

Fresh Coast Planning

119 ½ Washington Avenue, Studio B
Grand Haven, MI 49417
www.freshcoastplanning.com

Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
616-638-1240
greg@freshcoastplanning.com

Kevin Yeomans
616-349-0223
kevin@freshcoastplanning.com

Alexis Gulker
616-773-4638
alexis@freshcoastplanning.com

Aaron Bigelow
616-919-2370
aaron@freshcoastplanning.com

Andrea Goodell
616-313-9333
andrea@freshcoastplanning.com

MEMORANDUM

To: Village of Ravenna Planning Commission
From: Kevin Yeomans
Date: 4/23/2026
Re: Master Plan – Overarching Goals PC Brainstorm

The next step of the Master Plan process will be to create overarching goals for land use development within the Village over the next 10 – 20 years. In order to help facilitate the Commission's deliberations will be facilitating a brainstorming method known as Meta Planning at your April 28, 2026, meeting.

What to Expect

Meta Planning uses a focus question for Commissioner's to provide your answer to. To give your answers Commissioner's will be provided with sticky notes. On each sticky note Commissioner's will be asked to write down one idea/answer to the question. Once the Commissioner's have completed your sticky notes, we will collect them and begin placing them on a board (or the wall). As different answers are revealed the Planning Commission will begin to put the answers into similar groups. Once a group is large enough the Planning Commission will name the group. These groups will become the overarching goals of the Master Plan.

The process will become clear as we work through the brainstorming session. To help expedite the brainstorming session the focus question and some other directions are provided below.

Focus Question

What is the vision for development in the Village over the next ten to twenty years?

Directions

- Each Commissioner present will be provided with 10 – 15 sticky notes.
- One idea/answer on each sticky note.
- Please use three to five words for each answer.
- There should not be discussion between the Commissioner's during this time. We want to get your individual answers.
- **Write Big**, not like this.

If you have time to prepare your answers before the meeting that will help speed up the brainstorming session, but we understand that you may have questions and are planning to provide time for you to prepare your answers at the meeting.

Understanding that you will likely want to reference the community survey results as part of your answers we have attached a copy of the survey report to this memorandum.

Kevin Yeomans

Kevin Yeomans
Planner

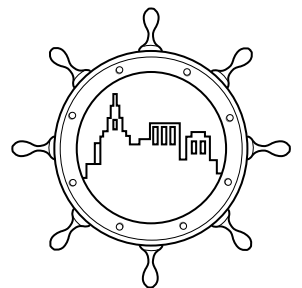
Attachments

cc: Emily Carrigan, Village Clerk

Master Plan Survey

Summary of Responses

2026



Fresh Coast
Planning

Table of Contents

- Summary of Findings..... 1
- Survey Results2
 - Community Sentiment.....2
 - Development Preferences4
 - Residential Development.....5
 - Commercial Development.....7
 - Downtown9
 - Industrial..... 14
- Miscellaneous..... 16
- Demographics..... 18
- Other Comments 19

Summary of Findings

Based on our review of the survey results, the key findings are as follows:

Residents are generally satisfied with life in the Village. There is support for slow, steady residential growth and a strong preference for increased commercial development. Industrial growth also appears to have moderate support. Any future growth should be managed to preserve the Village's small-town character, including the protection of natural areas and nearby farmland.

Residential development should continue to focus primarily on single-family homes, though respondents are also open to duplexes, townhomes, and limited apartment options. The need for senior housing should be factored into future land-use policies.

While support exists for commercial and industrial expansion, additional community input will be important in determining the appropriate scale, location, and type of future development.

Respondents also identified several broader priorities, including improved walkability, enhanced access to public recreation, and the availability of essential public services such as water, sewer, and emergency response.

Survey Results

Community Sentiment

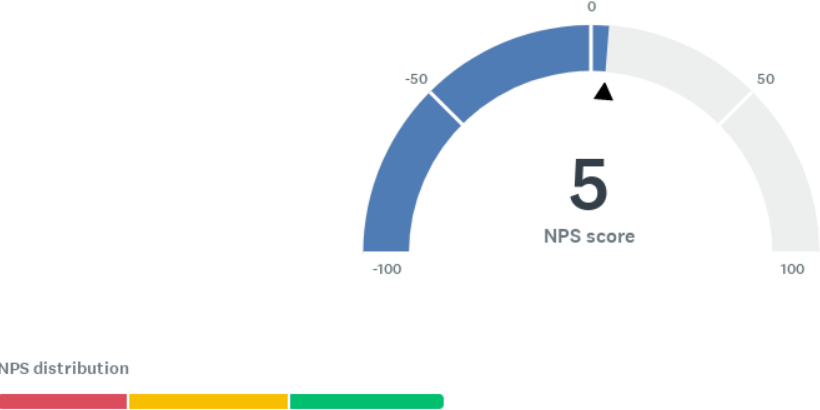
Net Promoter Score

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a metric developed in 2003 to assess overall experience and loyalty. In this survey, NPS is used to evaluate residents' perceptions of and relationship with the Village.

Respondents fall into three categories: Promoters, who are highly satisfied and likely to advocate for the community; Passives, who are generally satisfied but not strongly engaged; and Detractors, who are dissatisfied and may discourage others from engaging with the community.

NPS ranges from -100 to 100, with higher scores indicating more positive sentiment. While this tool provides only a general measure of community satisfaction, similar communities typically score between 10 and 20. The Village's slightly lower score suggests opportunities to better align services and initiatives with residents' expectations.

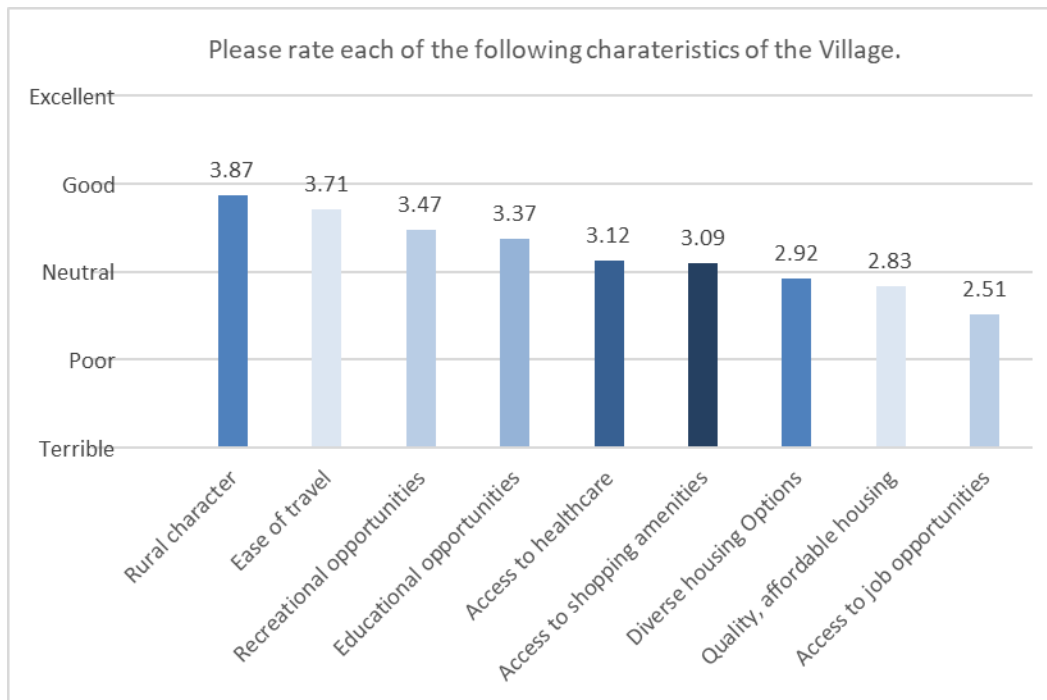
Q1 How likely is it that you would recommend living in the Village of Ravenna to a friend or colleague?



Community Character Ratings

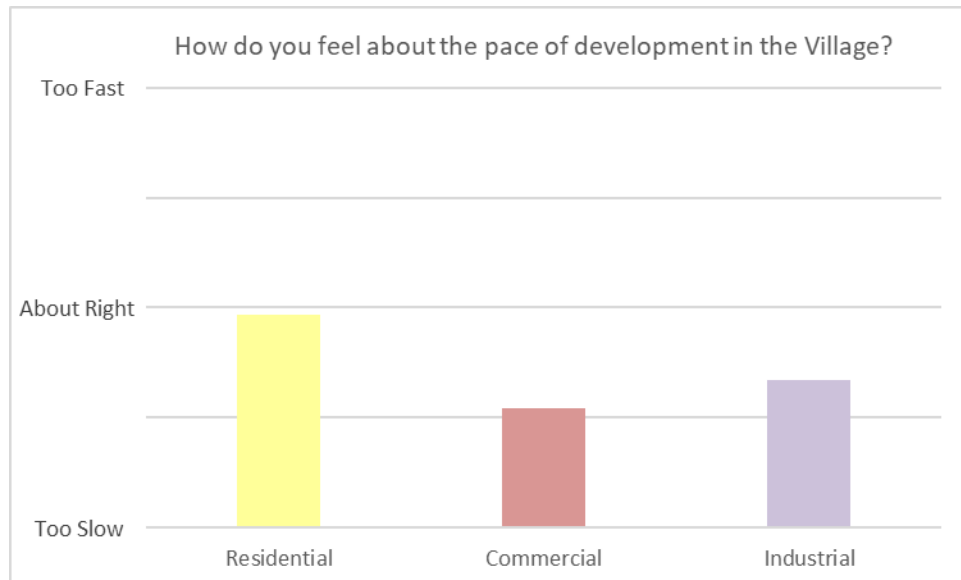
Respondents rated several community characteristics. The Village received good ratings for its rural character, ease of travel, recreational opportunities, and educational opportunities. Ratings for access to healthcare, shopping, diverse housing options, and quality affordable housing were generally neutral. Access to job opportunities received comparatively low ratings.

Overall, it appears that respondents value the Village's small-town, rural character and appear comfortable with driving to reach certain amenities. The neutral ratings suggest potential demand for improved healthcare, shopping, and housing options. The lower rating for job opportunities indicates a desire for additional employment options within the community.



Development Preferences

There is clear support for continued development within the Village. The chart below indicates that residents favor the current pace of residential growth, along with increased commercial and industrial expansion. The following subsections outline community preferences for each development type in greater detail.



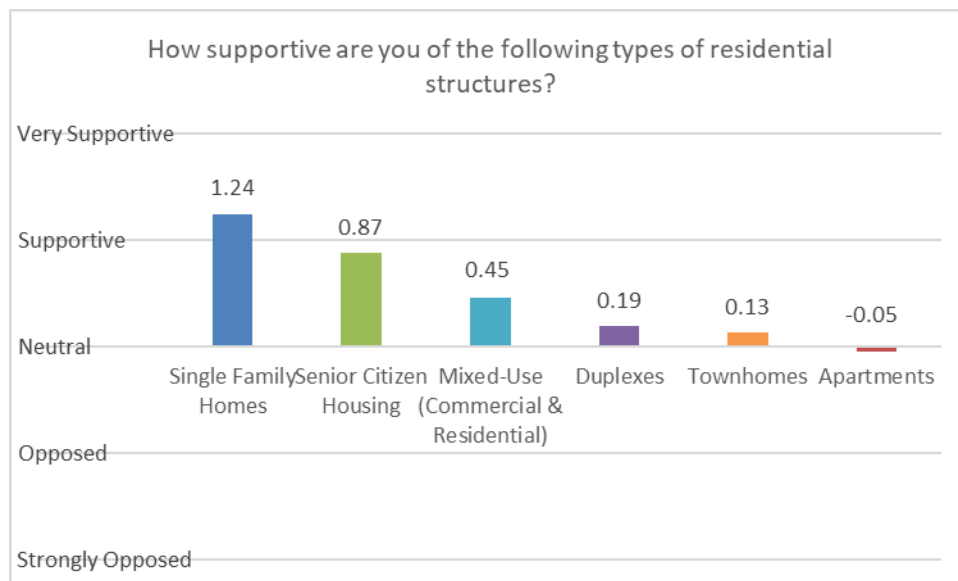
Residential Development

Support for the current pace of residential development remains strong. Recent townhome construction along Slocum Road reinforces this finding; if significant opposition existed, it would likely have been reflected in the survey results.

What type of residential development is preferred?

Survey results indicate a clear preference for single-family homes, along with strong support for senior housing. Senior housing encompasses a range of formats—from smaller single-family units to duplex condominiums and apartment-style options—which should be considered when identifying appropriate locations and regulatory approaches.

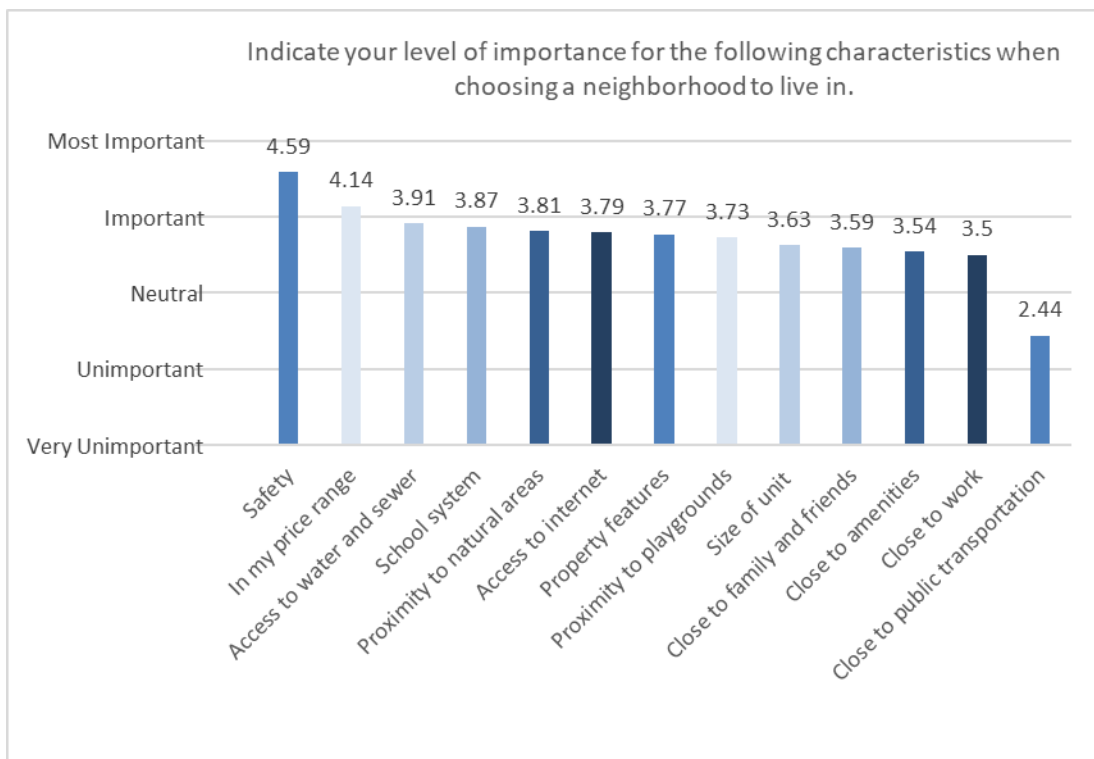
Respondents show generally neutral support for duplexes and townhomes, a level of acceptance that exceeds what is typically observed in comparable rural communities. This trend is even more pronounced for apartments. Although apartments received a slightly negative score (-0.05), this still reflects neutral sentiment. In many rural communities, apartment development faces significant opposition, often with at least half of respondents opposed and fewer than one-fifth in support. In contrast, Village respondents were more evenly split: 30.8% opposed, 35.9% neutral, and 33.3% supportive. While this does not indicate a desire for extensive apartment construction, it suggests that some apartment development may be appropriate in future planning.



Choosing Where to Live

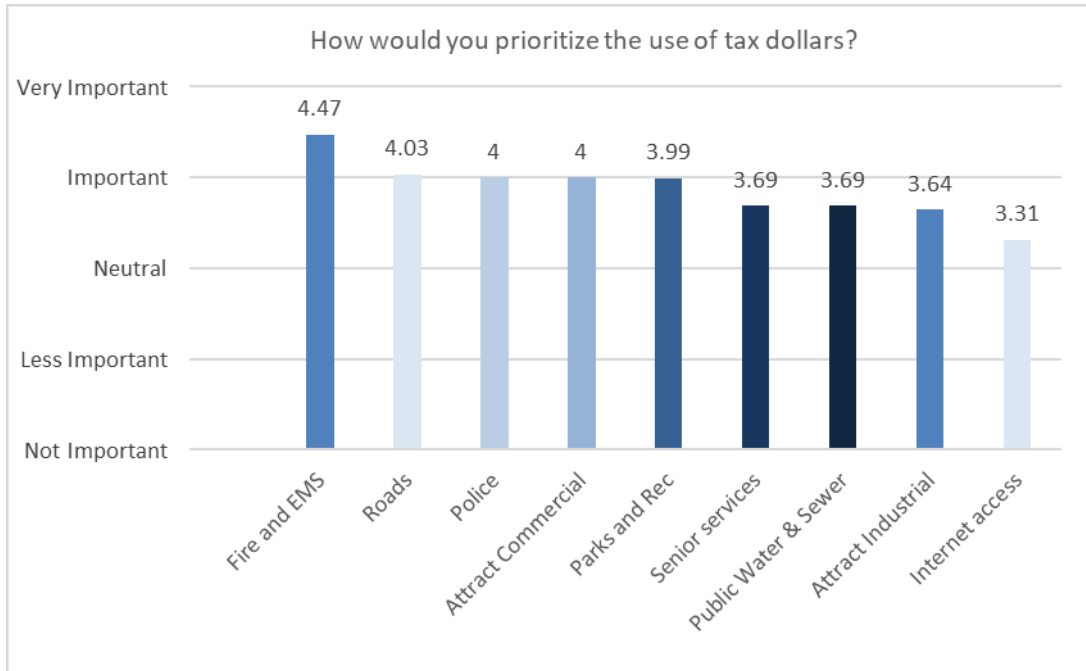
In addition to preferred housing types, the Planning Commission should also consider the factors that influence where residents choose to live. Survey responses show that safety is a top priority, followed by considerations such as housing cost, public utilities, school quality, proximity to natural areas, and internet access.

While the Village cannot directly control all of these factors, land-use strategies can help shape many of them. We will work with the Planning Commission to develop appropriate strategies and tactics for inclusion in the master plan.

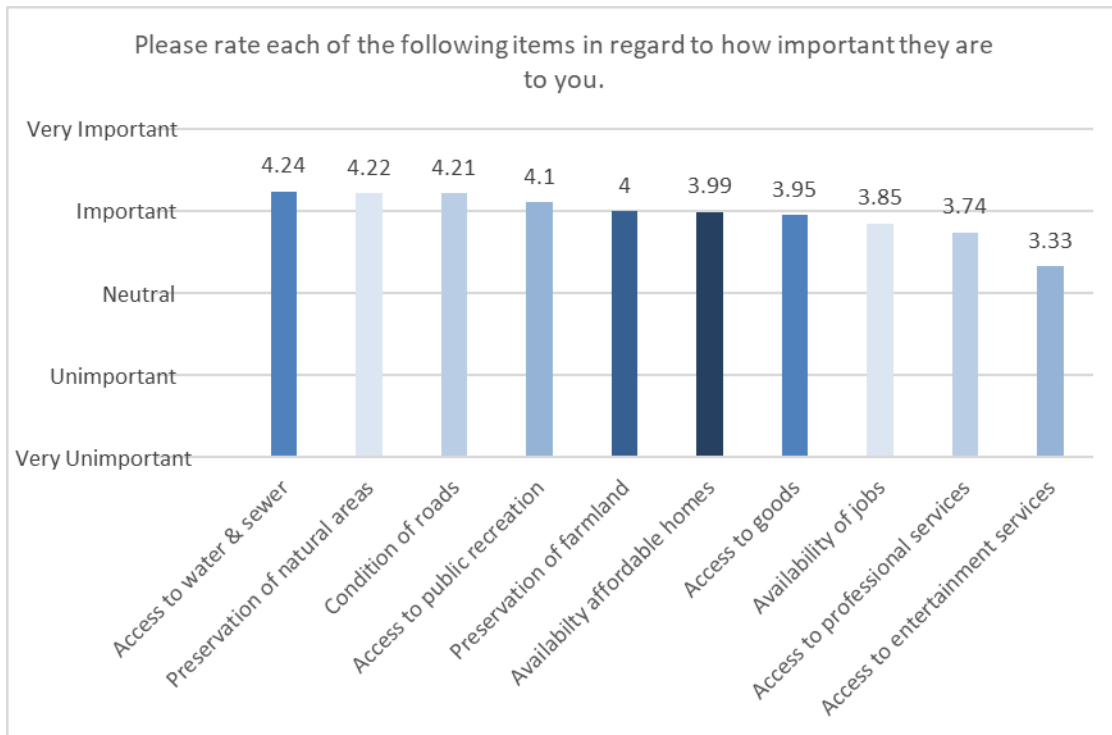


Commercial Development

Survey responses indicate strong support for commercial growth, including for the Village to take a more active role in attracting new businesses. As shown in the chart below, attracting commercial development ranks third among preferred uses of tax dollars—an unusually high priority compared with other communities we have surveyed.



The availability of jobs, while not the highest-ranked factor, is also important to respondents. These findings suggest that the Planning Commission should consider incorporating strategies to attract commercial businesses as part of the Master Plan.



Potential Opportunity

Many communities express a desire for additional commercial services, but this is often tempered by reluctance toward new development. In contrast, the Village’s strong support for commercial growth—combined with its existing water and sewer infrastructure and demand for commercial services in nearby areas—positions it well to serve as a small commercial hub for the region.

Based on current zoning and land-use patterns, future commercial development is likely to concentrate in the downtown area.

Downtown

The downtown area does not have formally established boundaries; however, based on current zoning and existing land uses, it generally extends along Main Street, Stafford Street, and Crockery Creek Drive. Establishing clear boundaries may be an item for the Planning Commission to address in the new master plan.

When evaluating future development in the downtown area, the Planning Commission should consider the following factors.

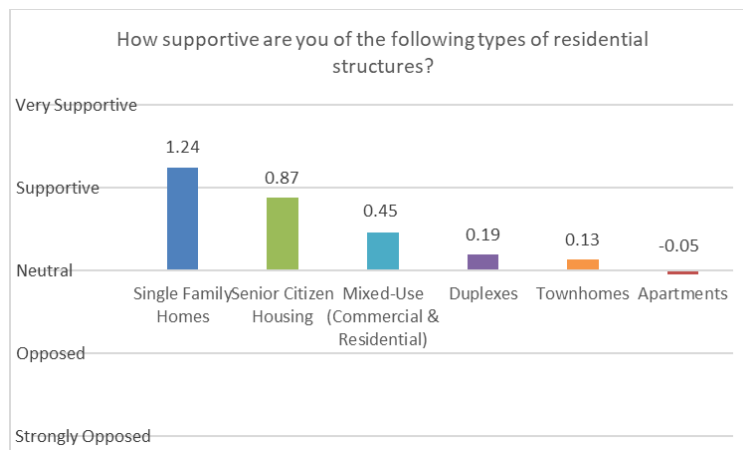
Support for Commercial Growth

As noted earlier, there is strong support for commercial growth within the Village. However, “commercial growth” can encompass a wide range of uses, including restaurants, offices, retail, personal services, and in some cases light industrial activities. Because communities differ in how they distinguish between commercial and industrial uses, additional clarification of where that line is for the Village may be needed.

To better understand community expectations on distinguishing between commercial and industrial uses, it may be beneficial to gather further public input. This could include stakeholder interviews, community workshops, additional surveys, or other engagement methods.

Support Level of Mixed-Use Commercial/Residential Uses

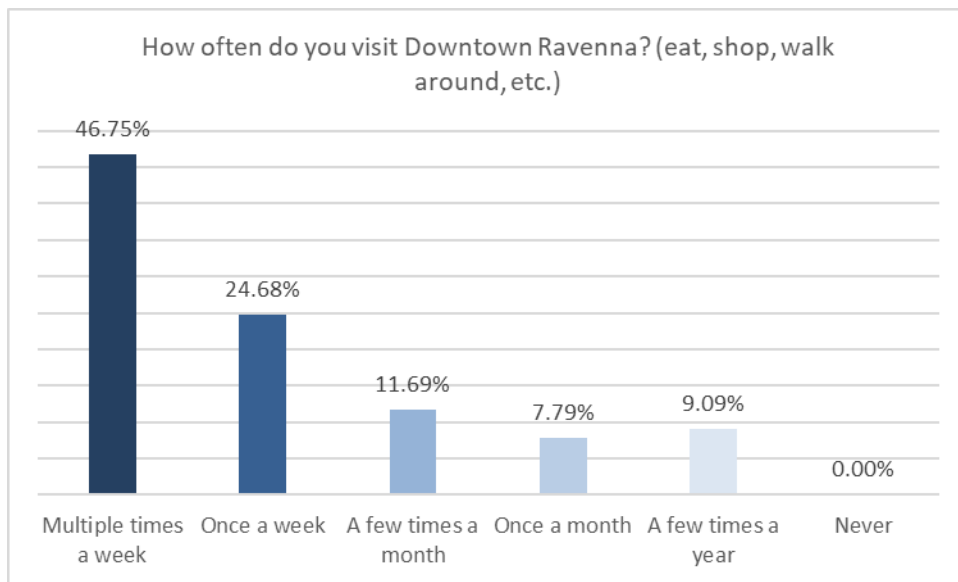
As shown in the chart below, support for mixed-use buildings falls between supportive and neutral, suggesting that some mixed-use development may be appropriate in the downtown area. Mixed-use buildings vary widely—from traditional two-story structures with ground-floor retail and upper-floor residential units to multi-story buildings with a mix of shops, offices, and apartments. Additional community feedback may be needed to better understand local preferences for these building types.



What Already Draws People Downtown

Approximately 71% of respondents visit the downtown area at least once a week, primarily for services such as medical appointments, banking, postal needs, automotive repair, groceries, and dining. Some also visit for shopping or events, while relatively few live or work downtown.

A key factor in creating a vibrant downtown is the presence of employment opportunities. The Planning Commission may want to explore strategies that encourage job creation within the downtown area.



Why do you visit Downtown Ravenna?	% of respondents who selected
Services (visit doctor, mechanic, bank, post office, etc.)	69.23%
Buy groceries	58.97%
Eat/Drink	50.00%
Events	30.77%
Shop	26.92%
I live downtown.	16.67%
Work	7.69%

Other Responses to why respondents visit Downtown Ravenna:

- *sell advertising*
- *I take a lot of walks in the downtown area- I like to get hills in*
- *Occasionally have breakfast.*
- *Jennifer Ann's boutique is great, we enjoy the Christmas shopping event.*
- *Walk/Bike*
- *For the safety of walking my dog on the sidewalks*
- *I don't. Unless to get pizza or to go to the library. There's nothing to do for a family really and people drive crazy that it doesn't feel safe to walk.*
- *Would cost more if had more restaurants and shops. As well as side walks for main road connecting Lo Al to city center*
- *There isn't much to visit it for. We have a couple restaurants, grocery store (priced as convenience store), insurance, bank, pharmacy, and post office. We need to expand businesses in our community.*
- *Buy gas*
- *I don't*
- *Banking/post office*
- *There's nothing here; so I go outside Ravenna to Muskegon. The prices are too high here.*

Desired Improvements to the Downtown Area

Sidewalk improvements and additional community events are the most desired enhancements for the downtown area. Connections to the bike path and other beautification projects rank next in priority. There is limited interest in expanded outdoor spaces, roadway improvements, or enhanced lighting. While there is currently little demand for additional parking, future growth in the downtown area will likely increase parking needs.

Is there anything you'd like to change in Downtown Ravenna?	% of respondents who selected
Sidewalk improvements	46.15%
More events	40.00%
Connection to bike path	32.31%
More landscaping (trees, flowers, bushes, etc.)	27.69%
More outdoor spaces	18.46%
Roadway Improvements	16.92%
Better lighting	13.85%
More parking	6.15%

Other Responses to things respondents would like to change in Downtown Ravenna:

- *Update and beautify downtown corridor and business area (storefronts), making it an inviting and quaint experience similar to small downtowns nearby like Sparta, Grant, and others (and small towns all across MI and the country)*
- *need more small businesses*
- *None*
- *Wellness/Fitness facilities*
- *Trash cans*
- *Upkeep of homes near the businesses!*
- *Another restaurant*
- *More businesses*
- *#5 3714 Conklin St*
- *Local shops, restaurants*
- *Active businesses*
- *I would love to see Downtown Ravenna become a place that people of all ages genuinely enjoy spending time. There is strong potential to enhance the area through improved home exteriors, thoughtful landscaping, attractive lighting, and seasonal flowers. Creating a more visually inviting atmosphere would naturally encourage visitors to explore local shops and businesses. The farmers market was a great idea and the alleyway space is already very charming, but it would benefit from more*

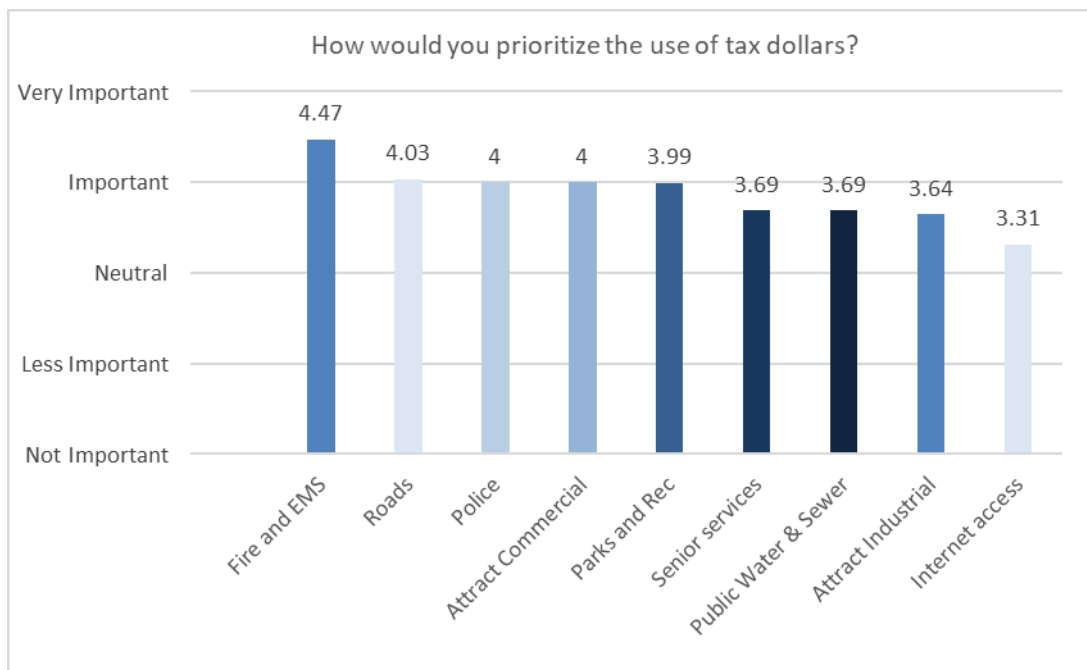
vendors and additional room to grow. Expanding that concept could make it a real destination. Adding features such as a community fireplace, revitalizing the ice skating rink, or enhancing the sledding hill with a gazebo and warming area would create a welcoming environment for families—giving parents a comfortable place to gather while children play. There is also a strong opportunity for growth through additional quality restaurants, unique shopping options, and local thrift stores. Overall, investing in the appearance and experience of downtown—especially during seasonal events like Christmas—could draw more visitors, much like how beautifully decorated towns encourage people to stop, explore, and support local businesses.

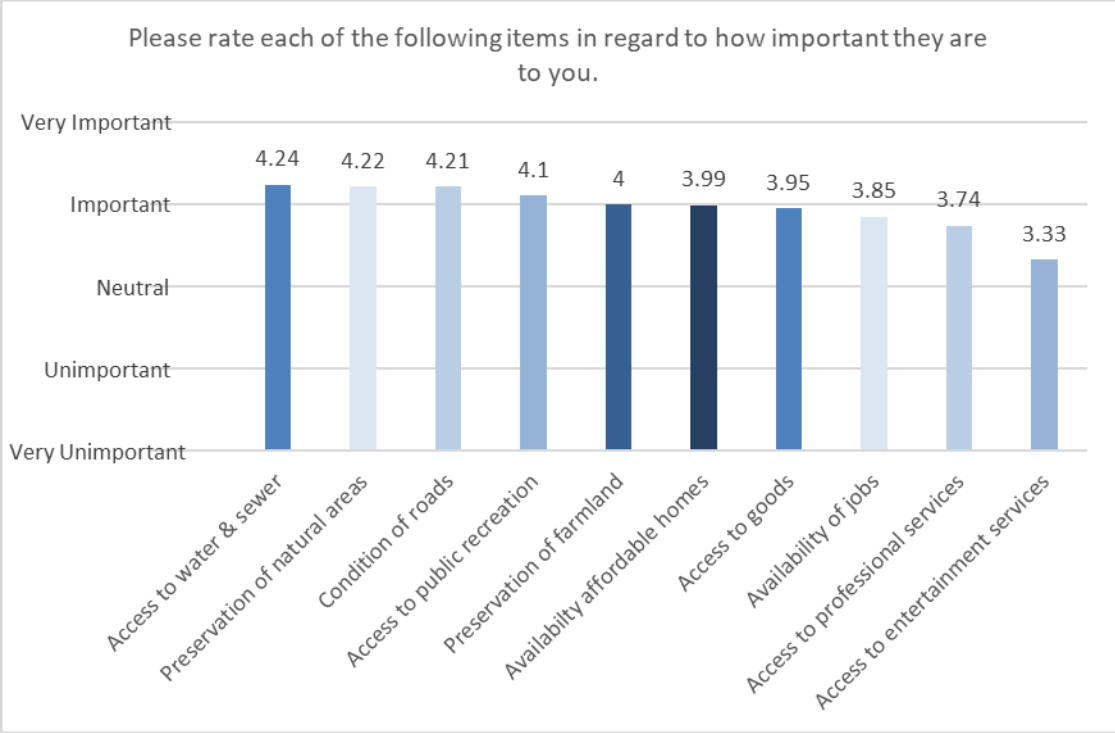
- *Businesses for people to work near town like the foundry or pattern shop*
- *There isn't much to visit it for. We have a couple restaurants, grocery store (priced as convenience store), insurance, bank, pharmacy, and post office. We need to expand businesses in our community.*
- *Coffee*
- *None*
- *More sustainable business options, more surrounding houses to buy*
- *Dirt hiking trails, a few miles of single track mountain bike trails - there's a large population of mountain bikers around here and it'd be nice to have trails close to home. It would also bring lots of people to our town. WMMBA is an association of volunteers that help build and maintain mountain bike trails in West Michigan, and could be looked into contacting. Mountain biking is extremely popular and would add cause huge attraction to our town. Maybe around Musketawa trail, or the undeveloped area in Haymeadow?*
- *Blackmer rd after Ellis needs overhaul*
- *More food options*
- *More grocery stores.*
- *Another restaurant option would be great.*

Industrial

There is support for industrial growth within the Village, which contrasts with other surveyed communities that report industrial development occurring too quickly. As noted earlier, the distinction between commercial and industrial uses varies by community, so additional feedback may be important in determining where this line should be for the Village.

Once this boundary is defined, the Planning Commission will be better positioned to identify appropriate areas for future industrial development. However, given the Village's limited land area, distance from major transportation routes, and public utility capacity, accommodating industrial growth may be challenging. Facilitating such growth will likely require coordination with Ravenna Township.



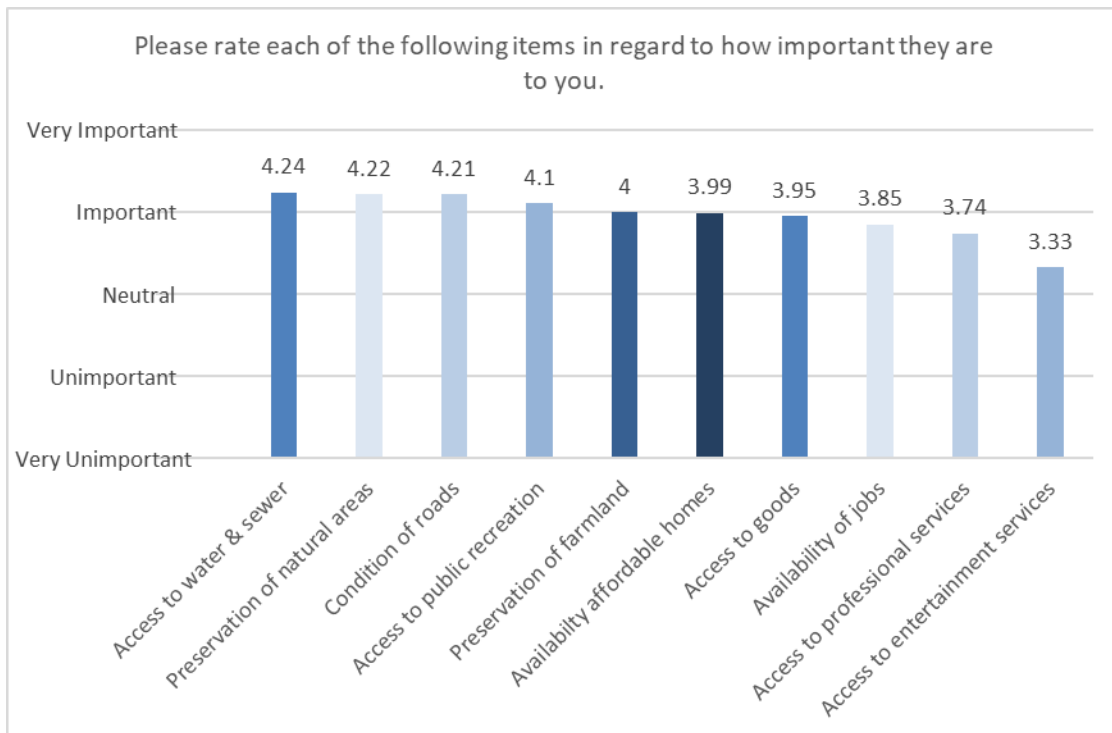


Miscellaneous

In addition to preferences for residential, commercial, and industrial growth, respondents identified several other important community priorities.

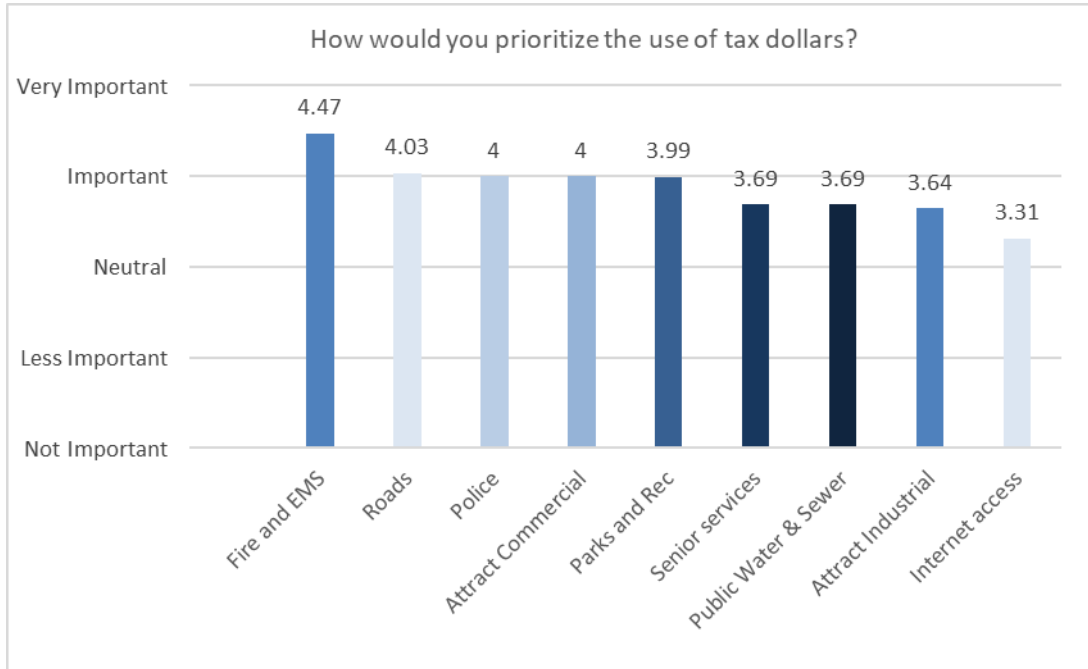
Public Servies

Respondents indicate that access to water and sanitary sewer, as well as road conditions, are important community priorities. Support for allocating tax dollars to fire, emergency medical, and police services also suggests strong backing for these essential services.



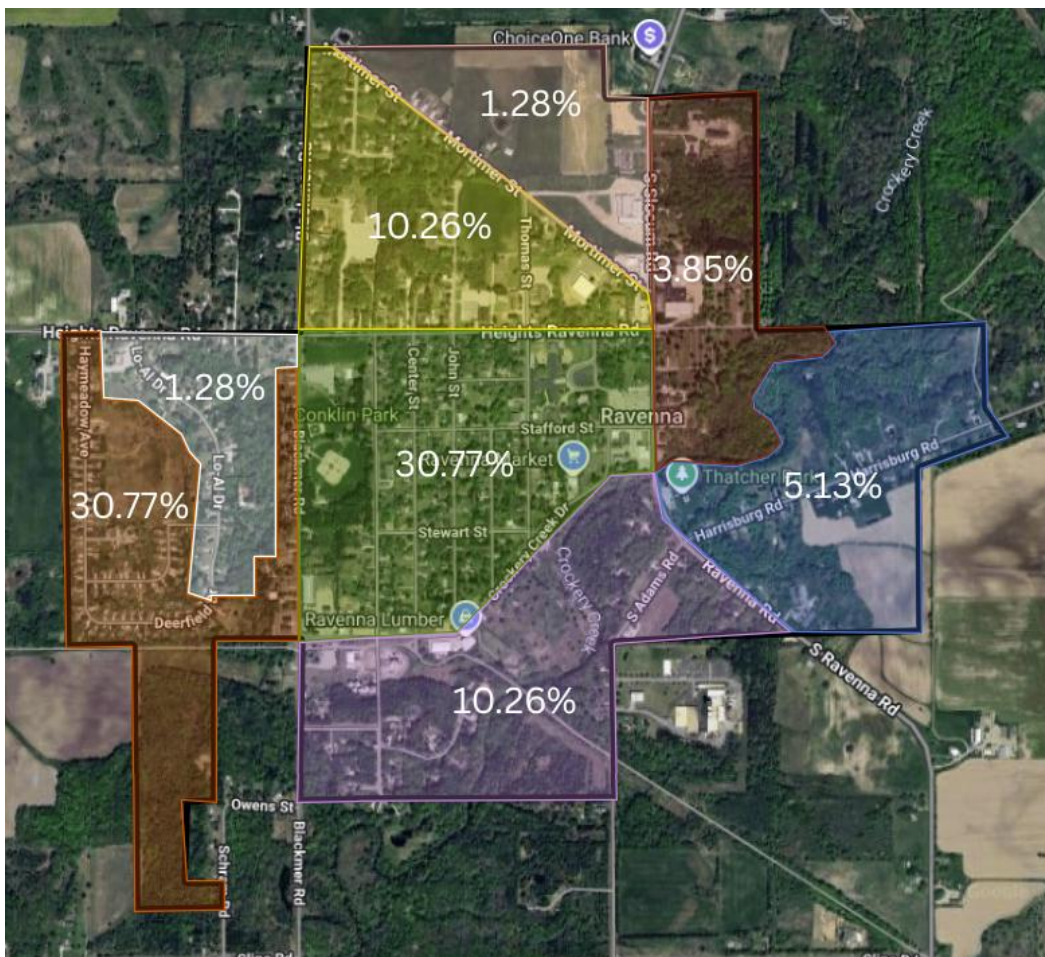
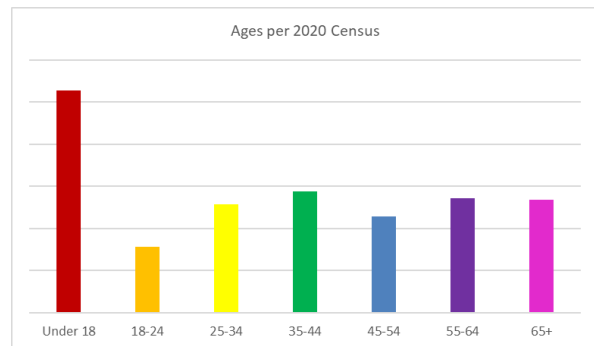
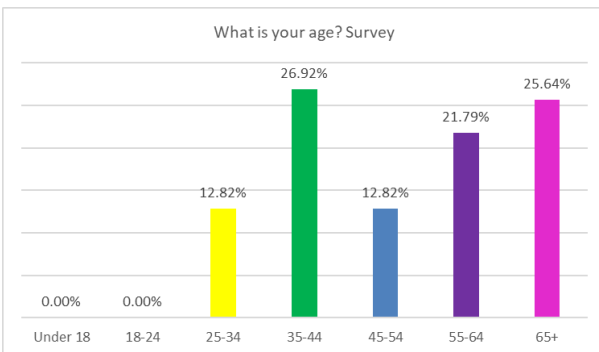
Preservation of Natural Areas and Recreation

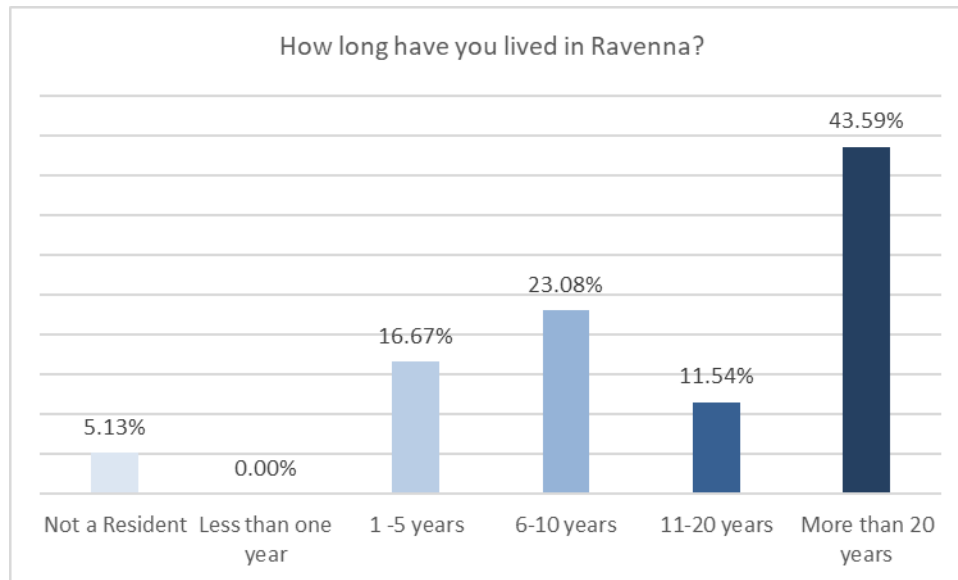
Respondents place a high level of importance on preserving natural areas and ensuring access to public recreation. Although the Village contains limited farmland, respondents also strongly value farmland preservation, which may indicate a preference for directing future growth away from farmland in Ravenna Township.



Demographics

We use demographics to ensure that the survey is a valid representative sample of the population. Based on the responses to demographic questions the survey appears to be a fairly representative sample of individuals over the age of 25 and is representative of different areas of the Village. No responses were received from residents 24 years old or younger. With almost half of respondents living in the Village for more than 20 years.





Other Comments

For the last question of the survey, we gave the respondents the opportunity to provide any additional comments or concerns. The following is a list of responses.

- *Have had many recent concerns about the makeup and direction of the village council and the progress of Ravenna (village AND township) overall. With the departure of toxic councilmember Kelly K., it's expected that things will start to improve, allowing business and commerce to thrive while improving;preserving quality of life and small town charm. The hope is that the village leaders are able to think independently (not be bullied by a few) and consider overall economic and human consequences of their leadership. Thank you for asking for resident input thru this survey.*
- *I would like to see a carwash*
- *fix curb at drugstore and at Brotons*
- *cost to produce the Master Plan by Fresh Coast is excessive*
- *I would love to see the bathrooms at Conklin Park and Thatcher Park get an update. Especially Conklin park with the hand dryers not working in the fall and the overall rundown state of the restrooms. I think Ravenna could be better represented, especially when we have visitors there from other communities to watch sporting events. Thanks for allowing us to provide input on this!*
- *We have loved living in Ravenna. I feel there needs to be a good balance in keeping the hometown feeling and growing. And change is never easy. One thing I feel is critical is affordable senior housing. There are seniors who call Ravenna home who*

would like to (and NEED) to move into Ravenna but cannot due to very limited availability.

- *Appreciation for all who serve and support the Village of Ravenna. Hope that productive, professional, respectful and collaborative conversations/planning/efforts continue, and conversely that shortsighted, negative and unproductive interactions cease. Ravenna is a great place to live, working together it can remain that way.*
- *One thing I've really wanted/is a big priority that I think would be doable is access to dog poop bags/more trash cans along the path in Conklin Park. I walk my dog in this park every day and people just don't pick up their dog poop. There's times it's right next to the path, or even times it's been right in the path and people just don't pick it up. I think if there were more trash cans along the walking path, or even those poles that have dog poop bags on them (like what you see at a dog park), people may be more willing to pick up their dog poop. They should be doing it no matter what, but the fact is right now they just aren't.*
- *we do need more control over ravenna rules...yard cleanup, animal control, noise complaints, etc.*
- *Need another restaurant. Do not bring fast food. More job opportunities like factory. Pharmacy open later and Saturdays*
- *Village residents who paid for chicken permits, should be allowed more than 6 chickens.*
- *I feel we have very low water pressure. Our road needs fixing. (Ledlie Court)*
- *Sidewalks would be nice or at least make the main roads wider so people can bike and walk a little safer.*
- *More diverse services downtown. Gym, tailor, ect*
- *Thank you!*
- *Need to modify semi traffic. Route to stay on either Slocum or Ravenna Road rather than cut across Mortimer. Speeds on Mortimer are excessive. Weight of semis cause decay to existing homes and road.*
- *"I would love to see Downtown Ravenna become a place that people of all ages genuinely enjoy spending time. There is strong potential to enhance the area through improved home exteriors, thoughtful landscaping, attractive lighting, and seasonal flowers. Creating a more visually inviting atmosphere would naturally encourage visitors to explore local shops and businesses.*
- *The farmers market was a great idea and the alleyway space is already very charming, but it would benefit from more vendors and additional room to grow. Expanding that concept could make it a real destination. Adding features such as a*

community fireplace, revitalizing the ice skating rink, or enhancing the sledding hill with a gazebo and warming area would create a welcoming environment for families—giving parents a comfortable place to gather while children play.

- *There is also a strong opportunity for growth through additional quality restaurants, unique shopping options, and local thrift stores. Overall, investing in the appearance and experience of downtown—especially during seasonal events like Christmas—could draw more visitors, much like how beautifully decorated towns encourage people to stop, explore, and support local businesses."*
- *Taxes are very high in Haymeadow and why aren't the roads being replaced?*
- *NA*
- *We live in Lo Al but map seemed to show not part of village ? Anyways. Would love not to pay taxes if that's true.*
- *We need a council and planning commission who are trained in how a meeting needs to be run. Meetings need to be more professional and follow the Robert's Rules of Order. Also concerned that if we don't start having some business come in and available housing our school will continue to struggle with financing due to little tax base.*
- *See comment about downtown*
- *I would like that this community stays small and rural. I'd appreciate if my taxes remained affordable. I love this small community*
- *Would love to see more food options in town, coffee, bakery etc. not a village issue but winter driving is horrible with ice with the farm land being open. Unsure how to avoid that*
- *The roadside rain drains need to be better than just a hole in the ground. They should be interconnected and drain away, this would help in maintaining roads (not wash away and deteriorate) at the very least.*
- *None*
- *We need some new people running the Village. All the fighting in the office needs to STOP. I have been to a few meetings and I'm not at all impressed with the current situation. As a Village tax payer, this needs to be resolved A.S.A.P.*
- *Street lights in haymeadow subdivision need to be updated. The roads in haymeadow subdivision need serious work.*
- *Wondering why village and township tax's appear to be so my more than surrounding areas*
- *I would like to express my appreciation to the individuals that do a good job working for the village/township.*