

Chapter 2: Critical Issues

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CITY OF LEBANON, IL



"City of the Cedars"

City of Lebanon, IL
November 2015

Chapter 2: Critical Issues

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Chapter 2: Critical Issues

Critical Issues Summary

Section 2.1 Critical Issues Summary

The Lebanon comprehensive planning process included an open, inclusive public engagement program to help gather information, identify values shared by the community and define what residents want Lebanon to be in next ten (10) years. Most participants in the public engagement process agree that Lebanon is a great place to live and raise a family and that Lebanon's greatest strengths are its small town charm, historic downtown and McKendree University. **The community's biggest concerns over the next ten years is the need to clean-up properties and enforce the City's ordinances.** Consensus was built in three (3) key quality of life issues. They include:

- 1) Lebanon needs a more diversified, prosperous economy.
- 2) Lebanon needs to do a better job balancing the growth of the City with that of McKendree.
- 3) Lebanon needs to be more pedestrian and bike friendly.

Section 2.2 Public Engagement Process

The public engagement program included a Town Planning Workshop, several stakeholder interviews, a Citizen Survey and ongoing meetings with residents and the City's elected and appointed officials. The Planning Commission served as the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and met monthly to discuss the Comprehensive Plan Update. These meetings were held at City Hall and open to the public. During the course of the public engagement process public comments regarding the future growth, development and preservation of the City of Lebanon were recorded and summarized in the following Sections.

Section 2.3 Town Planning Workshop

A key component of the public engagement program was the **Town Hall Workshop conducted on October 23, 2014.** Approximately 50 individuals actively participated in the Workshop, ranging from seasoned City officials to residents who had never attended a City meeting. The intent of the Workshop was to educate and raise awareness of the Comprehensive Plan and generate public comment regarding the wishes and worries regarding the future of Lebanon. The workshop was held at St. Paul United Church of Christ Fellowship Hall, which is centrally located within the study area. The use of the Town Planning Workshop format was intended to generate meaningful public input and send a message that the Comprehensive Plan was about the residents and neighborhoods of Lebanon and not City Hall. Participants included City Officials, business owners, and residents- both new and old. Participants were divided into 8 teams of 6-7 individuals and given a map of the study area, several colored markers, colored stickers and a workbook that included several discussion topics and mapping exercises. Each team appointed a secretary to record team findings, a cartographer to record team findings and recommendation on the project maps and a speaker to present the team findings. During the Workshop, participants were empowered to be Lebanon's planning experts and discuss several prepared topics relating to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the City of Lebanon. A summary of the notes gathered throughout the workshop are included herein. Additionally, a survey was distributed at the close of the meeting and available to all residents and businesses owners.

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Section 2.4 Stakeholder Interviews

The public engagement process included face to face meetings with stakeholders from the community. Stakeholders ranged from young families new to the area, second generation families living in the area, church leaders and representatives of McKendree University. The results of the Stakeholder Interviews are included in the following sections.



Section 2.5 Citizen Survey Summary

The following tables summarize the Citizen Survey that was developed and administered for the purpose of obtaining citizen feedback regarding issues relating to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update. The survey was published in the City's local newspaper and promoted throughout the summer and fall of 2014. Hard copies of the survey were also made available at City Hall and handed out during Planning & Zoning Meetings and the Town Planning Workshop. The city received over 45 completed surveys, many of which were representative of entire households, husband/wife or families. Therefore the actual number of survey respondents is well over 45 and possibly closer to 60-80.

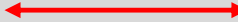


In addition to the Citizen Survey, stakeholder interviews and Town Planning Workshop, the Plan was also discussed at several Planning Commission meetings, which were open to the public, and scheduled throughout the 12 month planning process. Overall, the estimated number of individuals participating in the public engagement portion of the Comprehensive Plan update was approximately 150 individuals or roughly 3-4% of the City's population.

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1. **Concerns/Threats:** Survey takers were asked to rate the following issues the City will face in the next 10-20 years based on issues of most concern (5), to (1) for issues of no concern.


“**Residential Property Maintenance**” received the most “5” (Major Concern) ratings with 21 (out of 46 respondents) and appropriately rated the highest concern with a rating of 3.96. “**Non-Residential Property Maintenance**” received similar ratings with 20 “5” (Major Concern) ratings and an overall rating of 3.93 out of 5. Economic Development rounded out the top three highest rated concerns or threats facing the City of Lebanon with 18 “5” (Major Concern) ratings and an overall rating of 3.91. **Availability of Commercial Property and Public Transit** were the least concerns among the 46 respondents with ratings of 2.61 and 2.87 respectively. **Availability of Commercial Property** was the only item surveyed that did not received a single “1” (no concern) rating from any of the 46 respondents.

Rating of the Top Issues facing the City of Lebanon					
Top Community Threats (in order of rating)	No Concern				Most Concern
	1	2	3	4	5
	Rating				
1. Property maintenance- (residential)	3.96				
2. Property maintenance- (non-residential)	3.93				
3. Economic development	3.91				
4. Neighborhood stability	3.67				
5. Open space/farmland preservation	3.62				
6. Revitalization of Highway 50	3.61				
7. Access to quality shopping & dining	3.61				
8. Quality and delivery of city services	3.44				
9. Expansion of the current city limits	3.33				
10. Crime (violence, drugs and safety issues)	3.15				
11. Access to parks/recreation for all ages	3.11				
12. Apartments, duplexes & rental housing	3.04				
13. McKendree University expansion	2.98				
14. Public transit / senior transportation needs	2.87				
15. Availability of commercial property	2.61				

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2. Agree/Disagree: General Questions.

Almost half of the survey respondents selected “5” (*strongly agree*) when asked if **Lebanon was a great place to go to college**. This statement received the most favorable ratings. The lowest rated statement was “**Lebanon is a great place to own/operate a business**”. According to survey takers, Lebanon is a great place to live, visit, raise children, go to school and retire. Overall, all the quality of life agree/disagree statements received very high ratings.

Personal Preference Questions					
Agree/Disagree Statements (Top rated listed first)	Disagree  Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Rating				
1. Lebanon is a great place to go to college.	4.00				
2. Lebanon should grow in size and population.	4.00				
3. Lebanon is a great place to live.	3.87				
4. Lebanon is a great place to visit.	3.87				
5. Lebanon is a great place to raise children.	3.83				
6. Lebanon is a great place to go to school (K-12).	3.80				
7. Lebanon is a great place to retire.	3.74				
8. I am happy with the City’s parks & recreation	3.72				
9. Lebanon is a great place to own/operate a business.	3.04				

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3. **Strengths/Assets:** Respondents were asked to rate each of the following strengths/assets (see table below) as they apply to the City of Lebanon from most valuable (5) to least valuable (1).

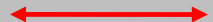
“Small Town Atmosphere” was the highest rated assets with a near perfect rating of 4.52 out of 5 followed closely by **“Downtown Historic District”** which received a very respectable rating of 4.2. **Proximity to SAFB** received the most “5” (most valuable) ratings with 26, which is over half of all survey respondents.

“Commercial and Retail Establishments” and **“Silver Creek / Natural Resources”** received the lowest ratings, however the rating were still over 3, which indicates they are viewed as an important asset, just not a top asset.

Rating of the City of Lebanon’s Top Strengths					
Top Community Assets (in order of avg. rating)	Least Valuable		Most Valuable		
	1	2	3	4	5
	Rating				
1. Small town atmosphere	4.52				
2. Downtown Historic District	4.20				
3. Proximity to Scott Air Force Base	4.15				
4. Schools	4.13				
5. McKendree University	4.04				
6. Horner Park	3.87				
7. Location	3.85				
8. Highway access	3.63				
9. Organizations and committees	3.61				
10. Local industries/businesses	3.52				
11. Housing & neighborhoods	3.52				
12. Resident population (the community)	3.52				
13. Municipal services	3.48				
14. Heritage, Emerald Mound, Dickens,	3.41				
15. Locust Hills Golf Club	3.39				
16. Silver Creek, natural resources	3.37				
17. Commercial & retail establishments	3.11				

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4. **City Services:** Survey takers were asked to rate the following municipal services based on the level of importance from 1-5, with 5 being very important, AND, rate the quality of services from excellent (5) to poor (1).

Rating & Quality of Municipal Services						
<i>Municipal Service (in order of most important)</i>	Level of Importance	Quality of Service				
		Poor				Excellent
	1-5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Fire	4.69	4.67				
2. Police	4.37	3.83				
3. Sanitary Sewer	4.40	3.67				
4. Trash / recycling	3.74	3.59				
5. Drinking Water	4.62	3.57				
6. Parks & recreation	3.86	3.48				
7. Stormwater management	3.74	3.28				
8. Winter maintenance	3.74	3.13				
9. Yard waste collection	3.11	2.96				
10. Building code enforcement	3.71	2.61				
11. Planning & zoning	3.63	2.46				
12. Street maintenance	3.86	2.39				

Note: The middle column is a ranking of the level of importance the services is to survey respondents. The second column is the actual ranking of how well the services are executed or “quality of services”. The services are listed in order from the highest quality of service ranking

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to the lowest. “Fire” was rated the most important service as well as the services that is performed at the highest quality,

5. Yes/No Specific Issue Questions:

Yes / No General Quality of Life Questions	YES	NO
1. Historic buildings and places should be restored and preserved.	88%	12%
2. I am generally pleased with the City's Public Services.	84%	16%
3. Traffic congestion is a problem.	82%	18%
4. McKendree University is a great asset to the community.	78%	22%
5. The City of should expand through annexation.	76%	24%
6. The City should have more sidewalks and bike paths.	76%	24%
7. Lebanon should invest money in incentives to attract new businesses	75%	25%
8. There are sufficient housing options in the City	74%	26%
9. Lebanon should invest money in marketing itself.	74%	26%
10. I would support a tax/bond to fund street improvements.	67%	33%
11. The City should have more parks and walking areas.	39%	61%
12. I would support a tax/bond to fund park/rec improvements.	36%	64%
13. There are sufficient recreation programs for seniors in Lebanon.	36%	64%
14. There are sufficient recreation programs for youth in Lebanon.	32%	68%
15. There are sufficient employment opportunities in town.	17%	83%

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6. Surveyor Demographic Questions:

Surveyor Demographics				
Gender	Male	48%	Female	52%
Resident	Yes	96%	No	4%

Age	17 & Under	18-29	30-45	46-64	65 and over
	0%	4%	28%	30%	38%
Education	Some high school	High school grad	Some college	College grad	Post-Grad, PHD, MBA
	0%	14%	9%	40%	37%

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SWOT Analysis

The discussion topics used throughout the public engagement process were developed with the intent of identifying citizen-defined values and critical issues as they relate to the health, safety and welfare of Lebanon. The responses to these questions, more specifically, helped identify Lebanon's **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT)**. The following comments, observations, recommendations and opinions are actual quotes or paraphrasing taken from the participants, teams and stakeholders interviewed during the public engagement program, and do not necessarily represent the position or opinions of the City or the consultant, who collaborated in the preparation of this Plan.

Section 2.6 Strengths

1. **Lebanon is fine the way it is.**
 - ✓ Lebanon is a safe, quiet community filled with generous, caring residents.
 - ✓ Lebanon is a great community made up of folks from all walks of life. It's a special place, let's keep it that way.
2. **The people (Citizens of Lebanon).**
 - ✓ When we do it, we do it right!
 - ✓ Strong community ties
 - ✓ High level of volunteerism and participation in various volunteer organizations
 - ✓ Lots of retired SAFB residents.
 - ✓ Racial diversity.
 - ✓ Lebanon is lucky to have so many churches and they should be included in the leadership roles of the community.
3. **McKendree University.** (Be sure professors, students and commuters are represented.)
 - ✓ University-oriented events (Sports, music, performing arts, education, etc.)
 - ✓ The Hett- Performing Arts Center which holds 500 and attracts national talent.
 - ✓ The Hills Golf Course- don't let the University close it.
4. **Downtown**
 - ✓ Architecture - great mix of styles, periods and character.
 - ✓ We love our Victorian town and houses.
 - ✓ Historic character of the community.
 - ✓ Tourist / Visitors Center
 - ✓ Brick Streets

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5. Small town atmosphere

- ✓ Family-friendly
- ✓ Small-town feel and charm, where you can walk to schools and church, and most residents know each other.
- ✓ Churches

6. Schools

- ✓ New elementary school.
- ✓ Great K-12 unit school district.
- ✓ New elementary school.
- ✓ Most teachers in the K-12 are from Lebanon.
- ✓ Small class sizes, excellent teachers, etc.

7. Location

- ✓ Easy highway access
- ✓ Nearby parks (Horner Park).
- ✓ Emerald Mound; Rich Native American History.

8. Fire Department

9. The prospect of the Bypass

10. Positive, character-giving development:

- ✓ South on 4 off Oak Grove School
- ✓ McKendree University
- ✓ Downtown. Winter lights are second to none.
- ✓ Northtowne Apt. Area
- ✓ Development along McAllister Street
- ✓ Property from Bell Street to Highway 4 along 50
- ✓ Our festivals are amazing.

Section 2.7 Weaknesses

Respondents were asked to identify Lebanon's biggest constraints (weaknesses) with regard to neighborhood stability, economic development and other quality of life issues?

- 1. Property taxes need to stay low.** It's getting more and more difficult for seniors and others on fixed income to pay the bills.
- 2. It's very hard to fit in** – everyone is an outsider.

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- ✓ The Old-Line Families (I.E. multigenerational locals) are resistant to change and intimidating to newcomers.
 - ✓ Eurocentric.
 - ✓ Racism.
 - ✓ There seems to be a lack of knowledge and participation in government.
 - ✓ The old guard resists change.
3. **Infrastructure is old and in need of updating/repair.**
- ✓ The quality of our water is a very serious concern.
 - ✓ Better lighting needed throughout town.
 - ✓ Our streets are terrible – no curb and no walks
 - ✓ Sidewalks are very unsafe in many areas.
4. **Marketing / Economic Development:** No one shops in town. Not enough local support to make businesses thrive. People seem to go outside town for services and shopping. City officials and business leaders should create and promote a “Shop Lebanon First” program. The City should work with the Chamber of Commerce and Newspaper to promote and consider featuring a different business/service every week. Some people that live in Lebanon have never set foot in some of the businesses/offices in town.
5. **McKendree University**
- ✓ On and off again relationship between the City and McKendree.
 - ✓ Parking is a problem for the University and really becomes an aggravation during major events.
 - ✓ Now that the University has control of the golf course, its future will be determined by the needs of the University rather than the good of the members, neighbors or that of the greater Lebanon region.
6. **Lebanon is struggling to attract young families.**
- ✓ Lebanon is not attracting young military families. Lebanon use to be a preferred location for SAFB families, but now O’Fallon and other nearby towns seem to be attracting most SAFB families.
 - ✓ We need to do a better job attracting young families and promoting what Lebanon has to offer. We need more community activities that focus on the family.
 - ✓ Realtors do not bring people to town. We need to get our story and strengths out to the realtors. We need to sell Lebanon at the Base. Realtors are not doing us justice.
 - ✓ We have become a rental town and not a destination town for new, permanent families.
 - ✓ City operational staff (fire and police included) do not match the social/economic/racial composition of the resident population.

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- ✓ Little to no promotion of our great schools and other benefits the community has to offer.
- ✓ Schools attract young families, but our school is too small so spec. housing is not an option. As a result our housing stock lack diversity, therefore, when someone wants to move here, there are very few homes that will interest young families.
- ✓ The High School's inability to offer chorus, a decent band, competitive speech, music, and drama, a good selection of AP/CP classes and math and science on par with local schools really hurts our students.
- ✓ Library is way too small for a population of 4000.

7. Lebanon needs better parks

- ✓ Parks need better access. It's too difficult to get to Horner Park – consider additional points of access for non-vehicular methods.
- ✓ Parks close too early. Horner hours need to be expanded.
- ✓ No parks department. The City does not own any parks. No control over parks and rec. Horner Park organization exists merely to maintain property. A park board should exist to serve the community- not the property. The City needs to forge a better partnership with Horner or better yet dissolve the Park Board and create a City Park Dept.

8. Walkability

- ✓ Lots of trip hazards downtown.
- ✓ Need to do a better job connecting the schools with the neighborhoods for bikes and pedestrians.
- ✓ Belleville Street & Highway 50

9. The City lacks vision and leadership

- ✓ No unified target in mind.
- ✓ We need to get everyone paddling in the right direction.
- ✓ The City needs a transfer of leadership - the old guard is not getting it done.
- ✓ Lack of a clear city strategy to move forward or set of adopted goals.
- ✓ We tend to cling to old habits or ways of doing things; we need to be more progressive.
- ✓ No City Leadership. Need a new City Council- the current officials argue all the time. Selfish. They want it their way.
- ✓ Inability of City Government to agree and move forward with needed improvements.
- ✓ Too many individuals working at cross purposes has led to stagnation and impasse on key issues.
- ✓ Decision-makers do not want change, and generally do not support MCK.

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- ✓ Lack of a budget.
 - ✓ Small town grudges and politics muddy the waters and hinder progress
 - ✓ People don't feel trustful of police who don't live in town.
 - ✓ The zoning/permitting process needs to be transparent, fair and equitable.
10. **Safety.** Not a widespread problem, but nevertheless an issue especially north of the university.
11. **Lots of land is held up by a few landowners who do not want to sell.**
- ✓ Consider offering land swaps. The City needed to work with these land owners to provide land for new housing, recreational uses and expanded retail/industrial opportunities.
12. **Road conditions**
- ✓ Roads are in terrible shape.
 - ✓ Congestion is bad.
 - ✓ No stop lights even though town was led to believe we'd get them.
 - ✓ We have neglected our roads and sidewalks too long.
 - ✓ Drivability is very poor on McAllister, North Monroe and Belleville.
 - ✓ Infrastructure along the streets is bad.
 - ✓ Visibility and site distance at St. Louis & Monroe.
13. **Traffic Problem Areas**
- ✓ 4 & 50 Square traffic. Need a traffic light at Highway 4 and St. Louis Street – with pedestrian crossings. Traffic lights would make a great impact.
 - ✓ We need to continue pushing for the installation of the bypass.
 - ✓ Congestion near schools and McKendree needs to be addressed.
 - ✓ Highway 4 and Acorn Way – Needs a turn lane going into the neighborhood. (several fatal accidents at this location)
 - ✓ Eastside of Highway 4.
 - ✓ Diagonal parking needed on W. St. Louis.
 - ✓ Chamberlain Street – dangerous.
 - ✓ New sidewalks starting downtown all the way to McKendree.
 - ✓ Exiting True Value.
 - ✓ Schuetz near school.
 - ✓ Belleville & 50.

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14. Limited parking

- ✓ Uptown for shoppers.
- ✓ Downtown everywhere.
- ✓ McKendree.
- ✓ Flea Market.
- ✓ Lots needed- consider (old Regions).

15. Access

- ✓ West to Main Campus.
- ✓ Need better access to businesses on West side of 4 (True Value, Dollar General and McDonalds).
- ✓ Bike/walking trails throughout town.
- ✓ 50 onto Belleville (left turn lane needs to be longer).
- ✓ Trucks around town instead of using Hwy 4.

16. Image / Physical appearance.

- ✓ Too many closed down, boarded up businesses that could do the City good to be renovated and up and running.
- ✓ Appearance of the school buildings.
- ✓ Most of Lebanon looks pretty run down. The roads are in terrible condition. Even all the entries into Lebanon are pretty embarrassing.
- ✓ Lebanon looks like a poor man's town. Not many nice areas except for the brick road and areas around McKendree.
- ✓ Evil looking teenagers walking around our community with underwear exposed- it's an insult to our residents.
- ✓ We have too many run down houses and derelict properties.
- ✓ Very high number of rental properties, most of which are substandard. Landlords are not keeping up property.
- ✓ Renting residential single family homes to college kids who do not know how to be a good neighbor is hurting our community. No more rental housing.
- ✓ We have become an ugly town. Too many vacant-boarded up buildings. Our Square is not beautiful anymore.
- ✓ Too many "home improvement" projects started by homeowners and not completed for years. This creates an eyesore, hurts property values, makes it difficult to sell homes and creates a negative image of our community.

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- ✓ Blighted Buildings. Something needs to be done with the vacant properties, starting with the gas station on East St. Louis Street and the vacant gas station at Hwy 50/4.
- ✓ Better code enforcement needed to address the many rundown homes in the City.
- ✓ Additional sidewalks needed.
- ✓ Better compliance with building permits needed (Development should not deviate from the approved plans / permits)
- ✓ Increasing enrollment at McKendree has created parking, traffic and crowding issues.
- ✓ Need gateway and welcome signage at Belleville and 50 (It's too drab).
- ✓ The un-kept nature of the grain mill is an eyesore.

Section 2.8 Opportunities

1. **Annexing south should have happened 20 years ago.**
2. **Let's work harder to support the Brick street Merchants.**
 - ✓ Update our ordinances to eliminate conditions/requirements that hamper businesses.
3. **For the city to grow and flourish, all of Lebanon's citizens' concerns should be addressed, not just the same citizens who has run the City for generations.**
4. **We should be a satellite community for SAFB.** Why aren't we recruiting residents and school students more aggressively? People that like it while they are here tend to come back and retire here where they are pillars of the community. Look how many of our movers and shakers are prior military.
 - ✓ People will only move here when the town looks more eye appealing.
 - ✓ Lebanon seems to have potential to be a better place for all; start with providing more public activities for teens and seniors.
5. **The historic downtown is a key part of Lebanon's identity.** The City needs to support the historic downtown and the preservation of key landmarks such as the Victorians and Belleville Street. The trick is to promote business growth in other areas. Supporting the historic main street with a parking lot is key.
6. **Promote Lebanon; develop a brand, tell our story.**
 - ✓ Lebanon could be marketed as the best kept secret in St. Clair County – Small town living at its best – and businesses asked to step up to serve the needs of local citizens.
 - ✓ If we can get quality families moving in, businesses will follow. The school improvements and test scores are a great start.
 - ✓ Lebanon needs to stand out as a "Different Kind of Community" not blend in to become like all the rest of St. Clair County with their big box stores and strip malls. Focus on "Small Town Living and Be Individual"

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- ✓ Lebanon needs to develop its own identity!!! Stress the SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE many are looking for. If this way of life was marketed the right way we could attract people looking for this type of life. We do not need to duplicate the strip malls and fast food restaurants that can be found within a 10 mile radius. Small Town Living residents would tend to be more loyal and stable.
 - ✓ Lebanon has a lot to say. Police; what's their story? Fire Department: what is their story?
 - ✓ Create a marketing campaign themed around the City's excellent educational institutions, arts and history
 - ✓ According to one community leader; *"Lebanon is a city built on a hill with a light, but there is a bucket over the light even though the City was meant to shine. We need to help radiate the light Lebanon has to offer by promoting our great schools, historic downtown, affordable housing, safe neighborhoods and rich heritage"*.
 - ✓ Schools are great- but they are not promoted
 - ✓ Branding. Who are we? Better branding for downtown. (Do we brand downtown separate from City-wide branding efforts)
 - ✓ Emerald Mounds: Focus on Emerald Mounds, promotions, connections, education
 - ✓ Museum. We need to celebrate our history, people and places. Showcase artifacts, Downtown Historic District, etc.
 - ✓ Development a Moto: **"Lebanon: City of Art & Education"**. Let's get away from the antique town we have become known for; we can be so much more.
 - ✓ Native American Cultures.
7. **Beautification opportunities.**
- ✓ **Entryways.** Gateways into the city could be more attractive
 - ✓ **Infrastructure.** Better infrastructure needed to attract future development.
 - ✓ **Grants.** The City needs to get money to clean up blighted areas.
 - ✓ **Code Enforcement.** The City has decent ordinances and laws; the problem is enforcement. The City needs to provide consistent, ongoing enforcement and out town would be much less cluttered, cleaner and well maintained.
 - ✓ **Redevelopment:** Vacant lot east of Hwy 50 and Hwy 4 intersection are recommended for redevelopment.
 - ✓ **Wetland Preservation.** Make this area an outdoor classroom with an observatory, trails, boardwalks, bird viewing blinds, etc.
 - ✓ The Silo's could be more attractive.

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8. McKendree University opportunities.

- ✓ Some respondents believe; *“The University is here to help the City, but there is not much reciprocation from the City. It should be a give and take relationship. The University helped buy a fire truck, support the Police Department and offer 40% discount on tuition for City employees”.*
- ✓ McK brings in the right people. The City needs to embrace McK and cultivate a warm relationship.
- ✓ McKendree Graduates tend to leave and establish careers, lives and homes elsewhere. Some stay. The City needs to work with the folks that stay to help develop a plan to recruit more graduates and minimize brain drain.
- ✓ A parking garage is needed for McKendree serving the Playhouse, sporting events and the Het Center.
- ✓ Lebanon has to develop a plan and see how McK U fits in Lebanon’s Plan, instead of the University seeing how the City fits in Mck’s Plan. Many town residents are resentful of McK “Taking Over” Lebanon and the City Fathers allowing it.
- ✓ McK is a financial mainstay of our community- we need to start working together.
- ✓ While McK is a big part of the City, Mck should not consume the City. The City should be open to new progressive ideas that work for the community and let Lebanon grow and develop for all the Citizens.

9. Park & open space opportunities.

- ✓ Preserve the family-style community we have where people and children can walk the streets safely and enjoy the nature that abounds around us. That means balancing the preservation of green space and walking areas with future development.
- ✓ A community center would be nice.
- ✓ Add winter skating to Horner Park again.
- ✓ Put a park near the new elementary school, possibly with a retaining pond.
- ✓ A bike path would be good.

10. Proposed transportation opportunities.

- ✓ A bypass around town to E. 50 is highly anticipated and supported. The City needs the Bypass to create opportunities for future commercial, industrial and residential. Roundabout: A roundabout at 4 & 50 would be great. Many believe it is the right solution and it will work/function great as well as look great, if done right. Let’s do this!
- ✓ Full 4-way lighted intersection with ped crossings needed at Market, east of downtown.
- ✓ Better N/S access needed to Downtown.
- ✓ 4 & 50 Truck Route / Bypass

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- ✓ The need for public transit, encouraging new businesses throughout the City, not just in what is or was considered the “industrial end of Lebanon.

Section 2.9 Threats

1. Infrastructure is aging.

- ✓ Streets and sidewalks are neglected.
- ✓ Improved sewer district needed.
- ✓ Longview – water line to Faust Road needs upgrades.
- ✓ Need water to the south (this is necessary for any substantial development south of town).

2. Planning & Zoning.

- ✓ Too many approved plans do not get built as approved. There are too many changes that occur. This needs to end.
- ✓ No systematic way to dismantle the system that is in place.
- ✓ **Better zoning needed:** Require parks, sidewalks and necessary infrastructure in all future development and make developers pay the way. Require well designed, professionally planned future development, no exceptions.

3. Lebanon is not business friendly

- ✓ **There are no substantial industries in Lebanon.** We need more industry which will then provide more jobs which will increase the number of rooftops which in turn will attract more desirable retail/commercial.

4. Realtors need to promote Lebanon, rather than skipping us over.

Future Land Use

Section 2.10 Future Non-Residential Growth & Development

Participants were asked if Lebanon offers an adequate supply of shops, restaurants, entertainment and places for people to gather. Respondents provided the following future non-residential land use recommendations

1. **There is a lack of quality commercial services and retail selection.** College students are going to other towns for shopping and entertainment.
2. **Businesses need longer hours.** Shops need to be open on Monday's; at the very least from Thanksgiving to Christmas.
3. Lebanon needs to build upon the success of the Looking Glass Playhouse and The Hett.

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4. Lebanon needs more industry to create jobs that attract families. More rooftops are needed to strengthen the retail sector. Locate future industrial uses by the railroad tracks, SW of town along Hwy 50.
5. Outdoor recreation retailers. A Bass Pro Shop would be great.
6. Family-oriented entertainment is lacking, there is great opportunity in this area.
7. Family-friendly, sit down, full service dining options are needed. Fine dining, breakfast,
8. The following businesses are needed; car dealerships, butcher shop, restaurants, larger retail (national chains, anchor stores), a bigger grocery store, coffee shop (with Wi-Fi), ethnic restaurants, ice crème store, deli, al fresco dining, bakery, dry cleaning, niche retail, B&B, hotel, a small boutique hotel, urgent care facility, etc.
9. Small boutique hotel.
10. Quality shops needed downtown.
11. Full service restaurant that serves breakfast. Family dining options. Need a full time family style restaurant. Restaurant with outdoor dining. A nice restaurant, we don't need more bars. Need fine dining.
12. Outlet mall – more retail stores.
13. Industrial development by railroad tracks.
14. Nail salons.
15. Physical therapy.
16. Coffee shop. Drive thru coffee, convenience and liquor store
17. Consignment shop.
18. Better grocery options.
19. Specialty foods.
20. Fitness/gym.
21. Senior care house (not nursing home) i.e. Assisted living (Sunrise).
22. Attract more retail (better selection, quality and service) that is more practical – provides services and products that residents use daily.
23. Acute care.
24. Library by N Monroe / Fire Station.
25. Develop a sports park.
26. Cater to SAFB traffic w/ lunch spots along Highway 50 (new gate on Rieder).
27. Tax generating retail and businesses.
28. Get harder on derelict properties.

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29. A completed bypass with a mix of commercial, industrial and residential growth/opportunity areas.
30. More businesses that serve students; expanded hours (etc.)
31. Small strip businesses (mail service, yogurt, coffee, etc.)
32. Need dry cleaner and newer laundromat
33. Encourage present businesses to be successful and expand.
34. We need a doctor.
35. Lack of daycare, summer programs and other programs and activities to help develop Lebanon kids is needed. The HS especially needs to expand its programs. At the very least promote the accomplishments that are on the marquee.
36. Empty storefronts and lack of expansion of businesses along highway corridors
37. The town isn't very "walkable" because the businesses within walking distance are geared to visitors while those that require driving are geared to residents.
38. Any growth/expansion needs to be done right, with more parkland being a prerequisite to development.
39. Bury power lines in all new development. Maybe bury lines in established neighborhoods a little at a time.
40. Street lights should be designed to limit light pollution and save energy.
41. Take over Horner Park.
42. Too many ordinances enforced for minor items while major concerns are ignored such as barking dogs, far too many lights invading private spaces.
43. Street maintenance follows a stop/gap philosophy. Years of poor planning and maintenance by chipping has left many streets so humped in the middle that they are dangerous for large trucks to corner.
44. Continue investing in schools or we will lose new families from moving in.
45. We should be a small town (no big business / industry)
46. We need to support small businesses in Lebanon and help them prosper. Instead of trying to attract big business that every other town has (O'Fallon, Shiloh, Belleville).
47. Lebanon needs more businesses, but it needs to serve the present businesses also. Keep taxes low for them.
48. More jobs opportunities, businesses, people, and better traffic flow.
49. More parking needed.

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Section 2.11 Downtown Lebanon

Participants were asked if Downtown Lebanon was being utilized to its fullest potential and what can be done to improve the downtown Lebanon experience. Respondents provided the following information and recommendations:

1. Uniformity in downtown appearance is needed. Unify/brand downtown through the use of benches, banners, planters, signage, etc. to add continuity downtown.
2. It's great, authentic, attractive and vibrant (at times). We need to take care of it, market it...and then repeat the cycle. More marketing, better accessibility for pedestrians along East St. Louis.
3. Build upon the Historic Charm of downtown.
4. Population growth will help support businesses.
5. Need stores we would use more often. (People don't buy ornaments, tea or wine every day.)
6. Access and development of East Main.
7. Revitalize downtown.
8. Bring in family-friendly businesses. Attract businesses willing to stay.
9. More consistent (longer) hours needed for downtown retail.
10. Stop lights, crosswalks (St. Louis and 50).
11. Expand hours of Visitors Center, especially for special events- where restrooms are necessary. Expanded hours of the museum.
12. Sidewalks are deplorable.
13. Rents are too high.
14. Improve the four (4) corners @ 4/50.
15. New signage should adhere to preservation aesthetic.
16. Better enforcement of historic requirements and fire codes needed to help define and enforce historic requirements.
17. Parking is a problem.
18. Empty buildings – create an image problem
19. We need more people downtown.
20. Library could be so much more.
21. Improved parking and ingress/egress to the historical area.
22. Downtown is underutilized – we need to define our target historical area. Then we should enforce the historical bylaws and work with area organizations to make a cultural-arts district.

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23. Outdoor dining would be nice.
24. Areas east of the Highway 4 stop need to be developed.
25. Bypass corridor around Lebanon for truck traffic along route 4 & 50 is needed to preserve downtown.
26. Implement Old Downtown Study.
27. Bus parking needed.
28. The University should have a stronger presence downtown – the City should encourage this.

Section 2.12 Future Residential Growth & Development

Participants were asked if Lebanon's housing stock offered options for all ages and price ranges, and if not what housing types are needed and where should they be located. Respondents offered the following recommendations and information.

1. **New single family homes needed.** Encourage the development of market-driven single family homes. Existing housing is OK, but most structures are old and too expensive for 1st time homeowners and seniors. They are also expensive and difficult to keep up. Northeast of town is a great area for future mixed residential development with some parkland as well as isolated areas for industrial development, provided they are screened and buffered adequately via parkland/woodlands and opens paces. Residential is recommended north of town.
2. **Assisting living & senior care needed.** Lebanon does well with providing senior housing, but senior care is lacking. An assisted care/living/recreation campus would do well. The duplexes at the Knolls are good, but they are not ADA accessible.
3. **Multi-family.** Lebanon has enough high density rentals. No more apartments, they do not fit in with the desired housing type and there is already an abundant supply of apartments.
4. **Community style garden apartments** near the University developed in a campus-like setting would be supportable.
5. **Eliminate substandard housing.** There are many houses that are abandoned and falling down that I know cost money to rid the city of, but are such an eyesore, safety concern and decrease the value of homes around them.
6. **Do not let older parts of town become college housing.** Don't allow cheap housing for students for to be built that can become section 8 in the future.
7. **No More Apartments and rental units.** No more! Restrict future development of apartments or the conversion of single-family homes to rental property. Impose fees, inspections and reporting/background checks/applications for any rental housing.
8. The University will continue buying homes as they become available – this should be regulated and limited to homes adjacent to the University.

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9. We need more new, quality mid-level housing to help attract young families.
10. Lebanon already has a diverse housing stock.
11. Assisted living facility needed.
12. Improved school (quality of education and new building).
13. Encourage first time home buyers (young families) to move to Lebanon.
14. Housing is needed to facilitate population growth which will help support businesses
15. Losing entry level houses – they are either occupied, used for businesses or retrofitted to the point they are no longer in the “entry-level” price range (under \$200K)
16. Development that includes homeowners fees for snow removal and lawn care etc. for older folks.
17. We need to get realtors to do a better job representing Lebanon
18. Housing is limited; we need more quality built single family homes. Apartments should be avoided.

Section 2.13 Future Annexation & Growth

1. **Encourage commercial growth Along Highway 4** – especially on the east side along the proposed Bypass.
2. **Annex as much property as possible** to make the bypass possible and protect the wetlands and open lands outside the City limits. The City needs to be proactive about growth and annex to the proposed bypass to accommodate future growth.
3. **Support the new SAFB entrance.** This could be an opportunity to pull in new housing at the east end of town.
4. **Annex to the east side of Rieder Road**
5. **Annex wherever necessary;** N, S, E & W, the SE quadrant, East to Rieder Road
6. If we expand, it should be north by the park and limited to single family housing only. No more apartments or subsidized housing developments.
7. The City should promote density downtown putting more residents in and around downtown would help promote businesses, make the town more walkable, and limit infrastructure costs, especially compared with the costs necessitated by expansion.

Section 2.14 Public Services

Participants were asked if Lebanon provides adequate public services and to identify improvements to the City’s infrastructure or public services that are of most concern. Participants have the following recommendations and observations:

1. **All teams believe the City does not have adequate public services.**
 - ✓ Infrastructure needs improvement; Better water and sewer needed

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- ✓ Old water and sewer lines and NW Treatment Plant.
 - ✓ Repair sidewalks and roads
 - ✓ More sidewalks (along both sides of all streets).
 - ✓ Improve look of town entrances.
 - ✓ We need to update our zoning code and policies relating to zoning.
 - ✓ Enforcement of laws.
 - ✓ Equal enforcement of ordinances for all wards.
 - ✓ Address Demolition of derelict properties.
 - ✓ Address leaf burning. It is a real health issue. People burn whenever and wherever and ordinance is never enforced.
 - ✓ Develop and implement a program to plant cedar trees would be nice.
 - ✓ Develop and implement a program to expeditiously demolish dangerous properties or properties that have outlived their usefulness and create a public nuisance.
2. **Better parks and recreation needed**
- ✓ Need a disc golf course in Horner Park.
 - ✓ Biking / pedestrian trails interconnecting throughout town needed.
 - ✓ An indoor aquatic center with Olympic size pool for University and LHS (Like the Korte Rec Center).
 - ✓ No green space, recreational areas, community center (YMCA), etc. The lack of a city park is a major weakness.
 - ✓ Lebanon needs a community center, teen center, senior center.
3. **Great Fire Department**
4. **Great Police Department-** But the officers are disconnected from the community. Police are friendly and caring. The police building is a disgrace- needs to be torn down. Need African American on the police force.
5. **Increase the confidence to invest:** We need to plan for and reinvest in the city with a purpose, as if it was hit by a natural disaster and everybody works together, money is directed to solve problems, people contribute in ways they never imagined towards a common goal.
6. The city library, city hall, fire department and police department buildings are grossly undersized.
7. Unless like-minded, progressive individuals are involved and dedicated to the task, another committee will be useless.
8. Stop giving special use permits to McK for single family housing- they are killing neighborhoods.

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9. The City needs publically owned parks, the parks in town are privately owned. Lebanon needs programs like O'Fallon and to make more use of the parks year round.
10. Work to eliminate gridlock on 50/4. Other towns smaller than Lebanon have traffic lights.
11. There is still also of work to be done on the sidewalks.
12. Need increased revenue to sustain city services, improvements, infrastructure upgrades. Increased revenue comes through aggressive economic development that brings new businesses, new residents. Out city government must stop resisting change- We can't afford it!!! And start stepping out boldly to promote goals of the comp plan. We also need to own up to the racial division in our city and start behaving like it is no longer ok.
13. **Several areas in town are abandoned and rundown.** These areas need to be cleaned up. Additionally the facility on route 4 next to the storage area has been under construction for over a year. This is a major eye sore.
14. Projects that are approved need to be constructed as permitted, no more cutting corners. Better planning/zoning and code enforcement needed.
15. Inconsistent enforcement of laws, codes, etc.
16. **Better property maintenance needed.** Strict and consistent code enforcement is recommended to address this issue.
17. **Put a street light in at the Route 4/ St. Louis intersection.** This should make it easier for pedestrians to cross and perhaps unlock the east side to development.
18. **Keep city services low.** Keep building codes simple as possible for builders and businesses alike.
19. Too much limitation on the kind of businesses "allowed" to operate on the brickstreets. Need more goods and services targeted to college aged students to keep them and their money in Lebanon. View campus population as a benefit and untapped market rather than an enemy.
20. The Mayor and City Plan Commission are doing an outstanding job, keep it up.
21. Youth programs need to be overhauled. Planning to utilize O'Fallon / Highland programs. More stop signs/ police on acorn way.
22. More background checks should be done on developers wishing to come to town to avoid shoddy construction and development that have gone up recently. Lebanon needs better quality control in compliance and zoning. – Hire a qualified enforcer – instead of using a nice old volunteer to make people comply with our ordinances.
23. The City should form a task force to help implement the bypass and promote Lebanon. The bypass is desperately needed to relive traffic, divert heavy trucks, accommodate more housing, create economic development opportunities and increase higher property values.

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24. We are headed in the wrong direction with regard to code enforcement. Emphasis must be to assist the people that live here.
25. It is hard to make a message heard unless you know someone who is willing to help. (good ole boys club mentality)
26. **Make Lebanon walkable & biker friendly.**
27. **Invest in pedestrian & bike enhancements.** Retrofit the city's existing streets and sidewalks to make them more walkable, safe and attractive.
28. **Create more bike trails throughout town.** A bike route along West McAllister Street (east-west), North Madison Street (north-south) w/ cross walk at new library/fire station site. Create a new N/S bikeway. Consider a route near Huddle House onto Mascoutah.
29. **Coordinate trail and bike access efforts with the Ridge Prairie Trailhead Initiative (RPTI).**
30. Need a sidewalk on the north side of College Road all the way to McKendree West Apartments.
31. Require bike routes with any improvements (Complete Streets).
32. Need to get traffic away from St. Louis Street for pedestrian safety.
33. Bike Trails would be great.
34. Install new sidewalks as needed, starting downtown.
35. Sidewalks are in shambles.
36. Lack of adequate street lighting – discourages walkers.
37. Trails / Pedestrian-ways are recommended in the following locations:
38. Fix what we have. Maintain what exists now! You can't even walk most of the sidewalks in town without tripping. Take care of what we have.
39. New School.
40. Pearl St.
41. Alton Street
42. Along all existing City streets and schools.
43. True Value Drive,
44. Sidewalks are needed everywhere.
45. Bike paths - Belleville St. to link with path west to O'Fallon and West to 50. The City should allow the funding for the bike project.
46. Repair existing sidewalks.

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47. We don't need bike paths. Bike paths are a luxury to worry about when everything else is fixed and only used by a limited population.
48. North Town – green space, street lights and a stop to get in and off the street.
49. A bike path would be good if it connected residents with nature/fields.
50. Everywhere – for young mothers and seniors.
51. Incorporate with all new construction.
52. Invest in aging infrastructure
53. Develop a stormwater drainage plan
54. Water runoff to 50 needs to be addressed.
55. There is support to link up to Metro-Link

Section 2.15 Communication & Partnerships

Participants were asked what can be done to improve communication, collaboration and empowerment throughout the community for the purpose of improving the quality of life and vitality of Lebanon. Respondents offered the following observations and recommendations:

1. Conduct Town Hall meetings run by the community
2. More of a welcoming attitude for new students is needed.
3. Encourage collaboration among property owners near town to encourage selling / swapping property.
4. Organizations need to pay attention to community calendar so their dinners don't fall on the same days.
5. SAFB- The city must do a better job recruiting families from SAFB.
6. There are several groups that must learn to work together, Retired military, active military, various ranked military, various races and various income and education levels.
7. The old-timers run the show. They don't accept outsiders. They are great at honoring our past, but this in part is holding Lebanon back.
8. Insist on citizen participation.
9. **Challenge residents and City Officials.** Empower them, engage them, and get folks excited. Ask the following questions and show that you care and that their voice matters:
 - ✓ Describe the Lebanon you would like to see in the future?
 - ✓ What can you do to make that future a reality? What can the City do?
 - ✓ What's the City's role within the community?

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- ✓ What can property owners, residents, students, elected officials, business owners, McKendree University and the many churches and organizations in town do to make Lebanon a better place to live, play and work?

Vision

Section 2.16 LEBANON'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Throughout the public engagement process, participants were asked to describe their vision for the future of Lebanon. The following is a summary of the responses.

1. **“Progress with Tradition”**. Honor our past, but don't be tied to it. Too much focus on Dickens. According to several respondents; “That one night stand is holding us back from telling many other stories Lebanon has to offer such as Pre-civil war history, one of the first schools to be integrated, etc.”
 - ✓ A family oriented town with green space for children to play, great schools, not a lot of traffic and low crime.
 - ✓ Small, quiet community that is sustainable on its own, with its own police, parks, walkways, tax base, and infrastructure for residents to live and walk freely about without fear of crime and traffic problems.
 - ✓ Offer amenities and services that cater to all age ranges from young children to young adults, newlyweds, folks in mid-life, and retirees.
 - ✓ Remain middle-class residential.
 - ✓ Remain a community based on family values and a place where couples can raise their children and then grow old together.
 - ✓ Quiet neighborhoods.
 - ✓ Small town atmosphere near the big city.
 - ✓ A great place to live with increasing property values, better streets and sidewalks creating safe places to walk.
2. **Improve the general appearance of the City.**
 - ✓ Better upkeep of streets and sidewalks.
 - ✓ Improved drainage along Highway 4 and up to Highway 50 (west)
 - ✓ Deal with blight on East St. Louis Street (change name?)
 - ✓ Better, well maintained roads and sidewalks
3. **Better quality and mix of businesses**

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- ✓ Bring in other types of businesses (retail stores, better grocery, bakery, clothing stores for college and high school students- t-shirts, sportswear, logo embroidery, etc.)
 - ✓ Bass Pro / Cabalas / Gander Mountain
 - ✓ Longer businesses hours.
 - ✓ Business development on 50 south of town and Belleville Street.
 - ✓ Beautiful roads, trails, sidewalks, landscaping and side streets.
 - ✓ New grocery store
- 4. Walkable neighborhoods.**
- ✓ Improved pedestrian access.
 - ✓ More bicycle lanes and provisions for bikes and pedestrians (bike racks, benches, etc.)
 - ✓ Better sidewalks/paths West to Main Campus.
 - ✓ Better ways to get in and out of town safely when biking or walking.
 - ✓ Enforce safe driving – too many speeding cars in neighborhoods.
 - ✓ A Bike trail, paths and better accessibility for non-motorized modes of travel would be great for the City.
- 5. Increase revenue collection to fund public improvements and revitalization efforts**
- ✓ Attract more tax-generating businesses.
 - ✓ Improve shopping (retail quality and selection) to encourage people to shop in town and bring dollars to Lebanon.
- 6. Preserve historic nature of the town.**
- ✓ Downtown stays “downtownish”.
 - ✓ Increase parking.
- 7. Better Traffic Circulation**
- ✓ Improve traffic on 4 & 50
 - ✓ Install 4 & 50 Bypass around Lebanon.
- 8. Better Marketing and Promotion of Lebanon’s Strengths**
- ✓ Maintain and promote Lebanon’s small town atmosphere, small class size and diverse population.
 - ✓ Create an Identity for Lebanon.

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- ✓ Invest in marketing efforts to promote the Mermaid, Emerald Mounds and City Museum. Capitalize on Emerald Mounds.
- ✓ Rebrand the City. Create a motto relating to history, art and education. Consider the flowing motto: Lebanon: *City of Arts and Entertainment and Independent Living*.

9. Increased utilization of area parks and open spaces

- ✓ Enhance wetlands. Divert water back to the swamp and create a bike path / conservation area.
- ✓ Parks need to be easier to use/access.
- ✓ Lebanon needs a Rec Center (Sportsplex, splash parks). A new pool would be great.
- ✓ Make our parks more user friendly.

10. More salaried jobs with benefits.

- ✓ Recruit development that improves our socio-economic level.
- ✓ Attract more jobs.

11. Embrace our relationship with McKendree

- ✓ To make the University more competitive and take care of student needs, McKendree spent \$40 million on renovations to the campus including major renovations to the library and a new rec center.
- ✓ Encourage McKendree to build a parking garage.

12. Controlled managed growth – in moderation

- ✓ Need to attract younger people and young families.
- ✓ Recruit more families, housing, and businesses simultaneously.
- ✓ Encourage the development of assisted living to retain our seniors.