



Agenda
Comprehensive Planning Committee
April 28, 2026, at 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Council Chambers, Second Floor, Auburn Hall

1. **ROLL CALL:** Committee members and staff
2. **MINUTES:** Minutes from March 24th, 2026
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
4. **LD 2173 OVERVIEW:** BerryDunn will provide a brief presentation on LD 2173. LD 2173 clarifies some of the components within LD 1829, LD 427, and LD 997.
5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DISCUSSION:** BerryDunn will discuss the feedback that was received during the Open House Events, on the Comprehensive Plan website, and the summer of 2025.
6. **FUTURE LAND USE MAP – DESCRIPTIONS:** The Committee will review the written descriptions for each of the land use categories to ensure the descriptions align with current and future land uses.
7. **FUTURE LAND USE MAP – BOUNDARIES:** The Committee will review the boundaries of each of the land use categories to ensure the boundaries align with current and future land uses.
8. **POLICIES & ACTIONS UPDATE:** Lauren will provide an overview of the current work on the Policies section and what to expect for the May Comprehensive Plan Meetings.
9. **SCHEDULE UPDATE:** BerryDunn will provide an overview of the schedule for the next six months.
10. **NEXT MEETING:** May 19th and May 26th, 2026
11. **ADJOURNMENT**



Comprehensive Planning Committee Minutes - DRAFT

March 24, 2026, at 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Council Chambers, Second Floor, Auburn Hall

1. ROLL CALL: Committee members and staff

Denis Bergeron, Kelly Butler (arrived at 6:10 p.m.), John Cleveland, Beckie Conrad, Jane Costlow, Mathieu Duvall, Jeff Harmon, Bilal Hussein, Paul Jacques, Bruce Rioux, Rex Rhodes, Dana Staples, and Rick Whiting (arrived at 6:15 p.m.)

Absent: Lauren Caffé, Riley Bergeron and Tim Cowan

Consultant members present from BerryDunn: Ali Tobey and Ashley Aaron

Staff members present: Phil Crowell (City Manager) and Denis D'Auteuil (Assistant City Manager)

2. MINUTES: Minutes from March 19th, 2026

Motion was made by Denis Bergeron and seconded by Jeff Harmon to approve the March 19, 2026, minutes as written. Vote: 10-0. Motion Carries

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephen Beale of 575 Johnson Road says the historic Laurel Avenue–Newbury neighborhood has deteriorated significantly and is at high risk of further decline, urging the city to prioritize efforts to preserve and improve it.

4. POLICIES & ACTIONS UPDATE: Lauren will provide an overview of the current work on the Policies and Actions.

Lauren was absent due to unforeseen circumstances, so the overview of the current work on the Policies and Actions was not presented.

5. FINALIZE DRAFT OF LAND USE CATEGORIES: The Committee will finalize a draft of the land use categories.



Staff reviewed updates to the growth area map. Several parcels were moved to Moderate or Low Growth, and new high-density core areas were added at the mall, Great Falls Plaza, and Exit 75. The downtown boundary was expanded slightly.

The airport-adjacent parcel will stay as it is for now. Lauren will meet with state and farmland groups, and the committee will review the parcel again afterward. Members also received updated land-use descriptions, including new language for high-density cores. The High Growth boundary will not change.

At Exit 75, the front of a large parcel will remain High Growth, and the back will shift to Moderate Growth. The Moose Brook area was placed in a transition zone. Members stressed that building height and density should decrease gradually as development moves away from downtown, and they want simple, flexible rules that avoid being overly restrictive.

The committee supported a few boundary changes, including adding the former Subaru site and nearby apartments to the mall district. They also noted traffic and access concerns, especially around East Hardscrabble. The Great Falls boundary will be expanded to include nearby civic buildings and extended north to Hampshire and Union Streets.

Members prefer mixed-use buildings in high-density cores, with active ground floors and housing above. The group agreed the plan should communicate clearly what the city hopes to see so future development aligns with long-term goals.

6. CONFIRM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN: BerryDunn and Lauren will present the April community engagement plan for the Future Land Use map and Land Use Categories.

The committee talked about plans for the upcoming community engagement events and public presentation. The dates—April 7, 8, 13, and 15—still need to be confirmed. The goal is to offer simple, easy-to-understand in-person and online activities so residents can react to the draft future land use map without needing any planning background. The open houses will use visual boards, clear explanations, and real-world examples to help people understand growth areas and share useful feedback.

Members stressed the importance of keeping the events welcoming, explaining new state law requirements, and improving outreach through translated surveys, flyers,



and community networks. They suggested adding a Saturday session, avoiding Mondays because of budget workshops, and using elementary schools—especially Washburn Elementary—to better reach non-English-speaking and underrepresented groups.

Committee members were asked to attend the events, help answer questions, and explain the reasoning behind earlier decisions. After the engagement sessions, staff will pull together all feedback for the April meeting so the committee can confirm or adjust the draft materials.

7. NEXT MEETING: April 28th, 2026

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.



City of Auburn Comprehensive Plan Update

Comprehensive Plan Committee

April 28, 2026

Legislative Overview

- ▲ In 2025, the State Legislature passed several bills that relate to the comprehensive plan process
 - LD 997
 - LD 1829
- ▲ In April 2026, the Legislature passed additional legislation refining parts of LD 1829 and 997
 - [LD 2173](#)

LD 2173 Overview

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

1. Municipalities must allow at least one ADU on lots with single-family, two-unit, or three-unit dwellings in any residential zoning district.
2. Municipalities may not require planning board approval solely because a project includes an ADU or up to four units in a single structure.

Minimum Residential Densities

1. In all residential areas, municipalities must allow at least three units per lot.
2. Four units per lot must be allowed if the lot:
 1. Is in a designated growth area, or
 2. Is served by both public water and public sewer
3. Municipalities may allow more units but may not allow fewer

LD 2173 Overview

Infrastructure-Based Lot Size and Density Limits

The law refines minimum lot size and density caps based on infrastructure availability:

1. Growth areas with public sewer and water:
 1. Max minimum lot size: 5,000 sq ft
 2. Max lot area per unit (first 4 units): 1,250 sq ft
 1. This is the same density as discussed under LD 1821
2. Outside growth areas but with public sewer and water:
 1. Max minimum lot size: 10,000 sq ft
3. Growth areas without public sewer:
 1. Max minimum lot size: 20,000 sq ft
 2. No density standard more restrictive than state shoreland law for the first four units

Affordable Housing Incentives

1. Affordable housing developments must be allowed:
 1. 2.5× base density where multifamily housing is permitted
 2. Reduced parking requirements (no more than 2 spaces per 3 units)
2. Eligible projects may exceed local height limits by at least one story or 14 feet (up to 55 feet total), subject to fire safety approval, in growth areas or where public water/sewer is available.

LD 2173 Overview

Clarifications and Targeted Exemptions

1. Defines “public sewer system” to ensure statewide consistency: *“A "public sewer system" means a sewer system managed, owned or operated by a municipality or quasi-municipal entity that is a municipal sewer department, a sewer district as defined in Title 38, section 1032, subsection 3, a standard district as defined in Title 38, section 1032, subsection 4 or a sanitary district formed under Title 38, chapter 11.”*
2. Explicit exemptions for:
 1. Drinking water watersheds in Lewiston and Auburn
 2. Coastal barriers, flood hazard areas, and coastal sand dunes (if locally exempted).
3. Clarifies that residential siting rules do not apply in industrial zones in certain contexts.
4. Child care facilities and family child care providers must be an allowed use in all areas zoned residential
5. Municipalities must comply by July 1, 2027

Future Land Use Open House and Online Feedback Results

As part of the City's comprehensive planning process, a series of future land use open houses and an accompanying online survey were designed to gather community feedback on draft future land use categories and growth patterns. These activities focused on understanding how residents, workers, and stakeholders experience Auburn today -- and how they feel about change over time -- so that future land use policies and maps reflect shared values and local context.

A key component of this outreach was the use of visual preference exercises. Land use can be complex and use abstract topics, often relying on technical terms or concepts that are difficult to visualize. Visual preference tools help make these discussions more approachable and tangible by allowing participants to react to images that show different building types, scales, and patterns of development. Rather than asking people to respond to technical descriptions, these visuals support more intuitive feedback about what kinds of places feel appropriate or comfortable in different parts of the community.

In addition to visual preference questions, participants were asked a series of growth-related questions intended to capture lived experience and local perception. These questions explored where growth feels most appropriate and where there may be concerns about impacts such as traffic, scale, or neighborhood fit. Together, this feedback helps highlight not only where growth may be supported, but also why certain areas generate support or concern.

About 15 people attended in-person open-house events, and 10 people provided feedback online. To inform the community of feedback opportunities, the City conducted targeted email outreach to over 1,500 organizations and individuals who have been engaged in the process previously. Feedback opportunities were also shared on the City's social media sites, project website, Absolutely Auburn podcast, and in the Sun Journal. Comprehensive Plan Committee members also conducted targeted outreach to their networks. Following outreach 420 individuals visited the project website to learn more about the project.

Appendix A contains additional feedback received throughout the project related to land use. This includes feedback from previous surveys, open houses, and pop-up events.

The results compiled below reflect themes and patterns from community input. They are intended to inform the Comprehensive Plan Committee's refinement of future land use categories, policies, and mapping, balancing the community's aspirations for growth with respect for existing neighborhoods, natural features, and the qualities that make Auburn a desirable place to live and work.

Future Land Use Open House Feedback (online and in person)

1. In Auburn, what areas are appropriate for the MOST amount of change or growth?

No.	Responses
1	The city looks torn up. So many ugly clearcuts all over the place. It's embarrassing. That huge pit on mt hope avenue for example. That should be reclaimed. I'd love to see Auburn focus on beautification. Also I'd love to see a water/ splash playground go in Somewhere. The kids and everyone would love it. It would be a wonderful addition.
2	I'm not qualified to answer this question
3	The areas most appropriate for the greatest amount of growth in Auburn are those with existing infrastructure, particularly downtown and key corridors such as Main Street, Court Street, and Center Street, where higher-density, mixed-use development can be supported. Growth should also be prioritized in areas near transportation routes, employment centers, and essential services like schools and healthcare, ensuring that expansion is both accessible and connected to opportunity. Additionally, underutilized or vacant parcels, including former industrial or commercial sites, present strong opportunities for infill development that can increase housing supply without contributing to sprawl. Overall, Auburn should focus on compact, infrastructure-aligned growth that strengthens the local economy while promoting equitable and sustainable community development.
4	What is wrong with CURRENT zoning regulations? Were they not originally created to clearly delineate and define commercial districts and differentiate between single family zoned areas versus areas zoned to preserve and protect areas where multi family homes predominate?
5	I would love to see the city lean into growth and change in the downtown and New Auburn areas that are centered in creative placemaking practice/vision and true community cultivation, rather than just allowing opportunities for investors to come in and make a buck.
6	No comment.
7	202 corridor.
8	Mixed-use neighborhoods lead to more walkable businesses.

2. What concerns you most about recent or future development?

No.	Responses
1	Natural resources
2	Natural resources/ equitable access to greenspace
3	Removal of acres from AG zone
4	Need promotion of famrs, forests, habitat, green space

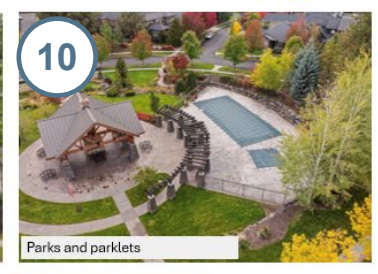
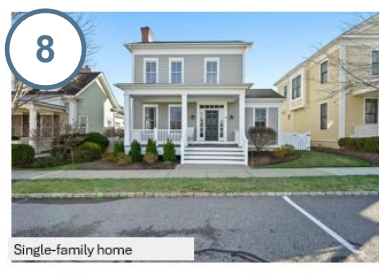
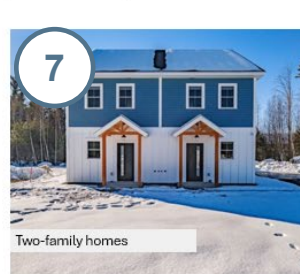
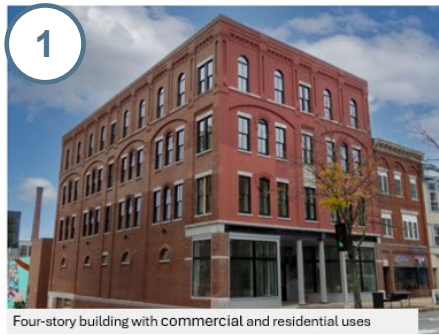
No.	Responses
5	My concern is in regards to potential development along Perkins Ridge Road and the area near Lost Valley. Perkins Ridge Road is clearly an agricultural area with orchards where farm equipment and pest controls are regularly used. That area should be zoned agricultural. The area near Lost Valley could be more appropriately used as an outdoor recreational space with trails in congruence with the current activities at the Valley. In addition, it's proximity to Taylor Pond requires natural spaces that protect the water quality. Given the emphasis citizens have placed on preserving natural spaces, development of any more residential or commercial space does not support that priority.
6	It appears that developers have the last word here and have little regard for environmental impacts such as the new clear cut and blasting by Taylor brook. That's my neck of the woods. There are clear cuts everywhere. I hope some of them will become decent lower cost housing.
7	Throughout this presentation I see "cluster development options" (i.e. "Homes close together to protect open space" in your parlance) but I have not seen any of this type of development in Auburn. I think we should prioritize this type of development when looking at the Compact Residential Area, The Neighborhood Transition area, and especially if large tracks are to be considered for development in the in the Agriculture, Forestry, Recreation, and Open Space area. Any development on a parcel larger than 35 acres ought to be required to use this approach to preserve open land for as long as possible.
8	My primary concern is that future development may occur in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner, leading to increased sprawl, traffic congestion, and strain on existing infrastructure. Without intentional planning, there is a risk that housing patterns will prioritize quantity over quality and affordability, potentially contributing to displacement and limiting access for working families. I am also concerned about the loss of natural resources and green spaces if growth is not aligned with environmental stewardship. Additionally, development that lacks cohesive design and community integration may weaken neighborhood identity and social cohesion. Overall, the greatest concern is that growth may proceed without a clear, equity-centered strategy that aligns housing, transportation, infrastructure, and environmental sustainability.
9	I'm suspicious of the need and motives for this current "planning"...or is it a rezoning activity. In an older, well established community like the city of Auburn, why is any kind of sweeping rezoning activity even being considered?
10	I worry about residential development that feels disconnected from any sense of neighborhood, community, or place, aside from proximity to the stretches of mostly devoid-of-character chain retail and service-oriented businesses.
11	No.

3. Future Me Activity

No.	Responses
Where do you envision you and your family living?	
1	In an apartment/multifamily home/neighborhood
2	Unsure
How will you get around?	

No.	Responses
1	Walk and bike
2	Unsure
What amenities will be nearby?	
1	Access to open space, bicycle infrastructure, local convenience store, school, cafe/business, office, pedestrian-centered infrastructure
2	Unsure
What types of places matter?	
1	Cultural, parks, schools, and third spaces (social)
2	open space, parks, walking trails, biking trails

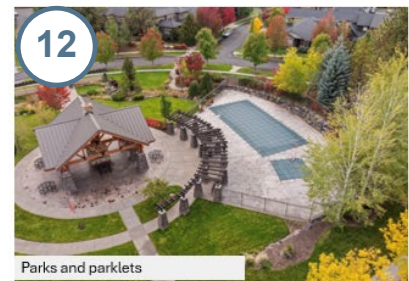
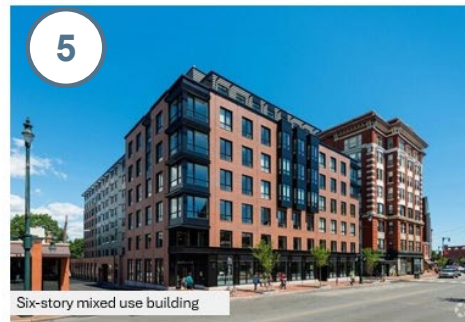
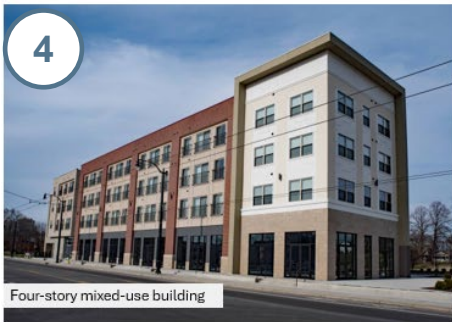
4. Downtown – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Four-story building with commercial and residential uses	6
2	Four- to five-story residential building	1
3	Three-story building with commercial and residential uses	2
4	Three- to four-story homes	3
5	Three-story building with commercial and residential uses	4
6	Two-family homes with shared public space	1

No.	Options	Number of Votes
7	Two-family homes	1
8	Single-family home	1
9	Single-family home	0
10	Parks and parklets	7
11	Three- to four-story residential	4
12	Four- to five-story residential building	2
Other:		
Opportunities - near bus station, hotel, elder housing, parking lot		
More affordable housing! Less urban sprawling ugly developments		
For large affordable housing - need a good, usable open-space next to it.		

5. High Density Cores – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Four-story mixed-use buildings	0
2	Four-story mixed-use buildings	3
3	Two-story commercial building	0
4	Four-story mixed-use buildings	0
5	Six-story mixed use building	3

No.	Options	Number of Votes
6	Four-story apartment building	2
7	Five-story mixed use building	4
8	Three-story mixed-use building	2
9	Three-story apartment building	2
10	Shopping center redevelopment- three- to five-story buildings	2
11	Shopping center redevelopment- one- to four-story buildings	6
12	Parks and parklets	7
Other:		
Grocery store on southern side		
Grocery store by exit 75		
Have aesthetic requirements to enhance Auburn's "character" such as in 4-story mixed use picture - respect history of the Town		

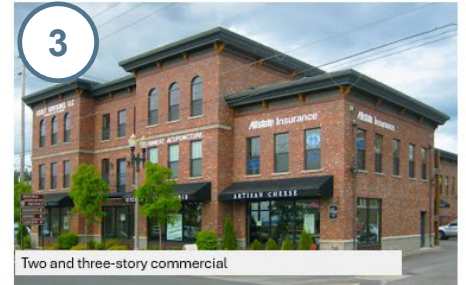
6. Mixed Use Corridor – What does future growth look like in this area?



Four-story residential building



Three-story building with commercial and residential uses



Two and three-story commercial



Four-story commercial building



Flexible office or manufacturing space



Attached single-family homes



One- or two-story commercial buildings



One- or two-story commercial buildings



One-story commercial building



Three-story building with commercial and residential uses



Three-story residential building

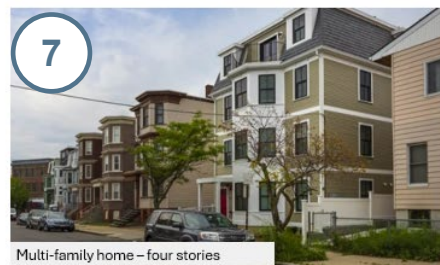


Two-story commercial building

No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Four-story residential building	1
2	Three-story building with commercial and residential uses	2
3	Two- and three-story commercial	4
4	Four-story commercial building	4
5	Flexible office or manufacturing space	2
6	Attached single-family homes	1

No.	Options	Number of Votes
7	One- or two-story commercial buildings	2
8	One- or two-story commercial buildings	2
9	One-story commercial building	0
10	Three-story building with commercial and residential uses	4
11	Three-story residential building	1
12	Two-story commercial building	3
Other:		
Add protections for brooks and streams; abolish 25-foot rule in Auburn and abide by state shoreland 75' and 100'		
Stop clear-cutting trees — more trees!		
More attractive like [four-story commercial building]; vertical sprawl is better than horizontal; current Minot Ave pics.		
Spaces with balconies and patios would be very attractive.		
When developing, consider that grass doesn't add anything environmentally and costs in upkeep and environmental impact, think low-impact when planning livability.		

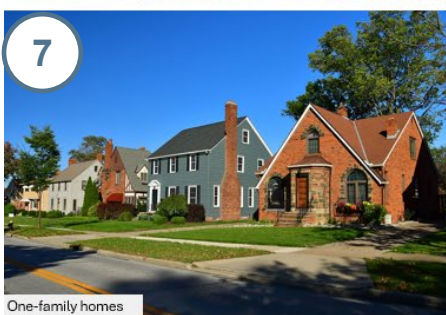
7. Mixed Use Neighborhood – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Attached one-family homes	2
2	Multi-family home - three stories	1
3	Multi-family home - three stories	3
4	Two-family home	1
5	One- and two-family homes with shared public space	4
6	Two-family homes	0

No.	Options	Number of Votes
7	Multi-family home - four stories	3
8	One-family home	1
9	One-family homes	2
10	Multi-family home - four to five stories	0
11	Neighborhood-scale business	5
12	Multi-unit commercial building	1
Other:		
New of funding to support pocket parks and open community greenspace		
Rethink high density core locations. More of those in-town.		

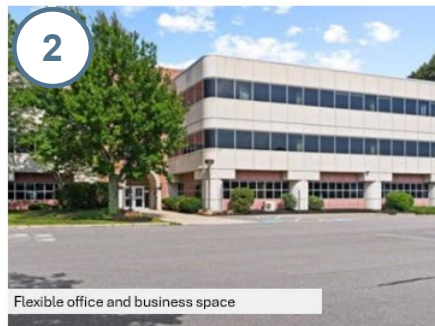
8. Compact Residential – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	One-family homes with shared public space	2
2	One-family homes with shared public space	2
3	Two-family homes with shared public space	3
4	One- and two-family homes with shared public space	4
5	One-family homes	0
6	One-family homes	2

No.	Options	Number of Votes
7	One-family homes	1
8	Attached one-family homes	1
9	Cluster-style developments	2
10	Cluster-style developments	3
11	Neighborhood-scale businesses	4
Other:		
Dog Park		
Cluster housing with shared space		
Where is there parking? Off-street parking preferred (roads narrow)		
Cluster housing with green space		
One-family homes for compact residential		
Better protection of all water bodies. Streams and brooks need protection and offer benefits with access!		

9. Industrial – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Agriculture and food production business	4
2	Flexible office and business space	3
3	Small-scale manufacturing and warehouses	1
4	Large industrial and manufacturing centers	2
5	Large industrial and manufacturing centers	1
6	Large warehouse and manufacturing centers	1

No.	Options	Number of Votes
7	Multi-story office, health care, or manufacturing	2
8	Flexible office and business space	2
9	Small-scale manufacturing and warehouses	5
Other:		
	Space/building for multiuse sports complex (shared parking/space clearing)	
	How about a bar/restaurant at the old Building next to the airport	
	No more solar	
	If you as leaders want to continue this solar insanity where the Serfs have to pay the solar thieves 30 cents/kwh to let them [illegible] and we pay them in taxes - you leaders need to pay back the citizens the overage from your personal funds.	
	Be careful of pollutants that manufacturing produces or find a way to offset it	
	Small scale manufacturing /non-toxic AFP	
	No AI data centers	
	More solar	
	Solar and/or wind farms	
	Tree ordinances - require tree buffers and enforce codes around that. Environment first rather than as afterthought.	
	Require solar for industrial developers. Incentives and penalties around buffers and trees. Consider allotting residential more carefully.	

10. Neighborhood Transition – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Cluster-style developments	5
2	Homes on small and medium sized lots	2
3	Cluster-style developments	1
4	Homes along street fronts on medium-sized lots	0
5	Two-family homes on small lots	2

No.	Options	Number of Votes
6	Homes on a moderate-size lot	1
7	Backyard cottage or accessory dwelling unit	5
8	One-family homes on small lots	0
9	One- and two-family homes with shared public space	1
10	Neighborhood-scale retail	3
Other:		
Shared driveways instead of building city-specific roads - i.e., eliminating road frontage requirements will open more compact development		
Walking park trail around Lake Auburn		
Auburn has areas problems in trying to control your subjects to limitations that make it so costly to build your own house without bowing to the control freaks who claim to be leaders. Not leaders, control freaks.		
Would love to see walking trails in these areas.		

11. Residential Corridor – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Farms and homes clustered around the street front	4
2	Homes clustered along the street front	4
3	Farms and agricultural uses with a home	1
4	Homes clustered along the street front	1
5	Homes clustered along the street front	0
6	Farms and agricultural uses with a home	4
7	Homes on large lots	1
8	Homes on a large lot	2

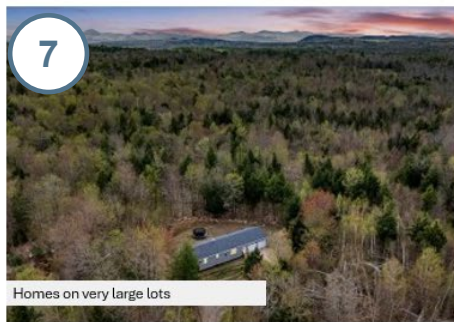
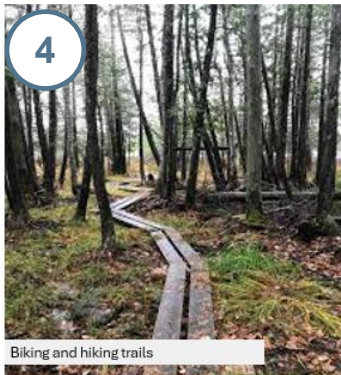
12. Agriculture, Forestry, Open Space, and Recreation – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Farms and agriculture-based businesses	5
2	Small-scale agricultural businesses	5
3	Trails	7
4	Homes on a very large lot	0
5	Homes on large lots	3
6	Agro-tourism	6
7	Forests and open spaces	5
8	Recreation-based businesses	4
9	Forestry-based businesses	3

No.	Options	Number of Votes
Other:		
	Is there a way to work with private landowners to establish public use trails in the south of Auburn by Durham?	
	The insanity of the ag. restrictions shows me the small "L" leaders in Auburn are not leaders but monarchies and controllers only. They get their jollies off by controlling their "subjects." Mental _____ control freaks.	
	Small farm land 9 or less acres need to build houses. People can farm for the single family. We do not have many small lots in the City that would change the outlook of the farmland around us. Let people build.	

13. Drinking Water Protection – What does future growth look like in this area?



No.	Options	Number of Votes
1	Farms and forestry-based businesses	2
2	Farms and forestry-based businesses	0
3	Lake access	1
4	Biking and hiking trails	3
5	Accessible walking paths	7
6	Biking and hiking trails	5
7	Homes on very large lots	1
8	Open space and forests	6

No.	Options	Number of Votes
Other:		
	Walking path around Lake Auburn like Portland's Back Cove (I realize this is expensive)	
	Walking trail	

Appendix A: FLU Feedback (All Events)

1.0 Questions

1.1 Community Visioning Survey

- What do you value most about Auburn?
- What changes would have the greatest positive impact on your family's quality of life?
- How do you see your (and your family's) transportation needs changing in the next 10 years?
- How do you see your household's housing needs changing in the next 10 years?
- In 10 years, what is your vision for the City of Auburn? What changes would you like to see made to achieve this vision?

1.2 Middle and High School Student Survey

- What are your favorite places in Auburn?
- If you could change one thing about Auburn, what would it be?
- What kinds of places do you wish existed for someone your age?
- Describe Your Ideal Place to Live. What Does It Look Like? What Businesses, Parks, or Other Places Does It Have? How Do You Get Around?

1.3 Social Pinpoint, Open Houses, and Pop-Up Events

- What types of places do you wish you or your family could walk or bike to?
- Which housing initiative should the City prioritize?
- What types of housing do you think are needed to support Auburn residents in the future?
- What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Auburn?
- What types of commercial development do you think would benefit economic growth in Auburn?
- What economic investments would you prioritize (allocate 5 buttons)?
- What do you think the City should do to protect water and natural resources? (Open-ended)
- What is the future of the AGRP zone? (Open-ended)

1.4 Focus Group Themes

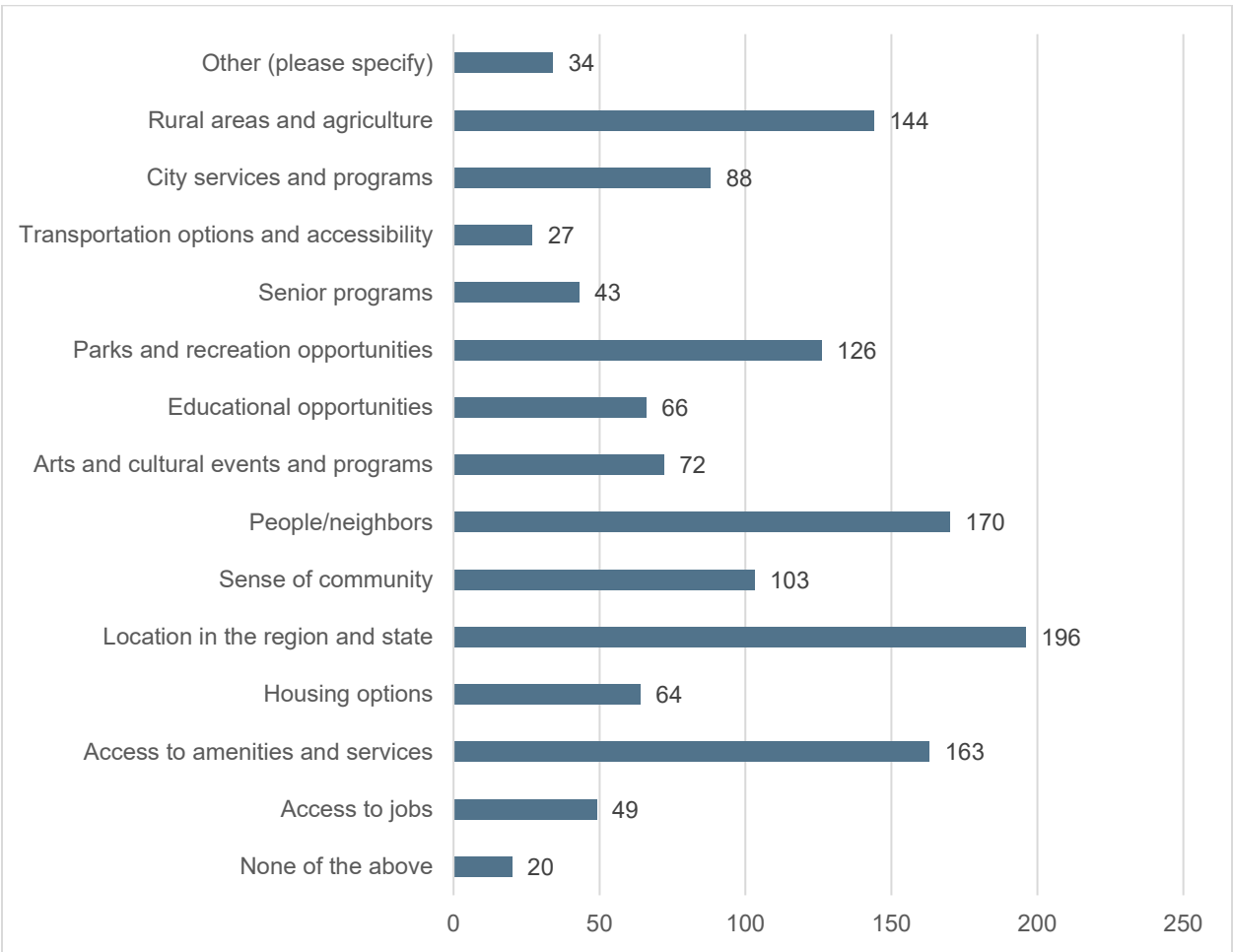
This section contains key themes from all focus group tables at the event. Themes relate to strengths, challenges, and goals.

2.0 Community Feedback Results

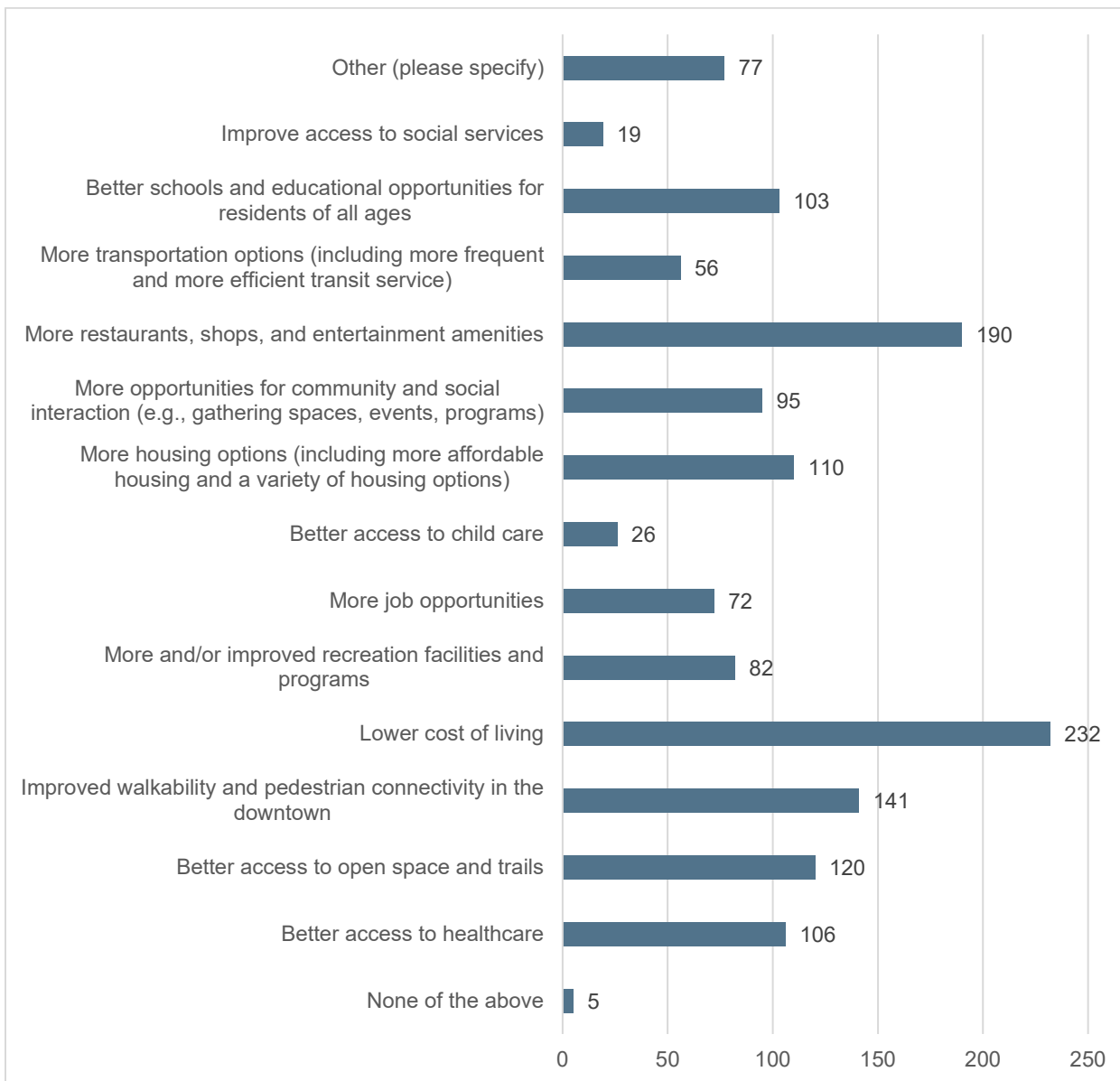
2.1 Community Visioning Survey

Below are survey responses related to land use. In total, there were 541 participants that responded to the survey.

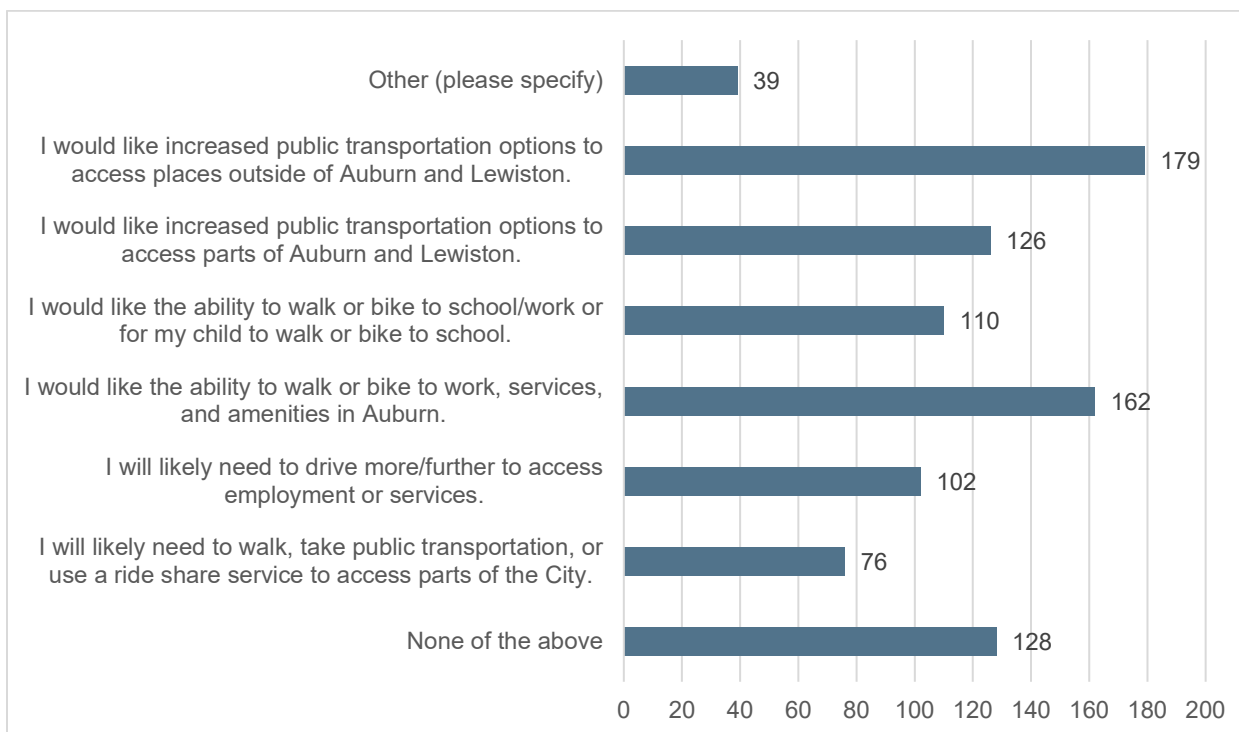
1. What do you value most about Auburn?



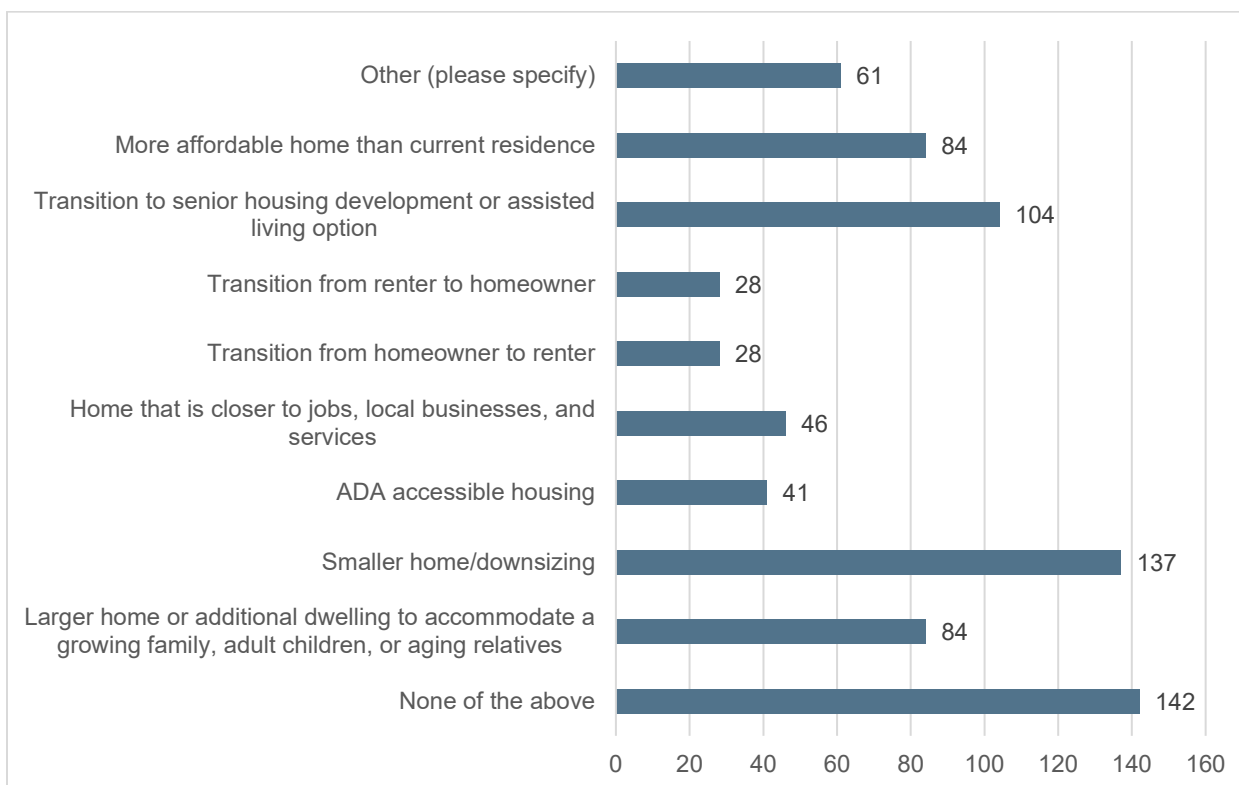
2. What changes would have the greatest positive impact on your family's quality of life?



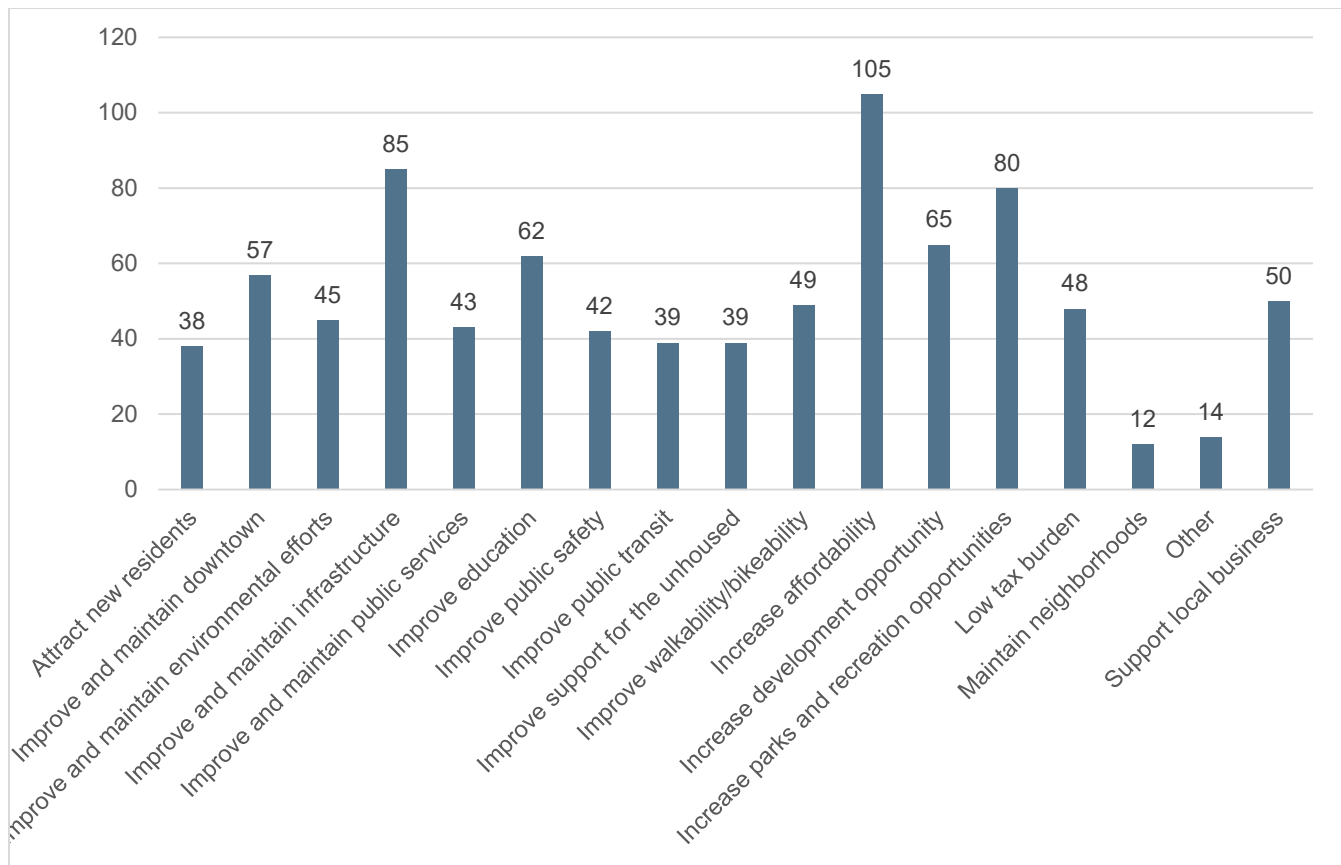
3. How do you see your (and your family's) transportation needs changing in the next 10 years?



4. How do you see your household's housing needs changing in the next 10 years?



5. In 10 years, what is your vision for the City of Auburn? What changes would you like to see made to achieve this vision?

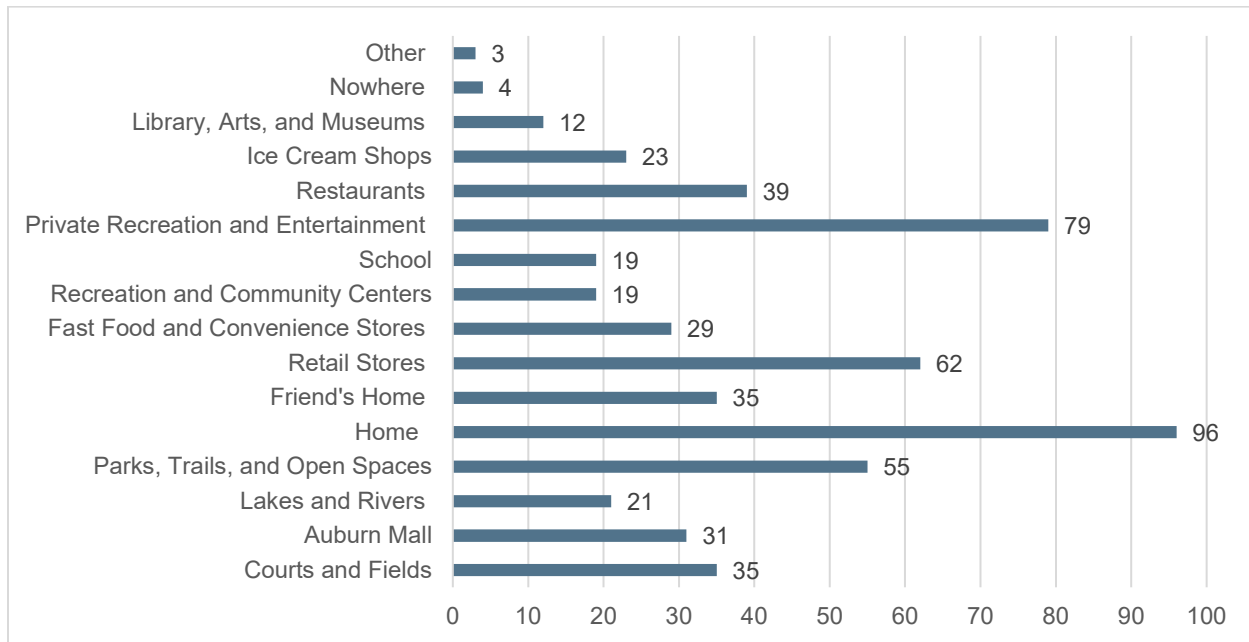


2.2: Middle and High School Student Survey

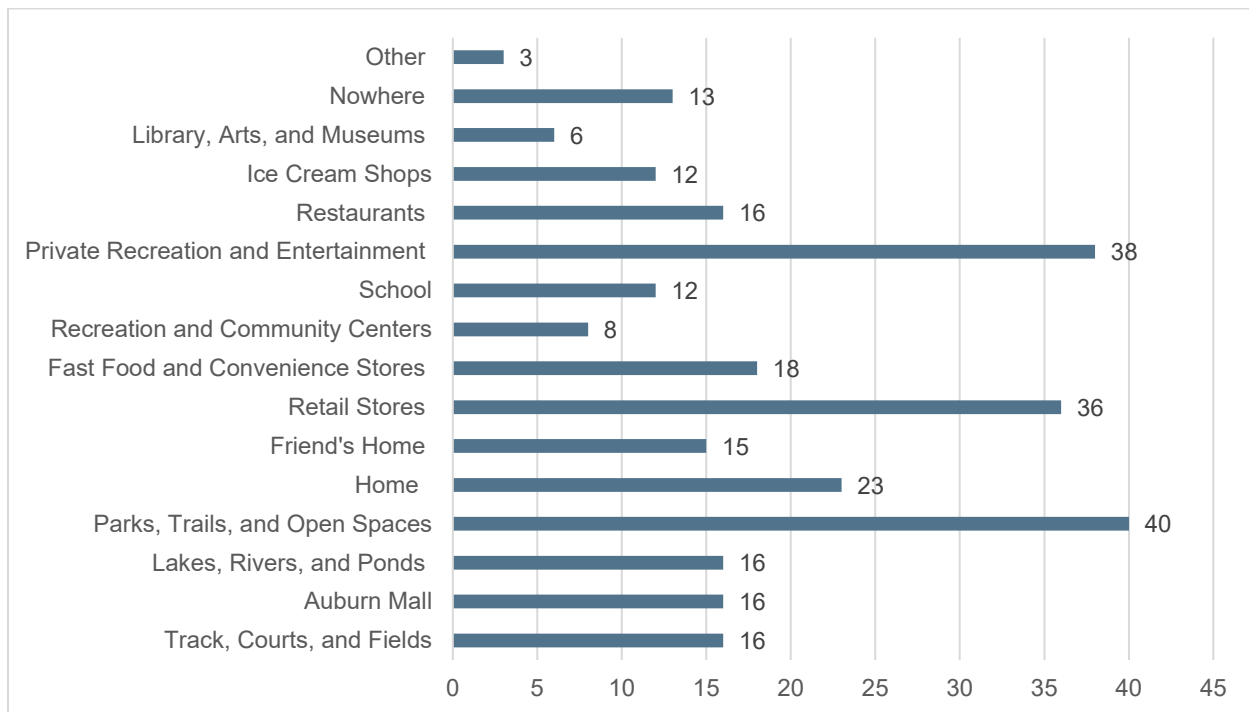
Below are middle and high schooler responses related to land use. In total, there were 285 middle school and 143 high school participants that responded to the survey.

1. What are your favorite places in Auburn?

Middle School

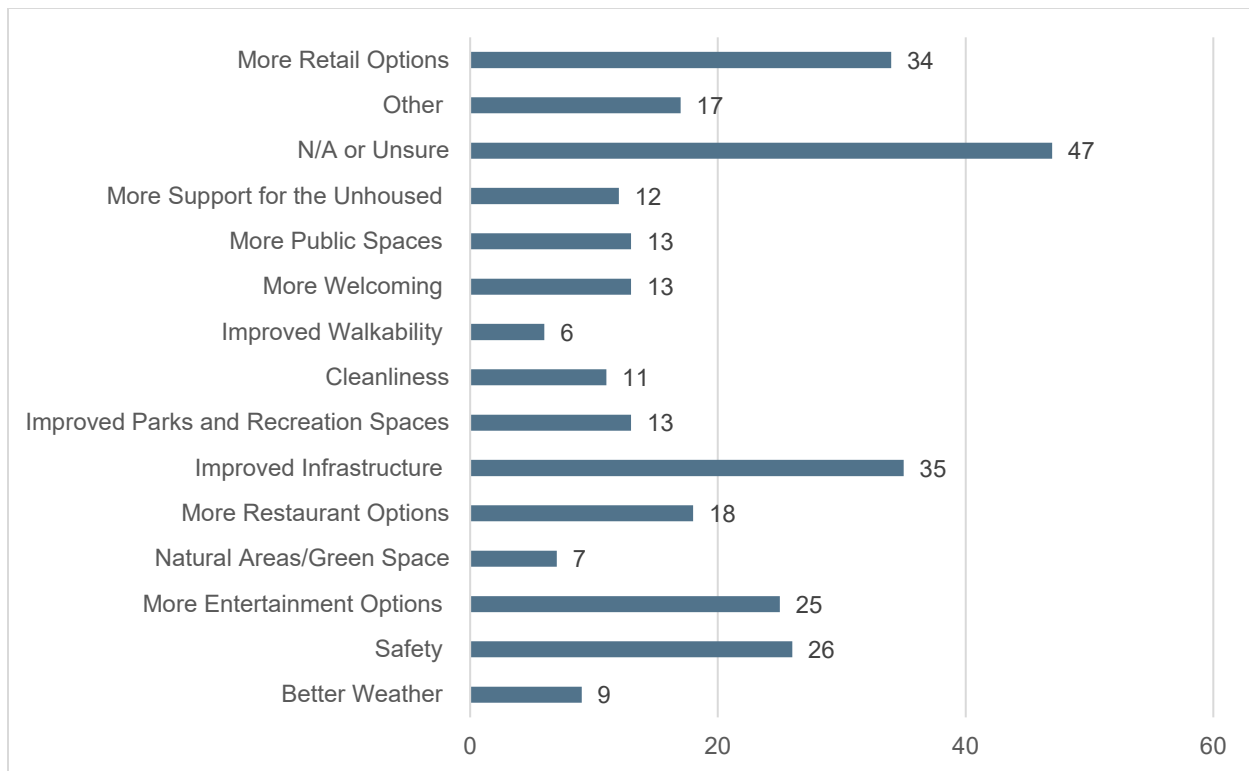


High School

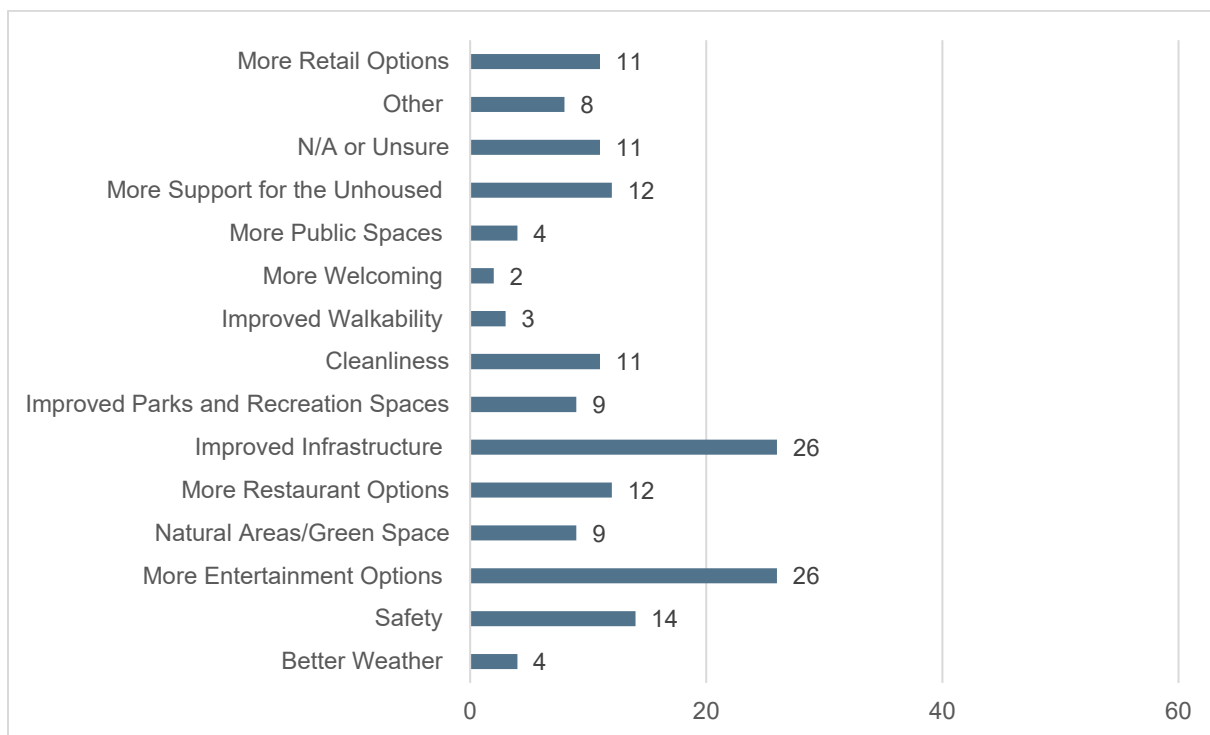


2. If you could change one thing about Auburn, what would it be?

Middle School

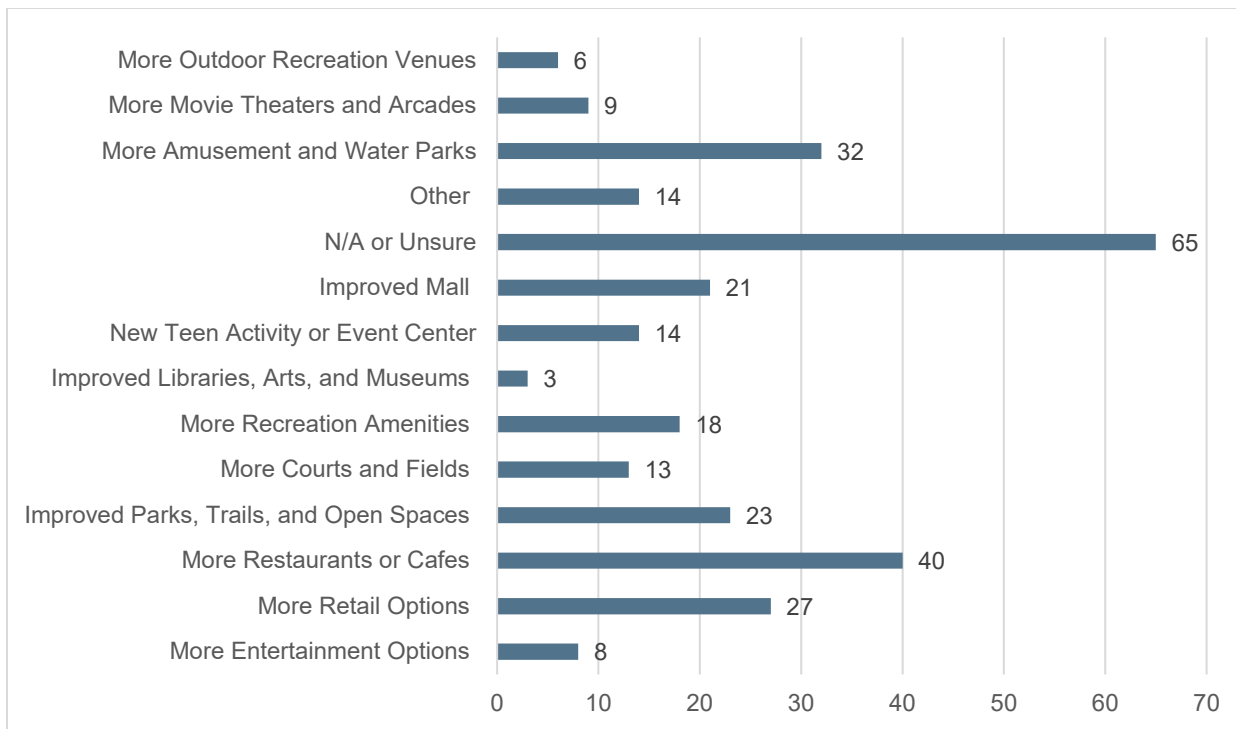


High School

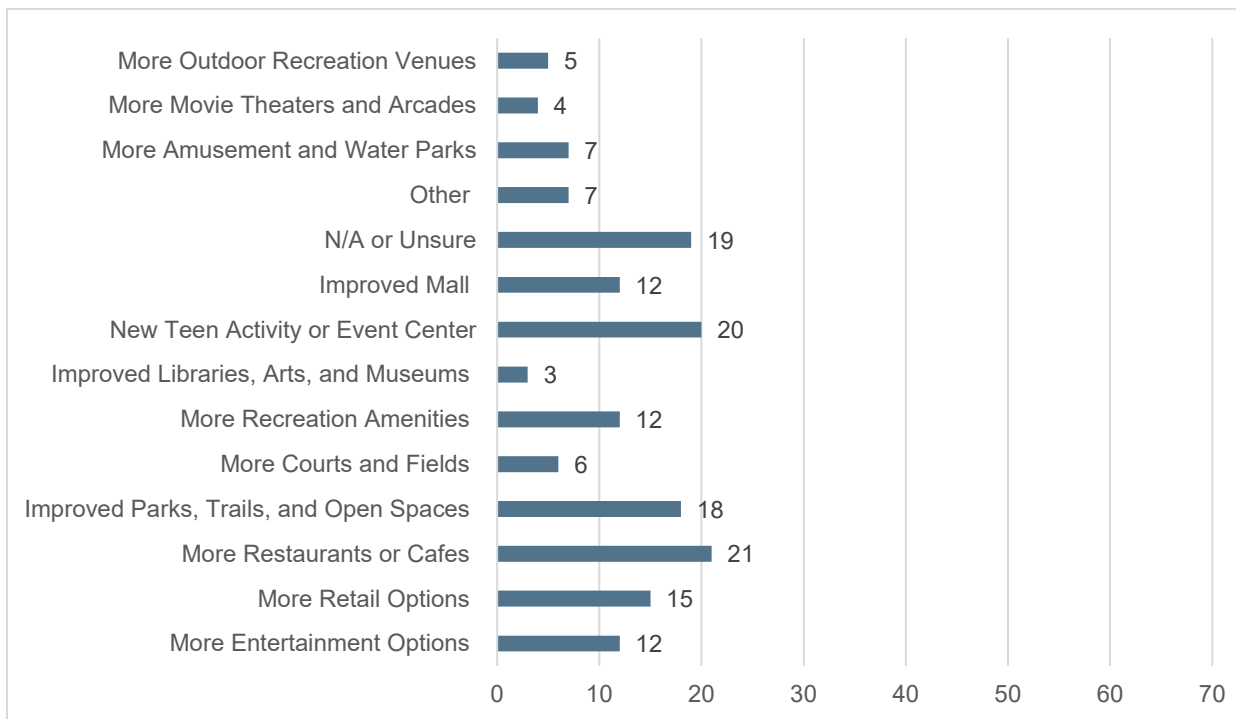


3. What kinds of places do you wish existed for someone your age?

Middle School

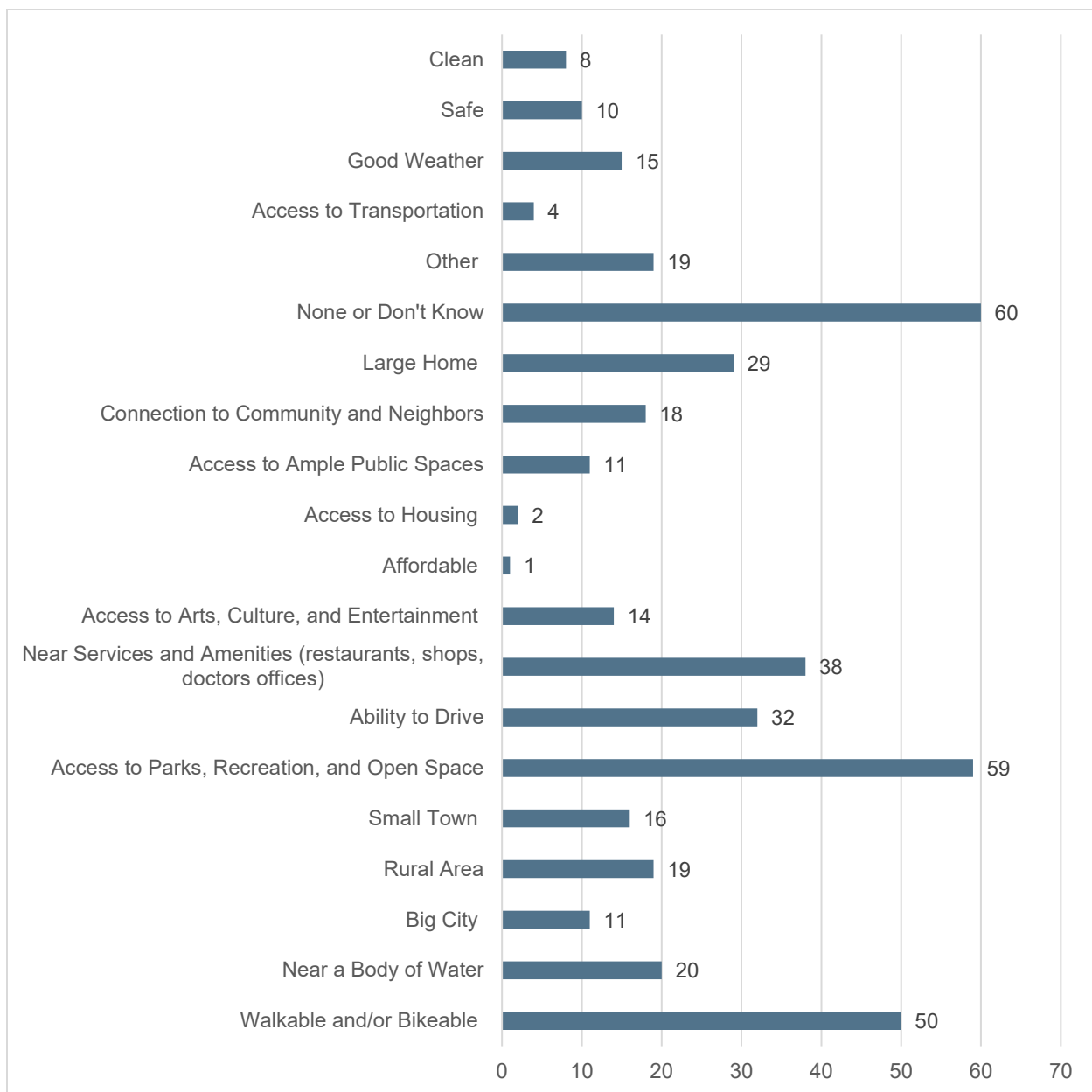


High School

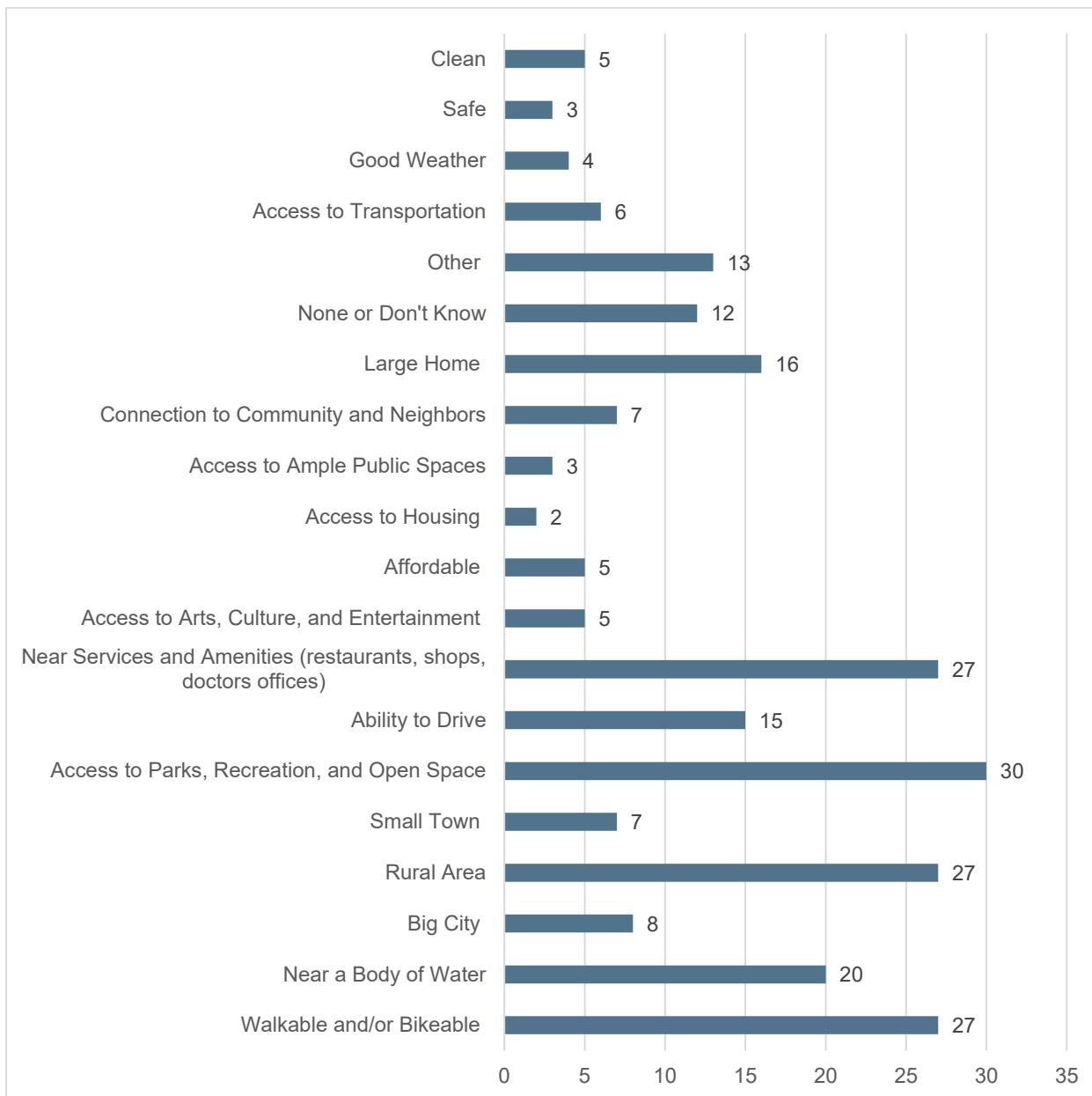


4. Describe Your Ideal Place to Live. What Does It Look Like? What Businesses, Parks, or Other Places Does It Have? How Do You Get Around?

Middle School



High School



2.3: Social Pinpoint, Open Houses, and Pop-Up Events

This section contains responses to activities at open-house events, pop-up events, and Social Pinpoint (SPP) feedback. Events include the Built Environment, Natural Environment, and People and City Services in-person and online open houses, Youth Forum, PAL Center Pop-Up, National Night Out Pop-Up, and posters at Auburn Hall and General Assistance Office.

1. What types of places do you wish you or your family could walk or bike to?

What types of places do you wish you or your family could walk or bike to?	Total Votes
School	9
Parks and playgrounds	18
Friends' and family members' homes	5
Restaurants	7
Community and recreation centers	6
Work	11
Downtown	12
Corner stores	3
Other: Library and other after school places	1

Source: Built Environment Open House, Youth Feedback Forum, Built Environment SPP, City Hall Data

2. Which housing initiative should the City prioritize?

Which housing initiative should the City prioritize?	Total Votes
Work with developers to build housing for people of all income levels	12
Work with developers to build market-rate housing	5
Work with developers to build housing for low-to-moderate income levels	16
Create opportunities to downsize, transition into senior housing, or transition into assisted living communities	6
Encourage mixed-income neighborhoods	5
Support for first-time homebuyers	16
Incentivize accessory dwelling units (ADUs)	7
Increase housing options near transportation and jobs	5

Which housing initiative should the City prioritize?	Total Votes
Promote energy-efficient, climate-resilient housing	9
Address homelessness and housing insecurity	27
Other: Larger units to accommodate bigger families	1
Other: Multi-family units	1

Source: Built Environment Open House, NNO, Built Environment SPP, City Hall Data

3. What types of housing do you think are needed to support Auburn residents in the future?

What types of housing do you think are needed to support Auburn residents in the future?	Total Votes
Backyard cottages or accessory dwelling units	3
Townhomes	2
Homes on medium sized lots (one to ten acres)	4
Homes on small lots (less than one acre)	14
Homes on large lots (over ten acres)	2
Two-family homes	2
Three-family homes	2
Mill or factory conversion to apartments or condos	8
Apartments or condos	2
Four-family homes	1
Manufactured or mobile home	3

Source: Built Environment Open House, Built Environment SPP

4. What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Auburn?

What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Auburn?	Total Votes
Professional services (law firms, etc.)	7
Personal services (hair salons, dry cleaners, etc.)	2
Fast food restaurants and cafes	2
Sit-down restaurants	12

What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Auburn?	Total Votes
Specialty retail (bookstores, pet supplies, clothing boutiques)	18
Entertainment venues (movie theaters, arcade, mini golf)	19
Lodging or hospitality	6
Grocery stores, local markets, or farm stands	14
Childcare or early learning centers	12
Manufacturing and industrial businesses	9
Other: Homeless shelter	1
Other: Ropes course	1
Other: Petting zoo	1
Other: Park	1
Other: Disney World	1
Other: Basketball	1
Other: Skatepark	1
Other: Opportunities for local workforce to find good-paying, future-aligned jobs (not just service sector/retail)	1
Other: More all-sensory soccer facilities (community is growing but resources are limited)	1

Source: Built Environment Open House, NNO, Built Environment SPP, City Hall Data

5. What types of commercial development do you think would benefit economic growth in Auburn?

What types of commercial development do you think would benefit economic growth in Auburn?	Total Votes
Corner stores	4
Neighborhood cafes or businesses	7
Farmstands	2
Agriculture facilities (e.g. shared cold storage)	4
In-home businesses (e.g. childcare, hair salon)	1
Outdoor or recreation-based businesses	9

What types of commercial development do you think would benefit economic growth in Auburn?	Total Votes
Medical or research facilities	3
Strip-style development	1
Large offices or business parks	2
Small offices or mixed-use buildings	3
Outdoor, open-air markets	3
Businesses in downtown Auburn	3
Manufacturing facilities	2

Source: Built Environment Open House, Built Environment SPP

6. What economic investments would you prioritize (allocate 5 buttons)?

What economic investments would you prioritize?	Total Votes
Affordable commercial space for startups	1
Attracting new industries	11
Developing housing options that are affordable to Auburn's workforce	12
Expanding broadband and digital infrastructure	2
Improving access to childcare	6
Promoting tourism, sports, and cultural economy	4
Revitalizing downtown and commercial corridors	13
Support for small and local business	13
Technical support to access grants	3
Workforce training and upskilling	7
Youth education and development	7

Source: Built Environment Open House, Built Environment SPP

7. What do you think the City should do to protect water and natural resources? (Open-ended)

What do you think the City should do to protect water and natural resources? (Open-ended)

Limit development near water and woodland areas

Improve the Lake Auburn watershed

Provide recreation access

Control storm runoff

Support changing river classification to B (allow for swimming uses)

Invest in stormwater management

Acquire easements or ownership

Make Auburn a model city for conservation (forests and trail work, address climate change)

Preserve the agricultural zone, but allow for exceptions for those who need to build to stay there

Keep agriculture development restrictions

Be conservative with development around water bodies

Keep development contained around Lake Auburn

Write in solid protections in policy

Encourage farmers to diversify operations beyond diversity

Have public bathrooms in all parks

Keep Lake Auburn clean with proper regulation and limited development

Policy protection for water quality

Work with families and youth for water quality education

Education for recycling, compost, cleanliness, and City pride

Encouraging public service in youth

control run-off in entire Lake Auburn Watershed through binding agreements with involved towns

Source: Natural Environment Open House, Natural Environment SPP

8. What is the future of the AGRP zone? (Open-ended)

What is the future of the AGRP zone? (Open-ended)

Allow more uses (housing)

Keep as is, develop in existing areas

Diversify use

Preserve as-is

Preserve as-is

Allow more uses (housing)

Protect farms and open space. Update solar ordinance to encourage continued farming in areas used for solar.

The long term preservation of this very important protected zone IS the future. We are not creating more land and every day we lose more farm and forested land, we all need to eat every day and our producers are vital to the long term food production.

Source: Natural Environment Open House, Natural Environment SPP

2.4: Focus Group Themes

Below are themes from focus group tables related to land use. In total, there were over 70 participants at focus group meetings.

1. Hospitality and Retail

The hospitality and retail group included a variety of small businesses in Auburn across a variety of sectors, including restaurants, trades, outdoor recreation, retail operations, and more. Thirteen participants attended this meeting.

Strengths

- The Auburn/Lewiston area is the second largest metro area in Maine providing a large, local customer base.

Challenges

- Many local businesses feel as if Auburn is a commuter area, with residents leaving the City for everything but their housing. They worry that Auburn is not a destination, and that there are not enough local events and amenities to attract tourism.

Goals

- Businesses expressed a desire for Auburn to be a destination city. They suggested festivals, events, and amenities to draw in visitors, with special interest in the idea of a music venue. They expressed a desire for events like the Balloon Festival, where businesses would benefit from increased traffic.
- Increase availability of all types of housing—from low-income, affordable units to luxury developments. Support the development of a range of options to aid in Auburn's growth as a diverse and sustainable community.

2. Essential and Social Services

This group included service providers from a variety of organizations, from New Mainers support networks to local senior service providers. Fifteen community members participated in the discussion.

Strengths

- Individuals in Auburn have a strong desire to improve their community, opening the door to increased support and funding from the City.

Challenges

- No challenges related to land use identified.

Goals

- The development of diverse housing options is needed—including low-income, multigenerational, mixed-use, high-end, rental, and other housing options.
- Participants supported the community's continuing investment in current issues, with special attention paid to shaping youth development and sustainable economic growth to support necessary services.

3. Education and Youth Services

This group was comprised of representatives from local schools, community colleges, educational nonprofits, and more. Seven participants contributed to this group.

Strengths

- Existing support services, like the Purple Bus from Central Maine Community College, were identified as strong drivers of success in the community.

Challenges

- Many teens lack structured opportunities and transportation access, leading to worse career outcomes.
- Post-secondary education and child care are increasingly unaffordable to many Auburn residents.
- Recreational activities for young people are limited in the area.

Goals

- Create a collaborative effort with community organizations to create more recreational activities for young people in the community, with potential for a teen center, collaborative efforts with Parks and Recreation, and the addition of new transportation options, all gaining support from the group.

4. Environment and Sustainability

Several groups in Auburn representing environmental efforts were present, along with City staff and interested individuals. The group had nine members, with written comments submitted from community members who were unable to attend the discussion.

Strengths

- The existing natural resources present in Auburn were discussed as strengths, with Lake Auburn and its associated watershed highlighted.
- Auburn's existing network of parks and trails provides a strong environment for outdoor recreation.

Challenges

- As Auburn grows, urban noise generation and pollution will grow with it, harming surrounding natural areas. Urban sprawl will increasingly threaten agricultural areas.

Goals

- The group strongly supported enhancing the local tree canopy, adaptive reuse of wastewater, flood assessments, water quality management, and other climate resilience measures.

5. Agriculture and Food Systems

In this focus group, local farmers, nonprofit representatives, and City staff discussed issues relating to local agriculture efforts, food access, and climate. Nine community members were present.

Strengths

- Auburn has a significant percentage of its land that is zoned for agricultural purposes, creating opportunities for local businesses.

Challenges

- Auburn residents may not have access to local foods where they shop, especially those who have less disposable income.

Goals

- Community members support allowing a diverse set of uses for farmland to allow farmers to continue to produce while bringing in additional revenue through commercial ventures (agrotourism, small-scale nonagricultural business on farmland).
- Investigate re-zoning agriculture zones to allow for different uses on some land, including small businesses and limited development.

6. Real Estate, Housing, and Development

A group of developers, construction company executives, local service providers, and City staff participated in this group. Fourteen group members were present.

Strengths

- The City's sewer and water infrastructure is well-maintained and supports current uses.

Challenges

- Housing is a paramount concern, with a significant need for housing at every level (low-income to luxury).
- Staffing construction and infrastructure projects is also a concern, with many potential employees unable to afford to live in Auburn.
- City staff involved in the discussion expressed a concern that the best areas for development have been utilized, leaving areas with low utility-connectivity and natural resources as the only realistic development sites.

Goals

- Increase development, as it would be beneficial to the City's economy. Explore mixed-use developments and infill developments as potential ways to maximize available resources. Consider new ways to incentivize land development using tax incentive programs.
- Group members expressed a desire for more high-income housing to attract residents with disposable income, who would boost Auburn's economy.
- The group also supported developing industrial areas, particularly around the airport, to provide high-quality employment opportunities for locals.

7. Transportation and Mobility

The transportation and mobility focus group was made up of local transit advocates, community organizations, and City staff.

Strengths

- Auburn's central location within Maine is an asset, with potential transit to Lewiston, Portland, and other communities as a likely and welcome proposal.
- Existing access to natural areas and trails for transportation and recreation is strong.

Challenges

- The group was concerned about safety, especially surrounding bikeability. Several incomplete bike lanes were mentioned, along with absent sidewalks.
- The lack of public transit options is a barrier to employment, education, and livability in Auburn.
- The areas surrounding downtown Auburn are visually unwelcoming, especially along Washington Street.

Goals

- Focus on walkability and bikeability in land use planning, along with ensuring roads are well-maintained and visually appealing.



Auburn Comprehensive Plan

Draft Land Use Categories

Introduction

Land use categories describe the different kinds of places that exist – or could exist – in a community based on how land is used, the types of buildings, and how people live, recreate, and get around in different areas.

Land use categories include a mix of characteristics like:

1. The types of homes in a category (e.g., single family, townhomes, apartments) and broad scale and spacing
2. Whether there are businesses, shops, offices, or industry
3. How close together or spread-out buildings are (scale and spacing of buildings)
4. What transit options may exist
5. Whether there are parks, open spaces, or community facilities

Land use categories establish a high-level vision for an area. Land use categories do not establish zoning. Following adoption of the Plan, the City will update the zoning ordinance to establish the regulatory requirements to implement the vision of the future land use map.

Zoning tools include a mix of overlay districts, lot and bulk requirements (e.g., building setbacks, height, units per lot, density), site development requirements (e.g., landscaping, parking, circulation) and natural resource protection, like shoreland zoning. There may be multiple zoning districts that fit into a land use category, and the conditions and context of a certain area will impact zoning decisions.

The draft land use categories below were developed by consolidation of committee feedback.

High Growth Area Categories

1. High Density Cores
2. Downtown
3. Mixed Use Corridor

4. Mixed Use Neighborhood
5. Compact Residential
6. Industrial

Moderate Growth Area Categories

1. Mixed Use Transition
2. Residential Corridor

Low Growth Area Categories

1. Agriculture, Open Space, and Recreation
2. Drinking Water Protection

High Growth Area Land Use Categories

High Density Cores

Description: High Density cores are located at Great Falls Plaza, Auburn Mall area, and surrounding highway exit 75. These areas are appropriate for Auburn's highest levels of density and include a variety of housing types and businesses. Redevelopment and infill are prioritized to strengthen economic activity, expand housing options, and support a vibrant, all-day environment.

Land Uses: Typical uses include a mix of commercial and residential activities. Some buildings are stand-alone businesses or multi-family residential. Others may be mixed with active ground-floor retail, restaurants, cafés, personal services, arts/cultural venues, small-scale grocery/markets, and community-serving services. Upper floors may include multifamily housing, offices, co-working, hotels, and institutional or civic uses.

Public spaces, including plazas, pocket parks, and civic gathering areas, are encouraged as integral components of redevelopment projects, supporting community life and walkable access to daily needs.

Density and Form: This category is characterized by the highest intensity and greatest building scale in the city, with a minimum of four-story buildings.. Buildings are oriented to the street, and the design of these areas supports pedestrian activity (e.g., transparent storefronts, weather protection, and human-scaled façade elements). Development should form walkable blocks, prioritize high-quality architecture and durable materials, and incorporate excellent site design that manages stormwater, enhances comfort, and creates a strong sense of place.

Parking should be shared, structured, or located behind/within buildings where it is feasible to reduce large surface lots and improve the streetscape. Streets are designed for safe, convenient walking, bicycling, and transit access, with continuous sidewalks, ADA-compliant crossings, bicycle facilities, and strong connections to the City's trails, parks, and adjacent neighborhoods.

Downtown

Description: Downtown has a mix of uses that support the creation and expansion of local businesses, increase housing options, and increase social activity. Expanded transportation options, trails, and paths enhance connectivity and increase access to downtown, creating a vibrant and active city center.

Land Uses: Typical uses include retail, restaurants, personal services, offices, civic, and entertainment uses on the ground floor of buildings, along sidewalks, and street fronts. Upper floors provide access to office spaces and residences, activating the downtown and creating additional foot traffic throughout the area. This area serves as a center for jobs, commerce, social activity, arts, and entertainment.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by high-density development of three or more stories. Buildings are oriented toward the street with minimal-to-no setbacks. Some buildings share walls, and others are stand-alone. Shared parking is encouraged. This area includes parks and public spaces, access to the Androscoggin River, and public art, creating a desirable urban fabric and public realm.

This area is highly walkable and served by public transportation, bike paths, sidewalks, and trail access to support people of all ages and abilities in accessing the area to work, shop, recreate, and live.

Mixed Use Corridor

Description: The Mixed-Use Corridor areas are primarily along major roadway corridors. These areas provide commercial amenities, including offices, restaurants, retail, and personal services. These areas also have a mix of larger-scale residential uses in mixed-use developments (e.g., commercial and residential in one structure) or in multi-family homes surrounding commercial development.

Land Use: Typical land uses include mixed use, commercial, and larger-scale residential developments. Some lower-intensity technology, light manufacturing, or logistics uses may also be supported, subject to review of environmental and public health impacts.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by larger scale developments, including one-story and ground-level commercial uses, upper-story office and residential uses, and larger multi-family developments.

Development along these major corridors allows for infill of existing commercial areas, including unused parking areas, and the redevelopment of key gateways into vibrant, mixed-use areas. These corridors have shared parking and include infill of underutilized buildings and parking lots.

Public transportation and sidewalk and bike networks allow for access to jobs, homes, and recreation amenities. Site design standards, tree-lined streets, buffered sidewalks, and integrated open spaces and parks create an attractive public realm along major corridors.

Mixed Use Neighborhood

Description: The Mixed Use Neighborhood area is comprised of residential and neighborhood-scale commercial development patterns. This area has small lot sizes with a variety of housing types.

Neighborhood-scale retail options provide residents with access to cafes, corner stores, restaurants, personal services, in-home businesses, and other businesses. Building height primarily follows the existing form and scale of homes and businesses in these areas today.

Land Use: Typical uses include stand-alone retail uses, restaurants, cafes, and personal services. These areas also support a mix of housing types, including townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, multi-family homes, single-family homes, and support access to multimodal transportation options.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by homes and businesses with fewer than four stories on smaller lots. Buildings have limited setbacks from the streets. Homes have small yards and buildings cover most of a lot. This area has a high density, typically supporting multi-family homes, attached housing, and small single-family homes on smaller lot sizes. Density may be regulated through form and scale relative to its neighborhood rather than unit counts or minimum lot sizes.

These areas are well integrated into the City's trail, sidewalk, and bike networks, supporting active transportation options.

Compact Residential

Description: The Compact Residential areas provide access to a variety of housing types in areas adjacent to mixed use, industrial, suburban, and rural areas. These areas provide a residential transition surrounding the City's densest mixed-use areas. These neighborhoods support compact growth that places more residents in close proximity to jobs, services, shopping, transit, and community amenities.

Land Use: Typical land uses include one to four family homes and accessory dwelling units. Limited home-based businesses may be allowed. Neighborhood-serving businesses may also be allowed. This would include smaller-scale commercial uses like cafes, corner stores, and personal or professional services.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by one to four family homes on medium to small lot sizes. Homes have moderate setbacks from the street and larger yards than more dense mixed-use neighborhoods. In less developed areas and areas abutting agriculture and resource protection areas, cluster developments are encouraged to allow for housing opportunity while preserving existing open spaces. Open spaces and parks are located throughout neighborhoods, and neighborhoods are well integrated into the City's trail network.

Industrial

Description: The Industrial areas include a variety of logistic, manufacturing, production, research and other industrial uses and supporting uses, including airport, rail, and interstate infrastructure.

Land Use: Typical uses include production, manufacturing, research, distribution, and other industrial and large-scale commercial uses.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by larger lots with large, low-rise buildings, ample exterior storage and parking, and significant landscaping or open space buffers between adjacent uses. These areas benefit from access to water, sewer, three-phase power, highways, rail, and public transportation and should be protected from incompatible land uses.

These areas are well integrated into the City's public transportation network, providing residents with convenient access to employment centers.

Moderate Density Area Land Use Categories

Neighborhood Transition

Description: The Neighborhood Transition area includes moderate density residential uses and some commercial uses. These areas are designed to provide a transition between the dense urban areas in the high-growth area boundary and the very-low density Agriculture and Resource Protection area.

Land Use: Typical uses include single-family, two-family, and three-family homes. Limited institutional and commercial uses, including recreation businesses, home-based businesses, and low-intensity, neighborhood scale businesses are allowed.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by one- to three-family homes on small to moderate lot sizes. Businesses follow a consistent density and form to surrounding neighborhoods. Areas along borders with the high growth zone may be more intense in scale, while areas closer to rural areas, agricultural and resource protection areas are less dense, providing a gradual transition between urban centers and rural areas.

Residential Corridors

Description: The Residential Corridor areas provide a limited, carefully designed opportunity for housing along existing road frontages in predominantly agricultural and rural landscapes. These areas are intended to accommodate modest residential growth while maintaining the community's working lands, rural areas, and scenic qualities. Development in these frontage strips should be compact, predictable in form, and sensitively sited to minimize conflicts with agricultural uses and open space protection.

Land Use: Typical uses include single-family homes and duplexes (and, where appropriate, small-scale accessory units such as ADUs) on lots sized to reflect the area's rural servicing

constraints. Limited small-scale home occupations are appropriate where they remain compatible with residential character and do not create commercial strip patterns.

Density and Form: This area is characterized by linear, frontage-oriented development that follows existing public roads, with homes sited to reinforce a rural roadside pattern and protect the open fields and working landscapes behind them. Where feasible, new development should be clustered within the frontage strip to preserve open space, minimize infrastructure extensions, and reduce the overall footprint of land conversion.

Low Density Area Land Use Categories

Agriculture, Recreation, and Open Space

Description: Agriculture, Recreation, and Open Space category encompasses areas intended primarily for agricultural production, forestry, natural resource protection, recreation, and open space preservation. These areas play a critical role in maintaining Auburn's rural areas, supporting agricultural and forested lands, and providing ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Land Uses: Typical uses include agricultural activities and associated businesses, forestry and resource management, passive and active outdoor recreation. Some residential uses are allowed, but are limited and generally secondary uses to agriculture, forestry, and recreation uses.

Density and Form: These areas are predominantly open landscapes with farms, fields, forests, and conservation lands, interspersed with agricultural structures and occasional single-family residences associated with agriculture, recreation, or resource-based land uses. These areas are intended to remain largely undeveloped to protect environmental resources, preserve scenic and rural areas, and support Auburn's agricultural, forestry, and recreation economy. Residences are located on large lots and are set back far from the road. Clustered development approaches may be appropriate where they preserve open space and agricultural soils.

Drinking Water Protection

Description: Drinking Water Protection area encompasses the Lake Auburn watershed, which provides drinking water for Auburn and surrounding communities. Special protections apply, including septic system inspection requirements, phosphorus controls, manure management standards, and ongoing water quality monitoring.

Land Use: Typical land uses include limited, very low-density residential uses, recreational uses, and open space.

Density and Form: Development levels are tightly regulated, with limits on new dwelling units and restrictions on lot sizes. Density is generally intended to remain at or below existing levels. Open spaces and forests are maintained to protect the City's drinking water source.