

# Comprehensive Plan Update

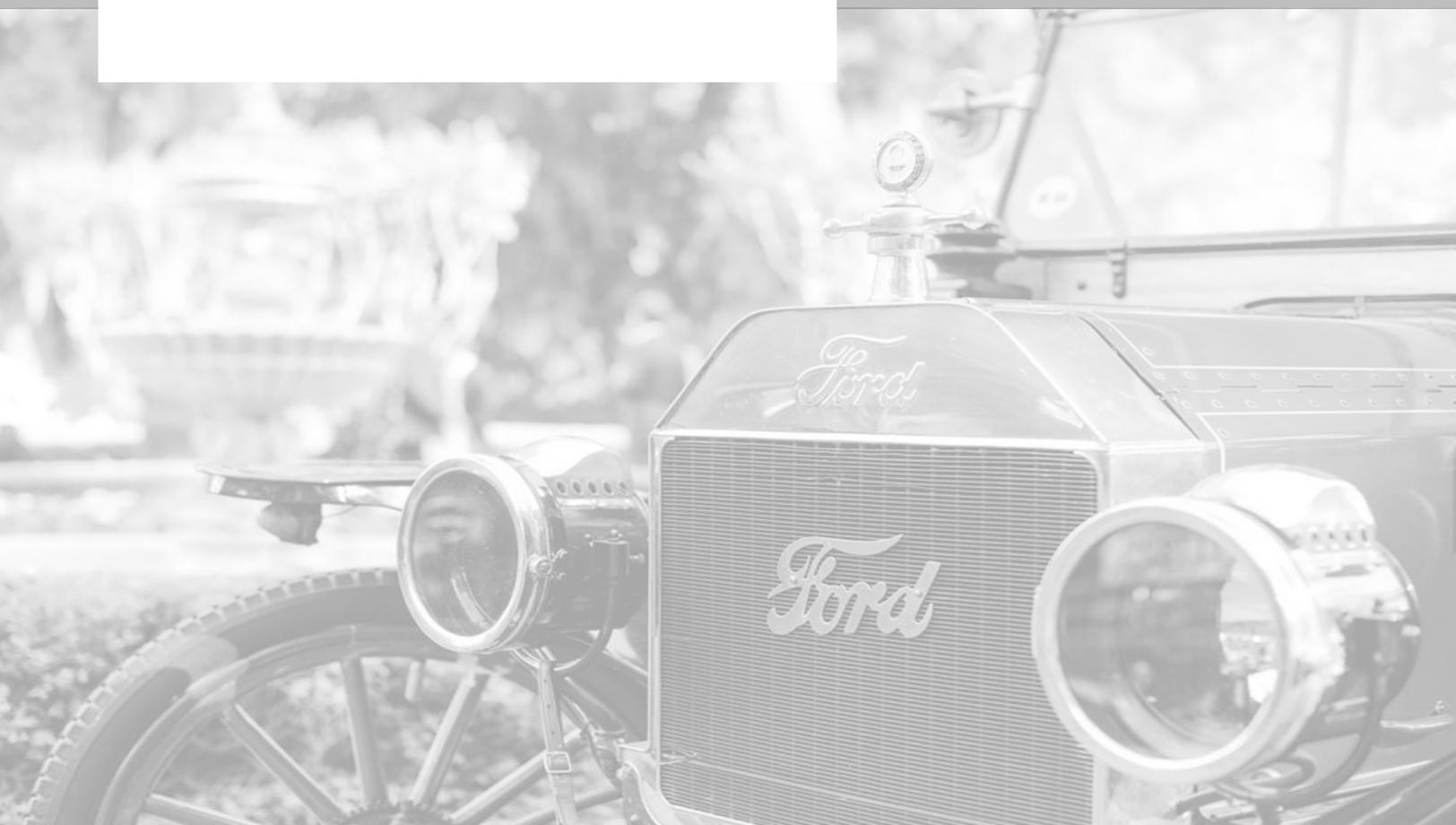
*2022-2027*

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City of Richmond Hill | Georgia

GMC





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## Background

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) administers the rules and regulations for Comprehensive Planning in the State of Georgia, effective on October 1, 2018. The purpose of these standards is to provide governmental entities a framework for the development, management, and implementation of local comprehensive plans because vibrant places are essential to the State of Georgia’s overall economic prosperity.

Producing and maintaining a Comprehensive Plan is a way for a local government to understand the relationship between the various issues and opportunities within the community. Understanding these trends gives community leaders a basis for establishing implementation activities and policies. The Comprehensive Plan creates an understanding of the future vision for the community inclusive of businesses, industries, investors, property owners, tax payers, and the general public.

O.C.G.A 50-8-1 established authority for the DCA to define minimum standards and procedures for developing comprehensive plans for local governments in the State of Georgia. These standards and procedures are designed to help the City prepare a plan that identifies immediate needs within a community and looks for opportunities to help the City reach its vision for the future. An adopted Comprehensive Plan allows the City to maintain its “qualified local government status,” which makes the City eligible for selected state funding and permitting programs.

The City of Richmond Hill addressed the elements required based on the DCA’s minimum standards and procedures and exceeded these requirements by conducting additional analysis on other planning elements. The following required elements are included in the City’s 2023 Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Community Goals
- Needs and Opportunities
- Community Work Program

As a community that has adopted a Zoning Ordinance and one that is also a member of a Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of Richmond Hill Comprehensive Plan is also required to address land use and transportation. In addition, the City has also reviewed and updated the previous assessment of housing; economic development; natural, cultural, historic resource preservation; community wellness; and intergovernmental coordination throughout this document.

## Setting the Stage

### *History of Richmond Hill*

On March 3, 1962, the township of Richmond Hill was incorporated through an act of the Georgia Legislature. The population of Richmond Hill when first incorporated was roughly 500 residents. This small town feel and rural community continued to exist until the more consistent growth began in the 1980s. Much of the growth of Richmond Hill is related to the City's proximity to Savannah, which sits roughly 20 miles north-east. However, the small town feel, quality of life, and the sense of place associated with the city make it a unique and desirable place to live.

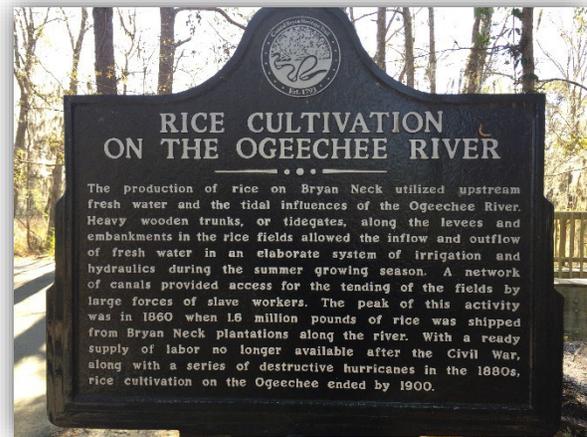
### *Ogeechee River*

Generations have made their homes along the Great Ogeechee River and surrounding waterways in Richmond Hill. The first residents, the Gule Indians, created villages along its sandy shoreline. General James Oglethorpe built defenses on it during the earliest days of the Georgia colony. The proximity of the Ogeechee was the salient factor in rice evolving as the primary cash crop here in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. African slaves worked in the rice fields and help build Fort McAllister on the Ogeechee which was known as the "Guardian of Savannah" during the Civil War. After the war and a series of hurricanes in the late 1800s, Richmond Hill fell into a state of economic decline.

### *Henry Ford*

In 1925, the most famous resident, automobile industrialist Henry Ford and his wife Clara, began purchasing upwards of 85,000 acres of land here. They built a winter home and began extensive agricultural research with rubber plants, soybeans, goldenrod and more. In the process, they provided much needed employment, housing, medical care and education for local residents. Over the next 25 years, they restored Fort McAllister, dozens of antebellum plantations, and were successful in turning Richmond Hill into a thriving community- their impact still being evident today.

Both commercial and residential development continues to occur in the City. Bryan County as a whole has also experienced significant population growth since the last Census and is one of the fastest growing counties in the Country. The announcement of the Hyundai Manufacturing Facility in North Bryan County is certain to have an immediate impact on development pressure in South Bryan County and the City of Richmond Hill. However, the City, through this plan as well as other efforts, is taking steps to steer the City in a direction that ensures the unique identity of the City continues to be preserved.





### People of Richmond Hill

In support of the Comprehensive Plan, a demographic study was performed to identify trends in population, housing, employment, transportation, community health, and other data trends. The full demographic study is summarized here and was used to help craft a plan that best addresses the changing demographics in the community.

According to recent Census data, Bryan County is the sixth fastest growing county in the whole nation and the fastest growing county in Georgia, with much of this growth occurring in and around the City of Richmond Hill. Richmond Hill experienced rapid population growth since the decennial census in 2000 as the City grew from a population of roughly 7,000 to almost 17,000 in 2020. The most tremendous period of growth for the City occurred from 2010-2020 when the population increased 80%, which was almost twice the growth rate in Bryan County and nearly eight times the statewide rate of growth during the same period. The State of Georgia experienced slower growth from 2010-2020 with an increase of 11%. Despite this trend, the population of Richmond Hill continued to grow at an alarming rate. Population growth in Richmond Hill is likely to continue at a fast pace. There are several platted residential subdivisions currently being developed as well as the future development of 5,000 acres of undeveloped land in the southern portion of the City. This area is platted for a mix of residential, commercial, and community mixed use. This anticipated growth presents many issues related to city services, infrastructure, impacts to community resources, and overall quality of life that must be considered when making future planning decisions.

Table 1 - Population Comparisons

Jurisdiction	2000 (Census)	2010 (Census)	2020 (Census)	% Change 2000-2010	% Change 2010-2020	% Change 2000-2020
Richmond Hill	6,959	9,281	16,633	33.37%	79.22%	139%
Bryan County	23,417	30,233	44,738	29.11%	47.98%	91%
Georgia	8,186,453	9,687,653	10,711,908	18.34%	10.57%	31%

Opportunities and considerations associated with this growth include:

- Development of a strategy to capitalize on the future growth as a result of the Hyundai Manufacturing Facility industrial development in the north end of the county which includes a plan to extend city water/sewer services
- Awareness of the development pressures and needs of existing neighborhoods

In addition to a rapid rate of population growth, the City is also seeing an increase in the average household size as well as the number of people between the ages of 20-54. The American Community Survey (ACS) published by the Census Bureau estimates the average household size for the State of Georgia to be 2.68 people. The estimate for Richmond Hill is 2.75, which is consistent with the idea that the City has become and will continue to develop as a community for younger adults with children.



Richmond Hill’s median age has slightly increased since 2000, but it is still fairly young at age 32.2. Since 2010, the City’s median age has increased by 1.5 years and is younger than the state average of 36.9 years and the national average of 38.2 years. The median age of the county’s population is trending younger, while the city and state are trending older.

Table 2 Age Distribution

Age	2000	2010	2020
0-4	9.4%	8.2%	9.1%
5-14	19.5%	17.7%	19.4%
15-24	14.0%	14.5%	10.7%
25-44	36.1%	30.9%	33.0%
45-64	14.2%	21.7%	19.5%
65+	6.8%	6.8%	8.2%
Median Age	29.3	30.7	32.2

### Housing

Based on the 2020 Census, the City of Richmond Hill had 5,030 total housing units. There were 3,156 single parent households with at least one child under the age of 18. Single-parent households and non-family households are both increasing. Households also increased by 96.6% since 2000. From 2000 to 2020, 4 and 5-person households increased the most at a rate over 175%.

Households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) support totaled 458 and make up 9.6% of all the households in the city. This is extremely low in comparison to the nation (24.4%) and state’s (26.7%) share of households on SNAP.

	2000 Census	2020 Census	Percent Change 2000-2020
Total Housing Units	2,639	5,030	90.6%
Total Households	2,433	4,783	96.6%
Family	1,924	3,433	78.4%
W/ Children <18	2,243	2,440	8.8%
Single-Parent	383	3,156	724%
Non-Family	564	1,350	139.4%
1 Person	467	1042	123.1%
2 Person	640	1362	112.8%
3 Person	557	1031	85.1%
4 Person	484	1348	178.5%
5 Person	203	598	194.6%



### Income

In looking at household income data specific to Richmond Hill, the City has a larger percentage of groups with incomes between \$50,000 and \$199,999 than the State of Georgia and slightly more than Bryan County as a whole. The difference was most pronounced for the group from \$75,000 to \$99,999 (19% versus 13.3%). The State of Georgia has higher numbers in the \$50,000 range and also in the greater than \$200,000 range. Overall, the City of Richmond Hill maintains a higher percentage of people making more than \$100,000 (34.5%) than the state, but slightly less than the County as a whole.

Table 3 Household Income

	Richmond Hill	Bryan County	Georgia
Total households	5,632	14,796	4,001,109
Less than \$10,000	5.7%	4.0%	6.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.8%	1.7%	3.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	7.9%	6.5%	7.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	3.5%	6.4%	8.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	6.3%	6.5%	11.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	21.3%	20.2%	17.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	19.0%	15.8%	13.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	20.5%	21.0%	15.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9.5%	8.7%	7.3%
\$200,000 or more	4.5%	9.3%	8.4%
	Richmond Hill	Bryan County	Georgia
Less than \$10,000	5.7%	4.0%	6.3%
\$10,000 to \$24,999	9.7%	8.2%	11.6%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	9.8%	12.9%	19.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	21.3%	20.2%	17.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	19.0%	15.8%	13.3%
\$100,000 to \$199,999	30.0%	29.7%	23.0%
Over \$200,000	4.5%	9.3%	8.4%
Less than 50K	25.2%	25.1%	37.8%
More than 100K	34.5%	39.0%	31.4%

### Health

Characteristics for a variety of health-related topics are available through the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Program, and rankings are also presented by county. County Health is categorized into two major headings – Health Outcomes and Health Factors. Health Outcomes are a measure of how long people live (Length of Life) and how healthy people feel while alive (Quality of Life). Health Factors represent what influences the health of a county, and they are an estimate of future health. These ranks



are based on four types of measures: Health Behaviors, Clinical Care, Social and Economic, and Physical Environment factors.

Bryan County ranks 18 of 159 in overall health outcomes according to a nationwide analysis by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Based on the study, Bryan County has less violent crime, less children in poverty, and less preventable hospital stays than the statewide averages. However, Bryan County has less access to exercise opportunities, more alcohol-impaired driving deaths, more suicides and slightly more adult obesity than the statewide averages. The County shared the same statewide averages for drug overdose deaths, food insecurity and physical inactivity. Similar to the state, the leading causes of death in the County are Cancer and Heart Disease, both of which have been linked to obesity. Roughly a third of the residents in Bryan County are considered obese.

- Health Factors Ranking – 9 out of 159 – On health factors (behavior, clinical, socioeconomics, & environment) Bryan County ranked top 6% of the state
- Health Outcomes Ranking – 18 of 159 – On health outcomes (length and quality of life) Bryan County ranked top 11% of the state.
- Driving Deaths – 20 per 100,000 – The rate of driving deaths in Bryan County is 6% higher than the statewide rate.
- Access to Exercise Opportunities – 57% - Access to nearby locations for exercise is 13% lower than the state average of 70%.
- Drug Overdose Deaths – 15 per 100,000 – The rate of OD deaths in Bryan County is the same as it is in the state of Georgia.
- Uninsured – 13% - The share of people under 65 in Bryan County is 3% lower than the statewide share.

Opportunities & Consideration:

- Develop proactive health policies around existing and emerging health challenges.
- Better understand the impact of the built environment on community health outcomes.

As a note, the results presented from this source describe the County as a whole and not necessarily Richmond Hill individually. However, with about one-third of the County’s population, Richmond Hill has a considerable impact on the Bryan County results.

## Education

Some interesting trends related to education are noted below:

- Richmond Hill saw an increase in number of adults with a Bachelor’s, Graduate, and Professional Degrees. Between 2010 to 2020, there was a 9.1% increase of adults over the age of 25 with a Bachelor’s, Graduate, and Professional Degrees living in Richmond Hill. In 2020, the share of adults with a Bachelor’s, Graduate and Professional Degree in Richmond Hill was 4.5% higher than the state average.
- In 2019, the Bryan County school system’s overall performance score was one of the highest in the state. The school system rated an 85.4% (B) in the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) in 2019, while the state performed at 75.9% (C). Specifically, Richmond Hill High



- School had the highest CCRPI score among public schools in Bryan County with an 89.9%. Additionally, the County school system scored higher than 93% of the districts in the state.
- Increase in number of students who are college and career ready. In 2019, 77.3% of Richmond Hill High School graduates were college and career ready, while the state received a score of 56.8%. Between 2017 and 2019, the High School's college and career readiness score increased by 5.3%.
  - Reading proficiency in 8th grade for Richmond Hill Middle School is high compared to the state. For the 2018-2019 school year at Richmond Hill Middle School, 79% of middle school students were proficient in reading at or above the grade level target for 8<sup>th</sup> grade compared to 67% in the state.
  - The Bryan County School System has a four-year graduation rate of 89.1%, which is higher than 57% of districts and 7.1% higher than the state average.

#### Opportunities & Considerations

- Maintain high academic standards and outcomes in area public schools.
- Partner with continuing education and workforce development entities.

### **Economy**

In May 2022, Hyundai Motor Group announced they will open their first fully dedicated electric vehicle and battery manufacturing facility in North Bryan County, investing \$5.54 billion and creating approximately 8,100 new jobs.

According to the Development Authority of Bryan County, the following are the county's existing industries:

- Blue Bell Ice Cream: ice cream maker
- Daniel Defense: weapons/components manufacturer.
- Orafol: PVC graphic film manufacturer.
- Agri Supply: agriculture supplies
- CZM: foundation equipment manufacturer.
- West Penn Testing Group: ultrasonic, penetrant, machro etch testing
- Caesarstone: quartz surfaces manufacturer.
- Savannah Global Solutions: agro-forestry solutions
- Express Packaging: corrugated box manufacturer.
- McLendon Enterprises: full service civil construction
- MacAljon: industrial contracting
- ARREFF Terminals Inc: export specialists
- NP (Newell-PSN): manufacturer and supplier of solid core station posts
- Dorel Home Furnishings: furniture distributor.
- AGCO: agriculture supplies
- Preci-dip: industrial parts
- CH Precision Weapons: weapons/components manufacturer
- Industrial Conveyor Belt Systems (ICBS), MACS Supply, MACS Waterjet, Custom Quality Scaffolding, Inc (CQS) (200 employees) – industrial contracting (MacAljon Affiliates).



- Spreetail: shipping
- Fed Ex: shipping
- Medline: medical supplies
- Ascendum: heavy equipment rentals and sales
- McKesson: medical supplies
- Norma Precision Inc: ammunition
- Komar: apparel design and distribution
- Kiss: beauty products
- WebstaurantStore: restaurant supplies
- Rooms to Go: furniture distributor:

Future economic development and diversification of the workforce have been identified as major goals for the future of Richmond Hill. The current demographic trends in terms of population, age distribution, income, and the other intangible factors appear to have set the stage for continued growth and economic prosperity. The impact of the Hyundai Plant and the commercial and industrial development that occurs to support this facility will play a critical role shaping North and South Bryan County in the years to come.





## **Plan Coordination**

### *Coastal Regional Water Plan*

The City understands the water resource challenges in this region, including saltwater intrusion, surface water shortfalls, and water quality challenges. The City also understands that management practices are needed to address these challenges. The City is working to adhere to the goals of the Coastal Regional Water Plan through existing regulations and ongoing activities associated with the City's Water Conservation Program, Watershed Protection Program, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Stormwater Management Program, and the implementation program developed within this report.

### *NPDES Phase II MS4 SWMP*

As a municipality within the Savannah Urbanized Area, the City of Richmond Hill falls under the coverage of the National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit as required by provisions of the Georgia Water Quality Control Act and the Federal Clean Water Act. This permit requires the development of a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP), to address stormwater pollution, maintenance of the drainage system, protect water quality and educate the public on water issues.

### *Part V Environmental Planning Criteria*

The City has adopted the Environmental Planning Standards for Wetlands, which is the only environmental planning measure applicable to the City. None of the City falls within the boundaries of groundwater recharge zones, protected river corridors, or water supply watersheds. Given the City's location in Coastal Georgia, the standards for Mountain Protection are not applicable either.

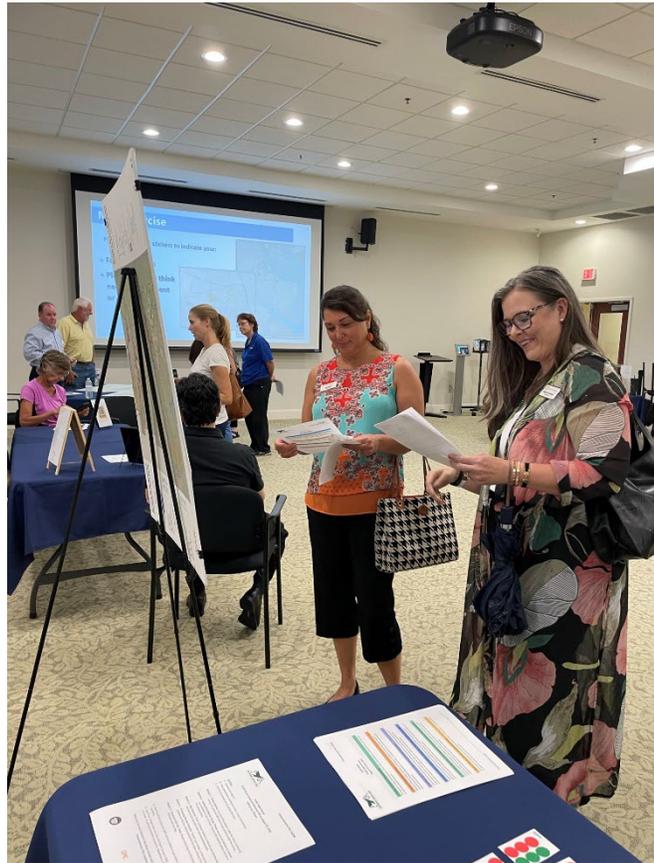
## Community Engagement

The DCA minimum standards and procedures require two Public Hearings and the identification and implementation of a participation program that offers various opportunities for community engagement. The following chapter provides a summary of the public involvement opportunities provided throughout this planning process, including public hearings, a Stakeholder Committee, educational handouts, community open house, the web-based Community Opinion Survey, and the interactive mapping applications. Summary materials from public involvement undertaken during this process can be found in Appendix B.

### Public Hearings

The Department of Community Affairs minimum planning standards require that two public hearings be held throughout the comprehensive planning process; one at the beginning of the process and one toward the end.

Public Hearing #1. The City of Richmond Hill held a public hearing on August 8, 2022 at a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. The City's consultant delivered a presentation that introduced the comprehensive planning process, the purpose of updating the plan, and what the City hopes to gain by going through this process. The presentation discussed the minimum planning requirements as defined by the DCA, the general benefits of planning, and opportunities the City will use to engage and involve residents and other key players in the community. The presentation also highlighted some of the key issues in Richmond Hill, current development trends, demographics, and how these factors collectively fit into the planning process.



Public Hearing #2. The second public hearing was held on April 24, 2023 at the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. A presentation was given to the Planning Commission that summarized the activities undertaken during the planning process. Needs, opportunities, and community goals identified by the residents and stakeholders were presented to the Planning Commission and discussed. The future land use map and community workplan were also presented to Planning Commission for discussion.

### Project Team

A Project Team consisting of City Staff and the Consulting Team met routinely throughout the planning process to review information and to make decisions about public involvement efforts.



## **Stakeholder Involvement**

Stakeholder Interviews: In participation with Bryan County and Pembroke, stakeholder interviews were conducted to gain insight on City and County goals, needs, and issues from community members based on the unique perspective based on their specific backgrounds. The interviews included some guided questions about housing, transportation, development, and other community topics, but the interview was also organic in nature to allow for a free-flowing conversation about the community and the direction it is heading. The groups interviewed as part of this effort included representatives from the following groups; Board of Education, Fort Stewart, Department of Transportation, Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, Historic Society, and Business Owners.

Stakeholder Meetings: Staff members of the City of Richmond Hill participated in stakeholder meetings and technical advisory meetings with Bryan County. These meetings addressed community goals, needs and opportunities, community character, and areas requiring special attention.

## **Mayor’s Special Advisory Committee**

The Mayor of Richmond Hill has a Special Advisory Committee made up of representatives from housing developments, homeowner’s associations, and other neighborhoods throughout the City. This group meets routinely to provide feedback to the Mayor and City staff regarding various community topics. A presentation was given to this group at the January 10, 2023 meeting on the planning process and the results of the community survey and other public feedback received. An opportunity was also provided for this committee to discuss issues, needs, and opportunity that should be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. This was a great way to gather feedback from community members from all over the City.

### Open House

The City held two public workshops in collaboration with Bryan County to gain feedback on development goals and the planning process from residents and other relevant actors and stakeholders. The workshops

were advertised on the official Richmond Hill website and social media pages as well as fliers throughout the community. Because Bryan County, Pembroke, and Richmond Hill worked simultaneously on their respective comprehensive plans, public workshops addressed both Bryan County as a whole as well as the specific municipalities.

**Prioritize Goals**  
 Please use the stickers to rank the goals in order of importance:  
 Green is high priority and Red is low priority.

Goal	Ranking	Comments
Provide a mix of housing types and price points		19 no 2 yes
Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors		2 no 7 yes
Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure throughout the City		2 no 4 yes
Expand the labor force and employment options within the City		10 no 10 yes
Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources		15 yes
Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents		70 yes 20 no
Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents		100 no 10 yes
Provide a mix of land uses to support retail, service, and professional needs of residents		3 yes 1 no
Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City		8 yes 3 no
Governmental transparency		3 yes 20 no

The first workshop was held in North Bryan County at the Bryan County Board of Education facility, located in Pembroke. A second workshop was conducted in South Bryan County at the County Administrative Complex. Both workshops were held from 5pm-7:30pm in order to provide flexibility and accessibility to residents and workers.

The workshops consisted of five stations allowing attendees to complete the community survey, provide input on proposed goals, and mark locations of note on maps of the respective regions. One of the stations was specifically focused on Richmond Hill and the City’s comprehensive plan. Goals discussed included downtown revitalization, transportation, water and

sewer, parks and recreation, redevelopment and preservation of historic structures, environmental preservation, and more. A full summary of this public workshop is included in the Addendum to this document entitled, “Community Engagement Summary.”

## Community Survey

Richmond Hill also collaborated with Bryan County and Pembroke to create a community survey to gain feedback from residents. This survey was distributed online to all residents of Pembroke, Richmond Hill, and Unincorporated Bryan County, business owners in the area, and others with personal or vested interest in the future of Bryan County. This survey covered a variety of topics, including setting goals for residential, commercial, and economic development, gathering opinions on environmental conservation and recreational facilities, land use priorities, municipal services, and other planning related topics. Since Fort Stewart divides the County geographically, the survey was structured to ask specific questions related to North Bryan and Pembroke and other questions that focused on trends in South Bryan and Richmond Hill. The survey was open from August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 to September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 and received a total of 881 responses.



Of the 881 respondents, 347 stated that they lived in South Bryan County and 306 stated that they lived in the City of Richmond Hill. The survey results were reviewed as whole and also filtered geographically to examine how opinions, priorities, and values differed. In looking at Richmond Hill specific responses, the top goals for the future of Richmond Hill are:

- Managing Growth
- Maintaining the Current Sense of Place
- Quality of the Schools

Additionally, the main issues noted from survey respondents included:

- Traffic congestion and Roads
- Infrastructure
- Plan for future development

A complete summary of the survey results is included in the Addendum.



### ***Social Media***

The City of Richmond Hill utilized social media to advertise meetings, the community survey, and other opportunities for public involvement in the planning process. The significant response rate on the community survey can be attributed to the social media push made by the City. Public hearings and how the public can review and/or comment on the draft plan were also broadcast using social media outlets.

## Richmond Hill Strategic Vision

*WE ARE* a well-managed, growing community, ideally situated along Georgia’s scenic coast, steeped in heritage and local pride, with a commitment to its military neighbors and to maintaining the quality of life for future generations.

### General Vision Statement

The City of Richmond Hill developed a community vision through the public involvement process. A group of community stakeholders collectively discussed current trends, community issues, and future needs within the community at a public meeting in February 2018. The group reviewed the vision established during the 2008 comprehensive planning process and crafted a new vision based on changing trends as well as accomplishments within the City. Based on the feedback gathered at this meeting, the following vision was produced:

*“Preserve the past, embrace the now, and plan the future.”*

#### OUR GOALS

- Promote smart growth practices
- Prepare for economic development opportunities
- Anticipate increases in population
- Preserve sense of community
- Responsible governance, leadership and preservation ethics.

#### OUR PRIORITIES

- Encouraging livability
- Diversity of housing options for all residents
- Promoting passion for progress and uniqueness of place
- Maintaining a sense of public safety and security
- Balancing the need for economic growth
- Protecting natural and cultural resources
- Providing quality government services



The City’s Vision, goals, and priorities recognize how future development patterns will impact the existing character of the community. While growth and development pressure are likely to continue, this section communicates the City’s commitment to quality of life, the importance of history, and the need to have a plan for the future.

### Community Goals

The purpose of the community goals section is to layout a road map for the community’s future based on the results of the various public involvement activities. The goals are arguably the most important part of the plan because they represent the value the community places on various quality of life issues. The goals are used to determine the direction the City should pursue based on feedback from people that are most

invested in the community. The following major goals have been identified and will be the basis of the recommended policies:

- Economic development
- Expand recreational activities and opportunities
- Address traffic congestion along major corridors
- Smart growth

### Quality Community Objectives

The following 10 objectives were adopted by the DCA from generally accepted community development principles to fit the unique quality of communities in Georgia. The list of items was intentionally crafted with significant areas of overlap to recognize the relationships between the various community objectives and the impact one aspect has on others. The DCA goals associated with each element are summarized in italics. The City of Richmond Hill completed a self-assessment based on these quality community objectives.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>DCA Goals</i>	<i>Richmond Hill Assessment</i>
 <p><b>Economic Prosperity</b></p>	<p><i>Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community.</i></p>	<p>To facilitate economic prosperity, the City of Richmond Hill is doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting commercial development along SR144, US 17, and other appropriate corridors</li> <li>• Utilizing architectural standards and overlays to control the aesthetics of development</li> <li>• Supports a mix of housing types in subdivisions throughout the city</li> </ul>

Objectives	DCA Goals	Richmond Hill Assessment
 <p><b>Resource Management</b></p>	<p><i>Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community.</i></p>	<p>Richmond Hill does the following to address resource management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Educates residents about water reduction and how to reduce consumption</li><li>• Uses gray water for irrigation</li><li>• Protects natural flood plains</li><li>• Incorporates open space and recreational amenities in new subdivisions</li></ul>
 <p><b>Efficient Land Use</b></p>	<p><i>Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community.</i></p>	<p>The City of Richmond Hill ensures that adequate infrastructure is in place to accommodate future growth and has identified areas of the City where growth is likely to occur</p>
 <p><b>Local Preparedness</b></p>	<p><i>Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve.</i></p>	<p>The City has done the following to better prepare for future growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developed a comprehensive plan and future land use map that will be used to assist with land use decisions</li><li>• Modernized the zoning ordinance</li><li>• Developed overlays and policies to protect the unique features in the community from unrestricted development</li></ul>

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>DCA Goals</i>	<i>Richmond Hill Assessment</i>
 <p><b>Sense of Place</b></p>	<p><i>Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities.</i></p>	<p>Sense of place in the City is achieved by maintaining the family-friendly atmosphere in the City, holding events that have a regional draw, and marketing the city's unique cultural and recreational amenities.</p>
 <p><b>Regional Cooperation</b></p>	<p><i>Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs.</i></p>	<p>The City works with neighboring jurisdictions on mutual aid agreements for emergency services and participates with the County on Service Delivery Strategy.</p>
 <p><b>Housing Options</b></p>	<p><i>Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community.</i></p>	<p>The City has a well-rounded and diversified housing stock and accommodates the needs of mixed incomes, sizes, and types of housing for residents.</p>
 <p><b>Transportation Options</b></p>	<p><i>Address transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents.</i></p>	<p>One of the challenges related to transportation within the City is the need to address congestion along SR144 and US 17. Multi-use trails and connectivity are currently in place, but expansion of these systems is needed.</p>

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>DCA Goals</i>	<i>Richmond Hill Assessment</i>
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Educational Opportunities

*Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or pursue life ambitions.*

Bryan County has great schools. The City is working with the BOE to determine the feasibility of expanding the resources to offer additional adult and continuing education opportunities.



Community Health

*Ensure that all community residents have access to critical goods and service, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities.*

The City supports health food options and does its part to address community health by creating walkable communities and providing various options for recreation within the City.



### Economic Development

The City of Richmond Hill supports a diverse set of economic activities with the primary focus being finding ways to serve the increasing residential population. The City continues to prioritize office, retail, and service related economic development. In addition, the City continues to explore ways to attract tourism through marketing Henry Ford related history and coastal Georgia charm.



**Goals:**

- Expansion of the labor force
- Increase commercial development
- Increase in retail and restaurants
- Attract more tourism
- Expansion of employment options

**Needs and Opportunities:**

- Diversify the availability of jobs
- Ensure that growth does not occur in a manner that brings unforeseen negative impacts on the City (increased crime, traffic, etc.)
- Better market the area from an economic development perspective (the geographic location alone does not necessarily communicate the commercial potential of the area)
- Change the negative perception associated with blue collar jobs and trades
- New interchange at Belfast has the potential to create a lot of future development, jobs, and employment options
- Explore programs to incentivize façade improvements and redevelopment of older commercial structures
- Develop an economic development program to help draw higher paying jobs to attract a younger skilled workforce
- Expansion of existing commercial corridors
- Explore tax abatement and other programs to assist with economic development initiatives
- Promote a diversified housing stock to create balance within the community as growth occurs

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use incentives to attract and retain businesses and industries</li> <li>• Encourage redevelopment and reuse of existing commercial and industrial space</li> <li>• Undertake the annexation of unincorporated islands within the City and areas that currently receive city services</li> <li>• Streamline the development process to make Richmond Hill a desirable place to do business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Prosperity</li> <li>• Efficient Land Use</li> <li>• Local Preparedness</li> <li>• Sense of Place</li> </ul>

## Transportation

When it comes to transportation, the City of Richmond will look to address traffic congestion along major arterials. This includes the high volumes of traffic along State Highway 144 with people traveling through the City to access South Bryan County. The City is also exploring ways to offer residents options for alternative modes of transportation such as trails and an improved sidewalk system.



### Goals:

- Reduce traffic congestion along SR 144 and Hwy 17
- Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City
- Sidewalk connectivity between existing neighborhoods and community facilities

### Needs and Opportunities:

- Better connectivity between commercial areas and adjacent residential neighborhoods
- Improve existing sidewalks
- Expand sidewalk and trail system
- Explore the use of alternative routes and expansion of the local transportation network as a way to alleviate traffic congestion

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and maintain the transportation system</li> <li>• Promote connectivity within the road, sidewalk, and trail network</li> <li>• Support investment in alternative modes of transportation</li> <li>• Consider the impact new residential and commercial development has on existing traffic flow</li> <li>• Support programs and projects that address traffic congestion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation Options</li> <li>• Economic Prosperity</li> <li>• Efficient Land Use</li> <li>• Local Preparedness</li> <li>• Community Health</li> <li>• Regional Cooperation</li> </ul>

## Housing

Residential development continues to thrive in the Richmond Hill. This City is committed to providing various housing options and encourages a develop pattern that blends in with the landscape in a manner that is appropriate for the coastal Georgia region.

### Goals:

- Provide a mix of housing types and price points
- Maintain a high quality of housing stock
- Create family-friendly neighborhoods

### Needs and Opportunities:

- Develop a better understanding of the rental market for housing within the City
- Put stronger regulations in place to improve construction
- Factor in tree canopy and open space preservation in new housing developments
- Minimize construction of new housing in flood prone areas
- Better understand the condition of the existing housing stock
- Explore ways to address code enforcement issues in different neighborhoods around the City

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage development of a range of housing options</li><li>• Encourage infill housing development in older established areas of the City</li><li>• Support mixed use housing projects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing Options</li><li>• Economic Prosperity</li><li>• Efficient Land Use</li><li>• Resource Management</li><li>• Local Preparedness</li><li>• Sense of Place</li></ul>



## Land Use

The City has established thoughtful land use development strategy as a way to promote quality development as the City grows. The Unified Development Ordinance will play a large part in maintaining the character of the community and achieving the future Vision.

### Goals:

- Diversify land use distribution within the City
- Provide a mix of land uses to support the retail, service, and professional needs of residents
- Protect the existing quality of life within the City
- Explore possible sites for development of a ‘downtown’ concept for the City.

### Needs and Opportunities:

- Address property maintenance issues throughout the City
- Identify areas for infill commercial and residential development
- Reserve land for future industrial and commercial growth
- Explore innovative uses for the Belfast Commerce area
- Exposure to I-95 provides numerous options for commercial and industrial development

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the new zoning ordinance and future land use map to make land use decisions that are consistent with the vision for this plan</li> <li>• Promote re-use and infill development along commercial corridors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Prosperity</li> <li>• Efficient Land Use</li> <li>• Local Preparedness</li> <li>• Resource Management</li> <li>• Sense of Place</li> </ul>



## Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources

The City’s goal for cultural and historic resources is to protect, revitalize and promote the local cultural and historic sites and areas, in particular the rich history centered around the Henry Ford era. Cultural and historic resources are what make Richmond Hill unique and give it a sense of place that should be enjoyed, enhanced and remembered for generations to come.

**Goals:**

- Attract more tourism
- Protection of natural, cultural, and historic resources
- Increase the availability of recreational opportunities within the City



**Needs and Opportunities:**

- Limit development within the floodplains and other hazard areas
- Utilize the Henry Ford history to draw visitors to the City
- Continuing holding festivals and other events that have a regional draw and bring people into the City
- Explore ways to provide public water access
- Develop a regional recreational complex as a venue for hosting tournaments (ie. baseball, soccer, etc.)
- Market the City Center as a location for various events and activities



Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use incentives to encourage protection of historic resources</li> <li>• Promote preservation and protection of open space in new developments</li> <li>• Support partnerships with private property owners to help protect natural, cultural, and historic resources</li> <li>• Establish partnerships with DNR and/or other groups to find locations for public water access / boat ramps</li> <li>• Support eco-tourism and other innovative approaches to drawing visitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Prosperity</li> <li>• Efficient Land Use</li> <li>• Sense of Place</li> <li>• Resource Management</li> <li>• Educational Attainment</li> </ul>

### Facilities and Services

The City’s goal for city facilities and services encourages the City and relevant partners to focus on providing excellent level of public services and inclusive facilities for existing and future residents. There should be a safe environment for youth and people of all ages to live, work, and play. Plans should be put in place to ensure there are sufficient utilities and adequate infrastructure to accommodate future growth.



**Goals:**

- Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure
- Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents
- Expand sidewalks and trails

**Needs and Opportunities:**

- Make improvements to city-maintained infrastructure
- Improve pedestrian crosswalks at busy intersections
- Improve lighting along major corridors
- Provide more youth activities
- Increase public awareness of city facilities and activities
- Improve drainage in flood prone areas
- Develop a plan to expand infrastructure to the newly annexed area of the City
- Improve aesthetics of community gateways



Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use incentives to attract and retain businesses and industries</li> <li>• Encourage redevelopment and reuse of existing commercial and industrial space</li> <li>• Undertake the annexation of unincorporated islands within the City and areas that currently receive city services</li> <li>• Streamline the development process to make Richmond Hill a desirable place to do business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Prosperity</li> <li>• Efficient Land Use</li> <li>• Local Preparedness</li> <li>• Sense of Place</li> </ul>

### Governance / Intergovernmental Coordination

The City’s goal of intergovernmental coordination encourages the communication and collaboration of the City of Richmond Hill with the surrounding jurisdictions including Bryan County, Pembroke, and other governing organizations to address shared needs through adequate funding, legislation and technical assistance.

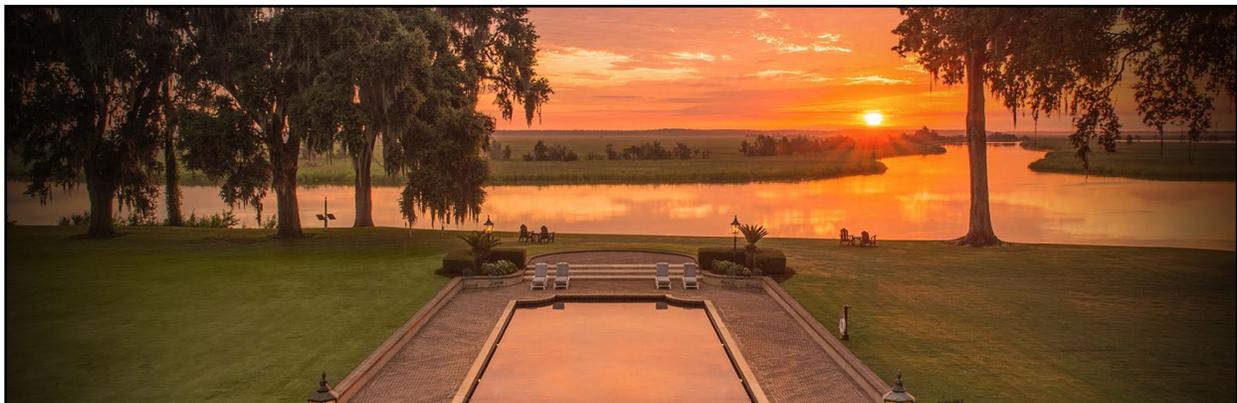
**Goals:**

- Transparency
- Coordination with other agencies

**Needs and Opportunities:**

- Work with other governmental authorities to minimize the duplications of services
- Improve cooperation between the City and County

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the sharing of resources and information between the City and County where appropriate</li> <li>• Consider an intergovernmental approach to addressing shared concerns and issues</li> <li>• Leverage the Comp Plan as a guidance document to show other agencies the community vision</li> <li>• Coordination with County on Service Delivery</li> <li>• Make a commitment to achieving the goals identified in this plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Prosperity</li> <li>• Efficient Land Use</li> <li>• Resource Management</li> </ul>



## Broadband

The City’s goal for broadband involves increasing cost-effective access to broadband internet where needed and ensuring service is reliable. Richmond Hill believes access to broadband is a critical need for all of its residents and will make broadband deployment a high priority.

### Goals:

- Ensure all of Richmond Hill has access to affordable broadband internet service.
- Certify that essential telecommunication services for all residents, businesses, and local government agencies (especially Public Safety and Emergency Services) are reliable
- The City of Richmond Hill should develop a comprehensive Broadband Plan

### Needs and Opportunities:

- Recognize the importance of the availability of quality broadband services as a valuable component of economic development and livability.
- Ensure equitable access to broadband services
- There is a need to ensure reliable telecommunication services is available for emergency use
- A comprehensive broadband plan is needed
- There is a need for affordable broadband services for children in school

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determine the current extend of broadband availability in the City of Richmond Hill</li><li>• Determine reliability of telecommunication service and devise a solution to fix it</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Health</li><li>• Local Preparedness</li></ul>





## Land Use Analysis

The City of Richmond Hill analyzed development patterns, land uses, and zoning districts to develop a baseline for development of the Future Land Use Strategy. The existing land use makeup within the City gives a good indication of likely development within various areas of the City. Existing zoning designations reveal what is currently allowed within various areas of the City by right, meaning that a development project is permitted under the existing zoning ordinance without requiring any special review or public hearing. Analyzing development trends will help the City formulate a future land use strategy that is realistic and consistent with the existing demand and trends within the City. Additionally, the future vision for areas may indicate that a zoning ordinance revision or update may be required to achieve that vision.

### Existing Land Use

The City created an existing land use map in the Fall of 2017 and updated this map in 2023 using desktop GIS practices and field verification via a windshield survey. The table below summarizes the current land use breakdown in the City by percent when compared to the 2017 analysis. An existing land use map has been created to illustrate the geographic breakdown of land uses within the City. It should be noted that this is a parcel-based analysis with the primary land use being assigned to the entire parcel. Also absent from the analysis are setbacks and other regulations that might impact future development. The City has experienced steady development since 2017. The City also annexed a significant area of land in the southern part of the City. The annexation plays a large part in explaining the overall decreases in many of the land use categories shown in the table.

Table 2 Existing Land Use Breakdown

Land Use	Percent 2017	Percent 2023
Commercial	12.2%	5.6%
Industrial	0.2%	9.2%
Parks / Recreation / Conservation	18.9%	10.8%
Public / Institutional	9.3%	7.7%
Residential Multi-Family	0.9%	1.2%
Residential Single-Family	16.6%	13.9%
Transportation / Communication	0.2%	0.1%
Undeveloped	41.6%	51.5%

Since there is a significant percentage of land area currently undeveloped, including a major portion of the annexed area, the breakdown of current land uses by acreage was analyzed by excluding the undeveloped land. The percent developed is depicted in the table below and later illustrated on the chart on the following page.



Table 3 Breakdown of Developed Land

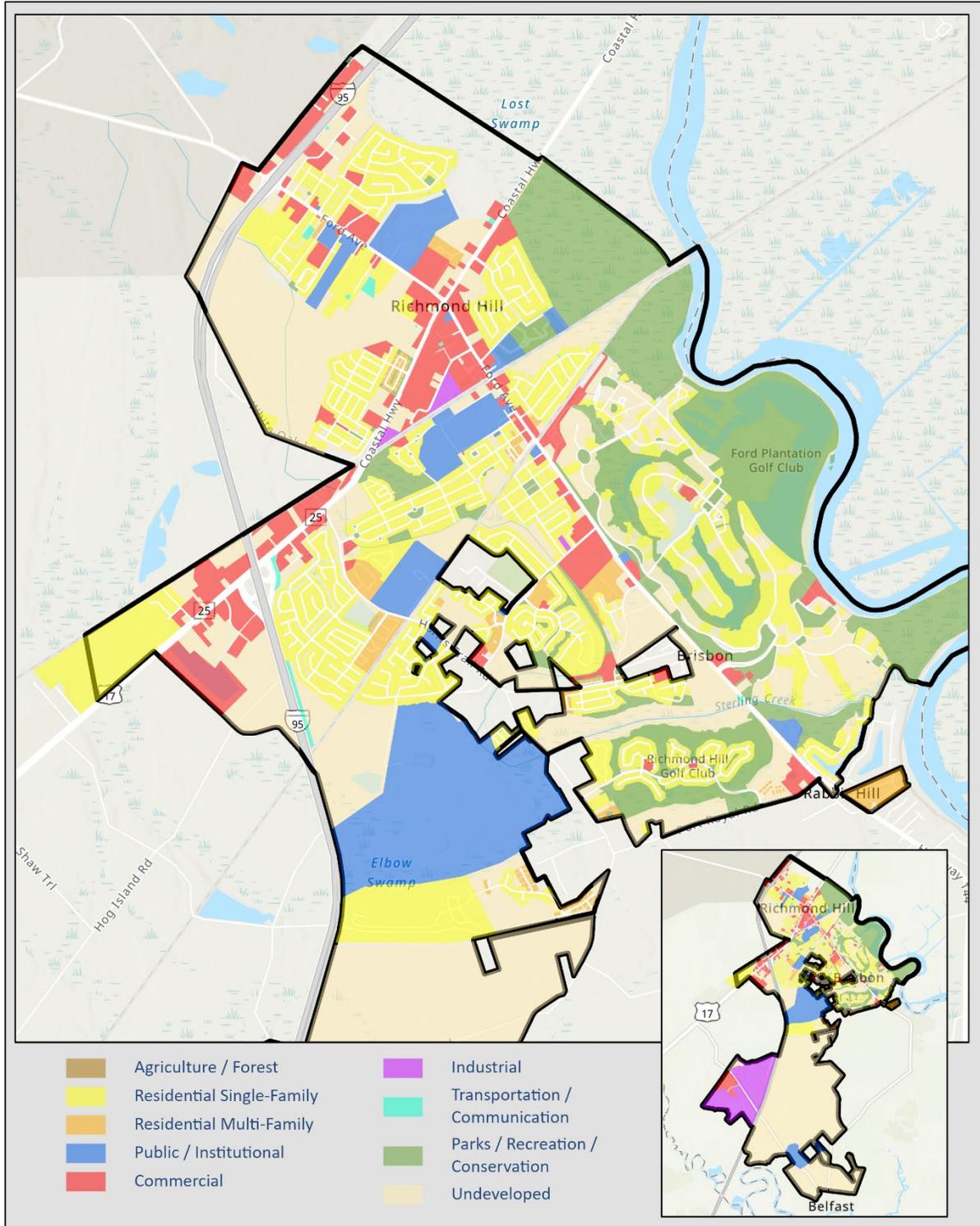
Land Use	Percent of City (excluding undeveloped area)
Commercial	11.6%
Industrial	18.9%
Parks / Recreation / Conservation	22.3%
Public / Institutional	15.8%
Residential Multi-Family	2.5%
Residential Single-Family	28.6%
Transportation / Communication	0.3%

Single-family residential areas account for the largest percentage of developed land area in the City (28.6%). Parks, recreation, conservation also account for a large portion of land area in the City. Suburban development has been the largest source of residential growth within the City with neighborhoods scattered throughout the City. The masterplanned area bordered by Timber Trail to the north, SR144 to the east, Port Royal Rd to the south, and Harris Trail Road to the west is forecast to have additional residential units added within the timeframe of this plan. Additional housing, neighborhoods, and mixed use development is also planned for the roughly 5000 acres of annexed land.

This category includes the parks, coastal marshlands along the Ogeechee River, the golf courses at Ford Plantation and Sterling Links, and the undevelopable land associated with neighborhood developments.

Commercial and public/institutional uses collectively account for slightly more than 25% of land area within the City. Commercial development continues to be concentrated along major road corridors (Hwy 17 & SR 144), with the highest concentration near the intersection of these two arterials. Additional areas of commercial development fall around the I-95 interchanges. Future commercial development is likely to occur along these same corridors in the form of infill and development of undeveloped land. The Belfast Commerce Area and the new I-95 interchange area also present an opportunity for future commercial development.

Industrial development has been isolated to a few limited locations throughout the City. Limited industrial growth is anticipated, mostly in the Belfast Commerce area.



Existing Land Use

3,000 Feet





### Existing Zoning

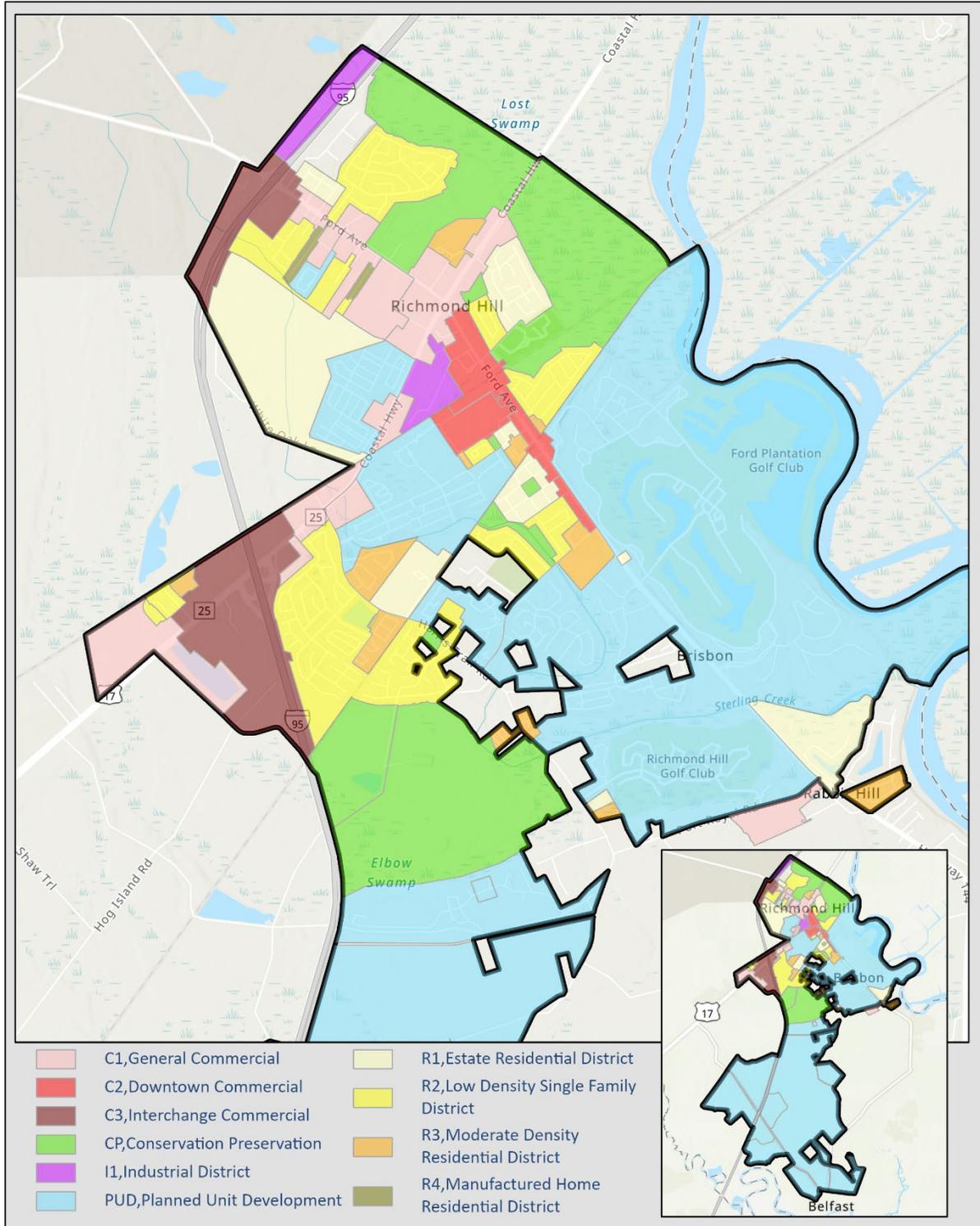
In 2017, the City of Richmond Hill adopted a Unified Development Ordinance that modernized the previously dated zoning ordinance. The UDO was designed to simplify the development process by making the requirements clearer by grouping overlapping regulations. The UDO also offers for flexibility in design by having less overlap between uses. The table below summarizes the zoning categories defined in the UDO based on the percent area they account for within the City. The table also looks at the percentage currently developed versus undeveloped within each zoning category. As illustrated in the table, the Planned Unit Development (PUD) category accounts for the largest percentage in the City at nearly 55%. The PUD category also has the largest percentage of land area currently undeveloped (84%). The large percentage of PUDs provides the City the opportunity to promote the most efficient use of land through preservation, protection of open space, and flexibility within the design of various developments.

Table 4 Zoning Classifications

Zone Name	Zone Description	Percent of City	Percent Developed	Percent Undeveloped
C1	General Commercial	4.1%	2.7%	1.1%
C2	Downtown Commercial	1.2%	2.3%	0.2%
C3	Interchange Commercial	3.2%	3.2%	7.8%
CP	Conservation Preservation	9.6%	14.0%	4.3%
I1	Industrial District	0.8%	1.7%	0.2%
PUD	Planned Unit Development	69.5%	54.6%	83.7%
R1	Estate Residential	4.6%	9.4%	0.4%
R2	Low Density Single Family	5.4%	9.4%	1.3%
R3	Moderate Density Residential	1.5%	2.7%	1.0%
R4	Manufactured Home Residential	0.1%	0%	0%
MU1	Neighborhood Mixed Use	0%	0%	0%
MU2	Community Mixed Use	0%	0%	0%

Recognizing the desired future development, the City created two mixed use categories; neighborhood and community. There are no parcels currently zoned to either of these categories, but the City has taken a proactive approach to zoning and future development by defining each of these districts.

The breakdown of commercial zoning districts allows for future development appropriate for interstate related services adjacent to the I-95 interchange areas, but transitions to lower intensity uses as you move away from the interstate.



Existing Zoning

3,000 Feet





## **Future Land Use Strategy**

In conjunction with the previous Comprehensive Plan Update, the City adopted a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). This ordinance was adopted on June 6, 2017 and has set the framework for how development will be steered in the future. For this reason, the City has elected to produce a future land use strategy based on the vision, goals, and policies in the comprehensive plan to support implementation of the UDO. The Future Land Use Strategy includes the following land use categories, which correspond to zoning classifications in the UDO.

### **Community Activity Center**

This area is intended for small scale commercial and recreational uses that are compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods. A variety of housing types is encouraged at moderate densities, along with some office, retail and service uses that are in harmony with the predominantly residential character of the area.

### **Community Mixed Use**

This area allows and encourages intense, large-scale development that will support significant population segments of the community and provide meaningful employment opportunities. In addition to a blend of housing types, the district allows for large retail uses, general office buildings and a complementary range of services. Suitable locations for these developments would include parcels adjacent to arterial streets and within reasonable proximity to freeway interchanges.

### **Low Density Residential**

This category includes most of Richmond Hill's single family residential neighborhoods. It also includes areas throughout the City where single family development is likely to occur in the future. Some instances of smaller lots and townhouses may occur within this area, generally as part of a larger planned subdivision with open space being set aside.

### **Moderate Density Residential**

This area was established to provide for a variety of housing types at moderate densities to allow for open space and amenities to be included as part of a new development. Moderate density residential should strive for 10 units per acre and can offer a smooth transition between lower density residential and commercial uses.

### **Conservation Preservation**

This area refers to undeveloped land and environmentally sensitive areas generally not suitable for development. The goal here is to preserve these areas as open space and/or provide passive recreational amenities.

### **Downtown Commercial**

This refers to the central downtown area and is established to promote a mix of commercial uses with the potential for infill residential in the future. The goal of this area is to protect and enhance the traditional, small-town character of Richmond Hill's historic core area. A mix of retail stores, offices, public spaces, residential uses and related activities that are mutually supportive and serve the needs of the community in a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment. Through the use of architectural standards and design requirements, the district establishes a cohesive identity based on the historic traditions of the city.



## General Commercial

The General Commercial area is intended primarily to accommodate a range of retail and service uses serving the broader needs of the community and the motoring public. Large-scale retailers, auto-related businesses and similar uses not generally appropriate for other commercial districts.

## Interchange Commercial

This commercial district is designed to provide service related uses related to the I-95 exits that intersect the City. Uses in this area will be auto-oriented when compared to the other commercial areas in the City.

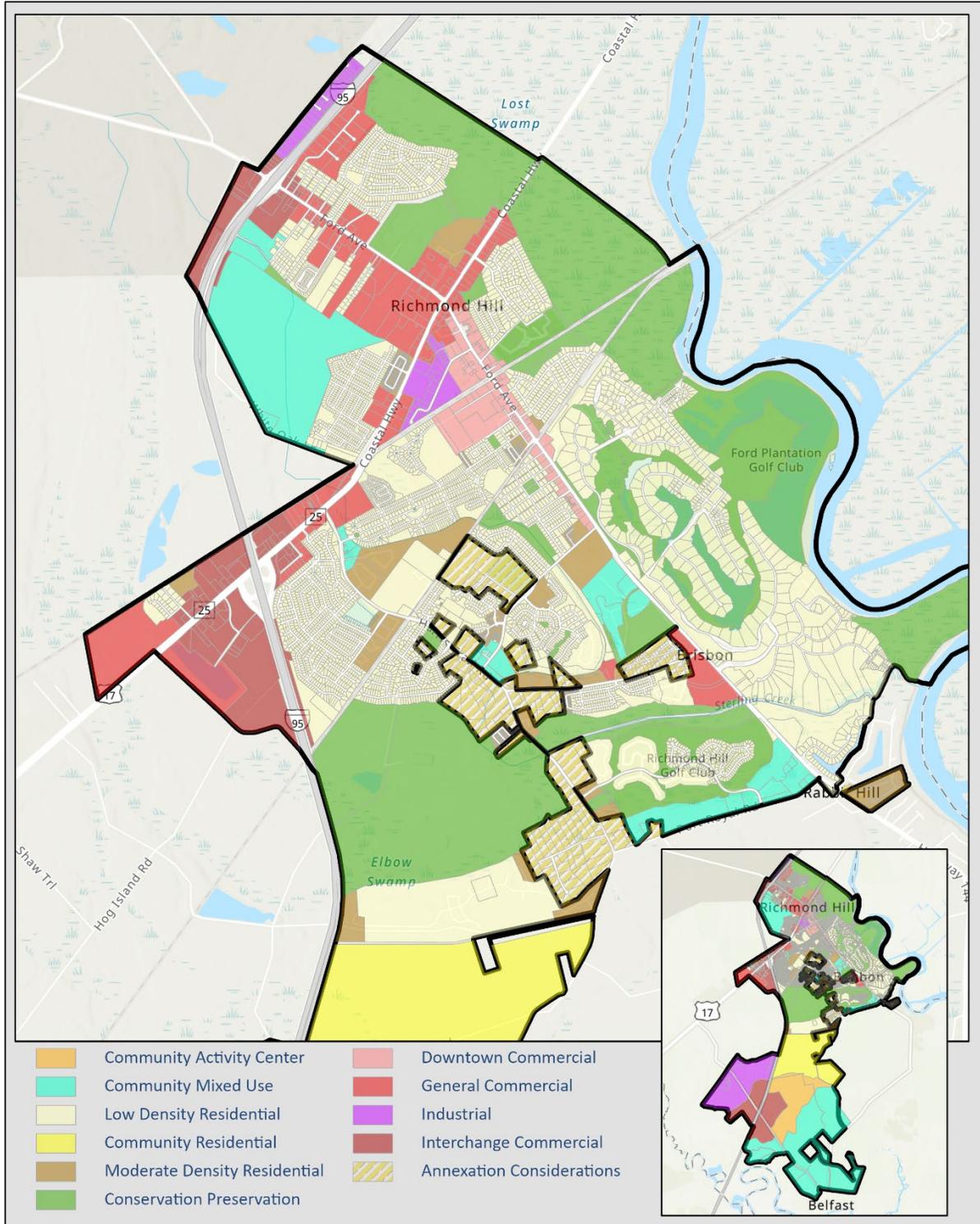
## Industrial

This land use category is established to accommodate industrial and related facilities that provide jobs for citizens of the community and surrounding areas, create a sustainable tax base and add value for property owners and the city. The focus is for light industries such as manufacturing or processing of previously refined materials and other industrial uses that, when properly located, can be compatible with the character of the community and immediate vicinity. This district also allows certain commercial uses of an industrial character or that are necessary to provide services to employees within the district.

## Annexation Considerations

Annexation is the incorporation of land from an unincorporated county into a City. Georgia State law recognizes the importance of growing cities to the economic health of the state and states that, “municipal corporations are created for the purpose of providing local governmental services and for ensuring health, safety, and welfare of persons and the protection of property. Currently, only about 7% of the State’s land area falls within an incorporated City. However, 40% of the population lives within these cities.

The purpose of the annexation considerations category on the City of Richmond Hill’s Future Land Use Map is to recognize where unincorporated islands exist within and directly adjacent to the existing City boundary. Annexation is typically driven by property owners that wish to be incorporated to receive the benefits of a heightened level of municipal services provided by the jurisdiction. For this reason, the unincorporated islands have been identified because it makes logical sense for these areas to be part of the City and in many cases, this City already provides many services to these locations.



### Future Development Strategy

3,000 Feet



## Housing Developments

The residential population within Richmond Hill is distributed around the City with more than 65 designated neighborhoods and residential clusters. Within these neighborhoods, the City offers a variety of different housing options that include detached single-family, attached single-family, townhomes, duplexes, apartments, and assisted living for elderly residents.

Single-family housing accounts for the majority of all housing types within the City making up roughly 75%. Housing stock within the City is relatively new, with over 90% of the housing stock built after 1990. Roughly 25 percent of housing in the City was constructed since the 2010 Census. The biggest lull in housing

development within the City occurred between the years 1960 and 1969. Less than 5% of the total housing stock was built during this time frame.

The neighborhood distribution within the City has been mapped and is shown here to illustrate the location of various developments.

The City also offers housing for a wide range of incomes.

Approximately 40% of owner-occupied housing units are valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999. The City also has a significant number of housing units priced between \$100,000 and \$199,999 (over 40%), which is a good price point for younger families and first-time home buyers. The City also offers high end housing options in several neighborhoods in the City.

Due to the City's proximity to Fort Stewart, as well as other variables, a portion of housing units are renter-occupied. The City is also starting to see an increase in the demand for short-term rentals.



## Transportation

### Road Network

The City of Richmond Hill contains roughly 105 miles of streets and roadways. The majority of the transportation system in the City is local roads; totaling between 85-90 miles. Major arterials and transportation corridors that bisect the City are State Route 144 and US Highway 17. SR144 stretches roughly 5 miles through the City and is a major connection point to South Bryan County. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) data shows an average daily traffic count on SR144 of 23,200. US Highway 17 is a major north-south corridor with roughly 4 miles intersecting the City. Similar to SR144, GDOT data has daily traffic counts on HWY 17 of approximately 21,000. Interstate 95 also intersects the City and accounts for 10 miles (5 miles for each directionally bound segment). The City currently has three exits off Interstate 95; Exit 90 (Ford Ave), Exit 87 (Highway 17), and Exit 82, which provides access to the Belfast Commerce area.

The City recently completed the I-95-Highway Exit 90 SR144 interchange. Roundabouts were constructed to improve the movement of traffic at this important community gateway.



### Alternative Modes

Residents of the City also benefit from having access to the Coastal Regional Coaches system operated by the Coastal Regional Commission. Coastal Regional Coaches is part of the regional rural public transit program that provides general public transit service in the coastal Georgia counties including Bryan County. This service is available to anyone, for any purpose, and to any destination in the coastal region. Fares vary with different itineraries. Coastal Regional Coaches is a demand-response, advance reservation service that operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M.

The City provides opportunities for alternative modes of transportation by maintaining a vast sidewalk system. Currently there are roughly 35 miles of sidewalks within the City, providing pedestrian movement through neighborhoods and along some of the major roadways. Expansion and better connectivity of this

system has been identified as a goal by the City and a preliminary sidewalk inventory has been completed that includes a plan for addressing underserved areas of the City. The City also has a trail system that is well utilized by residents and visitors. A 187-acre site was acquired by the City where a vast multi-modal trail system is being planned.



### *Parking*

The availability of public parking is not perceived to be an issue within the City. The majority of commercial development has occurred along the SR144 and Hwy17 with ample on-site parking. Parking throughout the City is primarily surface parking lots designed to serve the immediate location only.

### *Railroads, Trucking*

The I-95 corridor is the longest north-south Interstate in the country and passes through more states (15) than any other Interstate. The Interstate provides connection for numerous cities along the eastern seaboard. This leads to heavy volumes of truck traffic along the interstate and ultimately along some of the major corridors in Richmond Hill. Highway 17 and State Route 144 host about 10,000 truck trips on a daily basis, according to data from the Department of Transportation. With port expansion, development of the Hyundai Manufacturing Facility Manufacturing Facility, and associated industrial development in coastal Georgia on the rise, truck related traffic is likely to increase.

Richmond Hill also contains two major CSX rail lines. The northern line extends from Waycross through the City and provides connection to the CSX yard in Savannah. The southern line, also referred to as the Riceboro Southern line, comes from Riceboro through the City before connecting with the main CSX line.

#### *CORE MPO*

The City is a member of the Coastal Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO), which is the designated transportation planning organization for the Savannah urbanized area, a Census designated area that includes the City of Savannah and all surrounding Census Blocks with at least 500 people per square mile. Richmond Hill was brought into this urbanized area following



release of the 2010 Decennial Census demographics. Metropolitan planning organizations are governed by Federal law and require that plans and programs be developed through a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. The City is an active member of the technical advisory committee, but ultimately has limited control over how certain projects are identified and prioritized. The Mobility 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan include the following proposed projects that are specific to Richmond Hill:

- Port Royal Road Widening (SR144 – Harris Trail)
- Harris Trail Road Widening (Timber Trail – Port Royal Road)



## Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy demonstrates and defines the action items the City of Richmond Hill will take on to achieve the community vision, addressing the community goals, encouraging compliance with the Future Land Use map, and for addressing each of the needs and opportunities. The Community Work Program identifies specific programs and tasks to be undertaken by the City to implement the Plan. A proposed schedule, responsible party, and potential funding source are outlined within this plan. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs requires that cities complete an implementation plan as well as a report of accomplishments, which is a status update summarizing the previous work plan. Included below are the 2018-2022 Community Work Plan and the 2013-2018 Report of Accomplishment:

### Community Work Program

The Community Workplan includes the following information for each listed action item:

- Action Item: Brief description of the activity
- Timeframe: The timeframe for initiating and/or completed each action item s broken into four categories: 1) Ongoing (currently in-progress), 2) Immediate (1-2 years), 3) Short-term (2-5 years), and 4) Long-term (5-10 years). Items identified for immediate and/or short-term should be viewed as having a priority status.
- Priority: With an understanding that the City has limited resources to dedicate to implementation of the CWP, the City has assigned a priority status to each action item in an effort to assist with identification of the most urgent, necessary, and/or desired programs. However, it is important to recognize that all action items included herein relate to needs and opportunities identified in the plan. The four priority levels are: 1) Current/in-Process (C), 2) High (H), 3) Medium (M), 4) Low (L).
- Responsible Party: Parties identified as being responsible for implementation of the action items include city departments, agencies, and authorities. The responsible parties identified within the CWP as listed by the following acronyms:
  - PZ – Planning and Zoning
  - GA – General Administration
  - PW – Public Works
  - PT – Park and Tree
  - FD – Fire Department
  - PD – Police Department
  - DDA – Downtown Development Authority
  - CVB – Visitor’s Bureau
  - HPC – Historic Preservation Commission
  - DNR – Department of Natural Resources
  - GDOT – Department of Transportation
- Funding Source: This attempts to identify the potential or recommended funding source. It may be a specific city fund, grant, loan, or other source.



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Funding Source / Cost</i>
<b>Economic Development</b>				
Promote, establish, and support industrial and commercial development	Ongoing	C	GA/PZ/DDA/VB	Staff Time General Fund
Attain/Maintain Tree City designation	Ongoing	L	PT	Staff Time General Fund
Attain/Maintain All-America City Designation	Ongoing	L	GA	Staff Time General Fund
Explore the use of TADs, CIDs, BIDs, and other programs to improve economic development	Short-term	M	GA/PZ/DDA/VB	Staff Time General Fund
Develop a better understanding of the City's retail trade area to help market Richmond Hill	Immediate	M	DDA/PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Complete an inventory of water usage to help future commercial/industrial businesses better forecast utility costs	Short-term	L	GA/PZ	\$40K General Fund
Explore the use of the City-owned 6 acre site off Constitution Way as a Downtown Anchor	Short-term	H	GA/PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Complete feasibility study for a General Aviation Airport to support continued industrial, commercial and residential growth within the City	Immediate	H	GA/PZ	\$150K General Fund
<b>Transportation</b>				
Installation of new traffic signal (Cherry Hill @ SR144)	Immediate	M	GA/PZ/GDOT	\$200K General Fund
Complete a condition assessment of local roads	Short-term	M	PW/PZ	\$150K General Fund
Streetscape design and improvements for Ford Avenue	Short-term	M	DDA/PZ/GDOT	Staff Time General Fund
Landscaping project to improve aesthetics along Ford Avenue	Short-term	M	DDA/PZ/GDOT	Staff Time General Fund
Implementation of new signage program	Short-term	L	DDA/PZ/GDOT/VB	Staff Time General Fund
Citywide sidewalk improvements	Long-term	M	GA/PW	Staff Time General Fund
Obtain sidewalk landscaping and maintenance easements and agreements	Short-term	M	GA/PW	Staff Time General Fund
Expand sidewalk system and connectivity within neighborhoods and community features	Short-term	M	GA/PW	Staff Time General Fund
Work with DOT on sidewalks on Highway 144	Short-term	M	GA/PW/GDOT	Staff Time General Fund
Explore ways to alleviate traffic on Hwy 144 through interconnectivity and alternate routes	Short-term	L	PZ/PT	Staff Time General Fund



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Funding Source / Cost</i>
<b>Housing</b>				
Complete a feasibility study for development of a short-term rental registry / fee program	Immediate	H	GA/PA	\$75K General Fund
Identify target areas for increased code enforcement	Immediate	H	PZ/PD	Staff Time General Fund
Promotion of mix of housing types and options in new developments	Ongoing	C	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Restrict development of housing in flood plains and other vulnerable areas	Ongoing	H	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Offer incentives to promote amenities and open space in new housing developments	Ongoing	H	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Identify ways to incentivize era appropriate improvements to homes in historic residential neighborhoods	Short-term	L	PZ/PT	Staff Time General Fund
<b>Natural &amp; Cultural Resources</b>				
Nominate buildings and sites for historic preservation	Short-term	M	HPC/PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Continue to control the location and impacts of development through all available means including the Future Development Map and Zoning Ordinance	Ongoing	H	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Continue to encourage through development review and other means environmentally-friendly practices, including green growth guidelines, smaller lot sizes, and open space retention	Ongoing	H	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Continue to collaborate with state and national natural resource or land conservation programs to preserve environmentally sensitive or significant areas	Ongoing	M	GA/PZ/DNR	Staff Time General Fund
Make JF Gregory Park improvements	Short-term	M	GA/PT	\$100K-\$500K General Fund
Continue on-going collaboration with GDOT, Bryan County, and Rayonier to facilitate a regional approach to road development, improvements, and enhancements	Ongoing	H	PA/PZ/GDOT	Staff Time General Fund
Sterling Creek Park project	Long-term	M	GA/PT/PZ/PW	>\$1M General Fund
Explore the use of DNR grants to assist with trail system development throughout the City	Short-term	L	GA/PT/PZ/PW	Staff Time General Fund
Complete flood mitigation project on Sterling Creek	Short-term	M	PW/GA	\$100K-\$500K Stormwater Fund



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Funding Source / Cost</i>
Study the impact of updating the flood ordinance to require 2 of freeboard	Long-term	L	PZ/PT	Staff Time General Fund
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>				
Make GIS available to the general public	Ongoing	L	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Construct second elevated storage tank	Immediate	M	PW/PZ/GA	\$500K W/S Fund
Town Centre Engineering and Construction	Short-term	M	GA/PZ/PT	Staff Time General Fund
Complete drainage project to improve conveyance in Live Oak/White Oak Neighborhood	Short-term	M	PW/PZ	\$500K-\$750K Stormwater Fund
Study the feasibility of rehabilitation of the Egypt Trail boat ramp area	Short-term	L	PZ/PT/DNR	Staff Time General Fund
Develop signage and landscaping plan to improve the aesthetics of community gateways	Short-term	M	DDA/PZ	Staff Time General Fund
GA Power LED roadway light conversion project	Short-term	L	GA/PT/PZ	\$150K General Fund
Continue working with HOAs in older residential developments to have signs replaced and standardized	Short-term	M	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Complete landscaping improvements in traffic circles at exit 90	Short-term	H	PZ/PT	\$100K General Fund
Utilize the Tree Fund for beautification projects around the City	Ongoing	L	PT	Staff Time Tree Fund
Examine the cost of providing a routine dry trash pickup service	Short-term	L	PZ/PW	Staff Time General Fund
<b>Governance / Intergovernmental Coordination</b>				
Coordinate with County and GA Conservancy on the protection of Lost Swamp property	Long-term	M	GA/PZ/PT	Staff Time General Fund
Coordinate with City, DDA, and CVB for protection and purchase of historic structures (Community House, Commissary, etc.)	Immediate	H	GA/DDA/VB/HPC	Staff Time General Fund
Update Short-term work program annually	Ongoing	M	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Work with DNR to identify location(s) for future public water access	Long-term	M	PZ/PT/DNR	Staff Time General Fund
Work with the County on the Belfast Keller Road improvements / widening project	Short-term	H	PZ	Staff Time General Fund
Participate in the MPO to assist with local and regional transportation planning	Ongoing	C	PZ/GA	Staff Time General Fund
Coordinate with the County on the Timber Trail / Brisbon sidewalk project	Short-term	M	PZ	Staff Time General Fund



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Funding Source / Cost</i>
Broadband				
Leverage any opportunities to provide home access for K-12 students (as promoted by the Board of Education), and for college students to enable online educational opportunities.	Ongoing	C	GA	Staff Time General Fund
Work with all willing providers to expand broadband and mobile networks	Ongoing	C	GA	Staff Time General Fund
Identify and consider adopting policies that facilitate broadband deployment, such as appropriate streamlined project permitting / a “dig-once” policy.	Immediate	M	GA	Staff Time General Fund
Engage telecom providers in direct dialog to address telecom reliability and diversity/redundancy issues.	Ongoing	C	GA	Staff Time General Fund



### Report of Accomplishments

The following report of accomplishments summarizes activities completed since the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update. Items that are Completed have been finished within the 5-Year reporting period prior to this Comprehensive Plan Update. Items that are Underway/Continuing have been initiated or have had partial progress made and have been carried over into the new Community Workplan. Items that are Postponed are still priorities for the community and have been in the new Community Workplan. Items marked Cancelled are activities no longer prioritized by the City.

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Explanation/Justification</i>
<b>Economic Development</b>			
Promote, establish, and support industrial and commercial development	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	This is a high priority of the City, and something the City continues to work on.
Attain Tree City designation	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	Has been attained by the City and will reapply annually
Attain All-America City Designation	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to work toward the designation
Explore the use of TADs, CIDs, BIDs, and other programs to improve economic development	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City hired a consultant and is continuing efforts to implement programs such as these
Develop a better understanding of the City's retail trade area to help market Richmond Hill	Immediate	Underway/Continuing	The City contracted with NextSite, to provide this information and help market Richmond Hill.
Complete an inventory of water usage to help future commercial/industrial businesses better forecast utility costs	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort that allows the City to be able to provide this information.
Complete a feasibility study for potential development of a regional sports complex in Richmond Hill	Immediate	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to work with Radiant Places to explore options out at the new I-95 interchange, Exit 82.
<b>Transportation</b>			
Installation of new traffic signal (Cherry Hill @ SR144)	Immediate	Underway/Continuing	Hwy 144 is a state hwy and we are waiting on traffic counts to reach the threshold that will allow GDOT to issue the City a permit to install
Complete a condition assessment of local roads	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
Streetscape design and improvements for Ford Avenue	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	Sidewalks were installed in the recently widened section of Ford Ave, along with stamped concrete to resemble red bricks between the back of curb and the new sidewalk.



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Explanation/Justification</i>
Landscaping project to improve aesthetics along Ford Avenue	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	Recently received a GDOT permit to plant Crepe Myrtles the medians in the newly widened section of Hwy 144
Implementation of new signage program	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	Wayfinding signage has been installed around the City, along with new decorative street names and stop signs and posts.
Citywide sidewalk improvements	Long-term	Underway/Continuing	Connections in neighborhoods to link sidewalks have been constructed.
Obtain sidewalk landscaping and maintenance easements and agreements	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City obtained easements along Timber Trail and Harris Trail, and will continue to do so as needed.
Coordinate with GDOT, Bryan County, and Rayonier on Belfast Interchange project	Short-term	Completed	The new I-95 interchange, Exit 82, is open and fully functional.
Develop standards for streetscape elements	Short-term	Completed	The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) was created and has an Article devoted entirely to landscaping and trees, with specific standards for streetscape elements.
Complete signal upgrades and intersection improvements at Rushing Street	Short-term	Completed	The City partnered with the development adjacent to the intersection, to add mast poles and a dedicated left turn out of Rushing Street.
<b>Housing</b>			
Complete a feasibility study for development of a rental registry / fee program	Immediate	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
Identify target areas for increased code enforcement	Immediate	Underway/Continuing	The Code enforcement department implemented a zone approach, breaking the city into different areas for a more manageable effort.
Promotion of mix of housing types and options in new developments	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to work with developers on housing options.
Restrict development of housing in flood plains and other vulnerable areas	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	In combination with more common open space requirements being proposed, the resulting effect should reduce development of such areas.
Offer incentives to promote amenities and open space in new housing developments	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City is currently working through proposed revisions to the UDO, to require additional common open space areas, and amenities.
<b>Natural &amp; Cultural Resources</b>			
Nominate buildings and sites for historic preservation	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City recently purchased and restored a historic building to utilize as the office for the CVB, and led an effort for future restorations.



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Explanation/Justification</i>
Establish bike and walking path along widened Highway 144	Short-term	Completed	Both items have been completed
Continue to control the location and impacts of development through all available means including the Future Development Map and Zoning Ordinance	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to revise the UDO as needed, to control the impacts of development.
Continue to encourage through development review and other means environmentally-friendly practices, including green growth guidelines, smaller lot sizes, and open space retention	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City ensures through civil review, that new projects are in compliance with the CSS and low impact development
Continue to collaborate with state and national natural resource or land conservation programs to preserve environmentally sensitive or significant areas	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to communicate with Georgia Conservancy, Land Trusts, DNR, and River Keepers
Make JF Gregory Park improvements	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to invest in improvements. An ADA accessible playground was recently installed, and many more improvements are forthcoming
Continue on-going collaboration with GDOT, Bryan County, and Rayonier to facilitate a regional approach to road development, improvements, and enhancements	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	Recently the City and County agreed on future access points along Belfast Keller Road, and are working on finalizing a development agreement between all parties for the future widening needs of the area
Update Stormwater Management Plan	Ongoing	Completed	This has been completed
Passive park project on 187 acre site	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	Trails and signage have been installed, along with reconstructing a lake. The City continues to plan for improvements to this area.
Develop and adopt FOG (fats, oils, greases) ordinance	Short-term	Completed	This has been completed. A section was added to our Engineering Design Standards.
Establish historic preservation ordinance and commission	Short-term	Completed	This has been created. The HPC meets once a month.
Seek historic district designation	Short-term	Completed	The City has created a Historic District, and is planning for additional areas to also become such.



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Explanation/Justification</i>
Apply for DNR trail recreation grant	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to look for ways to expand public access to outdoor activities
Complete flood mitigation project on Sterling Creek	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City has completed some work, and has contracted with a consultant and is looking at additional mitigation projects
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>			
Build a third fire station to cope with anticipated growth	Long-term	Completed	Fire Station #3 opened recently along Belfast Keller Road
Make GIS available to the general public	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	The City continues to update the GIS and continues to work toward offering the public some limited access to it.
Construct second elevated storage tank	Long-term	Underway/Continuing	The City is in design stage for this second elevated tank, to be located out at Exit 82
Town Centre Engineering and Construction	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	The City has completed some interior road connections, and water/sewer extensions. Future phases are being planned.
Complete drainage project to improve conveyance in Live Oak/White Oak Neighborhood	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort.
Rehabilitate the Henry Ford Bakery property for tourist site	Short-term	Completed	The project is complete
Complete irrigation and landscaping project at Town Centre Drive	Short-term	Completed	The project is complete
Boles Park water tank landscaping project	Short-term	Completed	The project is complete
Explore additional ways to market the City Center beyond meeting and special events	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
Study the feasibility of rehabilitation of the Egypt Trail boat ramp area	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
Develop signage and landscaping plan to improve the aesthetics of community gateways	Long-term	Underway/Continuing	The City has implemented design standards through the UDO, and continue to look for ways to make improvements to the gateways
GA Power LED roadway light conversion project	Short-term	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
<b>Governance / Intergovernmental Coordination</b>			
Coordinate with County and GA Conservancy on the protection of Lost Swamp property	Long-term	Underway/Continuing	The City was able to work with the property owner to halt the proposal to harvest the timber. This is an ongoing effort.
Coordinate with County on Service Delivery	Short-term	Completed	This has been completed



<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Explanation/Justification</i>
Hire a special projects manager	Immediate	Completed	A Special Projects manager is now on staff
Coordinate with City, DDA, and CVB for protection and purchase of historic structures (Community House, Commissary, etc.)	Immediate	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
Coordinate with UGA and DDA on project in Crossroads area	Immediate	Completed	This coordination has been completed
Participate in LUCA project with County	Immediate	Completed	This has been completed
Update Short-term work program annually	Ongoing	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort
Work with DNR to identify location(s) for future public water access	Long-term	Underway/Continuing	This is an ongoing effort



## Appendixes





## Appendix 1 - Public Hearings





# Richmond Hill Comprehensive Plan



**Public Hearing**  
August 8, 2022

**GMC**

**Atlanta**

**Albany**

**Augusta**  
Glenn Coyne, FAICP, Georgia Planning Leader  
Julianne Harper, Community Planner

**Savannah**  
Courtney Reich, AICP, CFM, Senior Planner, Office Leader  
Ed DiTommaso, AICP, GISP, Project Manager  
Cassie Beckwith, Architecture

**Brunswick**  
Rob Brown, PhD, PE  
Water Resources Engineer

 The Richmond Hill Georgia logo and GMC logo are located in the bottom right corner of the map section.

## Public Hearing

Held at the beginning of the planning process.

The purpose of this hearing is to:

- » Brief the community on the process to be used to develop the plan;
- » Highlight opportunities for public participation in development of the plan; and
- » Obtain input on the proposed planning process.



## Comprehensive Plan

- » Inventories what exists today and outlines a community's vision for the future
- » Describes concrete action steps to achieve the vision

“A long-term plan for how the  
community wants to grow and develop  
in the future”



## Comprehensive Plan

» Answers the questions:

- » Where are we? (Mission Statement)
- » Where do we want to go? (Vision Statement)
- » How are we going to get there? (Goals & Strategies)
- » What are we going to do, who is going to do it and when is it going to get done? (Implementation Plan)
- » How are we doing? (Benchmarking, Annual Review, Report of Accomplishments)



## Comprehensive Plan

### 12-15 Month Process

Comprehensive Plan Elements include:

- » Community Goals
- » Needs and Opportunities
- » Land Use Analysis
- » Community Work Plan



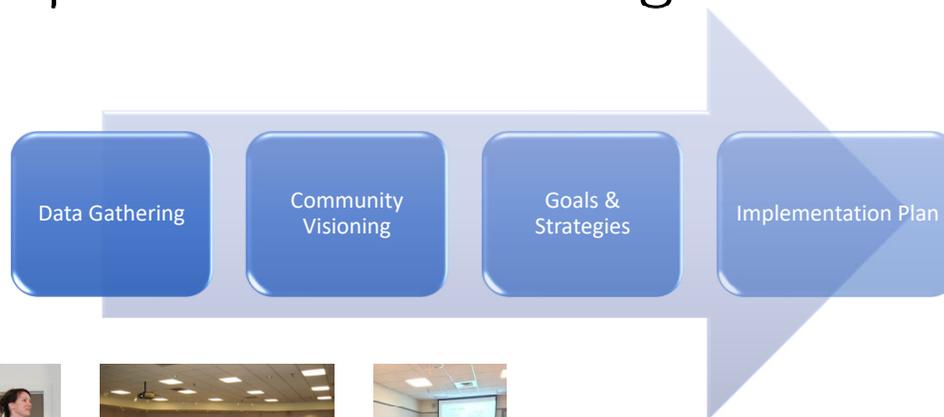
## Comprehensive Plan

### Planning Elements

- » Population
- » Economic Development
- » Land use
- » Housing
- » Transportation
- » Environmental & Historic Resources
- » Community Facilities & Services
- » Resiliency

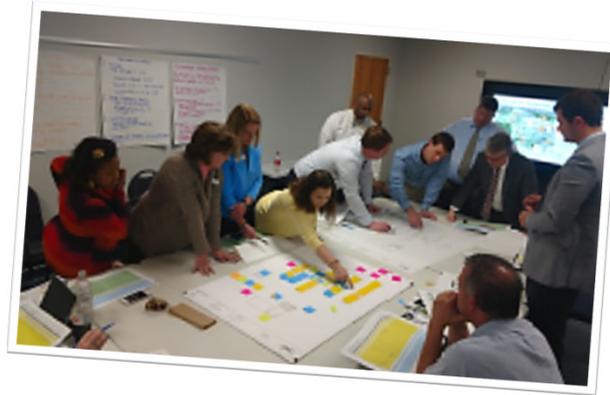


## Comprehensive Planning Process



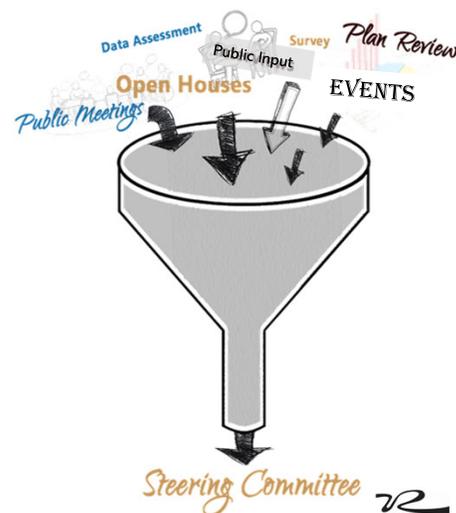
## Community Work Plan

- Implementation activities
- Time frame (5-Years)  
(2023 – 2028)
- Responsible party
- Cost
- Funding source



## Community Engagement

- » Project Team
- » Stakeholder Committee
- » Community Engagement Activities
  - » Community Survey
  - » Open Houses/Workshops
  - » Press Release
  - » Social Media
- » Public Hearings



## Schedule

Public Survey	August 1 – September 2, 2022
Public Hearing	August 8, 2022
Stakeholder Committee	September 2022
Public Workshop	August 25, 2022
Stakeholder Committee	November 2022
Stakeholder Committee	January 2023
Plan Development	December 2022 – February 2023
Draft Plan Review	February 2023
Final Draft Plan	March 2023
Public Hearing #2	April 2023
Submit to CRC and DCA	April 14, 2023
Adoption of Comp Plan Update	June 2023



## DCA Approval Process





Scan for survey



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2022**

BRYAN COUNTY AND CITY OF PEMBROKE  
BOARD OF EDUCATION, 8810 HWY 280, BLACK CREEK, GA  
5PM - 7:30 PM

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022**

BRYAN COUNTY AND CITY OF RICHMOND HILL  
BOC HEARING ROOM, 66 CAPT. MATTHEW FREEMAN DR,  
RICHMOND HILL, GA  
5PM - 7:30 PM

Join the Bryan County Community Development Department in partnership with the Cities of Pembroke and Richmond Hill at a drop in workshop to learn more about the update to the Comprehensive Plan and provide input on what you want for the future of your community.

Comments can be emailed or submitted in written format:

Richmond Hill Planning Department | 40 Richard Davis Drive | Richmond Hill, GA 31324

[astyer@richmondhill-ga.gov](mailto:astyer@richmondhill-ga.gov) | [rdykes@richmondhill-ga.gov](mailto:rdykes@richmondhill-ga.gov)





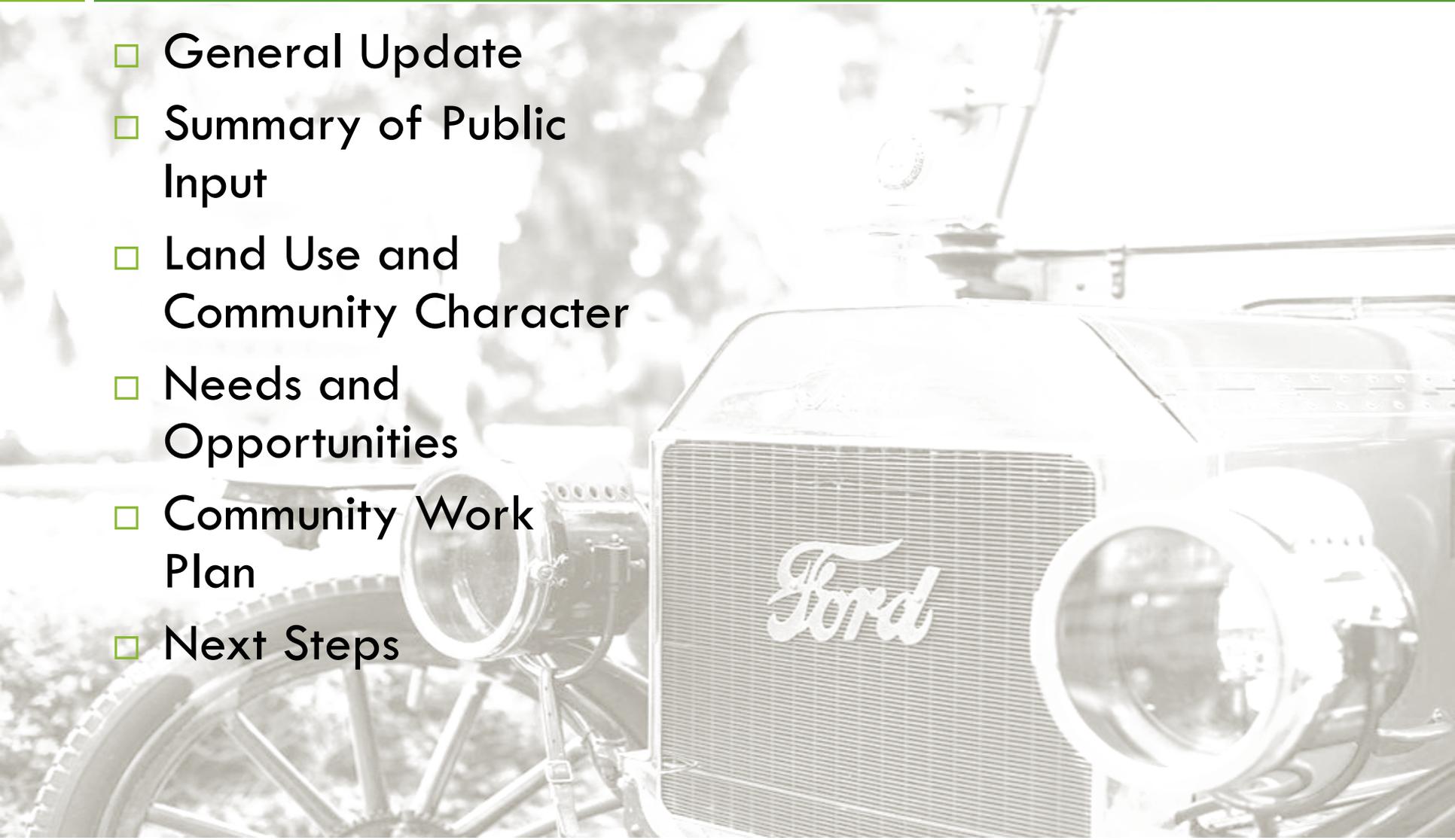
# RICHMOND HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

**GMC**

Public Hearing 2 | April 24, 2023

# Presentation Outline

- General Update
- Summary of Public Input
- Land Use and Community Character
- Needs and Opportunities
- Community Work Plan
- Next Steps



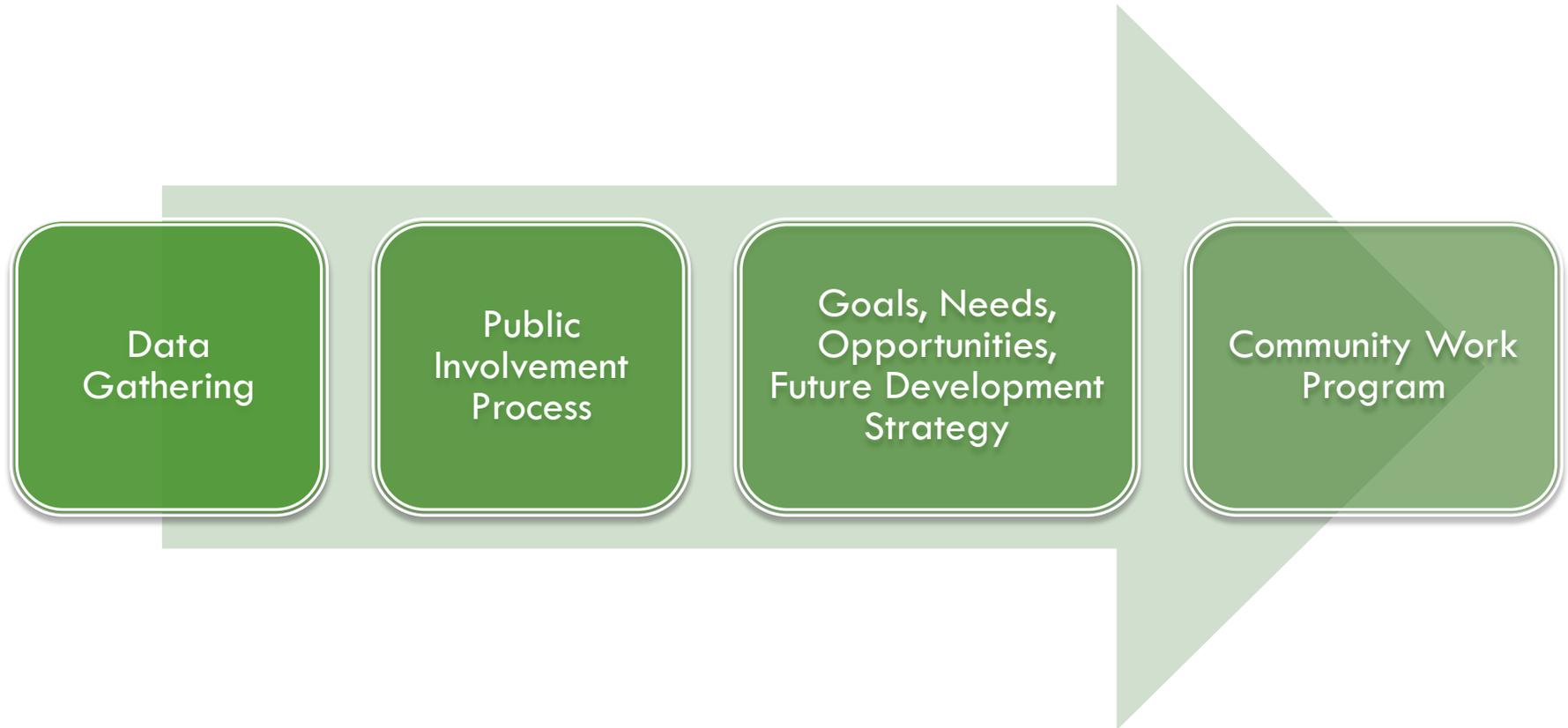
# Comprehensive Planning Requirements



- Community Goals
- Needs and Opportunities
- Identification of Community Character Areas
- Community Work Program

# Comprehensive Planning Process

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# Summary of Public Involvement

- ❑ Public Hearings
- ❑ Project Team
- ❑ Stakeholder Interviews
- ❑ Bryan County Stakeholder Committee
- ❑ Mayors Council Update
- ❑ Open House(s)
- ❑ Community Survey
- ❑ Social Media

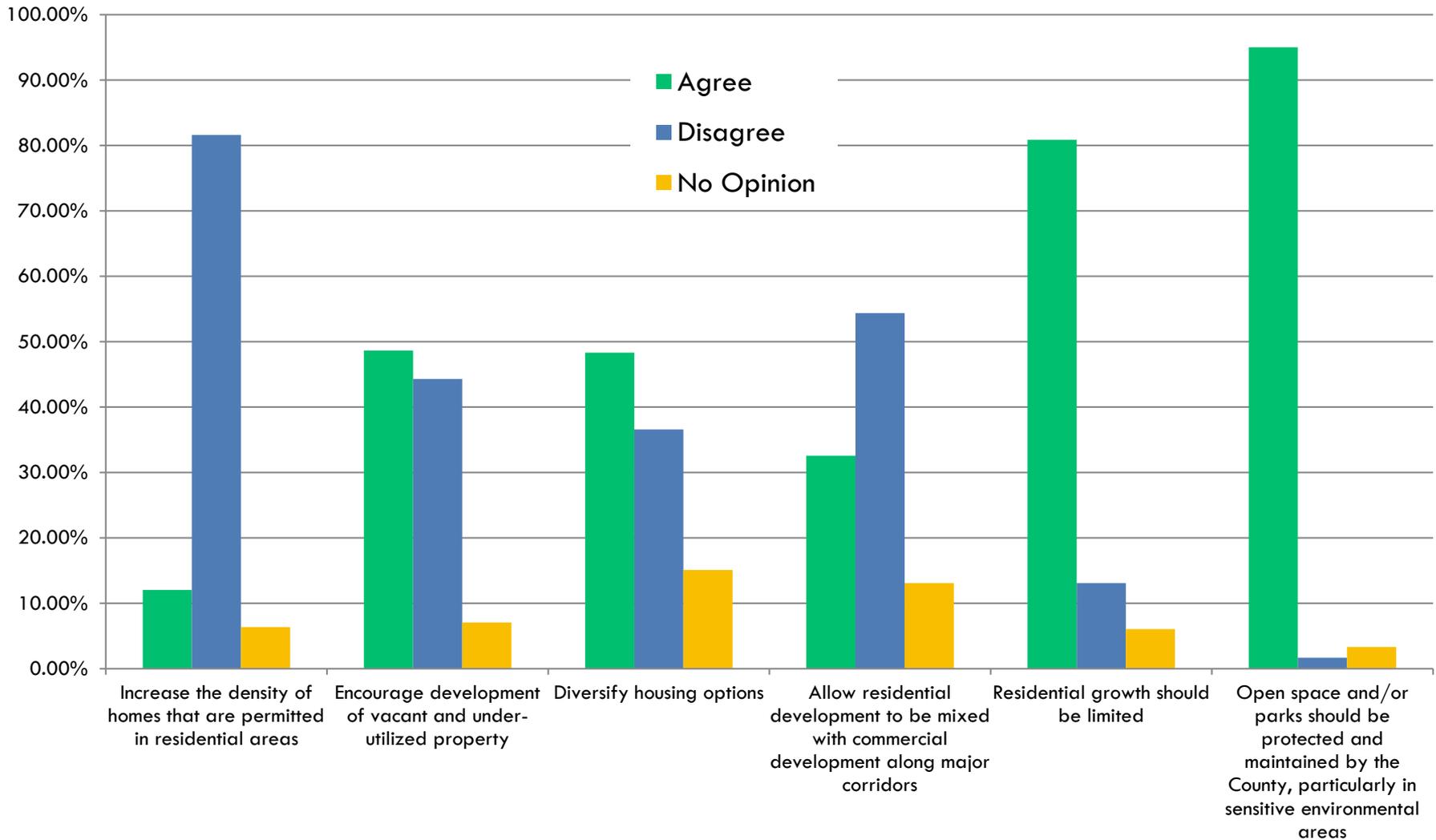


# Public Input Survey

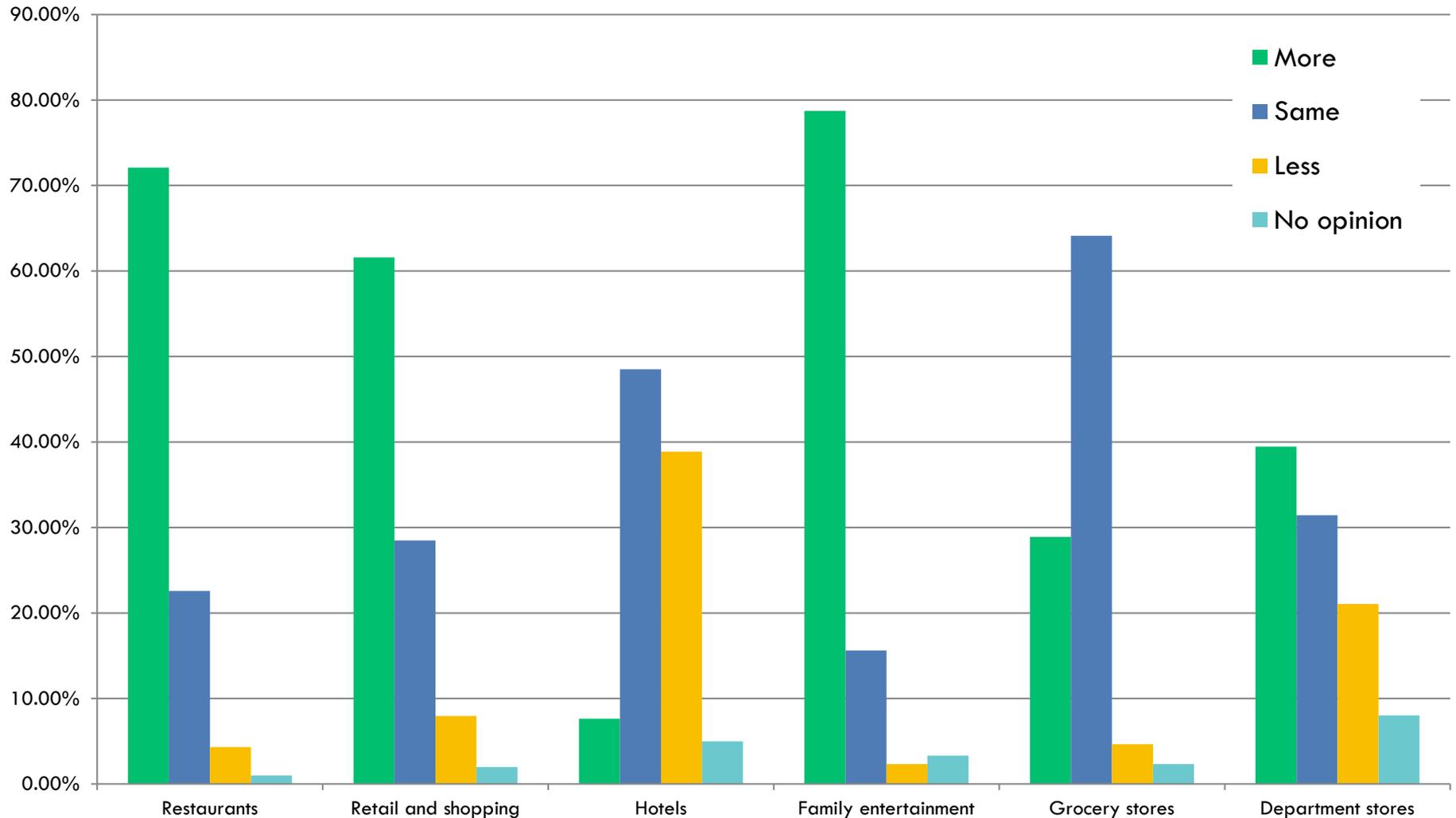
- Ran from August 1 – September 2
- 877 responses total
- **347 responses from South Bryan**
- **306 responses from Richmond Hill**
- 159 responses from North Bryan
- 42 responses from Pembroke



# Please state whether you agree, disagree, or have no opinion with the following statements on future residential development in South Bryan County and Richmond Hill over the next 20 years

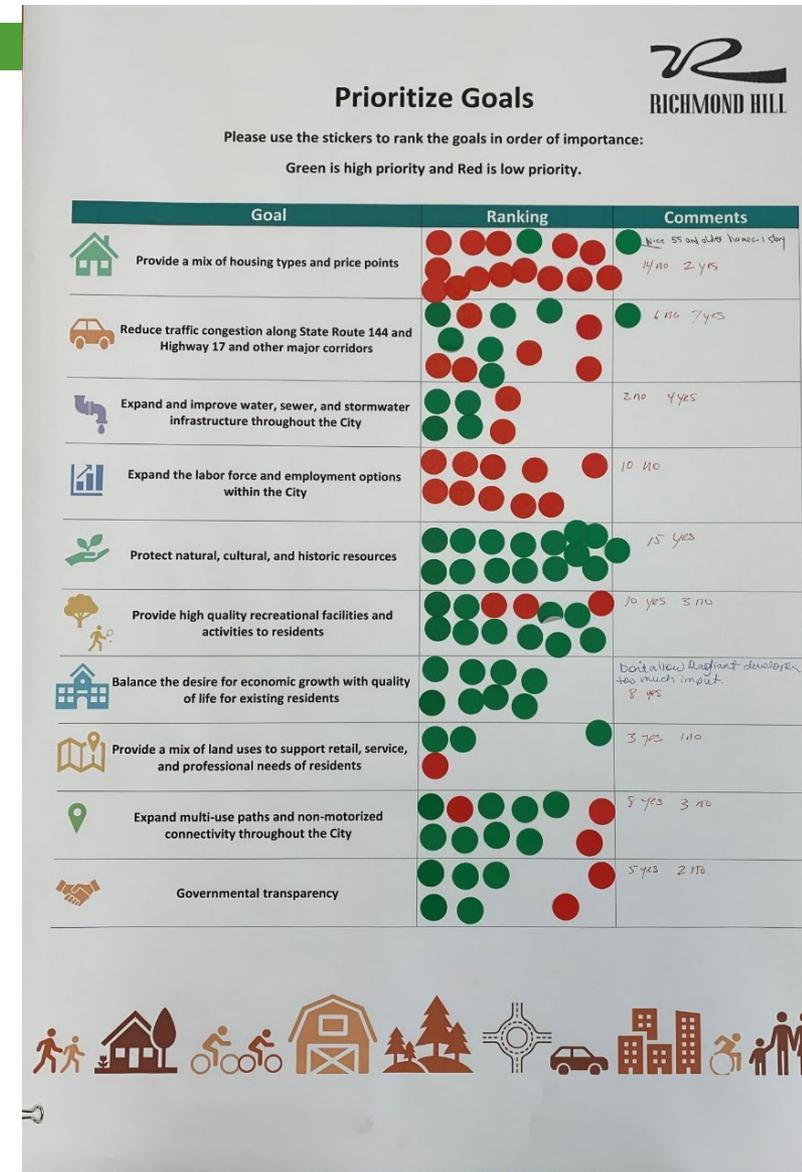


# Do you think Richmond Hill needs more, less, or the same amount of the following commercial businesses?



# Community Goals (from Open House)

- Priority Rankings (High)
  - Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources (15)
  - Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents (8)
  - Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents (7)
  - Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors (6)
  - Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City (5)
- Priority Rankings (Low)
  - Provide a mix of housing types and price points (-12)
  - Expand the labor force and employment options within the City (-10)



# Budget Buckets



<b>Discretionary Project</b>	<b>Funding Earned</b>
Transportation Alternatives*	\$600
Recreational Services & Programs	\$2700
Trails, Sidewalks, & Bike Lanes	\$2700
Downtown Revitalization	\$2200
Water Access	\$1000

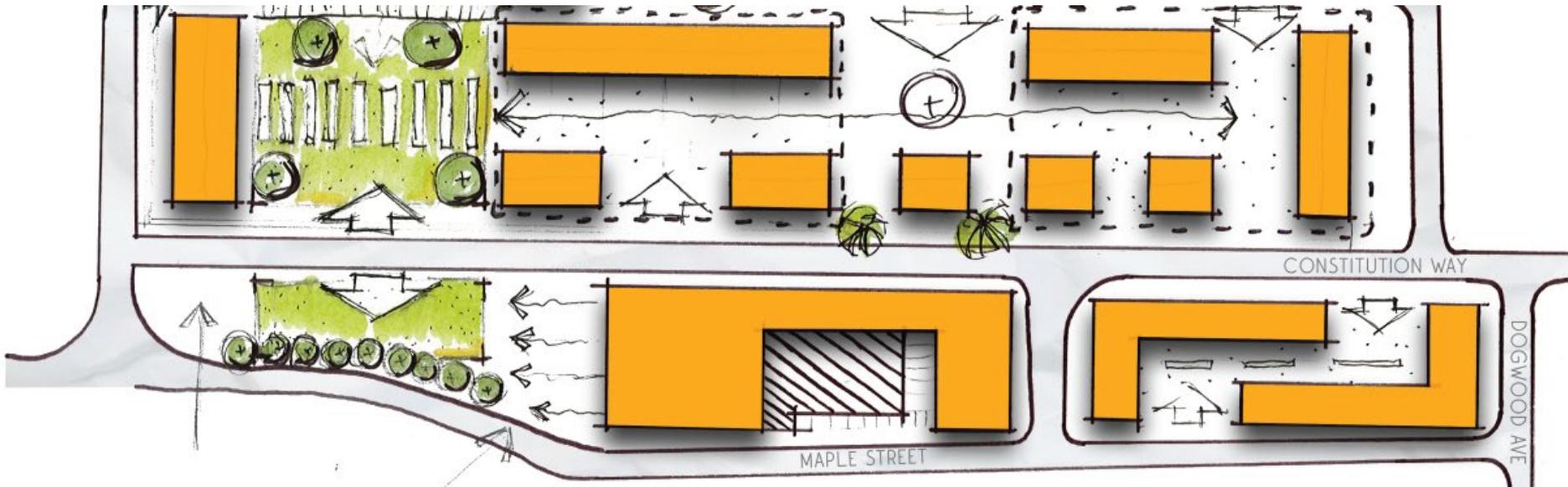
# Community Goals

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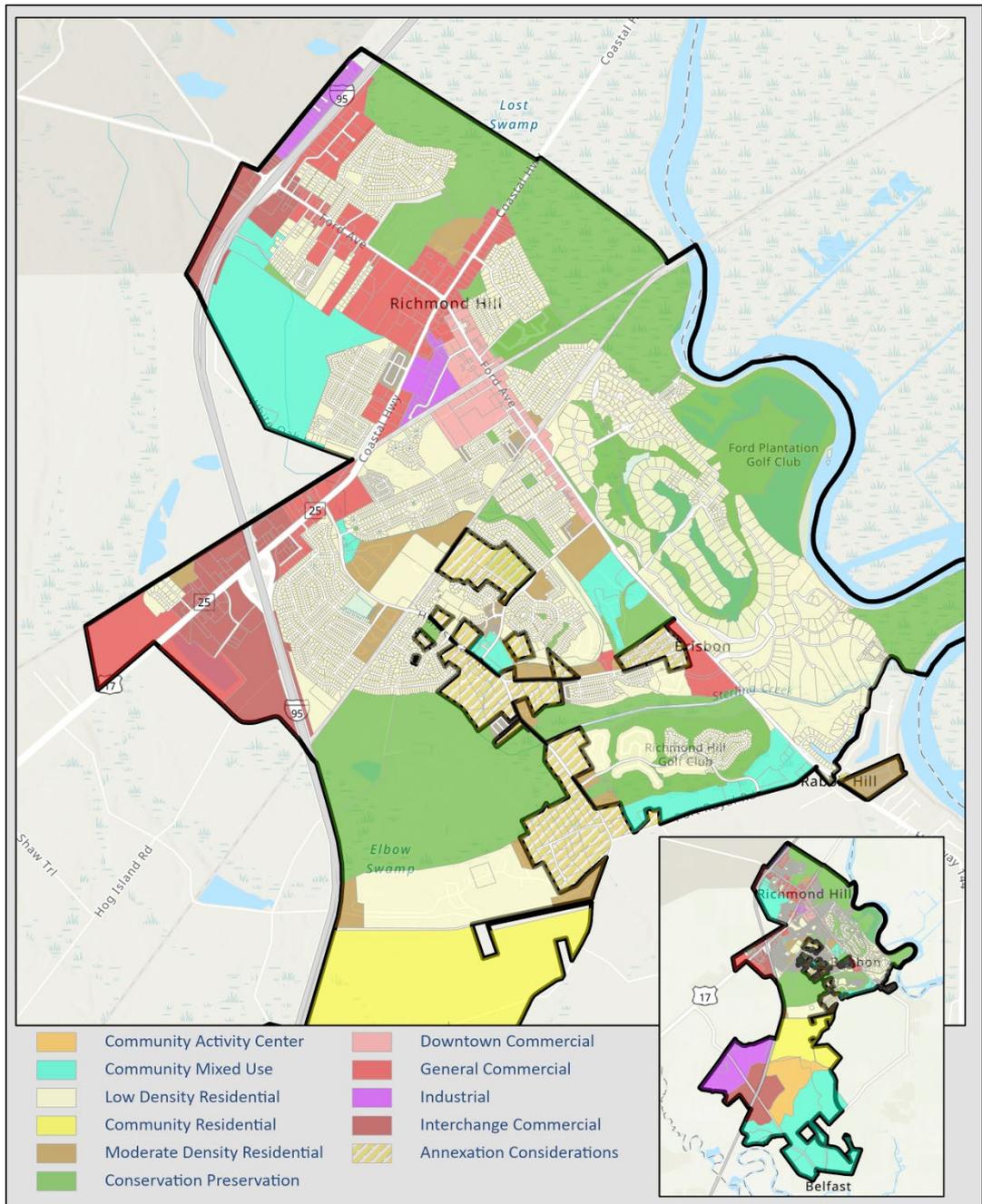
- Promote smart growth practices
- Prepare for economic development opportunities
- Anticipate increases in population
- Preserve sense of community
- Responsible governance, leadership and preservation ethics

# Land Use and Character Areas

- Specific geographic areas
- Unique characteristics (existing or potential)
- Areas with development issues



- Community Activity Center
- Community Mixed Use
- Low Density Residential
- Community Residential
- Moderate Density Residential
- Conservation Preservation
- Downtown Commercial
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Interchange Commercial
- *Annexation Considerations*





# Needs & Opportunities

- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Housing
- Land Use
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Facilities and Services
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Broadband

## *Land Use*

The City has established thoughtful land use development strategy as a way to promote quality development as the City grows. The Unified Development Ordinance will play a large part in maintaining the character of the community and achieving the future Vision.

### **Goals:**

- Diversify land use distribution within the City
- Provide a mix of land uses to support the retail, service, and professional needs of residents
- Protect the existing quality of life within the City
- Explore possible sites for development of a 'downtown' concept for the City.

### **Needs and Opportunities:**

- Address property maintenance issues throughout the City
- Identify areas for infill commercial and residential development
- Reserve land for future industrial and commercial growth
- Explore innovative uses for the Belfast Commerce area
- Exposure to I-95 provides numerous options for commercial and industrial development

Policies	Quality Community Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the new zoning ordinance and future land use map to make land use decisions that are consistent with the vision for this plan</li><li>• Promote re-use and infill development along commercial corridors</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic Prosperity</li><li>• Efficient Land Use</li><li>• Local Preparedness</li><li>• Resource Management</li><li>• Sense of Place</li></ul>



# Community Work Program

- Implementation activities
- Time frame
  - Ongoing
  - Immediate
  - Short-term
  - Long-term
- Priority
  - Current, High, Medium, Low
- Responsible party
- Funding source



# Implementation Activities

- Explore the use of TADs, CIDs, BIDs, and other programs to improve economic development
- Explore the use of the City-owned 6 acre site off Constitution Way as a Downtown Anchor
- Installation of new traffic signal (Cherry Hill @ SR144)
- Complete a condition assessment of local roads
- Complete a feasibility study for development of a short-term rental registry / fee program
- Identify target areas for increased code enforcement
- Nominate buildings and sites for historic preservation
- Complete flood mitigation project on Sterling Creek
- Complete drainage project to improve conveyance in Live Oak/White Oak Neighborhood
- Work with the County on the Belfast Keller Road improvements / widening project

# Next Steps

---

Submit to CRC and DCA for Review



40 day review period



Address any major comments



Consider minor comments



Adoption in June



Submit final plan to DCA



# QUESTIONS



## Appendix 2 - Stakeholder Involvement



## Stakeholder Interview Notes

### Introduction:

Bryan County, Richmond Hill and GMC interviewed stakeholders as part of the public engagement process for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The goal was to gain insight on the County and its future from individuals who could provide a unique perspective based on their specific background.

In the interview we discussed the main planning topics that have been identified by the public during the engagement process thus far, including; Transportation, Housing, Economic Development, Recreation and Leisure, Environment, Community Facilities and Services. The following is a summary of the interview discussions.

### **June 14, 2022**

#### **Dr. Paul Brooksher**

*Superintendent of Bryan County Schools*

*Lives in Richmond Hill*

*In-Person Interview*

- Great schools, Parks and Recreation, and Community Services, including fire and police, are what make a community great
- Bryan County School system has good relationship with the County and cities
- Pace of growth is a challenge to keep up with, grown by 3,000 kids in 10 years
- School system has a Capital Improvements Projects Plan which includes replacing the Richmond Hill High School by 2028, renovating Dr. George Carver Elementary School by 2030, and a completely new Bryan County High School in North Bryan County by 2032
- Transportation - Belfast Keller Rd. and 17 needs a traffic light; 2 capital outlay districts fund the busses for both north and south Bryan County; In favor of County considering impact fees to fund transportation needs like school busses
- Recreation and Leisure – School shares facilities with the County and is open to furthering that partnership
- Community Facilities and Services – Bryan County has now grown to the point where the county should have its own DFCS office, courts system and Library. These would help provide better services to struggling kids in the school system
  
- Economic Development – School system providing workforce training with new Lanier Learning Center which teaches technical skills

## Comprehensive Plan Update

- Housing – New teachers making \$42k can't afford to live in Richmond Hill without roommates; housing prices is a regional issue; doesn't like transient housing because negatively impacts school system; would prefer to see more homeownership, not renters
- Growth is mostly a mixture of retirees and families with children
- Senior citizen exemptions from paying school taxes should be revisited by the County if the senior population continues to increase

### **Christy Sherman**

*Conventions & Visitors Bureau (CVB) for Richmond Hill, Richmond Hill Historical Society*

*Lives in South Bryan County, 16 years*

*In-Person Interview*

- CVB funded via hotel/motel taxes in Richmond Hill
- There is not a hotel/motel tax in place in North Bryan County as there are no hotels there and there is no CVB there
- Transportation – In favor of idea to provide a circulator bus system that takes people from Richmond Hill to Savannah; There is already an Old Town Trolley that takes hotel guests in Richmond Hill to Savannah for daily tours
- Suggested thinking about a boat tour to increase tourism
- In favor of roundabouts; and in favor of making city and county more walkable
- Emergency Services – While admittedly down a long dead-end road, fire/EMS services sometimes take too long to get to her; believes there needs to be an additional fire station closer to her neighborhood in the future
- Downtown Richmond Hill – Idea to make downtown more walkable and to create a town center by tearing down old elementary school that is currently vacant
- Economic Development – Would like to keep big chain restaurants out and promote local restaurants instead
- Historic Preservation – County needs to create local ordinance to protect individual historic assets in the County; Richmond Hill created a historic district just last January, 2021

### **Cynthia Phillips**

*District Traffic Manager for Georgia DOT*

*Lives in Richmond Hill, 18 years*

*Video Conference Call Interview*

- Provided information on upcoming DOT projects in Bryan County
- I-95 and 17 interchange updates
- A roundabout is going in at Belfast and 144
- Dual Left lanes will be added to US 17 onto Harris Trail Rd as traffic volumes have increased on Harris Trail Rd.
- In North end US 280 will have a roundabout and be widened to provide better access to the Hyundai site
- Belfast Keller Road widening to 4 lane all the way from 1-95 to 144 or 17 in the future
- In favor of adding more pedestrian projects
- Hwy 80/280/Eldora Rd needs to be on radar for widening in future
- Says Harris Trail Rd. needs to be widened or at least shoulder widened and a bridge fixed or replaced

### **Sean Register**

*Business Owner, Former Development Authority Board Member*

*Has lived in South Bryan County for 32 years*

*In-Person Interview*

- Very involved in economic development and business recruitment
- Believes the North end of Bryan County will see residential growth
- County needs to be more open to developers, certain ordinances discourage development
- School system needs to promote skills training to provide workforce for coming industrial jobs
- I-16 needs to become a supply chain corridor
- In favor of adding more affordable housing options like apartments and townhomes
- Against Impact Fees

**June 21, 2022**

### **Wendy Sims Futch**

*Executive Director of Bryan County Family Connection*

*Lifelong Resident of Bryan County*

*In-Person Interview*

- She has worked at Family Connection (FC) since 2003
- FC supports children and families at risk. They work with many other community groups, faith-based organizations and others to provide needed services. They have a coalition of 50 groups that meet monthly.
- FC is “the only game in town” for social services on the North End
- They have administrative/social service offices in both the north end and the south end. They also run a teen/community center in RH. They help support Pembroke Community Center, but they don’t run that one.
- The Community Center in RH offers summer programming and after-school programming for teens, and day time programming for the community. They have a director who runs those programs.
- They offer non-recreational programming for teens, like art classes, theater, music etc.
- Supports workforce development especially through the Lanier Learning Center and Savannah Tech.
- They help coordinate transportation for those in need through Coastal Regional Coaches and through gas vouchers.
- One good thing: Pembroke created a senior living housing development that encouraged older people to move out and free up housing in the North End. It was very popular, quickly fully-occupied, and there is likely a need for more similar housing.
- Two major needs:
  - Mental Health Services – lots of needs. The County isn’t large enough yet to qualify for State services and getting people to services in Chatham and Liberty is very difficult. They do have professionals come to their social services building to provide services locally, but they need more support. Community Assessment to prove the needs are there.
  - Affordable housing. There is no housing for sale or rent that is affordable for working wage families. For example, when the tornado left about 20 – 30 families homeless, there was not a single available house for FC to rent for them to stay in temporarily.

## Comprehensive Plan Update

- Major wishes:
  - Alternative recreation activities such as cultural arts center, more support for a theater program and day camps
  - RH Social Services center needs more capacity. Also, the Library next door is going to be expanded so it may need to be moved altogether. Would like the Social Services Center to stay in RH.
- Local Resident perspective:
  - More restaurants and retail in the North End.
  - Side note. Wendy's husband works for the Sherriff office and the jail is a big problem. It is too small (apparently the 2nd smallest in the State based on a per capital measurement)
  - Hyundai is a good thing in that it will bring jobs to an area that has historically not had a lot of options, but it will also put a lot of pressure on infrastructure and there is concern there. Would like to see more planned growth.

**June 22, 2022**

**June 23, 2022**

### **Carter Infinger**

*Chairman, Bryan County Board of Commissioners*

*Lives in South End of County, since 1997*

*Telephone Interview*

- Transportation - Likes the most recent transportation plans; sees need for increased connectivity of roads in neighborhoods and side streets; In favor of more bike/ped options; In favor of adding a park and ride but, does not see a need for transit
- Housing – Open to affordable housing developments and open to higher density as long as it follows UDO
- Economic Development – People want more chain restaurants but need to promote the local restaurants that are there; thinks restaurants will likely follow the mega site in the North end; County needs to continue to work with the Chamber to promote economic development
- Environment – In favor of increasing access to water recreation, sees a possible opportunity in the North End to access the Ogeechee River; thinks the new Fisherman's Co-Op improvements will help provide more access; in favor of protecting the environment
- Thinks the UDO large lot subdivision guidelines need to be reviewed to ensure they allow large land owners to be able to subdivide larger lots of their land

**June 30, 2022**

**Meleka (Mel) Meleka**

*Fort Stewart Civil Engineer and Planner*

*Lives outside the County in the City of Hinesville*

*Telephone Interview*

- Land Use – in terms of Army Compatibility Use Buffers (ACUB), there is a large buffer between Bryan County development and the fort boundaries, the closest military land use to the County are military training areas, which the County will discuss with the fort regarding future growth implications and the military will share their CUB info with the County
- Planning – Mel will share recent plans created by the Fort – “Framework Plan Districts” and the “Vision and Installation Planning Standards”
- Housing – Mel shared that the base has private housing on the base but it is not sufficient to meet their housing needs causing military individuals to live off-base which may impact Bryan County long-term.
- Ft. Stewart has a regular working relationship with Liberty County to review and comment on all zoning activity within 3000 feet of the border of the base. Since there has not yet been development activity in Bryan County that approaches the base border, this formal review process has not been established.

**July 6, 2022**

**Stacy Watson**

*Director of Economic and Industrial Development of the Georgia Ports Authority (GPA)*

*Board member of the Bryan County Planning and Zoning Commission*

*Lived in Bryan County for 15 years*

*Telephone Interview*

- Been with Port Authority for 30 years; started as an intern
- Been a member of the Planning Commission for almost 4 years
- Leads statewide economic development efforts on behalf of GPA

## Comprehensive Plan Update

- Housing – says the County needs more housing including affordable housing for all the new jobs coming from the Hyundai plant and warehouse development; military officers tend to move to South Bryan County to the wealthier neighborhoods; said the Planning and Zoning Commission needs to identify areas for different types of housing. Recognizes the need to address workforce housing or affordable housing within the overall context of Bryan County
- Transportation – says truck traffic is the main concern voiced by the public in regards to new industrial development; in favor of creating a park and ride transportation system that could turn into a bus system or a privately run shuttle for the industrial jobs; says we should benchmark what other communities that have attracted auto plants have done and experienced in terms of its impact on transportation; believes the new Belfast Interchange is top notch
- Economic Development – there is 38 million square feet of warehouse space planned for development in North Bryan County on the other side of I-16 which will bring jobs requiring more housing
- Land use & Zoning – said that the west side of the Belfast interchange is planned to be industrial, while the east side is planned to be residential; people are starting to get frustrated with rezonings of their land as a result of all the industrial development; mentioned idea of creating design standards for the County to maintain rural character and prevent market taking over the development
- Top issues we should focus on – a) Create a plan for the best mix of residential, commercial and industrial development in the County, b) Plan for traffic and transportation improvements, especially while there is positive attention on the Hyundai announcement, c) Consider planned unit development strategy for future growth, similar to the Rayonier development, d) Planning for future growth beyond Bryan County as impacts of Hyundai plant will extend up to 70 miles away, especially for suppliers.

**July 11, 2022**

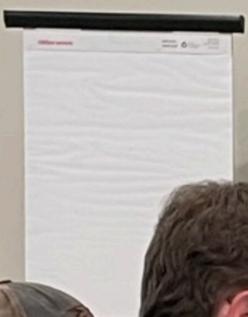
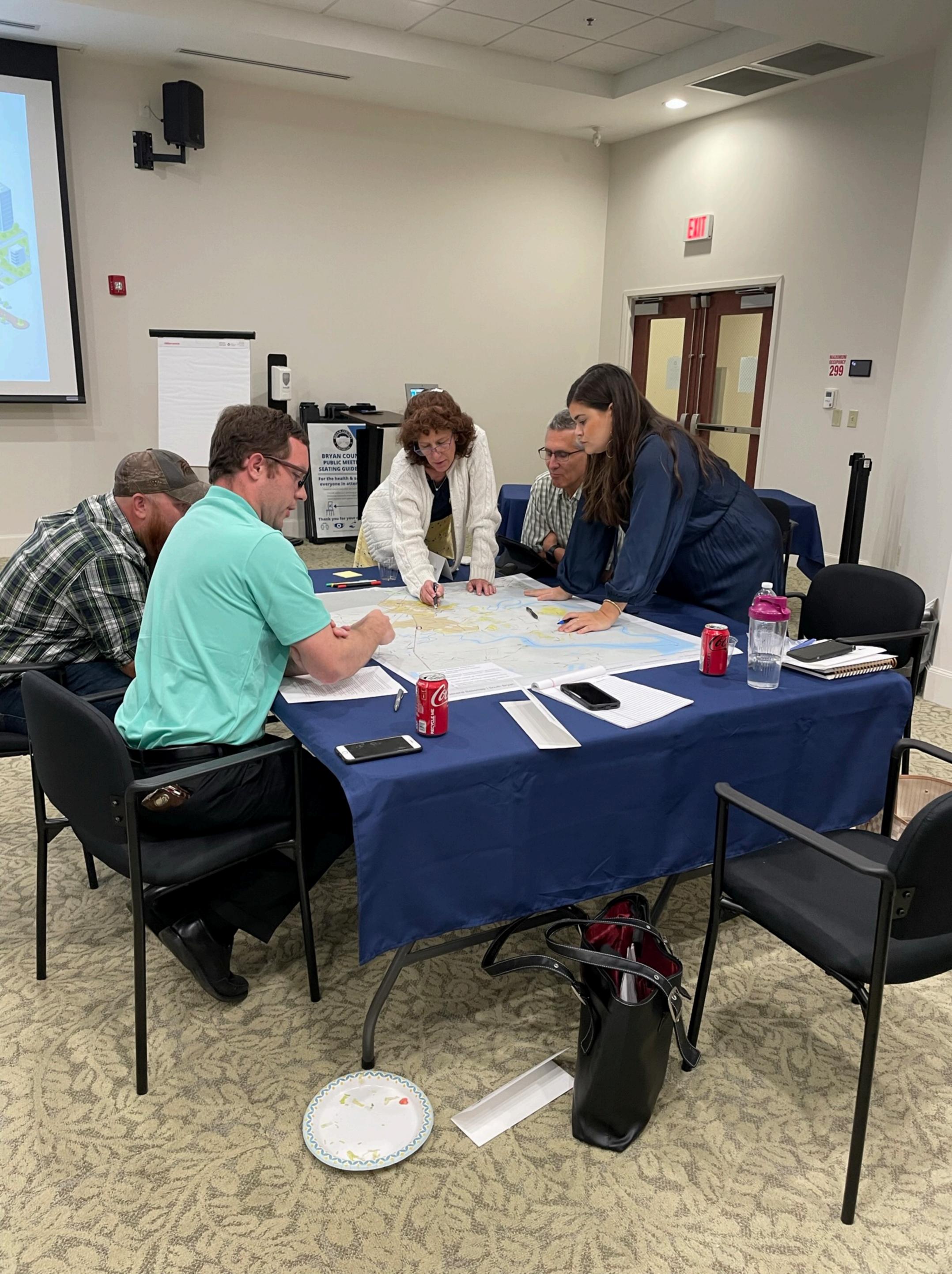
### **Mike May**

*Bryan County Department of Public Health  
overseeing environmental health and septic permitting  
Lived in South Bryan County for 8 years  
Telephone Interview*

- Been with DPH in Bryan County for 2 years, and DPH as a whole for 7 years
- DPH does restaurant inspections, septic system permitting, health inspection of hotel/motels, public pools and administers the rabies program and mosquito control

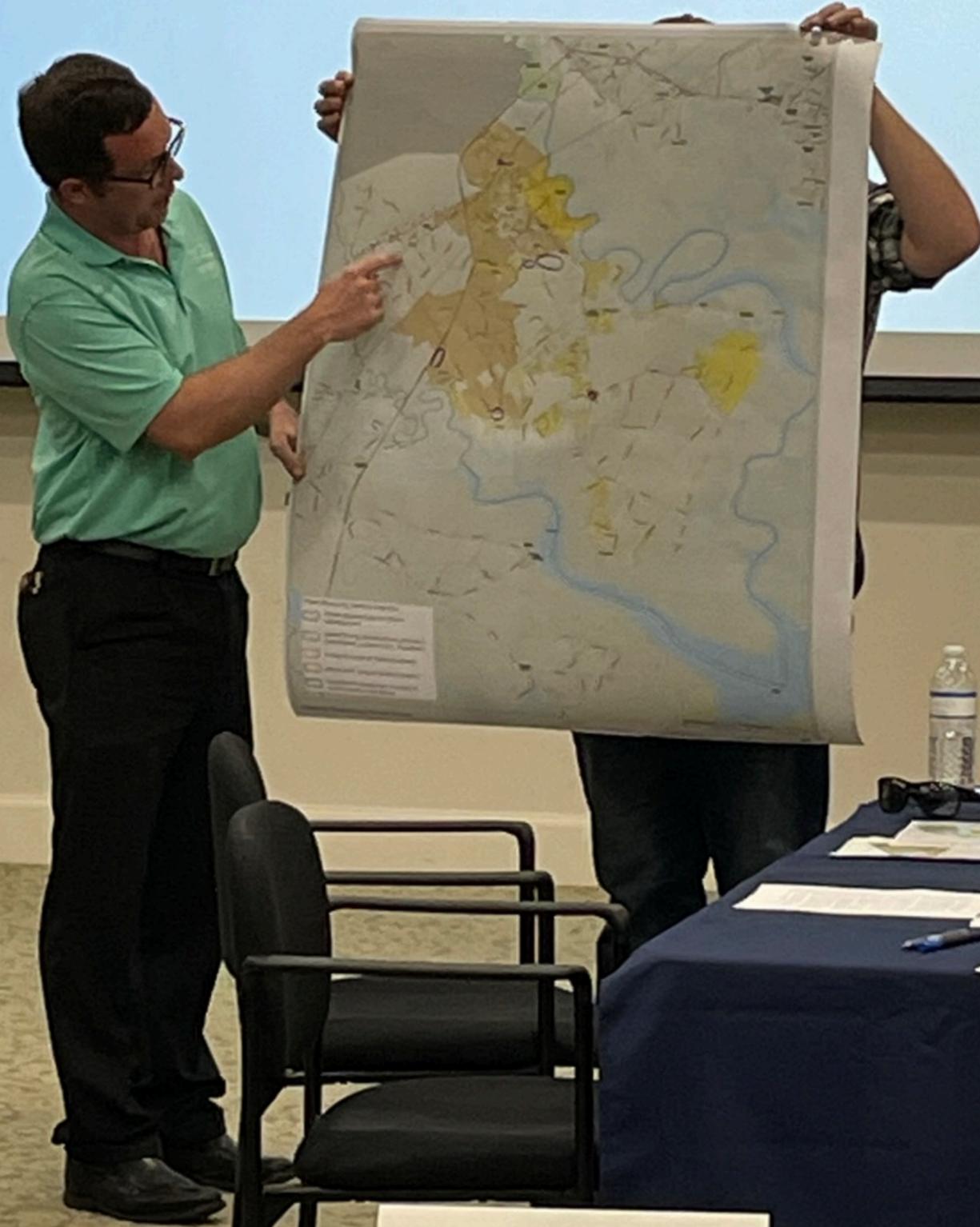
## Comprehensive Plan Update

- Transportation – Opinion that County’s biggest challenge in next 10 years will be to maintain good traffic circulation and reduce traffic congestion with all the new growth coming; In favor of any transportation improvements, particularly roundabouts because they effectively keep traffic moving; infrastructure will be impacted the most by growth and need to stay ahead of it.
- Environment – Water table in the area keeps getting shallower and shallower, making it harder to design septic systems in accordance with required standards. Seeing more “mound” septic installations to ensure the requires 24” above the water table
- Regional coordination - The only regional coordination on water/sewer he is a part of is through the Coastal Health District, which is 8 coastal counties, 99% of water/sewer work he does is in Bryan County.
- Housing – Sees need for affordable housing because his entry level employees cannot afford to live in the County; affordable housing prevents employers from finding good employees, as it limits the pool of candidates, and keeps young families out of the County; most houses in the north end use septic systems; lot size requirements for septic systems and well water prevent dense development.
- Septic System requirements
  - State law requires that homes with a septic system and well water supply must have a minimum lot size of 1 acre of usable land. Important to specify that useable land is that which lies outside of floodplain, wetland, etc.
  - Homes with septic system and community water supply require a minimum of one-half acre of land.
  - Size of septic systems is based on the number of bedrooms in a building not bathrooms; this is a more accurate measure of use
- General notes – Septic systems are expensive to repair and need to be maintained well; Pembroke has reached their limit on sewer and has asked DPH to permit septic systems in the city temporarily; the majority of septic systems in the County are in the North end. If population growth continues, he will need to hire another inspector for his team.
- Infrastructure will present the most important challenge as Bryan County grows. Both physical infrastructure – water, were, roads – and personnel – police, fire, teachers, and other public service employees – need to keep pace with projected growth.



# Breakout Group Presentations

## Character Areas and Land Use Map



 Justin Farquhar

 Gene





## Appendix 3 - General Plan Updates





# Richmond Hill Comprehensive Plan



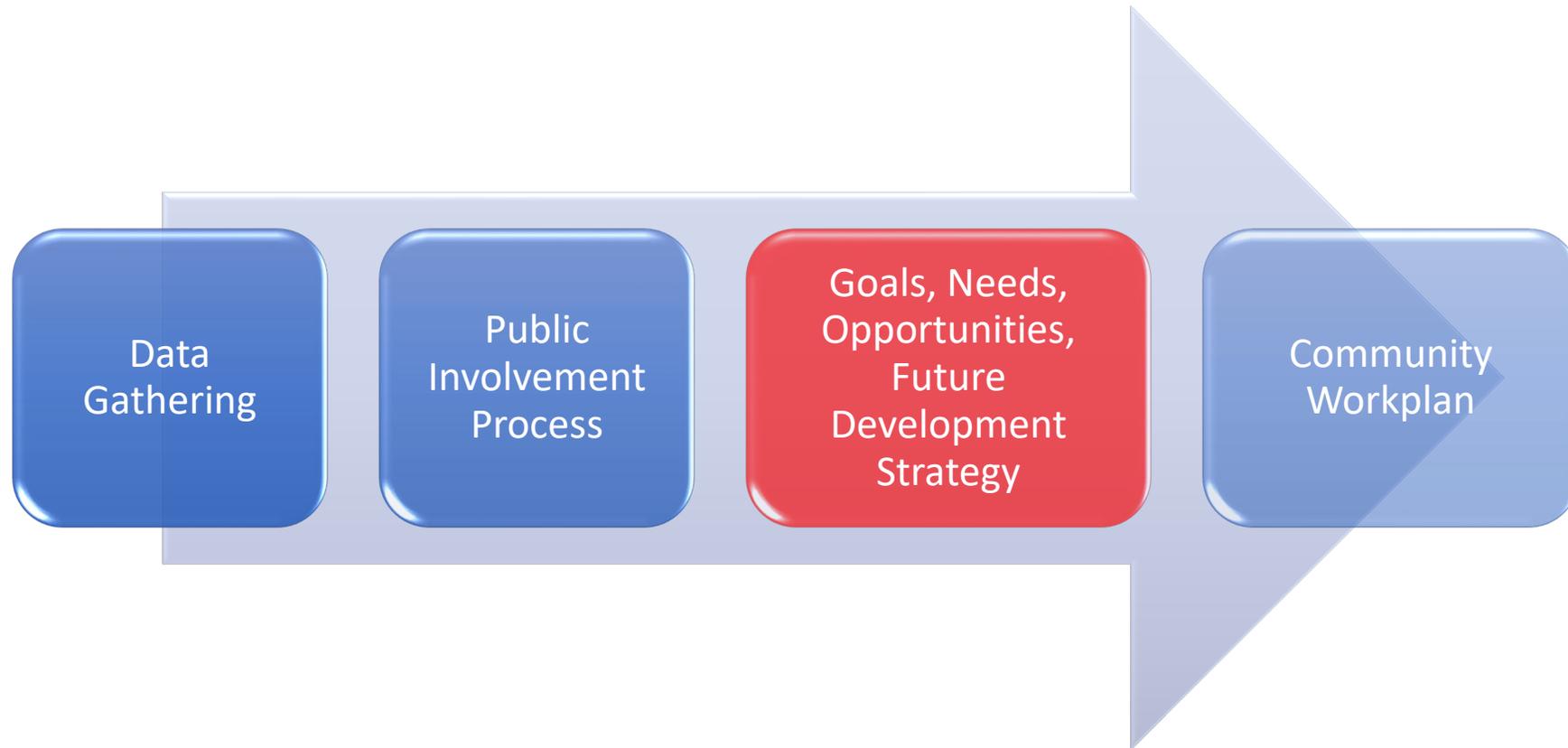
**Mayors Advisory Council**  
**January 10, 2023**

# Meeting Agenda

- » General Update
- » Review of Public Input
- » Schedule
- » Next Steps



# Comprehensive Planning Process



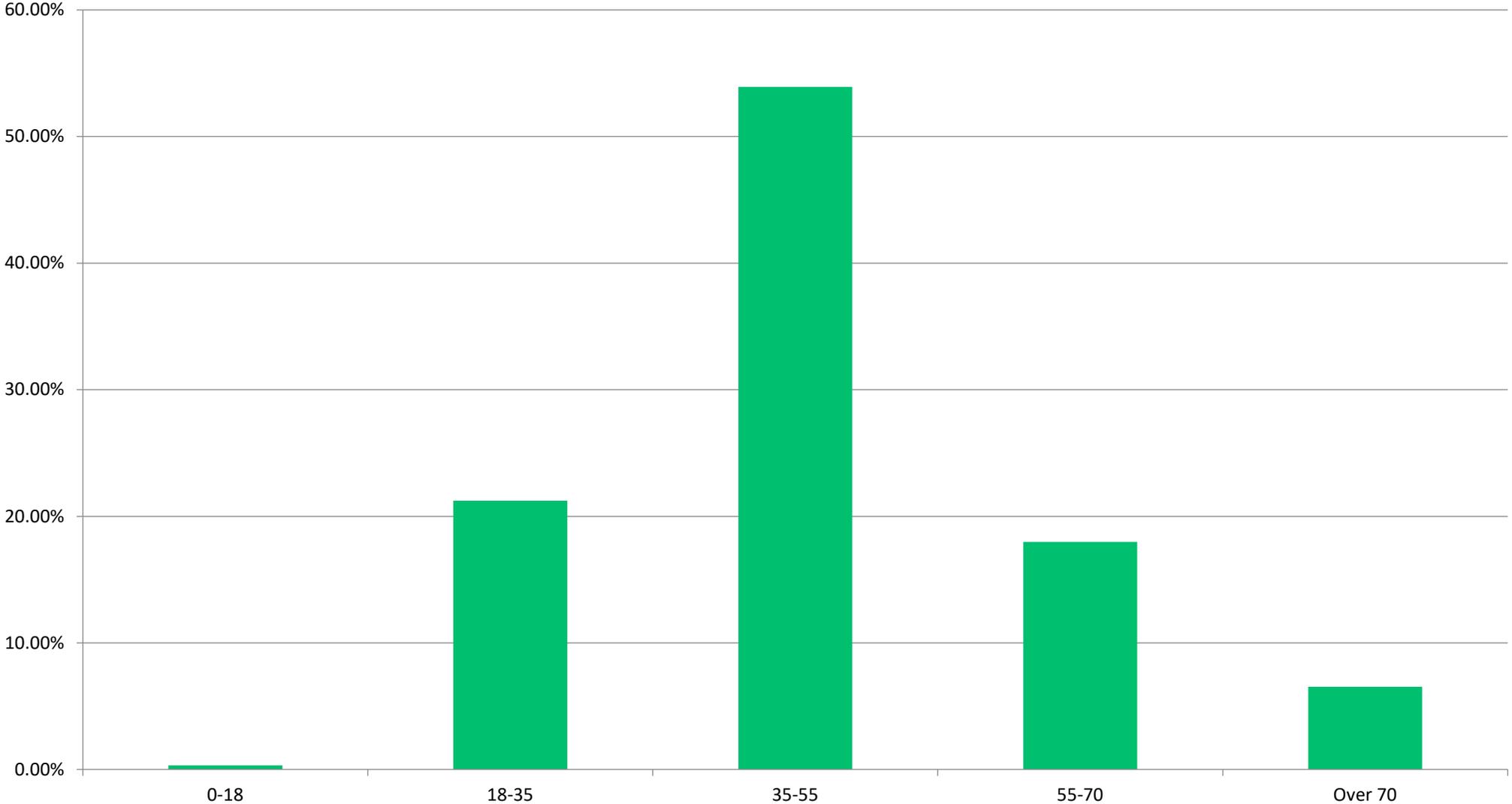
A grayscale photograph of a wetland landscape. In the foreground, there is a dense field of tall, thin grasses. A narrow, calm waterway flows through the middle ground, reflecting the sky and the surrounding vegetation. The background consists of a line of trees, including several tall, thin trees and a few larger, more complex trees on the right side. The overall scene is serene and natural.

# Summary of Survey Results

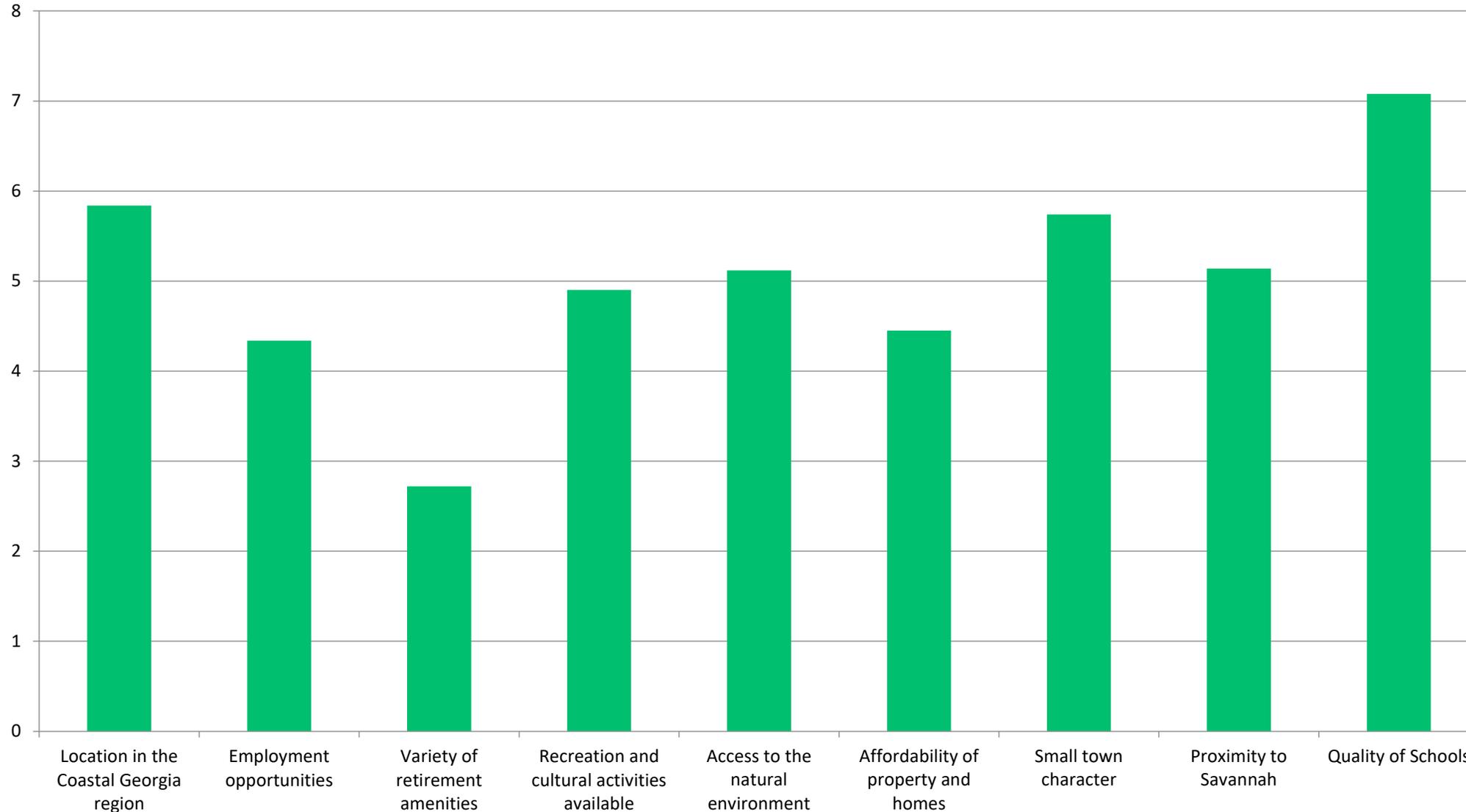
# Public Input Survey

- » Ran from August 1 – September 2
- » 877 responses total
- » 347 responses from South Bryan
- » 306 responses from Richmond Hill
- » 159 responses from North Bryan
- » 42 responses from Pembroke

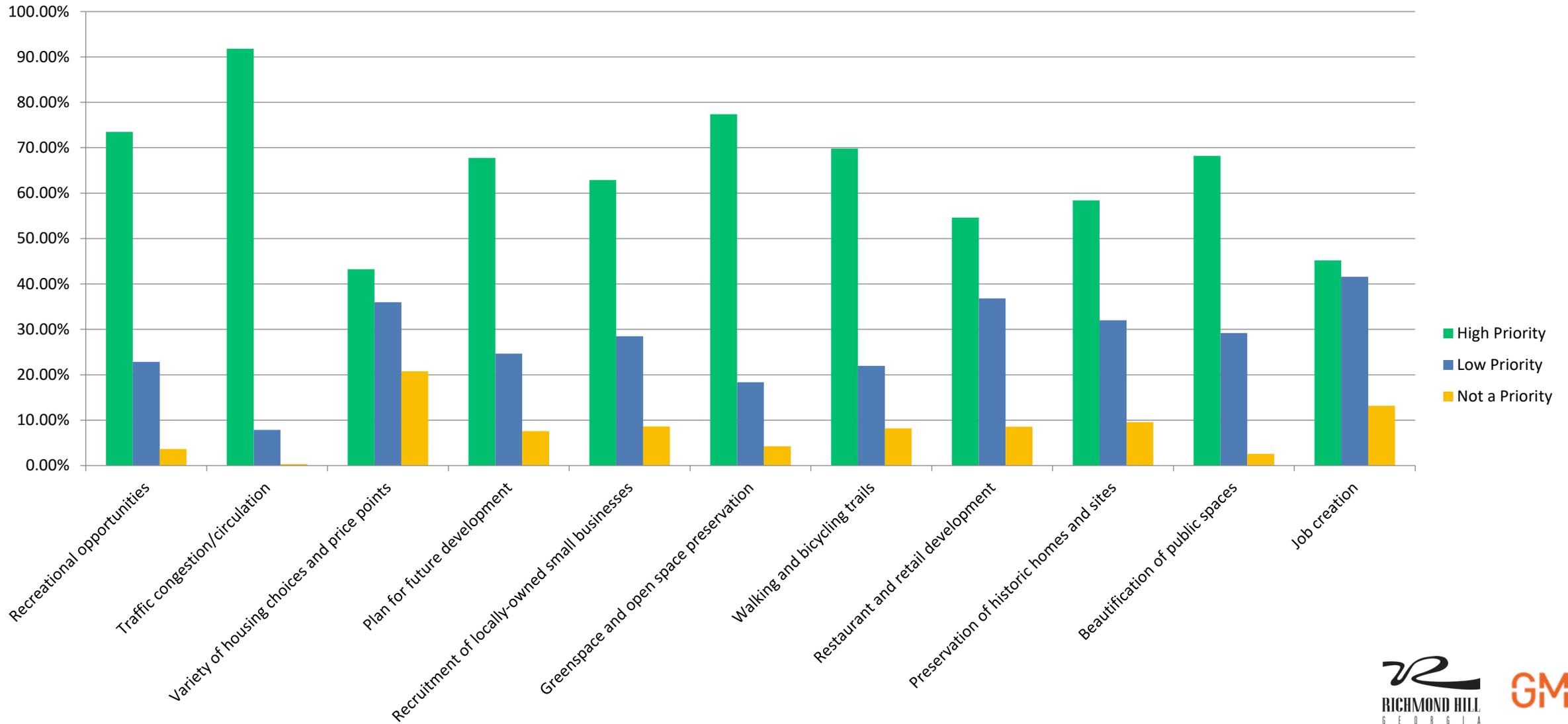
# How old are you?



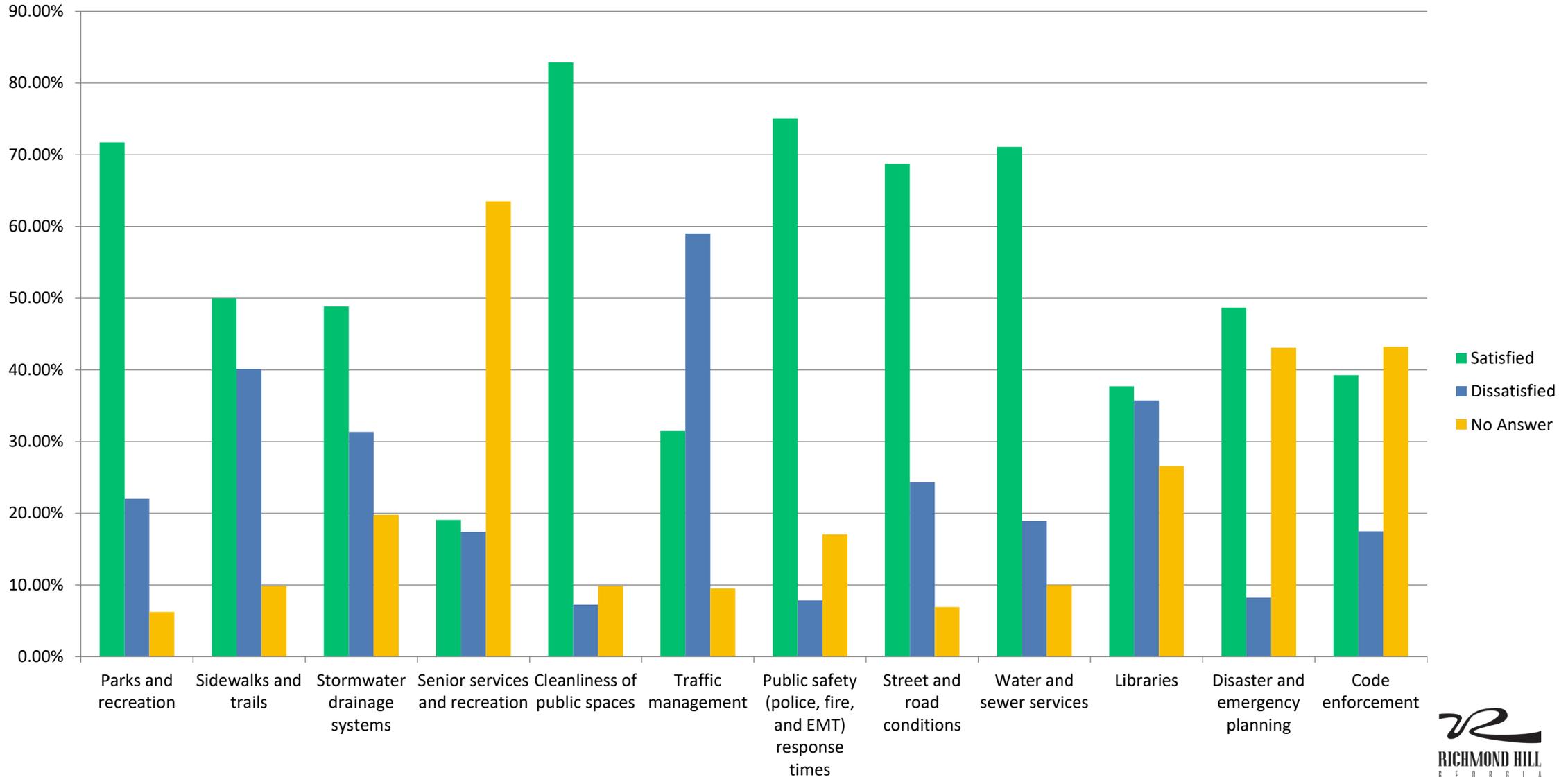
# Please rank the following characteristics based on importance for why you choose to live, work, or own property in Bryan County.



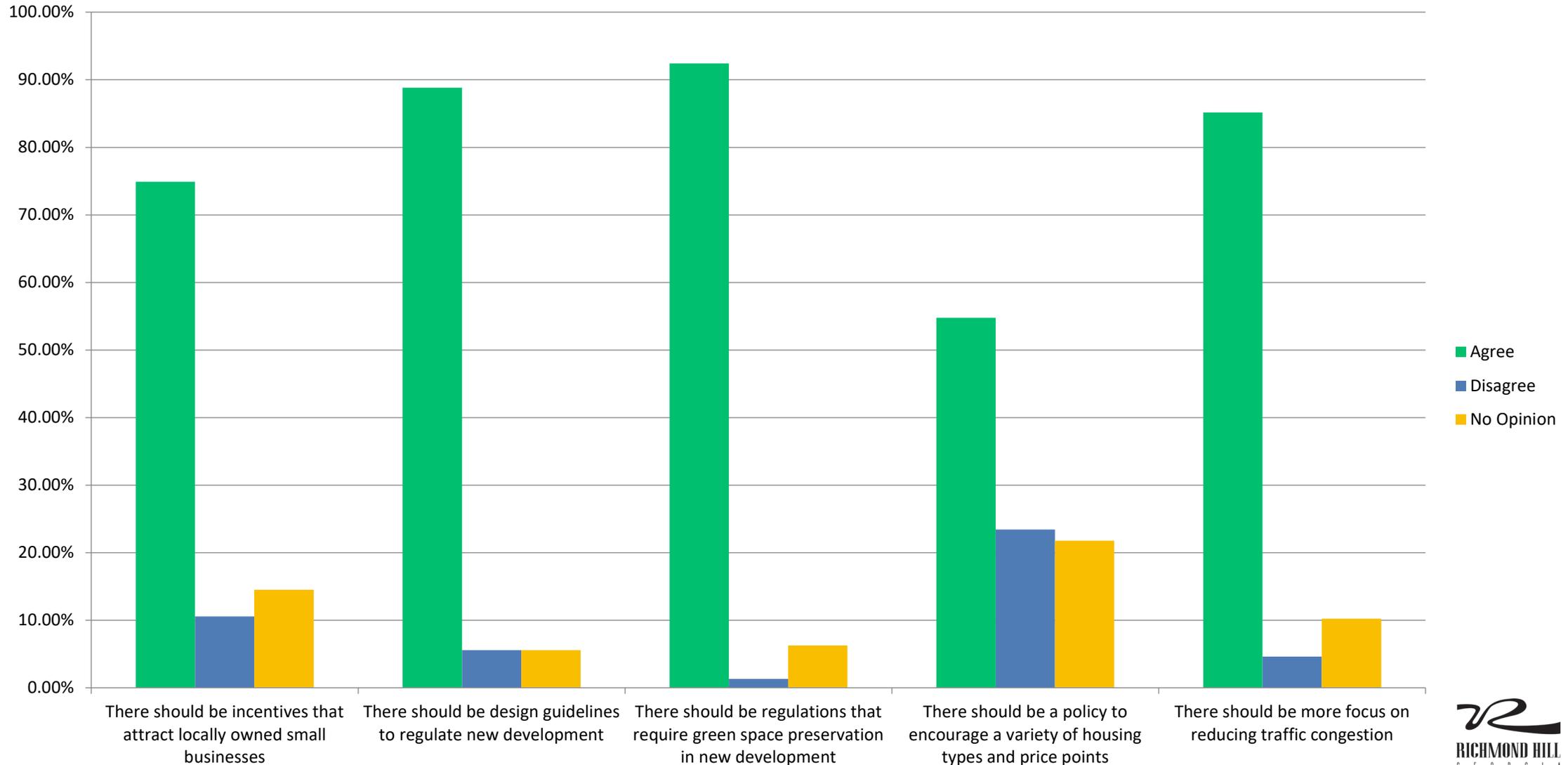
# How much of a priority should the following issues be for Bryan County?



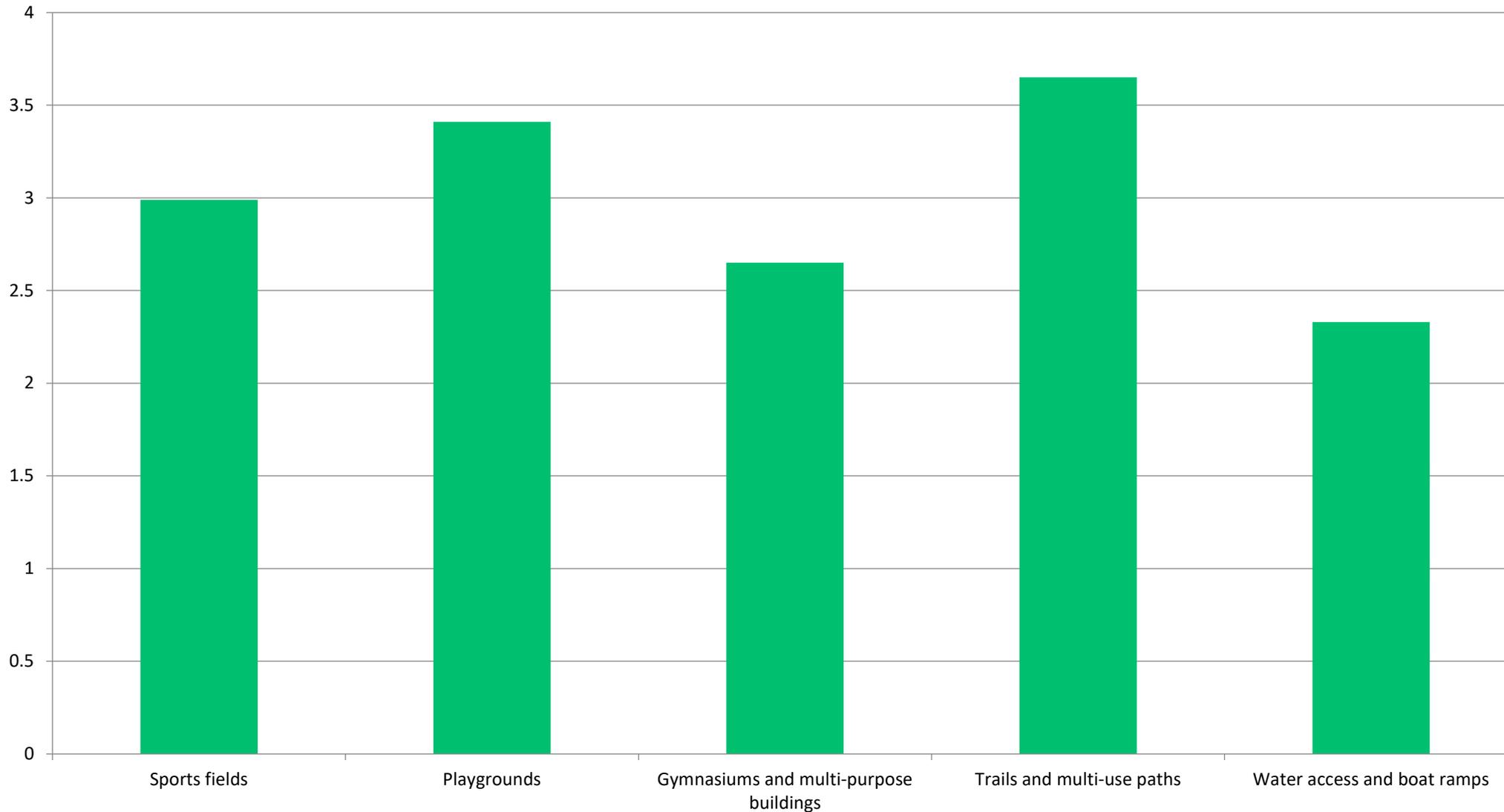
# Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following public services or facilities.



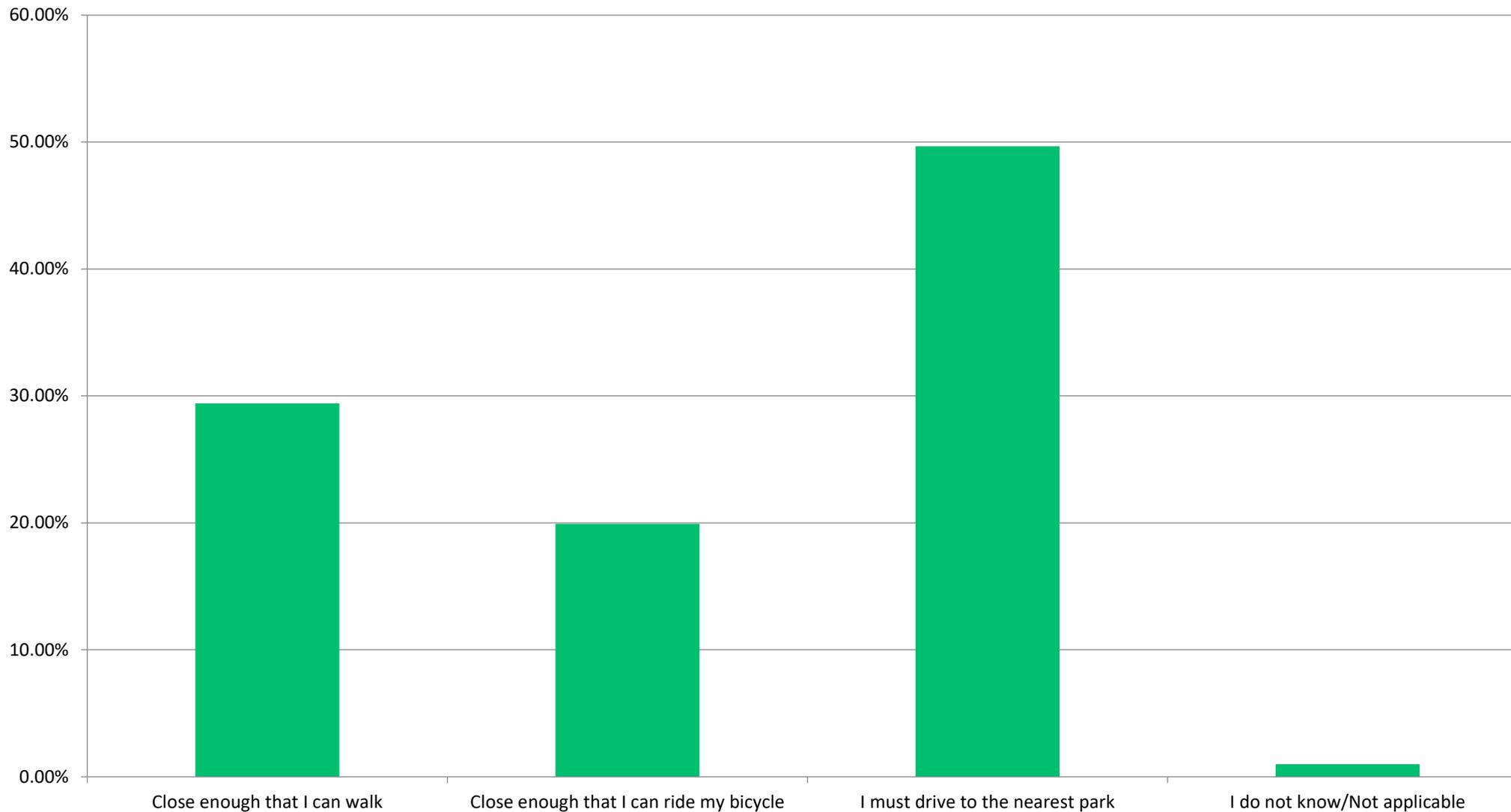
# Please indicate whether you agree, disagree, or have no opinion with the following statements.



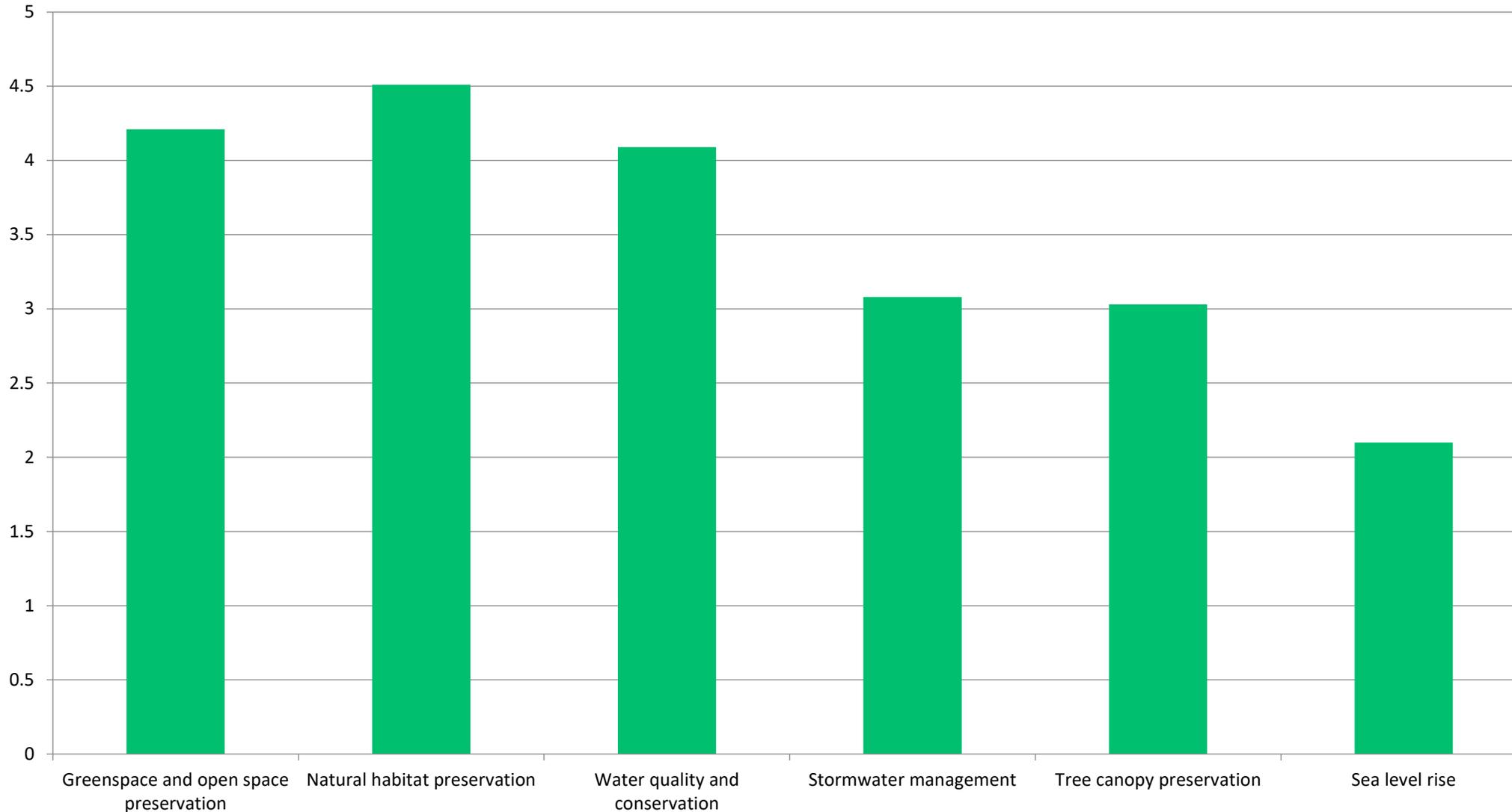
# Please rank the following recreational public facilities in accordance with how important you feel they are for the County.



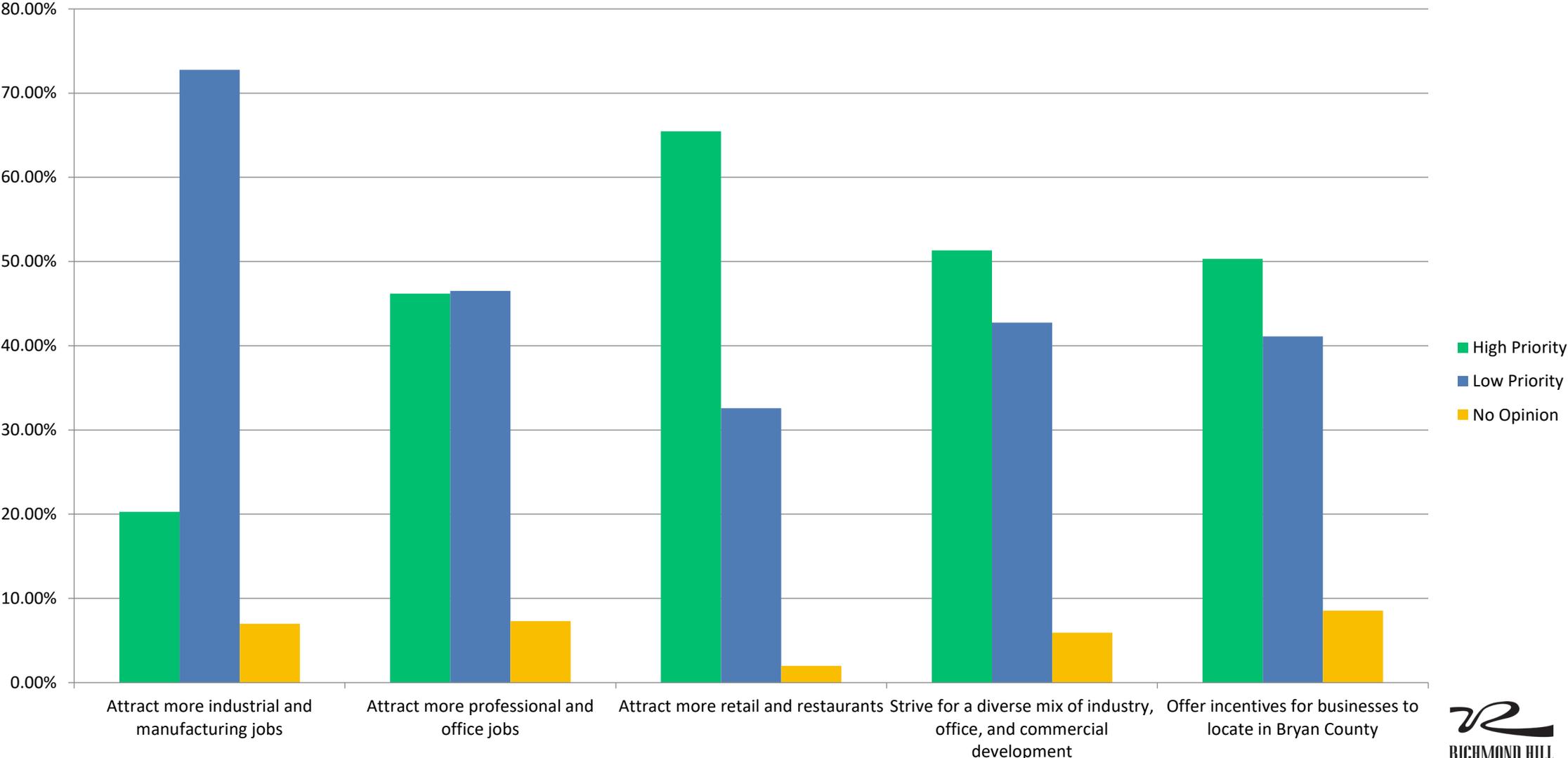
# How close is the nearest park to your home?



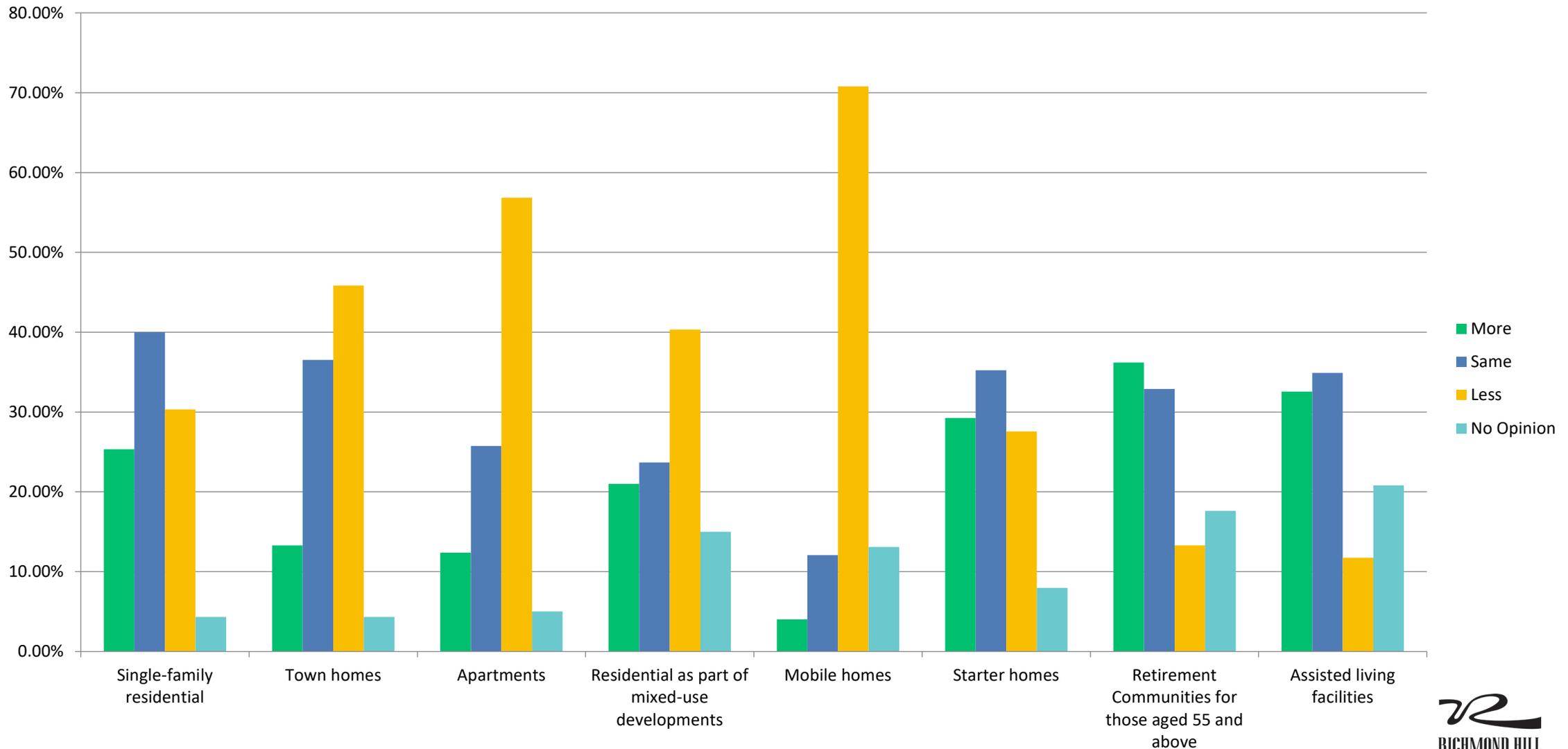
# Please rank the following environmental topics based on how important you feel they are.



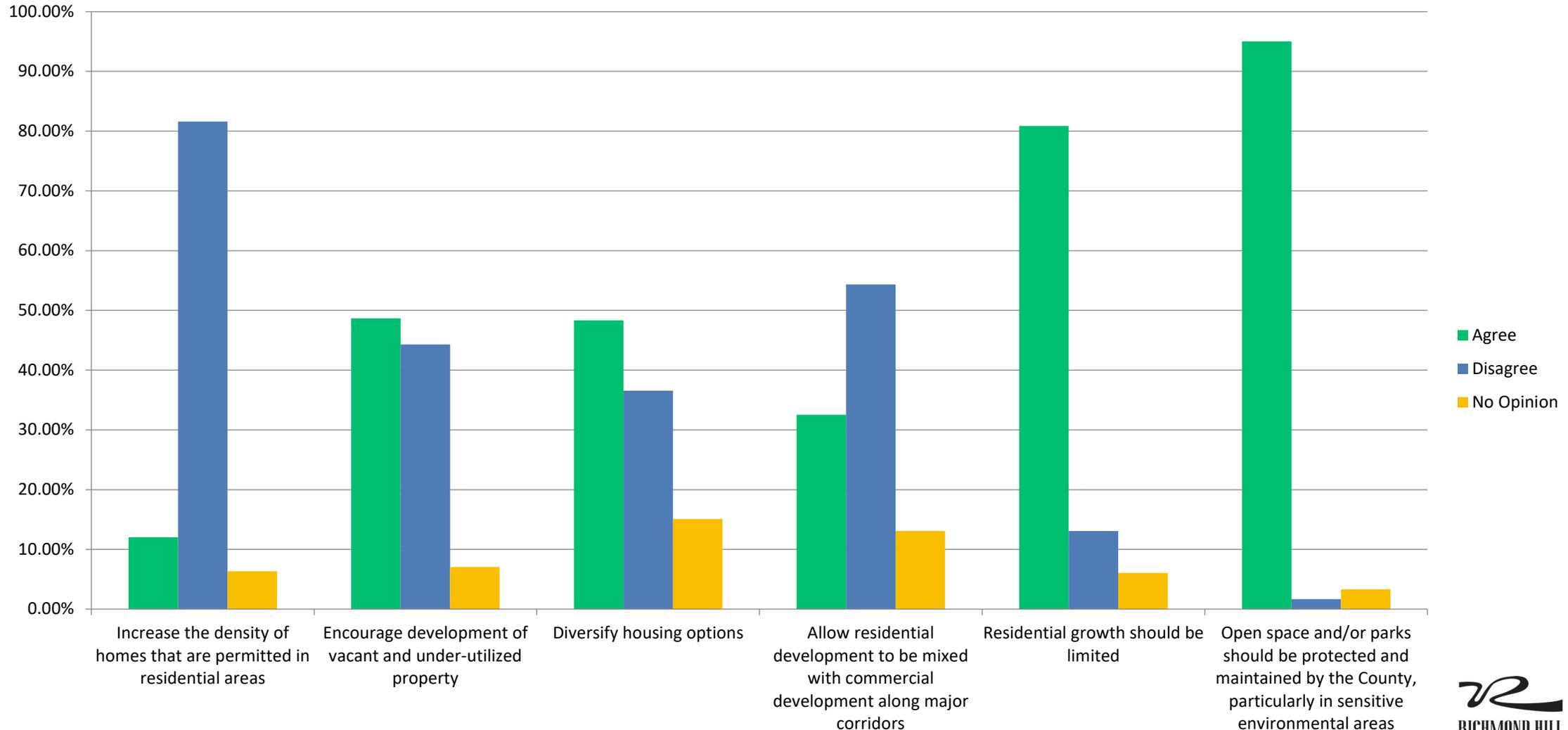
# Please rank the following economic development topics based on how important you feel they are.



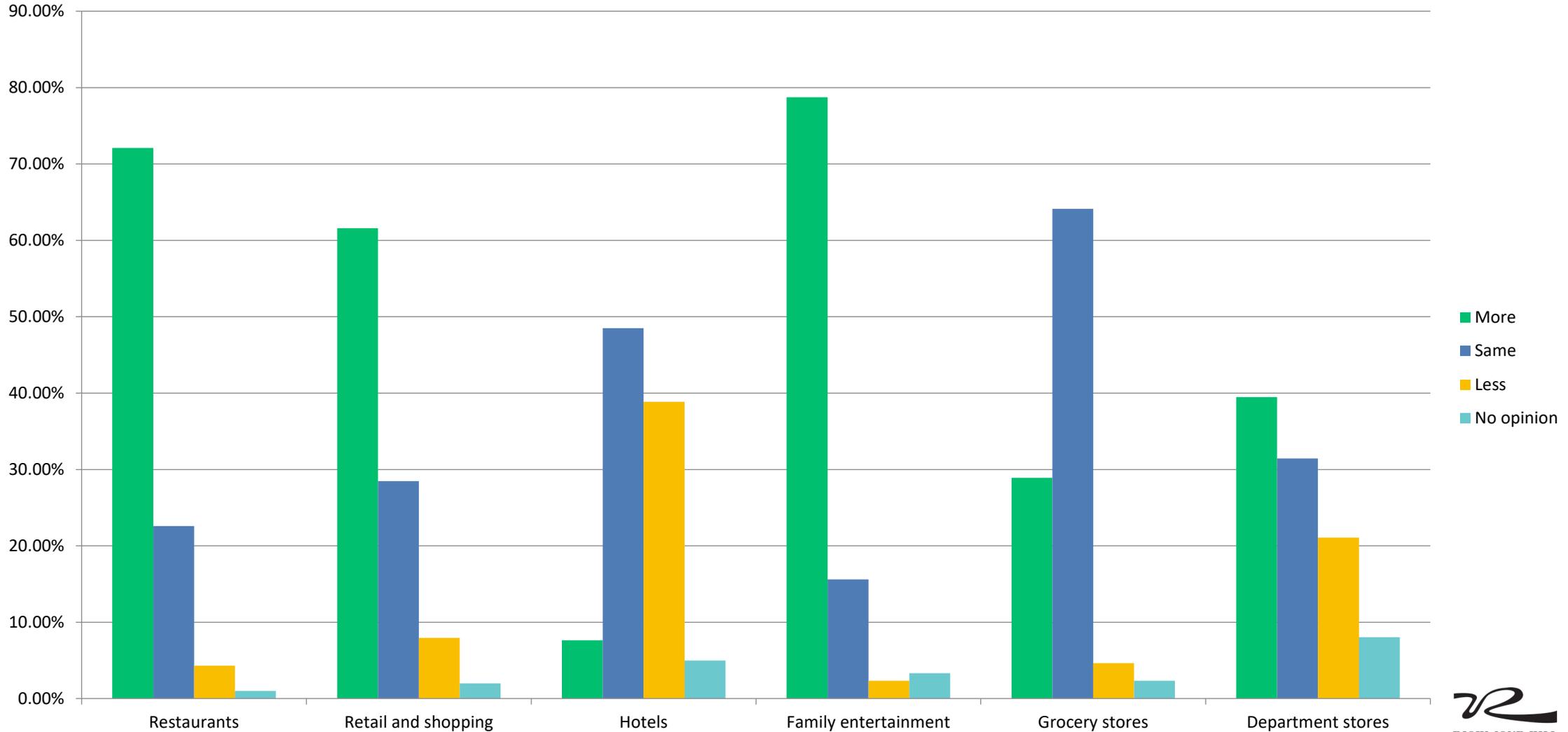
# Do you think South Bryan County and Richmond Hill need more, less, or the same amount of the following types of housing?



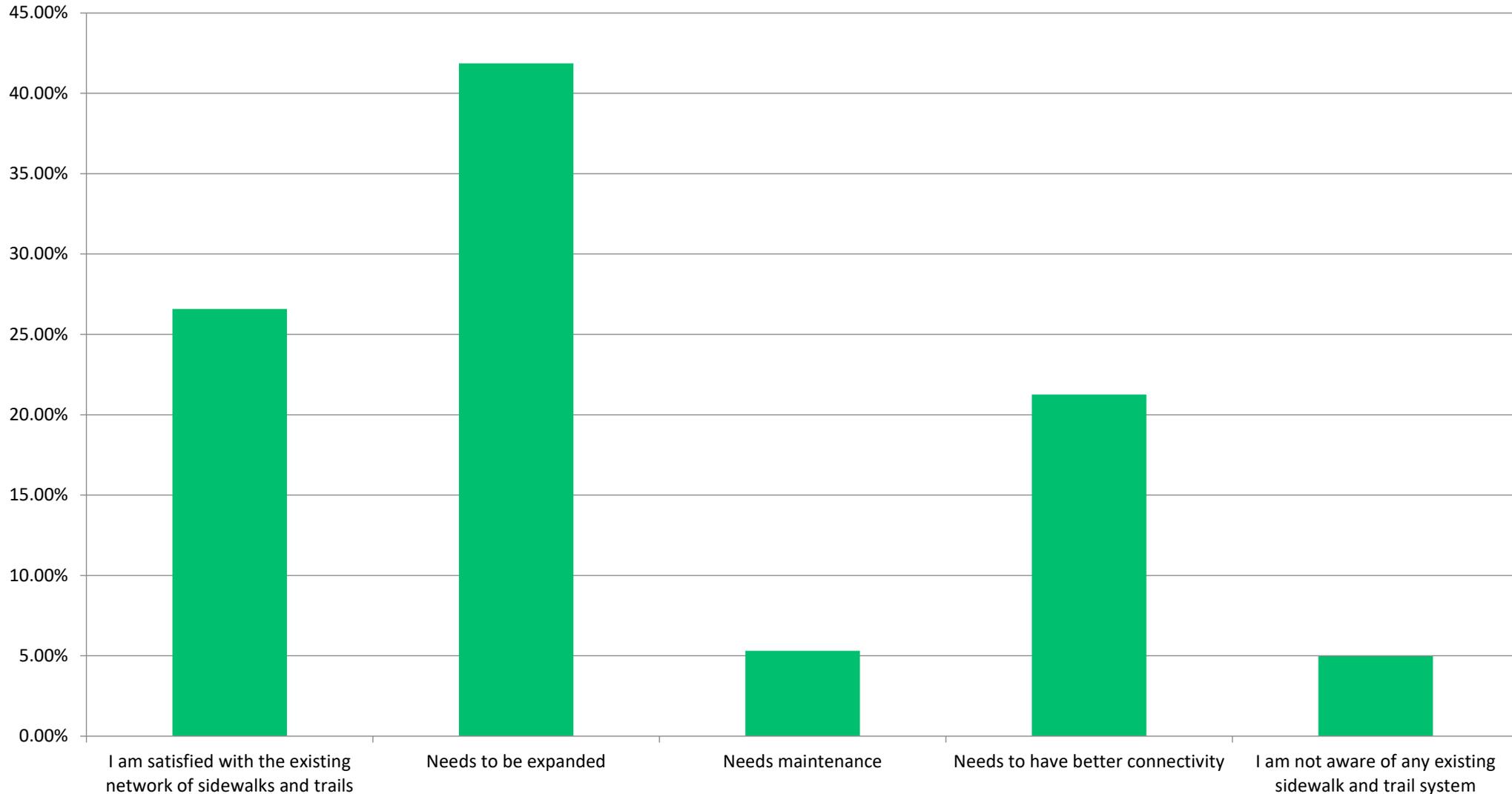
# Please state whether you agree, disagree, or have no opinion with the following statements on future residential development in South Bryan County and Richmond Hill over the next 20 years



# Do you think South Bryan County and Richmond Hill need more, less, or the same amount of the following commercial businesses?



# Which statement best describes your opinion about the existing sidewalk and trail system in South Bryan County and Richmond Hill?



# What do you think is the greatest challenge facing Bryan County in the next 20 years?

## Major Topics

- » Growth
- » Roads
- » Traffic
- » Schools
- » Industry
- » Infrastructure





# Feedback from the Open House

# Open House | Dot Exercise

- Priority Rankings (High)
  - ▣ Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources (15)
  - ▣ Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents (8)
  - ▣ Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents (7)
  - ▣ Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors (6)
  - ▣ Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City (5)

**Prioritize Goals**  
RICHMOND HILL

Please use the stickers to rank the goals in order of importance:  
Green is high priority and Red is low priority.

Goal	Ranking	Comments
 Provide a mix of housing types and price points		11/10 2 yrs 11/10 2 yrs
 Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors		2/10 7 yrs
 Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure throughout the City		2/10 4 yrs
 Expand the labor force and employment options within the City		10/10
 Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources		15/10 yes
 Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents		10/10 yes 3/10
 Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents		both allow significant development, too much impact. 8/10 yes
 Provide a mix of land uses to support retail, service, and professional needs of residents		3/10 yes 1/10
 Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City		5/10 yes 3/10 no
 Governmental transparency		5/10 yes 2/10 no



# Open House | Dot Exercise

## Priority Rankings (Low)

- Provide a mix of housing types and price points (-12)
- Expand the labor force and employment options within the City (-10)
- Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure throughout the City (2)
- Provide a mix of land uses to support retail, service, and professional needs of residents (2)
- Governmental transparency (3)

  
RICHMOND HILL

**Prioritize Goals**

Please use the stickers to rank the goals in order of importance:  
Green is high priority and Red is low priority.

Goal	Ranking	Comments
 Provide a mix of housing types and price points		11/10 2 yes Note: 55 and add 10 minutes delay
 Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors		2 no 7 yes
 Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure throughout the City		2 no 4 yes
 Expand the labor force and employment options within the City		10 no
 Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources		15 yes
 Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents		10 yes 3 no
 Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents		both allow long term developer, too much impact, 8 yes
 Provide a mix of land uses to support retail, service, and professional needs of residents		3 yes 1 no
 Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City		8 yes 3 no
 Governmental transparency		5 yes 2 no



# Budget Buckets

Discretionary Project	Funding Earned
Transportation Alternatives*	\$600
Recreational Services & Programs	\$2700
Trails, Sidewalks, & Bike Lanes	\$2700
Downtown Revitalization	\$2200
Water Access	\$1000



A grayscale photograph of a wetland landscape. In the foreground, there is a dense field of tall, thin grasses. A narrow, calm waterway flows through the middle ground, reflecting the sky and the surrounding vegetation. The background is filled with a line of trees, including several tall, thin cypripediums. The overall scene is serene and natural.

# Next Steps

# Community Work Plan

- Implementation activities
- Time frame (5-Years)  
(2023 – 2028)
- Responsible party
- Cost
- Funding source



# Schedule

Meeting Type	Month/Date	Agenda / Task
Summary of Public Involvement	November 2022	
Stakeholder Interviews	January 2023	
Plan Development	December 2022 – February 2023	Developing Draft Plan Update
Draft Plan Review	February 2023	Submit draft plan to Stakeholders for review
Stakeholder Committee	February 2023	Stakeholder Comments on Draft Plan
Final Draft Plan	March 2023	Make edits and develop final Draft Plan Update
Public Hearing	April 4, 2023	Presentation on Public Input & Draft Plan Update Adopt Transmittal Resolution (Optional)
Submit to CRC and DCA	April 14, 2023	DCA Review (40 days required)
Presentation to City Council	June 6, 2023	Adopt Comp Plan Update



## Richmond Hill Comprehensive Plan



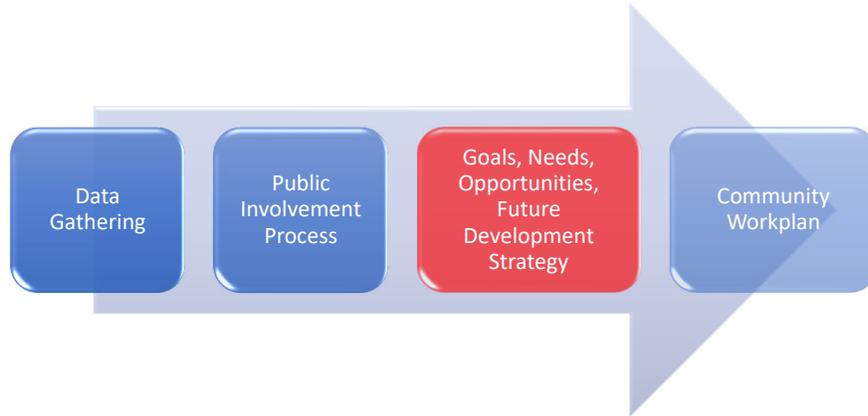
**General Update**  
January 10, 2023

### Meeting Agenda

- » General Update
- » Review of Public Input
- » Schedule
- » Next Steps



# Comprehensive Planning Process



## Summary of Survey Results



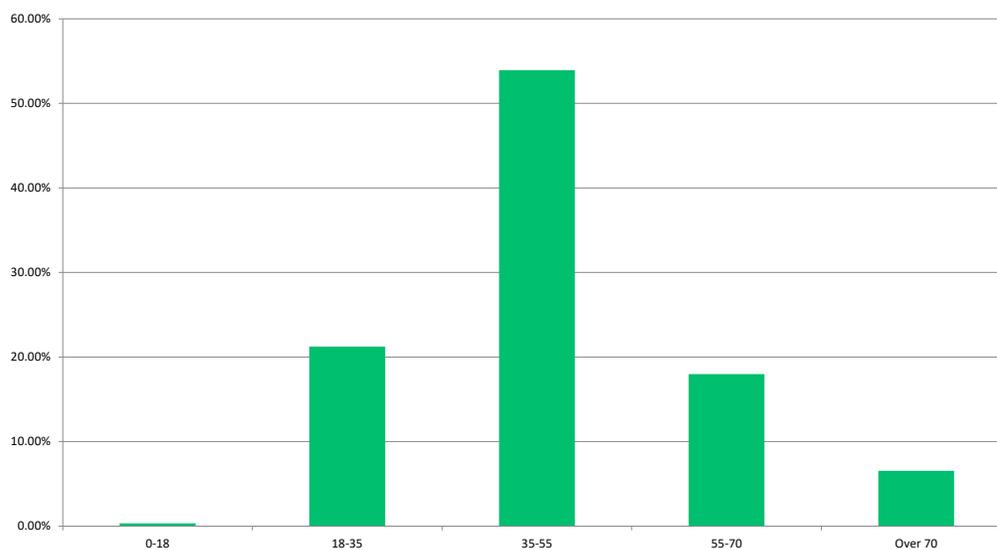
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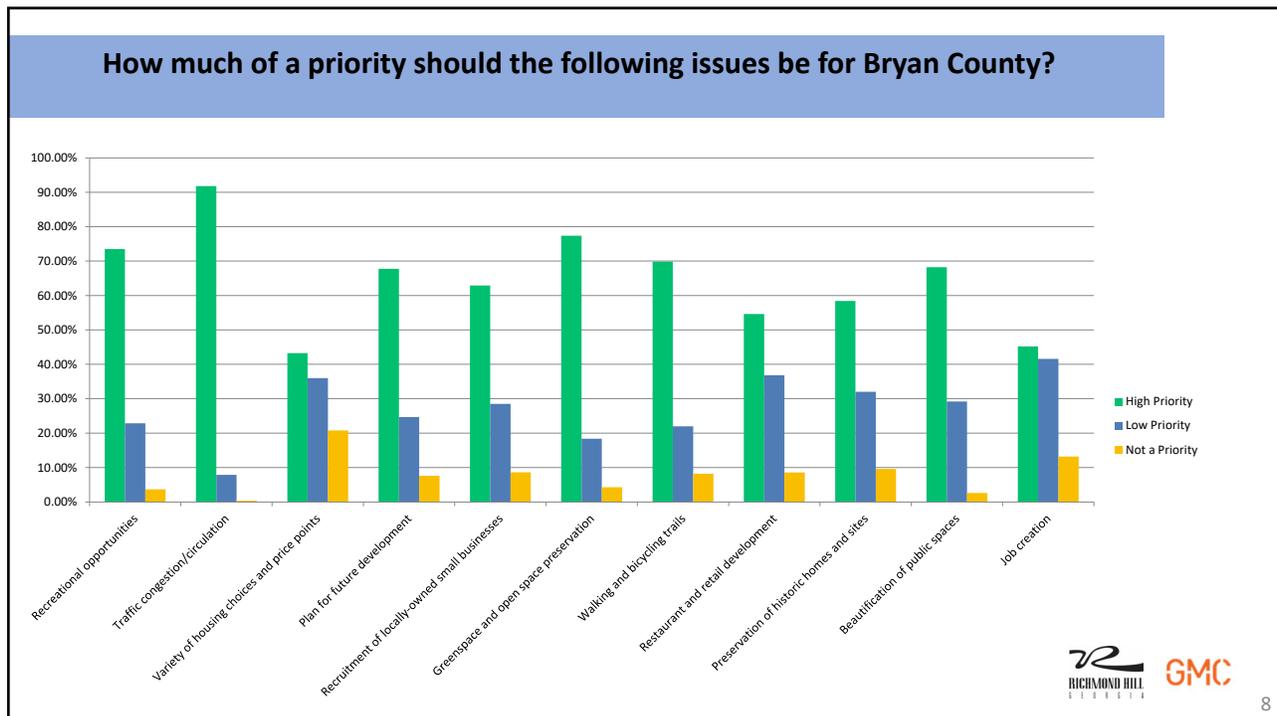
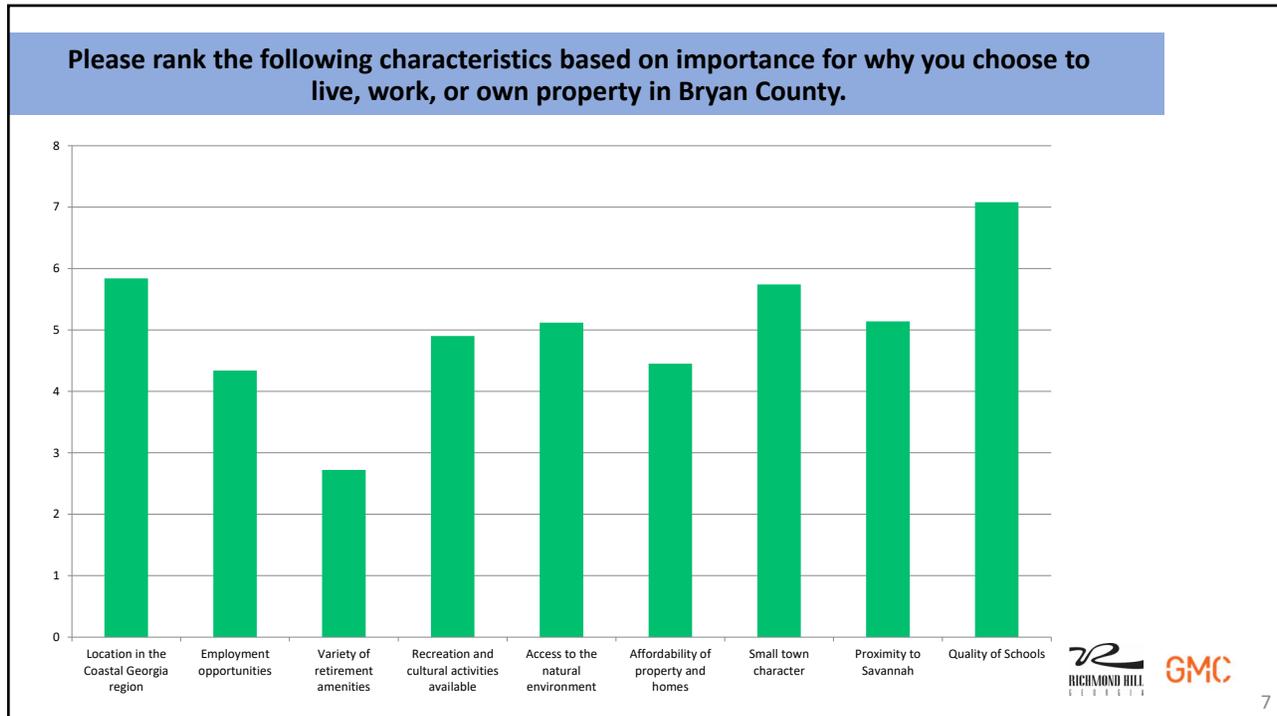


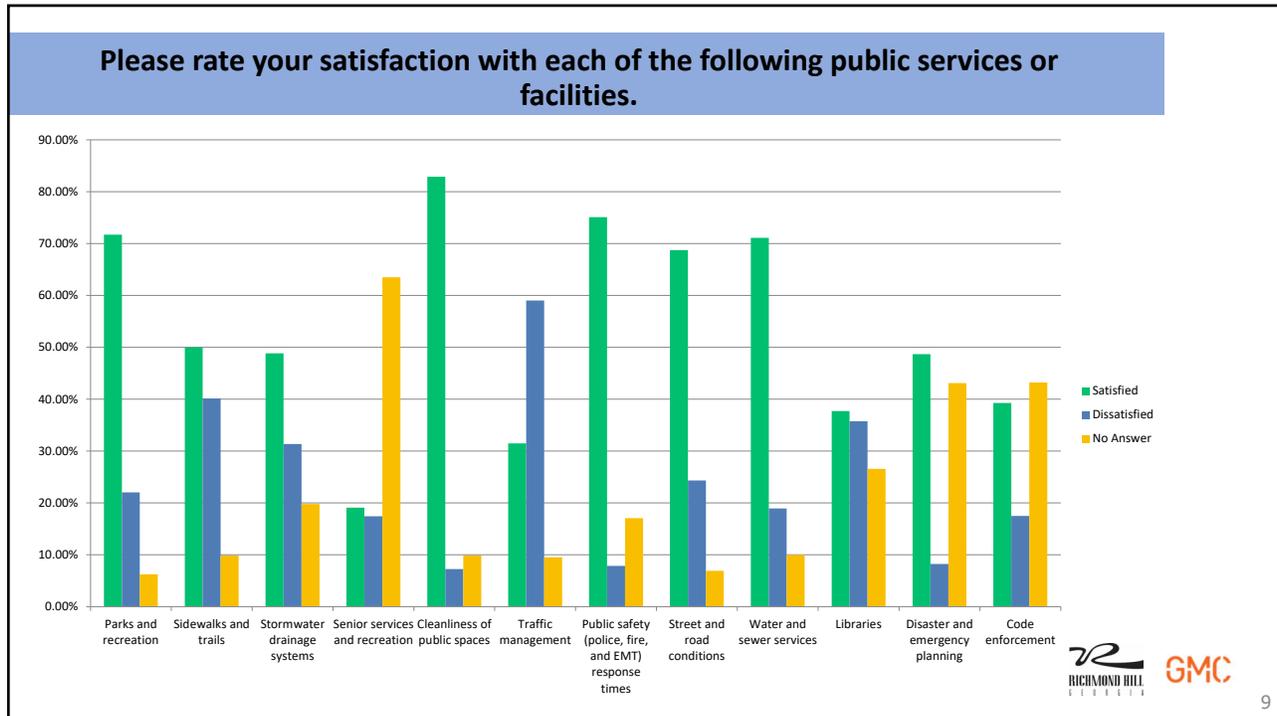
5

## How old are you?

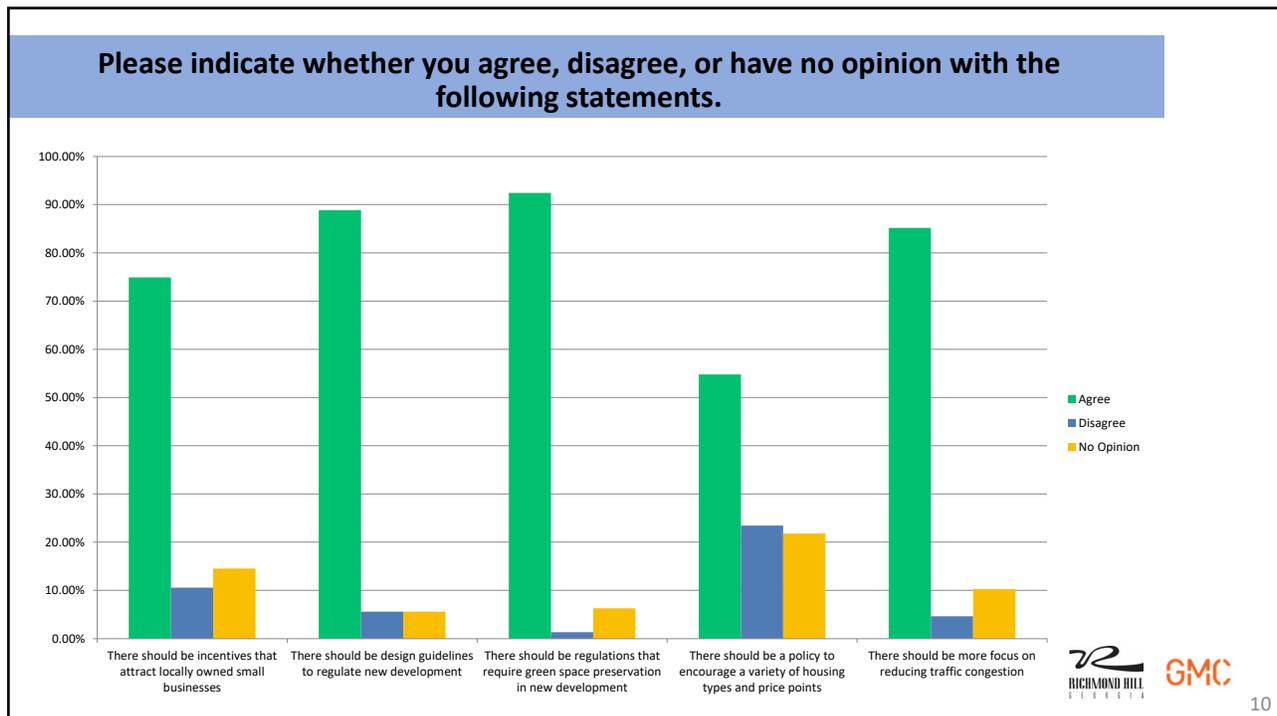


6

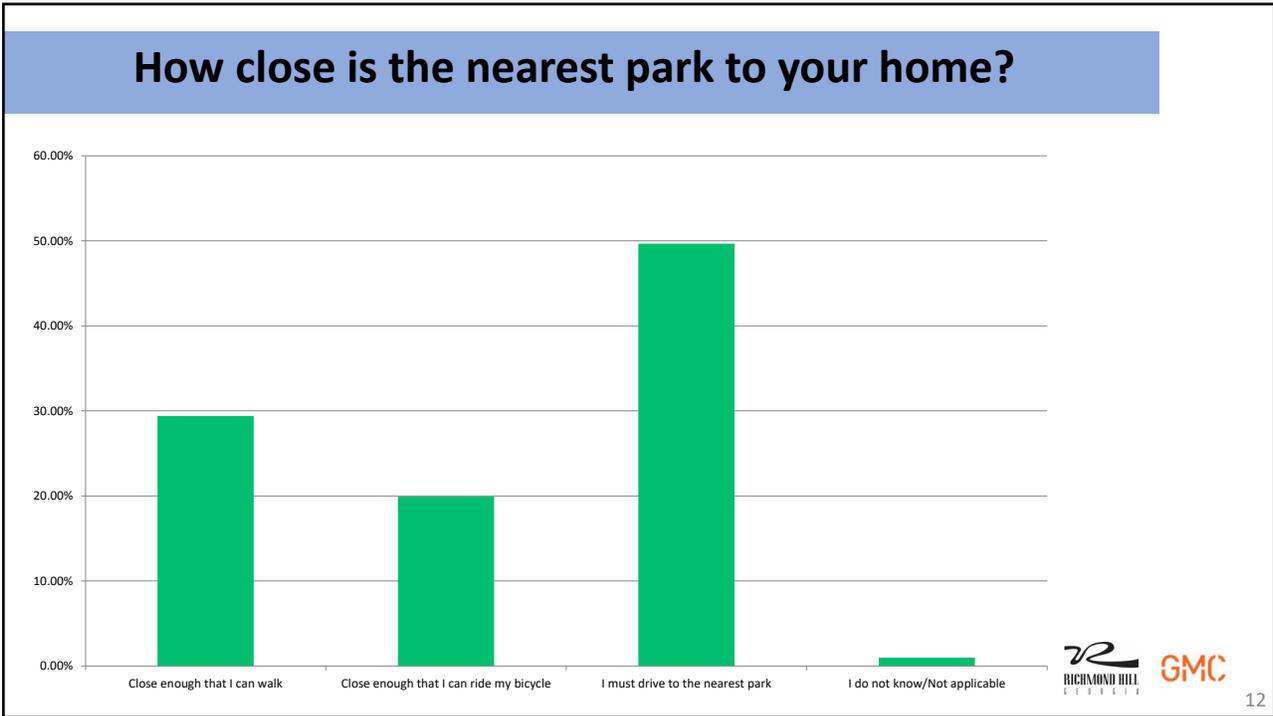
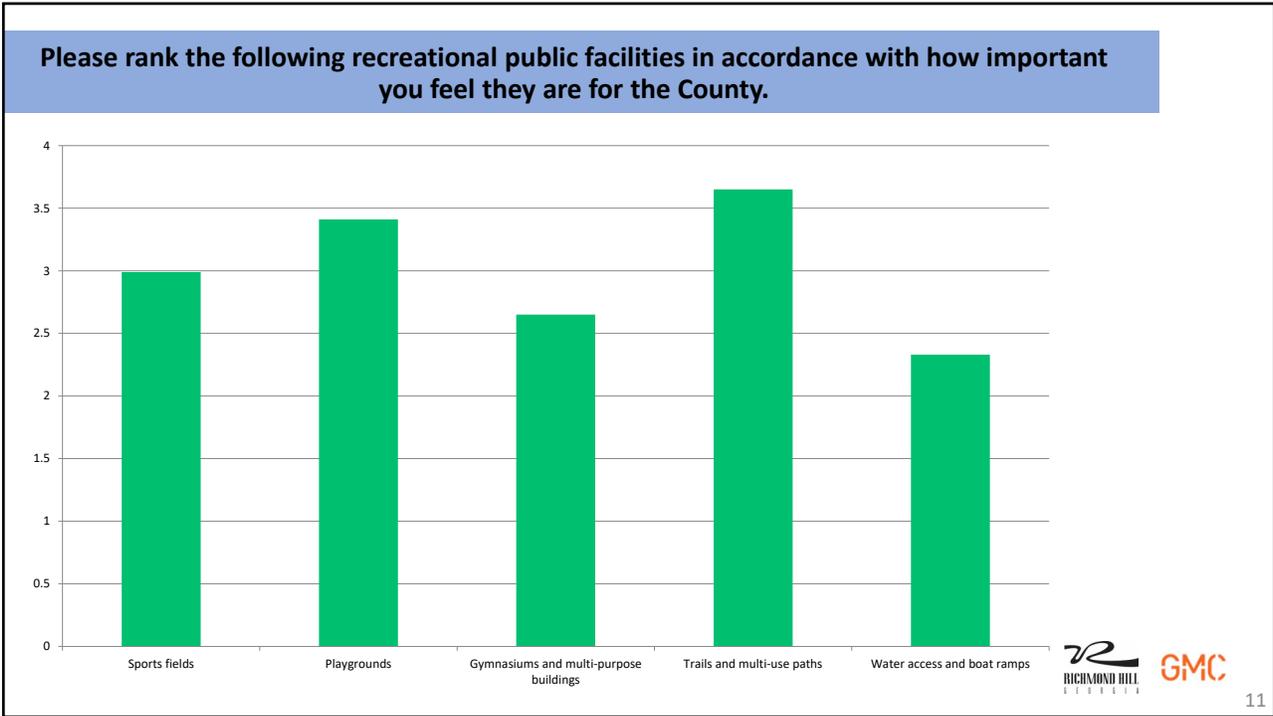


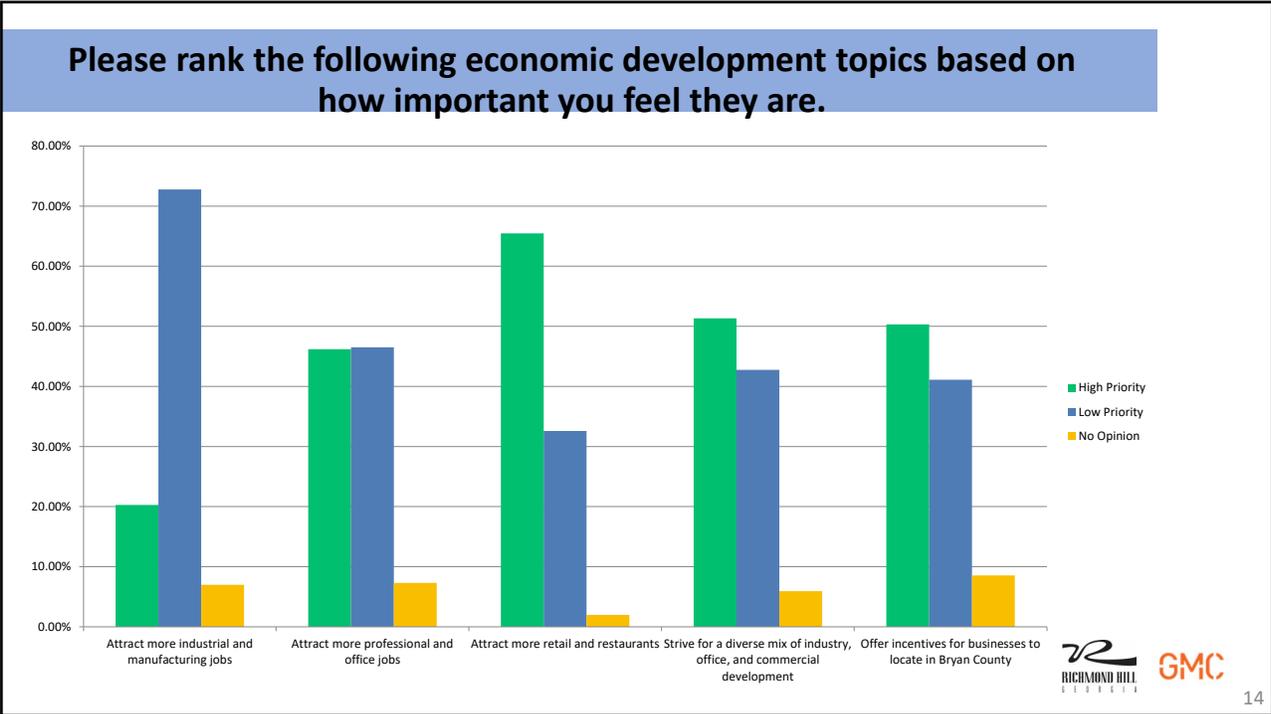
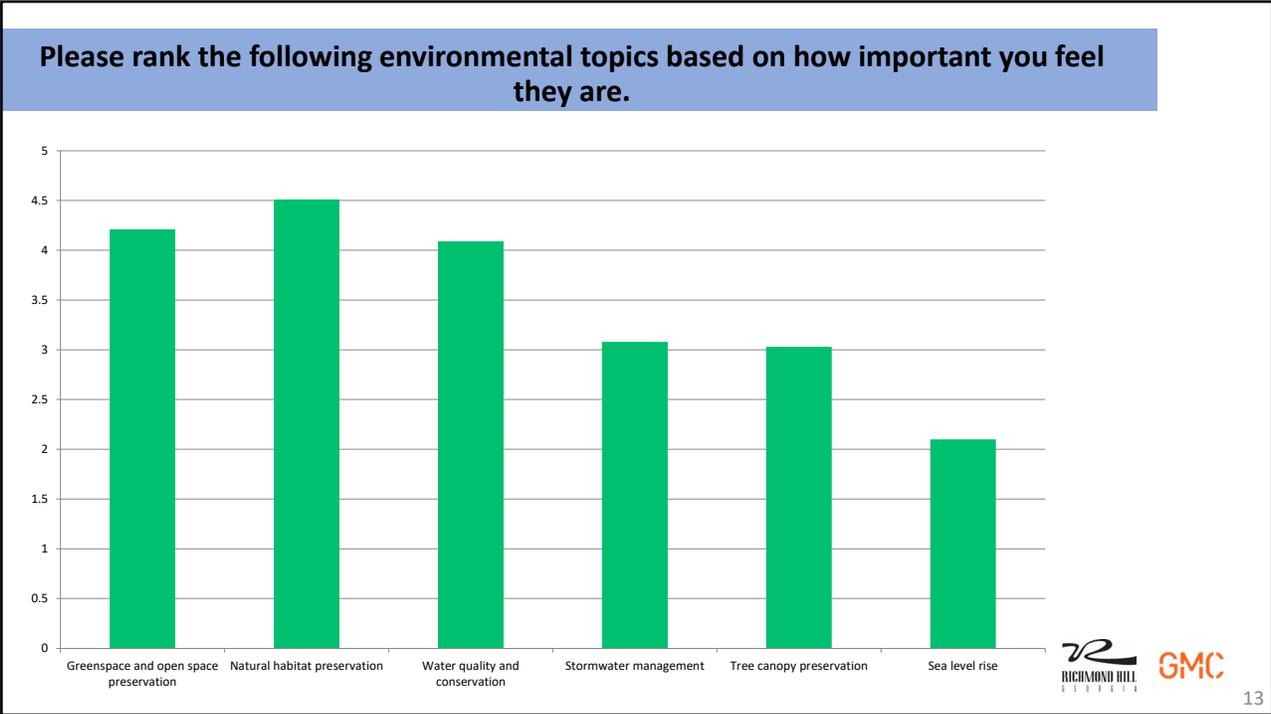


9

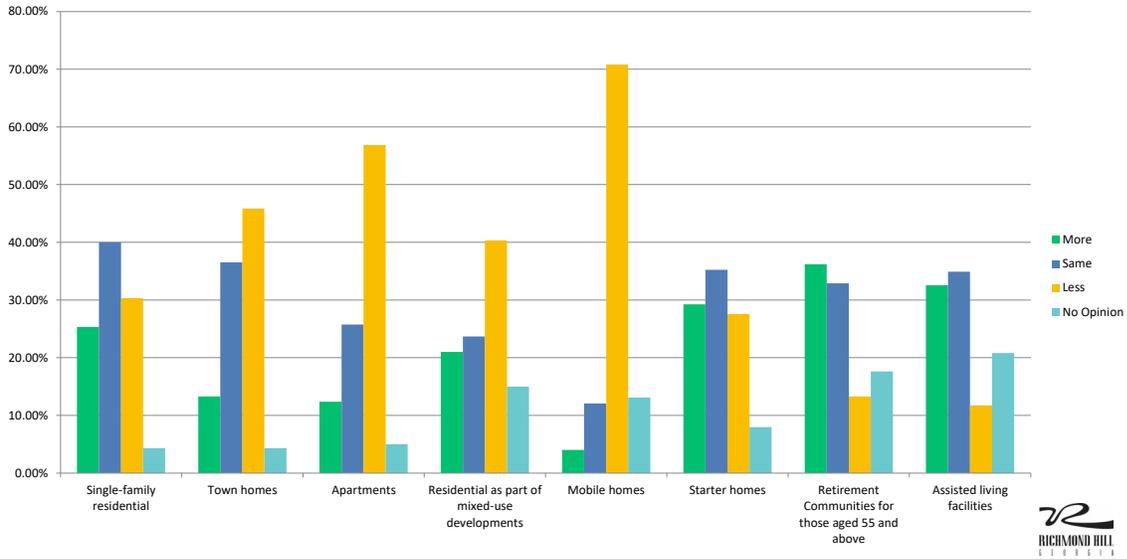


10

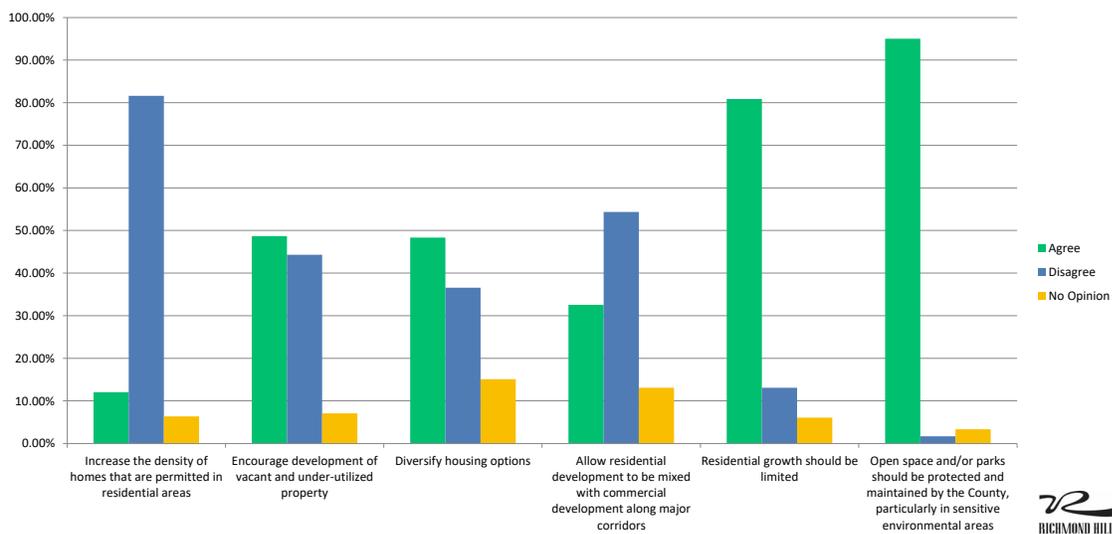


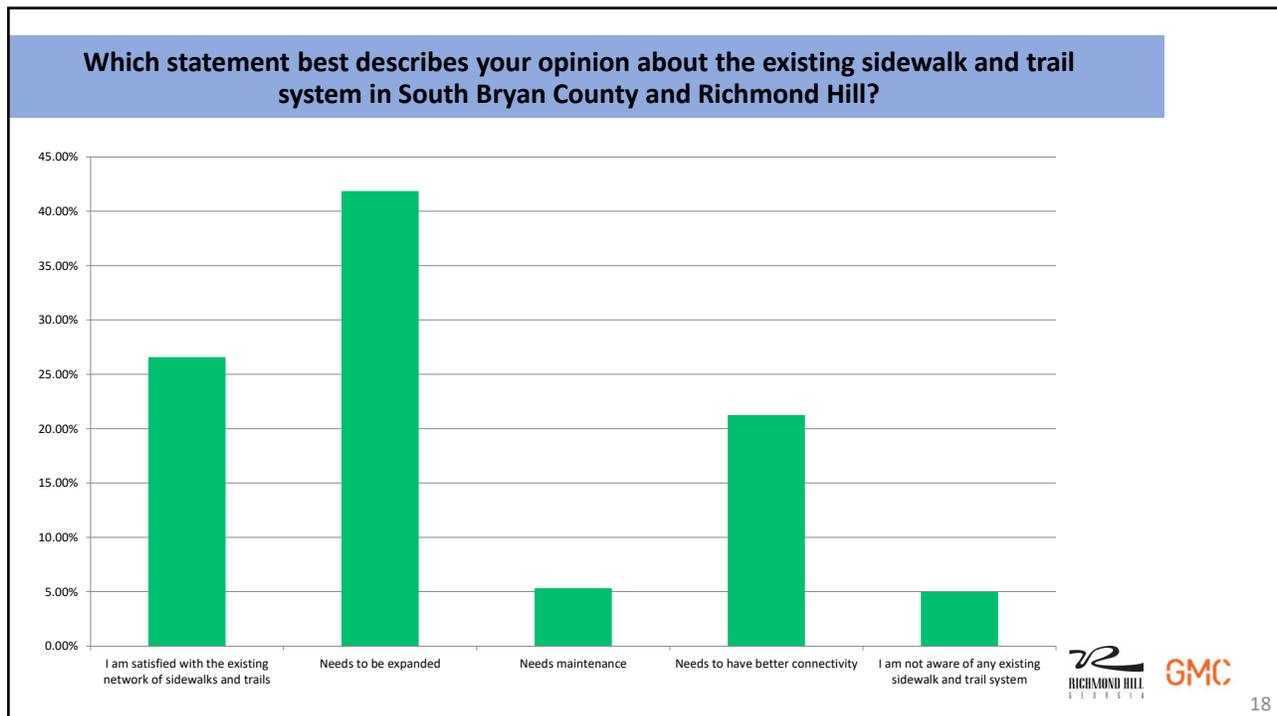
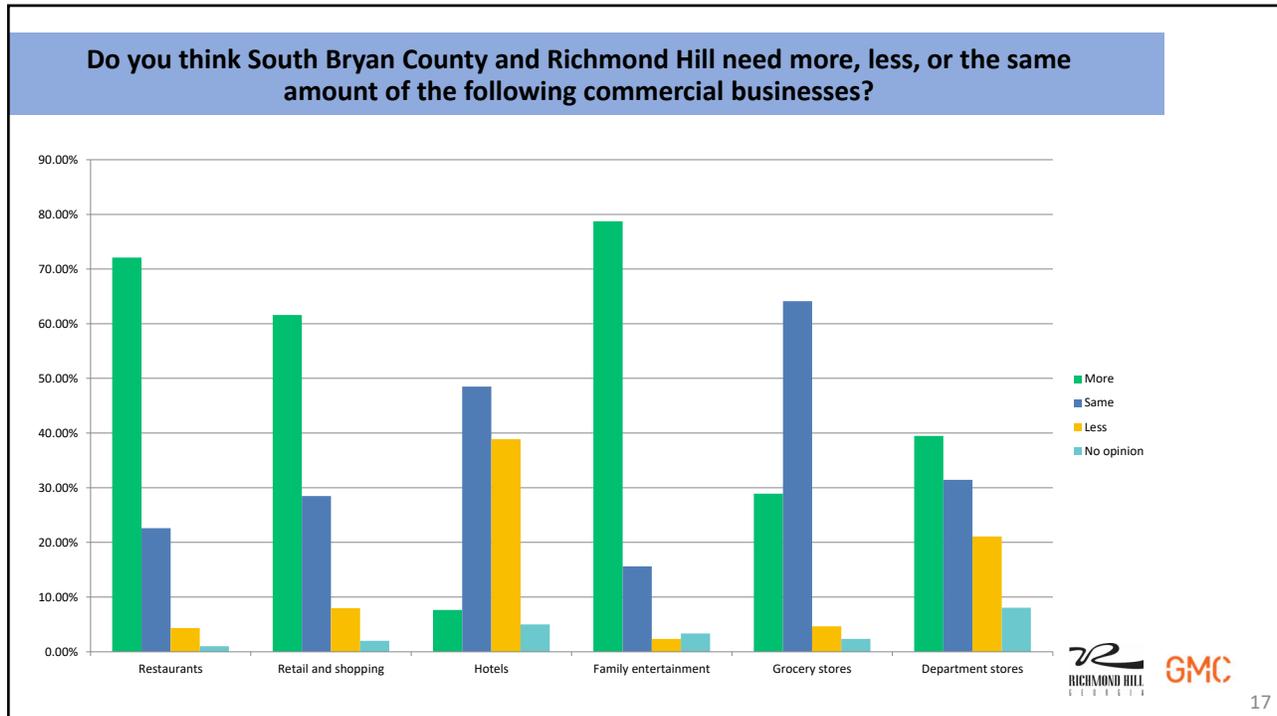


**Do you think South Bryan County and Richmond Hill need more, less, or the same amount of the following types of housing?**



**Please state whether you agree, disagree, or have no opinion with the following statements on future residential development in South Bryan County and Richmond Hill over the next 20 years**





What do you think is the greatest challenge facing Bryan County in the next 20 years?

Major Topics

- » Growth
- » Roads
- » Traffic
- » Schools
- » Industry
- » Infrastructure

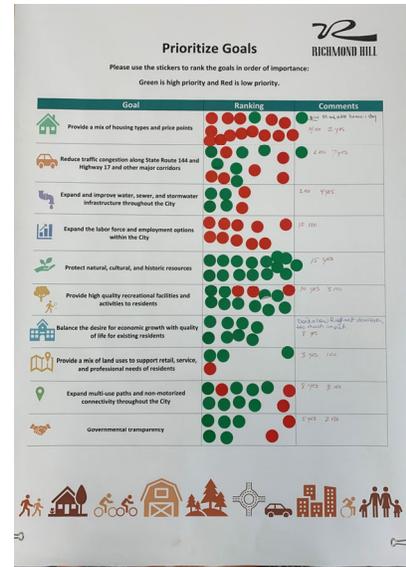


Feedback from the Open House



## Open House | Dot Exercise

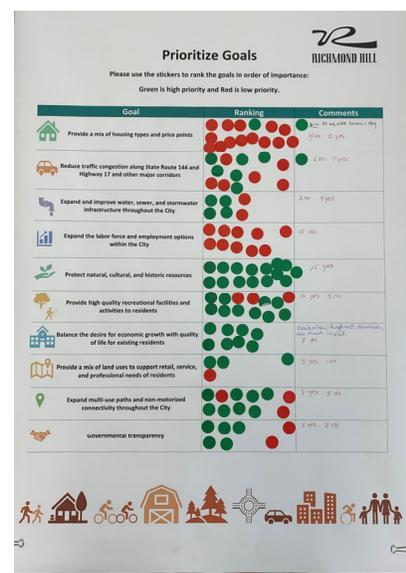
- Priority Rankings (High)
  - ▣ Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources (15)
  - ▣ Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents (8)
  - ▣ Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents (7)
  - ▣ Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors (6)
  - ▣ Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City (5)



21

## Open House | Dot Exercise

- Priority Rankings (Low)
  - ▣ Provide a mix of housing types and price points (-12)
  - ▣ Expand the labor force and employment options within the City (-10)
  - ▣ Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure throughout the City (2)
  - ▣ Provide a mix of land uses to support retail, service, and professional needs of residents (2)
  - ▣ Governmental transparency (3)



22

## Budget Buckets

Discretionary Project	Funding Earned
Transportation Alternatives*	\$600
Recreational Services & Programs	\$2700
Trails, Sidewalks, & Bike Lanes	\$2700
Downtown Revitalization	\$2200
Water Access	\$1000



23

Next Steps

## Community Work Plan

- Implementation activities
- Time frame (5-Years)  
(2023 – 2028)
- Responsible party
- Cost
- Funding source



## Schedule

Meeting Type	Month/Date	Agenda / Task
Summary of Public Involvement	November 2022	
Stakeholder Interviews	January 2023	
Plan Development	December 2022 – February 2023	Developing Draft Plan Update
Draft Plan Review	February 2023	Submit draft plan to Stakeholders for review
Stakeholder Committee	February 2023	Stakeholder Comments on Draft Plan
Final Draft Plan	March 2023	Make edits and develop final Draft Plan Update
Public Hearing	April 4, 2023	Presentation on Public Input & Draft Plan Update Adopt Transmittal Resolution (Optional)
Submit to CRC and DCA	April 14, 2023	DCA Review (40 days required)
Presentation to City Council	June 6, 2023	Adopt Comp Plan Update





## Appendix 4 - Open House



MAP COMMENTS



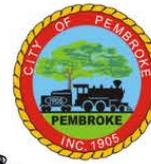
Number	Color	Comment
32	Blue	Increase recreational areas & improve facilities
33	Blue	Increase park areas
34	Blue	Raise CSX Railroad track or fly over on H144.
35	Blue	Widen Harris trail to entire length.
36	Blue	Widen Belfast Keller Rd.
37	Blue	Sterling Creek Park needs major updating and things put there. Re-center
38	Blue	improve recreational facilities NON-motorized connectivity

MAP COMMENTS

Number	Color	Comment
39	Blue	Non-motorized Bike lanes Wider Road



**BLUEPRINT BRYAN 2045**



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2022**

**BRYAN COUNTY AND CITY OF PEMBROKE**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, 8810 HWY 280, BLACK CREEK, GA  
5PM - 7:30 PM**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022**

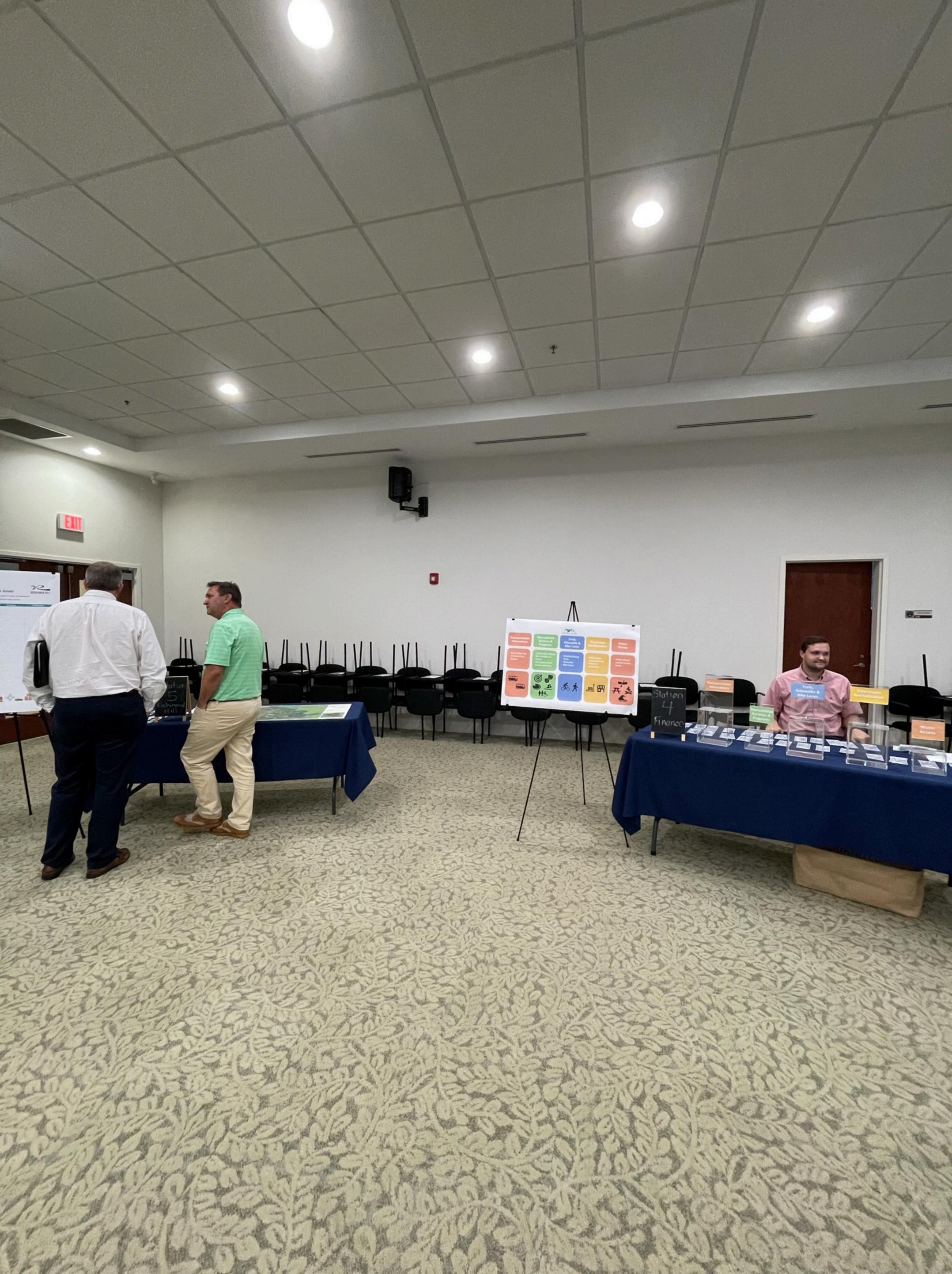
**BRYAN COUNTY AND CITY OF RICHMOND HILL**

**BOC HEARING ROOM, 66 CAPT. MATTHEW FREEMAN DR,  
RICHMOND HILL, GA  
5PM - 7:30 PM**

Join the Bryan County Community Development Department in partnership with the Cities of Pembroke and Richmond Hill at a drop in workshop to learn more about the update to the Comprehensive Plan and provide input on what you want for the future of your community.

**BRYANCOUNTYGA.ORG**  
**912.756.7962**

**CONTACT: SNEWMAN@BRYAN-COUNTY.ORG**  
**OR ACLEMENT@BRYAN-COUNTY.ORG**



Station 4  
Finance

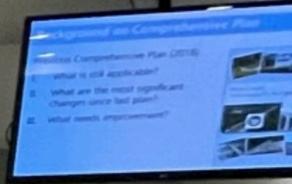
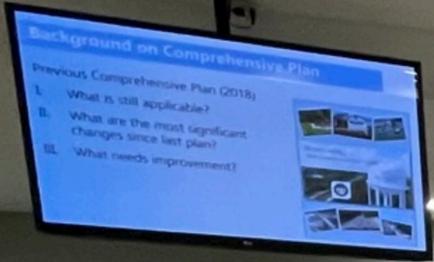
Public Safety & Security

Water & Stormwater

EXIT

Station 5  
Information & Technology

Station 5  
Information & Technology

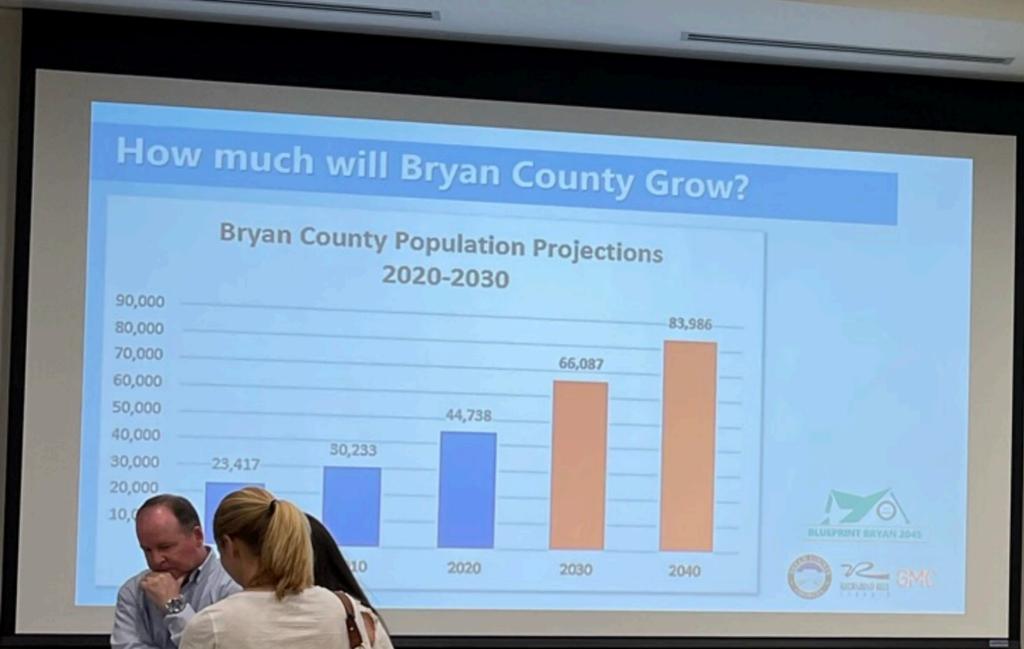
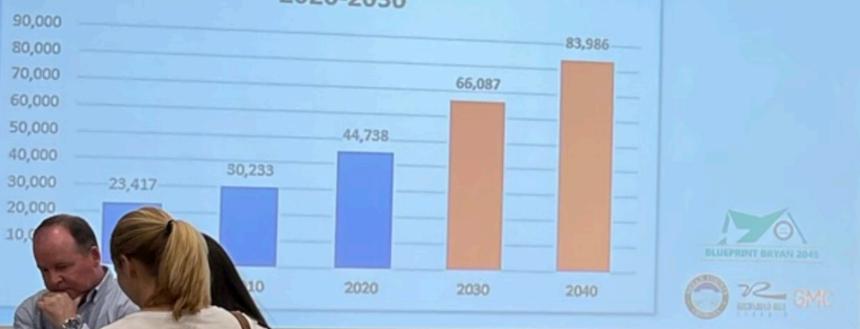


Station 2 Goals



# How much will Bryan County Grow?

## Bryan County Population Projections 2020-2030

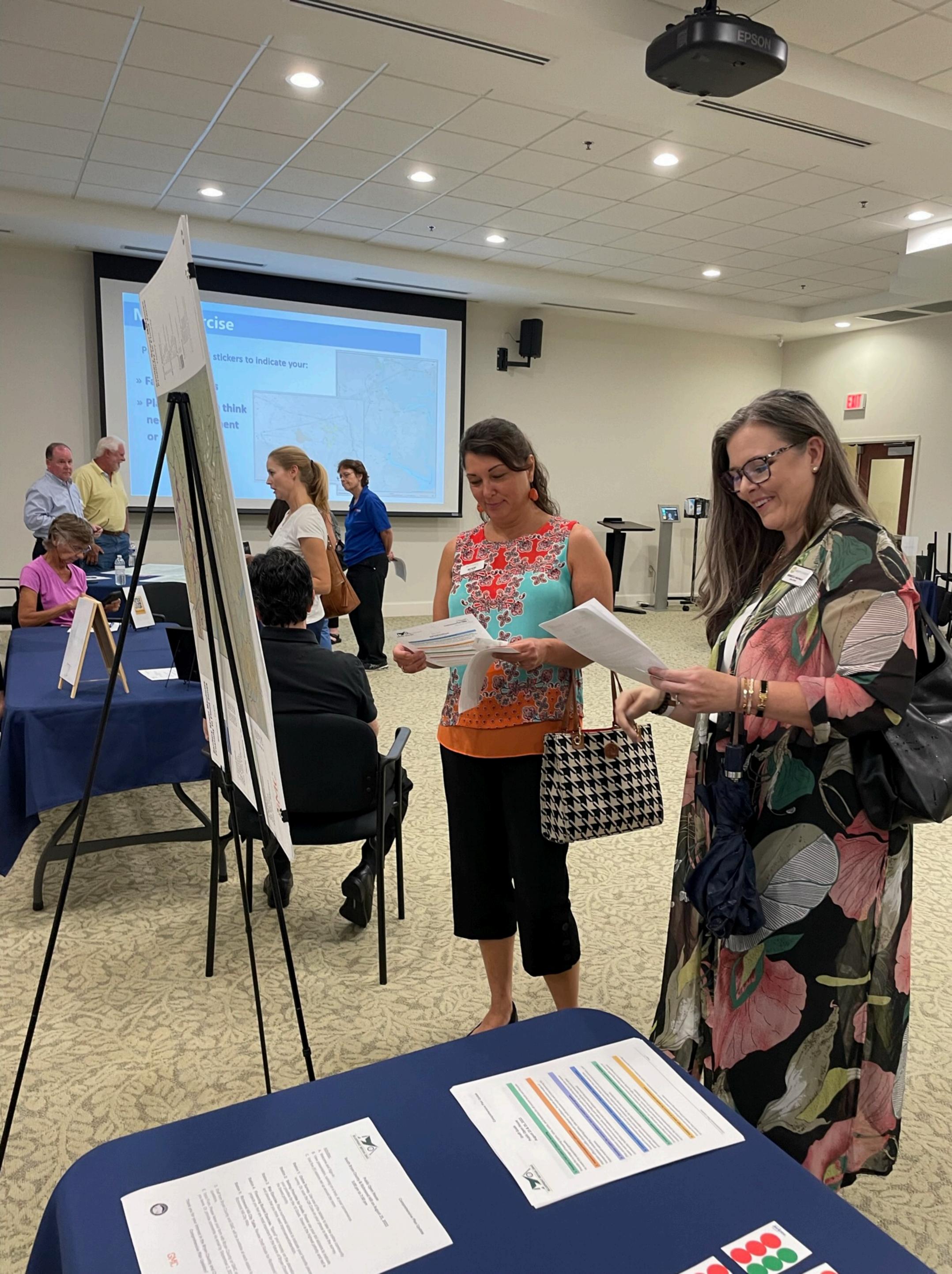




EXIT

Transportation Alternatives	Recreational Services & Programs	Trails, Sidewalks & Bike Lanes	Development Reevaluation	Water Access
Pool & Spa on Campus and Lakes	Community Events, Non-Traditional Sports, Community and Home Activities	Walking Using Public Streets, Sidewalks, Bike Lanes	Development Reevaluation	Public Water/Control Access Areas

Station 4  
Finance



**Exercise**

Place stickers to indicate your:

- » Favorite
- » Place to think
- » new
- » or

Woman in a colorful patterned top and black pants, looking at a document.

Woman in a floral dress and glasses, looking at a document.

Document on a table in the foreground, featuring a logo and text.

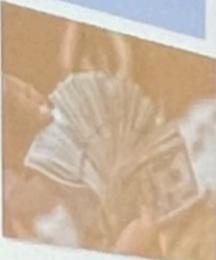
Document on a table in the foreground, featuring a logo and text.





# Financing Bucket Exercise

<b>Transportation Alternatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Park &amp; Ride lots</li><li>Circulator Bus System</li></ul>	<b>Recreational Services &amp; Programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Community Theater</li><li>Non-Traditional Sports</li><li>Community Pool</li><li>Senior Activities</li></ul>	<b>Trails, Sidewalks &amp; Bike Lanes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Walking/Biking Trails</li><li>Sidewalks</li><li>Bike Lanes</li></ul>	<b>Downtown Revitalization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Downtown Improvements</li><li>Business Improvements</li></ul>	<b>Water Access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Flood Water Control Areas</li></ul>



"Spend" your money on the discretionary projects that are most important for the future of Logan County.

A man in a light blue button-down shirt and dark trousers stands on the left, looking towards the presentation screen.

A man in a yellow polo shirt and blue jeans stands with his hands on his hips, looking at the screen.

A woman in a grey patterned top and dark pants stands behind the table, looking at the maps.

A woman in a blue polo shirt and dark pants stands behind the table, looking at the maps.

A woman in a white sleeveless top and blue pants stands behind the table, looking at the maps.

# Financing Bucket Exercise

Transportation Alternatives

Recreational Services & Programs

Trails, Sidewalks & Bike Lanes

Water Access

“Spend” your money on the discretionary projects you feel are most important for the future of Bryan County.

A man in a light blue button-down shirt and dark trousers stands on the left side of the table, looking towards the center.

A man with a white beard, wearing a yellow polo shirt and blue jeans, stands in the center of the table, looking at the maps.

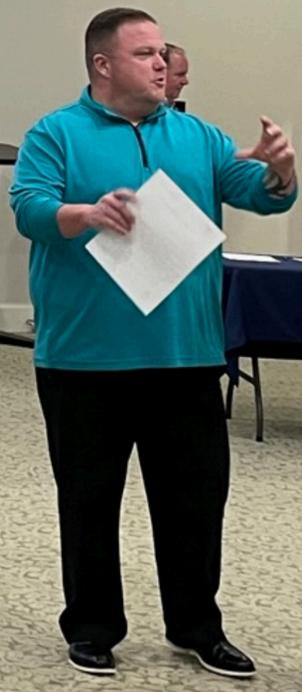
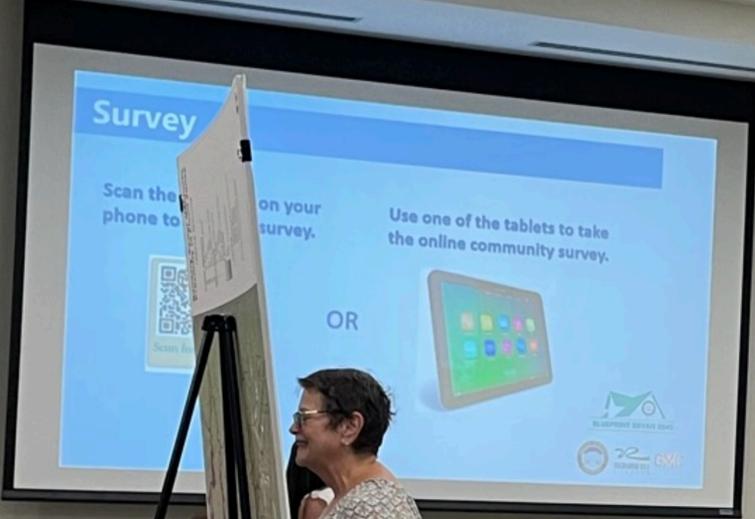
An older woman with short grey hair, wearing a patterned short-sleeved shirt, is leaning over the table, looking at the maps.

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue polo shirt, stands on the right side of the table, looking at the maps.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white sleeveless top and blue pants, stands on the far right, pointing at a document on the table.

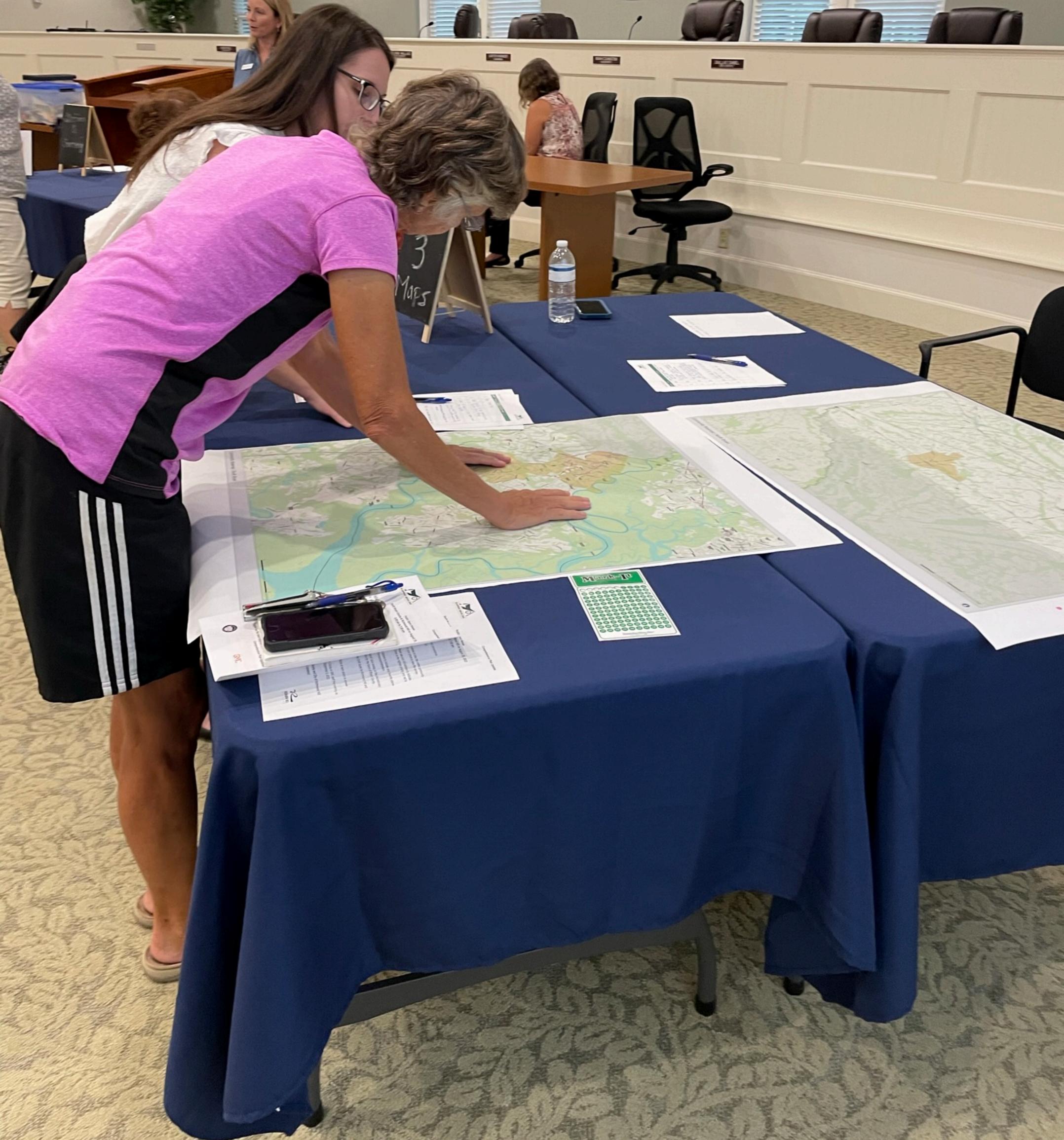
A table covered with a blue cloth holds several items: a large map of a region, a smaller map, a water bottle, a smartphone, and some papers. A small black sign on a wooden stand is also on the table.







Exercise # 2:  
Priorities for Draft Goals

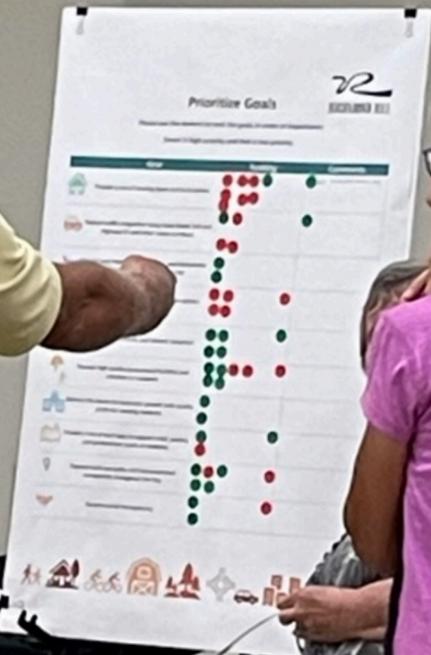








EXIT



A man with white hair, wearing a yellow polo shirt and blue jeans, stands with his back to the camera. He is pointing at the "Priority Goals" poster. He has a white tag or card tucked into his belt.

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a bright pink t-shirt and black shorts, stands facing the poster. She is looking at the information on the poster. She is wearing sandals.

Station  
5  
Richmond  
Hill



Survey

Scan the QR Code on your phone to take the survey.



OR

Use one of the tablets to take the online community survey.



Logos for T2 and GPC

Man in black shirt and khaki pants talking to a woman in a patterned top.

Woman in a patterned top and white pants standing in the background.

Man in a light green polo shirt and white shorts looking at a document.

People sitting at a table in the background, some looking at devices.

Blue table with survey materials:

- Survey form with text and a logo.
- Blue pen.
- Survey cards with red and green dots.



# Prioritize Goals

Please use the stickers to rank the goals in order of importance:

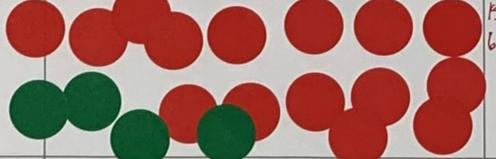
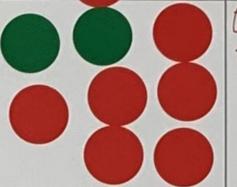
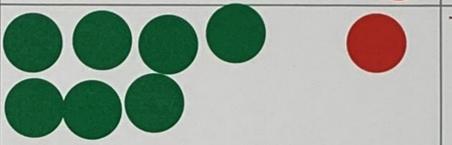
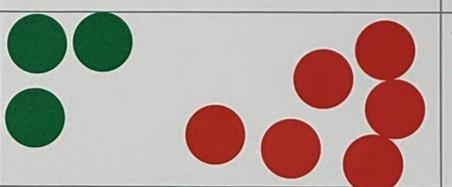
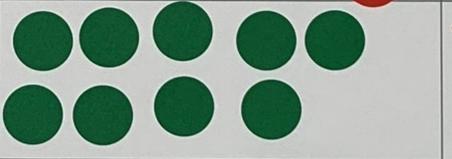
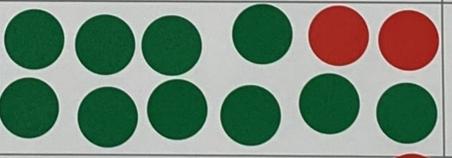
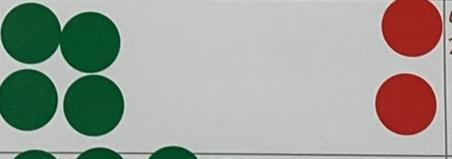
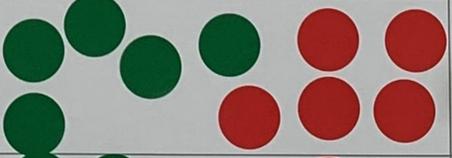
Green is high priority and Red is low priority.

Goal	Ranking	Comments
 Provide a mix of housing types and price points	14 Low 2 High	Nice 55 and older homes
 Reduce traffic congestion along State Route 144 and Highway 17 and other major corridors	7 High 1 Low	
 Expand and improve water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure throughout the City	4 High 2 Low	
 Expand the labor force and employment options within the City	10 Low	
 Protect natural, cultural, and historic resources	15 High	
 Provide high quality recreational facilities and activities to residents	10 High 3 Low	
 Balance the desire for economic growth with quality of life for existing residents	8 High	Don't allow Radiant developer too much input.
 Provide a mix of land uses to support retail, service, and professional needs of residents	3 High 1 Low	
 Expand multi-use paths and non-motorized connectivity throughout the City	8 High 3 Low	
 Governmental transparency	5 Yes 2 No	

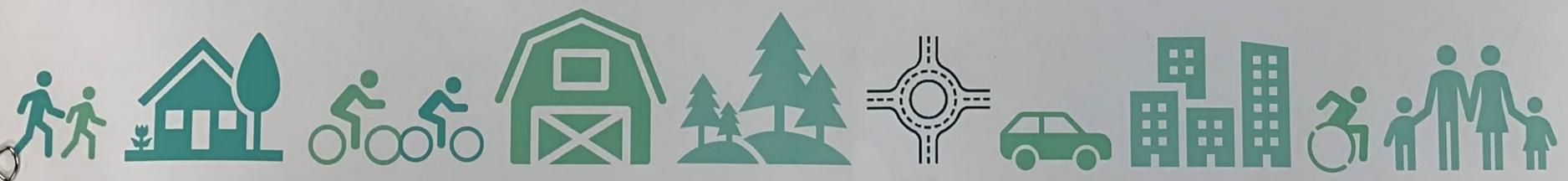


# Prioritize Goals

Please use the stickers to indicate the importance of the goals: Green is the highest priority and Red is the lowest priority. You have 6 stickers total: 3 Green, 3 Red.

Goal	Priority	Comments
 <p>Provide a full suite of Lifecycle Housing</p>		<p>55 and di Support housing Subdivision for young families, seniors, people in all stages of life</p>
 <p>Improve Transportation Efficiency and provide Alternative Modes of Transportation options (bike lanes, walking paths...etc)</p>		<p>No more development only affordable to upper class/wealthy</p> <p>Small bus system similar to college bus systems.</p>
 <p>Develop a plan for Service Delivery that can support future growth</p>		
 <p>Continue to support diverse Economic Development that benefits residents of the County</p>		<p>3 YES 6 NO</p>
 <p>Protect and provide access to our coastal Environment and Improve Community Resiliency</p>		<p>9 YES</p>
 <p>Support a high level of services for Parks and Recreation</p>		<p>10 YES 2 NO</p>
 <p>Maintain and support a variety of Community Facilities and Services</p>		<p>4 YES 2 NO</p> <p>NEED HOSPITAL</p> <p>Sterling Creek park needs to be improved tremendously</p>
 <p>Support Quality Growth through future land planning</p>		<p>11 YES 3 NO</p> <p>STOP THIS</p>
 <p>Protect and provide access and education to community Cultural and Historic Resources</p>		<p>5 YES 5 NO</p> <p>WETLAND DESTRUCTION of unwanted growth. support local businesses and "hamlet" style neighborhoods</p>
 <p>Participate in Inter-governmental Cooperation on regional issues</p>		<p>4 YES 4 NO</p>

August 2022





## Appendix 5 - Community Survey



# Comprehensive Plan Update City of Richmond Hill

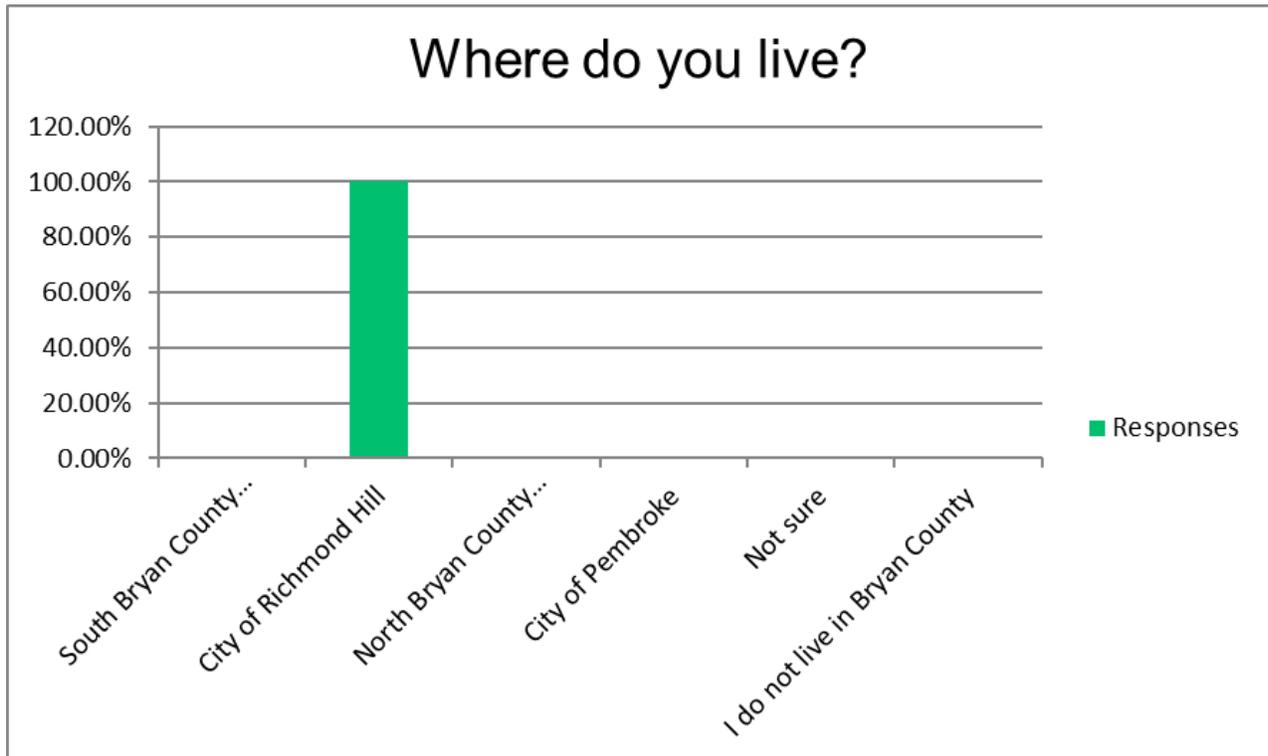
## Introduction

Designed as a joint survey with Bryan County and the two incorporated cities of Pembroke and Richmond Hill, the survey featured 20 questions total with 4 questions designated specifically for North Bryan County and Pembroke residents and the same 4 designated for South Bryan County and Richmond Hill. This comprehensive and user-friendly design allowed us to hear from all residents of Bryan County in one survey and garner macro as well as micro level data.

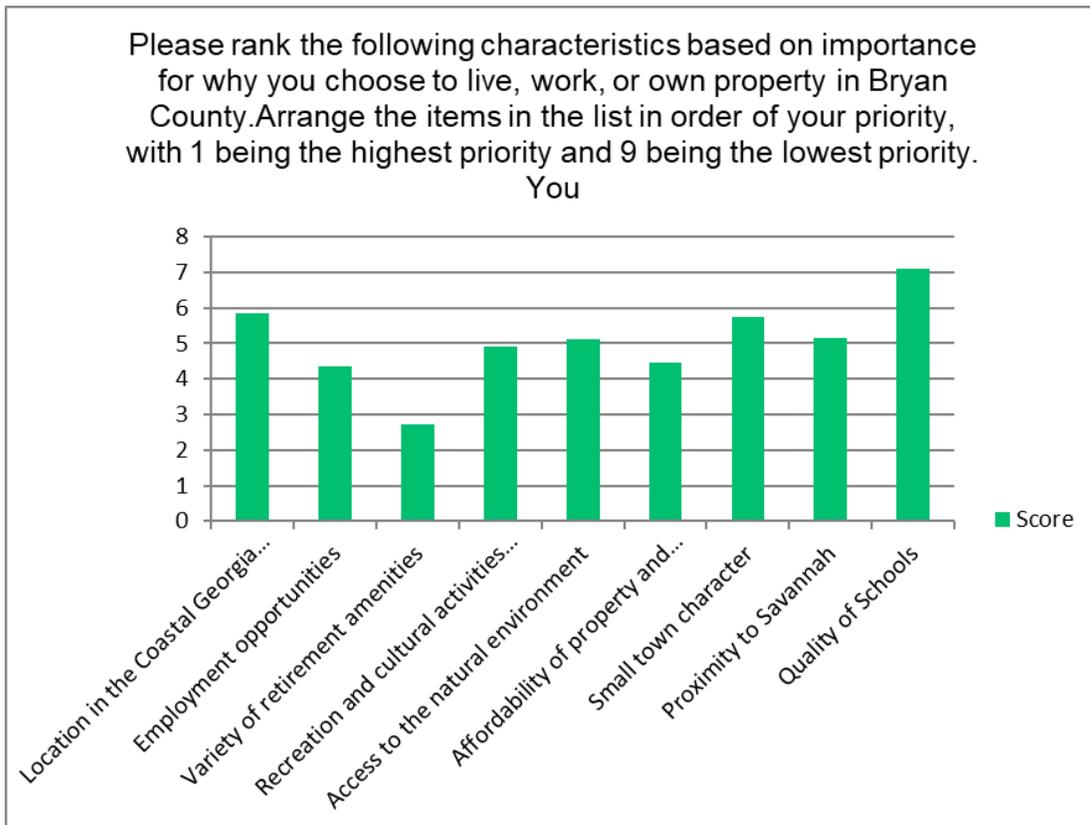
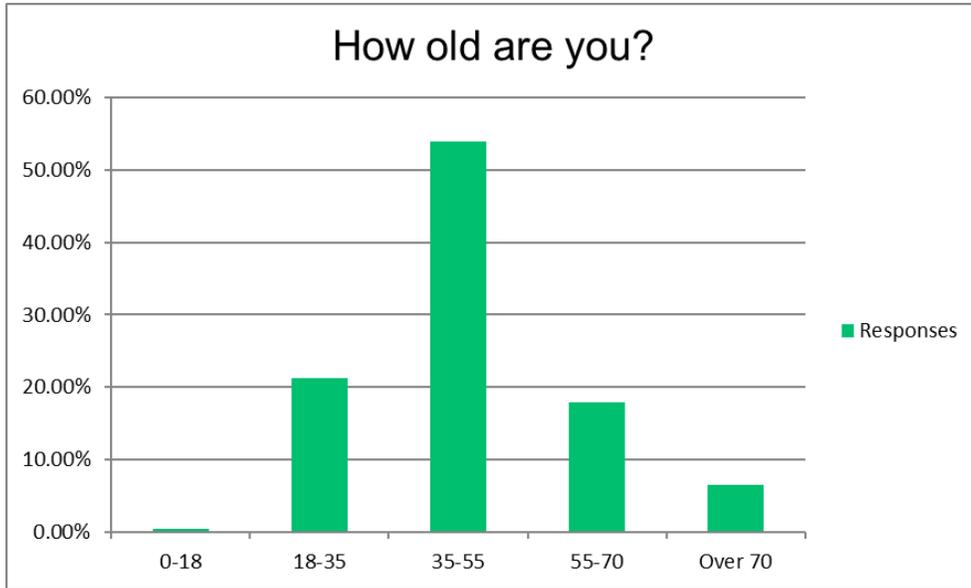
The data we received helped to identify what residents like or do not like and what they would want to change going forward. The results will be examined alongside input collected from public meetings to shape the comprehensive plan in an effort to reflect the collective voice of the community.

The online survey was open between August 1st and September 5th, 2022. Bryan County and City staff advertised and promoted the survey via outreach on social media platforms, announcements on websites, and the placement of flyers and signage throughout the county. These efforts were successful as evidenced by the fact that during the one-month survey window, 881 unique respondents completed the survey.

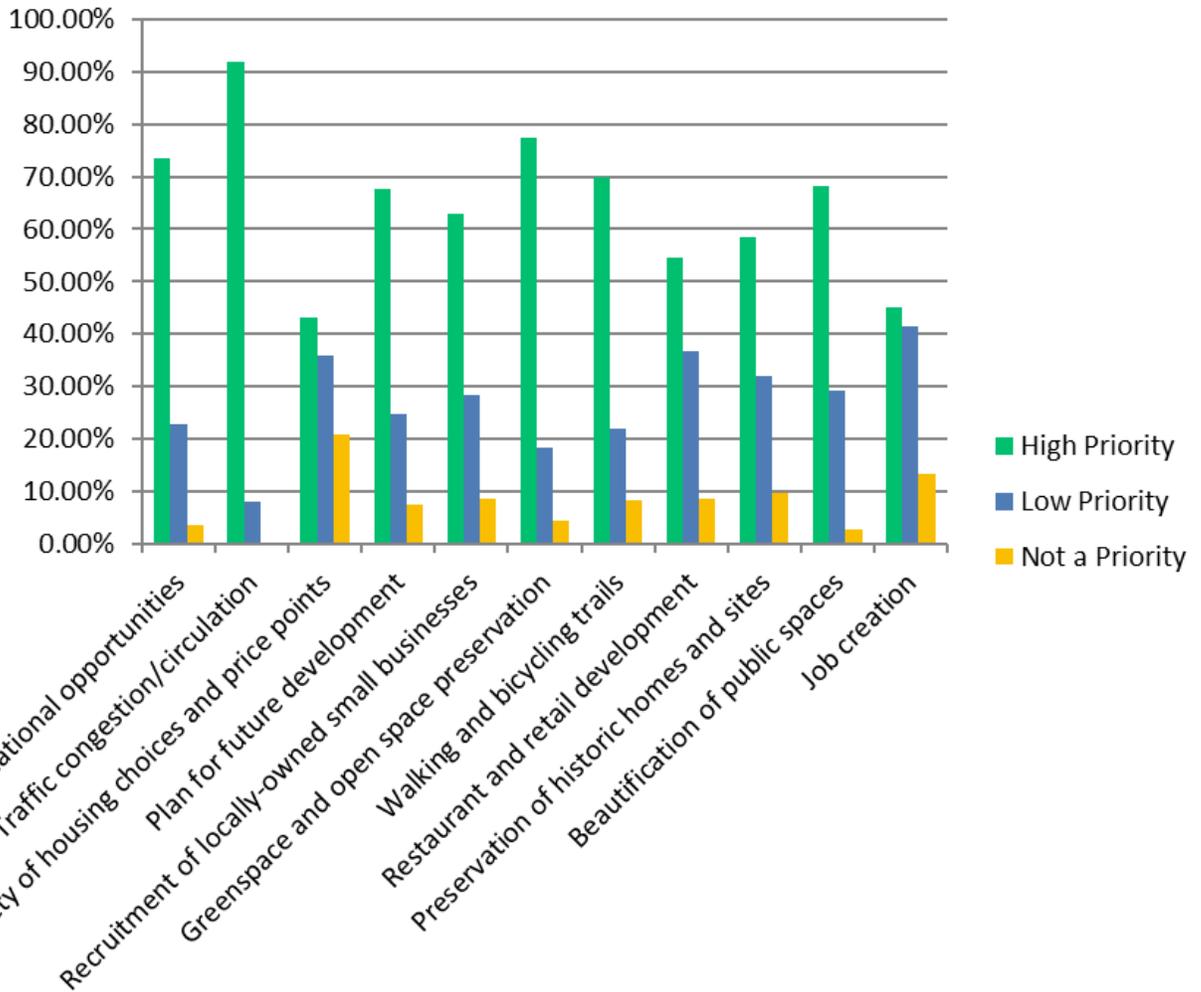
The results of the Joint Survey have been filtered to show only responses from people that stated that they live in Richmond Hill (306 responses).



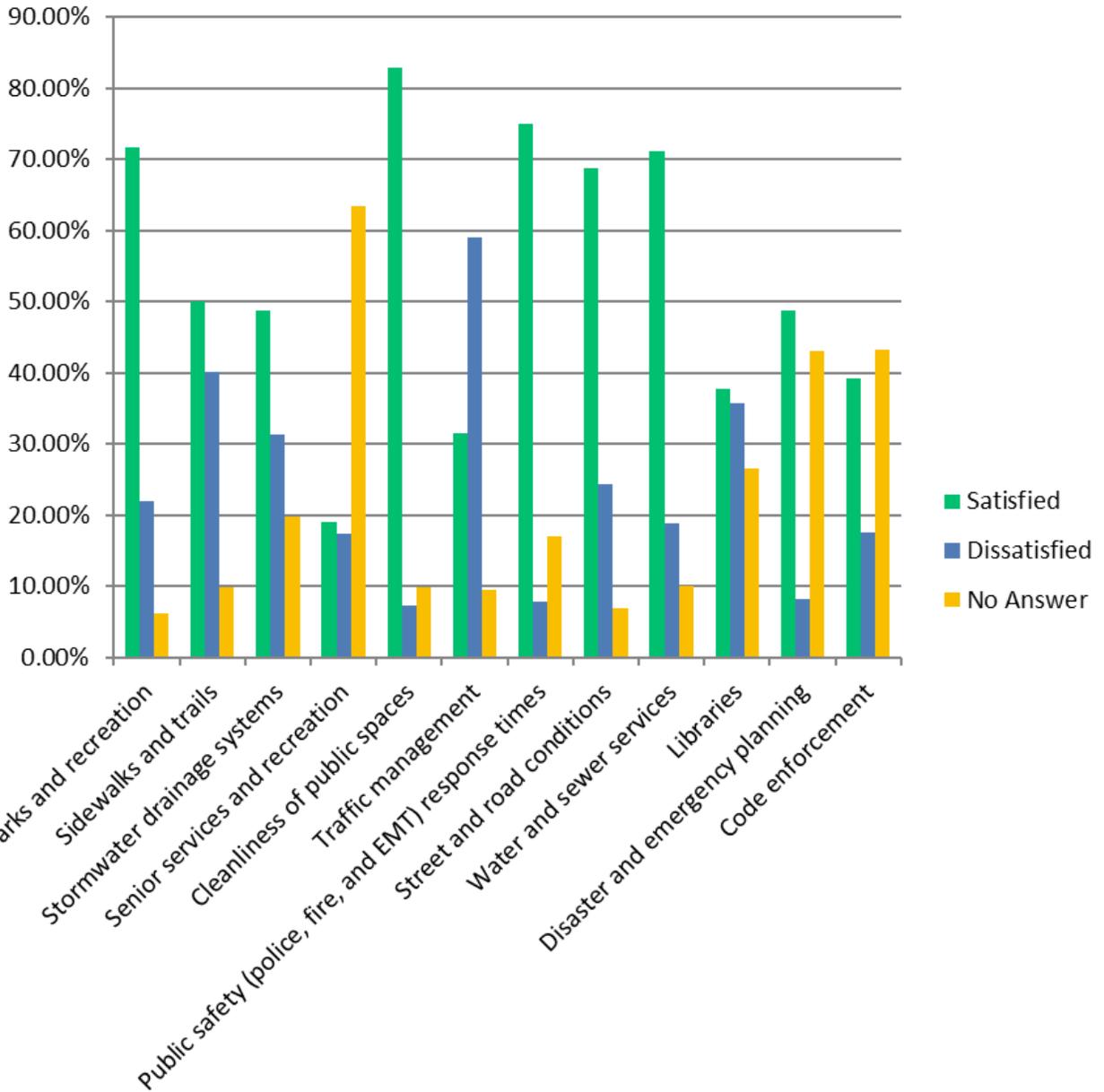
**Comprehensive Plan Update  
City of Richmond Hill**



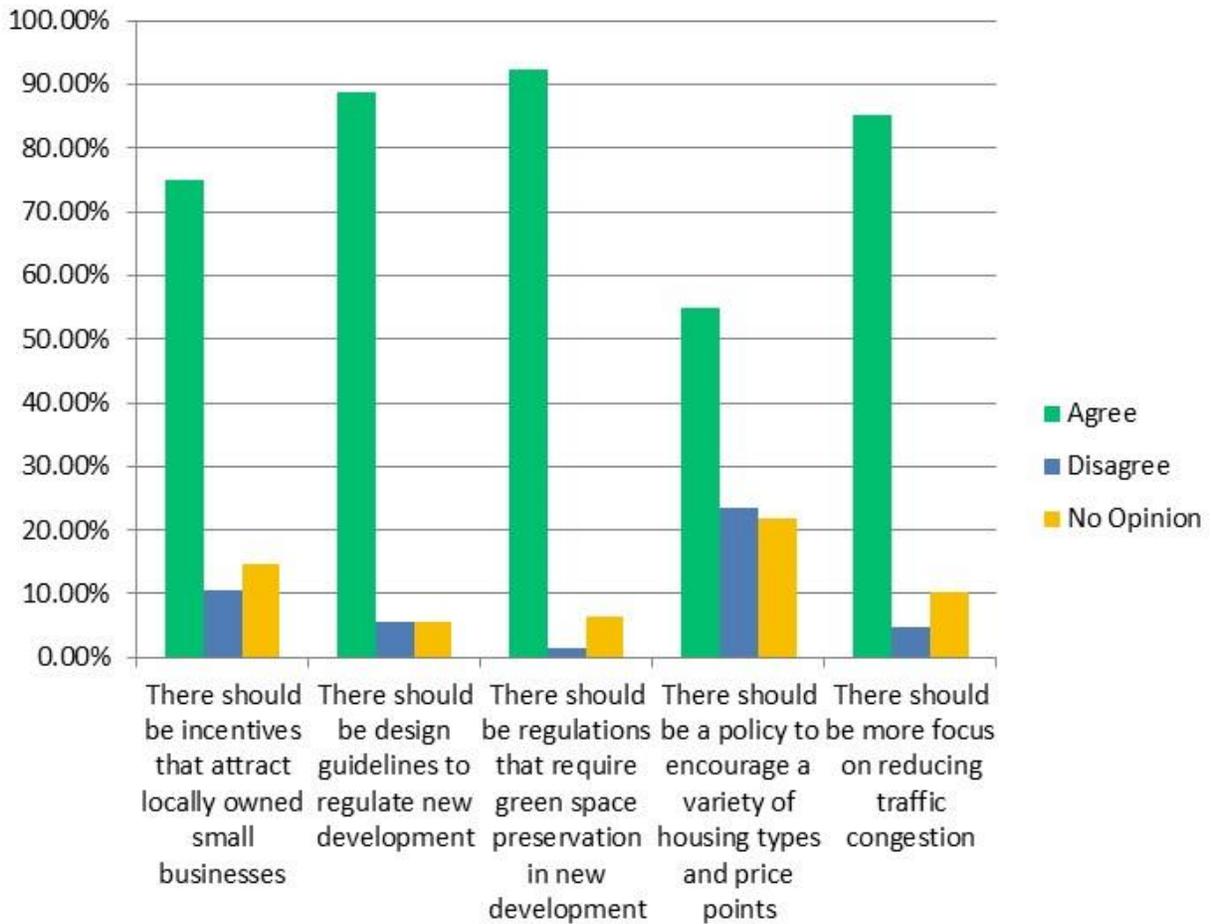
## How much of a priority should the following issues be for Bryan County?



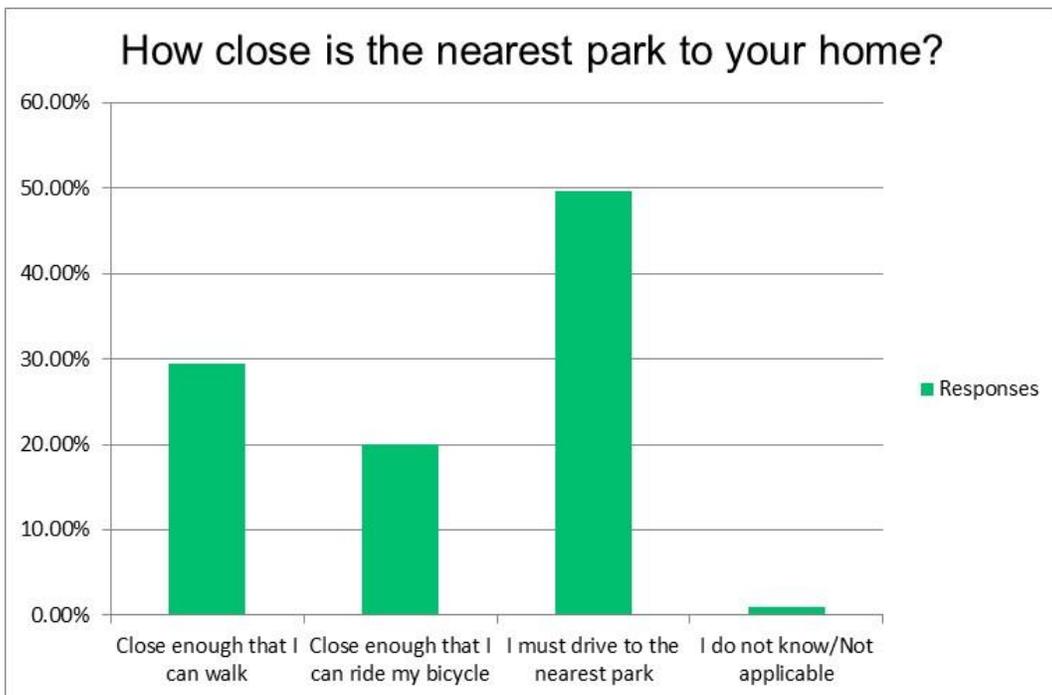
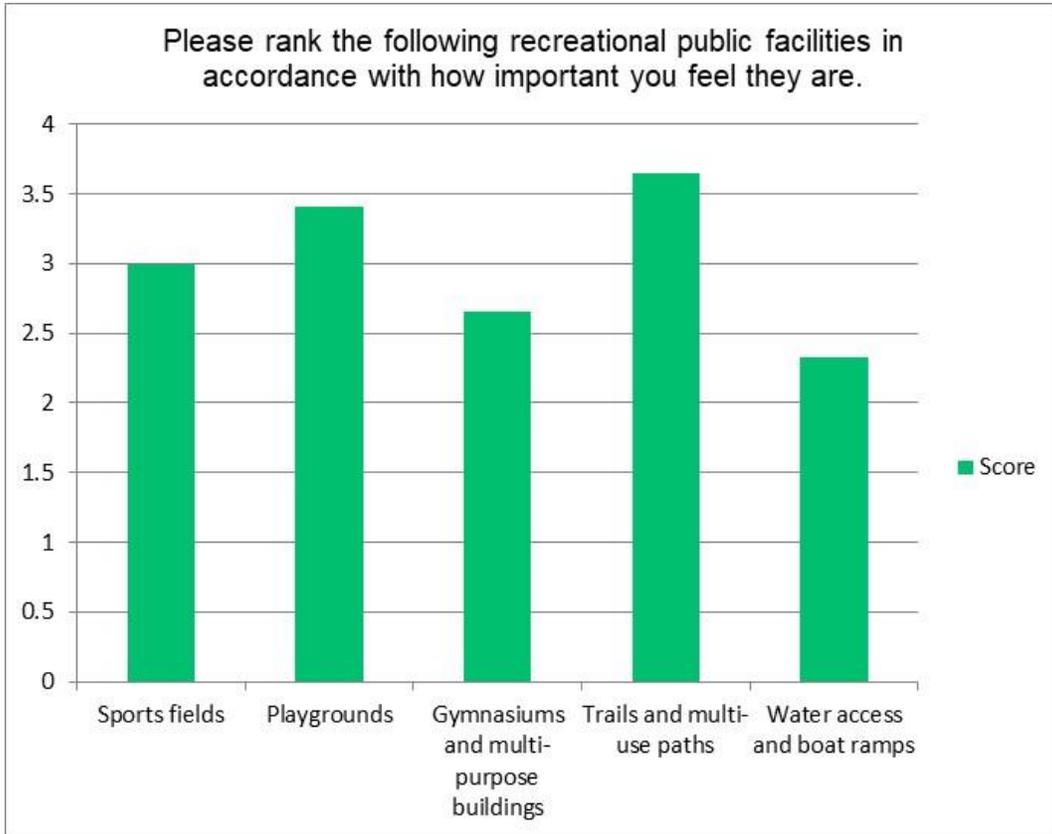
Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following public services or facilities.



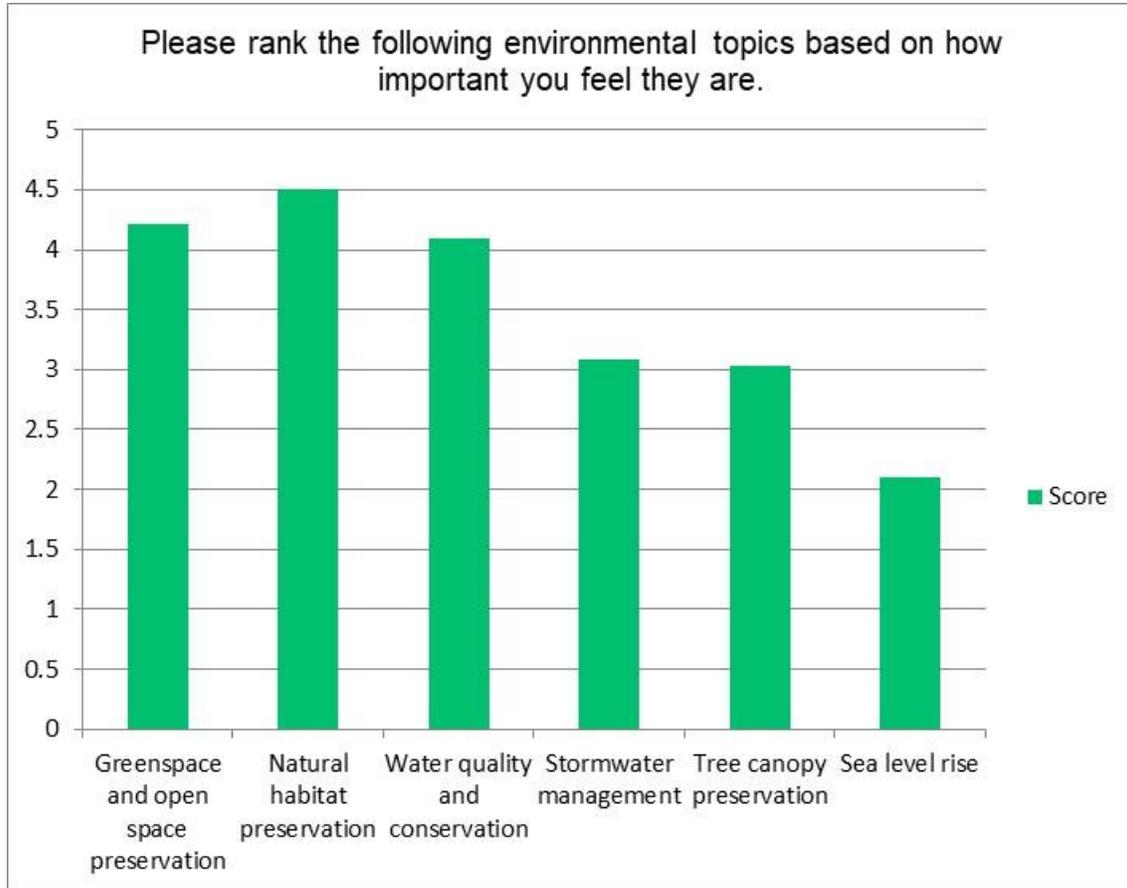
Please indicate whether you agree, disagree, or have no opinion with the following statements.



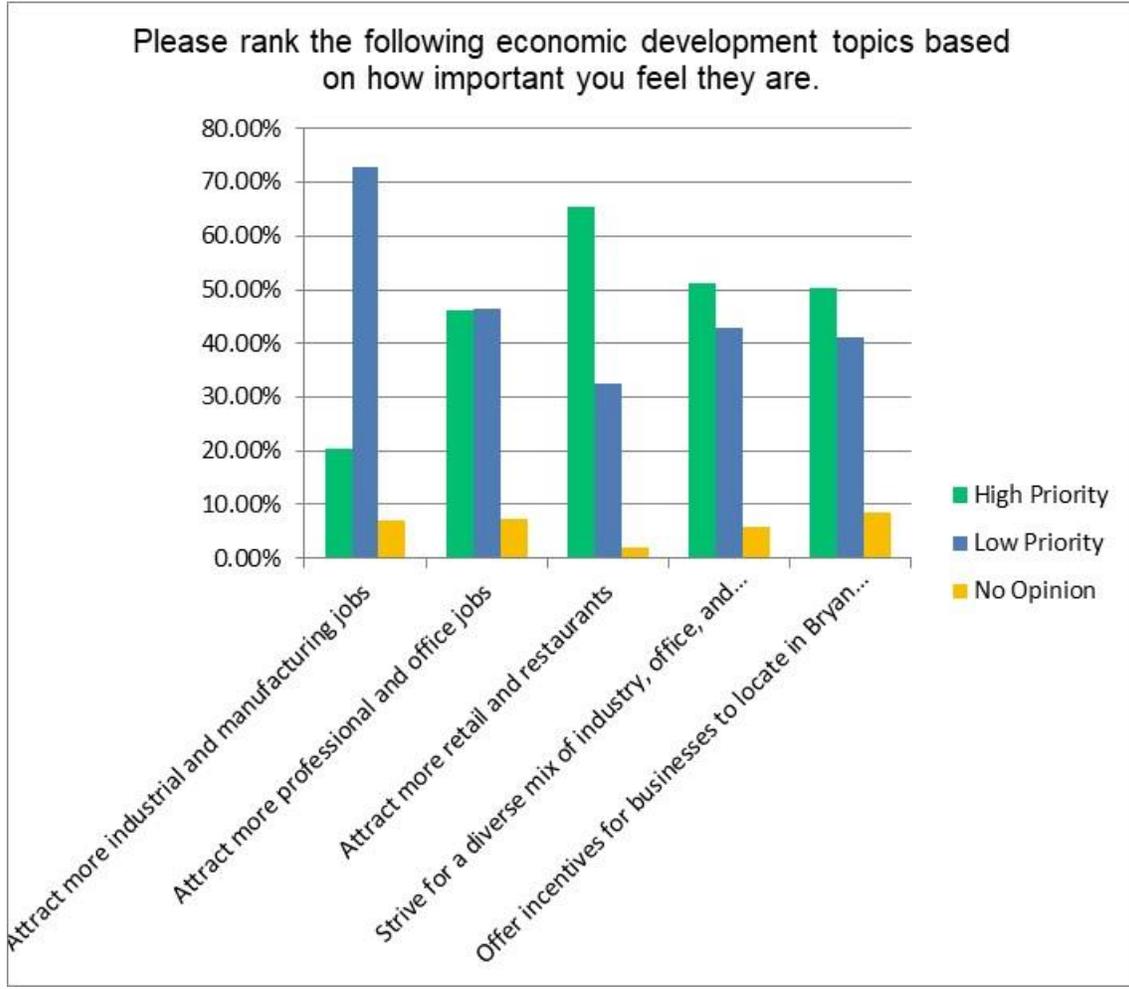
# Comprehensive Plan Update City of Richmond Hill



## Comprehensive Plan Update City of Richmond Hill

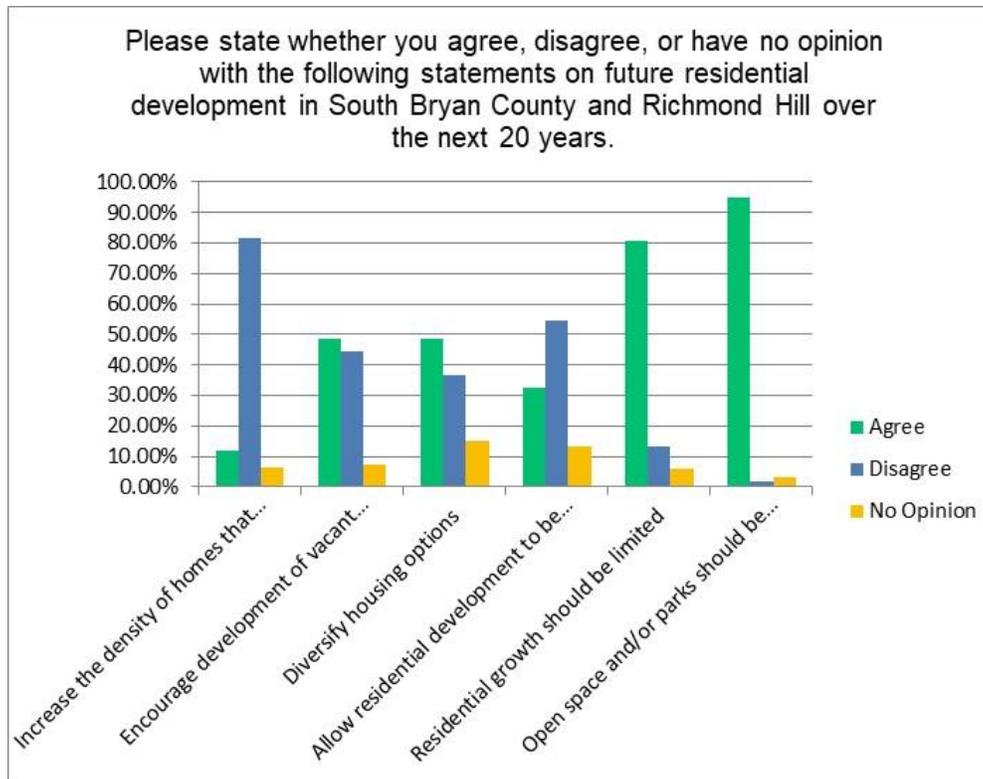
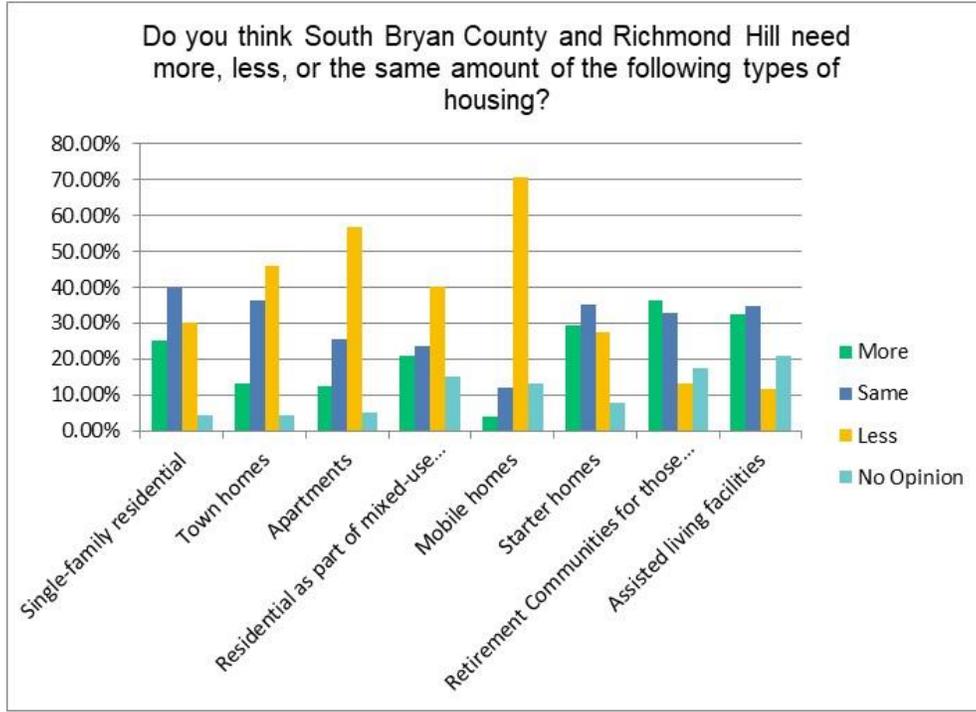


# Comprehensive Plan Update City of Richmond Hill

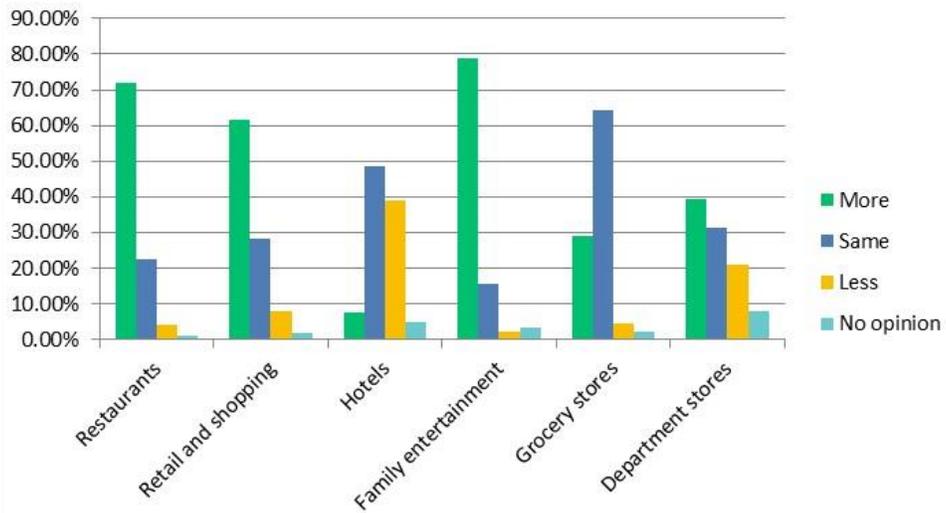


# Comprehensive Plan Update City of Richmond Hill

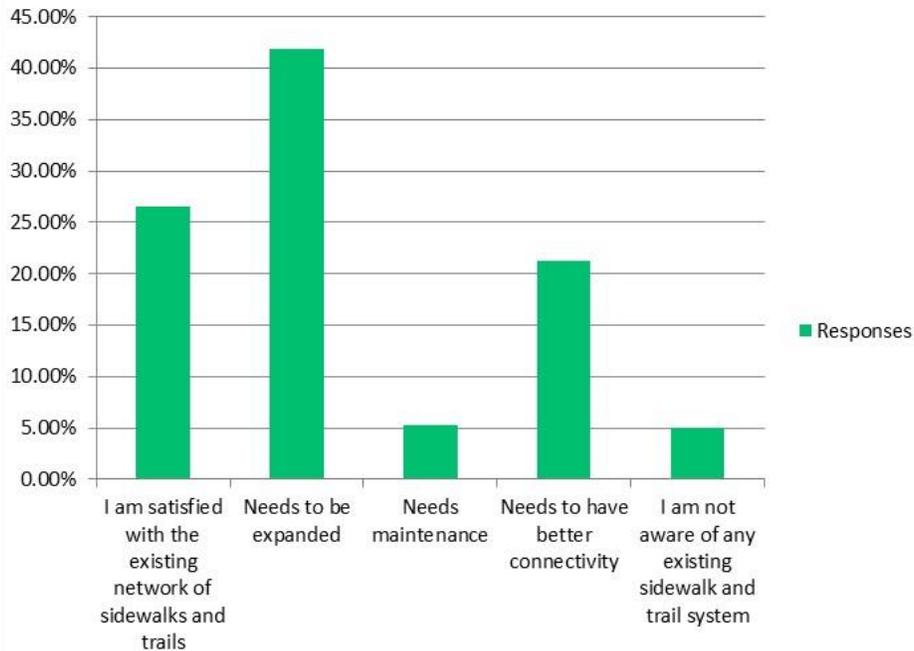
## SOUTH BRYAN COUNTY & RICHMOND HILL: (#15-18)



Do you think South Bryan County and Richmond Hill need more, less, or the same amount of the following commercial businesses?



Which statement best describes your opinion about the existing sidewalk and trail system in South Bryan County and Richmond Hill?



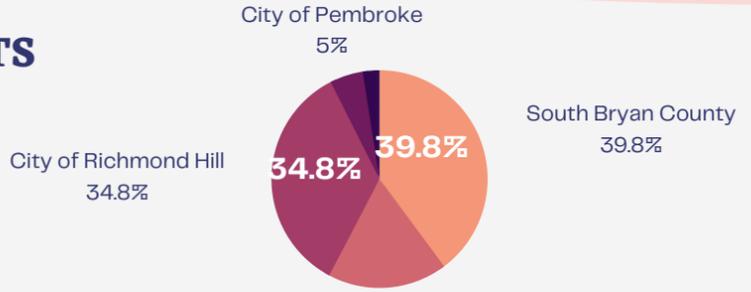
# Bryan County Joint Online Survey

A summary of results

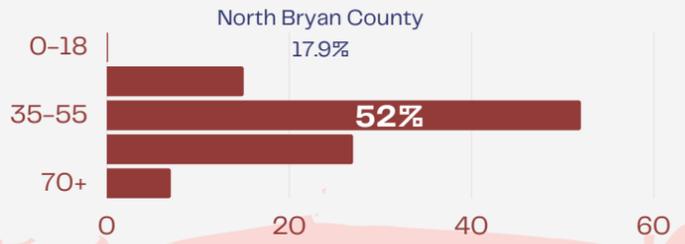
**881 – Total Respondents**

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Majority of respondents lived in **South Bryan County** and the **City of Richmond Hill**



More than half of respondents were aged **35-55**



## TOP 3 REASONS FOR LIVING IN BRYAN COUNTY



1. **Quality of Schools**



2. **Small Town Character**

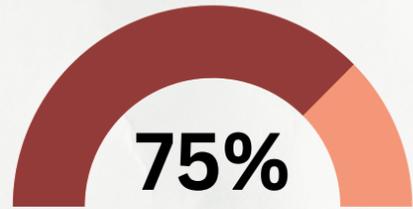


3. **Location in the Coastal GA Region**

## Highest & Lowest Priority Issues for County



## Highest Rated County Public Services



A tie between "**Cleanliness of Public spaces**" and "**Public Safety response times**"

## Parks and Recreation

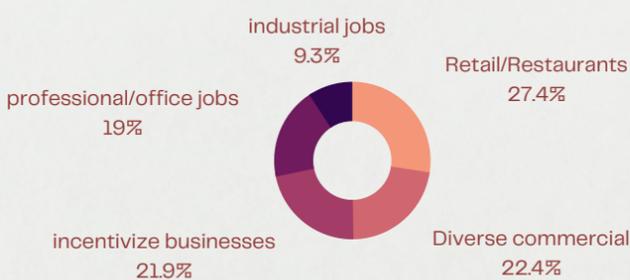
**66%** of respondents must drive to the nearest park



**Trails and Multi-Use Paths** were ranked as the top recreation priority for Bryan County

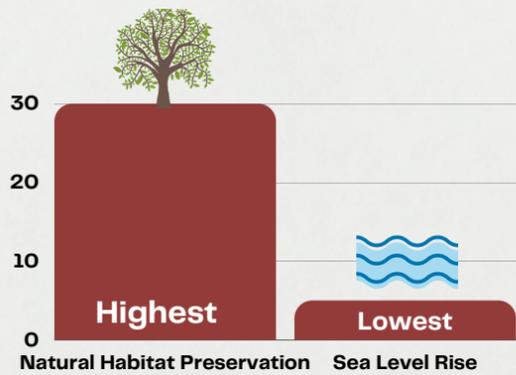
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Respondents would like to attract **more retail and restaurants** and **less industrial jobs**.



## Environment

Respondents ranked **Natural Habitat Preservation** as the top environmental priority for the County, while **Sea Level Rise** was Last.



# Bryan County Joint Public Open House

A summary of results

**51 – Total Attendees**

## GOALS

### HIGHEST RATED GOAL COUNTY-WIDE



Support high level of service for **PARKS AND RECREATION**

### LOWEST RATED GOAL IN NORTH



Support diverse **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### LOWEST RATED GOAL IN SOUTH



Provide a full suite of **LIFECYCLE HOUSING**

## BUDGET

### COMMON FUNDED PROJECT COUNTY-WIDE



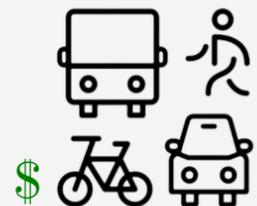
**Recreational Services & Programs**

### TOP FUNDED PROJECT IN NORTH



**Downtown Revitalization (Pembroke)**

### LOWEST FUNDED PROJECT IN SOUTH



**Transportation Alternatives**

## MAP

### North Bryan

24 Total Comments

#### Comments Highlights

- Preserve residential character of Blitchton
- Protect Ogeechee River from pollution from industrial development
- Expand Hendrix Park to include pickleball court and walking path
- Prepare for traffic growth from mega-site

### South Bryan

25 Total Comments

#### Comments Highlights

- Preserve historic Blueberry neighborhood
- Protect and make accessible Lost Swamp
- Maintain and Sterling Creek Park and J.F. Gregory Park
- Better manage traffic issues especially on Harris Trail Rd and Belfast Keller Rd

## COMMENTS

"We would like to keep our small town look and feel. I know we will have growth but we can keep a certain look with our small town character."

"The current plan will only turn northern Bryan County into warehouses, gas stations, and drive through fast food joints."

"Place laws and statutes in place to protect historic Pembroke and its residents and regulate growth"

"Focus on downtown in both Pembroke and Richmond Hill – get grants!!!"

"Community Theater, Sidewalks, Crosswalks, Revitalize current downtown"



## Appendix 6 - Adoption Resolution



## **RESOLUTION**

### **A RESOLUTION BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF RICHMOND HILL, GEORGIA ADOPTING THE RICHMOND HILL 2018 - 2028 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, Richmond Hill has prepared a 2023 Update to the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Minimum standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1), and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of Richmond Hill conducted a public involvement program to gather information from a cross-section of the community, and

**WHEREAS**, the City received input from community residents to assist with the establishment of goals, objectives, and strategies to guide the future of the community, and

**WHEREAS**, Richmond Hill staff met regularly over the same 12-month period with representatives of other agencies to advise them of the findings of the Committee to solicit their input in preparing the goals, objectives, and strategies to guide the future of the community, and

**WHEREAS**, Richmond Hill staff assembled the recommendations of community stakeholders and prepared such other documents in the Comprehensive Plan format required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1), and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 110-12-1 of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Local Planning Requirements requires that the Mayor and Council of Richmond Hill approve the document entitled Richmond Hill 2018 – 2028 Comprehensive Plan Update prior to forwarding it to the Coastal Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and

**WHEREAS**, the Richmond Hill 2018 - 2028 Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1) effective October 1, 2018, and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and includes the community's certification that consideration was given to both the Regional Water Plan and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria as provided in Section 110-12-1-.02(3) of the above mentioned Standards and Procedures in preparing the Plan,

**WHEREAS**, on April 25, 2023, the City transmitted the Plan to the CRC and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and,

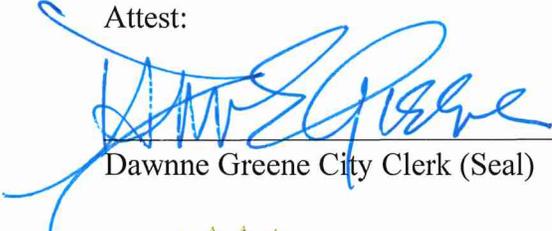
**WHEREAS**, the Plan has been found by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to be in compliance with the above-mentioned Minimum Standards and Procedures;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF RICHMOND HILL, GEORGIA**, that the Richmond Hill 2018 - 2028 Comprehensive Plan Update is hereby approved and adopted.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City staff be directed to provide a copy of this adoption resolution within seven (7) days of local adoption of the approved Plan to the CRC, and to publicize the availability of the adopted Plan as public information by posting the Plan on the City's website.

**ADOPTED** this 6<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2023.

Attest:

  
Dawnne Greene City Clerk (Seal)

Approved:

  
Russ Carpenter, Mayor

