



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2018-0190, **Version:** 1

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### **WELCOMING FAYETTEVILLE PLAN:**

#### **A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE WELCOMING FAYETTEVILLE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, in the Fall of 2016, Mayor Jordan was first introduced to the Welcoming City concept as a way to harness and foster the significant economic impact of new Americans in the region; and

**WHEREAS**, beyond the economic impact, there is value in the cultural diversity that new Americans bring to our school and workplaces including better problem-solving and critical thinking skills; and

**WHEREAS**, Mayor Jordan announced in his 2017 State of the City Address his intention to create a Welcoming Plan for the City of Fayetteville; and

**WHEREAS**, throughout 2017, City staff met with stakeholders in various sectors and held multiple public input sessions to identify existing conditions, barriers, and areas to improve in order to present 25 recommendations for action in three categories - The Community, The Economic Impact, and The Future; and

**WHEREAS**, adopting and implementing the Welcoming Fayetteville Plan is a natural extension of Fayetteville's values and hospitality and serves as a way to memorialize where we've been and where we are going as a diverse university City that brings cultures together.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS:**

Section 1: That the City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas hereby approves and adopts the Welcoming Fayetteville Plan, a copy of which is attached to this Resolution.



**THE WELCOMING  
FAYETTEVILLE PLAN**  
FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE,  
INTEGRATED COMMUNITY

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## “MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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*I've always believed in an open heart, open door and open mind, and I see this plan as an extension of those values. When new Americans arrive in Fayetteville, they face barriers that are unique and, sometimes, complicated. It's up to us to evaluate and ask ourselves, "Are we really doing everything we can to make Fayetteville a place that's easy for **everyone** to call home?" Most of all, no matter the color of your skin, where you're from, who you love, or your religious beliefs, know that we welcome you here in Fayetteville. Today and every day.*

**LIONELD JORDAN**  
Mayor, City of Fayetteville





# ***WELCOME***

[wel-kuh m] verb

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: to greet (someone) in a warm and friendly manner

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## INTRODUCTION

**Take a walk around the downtown square during a Saturday farmers' market, or a stroll through campus or the public library, and you'll see Fayetteville's heart: a passionate community that cares deeply about equality, involvement, and creating a strong sense of place.**

As a natural extension of Fayetteville's values and hospitality, the City has created a deliberate plan to welcome new Americans to our community. We are proud of this City's diversity and distinctiveness, and we think it's time to encourage growth through intentional efforts that support integration and inclusion. When new Americans arrive in our City, we want them to do more than just survive – we want to see them thrive and flourish in our community and in their neighborhoods. And we want to do this to create increasing diversity in our community.

Over the last decade, the City of Fayetteville has made great strides in its efforts to be a City for all people. Under the leadership of Mayor Lioneld Jordan, the City regularly acknowledges and celebrates women, LGBT people, indigenous people, immigrant heritage, black history, and many others. In 2015, the City passed a civil rights ordinance, which extends federal and state protections regarding discrimination to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens and visitors.

While Fayetteville's foreign-born population is small compared to that of the metro area, it plays an important role in the region's diversity as the home to the University of Arkansas. The City's foreign-born population sits at 7.1 percent, according to the 2016 American Community Survey, and we see this fact as an opportunity for significant growth in the coming years.

This welcoming plan outlines 25 recommendations for action in three categories based on research done in the region and state, discussions with dozens of stakeholders in key sectors, an online survey, and five public input sessions with community members from all backgrounds. These recommendations address areas for improvement in the following sectors:

- Learning, teaching, education
- Community, culture, arts
- Health, transportation, housing
- Government and policy
- Business and economic development

## THE WHY

It was in the fall of 2016 that Mayor Jordan was first introduced to the Welcoming City concept. He and other Northwest Arkansas mayors met with the Northwest Arkansas Council to discuss a report on the economic impact of new Americans in the region, *Global Talent: The Economic Engine of Northwest Arkansas*. The study highlights how new Americans make significant contributions to the economy “by starting new businesses that create local jobs, supporting the workforce of the region’s key industries, buying homes, and paying taxes.”<sup>1</sup> Also in late 2016, Canopy NWA - the region’s nonprofit agency for refugee resettlement and support - welcomed its first family.

After that initial meeting, the group convened again to discuss the opportunity for Northwest Arkansas municipalities, chambers of commerce, and stakeholders to work together on a larger, regional welcoming effort. In June 2017, the Northwest Arkansas Council established WelcomeNWA, which is working to develop a plan to advance inclusion of all members of the regional community.

Fayetteville has joined Welcoming America, the national organization that leads these efforts, as the first designated Welcoming City in Arkansas. More than 100 local governments and nonprofit organizations around the country have joined the Welcoming America network. Fayetteville is also working with the WelcomeNWA office on the regional inclusion effort. The Northwest Arkansas collaboration will put Arkansas in the spotlight at a national level, demonstrating Fayetteville and other communities are leaders in this effort.

We know there’s a significant positive economic impact when new Americans are fully integrated and included in the communities in which they live and work, but these efforts also go beyond developing the economy. There is value in the cultural diversity that new Americans bring to our schools and our workplaces. We all benefit from engaging conversations and experiences with people whose backgrounds differ from ours, and this leads to better problem solving skills, more open minds, and the ability “to navigate adulthood in an increasingly diverse society - a skill that employers value.”<sup>2</sup>

Ultimately, these efforts help “us work together to make sure that all of us - white, black, Christian, Muslim, or any faith - are part of making a community a great place to live. By giving each person an equal opportunity to contribute, it makes the entire community stronger.”<sup>3</sup>

Census data reveal that the Northwest Arkansas region has experienced significant demographic changes in recent decades. In 2000, 6.9 percent of the region’s population was foreign-born. Today, 11.2 percent of the region is foreign-born. Additionally, in 1990, nearly 96 percent of the population was white and 1.3 percent was Hispanic/Latino.<sup>4</sup> Today, 73 percent of the population is white and 16 percent is Hispanic/Latino.<sup>5</sup> Projections show the region’s population becoming even more diverse in coming years.

Simply put: We are growing and changing. Most of all, we are embracing these changes with intention.

## PUBLIC INPUT

**Language** was noted by survey respondents as the **top barrier** for new Americans in Fayetteville

*Five public input sessions were held at the:*

**FARMERS MARKET**

**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**HISPANIC**

**HERITAGE**

**FESTIVAL**

**CITY HALL LOBBY**

**UNIVERSITY**

**OF ARKANSAS**

**STUDENT UNION**

**COURTYARD**



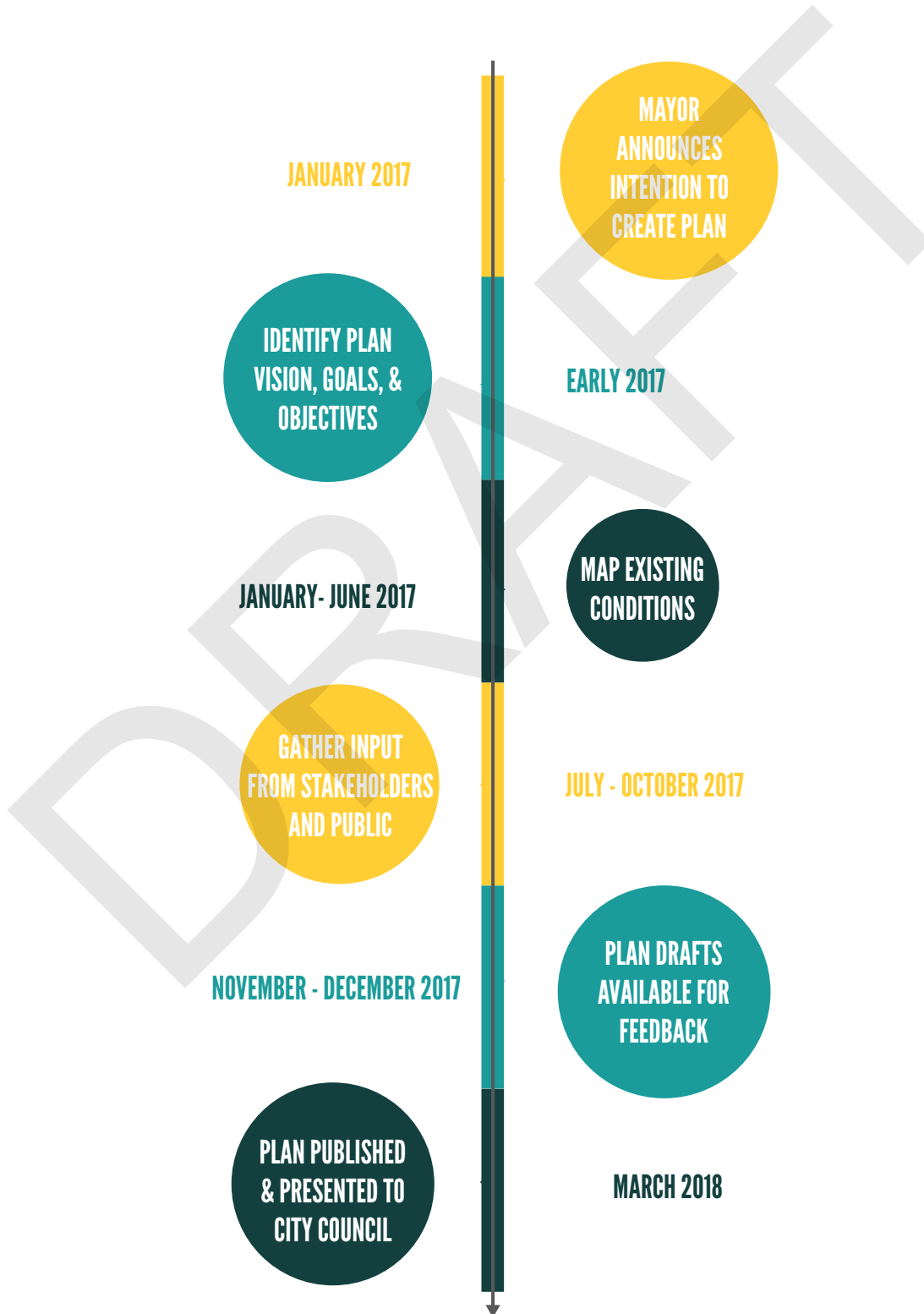
When asked in which sectors they would like to see resources invested, the public prioritized **education, housing, transportation & healthcare**

**Transportation & affordable housing** were frequently mentioned as **top barriers** by survey respondents

*More than 200 people turned out at the in-person sessions, and the online survey, which was distributed in English and Spanish, received a combined 412 responses, with 224 completing the survey*

## DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

The majority of this plan was developed over the course of 2017 with the help of a great number of experts, stakeholders, community members, and City staff.







## FRAMEWORK

The recommendations in this plan are split into three categories, noted below. Within each of these categories, recommendations fall into one or more of the sectors listed to the right. This list was guided by the sector checklist in Welcoming America's Community Planning Process Guide.

### THE COMMUNITY

A successful community creates a sense of belonging. It embraces and shifts with its changing population. It celebrates diversity through avenues that are accessible to everyone. A community breaks down barriers and makes everyday life easier.

### THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

As seen in recent reports, the economic impact of new Americans on our region is undeniable. This means more jobs, more contributions, and a more diverse and well-educated working population.

### THE FUTURE

The future is our youth and our overall education system. The future means thinking ahead and building today for a better tomorrow. The future demands patience, nurturing and open ears.



**LEARNING, TEACHING  
& EDUCATION**



**COMMUNITY,  
CULTURE & ARTS**



**HEALTH,  
TRANSPORTATION  
& HOUSING**



**BUSINESS &  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**



**GOVERNMENT  
& POLICY**

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## OUR MISSION

**TO CREATE A PLAN FOCUSED ON**  
THE INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION  
**OF NEW AMERICANS**  
**IN OUR COMMUNITY,**  
*SO THAT WE CAN HELP*  
**BREAK DOWN BARRIERS**  
**A N D M A K E**  
**EVERYDAY LIFE EASIER**  
**FOR THOSE WHO ARE NEW TO**  
OUR COUNTRY AND OUR COMMUNITY.

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## THE OUTCOMES

### **As a result of this plan, in the next 5 years we want to see...**

- ☐ ...an increase in Fayetteville's foreign-born population.
- ☐ ...more multilingual materials available in City government, local organizations, and from services providers.
- ☐ ...a diverse demographic participating in local government.
- ☐ ...strong, trusting relationships between new Americans and local government, communities, neighbors, service providers, and public safety departments.
- ☐ ...intentional, thoughtful approaches to programs that take into consideration all residents.
- ☐ ...Fayettevillians who are more educated about the value that new Americans and cultural diversity brings to our City.
- ☐ ...ongoing conversations between the City and organizations that frequently work with new Americans.
- ☐ ...efforts to attract and retain talent, including international students.
- ☐ ...increased access to housing and transportation services.



## IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

	THE COMMUNITY	THE ECONOMIC IMPACT	THE FUTURE
<b>SHORT TERM</b> 6 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR	<p>Explore barriers and encourage civic engagement for new Americans who wish to participate in boards, committees, commissions and other leadership positions</p> <p>Host and attend events to celebrate immigrant culture and heritage</p> <p>Create a chart that identifies the first steps to make when a non-English speaker makes contact with the City</p> <p>Create commercials, signs, and other marketing materials that promote Fayetteville's welcoming efforts</p> <p>Establish welcoming hubs to share information, offer classes, and serve as congregating spaces</p>	<p>Develop marketing plan to feature immigrant business success stories</p> <p>Create a welcoming business designation program</p>	<p>Ensure schools can connect new families with other services and resources in the community</p> <p>Create a course for adults to take an introduction to city government</p>
<b>MID TERM</b> 1 TO 2 YEARS	<p>Identify long-term funding solution for transit route expansions and ensure basic information, such as route maps, charts and apps, is multilingual</p> <p>Identify and evaluate existing health and social services directories</p> <p>Implement citywide cultural awareness training</p>	<p>Task entrepreneurial resource providers to offer comprehensive support for immigrant-owned startup companies</p> <p>Identify community mentors to pair with immigrant entrepreneurs</p> <p>Expand immigrant-friendly job fairs</p>	<p>Work with Fayetteville Public Schools to host financial literacy classes for immigrant parents</p> <p>Support multilingual parental engagement and identify opportunities to expand child care and pre-K programs</p> <p>Explore opportunities to expand English as a Second Language (ESL) programs</p> <p>Create an independently managed international student ambassador program</p>
<b>LONG TERM</b> 3 TO 5 YEARS	<p>Explore barriers to obtaining a driver's license</p> <p>Offer key documents and forms in other languages</p>	<p>Focus on workforce development and ensure access to training resources</p> <p>Continue to create opportunities for affordable housing</p> <p>Consider registering as an E-Verified employer</p>	<p>Explore barriers for new Americans who have professional degrees/certifications that cannot be used in the United States</p>





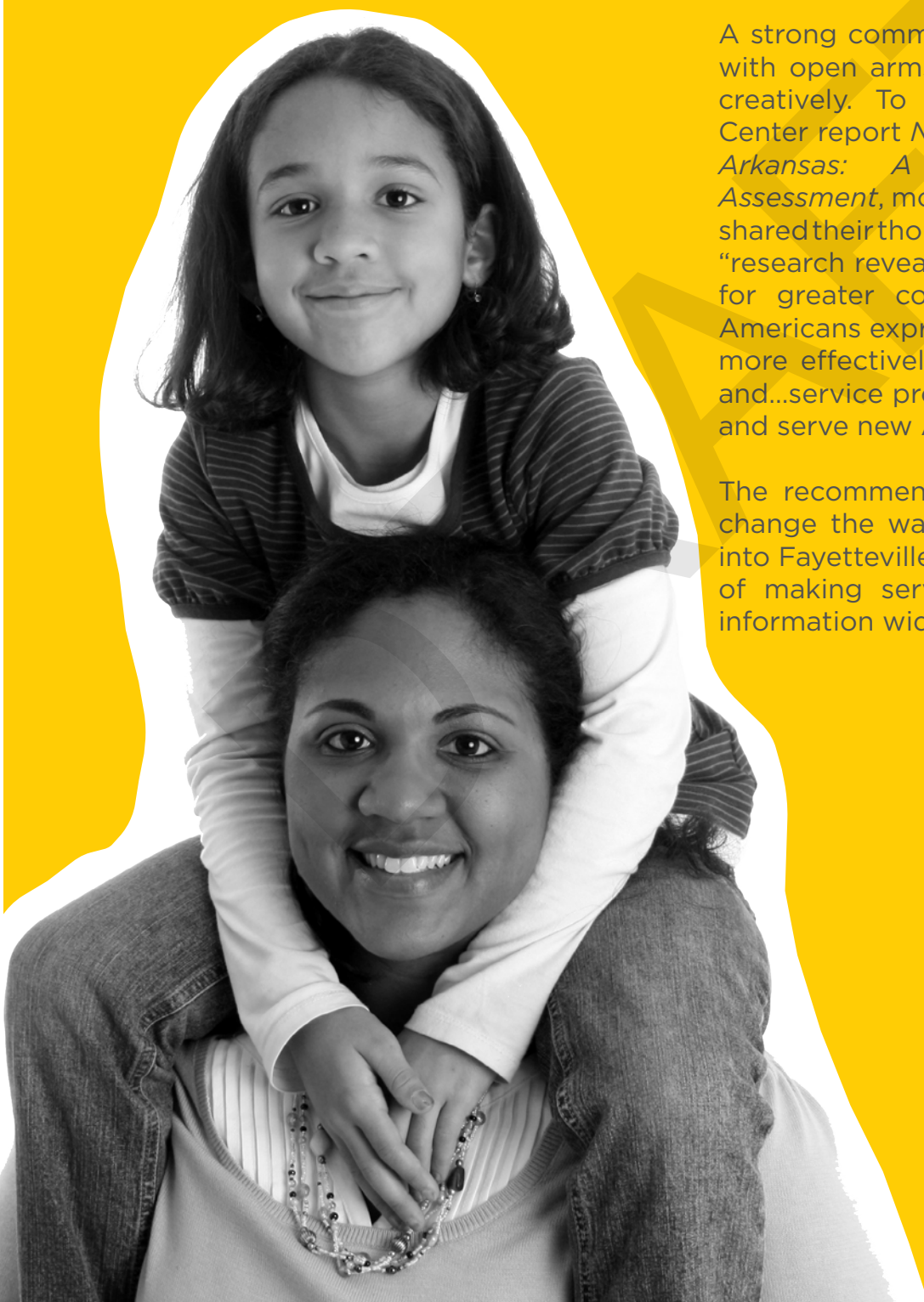
the  
community

## THE COMMUNITY: OVERVIEW

This plan would not be possible without the support of our strong welcoming community. When Fayettevillians care deeply about an initiative, they join together with a special determination, they spread the word, and they find resources.

A strong community is one that welcomes with open arms, listens closely and thinks creatively. To create the 2016 Cisneros Center report *New Americans in Northwest Arkansas: A Qualitative Community Assessment*, more than 300 new Americans shared their thoughts on life in the region. The “research reveals a widespread enthusiasm for greater community integration. New Americans express desires to communicate more effectively with their new neighbors and...service providers seek to better reach and serve new Americans.”<sup>6</sup>

The recommendations in this section will change the way new Americans integrate into Fayetteville’s community, with the goal of making services more accessible and information widely available.



## THE COMMUNITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Explore barriers and encourage civic engagement for new Americans who wish to participate in boards, committees, commissions and other leadership positions
2. Identify a long-term funding solution for transit route expansions and ensure basic information, such as route maps/charts, is multilingual
3. Explore barriers to obtaining a driver's license
4. Offer key documents and forms in other languages
5. Host and attend events to celebrate immigrant culture and heritage
6. Create a chart that identifies the first steps to make when a non-English speaker makes contact
7. Create commercials, signs, and other marketing materials that promote Fayetteville's welcoming efforts
8. Identify and evaluate existing health and social services directories
9. Implement citywide cultural awareness training
10. Establish welcoming hubs to share information, offer classes, and serve as congregating spaces

## THE COMMUNITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

### **1. Explore barriers and encourage civic engagement for new Americans who wish to participate in boards, committees, commissions and other leadership positions** SHORT TERM

The City of Fayetteville seeks to encourage new Americans to pursue leadership positions and join in making Fayetteville a City where all people can succeed regardless of their race, gender, or religious beliefs. Diverse local leadership is essential for well-rounded decision making. Studies have shown the positive effects of diversity and multiple perspectives in groups, such as innovation, creativity, and better problem solving.

The City will explore ways to enable new Americans to participate in boards, committees, and commissions by removing barriers they face related to citizenship requirements. Currently, Fayetteville City Code § 33.329 restricts appointments to “registered voters within the corporate limits of Fayetteville.” To be a registered voter, an individual must be a U.S. citizen. This restricts visa or green card holders who may have expertise in a certain field and care about the future of Fayetteville.

The City will consider amending this requirement for City-created advisory boards and commissions, including: Active Transportation Advisory Committee, Airport Board, Animal Services Advisory Board, Audit Committee, Civil Rights Commission, Environmental Action Committee, Fayetteville Arts Council, Keep Fayetteville Beautiful Committee, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Telecommunications Board, Town and Gown Advisory Committee, Urban Forestry Advisory Board, and Walton Arts Center Council, Inc. The City will also explore requirements for the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission and state-created boards.

If requirements are amended, City staff will identify and reach out to community organizations that can help advertise quarterly openings. The City’s Communications Department will also create educational brochures and flyers to encourage engagement.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, City Attorney’s Office



## THE COMMUNITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

### **2. Identify a long-term funding solution for transit route expansions and ensure basic information, such as route maps, charts and apps, is multilingual** MID TERM

Identified by the public and stakeholders as one of the top barriers for new Americans in Fayetteville, transit plays an important role in the lives of those new to the City. Transit is used to travel to school, job interviews, work, grocery stores, the library, parks and recreational venues, and more. In a 2015 survey, 25 percent of students, staff, and faculty traveling to the University of Arkansas used transit to get to campus.<sup>7</sup> The University of Arkansas recently completed a transportation master plan in which recommendations were made to reorganize routes, create bi-directional service and increase number of buses.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, the City of Fayetteville's new mobility plan makes recommendations about the future of transportation. Also in 2018, City administration and Ozark Regional Transit will evaluate route design, with a focus on changing routes based on a distance or place to routes based on ridership and frequency. This evaluation will take into account key areas that people want to go, to maximize the funding effectiveness and to establish the funding shortfalls.

As a financial supporter of both of Fayetteville's transit providers, the City will advocate for integrated route data in map applications. Ozark Regional Transit recently placed its data in Google Maps, but Razorback Transit has yet to make its route information available in a widely used map application. The City will work with Razorback Transit to explore the feasibility of putting route data in Google Maps, so that riders can plan efficient routes regardless of transit provider.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City administration, Development Services Department, Engineering Division, University of Arkansas, Ozark Regional Transit

### **3. Explore barriers to obtaining a driver's license** LONG TERM

In a City where nearly 90 percent of individuals use a car, truck, or van to get to work, the ability to obtain a driver's license is crucial. And while biking, walking, and transit conditions are constantly improving, living without a car and driver's license in Fayetteville can be difficult. A driver's license allows independence and the ability to get to and from work, school, and the amenities of daily life. The City of Fayetteville will explore barriers to obtaining a license, such as the availability of education resources and translations of the written drivers' test, and look for ways to work with the state and community organizations to improve the process.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration



## THE COMMUNITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4. Offer key documents and forms in other languages **LONG TERM**

To make communication with non-English speakers friendlier, City staff will identify and prioritize forms, policies, and other documents used most frequently by the public. Popular forms, such as the application for utility services, will be translated first. In recent years, the City migrated to a website platform that offers a translation tool, which supports numerous languages. However, PDF documents and online forms using a third-party system lack this ability. This initiative coincides with the City's recent efforts to modernize its forms, simplify processes, eliminate technical jargon, and consider the devices the public uses to access City resources. As the City's technology evolves, it will also explore the possibility of offering utility bills in more than one language. This initiative serves as a simple, but impactful way to ensure those who aren't yet proficient in English have equitable access to key information offered by the City.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, Information Technology Department

### 5. Host and attend events to celebrate immigrant culture and heritage **SHORT TERM**

The Mayor will recognize and celebrate immigrant culture and heritage, emphasizing its importance in making us a stronger City. Every September, cities across the country join Welcoming America in celebrating Welcoming Week as a way to change the rhetoric, shape the immigrant experience, and affirm values. Cities are encouraged to host festivals, volunteer projects, or classes that bring native- and foreign-born communities together. The City of Fayetteville will celebrate Welcoming Week every year and will seek ways to unite neighbors. Additionally, the Mayor will support ongoing events during this time of year, such as the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce's annual Hispanic Heritage Festival.

Currently, naturalization ceremonies are held four times a year at the John Paul Hammerschmidt Federal Building in downtown Fayetteville. The Mayor and staff will reach out to new citizens to celebrate their achievement, share resources, and build awareness about Fayetteville's welcoming efforts. Oftentimes, the road to becoming a citizen can be difficult to navigate, presenting many challenges and barriers along the way. This commitment to our country deserves recognition and appreciation.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, City administration



**We are in this period of  
profound demographic  
change.**

BILL SCHWAB  
*University Professor | University of Arkansas*



## THE COMMUNITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

### **6. Create a chart that identifies the first steps to make when a non-English speaker makes contact with the City** SHORT TERM

Training employees who frequently interact with the public to know the first step to make when a non-English speaker calls or visits an office is the first step to good customer service. The ability to serve everyone, regardless of their English language proficiency, is a priority for City departments that offer essential services to the public, such as utility billing, recycling and trash pickup, development services, and public safety. The City of Fayetteville will create a standard operating procedure and chart that can be used in these departments and during training.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, Human Resources Department, all City divisions

### **7. Create commercials, signs, and other marketing materials that promote Fayetteville's welcoming efforts** SHORT TERM

As part of the marketing efforts for this plan, the City will look for opportunities to place signage or advertisements around Fayetteville to promote the plan and welcoming efforts. These materials will highlight the City's work with the community and organizations, and will build awareness about the contributions of new Americans in Fayetteville. Most importantly, marketing campaigns will focus on educating new and lifelong citizens about the importance of diversity in our City.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, Media Services Division

### **8. Identify and evaluate existing health and social services directories** MID TERM

Oftentimes resources are available, but finding them can be the greatest obstacle. The City will identify current resource providers and existing directories that pull together helpful information. These directories should identify providers that have the capacity to serve new Americans. Staff will develop relationships with organizations that provide this information and explore ways to improve. Additionally, staff will promote and share these resources in an effort to ensure they are accessible through print and digital outlets.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department



## THE COMMUNITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 9. Implement citywide cultural awareness training **MID TERM**

The Mayor will implement a citywide cultural awareness training program that will focus on employee education, with an emphasis on those who work directly with the public. For the past two decades, the Fayetteville Police Department has trained its officers in racial diversity. New officers receive cultural diversity and racial profiling training at the Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy and the department holds annual training sessions on various diversity topics. However, City employees in departments outside the police department have yet to receive regular training. Because of their leadership and experience in these programs, City staff will work with the Police Department to develop curriculum and best practices for all City departments and staff. Additionally, the City will explore opportunities to work with organizations such as the Human Rights Campaign that may offer diversity training for employees. This training will focus on developing cultural competency, sensitivity, and an understanding and respect for racial, religious, and cultural differences. Employees will receive training in working closely with individuals with diverse backgrounds and those who aren't yet proficient in English.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City administration, Communications and Marketing Department, Human Resources Department, Police Department, all City divisions

### 10. Establish welcoming hubs to share information, offer classes, and serve as congregating spaces **SHORT TERM**

Language and cultural barriers can be some of the first roadblocks when arriving in a new country, and these divisions can make it difficult to lead a successful life in a new home. To ease some of this shock, the City of Fayetteville will identify and establish welcoming hubs to share information, offer classes, and serve as congregating spaces.

Fayetteville is a growing City with several services already in place that can be of use to new Americans; however, finding this information and piecing it together can be complicated. Welcoming hubs serve as a central location to disseminate resources, hold classes, and serve as the community's integration center. A welcoming hub should be a friendly, community-minded location where individuals can feel comfortable asking for information or attending a class. Potential locations include community centers and the Fayetteville Public Library. Ultimately, these hubs will serve as an approachable space for new Americans first arriving in Fayetteville and those looking to learn more about the City and its services.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, Fayetteville Public Library, Yvonne Richardson Community Center



the  
economic  
impact



## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: OVERVIEW

We cannot ignore the positive economic impacts of new Americans. As seen in the 2016 report *Global Talent: The Economic Engine of Northwest Arkansas*, immigrants accounted for 42 percent of Northwest Arkansas's population growth between 2009 and 2014. New Americans contribute to our economy as business owners, workers, consumers, and home buyers.

According to research by the Kauffman Foundation, immigrants are more than twice as likely to start a business as the native born.<sup>9</sup> And, despite accounting for approximately 13 percent of the U.S. population in 2014, 28.5 percent of new entrepreneurs were immigrants – up from 13.3 percent in 1997.<sup>10</sup>

Northwest Arkansas is no stranger to entrepreneurs, and research shows that immigrants are not only more likely to start businesses, but also that many of the most successful businesses in our country were founded by them. The Center for American Entrepreneurship reported that 43 percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded or co-founded by an immigrant or the child of an immigrant. "The findings of CAE's analysis... demonstrate the remarkable and persistent importance of immigrants to the creation and growth of America's largest, most successful, and most valuable companies."<sup>11</sup>

The Northwest Arkansas region also relies on immigrants who play an important role in supporting industries such as construction; manufacturing; transportation and warehousing; and information and communication. The recommendations in this economic impact section will look at ways to support immigrants in entrepreneurial efforts and ensure equitable access to resources – whether that's affordable or attainable housing, job fairs, or a business mentor.



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## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: RECOMMENDATIONS

11. Task entrepreneurial resource providers to offer comprehensive support for immigrant-owned startup companies

12. Focus on workforce development and ensure access to training resources

13. Develop marketing plan to feature immigrant business success stories

14. Identify community mentors to pair with immigrant entrepreneurs

15. Continue to create opportunities for affordable housing

16. Create a welcoming business designation program

17. Expand immigrant-friendly job fairs

18. Consider registering as an E-Verified employer

## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 11. Task entrepreneurial resource providers to offer comprehensive support for immigrant-owned startup companies **MID TERM**

The City of Fayetteville contracts with Startup Junkie Consulting to implement the entrepreneurship and innovation aspects of its economic development plan, Fayetteville First. As seen in reports, new Americans are more likely to possess an entrepreneurial spirit and start a business than native-born individuals. However, language barriers, lack of familiarity with development processes and City ordinances, and access to resources may hinder success. The City will identify gaps in its services for these entrepreneurs and will task resource providers to offer comprehensive, considered support for immigrant entrepreneurs who seek guidance in starting a business in Fayetteville.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Economic Vitality Department, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, Startup Junkie Consulting

### 12. Focus on workforce development and ensure access to training resources **LONG TERM**

Fayetteville is growing at an average of one new business a day, so providing a pipeline of talent for existing and prospective companies is a top priority for the City. New Americans support key industries that also overlap with the targeted sectors outlined in the City's economic development plan, such as manufacturing, retail, and specialized technology. These sectors, among others, have been identified as those in which Fayetteville will have success and are the top opportunities that the City will focus its time and effort. In 2018, the City will begin development of its first workforce development plan that will focus on attracting, developing, and maintaining a diverse talent pipeline that will fill positions in its growing industry sectors.

Additionally, the City of Fayetteville is committed to ensuring all citizens have access to the information they need to equip themselves with the skills and education to achieve employment at a sustainable living wage. The City will evaluate the Fayetteville workforce center's ability to assist individuals with a low English proficiency through training, education, and supportive services and will look for opportunities to expand apprenticeship programs in the area. Ensuring accessible resources exist in our community will allow new Americans to be equipped with the skill sets they need to thrive in our workforce and employers to hire the talent needed to thrive and expand.

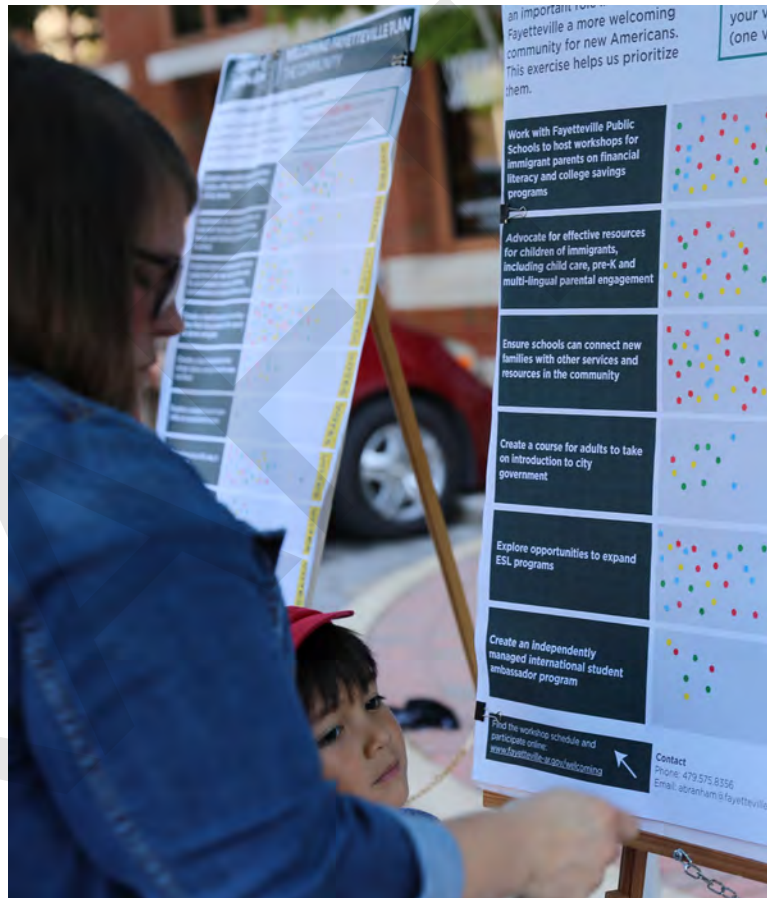
**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Economic Vitality Department, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, Startup Junkie Consulting

## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 13. Develop marketing plan to feature immigrant business success stories **SHORT TERM**

The City's economic development plan identifies marketing and communications as a strategic focus area that will increase awareness of Fayetteville and promote the community's strengths. As part of these efforts, the City has developed a series of success stories and video features. The City will build on this existing effort to identify immigrant business owners who can share their stories of success in Fayetteville. This will allow the City to highlight individuals making significant contributions to the economy, and it will position Fayetteville as an attractive, ideal place to find a career or start a business.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Economic Vitality Department and Communications and Marketing Department



### 14. Identify community mentors to pair with immigrant entrepreneurs **MID TERM**

The City will work with its contracted economic development service providers to identify successful mentors from the private and public sectors who can provide advice, support, and guidance for immigrant entrepreneurs. These relationships will help immigrants navigate the process of starting a business and may prevent hiccups or barriers that would otherwise hinder success for a new business owner.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Economic Vitality Department, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, Startup Junkie Consulting





**Immigrants are some of  
the hardest working, most  
motivated members of  
our community.**

WELCOMING FAYETTEVILLE  
*Survey Respondent*



## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 15. Continue to create opportunities for affordable housing **LONG TERM**

Increasingly, the need for affordable and attainable housing in Fayetteville is identified as a point of concern for those who live and work in Fayetteville. So, it's no surprise that the public also identified this need as a top barrier for new Americans in our community. As property values increase and the public voices concern, the City is constantly discussing this matter and looking for ways to create opportunity. In 2016, City Council approved a \$1 million cost-share agreement for the construction of public infrastructure for a mixed-income development focused on creating sustainable and attainable housing. In 2017, the City asked the public for help in identifying the biggest challenge facing Fayetteville, and housing climbed to the top of the list; more than a third of respondents mentioned either affordable housing, low income housing or homelessness as the top challenge in our City. As a result, City staff and community stakeholders worked together in late 2017 to brainstorm ideas and solutions on the topic. In keeping with subsequent efforts, such as the Housing Northwest Arkansas symposium, the City will continue to join and lead conversations related to finding innovative ideas to address attainable and affordable housing in the region.

This subject was also established in 2011 as one of six goals in City Plan 2030: "We will create opportunities for attainable housing." City Council reaffirmed the goal in its Strategic Plan 2050. The ability to access affordable and attainable housing affects how much discretionary income a family has to spend in our community, the stability of a child's housing environment and their chance at success, the likelihood that a family becomes homeless, and the ability to save for the future. "Across the U.S., 18.4 million low-income households pay more than 50 percent of their income on housing, and face difficult trade-offs with regard to other essential needs, such as food, clothing, transportation and health care."<sup>12</sup>

Going forward, the City will continue to identify and pursue opportunities to create affordable and attainable housing. City staff will work to find innovative, sustainable solutions and will keep an open dialogue with community organizations that support new Americans to ensure awareness about existing programs.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, City Media Services Division, City Development Services, City Planning, City Administration



## THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 16. Create a welcoming business designation program **SHORT TERM**

In an effort to create an integrated community-wide approach, the City will work with local businesses to become designated as a welcoming business. This designation will create awareness around the community-wide effort to support the plan, foster advocates, and hopefully generate compassionate neighbors. The City will implement a pledge for businesses to take, or set criteria to meet, before a business becomes designated as welcoming. Businesses that meet the criteria may display a City-designed sticker or cling in a storefront window as a recognizable symbol of their designation.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Economic Vitality Department, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, Startup Junkie Consulting

### 17. Expand immigrant-friendly job fairs **MID TERM**

City staff will work with community organizations, businesses, and the University of Arkansas to expand immigrant-friendly job fairs in Fayetteville. Job fairs can help new Americans transition into new careers in an unfamiliar location. Fair organizers should consider transit route access to event locations and multilingual marketing materials. These events can help connect new Americans with their first job in Northwest Arkansas and to companies with a need to fill gaps in employment.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Economic Vitality Department, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, Startup Junkie Consulting, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Public Schools

### 18. Consider registering as an E-Verified employer **LONG TERM**

The City of Fayetteville will research and consider registering as an E-verified employer with the United States Department of Homeland Security. E-Verify processes an employer's I-9 forms and verifies employment eligibility. The system compares data in the form to data from the DHS and Social Security Administration. As home to the University of Arkansas, the City of Fayetteville is more likely than other Northwest Arkansas cities to garner employment interest from recent international student graduates. However, international students who choose to participate in Optional Practical Training, which means they can remain in the country for 12 to 36 months to gain degree-related experience prior to filing for an H-1B petition, must be employed by an E-Verified entity. While E-Verify is a free, web-based system, it will require staff training and time from the City's Human Resources Department.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Human Resources Department



the  
future



## THE FUTURE: OVERVIEW

Immigrant families face unique barriers when they first arrive here in our country and state. Access to a strong, supportive education system is vital to the success of immigrant children and their parents.

Oftentimes immigrant children, some as young as five years old, serve as translators for their parents – an exhausting task when they must carry the burden of learning about health care plans or college and financial aid processes. As seen in a recent report that looks at challenges for immigrant families, the more than 80,000 immigrant children in Arkansas “are more likely to live in or near poverty than their peers in other states.”<sup>13</sup> Additionally, they are less likely than children in U.S.-born families to be enrolled in preschool, which “can make all the difference in preparing children to succeed in school, especially those who may not speak English at home.”<sup>14</sup>

The public and stakeholders in Fayetteville have identified education and language, for children and adults, as the top barrier for families new to our country and city. At both the in-person sessions and in the online survey, respondents selected as the top priority the strategy to advocate for effective resources of children of immigrants, including child care, pre-K and multilingual parental engagement.

Welcoming new Americans into our schools benefits the children as they have access to a quality education, and it also benefits children born right here in Fayetteville. “Researchers have documented that students’ exposure to other students who are different from themselves and the novel ideas and challenges that such exposure brings leads to improved cognitive skills, including critical thinking and problem solving.”<sup>15</sup> Simply put, “diversity makes us smarter.”<sup>16</sup>

The recommendations in this section touch on ways the City of Fayetteville, Fayetteville Public Schools, and other planning partners can connect families, improve services and explore new opportunities.



## THE FUTURE: RECOMMENDATIONS

19. Explore opportunities to expand English as a Second Language (ESL) programs

20. Support multilingual parental engagement and identify opportunities to expand child care and pre-K programs

21. Ensure schools can connect new families with other services and resources in the community

22. Work with Fayetteville Public Schools to host financial literacy classes for immigrant parents

23. Create a course for adults to take an introduction to city government

24. Create an independently managed international student ambassador program

25. Explore barriers for new Americans who have professional degrees/certifications that cannot be used in the United States

## THE FUTURE: RECOMMENDATIONS

### **19. Explore opportunities to expand English as a Second Language (ESL) programs** MID TERM

English language tutoring and classes are currently offered at a multitude of entities throughout Fayetteville, including the Ozark Literacy Council, Fayetteville Public Schools and the Adult Education Center, and the University of Arkansas's Spring International Language Center. The City of Fayetteville will work with these entities to identify gaps, barriers, and solutions to English language education. Needs identified by stakeholders include funding for additional staffing, satellite locations and online courses, transit routes that bring students closer to facilities, and childcare availability.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** Fayetteville Public Schools, City Communications and Marketing Department

### **20. Support multilingual parental engagement and identify opportunities to expand child care and pre-K programs** MID TERM

In 2010, children of immigrants accounted for 10 percent of children in Arkansas, compared to 5 percent in 2000.<sup>17</sup> Public input for this plan revealed access and engagement for children of immigrants as the top priority in this category. The City will identify and explore existing pre-K and child care programs in Fayetteville and will advocate for multilingual and cultural engagement in schools, outreach materials, and events, as Fayetteville Public Schools is home to more than 50 languages and approximately 1,000 English language learners. As identified in stakeholder meetings, the City will also explore education voucher programs and opportunities to expand and promote pre-K programs.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** Fayetteville Public Schools

### **21. Ensure schools can connect new families with other services and resources in the community** SHORT TERM

The first step to equitable access is education – simply knowing where to start. Oftentimes, schools serve as the first point of contact for immigrant families. Schools are a gateway for distributing helpful information related to health, transportation, community, business, housing, and education. The City will work with Fayetteville Public Schools to develop and distribute comprehensive information about services and resources available in the community. To ensure this information is accessible, it should be multilingual to reflect the diverse population served by the schools.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** Fayetteville Public Schools, City Communications and Marketing Department



“

**I think that we have quite a few resources in place but we need to do more to link them together so that if one place doesn't have what someone needs they can send them to the right person.**

WELCOMING FAYETTEVILLE  
*Survey Respondent*



## THE FUTURE: RECOMMENDATIONS

### **22. Work with Fayetteville Public Schools to host financial literacy classes for immigrant parents** MID TERM

The City of Fayetteville will coordinate with Fayetteville Public Schools to host financial literacy classes for immigrant parents. The City will research best practices and work with partners, including banks and community organizations, to develop curriculum and a multilingual course. Additionally, an emphasis will be made on college savings education, as “research has found that parents’ savings efforts for their children’s post-secondary education is positively associated with college attendance and that parental financial support increases the odds of college completion.”<sup>18</sup>

This initiative corresponds with the creation of the Personal Finance and Job Readiness Act in 2017, which requires students in Arkansas high schools, grades 10 through 12, to receive personal and family finance instruction in these areas: income, money management, spending and credit, saving and investing, and preparing for employment. Financial literacy at all levels in families is vital to successful and healthy futures for Fayetteville’s youth.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, Fayetteville Public Schools, local banks

### **23. Create a course for adults to take an introduction to city government** SHORT TERM

Government has many tentacles and can sometimes be difficult to fully grasp, even for those who are frequently engaged. The City of Fayetteville is made up of more than two dozen divisions and departments that involve everything from roads and parks, to utilities and animals. Getting to know your local government and its inner workings is the first step to becoming an involved, well-informed resident. The City will create an introduction course for adults to learn the basics: what the City does, how decisions are made, the organizational structure, how to find information about current projects and items coming to the City Council, and how the City works with other groups and entities. After creating the course, the City will find ways to make it accessible to anyone who is not yet proficient in English.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department

## THE FUTURE: RECOMMENDATIONS

### **24. Create an independently managed international student ambassador program** MID TERM

Thanks to the University of Arkansas's location in the city, Fayetteville is home to a diverse student population. These students serve as a valuable component in attracting and retaining international students at the university and in the city. An international student ambassador program will further the City's goal of positioning Fayetteville as a study destination. The City will work with organizations every year to solicit applications for the program and select students who can provide updates, posts, and blogs about life in Fayetteville, which will be posted online and then shared on the students' social media platforms. The students will also be invited to spend time in the community, getting to know how local government works and interacting with related organizations. Lastly, the Mayor will hold a friendship ceremony for international students every year to reiterate the City's support of a diverse student population. Building lasting relationships with students and attracting new international students to Fayetteville further supports the goal of the City's economic development plan to focus on retention of University of Arkansas graduates.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications and Marketing Department, University of Arkansas

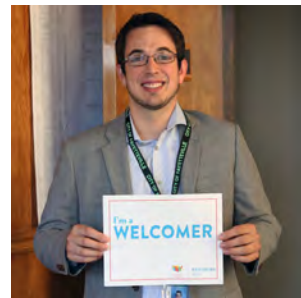
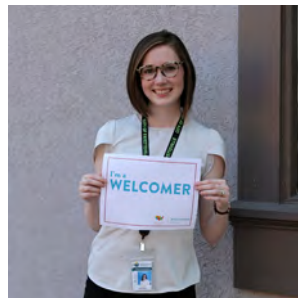
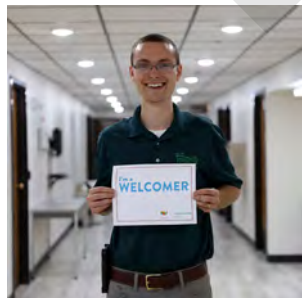
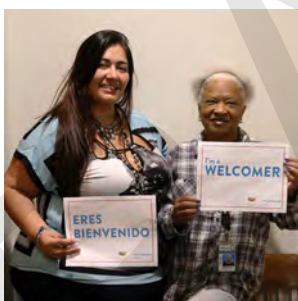
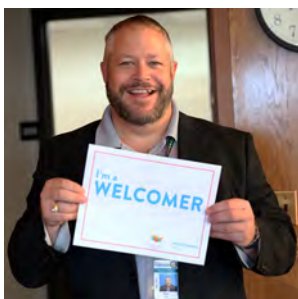
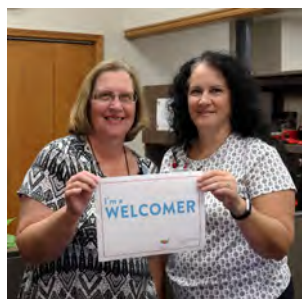
### **25. Explore barriers for new Americans who have professional degrees/certifications that cannot be used in the United States** LONG TERM

As stated in *Untapped Talent: The Costs of Brain Waste among Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States*, immigrants are more likely than native-born individuals to experience underemployment. In fact, one in four college-educated immigrants work in low-skilled jobs or are unemployed.<sup>19</sup> As a result, when highly skilled, college educated immigrants experience this "brain waste," they miss out on significant earnings, which results in lost tax revenues.<sup>20</sup> The City of Fayetteville's economic development plan highlights the importance of attracting, developing, and maintaining a diverse workforce, and the City recognizes the value in seeking this untapped talent. The City will explore barriers and look for ways to connect highly skilled new Americans with resources and organizations that can provide employment guidance.

**GROUP(S) RESPONSIBLE:** City Communications Department, City Economic Vitality Department



## WELCOMING WEEK 2017





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## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ADOPTION

This Welcoming Fayetteville Plan was adopted by City Council Resolution XX-XX on XX-XX-XXXX

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The creation of this plan was truly a community effort. We are deeply thankful for everyone who responded to the community surveys, made time to visit our input sessions, shared information with friends and posted flyers, met for one-on-one meetings, and shared honest stories from the heart. This engaged, compassionate community is what makes Fayetteville a special, welcoming place to live, work, and visit.

A special thank you to our stakeholder group and those who took the time to meet with us individually. These individuals played an important role in helping us identify our existing conditions and solutions: Emily Linn, Michael Freeman, Mireya Reith, Mark Osterle, Steve Clark, Chris Decker, Jenny Fish, Jennifer Irwin, Renee Deshommes, Sonia Gutierrez, Matthew Ramsey, Anita Hodges, Joel Gardner, Jeff Hatley, Donna Davis, Robbie Cornelius, Devin Howland, Joy Shirley, Bill Schwab, Kathy Grisham, Terry Bankston, Carlos Chicas, Christen Graham, Margot Lemaster, Adam Waddell, Rachael Schaffner, Megan Godfrey, Erick Sanchez, Chung Tan, Stephen Cogger, Jeremy Hudson, and Cynthia Smith.



appendices

## APPENDIX A: ENDNOTES

1. New American Economy, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and Engage NWA, *Global Talent: The Economic Engine of Northwest Arkansas*, 4.
2. Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, *How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students*, 2.
3. Welcoming America, “How Do Welcoming Communities Benefit Us?”, <https://www.welcomingamerica.org/about/faq>
4. Northwest Arkansas Council, *Diversity: A Look at How Northwest Arkansas’ Population is Changing*, 3.
5. Ibid
6. Cisneros Center for New Americans, *New Americans in Northwest Arkansas: A Qualitative Community Assessment*, 19.
7. University of Arkansas, *Transportation Plan Update 2015*, 10.
8. University of Arkansas, *2015 Summary Report: University of Arkansas Campus Transportation Plan*.
9. Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, *The Economic Case for Welcoming Immigrant Entrepreneurs*, 2.
10. Ibid
11. Center for American Entrepreneurship, *Immigrant Founders of the 2017 Fortune 500*, <http://startupsusa.org/fortune500/>
12. Enterprise Community Partners, *Impact of Affordable Housing on Families and Communities: A Review of the Evidence Base*, 4.
13. Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, *Report: Arkansas Children in Immigrant Families Face Toughest Climb*, <http://www.aradvocates.org/report-arkansas-children-in-immigrant-families-face-toughest-climb/>
14. Ibid
15. Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, *How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students*, 2.

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## APPENDIX A: ENDNOTES

16. Ibid

17. Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, *A Profile of Immigrants in Arkansas*, 8.

18. Molly Dondero and Melissa Humphries, *The College Savings Behavior of Foreign-born Parents in the United States*, 1.

19. Jeanne Batalova, Michael Fix, and James D. Bachmeier, *Untapped Talent: The Costs of Brain Waste among Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States*, 26.

20. Jeanne Batalova, Michael Fix, and James D. Bachmeier, *Untapped Talent: The Costs of Brain Waste among Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States*, 1.

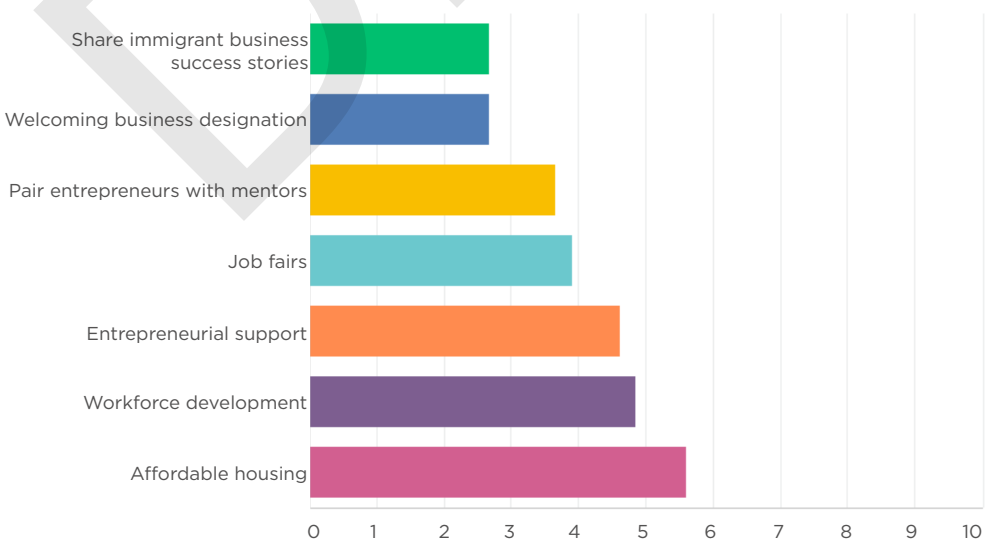


## APPENDIX B: ONLINE PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Which of the following **education strategies** do you think the City of Fayetteville and its stakeholders should prioritize? Please order them with 1 being the “most important.”

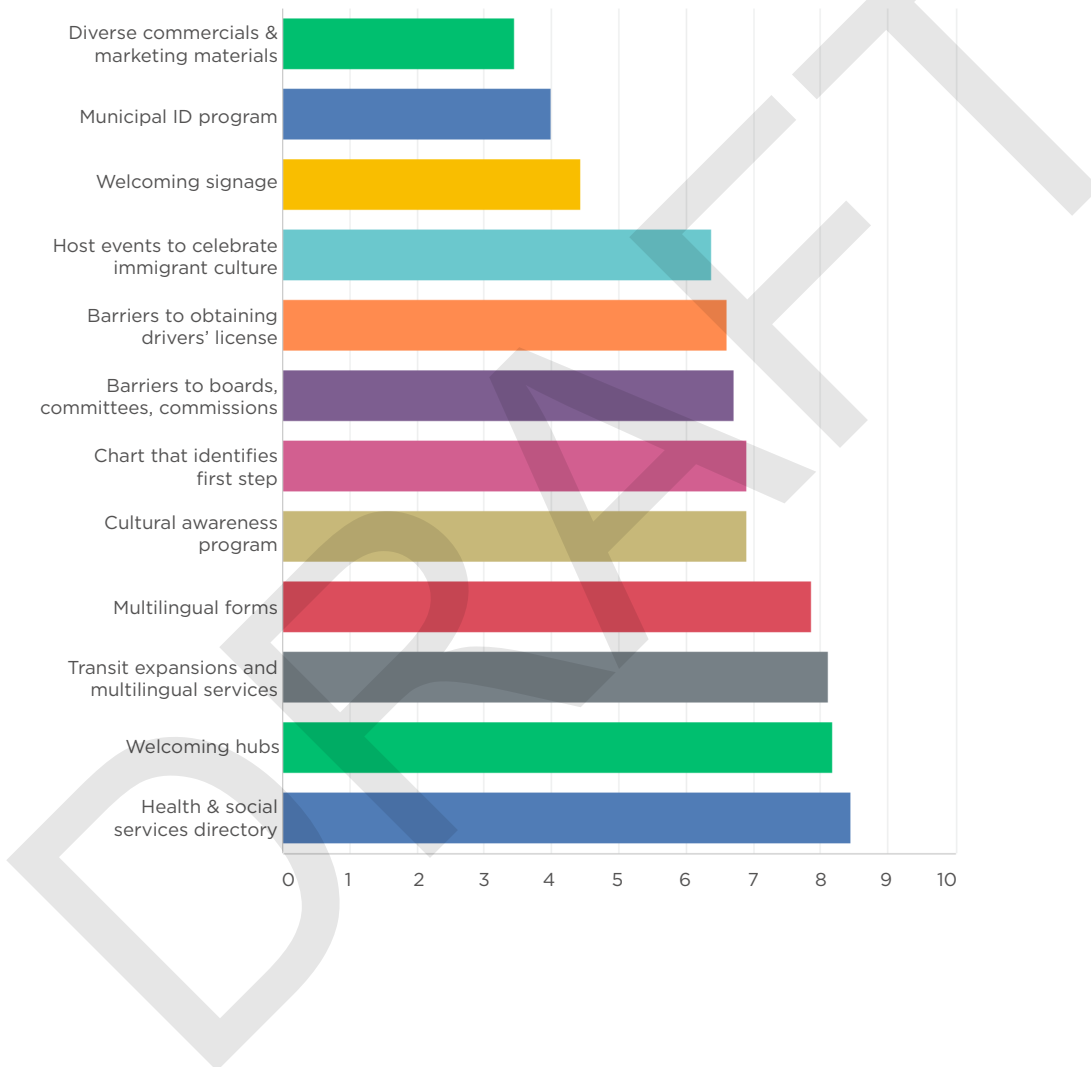


Which of the following **economic strategies** do you think the City of Fayetteville and its stakeholders should prioritize? Please order them with 1 being the “most important.”



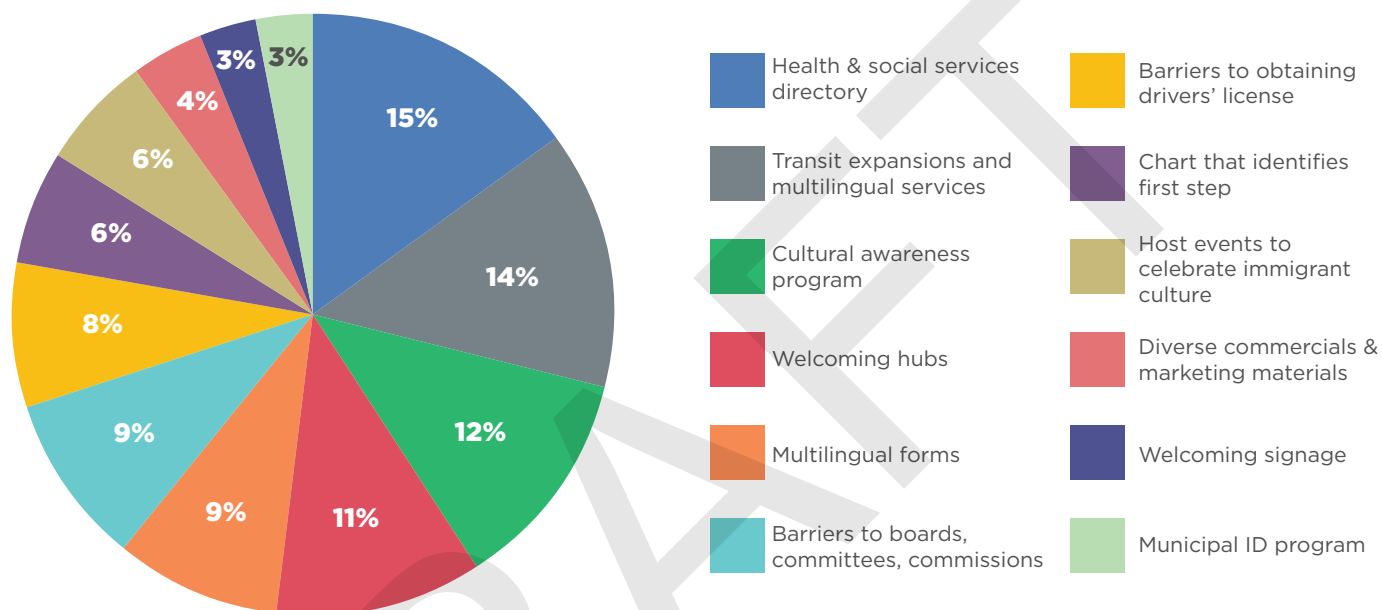
## APPENDIX B: ONLINE PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Which of the following **community strategies** do you think the City of Fayetteville and its stakeholders should prioritize? Please order them with 1 being the “most important.”

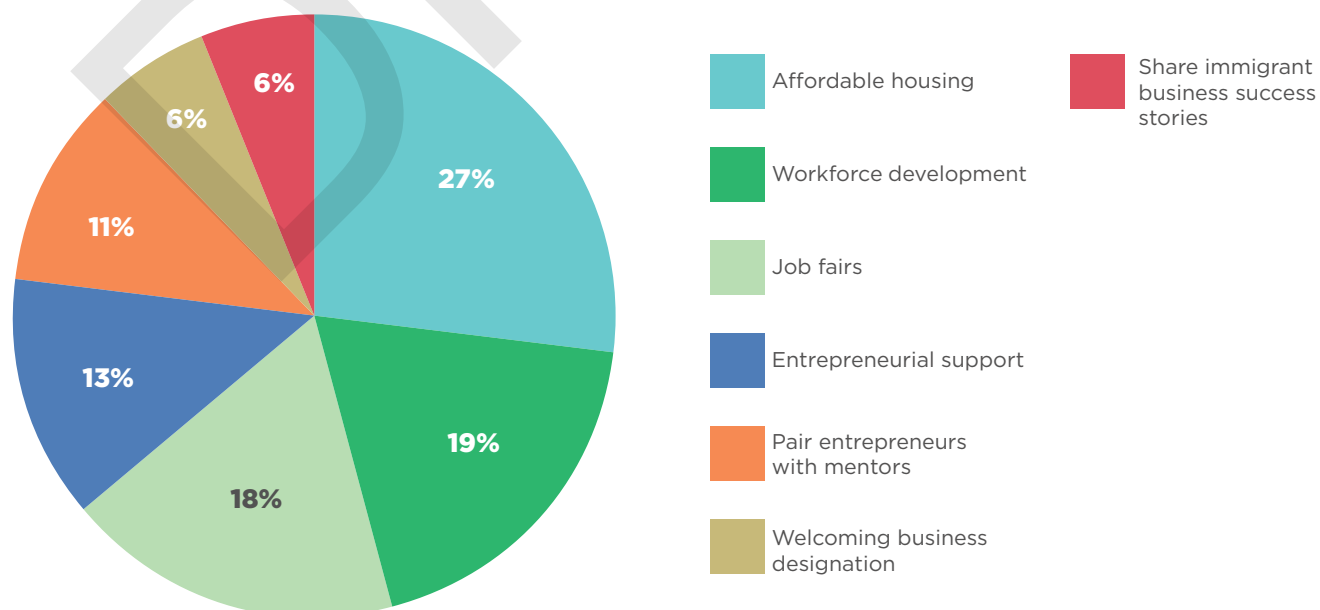


## APPENDIX B: IN-PERSON PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

For this exercise, people were asked to place 5 sticky dots on the **community strategies** that they'd like the City and its stakeholders to prioritize.

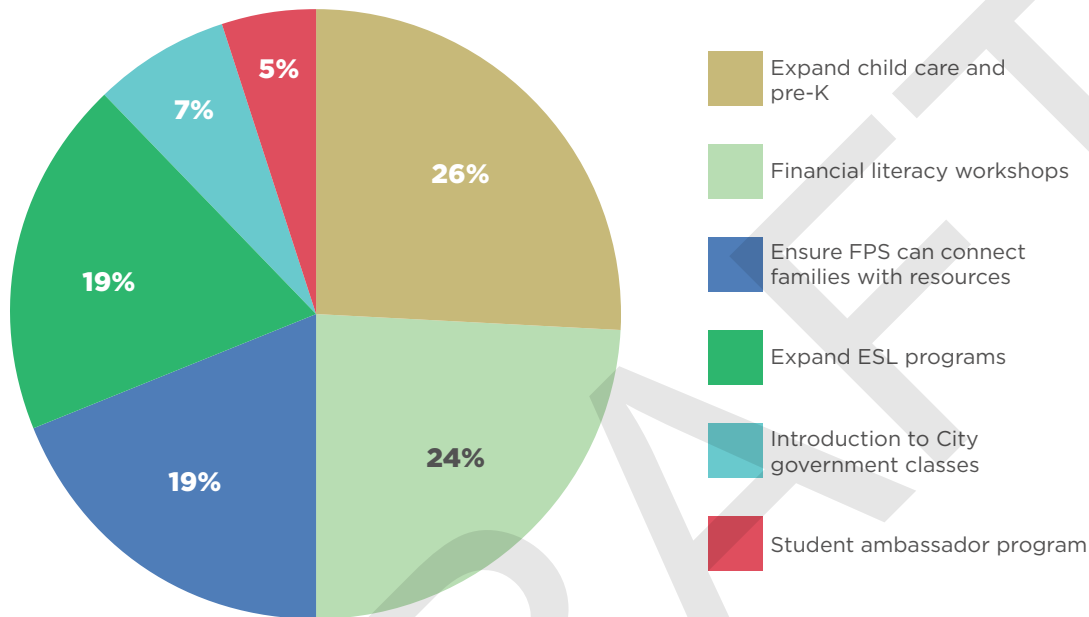


For this exercise, people were asked to place 3 sticky dots on the **economic strategies** that they'd like the City and its stakeholders to prioritize.



## APPENDIX B: IN-PERSON PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

For this exercise, people were asked to place 3 sticky dots on the **education strategies** that they'd like the City and its stakeholders to prioritize.





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