



FAYETTEVILLE FIRST

Stakeholder Input Summary

2016

Resident Input Session

Boyette Strategic Advisors moderated a resident input session that was open to the public. The goal was to allow residents the opportunity to share their thoughts related to economic development in the City of Fayetteville. An estimated 22 people attended this session. Following is a summary of the session.

What is the one thing that makes Fayetteville special to you?	
Beautiful environment	Great restaurants
Unique culture	Arts & Entertainment
Centrally located in US	Good airport nearby
Strong economy	Opportunities for business owners
Friendly people	Outdoor activities
University town	Focus on Quality of Life
Bike trails/lanes	Library
Family friendly	Farmers' Market
Diverse perspectives	Church bells ringing
Downtown Square	Increasing Walkability
Entertainment Industry (underdeveloped market)	Potential
Parks	Unique history
Cost of living w/ amenities	Support for local business
Lack of billboards	Creative minds/thinkers
Gentrification of Wilson Park Area	Urban Renewal
Sidewalks	Razorbacks
College Ave. Plans	MLK Improvements
Dickson Street	Block Street
Educational opportunities	Downtown Development Interest
People	

In Fayetteville, economic development means...	
Job creation in entertainment industry	Targeted infrastructure development
Density	Innovation/Tech Park
New housing	Public transportation
Start-ups/Entrepreneurship	Diverse economic base
Attraction of VC companies	Sustainable/Environmentally friendly
Sustainable growth	Managing traffic
Managing sprawl of city	Utilizing rail system to connect other NWA cities
Creating public transit system	Agricultural opportunities
Downtown revitalization thru transit system	Redevelopment of MLK as gateway
Urban mobility	Better connect downtowns to corp. employers – Apple Bus
Innovation/Tech Park	International airport
Crossover	Opportunities to revitalize key areas (for people to do that/reduce barriers)
Advanced Manufacturing – Walmart	Sectors tied to UA research
Tourism	Identifying retail districts – plan for development
Van Asche and Ruppel development	Festival like South x Southwest
Passenger rail to KC	Parking near public transit
Strengthen identity as unique community beyond the region	

What are the greatest assets, related to economic development, in Fayetteville?	
Underdeveloped entertainment industry	University
Best in class industry	Public-Private partnerships
Diversity of people	Authenticity
Available capital for entrepreneurs	Health of environment
Water source	Funkiness – needs to be cultivated
Recruit alternative retail in walkable area – infill on College	Developable areas
Architectural style of businesses	Sign ordinance
Landscaping	Parks
Intellectual capital	Youth
High school	Regional government with other NWA cities
City government is approachable	Loyalty of people
Brand recognition of community nationally (SEC college town)	Charitable infrastructure/giving community
Dickson Street Bookstores	KUAF/Public radio

What are current roadblocks to success, related to economic development, in Fayetteville?	
Lack of cohesive leadership for development of city	Fayetteville's identity
Incentives from city	Somewhat isolated from coasts
Distance between downtowns in NWA	Benton County investment
Perception of NWA/AR	Lack of community gathering space
Lack of convention center	Alternative to Dickson Street for other demographics
State politics	Small town (can also be an asset)
Stroads (1/2 street and 1/2 road)	E/W transit through the city (street and bikes)

What should the economic development priorities be for Fayetteville?	
Strong identity	Affordable housing
Jobs	Diverse economic base
High tech industry	Cohesive leadership
Incentives for reuse/infill	Recruiting businesses
Retention of existing businesses	Identify/build event space for entertainment industry
Bypass	Broadband infrastructure
Air & water quality protection (keep it good)	Light pollution
Public transportation	Supporting local arts/artists (jobs)
Mindful development (multi-use space)	Start-ups
Development of attractions (zoo, aquarium, etc.)	Awareness of neighboring regions'/cities' focus

What would you most like to see addressed in this economic development plan?	
Incentives	Affordable housing
Transportation	Streamlined approach to development
Recruitment of business & developers/marketing of Fayetteville	Ecosystem for innovation
Retention of UA talent	Attract more talent to UA (students & faculty & business people)
Maintain/encourage/incentivize (retention) existing businesses	Start-ups – first right of refusal in Fayetteville
Entrepreneurial support	Projections for UA enrollment
Collaboration between UA/Fayetteville Schools/City	Public schools support/strengthening
Involving high school students in business/internships	Focus on 20% of UA students who want to remain in Fayetteville
Support public safety programs	Health and wellness
Workforce development	Attracting trade oriented universities (Full Sail)

If Fayetteville had unlimited resources, what would you do as it relates to economic development?	
Make it prettier	Best transit system in company
Freight trains	Studio space for artists (x2)
Better connectivity	Art district
Public art	No homeless or hungry people
Stopping the fracking	Over/underpasses for pedestrians and bikes
Developing walkable mixed-use areas	Identity campaign
Highway to airport	West parking lot development – outdoor event space
Completion of regional park	Become outdoor recreation capitol of America
Take back control of state highways (College Ave.)	Create public utility
Another airport/reinvigorate Drake Field	Zoo
Community college in Fayetteville	Elimination of dead space/timeline for redevelopment
Convention center	Revamping of property tax structure

Business and Employers Survey

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

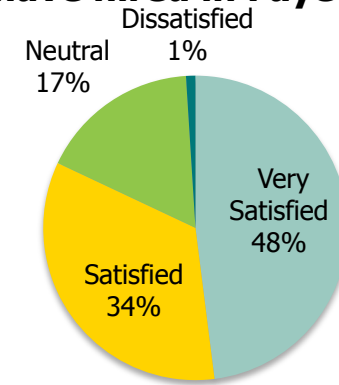
Of the more than 300 companies who responded to the survey, 63 percent employ fewer than 10 people, with only 5 percent employing 500 or more.

Of the total respondents, 82 percent are satisfied or very satisfied with their employees in Fayetteville.

Companies were asked if they had plans to increase their workforce or make a major capital investment. Thirty-eight percent responded affirmative. The following table outlines the number of responses by key sectors.

Industry	Increased Workforce	Major Capital Investment
Information Services	2	1
Manufacturing/Transportation	5	4
Professional Services	18	5
Retail	18	15

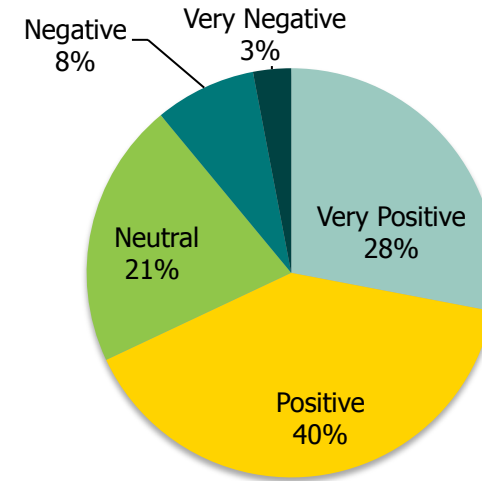
Please rate your overall satisfaction with the employees you have hired in Fayetteville:



When asked how Fayetteville rated as a place to do business, 68 percent said positive or very positive. Of those businesses with fewer than 10 employees, 82 percent responded positive or very positive.

Businesses considered the University of Arkansas, quality of life/lifestyle, arts/cultural/entertainment amenities, ability to attract young professionals, and cost of living as the greatest assets of Fayetteville related to economic development. The greatest challenges related to economic development, according to businesses, are business climate (permitting, etc.), transportation infrastructure, public transportation, tax climate, and ability to attract talent.

How would you rate Fayetteville as a place to do business?



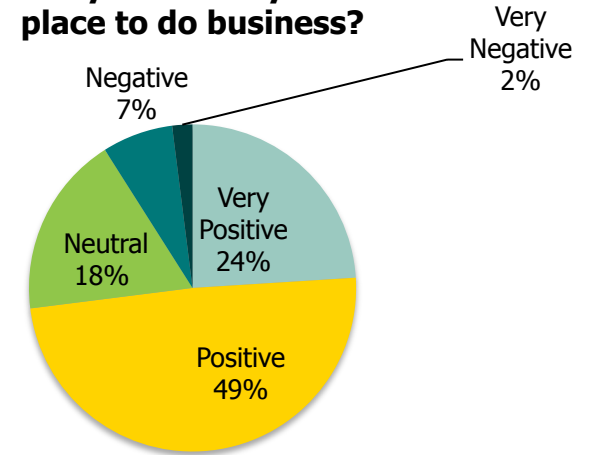
Entrepreneurs and Innovators Survey

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

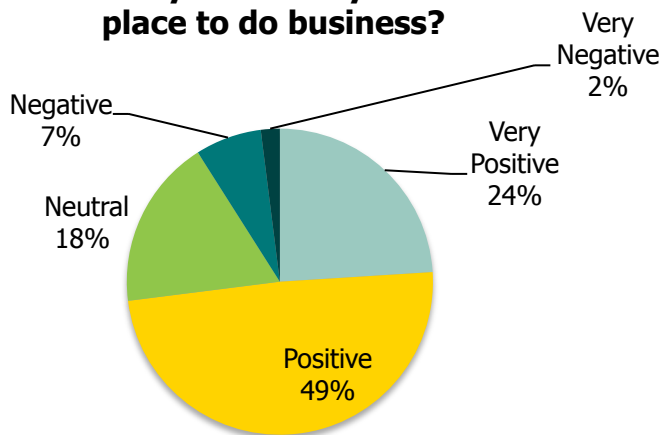
As part of the information gathering process related to the development of the Fayetteville First Economic Development Strategy, entrepreneurs and innovators in the City of Fayetteville were asked to respond to an online survey. The link to the survey was distributed via email and social media. A total of 110 responses were received.

When asked to identify barriers and advantages for entrepreneurs in Fayetteville, more than half of respondents felt cost of living was a significant advantage. Other significant advantages included business climate, network for entrepreneurs, and talent (workforce). While 33 percent felt talent (workforce) was a significant advantage, 22 percent considered it a barrier for entrepreneurs. Incentives/financial support for small business/entrepreneurs was considered a significant barrier for 19.3 percent and a minor barrier for 15.6 percent of respondents.

How would you rate Fayetteville as a place to do business?



How would you rate Fayetteville as a place to do business?



Seventy-three percent of respondents said they would rate Fayetteville as a very positive or positive place to do business, and only nine percent responded negative or very negative. For those with a negative perception of doing business in Fayetteville, the sales tax, high cost of living, and building and permitting process caused this perception.

For 85 percent of respondents, Fayetteville is considered a place for creativity, collaboration, and innovation. No one answered negatively to this question.

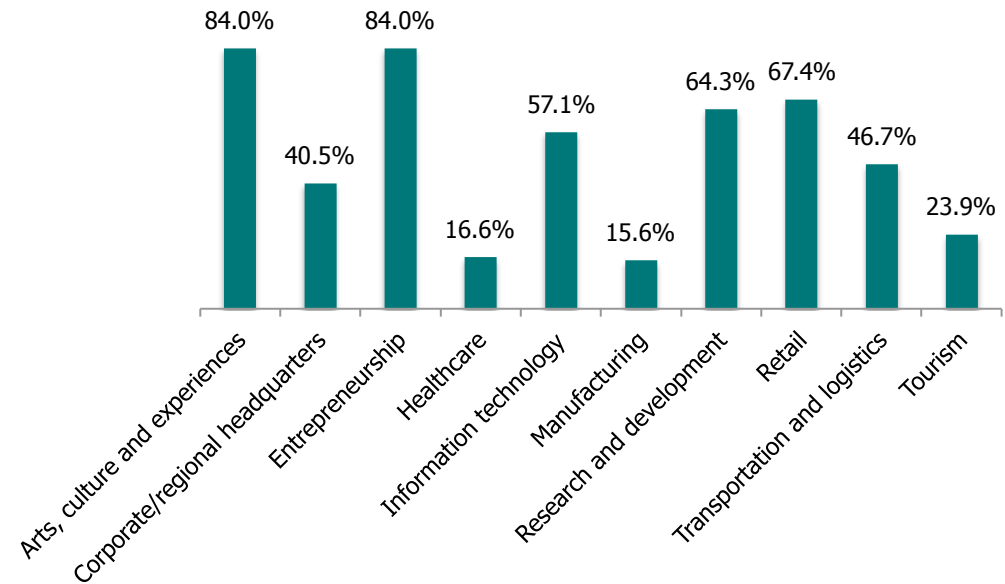
The majority of respondents said arts, culture and experiences; entrepreneurs; retail; and research and development were the top four business sectors or opportunities for investment and job creation in Fayetteville.

Entrepreneurs identified Fayetteville’s greatest assets from an economic development perspective as cost of living, University of Arkansas, ability to attract young professionals, entrepreneurial support, and quality of life/lifestyle. When asked about the greatest challenges for entrepreneurs in Fayetteville, ability to attract funding, ability to attract talent, business climate (permitting, etc.), entrepreneurial support, and tax climate were the top five responses. Entrepreneurial support was considered one of the top five assets by 37 percent of responses, but 35 percent considered it a challenge.

More than half of entrepreneurs considered the ability to attract funding as one of the top five challenges in Fayetteville. Funding at all levels, ranging from \$15,000 to \$10 million, was identified as a need. In addition to seed, venture capital, and angel investors, entrepreneurs would like to see funding for co-working space and continued development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Entrepreneurs were asked how Fayetteville could become a premier city for entrepreneurs. Responses ranged from supporting investment for entrepreneurs to creating/branding an innovation district on the downtown Square.

Please select the following business sectors or opportunities for investment or job creation, that are the best fit for Fayetteville. (Select up to five.)



Assets	Challenges
Cost of Living	Ability to Attract Funding
University of Arkansas	Ability to Attract Talent
Ability to Attract Young Professionals	Business Climate (permitting, etc.)
Entrepreneurial Support	Entrepreneurial Support
Quality of Life/Lifestyle	Tax Climate

Resident Survey

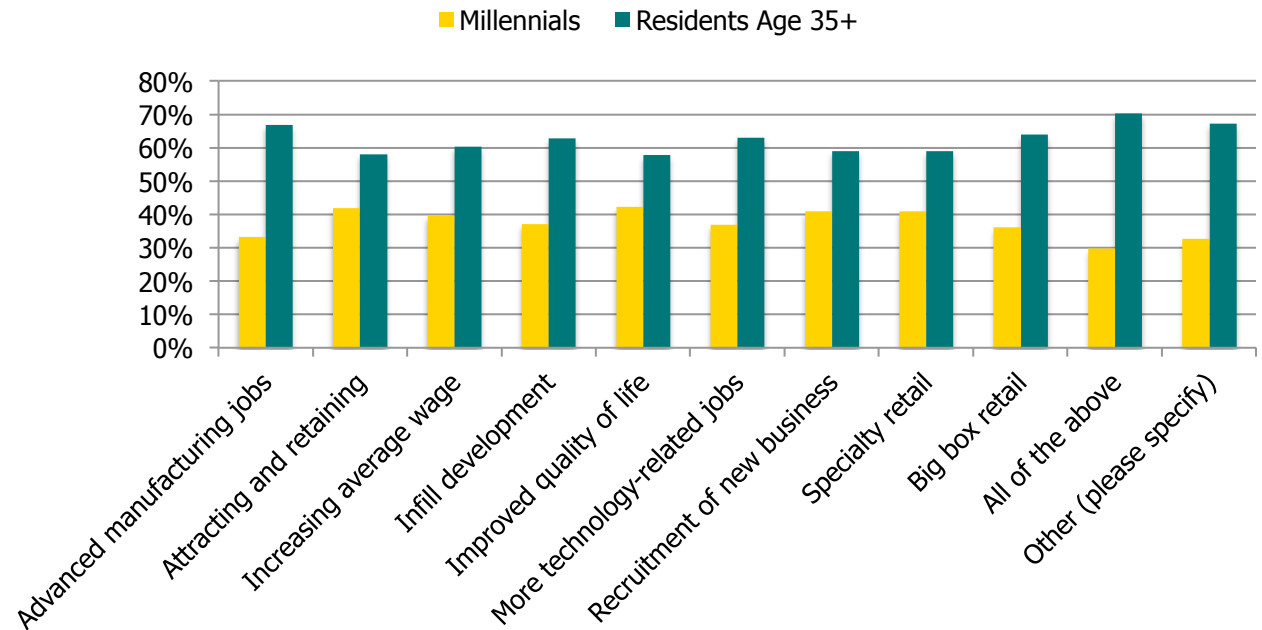
SUMMARY OF RESULTS

More than 1,000 residents or workers in Fayetteville completed an online survey about economic development efforts in the city. Of those respondents, 83 percent live in Fayetteville and 63.4 percent work in Fayetteville. Survey results were analyzed by age group broken down by respondents under the age of 35 (Millennials) and those over the age of 35. Following the summary are full survey results for these two age groups.

Fayetteville residents identified advantages of the city related to economic development as the University of Arkansas, quality of life/lifestyle, arts/cultural/entertainment amenities, post-secondary educational opportunities, bicycle friendliness, and recreational opportunities. Barriers, according to stakeholders, are transportation infrastructure, public transportation, attainable housing options, broadband access/providers, and tax climate.

When asked to define economic development, attracting start-up companies, recruiting new businesses, and improving quality of life were the top answers for the Millennials (residents age 35 or younger). For residents over the age of 35, top answers included attracting advanced manufacturing jobs and big box retail.

Economic development in Fayetteville means...



Residents over the age of 35 were asked what business opportunities or sectors would be the best fit for Fayetteville. The top three answers were arts, culture and experiences; entrepreneurship; and research and development.

Millennials were asked about their plans to start a business, and 38 percent have ideas, plans, or aspirations to start a business. Many of them feel the support they need is currently present in Fayetteville.

Do you have ideas, business plans or aspirations for starting a company?

