



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2026 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

AGENDA

The City of Buchanan Planning Commission, in compliance with Michigan’s Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a Planning Commission meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.

** Comments may also be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the Zoning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen at kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com*

** Buchanan City will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aide and services to those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the public meeting upon receiving at least one (1) week’s prior notice. Any such individual requiring such aids or services should contact the city in writing or by telephoning: Buchanan City Clerk; 302 North Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3844.*

I. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

IV. Approve Agenda

V. Public Comments - Agenda Items

VI. Approve Minutes

A. Minutes consider approving the Meeting Minutes from April 14th, 2026.

VII. Old Business

A. **Planning Commission Interviews & Appointments**

- 1) Randy Hendrixson
- 2) John Wregglesworth

VIII. Old Business

A. **Master Plan Update**

B. **UDC-Signs**

C. **UDC - Buffering, Trees, Fencing**

D. **UDC - Site Triangle, Parking and Planned Unit Development**

IX. New Business

A. **Proposed Amendment to UDC Table 71-J Use Matrix - Residential**

X. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

XI. Zoning & Community Development Director Comments

XII. Commissioner Comments

XIII. Adjournment



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2026 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

I. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

Chairman Houser called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Roll Call

PRESENT: Chairman Tony Houser, Vice Chair Jen Garry, Commissioner Dan Vigansky, Peter Lysy, Jacob Brown

ABSENT: Matt Pleasant

CITY STAFF: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director and City Clerk Kalla Langston-Weiss

IV. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by Brown to amend the agenda to add a discussion regarding Design Review under New Business item B. Votes carried unanimously.

Motion made by Lysy, seconded by Brown, to approve the amended agenda. Votes carried unanimously.

V. Public Comments - Agenda Items

There was no public comment.

VI. Approve Minutes

A. Minutes- Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from March 10th, 2026. Motion was made by Brown, seconded by Lysy, to approve the minutes as presented. Votes carry unanimously.

VII. Old Business

A. Master Plan - One Herd, One Future - Building a Better Buchanan – Update
Staff provided an update on the Master Plan process. The public survey remains open, and cards promoting the survey were distributed to Planning Commission members for further distribution. Staff noted that approximately 135 survey responses had been received as of the prior week.

The Commission discussed continued public outreach, including additional Facebook posts and distribution through local contacts. Staff noted that the June 9, 2026 regular Planning Commission meeting is expected to be used as an open house/workshop rather than a traditional meeting. Marcy is expected to attend the May meeting to review survey results and discuss materials for the June public engagement event.

The Commission also briefly discussed recognizing Ralph’s service to the Planning Commission, including the possibility of a plaque or similar recognition.

B. Unified Development Code - Buffering, Tree preservation, landscaping and Fencing - Discussion 2

Staff reviewed proposed amendments and draft language related to fences, lighting, screening, landscaping, tree preservation, and related definitions.

Fences

Staff explained that the current fence regulations are limited and proposed expanded language addressing fence height, post height allowances, placement on private property, clear sightline requirements, finished-side orientation, fence types, materials, and maintenance standards.

The Commission discussed open fences, solid fences, chain link fencing, corner lots, secondary front yards, side yards, and fence height. Staff explained that a solid fence would generally be 50% or less open when viewed at an angle. Staff recommended allowing chain link fencing in side and rear yards while continuing to restrict chain link fencing in front yards.

Staff also discussed adding provisions for public recreational fencing, protective measure fencing, and a fence modification process through the Zoning Board of Appeals. The proposed fence modification process would be less stringent than a full variance process and would include notice to nearby property owners but not newspaper publication. The Commission generally indicated support for the proposed direction on fence regulations.

Lighting

Staff stated that the current ordinance does not include lighting standards and recommended adding standards primarily for commercial properties. The proposed language would require lighting plans or photometric plans and would aim to keep light on the subject property, limit glare, and require fixtures to direct light downward rather than upward.

The Commission discussed streetlights and complaints about light glare into residences. Staff noted that city-controlled downtown lights and AEP-controlled neighborhood lights may be addressed through City Hall or AEP service requests.

Screening

Staff discussed creating clearer screening requirements for mechanical equipment, outdoor storage, and refuse containers. The proposed language would address rooftop and ground-mounted mechanical equipment, screening from public view, outdoor storage screening, and screening for dumpsters, recycling bins, grease bins, and similar refuse containers.

The Commission expressed general support for the proposed direction.

Tree Preservation and Tree Lawn Regulations

Staff explained that existing tree preservation language appears to regulate private trees broadly, including permitting and replacement requirements for certain trees. Staff stated that, after discussions with Tony and the tree group, the likely intent should be focused more on public trees and tree lawn areas rather than individual private property trees. Staff recommended removing or revising overly broad private tree preservation requirements and instead referencing the existing code provisions related to public trees and tree lawns. Staff also noted that Redevelopment Ready Communities requirements could be met through other green infrastructure provisions, such as permeable pavers, solar panel language, bioswales, rain gardens, and rain barrels.

The Commission supported staff continuing to work on green infrastructure language, including language for rain barrels that prevents standing water and mosquito issues.

Landscaping

Staff reviewed proposed landscaping requirements for properties other than one- and two-family dwellings. The proposed language would address perimeter landscaping, parking lot landscaping, foundation plantings, transitional buffers, berms, retaining walls, and green infrastructure.

Staff discussed thresholds for when landscaping improvements would be required for expansions: no new landscaping for small additions under 25%, targeted improvements for expansions between 25% and 50%, and full compliance for new developments or expansions over 50%.

Staff noted that front yards for new residential homes would still be required to have grass. Staff also discussed reducing certain planting size requirements, including reducing tree caliper requirements from 2.5 inches to 2 inches.

The Commission discussed commercial setbacks, suburban commercial district character, parking placement, and whether future development should encourage buildings closer to the street with parking to the side or rear. Staff noted this could be considered in future ordinance discussions.

Staff stated that several related ordinance amendments may eventually be grouped together for one public hearing process.

Public Hearing Process

The Commission discussed the public hearing process for zoning ordinance amendments. Staff explained that the Planning Commission serves as the review and recommendation body and that zoning amendments then proceed to the City Commission. The City Commission’s process includes readings and public hearings to provide public transparency and opportunity for input.

C. Unified Development Code - Section 71-30 Signs

Staff reviewed the draft sign ordinance language that had been discussed over the prior two months and explained that it had been placed into the new ordinance format. Staff noted that additional language was still needed regarding sign permit requirements, including language making clear when Downtown Design Review approval is required. Staff discussed prohibited sign types and areas needing further refinement, including vehicle signs, neon or LED lighting that permanently outlines windows or doors, roof signs, and other illuminated or attention-getting sign features. The Commission reviewed an example of bright exterior lighting around a storefront and discussed concerns that this type of lighting could be distracting or inconsistent with Buchanan’s desired character. The Commission generally agreed that permanently installed neon, LED, or similar lighting outlining windows or doors should be restricted or prohibited, while also recognizing the need to distinguish such lighting from temporary holiday decorations and other acceptable decorative lighting. The Commission also discussed roof signs and rooftop display features, including existing recognizable or “iconic” signs or objects. Lowery’s rooftop figures were specifically discussed as an example. Staff explained that the current definition of a sign could include objects or displays used to identify or advertise a business. The Commission discussed whether existing iconic signs should be allowed to remain and whether special language should be created for signs or displays that have become part of the community’s character.

Staff stated that she would research and draft possible “iconic sign” language, including standards such as age, proof of existence, and a review process, so that existing iconic signs could potentially be addressed without allowing new rooftop signs generally.

The Commission expressed general support for the revised sign ordinance layout and directed staff to continue refining the language, including the provisions related to vehicle signs, illuminated window or door outlines, roof signs, and iconic signs. The draft sign ordinance language will be returned to the Planning Commission for further review

VIII. New Business

**A. Discussion - Sections 71-16.G Corner Lot clear sight lines, 771-27 Parking and loading standards and creation of Planned unit development (PUD) process
Clear Sight Lines**

Staff discussed potential revisions to clear sightline requirements, including measuring clear vision areas from the property corner rather than from the curb, since curbs may change over time. Staff suggested that a 20-foot measurement may be appropriate instead of the current 30-foot standard.

The Commission discussed downtown sightline issues, particularly near Main Street and Oak Street, and noted that existing built conditions downtown may limit what can realistically be changed. Staff also discussed the possibility of adding clear vision requirements near driveways.

Parking and Loading Standards

Staff reviewed parking standards and noted that some provisions may be improved or simplified. The Commission discussed parking minimums, possible parking caps, stormwater impacts from excessive parking, and downtown parking perceptions. Staff stated that downtown appears to have sufficient surface parking, although some users may prefer parking directly in front of their destination.

Planned Unit Development

Staff explained that the prior code included Planned Unit Development provisions, but the current code does not provide a process to create new PUDs. Staff discussed how PUDs can provide flexibility for mixed-use buildings, higher-density housing, condominium projects, affordable housing, reduced setbacks, altered parking placement, building height flexibility, and additional open space or amenities.

The Commission discussed prior concerns about PUDs, including past examples, the difference between PUDs and neighborhood plans, administrative approval, and the need for better education and standards. Staff stated that a PUD process could allow the Planning Commission to review a full plan and recommend waivers to the City Commission, rather than requiring multiple separate variances through the ZBA.

There was a general consensus to continue exploring the creation of a PUD process with clear rules, expectations, and review standards.

B. Downtown Design Review Discussion

Staff reviewed issues related to the Downtown Design Review Committee. Staff explained that the current code makes the Design Review Committee the decision-making body for downtown applications, while staff may administratively review certain items. Staff noted that the code lacks a clear appeal process if the Design Review Committee denies an application.

The Commission discussed whether the Design Review Committee should remain a decision-making body, become a recommending body, or whether the Planning Commission should serve as the appeal body. Staff suggested that, for streamlining purposes, the Design Review Committee could remain the decision-making body, with appeals going to the Planning Commission.

The Commission discussed consistency in Design Review decisions, particularly regarding painted brick, historic preservation standards, and Secretary of the Interior standards. Staff recommended improving the ordinance language and design standards so expectations are clearer for applicants and committee members.

The Commission also discussed the possibility of adding alternate members to the Design Review Committee to help with recusals and ensure broader participation.

Staff will continue working with the Design Review Committee and will bring proposed language back for further Planning Commission review.

IX. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

X. Zoning & Community Development Director Comments

Gundersen stated that the Commission is moving in the right direction, noting that the process takes time.

XI. Commissioner Comments

Vigansky commented that people can become impatient with the process, but that it takes time to understand the direction of the work. He stated that administration needs the proper tools in place before the Commission can step back from certain details.

Brown thanked staff and the Commission for their work. He stated that the discussion was productive, respectful, and allowed members to share differing opinions without confrontation.

Garry thanked staff for digging into the ordinance details, explaining the issues, and helping the Commission understand how the proposed language would apply specifically to Buchanan.

Houser thanked the Commission and the Staff.

XII. Adjournment

Houser adjourned the meeting at 8:18 PM.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Chairman Tony Houser



Memorandum

Date: May 4, 2026
 To: Buchanan Planning Commission
 From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director
 Subject: **Planning Commission Vacancy Interviews**

Background

Earlier this year Ralph McDonald resigned from the Commission, creating one vacancy that needs to be filled. Two applications have been received and are attached. Staff has contacted each to confirm they will be able to interview at the beginning of the meeting on May 12th. Interviews typically take approximately 10-15 minutes to learn why the applicant wants to be involved and to explain the expectations of membership on the Commission.

Existing Membership

There are seven members on the Planning Commission which includes one City Commissioner. Terms end June 30th each year and appointments are made for 3-year terms or to fill an unexpired term. Members can remain on the Commission until an appointment has been made. Below is the existing membership with term expirations:

<u>Membership</u>	<u>Term Ending</u>
Vacant	2025
Tony Houser	2026
Jen Gerry	2027
Jake Brown	2026
Matt Pleasant	2026
Peter Lysy	2025
Dan Vigansky	2026 City Commissioner

Mr. Lysy and the vacant position will have terms expiring in June 2028.

The Planning Commission Bylaws state “members must be qualified electors of the City of Buchanan or another local unit of government except that no more than 2 (2) members may reside outside of the city

Recommendation

Please interview the two applicants and make a recommendation to the City Commission regarding an appointment.



PC

302 Redbud Trail North
Buchanan, MI 49107
Tel: (269) 695-3844
Fax: (269) 695-4330

Application for Board, Commission, Committee or Council Appointment

Please note that all information provided on this application is public information and potentially subject to disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, please do not list confidential information. Applications are kept on file for three calendar years.

Please return the completed form to the City Clerk's Office or clerk@cityofbuchanan.com

Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: Randy M. Hendrixson

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

City: Buchanan State: MI Zip Code: 49107

Telephone Number: [REDACTED] Second Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: [REDACTED]

Name of Employer: Building 324

General Question

Are you a registered voter within the City of Buchanan? Yes: No:

Do you own property within the City of Buchanan? Yes: No:

Do you own a business located within the City of Buchanan? Yes: No:

Please explain why you are interested in being appointed to a board.

I am interested in serving on the planning commision.

As a city property owner I believe I bring a great vantage point to the group.

Please describe your background, ability, skills or special qualifications that would strengthen the board you are interested in.

Extensive knowledge, experience and service to the City of Buchanan and surrounding area.

Served for 10 years on Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce as board member and executive director.

311020211

Please explain your professional experience and background:

Business owner responsible for helping over 30+ businesses get started and thrive in the City of Buchanan.

Extensive knowledge of business, economic & non profit operations in the City of Buchanan.

I currently own and operate 4 businesses in the city including the oldest business in the City of Buchanan.

Please explain any organizations or community groups you have been involved with:

5+ years on the DDA including Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary. I serve as a Trustee on the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation, Board member for the Buchanan Area MGCF,

Original board member for the Buchanan Promise board, 10+ years Board Member SW Michigan United Way, 10+ years Board Member Corewell Health

Served as board member and Chairperson for Live Buchanan board, Buchanan Common Board for 10+ years, etc

Have you attended a meeting, reviewed an agenda packet, visited the city's website, or talked with others to better understand the board you are requesting appointment to?

Yes. I have for years attended city boards and commission meetings.

Do you have other information or thoughts you would like to share that should be considered when the application is reviewed?

I believe my experience and time served with city-wide operations, business, non-profit and volunteer boards

What is your availability: Morning Afternoon Evening
 Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

If appointed do you agree to the following:

Attend at least 75% of all applicable meetings? Yes: No:
Attend any joint meetings or training provided by the City? Yes: No:
Abide by the City's Ethics Policy? Yes: No:
Abide by the applicable adopted Bylaws? Yes: No:

Signature: Randy Hendrixson

Date: 3-10-2026

Appointed Board, Commission, Committee and Council Opportunities

The City has many boards, commissions, committees and councils that work best when composed of diverse individuals with relevant qualifications. Please visit the city's website www.cityofbuchanan.com to learn more about the different opportunities. In most cases, the board, commission, committee or council has a rolling membership with members appointed in the summer to a three-year term. Please review the boards, commissions, committees and councils listed below and check the one(s) you are interested in joining. If interested in more than one board, please provide preference order.

Please also identify your related experience, and feel free to apply even if you do not have the suggested experience or professional background. The City needs citizens with diverse backgrounds on its boards and commissions, and we appreciate your application!

Board of Review

- Banking/Finance Property Appraisal/Assessing
- Real Estate/Development/Law (no agents or brokers)
- Other _____

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

- Construction Real Estate/Development/Law
- Environmental Regulations Banking/Finance
- Other _____

Buchanan Area Recreation Board (B.A.R.B.)

- Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations Forestry/Landscape Architecture
- Finance or Property Maintenance/Leasing Fitness/Recreation/Sports/Coaching
- Other _____

Buchanan Fine Arts Council

- Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations Finance/Budgeting
- Performing Arts _____ Event Planning
- Other _____

Buchanan Tree Friends

- Horticulture/Landscape Architecture Forestry
- Fundraising/Budgeting Advertising/Marketing
- Other _____

Common Committee

- Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations
- Performing Arts
- Other _____
- Finance/Budgeting
- Event Planning

Compensation Committee

- Budgeting and Finance
- Policy Making
- Other _____
- Public Sector Compensation

Construction Board of Appeals

- Architecture/Design
- Building/Construction/Trades
- Other _____
- Engineering
- Law

Downtown Design Review Committee

- Architecture/Design
- Finance or Property Maintenance/Leasing
- Other _____
- Construction/Development
- Historic Preservation/History

District Library Board

- Policy Making
- Strategic Planning/Grants and Endowments
- Other _____
- Budgeting/Finance/Fundraising
- Knowledge of Libraries

Buchanan Farmers' Market (subcommittee of the Common Committee)

- Advertising/Marketing
- Finance/Budgeting
- Other _____
- Event Planning
- Entrepreneurial

Friends of McCoy's Creek Trail (subcommittee of the B.A.R.B.)

- Bicycling/Walking/Walking
- Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations
- Other _____
- Environment
- Parks and Recreation

Friends of Oakridge Cemetery

- Funeral Professional
- Horticulture/Landscape Architecture
- Other _____
- History
- Law

Joint Water Sewer Board

- Engineering
- Banking/Finance
- Public Health
- Other _____

One Buchanan

- Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations
- Event Planning
- Other _____
- Social Services
- Budgeting/Finance

X

Planning Commission

- Architecture or Landscape Architecture
- Urban Planning/Land Use/Zoning
- Land or Real Estate Development
- Other **business use of prior and existing properties**
- Banking/Finance
- Building/Construction
- Civil Engineering

Zoning Board of Appeals

- Architecture or Landscape Architecture
- Building/Construction or Engineering
- Other _____
- Urban Planning/Land Use/Zoning
- Land or Real Estate Development

March 2026

302 Redbud
North Buchanan, MI
49107 Tel: (269)
695-3844 Fax: (269)
695-4330

Application for Board, Commission, Committee or Council Appointment

Please note that all information provided on this application is public information and potentially subject to disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, please do not list confidential information. Applications are kept on file for three calendar years.

Please return the completed form to the City Clerk's Office or

clerk@cityofbuchanan.com Applicant Information

Name of Applicant:

John

Wregglesworth_____

Mailing Address:

City: Buchanan State: MI Zip Code: 49107 Telephone Number: _____

Second Phone Number: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Name of Employer: Affordable Asphalt and Bulldozing

General Question

Are you a registered voter within the City of Buchanan? Yes: No: Do

you own property within the City of Buchanan? Yes: No:

Do you own a business located within the City of Buchanan? Yes: No:

Please explain why you are interested in being appointed to a board.

I am interested in joining the Planning Committee because I've lived in Buchanan my whole life and this town means a lot to me. I've always tried to do my part, whether that meant working with the city crews when they needed help or helping to execute Thrill on the Hill all those summers. When something needed done, I showed up and helped where I could.

I want to see Buchanan continue to improve and grow the right way without losing what makes it special. Serving on the planning committee would give me the chance to give back to the town that's given me so much to help make sure decisions are made with common sense and the best

interests of the community in mind.

Please describe your background, ability, skills or special qualifications that would strengthen the board you are interested in.

I bring a lifelong connection to Buchanan along with practical, hands-on experience that I believe would be valuable to the planning committee. I have lived here my entire life and have always taken pride in helping the city whenever I could.

I am also a 25-year business owner in Buchanan, operating an asphalt and excavating company that has worked consistently with the city throughout that time. Through this work, I have a strong understanding of how city projects function from the ground up-starting with planning and budgeting, through construction and coordination, all the way to project completion. I understand what works, what doesn't and how decisions made early can impact costs, timelines and the final result.

My experience gives me practical, common-sense perspective. I know what it takes to turn plans into finished projects, and I believe that understanding would help strengthen the board and support smart, responsible growth for Buchanan.

www.cityofbuchanan.com

Please explain your professional experience and background:

Please see above answers.

Please explain any organizations or community groups you have been involved with:

- Buchanan Westerners Riding Club - 15 years
- Thrill on the Hill Summer - all years

Have you attended a meeting, reviewed an agenda packet, visited the city's website, or talked with others to better understand the board you are requesting appointment to?

Yes this came about when I interviewed for the DDA, afterward Kalla and Tony reached out to me about my interest in the Planning Committee, which I think is actually a better fit for me with my experience.

Do you have other information or thoughts you would like to share that should be considered when the application is reviewed?

No I think the rest of the questions have covered that.

What is your availability: ___ Morning ___ Afternoon ___x_ Evening


Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday ___ Friday If appointed do you agree to the following:

Attend at least 75% of all applicable meetings? Yes: No: ___

Attend any joint meetings or training provided by the City? Yes: No: ___

Abide by the City's Ethics Policy? Yes: No: ___

Abide by the applicable adopted Bylaws? Yes: No: ___

Signature: 

Date: 4-2-26

www.cityofbuchanan.com

Appointed Board, Commission, Committee and Council Opportunities

The City has many boards, commissions, committees and councils that work best when composed of diverse individuals with relevant qualifications. Please visit the city's website www.cityofbuchanan.com to learn more about the different opportunities. In most cases, the board, commission, committee or council has a rolling membership with members appointed in the summer to a three-year term. Please review the boards, commissions, committees and councils listed below and check the one(s) you are interested in joining. If interested in more than one board, please provide preference order.

Please also identify your related experience, and feel free to apply even if you do not have the suggested experience or professional background. The City needs citizens with diverse backgrounds on its boards and commissions, and we appreciate your application!

___ **Board of Review**

- ___ Banking/Finance ___ Property Appraisal/Assessing
- ___ Real Estate/Development/Law (no agents or brokers)
- ___ Other

___ **Brownfield Redevelopment Authority**

- ___ Construction ___ Real Estate/Development/Law
- ___ Environmental Regulations ___ Banking/Finance
- ___ Other

_____ **Buchanan Area Recreation Board (B.A.R.B).**

___ Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations ___ Forestry/Landscape Architecture ___
Finance or Property Maintenance/Leasing ___ Fitness/Recreation/Sports/Coaching ___ Other

_____ **Buchanan Fine Arts Council**

___ Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations ___ Finance/Budgeting ___
Performing Arts ___ Event Planning
___ Other

_____ **Buchanan Tree Friends**

___ Horticulture/Landscape Architecture ___ Forestry
___ Fundraising/Budgeting ___ Advertising/Marketing ___ Other

www.cityofbuchanan.com

_____ **Common Committee**

___ Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations ___ Finance/Budgeting ___
Performing Arts ___ Event Planning
___ Other

_____ **Compensation Committee**

___ Budgeting and Finance ___ Public Sector Compensation ___ Policy Making
___ Other

_____ **Construction Board of Appeals**

___ Architecture/Design ___ Engineering
___ Building/Construction/Trades ___ Law
___ Other

_____ **Downtown Design Review Committee**

___ Architecture/Design ___ Construction/Development ___ Finance or Property
 Maintenance/Leasing ___ Historic Preservation/History ___ Other

___ **District Library Board**

___ Policy Making ___ Budgeting/Finance/Fundraising ___ Strategic Planning/Grants and
 Endowments ___ Knowledge of Libraries ___ Other

___ **Buchanan Farmers' Market (subcommittee of the Common
 Committee)** ___ Advertising/Marketing ___ Event Planning

___ Finance/Budgeting ___ Entrepreneurial
 ___ Other

___ **Friends of McCoy's Creek Trail (subcommittee of the B.A.R.B.)**

___ Bicycling/Walking/Walking ___ Environment
 ___ Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations ___ Parks and Recreation ___ Other

www.cityofbuchanan.com

___ **Friends of Oakridge Cemetery**

___ Funeral Professional ___ History
 ___ Horticulture/Landscape Architecture ___ Law
 ___ Other

___ **Joint Water Sewer Board**

___ Engineering ___ Banking/Finance ___ Public Health ___ Other

___ **One Buchanan**

___ Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations ___ Social Services
 ___ Event Planning ___ Budgeting/Finance ___ Other

Planning Commission

Architecture or Landscape Architecture Banking/Finance Urban Planning/Land Use/Zoning Building/Construction Land or Real Estate Development Civil Engineering Other

Zoning Board of Appeals

Architecture or Landscape Architecture Urban Planning/Land Use/Zoning Building/Construction or Engineering Land or Real Estate Development Other

March 2026

www.cityofbuchanan.com

Memorandum



Date: May 4, 2026
To: Planning Commission Members
From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director
Subject: **Master Plan Update Discussion 5 – Survey Results - Update and Next Steps**

Background

During the January 2026 meeting, Marcy Hamilton representative from the Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) attended the meeting and reviewed the timeframe for the creation of the update of the 2021 Master Plan.

Survey Results

Marcy Hamilton from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission will be at the meeting to review the survey results and discuss documents for the Tuesday, June 9th Open House. Staff will also be hosting a pop-up event on Saturday, June 13th at the Farmers Market.

The survey went live on March 24th and was available until Monday, April 20th. Outreach regarding the survey has included the following:

- Buchanan public school backpacks for grades pre-K through 6th along with the electronic email that is sent. The flyers were in the March 26th backpack.
- Posters and flyers were distributed left: public library, senior center, American Legion, RAM, Roti Roti
- The flyer was posted on the city's Facebook page Friday, April 3rd and will be likely be posted two or three more times.
- Information was included on the water bill that went out on April 1st.
- Information was placed on the city's website and can be found by searching "master plan."

Attached are the survey results for review and discussion. One hundred eighty-one (181) individuals responded to the survey or ten percent (10%) of the households. This is down from the 2021 master plan where 481 responded. Based on Census Reporter the population of Buchanan is 4,223 with 1,752 households.

To promote the public visioning session, staff will rely on the handouts and flyers at the public library, senior center, American Legion, RAM and Roti Roti in addition to Facebook postings.

MemorandumProject title

During the March meeting the Commission concluded the title of the plan would be “One Herd, One Future – Building a Better Buchanan.” This appears on all documents.

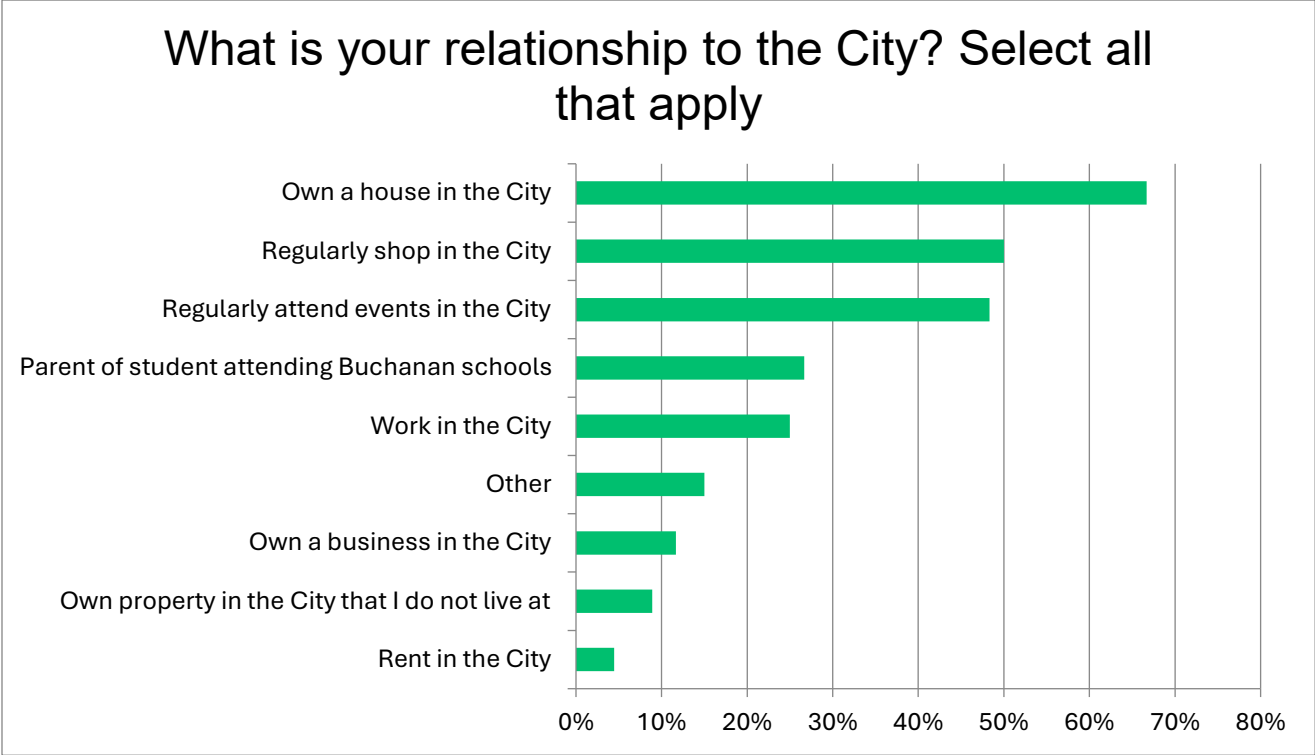
Review of Background/Supplemental Information

During the March 10th meeting background and supplemental information was reviewed. Ms. Hamilton answered questions.

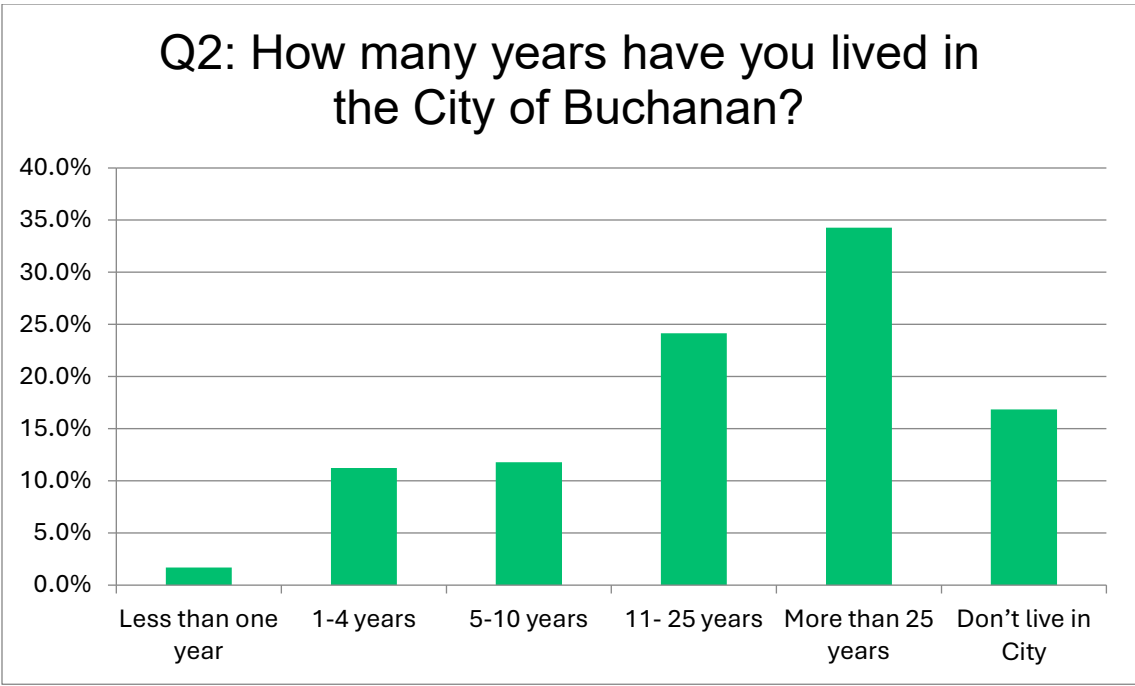
Next Steps

Review the survey results prior to the meeting and compile a list of information that should be expanded upon as part of the open house.

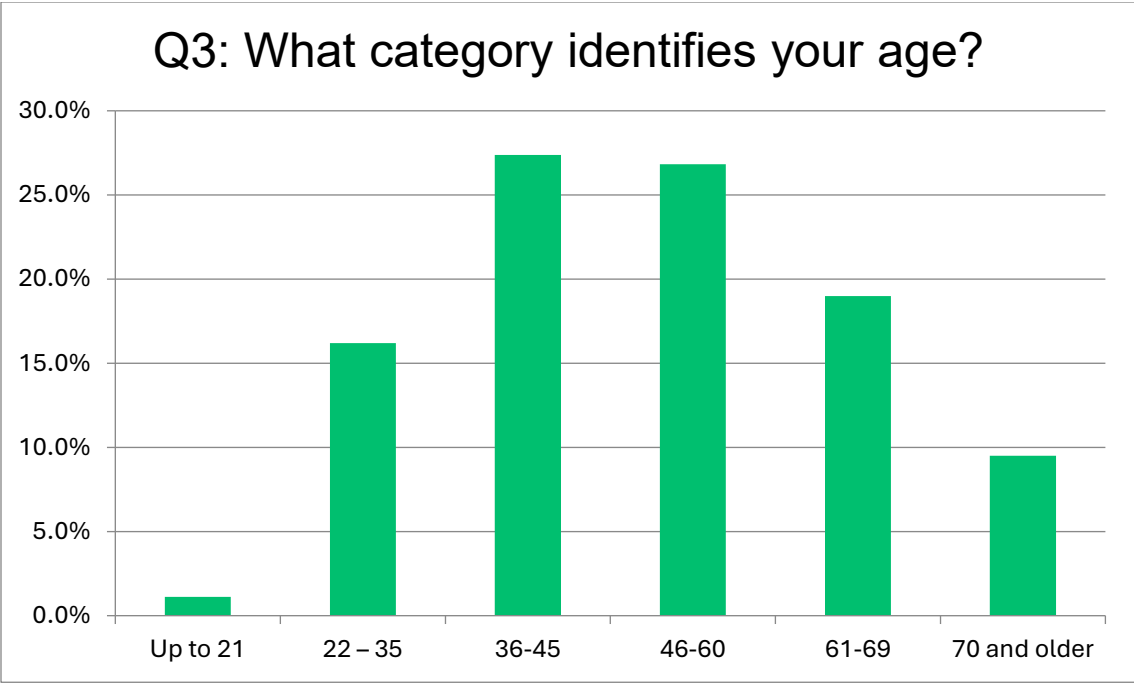
Q1: What is your relationship to the City? Select all that apply.



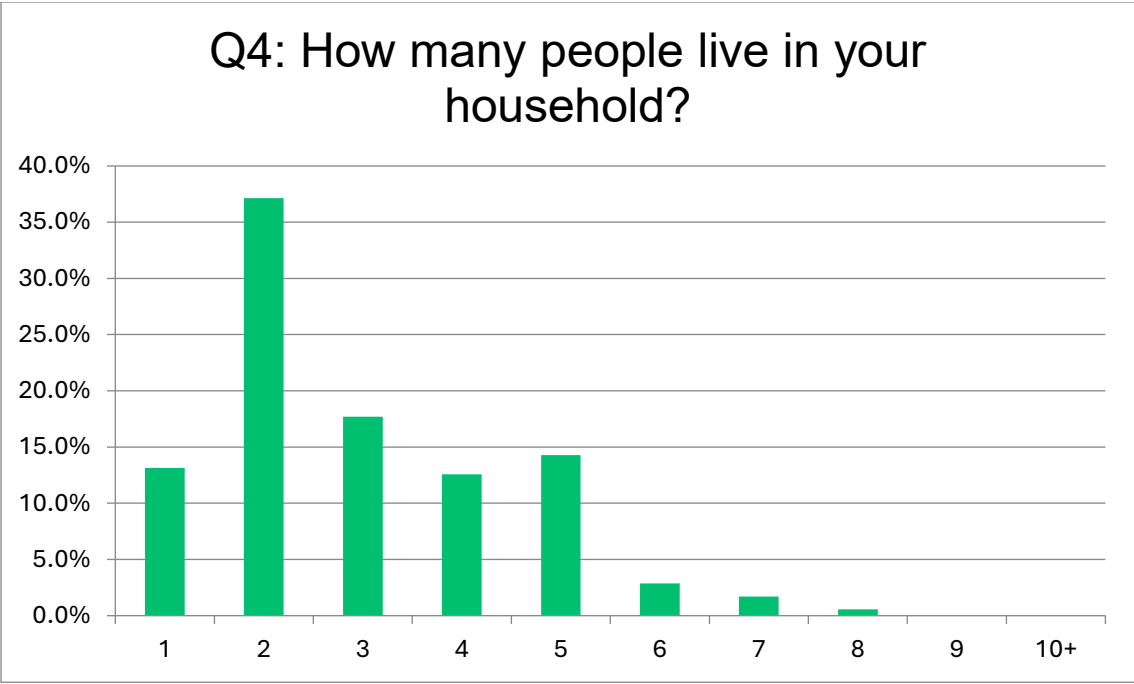
Answer Choices	Responses	
Own a house in the City	66.7%	121
Regularly shop in the City	50.0%	90
Regularly attend events in the City	48.3%	87
Parent of student attending Buchanan schools	26.7%	48
Work in the City	25.0%	45
Other	15.0%	27
Own a business in the City	11.7%	21
Own property in the City that I do not live at	8.9%	16
Rent in the City	4.4%	8
	Answered	181
	Skipped	0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than one year	1.7%	3
1-4 years	11.2%	20
5-10 years	11.8%	21
11- 25 years	24.2%	44
More than 25 years	34.3%	61
Don't live in City	16.9%	30
	Answered	179
	Skipped	2

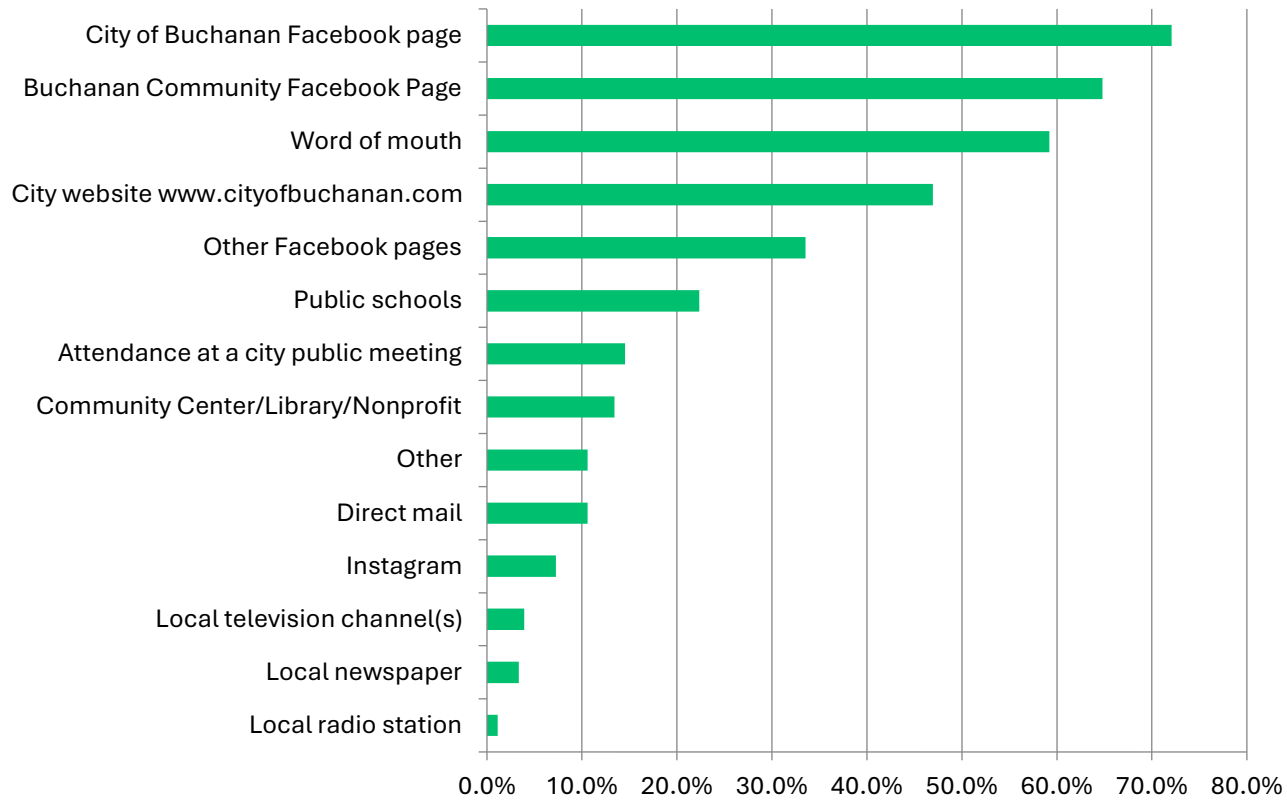


Answer Choices	Responses	
Up to 21	1.7%	3
22 – 35	16.2%	29
36-45	27.4%	49
46-60	26.8%	48
61-69	19.0%	34
70 and older	9.5%	17
	Answered	180
	Skipped	1



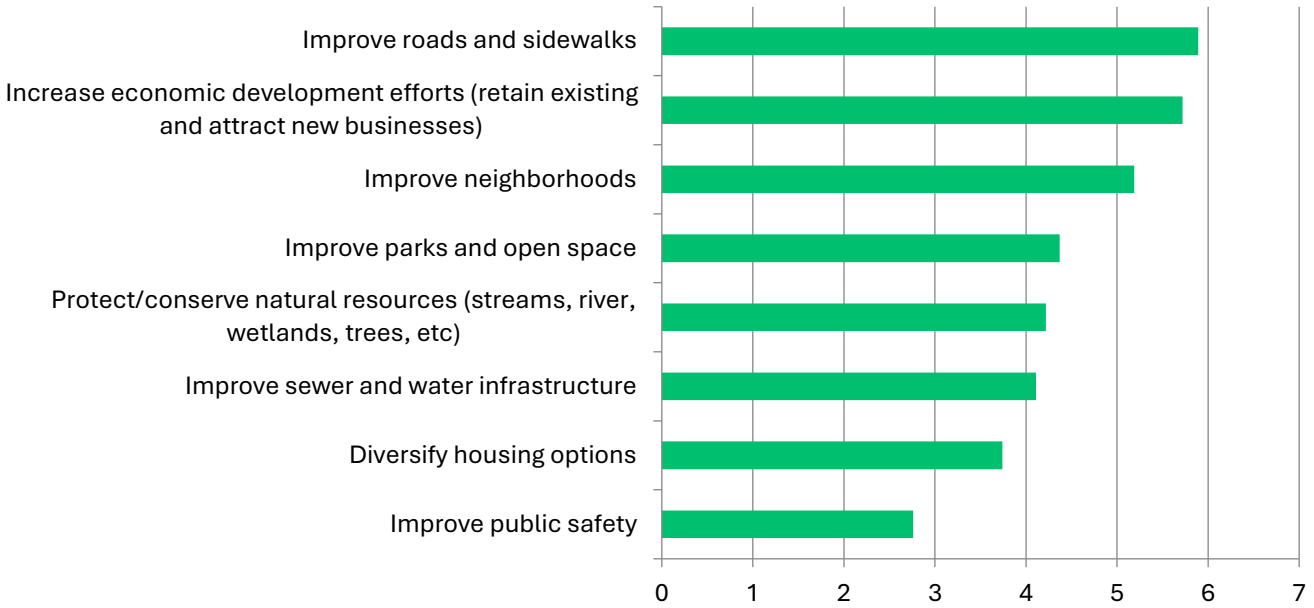
Answer Choices	Responses	
1	13.1%	23
2	37.1%	65
3	17.7%	31
4	12.6%	23
5	14.3%	25
6	2.9%	5
7	1.7%	3
8	0.6%	1
9	0.0%	0
10+	0.0%	0
	Answered	176
	Skipped	5

Where do you find information about the City
(such as events, public meetings, city news)?
Select all that apply.

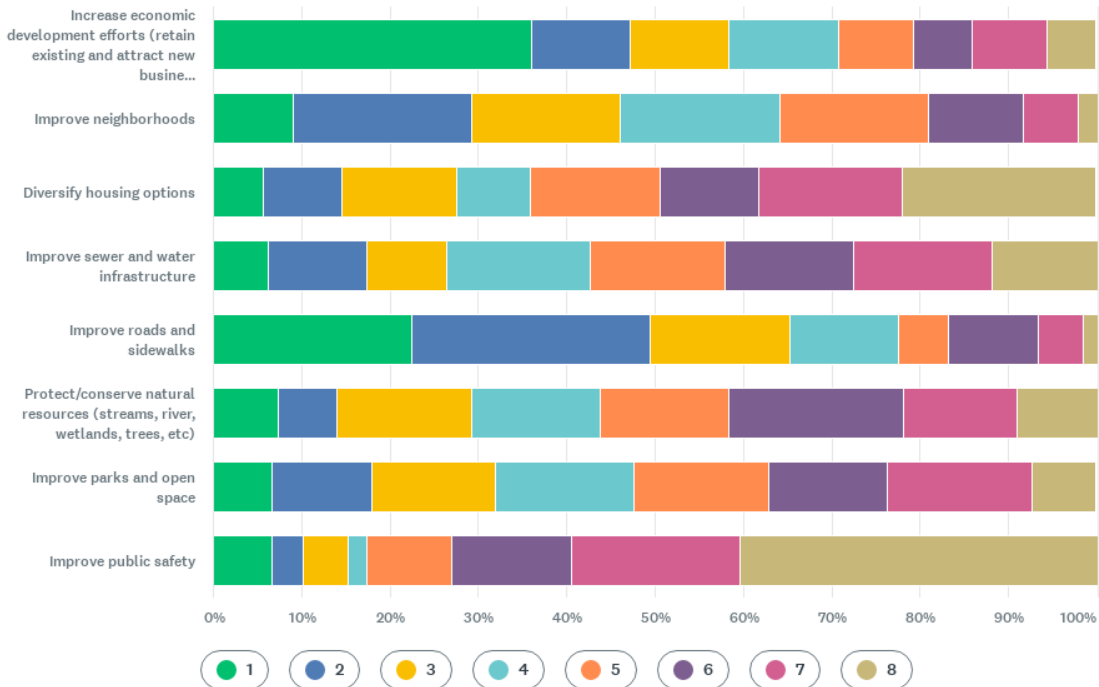


Answer Choices	Responses	
City of Buchanan Facebook page	72.1%	131
Buchanan Community Facebook Page	64.8%	116
Word of mouth	59.2%	107
City website www.cityofbuchanan.com	46.9%	84
Other Facebook pages	33.5%	60
Public schools	22.4%	40
Attendance at a city public meeting	14.5%	26
Community Center/Library/Nonprofit	13.4%	24
Direct mail	10.6%	19
Other	10.6%	19
Instagram	7.3%	13
Local television channel(s)	3.9%	7
Local newspaper	3.4%	6
Local radio station	1.1%	2
	Answered	181
	Skipped	1

Q6: Which of the following topics should be the highest priority for implementation? Rank 1-8

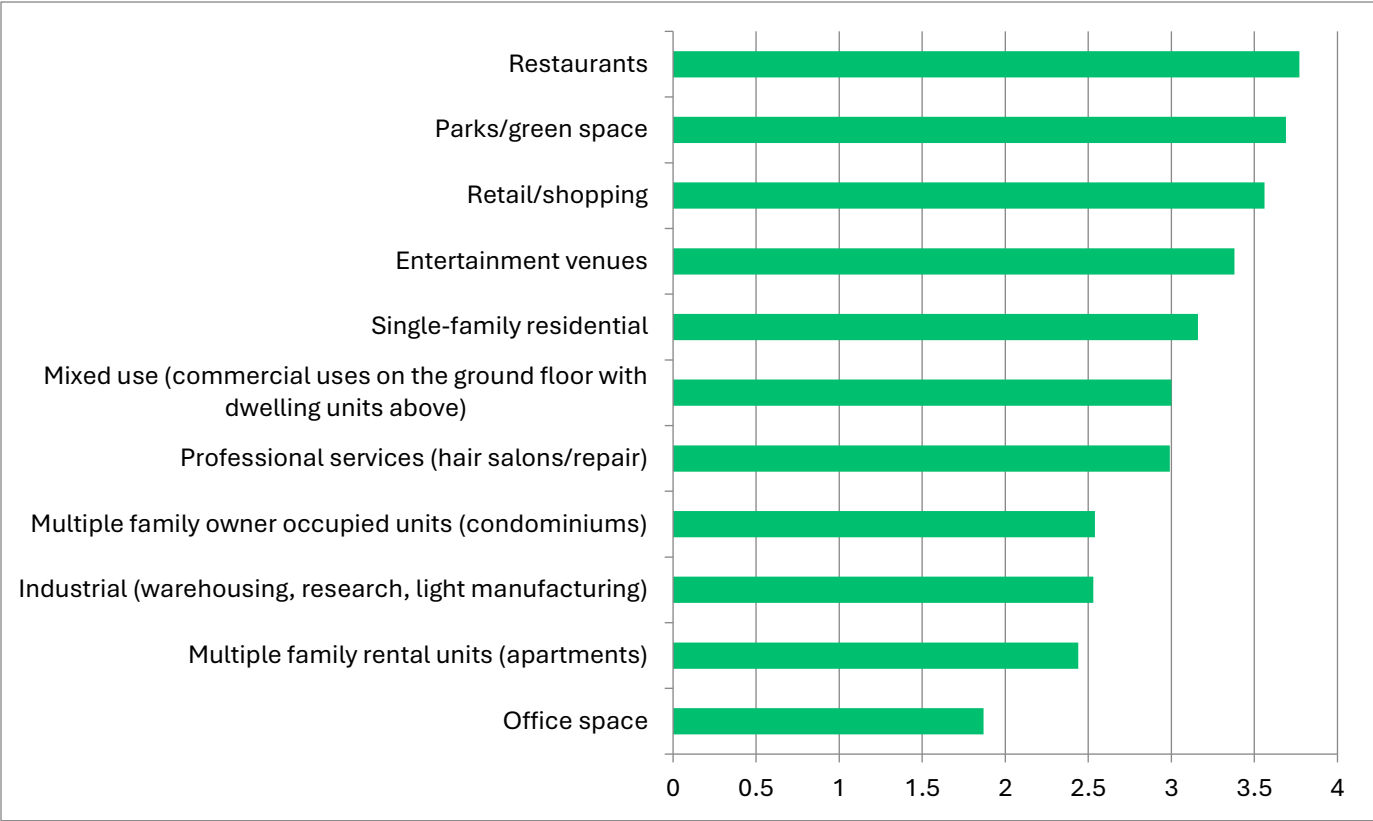


The higher weighted average indicates greater priority overall.



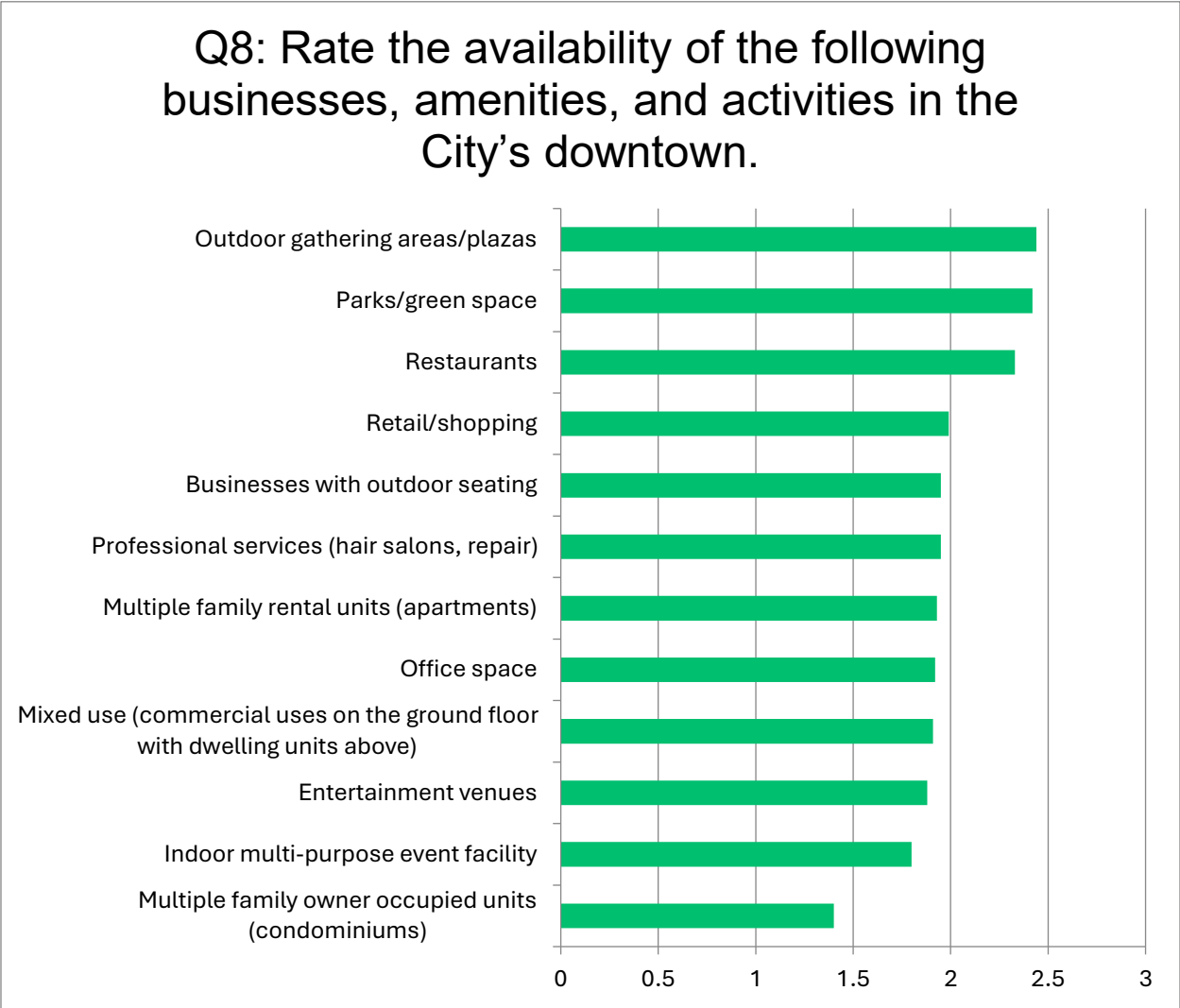
Answer Choices	Weighted Score
Improve roads and sidewalks	5.89
Increase economic development efforts (retain existing and attract new businesses)	5.72
Improve neighborhoods	5.19
Improve parks and open space	4.37
Protect/conserve natural resources (streams, river, wetlands, trees, etc)	4.22
Improve sewer and water infrastructure	4.11
Diversify housing options	3.74
Improve public safety	2.76
Answered	179
Skipped	2

Q7: Most of the land area in the City of Buchanan has already been developed or preserved as parks or open space. However, there are areas in the City that may be redeveloped with new buildings and uses. In general, how likely are you to support more of the following land uses in the City of Buchanan?

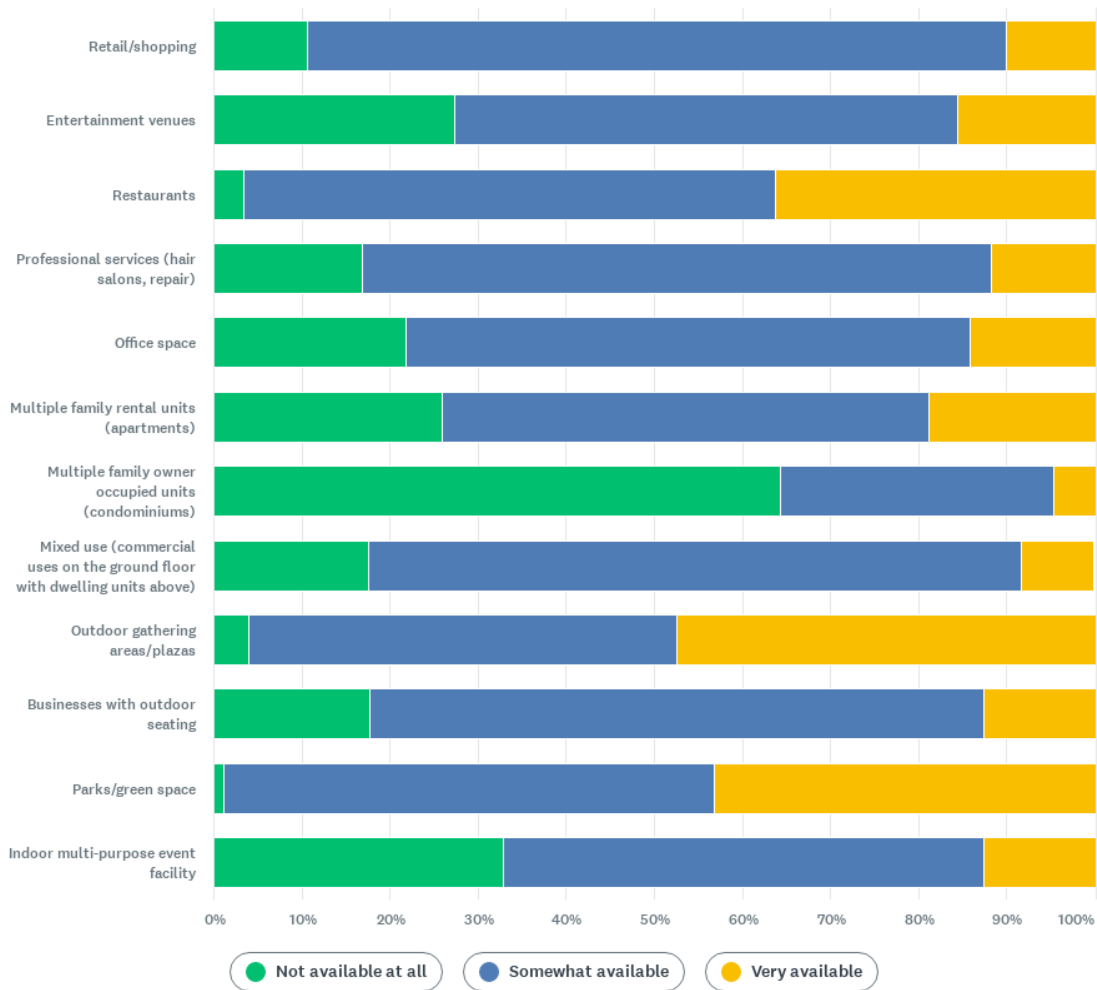


The higher weighted average indicates greater overall support.

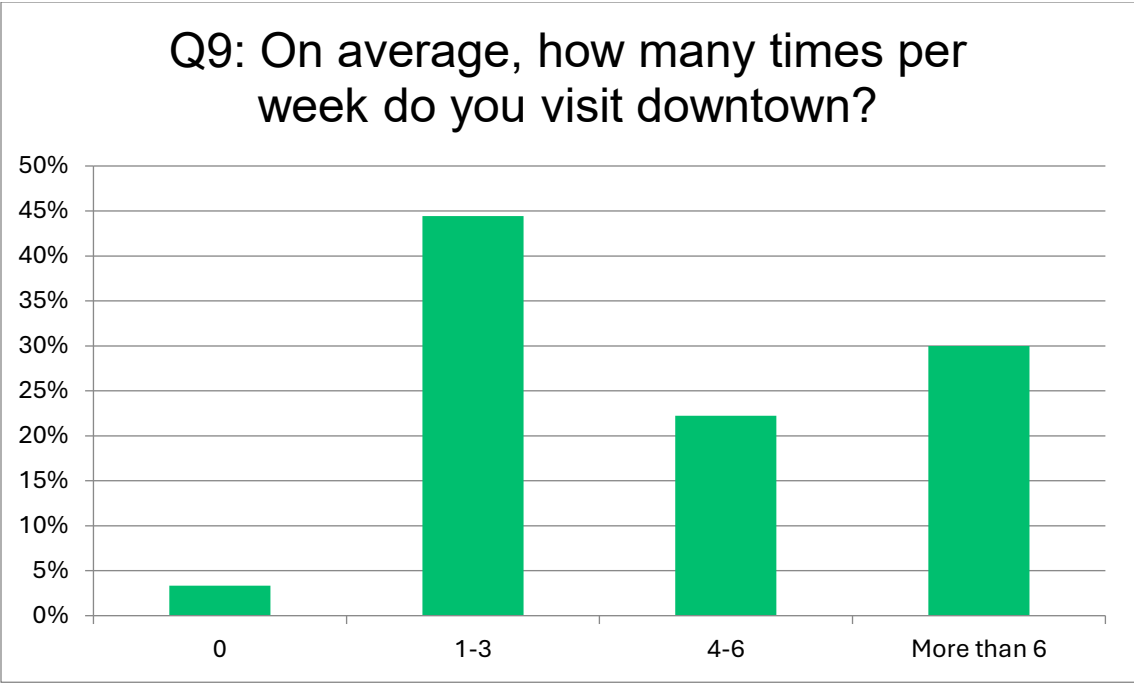
Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Restaurants	3.77
Parks/green space	3.69
Retail/shopping	3.56
Entertainment venues	3.38
Single-family residential	3.16
Mixed use (commercial uses on the ground floor with dwelling units above)	3
Professional services (hair salons/repair)	2.99
Multiple family owner occupied units (condominiums)	2.54
Industrial (warehousing, research, light manufacturing)	2.53
Multiple family rental units (apartments)	2.44
Office space	1.87
Answered	181
Skipped	0



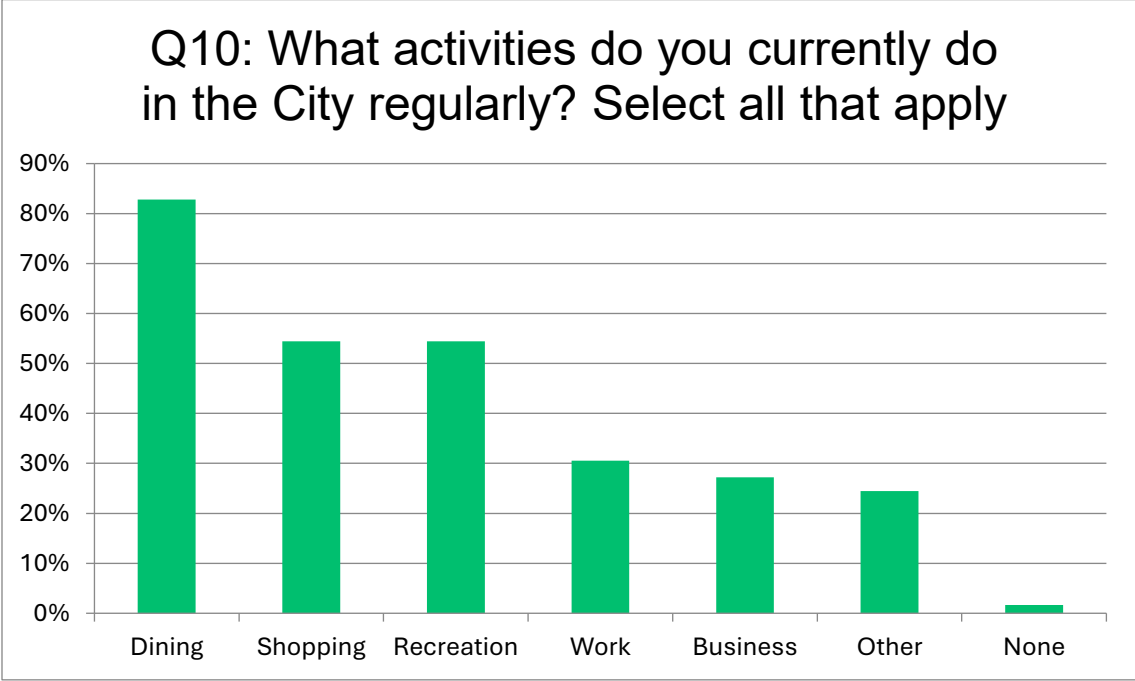
The higher weighted average indicates greater overall availability.



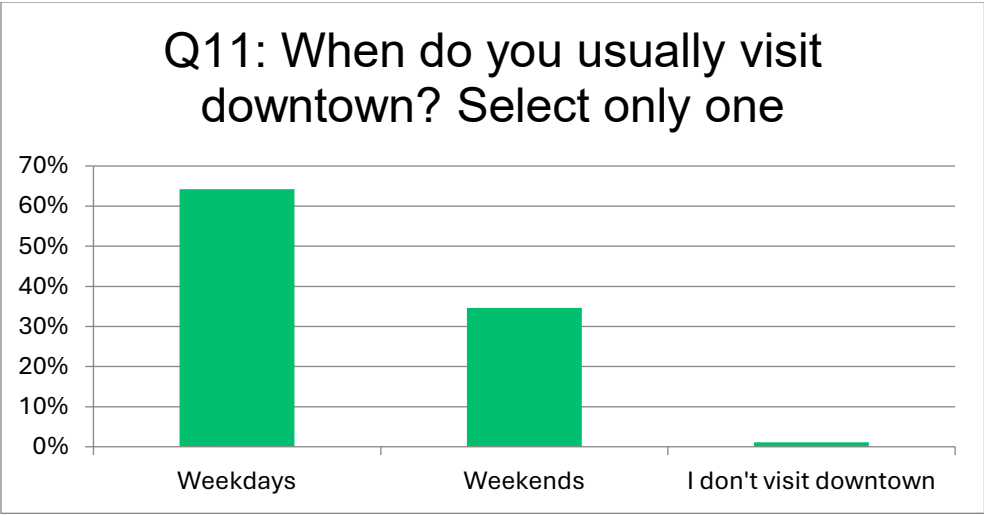
Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Outdoor gathering areas/plazas	2.44
Parks/green space	2.42
Restaurants	2.33
Retail/shopping	1.99
Professional services (hair salons, repair)	1.95
Businesses with outdoor seating	1.95
Multiple family rental units (apartments)	1.93
Office space	1.92
Mixed use (commercial uses on the ground floor with dwelling units above)	1.91
Entertainment venues	1.88
Indoor multi-purpose event facility	1.8
Multiple family owner occupied units (condominiums)	1.4
Answered	181
Skipped	0



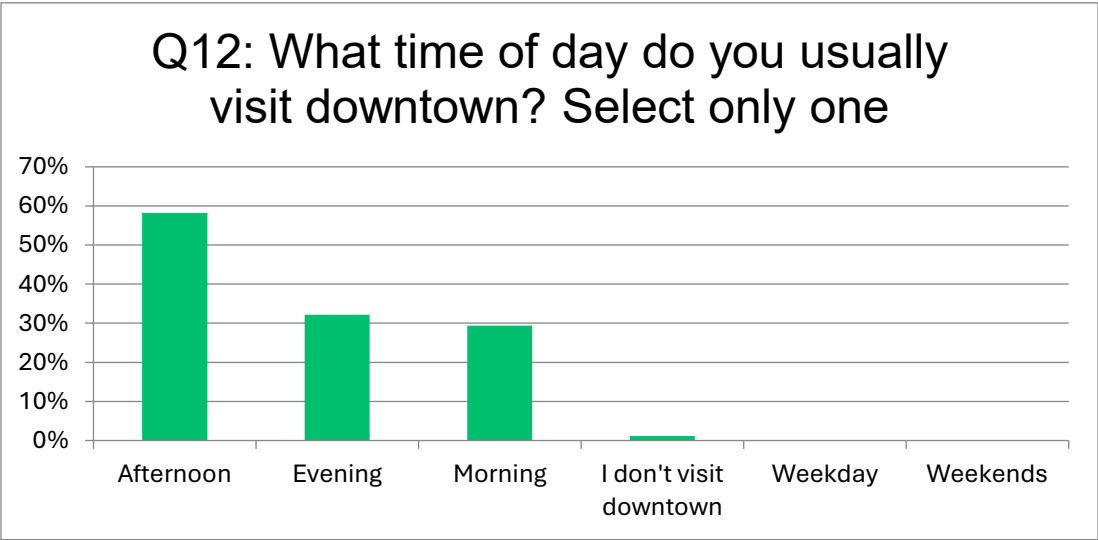
Answer Choices	Responses	
0	3.3%	6
1-3	44.4%	80
4-6	22.2%	40
More than 6	30.0%	55
	Answered	181
	Skipped	0



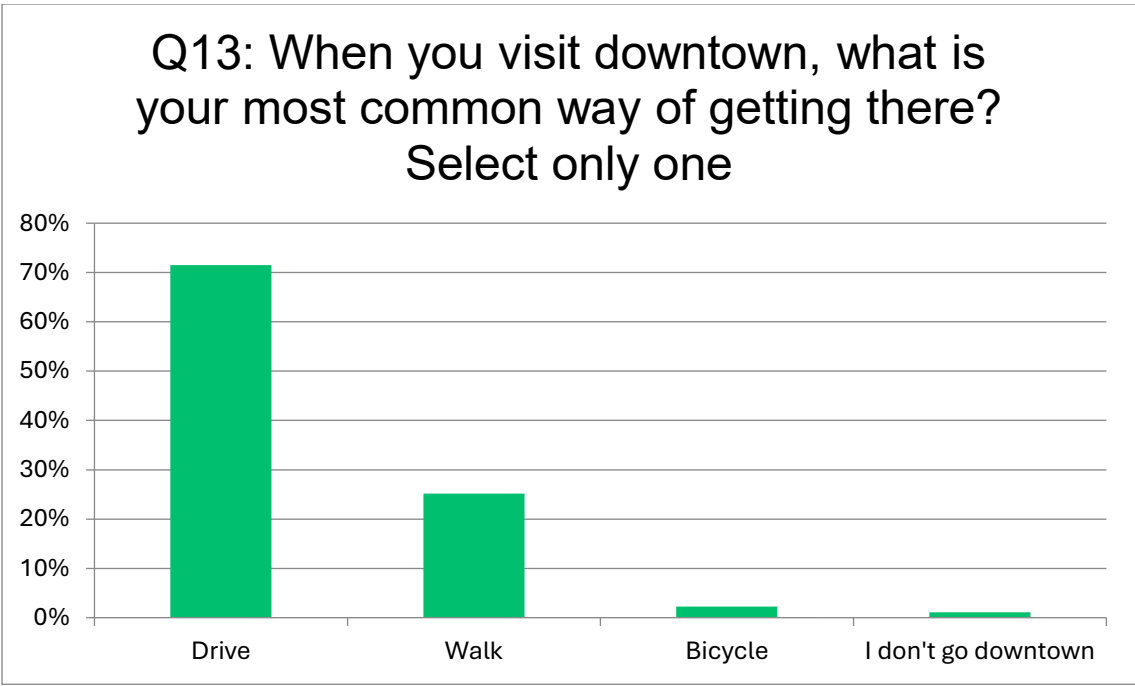
Answer Choices	Responses	
Dining	82.8%	149
Shopping	54.4%	99
Recreation	54.4%	98
Work	30.6%	55
Business	27.2%	49
Other	24.4%	44
None	1.7%	3
	Answered	181
	Skipped	0



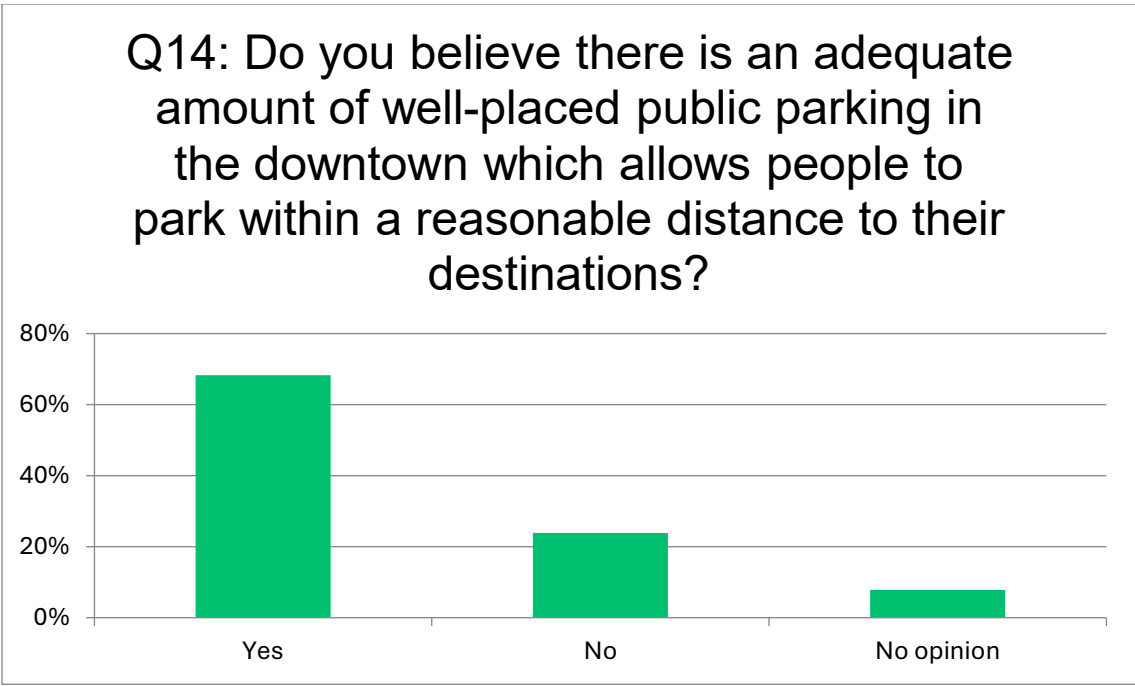
Answer Choices	Responses	
Weekdays	64.3%	115
Weekends	34.6%	63
I don't visit downtown	1.1%	2
	Answered	180
	Skipped	1



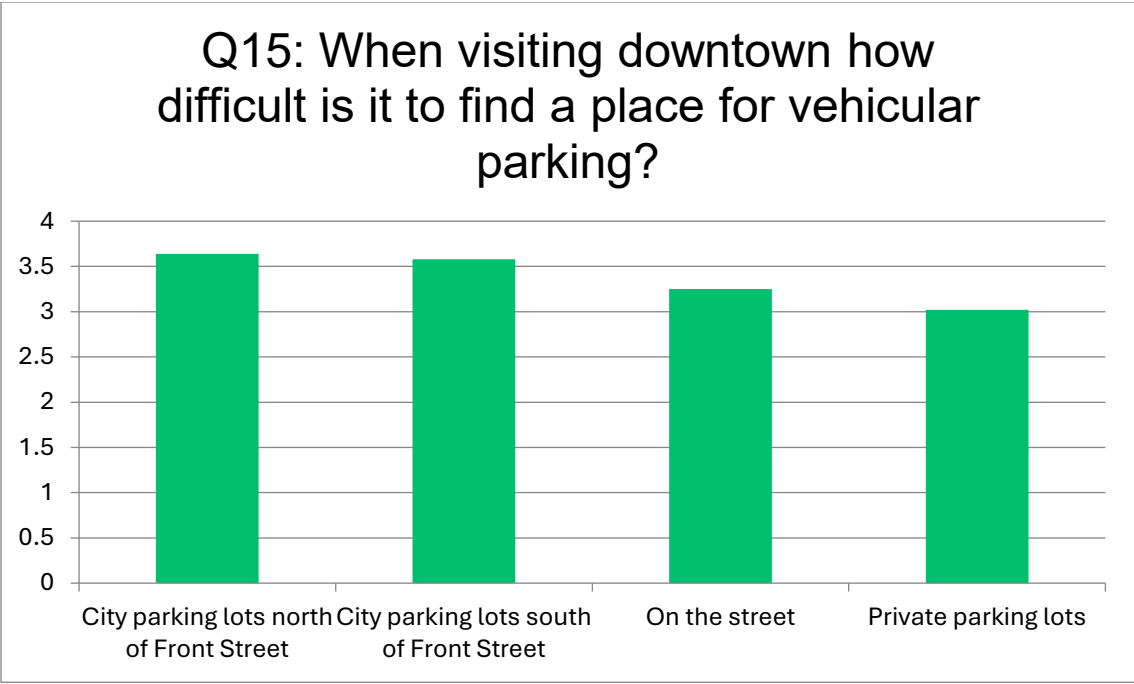
Answer Choices	Responses	
Afternoon	58.2%	104
Evening	32.2%	57
Morning	29.4%	52
I don't visit downtown	1.1%	2
Weekday	0.0%	0
Weekends	0.0%	0
	Answered	178
	Skipped	3



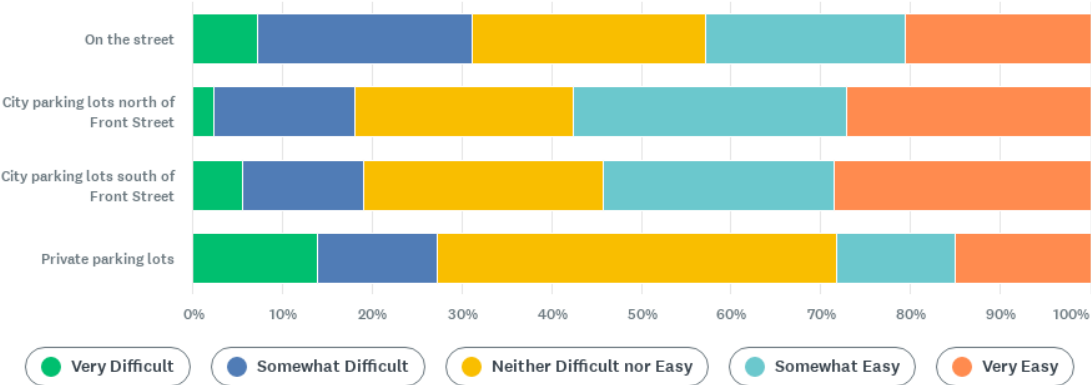
Answer Choices	Responses	
Drive	71.5%	128
Walk	25.1%	46
Bicycle	2.2%	4
I don't go downtown	1.1%	2
	Answered	180
	Skipped	1



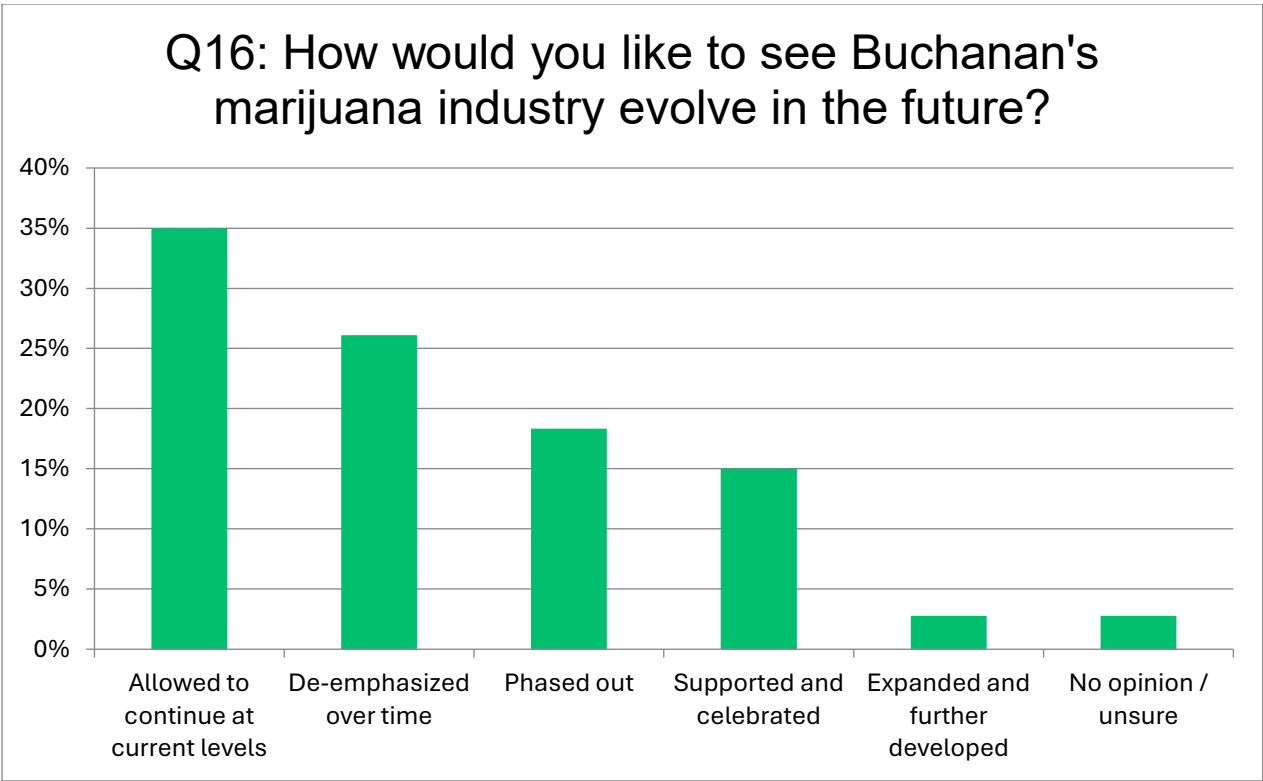
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	68.3%	123
No	23.9%	44
No opinion	7.8%	14
	Answered	181
	Skipped	0



The higher weighted average indicates greater overall ease of finding vehicular parking.

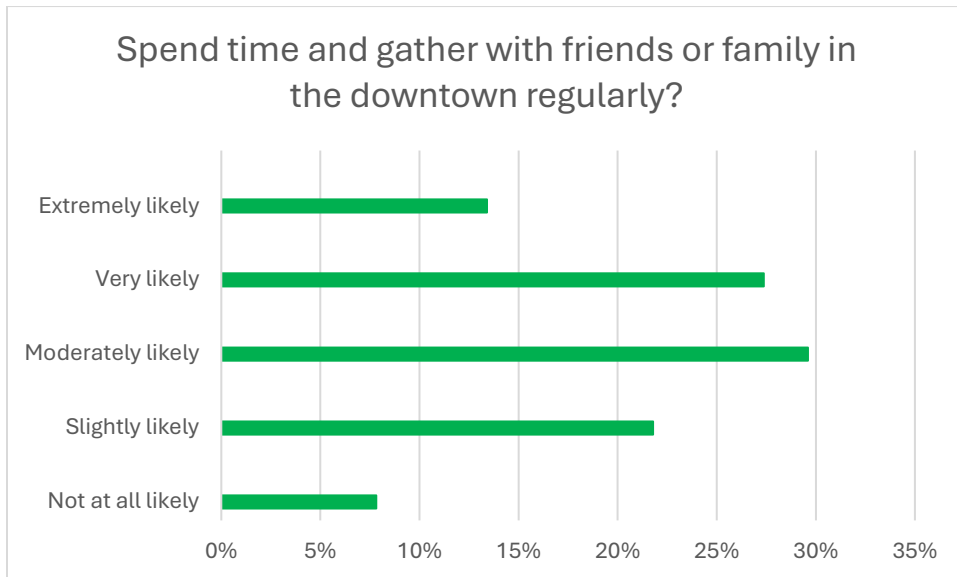


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
City parking lots north of Front Street	3.64
City parking lots south of Front Street	3.58
On the street	3.25
Private parking lots	3.02
Answered	181
Skipped	0

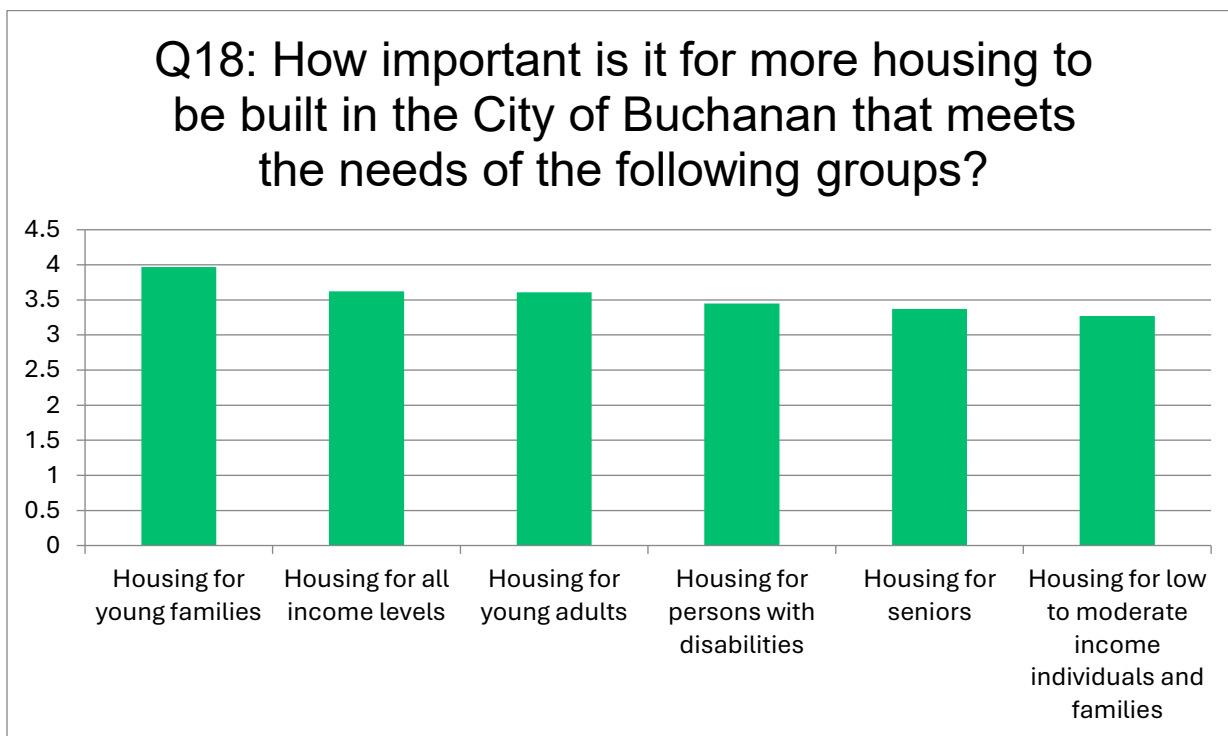


Answer Choices	Responses	
Allowed to continue at current levels	35.0%	64
De-emphasized over time	26.1%	47
Phased out	18.3%	33
Supported and celebrated	15.0%	27
Expanded and further developed	2.8%	5
No opinion / unsure	2.8%	5
	Answered	181
	Skipped	0

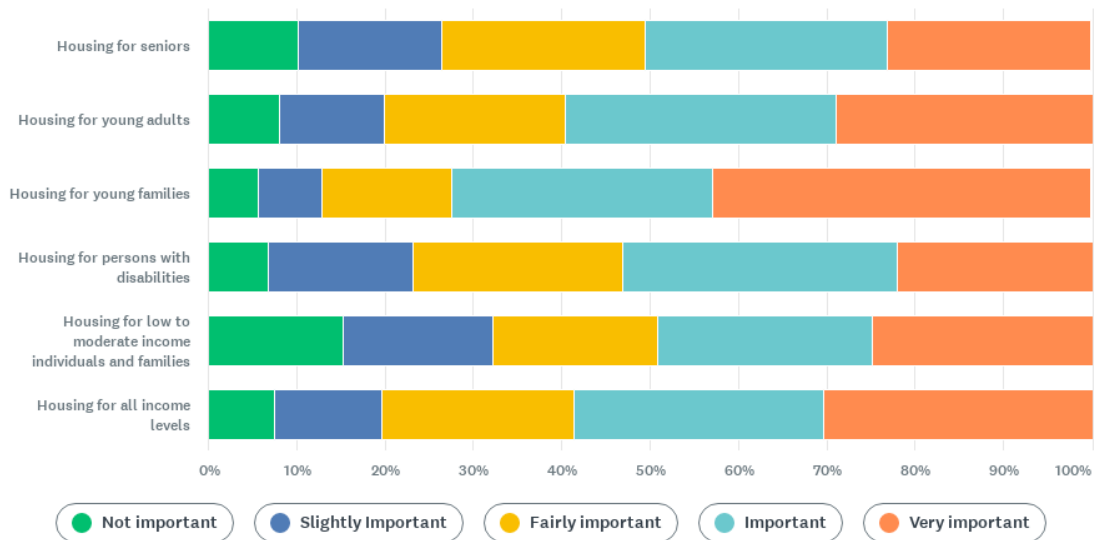
Q17: How likely are you to spend time and gather with friends or family in the downtown regularly?



Answered	180
Skipped	1

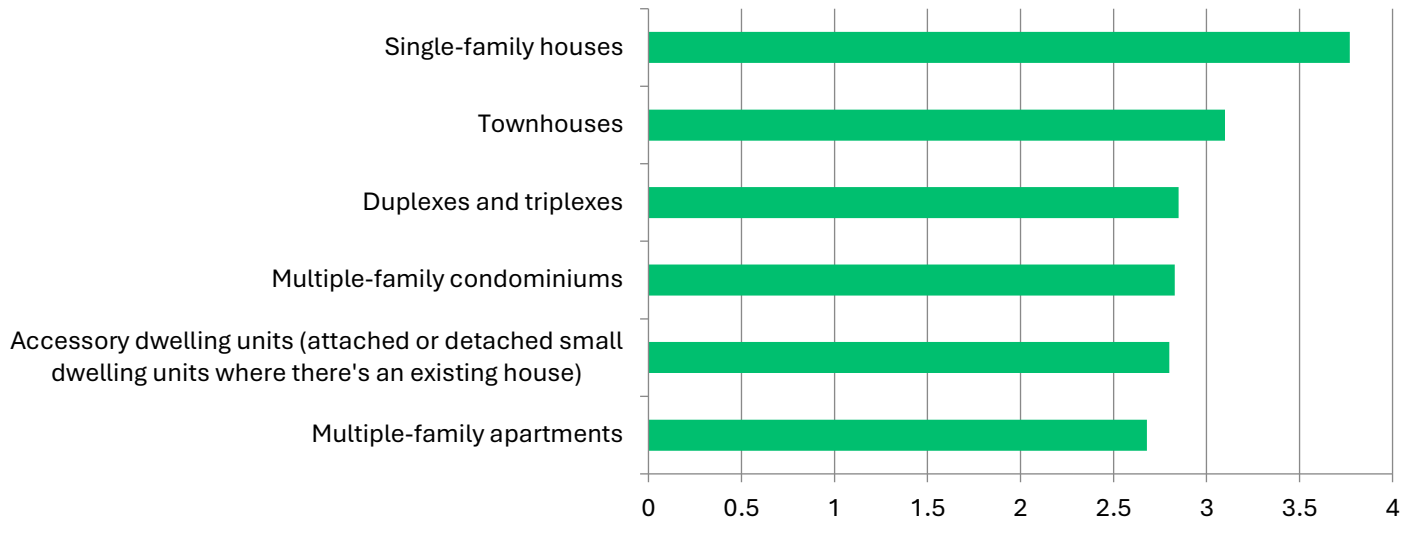


The higher weighted average indicates greater overall importance.

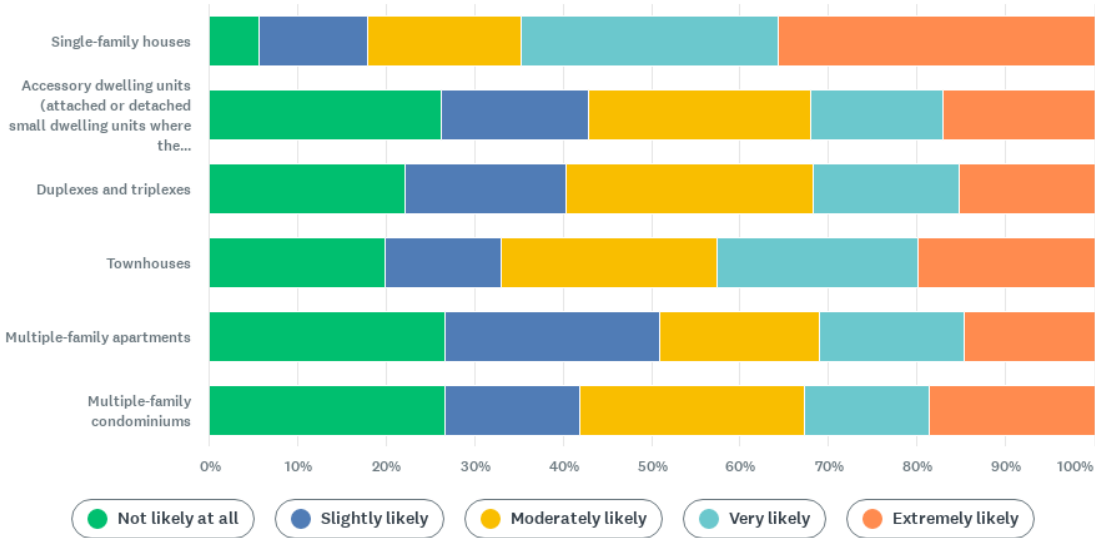


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Housing for young families	3.97
Housing for all income levels	3.62
Housing for young adults	3.61
Housing for persons with disabilities	3.45
Housing for seniors	3.37
Housing for low to moderate income individuals and families	3.27
Answered	179
Skipped	2

Q19: How likely are you to support the following types of housing being built in the City of Buchanan?



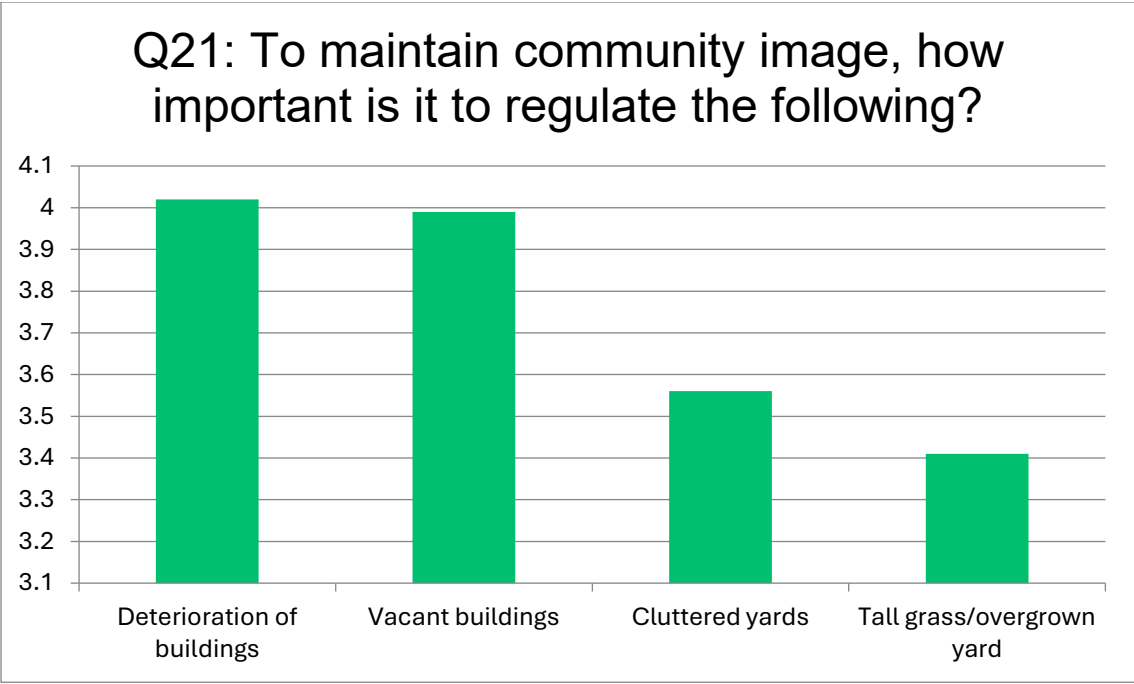
The higher weighted average indicates greater overall support.



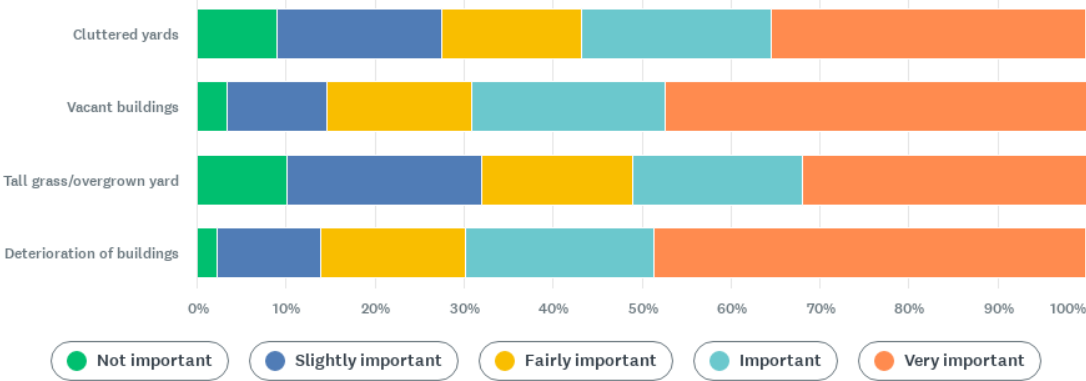
Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Single-family houses	3.77
Townhouses	3.1
Duplexes and triplexes	2.85
Multiple-family condominiums	2.83
Accessory dwelling units (attached or detached small dwelling units where there's an existing house)	2.8
Multiple-family apartments	2.68
Answered	180
Skipped	1

Q20: What other comments do you have about housing in the City of Buchanan?

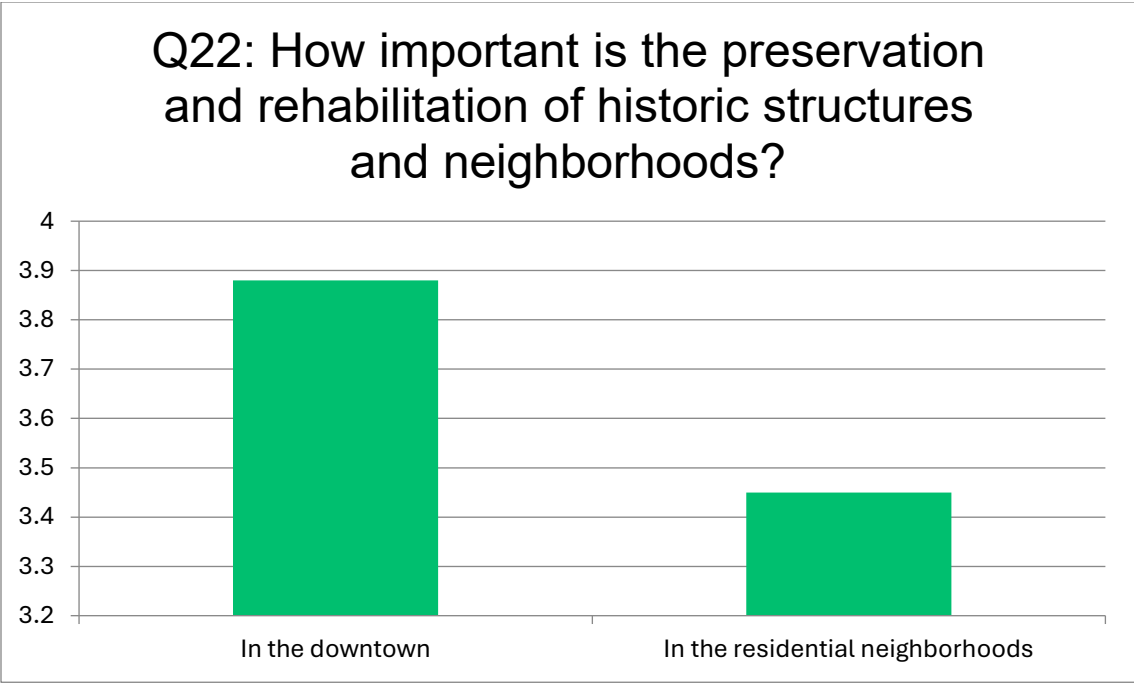
Responses about housing in Buchanan were mostly negative, with concerns centered on high property taxes, housing affordability, and the maintenance of existing properties. Some want more diverse housing options, but many oppose large developments and favor supporting current residents. A few mention the need for better infrastructure, downtown amenities, and stricter property standards. Overall, residents seek improved affordability, upkeep, and thoughtful growth, with some expressing distrust in city leadership and a desire for more transparency and community focus in housing decisions. Sentiment is largely critical.



The higher weighted average indicates greater overall importance.

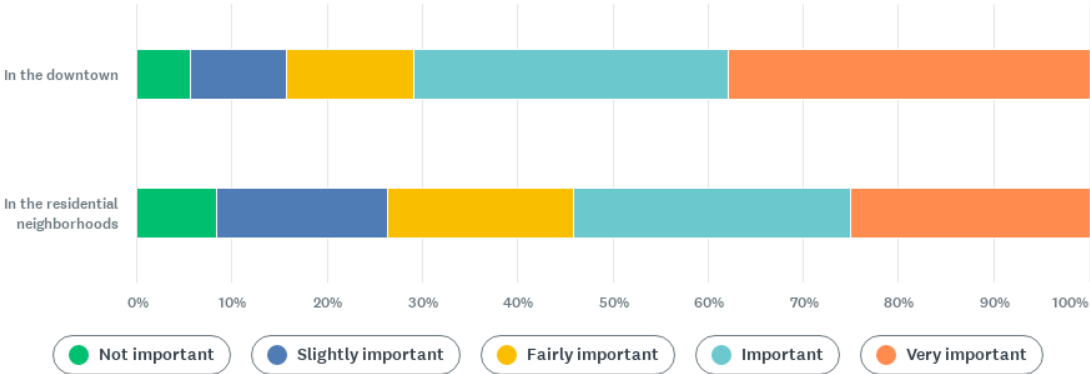


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Deterioration of buildings	4.02
Vacant buildings	3.99
Cluttered yards	3.56
Tall grass/overgrown yard	3.41
Answered	180
Skipped	1

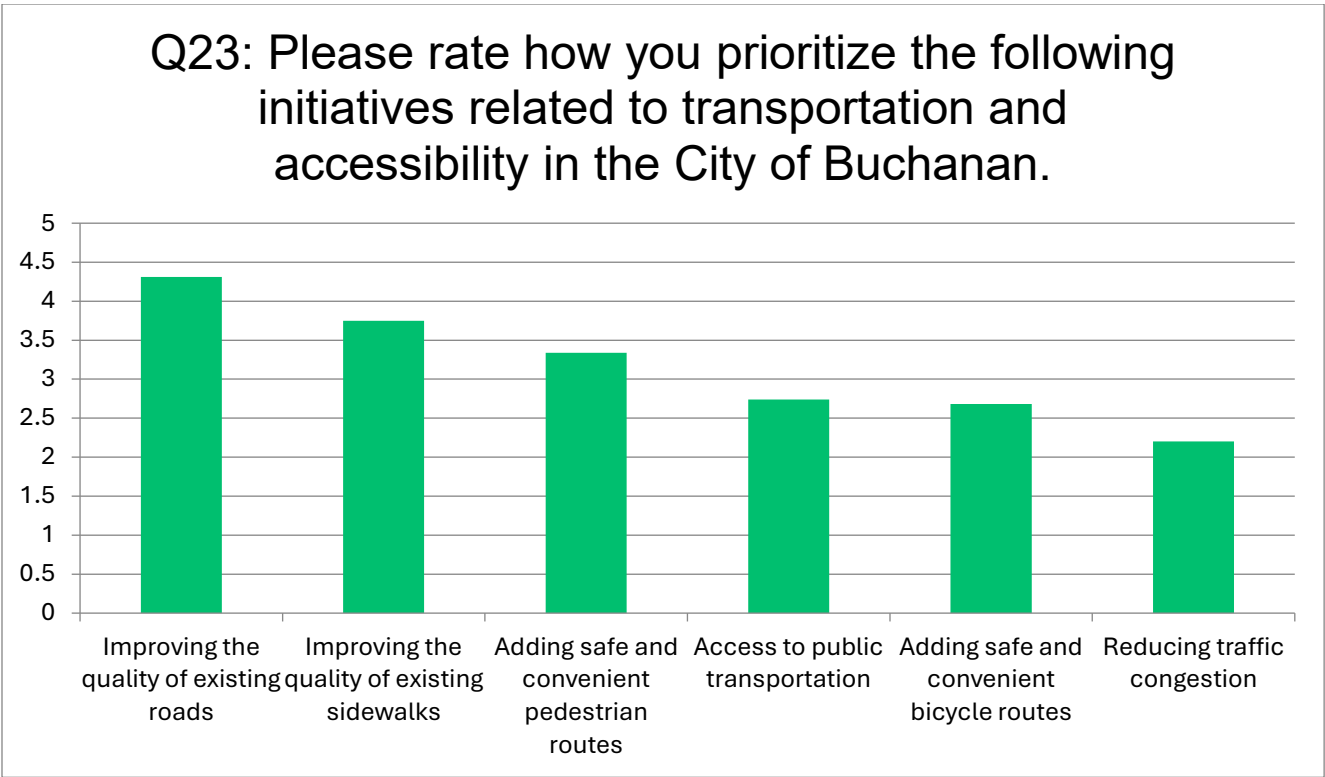


The higher weighted average indicates greater overall importance.

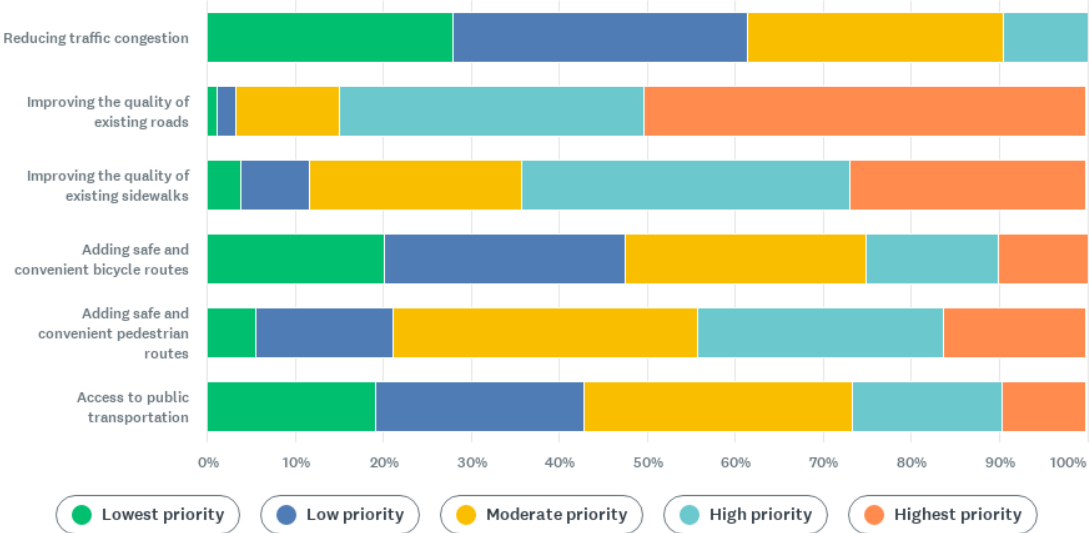
Q22 How important is the preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures and neighborhoods?



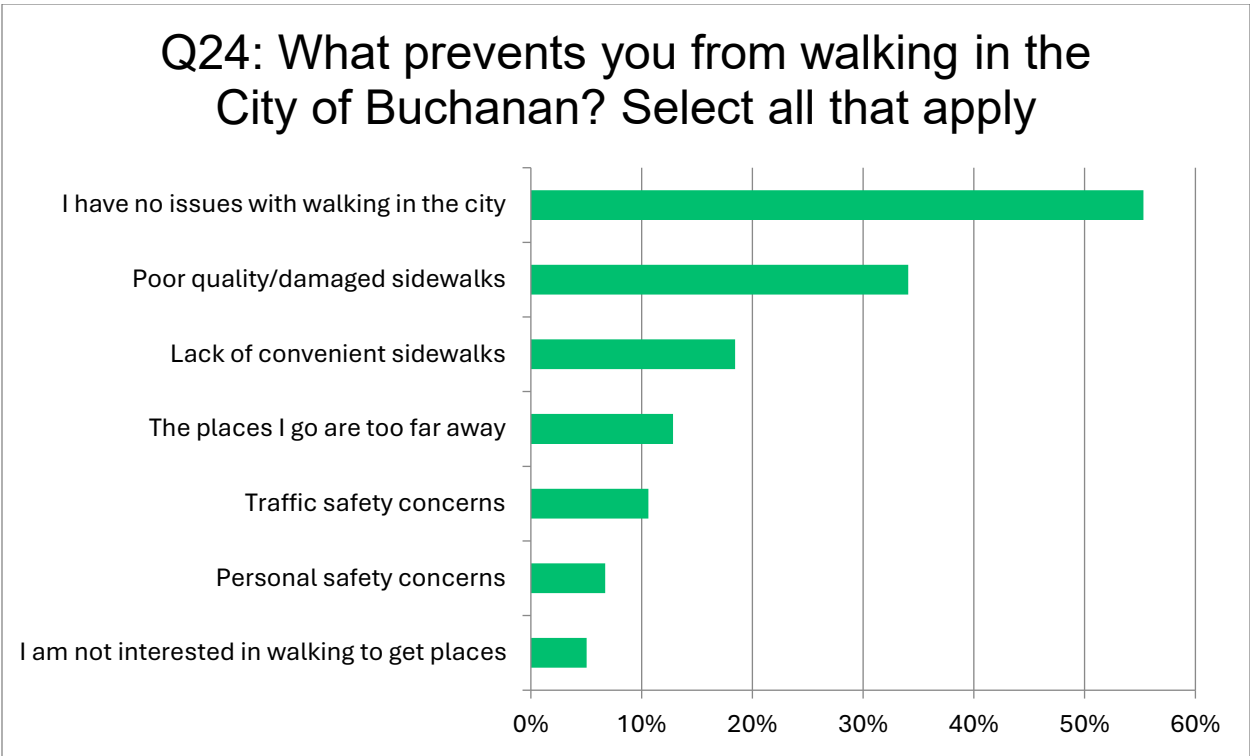
Answer Choices	Weighted Average
In the downtown	3.88
In the residential neighborhoods	3.45
Answered	181
Skipped	0



The higher weighted average indicates greater overall priority.

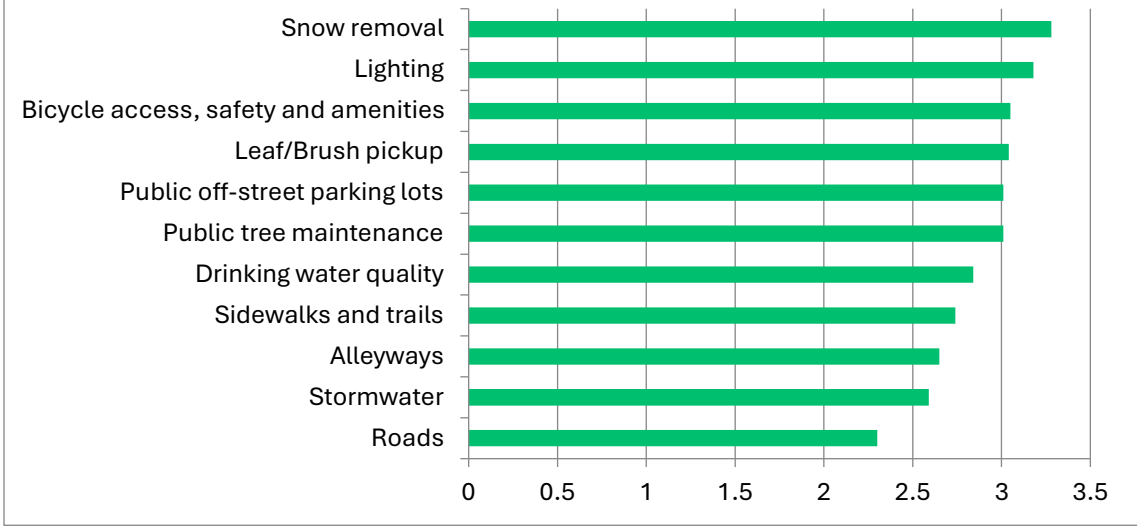


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Improving the quality of existing roads	4.31
Improving the quality of existing sidewalks	3.75
Adding safe and convenient pedestrian routes	3.34
Access to public transportation	2.74
Adding safe and convenient bicycle routes	2.68
Reducing traffic congestion	2.2
Answered	181
Skipped	0

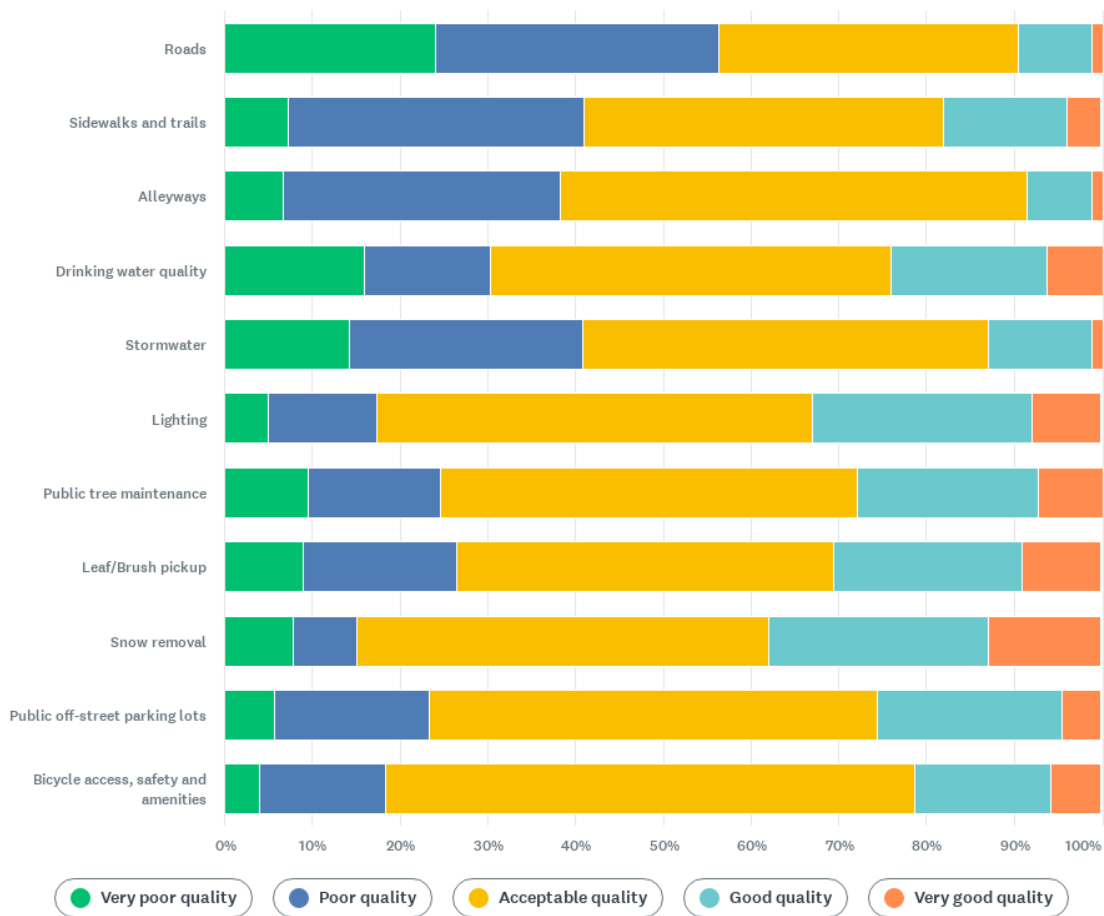


Answer Choices	Responses	
I have no issues with walking in the city	55.3%	99
Poor quality/damaged sidewalks	34.1%	61
Lack of convenient sidewalks	18.4%	33
The places I go are too far away	12.9%	23
Traffic safety concerns	10.6%	19
Personal safety concerns	6.7%	12
I am not interested in walking to get places	5.0%	9
	Answered	180
	Skipped	1

Q25: Rate the quality of infrastructure/services in the City.

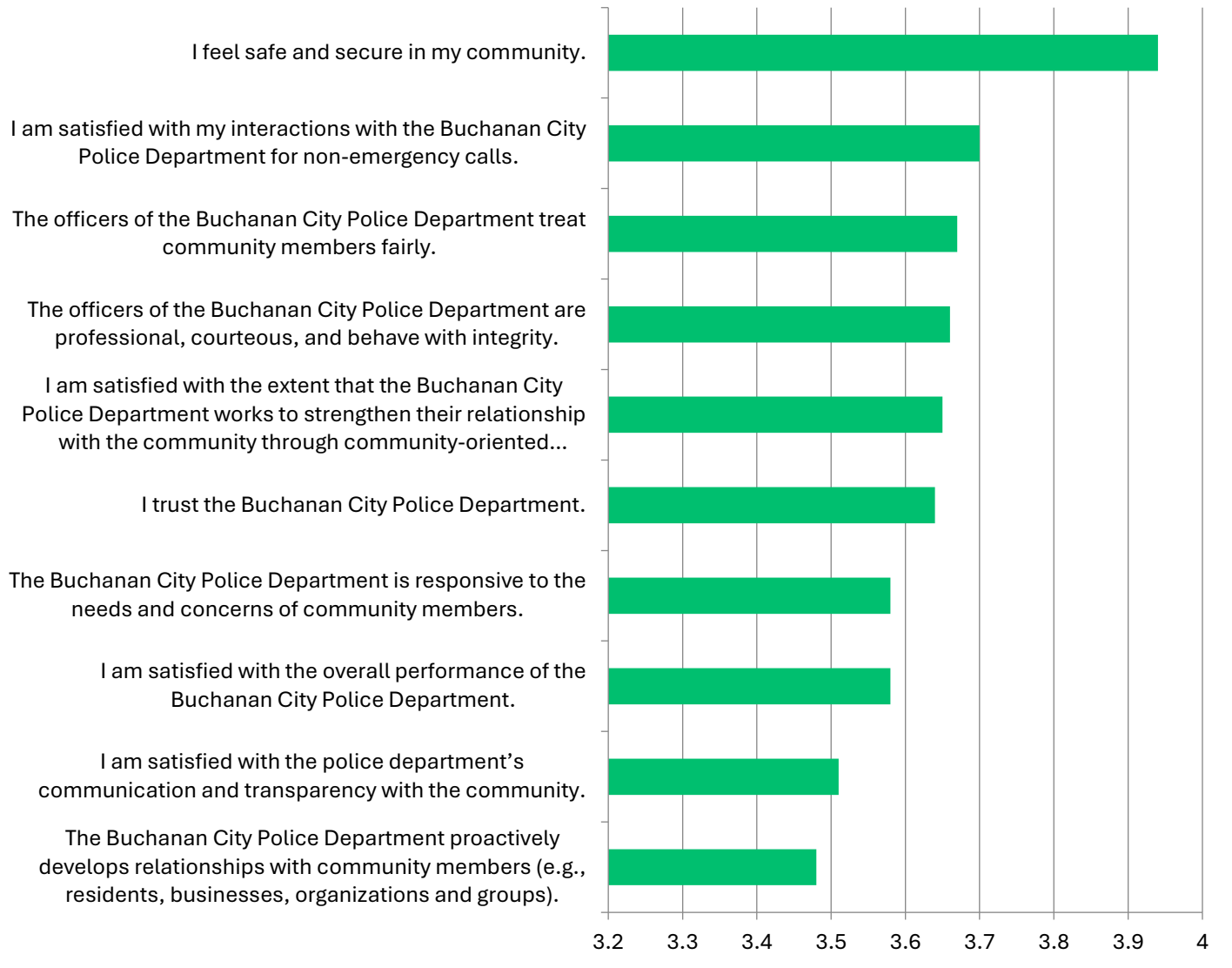


The higher weighted average indicates greater overall quality.

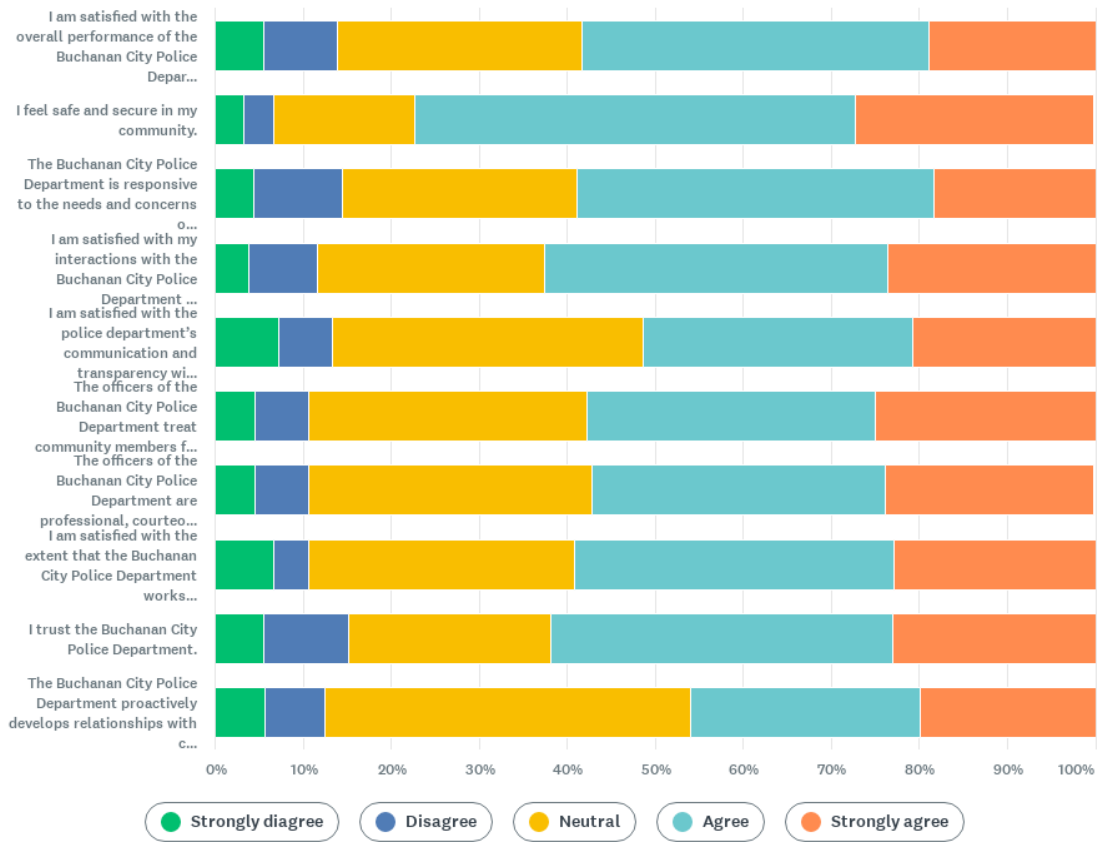


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Snow removal	3.28
Lighting	3.18
Bicycle access, safety and amenities	3.05
Leaf/Brush pickup	3.04
Public tree maintenance	3.01
Public off-street parking lots	3.01
Drinking water quality	2.84
Sidewalks and trails	2.74
Alleyways	2.65
Stormwater	2.59
Roads	2.3
Answered	180
Skipped	1

Q26: Select how much you agree with each statement.

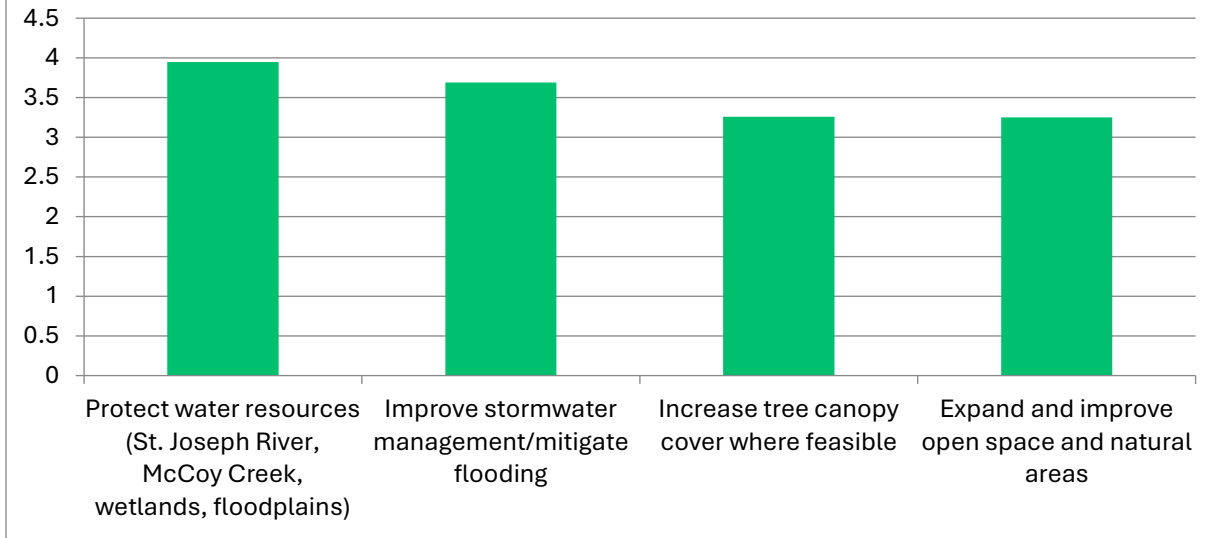


The higher weighted average indicates overall a greater level of agreement.

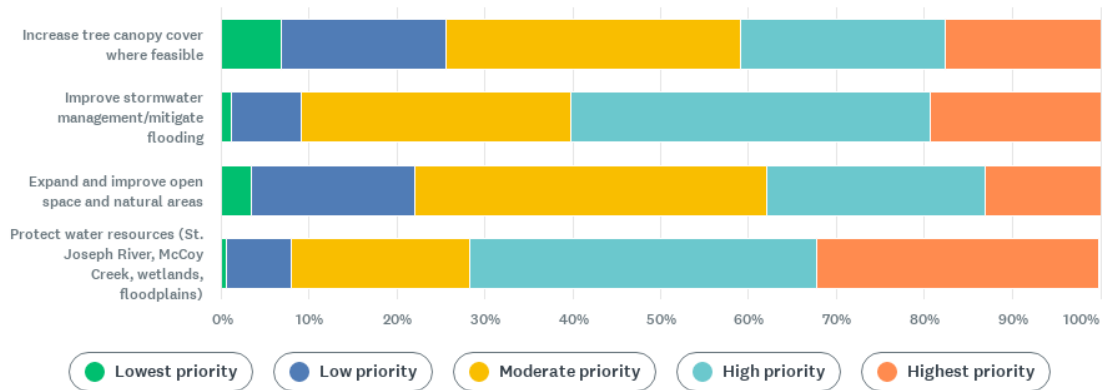


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
I feel safe and secure in my community.	3.94
I am satisfied with my interactions with the Buchanan City Police Department for non-emergency calls.	3.7
The officers of the Buchanan City Police Department treat community members fairly.	3.67
The officers of the Buchanan City Police Department are professional, courteous, and behave with integrity.	3.66
I am satisfied with the extent that the Buchanan City Police Department works to strengthen their relationship with the community through community-oriented activities (e.g., Shop with a Cop, National Night Out, Faith and Blue, etc.).	3.65
I trust the Buchanan City Police Department.	3.64
I am satisfied with the overall performance of the Buchanan City Police Department.	3.58
The Buchanan City Police Department is responsive to the needs and concerns of community members.	3.58
I am satisfied with the police department's communication and transparency with the community.	3.51
The Buchanan City Police Department proactively develops relationships with community members (e.g., residents, businesses, organizations and groups).	3.48
Answered	181
Skipped	0

Q27: Please rate how you prioritize the following natural resources and sustainability initiatives.

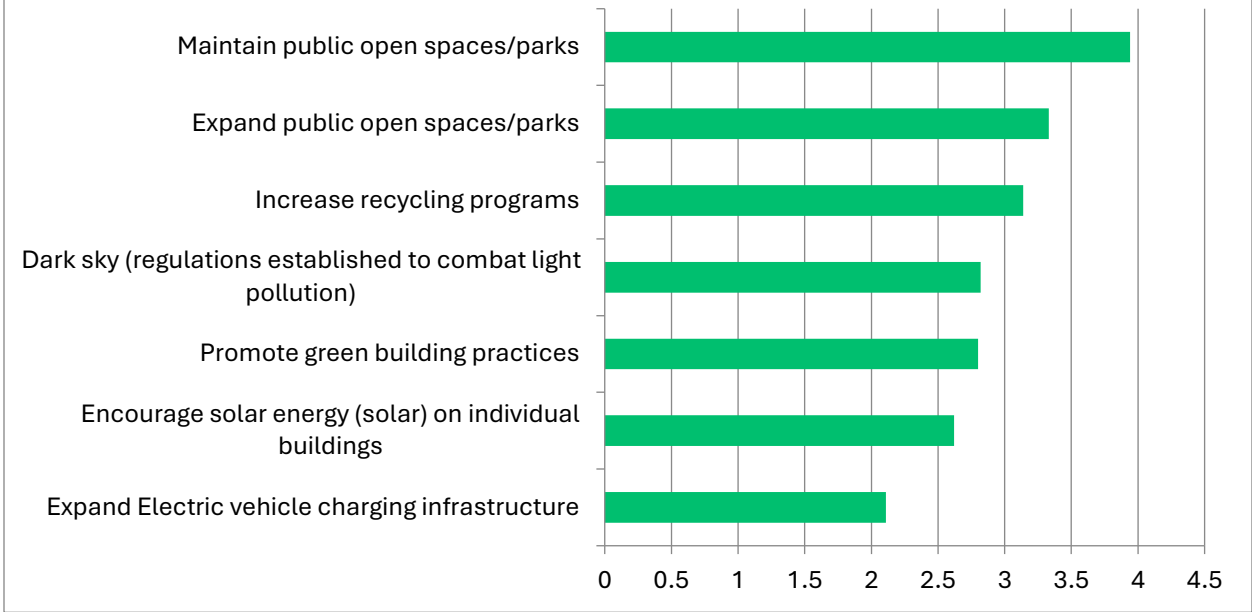


The higher weighted average indicates greater overall priority.

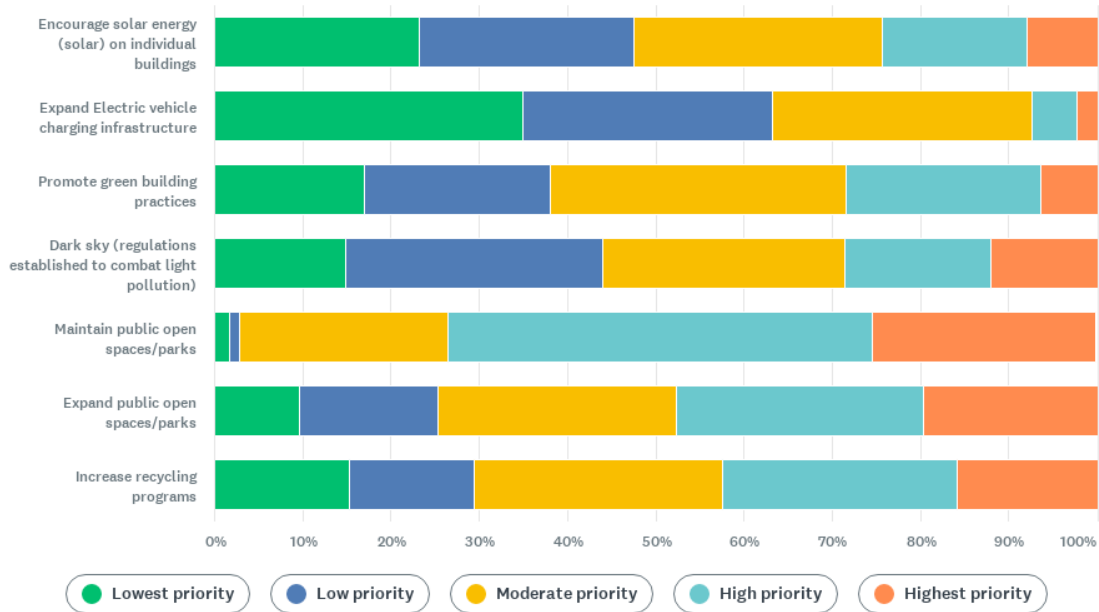


Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Protect water resources (St. Joseph River, McCoy Creek, wetlands, floodplains)	3.95
Improve stormwater management/mitigate flooding	3.69
Increase tree canopy cover where feasible	3.26
Expand and improve open space and natural areas	3.25
Answered	178
Skipped	3

Q28: Please rate how you prioritize the following sustainability initiatives.



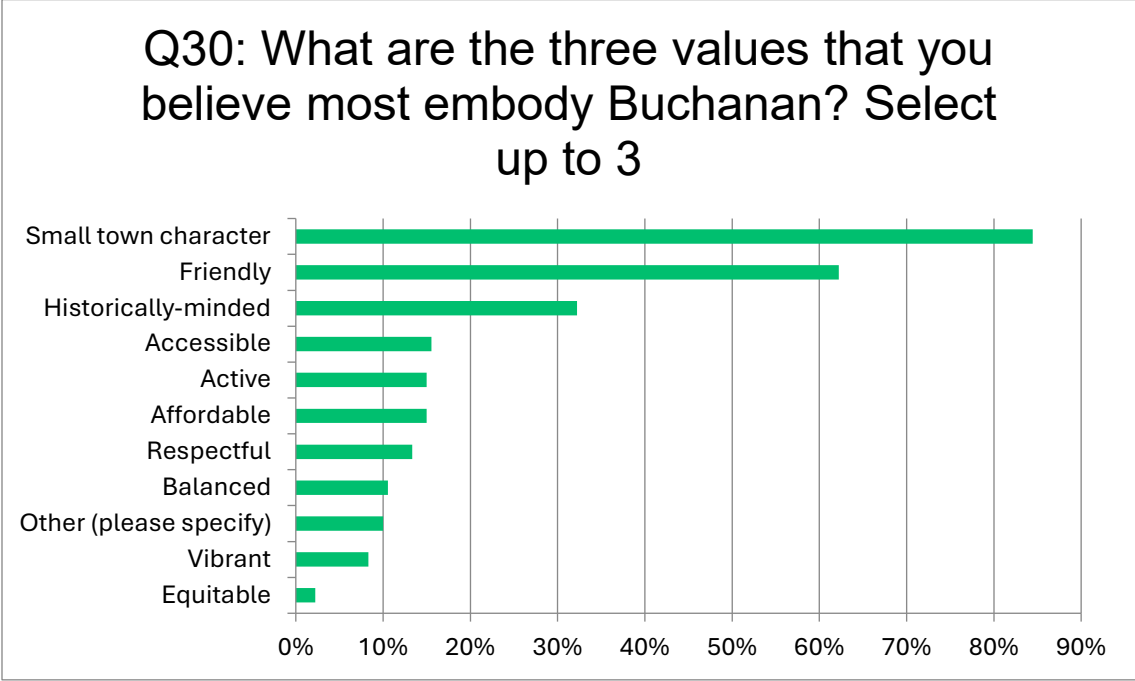
The higher weighted average indicates greater overall priority.



Answer Choices	Weighted Average
Maintain public open spaces/parks	3.94
Expand public open spaces/parks	3.33
Increase recycling programs	3.14
Dark sky (regulations established to combat light pollution)	2.82
Promote green building practices	2.8
Encourage solar energy (solar) on individual buildings	2.62
Expand Electric vehicle charging infrastructure	2.11
Answered	180
Skipped	1

Q29: In a few words, what is the City's greatest asset?

Responses highlight a strong sense of pride in Buchanan's parks, natural features, and small-town character. Many value the community's engagement, friendliness, and historic preservation, while others appreciate local businesses, dining, and educational institutions. A few mention public safety and community values as important assets. While most feedback is positive, a small number express concern about preserving history and local identity. Overall, the city's greatest assets are seen as its natural beauty, community spirit, and unique character.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Small town character	84.4%	153
Friendly	62.2%	113
Historically-minded	32.2%	58
Accessible	15.6%	28
Affordable	15.0%	27
Active	15.0%	27
Respectful	13.3%	24
Balanced	10.6%	19
Other (please specify)	10.0%	18
Vibrant	8.3%	15
Equitable	2.2%	4
	Answered	180
	Skipped	0

Open Ended Questions:

Q21: What other comments do you have about housing in the City of Buchanan?

- Residential streets need repaving.
- I am all for affordable housing, however I do believe that the current city council is not transparent, they are not looking out for the community, and they have done a lot of back door deals that only help themselves and their friends. I would love to see a place for entertainment/activities that people can afford. I really miss thrill on the hill, and I can't stress enough on how I do not trust the city council or anyone that works with them.
- AFFORDABILITY- make it more affordable PLEASE
- The City needs to up their game....more upper income residences (Condos/townhouses), more industries/businesses (NOT marijuana), more population. Tree policies are over reaching.
- It would be appreciated if residents didn't have trash or unusable vehicles in their yards. Stronger enforcement for the beauty of our city.
- The property tax and utility bills are sky high and prohibitive to live here! Having pot holes everywhere is the reason I get out of town as soon as I can find a way out that isn't under construction or wrecks your vehicles.
- There are plenty of housing opportunities. The problem is the property taxes and the water costs.
- A lot of run down houses that should be addressed
- I feel the properties in the city (both residential and commercial) are looking very shabby. What can be done to push code enforcement to be more diligent? It seems like our town is full of slum lords and it is eroding the lovely town.
- Given both the extremely limited housing availability in Buchanan and the demand for increased economic stimulus within the city, prioritizing housing that could cater to those interested in starting/operating/staffing businesses as well as those who have the means to support growing businesses should take priority.
- We desperately need more choices AND a cleanup of many of the existing homes.
- Please reinforce neighbors to take care of their yard. The sidewalks are pretty rough in the neighborhoods...
- Property taxes are extremely high for the lack of amenities in our small town.
- Great city manager
- I would like to see affordable housing for families made available with reasonable taxes. It is important to have a diverse population to maintain and improve the vitality of our community.
- Please enforce code violations and clean up blight!!! This would make a huge difference. Also empty store fronts up and downtown.
- City council wastes money. Current budget is too much. Taxes are too high. City has moved in the wrong direction in the past 5 years.
- We need more affordable housing, especially apartments and lower cost houses.
- Need middle class 3-bed townhouses for rent.
- We need more middle and upper middle price range housing to own and rent; there's plenty of starter or lower range already
- Less slumlords. Seems like they raise the rent but don't take good care of the properties
- Great place to live
- Need more housing options and lower property taxes.

- High tax rates make building within the city limits unattractive compared to surrounding areas. There should be tax incentives for improving city housing.
- I would like to have more shopping and restaurants downtown!
- The city should not be in the business of providing housing. The city should not be foreclosing on properties and selling the land to “preferred” buyers. What is the city/county doing to lower taxes and allow homeowners to keep their properties? Grants are taxpayers money, not free money.
- We need new rental units and stricter enforcement of stricter ordinances with regard to existing multi-family rental much of which is more than 40 years old and tenement like. How about townhouses for families, to own and to rent? Give away land to developers, starting with the City lot on Days Ave and the adjacent lot in exchange for building a townhouse development with 3-4 bed units for less than \$300K. How about single floor 2-3 bedroom condos for under \$200,000? All DT or close to encourage a small town walking lifestyle, rather than emphasizing driving to DT.
- As a young potential homeowner, the cost of owning property in Buchanan is very prohibitive, and I grew up here. Also, I'm very disappointed in the lack of school district representation in this survey.
- See codes informed for upkeep of homes in neighborhoods. Eliminate Marijuana businesses on Front street downtown
- We have apartments get those updated. Open the idea to using Golf Carts and stop pulling people over. Stop worrying about what the FIPS want. Push the road commission to fix all the roads in our surroundings areas. Get the Pot shops OUT of the down town area where families what to walk it stinks!
- We need to stop allowing houses being bought up, just to be a rental. Rentals have there place. There are not very many affordable houses for sale, especially for families.
- The rental units need held to a higher standard. The renters consistently are suffering for landlords indifference to the condition of the structure.
- Property taxes are quite high compared to other areas around. If they get much worse, we'll move to Indiana. We spend much of our time there anyway.
- There should be an ordinance requiring all residential driveways to be paved (no more stone/dirt/ grass driveways). Also, That residents must park in their driveways in such a way that their neighbors' views of pedestrians on the sidewalks are not blocked when pulling out of their driveways (both forward and in reverse)... it's dangerous. Lastly, residents must remove items, such as scaffolding, when they're done using them and not leave them up for 15 years as if they're part of the structure of the house.
- Any housing should be quality construction.
- Not enough of it
- Many houses could stand repair and restoration to make them comfortable and attractive again - but vinyl siding jobs and generic lumberyard window and door replacements should be discouraged in all ways possible.
- I feel there are several apartment buildings around town, but they are older and some are unkept. I don't think we need more complexes, but update the current ones.
- None
- Need a program akin to Niles that provides funding for redevelopment, maybe MSHDA or Foundation
- No more housing development.
- We do not want big developments here. Small town life is why people live here. People owning their own homes and not having corporations own apartments here is crucial to our quality of life. The apartments that

we do have need to be held to a very high standard of quality in how they maintain their properties. No new developments.

- I think affordable housing is very hard to come by for ALL people, but especially young adults trying to maintain footing in town. Many young adults are struggling to maintain housing on single incomes and younger generations are who we need to count on for community growth.
- I support housing growth only through pathways that prioritize local homeownership over institutional investment.
- I have noticed that there are a lot of low income families struggling to find housing on Facebook and Nextdoor.
- I think the amount of houses is fine they need to clean up properties that exist theres a lot of rundown homes that look trashy
- As a parent of two young adults ,the struggle to find nice , updated ,affordable housing is real. There is no such thing as a starter home. More needs to be done to attract young families to our town.
- Taxes & water are extremely high.
- To obtain housing in the city of Buchanan is nearly impossible with the tourist buying and driving the pricing of property up within Buchanan as a whole. The housing that is not available looks sad and drained as if the taxes are not breathing life back into the town and it's citizens. Few and far between are lovely homes with families that can afford to keep up with maintenance.
- None
- Their is plenty of housing in the city of buchanan. The problem with the city housing would be the taxes that are way to high for what the people have to live in. Dealing with crackheads throughout the city, lack of safety in the city, and the tax dollars being used inappropriately by city officials. In a city who's taxes are as high as cities like bridgman, and st. Joe. Make that make sense. Maybe if the officials for the city cared more about the residents of the city rather then trying to squeeze every dollar out of them, more people would like to live here. Nothing but a bunch of criminals.
- I feel like out of state people buy up the cheap houses barely fix them up, and then sell for 3-4 times what they paid for them.
- Need nicer apartments
- Start enforcing code violations!
- Please make taxes more affordable
- I would support people being able to rehabilitate and renovate existing homes whenever feasible, perhaps while living in an accessory dwelling onsite if immediate housing is needed during the rehab process (and that dwelling could be rented out later).
- High taxes do not allow young families to afford Buchanan. Water bills do not help. We need businesses that employe people with fair wages to attract the youth and young families. Rules on renting and STR's do not help.
- Taxes are way too high. Water bill is astronomical now because of poor city planning and maintence.
- Glad to see it improving
- I believe we have enough rentals and slumlords in Buchanan. The town needs more affordable Housing for families.
- It's a small town that doesn't need additional multi-family housing in my opinion.
- We just need more affordable housing

- If you make family homes then provide an inside fun place for children, teens and families.
- Worry about your current residents and our needs for affordable housing
- So many houses are in bad shape. And too many are vacant.
- I would like to see guidelines established for short term rentals that prevents the problems occurring in New Buffalo and Three Oaks, ie inflating housing costs so that families can't afford to live here.
- Water and tax bills are theought the roof. If I didn't have a water bill every month I could probably have a savings account. Lower them 2 bills and you might just get people to live in this town again.
- Help the people in Buchanan, stop ignoring them to bring people to replace them. A strong foundation is key before building out.
- It is great I love Buchanan
- Limited space to improve density opportunities
- The taxes are outrageous. I own three homes and pay almost \$20k per year in taxes to drive down a road riddled with potholes. The taxes make it hard to charge a reasonable rate for rent, yet the condition of the roads make it hard to justify - the two do not align. What do we have to show for the taxes?

Q29: In a few words, what is the City's greatest asset?

- The Library and the Commons and Union Coffee.
- Parks
- Small town feel, but also have a progressive stance.
- McCoy Creek Trail
- The people
- The people that care.
- The commons
- What remains of historic buildings and the natural beauty in all seasons. Both of these assets seem to be disregarded and dispensable by the commission.
- Trees
- The quietness
- The citizens
- The people who live here.
- Small town characteristics
- The police department is its greatest asset.
- Small town feel where everyone knows someone. The fire and police department are very friendly and take part in community events.
- Small town feel
- The people that care to help make positive changes.
- The historic charm of the city is very memorable and appealing in a rapidly modernizing world.
- Small town comraderie and cooperation.
- Visual, geographical and topographic beauty.

- The Common
- The community
- Beautiful area and a charming town
- The many volunteers who augment city provided services, such as BARB, BTF, the library, zoning commission, planning commission, etc.
- Youth programs. DPW. School Superintendent. City Manager.
- The wholesome hometown feel, how I feel like I know everyone and I know my family is safe on this town.
- The antique shops and cafe's downtown, but need galleries too.
- The redevelopment of historic buildings downtown the past 20 years
- The creek running thru it.
- People care about each other
- Green space
- It's history and farming
- The Commons
- Sense of Community Pride
- Recent addition of restaurants and shopping
- It's people.
- Buchanan Common with McCoy's Creek, historic buildings, and the expanding entertainment choices.
- Location
- All those who have brought DT back to life.
- Natural beauty and history, I.E. the creek and trails.
- Residents
- Low cost/value housing stock
- Downtown businesses that draw visitors
- Convenience to other places
- McCoy Creek Trail, The Commons & Cannabis Culture
- The Commons and Farmers Market
- We have a lot of parks. They just need updated.
- It's location. It's a very pretty little town, always has been, slightly off the beaten track yet convenient to interstates that can quickly connect you to urban areas. I would like to see us not imitate commercially oriented small towns. I would like to see our residents benefit from more industry jobs brought our way.
- It's DT developers and business owners
- The people in it.
- Proximity to city amenities in South Bend and to the beach.
- Our community members.
- Their transparency and how well they care for our city
- Buchanan Art Center
- The creek and the mill race

- Cooperative and helpful small-town community with pride in its past, historic built environment, and spirit of civic engagement.
- Our location to larger cities, wineries, natural features and agriculture.
- The library and the commons
- The Common, McCoy Creek Trail, Pears Mill
- Cares for citizens
- Clean and friendly small town.
- Being a small town! People are nice here and we don't have huge developments that is so important.
- Diversity. There are quite a few stubborn and bias individuals, but it hasn't stopped the diversity from blooming
- Aside from my own home, Mike Baker. That man deserves a raise!
- the people
- The Community Commons
- Small town atmosphere
- The downtown and buchannan commons areas.
- The people who live there
- Friendly small town feel
- Walking paths.
- Location
- The library and festive downtown atmosphere
- Redbuds
- Its community and increasingly thriving downtown area.
- The commons area
- Hometown Feel
- The city is doing a fantastic job of abolishing the history that got us here. The small town charm is what got us on the map let's not erase it.
- The charm
- The Residents.
- The community members.
- BCPD, BCFD, SMALL business owners who stay, and invest in us. Teachers, staff, and parents who invest our kids and community.
- Businesses centrally located.
- Can't think of one.
- The library.
- We have a great chief of police
- The fire department!
- Buchanan's greatest asset is its size and people within the community. It would not take much as a community to make it the great place to live it claims to be. It takes the responsibility of the collective as individuals who care about their family, home, neighbors, community and country. That and with the assist from local government for vital systems like clean water, handling abandoned and properties that

are a blight, consider incentivizing tiny homes, and roads built to last including using heated roadways like other cities in Michigan have begun to do.

- Schools, Civic engagement
- Proximity to Chicago
- Its people, especially its children and youth
- The school system and its employees.
- Local Business Owners who are invested
- Volunteers working to better the city with little help from the actual city officials help.
- Hardware store. Gary z's and b&w. Everything else is geared to Chicago people
- The people they love the town
- The Buchanan public school system
- Small town USA
- Commons
- The waterways
- The Common. The river.
- Buchanans location allows it to keep a small town/historic vibe and its that very charm of our town I think we can expand upon. Keeping the feel of a small town with big personality. Nothing is better than coming to Buchanan and walking around to all the downtown restrants and shops. I think improving what we can offer visitors downtown would really make a big difference. We need more reasons for people to want to visit and stick around.
- Great restaurants
- its people
- Walking tails
- It's still reasonably affordable unlike small towns near the lake where IL people have driven up costs.
- The people that live here and actively care about the health and well-being of the city and its residents.
- Our children and our safety
- Its residents
- McCoy creek and close proximity to the St. Joe River
- ItsDPW
- Residents
- The reputation of its people (friendly, helpful)
- Volunteers
- Small Town
- Parks
- Location
- Volunteers and their partnership with the City and City Staff
- McCoy creek trail
- The history and people. It seems like we are trying to make Buchanan country generic instead of leaning on our rich history.(leaning not living in the past)
- Fast food
- Restaurants and bars

- Our youth.
- Continue investing in placemaking activities that promote families setting roots.
- Small town charm
- The school system and the volunteers who make things happen in the city.
- I would say our creek and trails.

Memorandum



Date: May 5, 2026

To: Planning Commission Members

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Discussion #5 - Unified Development Code – Signs**

Background

The Planning Commission began hearing concerns regarding Section 71-30 Sign standards during the January 13th meeting at which time directed staff to move forward to address issues. Discussions have taken place during the February 10th and March 10th meetings when staff presented draft language and provided updates based on direction by the Planning Commission.

Update

Attached is the fourth draft of changes to Section 71-30. Ordinances from the cities of Holland, Benton Harbor, New Buffalo, St. Joseph along with the village of Bridgeman have been reviewed along with the previous Sign Ordinance from Buchanan.

The April draft document incorporated all the changes previously reviewed, discussed and agreement was found into one cohesive document excluding formatting. Below is a summary of the layout of the draft document. Language underlined explains proposed changes and the need to review. Attached is the draft document with strikethrough and underline for changes proposed between the April and May meetings.

- A. General Provisions – purpose, compliance, exclusions, not vested rights, and substitution/no discrimination ..., added additional language into the purpose statement.
- B. Sign regulations – permits required, exempt signs, prohibited signs, district regulations for permanent signs, and temporary signs.
Prohibited signs – neon, LED... was discussed during the April meeting.
Prohibited signs - Removed “transported signs”
Temporary Sandwich board – need to decide on maximum width
- C. Sign standards in all districts – corner lot clear site lines, setback, sign height, sign measurement, illumination. Possibly need to add description of sign types – wall, free-standing – staff has deleted this reference as the sign types are defined in definitions.
- D. Changeable message centers/boards/reader boards
- E. Billboards
- F. Maintenance and liability. Staff removed liability language and expanded language
- G. Removal. Staff removed language and replaced with expanded language.
- H. Nonconforming signs. Staff removed language and replaced with expanded language.

Memorandum

Article IV Administration

1. added reference to Iconic Sign Designation
2. added language for PC to grant Iconic Sign Designation and factors for review

Definitions

1. added Iconic signs
2. inflatable sign – deleted 20 cubic feet reference.

Next Steps

Review the additional draft changes and direct staff to make changes. Staff believe that after this meeting, the document should be ready to send to the attorney for review. Staff is hopeful a public hearing before the Planning Commission for the first major amendment to the UDC can take place during the September meeting for the different sections that have been being reviewed this calendar year.

DRAFT 4– 05122026 PC MEETING DISCUSSION – previously discussed items are shown in regular text. New language is underlined. See previous packets for older versions

Discussion 3 – new language added 04142026 – incorporated into document as standard text

Discussion 2 – new language added 03102026 – incorporated into document as standard text

Discussion 1 new language added 02102026 – incorporated into document as standard text

Sec. 71-30 Sign standards – delete in entirety and replace with the following:

Sec. 71-30 Sign standards

71-30.A General Provisions

1. Purpose

This section establishes the standards for the number, size, placement, and physical characteristics of on-premises signs visible from a public sidewalk or adjacent property. Signage regulated is located on private property and does not include directional, emergency, or traffic related signs owned or required by city, county, state or federal governmental agencies. The regulations are designed to protect the interest of public health, safety and welfare while accommodating the need for signs to inform, direct, identify, advertise, advocate, promote, endorse and otherwise communicate information to residents of the City of Buchanan, the business community and visitors

The regulations also promote the goals of the master plan by improving the visual character of thoroughfares and fostering business retention while attracting new businesses. Accommodations for special circumstances or events may create a need for temporary signs or modifications to adopted regulations. The need to eliminate potential hazards to motorists and pedestrians resulting from sign clutter and visual distractions and preventing blight.

While these regulations allow for a variety of sign types and sizes, they do not necessarily ensure every property owner or business owner's desired level of visibility. It is not the intent or purpose to regulate the message or content displayed on any sign.

2. Compliance and applicability of other regulations

It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, relocate, enlarge, alter, modify or maintain a sign or allow a sign to remain on property in the city except for compliance with this Section. All regulations in this section shall be in addition to any other applicable laws, rules and regulations concerning signs. If any provision in this section is inconsistent with the provisions of any other law presently existing or enacted in the future, the more restrictive will apply.

3. Exclusions

Government signs are not regulated by this section.

4. No vested rights.

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted or construed to give rise to any permanent vested rights in the continuation of any particular sign, and it is hereby declared to be subsequent amendment, change or modification as may be necessary for the preservation of public health, safety and welfare.

5. Substitution/no discrimination against non-commercial signs or speech.

The owner of any sign which is otherwise allowed by this section may substitute non-commercial content in lieu of any other commercial or non-commercial content. This substitution of content may be made without any additional approval or permitting. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech or non-commercial speech or favoring of

any particular non-commercial message over any other non-commercial message. This provision prevails over any more specific provisions to the contrary in this section.

The clause shall not be construed to allow content, which is profane, obscene, threatening, discriminatory or otherwise not protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or art. 5 of the Michigan Constitution.

71-30.B Sign regulations.

1. Permits required

- a. A permit is required to erect, alter, place, or replace any sign or sign structures as regulated and required by this section or by the City's Code of Ordinance. A permit is also required for substantial maintenance or repair to an existing nonconforming sign.
- b. To obtain a sign permit, a completed application as provided by the city shall be filed with the City in accordance with Section 71-26I Sign Permit.
- c. Properties located within the D Downtown District are required to obtain Downtown Design Review in accordance with Section 71-36H Downtown Applications.

2. Signs exempt from obtaining permits.

The following signs may be installed or erected without a permit:

- a. Donor signs up to two square feet in size.
- b. Historic markers placed under the authority of the local, state, or federal government and not exceeding two square feet in size.
- c. Home occupation sign, not to exceed 3 square feet and nonilluminated (from section 71-23.A.5)
- d. Nameplate or plaques up to 2 square feet in size, bearing the name of the building occupant, one per occupant.
- e. Official legal notice.
- f. On-site informational signs.
- g. Vehicle signs, where the on which the sign is displayed does not regularly go unoperated for a period exceeding seven consecutive days. – **defined NEED WORK**
- h. Signs located on or within a building, in compliance with MCL125.3205d, that commemorate any of the following:
 - i. Any of the following how die in the line of duty: police officers, firefighters, medical first responders, members of the United States Armed Forces or correction officers;
 - ii. Veterans of the United States Armed Forces.
- i. Window signs when applied to the interior or exterior of the window or door glass does not exceed 25% of the glass area. Windows that are immediately adjacent, on the same wall face of the same building, maybe averaged together. (25% per existing code)

3. Prohibited signs.

The following signs as described are prohibited:

- a. Abandoned signs.
- b. Inflatable signs or devices except for balloons used in temporary, non-commercial situations.
- c. Neon, LED, or other light types permanently outlining windows or doors.
- d. Pornographic or obscene signs.
- e. Roof signs
- f. Signs emitting smoke, vapors, particulate matter, odor or open flames
- g. Signs imitating or resembling official traffic or government signs or signals that confuse, mislead, or create a safety hazard.

- h. Signs prohibited under federal, state, or local laws, rules or regulations.
- i. Signs utilizing animation or which contain the optical illusion of sign movement.
- j. Snipe signs.
- k. ~~Transported signs unless the vehicle with the transported sign is operating lawfully in a public or private road. defined~~ **DISCUSS**

4. District sign regulations

Table 71-T sets forth the sign types, maximum size, height and number of signs allowed, minimum setbacks, prohibited or permitted signs. All permitted signs require a sign permit prior to installation unless exempt under section ___ or allowed as temporary under section ____ of this chapter.

Table 71-T Permanent Sign Standards

DRAFT 04142026

Table 71-T District Sign Regulations					
	N, NE, GN, NC - One or Two-Family Residential Use	N, NE, GN, NC - Three-Family or more Residential Use or Non-Residential Use	D	SC	I
Wall Signs: Awning, Canopy, Wall	Permit Required				
Maximum square footage for business frontage		One times (1 x) the building frontage	Two times (2x) the building frontage not to exceed a combined total of 150 square feet		
Number allowed		1 per building frontage	3 per building frontage		
Maximum square footage for side or rear wall having a secondary entrance (not on building frontage)		20 square feet			
Number allowed on a side or rear wall having a secondary entrance (not on building frontage)		1 per wall			
Maximum height		20 feet or below the bottom of any second floor window, whichever is less. Shall not extend above the roof deck or parapet and shall not be located on a penthouse or elevator overrun.			
Minimum vertical clearance		8 feet when located over public or private sidewalk; 15 feet over public rights-of-way or drive aisles. If projection less than 4" no minimum vertical clearance			
Maximum projection		12" from face of building			
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					
Wall Signs: Projecting or Hanging	Permit Required				
Maximum square footage			6 square feet		
Number allowed			1 per building frontage		
Maximum projection from wall of building			4 feet		
Maximum height			Below the bottom of the second floor window		
Minimum vertical clearance			8 feet		
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					
	N, NE, GN, NC - One or Two-Family Residential Use	N, NE, GN, NC - Three-Family or more Residential Use or Non-Residential Use	D	SC	I
Ground Signs	Permit Required				
Number allowed, total	1 per development entrance	1 per parcel	1 per parcel		
Maximum size	32 square feet	32 square feet	50 square feet		
Maximum Height - Monument	6 feet	6 feet	8 feet		
Maximum Height - Pole		6 feet	15 feet		
Minimum setback	3 feet from any lot line	3 feet from any lot line	3 feet from any lot line		
Minimum vertical clearance for pole sign			8 feet		
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					

Changeable message board - see section ___ for additional information					
Billboards, see Section ___ for additional information					Permit Required
Number allowed					1 per parcel
Maximum size					260 sf
Maximum height					30 feet
Minimum setback					50 feet
Distance between signs					300 feet
Minimum clearance from ground					8 feet
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					

5. Temporary signs

- a. Temporary signs which allow for the freedom of expression or promotion of temporary events while minimizing clutter, visual distractions, obstructions, and nuisances when meeting the following:
General regulations:
 - i. Shall not be illuminated;
 - ii. Shall not have supports or borders wider than two inches on any side; and
 - iii. Shall be removed no more than seven days after an event concludes if the sign is associated with a particular commercial event.
- b. Signs placed on a lot where the primary use is a single-family or two-family residential use
 - i. The maximum overall sign height is four feet.
 - ii. The maximum sign area is six square feet.
 - iii. The maximum total area of all temporary signs displayed concurrently on one lot is 24 square feet.
- c. Signs placed on parcels where the use is not a single-family or two-family residential use
 - i. The maximum overall height is eight feet.
 - ii. the maximum total area of all temporary signs displayed concurrently on one parcel is 32 square feet.
- d. Sandwich Board signs under the following:
 - i. One board per business;
 - ii. Maximum height of 4 feet (no requirement now);
 - iii. Maximum square footage of ~~9~~ 8 square feet (reduced to 8 sf);
 - iv. Maximum width ~~24" or 30"~~ **NEED TO DECIDE** ;
 - v. Displayed outside during business hours and stored inside when the business is closed;
 - vi. Shall not have moving parts or attachments, including but not limited to, balloons, pinwheels, streamers, pennants, flags, or similar adornments;
 - vii. Shall not be illuminated or have sound amplification;
 - viii. Shall be constructed of wood, metal, or other similarly durable material and shall have adequate support to prevent tipping or movement of the sign and shall not present a tripping hazard to pedestrians.
 - ix. Must be placed to allow unobstructed ADA compliant route to business and surrounding areas;
 - x. Located on private property or on public sidewalk when located in the D Downtown district.
- e. Pennant signs are allowed under the following:
 - i. Shall be displayed for not more than thirty (30) days when associated with a business grand opening.
- f. Feather flag signs are allowed under the following:
 - i. No more than two feather flag signs per commercial property.
 - ii. Shall be located on private property.
 - iii. Shall only be displayed during business hours.
- g. Portable Changeable Message signs are allowed under the following:
 - i. No more than one portable changeable message sign is allowed on a non-residentially zoned property or on properties which have non-residential uses.
 - ii. Shall be displayed on private property no more than one week prior to advertised event.

71-30.C Sign design standards in all districts

1. **Corner lot clear sign lines**
No sign shall be located within the required corner lot clear sight line as established in Section 71-16.G of this Code.
2. **Setback – minimum distance**
The minimum required distance between any sign, building or property line is measured by drawing a straight horizontal line that represents the shortest distance between the sign and other sign, building or property line.
3. **Sign height/overall height.**
The height of a sign is measured from the existing average finished grade level of the premises where the sign is located to the highest point of the sign structure. Freestanding signs located in raised planter boxes shall have the height measured from the existing average finished grade outside the planter box. The ground beneath a sign shall not be raised to artificially raise the height of a sign.
4. **Sign area measurement**
 - a. The area of a sign shall be measured as the area within a single, continuous perimeter composed of either the smallest square, or rectangle, which encloses the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, logo, or any other figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed, excluding only the structure necessary to support the sign. Reader boards shall be included in the sign measurement.
 - b. The area of a freestanding or projecting sign that has two or more faces shall be measured by including the area of all sign faces, except if two such faces are placed back-to-back shall be counted as one face. If the two back-to-back faces are of unequal size, the larger of the two sign faces shall be counted as one face.
5. **Illumination**
 - a. Any permanent wall or free-standing sign may be internally or externally illuminated.
 - b. If externally illuminated, the source of the light shall be located, shielded and directed to prevent the source of light from shining directly onto any public right-of-way or residential property.
 - c. Uniform lighting shall be used throughout a sign to create a uniform appearance rather than creating some areas that appear brighter than others.
 - d. Signs shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 pm and 6:00 am, except that a business open after 11:00 pm or before 6:00 am may have illumination during business hours.
 - e. All signs must comply with the building and electrical codes of the City of Buchanan. Underground wiring is required for all illuminated signs.

71-30.D Changeable message centers/boards/reader boards

1. In addition to other regulations contained in this section, the following provisions shall apply to changeable message boards, where allowed:
 - i. One changeable message board is permitted per business; however, no more than one changeable message board is permitted per lot.
 - ii. Changeable message boards shall only advertise on-site products or services or non-

commercial public information such as time/temperature, safety alters, and community/civic events.

- iii. Changeable message boards are permitted only on free-standing signs and shall not be attached to the exterior wall of a building.
 - iv. Changeable message boards shall be integrated into a free-standing sign in order to create a cohesive, single-looking sign and shall not occupy more than 50% of the total sign face on each side.
 - v. With the exception of wall mounted signage located in the D Downtown district, illumination shall not exceed 0.0 foot-candles at any lot lines that are adjacent to or across a right-of-way from a residential use. In all other cases, the illumination shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at the lot line.
 - vi. Changeable message boards shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 pm and 6:00 am, except that a business open after 11:00 pm or before 6:00 am may have the changeable message board illuminated during business hours.
2. Electronic message centers (EMC) must comply with the following additional regulations:
- i. An EMC shall not be used or displayed in a way that presents multiple screens within a single sign face, whether simulated or actual.
 - ii. Transition from one message to another shall be instantaneous, without movement or other transition effects between messages.
 - iii. Messages must remain on display for no less than seven seconds. Scrolling and flashing display messages is prohibited.
 - iv. Illumination shall not exceed 0.0 foot-candles at any lot lines that are adjacent to or across a right-of-way from a residential use. In all other cases, the illumination shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at the lot line.
 - v. Any new EMC must be equipped with both a programable dimming sequence as well as an additional overriding mechanical photocell that adjusts the brightness of the display to the ambient light at all times of day. Such programming and mechanical equipment shall be set so that the electronic sign, from dusk to dawn or in overcast conditions, will be no more than 40% of the daytime brightness level. Manufacturers' information must be submitted with the sign permit application.
 - vi. A copy of the manufacturer's operating manual for the EMC, including any recommended standards for brightness, display operations and any interfaced computer programs, must be available for immediate access at the business location where it is operating and must be provided to the zoning administrator upon request.
3. Electronic vehicle fuel station signs displaying fuel prices must comply with the following:
- i. A maximum of three fuel products may be displayed per sign face, limited to fuel product pricing only.
 - ii. The maximum electronic message area is 12 square feet or five square feet per fuel product displayed.

E. Billboards.

The following standards shall apply to all billboards unless specifically exempted in this section:

- a. A sign face shall not exceed 260 square feet per side, and the total area of a double-faced sign shall not exceed 520 square feet. A double-faced sign shall consist of the two sign faces being parallel to each other and facing opposite directions.
- b. Billboards greater than 100 square feet in size shall be located a minimum of 50 feet from the nearest property line and 100 feet from any residential use or district, public park, religious institution or any public or private school.
- c. Billboards must have a minimum ground clearance of eight feet and may not exceed 30 feet in height.
- d. Billboards must have a minimum separation of 300 feet from any other billboard

or any public waterway.

- e. Billboards shall be located perpendicular to the nearest street.
- f. Billboards must be free-standing and shall not be attached to, erected on, cantilevered over or constructed above any other structure.
- g. Billboards shall not incorporate flashing or rotating lights, beacon lights, running lights, animated copy, electronic message centers or digital displays.

Exemption: Billboards lawfully existing on the date this chapter becomes effective shall be allowed to continue in their current location and size even if in conflict with the provisions of this chapter. However, all other regulations shall continue to apply to such billboards.

F. Maintenance and liability.

- ~~1. Painted or paper-faced signs and sign structures must be maintained free of broken or torn materials, peeling paint or paper, sun fading, staining, rust or other conditions which impair the legibility of the sign.~~
2. Any permitted signs, including all supports, braces, guys and anchors, must be maintained in a manner not to cause a hazard to the public.
- ~~3. The city requires proof of current, in force liability insurance in the aggregate amount of at least \$500,000.00, as a condition of granting a sign permit or as a condition of allowing the continued use of an existing sign, in the following instances:~~
 - ~~a. Signs that extend over the city right of way.~~
 - ~~b. Freestanding signs whose height exceeds the horizontal distance of the base of the sign to the nearest city right of way~~

~~G. Removal. The zoning administrator or their designee is authorized to remove any sign deemed to be unsafe or a hazard to the public. The cost of the removal will be billed to the property owner.~~

G. Removal of unsafe, abandoned, obsolete and prohibited signs and sign structures.

1. Public Property or Rights-of-Way. Any unauthorized sign or sign structure located in a public right-of-way or on public property may be removed without notice and may be destroyed after seven days of being removed.
2. Abandoned, Obsolete, Unsafe or Prohibited Signs. If upon inspection, the zoning administrator finds that a sign or sign structure located on private property is abandoned, obsolete, unsafe, and/or prohibited, the zoning administrator shall issue a written order to the sign owner and the property owner upon which the sign or sign structure is located stating the nature of the violation and requiring them to repair, remove, or conform the permanent sign or sign structure within 30 calendar days of the date of the order, or to remove temporary signs or sign structures within five calendar days of the order.
3. Imminent Danger. When any sign or sign structure is found to be in such condition as to make it an imminent danger to the life or safety of the public, in addition to any other remedy in this chapter, the zoning administrator is hereby authorized and empowered to immediately order the necessary work to be done as is necessary to render such sign or sign structure

temporarily safe. In such event, the owner of the premises upon which the sign is located is responsible for such costs and the zoning administrator shall cause such appropriate action as is necessary to recover those costs.

H. **Non-conforming signs.**

~~1. If a sign display is not current, is in a state of disrepair, or is left blank for a continuous period of 60 days, it is considered abandoned, within 30 days after abandonment the owner of the property must remove or replace the sign or the message. The sole exception to this provision is signs installed as an integral component of a building.~~

~~2. Illumination may not be added to a nonconforming sign.~~

~~3. A nonconforming sign may not be replaced except to bring it into complete conformance with this section.~~

~~4. If a sign is removed or damaged to the extent that the cost of restoration exceeds 50 percent of the original value of the sign it must be removed or brought into complete conformance with this section.~~

Every permanent sign which was erected legally and which lawfully exists at the time of the enactment of this article, but which does not conform to the provisions of this chapter as of the date this chapter is effective, is hereby deemed to be nonconforming and may remain except as provided in this section.

1. Nonconforming status shall not be granted to any temporary sign, banner, or other non-permanent sign. In addition, a sign illegal at the time of the adoption of the ordinance from which this section derives shall not become a non-conforming sign by reason of such adoption, but shall remain an illegal sign.

2. The right to maintain any nonconforming sign shall terminate whenever any of the following occurs:

a. The nonconforming sign is dimensionally or structurally altered, enlarged, modified, added to, or changed, except as may be required by law, unless it is made to conform with this chapter.

b. The nonconforming sign is located on property that is being modified as requested and initiated by the owner of the property or owner's representative, for an application that involves a public hearing request before the planning commission (examples include: map amendment (rezoning), text amendment, special use permits, or planned unit developments) or zoning board of appeals (example, a dimensional variance).

c. The principal structure associated with the sign or the non-conforming sign is razed or destroyed by fire or other casualty loss when restoration will constitute more than 50 percent of the value of the structure.

d. The principal structure associated with the sign is renovated or remodeled when renovation or remodeling will constitute more than 50 percent of the value of the structure on the date the renovation or remodeling begins.

e. The nonconforming sign is unsafe, abandoned, obsolete and/or prohibited.

3. The nonconforming sign shall not be relocated or moved in whole or part to any other location on the same or any other lot unless every portion of such sign is made to conform to the regulations of this chapter and other applicable regulations of the city.

ARTICLE IV. ADMINISTRATION AND PROCESS

This article outlines the bodies with review, approval, and appellate authority in administering this chapter.

Sec. 71-33 Review and decision making bodies.

- A. City Commission.
 1. Powers and duties. In addition to any authority granted the City Commission by charter, ordinance or state law, the commission has the following powers and duties under this chapter:
 - a. Amendments to text and zoning map. To review, hear, consider and approve or disapprove:
 - i. Text amendments. Petitions to amend the text of this chapter.
 - ii. Zoning map amendments. Petitions to amend the zoning map.
 - b. Initiate amendments. To initiate petitions to the text of this chapter and the zoning map.
 - c. Other. To take any other action not delegated to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals or heads of city departments, as the City Commission may deem desirable and necessary to implement the provisions of this chapter.
- B. Planning Commission. The Planning Commission establishment, organization, powers and duties are enumerated in Chapter 70 of the City of Buchanan Code of Ordinances and include review, hear, consider and approve or disapprove Sign Modifications, Mural requests or Iconic Sign Designation.
- C. Community Development Director/Zoning Administrator.
 1. Powers and duties. In addition to the jurisdiction, authority and duties that may be conferred upon the Zoning Administrator by other provisions of this chapter and general or special law, the zoning administrator has the following jurisdiction, powers and duties under this chapter:
 - a. Administrative adjustments. To review, hear, consider and approve or disapprove administrative adjustments.
 - b. Temporary use permit. To review, hear, consider and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove temporary use permits.
 - c. Minor deviations. To review, hear, consider and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove minor deviations for site plans.
 - d. Interpretations. To render interpretations of all provisions of this chapter, including interpretations of the text; interpretations of the zoning map boundaries; and determinations of whether an unspecified use falls within a use classification or use group allowed in a zone district.
 - e. Enforcement. To enforce the provisions of this chapter.
 - f. Administer chapter. To establish application requirements and schedules, to review and make recommendations to the City Commission, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals on all applications considered by those boards, and take any other actions necessary to administer the provisions of this chapter.
 - g. Provide expertise and technical assistance. To provide expertise and technical assistance to the city commission, planning commission and

zoning board of appeals.

D. Zoning Board of Appeals.

1. Powers and duties. The Zoning Board of Appeals has the following powers and duties under this chapter:
 - a. Variances. To review, hear, consider and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove variances.
 - b. Appeals of administrative decisions. To hear, review, consider, and affirm, modify or reverse any decision or interpretation of the zoning administrator.
2. Appeals. An appeal of a decision by the Zoning Board of Appeals must be filed with the Circuit Court within 30 days after the decision in writing, or within 21 days after the board approves the minutes of the meeting.

E. Design Review Committee.

1. Powers and duties. The design review Committee is the decision-making body for applications subject to downtown design standards unless the proposed work qualifies for administrative approval under [Sec. 71-36 H. Downtown applications](#).
2. The Design Review Committee meets on an as-needed basis when discretionary review is required.

Sec. 71-34 General provisions.

*****Sections A – F not included*****

G. Timing of notice. Unless otherwise provided in the Michigan statutes and laws or this chapter, notice will be provided as shown in [Table 71-U](#).

TABLE 71-U NOTICE TIMING		
Application	Notice Required	
	Written	Published
Text amendment		Planning commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing City commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Zoning map amendment	Planning commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing City commission: reasonable time prior to public hearing	Planning commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing City commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Special use permit	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing	
Variance		
Appeal		
Sign modification or mural	No notice is required	

*** Sections H – K not included ***

Sec. 71-35 Public hearing procedures. NOT INCLUDED

All public hearings must comply with the following procedures.

Sec. 71-36 Specific standards for development approval.

A. General. [Table 71-V](#) summarizes the development review procedures for all types of applications.

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES						
Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Text amendments	R	[R]		[DM]		N
Zoning map amendment	R	[R]		[DM]		W, N
Special use permit	R	[DM]				W, N
Variance	R		[DM]			W
Appeals of administrative decision			[DM]			W
Administrative adjustments	DM		[A]			
Site plan review	DM					
Sign permit, modifications, mural and iconic designation	DM or R	DM	[A]	A		

Temporary use permit	DM		[A]			
Certificate of zoning compliance	DM					
Downtown application	R				DM	
Interpretations	DM		[A]			

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	

Key

Planning Commission	PC
Zoning Board of Appeals	ZBA
City Commission	CC
Design Review Committee	DRC
Review & Recommendations	R
Decision Making Body	DM
Appellate Body	A
Public Hearing Required	[]
Published Notice	N
Written Notice	W

*****Section B Amendment to text or zoning map and C Special use permit D Variances E Appeals of administrative decisions and F Administrative adjustments, G Site Plan and H Downtown applications not included *****

- B. Sign permit.
 - 1. Administrative review of sign applications.
 - a. Action. After the application is determined sufficient, the zoning administrator will review the application and determine if the application complies with the standards in [Sec. 71-30](#).
 - b. Approval. If the zoning administrator finds that the application complies, the zoning administrator will approve the sign permit.
 - c. Appeals from any interpretations, determinations, or denials made by the zoning administrator shall be made to the planning commission and submitted on such forms provided by the city for that purpose and subject to such fees set by the city commission prior to the posted submittal deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled planning commission meeting.
 - d. Applications denied by the zoning administrator for the reason that the proposed sign requires a sign modification of the sign regulations by the planning commission as provided under section ___- of this section, the applicant shall submit a complete application for such request to the planning commission on such forms provided by the city for that purpose and subject to the fees set by the city commission prior to the posted submittal deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled planning commission meeting.

- e. Appeals from a decision of the planning commission shall be made to the city commission on such forms provided by the city for that purpose and subject to such fees set by the city commission and within 30 days after the decision in writing, or within 21 days after the planning commission approves the meeting minutes.

2. Planning commission review and approval of certain sign modifications and murals

Subject to the standards and limitations set forth in this section, the planning commission shall have the authority to review certain sign applications and grant approvals. Any approval granted shall be valid for not more than 180 days.

a. Authority to Grant Requested Modifications of Sign Regulations. The planning commission has no authority to grant a modification for signs prohibited under section _____ of this section. However, the planning commission has authority, in connection with an application, to grant approval of a request for modification of the sign regulations for permitted signs, subject to the following regulations.

1. Review. The planning commission shall, within 60 days of receiving a complete application, either grant approval of the application by written findings stating the reasons therefor, deny the application, or grant the application with modifications or conditions. Failure of the planning commission to act within 60 days, or such further time to which the applicant may agree, shall be deemed to be a decision of denial.
2. Authorized Modification. The planning commission may grant an applicant's request to modify the provisions of this section as follows:
 - (a) To increase by no more than 20 percent the maximum allowable height of any free-standing sign.
 - (b) To increase by no more than 20 percent the maximum area of signage otherwise allowed.
 - (c) To increase by no more than one sign the maximum number of signs or sign types otherwise allowed.
 - (d) To allow no more than one sign type to be located on a lot where signs of such types are not otherwise allowed.
 - (e) To adjust the required spacing between any signs, structures or lot lines.
3. Factors for Approval of Modifications. The factors to be considered by the planning commission for permitted modifications shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) Minimum Request. The modification requested is the minimum change necessary to alleviate the hardship while addressing the unique and specific needs of the applicant.
 - (b) General Standards. Carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this Ordinance would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty not caused by an act or omission of the applicant.
 - (c) Unusual Physical Limitations. The subject property or the structure on which the sign is proposed to be located is burdened with an unusual physical limitation, such as irregular shape, unusual geographic location, exceptional feature, or other extraordinary physical condition, that is peculiar to the subject property and is more than merely an inconvenience or cost consideration to the applicant.
 - (d) Location Factors. The subject property location supports the permitted modification, reviewing such factors as size and use of parcel, setbacks, adjacent property uses, and speed of adjacent roadway(s).
 - (e) Adverse Impacts. The modification, if granted, would have no significant adverse impact on any abutting or adjacent property, the essential character of any part of or all of the neighborhood, or the use, enjoyment or value of other nearby properties.

(f) **Public Health and Safety.** The modification, if granted, would have no significant adverse impact on and would not endanger the public health or safety of the public.

b. **Authority to Approve Requested Mural Installations.** The planning commission has authority, in connection with an application to grant approval of a request for installation of a mural as defined in Article V subject to the following regulations.

1. **Review.** The planning commission shall, within 60 days of receiving a complete application, either grant approval of the application by written findings stating the reasons therefor, deny the application, or grant the application with modifications or conditions. Failure of the planning commission to act within 60 days, or such further time to which the applicant may agree, shall be deemed to be a decision of denial.

2. **Factors for Approval of Murals.** The factors to be considered by the planning commission for installation of a mural shall include, but are not limited to the following:

(a) **Art Work.** The mural design does not include elements that would be considered inappropriate and/or indecent by community standards and the art work provided is sufficient and accurate for review.

(b) **Location Appropriate.** The proposed mural placement on the building does not negatively impact vehicular or pedestrian traffic once installed and does not disrupt the properties landscaping and maintenance activities.

(c) **Placement in Neighborhood/Surrounding Area.** How many murals are in the neighborhood/surrounding area and what impact could the new mural have on existing ones.

(d) **Scale and Placement on Building.** Is the scale of the mural on the exterior wall and view from public right-of-way properly designed and placed. Does the mural design minimize alterations to the existing façade of the building including windows or doors.

(e) **Enhancement and Activation.** How will the proposed mural enhance and activate the pedestrian and streetscape experience.

(f) **Installation Process.** The applicant has sufficiently documented how the exterior wall will be prepared prior to installation of the mural, how the mural will be installed and what if any city permits will be required (right-of-way permit), documentation regarding public utilities being disturbed either on the building or overhead.

(g) **Maintenance and Removal.** Written document has been provided regarding the future maintenance and/or removal of the mural.

3. **Authority to Grant Iconic Sign Designation and Maintenance.** The planning commission has authority, in connection with an application, to grant approval of the application for iconic sign designation, subject to the following regulations.

a. **Review.** The planning commission shall, within 90 days of receiving a complete application, either grant the application by written findings stating the reasons therefor, deny the application, or grant the application with modifications or conditions. The failure of the planning commission to act within 90 days, or such further time to which the applicant may agree, shall be deemed to be a decision of denial.

b. **Factors for Approval of Iconic Sign Designation.** Iconic sign standards are intended to provide for the preservation of the city's unique character, history, or identity as reflected in its historic and iconic signs. A sign may be designated as an iconic sign if the planning commission determines that the sign is structurally safe or capable of being made so without materially altering its historical character or significance, and the applicant presents a proposed maintenance program that addresses general maintenance, repair, restoration, and other potential future modifications (e.g., text changes).

In addition, the planning commission must determine that the sign meets a majority of the following criteria:

1. The sign has been in continuous existence at its present location for at least 10 years.
2. The sign is associated with historic figures, events, or locations within the city; is recognized as a popular focal point in the community; or reflects the history or historical use of the building or the history of the city.
3. The sign is of exemplary technology, craftsmanship, or design for the period in which it was constructed; uses historic sign materials or means of illumination; or is unique in that it demonstrates extraordinary aesthetic quality, creativity, or innovation.

c. *Factors for Approval of Iconic Sign Repair or Restoration.* Any repair or restoration to an iconic sign requires a permit and shall be reviewed by the planning commission by the above described process, and must comply with the following:

1. The sign will be restored and repaired to its substantially original condition, using the same color scheme, graphics, and materials to the extent practicable in order to replicate the original appearance of the sign;
2. Text changes either match or are compatible with existing text in material(s), letter size, font/typography; and
3. Restoration or repair of the sign is not expanded beyond the original sign area.

d. *Iconic Sign Removal.* Nothing in this chapter prohibits the voluntary removal of an iconic sign. Once removed, an iconic sign cannot be replaced unless it is removed as part of an approved sign restoration.

ARTICLE V. DEFINITIONS

This Section provides definitions for terms in this chapter that are technical in nature or that may not reflect a common usage of the term.

***** definitions A – Z with exception of sign related language not included *****

Signs: An object, devise, structure, fixture, or placard using graphics, symbols, and/or written copy designed specifically for the purpose of advertising or identifying an establishment, product, service or activity. Multiple types of signs exist and are defined below:

Awning or canopy: a fixed or movable shading structure, cantilevered or otherwise entirely supported from a building, used to protect outdoor spaces from sun, rain, and other natural conditions.

Banner: a temporary lightweight sign that is made of flexible, nondurable materials such as fabric, cloth or plastic and is typically affixed to a building or accessory structure. A banner sign does not include a feather or pennant sign.

Billboard: An off-premises sign which contains a message unrelated to or not advertising a business transacted or goods sold or produced on the premises on which the sign is located.

Business frontage: The maximum linear width between exterior wall(s) of a building, or in the case of a multi-tenant building, the maximum linear width between the exterior and/or demising walls of an individual tenant located at street level and having an individual exterior entrance. Building frontage must abut a public street or a parking lot abutting a public street; it is measured in a single straight line parallel, or essentially parallel, with the abutting public street or parking lot. The building frontage is used to determine the maximum square footage of wall signs. A corner lot is considered to have a building frontage abutting each public street or parking lot; maximum signage is calculated individually per building frontage.

Donor or memorial sign: a sign that contains names, acknowledgements, or factual information to acknowledge or honor a benefactor, volunteer, or individual associated with the structure or site upon which it is located.

Electronic message center: an electronic changeable message board, including an electronic screen or monito, which is not an animated sign.

Expressive sign: a temporary sign that promotes or expresses an individual's personal non-commercial ideology, belief, value, or message. Examples of expressive signs include, but are limited to, signs expressing political beliefs, supporting clubs or sports teams, and expressing religious views.

Feather flag: A temporary sign applied to cloth, paper, flexible plastic, or fabric of any kind with only such material for backing, are generally a single sign attached to a support post and typically having a dimensional ratio of four high to one wide and move in the wind to attract attention. This can also be referred to as a feather banner or feather sign.

Flag: Any fabric, banner or bunting containing distinctive color, letters or symbols.

Freestanding sign: A sign that is not affixed to a separate structure or building but is affixed to the ground, including but limited to pole signs or monument/ground signs.

Historical marker sign: a plaque bearing historical information related to the nearby structure, land or area upon which it is located (i.e., date of construction, early owners and builder, etc.)

Iconic sign: A sign found in its sustainably original form or construction that exemplifies historical, cultural or architectural features or is deemed to be unusual, significant, or meaningful to the city streetscape or the city's history.

Inflatable sign: a sign composed of an inflatable, nonporous bag. ~~and exceeding 20 cubic feet.~~

Marquee: a permanent structure constructed of rigid materials that projects from the exterior wall of a building.

Monument sign: A base-mounted, freestanding sign placed on the ground and not attached to any building or other structure. A monument sign includes a solid supporting base of at least twelve inches in height and a width equal to or greater than the width of the sign face.

Mural: A design, graphics, or representation painted or drawn on a wall or other structure which does not contain commercial copy, advertising symbols, lettering, trademarks or other references to a particular entity, product or service located on the premises where the mural is located, or any other premise.

Official legal notice: Notices required by law, signs erected by a governmental agency or public utility

Off-premises sign: A sign which contains a message unrelated to or not advertising a business transacted or goods sold or produced on the premises on which the sign is located. Sometimes referred to as a billboard and can be free-standing or attached to a building.

On-site informational sign: a sign that identifies entrances and exits, safety precautions, open and closed information, warnings and other such incidental information for the property upon which the sign is located, including drive-thru menu boards, which is of a minimum size and height to provide the necessary information while not extending above the parapet, eave or wall of the building.

Pennant sign: a geometric piece of fabric or other material, commonly attached by string, with rows of loose materials, streamers, shapes, or strands, or supported on small poles intended to flap in the wind and used to draw attention. A pennant sign is not a feather flag.

Permanent sign: a sign that has a permanent location on the ground or which is painted on or attached to a structure having a permanent location and which meets the structural requirements for signs as established in the building code.

Pole sign: a freestanding sign that is affixed, attached, or erected on a pole that is not an integral part of or attached to a building or structure.

Portable changeable message board or sign: A sign containing a changeable message and designed to be transported or moved and not permanently attached to the ground, a building, or other structure.

Projecting sign: a double-faced sign attached to and not parallel with a building or wall.

Reader board: a portion of a sign, with written representation, emblem, graphic, logo, symbol or other display that can be changed periodically, either manually or electronically without altering the face surface of the sign, whether or not displayed is periodically rearranged. This definition excludes sandwich boards.

Roof sign: a sign which is erected, constructed and maintained above any portion of the roof or parapet.

Sandwich board sign: a free-standing, portable, temporary sign consisting of two faces connected and hinged at the top and whose message is targeted to pedestrians; it is also known as an A-frame sign or inverted T-shaped sign.

Sign: An object, device, display or structure, or part thereof situated outdoors which is used to advertise or identify an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event or location by any means including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, motion illumination or projected images.

“Signs” do not include the following:

- a. Flags which do not advertise a business, product or service, not larger than 30 square feet and affixed to permanent flagpoles or flagpole mounted to buildings, subject to the maximum building height of the zoning district it is in. However, if such flags are greater than 30 square feet, they are considered signs and are subject to regulations in this Article.

- b. Seasonal decorations which do not advertise a business, product or service.
- c. Interior signs that are not visible from adjacent property or public rights-of-way.
- d. Merchandise, pictures or models of products or services incorporated in a window display.
- e. Governmental, educational, military, religious, fraternal, and civic symbols or crests.
- f. Tablets or plates containing only the building's name and/or date the building was installed when cut into the masonry surface or permanently affixed to the building.
- g. Time and temperature devices not related to a product and not larger than six square feet.
- h. Works of art, including murals, which do not advertise a business, product or service.
- i. Address numbers in compliance with the International Property Maintenance Code, Premises identification.

Sign structure: poles, posts, walls, frames, brackets, or other supports holding a sign in place.

Snipe sign: Any sign tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued, or otherwise attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences, public benches, streetlights, or other objects, or placed on any public property in the public right-of-way or on any private property with or without the permission of the property owner for commercial uses.

Temporary sign: Any sign which is erected or displayed on a non-permanent basis for a limited period of time. Examples of temporary signages include, but not limited to, a banner sign, construction sign, garage sale sign, political sign, expressive sign, real estate sign, and sandwich board sign.

Transported sign: A sign attached to or pulled by a vehicle that may be displayed or affixed to a moveable object such as but not limited to a car, truck, trailer, or similar transportation device. A transported sign is not a vehicle sign.

Vehicle sign: A sign, painted or otherwise, attached to an operable vehicle or pulled trailer that is regularly used and moved. A vehicle sign is not a transported sign.

Wall sign: any sign mounted or attached to and supported by the wall of any part of a building or structure and in which the horizontal sign surface is parallel to the building wall or structure.

Window sign: any sign painted on, affixed to or placed against any window intended to be viewed from the outside.

Memorandum



Date: April 8, 2026

To: Planning Commission Members

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Discussion #3 - Unified Development Code – Buffering, Landscaping and Trees, Fencing**

Background

The Planning Commission began hearing concerns regarding Sections 71-26 Buffering, 71-28 Tree Preservation and Landscaping standards and 71-29 Fencing standards during the March 10th meeting. The concerns were discussed and the Planning Commission directed staff to move forward to address the concerns. Draft changes were reviewed during the April 14th meeting.

Staff is continuing to work with the Tree Board/Friends regarding species lists.

Next Steps

Once recommendations from the Tree Board/Friends has been received. Staff will incorporate the information into the draft document for final review during the July 14th meeting.

Memorandum



Date: May 5, 2026

To: Planning Commission Members

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Unified Development Code – Section 71-16G Corner lot clear sight lines, 71-27 Parking and Loading and Planned Unit Developments**

Background

During the April 14th meeting, staff explained two areas found within the Unified Development Code need additional review – Section 71-16.G Corner lot clear sight lines and Section 71-27 Parking and Loading. In addition, the UDC removed the ability for an applicant to request a planned unit development and relies on the use of Neighborhood plans found in Section 7-15. However, to request a neighborhood plan that is only reviewed by city staff the parcel must be a minimum of three-acres in size. This minimum threshold can be a problem for some properties and staff believe allowing requests for planned unit development should be incorporated back into the regulations.

Next Steps

Due to time constraints no work has taken on drafting changes. Staff will work on this information and present it at the July 14th meeting.

Memorandum



Date: May 4, 2026

To: Planning Commission

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Amendment Unified Development Code (zoning ordinance)– Table 71-J Use Matrix - Residential**

Background

In late 2025, the Unified Development Code (UDC)/zoning ordinance was adopted. While the Planning Commission has been working on amendments to several sections, staff has concern regarding Table 71-J Use Matrix as it relates to Residential. Similar to the amendment taken separately for the creation of the Short-term rental Overlay District, staff would like to address the concerns separately.

As many of you know, there is a housing shortage throughout the country, which does not exclude the city of Buchanan or surrounding communities. To help provide opportunities to create additional housing, many organizations have been creating tools to help increase opportunities for additional housing. There has also been state legislation introduced that would allow more than one dwelling unit per parcel and communities in Michigan and other states have been changing zoning regulations to allow additional dwelling units by right on parcels.

The city owns several vacant properties and published a request for proposals (RFP) last year for the construction of duplex dwelling units throughout the city. While completing reviews of the RFP's, it was found that duplex units are not allowed in the NE district. It is unclear why two dwelling units are not allowed as many of the parcels are larger than those found in the GN or NC districts. Staff also believe properties in the NE, GN and NC districts should have an opportunity under a special use permit to request additional dwelling units.

While reviewing Table 71-J Use Matrix for Residential options, staff was concerned about some of the wording and missing information associated with Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) and Group Homes which have additional requirements, found Sections 71-24 and 71-25. Attached is an excerpt from Table 71-J relating to Residential. Below is summary of the proposed changes:

1. Home occupations. Added code reference to "Home occupations" as found in Section 71-24.
2. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) with code reference as an accessory use in the NE, GN, and NC districts. New language

Memorandum

3. Group Homes with code reference to Section 71025 as a permitted use to the NE, GN and NC districts. New language.
4. Accessory Dwelling Units on the ground floor in the rear 50% of a building when there is an existing and active permitted principal use in the front of the building in the D district as an accessory use. Typically, in core downtown areas the creation of residential uses on the ground floor is not desired and the use is allowed on the upper floors. Some communities allow residential in the rear of the building. New language which requires discussion.
5. 1 dwelling unit per lot. Added clarification of “detached” and included D District.
6. 1 dwelling unit per lot (zero lot line). Deleted language that pertained to GN and NC district. Staff does not understand reference to zero lot line.
7. 2 dwelling units per lot. Clarified by adding “attached” dwelling units and included NE district. Staff does not believe the intent was to allow two free-standing dwellings on a single property rather a duplex being next to each other or above each other is allowed.
8. 4 dwelling units per lot. In keeping with #7 above, the clarifying word “attached” was added along with the special use opportunity in the NE district where 4 dwelling units are not an option.
9. 8 dwelling units per lot. In keeping with #7 and 8 above, the clarifying word “attached” was added in addition to the special use opportunity in the NE and GN districts where 8 dwelling units are not an option.
10. More than 8 dwelling units per lot. In keeping with #7-9 above, the clarifying word “attached” was added in addition to the special use permit opportunity in the NE and GN districts where more than 8 dwelling units is not an option and is in keeping with the NC district where a special use permit could be requested.
11. Footnote¹ was added to 1, 2,4 and 8 dwelling units and is associated with the D Downtown district. The footnote prohibits the creation of a dwelling unit on the ground floor/first floor/street level in the D District. Typically, in core downtown areas the creation of residential uses on the ground floor is not desired and the use is allowed on the upper floors.

Recommendation

Please discuss and review the language draft provided and direct staff to make any necessary changes. Staff is proposing this item be on the July 7th agenda for a public hearing.

Excerpt – Table 71-J Use Matrix – Redline of Residential

TABLE 71-J USE MATRIX							
	N	NE	GN	NC	D	SC	I
Residential							
Home occupation		A	A	A	A		
1 dwelling unit per lot		■	■	■			
1 dwelling unit per lot (zero lot line)			■	■			
2 dwelling units per lot			■	■	■		
4 dwelling units per lot			■	■	■		
8 dwelling units per lot				■	■		
More than 8 dwelling units per lot				S	■		
Residential							
Home occupation – See Sec. 71-23		A	A	A	A		
<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) See Sec. 71-24</u>		A	A	A			
<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit on the ground floor in the rear 50% of a building when there is an existing and active permitted principal use in the front of the building</u>					A		
<u>Group Homes – See Sec. 71-25</u>		■	■	■			
1 <u>detached</u> dwelling unit per lot ¹		■	■	■	■		
2 <u>attached</u> dwelling units per lot ¹		■	■	■	■		
4 <u>attached</u> dwelling units per lot ¹		S	■	■	■		
8 <u>attached</u> dwelling units per lot ¹		S	S	■	■		
More than 8 <u>attached</u> dwelling units per lot ¹		S	S	S	■		

¹Residential dwelling units located on the ground floor/first floor/street level in the D Downtown District are prohibited.

- Permitted use ■
- Temporary use T
- Accessory use A
- Special use permit S
- Prohibited use blank space

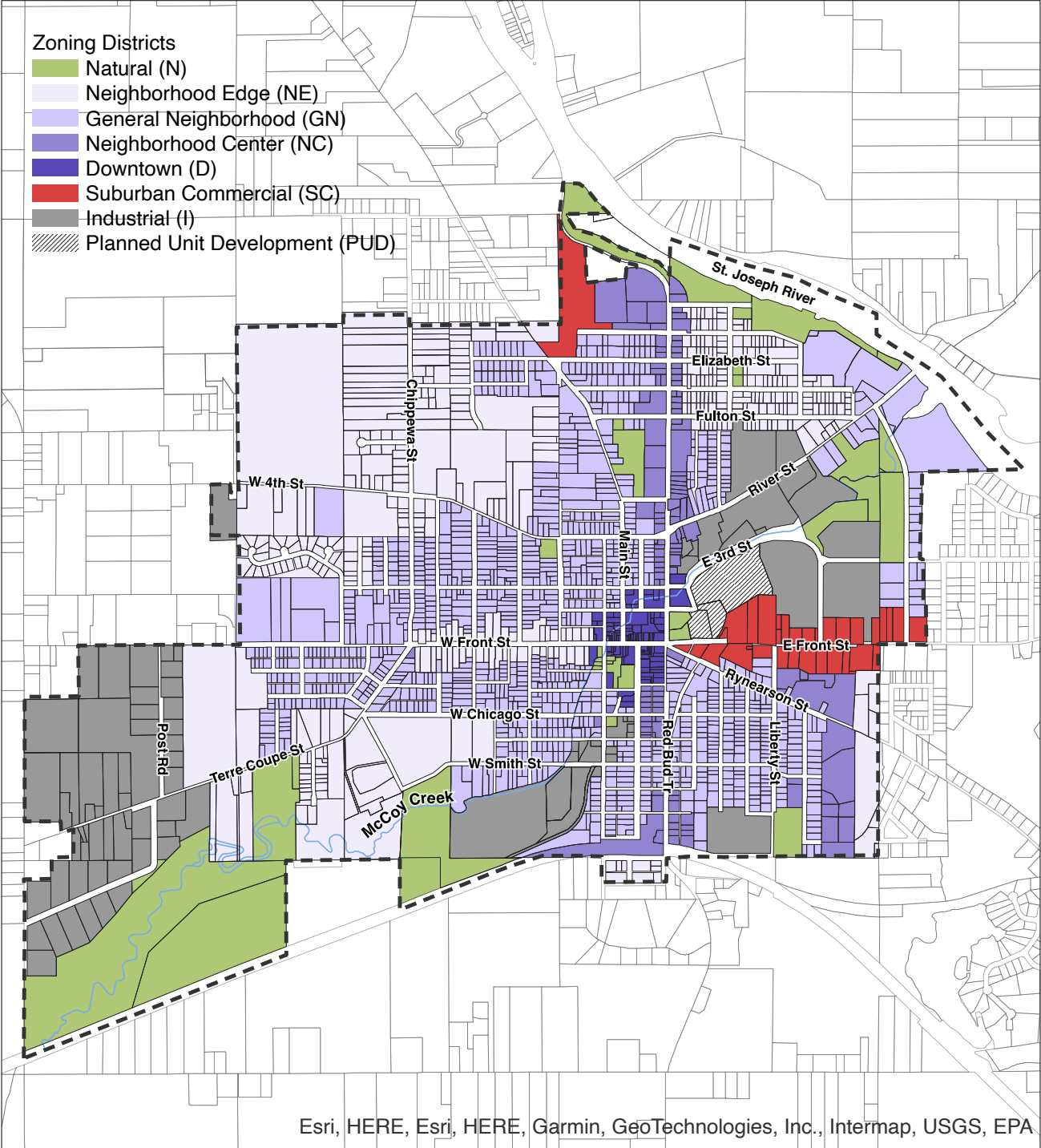


Figure 71-A Buchanan Zoning Map