

City of Evansville Site Redevelopment Plan, Survey + Workshop Results

Updated 2026.04.28

Community Survey

The online community survey, available April 10-27, 2026, was designed to complement the activities of a public open house held on April 16, 2026, to ensure consistency and provide remote opportunities for feedback. The survey received 145 responses, 83% percent of which were submitted by Evansville residents. Respondents were predominantly aged 45-54, homeowners, and have lived in the city for over ten years.

Overall, survey respondents expressed strong interest in redevelopment that would support economic growth for jobs and local businesses. “New housing options” and “improving access and connectivity” also emerged as notable secondary priorities. When asked to consider potential outcomes for the redeveloped site, respondents selected “mixed-use development with commercial and housing” more frequently than any other category. Respondents were also asked to indicate their support for uses organized into four categories; **Table 3.1** highlights land uses which were selected by at least 40% of respondents.

Participants were also asked to rank a set of land use options from one to eleven, with first place indicating their most preferred use and eleventh noting their least preferred use. Highest voted uses included “public park or gathering space,” “restaurant, café, bakery, or bar,” and “retail or professional services.” Least supported uses were “storage facility” and “municipal parking lot.” Seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents stated that their preferred land uses for the site would remain unchanged if neighboring properties were acquired and incorporated within the development. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents support short-term or temporary uses for the site such as food trucks or event space.

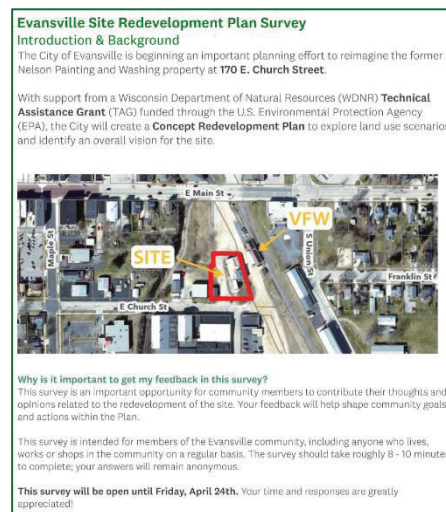
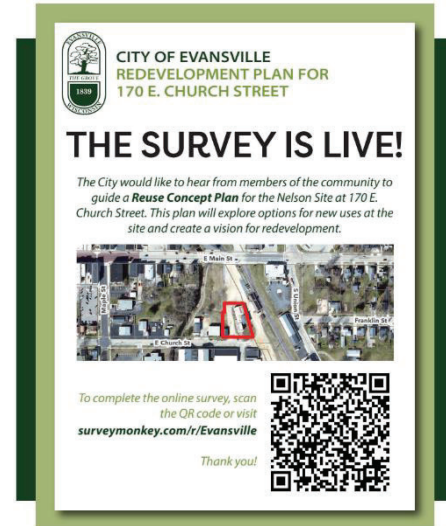


Table 3.1 – Support for Use Types in Survey Results

<p><i>Top-Voted Commercial Uses</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restaurant or food related use (52%) 2. Small shops or boutiques (45%) 3. Café, bakery, or coffee shop (41%) 	<p><i>Top Voted Public/Community Uses</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food truck park or flexible event space (53%) 2. Greenspace or park (47%) 3. Public plaza or gathering space (45%)
<p><i>Top Voted Housing Uses</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upper story apartments above commercial space (52%) 	<p><i>Top Voted Industrial Uses</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No Industrial Use (51%) 2. Light Manufacturing (45%)

In terms of character and scale, respondents favored “downtown-oriented, walkable, traditional” and “natural, green, or park-like” for the design for the site, with preference for one- to three-story building heights to maintain compatibility with surrounding development.

Across open-ended responses, many respondents emphasized the need to grow the local tax base and create jobs. There was concern about timelines, spending, and responsibility for the site’s redevelopment; at the same time, several comments advocated strongly for affordable housing options. Another common theme was the desire to protect and strengthen existing local businesses, with some concern for oversaturation of food and beverage uses. Many respondents expressed enthusiasm for community spaces tied to Allen Creek, including suggestions for a dog park, trails, green space, creek access, farmers markets, outdoor music, and recreation-oriented uses. Considering the visual character of the development, some comments described the current site as visually unappealing and would like to see redevelopment that is attractive, context-sensitive, environmentally responsible, and welcoming to the entire community.

The complete results of this survey are included in *Appendix B*.

Public Open House #1: Visioning Workshop

The project team hosted a public workshop on April 16, 2026, at the local VFW adjacent to the Nelson site. During the workshop, attendees engaged in interactive activities to explore potential uses for the site, which mirrored portions of the community survey released on April 10, 2026. Approximately 30 residents attended the event.



Workshop attendees were given six votes to distribute amongst a variety of land use options in four categories: commercial, housing, industrial, and public uses. The highest scoring land use was “green space or park.” Some attendees proposed additional categories, such as a bandshell or pavilion, or a veterans memorial associated with the VFW.

Sidebar: Top-Voted Land Uses at Open House

1. Green Space or Park (24 votes)
2. Upper-Story Apartments above Commercial Space (13 votes)
3. Public Plaza or Gathering Space (13 votes)

When discussing the site and potential concerns, some attendees mentioned need for parking, especially during community events in Downtown Evansville. Attendees would like to see the continuation of this site used as a flexible event space for events such as the annual Rally in the Alley, and a potential expansion of the seasonal farmer’s market. Many attendees highlighted need for additional housing with a downtown, walkable feel and larger commercial space (with a minimum of 3500 square feet). Many expressed support for a restaurant or food space, though some indicated concern for supporting existing local businesses and prioritized bringing more people to live in downtown.

Participants were also asked to select images of different uses and design character which would be appropriate for the site; images selected by workshop attendees are shown in **Figure 3.1**. The preferred images suggest a walkable environment as an extension of the existing downtown, with supporting images of community events like farmers market, street furniture such as benches, and park or playground space.



Figure 3.1 – Character Images Supported by Workshop Attendees



In the final activity of the workshop, participants had the opportunity to draw their ideal vision for the site. Many attendees included park space, housing, and community facilities in their drawings, indicating support for a mix of active uses for the site.

Examples of Drawings from Workshop Attendees

