VISIONING SESSION

2027 Comprehensive Plan Update

Where We've Been, What We Heard, and Where We're Headed

TOWN OF DAYTON, VIRGINIA

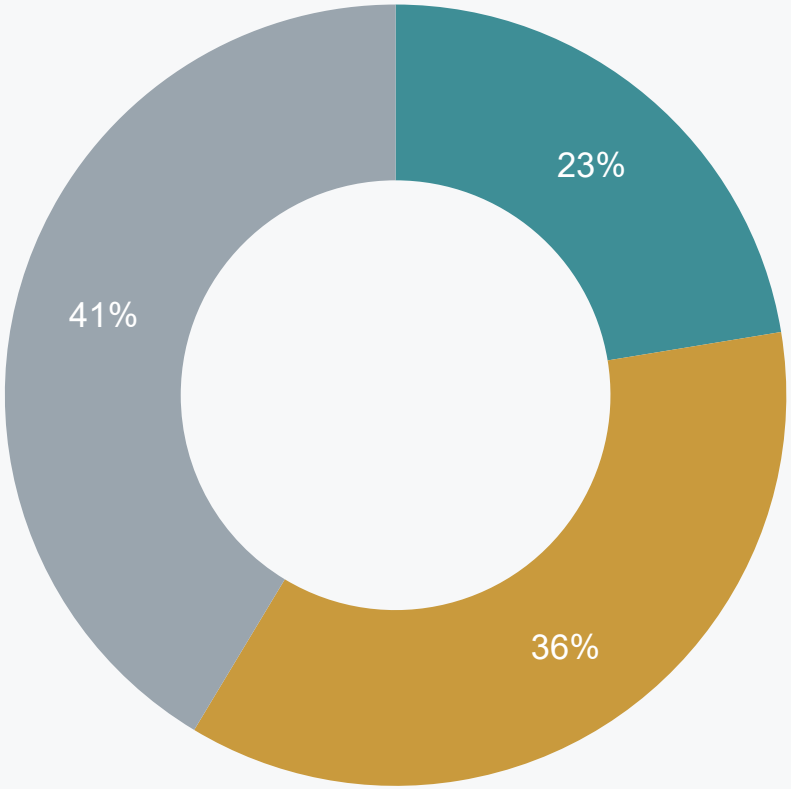
OUR STARTING POINT — THE 2022 VISION

> *"Dayton is an exemplary small town with a sustainable economy that provides innovative public services while supporting a strong sense of community and quality of life and valuing our historic agricultural roots."*

Adopted February 13, 2023 · 2022 Comprehensive Plan

How the 2022 Plan Has Been Put to Work

A working tally of every goal-level action item in the 2022 Plan, compiled by department staff as of August 2026.

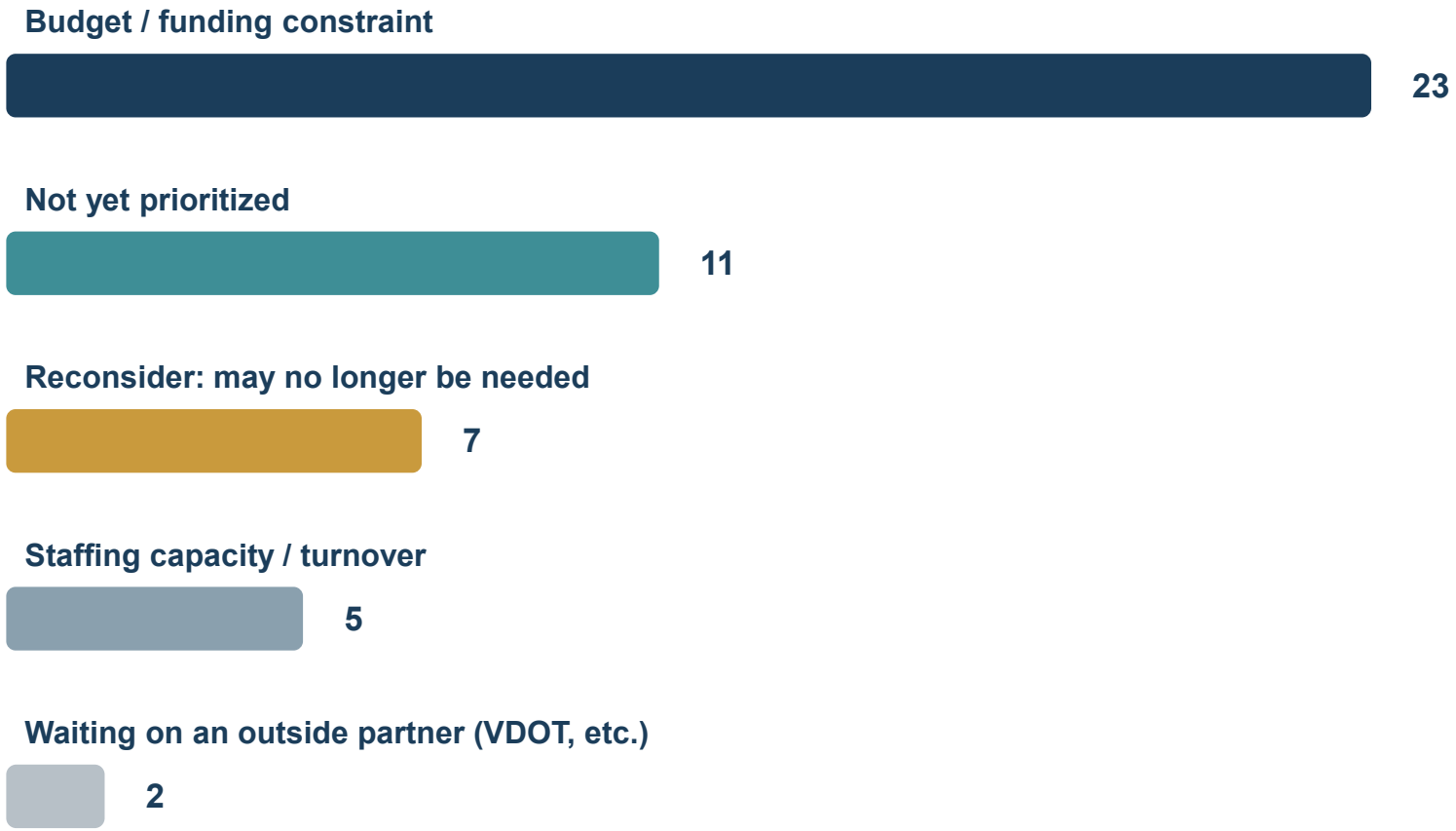


- **Achieved or in practice** — 26 items
  Completed actions and standing policies the Town follows
- **Underway** — 42 items
  Actively in motion right now
- **Not yet acted on** — 48 items
  Broken down by reason on the next page

A comprehensive plan is a guide, not a checklist. Nearly two-thirds of the 2022 Plan is already shaping what the Town does.

Why Some Items Haven't Moved Yet

The reason matters more than the count. Here is why each of the 48 items not yet acted on hasn't moved, from most to least common.



TAKEAWAY

Nearly half come down to budget and funding cycles, not choice.

In the 2027 update, every one of these items will be carried forward, revised, or retired.

The 7 flagged to reconsider are the first candidates for revision or retirement.

Progress: Land Use & Housing

LAND USE

- Annexation Agreement reviewed
- ADU ordinance in progress
- Parking ordinance amendment in progress

POPULATION & HOUSING

- Residential accessory uses (ADUs, tiny homes, STR) explored
- Build-out of current subdivisions ongoing
- New development following TND principles

Wins: Small Business

RECENT WINS (SINCE JULY 2025)

Field and Feast

Sweet Molly Kate's Bakery (downtown location)

Heirloom Markets Initiative

Bridgewater Coffee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

- Development Incentive Grant (DIG)
- Facade Improvement Grant revamped and ongoing
- Parking ordinance amendment expected to lessen barriers to business expansion

Visibility & tourism — rack cards reprinted, visibility at rest areas and I-81 Welcome Centers, and active partnerships with our not-for-profits and the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center

Wins: Safety, Facilities & Water

PUBLIC SAFETY

- 24/7 police staffing maintained
- New Fire & Rescue station
- Officer equipment kept current

FACILITIES & CIP

- Town facilities well maintained
- Capital Improvements Program updated and adopted

WATER SYSTEM

- Water safety regulations met
- Cross-contamination testing current
- New lines built to 8" minimum standard
- GPS mapping of hydrants/valves in progress

Still Building: Transportation & Environment

TRANSPORTATION

- Silver Lake path extension — done
- Dayton Market Connector, alleyway safety & Dayton Market bike path (via alleyway study) in progress
- School, Rt 42/Huffman, King St & buggy safety projects — budget-constrained, not yet funded
- Most VDOT/HRMPO coordination items simply not yet prioritized

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Creek activities, clean-ups & farmer fencing — staffing capacity, not neglect
- Watershed compliance & Tree City USA — not yet prioritized

Still Building: Parks & Culture

PARKS & RECREATION

- Community events, safety standards, equipment — all maintained
- Limited green space due to land availability
- Greenway Project segments — budget-constrained, not yet funded

BEAUTIFICATION & CULTURE

- Historic/cultural event promotion with Rocktown History & partners
- Gateway appearance & Town beautification — maintenance is something we need to think about
- Downtown revitalization grant work — budget-constrained
- Future events — staffing capacity

THE THROUGHLINE

Site-specific projects move faster than plan progress

- Physical, fundable projects — grants, water lines, police equipment, new businesses — have moved steadily since 2022.
- Priorities in plan documents (Comp Plan, Downtown Master Plan, 2016 Greenway Master Plan) have historically lagged due to budget realities: 23 of the 48 items not yet acted on are budget-constrained.
- Worth asking together: 7 items not yet acted on (a 55 & Over community, the Landscaping Ordinance update, others) are flagged to reconsider — do they still fit our priorities and capacity today?

WHAT WE HEARD

Community Input Survey

CSPDC Connects · September 16 – October 14, 2026

66

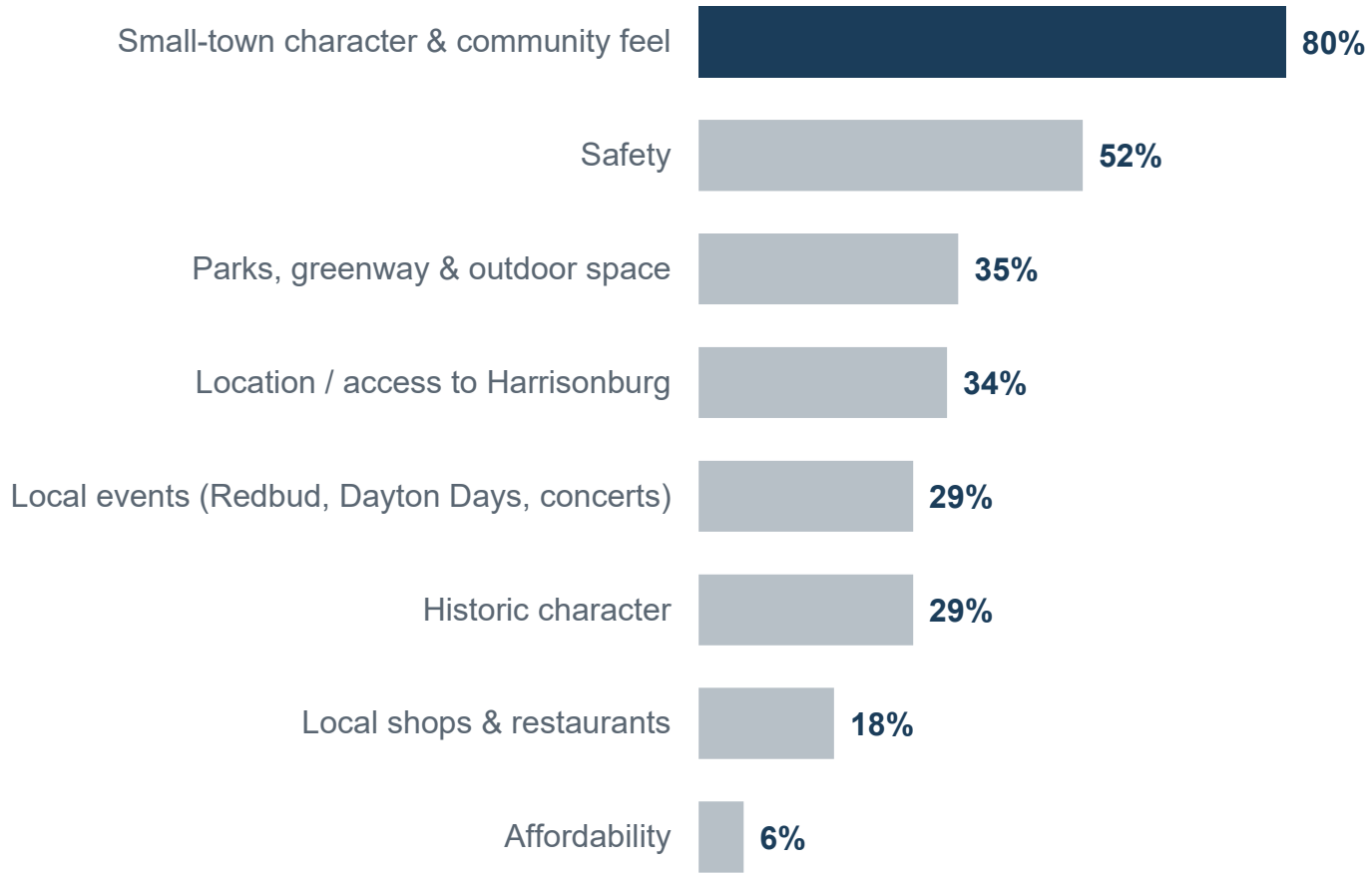
survey responses submitted

53%

hadn't heard about the plan update before taking the survey

What Makes Dayton, Dayton

What contributes most to Dayton's quality of life? Respondents chose up to three; share of 65 respondents.



THE ANCHOR

80%

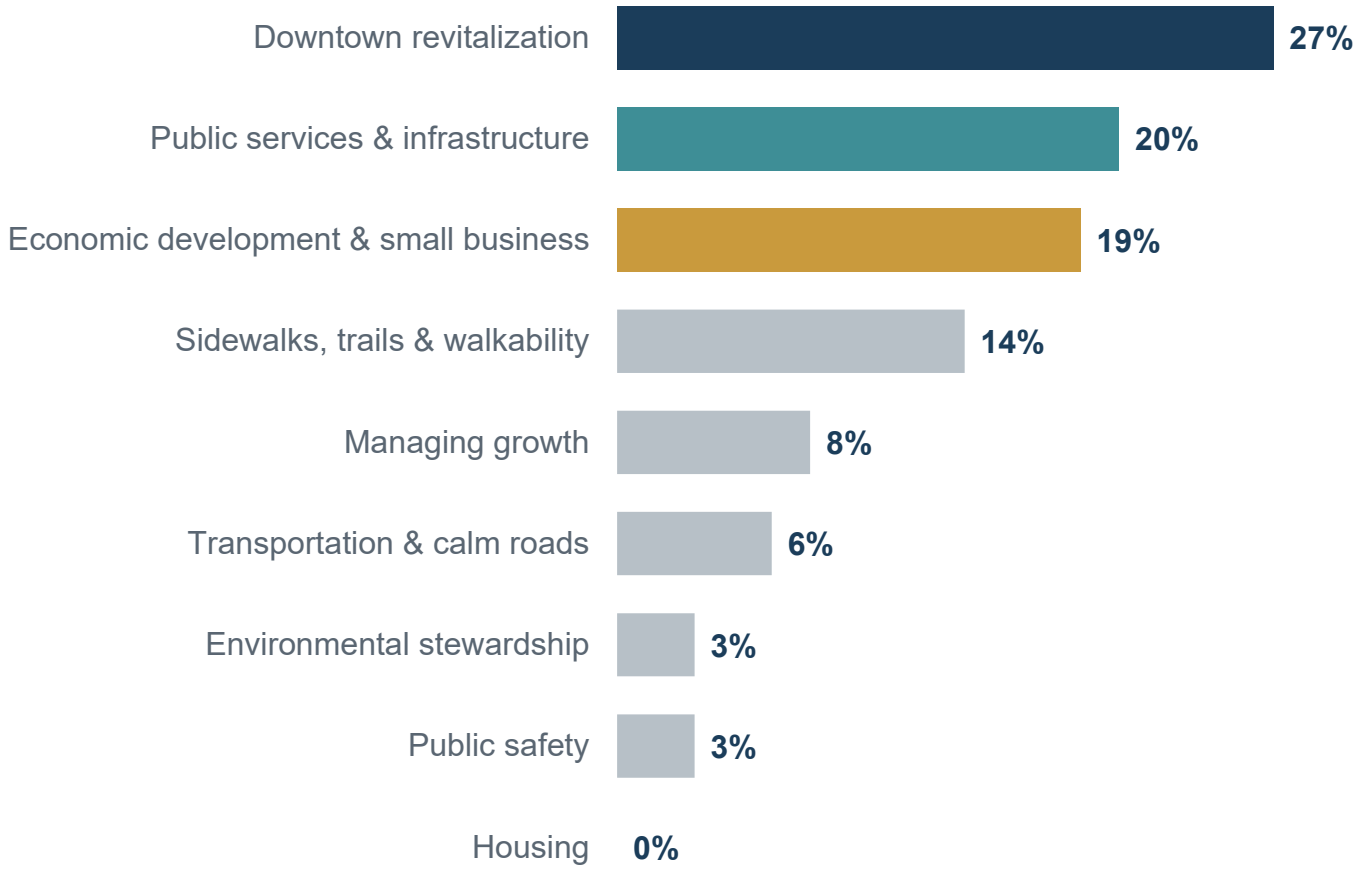
named small-town character and community feel, far ahead of any other factor

4.1 / 5

average quality-of-life rating; no one rated Dayton below a 3

Top Priority for the Next 5 to 10 Years

What should Dayton's top priority be? Respondents chose one; share of 64 respondents.



TAKEAWAY

2 in 3

picked downtown, public services, or economic development as Dayton's top priority

No one chose housing as the single top priority. Walkability came in fourth at 14%.

Growth: Steady and Measured

Residents are open to growth when it comes at a pace that fits the town.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT FUTURE GROWTH?

78%

support balanced or slower growth

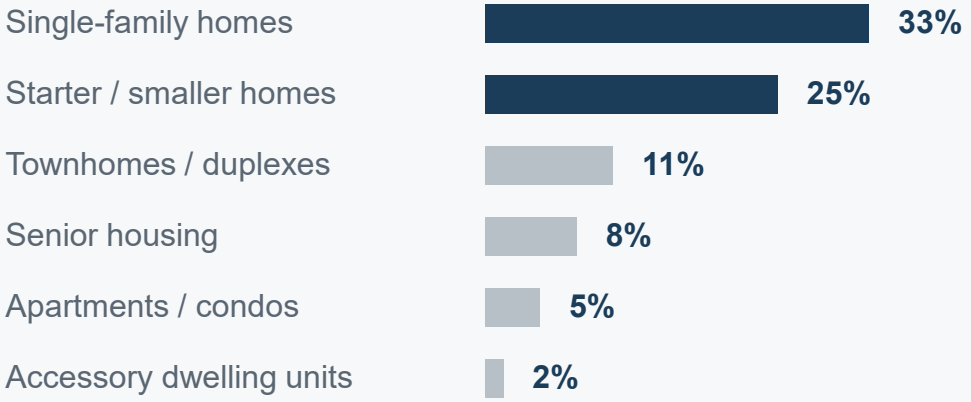
Support more growth	11%
Balanced, steady growth	42%
Slower, more limited growth	36%
No further growth	9%

WHAT HOUSING DOES DAYTON NEED MORE OF?

49%

say Dayton already has enough housing options

Types named (choose up to two; share of 63 respondents):



What Dayton Needs More Of

Business needs, where growth should go, and appetite for diversifying the tax base. Share of 65 respondents.

BUSINESS NEEDS

48%

chose grocery or everyday retail as the business Dayton needs most

Restaurants & cafés	**26%**
Keep Dayton as it is	**12%**
Tourism-oriented	**0%**

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

66%

would support some light industrial growth, at least in limited cases

Yes	**25%**
Only in limited cases	**42%**
No	**23%**

WHERE TO GROW

34%

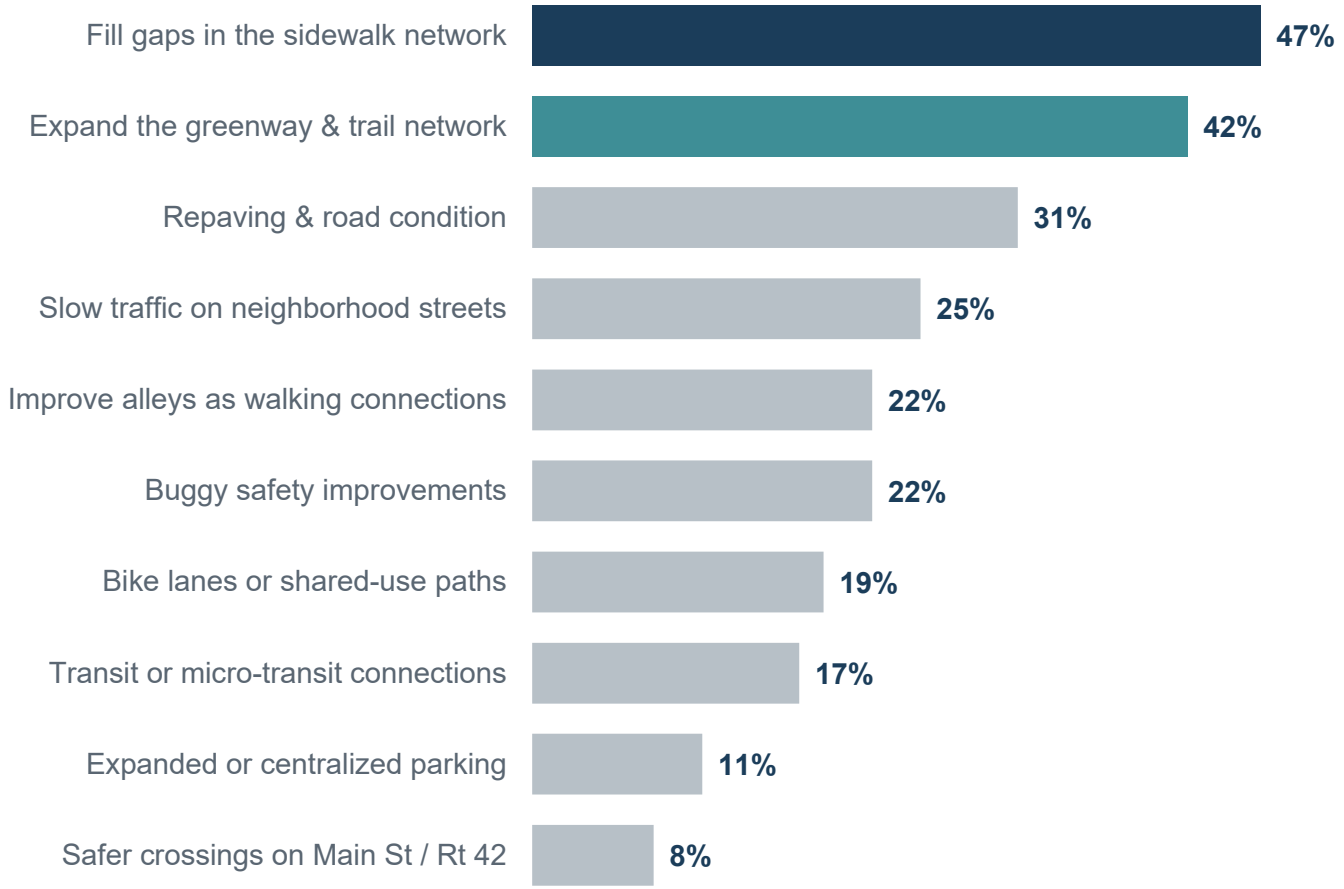
want small business growth spread across all areas of town

Downtown first	**29%**
Route 42 business clusters	**17%**
No strong preference	**15%**

The clearest ask in the survey: meet everyday needs close to home. Grocery drew nearly twice the votes of any other business type.

Getting Around: Walking Comes First

Which improvements to how people get around would you most like to see? Up to three; share of 64 respondents.



TAKEAWAY

The top two answers are both about walking.

Nearly half want the sidewalk gaps filled, and 42% want the greenway expanded.

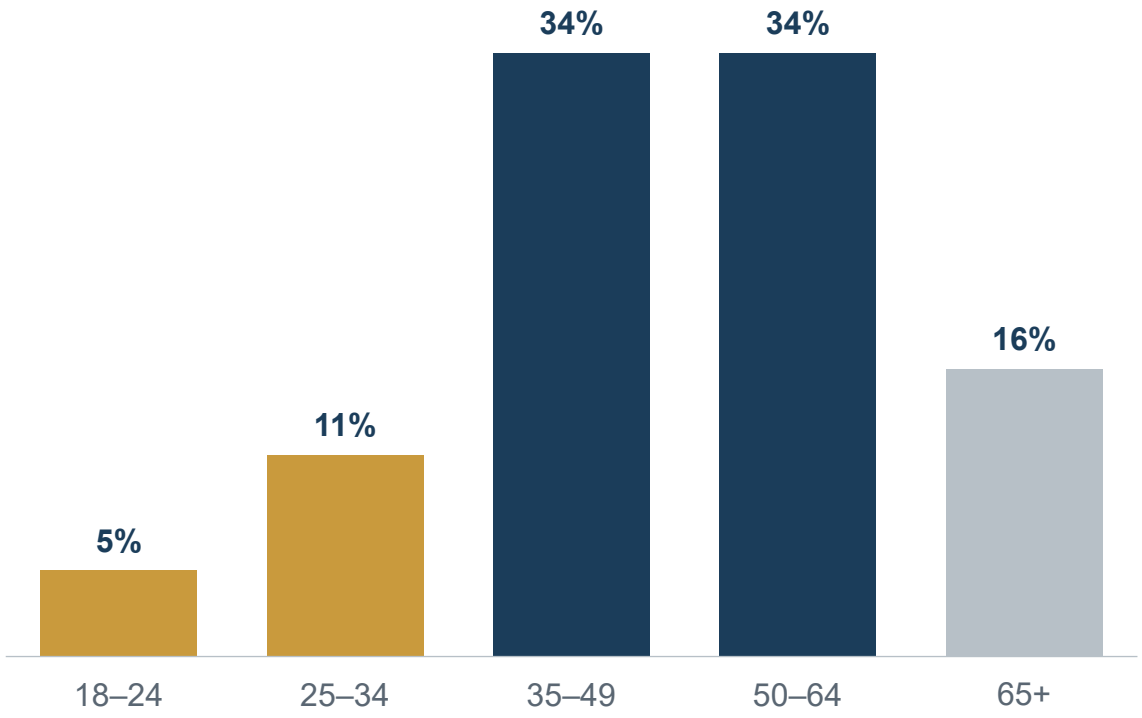
Road condition is the top driving concern at 31%.

Only 8% said the current network works well as it is.

Who We Heard From

Knowing who answered tells us whose voices we still need to reach.

AGE OF RESPONDENTS (66 answered)



83% own their home; only 4 renters responded

36% have lived or worked in Dayton for 5 years or less

16% are under 35

Two in three respondents are 35 to 64. Younger residents and renters are underrepresented, so their views need another route in.

How People Want to Stay Involved

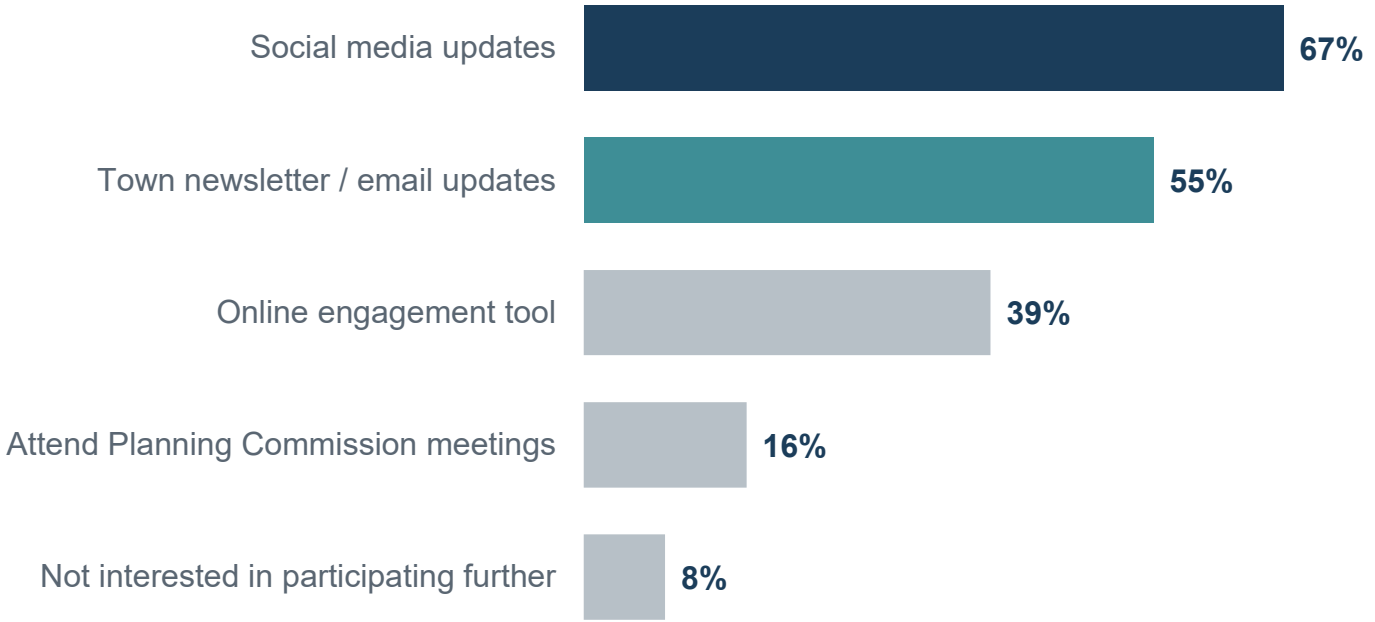
Choose all that apply; share of 66 respondents.

THE OUTREACH GAP

53%

didn't know the Town was updating its Comprehensive Plan before taking the survey

Social media and the newsletter are where people want to hear from us. Few will come to a meeting.



Still to review: 30 “change one thing about Dayton” responses and 17 map pins marking spots to improve. These weren't in the summary export.

WHAT THE SURVEY TELLS US

Keep what makes Dayton home. Build on what's here.

- **Small-town character is the anchor.** 80% named it, and quality of life rates 4.1 out of 5.
- **Build on downtown and meet everyday needs locally.** Downtown is the top priority, and grocery leads every other business type.
- **Grow, but at a steady pace.** 78% favor balanced or slower growth; 66% are open to light industrial in the right cases.
- **Make it easier to walk.** Sidewalks and the greenway top every transportation option.

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Does This Sound Like Dayton?

DRAFT VISION

“Dayton is a close-knit Shenandoah Valley town that honors its history and small-town character, builds on the strength of its downtown and local businesses, and grows at a measured pace as a walkable community where neighbors of every age feel at home.”

TESTING THE DRAFT

Does the draft describe the Dayton you know and want?

What's missing, and what would you cut?

Which single word would you change?

Six Values Behind the Vision

Each value becomes a goal area in the plan, and each is grounded in what residents told us.

80%

Small-town character & heritage

named small-town character as a top quality-of-life factor; 29% named historic character

27%

A strong, growing downtown

chose downtown as the top priority; 48% want grocery or everyday retail

47%

Walkable & connected

want sidewalk gaps filled; 42% want the greenway expanded

52%

Safe, with room to get outside

named safety as a top factor; 35% named parks, greenway & outdoor space

78%

Measured growth, reliable services

favor balanced or slower growth; public services ranked #2 at 20%

33%

Homes for every stage of life

want more single-family homes; 25% want starter or smaller homes

Where We Go From Here

17-month update process · August 2026 – December 2027 · CSPDC serving as technical partner

Now

Visioning Session, Community Input Survey, Definition of Success

Late 2026

Chapter Drafts being: Introduction, History, Population and Housing, Natural Environment, Land Use

First Half 2027

Future Land Use map, Zoning Map, Economic Development, Services, Parks and Rec

Second Half 2027

Transportation, full draft plan open for public comment, community sessions, leading to adoption in December

The “Economic & Community Development” chapter rename is confirmed for this update.