



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
City of Saugatuck

FROM: Grayson Moore
Director of Planning/Zoning

MEETING DATE: July 16, 2026

RE: Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Survey Summary

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, Planning Commission members were asked to provide feedback on the proposed plan outline, key planning priorities, and the desired future direction for the City. The survey results will be used along with community input during public engagement opportunities to help guide the development of plan goals, objectives, and implementation strategies.

Planning Priorities

Planning Commission members identified the following as the highest-ranking priorities:

1. Infrastructure capacity (water, sewer, roads)
2. Preservation of historic character
3. Downtown economic vitality

Additional topics identified for consideration included parking and public transportation.

Growth, Development, and Community Character

- Five (5) out of seven (7) commissioners (71%) indicated that the Comprehensive Plan should place a stronger emphasis on preserving existing neighborhood character, while allowing appropriate opportunities for future growth and redevelopment.
- Regarding downtown development, commissioners were generally divided between maintaining the current scale and allowing moderate intensification where appropriate.
- No commissioners supported encouraging increased density and mixed-use redevelopment as a primary downtown development direction.

Housing, Mobility, and Tourism

- Commissioners generally supported encouraging year-round housing development, with all members indicating that it should either be somewhat prioritized or remain a consideration.
- Expanding walkability and non-automobile transportation options received strong support, with six (6) out of seven (7) commissioners (86%) indicating it should be somewhat or strongly prioritized.
- Managing short-term rental impacts was also identified as an important consideration, with five (5) out of seven (7) commissioners (71%) supporting some level of prioritization.
- Expanding commercial and tourism capacity received less support as a primary planning priority.

Future Vision for Saugatuck

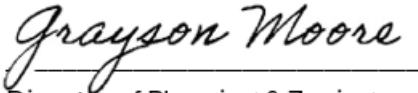
Common themes identified in responses regarding the desired future character of Saugatuck included:

- Maintaining the community's unique identity and "sense of place."
- Balancing tourism and economic vitality with year-round community needs.
- Supporting a strong resident population and year-round activities.
- Preserving historic character while allowing appropriate opportunities for change.
- Addressing housing availability and broader livability concerns.

Next Steps

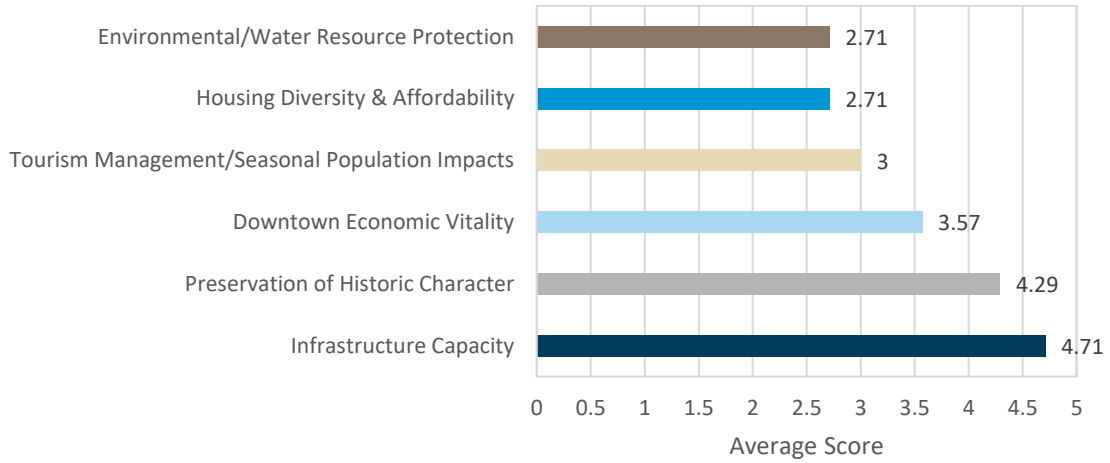
Staff will continue incorporating Planning Commission and additional community feedback into the Comprehensive Plan draft and use these priorities to assist in facilitating further discussions regarding goals, future land use, and implementation strategies.

Respectfully Submitted,

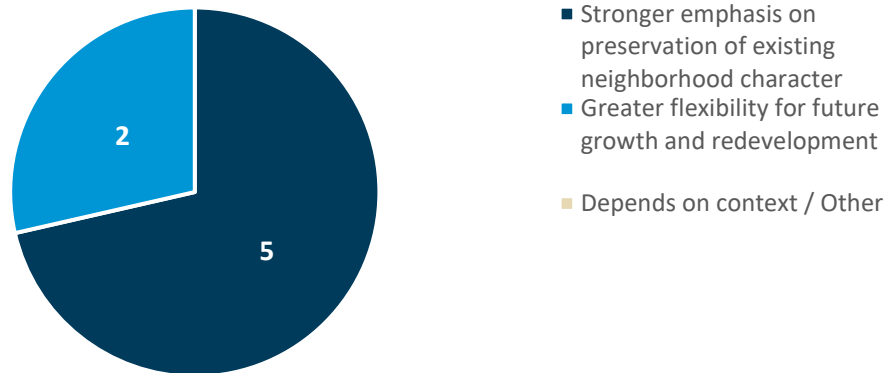

Director of Planning & Zoning

Appendix

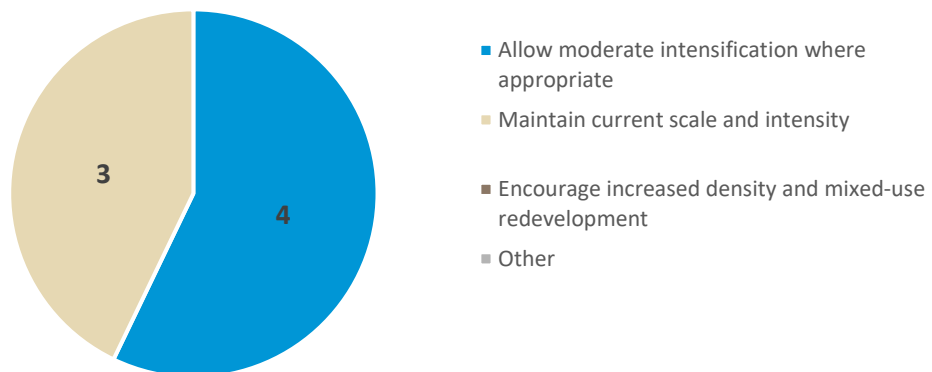
Planning Priorities for Saugatuck

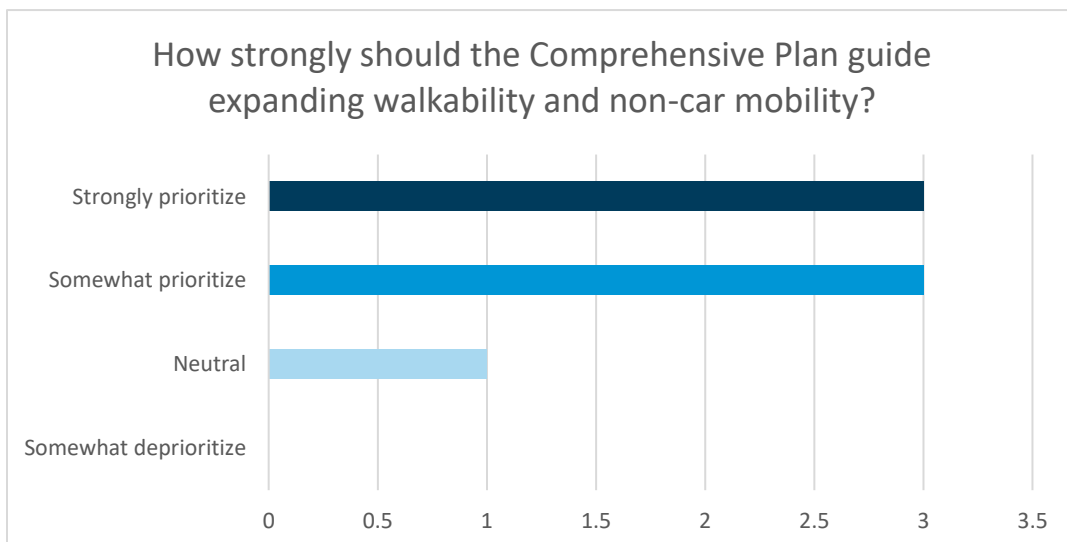
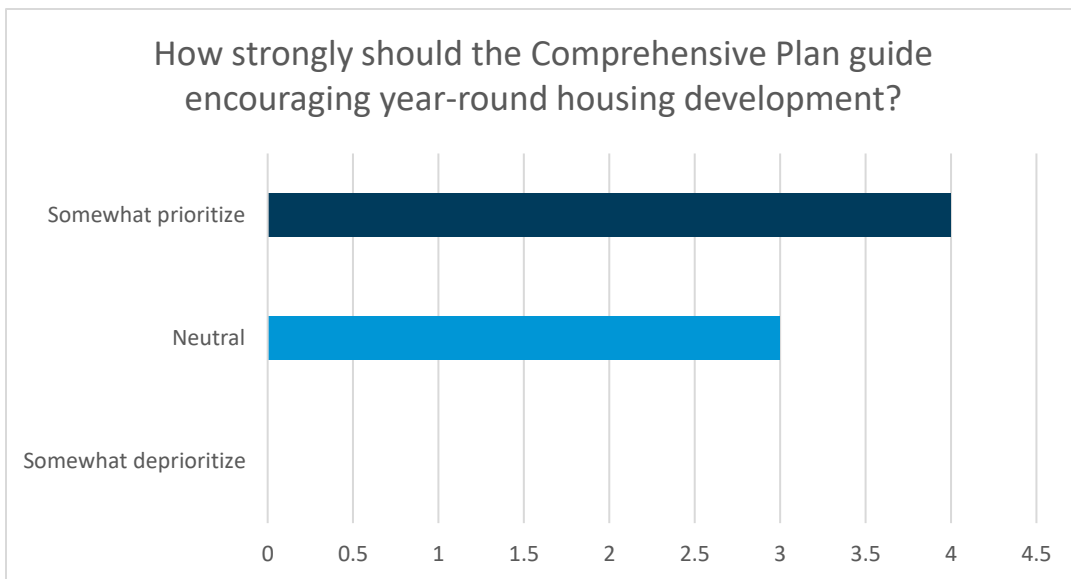
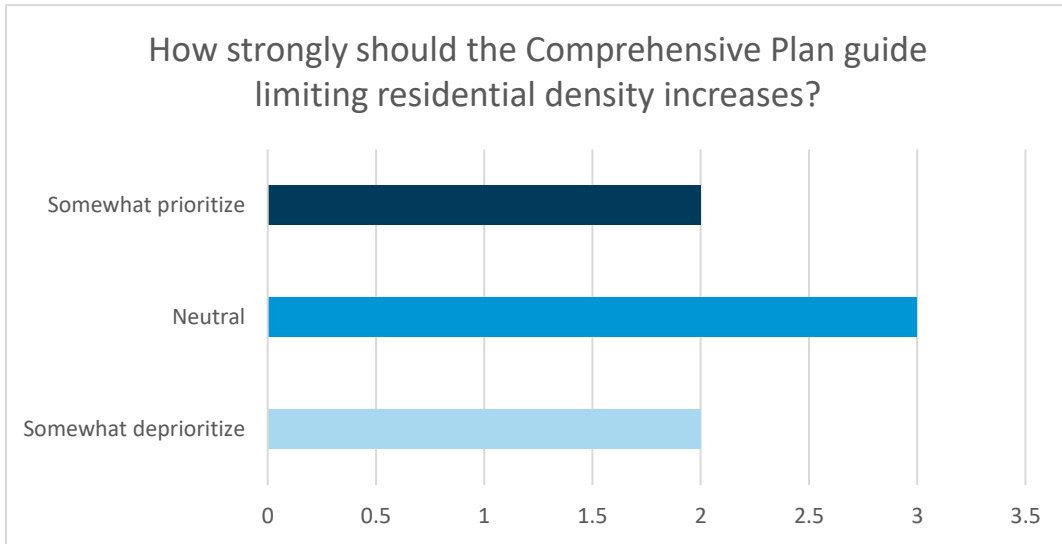


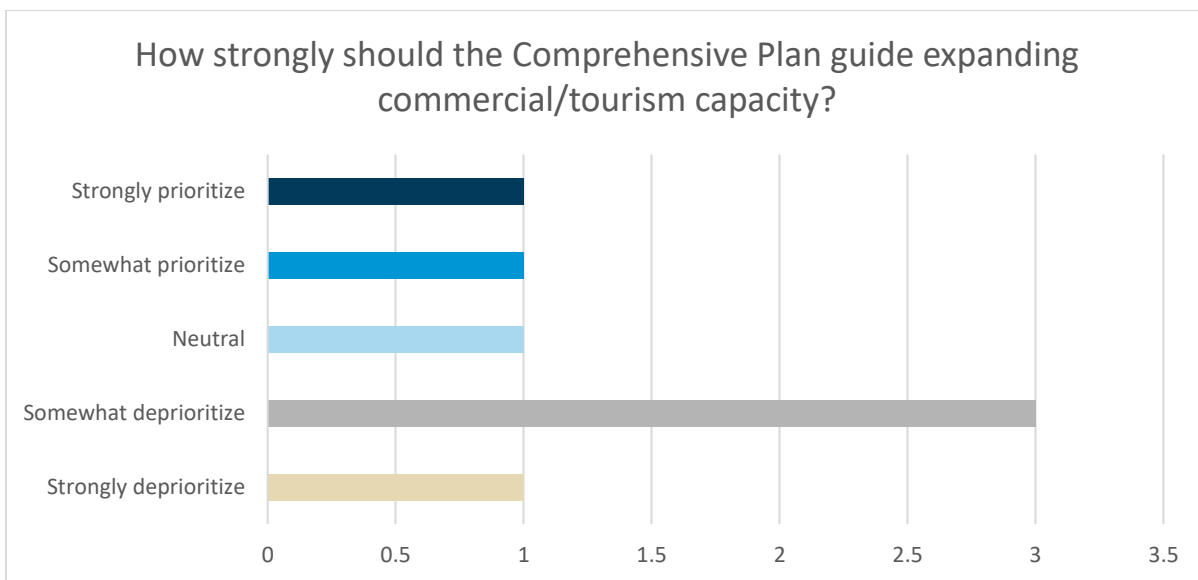
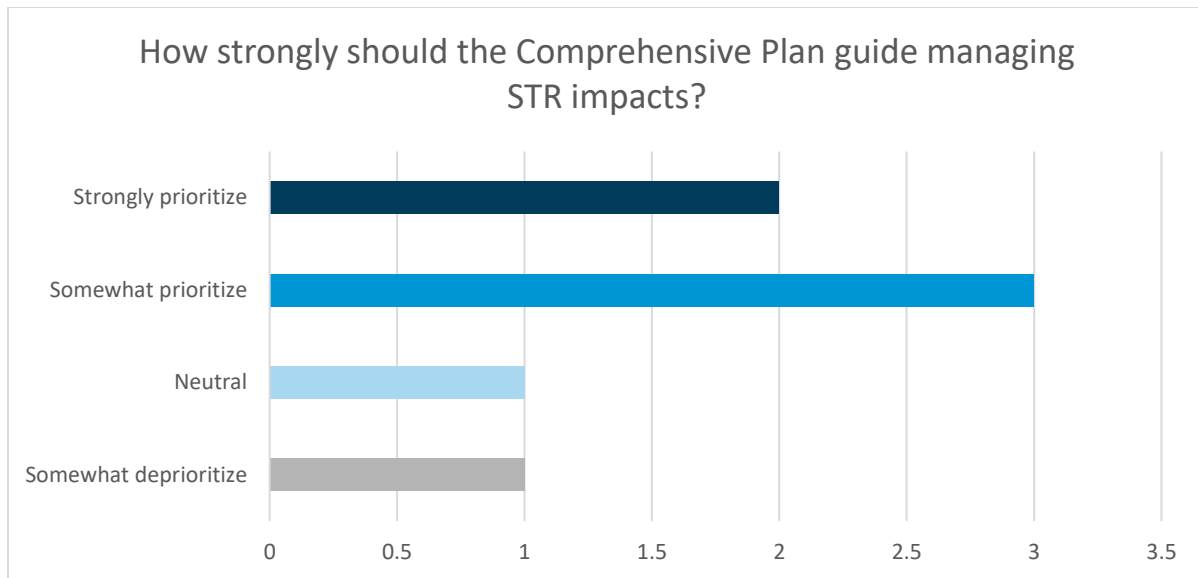
If forced to prioritize one, which direction should the Comprehensive Plan lean toward?



Which best reflects your view of downtown development intensity?







What is one topic or issue you feel is missing or underrepresented in the current outline?

- Impact of priorities of surrounding communities on the City (ie. Douglas, Saug Township)
 - The economy generation of the city in the “current/past” is good for the reporting section. The goal section should highlight the growth needed to support the city initiative, our current attractions are great but may be maxing out, new city to support new growth to limit pure price increases on existing items
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In one sentence, describe what you want Saugatuck to look and feel like in 10–15 years if the Comprehensive Plan is successful.

- Maintaining the elusive "it" factor that draws people here rather than other beachfront communities both along Lake Michigan and nationally.
 - I would like the same summer vibrancy throughout the year and more cultural diversity in the population.
 - I want Saugatuck to look and feel like a "real" town (not a pseudo theme park) which retains its resort/vacation character but restores its full time resident population by limiting the conversion of homes into full time rental properties.
 - I thriving community with year around activities and residents yet high seasonal influxes that has commercial and mixed uses on its waterfronts.
 - Continue to be economically strong. The entertainment hub for the tri-community area. Entertainment is not just the businesses and attractions but the parks and water
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Any additional comments or considerations for the planning process?

- Include the "complete streets" initiative into our mobility goals
- I find myself being uncharacteristic (for me) in being in favor of maintaining the status quo in terms of development as it pertains to tourism. But I remain aggressive with respect to finding solutions to the limitations of affordable housing in our community and more general livability concerns. I honestly fear that the current trajectory of unbridled commercial development while ignoring our acute housing shortage is not sustainable for the longterm viability of our community, especially with the external pressures on our resources from our immediately neighboring communities and beyond..
- Changes to zoning through discussions on future land use would be necessary to allow for commercial growth and expanded housing options.