



02 VISIONING

Introduction

The planning process exists fundamentally to serve the public interest. A comprehensive plan is a vital tool that helps guide City staff and leadership in realizing the future that residents desire. Because this document acts as the community's primary roadmap, it is essential that public input serves as the cornerstone of every goal and policy within the AdvancingAda Comprehensive Plan.

Through an extensive engagement process, this Plan sought to gather insights from everyone in Ada, including residents, business owners, students, and regional partners, who wished to participate in shaping Ada's future. The following outreach opportunities provided the direct basis for the visions and strategies found in this document:

- **3 Ada Advisory Committee (AAC) Meetings:** Regular working sessions with a dedicated group of local stakeholders to vet data and refine policy directions.
- **2 Community Open Houses:** Interactive, in-person workshops where the public provided hands-on feedback on land use, housing, and community character.
- **3 Online Surveys:** Targeted digital outreach efforts that allowed a broad cross-section of the population to weigh in on specific priorities and concerns.
- **1 Joint Work Session:** A collaborative session involving the Planning Commission and City Council to ensure the Plan's vision aligns with implementation strategies.

This chapter provides a transparent record of each public input opportunity that occurred during the development of the AdvancingAda Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, it establishes the Vision Statement and Goals that City leadership will utilize to ensure that future decisions remain in harmony with the community's long-term aspirations.

Community Engagement Process

The community input and visioning process serves as the vital foundation of the AdvancingAda Comprehensive Plan. Through the collective insights provided by the Ada Advisory Committee (AAC) and the broader community, the City identified key issues and opportunities regarding land use, economic development, housing diversity, and public infrastructure.

This collaborative approach allowed for the formulation of a comprehensive vision and goals that reflects the unique character of Ada while addressing the modern needs of its residents and regional partners. By bridging the desires of the community with technical realities, this process ensured that the resulting recommendations are both ambitious and achievable.

AAC Meeting #1: Kickoff and Community Assessment

Date: April 7, 2026

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Location: Ada Arts and Heritage Center

Purpose: To kick off the project, explain the planning process, and obtain general input about the overall vision for Ada.

Summary: The kick-off meeting successfully established the groundwork for the comprehensive planning process. After a round of introductions, the committee conducted a deep dive into the project's logistics, clarifying how this comprehensive plan serves as a high-level strategic roadmap. A key portion of the discussion focused on distinguishing this effort from the Neighborhood Plans, which are smaller in scale, and the upcoming Unified Development Code (UDC) effort.

The latter half of the meeting transitioned into an analysis of Ada's current landscape and future aspirations. The committee reviewed Chapter 1 (Community Profile), examining updated demographic data to understand the shifting needs of the population. This data-driven approach was complemented by a review of the project website and a summary of public engagement feedback gathered to date. To wrap up the meeting, members participated in a ROAD analysis, identifying specific Resources, Obstacles, Assets, and Desires, alongside a visioning exercise. These collaborative activities provided the initial framework for the plan's core objectives, ensuring that the final document reflects the collective values and priorities of the community.

Ada Arts and Heritage Center April 7, 2026 The Ada R.O.A.D Map	
RESOURCES (The Fuel) What do we have to work with? (e.g., Grant funding, university partnerships, vacant land, staff expertise)	OBSTACLES (The Roadblocks) What's stopping us from moving forward? (e.g., Infrastructure gaps, zoning limits, budget constraints)
ASSETS (The Foundation) What are our unique strengths? (e.g., Historic downtown, local parks, community identity, school pride)	DESIRES (The Destination) What do we want Ada to be in 2040? (e.g., Walkable districts, diverse housing options, tech hubs)



Ada Arts and Heritage Center April 7, 2026 The "Intersection" Exercise	
After filling out your quadrants, look for the connections between them: 1. Leverage: Which Asset can we use to achieve a Desire ? (Example: Use our historic downtown to attract new small businesses)	
2. Strategy: Which Resource can help us remove an Obstacle ? (Example: Use "Penny Tax" funds to fix the drainage issues on Main St.)	
3. Priority: If we could only focus on one quadrant for the next 12 months, which would yield the biggest impact for Ada?	

Key Takeaways

- Increased housing stock and types are needed to encourage continued growth and a high quality of life.
- Partnerships with local organizations, such as the Chickasaw Nation and ECU, are crucial to Ada's success.
- Ada has wonderful resources such as Wintersmith Park, recent Downtown improvements, a new sports complex, and a supportive community (Penny Tax).
- More retail options are desired, including outdoor dining and grocery options.

Community Open House #1

Date: May 2, 2026

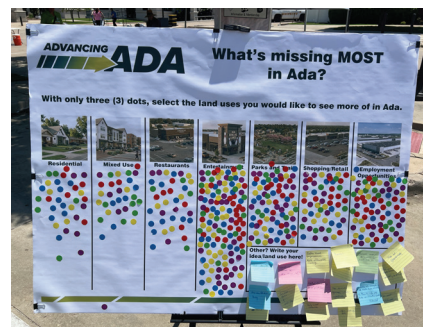
Time: 10:00am-2:00pm

Location: Pontotoc County Court House

Purpose: To provide a transparent platform for residents to learn about the Comprehensive Plan and to share direct feedback regarding the city's current needs and future opportunities. By capturing these perspectives, the City ensured that the resulting vision for Ada is built upon the genuine values and priorities of its people.

Summary: The first community open house for the Comprehensive Plan, hosted during the City's 2nd annual Police Block Party, successfully brought residents together to share their vision for the city's future. Set up outdoors on a beautiful sunny day, the booth featured interactive stations that encouraged casual yet meaningful conversations between community members and the project team.

To gather actionable feedback, the booth utilized hands-on activities, including a dot-voting board and a budgeting exercise. The dot-voting station asked residents to identify what is missing most in Ada regarding land use, allowing them to place colorful stickers under categories ranging from Residential to Parks and Trails. Nearby, the "Vision Ada: The \$3,000 Challenge" invited participants to step into the shoes of the City, distributing blue tokens into clear acrylic boxes to prioritize theoretical funding across various municipal needs, such as Streets & Infrastructure, Public Safety, and Downtown Revitalization.



Key Takeaways

- The dot-voting board revealed a community desire for more entertainment options, including family-oriented entertainment.
- Residents mentioned a need for better sidewalk connections, more attainable housing, and a larger variety of restaurant options.
- Results from the budgeting exercise revealed that residents prioritized funding for housing, streets, and parks and recreation over other municipal categories.

AAC Meeting #2: Land Use, Housing, and Community Design

Date: June 23, 2026

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Location: Ada Arts and Heritage Center

Purpose: To review recent community engagement, finalize the overarching vision statement, and gather detailed feedback on the draft Future Land Use Map and related policy recommendations.

Summary: The meeting began with a brief project recap and a review of the feedback gathered from the recent open house, AAC, and online engagement efforts to date. Building directly on this public input, the committee successfully finalized the project's vision statement. The focus then shifted to future land use, starting with a foundational overview of what a Future Land Use Plan entails. The project team guided the committee through the draft Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and its corresponding land use categories, while also highlighting key chapter recommendations, with a specific focus on topics such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and platting.

To illustrate how these planning concepts apply in practice, the team walked through simulated development examples, clearly demonstrating how the proposed plan will interact with existing zoning regulations and the overall development process. The meeting concluded with highly interactive breakout sessions. Maps depicting the draft FLUM for different segments of the city were distributed across several tables, and AAC members rotated through the stations. This allowed the committee to engage in targeted, area-specific discussions and provide valuable, hands-on feedback to further refine the draft Future Land Use Map.



Key Takeaways

- The Future Land Use Plan was well-received overall and requires minor adjustments to be finalized.
- Minor tweaks to categories should be done to address confusion and provide clarification.
- Reevaluate specific designations on the draft map to ensure commercial uses are prioritized along major frontage roads.
- Change certain areas currently designated as Suburban Residential back to Agriculture, reflecting realistic timelines for long-term development viability.

AAC Meeting #3: Infrastructure, Parks, and Trails

Date: August 25, 2026

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Location: Ada Arts and Heritage Center

Purpose: To review the draft Infrastructure, Parks and Trails, and Implementation chapters, evaluate projected timelines to the Implementation Matrix, and review the Draft Comprehensive Plan for public and official review.

Summary: The meeting began with a short review of the Future Land Use chapter and the changes made since the previous meeting. The committee then reviewed the draft Infrastructure and Parks and Trails chapters and their corresponding policy recommendations. During this phase, the Infrastructure discussion covered all street typologies, existing and recommended thoroughfare maps, water and sewer service maps, and the emergency services map. For the Parks and Trails chapter, the committee examined the level of service maps for each park type in Ada's inventory and evaluated the Centennial Trail extension as a proposed future pedestrian connection.

The project team then introduced the Implementation Chapter, providing guidance on how to navigate and interpret the Implementation Matrix. This overview transitioned into a collaborative breakout work session where AAC members evaluated each proposed action and assigned appropriate timeframes for completion. The meeting wrapped up with a review of the plan's appendices and a summary of recent online engagement efforts.



Name: _____

Topic(s)	Action	Initiation Time Frame				Key City Entities
		1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-10+ Years	Ongoing	
Future Land Use						
Housing and Neighborhoods	Reevaluate "Missing Middle" Housing: Encourage the development of townhomes, duplexes, and cottage courts to fill gaps in the housing market and support affordable housing.					Community Development
Housing and Neighborhoods	Streamline Lot Splits: Allow administrative (not full-scale) approval for standard lot splits and contributions to reduce barriers and costs for lot development.					Community Development, Public Works
Housing and Neighborhoods	Promote Smart Growth Patterns: Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) and Conservation Development to foster walkability, preserve open space, and reduce infrastructure maintenance costs.					Community Development, Public Works
Zoning and Subdivision Framework	Adopt a Unified Development Code (UDC): Consolidate zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and design standards into a single, cohesive, and user-friendly document.					City Manager, Community Development, Legal, Public Works

Worksheet 003 - AAC Meeting #3 August 25, 2026

Topic(s)	Action	Initiation Time Frame				Key City Entities
		1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-10+ Years	Ongoing	
Zoning and Subdivision Framework	Increase Urban Core Flexibility: Allow right-of-way standards in older neighborhoods by allowing reduced setbacks, flexible lot sizes, and reduced mandatory off-street parking minimums.					Community Development, Legal, Public Works
Zoning and Subdivision Framework	Enforce Controlled Parking: Require parking for all land divisions and new developments to protect infrastructure investments and ensure logical street and utility networks.					Community Development, Public Works
Pedestrian Mobility and Connectivity	Maximize New Sidewalk: Require sidewalk installation in all new residential and commercial developments to build a continuous pedestrian network.					Community Development, Public Works
Pedestrian Mobility and Connectivity	Enhance the Downtown ECD Corridor: Upgrade crosswalks, lighting, and pathways to safely and seamlessly connect East Central University with Downtown Ada.					Public Works
Pedestrian Mobility and Connectivity	Target Sidewalk Gaps: Identify and construct missing sidewalk links in existing neighborhoods to improve pedestrian access to parks, schools, and local businesses.					Public Works
Branding, Signage and Landscaping	Reviser Landscaping Requirements: Update development codes to mandate landscaping along street frontages, side yards, and parking lot interiors for all new commercial developments.					Community Development, Public Works

Worksheet 004 - AAC Meeting #3 August 25, 2026

Key Takeaways

- The Committee successfully evaluated the Infrastructure and Parks and Trails chapters, including detailed reviews of service maps and thoroughfare recommendations.
- During a targeted breakout session, AAC members analyzed realistic timelines for the action items detailed in the Implementation Matrix.
- The appendices and results from recent online engagement were reviewed as final supporting elements of the drafting process.
- The AAC approved advancing the Draft Comprehensive Plan to a public Open House, as well as to a joint work session for the Planning Commission and City Council.

Community Open House #2

Date:

Time:

Location:

Purpose:

Summary:

**SUMMARY TO BE COMPLETED
FOLLOWING MEETING**

Joint Work Session: Plan Review and Implementation

Date:

Time:

Location:

Purpose:

Summary:

**SUMMARY TO BE COMPLETED
FOLLOWING MEETING**

Online Engagement - Community Survey

Platform: AdvancingAdaOK.com

Date: March 2026 - July 2026

Participation: 680+ Responses

Summary:

The AdvancingAdaOK Community Survey served as a key online engagement tool to gather citywide perspectives on quality of life, core values, future concerns, and targeted priorities for housing and design.

Over 80% of participants live in Ada, and 60% work in the city, offering a strong representative cross-section of residents, business owners, and students. Results highlighted street infrastructure repairs as the highest long-term concern, alongside strong community demand for enhanced walkability, older home rehabilitation, and downtown revitalization.

Resident
Participation

80.3%

Prioritize Walkability
& Trails

68.1%

Prioritize Repairing
Older Homes

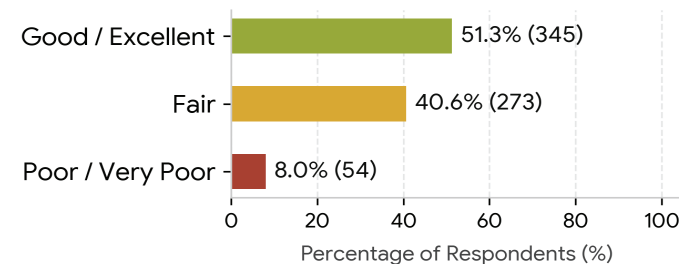
59.8%

Target Streets &
Infrastructure

70.1%

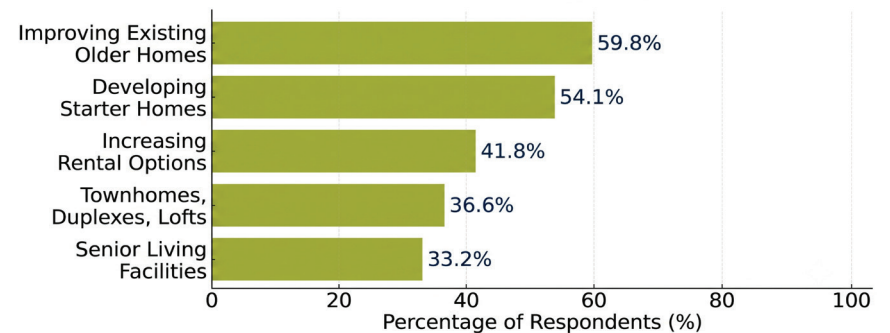
Quality of Life in Ada Today

A breakdown of Survey contributions for question #2: *How would you rate the overall quality of life in Ada today?*



Ada Housing Priorities

A breakdown of Survey contributions for question #5: *Which housing issues do you think the City should prioritize?*



Key Takeaways

- Street & Infrastructure repair is the #1 priority for long-term growth.
- High demand for walkability, sidewalks, and trail connections citywide.
- Focus housing efforts on fixing older homes and starter housing.
- 79.8% view Downtown revitalization as vital to Ada's success.

Online Engagement - Ideas Wall

Platform: AdvancingAdaOK.com

Date: March 2026 - July 2026

Participation: 100+ Contributions & 540+ Community Votes

Summary:

The AdvancingAdaOK Ideas Wall invited residents to respond to a central guiding question: *“How can Ada be improved in the decades to come?”* Serving as an interactive online forum, community members submitted concepts and voted on peer proposals, gathering over 100 ideas and 500 upvotes to highlight the public’s highest priorities. Community proposals centered on enhancing connectivity, expanding indoor recreation, diversifying housing stock, and broadening commercial offerings.

The single most upvoted priority was expanding citywide walkability and non-motorized access, with strong calls for continuous sidewalk networks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails connecting neighborhoods, parks, and East Central University.

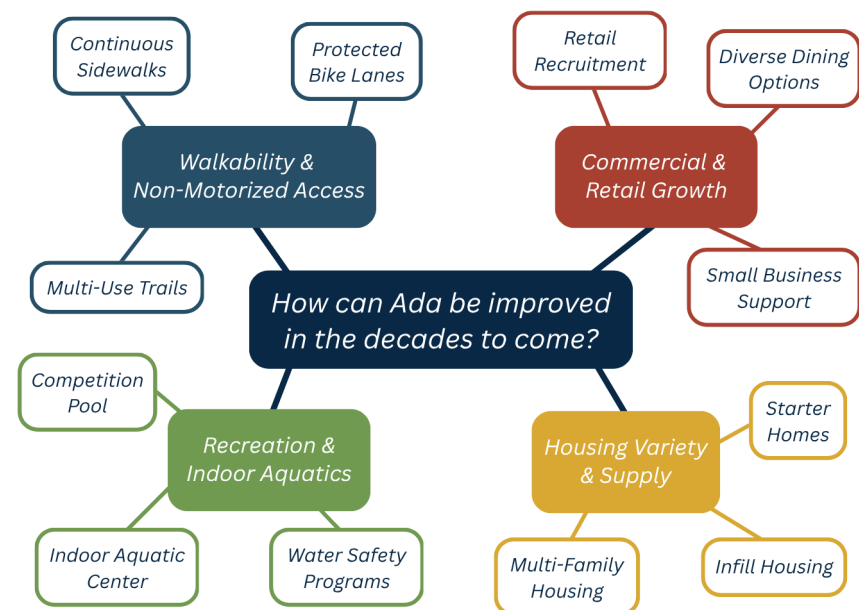
In recreation, residents emphasized developing an indoor competition pool or community aquaplex to support local youth swim teams, water safety, and event hosting.

For housing, feedback stressed greater overall housing diversity and stock, ranging from starter homes and duplexes to multi-family options and repurposing vacant upper-level spaces in downtown buildings into residential lofts.

Finally, contributions highlighted more commercial development with a balanced mix of choices, ranging from larger retailers to small business space and diverse dining options.

Community Vision & Input Map

This bubble map categorizes community-submitted input into four overarching themes, illustrating how broad resident visions translate into specific, actionable priorities for Ada’s long-term growth.



Key Takeaways

- Prioritize interconnected sidewalks, dedicated bike lanes, and multi-use trails to foster a safer, walkable community.
- Investigate partnerships to plan an indoor regional competition pool and sports venue.
- Expand housing choices across all income levels, encouraging starter homes, infill developments, multi-family housing, and upper-story downtown residential conversions.
- Foster a balanced commercial environment that attracts major retailers and dining options, while supporting small local business.

Online Engagement - Interactive Map

Platform: AdvancingAdaOK.com

Date: March 2026 - July 2026

Participation: 25 Posts with 44 Total Votes

Summary:

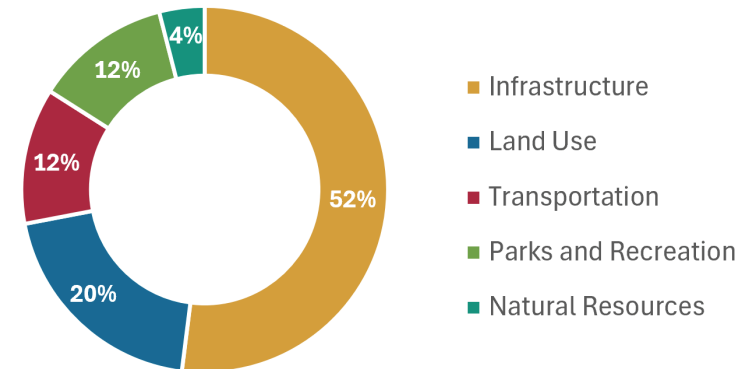
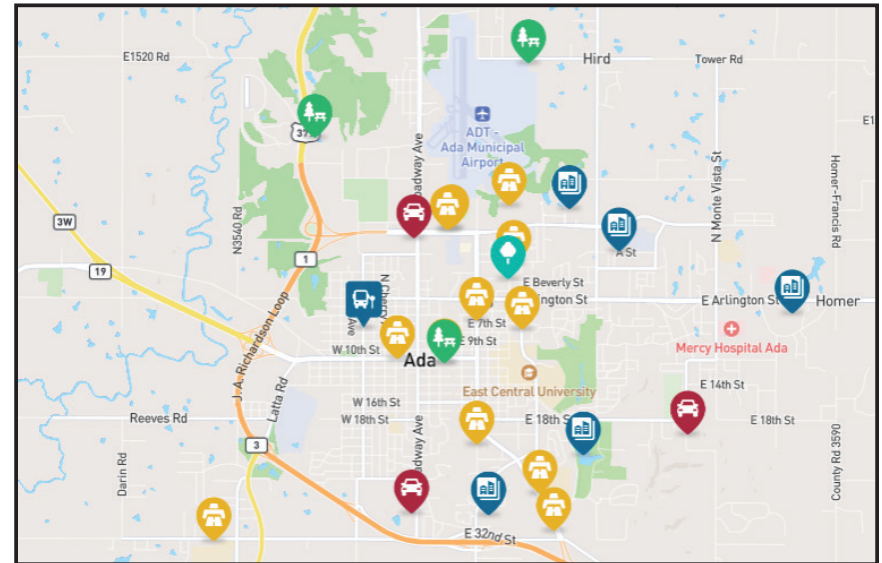
The AdvancingAdaOK Interactive Social Map provided a location-based platform for residents to drop comments directly onto physical spaces across the city. By linking feedback to specific coordinates, the tool helped identify geographic hotspots, corridors, and localized priorities for future investment.

Map contributions directly highlighted community priorities across commercial corridors, transportation networks, recreation facilities, and the downtown core. Residents expressed a strong desire for expanded retail and dining options, emphasizing additional value-oriented clothing and home goods stores, casual dining along primary thoroughfares, and additional grocery and fuel options in underserved areas of the city.

Infrastructure feedback focused on improving overall road quality and addressing street maintenance needs, alongside filling critical sidewalk gaps to safely connect residential neighborhoods with local schools and the university.

For community recreation, submissions called for expanding multi-use trail networks, enhancing lake recreation amenities, adding playgrounds and splash pads near existing sports facilities, and acquiring available vacant land for future public parks.

Finally, feedback emphasized downtown placemaking, advocating evening and weekend activation by repurposing vacant lots into flexible community gathering spaces for food trucks, live music, art events, and outdoor dining.



Key Takeaways

- Strong community desire for commercial infill, retail, and dining developments.
- Fill sidewalk gaps linking major Focus housing efforts on fixing older homes and starter housing.
- Turn empty downtown lots into active community spaces for community events and gathering places.
- Build out trail network, improve park and lake amenities.

Vision Statement

A vision statement serves as the foundation of the AdvancingAda Comprehensive Plan, providing an encompassing narrative that describes the overriding needs and desires of Ada's residents, leadership, and stakeholders. It is the "North Star" that ensures every policy and development decision made over the next two decades moves the City toward a shared destination.

Throughout the visioning process, residents and leaders engaged in meaningful dialogue to define what Ada should ultimately become. These collective expressions were carefully synthesized

from the issues and opportunities identified during Ada Advisory Committee (AAC) work sessions, community open houses, and a series of online surveys.

By grounding the vision in direct public feedback, we ensure that the resulting statement is not just a high-level concept, but a true reflection of the community's values. All information gathered during this collaborative process was used to craft the following vision statement, which serves as the guiding light for the remainder of this Plan and its corresponding recommendations.



Ada is a thriving regional South-Central Oklahoma community built on unique partnerships with citizens, institutions, and tribal neighbors, working to expand housing opportunity, improve how residents move around the city, and create a place where people choose to **stay, invest, and grow.**