

SUBJECT LINE: Eupora 2040 Action Circles - What We Heard — August 27, 2026

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the first **Eupora 2040 Action Circles meeting** on August 27 at the Eupora Civic Center.

The Action Circles grew out of ideas and priorities shared during the Welcome Table retreat, the August public meeting, and other community conversations. Seven themes continued to rise to the top, and participants chose the area they were most interested in exploring. Each group then began moving from “**What do we want?**” toward “**What could we actually do?**”

Across the evening, one message came through clearly: Eupora already has many of the people, places, skills, relationships, and resources needed to build a stronger future. Our challenge is to connect them, make participation easier, and begin turning good ideas into visible action.

1. Civic Trust, Belonging & Shared Leadership

Participants emphasized that trust grows through respectful, responsive, accountable leadership and through making sure people across differences of race, class, disability, and background feel welcomed and heard. The group also discussed the importance of recognizing and drawing upon the talents of people already connected to Eupora. Possible early steps include creating a **community volunteer registry** and an inventory of churches, civic organizations, and groups that need volunteers.

2. Accessibility, Mobility & Welcome

This group focused on making Eupora easier and more enjoyable to navigate for everyone. Ideas included better ADA access, safer pedestrian crossings, improved steps and ramps, more public seating, stronger connections between schools, parks, downtown, and White’s Creek Lake, and more art and beautification. Early ideas include an **accessibility/ADA audit** and a survey to better understand transportation needs.

3. Children, Youth, Schools & Lifelong Opportunities

Participants strongly supported creating a **youth advisory group** so young people can help shape Eupora 2040 themselves. Other ideas included youth interest surveys, stronger communication among schools, parents, churches, employers, and community organizations, college and career preparation, trade and life-skills workshops, mentoring, entrepreneurship, and greater support for families navigating school requirements.

A youth meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 16 at 4:00 p.m. at 24 N. Dunn Street** to begin listening directly to young people and exploring a youth advisory committee.

4. Housing, Neighborhoods, Infrastructure & Care of Place

The housing group discussed strengthening neighborhoods while expanding affordable housing

choices. Ideas included smaller starter and retirement homes, aging-in-place design, more flexibility in city ordinances, rehabilitation assistance for existing homeowners, and making better use of vacant lots that already have water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure. Participants also supported mapping vacant and deteriorated properties and bringing together **banks, builders, realtors, housing advocates, and the City** to explore practical housing strategies.

One particularly strong idea was to **pilot solutions rather than wait until every problem can be solved at once**—try something in one neighborhood, learn from it, and build from there.

5. A Distinctive Local Economy

This circle kept returning to a simple question: **How can more of the money Euporans already spend circulate within Eupora?**

Participants discussed locally needed services, transportation, manufacturing and trades, restaurants and retail, reusing vacant buildings, and supporting entrepreneurs. Possible next steps include a small-business or entrepreneurial training program, research into business incubators and cooperative models, and other strategies that help local people create businesses and jobs.

6. Gathering Places, Recreation & Public Life

Participants generated a wide range of ideas for getting people out, active, and together: pickleball, disc golf, improvements at White's Creek Lake, music, movies, festivals, performing arts, block parties, recreation for young people, and more public events.

Possible early actions include community movie nights, seasonal block parties, and expanded festivals and events. Participants also emphasized the need for an easily accessible **community event calendar** so people know what is happening.

7. Eupora's Story, Communication & Invitation

This group explored ways to tell Eupora's story more fully while keeping residents better informed. Ideas included oral histories with former Webster County Training School and Eupora High School students, stories from longtime residents and people who have moved away, youth storytelling projects, a community cookbook, skill-sharing, and regular Eupora 2040 updates.

Participants also made an important point: **Eupora's history has not been experienced the same way by everyone.** Telling the community's story well means making room for both joyful memories and more difficult experiences.

The **Eupora 2040 website is now live**, and it will continue to serve as a place to share planning updates, meeting notes, community ideas, and opportunities to participate.

What Happens Next?

The Action Circles are not intended to produce seven long lists that sit on a shelf. The goal is to begin identifying:

What can we do soon? What requires more research or resources? Who else needs to be at the table? And who can help carry the work forward?

The next major public meeting will be **September 24 at the Eupora Civic Center**. The City of Eupora, Belinda Stewart Architects, The SouthWay Foundation, and planning partners will reflect back what they have heard so far and share research, maps, and possibilities related to each of the seven themes. The meeting will give residents another opportunity to respond, add ideas, and help prioritize what should move forward.

Among the materials being developed are maps of potential housing infill sites, information about vacant and underused properties, possible accessibility problem areas, inventories of civic and youth organizations, ideas for new community activities, and other tools that can help move the conversation from aspiration toward implementation.

Eupora 2040 belongs to the people who call Eupora home. Thank you to everyone who has shown up, shared an idea, asked a difficult question, volunteered, or simply begun imagining what might be possible.

We are listening. We are learning. And we are beginning to act.