

Results from Spring 2025 Open House

May 21, 2025

On April 24, April 30, and May 7, the city's planning team hosted three open house sessions from 3 pm to 7 pm at three library branches. The open house format was designed to be a drop in so residents could attend at their convenience during that timeframe. No formal presentation was given but slides were played on repeat with the project's timeline, final decision-makers, council's directive, and how to stay involved in the process. Staff, planning commissioners, and council members were available for questions and conversation.

There were three boards that compiled the goals and strategies by the goal topic area: housing and neighborhoods, infrastructure and services, economy and opportunity. Each board had a unique QR code in the bottom right corner that took them to a survey. These QR codes and the links were posted on the project page after the first open house. Each survey asked the same four questions for the topic goal area:

- Rate the goals on a scale of 1 to 5
- Rate the strategies on a scale 1 to 5
- Provide your input on the goals and strategies
- Tell us your priority

For those without a smartphone, a tablet was offered with staff assistance or paper copies for written responses. A printed six-by-six-foot Future Land Use Map allowed residents to tag their area of concern or support spatially and provide their feedback (separate summary is available).

Below is a summary of the responses received until the survey was closed on May 16.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Goal score: 3.27 (out of 5)

Strategy score: 2.63 (out of 5)

Feedback responses: 233

Priority responses: 284

The participants were split when it came to densification in residential zones: 41 for densifying and 39 opposed. An additional 9 respondents were opposed to any densification at all, even in the downtown and hub areas. Within this argument, there are several factors in play. Some worry about the unknown consequences (20), which go hand in hand with wanting to see a greater explanation of the plan's methodology

and implementation (13) and more research and data to understand how the strategies connect with the goals (16). Notably, a significant number of respondents were unconvinced that density would improve affordability (21). Other concerns included environmental and infrastructure challenges associated with density (18) and that neighborhood character won't be protected (18). Additionally, while many participants highlighted the importance of walkability and non-car transportation options (15), others described the importance of cars and parking, especially for seniors and disabled people (7).

The top priority from participants was to protect neighborhood character (26), which included an emphasis on preserving the visual cohesion of neighborhoods (15). Many respondents also highlighted the need to improve affordability for all income levels (25), through increasing housing supply (21) and expanding income-restricted housing (12).

Economy and Opportunity

Goal score: 3.43 (out of 5)

Strategy score: 3.04 (out of 5)

Feedback responses: 107

Priority responses: 123

The responses do not show a clear consensus among the residents. The highest proportion of respondents (22) support the proposed hub districts. Many report the improved walkability and retail diversity that could come as a result of a downtown-like hubs throughout the city. The next most common response (18) was that the goals or statements were vague or unclear. This came in the form of questions or comments that the descriptions were not concrete enough to properly evaluate. Support for local entrepreneurs was also emphasized (11). Some lamented the loss of smaller local businesses and urged the city to assist where feasible. Respondents used this opportunity to discuss housing and its connection to economic development – some believing that density will support local commercial uses and others that it will ruin the neighborhoods and force local business out.

The priorities reflect the open responses: support for hub districts and support for local entrepreneurs are the top two, earning 20 and 14 calls outs, respectively.

Infrastructure and Services

Goal score: 4.05 (out of 5)

Strategy score: 3.81 (out of 5)

Feedback responses: 228

Priority responses: 108

The highest proportion of respondents were related to protecting natural features (17). There is concern that with greater density, environmental protections will be eroded and that a balanced approach would support both development and trees, water, and green spaces. The second most common was an expression of general support (16) for goals and strategies. In the case of “general support,” responses were either nonspecific support or comments that expressly supported more than one of the goals or strategies. When combined, references to transportation, including multimodal, roads, and public transit infrastructure (35) top priorities. Many of these comments are to improve public safety and reliability. Similarly, if combined, infrastructure energy and resilience infrastructure (13) call for the city to plan for future needs under extreme climates.

The priorities largely follow the open responses: protect natural features (26) and expand multimodal transportation infrastructure (20).