



Prepared By:
Northeast Florida Regional Council

CITY OF BUNNELL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VISIONING REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

As the City of Bunnell enters a period of anticipated growth, it has a unique opportunity to shape its future in a way that reflects the community's shared values. The City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report was created through extensive community participation, with residents directly shaping the report's themes and priorities. This document is one of many tools in the City's long-term planning toolbox that will collectively inform future development, policy decisions, and investment priorities. While adopted plans such as the 2009 Vision Statement, Comprehensive Plan, Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Plan, and other regulatory and strategic documents also guide growth and decision-making, the City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report is distinct in that it is driven entirely by community input.

The City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report is intended to be ancillary to, and fully consistent with, the City's adopted 2009 Vision Statement. Rather than replacing or superseding the earlier vision, this report builds upon its foundational principles by reaffirming Bunnell's commitment to economic growth, job creation, private investment, and reinvestment, alongside thoughtful development and long-term sustainability, while acknowledging current conditions, market realities, and community input. This report is intended to function as a flexible, evolving guide, working in tandem with the 2009 Vision Statement to both inform public policy and investment and help community leaders and residents work together towards the community's shared vision.

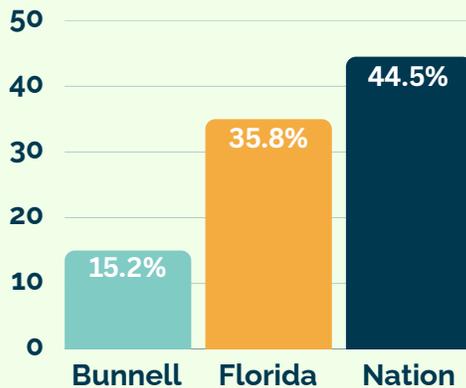
The City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report helps guide future growth in a manner that supports economic vitality, protects natural resources, and enhances quality of life for current and future residents. It outlines the public engagement process, summarizes community feedback, and presents overarching themes intended to move the City forward in a unified direction, complementing and reinforcing the broader set of plans and policies within the City's planning framework.

Bunnell

BY THE NUMBERS

Educational ATTAINMENT

Bachelors Degree or Higher



4,224

MEMBERS OF
POPULATION

Median Age

48 YEARS OLD

1,697

HOUSING UNITS

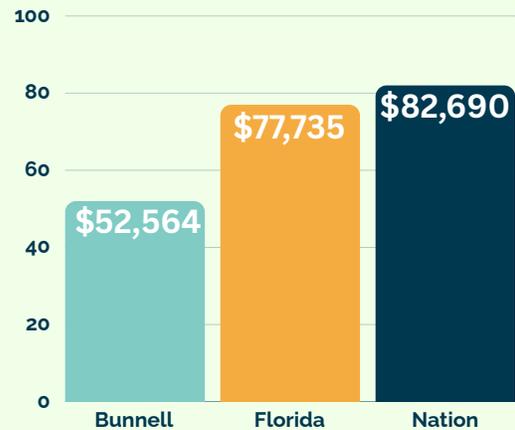
Median
Property Value

\$247,800

138.5

SQUARE MILES

Median Household Income



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STATEMENT

The City of Bunnell is a community that cherishes its rural, small-town character while cultivating a vibrant, connected downtown and neighborhoods and investing in welcoming public spaces and parks that enhance quality of life for all residents.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report was developed through a robust public participation process, with 2 community workshops attended by over 50 members of the public, an online survey with 331 responses, and one joint workshop with the Planning, Zoning, and Appeals Board and City Commission.

Community Workshop 1 September 30, 2025

The first community workshop was held on September 30, 2025, at Bunnell City Hall and was attended by 26 community members. The purpose of the workshop was to gather community input to help shape the City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report by identifying priorities, concerns, and opportunities for the city's future.

During the workshop, Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) staff launched the Visual Preference Survey, allowing participants to provide real-time feedback on their personal devices or on paper. Participants participated in a mapping activity to spatially illustrate desired community features. Participants also had one-on-one discussions with NEFRC staff to further explore topics related to community development and quality of life.



Community Workshop 2 October 28, 2025

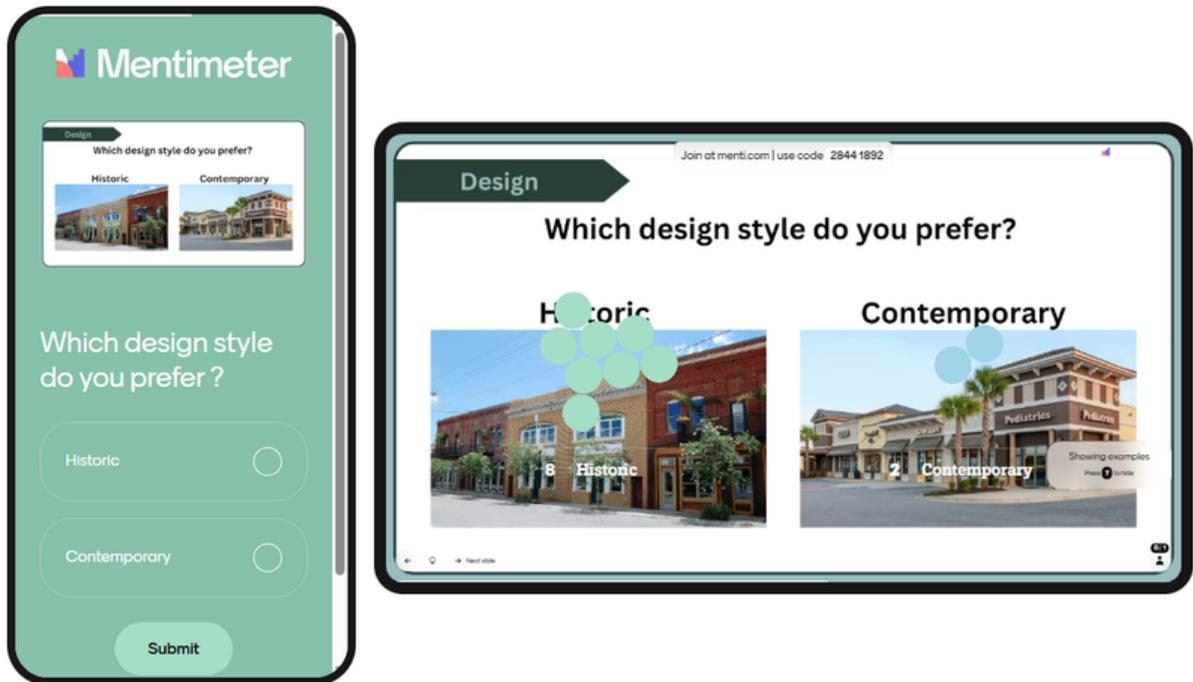
The second community workshop was held on October 28, 2025, at Bunnell City Hall and was attended by 25 community members. The purpose of this workshop was to present preliminary results from the Visual Preference Survey and the first workshop, as well as to confirm that initial findings accurately reflected community priorities.

NEFRC staff presented themes compiled from survey responses, one-on-one discussions, and the mapping activity. Following the presentation, the format mirrored the first workshop, with one-on-one discussions and an interactive mapping exercise that allowed participants to outline a preferred downtown core for the City of Bunnell. Workshop attendees were also given a final opportunity to complete the Visual Preference Survey.



Online Visual Preference Survey

To ensure broad participation, the Visual Preference Survey was also made available online for residents who were unable to attend the community workshops. The online survey was open from September 30, 2025, through October 29, 2025, and was identical to the survey administered during the in-person workshops.



Survey Methodology

The community had three opportunities to participate in the Visual Preference Survey: Community Workshops 1 and 2, as well as the online survey. All workshops were advertised and open to the public. The Northeast Florida Regional Council used the software Mentimeter to administer the survey both in-person and online.

The survey utilized multiple choice, short response, and ranking questions. Most questions were structured to capture respondents' preferences, while ranking questions allowed participants to prioritize initiatives they would like to see the community pursue.

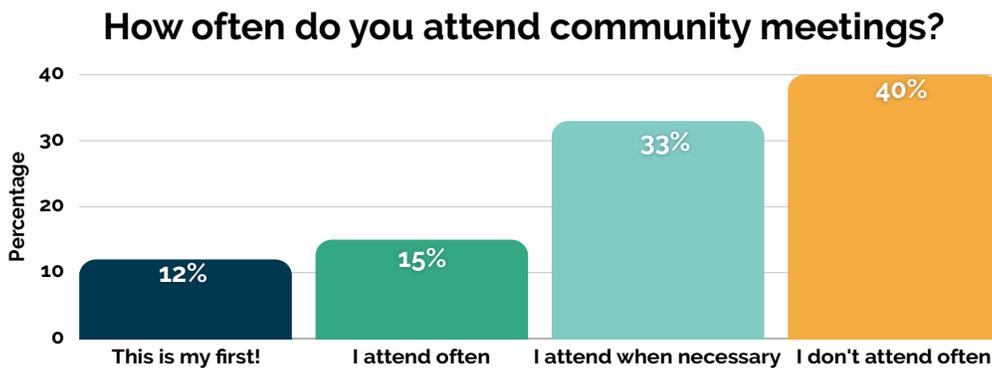
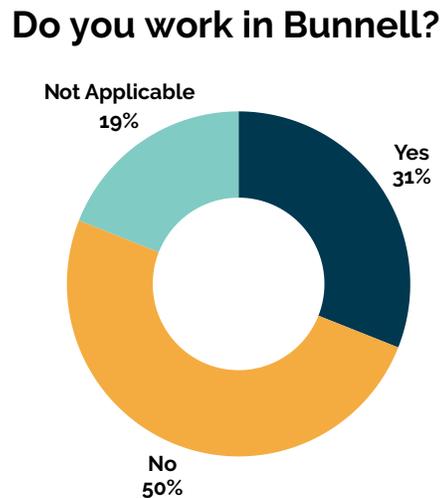
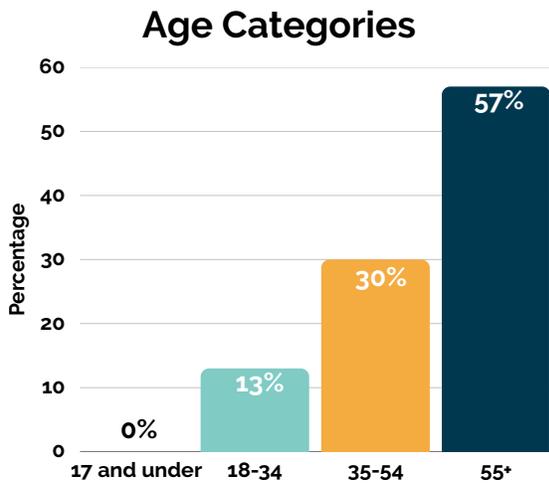
VISUAL PREFERENCE

SURVEY RESULTS

The following section summarizes the results of the Visual Preference Survey and highlights key insights into community preferences for the future of the City of Bunnell. In total, 331 people participated in the survey.

Demographics

Survey respondents skewed toward an older population, with 87% of survey participants over the age of 35. This response number is consistent with the median age of Bunnell residents being 48 years old. A majority of survey participants, 50%, note that they do not work within the City of Bunnell and commute elsewhere for work. When asked about civic engagement, only 15% of participants reported actively attending community workshops.

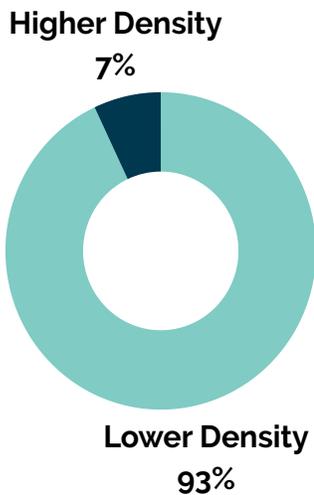


Housing

In the next set of questions, participants were asked to define how they would like their neighborhoods to look and function. Survey participants showed a strong affinity for lower density housing compared to higher density housing. Lower density housing typically includes single-family homes with yards and is defined by the City of Bunnell as up to four dwelling units per acre.

Affordable housing is critical for Florida communities to plan for, as rising inflation and increased demand have put a strain on the availability of housing for all life stages. One of the most common forms of affordable housing is naturally occurring, which is driven by the market and built by private developers. Participants were asked to select their preferred form of affordable housing. Of the five choices, participants preferred tiny homes, in-law suites, and manufactured homes. With thoughtful rules, these housing types can be incorporated into existing neighborhoods without changing their basic character.

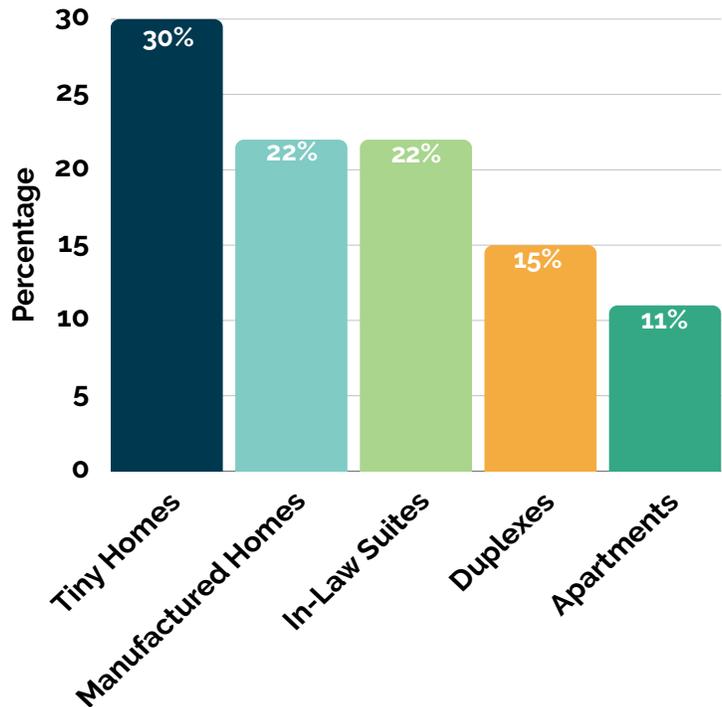
How do you want to see your neighborhoods?



Low-Density Housing



What type of affordable housing would you prefer?



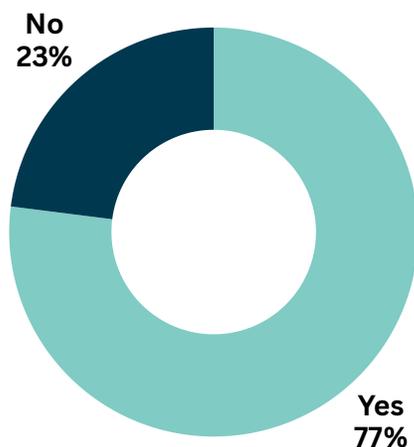
Community Development

A majority of survey participants, 77%, indicated interest in creating a defined downtown. At the second community workshop, participants mapped where they would like to see their downtown. Participants primarily selected the Moody Boulevard and State Street areas as the primary downtown corridor, with special attention to the Railroad Street area. Survey participants noted that they would prefer to see the city attract more local businesses in Bunnell, rather than large franchises. Participants were also interested in more signage standards that would create a consistent look across the city.

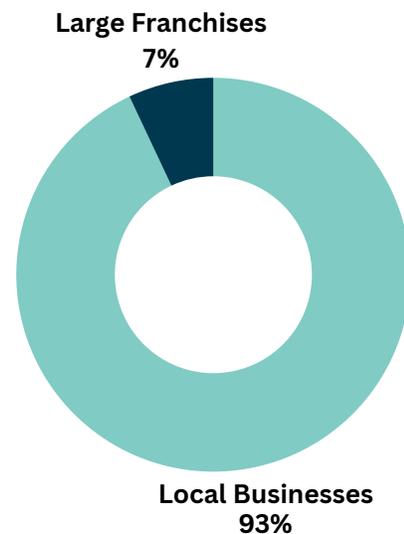
Additionally, survey participants were asked to identify abandoned industrial or commercial sites that they would like to see cleaned up, demolished, or redeveloped. Respondents identified the old hospital, areas around the railroad, and junk yards as areas of interest.

As the City of Bunnell faces increasing growth, survey participants defined what growth means to them. A prominent theme in the responses included a call for cautious, controlled growth that benefits everyone. Participants also recognized the need for land conservation and the need for additional business to support a growing population. In general, there is a need to balance the opportunities that growth can bring while recognizing how growth may impact existing residents.

Would you be interested in Bunnell creating a defined downtown district?



Which businesses do you want to see in Bunnell?



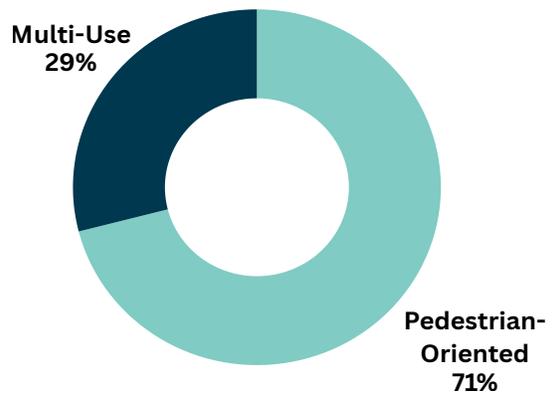
Transportation

In regards to street design, 71% of survey participants preferred pedestrian-oriented street design to multi-use street design. Pedestrian-oriented street design includes amenities like prominent street crossings, wide sidewalks, and traffic calming measures. Survey participants were then asked to rank options for how to make Bunnell safer. Sidewalks and street lighting were the two most preferred safety options.

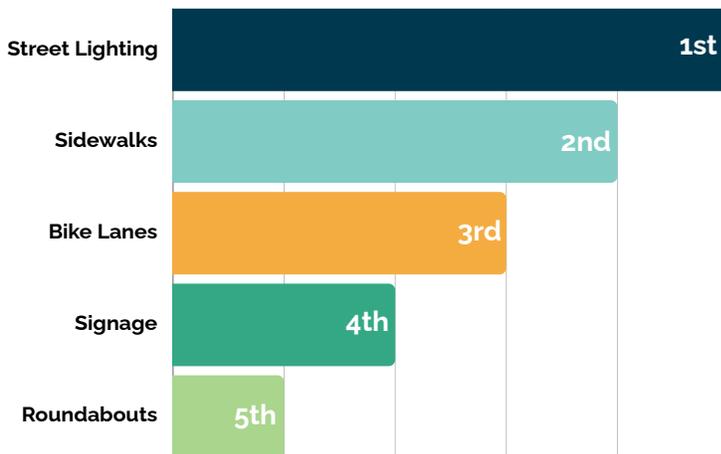
Pedestrian-Oriented



What street design do you prefer?



What can make Bunnell safer?



Average Ranking on a Scale of 1-5

Street Lighting



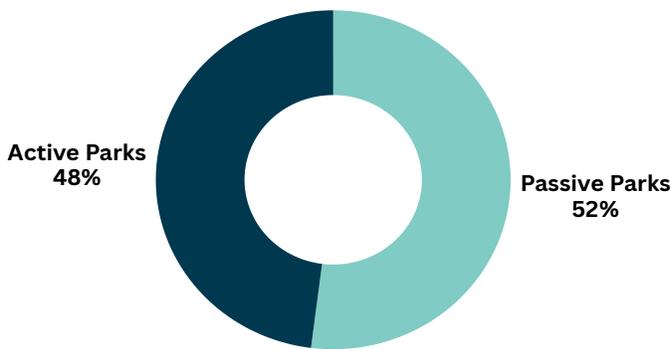
Sidewalks



Quality of Life

Increasing the parks and park services in the City of Bunnell was a priority identified by the City. When asked to choose between passive parks and active parks, the results were almost even, with 52% of people choosing passive parks and 48% of people choosing active parks. When asked to prioritize the amenities they would like to see at local parks, picnic areas and playgrounds were the most highly rated options. When asked to prioritize how Bunnell can protect the environment, land conservation was the most highly ranked option. This response confirms survey participant's concern for conservation in the face of population growth.

What types of parks do you prefer?



Priority Park Amenities

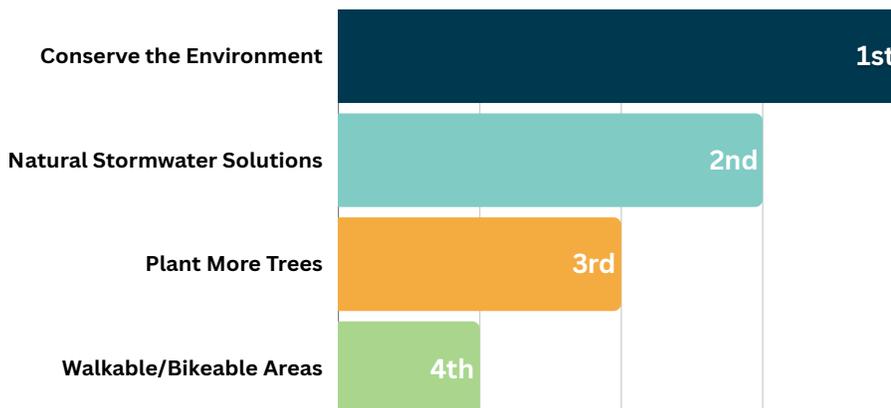
Picnic Areas



Playgrounds



Prioritize how Bunnell can protect the environment



Average Ranking on a Scale of 1-4

THEMES

The following themes reflect the values and priorities shared by community members throughout the planning process. Input from community workshops, surveys, and direct correspondence revealed a strong desire to guide growth in a way that protects Bunnell's small-town character while improving quality of life.

Preserve Small-Town Heritage

Bunnell residents consistently expressed a strong connection to their community and a desire to preserve what makes it unique. This message came through in community workshops, in survey responses, and in emails to the project team. It was often expressed as a fear of losing what makes Bunnell special. Residents identified the historic small-town feel of Bunnell as a key part of what they want to protect. Importantly, a small-town feel is not necessarily about limiting physical growth, but about maintaining a welcoming attitude, responsive local government, and a high level of customer service that makes residents feel known, heard, and valued.

Maintaining a strong and identifiable character will also help the city distinguish itself from the nearby beach towns and the rest of Flagler County, which can provide a benefit for economic development. The following recommendations all relate in some way to maintaining Bunnell's character - strengthening the downtown, preserving distinctive neighborhoods, improving the appearance of the city, expanding the park system, and protecting the rural environment.





Northeast View - Existing Conditions



Northeast View - Potential Improvements

The image above shows potential improvements to the intersection of Moody Boulevard and Railroad Street. This area already contains walkable elements that can be enhanced through targeted improvements. In the example above, street improvements such as marked street crossings, facade improvements, and public art represent what a walkable downtown Bunnell could look like. These initial improvements could be done at a relatively low cost.



Southeast View - Existing Conditions



Southeast View - Potential Improvements

This design rendering illustrates the southeast view of Railroad Street and Moody Boulevard. The proposed modifications include adding landscaping along the railroad corridor, enhancing the visibility of parking areas, and introducing new pedestrian crossings to improve safety and walkability.



Northwest View - Existing Conditions



Northwest View - Potential Improvements

This rendering depicts a proposed design concept for the southeast corner of Moody Boulevard and Railroad Street. The report highlights new landscaping and parking along the railroad, and enhanced pedestrian crossings to improve walkability and access.

The City of Bunnell should pursue growth strategies that reinforce small-town character while addressing evolving housing needs. To support housing affordability without compromising neighborhood scale, the City of Bunnell should update its comprehensive plan to allow a broader range of accessory housing options, including tiny homes, manufactured homes, and accessory dwelling units (in-law suites). This approach allows for increased density in a way that maintains a low-density look and feel, preserving neighborhood character and providing attainable housing options for residents at different life stages.

Additionally, the City can reinvest in existing neighborhoods, preserving their historic character by turning underused land into more housing. Many of Bunnell's historic buildings are from the early to mid-20th century, so design elements such as brick exteriors and human-scaled architecture would best provide continuity in the historic style of the city. This approach uses existing infrastructure and helps reduce sprawl, which in turn, transforms underutilized sites into economic assets.

Low-Density Housing



Tiny Homes



In-Law Suites



Manufactured Homes



One way that Bunnell can maintain its rural, small-town character is by paying close attention to the appearance of roadway design, signage, lighting, and sidewalks. Local governments can typically regulate the height, type, and materials of business signage, which can help to reduce distractions for motorists and create a more consistent appearance. Signage should be appropriate for the speed of traffic - slower traffic and pedestrian and bike users do not need large signs and can appreciate design and material choices.

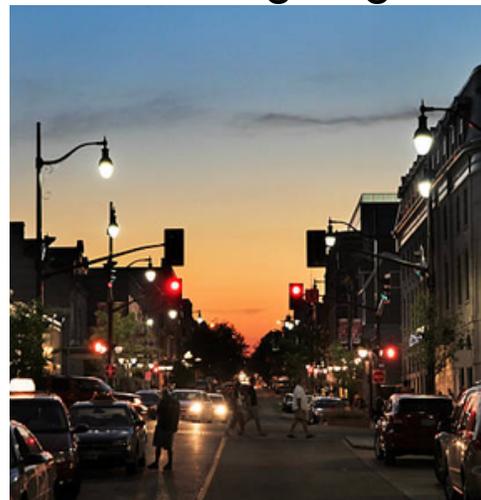
Street lighting should be appropriately scaled for a small-city setting, focusing on key corridors, intersections, and pedestrian areas to enhance visibility. Expanding and repairing sidewalks along key routes is another essential component of a safe and connected community.

Equally important is addressing the condition of Bunnell's roadway infrastructure, which both residents and commissioners identified as a critical concern. Repairing aging roads and securing sustainable funding for ongoing maintenance are essential. Coordinating roadway repairs with improvements to lighting, sidewalks, and signage will allow the City to maximize resources while creating safer, more attractive streets.



Sign Regulations

Street Lighting



Expanding the park system provides an opportunity to enhance quality of life while reinforcing Bunnell's rural character. Parks and green spaces can serve multiple functions by offering recreational opportunities and preserving natural landscapes. Parks should balance the community's desire to support recreation, such as creating playgrounds and sports areas, with areas that provide more passive uses that can doubly support preserving the natural environment.

As growth approaches the City of Bunnell, the City should continue to prioritize environmental stewardship as a guiding principle by directing development in a manner that protects its agricultural lands and conservation areas while accommodating intentional, well-designed growth. Future development should be strategically located to utilize land efficiently and preserve the rural character that defines Bunnell's identity. The City should continue to encourage clustered and conservation-oriented development patterns to ensure that the overall density across the city remains low even as development occurs. By proactively integrating growth management, park expansion, and environmental protection, the City can ensure that future development is sustainable.

Active Parks



Passive Parks

CONCLUSION

Developed through community collaboration, the City of Bunnell Community Engagement Visioning Report reflects the shared values, priorities, and aspirations of the community. The vision outlined in this report is not a fixed endpoint, but a living guide designed to evolve as community needs change.

To ensure the report remains relevant and responsive, the City of Bunnell should formally review this report every five years. This review cycle will allow the community to assess progress and update goals as needed. Ongoing community engagement will be essential to this process to ensure that community needs are reflected in this report. By committing to the vision alongside other planning documents, the City of Bunnell can move forward with confidence and purpose to build a future that is inclusive, resilient, and aligned with the community's shared values.





COMMUNITY VISIONING

A Program of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

