roads, particularly those just outside city limits, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts between city and county authorities.
- Calls to improve County Roads feeding into the city.

Greatest Threats/ Challenges

What are the three greatest threats or challenges Sulphur Springs could face in the future?



The greatest threats to Sulphur Springs were generally agreed upon amongst the public. The top three responses are:

- Aging infrastructure 61.09% (168)
- Roadway infrastructure (166)
- Water/ sewer infrastructure 50.18% (138)

Responses marked “other” included comment themes of:

1. Growth and Development:

- Concerns over rapid growth leading to the loss of small-town charm and increased crime.
- Opinions divided between slowing growth to maintain community feel and supporting more balanced development.
- Issues with displacement of residents due to high taxes and growing housing costs.
- Desire for a more inclusive growth mindset that supports diverse businesses and residents.

2. City Management and Cost of Living:

- Criticism of current city management and calls for new leadership focused on community needs.
- Issues with high costs and taxes making housing unaffordable, especially for people on disability.

- Complaints about the city charging high permit fees to public schools.

3. Infrastructure and Services:

- Numerous calls for improvements in infrastructure, such as water/sewer systems, sidewalks, bike lanes, and roadways.
- Stray animal control and better management of resources like renewable energy.
- Need for more transparent communication from city officials, especially regarding development projects.

4. Community and Safety:

- Need for better support for public safety services, including law enforcement and emergency medical services, with competitive wages.
- Emphasis on preserving green spaces and controlling light pollution.
- More activities and facilities that cater to families and help reduce the outflow of residents seeking entertainment and shopping elsewhere.

5. Economic Concerns:

- High value of homes pricing residents out of the market.
- Need to invest in current businesses with support such as marketing and business budgeting to avoid reliance on big chains.
- Calls for diverse employment opportunities to match the growing population and cost of living.

6. Public Sentiment:

- Mixed feelings on adapting to growth, with concerns about losing small-town values and community-focused living.
- Resistance to new industrial developments like wind farms and lithium drilling.
- Calls for a balanced approach to growth that preserves the town's unique characteristics while improving infrastructure and community services.

Additional Comments

Survey respondents were asked, ***“Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share about Sulphur Spring’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and/or threats?”***.

There were 160 comments. Key takeaways include:

1. Community Activities and Options:

- Desire for more activities for children such as a skating rink, swimming pool, arcade, and places to have fun.
- Desire for more family-oriented amenities considering how family-focused the community is.
- Increased focus on family-oriented spaces and activities.

2. Infrastructure Improvements:

- Improvement of streets and drainage.
- Better traffic flow and expansion of public transportation options.
- Enhance pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure with more sidewalks and bike lanes.

3. City Management and Governance:

- Concerns about city management and EDC, and the need for transparency and inclusivity in decision-making.
- Strengthen communication between city officials and residents.
- Recruitment and retention of qualified volunteers for city boards.

4. Growth and Development:

- Emphasis on careful planning to maintain the small-town charm while accommodating inevitable growth.
- Development of affordable housing and tackling the high cost of living.
- Expand business opportunities to provide good-paying jobs and diversify economic growth.

5. Entertainment and Shopping:

- Desire for more diverse shopping options and restaurants, particularly affordable and family-friendly establishments.

- Potential for developing areas like Wildcat Way into entertainment corridors.

6. Public Safety:

- Need for increased law enforcement presence and focus on public safety.
- Concerns about crime and the importance of proactive measures to address it.
- Cameras requested at parks to hold people accountable for vandalism.

7. Community and Inclusivity:

- Focus on making the city welcoming and inclusive for people of all races, religions, and political standings.
- Strengthening community bonds and supporting local businesses.

8. Parks and Recreation:

- Expansion and renovation of existing parks and recreational facilities, including Coleman and Buford parks.
 - Comments that the city could benefit greatly in an economic sense if tournaments can be hosted in these locations.
- Introduction of facilities like dog parks, bike trails, walking tracks, and play areas for children.
- Turf added to the existing baseball and softball fields due to frequency of cancelled games due to fields flooding.

9. Beautification and Maintenance:

- Continue beautification efforts beyond downtown with consistent maintenance.
- Encouraging upkeep of homes and neighborhoods to improve aesthetics.

10. Housing Affordability:

- Addressing the need for affordable housing and rental properties.
- Support for low-income families and single parents.

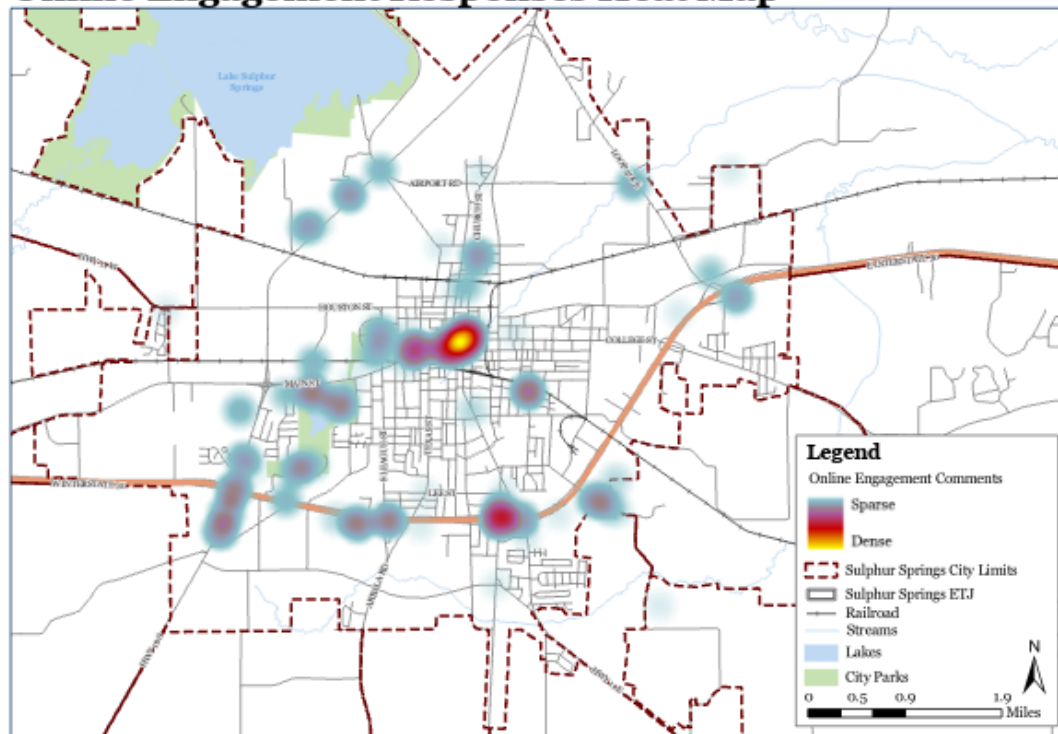
Interactive Map Comments

An interactive map was used to receive feedback from survey respondents who wanted to comment on specific areas. They provided insights about areas they love, areas that could be improved, or suggested new ideas. Respondents were able to use markers to leave comments on the following categories:

- Idea, 20% (23)
- General comment, 10.4% (12)
- Needs Improvement, 28.7% (33)
- Works great, 7% (8)
- Traffic concern, 25.2% (29)
- Parks & recreation, 8.7% (10)

115 comments were received from survey respondents. 113 were within the city limits. 2 comments were left in the ETJ. Respondents were also given the option to view other comments and up/downvote if they agreed or disagreed with the comments. The heat map below shows the locations of comments with the more vibrant the color, the more centralized location for comments.

Online Engagement Responses Heat Map



Key takeaways from the comments:

1. Infrastructure and Maintenance:

- **Sidewalks:** Need for proper, well-maintained sidewalks, specifically between Hodges Orthodontics and White Oak City limits.
- **Road Conditions:** General road maintenance, fixing potholes, and addressing road wear due to heavy traffic.
- **Drainage Issues:** Recurrent flooding problems on roads and service roads that require attention.
- **Traffic Management:** Installation of traffic lights, controlling heavy traffic areas, and improving road design to mitigate congestion.

2. Beautification and Curb Appeal:

- **Community Cleanliness:** Suggestions for community service projects for cleaning yards, removing debris, and maintaining curbs.
- **Greening Initiatives:** Planting trees and improving landscaping in different parts of town, especially around the square.

3. Recreational Facilities and Spaces:

- **Park Enhancements:** Proposals for adding amenities like restrooms, benches, shade covers, and water features in parks.
- **New Recreational Spaces:** Ideas like an indoor/outdoor miniature golf course and community gardens.
- **Youth and Sports Facilities:** An emphasis on developing youth baseball and adult softball fields, sports complexes, and making existing fields user-friendly with better maintenance.

4. Economic Growth and Development:

- **Business Expansion:** Encouragement for business growth, such as getting stores like Aldi, and updating old shopping centers to attract new businesses.
- **Entertainment Options:** Calls for more entertainment facilities including food truck parks, a water park, and a community recreation center.

5. Public Safety and Services:

- **Traffic and Road Safety:** Areas needing traffic lights, pedestrian crosswalks, and better road markings.
- **Lighting and Accessibility:** Better street lighting, especially around parks and pedestrian areas for increased safety.
- **Emergency Response:** Improving emergency routes and addressing critical points for quicker response times.

6. Preserving Heritage and Enhancing Tourism:

- **Historic Restoration:** Suggestions for projects that showcase the city's history, like the healing waters area restoration.
- **Tourism Infrastructure:** Developing areas like the Riverwalk to enhance the city's appeal to visitors, ensuring continued growth of the tourism economy.

7. Community-Oriented Developments:

- **Facilities for Community Use:** Repurposing buildings into community centers with classes and activities.
- **Accessibility to Recreational Areas:** Expanding access to parks, adding more park benches and rest areas, and ensuring facilities like the Coleman pickleball courts are well-supported with amenities like restrooms.

8. Addressing Neglected Areas and Eye-Sores:

- **Run-Down Areas:** Addressing neglected shopping centers and dilapidated buildings, considering options like demolition or redevelopment.
- **First Impressions:** Enhancing the visual appeal of critical entry points and main roads to make a better impression on visitors.

9. Integration of Modern Amenities:

- **Two-Way Traffic:** Suggestions to revert some roads back to two-way traffic to improve business accessibility and traffic flow.
- **Parking Solutions:** Addressing parking shortages, especially around popular spots and during events, possibly with parking garages.

10. Residential Planning and Growth Management:

- **Affordable Housing:** Development of affordable housing options, particularly for displaced elderly and low-income residents.
- **Rational Zoning:** Reconsidering zoning decisions, especially in mixed or residential neighborhoods to preserve their character.

Conclusion

The community engagement process has provided valuable insight into the residents' preferences and concerns of growth and future development of Sulphur Springs. Key themes emerged such as maintaining the community's family-oriented feel, prioritizing water infrastructure to mitigate flooding and planning for strategic growth.