

Key Takeaways

Phase 1 Public Engagement Results Analysis

August 16, 2022

The first phase of the Frankfort - Franklin County Comprehensive Plan process included multiple feedback opportunities and outreach efforts between June and August 2022. This included an online survey and two open house events. The Open house events included extensive public discussion with staff and consultants and various interactive exercises such as ranking goals and policies suitability for the city and county, a priorities budgeting activity, and an online polling exercise.

Engagement in this phase was constructed to encourage feedback on all aspects of the community in order to gauge key concerns, needs, and demands. It resulted in successful engagement with over 80 community members attending the Open House events and 391 total responses on the online survey. All input provided through the various mediums were collected and analyzed to identify key themes and priorities that resonate consistently in the community voice. Findings from the analysis are presented in the following pages.

Please Note:

- Mentimeter Exercise (live polling) – **81 total participants**
- Priority Budgeting Exercise – **approx. 81 participants**
- Boards and Mapping Activities – **approx. 81 participants**
- Online Survey – **391 responses**

41% of survey takers **live** in the Frankfort/Franklin County area

30% of survey takers **play** in the Frankfort/Franklin County area

29% of survey takers **work** in the Frankfort/Franklin County area



General Takeaways

- **Economic Development, Rural Character Preservation** and **Quality of life** in the city and County are the top three priorities for the future of the region.
- Results show specific interest in **protection of agricultural, environmentally sensitive, and culturally sensitive lands** without compromising on development interests that bring economic value to the community (industry, distilleries, etc.).
- There is a desire to **preserve and protect local historic character and identity** in specific areas such as established settlements (hamlets), Peaks Mill, Benson valley, Bellepointe, and Downtown and South Frankfort neighborhoods.
- Survey takers voice a **need for structured community facilities** such as an indoor pool, convention center, and recreational areas to support social activities throughout the year.
- The local **community takes pride in** Frankfort/Franklin County's **uniqueness** through accessible location, pastoral beauty, historic charm, significant government presence, bourbon tourism, downtown vibrancy, engaged residents, and a hometown feel.
- There is an identified need to continue **highlighting and improving upon Downtown Frankfort's vitality, intensity, and success.**
- There is a resonant **demand for entertainment opportunities, dining options, hospitality services, and recreational amenities** within the city.
- Recurring **concerns about stagnancy and being outdated** highlight the obstacles holding the area back from being competitive with surrounding communities such as Lexington and Louisville.



- Protecting local ecology and celebrating the Kentucky River and Elkhorn Creek and their tributaries through establishing **water access and recreational opportunities** to encourage nature recreation tourism.
- Survey responses emphasize on the vitality of **updating housing stock and improving park facilities** to elevate quality of life in the region.
- Measures to **improve infrastructure** to provide better connectivity, road safety, access to all, equitable accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists, and convenient parking are vital.

Growth and Development Takeaways

- **Most important considerations for Growth and Development are:**
 - Promoting tourism (61%)
 - Supporting local businesses (59%)
 - Diverse job creation (52%)
- **Curbing sprawl is a key priority** both in the city (24 responses) and county (21 responses).
- **Strategic infill and redevelopment in underutilized areas (44%)** and expanding **hospitality services (26%)** are other desired actions. **Infill and redevelopment can be prioritized within the city (32 responses)** to maximize rural character and environmental preservation.
- **Entertainment, dining, and other recreational uses need to be prioritized** (survey comments).
- A **healthy mix of uses** that support commercial, restaurants, parks, residential, and recreational uses are encouraged in the city (21 responses).



- **Commercial and industrial uses can be expanded** (without encroaching upon protected rural lands) in both the city and county with increased priority outside the city (**16 responses within city, and 21 responses for development in county**).
- Responses show an inclination to **promote bourbon tourism** that are consumer focused both in the city (**17 responses**) and county (**15 responses**).
- **Updating housing stock** while maintaining affordability in the area is required (*survey comments takeaway*). **Expansion and diversification of housing types should be prioritized in the city (23 responses)**.
- **There is the need for a grocery store downtown** along with healthy and ethnically diverse food options within the city is emphasized (*survey comments*).

Natural and Cultural Resource Takeaways

- **Key areas for Natural and Cultural Resources include:**
 - Kentucky River Corridor (**76%**)
 - Elkhorn Creek Corridor (**76%**)
 - Parks, Hillside and Wooded areas (**66%**)
- There is **potential to celebrate natural preserves and riparian corridors** in the city and county (**53 responses**).
- **Opportunities for recreation, preservation, and connectivity** along the Kentucky River corridor should be **identified and developed (32 responses)**.
- There is community desire to **preserve and protect rural character (40%) and agricultural lands (44%)** from encroaching development that is incompatible with the low density of the existing areas. Responses show that the community wants to **limit sprawl to protect agricultural lands** in the county (**28 responses**).



- **Results indicate community resistance to industrial expansion into rural areas** such as Peaks Mill (*survey comments*). Other areas to be protected include Benson Creek corridor and Benson Valley.
- Survey comments show interest in **preserving prime agricultural lands, indigenous vegetation, and sensitive hillsides**.
- Responses also show concern about **over-protection and encumberment of growth potential** in the city and county. There is a need to **balance preservation and new developmental interests** in the future (*survey comments*).
- There is also considerable interest shown in **exploring sustainable energy technologies (45 responses)** and to implement such strategies within the region.
- The responses indicate an interest in studying the local **tree canopy and developing strategies for improvement** (*map comments*).

Identity and Character Takeaways

- The community **identifies strongly with the local historic character and government significance** that makes Frankfort/ Franklin County unique (*survey comments*).
- **The protection of historic buildings and settlements** such as downtown and county hamlets **should be prioritized (32 responses)**. Key **historic hamlets** in the county should be identified and **protected** from encroachment of other development (**43%**).
- There is resonant interest in investing efforts for **cleaning up and presenting aesthetically pleasing visuals in the neighborhoods and commercial areas** of the city and county through landscaping, beautification efforts, etc. (*survey comments*).
- **Pedestrian walkability and beautification efforts** with public art and landscaping that can support commercial interests and the city's unique brand in downtown are desired in the city (**33 responses**).



Community Facility and Service Takeaways

- **Improvements and maintenance of existing parks** is highly desired (64%).
- Results from the public events show that there is local **demand for more park facilities** such as **play and gathering spaces (12 responses)**, and a variety of **outdoor recreation opportunities** like **water activities (13)**, **hiking trails (8)**, **shared bike ped paths (8)**, and **boat tours (5)**.
- **River recreation and development is a key priority**, especially within the city limits (*survey comments*). There is high demand for identifying opportunities to create new access, better connectivity and improve existing landings along the Kentucky River in downtown.
- **A dog park, a water park, and sports facilities** are other suggestions for expansion of park amenities in the future (*boards comment*).
- There is also a **demand for better restrooms and ADA accessibility** in local parks and recreational facilities (*boards comment*).
- **A Civic/ Convention Center** that can support events, conferences, weddings, and other social gatherings is desired.
- **It is imperative to continue to maintain and improve our schools** (*Survey comments*).
- There is demand for community facilities such as **an indoor pool and other indoor recreational facilities** that the community can utilize throughout the year regardless of weather conditions (*survey comments*).
- **Events and programming that can attract and serve a diverse resident base is needed.** Family friendly entertainment opportunities, and spaces where youth and older residents can enjoy without a high cost associated with it should be encouraged (*survey comments*).



- **Other community suggestions include:**
 - Duckers Golf Course should become a public course to support Lakeview Park
 - Install pocket parks and other parks in lower income neighborhoods of the city
 - Protect against invasive species
 - Preserve creeks from development and provide recreational opportunities through water access, bike/walk paths along creek, etc.
 - Improve accessibility to public parks such as Leslie Morris

Transportation and Infrastructure Takeaways

- **Public input results show that traffic is currently not an issue in the city or county. However, roadway improvements are still desired in the area.**
- The community identifies **Infrastructure Maintenance** as the highest priority within this focus topic (54%).
- Other key concerns include **Safety on public and neighborhood streets (43%)** and **Streetscape improvements in Downtown (39%)**.
- **Improving road infrastructure** in areas such as new industrial park, Millville Road, Bellepointe and Holmes St among others is desired (*survey comments*).
- **Better access management and new gateways** with landscaping and branding along US60, US127 and East Main Street is proposed (*Survey comments*).
- **Parking (36%) along with convenient vehicular circulation (32%)** is an important factor that needs to be addressed within the city (*survey comments*). **The Study and improvement of parking conditions**, especially in downtown is further emphasized in public discussion and comment (*survey comments*).



- **There are divided opinions regarding more pedestrian bridges in Downtown.** This topic will need further discussion moving forward.
- Responses highlight a need to **strengthen pedestrian connectivity** through identifying and closing gaps in sidewalk infrastructure (*Boards activity and Survey comments*).
- **Demand for public transit is low** in the city and county for the attendees of the in-person meetings, with responses indicating that current transit services are unreliable (*One response for bus transit*).
- **The community prefers to bike for leisure rather than bike to work** because of lack of safe infrastructure and convenient connections.
- There is **the need for sanitary and water infrastructure improvements in the county (10 responses)**. The Peaks Mill water infrastructure can be improved upon.
- **Other suggestions from survey respondents include:**
 - Expand walkability throughout city
 - Emphasize ADA accessibility
 - Install Bike lanes
 - Explore Rails to Trails programs
 - Create accessible and sheltered bus stops
 - Encourage more frequent and long hours of bus transit (especially to Lexington and Louisville)
 - Install infrastructure to encourage and support electric vehicle use
 - Look into installing commuter trains and networks

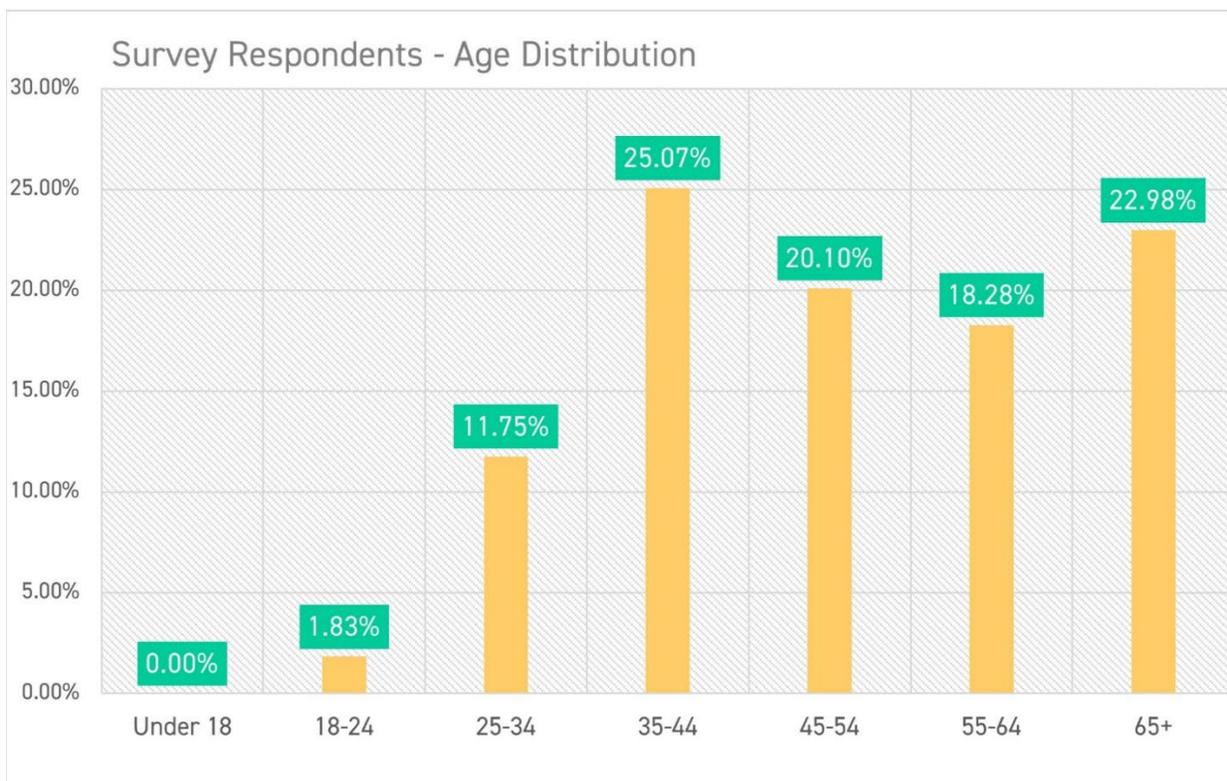


Demographic Summary of Survey Participants

The online survey asked participants to provide information on where they live, their age, and their race. This information is used to determine if we received a good representation of residents and stakeholders or if we need to increase our engagement efforts with certain groups of people or in certain locations.

Age Distribution

The age distribution of the survey participants was varied and included individuals in every age range (except for under 18). **The majority of participants range in age from 25 to 64.** This age range made up 75% of the total, followed by people 65 years old and up which made up 23% of the total, and under 24 years old with the smallest at 2% of the total. Moving forward, increased efforts should be made to engage young people.



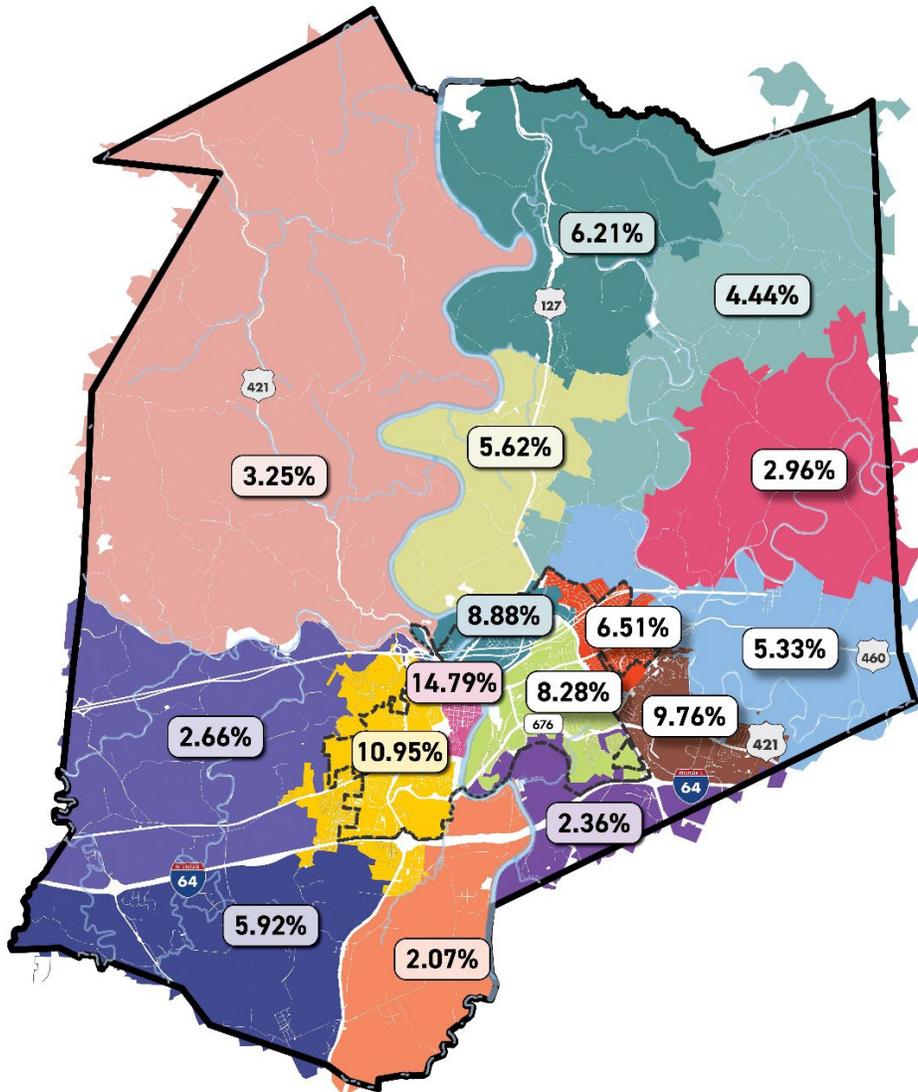
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Location Distribution

The survey participants live throughout the city and county, with **representation from each of the 16 neighborhoods** that were identified in the survey. The biggest concentration is within the city boundaries, with lesser representation in the county. This is consistent, though, with the residential growth patterns of the city and county.



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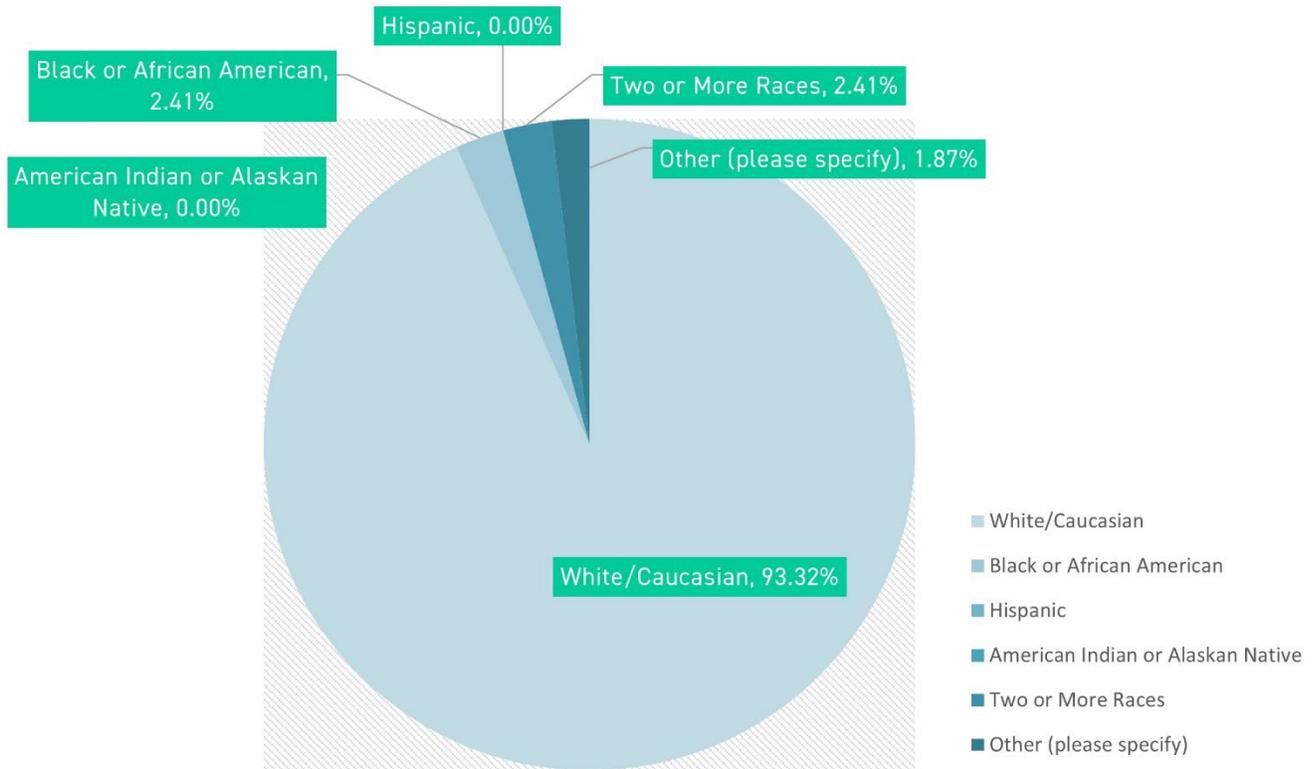
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Ethnicity Distribution

The identified ethnicity of the **survey participants was overwhelmingly white/Caucasian** (93.32%). This population is overrepresented in the survey results as the total number of city and county residents is 81% white. Moving forward, increased efforts to engage non-white individuals is necessary to ensure proper representation.

Survey Respondents- Ethnicity Distribution



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