



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

A program for Community Improvement

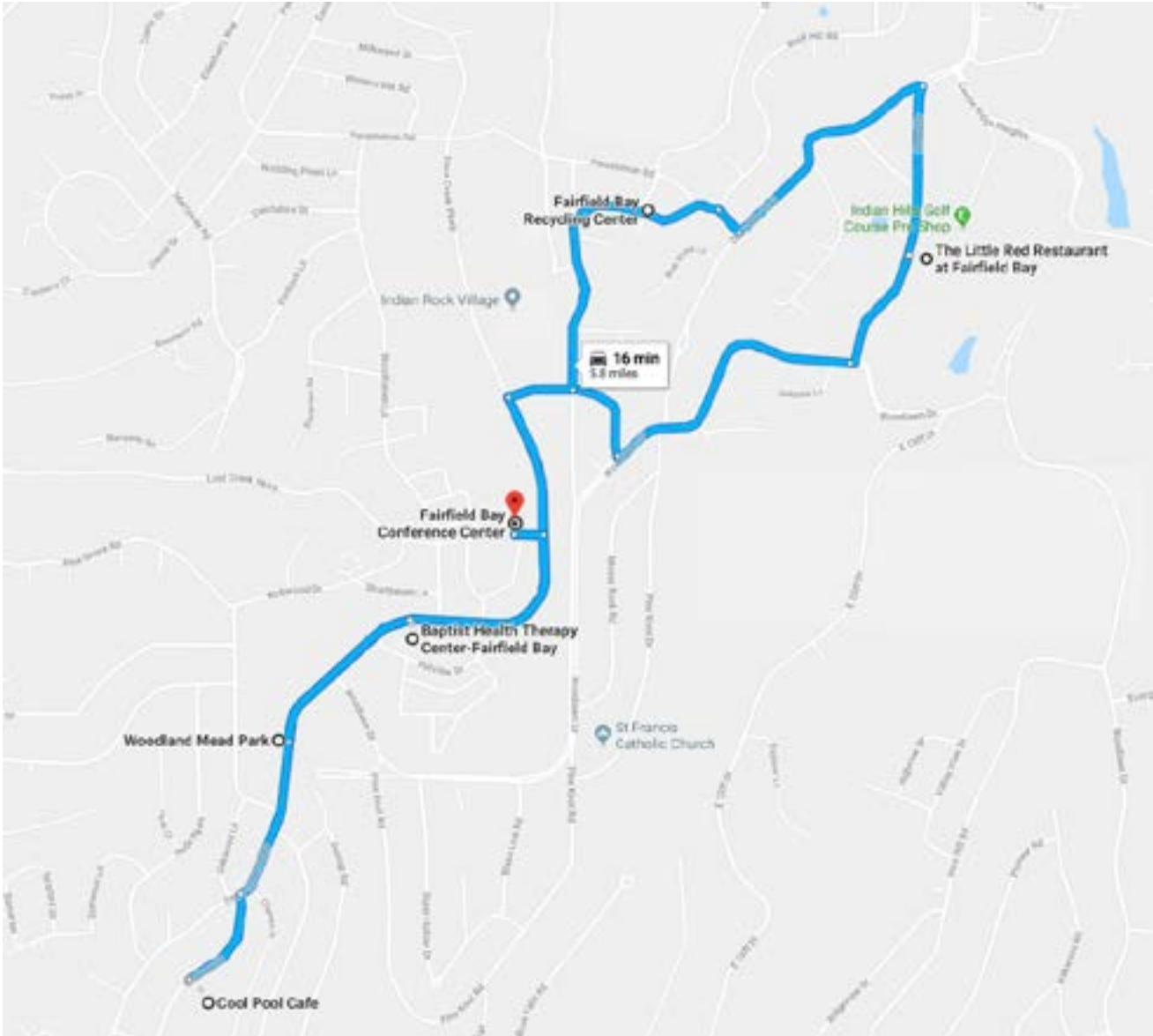
Fairfield Bay Community Report

UNCOMMON  COMMUNITIES

making our own future

A WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE PROGRAM

FAIRFIELD BAY VISIT ROUTE



UNCOMMON  COMMUNITIES

making our own future

A WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE PROGRAM



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Restoration Conferences

Other members present were:

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Samantha Evans, Winthrop Rockefeller Institute

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INTRODUCTION

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

The assessment is modeled after the Connecticut First Impressions program developed by Laura Brown of 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 assessment program that enables communities to learn about the first impressions they convey to outsiders.

On April 27, 2018, community leaders from Conway, Perry, Pope, Van Buren and Yell counties participated in a First Impression Tour of the city of Fairfield Bay 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 of 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.

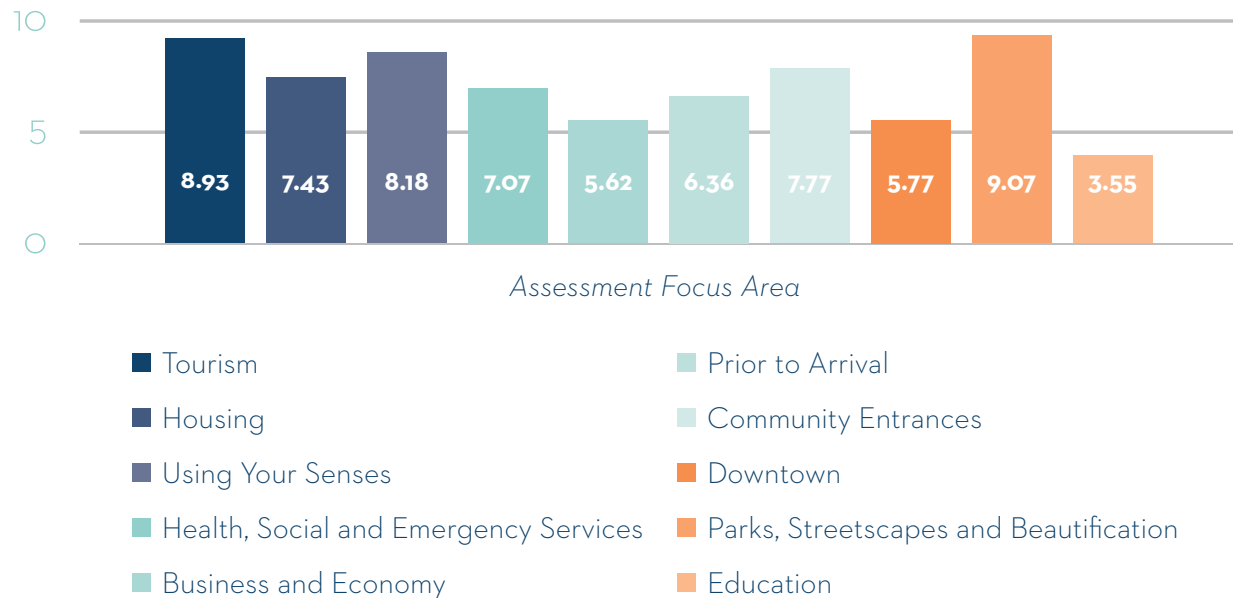
Following the tour, participants who reside outside the city of Fairfield Bay participated in a facilitated discussion led by Winthrop Rockefeller Institute staff to gather their thoughts, feelings and perceptions regarding both positive assets and opportunities for improvement in Fairfield Bay. Information contained in this report is a compilation of observations by these participants.

In addition to offering these observations, participants were asked to evaluate various aspects of the community using the following scale:

- 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.



FAIRFIELD BAY AREA FIRST IMPRESSIONS RATING



The graph above shows the average score for each aspect observed. The lowest average score was for the “Education” section, where participants’ experiences did not meet their expectations due to the city not having a local school. “Parks, Streetscapes and Beautification” was scored highest at 9.07, reflecting experiences that exceeded participants’ expectations.

Overall, participants’ first impressions of Fairfield Bay were positive. Participants were impressed with the scenic parks and trails system within the city in addition to the numerous amenities and historic and cultural sites throughout the city. Participants also noted the progressive leadership of the city and club management in working together to build a nice city for both residents and tourists to enjoy.

Before the first impressions tour, many participants were unaware of the cultural amenities offered within the city and thought of it as a “retirement community that had experienced a slow-down.” Once on the tour, participants were able to experience the many amenities offered which changed their outlook on Fairfield Bay. While many participants noted that the city did not have its own school system and students had to be bused to Shirley, which is approximately five miles away; others mentioned the local community education classes held at the conference center for artists and also at the recycling center for continuing education classes. Fairfield Bay shows obvious growth during the last four years.

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; rather its goal is to inform a community action plan.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

The past perceptions of the Fairfield Bay community were positive. Most of the participants were generally expecting a retirement community with lots of golf courses and timeshares but “not a lot to do.” Most of the participants were familiar with the city of Fairfield Bay and cited mostly positive perceptions.

When asked what their impressions of the community were in advance of the visit and what they expected to see, some participants answered:

“Small, not a lot to do, retirement community.”

“A nice resort town with natural beauty.”



“Years ago, I visited Fairfield Bay with my parents and remember having lots of fun. Since then, I’ve had no experience but knew it was going to be beautiful.”

“A retirement community with golf courses that’s pretty well kept.”

“A nice retirement community that had experienced a slow-down.”

Participants were also asked to share their sense of the community based on online research ONLY. What were their gut reactions? Would they want to visit? Did the community seem welcoming?

They reported that finding information about Fairfield Bay was easy and through online searches, the information was useful for getting to learn about what the community had to offer. Fairfield Bay Community Club’s website is the first to appear in the results of a search for “Fairfield Bay, Arkansas, followed by the city’s webpage on the Arkansas Parks and Tourism website, Fairfield Bay’s Chamber of Commerce website and Wikipedia entry about the city. The top websites’ links were up-to-date with current photos.

Participants noted the city’s good internet presence. As one participant noted, “the city’s website had good content on the website and on TripAdvisor with lots of information regarding amenities, events, etc.” Conducting a search on TripAdvisor yielded several opportunities advertising lots of things to do and several restaurants. However, conducting a search for lodging through Booking.com and Expedia did not boost great results with rooms offered several miles away and those within the community through Wyndham Resorts were sold out several weeks in advance. Some participants did have luck with a few lodging opportunities posted on the VRBO.com website. Participants were encouraged by the city’s recent groundbreaking ceremony for a new hotel. A new hotel will go a long way in boosting the city’s ability to attract tourists.

Participants’ were impressed with the city logo utilized throughout several community entities’ websites and also on social media. When asked to identify the sense of the community from the online research only, participants noted, “a pretty strong well-informed community with active citizens.”

<p style="text-align: center;">EXPECTATIONS</p> <p>Retirement community with some outdoor things to do</p> <p>Retirement community with very few families</p> <p>Residential with tennis, golf, pool and marina</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Beautiful and scenic</p> <p>A nice retirement community that had experienced a slow-down</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT YOU SAW</p> <p>Cleanliness</p> <p>Polite people</p> <p>Lots of history</p> <p>Supportive community</p> <p>Amazing lake</p> <p>Community pride and leadership is readily evident</p> <p>Quiet, peaceful, no traffic</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">POSITIVES</p> <p>Parks</p> <p>Pool and Tennis Courts</p> <p>Natural Scenic Beauty</p> <p>Greers Ferry Lake</p> <p>Cool Pool</p> <p>Indian Rock Cave and Trail</p> <p>Museum Shop</p> <p>Conference Center</p> <p>Big Chairs by Community Entrance</p> <p>Dog Park</p> <p>Helicopter Pad for medical emergencies</p> <p>Volunteers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>New Hotel</p> <p>Increased Tourism</p> <p>ATV Trail expansion</p> <p>Restaurants</p> <p>New Gas Station</p> <p>Residential development</p> <p>Property Investment</p> <p>Trail System</p> <p>Marketing - "There's more here than people realize."</p> <p>Theme Park</p> <p>Retreat Center</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CHALLENGES</p> <p>No broadband</p> <p>No School</p> <p>Remote location</p> <p>Infrastructure support</p> <p>Healthcare for aging population</p> <p>Two governments, one town</p> <p>Year-Round operations, not just summer tourism</p> <p>Maintaining cooperation between city and club</p>	



COMMUNITY ENTRANCES

Regarding the two major entrances to Fairfield Bay on Highway 16 and the “New Road,” comments were positive with an average rating of 7.77. Participants’ experiences were better than their expectations. Positive comments mentioned the wayfinding signage and clearly marked entrance signage. Participants were also thoroughly impressed with the big colorful chairs as you entered the community. Most of the negative comments were related to the small size of the wayfinding signage and also the alternative route into Fairfield Bay being “unimpressive.” Participants recommend the city spend more funds on entrance signage as far away as Shirley and Clinton as tourists are not coming to “Fairfield Bay on accident.”

Approach the community from two major entrances. Grade and comment on each entrance. While there may be an obvious main entrance, there are typically multiple ways to enter a community.

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<p><i>“Signage was clearly marked, entrance was clean and well-maintained. I loved the big chairs which made a good impression.”</i></p> <p><i>“Well-manicured near entrance with plenty of signage throughout.”</i></p> <p><i>“The main entrance had a great visual with the big lawn chairs that said “Fairfield Bay.”</i></p> <p><i>“Where the chairs were is awesome - made me feel welcomed.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Fairfield Bay relies on their entrance signs no one would end up here on accident. Given that importance, I would spend more money making them even better.”</i></p> <p><i>“Main entrance was impressive but back entrance was unimpressive.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Small Signs.”</i></p> <p><i>“Coming from Clinton, there was not a big sign or anything that said “Welcome to Fairfield Bay” or anything that stood out.”</i></p>



DOWNTOWN

Fairfield Bay does not have a designated “downtown area.” However, the majority of the city’s activity takes place between the shopping mall area and the conference center. The average rating for the Downtown was a 5.77, in which participants’ experiences were met but did not exceed their expectations. Participants did not spend a lot of time in the shopping area but the majority of their time within the conference center. Participants’ comments were mixed about the shopping mall area but positive about the conference center. As one participant noted, “The shopping center was adequate but nothing out of the ordinary.” Participants were impressed with the area’s aesthetic uniformity. Participants noted, “Everything has a similar theme and is clean, well maintained and nicely landscaped.”

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>“There are many more businesses than I expected. We went in one and even more impressed by the quality. Pool shop and marina shop impressive.”</i></p> <p><i>“Good Signage.”</i></p> <p><i>“Much improved from my visit years ago.”</i></p> <p><i>“Nice shopping area.”</i></p> <p><i>“Mostly favorable - “Village Mall” area was bypassed on bus tour, but appears to be the downtown business district.”</i></p> <p><i>“Rebuilding the mall has been great for the community.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Some road signs are obsolete including the Municipal Offices still lead to Indian Hills; Art Gallery at Post Office no longer in business can be easily fixed by painting over white lettering with green paint.”</i></p> <p><i>“Looked old.”</i></p> <p><i>“Did not look appealing.”</i></p> <p><i>“Not a lot of businesses for workers.”</i></p> <p><i>“Fairfield Bay did not have a “downtown district” area. Could use more walk/bike lanes for pedestrian traffic.”</i></p> <p><i>“Privately owned, strip mall type that needs repair.”</i></p> <p><i>“Looks really empty.”</i></p> <p><i>“Town Square is a shopping mall parking lot.”</i></p>



TOURISM

Fairfield Bay is a tourist community that boasts several amenities including Greers Ferry Lake, the Cool Pool, Indian Cave and Trails and festivals and events to attract tourists both far and wide. The Fairfield Bay Community Club and city have done a remarkable job of capitalizing on these assets to have a strong economic impact on the city and Van Buren County. Overall, participants rated Tourism in Fairfield Bay 8.93, which indicates participants' experience was better than expected.

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>"Fairfield Bay is bringing tourism to Greers Ferry Lake."</i></p> <p><i>"Appeared strong and well thought-out."</i></p> <p><i>"There is no denying this community is absolutely gorgeous. There is so much natural beauty that this new hotel will do WONDERS for their tourism."</i></p> <p><i>"Natural cave was a great attraction."</i></p> <p><i>"They are working on it and with the leadership in place, they are on a strong trajectory."</i></p> <p><i>"Great festival ideas boasting more than twelve festivals a year!"</i></p>	<p><i>"Buildings could use a fresh coat of paint and pop of color to help attract visibility."</i></p> <p><i>"Retail shops are there but not well advertised."</i></p> <p><i>"Loved the Indian Cave but needs more attention."</i></p> <p><i>"More children activities needed."</i></p>



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<p><i>“Great amenities for the “resort life”.”</i></p> <p><i>“Great job promoting the area...proof is in the number.”</i></p> <p><i>“The Cool Pool, the cave, the golf course and nature are all good assets.”</i></p> <p><i>“Miniature golf”</i></p> <p><i>“Dog Park”</i></p> <p><i>“Beautiful landscapes”</i></p> <p><i>“Restaurants”</i></p> <p><i>“Ed Leamon Park”</i></p> <p><i>“Heritage Center”</i></p> <p><i>“ATV Trails”</i></p> <p><i>“Marina”</i></p> <p><i>“Sugar Loaf Mountain”</i></p> <p><i>“All excellent attractions”</i></p> <p><i>“It seems to be a wonderful community for just that - tourism. There is nothing I can add to what is already going on.”</i></p> <p><i>“This is a tourism city for sure with unlimited potential! Community should dream even bigger - I am coming back with my family!”</i></p>	

HOUSING

Comments regarding Fairfield Bay’s existing housing stock was positive with participants commenting on the variety of housing options offered and the attractive affordable size of housing lots. Participants also commented on how well-kept everyone’s yard appeared and also the apartments and condos in the area also were very well landscaped. The average rating for Housing was 7.43. Participants recommended the city encourage more housing options with tiny house ordinance and develop ways to improve broadband service.

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

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<p><i>“I liked that most of the houses I saw appeared to be nicely kept, attractive and of affordable size.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Nice mix”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“All well-kept”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Lots of residential housing”</i></p> <p><i>“Very diversified and what I experienced they are top notch in cleanliness and positive in their presentation.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Really cute single family homes”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Plenty of condos”</i></p> <p><i>“The Wyndham condo we stayed in was very nice!”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Homes were beautiful”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Tiny House addition”</i></p> <p><i>“What I got to see was beautiful. Loved that the rocks/nature are incorporated into landscaping in homes and businesses.”</i></p> <p><i>“The homes and yards are clean, well-maintained and have a similar feel.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Not many options if you want a house with a yard.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Didn’t see much”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Mostly apartment condo-style housing”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Some condos were in need of repair.”</i></p> <p><i>“High speed internet for working class - stay at home parents/grandparents.”</i></p> <p><i>“Some need repair and appear older and rough.”</i></p>

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Fairfield Bay does not have an industrial park but relies heavily on tourism with lots of small businesses found throughout the more populated areas of the city. There seems to be room for expansion of retail and tourist-based businesses in the area. The Chamber of Commerce website does a great job in listing current businesses and tourism attractions, some participants recommend that the chamber also list available sites in the area with information about what the community can support by boosting the sites relocation data webpage.

Participants were concerned with Fairfield Bay’s current workforce and not being able to attract a younger population. Participants were also concerned about the set-up of the community club and city government. For several years, the community club and city leadership have worked really well



together. Participants were concerned about what happens when this leadership changes. As one participant noted, the challenging set-up of the government could present issues but cooperation of mayor and General Manager of the Club is imperative.” Overall, Business and Economy received an average rating of 5.62.

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>“Much more businesses here than I expected. More stores, restaurants than I thought ever here and they seem to be doing well.”</i></p> <p><i>“Several good looking restaurants”</i></p> <p><i>“No industry, but don’t need it. Concentrate all efforts on tourism. Tourism based retail should be successful.”</i></p> <p><i>“Opportunity exist for small businesses, supportive climate, action-oriented citizenry, upgrades to gas station coming, clean and safe.”</i></p> <p><i>“Business would be wise to invest here - it’s booming now- just wait! This will become the hottest spot in Arkansas to visit. Theme park would be huge asset!”</i></p>	<p><i>“A few places seemed rundown, but I understand new owners are coming in soon.”</i></p> <p><i>“Shopping mall could use sprucing up.”</i></p> <p><i>“Won’t attract younger population because there is no workforce.”</i></p> <p><i>“I did not notice any industrial/manufacturing in the area.”</i></p> <p><i>“Not a lot of shopping other than what is in the mall.”</i></p> <p><i>“Limited retail space available”</i></p> <p><i>“No visible industry - gas station is the only ‘business’.”</i></p>

EDUCATION

Education was the lowest-scored aspect with an average rating of 3.55. Participants noted Fairfield Bay did not have a school located within its city limit and that students had to be bused to the Shirley school district which is approximately eight miles away. Participants were impressed with the community outreach classes offered including cooking, gardening, history and recycling classes. Participants encouraged city leadership to enhance these offerings and perhaps partner with colleges and universities within the state to offer summer leadership, art, archeology, and hospitality and history internship opportunities.

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 style="text-align: center;"><i>“Saw school bus signs”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Within 4.3 miles of school”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Didn’t see any schools but do offer living education – gardening and Indian Caves and cooking classes offered.”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“No Schools”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Didn’t notice any schools or daycares.”</i></p>

HEALTH, SOCIAL AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Participants were impressed with the healthcare facilities offered including the helipad, therapy, fitness and Senior Center. One participant stated, “They are very focused in the area and I was very impressed with their helicopter pad allowing them to get a patient to a Little Rock surgery facility in an hour.” While most participants were impressed and listed the city’s volunteers as a positive; some participants were concerned that the city had to rely so heavily on volunteers to run the fire and EMS services. Participants also did not notice an urgent care or primary care physician in the area. The average rating for Health, Social and Emergency Services was 7.07.

Comment on the availability of health care 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 style="text-align: center;"><i>“Helipad”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Helicopter pad, volunteer ambulance, gym and walking trails – no excuse not to be up and moving.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Strong volunteer services”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Volunteer ambulances look nice and new. We saw several medical offices. Medical helicopter option was impressive.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Fire, police department and pharmacy”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Fitness Center is very well presented.”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Is there a PCP here?”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Lack of healthcare services for population demographic that lives in this area.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Only volunteer emergency services”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Didn’t see clinics, urgent care, assisted living. With an older population I would expect more health services.”</i></p>



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<p><i>“Excellent - amazing that all of this is operated by volunteers.”</i></p> <p><i>“Senior Center, Hart Fitness Center, EMS/Public Safety Office, Helipad, community garden”</i></p> <p><i>“Seemed to have good health and social services.”</i></p> <p><i>“Recycling Center”</i></p> <p><i>“Ozark Health System”</i></p> <p><i>“Pharmacy”</i></p> <p><i>“Therapy Center”</i></p>	

PARKS, STREETSCAPES AND BEAUTIFICATION

Participants were very impressed with the city’s park and trail system ranking it the highest at 9.07. Participants stated that there are many amenities that have great signage and natural beauty that could attract young families. The city parks were clean and well-maintained throughout the community. The city had plenty of outdoor opportunities to attract several key demographic areas to boost tourism.

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>“Good parks”</i></p> <p><i>“Two golf courses”</i></p> <p><i>“Trails”</i></p>	<p><i>“Trail maps are thick but not user-friendly.”</i></p> <p><i>“Clock Tower needs a little work”</i></p> <p><i>“Need more for kids, maybe a playground”</i></p>



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<p><i>"Signage is wonderful"</i></p> <p><i>"All available recreational resources are top rated."</i></p> <p><i>"The master gardeners do a really good job, very welcoming."</i></p> <p><i>"God job in this area, safe and welcoming environment that is well-kept."</i></p> <p><i>"Beautiful parks, love the rose garden"</i></p> <p><i>"Great photo opportunities"</i></p> <p><i>"Indian Rock Cave Historic District"</i></p> <p><i>"No trash anywhere"</i></p> <p><i>"Safe looking"</i></p>	<p><i>"Parking for UTV?"</i></p> <p><i>"Beautiful trails - paved, clear but not named or described."</i></p> <p><i>"Some streets and parking lots were grown up with weeds and other greenery. Could be repaved."</i></p>



USING YOUR SENSES

Participants toured the community on a sunny, cool morning between 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. The average rating for Using Your Senses was 8.18. Participants noted there being no offensive odors. Most of the remarks were that it was a clean and quiet area boosting the smell of nature.

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>“Community has a woodland feel interspersed with pockets of human activity. Environmental quality is excellent.”</i></p> <p><i>“Good vibe in the area. Feel like you’re on vacation as it should, nothing offensive.”</i></p> <p><i>“Quiet, fresh lake air”</i></p> <p><i>“Fresh and clean with well-manicured areas and no offensive smells or odors.”</i></p> <p><i>“One of the most peaceful places to stay. We stayed at the Wyndham condo. It was awesome! Clean and so pleasant and peaceful.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Very natural smelling - wood, water, pool, chlorine some moldy smelling areas and burgers at golf course.”</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?

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<p><i>“Perfect time of year to visit – great weather but not over-run with tourists yet.”</i></p> <p><i>“Community pride and leadership is readily evident. This is the driving force for Fairfield Bay’s present and future.”</i></p> <p><i>“Polite people. Lots of history that I wasn’t aware of. People at hotel groundbreaking ceremony were polite and seemed to be totally supportive of the tourism commitment.”</i></p> <p><i>“Quiet, peaceful with no traffic – can’t imagine it different – even with summer crowds.”</i></p>	

REFLECTIONS

At the end of the tour, participants were asked to reflect and create their own list of positive features about the Fairfield Bay community. There were two major themes regarding the community: The town is attractive with lots of opportunities.

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

“The Cool Pool and tennis courts”

“Boating on Greers Ferry Lake”

“The lake and trails”

“Our condos were great and I can’t wait to come visit the pool and hiking trails!”

“Golf, cave, festivals, pool, tennis, lake, etc.”

“The hiking”

“The lake is amazing!”

“Museum shop was well-stocked and pleasing. Shopped at cool pool was very nice. I enjoyed the experience at both.”

“Conference Center for business trip”

“I want to come back to the Little Red at Indian Hills restaurant.”

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

“A tourist business? Absolutely. I think there is a growing market here but broadband and daily traffic could be a problem. It would have to be the right type of business.”

“Not sure. Would love to research how much businesses residents do in the county.”

“Not really, there just doesn’t seem to be the market for it.”

“If I were several years younger, I would seriously consider moving here. Again, leadership draws leaders.”

“If I could find a niche business that fit”

"Yes, because this is so much potential."

"It would have to be targeted based on the needs which I am not sure of. But would definitely think investing in property in the Bay would be good idea."

"Yes! Lovely place to live and work."

"Possibly, but would need to see economic demographics."

"Yes, if had one that truly fit the customer base."

"Yes, if I was in the market to do such a thing."

"No, retired"

"Not at this time but it would be an awesome investment. Definitely worth considering."

"It would have to be tourism based."

"Yes, because of the way things are done here."

Would you consider living here? Why or why not?

"No. Lack of schools and broadband."

"Yes, quiet and peaceful"

"Maybe, if I could work remotely. It is so peaceful out here."

"As a rental/vacation home"

"I would absolutely retire here! Or vacation. You may see me this summer!"

"Yes. Beautiful place to live. Definitely will visit."

"Yes, it's so beautiful and seems so inviting."

"Yes. People are welcoming and lovely."

"Probably, because of lake."

"Certainly!"

"No, too remote from Little Rock."

"Yes/Maybe. Great possibility - will definitely visit often!"

"Yes! It's peaceful and beautiful."

"Yes, because of everything that is offered! So much to do and it's also peaceful."

"Living here - yes! To relax."

WRAP UP

In the final section of the guidebook, participants were asked to sum it all up with the following questions:

What is the most outstanding feature of this community?

"The lifestyle amenities. So much to see and do."

"Community historical/education employee"

"The people"

"That cool pool was cool."

"This town is so welcoming with people and city features. It feels like truly living in a resort."

"The natural beauty. Extremely safe and welcoming."

"Perfect family resort atmosphere"

"Volunteerism, sense of community"

"The people and the beautiful setting"



"Public spaces (broadly defined) that were so well-kept"
"The entities of the city and management working together"
"Indian Rock Cave"
"Cool Pool"
"The pool and dive in theater"
"The lake and marina"
"The recycling center"

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

"The Cool Pool"
"The Indian Rock Cave"
"Wyndham resort lodging"
"Scenic views"
"Friendliness and leadership"
"Great people and great cooperation"
"That I want to come back"
"Natural environment - forest, lake"
"How clean and pretty it is"
"The amazing groundbreaking ceremony - incredible demonstration of some significant community work."
"Cleanliness"
"The development of the historic assets"
"Miniature golf"
"Cool Pool with dive-in movie - neat idea!"
"The relaxing atmosphere"
"Parks are well maintained"

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

"Upgrade our public pool area"
"We need to be more diligent in working together."

"If we're going to use "Live like you're on vacation" we need to learn from Fairfield Bay."

"We need to embrace and expand our tourism opportunities as we have many of the same opportunities."

"Mutual management responsibilities between mayor and community club"

"Cleanliness"

"Must keep working on finding and developing our own special assets and opportunities"

"Vision/Passion/Determination and an attitude of refusing to fail."

"Landscaping makes a big difference!"

"A recycling center is possible and can be beautiful."

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

"Reaffirmed the importance of cleaning up"

"More focused actions and follow-up"

"Dive-In movie screen"

"Capitalize on history"

"More promotion and advertising"

"Cleanliness and signage"

"For some strange reason, it makes me think that we need to make some special efforts to improve and support our education from K-12 through community education."

"Yes. Think out of the box - use natural resources available and make vision reality."

"Teamwork is a must."

"Yes! We need to play up what we have available in tourism. We need a conference center."

"Working together we can do what has been done here."

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

"We need a community pool like the one here."

"I had already thrown around the idea of a "dive-in movie" but I love having the signs and a permanent fixture."

"Community events at pool, garden, lake, etc."

"Photo spot with chairs"

"Uniting our county communities to working together for progress for all."

"Find-a-way attitude"

"Walking garden - peaceful and needed for people to enjoy"

"Dog park can be such an important activity in area - good for exercise and social gathering."

"Miniature golf!"

"The recycling center and community garden"

Additional Comments:

"I will be back soon!"

"Really enjoyed our time here!"

"Wonderful hospitality!"

"I feel so appreciative of the efforts made to make our time here special."



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