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Memorandum

Date: February 26, 2016
To: City of Benton
From: Steve Bzomowski, Alta Planning + Design
Re: **Vision and Goals**

Overview

In developing goals and a vision statement for this plan, it is essential to examine goals and visioning provided in the comprehensive plan and by the general public. This memo summarizes this guidance and provides specific goals and a vision statement for the bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Guidance from the City of Benton Comprehensive Plan

The City of Benton Comprehensive Plan is the guiding document for future growth and development. The Comprehensive Plan's vision statement is shown below, with bolded sections highlighting specific impacts to this study:

*"Benton is Saline County's central city and central Arkansas' gateway to the Southwest. As Benton grows and develops it can **enhance its livability** and become central Arkansas' premier suburban community by developing **unique public spaces**, such as its **historic downtown and recreational facilities along the Saline River**. **Enhancing the aesthetic appeal and livability of the built environment will reinforce Benton's attractive qualities, help create a sense of place and strengthen community identity**. Meaningful citizen input, resource preservation, great neighborhoods, safe environments, exemplary community facilities, and **multimodal mobility** are all integral to accomplishing this vision."*

Specific Transportation objectives in the Comprehensive Plan impacting this study include:

*"**Objective 6.3:** Encourage local street, pedestrian and bikeway connections between neighborhoods in order to reduce indirect travel and traffic congestion on arterial roadways and enhance safety for non-motorized modes of transportation."*

*"**Objective 6.5:** Require construction and rehabilitation of accessible pedestrian facilities wherever needed and feasible, such as in the vicinity of schools and colleges, stadiums, public parks, tourist attractions, bus stops, medical facilities, signalized intersections, transit oriented developments, commercial areas, shopping centers, central business district, churches, bridges, public buildings, mixed-use/multi-use areas, moderate to high density areas, traditional neighborhoods, and streets connecting pedestrian activity areas."*

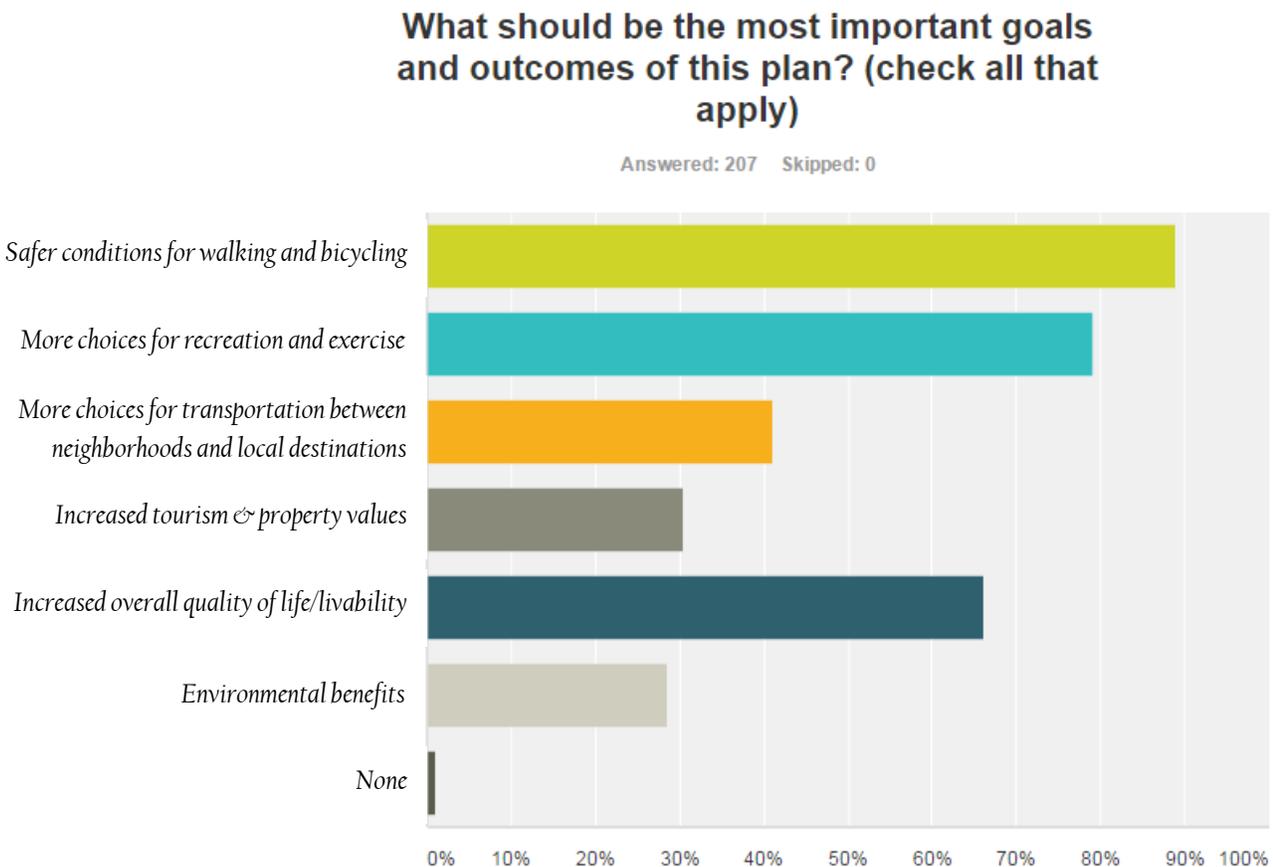
“Objective 6.6 Encourage the creation of bikeways, both on-road and off-road.”

“Objective 6.7: Encourage the linking of public parks, schools, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and other destinations in the planning area with a network of multi-use trails for pedestrians and bicyclists, including trails buffering riparian habitat along the Saline River and other streams.”

“Objective 6.II: Provide for a multi-modal transportation system that effectively supports economic growth and guides land development in concert with the land use and community facilities plans.”

Guidance from Public Outreach

At the time of this memorandum during this planning process, over 200 surveys had been completed by the general public. Question 3 from the survey asks “What should be the most important goals and outcomes of this plan?” The responses are summarized in the graph below:



Responses from the survey, meetings with local stakeholders such as UALR Benton, City of Benton Public Schools, Saline Memorial Health Foundation, and City of Benton leadership have reflected similar desires for multiple benefits inherent in active communities.

Recommended Goals

Goals for this plan focus on multiple benefits related to connectivity, safety, economy, walkability, health, recreation, and transportation. Specifically, this plan should:

- Improve Connectivity for:
 - Neighborhoods
 - Parks
 - Schools
 - Downtown
 - Saline River access
 - Southwest Trail corridor
 - I-30 crossings
 - Railroad crossings
 - Neighboring communities
- Improve Safety
- Enhance the Economy
- Improve community Health
- Strengthen Recreation opportunities
- Improve Transportation Efficiency

Recommended Vision Statement

Based on the goals discussed with the City of Benton, stemming from the Comprehensive Plan, public input, and discussions with the Steering Committee, the draft vision statement developed for this plan emphasizes essential components for a high quality of life in the City of Benton.

“The City of Benton is a walkable, bikable community whose residents and visitors enjoy a high quality of life and healthy living opportunities. A connected network of safe sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways enrich the sense of community, strengthen economic vitality, provide recreational opportunities, enhance the transportation system and connect neighbors to each other.”