

Vision **100**

ROGERS & LOWELL,
ARKANSAS

OUR FUTURE...



Our VISION for Rogers and Lowell is a vibrant, diverse, and cohesive community in the heart of Northwest Arkansas, with a willing spirit, a healthy focus and a progressive attitude, possessing the core values of faith, family, community, education, and economic prosperity.

We will advance these values by preserving and recognizing our heritage, taking action in the present, and pursuing a dynamic future.

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Creating A Vision for the Future

Since 1989, the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce has served the community in its role as the “Keeper of the Vision” by proactively collaborating with city and regional leaders to produce strategic action plans that project the community’s future wants and needs. This program has happened nine times prior to Vision 100: 1989 (Vision 2000), 1994 (Vision 2015), 1997 (Vision 2015 Part 2), 2002 (Vision 2020), 2004 (Vision 2020 Update), 2008 (Vision 2025), 2013 (Vision 2025.1 What’s Next), 2014 (Vision 2030) and 2015 (Downtown Master Plan).

Once identified and prioritized, these visionary concepts have been quickly implemented by a wide range of players: federal, state and local elected officials, the cities of Rogers and Lowell, community groups and nonprofits, private developers and individual citizens. This approach has been a key to the growth of Rogers and Lowell: inviting and encouraging the public’s participation builds in a sense of shared ownership in the outcome and creates buy-in for the sometimes-difficult effort it takes to build the vision.

This visioning process is designed to enhance the community’s quality of life and ensure its readiness for the future. Using reasonable projections, the Rogers-Lowell area is expected to reach a population of 100,000 in less than 15 years, hence the title, “Vision 100.” Rather than selecting a specific year, it was decided early on that envisioning this significant population growth would allow the community and residents to create more connected, aligned and collaborative goals for the future.

The Process

The Chamber started building a vision for the future by asking the people in the community for their input. The first stage accomplished was the development of a steering committee of some 25 community leaders representing Rogers and Lowell. The committee members worked cooperatively to develop the community engagement portion, and drafted a vision statement that neatly incorporates the community’s values with their vision for the future.

A series of 11 brainstorming sessions, dubbed “Community Tables,” were organized as a way to gather ideas in a casual setting. An online survey of 14 open-ended questions was also used to gather additional information from Community Table attendees, as well as those who were not able to share their thoughts in person.

Held in July, the Community Tables hosted 284 participants at easily-accessible sites across both Rogers and Lowell. Each Community Table was facilitated by a member of the Vision 100 Steering Committee, with helpful volunteers taking notes on flipcharts to keep the conversation flowing.

An additional 292 people took the online survey, with the respondents split fairly evenly across age ranges 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and 55-64. People reporting they were 24 or under, or 65 and over accounted for 15 percent. A majority of the survey answers came from females (55 percent).

The distribution of survey takers was spread between the communities (reported by zip code), with 21 percent living in the 72756 zip code, 39 percent living in the 72758 zip code, 31 percent living in the Lowell zip code, and 9 percent from other areas. Another 11 percent reported working in Lowell.

Those participating in the online survey tended to be longer-term residents, with 56.2 percent reporting that they have lived in Rogers-Lowell area for more than 10 years. Notably, newer residents were well represented, with 27 percent of the survey takers reporting they have lived in the area for less than 4 years.

The responses from the informal discussions at the Community Tables and from the survey questions were compiled to develop the guiding ideas and action-oriented goals listed in each section.

After publication, this document is intended to be adopted by the Board of Directors of the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, and both Rogers and Lowell municipal governments as a useful guide in preparing for the future growth of both communities.

The Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce is committed to promoting the use of the plan across the community, by government agencies, regional organizations, corporations, companies, businesses, nonprofits, and other community groups, and publicizing progress toward completion of the goals.

The Vision

The questions asked, at Community Tables and in the online survey, were simple and straightforward: What do you think the community should be like when it reaches 100,000 in population?

The answers were specific, clear and concise. People love their community as it is, and are excited to see it grow bigger and better in the future.

With few exceptions, “maintain” and “continue” were the most popular responses to any open-ended questions, although many ideas and successful practices from other areas were shared. The overall attitude of respondents was to continue pursuing excellence while becoming innovative leaders, recognized among the best communities anywhere. Doing so will require public and private officials to implement innovative concepts that set a new standard of excellence.

On a map, the boundary separating Rogers and Lowell is distinct, but the wants, needs and vision of the people in both cities are based on **shared values and vision**.

And that vision is clear and vibrant, based on the concept of living where you work and play. If you think about what that looks like, you could start with your own home on the block in your residential area, or subdivision.

On my block, I envision . . .

- Houses and buildings of architectural diversity, bringing character through different sizes and styles.
- A beautiful landscape filled with well-kept buildings, trees, yards and gardens that enhance the surrounding natural environment.
- Neighbors who are friendly and caring, who display good citizenship by showing respect to all.

In my subdivision, I see . . .

- Improved streets with curbs and gutters, clear markings, and street lamps that provide easy accessibility to the surrounding neighborhood.

Vision Statement

Our vision for Rogers and Lowell is a vibrant, diverse, and cohesive community in the heart of Northwest Arkansas, with a willing spirit, a healthy focus and a progressive attitude, possessing the core values of faith, family, community, education, and economic prosperity.

We will advance these values by preserving and recognizing our heritage, taking action in the present, and pursuing a dynamic future.

Rogers-Lowell is:

- Known for a beautiful, safe and inviting atmosphere;
- Led by robust economic growth, balanced and diverse job creation and a sustainable mix of industry;
- Recognized for prioritizing education and personal development offered by excellent public, private and charter schools and institutions of higher learning;
- Focused on healthy, active lifestyles supported by world-class healthcare;
- Characterized by the beauty of our trails, parks and natural environment;
- Home to premier shopping, entertainment, and cultural art amenities that serve many cultures;
- Acknowledged for excellence in the delivery of municipal services;
- Known to value all community members by respecting and embracing differences, and treating all with dignity;
- Known as a community that embraces togetherness and encourages a sense of community involvement and service;
- Supportive of a quality of life that captures imagination, talent, opportunity and authenticity.

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- Sidewalks that lead to trail connections, nearby subdivisions and the commercial zone in the neighborhood.
 - Small parks and open green spaces with playgrounds to provide places for children and adults to gather and play.
 - Covenants that are fair and enforceable by an active Property or Homeowners Association.
 - A regular police presence that improves traffic safety and reduces crime.
 - Environmentally-friendly building materials, energy sources, conservation measures and recycling.
 - Sensible enforcement of building codes, parking and maintenance ordinances.
 - Active residents who cooperate and care about each other and the community.

In my neighborhood, I see . . .

- Subdivisions and residential areas that mix new and revitalized homes in a variety of styles, sizes and price points, that are clean and beautiful.
- Modern road infrastructure that is designed to improve traffic flow and connectivity, making accessibility to services and amenities easy.
- Streetscapes that are beautiful and well maintained.
- Alternative transportation infrastructure for public transportation, park & ride

lots, bicycle lanes with access to city and regional trails, and sidewalks, crosswalks and trail connections that promote walkability.

- Open green spaces that connect the built environment to the natural.
- Parks with amenities for all ages, including playgrounds and pools, community gardens, dog parks and recreational spaces.
- Community centers offering recreational activities and city services, along with gathering spaces and neighborhood events.
- Emergency services nearby, and a regular police presence to enhance traffic flow, ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety and deter crime.
- A small-town or village feeling enhanced by pedestrian-only spaces surrounded by locally-owned small businesses that provide services, shopping and dining.

In my city, I envision . . .

- Natural spaces filled with trees, native plants and beautiful landscaping, open spaces that remain undeveloped, green spaces offering recreational opportunities and an overarching respect for the air, soil and water.
- Modern utilities that protect and respect the natural environment and beauty of the region.

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- Modern infrastructure designed to be efficient, well planned to keep pace with growth, and maintained to extend its lifespan.
 - A well-maintained transportation network that promotes accessibility and traffic flow while minimizing congestion, improving safety for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, and supporting alternative transportation methods.
 - Zoning that reduces sprawl and encourages density, allows variety, buffers industrial areas from residential, encourages revitalization of existing property and preservation of historic districts, and balances new development throughout the community.
 - Well-kept, architecturally-distinct buildings that are sustainably built or renovated to a high-level of design and construction, that fit into their surroundings and are suitable for mixed uses.
 - A smart city that is innovative, unique, well planned and utilizes technology to achieve its goals.
 - Competent, diverse and innovative city leaders and employees that engage and communicate with citizens, provide services and amenities in multiple locations in the city, enforce codes and ordinances evenly, strive to keep the community well balanced, focusing on safety, beautification, infrastructure and quality of life for everyone.
 - Multi-use facilities that serve as gathering places for the community.
 - Attractions that excite residents and visitors throughout the community, focused on entertainment, the arts, sports and outdoor recreation.
 - People of all ages living healthy lifestyles and visiting state-of-the-art medical facilities.
 - Schools at all levels that are destinations, chosen specifically for their quality and variety of programs.
 - Businesses that offer living wages in a variety of fields; major corporations, start-ups, and entrepreneurs that choose to locate in this area; and locally-owned small businesses that meet the needs of the entire community.
 - A sense of community based on respect and inclusion of all people, with a welcoming and friendly attitude toward all types of diversity, and an expectation of involvement, interaction, cooperation and communication.

Inviting Atmosphere

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is known for a beautiful, safe and inviting atmosphere

Beautification

The natural beauty of the physical environment surrounding Rogers and Lowell is a valuable asset, and residents want to invest in the development and maintenance needed to ensure the community meets the highest standards of beauty.

From the appearance of their own home to that of their neighbors, their subdivision, the nearby commercial neighborhood and public spaces, beautification is a priority for the residents of Rogers and Lowell. While they enjoy the beauty of the hills, lakes and forests, they expect the built environment to be as beautiful as the natural.

Private property owners will be encouraged to improve their own efforts as they see the growing commitment of the municipal governments toward creating beautiful public spaces. The cities must plan for and invest in maintaining public spaces at a high level before they build. Cities must take the lead, ensuring city-owned, public spaces such as roadways, streetscapes, intersections, right-of-ways, easements, drainage areas and retention ponds, sidewalks, trails, parks and public buildings meet expectations. Cities should also balance the community's priorities with private property rights, enforcing reasonable codes fairly.

In Rogers

To lead a fresh perspective on beautification in public spaces, a new department within the City of Rogers should centrally manage the development and on-going maintenance of all landscaping on city property. The department will manage projects using a zoned approach, ensuring staff members are familiar with the unique details and needs of the area to which they are assigned. Funding

for the department can initially be reallocated from the many different departments currently maintaining the property (Parks, Streets, Library, Museum, etc.) to one single department budget. As the city continues to grow and install new landscaping and facilities, additional funding will need to be directed to beautification and maintenance efforts.

There are several benefits to running a centralized department for maintenance, including combined purchasing to qualify for bulk discounts, shared knowledge of best practices and materials, and the development of a team of professionals to oversee the design process.

As the city improves the appearance of public spaces, it is also tasked with managing the appearance of private property through the Planning Department and Code Enforcement, both utilizing tools to guide the look and feel of the community toward the overall vision. The City will encourage new development that fits gracefully into the natural environment and accentuates existing design styles.

City Level Objectives

- Form a new department within the City of Rogers to centrally manage the maintenance and beautification of all landscaping on city-owned property, with a mission of achieving a standard of excellence while being fiscally responsible with the taxpayers' money.
- Prioritize the community's design principles by encouraging new development that fits gracefully into the natural environment and accentuates existing design styles.
- Place landscaping plans at the forefront of the planning process for public, residential and commercial

construction, reinforcing the importance of beautification to the community.

- Enforce city codes designed to support beautification and maintenance of individual properties, subdivisions, Neighborhood Centers and Regional Centers.
- Offer incentives to encourage the renovation of existing structures, prioritize historic preservation, and remove dilapidated structures when necessary.
- Protect green, open spaces that connect the city to the area's natural beauty.
- Showcase civic pride through beautification efforts that attract people to the community.

Residential & Commercial Level Objectives

- Support the organization and activity of property/homeowners associations using fair and enforceable covenants to maintain the appearance of subdivisions.
- Create an appealing character in the built environment by encouraging the construction of architecturally-distinctive buildings that tie into the existing historic look of the community, and that blend into the natural surroundings.
- Endorse high-quality new construction to reduce the future costs of maintenance, or the renovation of existing properties to improve the appearance of the community.

- Support maintenance and upkeep as a responsibility of property ownership and civic pride that shows respect for neighbors.
- Utilize native plants and trees in landscaping to add to the natural appearance of the community. Native plants require less water and fertilizer, adding additional environmental benefits.

In Lowell

Recent changes to Code Enforcement have given Lowell a new direction. Practices have changed from reactive to proactive, enforcing Lowell codes to maintain a cleaner and more presentable city.

Objectives

- Protect green, open spaces, agricultural and undeveloped landscapes that connect the city to the area's natural beauty.
- Attract people to the community with a charming and beautiful environment that is clean and well-kept through public and private efforts.
- Enact municipal codes and city policies that help Lowell maintain a beautiful appearance on public and private properties.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The vision of having a safe, secure community is universal. The people of Rogers and Lowell recognize the outstanding levels of professionalism existing in the law enforcement and emergency services of

today and make clear their desire to invest in public safety so that it continues meeting the high standards of excellence achieved by the departments. Equally clear is the public's request that the departments grow to meet the needs as the population grows.

As neighborhoods develop in the cities, residents place a priority on having fire and EMS services in each, along with a strong police presence in each subdivision to deter criminals and build a sense of security.

Supporting the people's desire to maintain a welcoming atmosphere in the community, many recommendations encourage public safety officials to meet with residents frequently, build personal relationships, and to ensure the makeup of each department reflects the diversity of the community they serve.

Objectives

- Invest in public safety to reduce and maintain low crime rates. Ensure staffing levels, supplies and equipment meet the community's needs as the population grows.
- Set standards of excellence through the achievement of national accreditations and certifications that ensure the residents of Rogers and Lowell are protected by the best public safety departments in the country.
- Reflect the diversity of the community to create positive attitudes and effective interactions for public safety officials. Hire

more bilingual employees from diverse backgrounds to promote inclusiveness, ensuring minority residents see people like themselves as important members of the community.

- Maintain a regular police presence in all neighborhoods to improve the safety of all residents and deter criminal activity.
- Prioritize traffic control to increase the safety of pedestrians and bicycles as the public embraces alternative transportation options, primarily bicycles, and supports walkability within neighborhoods and the trail systems.

PLANNING AND ZONING

In Lowell

With the ongoing redevelopment, renovations and revitalizations of downtown districts in neighboring cities in the region, Lowell residents have a vision for a clearly-defined, pedestrian-friendly central community gathering space of their own.

The City of Lowell currently utilizes several parks for community activities (Ward Nail Park and Heritage Park) and the Kathleen Johnson Memorial Park incorporates innovative public uses (municipal and nonprofit) with open space. In the future, residents are seeking public spaces that offer multiple uses including recreation, entertainment and retail in a charmingly beautiful atmosphere.

An equally strong desire in planning

the community is to separate industrial and warehouse space from residential areas. Clear and well-defined zoning that encourages preservation, revitalization and development that fits into the surroundings is important to residents.

Objectives

- Develop a downtown district that incorporates public and private entities providing entertainment and services to Lowell residents in a beautiful, pedestrian-friendly environment. Include retail, restaurants, service providers and small businesses with programming that attracts people to the gathering space.
- Update planning and zoning to clearly define the most-appropriate uses, including undeveloped land, rural and agricultural uses, industrial and warehouse spaces, commercial districts and residential neighborhoods. Allow for innovative, alternative options for mixed-use areas, smaller lots, higher density and affordable housing.
- Preserve natural and historical spaces to provide open green space as well as recreational areas in parks for sports and outdoor activities.
- Design infrastructure to provide convenient access by sidewalks, trails and streets from residential areas to commercial districts.

In Rogers

The recently adopted Comprehensive

Growth Plan for Rogers builds upon the Master Street Plan to manage growth, enhance livability by reducing sprawl and intentionally spreading services, and ensures that everywhere in the city land is developed to its highest and best use.

In the past, Rogers grew following the same basic growth pattern of nearly every other American city since around the end of WWII. Major arterial roads connected cities with their neighbors. County roads became city roads and, as congestion increased along certain thoroughfares, they were widened to four or five lanes.

As these inter- and intra-city arterials were built, commercial development was allowed to flank them, and before long the arterials no longer functioned well due to the number of commercial curb cuts along each road. As roads became choked with cars, people moved further away from the congestion in subdivisions that disallowed commercial development and required people to drive more, thereby exacerbating the congestion they were trying to escape.

To avoid every major street within Rogers evolving into another 8th Street or Walnut, the city has adopted a growth strategy that limits commercial development to about thirty evenly-dispersed points (Neighborhood Centers) located at major intersections. An additional three Regional Centers are identified in Uptown (Pinnacle Hills), Midtown (Walnut and Dixieland), and Downtown. The rest of the city is preserved for residential development and open-space

preservation, primarily stream preservation intended to mitigate flooding.

This “polycentric” approach to growth management concentrates residential density within the Regional Centers and around Neighborhood Centers. An added advantage of this method is that it creates the necessary mass to support future transit.

Each of the Regional Centers presents unique challenges and opportunities. Uptown Rogers continues to emerge as a cosmopolitan center for the entire region. Midtown continues to grow as a slightly senior-skewed area offering a number of services for this demographic. Both Uptown and Midtown suffer in terms of walkability. Downtown Rogers is believed by many to be the most authentic of the NWA downtowns but struggles with low residential density and accessibility to the broader region. Downtown also requires improved services (primarily sewer) to expand and grow to the east. Midtown and Downtown have limited accessibility to the broader NWA trails network.

Objectives

- Support the City of Rogers’ Comprehensive Growth Plan through adherence to its principles and guidelines to reduce and prevent congestion.
- Advance walkability through the construction and maintenance of sidewalks and lighting that provide safe connections between subdivisions,

neighborhoods and Regional Centers.

- Develop corridors that provide convenient connections from Uptown to Downtown, and Downtown to the new Walmart Headquarters. Incorporate innovative planning, design and beautification practices to ensure they meet the high expectations of the community.
- Connect Midtown and Downtown to the regional trail network through sidewalks, trails and bike lanes.
- Foster improvements in public and alternative transportation methods using innovative planning principles.
- Balance growth, development and business diversity across the entire community.
- Construct and maintain modern infrastructure to encourage and support residential and commercial growth in all three Regional Centers.
- Improve convenient access to amenities and reduce sprawl by developing denser residential areas.
- Nurture diverse neighborhoods of mixed uses, including single- and multi-family residential areas with commercial spaces.
- Provide a variety of residential options, from all-inclusive communities to senior-friendly areas to spaces for tiny homes that meet the needs of the community.

Growing Economy

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is led by robust economic growth, balanced and diverse job creation and a sustainable mix of industry

Residents want to see a diversified and balanced economy in the Rogers-Lowell community that will buffer the region from dramatic economic swings. Growing support for our existing Fortune 500 companies, recruitment of complementary businesses, and nurturing innovative entrepreneurs are recommended strategies.

The community recognizes the importance of maintaining a business-friendly attitude to attract and retain successful companies. Equally important is that companies attracted to our area exhibit the values and characteristics of the community, including family-friendly policies, environmentally-sustainable practices and social responsibility.

Businesses in the community need to enable the creation and protection of technology, intellectual property and data in the future. As many companies do not know where to begin, a strategy to enable the creation and protection of technology, intellectual property and data in the future will provide resources.

Jobs that allow employees to enjoy a comfortable quality of life and companies that offer opportunities for people of all skills and education levels are desirable.

A strong interest in doing business with locally-owned companies suggests a need to encourage and support start-ups and entrepreneurs. Innovative small businesses with local ownership will be able to serve the community's diverse population, particularly in areas valued by residents, such as beautification, healthcare, arts and entertainment, education, recreation, services, retail and hospitality.

Objectives

- Identify and recruit corporate operations that support existing Fortune 500 businesses in the region.
- Pursue technology-sector companies that support the community's existing industries and offer higher-paying jobs.
- Nurture the development and growth of locally-owned businesses, encouraging the values of inclusion, innovation and uniqueness, by offering support for startups, entrepreneurs and expanding entities. Encourage even distribution of small businesses throughout the community. Provide resources, education and funding options to help them succeed.
- Include manufacturing and light-industrial businesses, service providers, retail and hospitality companies in the community's economy that offer job opportunities and good wages for individuals with differing interests, skill sets and education levels.
- Encourage companies to choose Rogers and Lowell as their home based on an understanding of shared values and a welcoming, business-friendly atmosphere.
- Develop business opportunities that meet the needs and desires of the community's diverse population, identified as beautification, healthcare, arts and entertainment, education, recreation, services, retail and hospitality.
- Promote workforce development and employment initiatives that educate, train and fit people with the job market as it evolves and expands.
- Increase awareness and offer education on intellectual property, data breach risks, and state data breach and data management laws.
- Build the strength of Rogers and Lowell as world-class destinations for business and leisure travel by developing iconic attractions that are authentically tied to prized recreational opportunities and arts activities; constructing lodging in the Downtown and lake areas of Rogers; and through improving transportation infrastructure, access and mobility in both cities.

Prioritizing Education

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is recognized for prioritizing education and personal development offered by excellent public, private and charter schools and institutions of higher learning

Whether attending Rogers Public Schools, a public charter school or a private school, students in the Rogers-Lowell area enjoy the undisputed benefits of an award-winning educational system, and residents want to continue the tradition of educational excellence. The community prioritizes education and supports funding that provides outstanding educators and many options for rigorous study.

The people of the community want to ensure that schools meet the educational needs of the population and attract newcomers as an education destination. Additionally, they are concerned about the availability and affordability of childcare. Following high school graduation, the community wants to help area students fund college, or participate in workforce development programs that will train future employees to fill local jobs.

Objectives

- Promote the development of affordable, safe childcare providers, with options for early childhood education and non-traditional hours to meet the needs of working parents.
- Support the growth of healthcare education and the region's medical school to provide a local training ground for the future medical needs of a larger population.
- Assist graduates in accessing higher education opportunities at in-state colleges and universities, and encourage the development and use of college funding initiatives.
- Nurture a pipeline of education, apprenticeships, technical training and workforce development initiatives that encourages students to enter high-need fields.

Rogers Public Schools

Through past periods of population growth, the Rogers Public School District has enjoyed a strong partnership with the City of Rogers and the Rogers-Lowell Chamber of Commerce in meeting the education needs of the community. The path to a community of 100,000 will see the school district continue to focus on providing an education that prepares all students for being successful citizens, making RPS a district of choice in NWA.

A growing community today presents diverse challenges in order to educate students for their future. Present efforts to meet the education needs of residents include a high school based on a project-based learning environment, an honors academy for promoting and supporting top-tier college entrance, expanded career technical offerings, increased advanced placement courses and a program to award associate college degrees to graduating high school seniors. The district has undertaken a plan to renovate older buildings to provide equity for student learning spaces and to maintain the public's investment in facilities for the long term. Activity spaces are being updated to meet student needs and remain competitive.

The previous strategic plan for the district focused on internal effectiveness and

structure. In designing a strategic vision to coordinate with the City's Vision 100 plan, RPS engaged the public for input through a parent survey and a "key leader" interview process.

Objectives

- Recruit, retain and support the very best teachers to engage all students in purposeful and rigorous learning.
- Be accountable to the public in utilizing the resources from local and state sources to meet the financial needs for educating students in the future.
- Provide first-class learning opportunities to students that will meet the changing needs for future success. Options for delivering instruction will move beyond the traditional bricks-and-mortar model of schools.
- Engage the community in the education of all students to best meet the needs of a growing district moving forward.

Rogers prides itself on embracing the philosophy of educating all students who live in our community. A continued collaborative effort with the City and Chamber will lead to a successful education future for a community of 100,000 and beyond.

Living Healthy

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is focused on healthy, active lifestyles supported by world-class healthcare

A shift in mindsets over the past decade has successfully created a desire for living healthy lifestyles. The people of Rogers and Lowell are fortunate to enjoy high-quality healthcare, and their vision is to enhance the existing by adding amenities, services and specialized providers to meet future needs.

Realizing that healthcare necessities and recreational desires change as individuals age, an interest in providing seniors with advocacy, support and amenities was expressed more directly.

Thanks to the region's trail network development and support for community recreational facilities, the overwhelming desire of the public is to increase walkability, improve bicycle access, and provide parks and green spaces that offer a wide variety of recreational options. Existing facilities are well-loved, with the most frequent need expressed as simply "more."

Objectives

- Recruit health-related businesses, such as gyms, health food stores and professional services to serve the growing demand for living a more health-conscious lifestyle.
- Attract additional health-care providers and specialists to the region to meet the capacity and specific needs of a larger population.
- Establish senior communities to provide a variety of housing options in a supportive environment that incorporates desirable amenities such as recreation and social opportunities.

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- Provide advocacy, support and respectful care to seniors while engaging them in the life of the community.
 - Add recreational facilities that encourage walking and bicycling, connect to existing trails and expand the network to provide accessibility from as many Neighborhood Centers and residential areas as possible.
 - Build recreational facilities and programs in multiple locations around the community to improve access and provide more capacity. Recreation or wellness centers, sports fields, community recreation leagues and programs and pools are priorities.
 - Encourage outdoor recreation in the natural environment of Northwest Arkansas, promoting attractions such as Beaver Lake, the Razorback Greenway, city parks and trails, and neighboring facilities, along with programming that introduces and grows interest in outdoor activities.
 - Add capacity and improve the quality of sports facilities and leagues for youth and adults to provide a variety of new options with popular programs, including pickleball, soccer, ballfields, and skateboard parks.
 - Construct athletic facilities that will attract competitive tournaments, promoting the development of stronger programs in the community, as well as boosting the economy.

Attracting Amenities

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is home to premier shopping, entertainment, and cultural art amenities that serve many cultures

Shopping & Entertainment

In this community, shopping and dining are deeply appreciated, not as necessities, but as a form of entertainment. People in Rogers and Lowell are interested in a wide variety of restaurants, stores and activities, so comparing notes on the latest novelties and sharing tips on tried-and-true favorites are conversation starters. And as many in the community travel around the country and the world frequently, they have fresh, creative and often specific recommendations on the types of amenities they would like to see develop in the area.

A strong desire to serve as a destination for retail, dining and entertainment is shared in the community. National chains with no other nearby stores, businesses that offer “local flavor,” and unique entertainment venues that will attract visitors are priorities.

As a business-friendly community, shopping, dining and entertainment venues can support the effort by serving customers with longer hours.

Objectives

- Develop authentic, unique experiences that attract visitors of all ages to Rogers-Lowell as a destination for entertainment.
- Promote locally-owned small businesses in multiple areas (Neighborhood Centers) of the community, increasing accessibility.
- Foster family-friendly entertainment and events that provide inclusive activities for all ages.
- Encourage shopping, dining and entertainment that

promotes healthy, active lifestyles, such as restaurants, grocery and health-food stores, sporting events and recreational activities.

- Support the community's business-friendly attitude by offering innovative customer service that meets the needs of the working community.

Arts

Today, Downtown Rogers serves as the true cultural center of the city, with flagship museums, craft breweries, artfully-preserved historic buildings, retail art venues, and unique restaurants and bars hosting live music and providing nightlife. A growing creative class has organically gravitated to the Downtown district, contributing to an authentic creative culture.

According to a recent ArtSpace study, Rogers ranked second in NWA as the place artists want to have space. Additionally, the number of art assets (places where arts, culture and creativity happen in the community) in Rogers grew 193 percent from 2014 to 2018, the largest jump by far of all cities in the region. As more artists choose to work in Rogers, more want to come. This presents a huge opportunity for Rogers, to invest in and support the development of local artists.

The Uptown area hosts one of the most frequented and visible cultural assets in the region, the Walmart AMP, which is driving tourism and providing family entertainment infrastructure. Other locally-owned and nationally-recognized venues provide family-friendly activities. Both Uptown and Downtown districts will be connected to each other in the near future with incredible recreational assets that also link to neighboring communities along the

Retail Requested by Name

Grocery & health-food stores

Costco
Hy-Vee
Lidl
Kroger
Meijer
Trader Joe's
Wegman's
Whole Foods

Outdoor retail

Department stores

H&M
Macy's
Nordstrom

Specialty retail

Apple Store
Buy Buy Baby
The Container Store
Ikea
Michael's
Menards
Restoration Hardware
See's Candy
World Market

Razorback Greenway.

Although Downtown remains its cultural center, Regional Centers and Neighborhood Centers in the city will establish their own sense of character as arts and entertainment venues proliferate. Although this growth is occurring rapidly, these areas have an opportunity to distinguish themselves in terms of the built environment through building types, styles, materials and aesthetic appearance.

Envisioning these Regional Centers as part of a unified whole, and humanizing connections between them and residential areas, can contribute to the sense of place and health of the city. This is where the arts come in!

Citizens are enthusiastic about the progress growth portends; yet, in community forums, they frequently express a desire to retain a unique identity for Rogers rooted in its history and culture. Part of that identity comes from cultural values that evolve through shared patterns of community life: schools, social and service organizations, religious communities, places of commerce, etc. Identity, however, also derives from the heritage of a place, distinguishing physical features, and community interests, the expression of idiosyncratic characteristics making Rogers exceptional.

Arts and entertainment can play expanded roles in retaining a connection to Rogers' past and making its future identity extraordinary. For example, original public

art may employ an identifiable theme unique to Rogers (such as railroading) in planned roundabouts throughout the city.

A variety of local businesses contribute to the evolving character of Rogers by hosting musicians, readings, and exhibiting the work of local artists. Additionally, underutilized, older Downtown buildings present opportunities for artist workspace and increased vitality with limited investment.

Performing Arts

As Rogers grows its identity as an entertainment hub for live performance, its citizens are especially appreciative of local music venues in Rogers and their support encourages organic growth of the city's entertainment industry.

Part of this entertainment ecosystem is the bars and restaurants hosting live music events and numerous entrepreneurial performing arts schools that have sprung up. These add richness and local intonation to significant cultural assets supported by public and private initiatives in arts programming and education, including Arkansas Music Pavilion (AMP), Arkansas Public Theater (APT) and Arkansas Arts Academy (AAA). Entertainment festivals combine live music with art shows and food trucks to offer something for everyone. In addition, Railyard Park's vision for its Butterfield Stage, an outdoor performance space for up to 1,000, contributes to this network of venues. As a freely-accessible venue, Butterfield Stage strengthens the vitality of Rogers' public sphere.

Building upon these investments in entertainment venues, annual events and performing arts education, Rogers provides an interconnected system of entertainment for current and future residents as well as a draw for visitors from the region and beyond. Working with local initiatives, the Northwest Arkansas Film & Entertainment Commission envisions performing arts opportunities of varied scales characterized by authentic expressions of local culture. Given the community's enthusiasm for live entertainment and its ongoing support of performing arts education, Rogers may become nationally recognized as a smaller city where entertainment is one of its economic engines.

Public Art

Interest in visual and public art forms is growing, following the lead of the performing arts in Rogers. Starting with small initiatives by local artists and public art advocates, larger-scale murals and artworks have recently been added in public places.

The potential for artworks on public lands, in roundabouts and along trails offers opportunities for the development of the city's future infrastructure. Original art in public places aids wayfinding and contributes to community identity. Integrated into public ways and parks, public art is a source of community pride and engages individual passers-by.

Artist-designed street furnishings, such as paving, benches, and lighting, give a

unifying continuity to a city. One-of-a-kind artworks bestow a sensibility of place that is memorable and encourages relatedness. Inviting artists to engage with community members in the process of planning, designing and creating art adds civic pride and helps residents, especially newcomers, find common ground and build community.

As Rogers continues to grow, these dual possibilities of public art, creating a sense of the whole and celebrating that which is unique, can make its new environments both knowable and worthy of care.

Artists

In the initial community engagement for Frisco (i.e., Railyard) Park, numerous participants conjectured having more entertainment and art downtown would make Rogers more livable and improve the quality of their lives. In a broader vision for Rogers, this is about more than providing pleasurable activities for residents and visitors. Prioritizing arts-focused education and entertainment and arts programming throughout the city makes it possible for creative workers to live and work in Rogers. Having more artists and other creatives in a community contributes to the vibrancy of the local economy. It also brings a fresh perspective to every public decision-making process and enlivens the everyday environment.

Gainful opportunities for artists to work in Rogers lead to more artists wishing to live and work in the city. While only 12 percent of artists surveyed by Artspace Projects

live in Rogers, 49 percent said they would consider relocating to Rogers. Providing space that meets artists' particular work requirements at a cost they can afford helps Rogers become the city many citizens say they want.

Given the number and variety of live performance venues in Rogers and educational opportunities, performing artists provide a current and growing market for rehearsal, production, and live/work space.

Objectives

- Position Rogers to be nationally-recognized as a leading entertainment city, with a documented, growing impact on the city's economy.
- Execute the city's first cultural planning process to create a blueprint for arts and culture in the city of Rogers. Planning will engage residents and stakeholders to identify cultural needs, opportunities and resources, and to think strategically about how those resources can help the community achieve its goals. The process will create a 5-year plan, designed to prioritize, coordinate and align public and private resources to strengthen cultural vitality over the long term.
- Establish an arts and entertainment partnership entity to advocate for and coordinate activities in Rogers.
- Explore funding sources to expand and sustain arts and entertainment initiatives, including staff and/or contracted personnel to coordinate, promote, document and advocate for the growing number of arts and entertainment offerings in Rogers, support for artists, educational efforts in school and communities.
- Maintain an arts and entertainment calendar to coordinate creative activities and to inform artists and prospective audiences.
- Encourage commentary in the local and regional media to grow audience awareness, understanding and appreciation for increasing diverse arts and entertainment activities.
- Formalize a plan for an infrastructure of multimodal connections and public spaces employing public art to express the community's unique identity, build bridges in communities, and make spaces attractive and welcoming.
- Connect new residential communities with programming and spaces that bring people together, creating a sense of character in the Downtown, Uptown and Midtown centers through the appearance and function of the built environment.
- Prepare the Rogers Arts Commission for its role in the approval and maintenance of works of art in public lands and facilities.
- Contribute to the development of young and local performing artists through varied educational opportunities and

performance venues. Create a pipeline to nurture artistic development at multiple stages with funding to support the overall and individual efforts.

- Secure and develop affordable, functional working studio and live/work space for artists.
- Partner with the NWA Regional Arts Council to engage in cultural planning and implementation of priorities and goals, and to support artists and arts organizations.

Serving the Community

Vision

**Rogers-Lowell
is acknowledged
for excellence
in the delivery
of municipal
services**

Municipal Services

Both Rogers and Lowell residents wish to maintain the high-quality city services for which they are known by expanding to meet future needs in smart and efficient ways.

With a priority placed on public safety, planning and zoning and beautification to ensure the region remains beautiful, safe and inviting, along with a business-friendly attitude, community members address transportation and infrastructure, recreational opportunities and solid civic leadership at the next level.

Objectives

- Fulfill this vision for the future of Rogers and Lowell by building public support for the plan and goals, aligning the various groups and organizations tasked with implementing the vision, and unreservedly communicating about the progress toward achievement.
- Invest in planning and engineering for efficient, smart growth and construction of municipal infrastructure.
- Protect the natural environment that makes the community attractive through innovative practices and services.
- Create an inviting appearance with improved maintenance of city facilities and infrastructure.
- Construct and offer city facilities and services in the Neighborhood and Regional Centers to improve accessibility to as many residents as possible.
- Cooperate and collaborate with neighboring cities, the county and the state to increase efficiencies, support larger efforts and build strong relationships.

- Communicate about city activities, amenities, opportunities for engagement and community events to all residents, using inclusive and wide-reaching methods to share information with as many people as possible.

Lowell Infrastructure

As growth continues in Northwest Arkansas, Lowell continues to see a growing demand for more roadways to maintain and improve its position as the “heart” of the region. A number of transportation projects are planned for the near term that will increase capacity and connectivity. Providing modern government services through technology and improving utilities are important to attracting development.

Objectives

- Construct community amenities that support family-friendly recreation and education:
 - a pool, splash pad or water park;
 - community center offering meeting space and recreational programming;
 - a library;
 - parks offering natural green spaces, dog parks, playgrounds, and a skateboard park.
- Address water and sewer issues to accommodate growth.
- Improve safety with the installation of crosswalks and sidewalks, bike lanes and railroad crossing arms.

Rogers Infrastructure

Throughout its history, the City of Rogers grew in size through annexation, with significant expansions in 1928, 1965, 1980, 1992, and 2014. Although we will continue to see small annexations from time to time, we have nearly exhausted

Current Lowell Projects

- North Goad Springs Road widening to three lanes.
- South Dixieland extension to Apple Blossom.
- Signal light at Bellview/ Spring Creek streets and Highway 264.
- Zion Church Road connection from Bellview Street to Goad Springs Road.
- Trailhead with parking, restrooms and connector trail at Kathleen Johnson Memorial Park.

our ability to grow through annexation and must even more carefully plan to make the most of what have.

Managing the transition from expansion to infill is challenging. In 2018, the City adopted a new Master Street Plan that was based on hard data collected over six months, and that incorporates the following underlying growth-management principles:

Objectives

- **Maximize Connectivity.** From new overpasses that create alternates to clogged interchanges, to local grid-based streets in commercial districts, to creating more direct routes between Uptown, Downtown, and the new Walmart Headquarters, our street network is designed to provide multiple routes between origin and destination to mitigate congestion. We cannot accommodate all of our future growth through street-widening projects alone.
- **Multiple, overlapping networks.** Automobiles, pedestrians, bicycles, and transit each require thoughtful planning and the creation of both dedicated and combined thoroughfares. Although individual automobiles will account for the vast majority of trips for the foreseeable future, providing alternative ways to travel can dramatically reduce the stress on our roads and improve quality of life and overall livability.
- **Transportation facilities must be safe and appropriate based on context.** Sometimes

it is appropriate to build complex, multi-lane roads with streetscape improvements such as lighting and side paths. Other times a relatively simple two-lane road is more appropriate. To get the most from both current construction and future maintenance funds, it is critical that we build the right infrastructure at the right location. This means thinking carefully about how each facility is intended to function, favoring safer and more efficient roundabouts over traffic signals in most situations, and avoiding such practices as installing unnecessary left-turn lanes.

As Rogers continues to grow and mature, a larger percentage of tax revenue must be devoted to infrastructure maintenance as the requirement to build new infrastructure will require a smaller percentage of tax revenue. Eventually, there will be no more land for new roads, but existing roads will always need to be maintained.

Maintenance expenditures, which primarily affect the depreciation rate of public infrastructure and are therefore necessary to extend and retain capacities, are lower for transportation networks that are highly connected, diverse, and context-sensitive. If we are to not only keep up with the cost of maintaining our infrastructure but to provide the margin of excellence that takes a place from good to great, we must continue to complete and open up our grid and invest in alternative transportation networks that support commercial, industrial, residential, and mixed-use environments.

Current Rogers Projects

- Walnut Interchange
- Magnolia Overpass
- Bellview
- Garret Road
- 28th Place / JB Hunt Drive
- Poplar Street enhancements and beautification
- Walnut St widening, Dixieland to 8th
- 8th and Easy intersection improvements
- Pleasant Grove Road west of I-49 to Hwy 112
- Uptown Overpass linking Embassy Suites/AMP and Mercy Campus
- Oak Street extension from 26th St across I-49, to Horsebarn Road
- Uptown Rogers local street grid projects
- 8th Street sidewalks
- Northern Loop trail (links Downtown Rogers to the Razorback Regional Greenway)
- Arkansas Street, Easy Street Corridor (links Downtown Rogers to Bentonville/ Walmart new HQ)
- Laurel Avenue West street widening and intersection improvements
- East Downtown Rogers water and sewer improvements
- Railyard Park project and related street and trail improvements
- Uptown and Downtown corridor study: intersection improvements to reduce travel time
- Dodson, Rainbow, Stoney Brook intersection improvements
- Downtown Rogers parking projects: restriping, additional parking lots, parking garage studies

Potential Future Rogers Projects

- Rainbow Road improvements
- New Hope Interchange
- Highway 12 Bypass (connection from Highway 12 to Easy Street, avoiding Locust)
- Intersection improvements: signal coordination, roundabout conversions, etc.
- Oak Street extension west from Horsebarn to Bentonville city limits
- Stoney Brook and Elk Road improvements, extensions
- Blossom Way Trail (realignment of southern loop along Blossom Way Creek)
- Additional improvements to establish local street grid network
- Hudson Road intersections at 8th and 2nd
- Stormwater infrastructure: stream restoration, regional detention, water quality, curb/gutter improvements, etc.
- Increased investment in transit and related alternative transportation: bus stops, bus technology, bike share, park and ride, EV support, etc.

Respecting Differences

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is known to value all community members by respecting and embracing differences and treating all with dignity

The Rogers-Lowell area supports diversity, equity and inclusion, now and in the future. Respecting everyone and treating all with dignity is the basis of the value of friendliness, repeatedly identified as the top trait exhibited by the people of Rogers and Lowell.

A welcoming community includes everyone, provides diverse representation in leadership roles, supports and celebrates cultural traditions and faiths, and ensures everyone enjoys a sense of being a part of the community.

With diversity, equity and inclusion as the way of life in Rogers and Lowell, that standard will become an attraction to the skilled workforce desired by employers.

Objectives

- In neighborhoods, build a sense of community by welcoming and respecting neighbors, cooperating on projects and sharing a sense of pride in the community.
- In schools, increase access to learning for students who speak a language other than English, and reflect the diversity of the community in the makeup of the teachers and staff.
- In the community, welcome newcomers with information, support and resources to familiarize them with the region, and engage them in the community.
- Increase and improve communications with diverse segments of the population using a variety of media to share important information and gather useful feedback.

Embracing Involvement

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is known as a community that embraces togetherness and encourages a sense of community involvement and service

The small-town feel of the Rogers-Lowell community is characterized by the friendly greeting from a store clerk, a warm welcome at the farmers' market and a neighborly invitation to get involved in a community event. Residents are proud of their community, and of the sense of caring and cooperation for which it is known.

A high value is placed on community engagement by residents, and on community outreach by visionary leaders. The foundation of this atmosphere is a basic respect for everyone, along with a welcoming attitude.

As the number of people in the community grows, it is a priority to build on the tradition of community involvement and service that promotes its vision.

Objectives

- Develop programs that encourage residents to become involved, such as neighborhood activities, city events, cultural programs, and projects that serve the community.
- Build a sense of commitment and pride in the community by seeking input and participation from diverse populations (newcomers, Spanish speakers, seniors, youth) to encourage their inclusion in community projects and events.
- Encourage active involvement in city government, promote good citizenship and increase communication to showcase strong leadership and diversify representation.
- Nurture future leaders from diverse backgrounds and skillsets who are prepared to be innovative in implementing the community's vision.

Inspiring Quality of Life

Vision

Rogers-Lowell is supportive of a quality of life that captures imagination, talent, opportunity and authenticity

The people of Rogers and Lowell pride themselves on being a welcoming, safe, inclusive and family-friendly community, that is innovative, prosperous and healthy. They have identified an exciting vision for the future that is based on building a place people want to live, work, visit and play.

In constructing the vibrant, diverse and cohesive community of the future, the community will foster a quality of life that inspires imagination, showcases talent, provides opportunity and values authenticity.

Objectives

- Rogers will be a destination for arts and entertainment. Creative people will choose to locate in the city because of the genuine character preserved and nurtured by the quality of life.
- Rogers and Lowell will grab opportunities to pursue smart growth, managing density to meet land capacity, providing essential services to the growing population and creating community with imaginative planning and zoning.
- Community leaders will seek to emulate the best cities in the country, making efforts to learn from them through intercity visits and research, implementing best practices that further the vision and values of Rogers and Lowell.
- All people will be respected and included in the community, ensuring that all feel safe, welcome and equal.
- Communication will be prioritized so all residents, employees and visitors are aware and engaged in the community.
- Rogers and Lowell will continue to cooperate and collaborate with other communities in the region for the good of the entire area and will protect and enhance their own identities as desirable places to live, work, visit and play.

Resources

Steering Committee

Lowell

Walter Benson
Martha Brown
Brian Clark
Nathan Crowder
Karen Davis
Liz Estes
Melanie Houston
Mayor Chris Moore
Bethany Rosenbaum
Eric Schein

Tonya Schein
Richard Stone
Linda Vannoy
Anne Villines

Rogers

Tom Allen
Daizy Andrade
Dr. Marlin Berry
Ben Blakeman
Raymond Burns

Ben Kaufman
Erin Kiefer
Mauricio Herrera
Mayor Greg Hines
Eric Pianalto
Mandel Samuels
Emma Willis
Marge Wolf
Meredith Young

Community Table Volunteers

Leah Acoach
Sheree Barnes
Shey Bland
Jerry Carmichael
Larry Cooper
Steve Cox
David Faulkner
Justin Freeman
Loretta Gomez
Angela Grayson
Vickie Grotts
Lauren Hildreth
Tom Hopper
Ben Klein
Lance Lloyd
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Next Factor

Rogers Public Schools

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