



# FIRST IMPRESSIONS

A program for Community Improvement

## *Dardanelle Community Report*

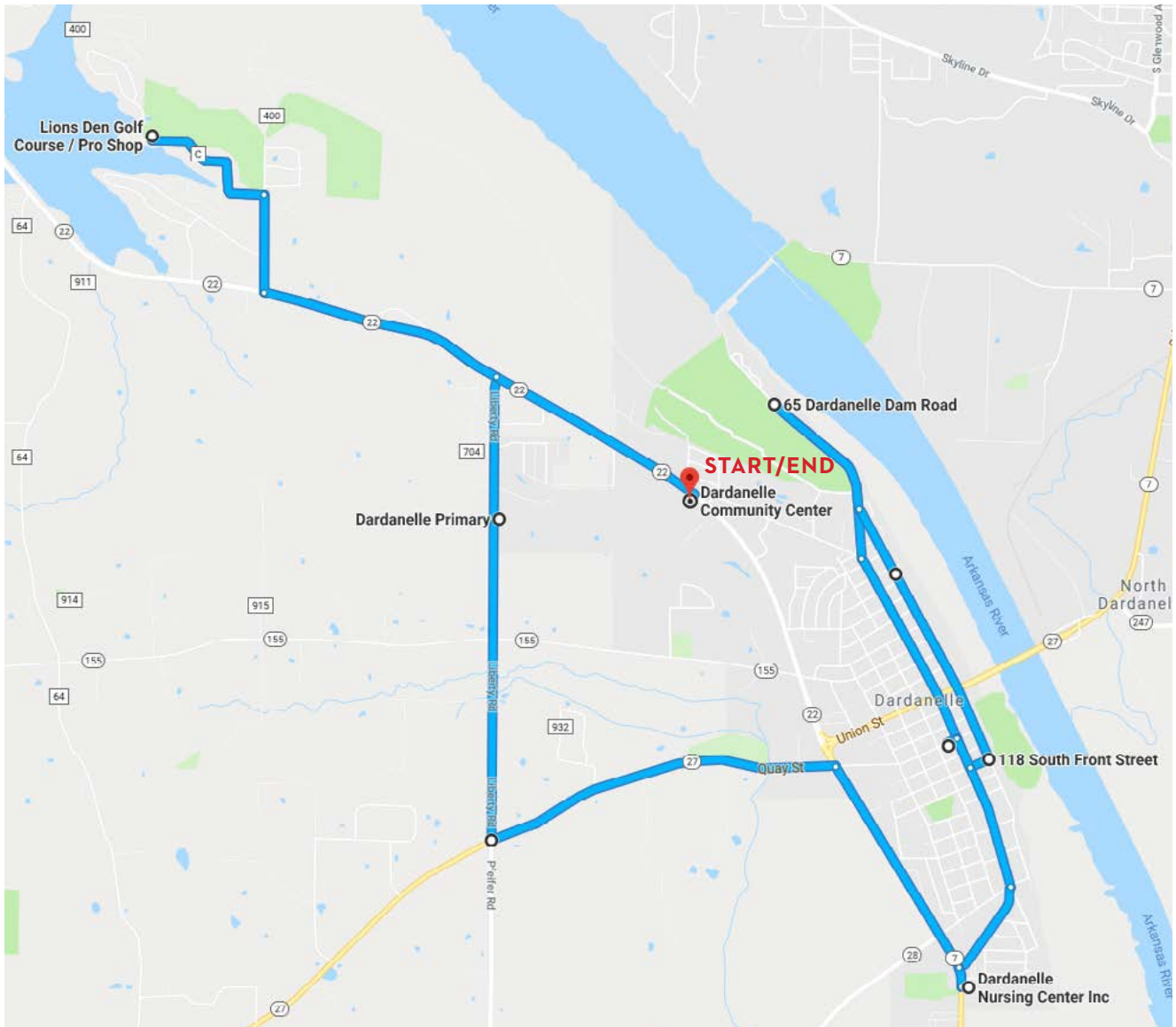
UNCOMMON  COMMUNITIES

*making our own future*

A WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE PROGRAM



# DARDANELLE VISIT ROUTE



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A WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE PROGRAM



## VISITATION TEAM PARTICIPANTS

### **Linda Birkner**

University of Arkansas Community College  
at Morrilton

### **Kay Drilling Jones**

Morrilton Volunteer

### **Barry McKuin**

Conway County Economic Development  
Corporation

### **Phyllis McKuin**

Leadership Morrilton

### **Tabatha Duvall**

Russellville Chamber of Commerce

### **Jackie Sikes**

Dirty Farmers/Greater Good Café

### **Allen Nelson**

Woodmen Life

### **Paul Casey**

Heifer International

### **Dustin Morphis**

Bridgestone-Firestone

### **Jeana Anderson**

Natural Helping Hands

### **Kara Johnson**

Arkansas Tech University

### **Jerry Smith**

Morrilton Area Chamber of Commerce

### **Morgan Zimmerman**

Crow Construction Company

### **Tonya Oates**

Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center

### **Don Bailey**

B&B consult

### **Chris Olsen**

RussVegas Half Marathon

### **Steve Mallett**

General Corporation

### **Dr. Catherine Swift**

Fairfield Bay Community Education Center

### **Brandon Zinser**

ESS Transportation

### **Roger Hooper**

Judge, Van Buren County

### **Rocky Nickles**

Fairfield Bay Community Club

### **Michael Roetzel**

Roetzel Rentals

Other members present were:

Barry Simms, Community Tour Guide

Heather Southard, Winthrop Rockefeller  
Institute

Venita Berry, Winthrop Rockefeller Institute

Dr. Mark Peterson, UAEX

Dr. Roby Robertson, UALR

David Leckey, Orton Family Foundation

Pat Hart, City of Gardiner, Maine



## INTRODUCTION

The First Impressions program is designed to help a community learn about existing strengths and weaknesses as seen through the eyes of the first-time visitor.

The assessment is modeled after the Connecticut First Impressions program developed by Laura Brown with the University of Connecticut Extension and Susan Westa of the Connecticut Main Street Center. These programs are adaptations of the original University of Wisconsin-Extension First Impressions Program developed by Andrew Lewis and James Schneider in 1991 as a structured community assessment program that enables communities to learn about the first impression they convey to outsiders.

On January 12, 2018, community leaders from Conway, Perry, Pope, Van Buren and Yell Counties participated in a First Impression Tour of the city of Dardanelle as part of the Year III component of the Uncommon Communities program.

Uncommon Communities is a community and economic development program that marries the wisdom and methodology of celebrated community development expert Dr. Vaughn Grisham, professor emeritus of sociology and founding director of the McLean Institute for Community Development at the University of Mississippi, with the award-winning Breakthrough Solutions partnership, under the direction of Dr. Mark Peterson at the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. This comprehensive program produces a group of community leaders who are equipped to assess, plan, visualize and mobilize citizenry to work together in the areas of economic development, education and workforce development, and quality of life and place—the critical elements of thriving communities—with an aim to help them become vibrant and sustainable in the 21st century global knowledge economy.

Following the tour, participants outside the city of Dardanelle were part of a facilitated discussion led by Winthrop Rockefeller Institute staff to gather their thoughts, feelings and perceptions of both positive assets and opportunities for improvement in Dardanelle. Information contained in this report is a compilation of those observations.

In addition to their observations, many questions in the guidebook asked for participants to apply the following grade scale to various aspects of the community based on what they experienced:

9 - 10 = What I experienced far exceeded my expectations.

7 - 8 = What I experienced was better than my expectations.

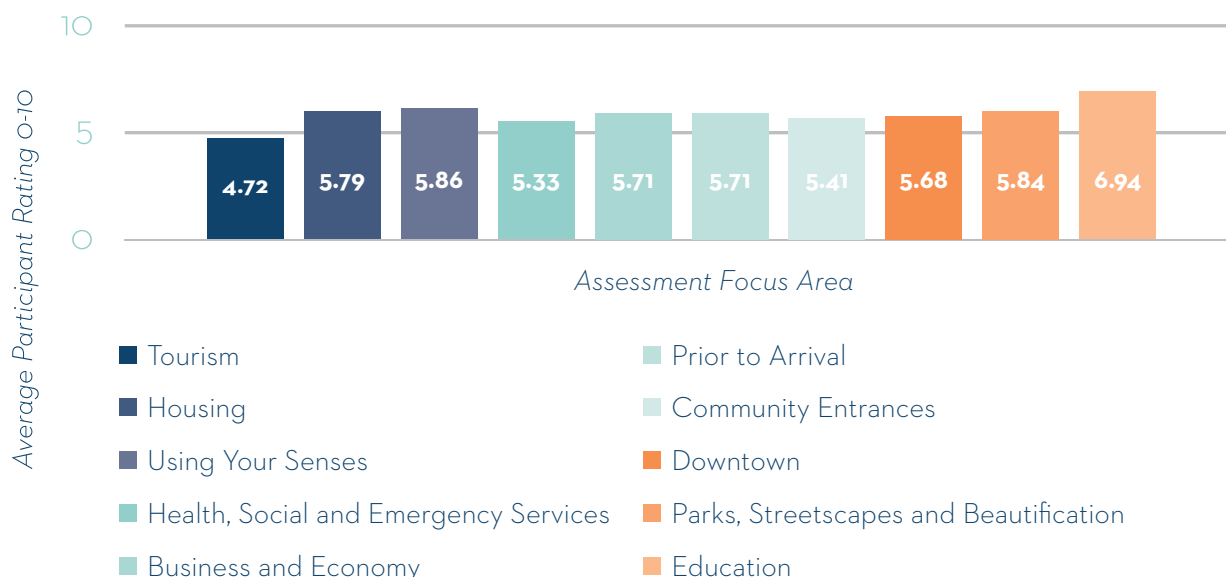
5 - 6 = What I experienced met (but did not exceed) my expectations.

3 - 4 = What I experienced did not meet my expectations.

1 - 2 = What I experienced was far worse than my expectations.



## DARDANELLE AREA FIRST IMPRESSIONS RATING



The graph above provides their average score for each section of the community observed. Overall, tourism received the lowest average score of 4.72, in which participants' experiences did not meet their expectations; while education received the highest average rating of 6.94, in which participants' experiences were met and was likely better than their expectations.

All told, the first impression of Dardanelle was mixed. While some participants were surprised by the amount of natural resources and amenities available, other participants noted the lack of retail and service businesses. A recurring theme throughout the visit and the debrief discussion was that Dardanelle has great potential, with an immense amount of natural attractions and history. Tourism did not appear to be a significant focus for the town, although the team noted Lake Dardanelle, the Arkansas River and Mount Nebo State Park should be promoted as assets. As an example, one participant noted "Dardanelle is bustling and busy but not overcrowded and gifted in natural resources. Dardanelle is so 'possible,' that with a little coordinated effort it could be bright spot in region."

This report is a compilation of observations and verbatim comments from each of the participants. It is not meant to offer recommendations for specific action, but rather to inform a community action plan.

### PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

The past perceptions of the Dardanelle community were mixed. Most of the participants were generally expecting "a small but historic town" that has an "older Hispanic population with very little growth." Most of the participants were familiar with the Dardanelle area and cited both negative and positive perceptions.

#### **What is your impression of the community before your upcoming visit? What are you expecting to see?**

*"I expect to find a city built around and partially defined by Tyson Foods Industry with lots of potential for redevelopment and revitalization."*

*"I've visited Dardanelle briefly just a few times. I know they have farmland, Tyson, Mount Nebo and a strong Hispanic population."*



*"My experiences have been visiting with local industry and the riverfront. I expect to see very little development but a nice clean town."*

*"My gut reaction is Dardanelle is a very close-knit, small community that is proactive and friendly."*

**Identify the sense of the community you have from the online research ONLY. What is your gut reaction? Would you want to visit there with family or friends? Does the community seem to welcome you or others to visit or live there? Why or why not? Consider your income, age, interests, hobbies, family, health/disabilities, race and ethnicity in your response.**

Participants' online research revealed limited information about current events, restaurants or local businesses in Dardanelle. While the city's website was mobile-friendly and informative for a resident, it lacked information for tourists, like an updated calendar of events or links to local businesses. Participants suggested promoting local events and the diversity of businesses on the city's current website and through the Chamber of Commerce website. As one participant stated, "The city's website is very municipal focused and does not show the charm that is talked about by the mayor."

While there was a limited presence on social media and national websites such as TripAdvisor, Yelp and Airbnb, the Arkansas Parks and Tourism website on Dardanelle was attractive. The Arkansas Parks and Tourism website really showcased Dardanelle's outdoor attractions, unlike TripAdvisor. As one participant stated, "TripAdvisor doesn't sell the community." Most of the eating establishments listed on TripAdvisor were from Russellville. Participants suggested the community update its social media pages with current photos that highlights the diversity in the community and restaurant offerings.

<p><b>EXPECTATIONS</b></p> <p>Small town that needs beautification</p> <p>Very rural, not much to see</p> <p>A quiet aging community</p> <p>An old industrial town</p> <p>Historic town</p> <p>Declining and old community with link to dam</p> <p>Older Hispanic population with very little growth</p>	<p><b>WHAT YOU SAW</b></p> <p>Nice, clean town</p> <p>A good deal of affordable housing options</p> <p>Great ballparks</p> <p>Great view of the river</p> <p>Bustling and busy but not overcrowded</p> <p>Great outdoor opportunities</p> <p>Friendly people</p> <p>An awesome community center</p>
<p><b>POSITIVES</b></p> <p>Access and close proximity to natural attractions including Mount Nebo, Lake Dardanelle and the Arkansas River</p> <p>Historic Sites</p> <p>Growth of Hispanic Community</p> <p>Community Center</p> <p>Abundance of parks</p> <p>Front Street</p> <p>Ball parks</p> <p>Tyson Industries</p> <p>New Schools</p> <p>Evidence of some economic growth</p>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Tourism</p> <p>Bedroom community for Russellville</p> <p>Downtown revitalization</p> <p>Trail System &amp; Connectivity</p> <p>Marketing to younger generation</p> <p>Riverfront Park</p> <p>Diverse population</p> <p>City website</p> <p>Coordinate events with Lake Dardanelle State Park</p> <p>Industry</p> <p>Historic properties</p>
<p><b>CHALLENGES</b></p> <p>Narrow Roads</p> <p>Signage</p> <p>Absentee landowners</p> <p>Mid-level business leaders</p> <p>Aging population</p> <p>Economic Development</p>	





## COMMUNITY ENTRANCES

**The following observations were made regarding the community’s major entrances:**

For the two major entrances on Highway 27 and Highway 22, the majority of comments revealed a very busy community with heavy traffic on Highway 27 and limited crosswalks at both highway entrances. Overall, participants rated community entrance as a 5.41, in which participants’ experiences met but did not exceed expectations. Participants were impressed with the view from the bridge overlooking the Arkansas River on Highway 27, but recommended adding more landscaping, trees and signage at the interchanges signifying entrance into community.

+	-
<p><i>“Easy traffic flow”</i></p> <p><i>“Great from Highway 22”</i></p> <p><i>“Entrance was busy but had stop light help”</i></p> <p><i>“Going over bridge was pretty cool”</i></p> <p><i>“Entering from the bridge, the town looks like its bustling.”</i></p> <p><i>“River bridge is awesome! View of Dardanelle Rock and Courthouse and loved the Christmas Trees.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Until I got to bridge, I wasn’t sure Dardanelle existed. I never knew when I arrived in Yell County.”</i></p> <p><i>“Heavy traffic at interchanges and hard to cross.”</i></p> <p><i>“Not very pretty.”</i></p> <p><i>“Nothing notable about entrances. Seems more like a pass through town.”</i></p> <p><i>“Entrances do not have curbside appeal.”</i></p> <p><i>“Highway 7 from South has a very industrial feel and not much to see,”</i></p>



### DOWNTOWN

**Observations about the general appearance of the downtown area:**

Dardanelle’s downtown business area was filled with historic buildings, including a WPA post Office and mural with a few retail shops and restaurants. The average rating of the downtown was a 5.68, in which participants’ experiences met their expectations. The majority of participant comments were positive regarding the river-front view from Front Street and the greenspace potential at Riverfront Park.

While participants were unable to walk around the downtown to truly get a feel for the area, recommendations to improve the downtown area include more access to the river and updating municipal buildings along Front Street. Some participants felt that the new construction shows effort, but that even more revitalization of downtown buildings and warehouses is needed. Participants also suggested enforcing or updating the city of Dardanelle’s sign ordinance.

**Comment on the overall appearance of the buildings, displays, signage, and streetscape. Is the downtown walkable and accessible? Comment on the quality, availability, or necessity for parking in the downtown. Does the downtown play a role in tourism? Is there potential for it to play a greater role.**

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<p><i>“Huge potential that already attracts people from within the region. The restoration of downtown buildings after the fire are great examples of what downtown could be...still needs some mixed use buildings with new and vibrant retail options that is currently not offered in Russellville.”</i></p> <p><i>“Lots of potential with the river.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Buildings in disrepair”</i></p> <p><i>“Municipal building needs updating”</i></p>



+	-
<p><i>"Millyn's is a great gift shop"</i></p> <p><i>"The outdoor area and gazebo."</i></p> <p><i>"Tarascos rebuild looks amazing and has a great reputation for good Mexican food."</i></p> <p><i>"Sufficient downtown parking."</i></p> <p><i>"Great festival area."</i></p> <p><i>"An interesting mix of shops and commercial buildings"</i></p> <p><i>"Can visually see current downtown improvements."</i></p> <p><i>"Downtown looks fuller than is the case in many small towns."</i></p> <p><i>"Lots of nice, historic buildings."</i></p> <p><i>"Front Street is attractive and provides a great view of the river. It's nice to see the businesses rebuilt after the fire and to also see municipal buildings downtown."</i></p> <p><i>"New construction."</i></p>	<p><i>"Need to update signage at cliff of Riverfront Park."</i></p> <p><i>"Lots of vacant buildings."</i></p> <p><i>"Many of the buildings downtown entrances faced away from river."</i></p> <p><i>"View of river partially blocked, no real "feel" to downtown. It seems like a collection of randomness"</i></p>





## TOURISM

Due to the nature of the assessment tour and weather, participants did not have an opportunity to get off the bus and tour the city of Dardanelle's tourism attractions on Mount Nebo and Lake Dardanelle State Park. However, many of the participants were aware of these tourism attractions and discussed opportunities for the city to capitalize on promoting these attractions to those that live outside the Arkansas River Valley area. Overall, participants rated tourism as a 4.72, receiving the lowest average rating in which participants' experience did not meet their expectations. Suggestions included providing more lodging opportunities, building on the city's natural resources and connecting the city's natural resources in advertisement, events and trails.

**Does the community appear to have a strong tourism sector? Why or why not? What have you seen that could be developed into a tourist attraction (natural or man-made)? Comment on the quality and appearance of existing tourist attractions.**

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<p><i>"Mt. Nebo is a strong asset."</i></p> <p><i>"Each tourism attraction seemed to be self-contained not a simple "sector." The downtown river park gazebo has great potential."</i></p> <p><i>"The city has a strong identity with Lake Dardanelle and to the Arkansas River; however it needs improvements with showcasing its restaurants and housing."</i></p>	<p><i>"The city has great tourist attractions; however, they are not well known."</i></p> <p><i>"There is nothing that says tourists are welcomed in the city."</i></p> <p><i>"Did not see or hear about events."</i></p>



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<p><i>"Golf course has lots of potential."</i></p> <p><i>"The river park is great but could use more landscaping and the addition of public amenities and a playground."</i></p> <p><i>"Walking bridge across river is a great idea!"</i></p> <p><i>"The city has a great connection to Mt. Nebo."</i></p> <p><i>"The city has great potential with Lake Dardanelle State Park, Mt. Nebo and downtown River Park...it is hard to list them all."</i></p> <p><i>"The bayou could be incorporated into a walk/ bike trail."</i></p> <p><i>"The water area surrounding the John Daly's Lions Den Golf Course has a beautiful view."</i></p> <p><i>"Before the tour, I did not know about the Dardanelle Rock. The city should promote this natural area more!"</i></p> <p><i>"There is a lot to do in the area and the city should tie this in some way."</i></p>	<p><i>"Golf course needs some TLC."</i></p> <p><i>"No hotels."</i></p> <p><i>"I did not see anything online or in person that appeared to market to tourists."</i></p> <p><i>"Not much public advertisement or internet presence."</i></p> <p><i>"Not many places to stay, need to promote."</i></p>

## HOUSING

Comments regarding Dardanelle's existing housing stock were positive, noting a diverse mix of housing options. The average rating for housing was 5.79. Participants recommended the city explore creating a downtown incentive program that encourages renovation and inspires historic home property owners to either rehab their properties or find new uses for them such as turning them into a bed and breakfast, to increase lodging options, or a bistro and coffee shop. As one participant noted, "Dardanelle has a good mix of housing options with new subdivisions and some large, beautiful historic homes on the river. Great value in housing based on comparison with Russellville."

**Describe the residential housing mix in the community (apartment, townhouses, single-family, multi-family, etc.).**

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<p><i>"Nice homes on Front Street near Catfish N restaurant and golf course."</i></p> <p><i>"Lots of housing of all types with room to expand into providing more multifamily housing."</i></p>	<p><i>"Didn't see apartments."</i></p> <p><i>"New construction homes are hidden and seem to be outside the city limits."</i></p>



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<p><i>"The nicest houses on the tour were in the non-annexed area (golf course). The other houses on the tour were a mix of construction types in small neighborhoods. The downtown area seemed to have some historic homes with the potential for renovation."</i></p> <p><i>"I saw much nicer homes than expected."</i></p> <p><i>"Some excellent housing in the area, but the housing in the older sections and close to downtown seems to need a little care."</i></p> <p><i>"A lot of older homes with tons of potential."</i></p> <p><i>"Very impressed with subdivisions."</i></p>	<p><i>"Most of the homes were older and unattractive."</i></p> <p><i>"Did not appear to be any housing for middle-class families."</i></p> <p><i>"The residential neighborhoods near the downtown appeared un-kept."</i></p> <p><i>"I didn't notice much housing or any neighborhood."</i></p>





## BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Dardanelle's industry and business areas were intermixed throughout the city. It was clear, however, that Tyson Foods Industry is the city's major employer and it appeared well-kept and tidy for an older chicken processing plant. Business and Economy received an average rating of 5.71. Participants suggested the area work to expand small businesses and small industries to increase diverse employment opportunities.

**Is there a well-maintained industrial park? Why or why not? Would this community be an attractive location for small businesses/entrepreneurs? Why or why not?**

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<p><i>"Has healthcare, industry and businesses throughout the city."</i></p> <p><i>"While I did not see an industrial park, there were several businesses scattered throughout the area."</i></p> <p><i>"Looks like there's plenty of traffic for businesses but seems to lack small businesses besides gas stations and restaurants."</i></p> <p><i>"The recent remodel of Walmart looked great."</i></p> <p><i>"Good selection of fast food options."</i></p> <p><i>"Tyson was well kept for older facility."</i></p> <p><i>"Tyson site is well maintained and highly visible."</i></p>	<p><i>"No industrial park"</i></p> <p><i>"Many of the businesses downtown don't have a lot of signage and "signs of life."</i></p> <p><i>"With little commercial and retail presence, I assume most people shop in Russellville for their basic needs."</i></p> <p><i>"Areas near businesses appear to be deteriorating - peeling paint, no landscaping."</i></p>



## EDUCATION

Education rated the highest with an average grade of 6.94. The school facilities from K-12 were well-maintained and looked up-to-date, including a newly-constructed elementary school. Participants commented on the recent millage increase to construct and improve current facilities, which had a net positive effect on participants. Participants recommended sprucing up the area around library and schools with additional landscaping to increase curb appeal.

**Comment on the availability and quality of schools (pre-school/kindergarten/Headstart, primary/elementary/middle schools, high schools, colleges/universities).**

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<p><i>"Great primary school."</i></p> <p><i>"Good elementary and high school facilities."</i></p> <p><i>"Having Arkansas Tech University nearby helps, but need to find ways to connect students to the university and community colleges."</i></p> <p><i>"I've only heard good things about the school system."</i></p> <p><i>"Everything but colleges were available for kids"</i></p>	<p><i>"Need to spruce up area around library."</i></p> <p><i>"We saw only one school, which seemed nice but unremarkable."</i></p> <p><i>"It seems through high school Dardanelle has great opportunities but did not notice in other educational opportunities, i.e. college, workforce development training center."</i></p> <p><i>"Elementary school seems far away from city center."</i></p>

## HEALTH, SOCIAL AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The availability of healthcare facilities seemed to be adequate for a community the size of Dardanelle. The average rating for these services received a 5.33. The River Valley Medical Center and EMT Services were centrally located and accessible. On the tour, participants noted they did not see any community gardens or a farmers' market and recommended the city invest in providing space for a local community garden and market.





**Comment on the availability of healthcare facilities (hospitals, physicians, dentists, optometrists, or other medical offices and clinics, long-term care or assisted living, and other health services such as chiropractic, mental health, yoga, massage); community gardens, the availability of civic organizations and fitness centers; emergency shelters and services.**

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<p><i>"Has a local hospital and near Mercy Hospital in Russellville that provides specialty services."</i></p> <p><i>"Hospital looked adequate."</i></p> <p><i>"Appeared to have a variety of health-related clinics."</i></p>	<p><i>"Hospital looks small and outdated."</i></p> <p><i>"Did not see wellness or health centers."</i></p> <p><i>"Older hospital facility "</i></p>

**PARKS, STREETSCAPES AND BEAUTIFICATION**

Dardanelle is home to some great state parks that are excellent, if underutilized, magnets for tourists. Lake Dardanelle State Park, Mount Nebo, the Riverfront Park, and the Wildlife Refuge area received positive comments. Participants recommended the city update all signage, including historical signs at the Dardanelle Rock Natural Area, and invest in directional signage to guide residents and visitors alike throughout the community to area attractions. Participants’ average rating for this section was a 5.84.

**Do areas of the community appear to be developing or declining? Comment on how effectively the community appears to be managing this. Does the community have historic buildings or places? Are they well maintained? What recreational activities or facilities seemed to be missing? Does the community appear welcoming to a diverse range of residents? Why or why not?**



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<p><i>"Historical buildings - courthouse, post office and the Dardanelle Post Dispatch building seemed to be maintained and in good condition."</i></p> <p><i>"What we saw seemed well maintained but there has to be more done to make the history of the community more prominent to visitors."</i></p> <p><i>"Great park by community center but needs signage."</i></p> <p><i>"Dardanelle Rock is a great attraction but the sign there was old and broken."</i></p> <p><i>"Excellent ballparks and community center."</i></p> <p><i>"I have seen Ed Levy's presentation and love some of his ideas! Community should implement what is practical."</i></p> <p><i>"Excellent docks and boat access with lots of historical markers."</i></p>	<p><i>"Streets were not well maintained."</i></p> <p><i>"Much of the town feels very industrial."</i></p> <p><i>"Front Street has real possibilities of a gathering place but it is not there yet."</i></p> <p><i>"Need to clean-up areas around historical marker at Dardanelle Rock and repair sign."</i></p> <p><i>"Park areas needed more attention."</i></p> <p><i>"Seems as if there could be and should be something developed around art in the downtown area."</i></p>

## USING YOUR SENSES

Participants toured the community on a windy day in the middle of winter between 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm. Participants' average rating for senses was 5.86 and received positive comments. Participants noted the city appeared clean and did not report any offensive smells. Many participants noted the amount of traffic, which appeared to have somewhat of a negative impression on them.

**What did the community taste like? Was there any specialty food item, bakery, restaurant, or other food store that you will remember? What did the community smell like? Were there any offensive smells? What about pleasant odors (flowers, food, etc.)? What sounds did you hear? Please comment on the level of noise in the community (traffic, industrial noises, birds singing, water fountains, music on the streets, trains, clock chimes). How would you describe the overall environmental health of the community (air quality, litter, noise pollution, etc.)?**

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<p><i>"There seems to be an assortment of restaurants, continue to market and improve. Many people come from Russellville to eat in Dardanelle. Capitalize on that! Didn't get off of bus but assume the smell was fairly "industrial" as that's the feel."</i></p> <p><i>"Taste appeared to be a mix of Mexican food and hamburgers. No offensive smells just the sounds of traffic."</i></p> <p><i>"No litter and no offensive odors."</i></p> <p><i>"The community looks and smells clean."</i></p> <p><i>"Didn't notice any offensive smells which is good because it used to stink really bad."</i></p> <p><i>"The community tastes, smells and looks like opportunity. Industry does not smell (surprising)."</i></p>	<p><i>"It seemed like the area needed more attention. Despite the downtown and other wonderful areas, there is just something important about the downtown being a reflection of the community. It might be good to have an outside consultant create a Community Master Plan."</i></p> <p><i>"Traffic was busy and its winter so I would imagine it's very pretty in Spring and Fall. Main Street needs some help but it will get there."</i></p> <p><i>"Lots of traffic."</i></p>

**Did you experience anything that had strongly negative or positive impact on the way the community felt to you (children playing, hateful or angry responses, crowded or deserted streets and safety issues, smiling faces)? Do you think your impression would be different if your visit occurred during a different time of day or at a different time of year?**

+	-
<p><i>"Friendly people."</i></p> <p><i>"Beautiful, yet affordable."</i></p> <p><i>"Very nice people."</i></p> <p><i>"The community center is awesome."</i></p>	<p><i>"Didn't see a lot of activity but it was cold."</i></p> <p><i>"Maybe touring at a different time of year and getting off the bus would have helped."</i></p> <p><i>"A non-cold day would let me experience town."</i></p> <p><i>"Looks like a lazy and quiet community. Nothing negative but age and did not appear to have welcoming signs at entrance to community."</i></p>





## REFLECTIONS

**What local restaurant, specialty shop, or attraction would bring you back to this community in the future?**

- The Mexican restaurant downtown brings me here and the Mexican Tortilla Party is fun!
- Riverfront area was attractive with potential
- Learning about the history of the community
- Would like to check out Mt. Nebo and River area.
- I've experienced first-hand - good Mexican food!
- Food/restaurants, shops near Front Street and near mountain would be great - most "fast food" is ugly - that is big signs that are just to see Fast businesses.
- Catfish N restaurant
- Parks
- Golf Course/Lake Access
- Millyn's love it! I have been shopping there for years. Drive an hour to get there.
- Front Street
- Mexican restaurants
- Dardanelle Rock
- Mt. Nebo

**Would you consider locating a retail, professional, or nonprofit business here? Why or why not?**

*"Yes, it is quiet, has great outdoors opportunity with Lake, River and Mountain. Has larger community close by."*

*"I would need to see the economic demographic data first."*

*"Yes, it looks like an environment that could support a small business."*



*"No, because I'm so happy with where I am but I do see potential here. So many "gold nuggets," shine them up a bit!"*

*"Non-profits that strengthens the local community can do well if they connect to each other."*

*"Nonprofit business maybe but not a retail business."*

*"No, it seems as though economic development is not of high priority for retail. The industrial businesses might appreciate the lack thereof."*

*"No. I noticed one business that was closed for the winter season. Not sure new business would be sustainable."*

*"Yes, but you would need to do your homework on what type of business you might want to start."*

*"Yes, something on Front Street with awesome view of river BUT only if the community, downtown property owners and city government was committed to developing other parts. If not, wouldn't do it. Would love to be part of a "movement."*

### **Would you consider living here? Why or why not?**

*"Probably not - no institution of higher education."*

*"While I would be concerned with job availability, it seems like a good place for families."*

*"Yes - Lovely parks, homes on the river, with a variety of restaurants."*

*"Hard to say, but maybe if I wanted access to river or links nearby."*

*"Yes, if I weren't already ensconced in my own community, I think it would be very nice."*

*"No, I am use to bigger communities."*

*"Unfortunately, it seems as though it is moving in the wrong direction."*

*"No. Town seems to revolve around two busy highways. Too spread out."*

*"Yes, because of the people I have met who live here! They represent their community quite well."*

*"Would love to live on the property between the golf course and lake. Perfect setting."*

## **WRAP UP**

### **What is the most outstanding feature of this community?**

- The 3 natural attractions and the history
- Access to so much natural resources
- River/mountain
- Mt. Nebo
- The river
- Water
- Community Center
- Ball parks
- People
- It's potential



**What will you remember most about this community six months from now (negative or positive)?**

- Things to do and quiet living
- The gazebo
- The oldest newspaper
- The natural resources that are to explore. Would like to see this community move forward with a vibrant downtown
- Hospitality
- Front Street
- The potential
- The park
- Dardanelle Rock

**What have you learned that has changed your impression of your own community?**

- Cohesion of building exterior
- We all have the same issues to a certain extent. We do better in small areas, and worse in others.
- We need continual improvement

**Has this experience given you any new ideas about what is needed in your own community?**

- Just reinforced what's needed.
- The park

**Describe one idea that you will borrow for use in your own community and describe how you will implement it.**

- Focus on our hospitality more

**Additional Comments:**

- Lots of opportunity. Tourism is the greatest thing to help the community.
- Embrace your access to the river. Use a brand that can be used throughout the community to bring you all together.





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