Sanford
MAINE

City of Sanford Comprehensive Plan

Engagement Summary

October 28, 2026

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Introduction

As part of the City of Sanford's (City) Comprehensive Plan Update, City staff, Steering Committee members, and the City's consulting partner (BerryDunn) have conducted an initial public engagement effort to obtain input from Sanford's residents. The Steering Committee began meeting in 2024 and conducted engagement throughout 2025 with Community Heart & Soul and through an online survey. Recent engagement has focused on the Questions of the Month series, the development of the community vision statement, and future land use.

The goal of this engagement effort was to identify community values and priorities, provide information to inform the creation of the comprehensive plan's vision statement and future land use, and guide plan development and policy recommendations.

To help inform the community of the project, several methods were utilized to engage participants in the process:

- Social media posts
- Information on the City's website
- Postings in local newspapers
- Sharing through informal networks (e.g., steering committee members sharing information, social media groups)
- Direct outreach to local organizations and groups

The table below summarizes engagement participation totals from May 2025 through October 2026.

Table 1: Engagement and Event Totals

Event	Total Engagements or Participants
Engagements and Inputs	
Community Heart & Soul event	~20-40
Sanford Comprehensive Plan Community Survey	826
March Questions of the Month	93
April Questions of the Month	59
May Questions of the Month	88
June Questions of the Month	96
Tabeling Events (Healthy Living Expo, July 3rd Block Party)	~75
August Questions of the Month	78
Trafton Center	5

Event	Total Engagements or Participants
Future Land Use Open House	~35
Photo Contest	7
High School Student Engagement	25
Total	**~1,407 inputs**

This high-level summary details each engagement as well as its results, summarizing feedback received at each event. Across all engagements, several themes emerged, categorized by subject area below.

1. **Address affordability and cost pressure**: Affordability emerged as a consistent concern across survey responses and activities, including housing costs, taxes, and the overall cost of living. Residents highlighted the need for a broader range of housing options fiscally responsible growth that allows households at different income levels, including existing residents, to remain in Sanford.

2. **Revitalize Downtown and underutilized areas**: Participants frequently emphasized the need to strengthen Downtown Sanford and Springvale and redevelop key sites such as the mill district and vacant storefronts. Residents envisioned vibrant, safe, and walkable downtown areas that combine active businesses, housing, gathering spaces, and stronger connections between community destinations.

3. **Expand local business, retail, and dining options**: Across multiple activities, residents expressed a desire for additional local shopping, dining, entertainment, and community amenities, noting that they often leave Sanford to access these options. Participants supported attracting and retaining small businesses, restaurants, retail establishments, and other employers that meet community needs and strengthen the local economy.

4. **Balance safety concerns with community well-being**: Safety was a recurring theme, particularly in relation to homelessness, substance use, and perceptions of public spaces. Respondents emphasized improving safety in neighborhoods, parks, trails, and downtown while also recognizing the importance of supportive services, accessible public spaces, and community well-being.

5. **Invest in infrastructure, services, and community facilities**: Respondents identified concerns about road and sidewalk conditions, transportation infrastructure, public facilities, parks, and the capacity of municipal services to accommodate growth. Feedback emphasized maintaining reliable infrastructure and services, improving access to community facilities, and considering the long-term financial impacts of public investments.

6. **Enhance walkability, connectivity, and transportation options**: Residents highlighted the need for safer pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and stronger connections between neighborhoods, downtown, businesses, and community amenities. Improved walkability, public

transportation, roadway safety, and connected public spaces were viewed as important to quality of life, accessibility, and economic activity.

7. **Protect and expand parks, trails, and natural resources**: Outdoor recreation and access to nature were consistently identified as defining community assets. Residents supported expanding recreational opportunities and improving facilities while protecting trails, waterbodies, forests, agricultural lands, open spaces, and other natural resources for future generations.

8. **Promote economic development and quality job opportunities**: Economic development emerged as a consistent priority, including support for small businesses, industry, major employers, and workforce opportunities. Future land use feedback supported concentrating industrial and larger-scale commercial activity in appropriate areas while allowing neighborhood-serving businesses and mixed uses in downtowns, corridors, and transitional areas.

9. **Strengthen community connection, communication, and trust**: Respondents expressed mixed levels of community connection and identified barriers such as limited communication, insufficient gathering spaces, and difficulty engaging with decision-makers. Participants supported more inclusive engagement, transparent and accountable decision-making, improved communication, and additional opportunities for residents to connect with one another and participate in civic life.

10. **Manage growth while preserving community character**: Residents expressed a desire to preserve Sanford and Springvale's small-town character, rural landscapes, farms, natural resources, and community identity while accommodating new housing, employment, and investment. Feedback generally supported directing different forms and scales of development to appropriate areas, providing varied housing choices, and balancing redevelopment and economic growth with the protection of rural areas.

Community Survey

General Community Survey

The City conducted a survey through Social Pinpoint. Survey information was distributed via flyers placed in high traffic locations, in the local newspaper, and through social media and email outreach. The survey generated 826 responses and covered a variety of topics related to the Comprehensive Plan.

When asked what their favorite thing about Sanford/Springvale was, respondents highlighted the City's strong sense of community, ease of access to the outdoors, and Sanford's location within the region. Proximity to the beach, mountains, and recreational opportunities, along with the small town feel of the City, were frequently mentioned by respondents as their favorite aspects of the City. Respondents also highlighted Sanford's robust trail network, the Mousam Lake, and the Mousam River as valuable assets.

Figure 1.1: What is your favorite thing about Sanford/Springvale?

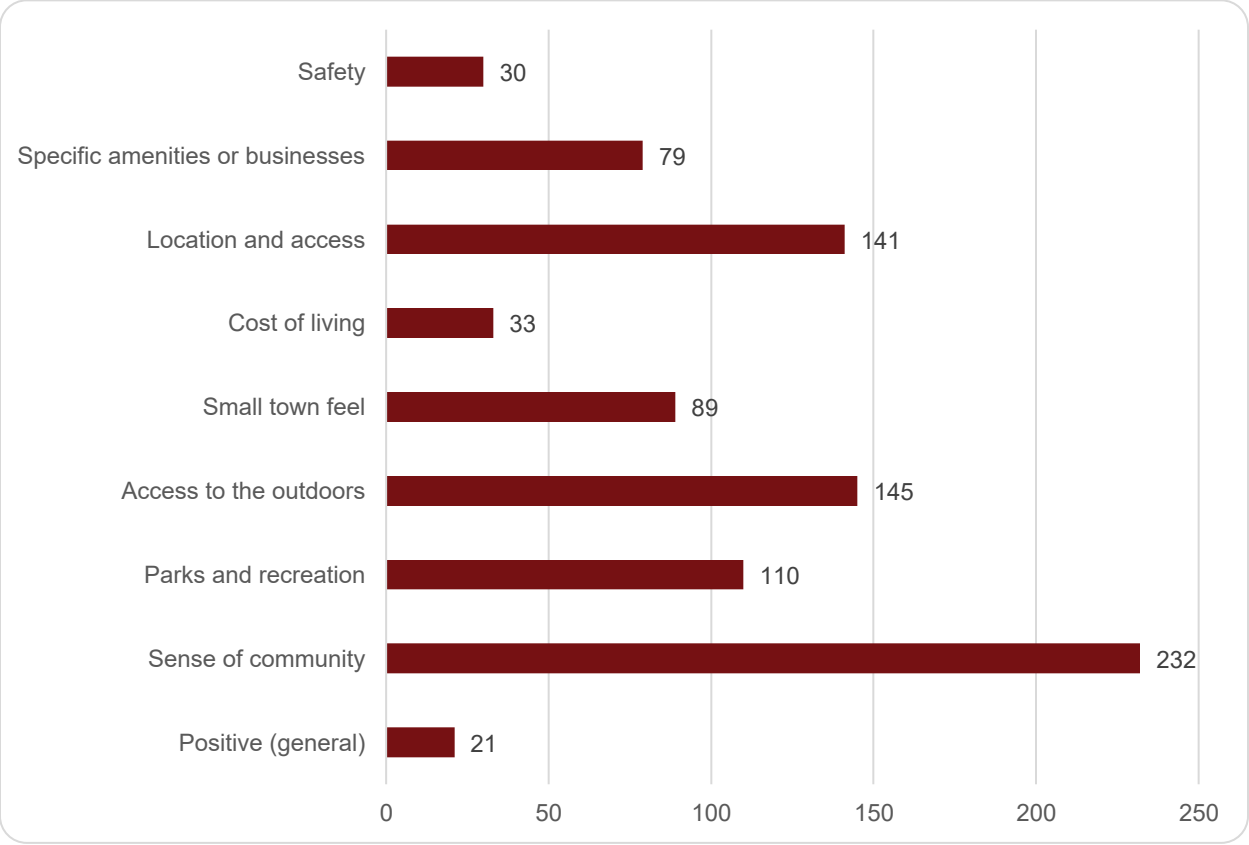
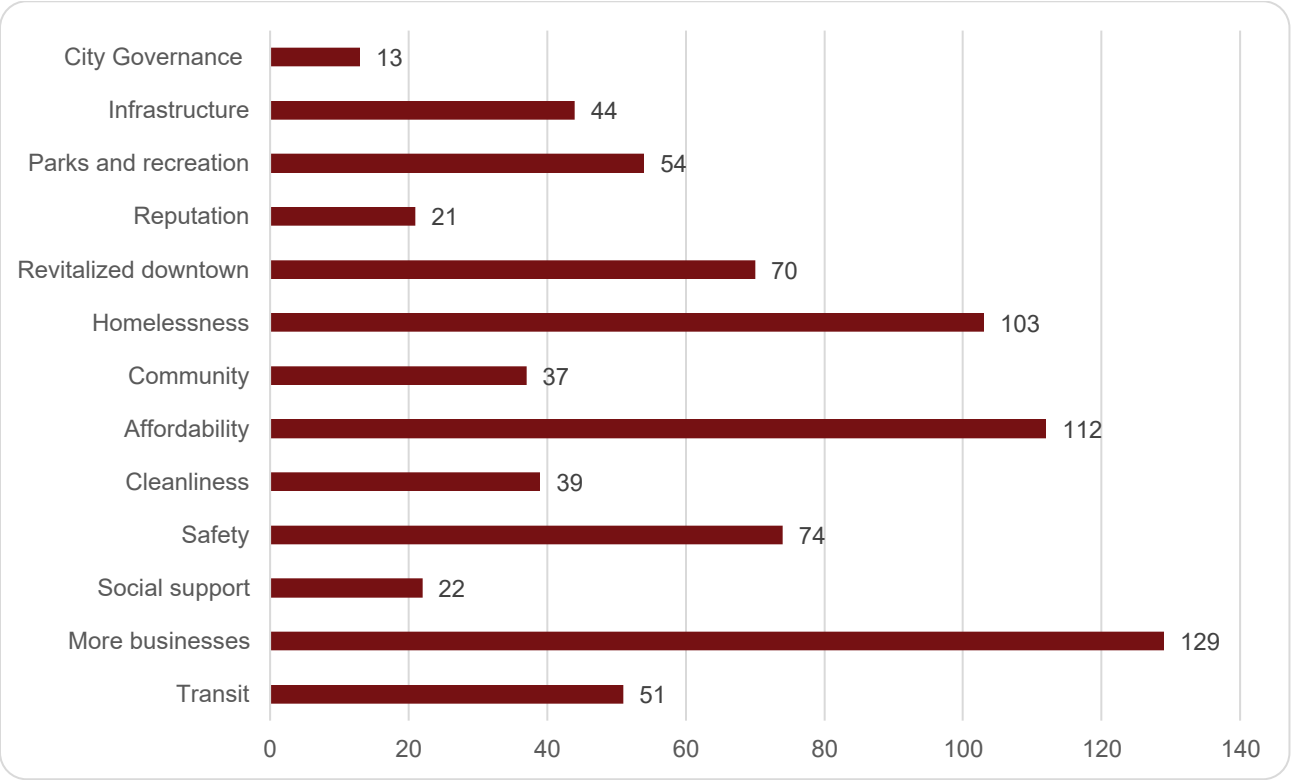


Figure 1.2: If you could change ONE thing about Sanford/Springvale, what would it be?



Looking ahead to the next decade, many respondents indicated a desire for the mill district and downtown to be revitalized. Respondents also highlighted the need for more local businesses, primarily dining and shopping options. Overall, the community expressed strong interest in economic development initiatives. Respondents emphasized the need for more support resources for unhoused residents, and lower barriers to entry for housing options in the community. As Sanford grows, respondents expressed concerns about the City's budget, taxes, and increased burden on City infrastructure and services, including traffic and roadway safety, school capacity, and public safety service levels. At the same time, respondents indicated that they were mostly neutral (391 responses), happy (229 responses), or very happy (84 responses) with recent development.

Respondents also stated a desire for more family-friendly community events and quality spaces for recreation. Respondents pointed out various parks/open spaces with the potential for infrastructure that could support entertainment, as well as a place for the community to gather and connect. Improved transportation, walkable/bikeable infrastructure, and road maintenance were also important transportation focuses for the community.

Sanford Connects

The Sanford community was given a variety of opportunities to provide feedback on the comprehensive plan through the Sanford Connects website. The website has hosted several ongoing engagement activities, including a map, ideas wall focusing on transformation questions, and question and answer opportunities. The site also hosts the Questions of the Month series and hosted the community survey.

Questions of the Month

March: Community Connection

In March, the QOTM received 93 responses from the Sanford/Springvale community. Respondents indicated that they connect most with their community through online or social media platforms, local businesses, and community events. Respondents also stated they strongly valued their community, access to the outdoors, and the smaller size of the City. Barriers to stronger connections with their community included unmet interests, not hearing news about events, and a limited City transportation system.

Figure 1.3: How do you connect with the Sanford community today?

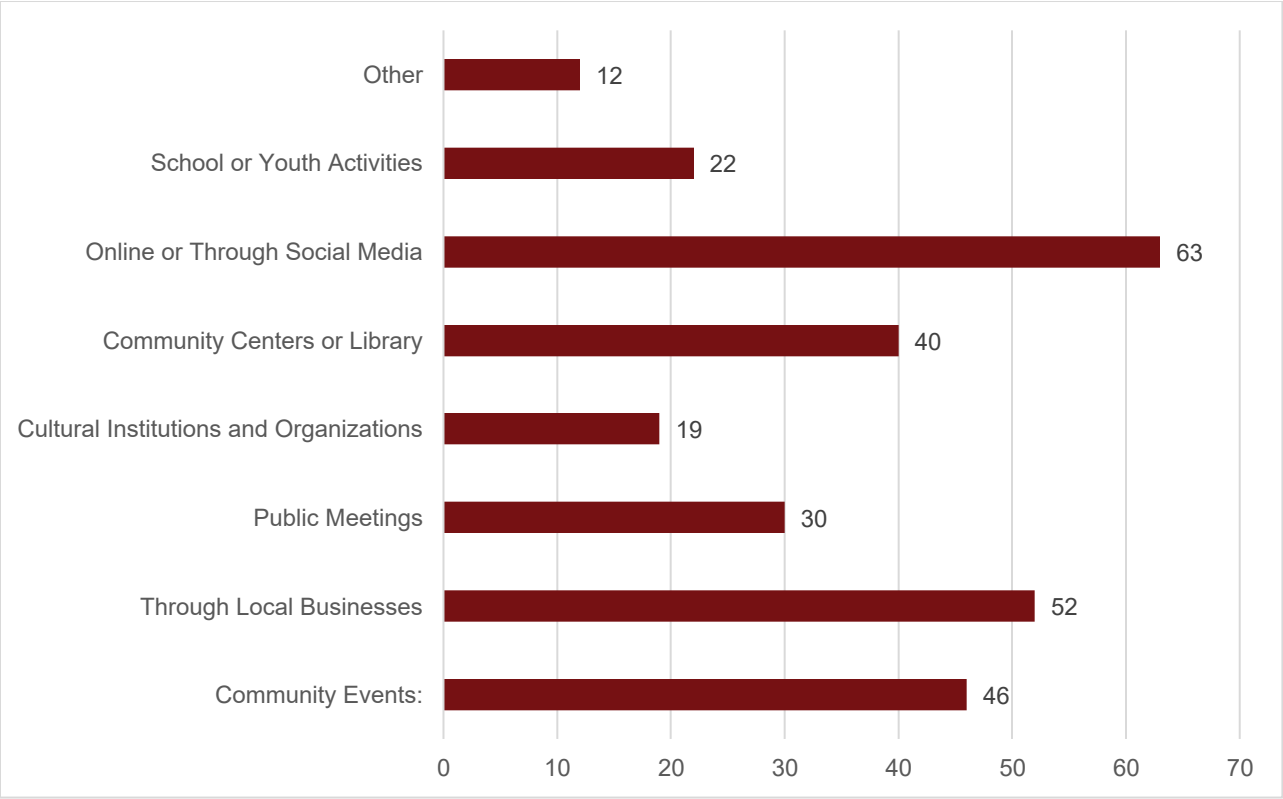


Figure 1.4: What do you value most about Sanford?

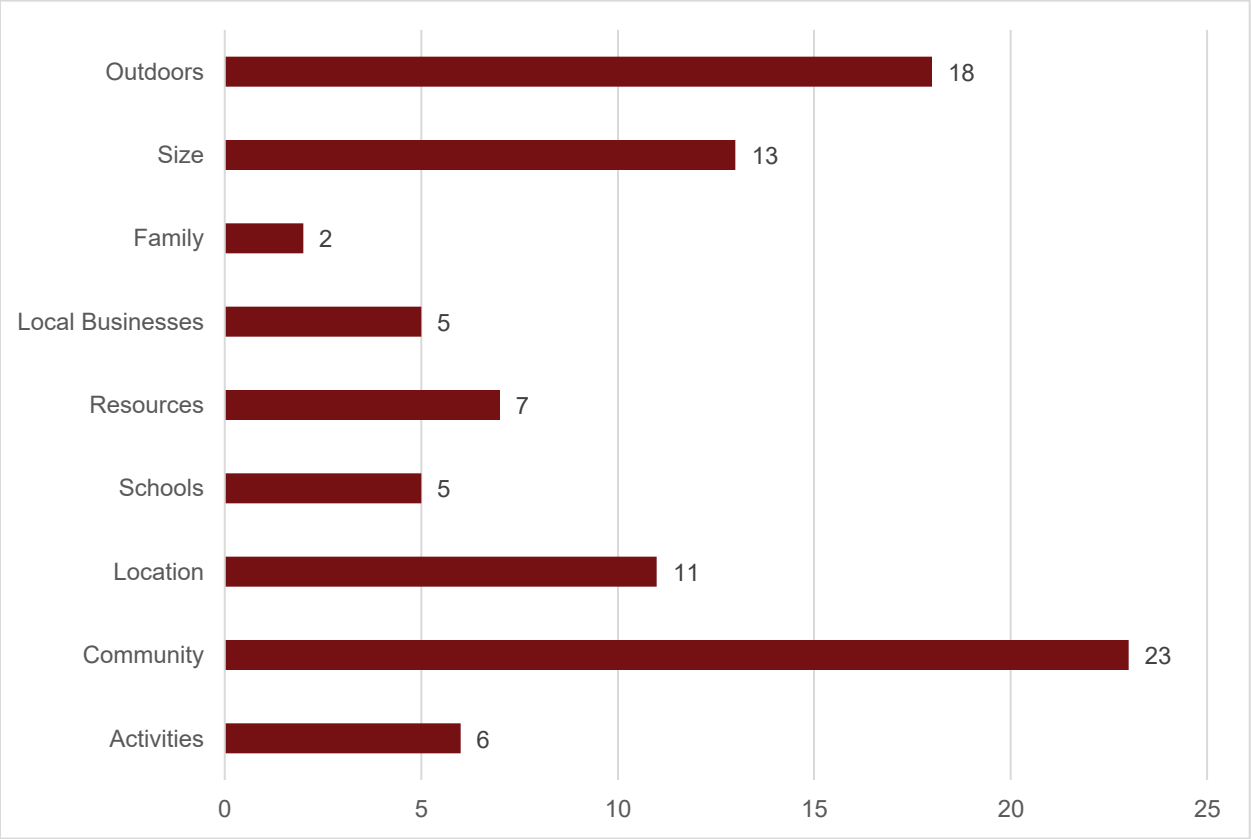
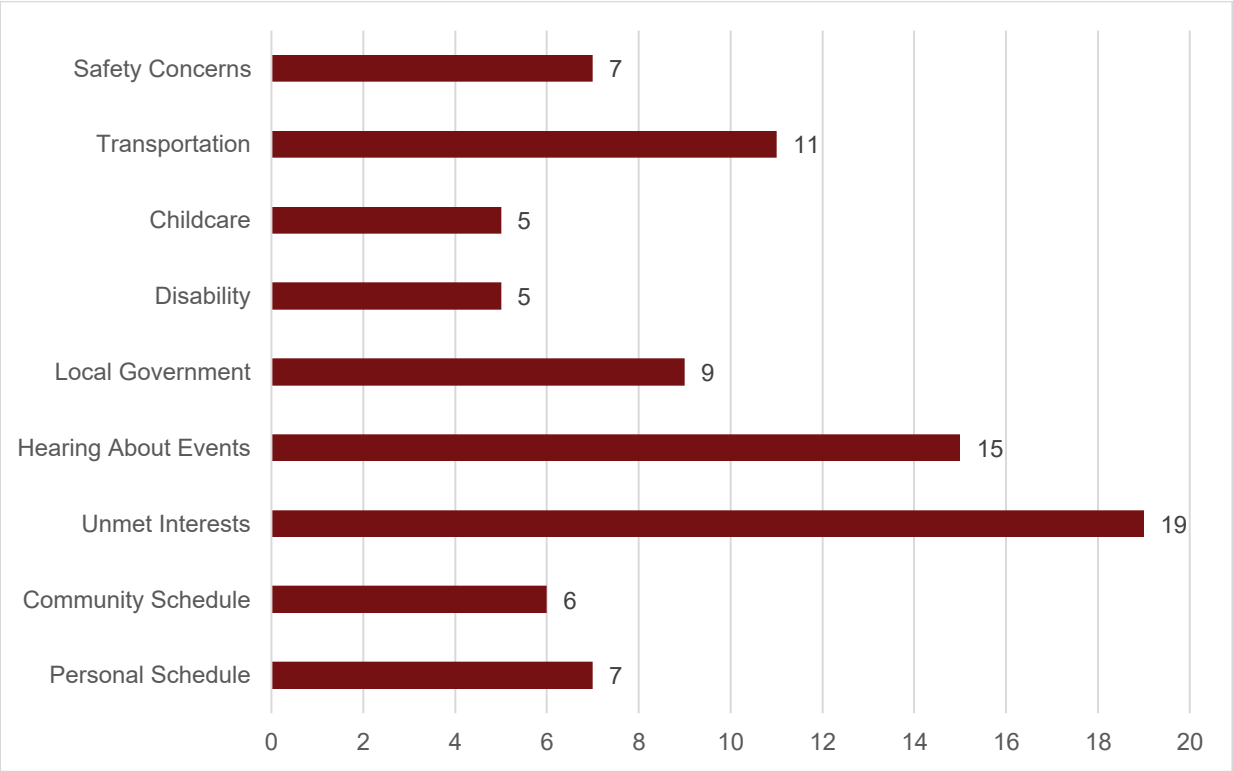


Figure 1.5: What barriers do you face in connecting with the Sanford community?



April: City Facilities and Community Spaces

In April, the QOTM received 60 responses from the community. Respondents demonstrated a strong desire for more community spaces in Sanford/Springvale. Key themes included the need for improved parks and recreational spaces and stronger support for unhoused community members. Other key themes that arose in response to what barriers respondents experience when accessing city facilities and services were hours of operation and improvement to infrastructure. Lastly, respondents claimed that the trails, parks, and downtown area are all underutilized parts of the City.

Figure 1.6: What improvements would you like to see in the City's public spaces and facilities, or types of new spaces you would like to see created?

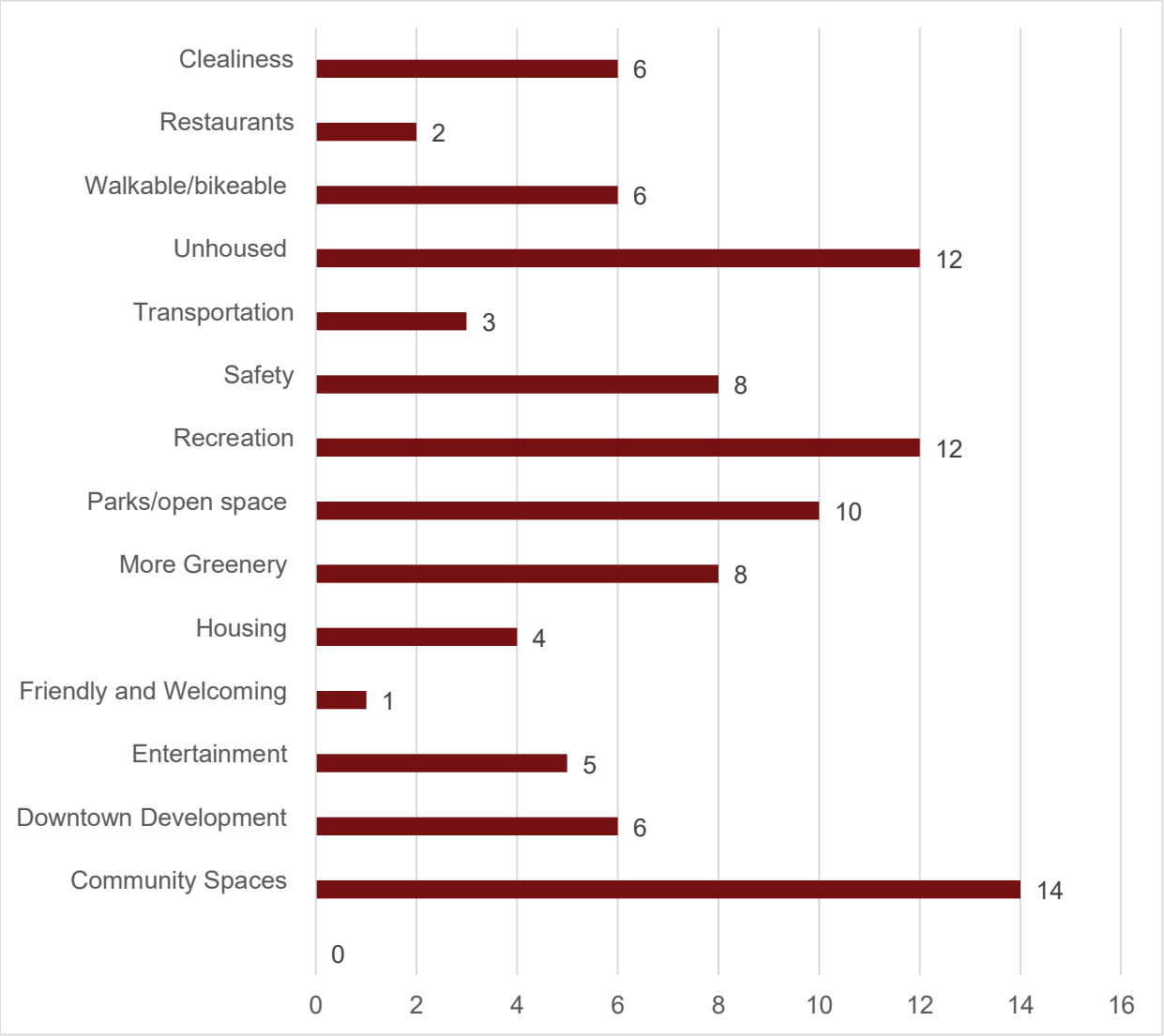


Figure 1.7: What barriers do you experience when accessing city facilities or services?

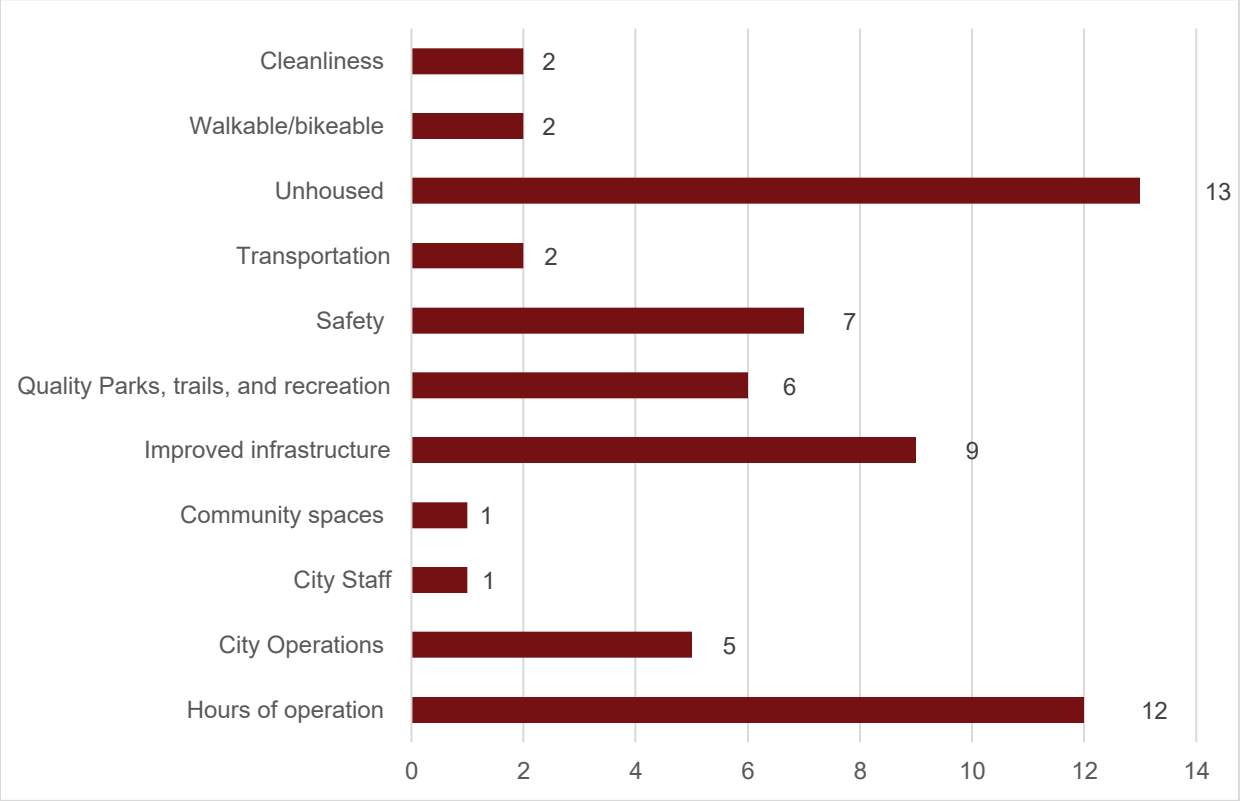
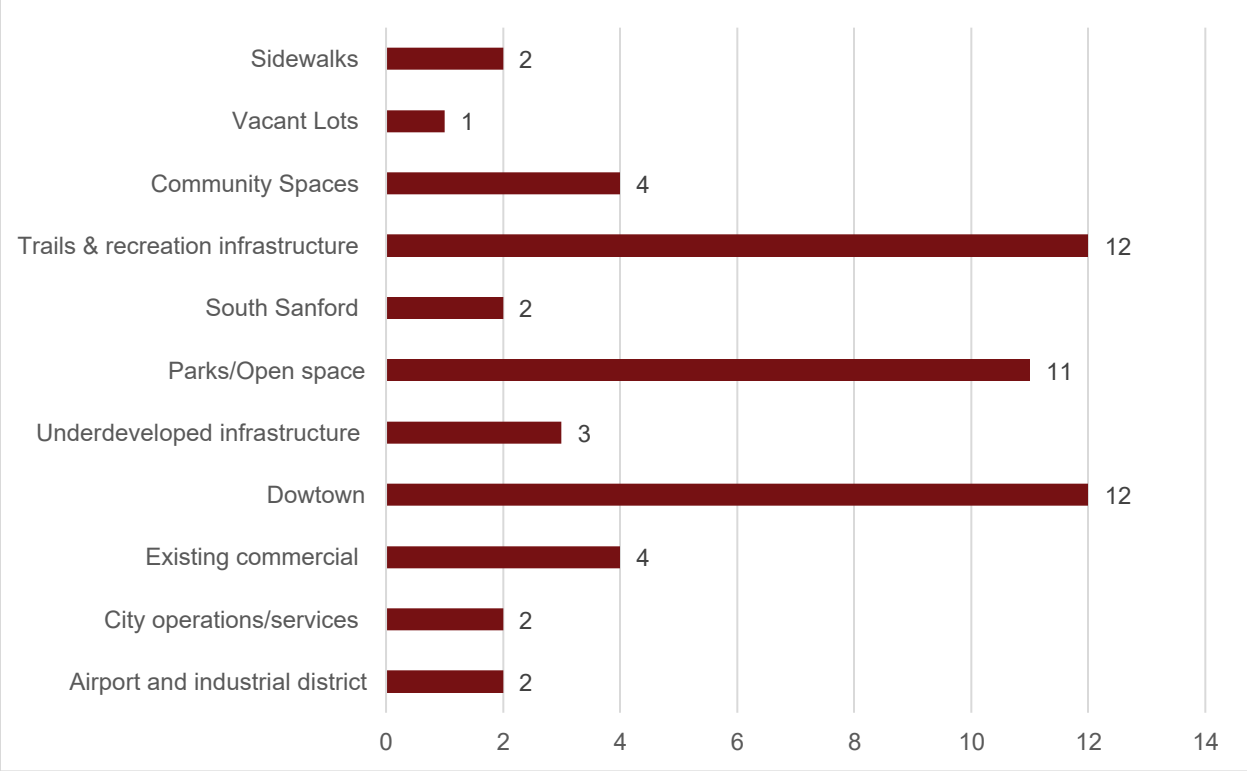


Figure 1.8: Are there areas in the City that feel are underutilized?



May: Growth and Visions for the Future

In May, the QOTM received 88 responses from the Sanford/Springvale community that demonstrated many ideas for how the City should grow. Responses revealed that many respondents leave the City for retail and dining options. Many residents hope to feel safer as the City grows, and improved public services are a high priority for the community.

Figure 1.9: What types of businesses, activities, public spaces or other amenities do you leave Sanford to access that you wish you could access locally?

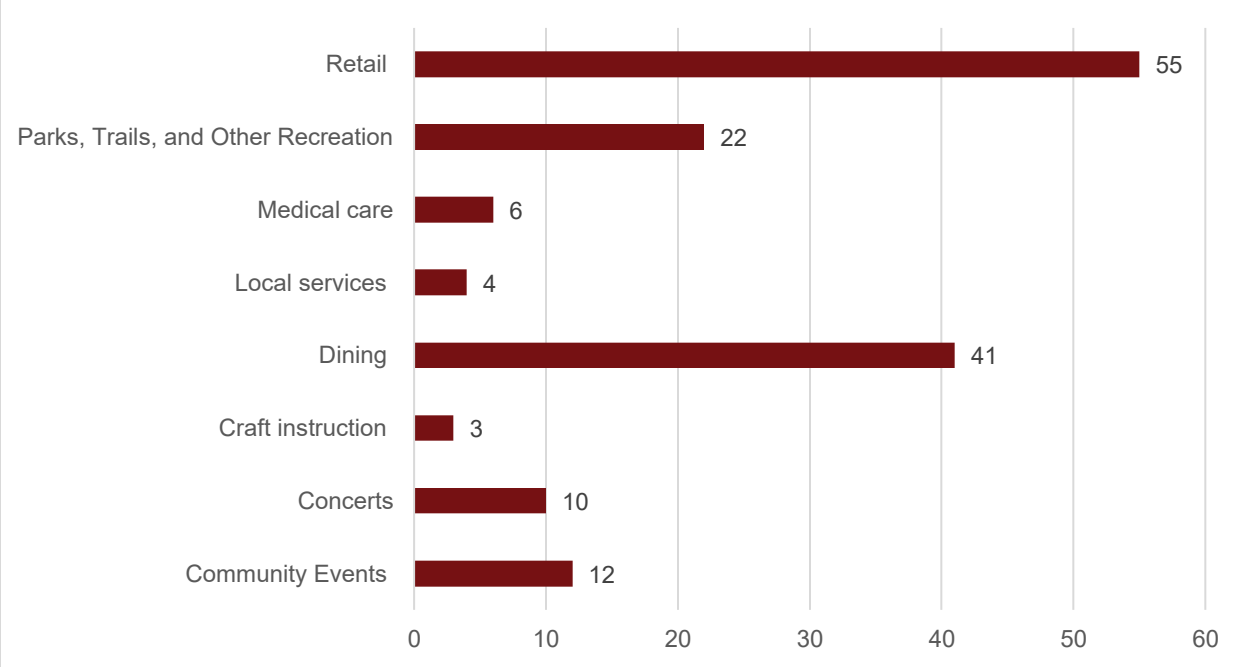


Figure 1.10: Looking ahead 10 or 20 years, what do you hope Sanford will be like?

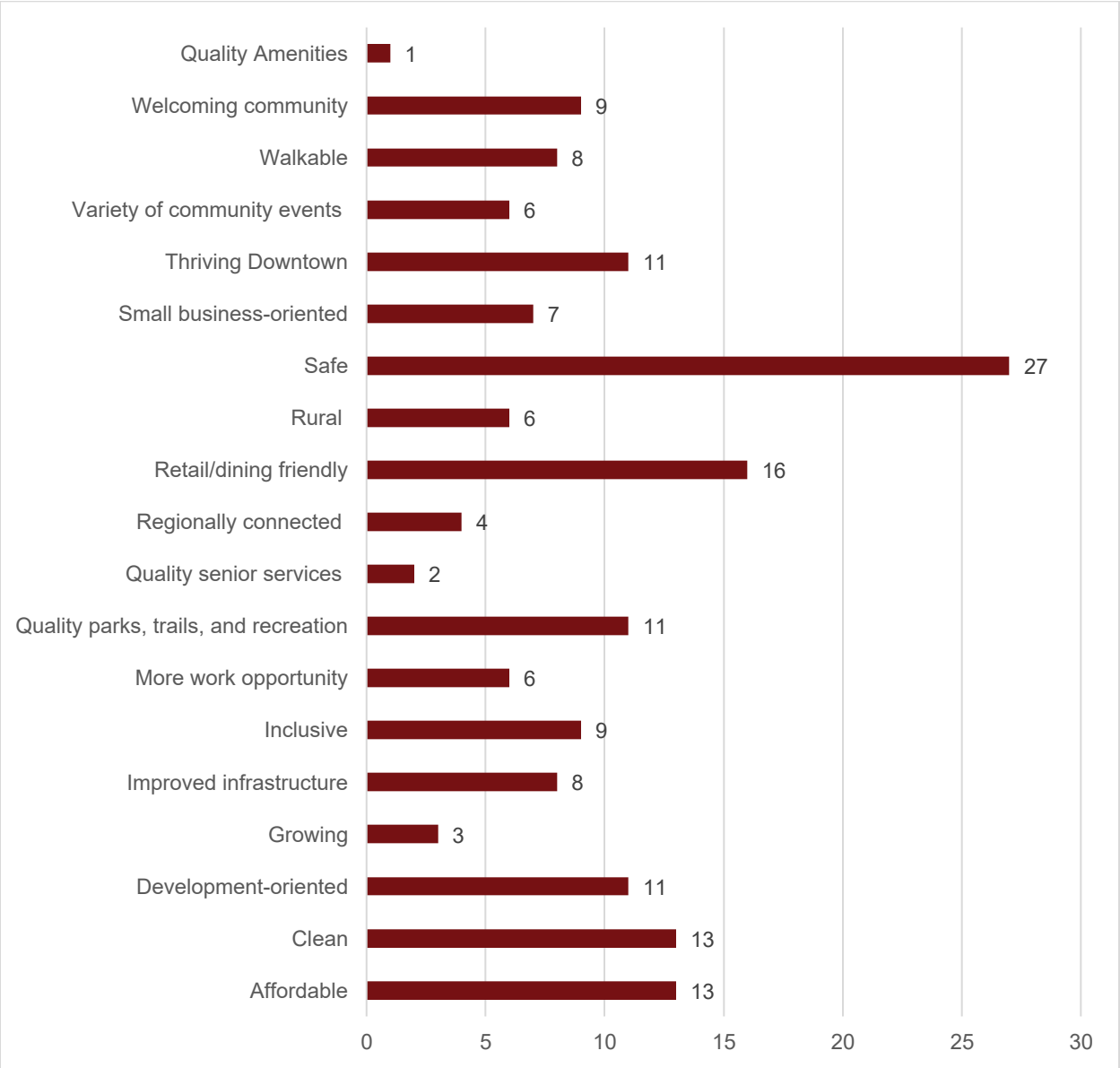
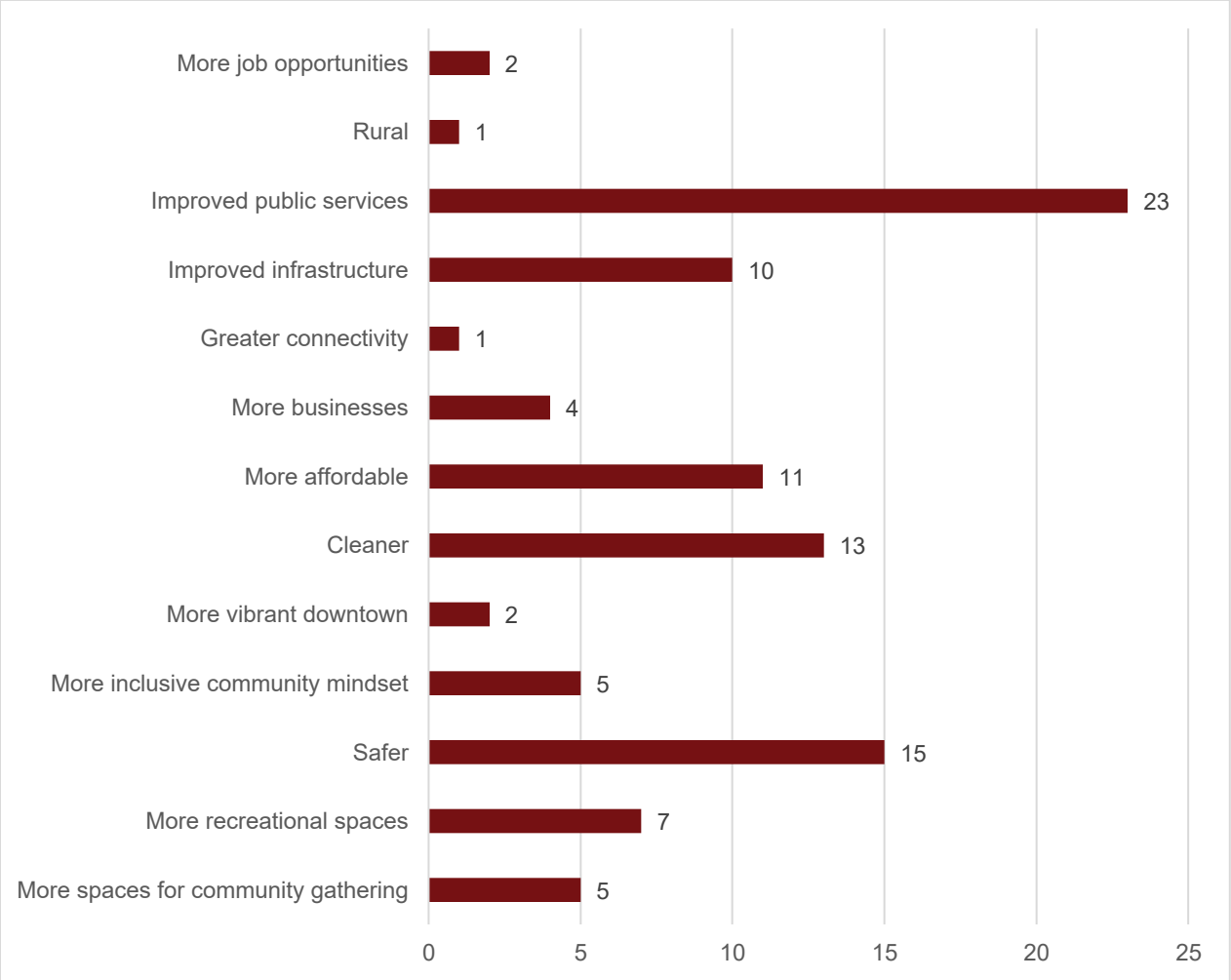


Figure 1.11: If you could make one change to Sanford to improve the quality of life for all, what would it be?



June: Development in Sanford/Springvale

In June, the QOTM received 96 responses from the Sanford/Springvale community. Key themes included a desire for more industrial and commercial areas in South Sanford, small businesses in Downtown Sanford/Springvale, and a variety of housing types throughout the City.

Figure 1.12: Businesses in Larger Buildings

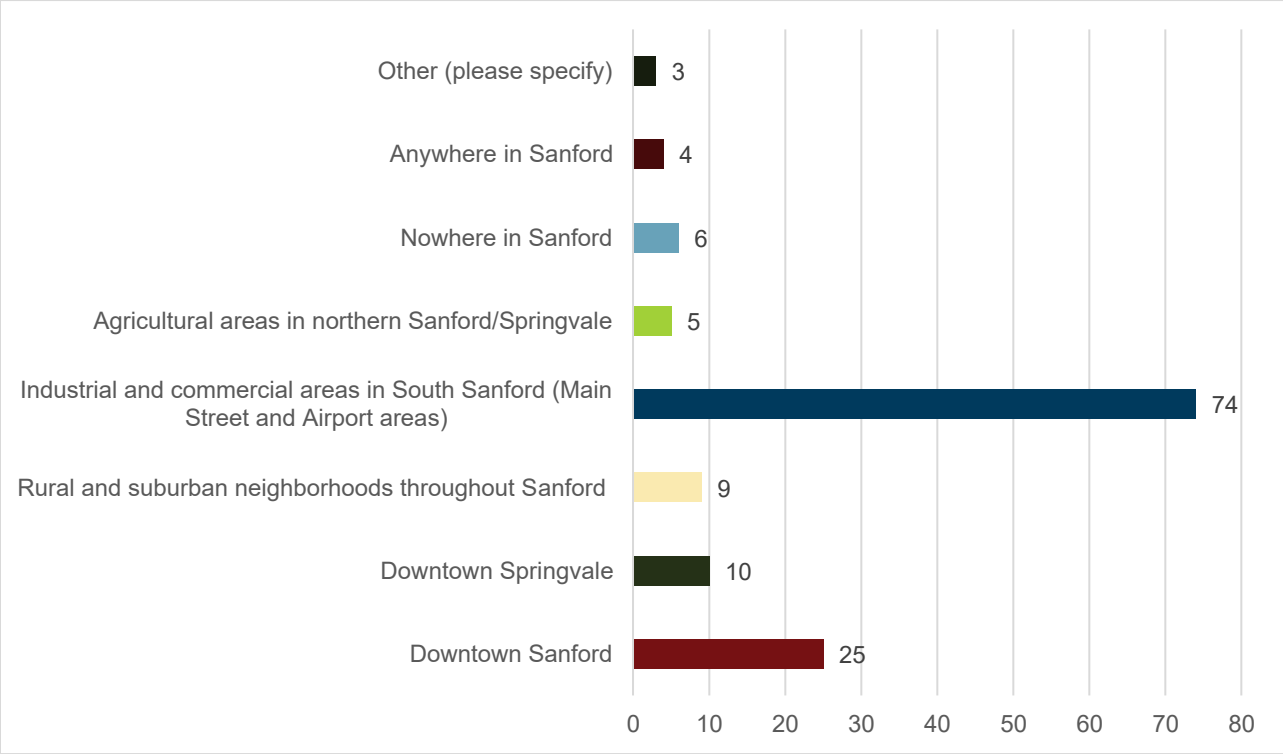


Figure 1.13: Businesses in Smaller Buildings

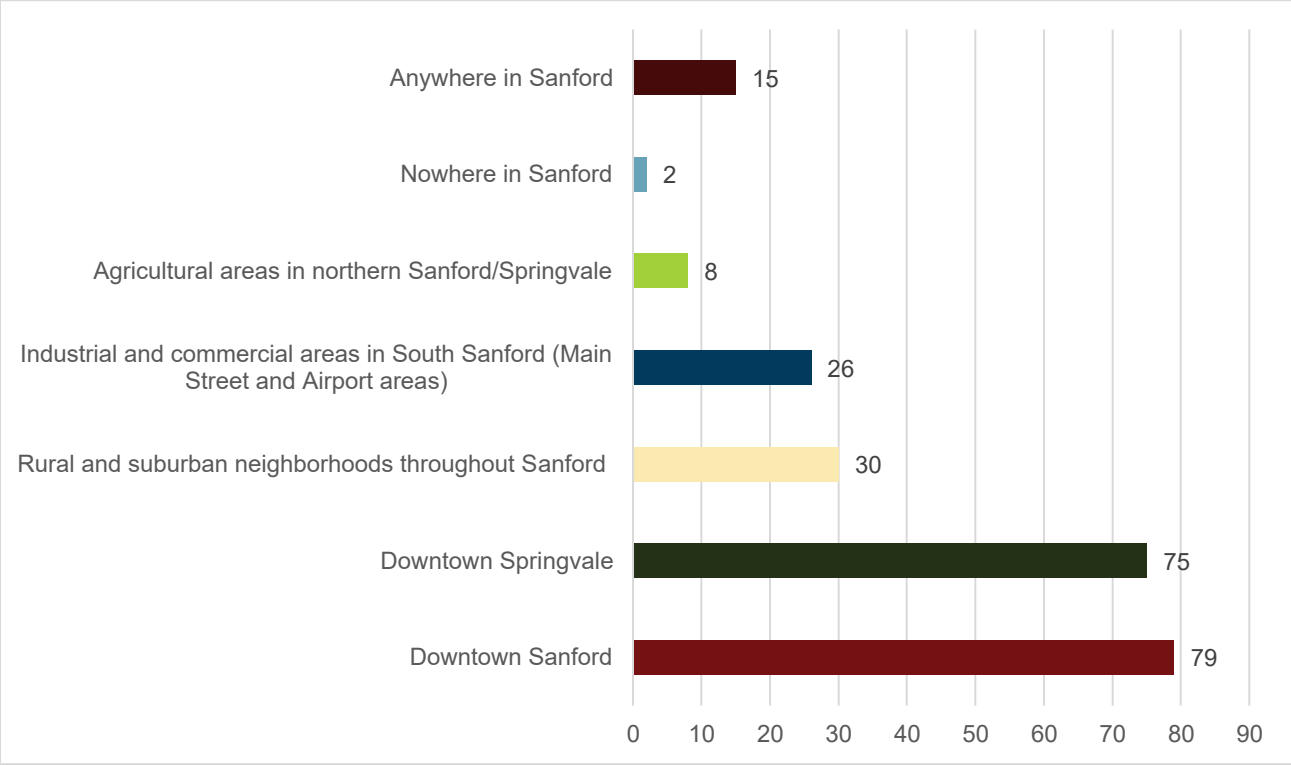


Figure 1.14: Mixed-Use Buildings (Commercial Ground Floor, Residential Upper Floors)

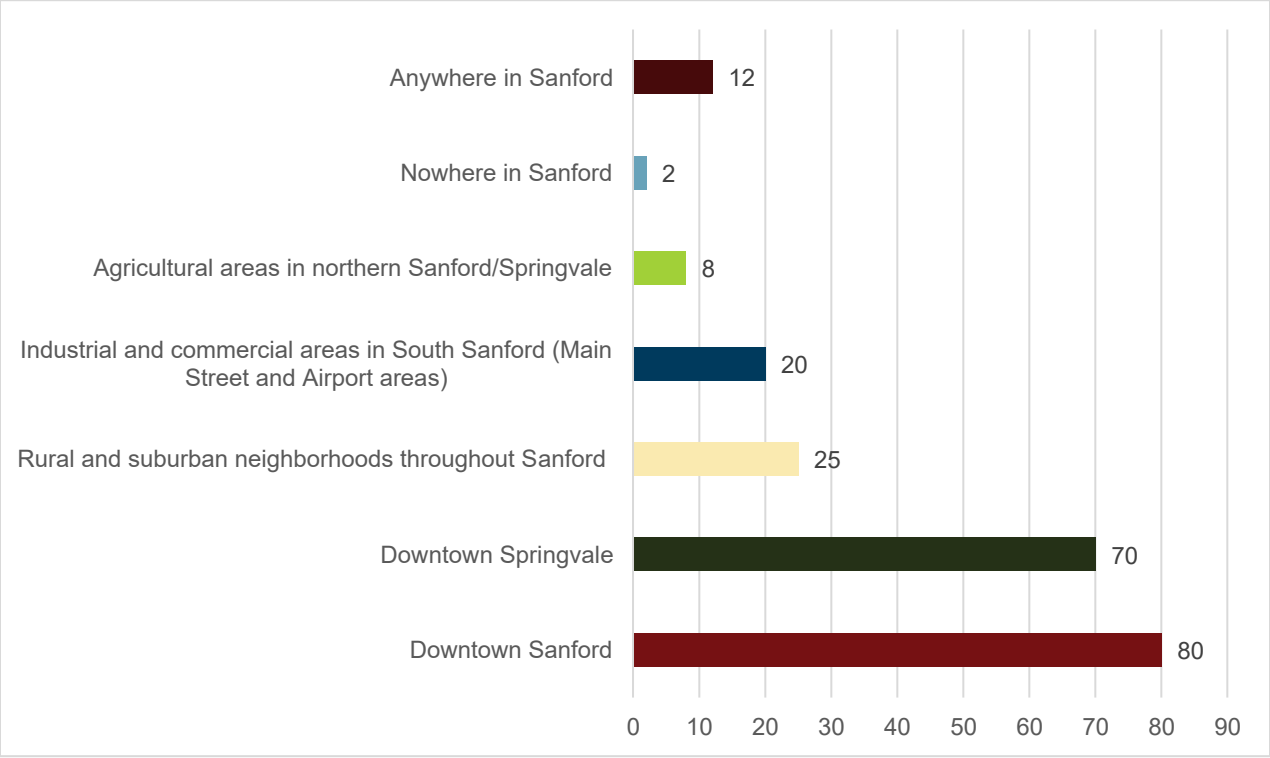


Figure 1.15: Multi-Family Home (More Than Four Units)

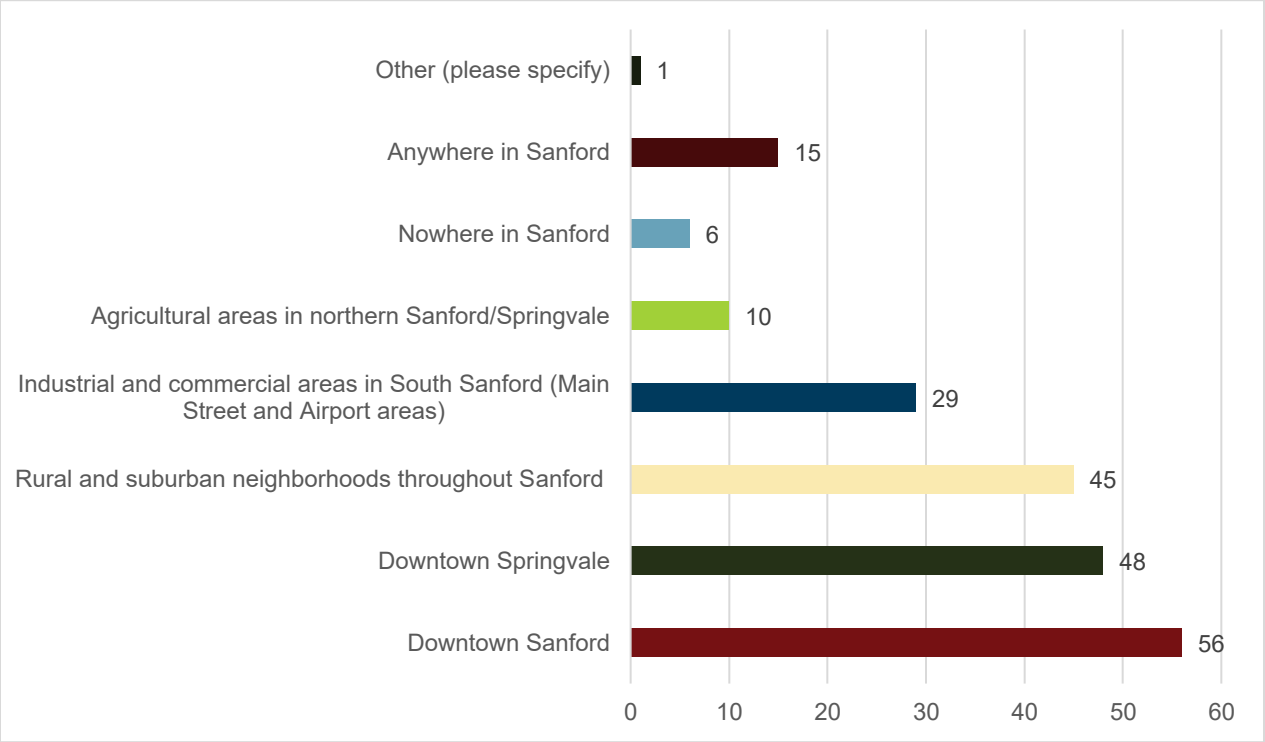


Figure 1.16: Detached Single-Family Homes

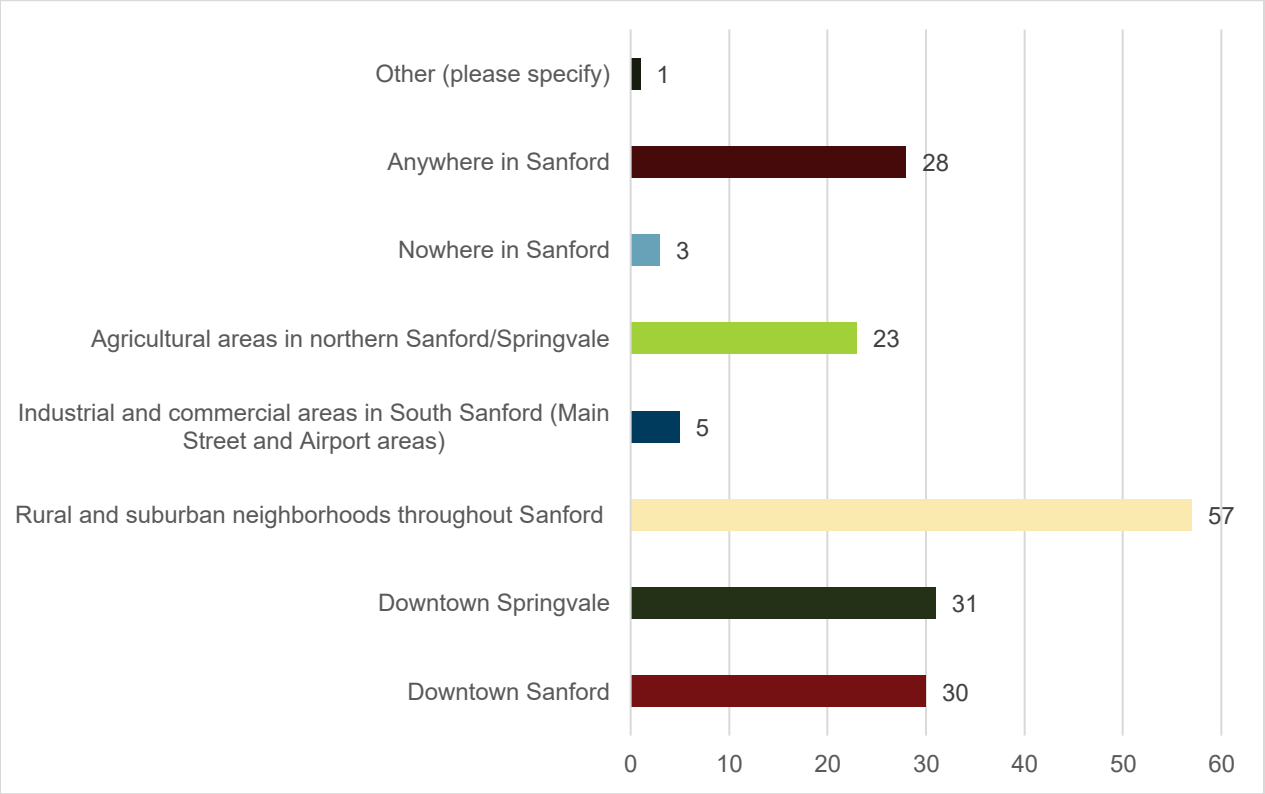


Figure 1.17: Attached Single-Family Homes (Townhomes)

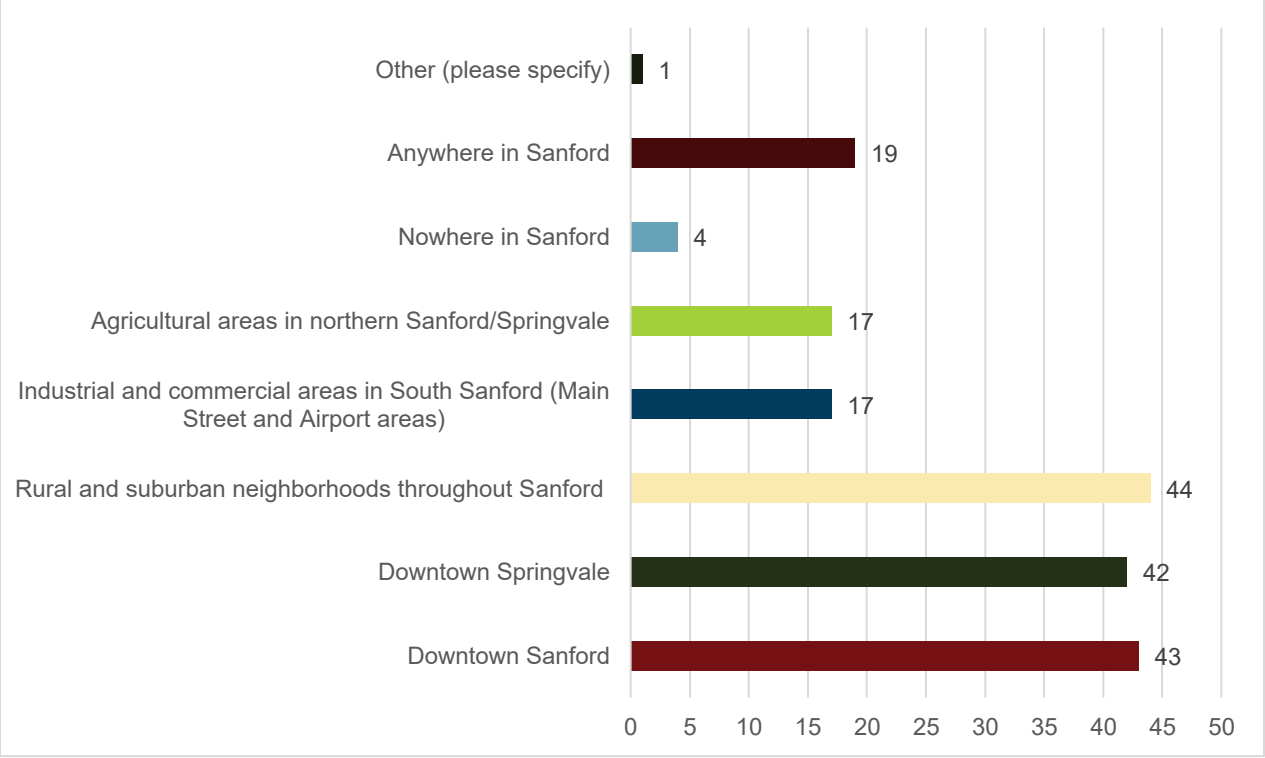


Figure 1.18: Two-Family Homes

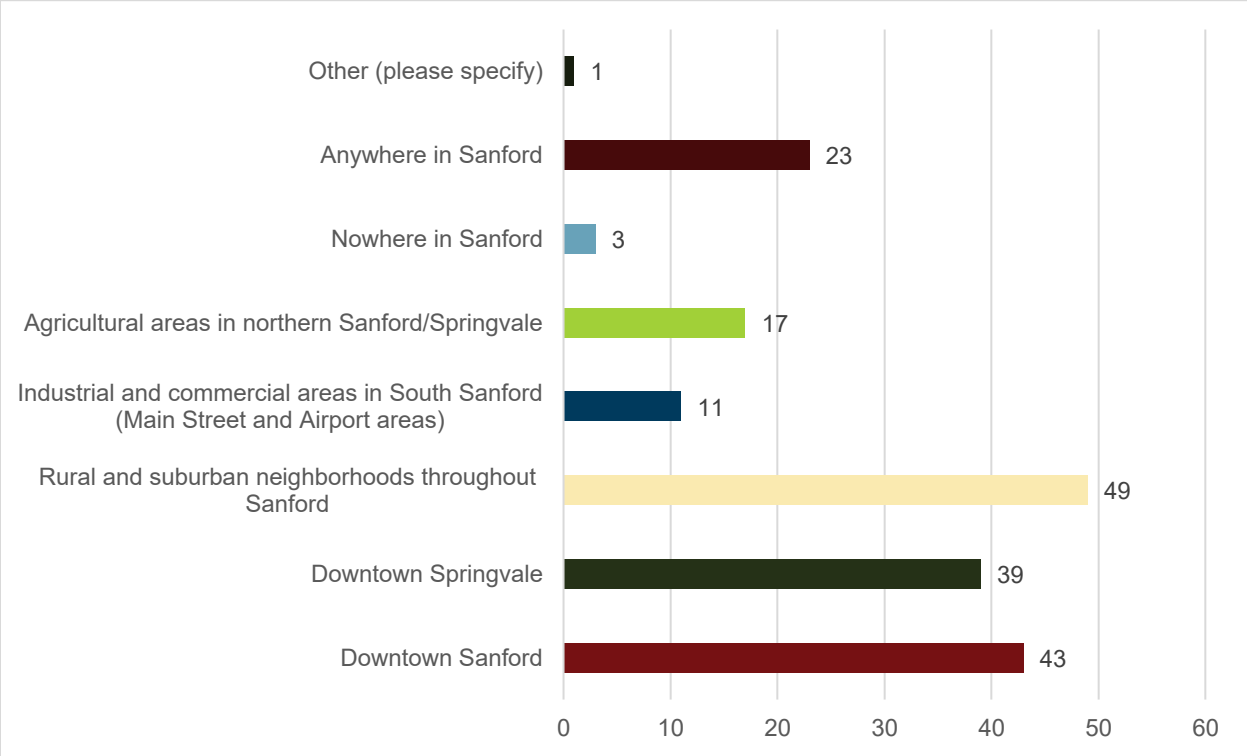


Figure 1.19: Three- and Four-Family Homes

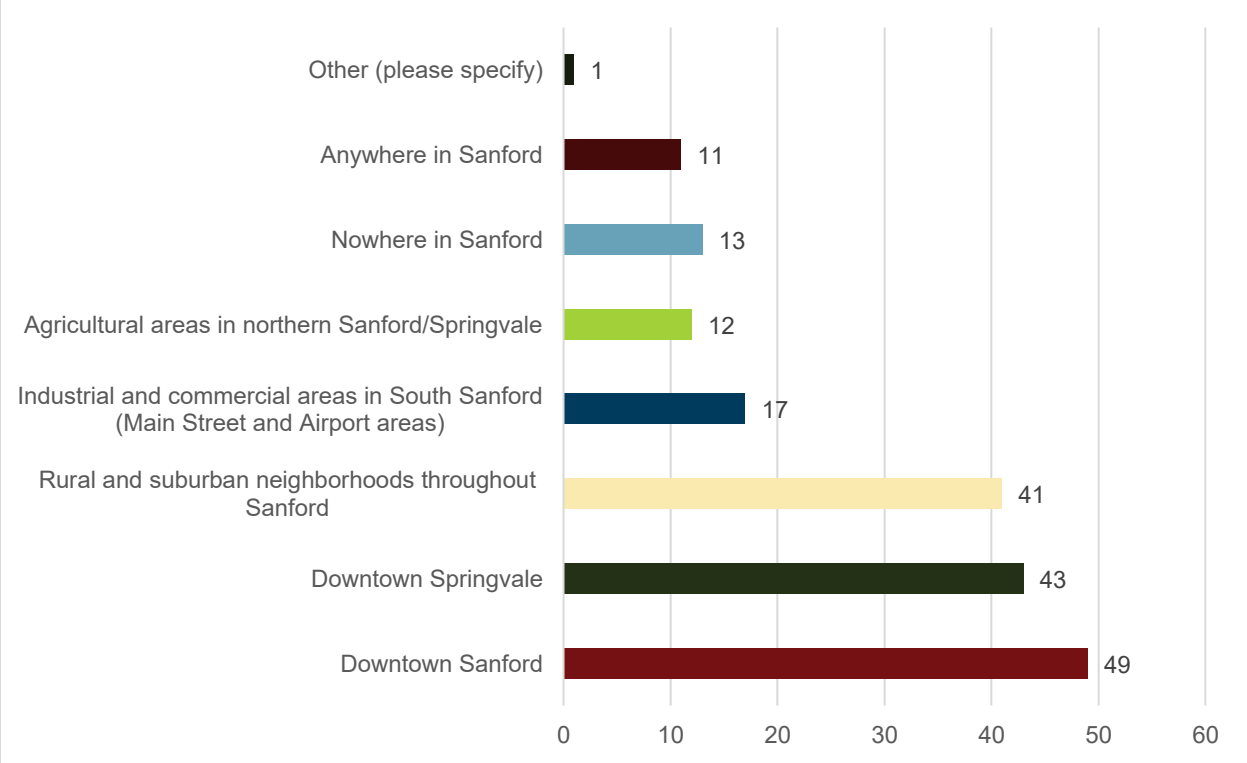


Figure 1.20: Homes on Small Lots

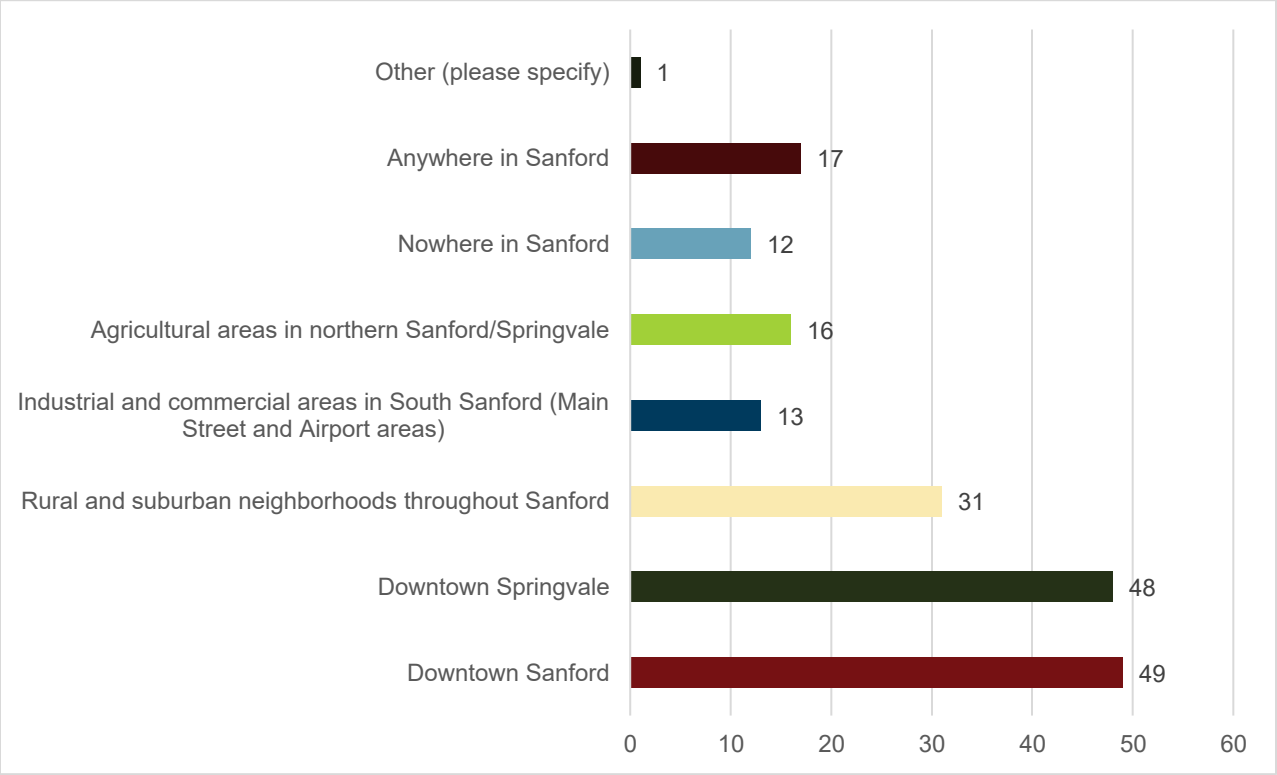


Figure 1.21: Homes on Medium-Sized Lots

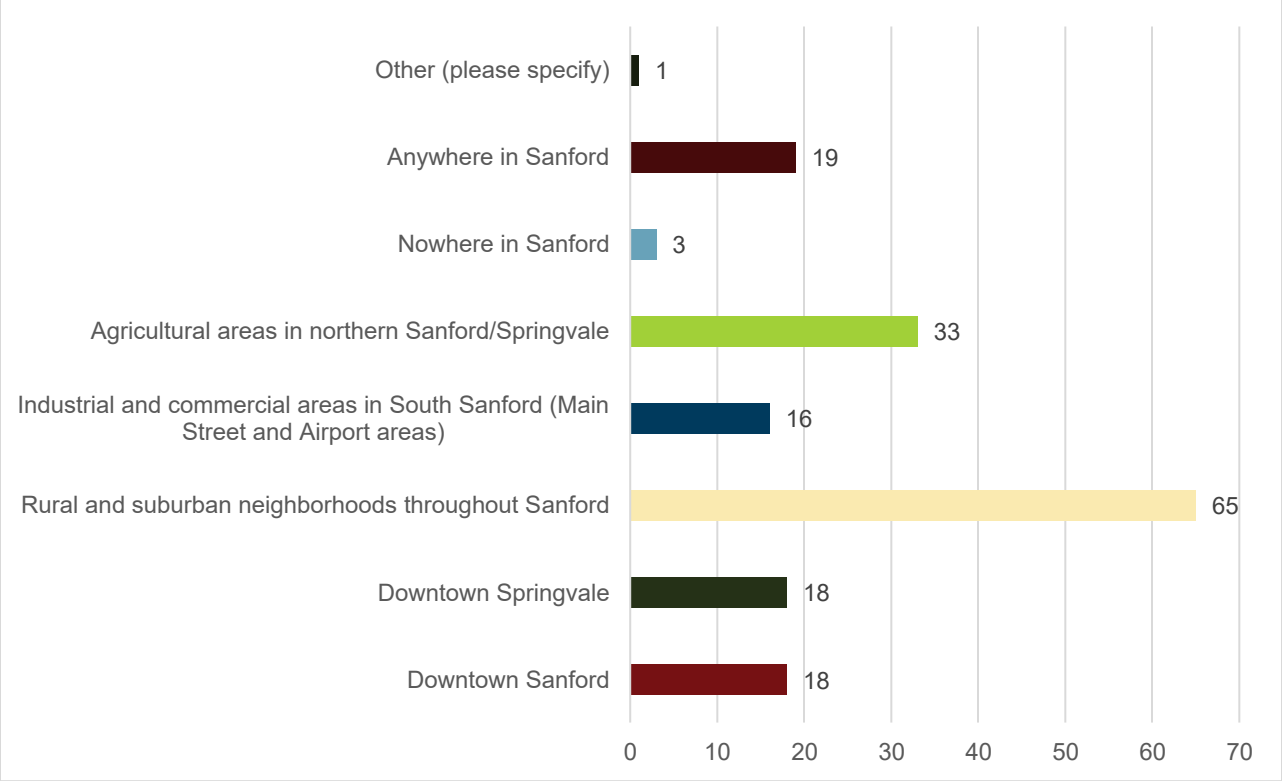
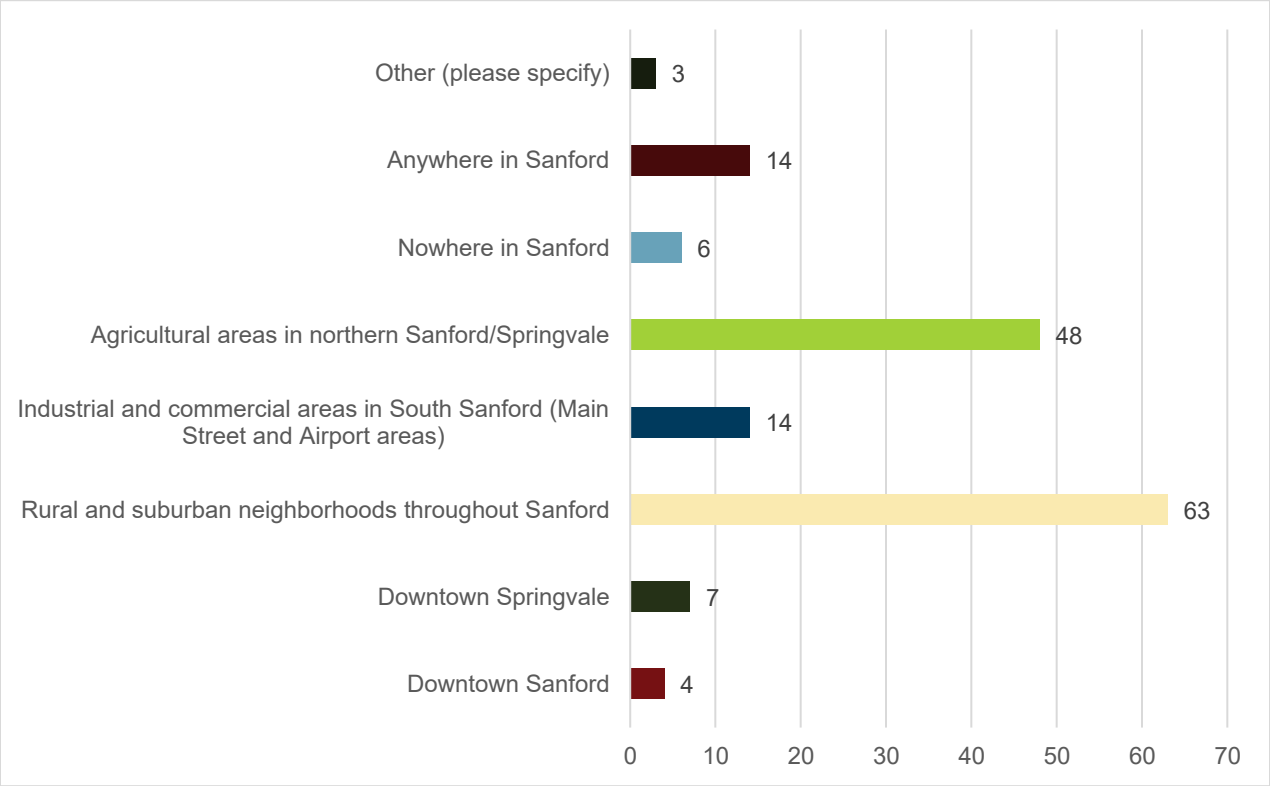


Figure 1.22: Homes on Large Lots



August: Vision Statement Voting

In August, Sanford's QOTM received 78 responses from the Sanford/Springvale community. Community members chose between two proposed vision statements and provided feedback regarding elements of each vision statement they liked, and what they believed was missing. Community preference leaned strongly toward vision statement option 1, though many respondents found both options strongly reflected their vision for the community.

Figure 1.23: Option 1: How well does this vision statement reflect the future you would like to see for our community? Five stars = strongly reflects my vision; Three stars = neutral; One star = does not reflect my vision.

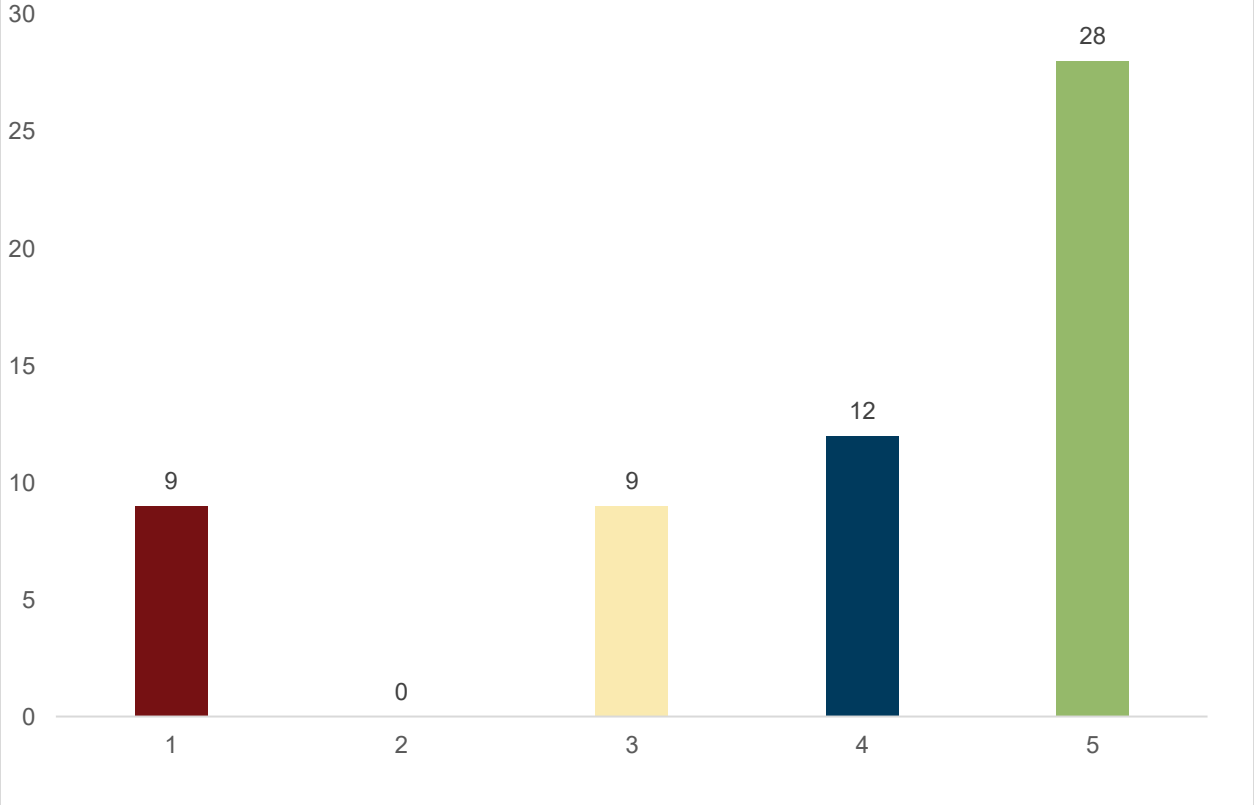


Table 2: What do you like most about this vision statement?

#	Response
1	Feels a like fully formed planned. With ideas this really needs. It lacking a strong identity and feels fractured as community. People need more unity, stable/safe housing and stable economic opportunity that creates at least 3000-4000 from an employer that can take on the tax base.
2	I like that this vision looks at Sanford as a complete community. It balances economic development and downtown revitalization with strong neighborhoods, housing, recreation, natural resources, infrastructure, quality services, and transparent government. I especially

#	Response
	appreciate the emphasis on community connection, long-range planning, and making sure growth strengthens the quality of life for the people who already call Sanford home.
3	With option 1 needs to more opportunity to visit tourist to generate more income so property tax will not get high every 2 years.
4	“A healthy and resilient community is one where ALL individuals feel welcome, supported, and connected.” ..which in my mind means you’re including those who are currently being neglected simply because they don’t have enough money to survive, feed, or house themselves. That’s fantastic! This awareness and support should be “a given”, yet currently our town and its people vilify the ones who need anything, and reward those who have the most. I’m pleased to see that this vision is to include “ALL”. Also, protecting the environment is of utmost importance. This blows my mind that it’s even included in any vision statement coming from the very town who’s actively promoting data centers, which, by the way, will destroy us. The known damaging impacts are being denied by this town. So these “vision statements” I’m guessing are actually nothing more than a PR stunt.
5	focus on community
6	It is great for a meeting. Awesome, but too lengthy for readers if posted for any reason.
7	I appreciate Option 1’s thoroughness and its recognition that Sanford’s future depends on more than economic growth alone. It connects community identity, housing, downtown vitality, natural-resource protection, infrastructure, transparent governance, health, and inclusion. I especially value the explicit attention to Sanford and Springvale, walkability, attainable housing, people experiencing housing instability, public services, and opportunities for residents to participate in community life.
8	I believe in the titled Community Goals and love that it includes Statements about diversity and inclusion
9	Much broader and better represents the community.
10	These options sound overly bureaucratic. A walkable, attractive downtown means nothing amidst rampant homelessness and drug problems that a half corrupted police and city hall legislative staff fail to address. Yes maintain trails, Yes, support high functioning infrastructure, but clean up our street and clear out red tape to allow investors to thrive and create jobs. Sanford has a bad name for a reason, we need you to start that change by making our streets safe for residents.
11	While options 1 is a little "wordy" it clearly lays out how community goals can be met. It provides a strong clear foundation.
12	Our future is shaped by the strength of our roots. The vision statement for Sanford’s Comprehensive Plan bridges our rich heritage as a resilient, hard-working community with our bold aspirations for tomorrow. By grounding our long-term goals in our historic Spartan spirit, this vision ensures that as we modernize our roads, expand housing choices, and boost local business, we are not changing who we are—we are building on who we have always been.

#	Response
	This plan is our roadmap to developing a forward-looking city that remains deeply connected, vibrant, and a proud place for all generations to call home.
13	I like the overall headlines, but they do sounds more like actions/goals than visions.
14	Invest in infrastructure and quality services
15	Inclusion!
16	Nicely laid out presentation.
17	I like that this appears more action based.
18	I would like to see more places to eat in Sanford. Also small businesses.
19	On paper it sounds wonderful. In reality we have a long way to go. Sanford has the reputation of high crime, taxes and resource mismanagement. But this statement was well written and most of us hope that we as a community can achieve the statement as much as possible.
20	I like the detail in vision one and the inclusion of all.
21	The areas of the future it covers
22	It provides a more detailed description of the element and how it was or will be achieved. It does not read as bulleted list of one sentence statements.
23	I like that its a bit more explanatory than Option 2. I like how our community goals are broken down.
24	I like the amount of detail and the clear indication of what Sanford wants to be.
25	I like the detail of the goals.
26	Lots of details
27	I like the values it presents. It is something to move towards, but we are not there yet.
28	Comprehensive
29	Roads must be a priority. Number 1 pond clean up to include trim of overgrown shrubs in the mud islands. The pond should be a focal point
30	Engaging. All-encompassing. Ties us to each other and what's important
31	More reasonable an relatable
32	I'm feeling like you have to be able to read between the lines to know what the difference really is between option 1 and 2.
33	I love the vision and think it's great direction for Sanford.
34	It seems quite comprehensive.
35	great for attracting businesses and, in turn, employment opportunities financial and health strength a great fpundation.

#	Response
36	Encouraging diversity, revitalization of the downtown, and creating housing opportunities and protecting the environment.
37	Through well-written bullet points, this vision provides goals and possible action plans.
38	Nothing
39	I like the civic engagement, protecting of natural resources, and the beautification of downtown Sanford/Springvale.
40	I think it is written well overall but a little long, most people have shorter attention spans and option 2 is better for that.
41	To wordy and fluffy!!! Walkable neighborhoods- no not really the side walks in most neighborhoods are major trip hazards.
42	I like that this vision statement includes points about diversity and protecting nature in Sanford. Diversity and protecting our environment are very important to me and something I feel Sanford should focus on to attract more businesses and people.
43	It focuses a lot on nature.
44	This is a great and comprehensive plan overview. It will be a wonderful day when all these things happen in Sanford. We desperately need new stores, national brands that will keep people shopping in the city and attract visitors such as clothing stores, shoe stores, dry cleaner, technology stores, etc. Then taxes on homeowners can be lowered.
45	I like that the statement is clear, concise, and focused on both people and place. It recognizes Sanford's history and community identity while also supporting thoughtful growth, affordable housing, local businesses, revitalized downtowns, public services, recreation, and responsible stewardship. The community values and future outcomes make the vision easy to understand and show how the broader ideas could translate into meaningful improvements for residents.

Table 3: What is missing and/or what would you change about this statement?

#	Response
1	My preference is for the shorter version because I think a vision statement should establish broad community goals without creating overly specific expectations about the services the City will provide or who will be eligible for them. I have some concern about language specifically referencing "residents experiencing housing instability." While I absolutely think access to housing is an important community issue, I don't think we should unintentionally create an expectation that the City will provide services or financial assistance to anyone who identifies as a Sanford resident. We have seen with programs such as rent relief how questions around residency and eligibility can become complicated. Given the regional nature of homelessness and the fact that people may come to Sanford because they believe resources are available here, I think we should be careful about language in the vision statement that could later be interpreted as a commitment to serve anyone experiencing housing instability.
2	Too long.

#	Response
3	It's fine it's feels formed.
4	I would add a more explicit commitment to fiscal sustainability and affordability for residents. As Sanford grows and invests in infrastructure and services, we should also consider the impact those decisions have on property taxpayers, renters, seniors, working families, and people on fixed incomes. Sustainable growth should strengthen our tax base and quality of life without making it increasingly difficult for longtime residents to remain here. I would also like to see continued emphasis on measurable goals and using community input and data to evaluate whether our plans are actually producing the outcomes we intended.
5	Most of the statement (to me) is fluff. It's not a genuine vision, and lacks substance. It sounds more like an advertisement that says nothing but wants to puff its chest while demanding we all work work work harder harder harder. Where's the leisure in our lives? The connections? The fun? Sure, we need jobs here, but we need things that support our physical and emotional well being for enjoyment. I read this statement multiple times, trying to envision something real about it, and mostly glazed over at the nothingness. At the same time 90% of what's written as a vague essence should be the given belief system in every community. It's common sense (..that isn't so common). Something I'd add is high quality attractions, such as a botanical garden, and indoor and outdoor centers with creative activities for ALL ages - youth, teens, young adults, older adults, retirees - without separating the generations. Also, just as important as anything else: I'd like to see safe, roomy, car-less areas for pedestrians, cyclists, and the like. Many public walkways / pathways, although are beginning in show some improvement, have a LONG way to go towards safer access.
6	Beautify our city by asking local businesses to sponsor different areas in the city and make them look nice to passing travelers
7	boring text lacks expression of need to limit new housing in rural areas, which is in fundamental conflict with numerous other goals
8	Nothing about tax relief for home owners to encourage those of us who have lived here for awhile to stay
9	I would make the core vision statement shorter and more memorable, while moving some of the detailed implementation language into the plan's goals and strategies. The language about expanding the tax base and directing commercial growth could be framed more clearly around responsible, community-serving growth that protects neighborhood character and natural resources. I would also add a more direct commitment to climate and energy resilience, including preparation for flooding, extreme weather, and reliable, efficient infrastructure.
10	Is a bit repetitive.
11	Revitalize the downtown? It sounds good. What are the suggestions and plans to accomplish this? The need for Pre K without a lottery
12	It's overall too wordy. It needs to be more concise to encourage people to actually read it.
13	It's to long. Reads like it was taken from a boiler plate.

#	Response
14	I would inject in the statement that the town government is aware of the many issues that need to be resolved but have the people and resources in place to change the city for the better and will provide feedback to the taxpayers as the vision becomes more of a reality. This would make your vision more believable and realistic and easier to believe. Include in your statement that you will, and should use the community's feedback now and in the future.
15	More focus on the ageing and the immigrant populations. More protection of our wild habitats, displacing the wild animals to build a McMansion in a post war neighborhood is just not right. It will cause the property values in those neighborhoods go up to much which will cause taxes on those homes go up, which will make like harder for the retirees living in those homes. This is why we move to Sanford in the first place, to get away from artificially high property values with high taxes. Business is good, help out newest residents open small business to serve the neighborhoods.
16	Community involvement strategies
17	Too many words just to say the same thing as option 2. I really don't see the difference and don't feel like these are even options
18	I recommend replacing "camaraderie among residents" with "strong connections among residents." While "camaraderie" is certainly a legitimate word and generally conveys fellowship and mutual goodwill, I find that it can carry associations or connotations that are unnecessary in a community Vision Statement. More importantly, "strong connections among residents" expresses the intended concept more plainly and inclusively and is less likely to distract a reader from the larger message.
19	Some people might find it challenging to connect to this statement because there is a lot of text.
20	I like aspects of the actual vision statement paragraph better for option 2. I think "Sanford is a welcoming, hardworking Main community..." sounds like it could be any community. I like "Sanford is the heart of inland York County." It's more direct, specific, and catches the concept of Sanford in the first line much better than the first statement.
21	Too much verbiage
22	Having experienced Sanford since 1987, I feel that this first one, while I like the wording better than Option 2, is going to not be looked at thoroughly. Bullet points are better for the demographics, in my opinion.
23	Too verbose.
24	Why to long.
25	There seems to be several open ended statements left up for various forms of interpretation, for ex: What businesses are you targeting? People will add their own interpretations. This is also way too wordy. Trying to hard to add to much into each section
26	Visually is has a LOT of writing. Can it be condensed to one page? (Like a good resume). For visual impact only, have a shortened version for ease of summation, while keeping the original for working purposes.

#	Response
27	I want to see something that addresses the fact that all city residents are to be notified when important/ impactful or potentially controversial projects are being considered so that they can attend informational city meetings to get a full understanding of how the project will impact the city and its residents. Residents can then share their support for or protest the project.
28	It feels very long. I had a hard time reading all that text.
29	Seems to have unnecessary wordiness.
30	sounds like you think if you make a strong business and health atmosphere, people will have great lives by osmosis
31	Ithink it covers everything. Maybe addressing the homeless situation too
32	This is an absolute joke.
33	I would like to see more connection and attention given to music and the arts.
34	More precise into the point.
35	I would scratch this one all together, it sounds to Disney world perfect... And Sanford is far from that. The light colored background makes it difficult to read that small print. Most peoples eyes are sensitive to bright colors due to technology
36	It's too wordy - ideally a mission statement should be 1-3 sentences and 30 words or less. Yes I googled for precise details but I know a bit about mission statements.
37	I would keep it the same. Perhaps, adapt it to have a more modern look like Option 2 but with the full details of Option 1. I believe the full overview is best to give residents and potential stakeholders a positive and inspiring view of what Sanford can be with a nod to the renaissance of what we were born ripe to becoming a city…. Prosperous.
38	I would add a stronger emphasis on education, workforce development, and creating opportunities for young people and working families to build their futures in Sanford. I would also clarify how progress will be measured so the vision becomes an accountable guide for decision-making rather than simply an aspirational statement. The language could more directly recognize the importance of collaboration among residents, businesses, schools, nonprofit organizations, and city government in achieving these outcomes.

Figure 1.24: Option 2: How well does this vision statement reflect the future you would like to see for our community? Five stars = strongly reflects my vision; Three stars = neutral; One star = does not reflect my vision.

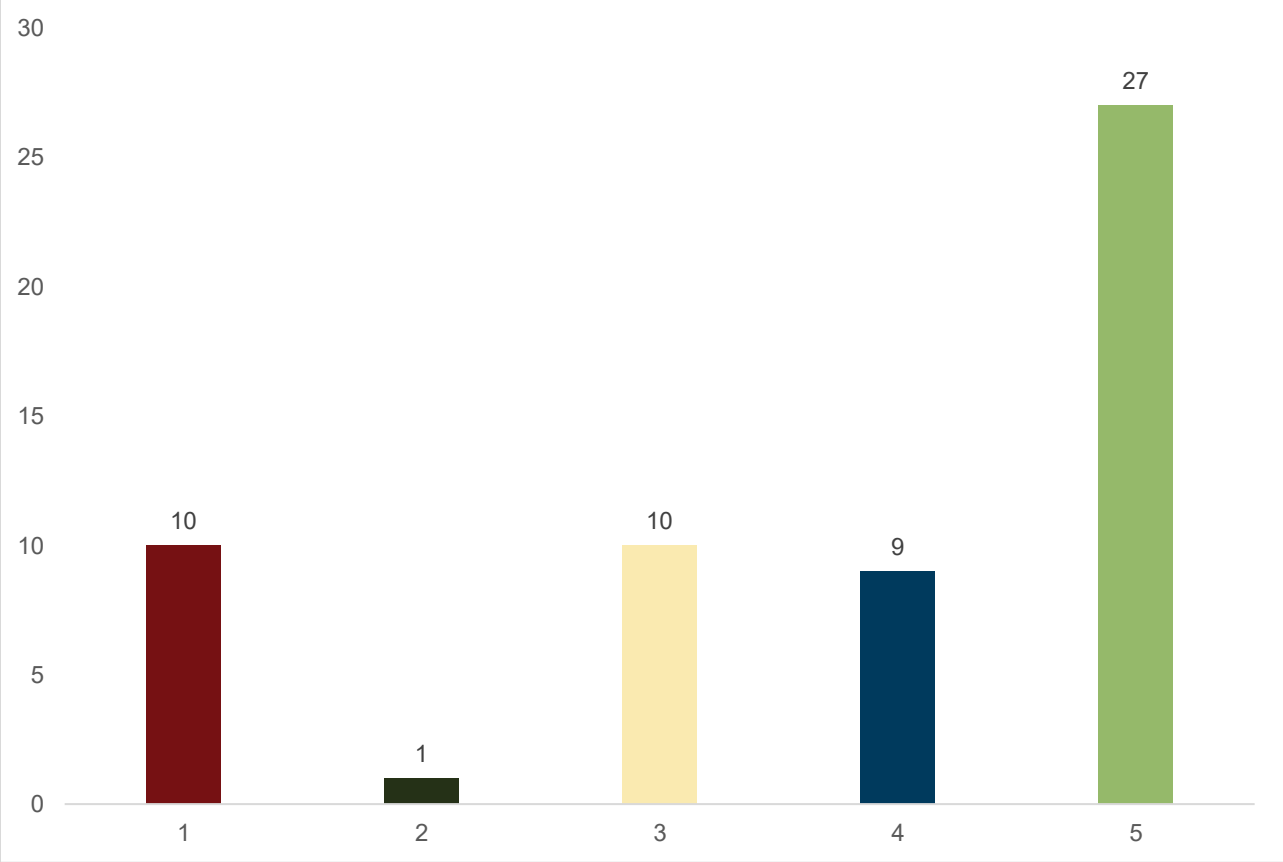


Table 4: What do you like the most about this vision statement?

#	Response
1	It is easy to read and encompasses a general understanding of the town without diving too deeply.
2	Clear & concise. The words accountable, transparent, & collaborative indicate planning and action we can trust.
3	It's too simple and glazes over what really needs to happen in Sanford. Doesn't feel like a fully formed idea or plan. It feels like it is half committed.
4	I like that this vision is clear, forward-looking, and grounded in values. Connection, local opportunity, livable places, stewardship, resilience, and trust provide a strong framework for making decisions rather than simply listing individual projects or priorities. I also appreciate that it describes future outcomes we can work toward, particularly strong neighborhoods, opportunities for local businesses, housing choices, reliable infrastructure, protection of natural resources, and transparent and consistent public decision-making.
5	Third alarm is amazing

#	Response
6	Overall, it seems to have a bit more substance: "..improving transportation and public infrastructure, and ensuring that parks, trails, public services, and civic life are safe, inclusive, and accessible to all." People need the outdoors to be more user friendly. I'd like to see some motivation for "all" to be out in the community - places that don't always require spending money to enjoy them; places to socialize while engaging in activities as an option. Again, "visions" are vague, and open to interpretation.
7	It is precise and to the point. I think it better states what the community and its values are about and then presents what the future looks like. I like the set up and presentation better.
8	much punchier than Option 1
9	Great visual to post places to remind community members that they can feel good about being a part of somewhere that cares for it's people. Less wordy for a world that seems to be in a hurry.
10	I like that Option 2 is clear, inclusive, and practical. It recognizes Sanford's role as a regional hub while honoring the history of Sanford and Springvale, mill villages, rural landscapes, and community character. It gives equal weight to attainable housing, local opportunity, active downtowns, transportation and infrastructure, parks and natural resources, public safety, and transparent decision-making. Its focus on future outcomes makes it easy to understand what the community is working toward.
11	Option 2 is concise and readable.
12	Thank you!
13	As the heart of York County, Sanford unites a resilient Spartan spirit with establishing a proud, vibrant community with forward-looking growth. Creating a safe, thriving, and inclusive place where every generation can belong while embodying this strength and unity, we promote thriving local businesses, diverse housing options, connected transit, and protected green spaces. Shaping a dynamic, connected city that sustains our families for generations to come; where all generations can put down roots to call home."
14	Concise and direct. It also presents as aspirational ideas to strive towards for the future, which is what a vision statement should be.
15	Trust and resilience
16	Direct and all encompassing!
17	shorter than Option 1.
18	I do not dislike this option, I just prefer the 1st.
19	Simple statements that have great meaning
20	Much like the first statement this was well written. And also asking the taxpayers for feedback is a great way to reinforce what you're trying to accomplish. I hope that our feedback is not falling on deaf ears because I would expect 99% of the feedback is from people that want to

#	Response
	see Sanford get away from its negative past and see the vision that your have presented to us.
21	the inclusion of outcomes
22	I like option one best
23	It si a much quicker read to some readers, but it does not add justification of heft to the meaningful elements of the Vision Statement.
24	one page
25	I think it is well-crafted and succinct, and captures the essence of what Sanford wants to be without being too dense.
26	Too short. Not detailed enough to explain what we want to see in the future.
27	More concise
28	Specific outcomes included
29	Less fine print.
30	Short bullet points are more likely to be read by the public, in my opinion. Sadly, both mention "affordable" and that is asking for the trolls to aggrevate the social media peeps. A lot of people do not feel affordable is actually attainable anywhere right now, but it certainly should be the goal. Just be prepared for those that like to stir the pot to target that concept.
31	This statement encompasses all I would like to see continue and improve in our community in the years ahead. The wording is succinct. I especially like the "Trust" section.
32	Short, distilled vision for our town. Belonging is key. I like the use of stewardship
33	It's goal driven and more of a commitment to the community. It adds our values that we want to uphold as a community. It's shorter and more comprehensive.
34	I'm feeling like you have to be able to read between the lines to know what the difference really is between option 1 and 2. 2 just seems more concise.
35	Very clear, rooted in what matters to people in Sanford (affordability, outdoor recreation, local businesses)
36	It seems comprehensive and concise.
37	there is more focus on making Sanford a welcoming vibrant living home Come in! Let's eat and do something together. Good conversation . Informal, open gatherings. And yes, a strong, positive business atmosphere in option one is also necessary.

#	Response
38	It's shorter and to the point. Unlike option 1 which is lengthy and wordy.
39	The leaders of this city are horrendous at their job. You all need to be replaced by people who will handle actual issues in this "city"
40	Short and to the point.
41	The thing I like most about this statement is, it is short and concise. It gets to the point let you know what we are about as a community and leads you into doing research.
42	Simple.... Colors and font easier to read. This is all fine and nice, however can we discuss how we are going to achieve this wonderful little City you are trying to pick up.... I feel like we are putting the cart before the horse here. I have been a homeowner in Sanford for 16 years. I can't say anything posative. We have lost business, there are lots of empty spaces. I understand people want places like Nuts and Bolts, but those business don't pay the bills for just a clerk or position like. Every household I know has had to make major cuts to make there budget work. Why do towns and Cities not understand that? The City of Sanford just keeps increasing there taxes. I am not sure how you can do that, because the citizens are not getting major pay raises to accommodate all the cost increases. Someone needs to grow a pair and slash the City of Sanford budget!!!!
43	I like the economic ideas and making Sanford a better place for businesses to thrive.
44	Clean, concise with a modern design.
45	It's clear, distinct language in shortened form really surrounds the ideas and initiatives we all hope and want for this city as we move forward!
46	I like that this version provides a fuller and more inspiring picture of Sanford's future. It balances community identity, economic development, downtown revitalization, housing, infrastructure, natural resources, recreation, inclusion, and effective governance. I especially appreciate that it connects each goal to quality of life and explains why the goal matters, rather than simply listing priorities.

Table 5: What is missing and/or what would you change about this statement?

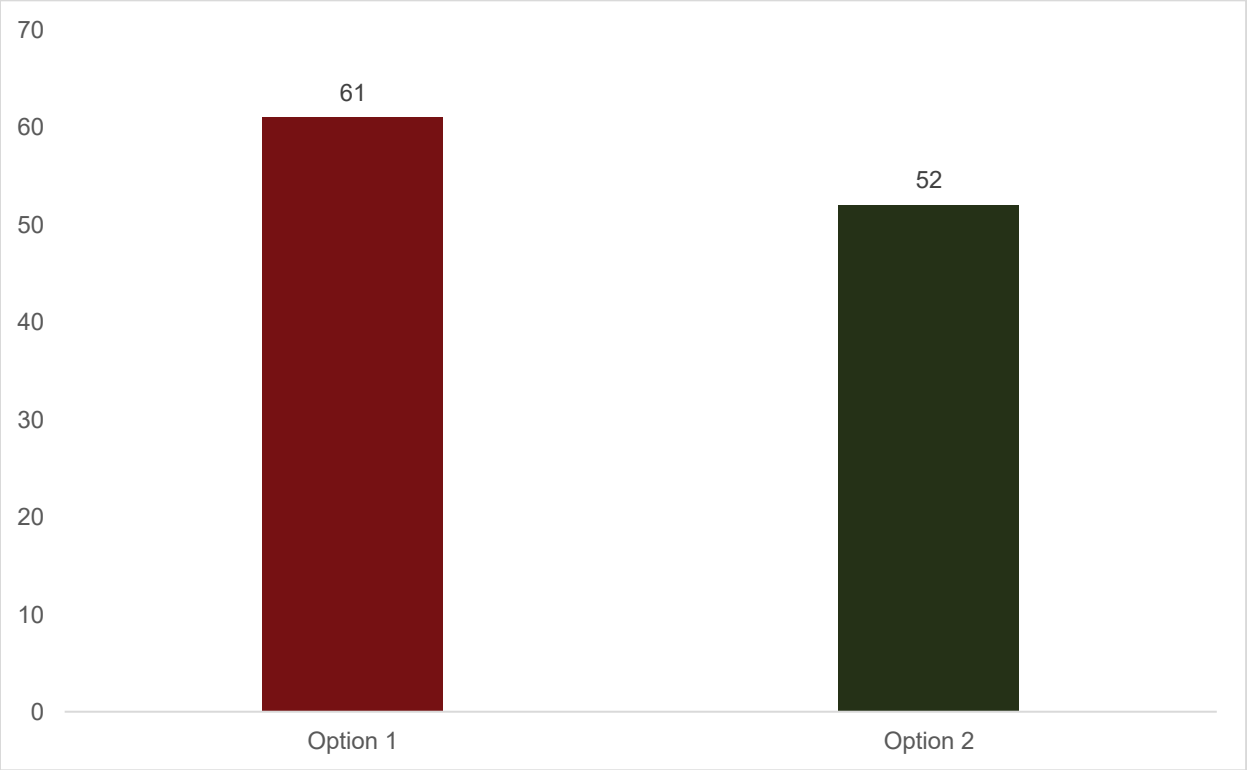
#	Response
1	Too long.
2	It needs more explanation on each value. If that can't be provided then do not use. It's doesn't feel clear enough.
3	I would strengthen the language around affordability and fiscal sustainability. As Sanford grows, we should be asking not only what investments our community needs, but how we make those investments responsibly and ensure that existing residents can continue to afford to live here. That includes homeowners, renters, seniors, working families, and people on fixed incomes. I would also like to see measurable goals connected to these future outcomes so residents can see our progress over time and determine whether our decisions are actually producing the results we intended.
4	This statement is sort of a summary of the first one, but better explained, and narrowed down to more meaningful goals. There's a lot to process in both statements since it's all left up to

#	Response
	interpretation. What I'd like to see here in the future is for Sanford to ultimately become a place that others from out of town think of us first.. as a go-to area for calm, beauty, uniqueness, quality attractions, food, safe and healthy activities, enjoyment, fun,and yes, varied work options. Thanks for asking.
5	I would like to see the future outcomes section be more vivid. Make it po but not outdo the top of the statement. Color wise from the top down to future outcomes is perfect buy please enhance the bottom a bit.
6	lacks expression of need to limit new housing in rural areas, which is in fundamental conflict with numerous other goals
7	Nothing about tax relief for home owners to encourage those of us who have lived here for awhile to stay
8	I would strengthen the language about housing affordability and stability so it explicitly includes renters, first-time homebuyers, seniors, people with disabilities, and residents facing housing insecurity. I would also add a specific commitment to climate and energy resilience, including flood preparedness, extreme-weather readiness, efficient buildings, and reliable utilities. Finally, the statement could more directly mention health, well-being, and access to services for residents of all ages.
9	Not much. I'd have to nit-pick to find things.
10	"Schools " The need for Pre K without a lottery
11	Nothing.
12	Lacks specifics which makes it safe for the future. E.g; Future Outcomes: what open spaces, water resources are we going to protect and how?
13	again missing is the promise to keep us informed of the promise to stay the course towards the vision's high expectations. We all want to see, and hear that progress is being made. Action speaks louder than words. I wish you the city and its people best wishes and thank you for taking a step in the right direction!!
14	See above
15	The expense of goals for the future this option seems very limited
16	There are too many things to focus on and some are at odds with each other. If you revitalize downtown and preserve rural character, housing becomes much more expensive. It's like there was a list of options given and we just selected all. I'm not in favor of embracing being a service center. People living here because it's cheaper or because the services are here has not increased the sense of community. Both have to many words to succinctly convey the message
17	Reads more like a bulleted list of statements and less of a Vision Statement. Lacks necessary details in narrative to fully convey the Vision Statement. Future Outcomes are lacking in context and actionability and are mere statements.
18	I like the greater details and explanations on Option 1
19	I don't think this statement captures as much detail as it could; it feels like a "cliff notes" version that is attractive and easy to read, but not as substantive as I would like.

#	Response
20	Attracting industry offering livable wages; long term investment in public transportation
21	I want to see less government and less spending.
22	I know Springvale is a village of Sanford but it would be great if the top left used the same logo as the Sanford homepage:https://www.sanfordmaine.org/_assets_/images/logo.png
23	Nothing.
24	If there were a way to incorporate more of vision 1 into vision 2 and still keep the clean and short look to accomodate those that just won't read the lengthy one, I'd feel a bit more comfortable.
25	For each community value,reword so they don't start the same way. Perhaps incorporate the idea we are forward looking for generations to come?
26	Morning about economic advancements really.. we could be more of an economically thriving city with more job opportunities and lower taxes if we had an economic growth plan and mission statement should reflect some sort of goal to provide more “in house” jobs for the people,
27	This statement begins by comparing Sanford to others. Never build something (especially for change) on a comparison. Build on your own merit. Sanford has merit this reflects a negative beginning point.
28	I want to see something that addresses the fact that all city residents are to be notified when important/ impactful or potentially controversial projects are being considered so that they can attend informational city meetings to get a full understanding of how the project will impact the city and its residents. Residents can then share their support for or protest the project.
29	I would love to see more art woven into the Sanford culture. I didn’t see anything about art mentioned
30	It needs no changes. Seems fine the way it is.
31	The strength of business, transportation, and health giving a strong foundation. Would like to see both option 1 and 2 need the
32	Future outcomes are good, but action plans to achieve these outcomes are not provided.
33	I would like to see more emphasis of new business in town not discount stores. In the past we could find stores with a good quality of clothing etc. Now we have just junk stores.
34	I actually think this is done very well. I don’t know that there is much I would change.
35	I like this vision statement but it feels stripped back and focuses more on economic growth while not touching on diversity or being environmentally friendly, which I feel are important to Sanford's growth and increasing desirability.
36	This look is excellent but I believe the full descriptions found in Option 1 are what the city needs to give other hope for the future.

#	Response
37	I would add a stronger and more direct emphasis on education, workforce development, and opportunities for young people to remain in or return to Sanford. I would also include clearer language about how progress will be measured and reported to the public. The statement is thorough, but some sections could be shortened slightly so the main priorities are easier for residents to absorb.

Figure 1.25: What vision statement option do you want to see included in the Comprehensive Plan?



Community Heart and Soul Event

On May 29, 2025, Friends of Downtown, in coordination with other groups and the Committee, hosted “Curated Grazing and Great Conversation” at the Sanford Memorial Gymnasium to unveil draft Heart & Soul statements developed from community stories and input collected over several years. The event included opportunities to review and respond to the statements, add comments, and discuss potential action steps. Overall, participants affirmed many of the draft statements while also identifying areas that need additional refinement, including continued attention to community connection, downtown and mill redevelopment, affordable housing, public safety, outdoor recreation, and pride in Sanford’s future.

Participants placed green, yellow, and red stickers next to statements to indicate level of agreement. Green means “yes, right on”; yellow means “needs more work”; red means “missed the boat”.

Table 6: Recreation Statements

Statement	Sticker Response
Sanford has diverse outdoor community assets that enhance our well-being	3 green, 1 yellow sticker
We treasure our easy access to the outdoors because it makes natural beauty, recreation, and spiritual connections available to us all.	4 green, 4 yellow stickers
We enjoy gathering places where we can engage with new people, interact with others, build connections and strengthen friendships.	4 green, 4 yellow, 1 red sticker

Table 7: Safety Statements

Statement	Sticker Response
Overall Sanford feels safe.	5 Green, 6 yellow stickers
Sanford has a family-friendly, small-town feel that makes us feel safe, creating a sense of comfort to move freely within our neighborhoods.	1 green, 6 yellow stickers
We are concerned by the persistence of drug use and homelessness in our midst because of the multiple ways it harms individuals, their families, and our community.	6 green, 3 yellow stickers

Table 8: Education Statements

Statement	Sticker Response
Sanford schools give our youth opportunities to reach their unique potential.	10 green, 2 yellow sticker
We appreciate the opportunities given to our students in a wide variety of subject matter that provide an array of college preparatory and workforce ready skills and experiences.	5 green stickers
We support the expansive opportunities that encompass adult learning, professional development and social enrichment, because they are a source of pride and community cohesiveness.	3 green stickers

Table 9: Economy Statements

Statement	Sticker Response
Sanford supports entrepreneurial opportunities and legacy businesses	2 green stickers, 1 yellow sticker
We desire to be a thriving hub of local business owners, who can provide residents options for eating, entertaining, gathering, and shopping.	11 green stickers
We are poised for growth and people are optimistic about the future.	3 green stickers, 7 yellow stickers

Table 10: Community Statements

Statement	Sticker Response
Sanford is a safe, supportive community where people feel connected to one another.	2 green stickers, 9 yellow stickers
We value the generational pride of our mill town heritage, and strong work ethic because it shapes our identity.	2 green stickers, 4 yellow stickers
We welcome new residents for their diversity that broadens our perspectives.	7 green stickers, 2 yellow stickers
We are grateful for "neighbors helping neighbors" which strengthens our community and enhances the overall quality of life.	5 green stickers, 1 yellow sticker

Steering Committee Meetings

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (Committee) includes residents, employees and board representatives, who are responsible for guiding the Comprehensive Plan process. The Committee meets monthly to discuss feedback and next steps. These meetings are recorded and open to the public and have focused on a variety of planning topics to support the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Recent meetings have focused on the development of the plan's vision statement, future land use, and policies.

This section contains a high-level summary from the Committee's May 2024 meeting, which resulted in the development of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The information from this effort, paired with community feedback derived from open house events, tabling, and questions of the month, has been helpful in guiding committee members through the development of key elements of the comprehensive plan.

At the May 2024 Steering Committee meeting, members took turns voicing characteristics of Sanford and the surrounding region to begin to identify areas in the community in need of change, and qualities that should be expanded upon in the future. In total, the group came up with 34 strengths, 22 weaknesses, 33 opportunities, and 21 threats.

Common themes are summarized below:

- Civic pride/Sanford stigma – This is often a theme in communities that have had a strong blue collar workforce and then experienced industry closures, such as with the mill district. There are still strong forces of community pride present in Sanford, and yet the community will need widespread efforts and positivity to instigate the kind of community renaissance seen elsewhere.
- Local businesses – There is pride in long-standing local businesses of Sanford and some momentum occurring in the revitalization of a local business community with the façade program and economic development benefits, but the community is still looking for opportunities to attract new and diverse businesses to create a thriving downtown, a supported agricultural sector, and a stable industrial base.
- Arts, entertainment, and tourism – Recent successes with the development of the Performing Arts Center and the Art Walk should be celebrated and capitalized on; Sanford does not have a strong tourism industry or quality lodging to support the crowds these events can draw, and other communities are moving into this market.
- Industry, history, and schools – Sanford High School and York County Community College are major assets to the community and continue strong ties to its industrial past; Sanford's Industrial park is the only opportunity in the region for major industry developments. Proximity to, and high employment representation among residents, of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is an opportunity not to be missed.
- Parks, recreation, and development – Balancing recreational opportunities with increased growth is key to promoting a high quality of life for new and existing residents.

Decentering vehicles and refocusing on people can achieve the density required to support the restaurants and retail of a thriving downtown district.

- Gateways – Current lack of signage, landscaping, and gateways as you enter Sanford could be improved for better first impression of the community.
- Municipal services and infrastructure – Strong relationships with state and federal officials and the presence of Sanford Net Fiber set Sanford up well to continue improvements to services and infrastructure, which supports new business attraction.
- Communications – Sanford Springvale News and City Hall's Communication Coordinator are good resources to promote all of the issues and events above; increasing transparency with residents is a great way to improve community pride and awareness.

July 3rd Block Party Tabling

On July 3, 2026, BerryDunn participated in the City of Sanford's July 3rd Block Party to raise awareness of the Comprehensive Plan Update and gather preliminary input on the community's vision for future land use. Residents who visited the table were invited to review a map of the Sanford planning area and place land use "building blocks" on locations where they felt different types of new development, redevelopment, or public investment would be appropriate. BerryDunn team members and City staff facilitated conversations with participants, asking questions such as:

- What should this area be known for in the future?
- What existing features, buildings, natural resources, or community assets should be protected or strengthened?
- What transportation, infrastructure, or public space improvements would help this area function better?
- Are there locations where new development, redevelopment, or reinvestment should be encouraged?
- What type of housing mix is appropriate in this area?
- Are there locations where development should be limited, carefully designed, or avoided?

~50 participants provided feedback through this activity. The placement of building blocks, combined with conversations with residents, highlighted several priorities and preferences for future land use, development, redevelopment, and public investment throughout Sanford. Key priorities included the following:

- Public transportation to Biddeford
- Small commercial businesses
- Traffic improvements
- Biking improvements
- Open Space, Conservation Land, and Parks
- Agriculture or farms
- Walkability improvements
- Multi-family homes
- One- and two-family homes
- Large commercial businesses

Future Land Use Open House

On September 30, 2026, City staff and BerryDunn hosted a Future Land Use Open House at Sanford's Memorial Gym. The workshop featured four activities designed to gather community input and better understand preferences related to future growth, redevelopment, conservation, and community character. Community members were also able to participate in activities online. In total, roughly 35 individuals participated at the in-person event and online. Key themes identified through each activity are summarized below.

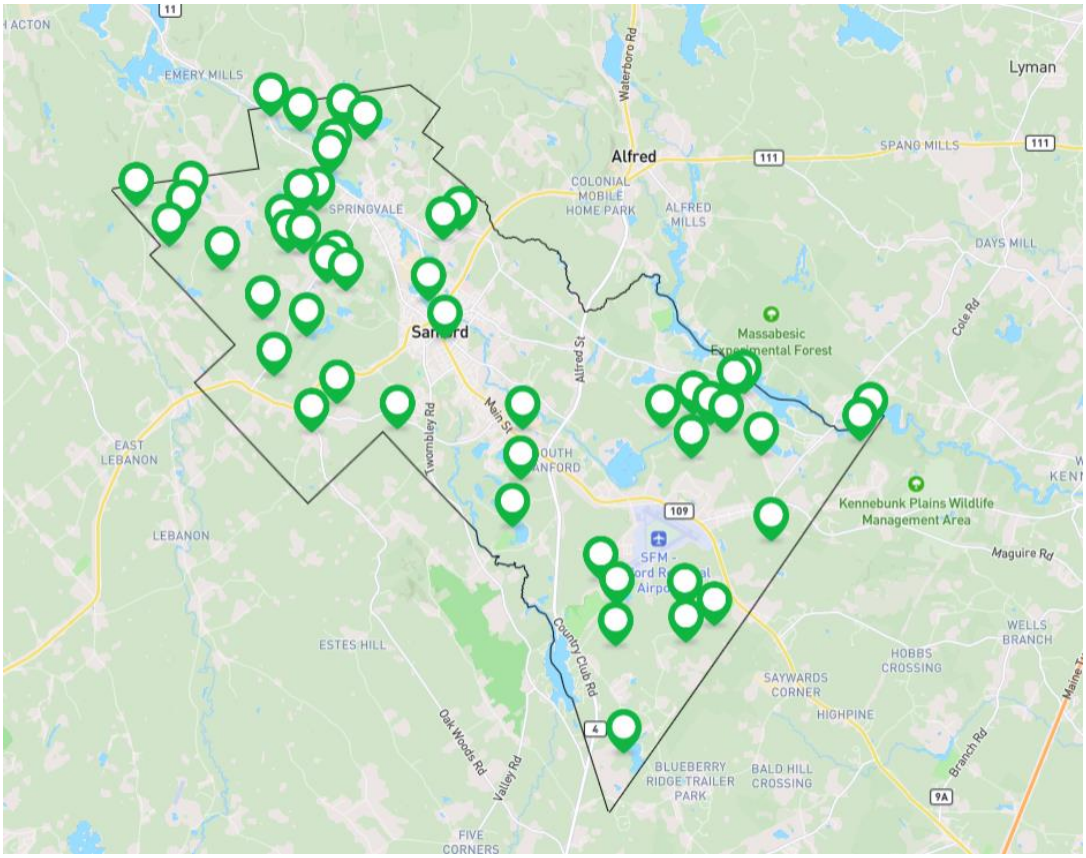
Activity 1: Preservation and Conservation Mapping

In Activity 1, Open House visitors were instructed to review a map of the Sanford planning area and place a pin on any location, area, landscape, natural resource, agricultural land, trail, waterbody, open space, or historic area that they would like to see conserved in the future. City staff and BerryDunn team members facilitated conversations with participants throughout this process, asking questions such as:

- What places would you be disappointed to see developed or significantly changed?
- Which natural or cultural resources are most important to preserve?
- What landscapes help define the identity of the community?
- What areas should future generations be able to enjoy and experience?

50 responses were provided in-person and via the Social Pinpoint online survey. Mapping results are shown in Figure 1.26 below.

Figure 1.26: Areas Identified for Conservation



Activity 2: Land Use Category Character Identification

In Activity 2, residents reviewed a series of future land use category maps and identified the characteristics they felt best represented how each area should evolve over time. For each category, participants selected and paired words, phrases, and images that reflected their preferred development patterns, community character, and land uses. When a word, phrase, or image had already been placed within a land use category, participants could add a dot or marker to indicate agreement with that selection. City staff and BerryDunn team members facilitated conversations with participants throughout this process, asking questions such as:

- What characteristics best reflect the future you want for this area?
- What should this area be known for in 10 to 20 years?
- Which images feel appropriate for this land use category?
- What elements of the area's character should be strengthened, preserved, or introduced in the future?

Key themes for each future land use category are provided below.

Downtown

Residents provided 66 images and 111 words or phrases associated with future land use areas in Downtown Sanford and Downtown Springvale. Responses underscore participant visions of downtown areas as vibrant, safe, and walkable mixed-use centers with active businesses and community gathering opportunities. Participants selected *active storefronts*, *gathering spaces, safe, walkable,* and *mixed-use commercial and residential* as primary words and phrases to associate with downtown. *Corner store/cafes, ground-floor commercial buildings with upper-story residential areas, rural residential/agricultural property, homes on mid-sized lots*, and *small/attached homes along street fronts* were the most frequently selected images to characterize this space. Responses point toward a lively but appropriately scaled downtown with a mix of businesses, housing, gathering spaces, and pedestrian-oriented amenities.

Figure 1.27: Downtown Words and Phrases

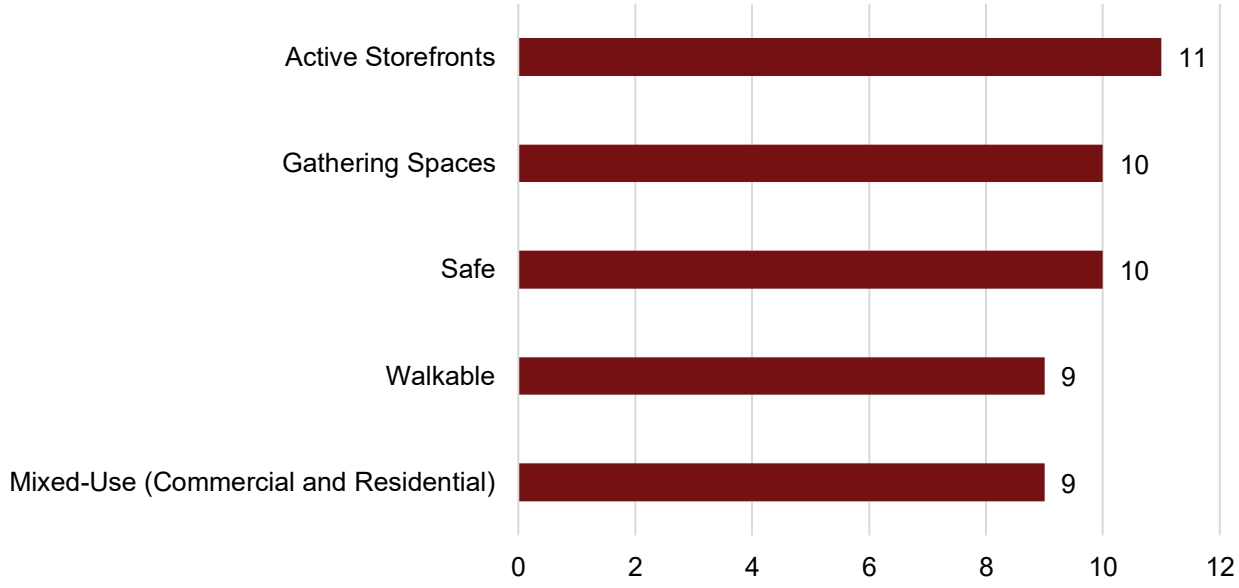
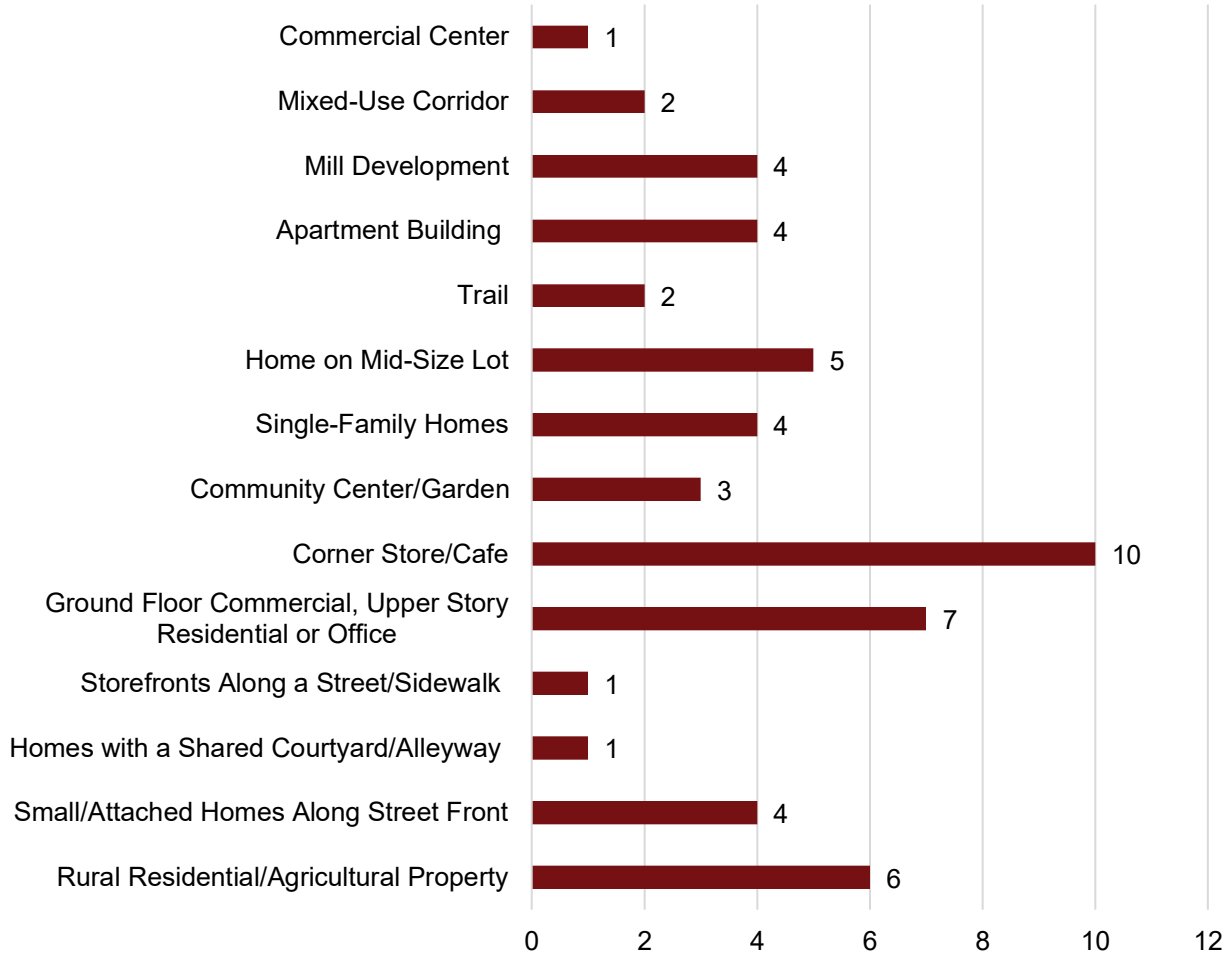


Figure 1.28: Downtown Images



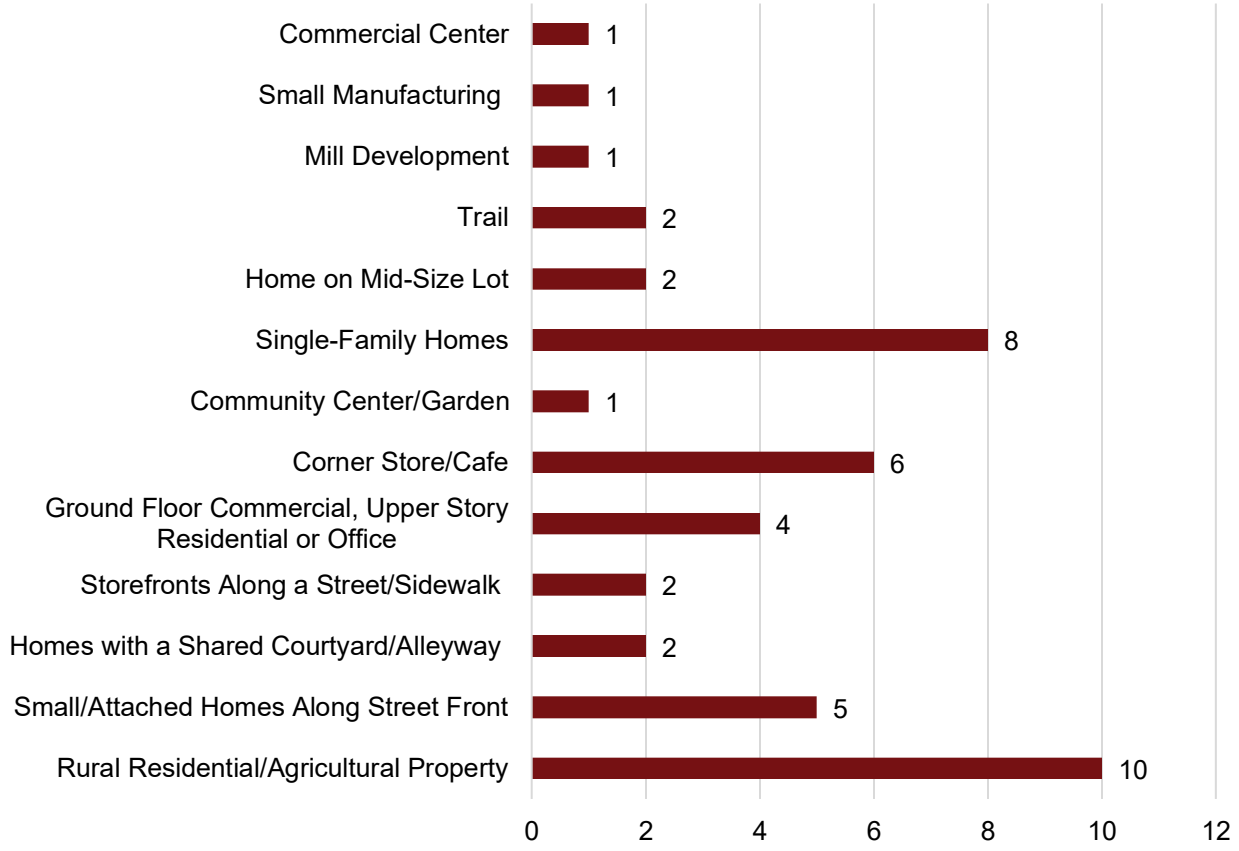
Transitional Neighborhood

Residents provided 43 images and 79 words or phrases associated with future land use designations for transitional neighborhoods. Selections indicate that participants envision transitional neighborhoods as safe, moderately scaled areas that balance housing choices and mixed-use opportunities with existing rural and agricultural character. Participants selected *mixed-use commercial and residential, working farms, varied housing types, parks*, and *safe* as primary words and phrases to associate with transitional neighborhoods. *Rural residential/agricultural property, single-family homes, small/attached homes along street front, ground-floor commercial with upper-story residential areas*, and *corner store/cafe* were the most frequently selected images to characterize this space. Results suggest an interest in accommodating housing and neighborhood-serving uses while maintaining elements of the area's lower-density and rural character.

Figure 1.29: Transitional Neighborhood Words and Phrases



Figure 1.30: Transitional Neighborhood Images



Mixed-Use Corridor

Residents provided 31 images and 35 words or phrases associated with future land use designations for mixed-use corridors. Responses imply that participants envision mixed-use corridors as employment-oriented areas combining commercial activity, housing, community amenities, and selected light industrial uses. Participants selected *employment-focused, active storefronts, trails,* and *mixed-use commercial and residential* as primary words and phrases to associate with mixed-use corridors. *Community center/garden, small manufacturing, hotel/convention center,* and *small/attached homes along street front* were the most frequently selected images to characterize this space. Results suggest a flexible corridor where employment and commerce are complemented by housing, recreation, community facilities, and gathering destinations.

Figure 1.31: Mixed-Use Corridor Words and Phrases

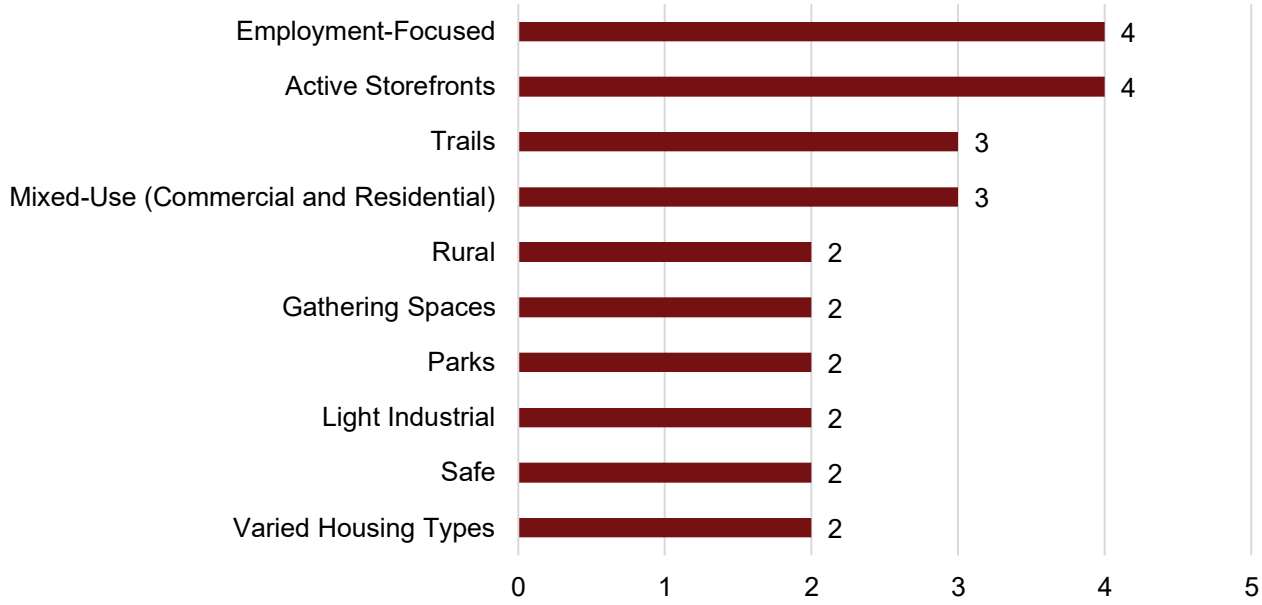
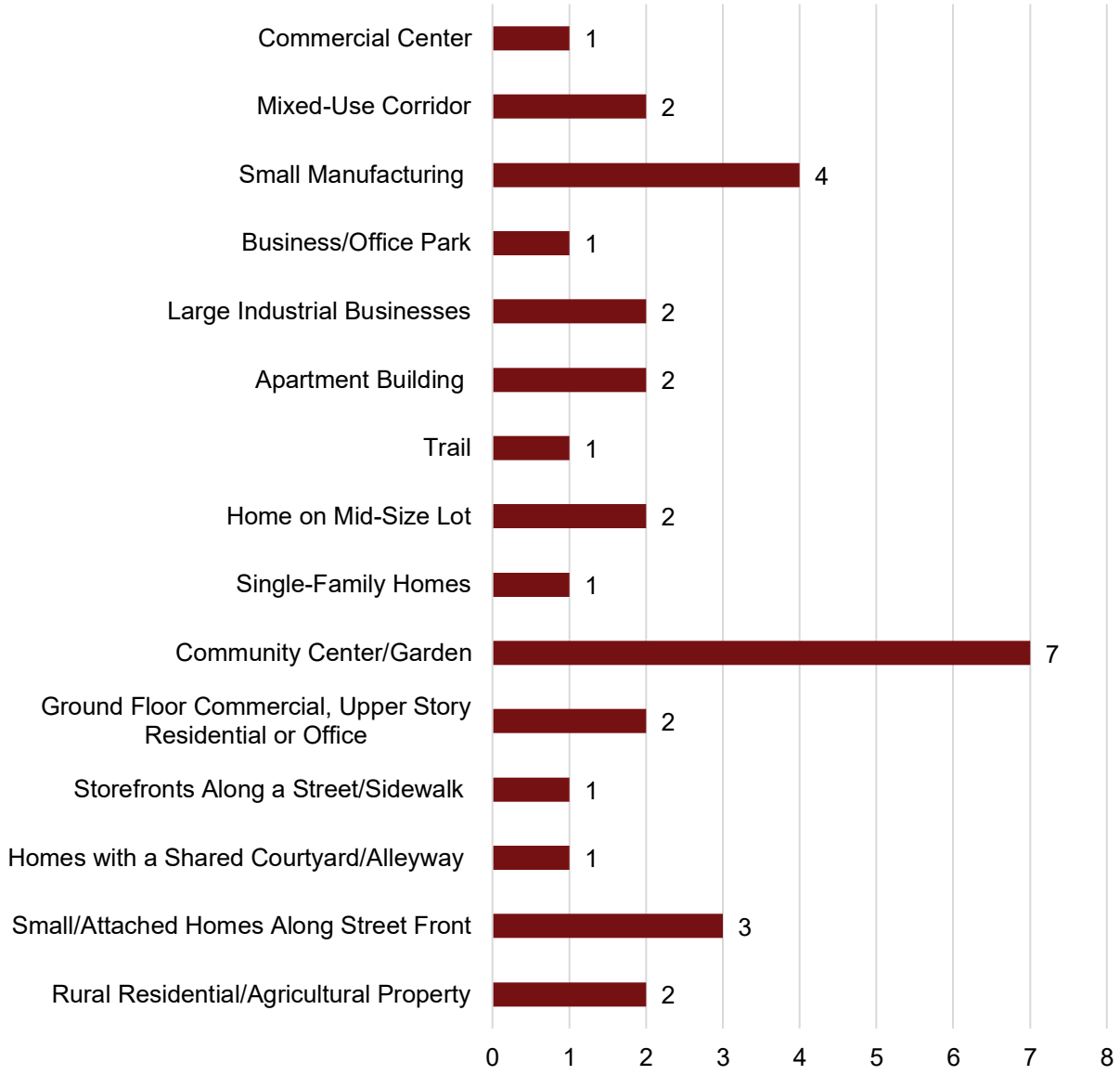


Figure 1.32: Mixed-Use Corridor Images



Transitional Mixed-Use Corridor

Residents provided 36 images and 53 words or phrases associated with future land use designations for transitional mixed-use corridors. Responses reflect a vision of transitional mixed-use corridors as blends of employment, commercial, mixed-used, and rural characteristics. Participants selected *light industrial, employment-focused, mixed-use commercial and residential, conservation-oriented,* and *varied housing types* as primary words and phrases to associate with mixed-use corridors. *Rural residential/agricultural property, corner store/café,* and *mixed-use corridor* were the most frequently selected images to characterize this space. Results indicate support for employment and business development while maintaining flexibility for mixed-use, residential, and rural characteristics.

Figure 1.33: Transitional Mixed-Use Corridor Words and Phrases

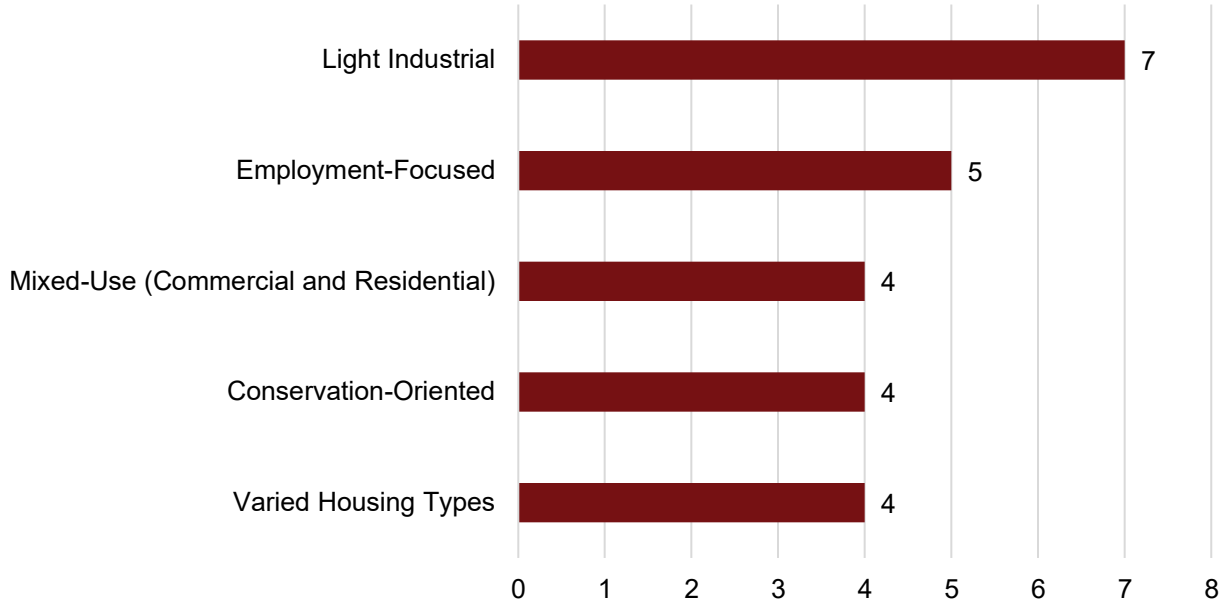
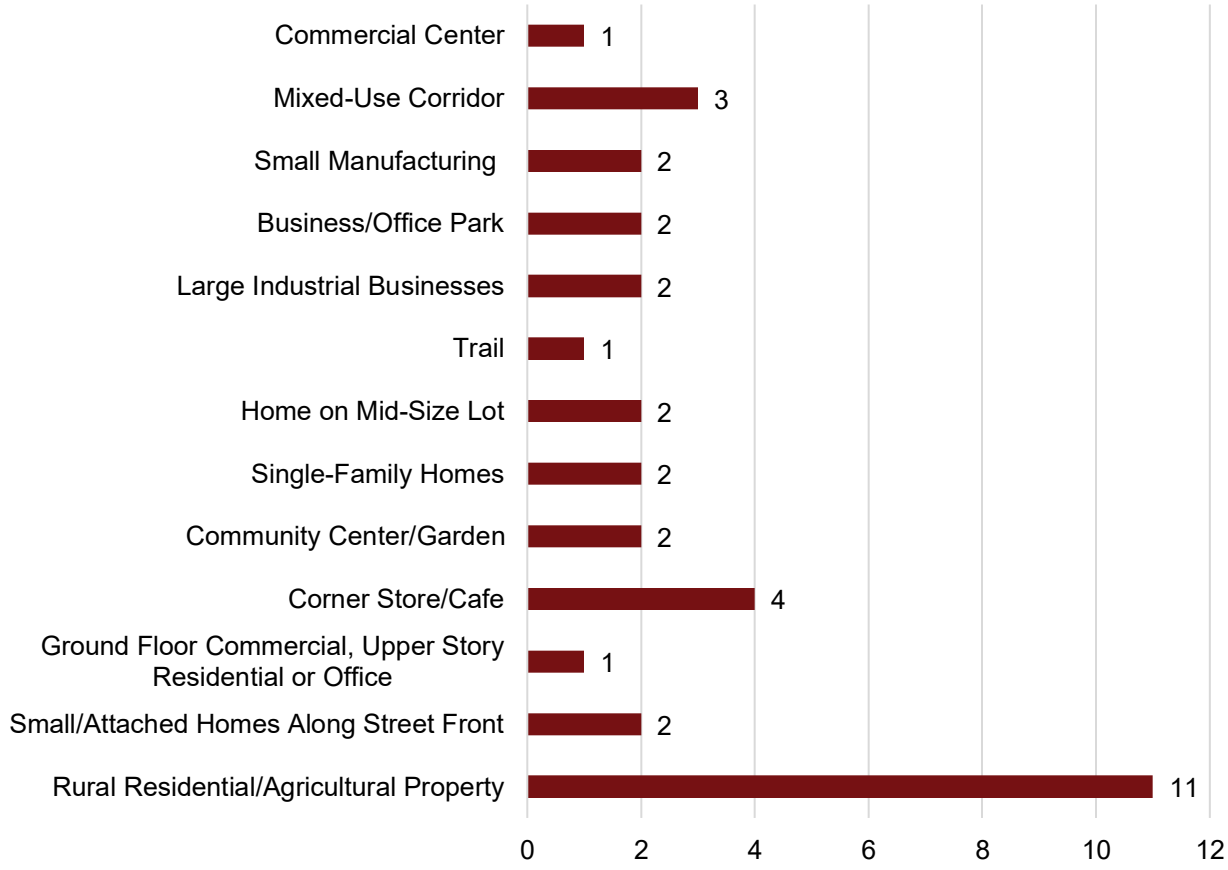


Figure 1.34: Transitional Mixed-Use Corridor Images



Industrial Areas

Residents provided 40 images and 53 words or phrases associated with future land use designations for industrial areas. Responses strongly identified industrial place types with employment and industrial development. Participants selected *employment-focused, light industrial, mixed-use commercial and residential, conservation-oriented,* and *safe* as primary words and phrases to associate with industrial areas. *Large industrial businesses, business/office parks, small manufacturing, commercial centers,* and *mixed-use* were the most frequently selected images to characterize this space. Results point to an industrial area focused primarily on major employers, manufacturing, and business activity, while allowing supporting commercial or mixed-use functions where appropriate.

Figure 1.35: Industrial Area Words and Phrases

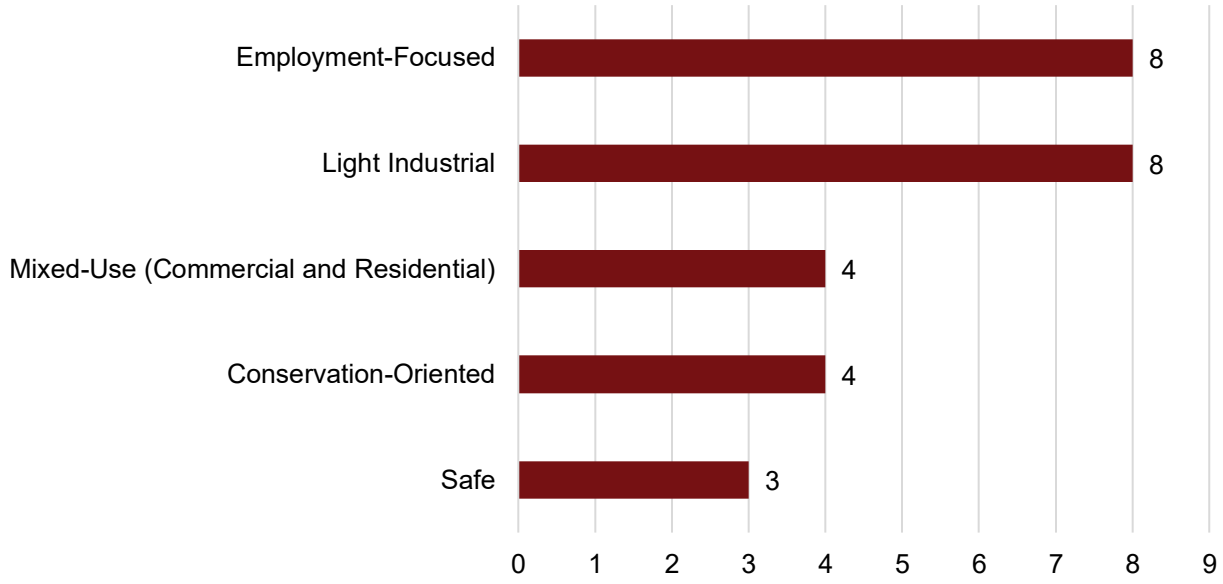
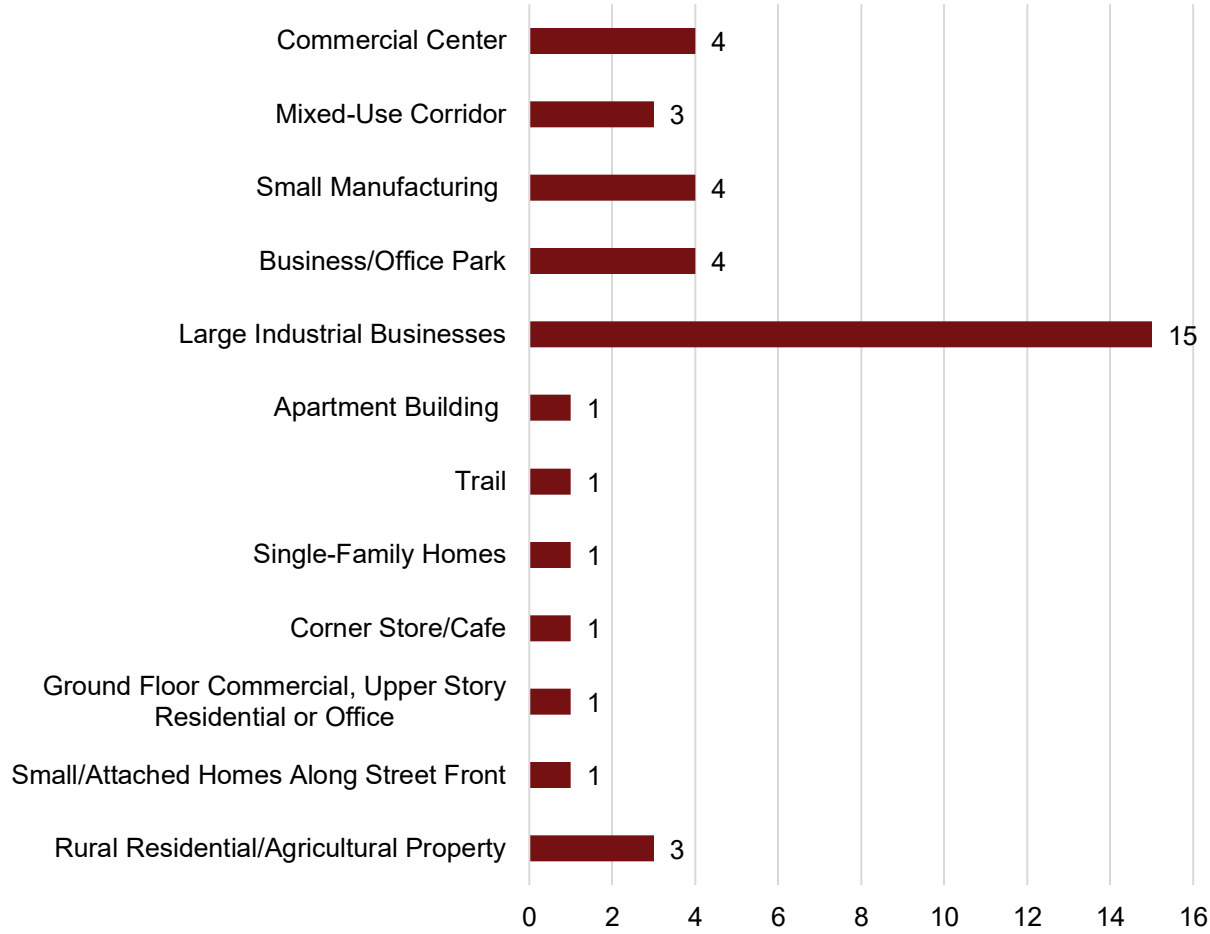


Figure 1.36: Industrial Area Images



Rural Areas

Residents provided 44 images and 81 words or phrases associated with future land use designations for rural areas. Participants expressed a strong preference for protecting the rural and natural qualities of these areas. Respondents selected *conservation-oriented, working farms, rural, parks,* and *forested* as primary words and phrases to associate with rural areas. *Rural/residential agricultural property, rural residential/agriculture, rural road, trails*, and *large lot homes* were the most frequently selected images to characterize this space. Results indicate a clear preference for conserving rural landscapes, farms, forests, and open spaces while accommodating lower-density residential development, trails, parks, and limited small-scale commercial activity.

Figure 1.37: Rural Area Words and Phrases

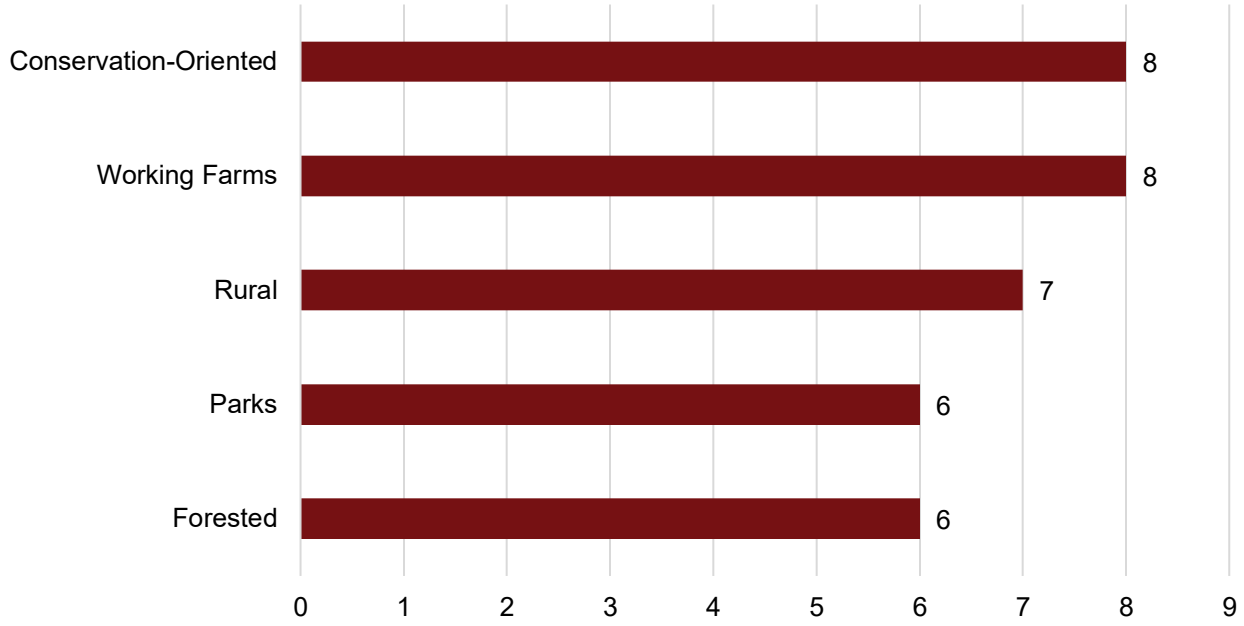
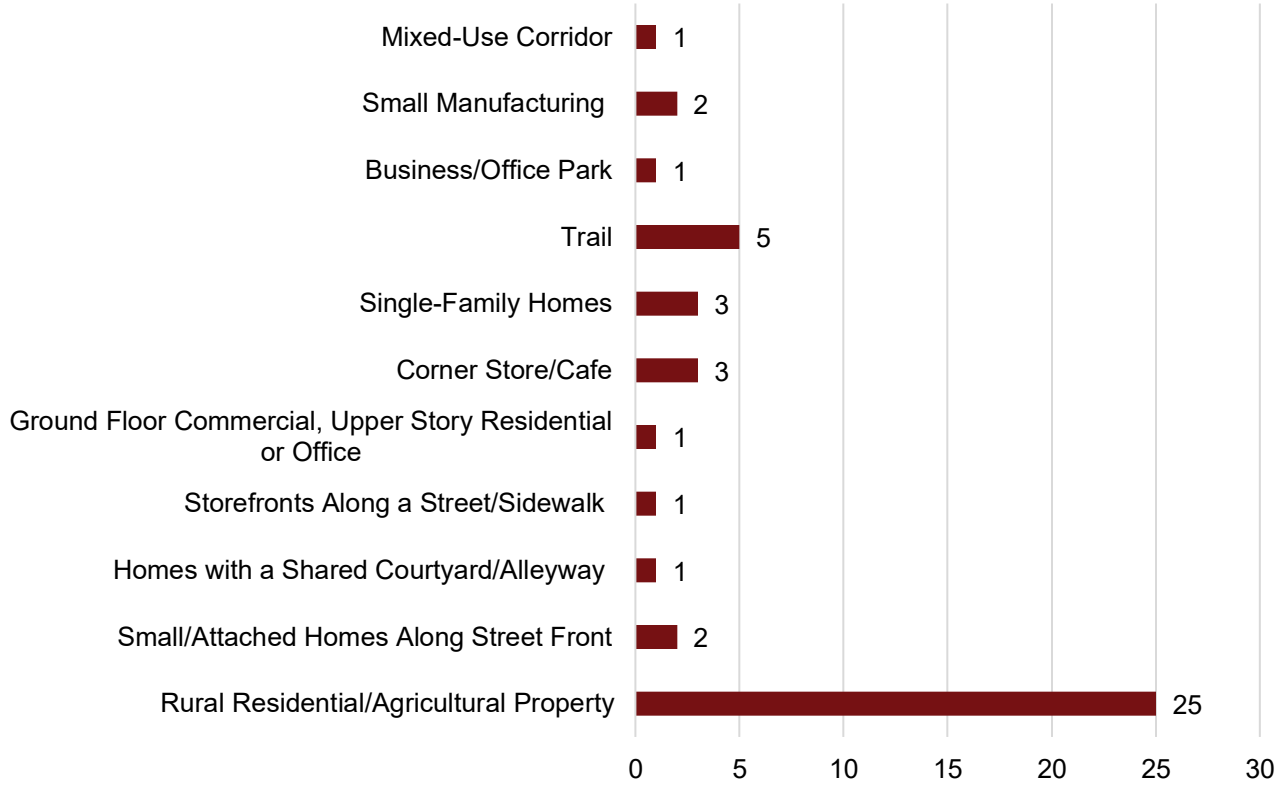


Figure 1.38: Rural Area Images



Activity 3: Where Would You Put It?

In Activity 3, visitors reviewed a series of development scenarios and indicated which parts of the community were best suited for each type of development. City staff and BerryDunn team members facilitated conversations with participants throughout this process, asking questions such as:

- Which areas are best suited to accommodate future growth?
- Where would new homes, jobs, services, or amenities have the greatest benefit?
- Where should redevelopment and reinvestment be prioritized?
- Which areas should remain largely unchanged to protect natural resources, agricultural lands, scenic character, or community identity?

47 respondents provided input for this activity. The following overview provides a summary of frequent development scenarios, and which future land use category responses were most often found in.

Industrial Areas

Within areas designated for future industrial land use, respondents typically placed:

- Industrial businesses
- Large commercial businesses
- Mixed-use buildings

Mixed-Use Corridor

Within areas designated for future mixed-use corridors, respondents typically placed:

- Large commercial businesses
- Small commercial businesses
- Mixed-use buildings

Transitional Neighborhoods

Within areas designated for future transitional neighborhoods, respondents typically placed:

- One- and two-family homes
- Small commercial businesses
- Multi-family homes (6 or more units)

Rural Areas

Within areas designated for future rural use, respondents typically placed:

- Small commercial businesses
- One- and two-family homes
- Senior/Assisted living community

Downtown

Within areas designated for future downtowns, respondents typically placed:

- Multi-family homes (6 or more units)
- Small commercial businesses
- Multi-family home (3-6 units)
- One- and two-family homes
- Mixed-use buildings
- Senior/Assisted living community

Activity 4: Wrap Up Activity

Activity 4, focused primarily online, asked participants to share any additional comments related to future land use and future growth in Sanford, including opportunities, challenges, and priorities.

Four residents provided feedback for this activity. Respondents expressed an interest in the preservation of Sanford's town character, emphasizing light industrial development, more recreational opportunities, and cohesive building design incorporated into existing City structures. Residents also highlighted the need to create an inviting environment in Downtown Sanford, prioritizing Main Street corridor development, walkability, and parking opportunities.

Table 11: Activity 4 Long Answer Responses

#	Response
1	I'm in South Sanford. My kids are, as well. We like being at this end of town. We don't like the uncertainty of their house, as it is now in the zone that includes airport growth zone. We are worried about airport expansion, selfishly, but honestly. Are they going to be crowded out? Should they be making plans? And if so, will the airport zone now impede their future sale? These are some of the things we are all thinking about. Other concerns, need to make sure we are getting environmental impact studies when considering type of industry; need to try to keep things somewhat cohesive in style, without looking like a Stepford community. Bright, shiny glass buildings placed next to

#	Response
	something classic New England wouldn't mesh. And to be clear, my voice is one of the ones appalled at the idea of the two large endeavors being considered. Consider it a resounding no from the south Sanford Foleys. And yes, I've researched it and there is so much unknown that can go wrong, not to mention the environmental impact of both industries. We need growth, we need companies to come here, but careful consideration of more than the potential earnings needs to take place. Thank you for the opportunity for this. Well done.
2	The Main Street corridor should be a priority, many people drive this daily yet there is not a space to make you want to park and spend some time. It would be nice to have a true, walkable and inviting downtown area. At the same time, we need to preserve the farmland and open spaces. Our community already has a little bit of everything, and we should be improving upon that as we grow.
3	We don't won't any data center here in Sanford Maine we are praying that they will go somewhere else
4	I still consider Sanford to be a town; not a city, therefore I tend to desire light industrial, more sports, cultural, parks and trails for a recreation destination. I also can envision homes with architectural designs being built once again with tree-lined sidewalks and benches to gather or rest. I believe also that Sanford definitely needs a central parking garage for downtown shopping. The parking garage should stand out architecturally so that it amplifies Sanford’s downtown beauty.

High School Engagement

On October 27, 2026, City staff and BerryDunn met with members of Sanford High School's Student Council to introduce the Comprehensive Plan and gather student perspectives on Sanford's future. Students responded to seven questions using MentiMeter, providing input on their priorities, experiences, and visions for the future.

Student Survey

A total of 25 students participated in the MentiMeter activity during the presentation.

Figure 1.39: How connected do you feel to Sanford and Springvale?

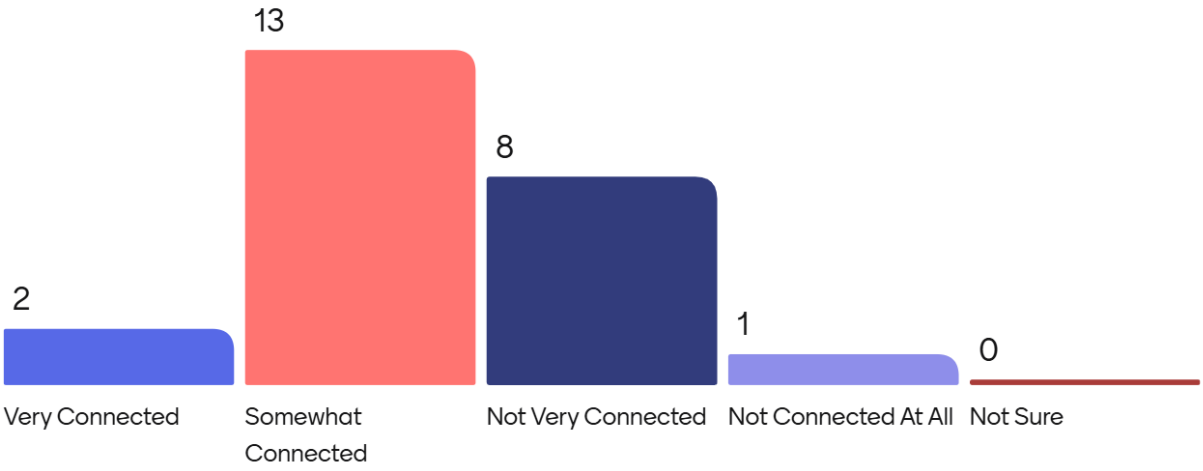


Figure 1.40: What are the THREE things you value most about living in Sanford/Springvale?

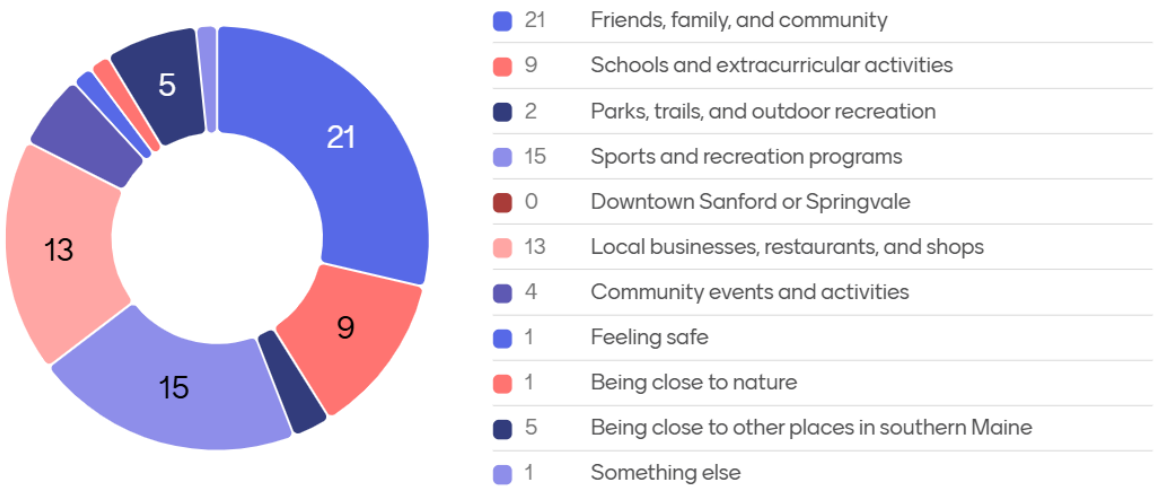


Figure 1.41: What do you wish Sanford had more of for people your age?

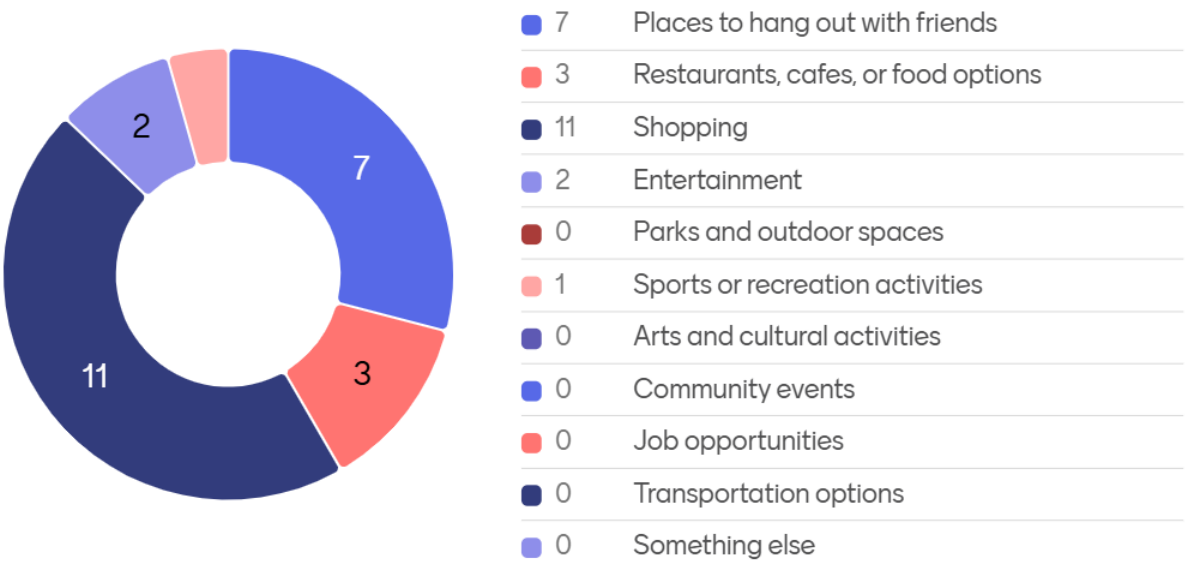


Figure 1.42: If Sanford could make ONE major investment to improve quality of life for young people, where should it focus?

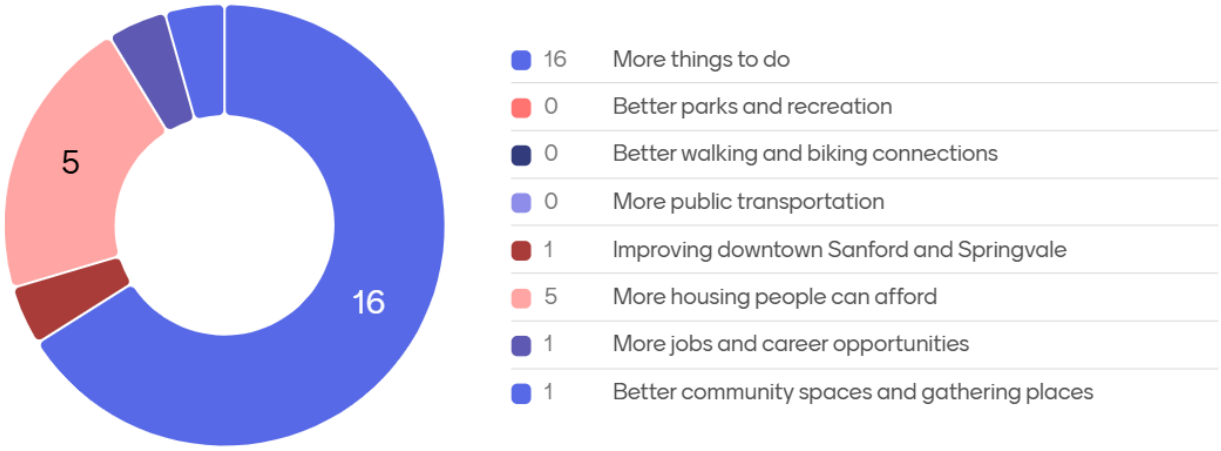


Figure 1.43: Right now, how likely do you think you are to live in Sanford/Springvale as an adult?

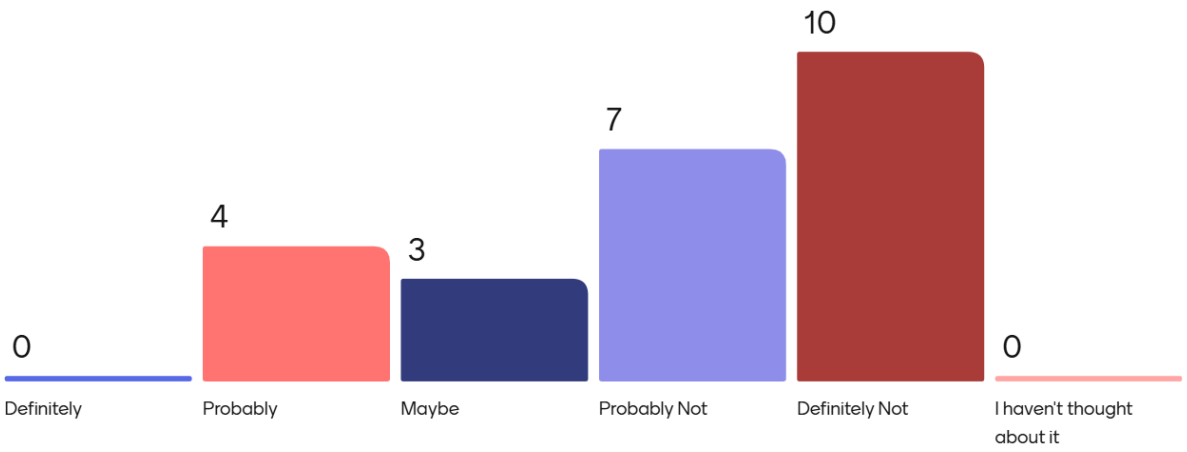


Figure 1.44: What would make you more likely to stay in or return to Sanford/Springvale as an adult? Pick THREE.

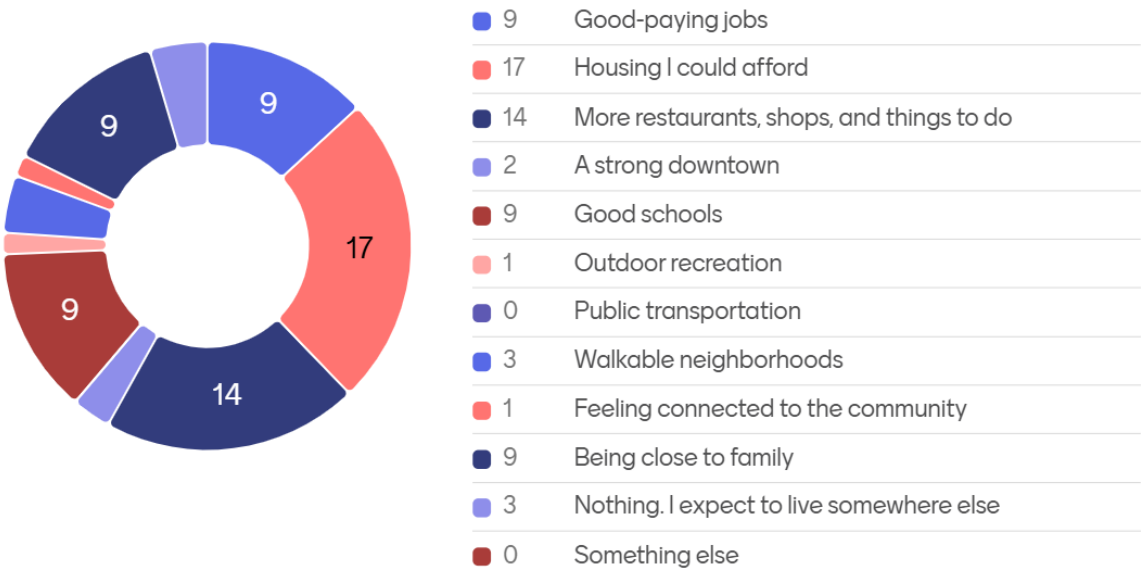


Table 12: It's 2036, and you're telling someone Sanford/Springvale is a great place to live. What changed?

#	Response
1	New living areas, more places to go to and affordable prices.
2	They have added more things to do and more places to go where you can hang out with your friends, and you can get a cheaper nice house
3	There are more restaurants and places to hang out with friends and family. Sanford has also become a lot safer.
4	School system improved, sport programs run better from youth to high school, less homeless people, stronger sense of community regardless of how long you've lived in Sanford.
5	There are more shopping centers, fewer vagrants, and more affordable rural housing. As well as more places to get together as friends or family.
6	We have more choices of places to go and housing you can afford.
7	I would tell them that the school system improved and there isn't so much homelessness. There are now more restaurants and activities to do with family and friends.
8	There are a lot more options for going out last minute like restaurants or activities.
9	There are a lot more community spaces and fewer homeless people.
10	The homeless population and things to do with your friends.
11	Homeless population, more opportunities, and clean atmosphere/environment.

12	The homeless problem and overall, it is safer to walk around freely.
13	There are no more druggies and fewer people on the streets; when it becomes a safe place to exist without fear.
14	Taxes have gotten lower and life in Sanford in general has become more affordable in comparison to nearby towns. Additionally, there are more communities and homeless problem is minimized.
15	Probably lots of safe spaces for kids to hang out without having to be worried about safety, more stores/restaurants CHICK FIL A!!!
16	I want to live in the town now not just because of the people but the atmosphere of the town. Homelessness has gone down a lot and there are more places to have fun.
17	There are more things to do around town like places to shop and restaurants. Downtown also feels safer to walk on the streets.
18	There are mostly nice friends around the city, and we like to hang out sometimes and get friends' phone numbers sometimes, and I like to video call sometimes.
19	More places for teenagers to spend time rather than doing things that are unsafe and unhealthy for them, more family housing that I affordable, no data center.
20	There are more things to do like shopping, restaurants, and activities. There is also a fewer homeless population.
21	There are more shopping places and fancy restaurants to eat at for a nice dinner rather than just relying on driving 30-40 minutes away.
22	The Homeless Problem has become less of an issue. The housing prices have gone down. There is a New Fire Station and Police Station. There are more Dine-In Restaurants and Activities.
23	If I were to tell someone that Sanford is a good place to live, I think that the homeless and drug use around the city would have to change. I also believe that the housing needs to be more affordable.

Responses primarily emphasized community safety, increased amenities, a greater number of retail and dining options, more public and secure spaces for students to spend time with friends, and improvements to affordability that support lower taxes and more available homes.