

# OSHKOSH

## Community Survey Results

**Out of 1,172 surveys mailed to Town of Oshkosh property owners, 488 were returned—a 42% return rate. This return rate reveals a high level of concern with land use issues.**



### AD HOC SURVEY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Rick Billington**
- Dave Frank**
- Gerald Frey**
- Tom Gabert**
- Maribeth Gabert**
- Sharon Karow**
- Carol Kaufmann**
- Jeanette Merten**
- Vicky Rowe**



Produced by:  
 Mike Koles  
 Community Development  
 Educator UW-Extension,  
 Winnebago County  
 Linda Block  
 Secretary

### Introduction:

The Town of Oshkosh is experiencing changes. From 1990 – 1997, the Town witnessed construction of an average of seven new homes annually. Despite construction of new homes, the Town population decreased 1,225 people and the total number of homes in the Town declined by 120 due to annexation. Moreover, it is widely recognized that external economic, social, and political forces are putting certain pressures on the Town.

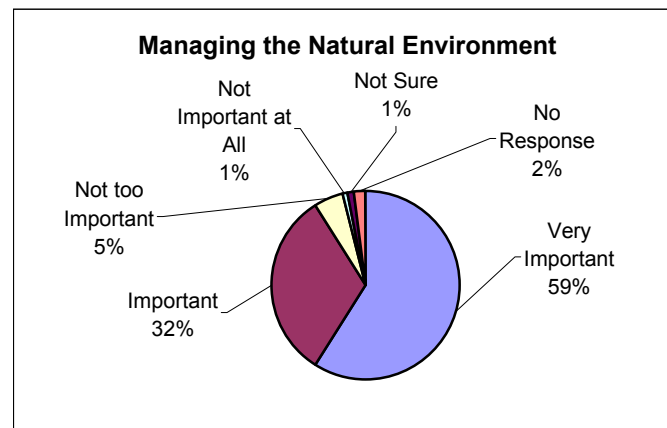


One tool to assist communities effectively and efficiently manage change is comprehensive planning. Planning can be defined as an orderly, open approach to determining local needs, setting goals and priorities, and taking action to achieve what the community desires. Realizing the potential utility of planning as a tool to manage change, combined with external factors, i.e., County planning efforts and Wisconsin's New Smart Growth Law, the Town Board assembled an ad hoc survey committee to guide the development and administering of a land use citizen opinion survey. The following report summarizes the survey results.

### A Community Vision:

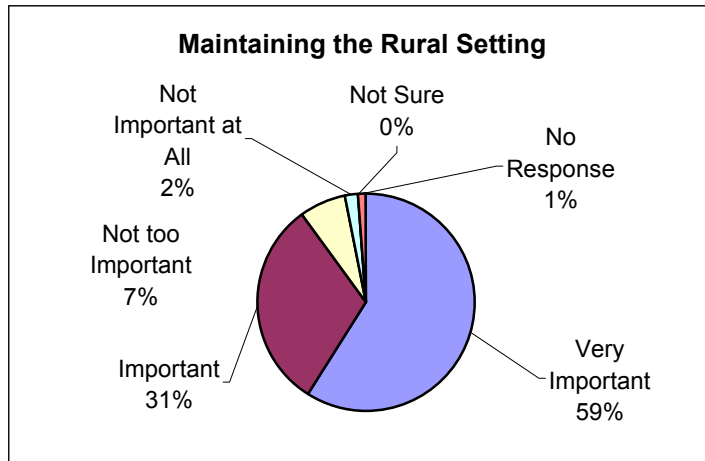
Community visioning is often used to determine what citizens want their community to be. A community vision then is a description of broad desires of the citizenry. For example, some communities would like to be rural while others have a vision of being urban. The community visioning process helps citizens identify common values and desires that provide a foundation and give direction for getting from the present to the future. The following survey questions were asked to help identify a future Town vision.

*How important do you think the following should be in the Town of Oshkosh?*

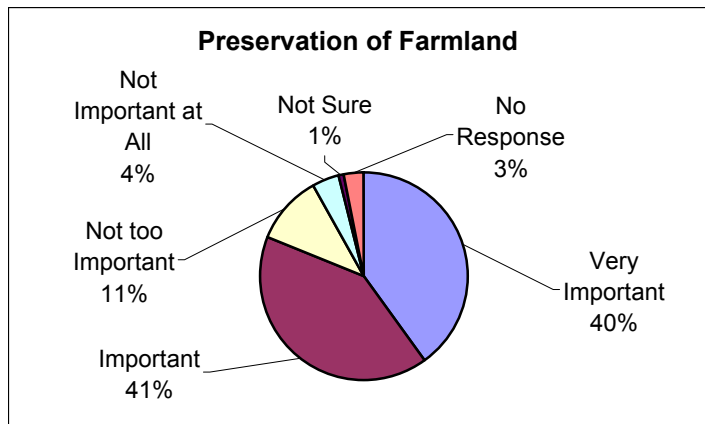


**RESPONSE:**  
 91% of respondents felt that managing the natural environment should be very important or important.

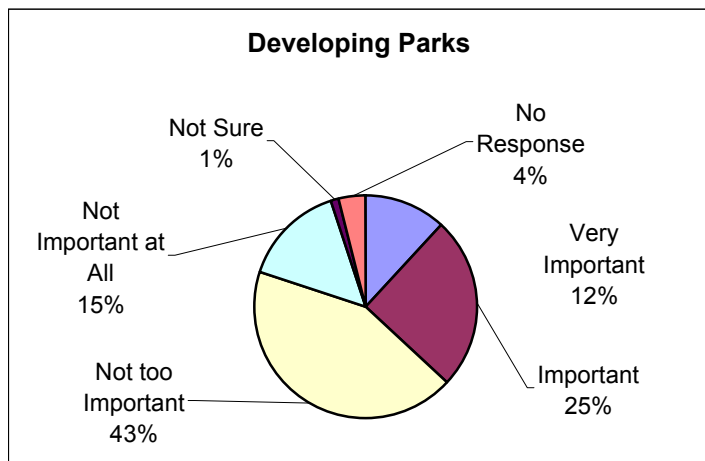
**How important do you think the following should be in the Town of Oshkosh? (cont'd)**



**RESPONSE:**  
90% of respondents felt that maintaining the rural setting should be very important or important.

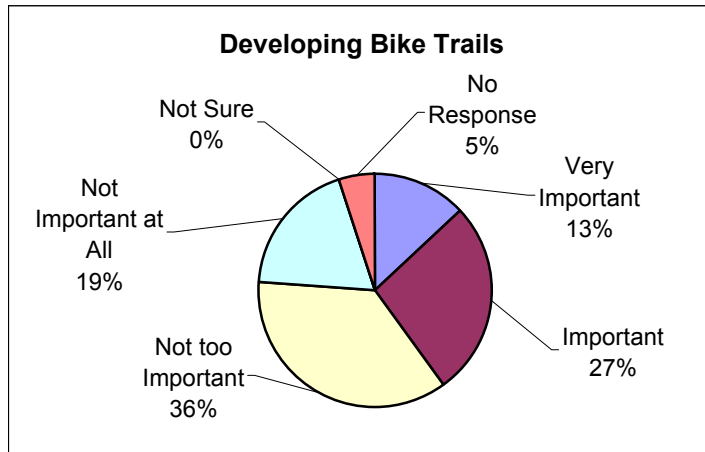


**RESPONSE:**  
81% of respondents felt farmland preservation should be very important or important.

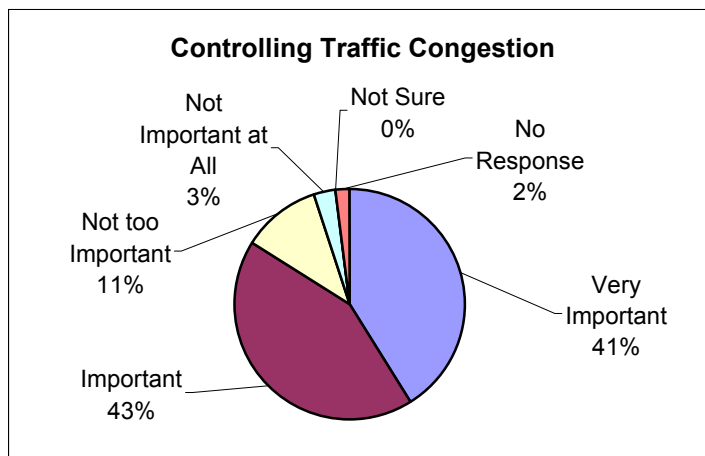


**RESPONSE:**  
37% of respondents felt developing parks should be very important or important. 43% didn't think it should be too important and 15% didn't think it should be important at all.

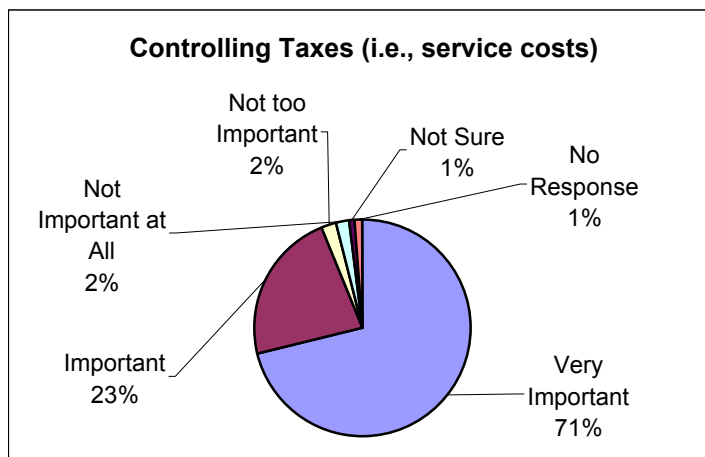
**How important do you think the following should be in the Town of Oshkosh? (cont'd)**



**RESPONSE:**  
40% of respondents felt developing bike trails should be very important or important, while 36% didn't feel it should be too important and 19% didn't think it should be important at all.



**RESPONSE:**  
84% of respondents felt controlling traffic congestion should be very important or important in the Town.

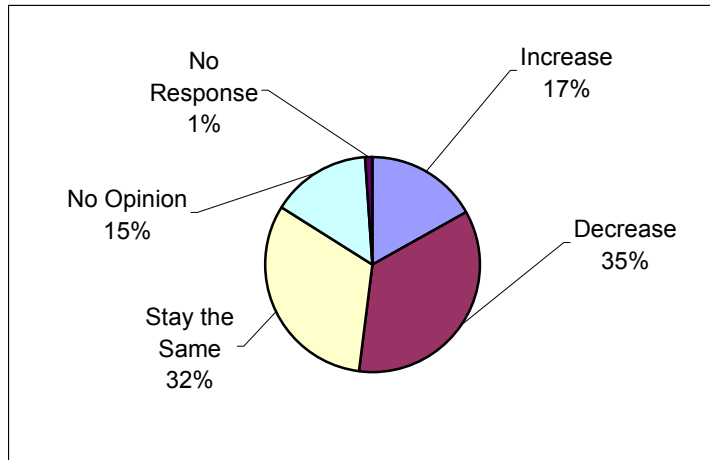


**RESPONSE:**  
94% of respondents felt controlling taxes should be very important or important in the Town.

## Land Development Desires:

Because the Town of Oshkosh is witnessing land development changes, the following questions were asked to determine citizen desires regarding land development.

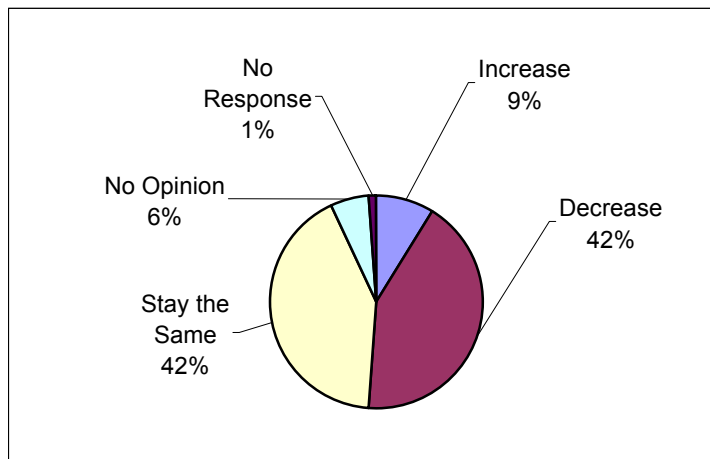
*Would you like to see the number of homes built each year (currently 6 annually) in the Town increase, decrease, or stay the same?*



### RESPONSE:

About 1/3 of respondents would like residential development to decrease, 1/3 would like it to stay the same, and 1/5 would like it to increase.

*Would you like to see the rate of farmland conversion (currently 16 acres annually) increase, decrease, or stay the same over the next twenty years?*



### RESPONSE:

An equal number of respondents (42%) would like it to decrease or stay the same, while 9% would like it to increase.

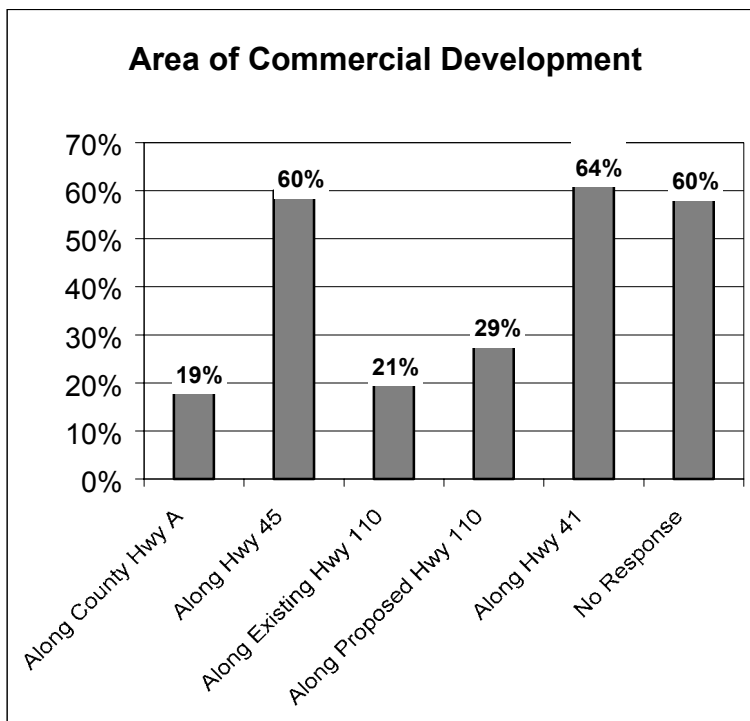
*Please identify which of the following types of land uses you feel the Town should encourage or discourage.*

	<i>Encourage</i>	<i>Discourage</i>
Single Family Housing	81%	7%
Agriculture	70%	7%
Recreational	57%	13%
Light Industrial	34%	41%
Restaurants	31%	40%
Convenience Stores	18%	55%
Mini-Storage	10%	64%
Strip Malls	10%	72%
Multi-Family Housing	9%	72%
Heavy Industrial	7%	76%

**RESPONSE:**

The results reveal three distinct categories of responses. Three types of land uses are strongly desired by respondents: (1) single family residential, (2) agriculture, and (3) recreational. About an equal amount want to encourage and discourage light industrial and restaurants. On the other hand, respondents do not want to encourage multi-family housing, heavy industrial, strip malls, convenience stores, or mini-storage.

*If a commercial development occurs, in which areas of the Town should it be encouraged (more than one answer per respondent was possible)?*



**RESPONSE:**

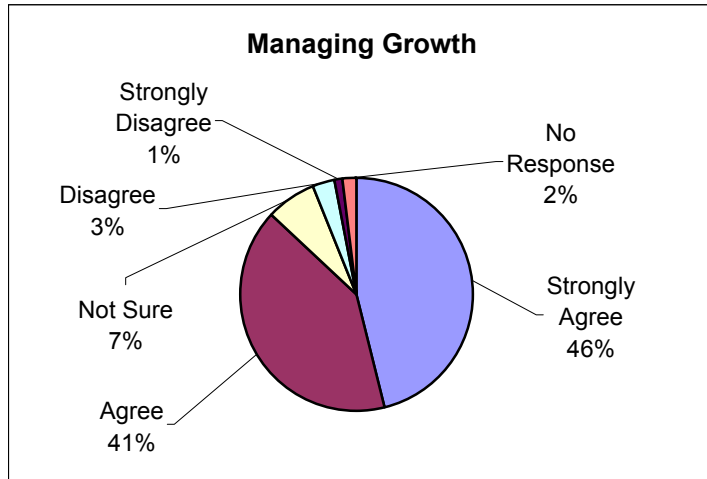
The results reveal two separate categories. First, along highways 41 and 45 stand out as being the most desirable for commercial development. Second, along existing and proposed 110 and County Highway A seem to be equally desired, but to a lesser extent than the former.

# Comprehensive Planning and Growth Management

Comprehensive planning is a tool that can be used to manage growth and change so that the community becomes what the citizens would like it to be. The following questions were asked to identify citizen opinions regarding planning and growth management.

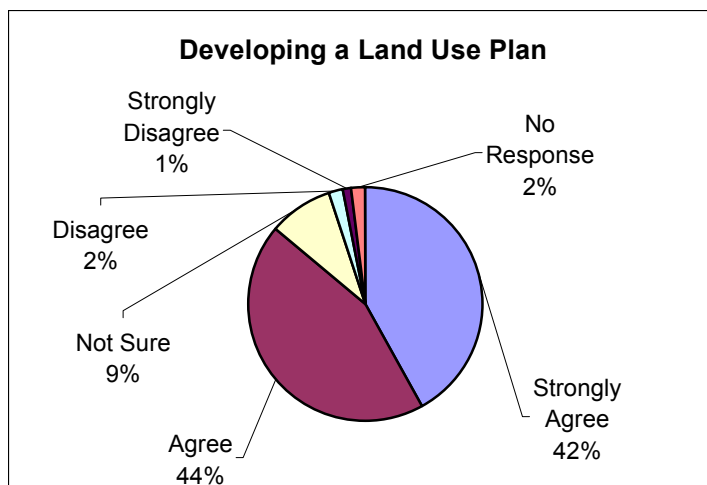
To what extent do you agree or disagree that...

*...the Town of Oshkosh should be concerned with managing growth?*



RESPONSE:  
A large majority of respondents (46% strongly agree and 41% agree) feel that the Town should manage growth.

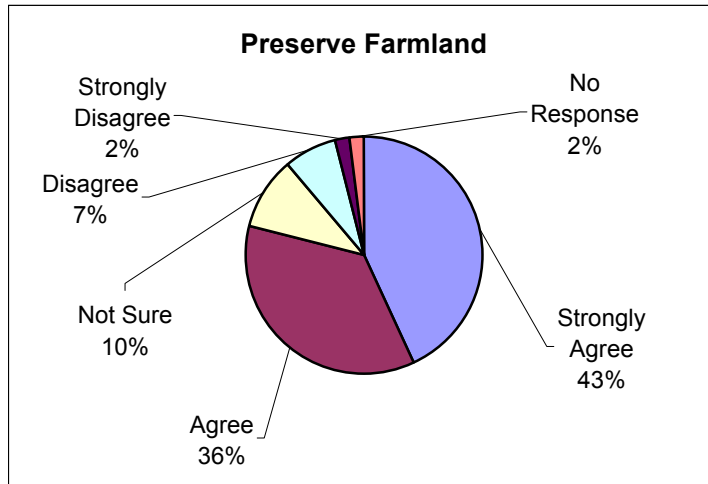
*... the Town of Oshkosh should consider developing a land use plan?*



RESPONSE:  
42% of respondents strongly agree and 44% agree that a land use plan should be one tool used to manage growth.

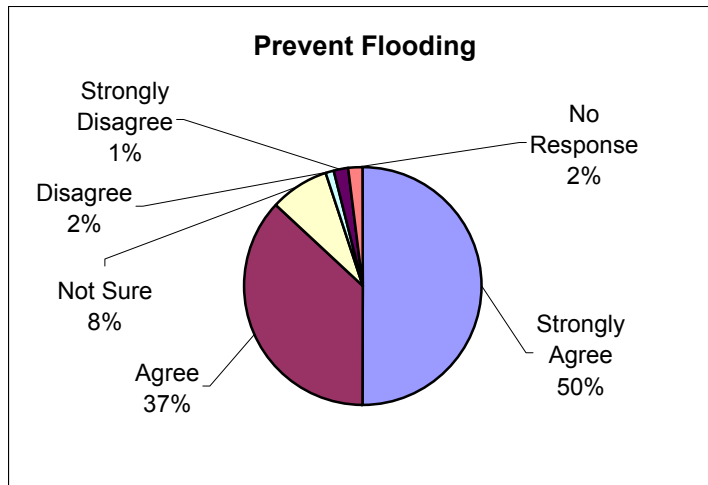
## Comprehensive Planning and Growth Management (cont'd)

*...development should be guided so that it occurs in certain areas and is not allowed in others in order to preserve farmland?*



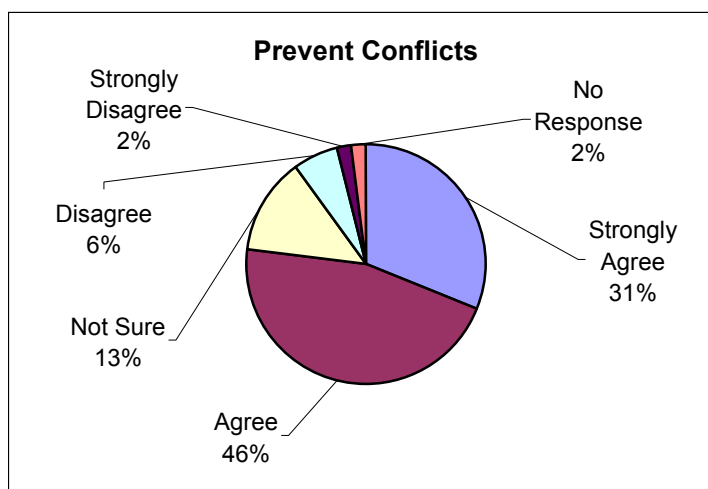
**RESPONSE:**  
79% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that growth should be managed to preserve farmland. This compares to 81% who previously answered it was important or very important to preserve farmland.

*...development should be guided so that it occurs in certain areas and is not allowed in others in order to prevent flooding?*



**RESPONSE:**  
87% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that growth should be managed to prevent flooding.

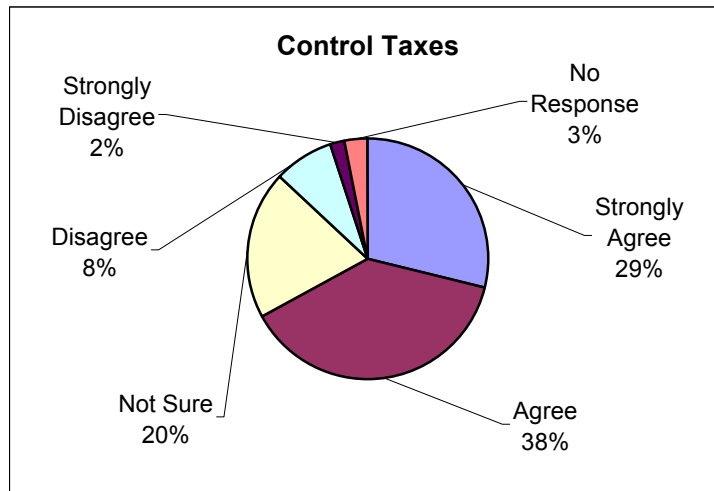
*...development should be guided so that it occurs in certain areas and is not allowed in others in order to prevent conflicts between farming and residential development?*



**RESPONSE:**  
77% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that growth should be managed to prevent farming – residential conflicts.

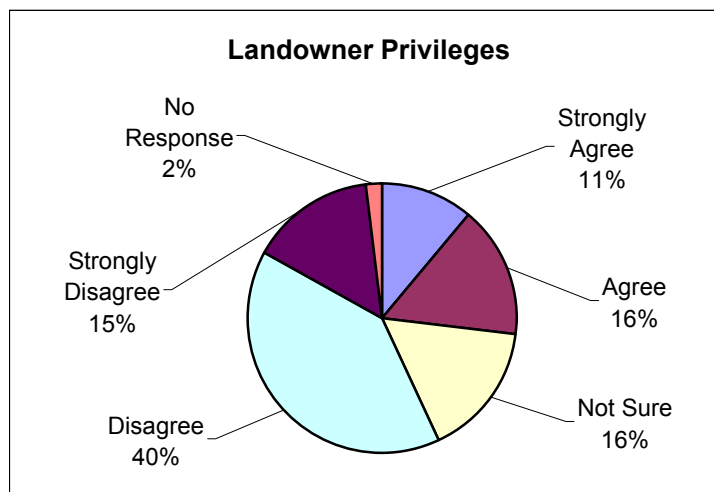
## Comprehensive Planning and Growth Management (cont'd)

*...development should be guided so that it occurs in certain areas and is not allowed in others in order to control taxes?*



**RESPONSE:**  
67% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that growth should be managed to control taxes. 10% strongly disagree or disagree, while 20% were not sure.

*...that land owners should have the right to use his/her land for any purpose?*



**RESPONSE:**  
27% of respondents strongly agree or agree that a land owner should have the right to do whatever they want on their land, while 55% strongly disagree or disagree. 16% were not sure.

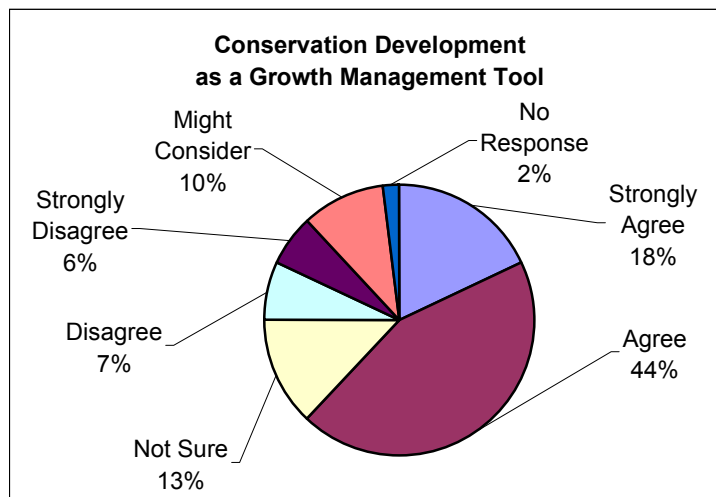
## Implementation Tools:

A comprehensive plan is not action, but only a plan. In order for the plan to be effective, it must be implemented using a variety of tools. The following questions were asked in order to determine opinions regarding several implementation tools.

## Conservation Development:

Conservation development is an implementation tool that involves clustering homes together on one part of a parcel while the remainder of the parcel is not developed. Under conservation subdivision, just as many homes can be built, but they are built on smaller lots so other environmentally sensitive, farmland, aesthetic areas, etc. can be preserved.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that a conservation development should be considered as a growth management tool in the Town?*



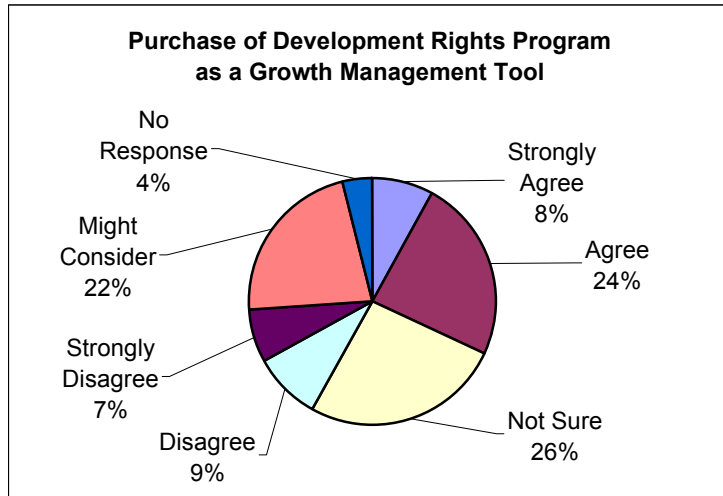
### RESPONSE:

A majority of respondents, 62%, either strongly agree or agree. 13% strongly disagree or disagree. A significant number, 13%, were not sure and 10% might consider it if they understood the tool better.

## Purchase of Development Rights:

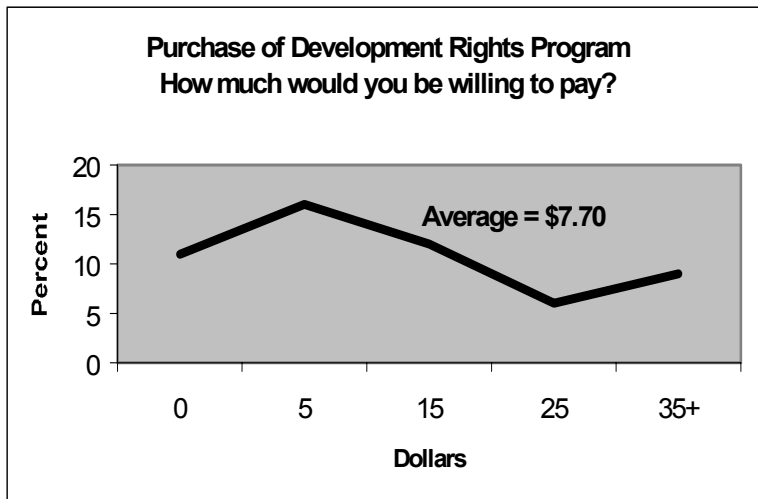
Purchase of development rights is an implementation tool that involves purchasing development rights from the property owner whose land is to be preserved. The property owner retains all rights, except to develop, and receives financial gain, while the community preserves the lands that it desires.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that a purchase of development rights program should be considered as a growth management tool in the Town?*



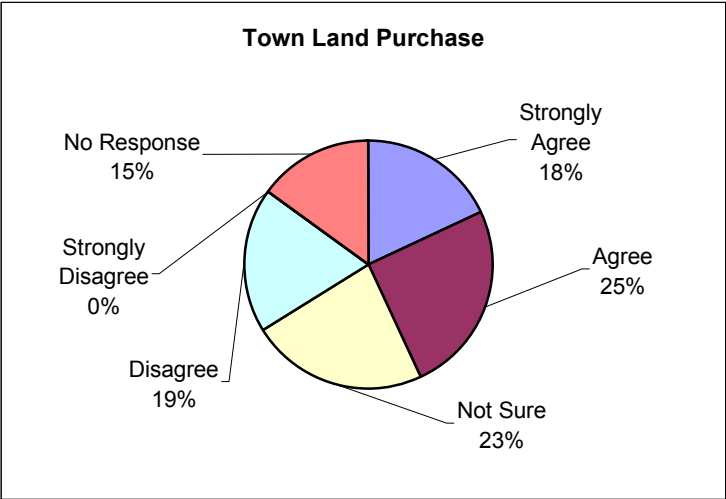
RESPONSE:  
32% of respondents strongly agree or agree, while 16% strongly disagree or agree. A large number were not sure or might consider if they understood better, 26% and 22% respectively.

*How much would you be willing to pay annually to fund a purchase of development rights program?*



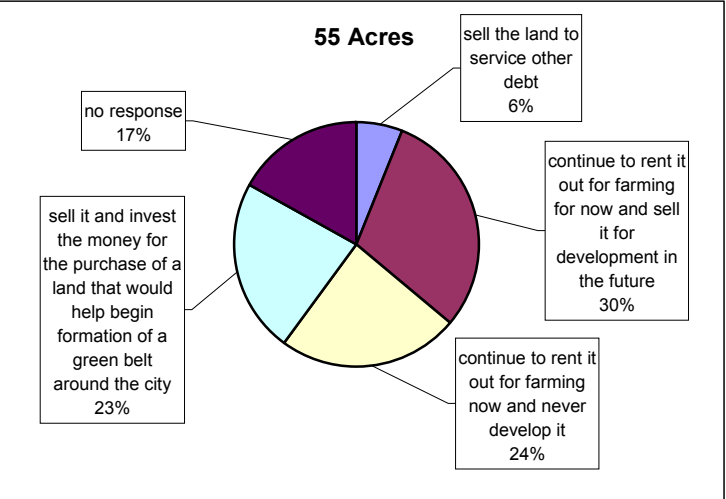
RESPONSE:  
The demand curve on the graph reveals that respondents on average would be willing to pay \$7.70 annually to fund such a program.

*To what extent do you agree or disagree the Town should help guide growth by buying property so it would be permanently protected from development?*



**RESPONSE:**  
43% of respondents strongly agree or agree that the Town should manage growth by purchasing property. 19% disagree, nobody strongly disagreed, and 23% were not sure.

*What should the Town do with the 55 acres it owns between Snell Road and County Highway Y?*



**RESPONSE:**  
30% of respondents would like to continue to rent it for farming and sell it in the future for development. 24% would like to continue to rent it for farming and never develop it. A similar number, 23%, felt it should be sold now so land that better enables the formation of a green belt around the city could be purchased, while only 6% felt it should be sold to service debt.

**Town Services**

*What is the quality of the following local services.*

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>	<i>No Response</i>
Fire Protection	35%	41%	5%	0%	15%	4%
Ambulance	24%	39%	7%	2%	23%	5%
Garbage Pick-Up	41%	42%	8%	2%	3%	4%
Recycling Pick-Up	41%	42%	9%	1%	4%	3%
Road Maintenance	15%	45%	26%	9%	2%	3%
Sanitary, if applicable	18%	24%	2%	1%	13%	42%

**RESPONSE:**  
Road maintenance appears to be the service of most concern to survey respondents.