



# Kick-off Outreach Summary

Clarksville-Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan  
 March 30-31, and April 7, 2022

The kick-off program for the Clarksville-Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan included two sets of activities – focus groups with key community stakeholders, and a series of workshops conducted with key committees assembled to guide the project, as well as elected officials.

## Focus Groups

As a part of the Community Engagement phase of the planning process, interview-style discussions were conducted with focus groups to discuss existing conditions, issues, and potentials within the Clarksville-Montgomery County community. Developers, business owners, local experts, and other key stakeholders from Clarksville-Montgomery County were asked to provide unique and direct insight to the community.

The interviews took place in person at the Clarksville Montgomery County Regional Planning Commission offices on March 30 – April 1, and virtually on April 7, 2022. Each lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Interviews were framed around a sequence of questions regarding the community and conducted in a conversational style with an emphasis on each group's particular area of expertise or interest.

Focus group conversations were intended to be candid and confidential. Key takeaways and themes from the focus group discussions will be included in overall thematic discussion of issues and opportunities in the Existing Conditions Report.

*A total of 42 participants engaged in the following focus groups.*

|    | <b>Focus Group</b>  | <b>Participants</b> |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 1  | Austin Peay State University (APSU)                           | 3                   |
| 2  | Businesses  | 3                   |
| 3  | City and County Mayors  | 2                   |
| 4  | Developers  | 2                   |
| 5  | Downtown Developers   | 4                   |
| 6  | Education   | 3                   |
| 7  | Engineers   | 2                   |
| 8  | Fort Campbell   | 3                   |
| 9  | Housing   | 6                   |
| 10 | Industrial Development Board and Economic Development Council | 2                   |
| 11 | Sustainability (virtual)                                      | 4                   |
| 12 | Transportation  | 8                   |

## Workshops

On March 30-31, 2022, the Clarksville-Montgomery County Regional Planning Commission hosted a series of workshops for the City Council and County Commissioners, the Citizen and Steering Committee, and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The workshops were held as part of the kickoff outreach process for the creation of the new *Clarksville-Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan*. The workshops discussed issues, opportunities, and key strengths and assets of the community. Input from the workshops will be directly reflected in the vision, goals, recommendations, and policies of the *Clarksville-Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan*. Kick-off workshops were conducted in the following format.

### Issues and Concerns

Participants were asked to individually identify the issues and concerns facing the community. Next, participants worked to create a single, cumulative list as a large group where each participant shared important issues from their individual list.

Participants were then asked to rank the three most important issues discussed from the cumulative list. For the issues most often identified as a top issue by group participants, the number of votes the issue received during the group exercise is included in parentheses.

### Priority Actions and Projects

In response to the list of issues, participants were asked to name specific projects or actions that would provide solutions to those issues identified in the first part of the exercise.

### Strengths and Assets

As the Clarksville-Montgomery Comprehensive Plan is developed, the key strengths and assets of Clarksville-Montgomery should be regarded as areas to maintain and build upon. For the final part of the exercise, participants were asked to list the strengths and advantages of Clarksville-Montgomery that should be preserved. In the summaries, the numbers included in parentheses indicate that the strength or asset was listed on the sheets of multiple participants.

### Note on Summary Context

*The following is a summary of the thoughts, comments, and opinions received in each workshop. Some comments were shared with the entire group, while others were recorded privately on worksheets. The items identified in this summary are not recommendations or observations of the consultant, but rather represent feedback and comments received from those who participated in the workshop.*

# Technical Advisory Committee

March 30, 2022

Clarksville Montgomery County Regional Planning Commission Offices

329 Main St, Clarksville, TN 37040

30 participants

The top issues and concerns identified during the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) workshop were roadway congestion, insufficient revenues and tax base, and uncertainty regarding land use planning updates and rezoning. Three concerns were raised related to the city's ability to manage future growth – utilities and infrastructure, recreational facilities, and city services.

When asked to identify the assets and strengths of Clarksville-Montgomery, participants shared their admiration for the area's institutions and cultural assets, the diverse and progressive citizens, and the physical landscape of the area. Respondents praised Clarksville-Montgomery's proximity to Nashville and the Cumberland River.

## Highest Group-Ranked Issues

- Need for affordable housing development (10)
- Traffic-related concerns (10)
- Concerns over rapid population growth outpacing infrastructure (9)
- Need for more schools as there are overcrowding concerns (8)
- Concerns over suburban sprawl (4)
- Need for expanded road network (4)
- Lack of sidewalks (3)
- Need for diverse, higher-wage jobs with career opportunities for growth (3)
- Lack of healthcare options (2)
- More police enforcement is needed in areas with crime concerns (2)
- Need for greater water and sewer capacity (2)
- Need for more parking concepts (2)
- Need more quality-of-life assets (2)
- Need for workforce development (2)
- Shortage of skilled labor pool (2)
- Rising housing costs (2)
- Need for a City or County housing trust fund (2)

## *Other Issues by Category*

### *Growth and Development*

- Need to identify revitalization efforts in an adopted plan for development
- Need to expand the road network to keep up with population growth
- Need for more white-collar jobs
- Lack of amenities on the northside of town
- Lack of complete neighborhoods where residents can live, work, and play
- Concerns over suburban sprawl
- Need for downtown development
- Improve the land use around the Fort Campbell Army Base
- Loss of open and green space
- Need to update development standards

- Need for a vibrant downtown
- Need to update aging infrastructure
- Need for a revitalization plan
- Incentives in rezoning to encourage mixed use communities

#### *Housing and Neighborhoods*

- Need for affordable housing stock, especially for seniors and working-class such as teachers and caregivers
- Need for mixed-use development
- Need for mixed-income housing development
- Limited access between adjoining neighborhoods

#### *Economic Development*

- Retailers are concentrated at Exits 1 and 4 and not dispersed evenly throughout the community
- The population is growing faster than current tax funds can keep pace
- Availability of quality workforce
- Excessive strip malls
- Limited revenue to support unlimited needs

#### *Transportation and Mobility*

- Excessive traffic as population increases
- The lack of sidewalks creates an un-walkable community
- Need for road expansions
- Lack of crosswalks on Main Street
- Need for public transportation
- Need for downtown parking
- Corridor widths are not preserved for road widening

#### *Community Facilities and Services*

- Need for more schools to match population growth
- Concerns over stormwater and drainage infrastructure
- Need for childcare services
- Concerns for City-County government cooperation
- Shortage of grocery vendors
- The County needs to focus on schools and services outside City limits
- Lack of parks and greenspace
- County Fire Department staff must be paid (not just volunteers)
- Lack of accessible healthcare options
- More police enforcement needed in residential districts

#### *Infrastructure*

- The ability of water and sewer infrastructure to keep up with growth

#### *Perception and Character*

- Need for general beautification

## Priority Actions and Projects

### *Housing and Neighborhoods*

- Fund adequate affordable housing resources to build attainable housing for the workforce
- Build mixed-use communities that include affordable housing, grocery stores, medical facilities, and retail options
- Incentivize repair of blighted properties
- Build quality infill housing development
- Leverage affordable housing grants
- Develop workforce housing near Industrial Park East

### *Economic Development*

- Implement capital improvement districts
- Add incentives for developers to build denser and closer to the Clarksville city center
- Invite more small, local businesses in Downtown Clarksville
- Provide more office space
- Career development at all levels to attract jobs and employees

### *Transportation and Mobility*

- Expand road network to address traffic congestion
- Improve roads and bridge pinch points
- Complete the State Route 374 loop
- 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division Parkway should cross the Cumberland River and function as a bypass
- Build a bridge over the Cumberland River between Clarksville and Ashland City
- Expand downtown parking
- Complete the Mayor's Transportation 2020+ Strategy
- Complete the Exit 8 Athletic Park plan
- Expand I-24 and establish high-capacity connector roads to it
- Build a bridge on SR 374 across the Cumberland River
- Decrease traffic congestion on Wilma Rudolph
- Work with the Tennessee Department of Transportation to seek transit solutions

### *Community Facilities and Services*

- Fund adequate healthcare, especially for children
- Build a new hospital so residents have health care options
- Offer education needed for white-collar jobs
- Increase accessibility to services throughout Montgomery County
- Build a military museum
- Build a hotel convention center
- Address encroachment on the Fort Campbell Army Base
- Provide daycare in the school system
- Build more parking around the Montgomery County Multi-Purpose Event Center

### *Other Priority Actions and Projects*

- Build a water park/theme park for children
- Attract a minor league sports team
- Leverage more STEM education in schools

## Strengths and Assets

- Institutions and cultural assets (APSU and Fort Campbell Army Base) (11)
- Opportunities for the downtown to grow and develop (6)
- The Cumberland River (4)
- Proximity to Nashville (4)
- Diverse and progressive residents (4)
- Strong governmental leadership (3)
- Young community (3)
- Small town feeling, but progressive thinking (3)
- Blueways, greenways, and parks (3)
- Industrial growth (2)
- Affordable cost of living (2)
- Downtown Clarksville
- Clarksville-Montgomery governments work in harmony together
- A diverse mix of land uses
- Good schools
- Large economic driver with consistency

# Citizen and Steering Committee

March 31, 2022

Clarksville Montgomery County Regional Planning Commission Offices

329 Main St, Clarksville, TN 37040

30 participants

The top issues identified during the Citizen and Steering Committee workshop were traffic-related concerns, dated zoning regulations, and too much sprawl. Additionally, the CPSC shared the need for more vertical development, especially in the downtown.

Members of the CPSC agreed that Clarksville-Montgomery's institutions and cultural assets, such as Austin Peay State University (APSU) and the Fort Campbell Army Base, are some of the area's primary strengths. Participants also listed the sense of community felt throughout Clarksville and Montgomery County as a top strength and noted that Clarksville-Montgomery branding and community identity could be improved.

## Issues and Concerns

### *Highest Group-Ranked Issues*

- Traffic-related concerns (9), particularly in the downtown and in developing subdivisions
- Lack of density (4), as respondents shared their concerns with sprawl, uncontrolled growth, and un-walkable streets
- More parks and recreation (3) in addition to a need for beautification through landscaping
- Need for more jobs and better paying, white-collar jobs (3)
- Community character must be clearly identified (3)
- Need for more commercial uses, such as retail and dining (3)
- Too many big box retailers and not enough small businesses (3)

### *Other Issues by Category*

#### *Housing and Neighborhoods*

- Need for multifamily housing options
- Residential lot inventory must be conducted
- Lack of housing and development in low-income areas
- Excessive outdated homes
- Lack of shelters for the homeless population and victims of domestic violence

#### *Transportation and Mobility*

- Need for public transit that is functional and easy to use
- Lack of walkability
- Lack of downtown parking availability
- Need for a reduction in downtown parking rates

#### *Community Facilities and Services*

- Need for more schools and quality teachers as schools are overcrowding
- Lack of school funding
- More police enforcement needed in residential districts
- Disagreements in city planning
- Disjointedness and institutionalized racism in city planning

### *Infrastructure and Development*

- Need for a diversity of light industrial and commercial properties
- Lack of cultural and entertainment amenities that are attractive to a younger demographic
- Sewage and water shortages

### *Perception and Character*

- The small-town mentality must be reimagined
- Need for more cultural acceptance and diversity
- Implement tactics to invite people downtown

### *Other Issues*

- Organize mental health support services
- Lack of accommodation for the aging community

## **Priority Actions and Projects**

### ***Growth and Development***

- Remove regulations on vertical growth, especially in the downtown, and create incentives for developers to build vertically
- Set standards for buildings to include landscaping requirements
- Penalize sprawl
- Update zoning code
- Compensate rapid growth with the addition of schools and grocery stores
- Identify areas of wasteful spending
- Research success stories from other planning projects (i.e., Bentonville, AR)

### ***Housing and Neighborhoods***

- Create minimum green space and mixed-use requirements in new subdivisions
- Consider diverse housing sizes, especially smaller housing units and apartment buildings
- Create incentives for developers that create community neighborhoods
- Incentivize developers to build affordable housing
- Build mixed-income housing throughout Clarksville-Montgomery

### ***Economic Development***

- Invite a diverse range of companies to attract top talent
- Incentivize for small businesses to open rather than large corporations through tax relief
- Invite diverse candidates to help with the Clarksville-Montgomery Economic Development Council

### ***Transportation and Mobility***

- Convert downtown streets into pedestrian-only walkways
- Incentivize incoming businesses with transportation updates to include routes to their businesses
- Revisit traffic and transportation projects
- Introduce a limited time toll program for building a parking garage, while inviting APSU students to create a sustainable model for parking
- Overlay multimodal networks to allow more efficient mobility options
- Research high traffic areas to see what roads need to be built
- Allocate more money for road expansion and repair
- Evaluate traffic signal timings at major intersections
- Build better accessways, such as roads and walkways, to make the community more efficient



### ***Community Facilities and Services***

- Plan for educational facilities, keeping in mind school size, recruitment of quality teachers, and transportation routes
- Build more permanent structures on existing school campuses
- Provide a greater Clarksville Police Department presence needed in residential areas
- Plan for more multicultural activities and events
- Build more healthcare facilities
- Bring in more high paying jobs to the industrial park
- Create sustainability and resiliency departments in the City and County
- Aid in funding to staff Clarksville-Montgomery's nonprofit organizations
- Implement parks and recreation expansion projects for more trails, athletic fields, and parks

### ***Infrastructure***

- Create an organized system prioritizing infrastructure projects and ask APSU students to help
- Create a plan and secure funding for the most important infrastructure needs

### ***Perception and Character***

- Implement an identity plan with branding and marketing procedures
- Involve small businesses in city rebranding
- Beautify low-income neighborhoods

### **Strengths and Assets**

- Institutions and cultural assets (APSU and Fort Campbell Army Base) (5)
- Sense of community and small-town feel (4)
- Cumberland River (2)
- Opportunity for growth and development (2)
- Youthful city (2)
- Diverse population (2)
- Affordable place to live (2)
- A progressive planning commission that looks toward the future
- Tax incentives as Tennessee's state income tax is zero
- A desirable place to live
- Proximity to large growth center, Nashville
- Deeply rooted in history

# City Council and County Commissioners

March 31, 2022

Montgomery County Historic Courthouse

1 Millennium Plaza, Clarksville, TN 37040

16 participants

Several of the top issues and concerns raised among the City Council and County Commissioners were related to Clarksville-Montgomery's ability to manage overcrowding and future growth, particularly in the school system, road networks, and public infrastructure. Respondents also noted their concerns about keeping Clarksville-Montgomery affordable for residents of diverse incomes.

When asked about the strengths and assets of Clarksville-Montgomery, respondents mentioned attributes like the institutions and cultural assets, such as APSU and the Fort Campbell Army Base, the diversity of the citizens, and the good education system.

## Highest Group-Ranked Issues

- Traffic-related concerns (6)
- Overcrowding in schools without a plan to address growth (4)
- Infrastructure does not match rapid population growth (4)
- Concerns over safety (3)
- Lack of sidewalks (2)
- Lack of communication with citizens (2)
- Funding needed for governmental services (i.e., fire, police, education) (2)
- Concerns over stormwater management (2)
- Lack of affordable housing/increasing housing prices (2)

### *Other Issues by Category*

#### *Growth and Development*

- Manage population growth
- Growth impacts housing and basic governmental services

#### *Housing and Neighborhoods*

- Racism and biases in planning for certain neighborhoods
- Excess of blighted neighborhoods that have never been revitalized
- Urban and residential encroachment into rural areas
- Residential encroachment into the industrial park
- The conflict between existing neighborhoods and future development
- Lack of commercial development outside City limits

#### *Economic Development*

- Offer more jobs and develop a diverse workforce

#### *Transportation and Mobility*

- Increased car crashes on streets
- Lack of space between homes and streets which prevents road widening
- Lack of walkable neighborhoods and connectivity (i.e., residents cannot walk to the Dunbar Cave State Park)
- Lack of multimodal streets

- Lack of adequate arterial roads
- Lack of downtown parking

#### *Governance*

- Lack of partnership with stakeholders
- Lack of money to fund projects
- Lack of investment in certain communities
- Funding needed for the school systems
- Excessive control in the hands of the Planning Commission with not enough oversight
- Balance needed between local government stability and expectations

#### *Community Facilities and Infrastructure*

- Lack of libraries
- Lack of access to grocery stores
- Lack of green space and accessibility to these areas
- Lack of 24/7 fire service outside the City limits
- Protection needed for public education
- Limited space for schools
- Lack of health programs

#### *Infrastructure*

- Need to better manage infrastructure
- Ensure public financing of infrastructure

#### *Other Issues*

- Lack of diversity
- Loss of agricultural areas
- Lack of high wage jobs
- Need for animal shelter
- Increased crime

## **Priority Actions and Projects**

### ***Growth and Development Housing and Neighborhoods***

- Build more affordable housing
- Build tiny homes for the unsheltered
- Provide housing options for low to moderate-income residents
- Enforce stricter policies on future developments

### ***Economic Development***

- Increase workforce

### ***Transportation and Mobility***

- Build downtown parking
- Address traffic concerns
- Build new roads with extra space for expansion
- Emphasize walkability in the Clarksville-Montgomery County budget
- Expand arterial roads
- Build shoulders on roads in rural areas

### ***Governance***

- Focus on the whole community rather than the “loud” voices
- Improve cooperation and communication between Commissioners, City and County Councils, and School Board
- Strengthen public/private partnerships
- Review regulations to determine barriers
- Form a fire and stormwater district outside City limits

### ***Community Facilities and Services***

- Build neighborhood parks
- Build schools for a growing population and build them three to four stories tall
- Secure funding for schools, fire, and public safety
- Provide health centers

### **Strengths and Assets**

- Diversity (6)
- Institutions and cultural assets (APSU and Fort Campbell Army Base) (5)
- Good schools (4)
- The local City Council and County Commissioners (3)
- The citizens (2)
- The community’s history (2)
- Cumberland River
- Rural feeling in an urban area
- Both Mayors work in harmony
- Jobs and factories entering the area
- Natural resources
- Location
- The community’s reputation
- Developing downtown
- Expanding green space
- Public willing to help one another
- Low cost of living
- Untapped potential
- Low tax rate
- Parks