Workshop 3: How do we get there?

Summary Memorandum
3/30/2026

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the third community workshop conducted as part of the Citrus County Comprehensive Plan Update. This workshop marked the final planned community workshops designed to gather input on the community's vision for the future of unincorporated Citrus County. The workshop was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Lecanto Government Building (3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto, Florida 34461). A total of 46 Citrus County residents participated in the workshop; the general geographic distribution of attendees is illustrated by the purple dots in **Attachment A**. The workshop format consisted of a presentation and a two-part public engagement activity.



Presentation

The third workshop started with a presentation from the project manager, Chris Dougherty. The slide deck used during the presentation can be found in **Attachment B**. The presentation began with an introduction of the Citrus County staff and the consultants from Inspire Placemaking working on the project. The presentation provided an overview of the Comprehensive Plan Update with a project timeline and interactive project website. The presentation then provided preliminary results for the survey, which was available to residents on the project's website and as hard copies at kiosks around the County. The presentation then provided projected population growth as well as key themes identified from community feedback received thus far. The presentation concluded with an overview of the two-part public engagement activity which are summarized below.

Public Engagement Activity

Workshop #3 featured a two-part public engagement activity designed to answer the question "How do we get there?". The first part of the activity divided the room into roughly four groups of 12 attendees each. Inspire Staff then brought a topic

board to each of the groups and asked attendees to develop strategies related to the topic. The board topics were as follows:

- Rural Character and Land Use
- Conservation
- Infrastructure
- Transportation



Example strategies were provided on each of the topic boards based on previous engagement feedback. Attendees were given eight minutes to develop as many strategies as possible for that board before the boards were rotated. Once attendees had an opportunity to develop strategies with each board, they were asked to prioritize strategies they felt would best achieve their vision for Citrus County. Attendees were given three stickers per board to select their priority strategies. Additional Housing and Economic Development topic boards with strategies developed by the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce at Pop-Up #2 were also available for prioritization. The results for each board are summarized below, and photos of each board can be found in **Attachments C – H.**

Rural Character and Land Use Strategies

Strategies in this category focused on agriculture, conservation, redevelopment, and land use compatibility. **Table 1** reveals that attendees believe that farmland conservation, redevelopment, and land acquisition should be prioritized.

Table 1. Rural Character and Land Use Strategies Activity Results

	Policy	Priority Stickers
A	Create a farmland conservation (+ incentives) program to maintain agricultural lands	17
B	Establish a TDR (transfer of development rights) program	0
C	Provide incentives to redevelop properties	9
D	Encourage higher densities and increased building heights in developed areas to preserve remaining agricultural lands and open space	10

	Policy	Priority Stickers
E	Develop and promote eco-tourism & agri-tourism	4
F	Establish a rural boundary	4
G	Establish a land acquisition program for conservation	10
H	Compatibility standards adjacent to more intense land uses	0
I	Provide for less intense land use transitions	2
J	Incentivize apiaries (Bees)	3
K	Promote & incentivize small cottage farms	9
L	Develop community gardens (co-ops)	4
M	Establish homeowner program for planning & land use guidance	2
N	Bring back concurrency	2
O	Establish concurrency for natural lands	2
P	Incentivize the use of native plants	4
Q	Set aside public facilities (fire/ems/libraries/schools/etc.) lands as part of Dev.	1
R	Billboard standards	1

Conservation Strategies

Strategies in this category focused on tree preservation, water resources, native vegetation, and natural areas. The results of the board reveal that attendees believe that the preservation of trees and protection of wetlands and sensitive lands during development should be prioritized, as provided in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Conservation Strategies Activity Results

	Policy	Priority Stickers
A	Provide funding or incentives to conserve native vegetation, promote connected green spaces, and enhance wildlife corridors	9
B	Protect wetlands by installing vegetated buffers and discouraging filling of wetlands	10
C	Adopt and enforce a stronger tree preservation ordinance that effectively reduces or prevents clear cutting	15
D	Require/incentive native vegetation	3
E	Make developers responsible for preserving & adding quality natural habitats (% Requirements for open space & Native Plants/Trees)	2
F	Bonuses for preserving open space/conservation	0
G	Prevent septic in coastal/wetland areas	11
H	Bring back bird & wildlife sanctuaries (County Program)	1
I	Establish local conservation lands acquisition program (target Florida Wildlife Corridor)	3
J	Include "The Florida Wildlife Corridor" in plan	10
K	Focus on Redevelopment - to preserve existing open space	2
L	Minimize sound & light pollution in natural area	2
M	Enforce & strengthen pesticide/herbicide/fertilizer regulations around natural areas	2

	Policy	Priority Stickers
N	Increase penalties for violating environmental laws	5
O	Identify & target aquifer recharge areas	5
P	Designate & secure existing wildlife areas in unincorporated cities	4

Infrastructure Strategies

Strategies in this category focused on sanitary sewer, potable water, and reclaimed water systems. **Table 3** includes the results of the infrastructure board revealing that attendees believe that aquifer recharge protection, expansion of sanitary sewer, and reduction of groundwater withdrawal should be prioritized.

Table 3. Infrastructure Strategies Activity Results

	Policy	Priority Stickers
A	Ensure the protection of aquifer recharge areas from new and existing development	19
B	Incentivize (or require) low impact design (use of on-site natural features to treat stormwater by slowing its path through the soil)	6
C	Eliminate septic systems and increase sewer connections near waterways	12
D	Establish an Urban Service Area to promote growth in areas with existing infrastructure	4
E	Encourage reclaim water on golf courses	2
F	Discourage the use of water resellers/large volume withdrawal for resell	10
G	Build larger lift stations	0
H	Require MH/RV parks to be connected to main sewer system	2
I	Better coordination between road improvement & utility improvement	2
J	Incentivize clean energy	6
K	Create open spray fields for better wastewater collection	0
L	Discourage excess use of groundwater consumption (esp. by new development)	10
M	Expand the reclaim water system	2
N	Evaluate impact fees often	4
O	Incentivize new development on sewer & water	2
P	Implement stormwater management system for water quality	3
Q	Increase the frequency of culvert cleaning	1

Transportation Strategies

Strategies in this category focused on enhancing different modes of transportation including automobiles, pedestrians, bicycles, and transit. The results of the activity reveal that attendees believe that expanding transit service, roadway maintenance, addressing congestion should be prioritized, as outlined in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Transportation Strategies Activity Results

	Policy	Priority Stickers
A	Expand the sidewalk and trail network within the County, particularly around public facilities, such as schools, parks, and in residential areas	5
B	Pursue the creation of buffered/separated bike lanes throughout the County	4
C	Require multi-use trails for new development	2
D	Pursue state/federal grants for roadway improvements	5
E	More mass transit in an urban area	13
F	Paving roadways	10
G	Address congestion issues	10
H	Reevaluate roadway surface standards	1
I	More traffic enforcement officers	4
J	Driver education programs	5
K	Limit traffic residential areas	0
L	Implement traffic calming strategies	2
M	Create more transportation choice	3
N	Create more walkable communities	0
O	Incentivize developers to implement multi-modal transportation	0
P	Implement synchronized signal coordination	1
Q	Incentivize residents to use mass transit	0
R	Require developers to pay for transportation improvements (concurrency)	2
S	Create pedestrian bridges/underpasses & other safe pedestrian crossings	3
T	Implement wildlife crossings (over or under)	11
U	Incentivize a community based rideshare program (carpooling)	4
V	Adding bicycle/ebike/scooter lanes	0
W	Extending hours of mass transit	2
X	Evaluate roadway maintenance responsibility	2
Y	Pursue safety improvements	1
Z	Improve roadway visibility (paint)	2
AA	Improve access management	0
AB	Bicycle/E-bike safety program (education)	1
AC	Evaluate an Inverness Bypass	1
AD	Coordinate FDOT about the Withla Bridge over 200	2
AE	Prioritize paving existing dirt roads	0

Housing Strategies

Strategies in this category focused on housing affordability, housing choice, and housing tenure type. Shown in **Table 5**, the results of the activity reveal that attendees believe that green building practices and resilience strategies should be prioritized as well as exploring opportunities for permitting additional housing types.

Table 5. Housing Strategies Activity Results

	Policy	Priority Stickers
A	Require a mixture of housing types for large developments (i.e., single family, town homes, multi-family product within the same project)	4
B	Strategically reduce minimum lot sizes in select residential future land use categories and zoning districts	2
C	Explore opportunities for permitting additional housing types (e.g., accessory dwelling units, duplexes, etc.) within low density future land use categories and zoning districts	11
D	Require developers to designate a percentage of units in their development as affordable housing units (through inclusionary zoning practices)	6
E	Provide a density incentive for development that dedicates a certain number of units for affordable or senior housing	3
F	Align housing variety and needs to attract economic growth	6
G	Ensure workforce housing is near employment centers	4
H	Limit or discourage short term rentals	8
I	Ensure the existing housing stock is resilient against natural disasters	17
J	Encourage or incentivize green building practices for new developments and redevelopment	18

Economic Development Strategies

Strategies in this category focused on business development, workforce training, and strengthening the local economy. The results, identified in **Table 6**, of the activity reveal that attendees strongly believe that redevelopment of existing buildings and underutilized sites should be prioritized.

Table 6. Economic Development Strategies Activity Results

	Policy	Priority Stickers
A	Explore Partnerships that would allow for the development of shell commercial buildings	3
B	Establish an expedited permitting program for target industries looking to develop within the County	1
C	Partner with local banks to create a small business revolving fund	9
D	Promote the reuse of existing buildings and underutilized sites for new businesses before the development of undeveloped rural land	27
E	Partner with local colleges and universities to create business incubators and shared workspaces to foster entrepreneurship and collaboration	12
F	Ensure that the needs of the business community and vocational programming are aligned with the curriculum and the skills required for available and emerging employment opportunities	6
G	Ensure broadband internet is available throughout the County	14
H	Establish incentives to attract more manufacturing jobs	7

	Policy	Priority Stickers
I	Establish incentives to attract more distribution facilities	1
J	Prioritize infrastructure for Economic Development and Jobs	4
K	Increase east-west connectivity through the County	0
L	Enhance sports tourism by attracting a minor league team	2
M	Establish a more diverse tourism program to attract other types of tourism besides coastal water based (Inland/Conference Center)	4
N	Prioritize establishing and developing Port Citrus	2

Community Idea Wall

The Community Idea Wall is an activity that allows workshop attendees to share any ideas or thoughts that could not be reflected in other workshop activities. The following Thursday March 5th, 2026, the Citrus County Planning Commission held a meeting on a rezoning request in the Holder Industrial Park Area. This rezoning is linked to a potential data center at the Industrial Park. Many of the comments received throughout the activities but especially on the Community Idea Wall are reflective of the upcoming meeting. The comments collected by the Community Idea Wall can be seen in **Attachment I** and are provided below.

- Paved Dirt Roads
- County to purchase Commercial land in Sugarmill to be used for a park
- Increase Fire Stations as population grows
- Set-up economic building criteria for commercial/manufacturing to minimize building permit time & shorten construction time
- Encourage new industries that do not negatively our natural resources i.e. water
- Require developers to pay for road impact
- Light + Sound pollution needs be addressed
- Kick Duke out of the County
- Put data center on Dukes property
- No Data Center – detriment to environment and public health
- Increase visibility, networking, importance of these meetings. Incentivize businesses to share this data with customers/patients
- County-ran utility service (cable, internet, etc.) i.e. Ocala
- Incentive to introduce fiber optic lines – Service reliability
- Promote recycling – manufactures – produce a product (plastic blocks (etc.)
- Incinerator – create energy and rid waste in landfills

Summary

The third public workshop had a two part engagement activity: Develop/Prioritize Strategies and a Community Idea Wall that generated meaningful input on the future of the County. These activities were meant to be a cumulation of previous workshops and answer the question “How do we get there?” The most prioritized

strategy per topic is listed in **Table 7**. These strategies reveal attendees strong desire to implement redevelopment strategies to preserve rural character, natural resources and address transportation congestion.

Table 7. Priority per Category

Topic	Policy	Priority Stickers
Rural Character/ Land Use	Create a farmland conservation (+ incentives) program to maintain agricultural lands	17
Conservation	Adopt and enforce a stronger tree preservation ordinance that effectively reduces or prevents clear cutting	15
Infrastructure	Ensure the protection of aquifer recharge areas from new and existing development	19
Transportation	More mass transit in an urban area	13
Housing	Encourage or incentivize green building practices for new developments and redevelopment	18
Economic Development	Promote the reuse of existing buildings and underutilized sites for new businesses before the development of undeveloped rural land	27

Attachments

Attachment A: Live Work Play Map....9
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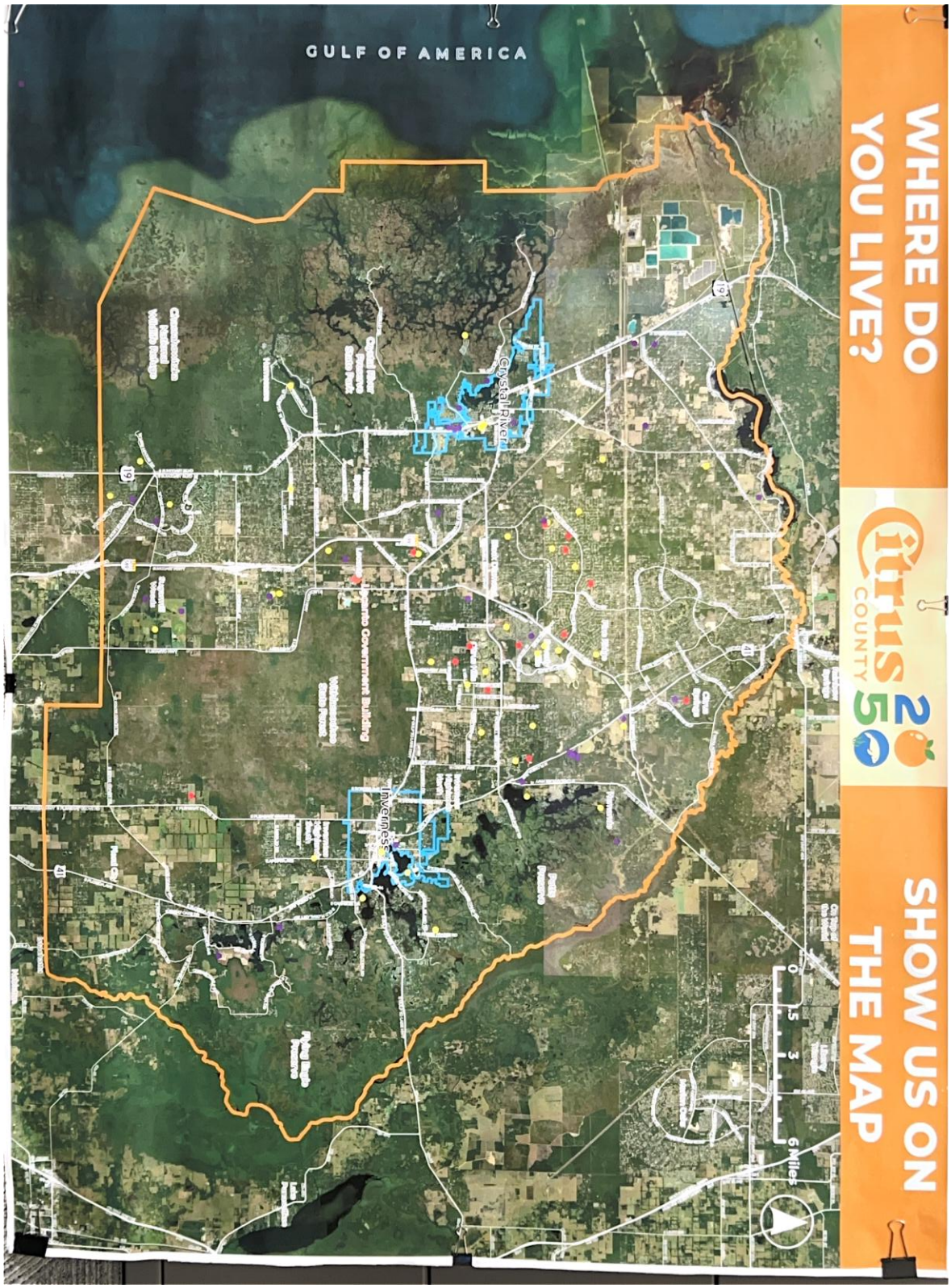
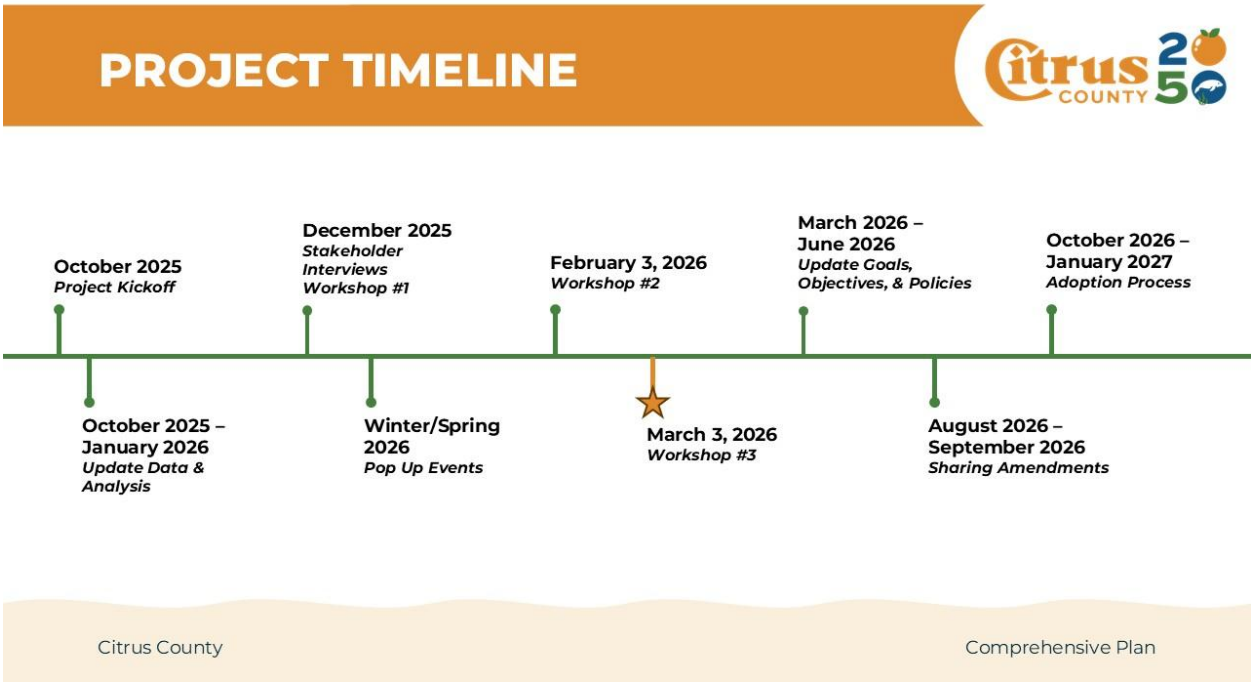
Attachment A: Live Work Play Map



Attachment B: PowerPoint Presentation





PROJECT WEBSITE

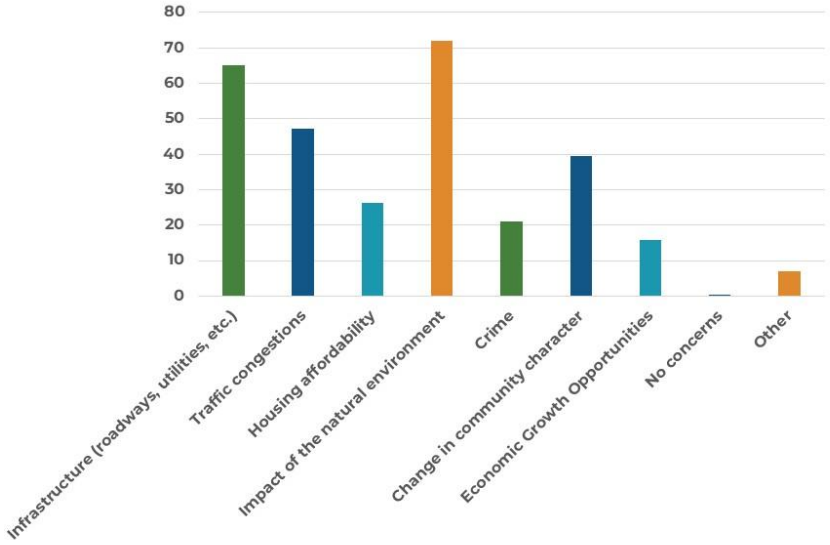
- ✓ **Provide feedback on the Implement Your Vision Activity**



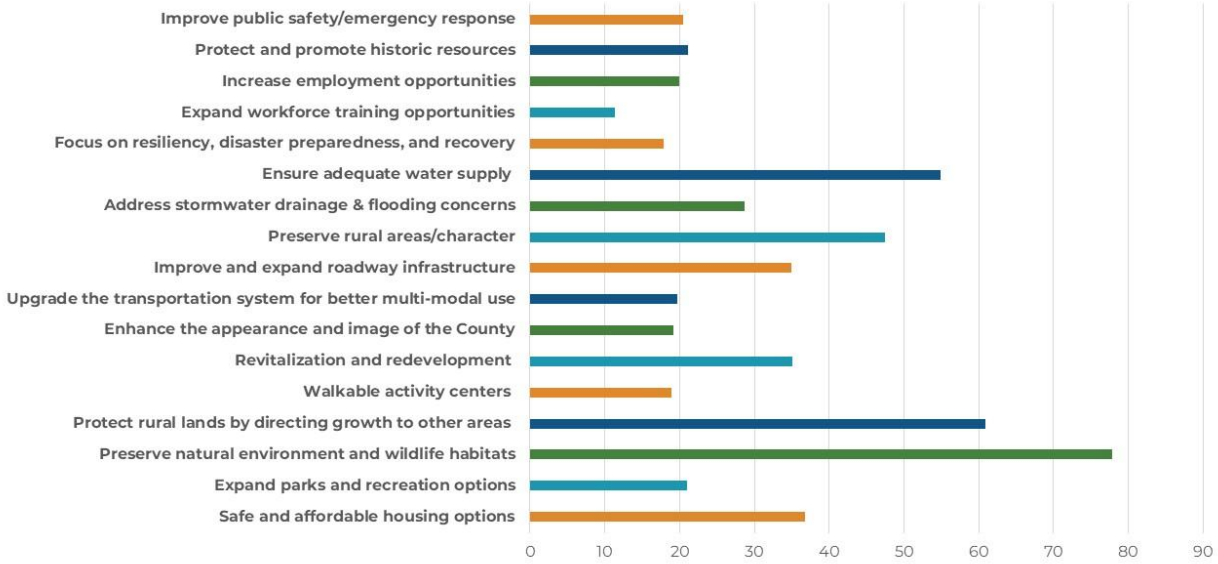
SCAN ME!

bit.ly/plancitrus

What are the top three concerns you have related to future growth within the County?

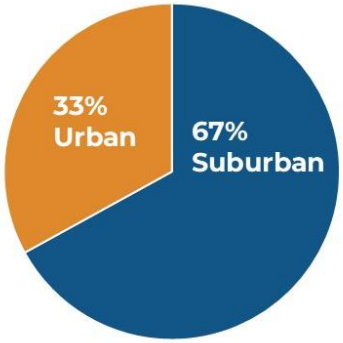


Which of the following initiatives should be prioritized within the comprehensive plan update?



Project Website

What type of development should the County prioritize within the next 25 years?



What type(s) of housing do you think should be developed to accommodate County's growing population?

Participants could select as many options as they like.



77%



40%



36%

Project Website

Top 4 Resiliency Priorities

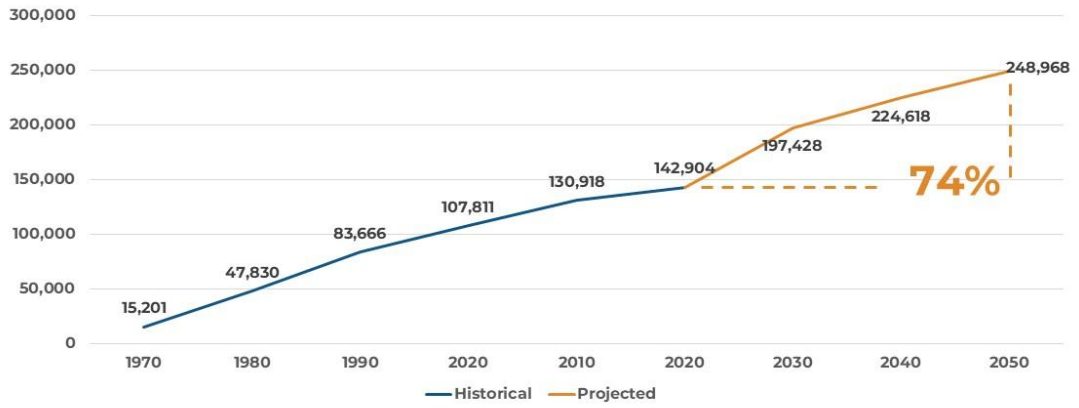
1. Protecting trees and green space
2. Ensuring reliable water supply
3. Infrastructure hardening (roads, utilities, buildings)
4. Reducing flooding and drainage issues

Top 4 Transportation Priorities

1. Ensuring roadways are properly maintained
2. Improving quality of roadways
3. Retrofitting right of ways to include sidewalk and multimodal paths
4. Increasing local transit options

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Population Growth for Unincorporated Citrus County



Key Topics

Economic Development

- Need Jobs and to Diversify Tax Base
- More Small business opportunities
- Attract target industries
- Increase Manufacturing & Technical Businesses

Housing

- Affordable housing options needed
- Housing variety needed
- Ensure housing stock is resilient to natural disasters

Key Topics

Conservation

- Preserve Natural Resources
- Connect Conservation Areas
- Protect Agricultural lands
- Concentrate Growth & Development to existing area

Transportation

- Improve Condition of Roadway System
- Better Right of Way Conveyance
- Address sidewalk gaps

Key Topics

Land Use

- Preserve Rural Character
- Concentrate Growth & Development
- Promote public spaces (where people can gather)

Park & Recreation

- Need for Parks/Fields & Amenities
- Desire for more boat access

Key Topics

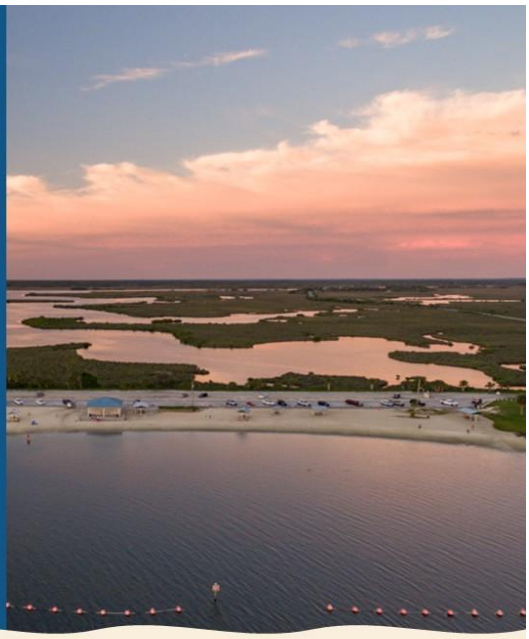
Infrastructure

- Reduce Water Consumption
- Increase Water Capacity
- Maintain and Improve Water Quality
- Sewer Infrastructure
- Bury Powerlines

Coastal Management

- Assess evacuation routes
- Ensure coastal areas are more resilient

ACTIVITIES



Citrus County Comprehensive Plan

TODAY'S ACTIVITY

Part 1. Develop Strategies

Each of the **four categories** is displayed on a board and will be brought to your area.

Each group will write down strategies for how the County can bring each category to life.

To help get you started, we have included sample strategies. Add your own thoughts or build on these ideas.



TODAY'S ACTIVITY

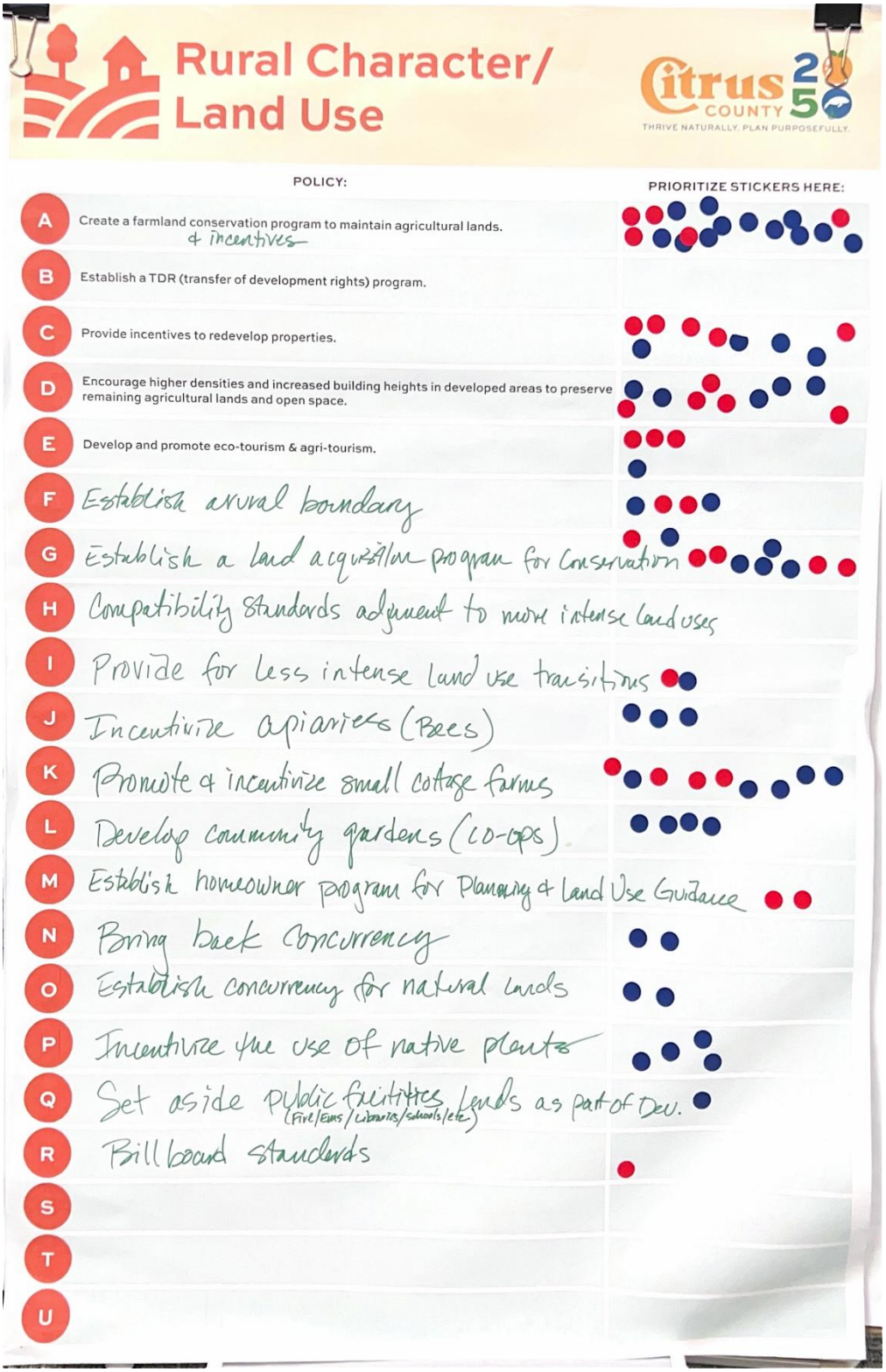
Part 2. Prioritize Strategies

The strategy boards will be posted on easels.

Place **dots** on the top strategies you feel are the most important for each topic.



Attachment C: Rural Character and Land Use Strategies Board



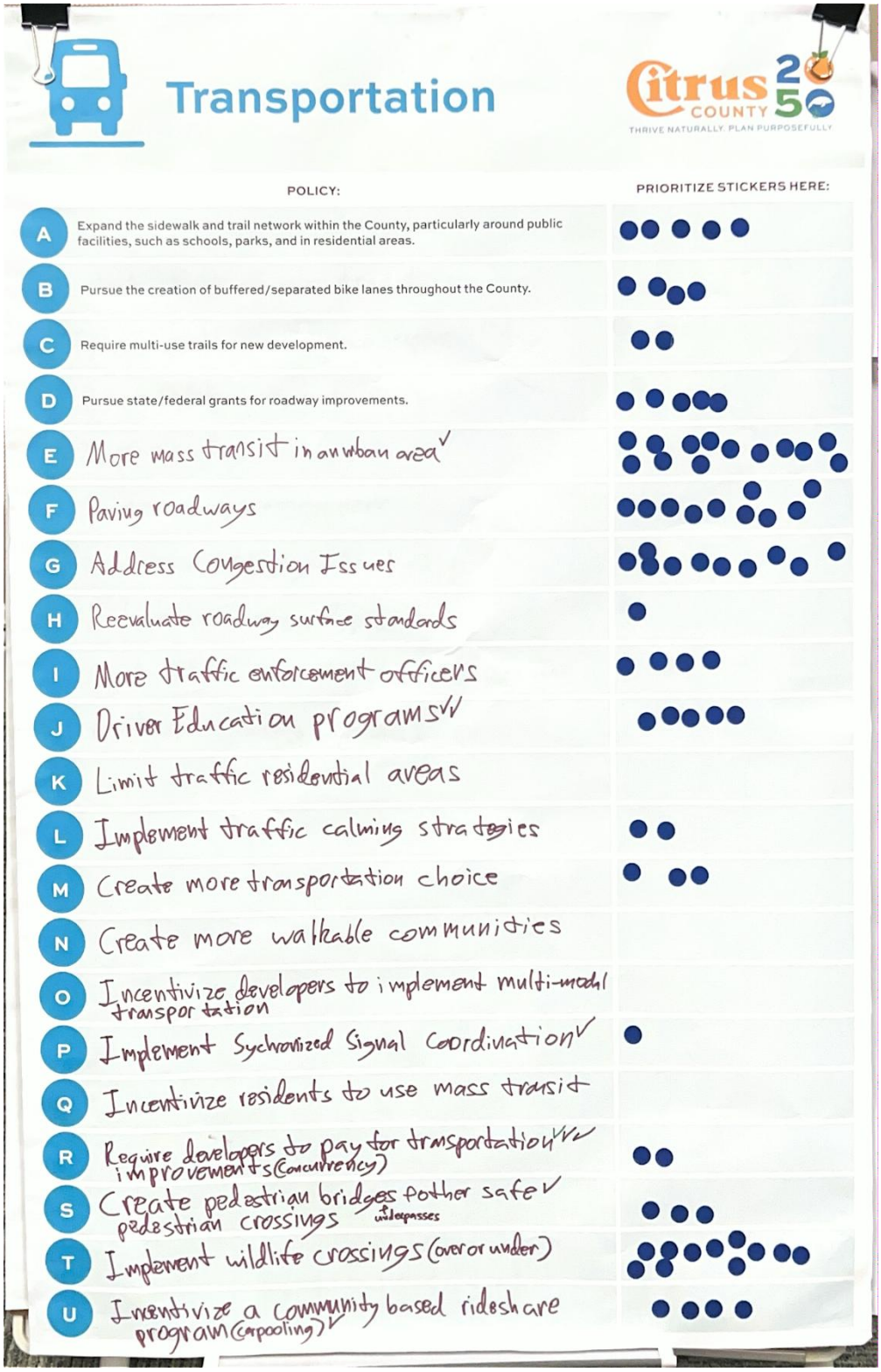
Attachment D: Conservation Strategies Board



Attachment E: Infrastructure Strategies Board



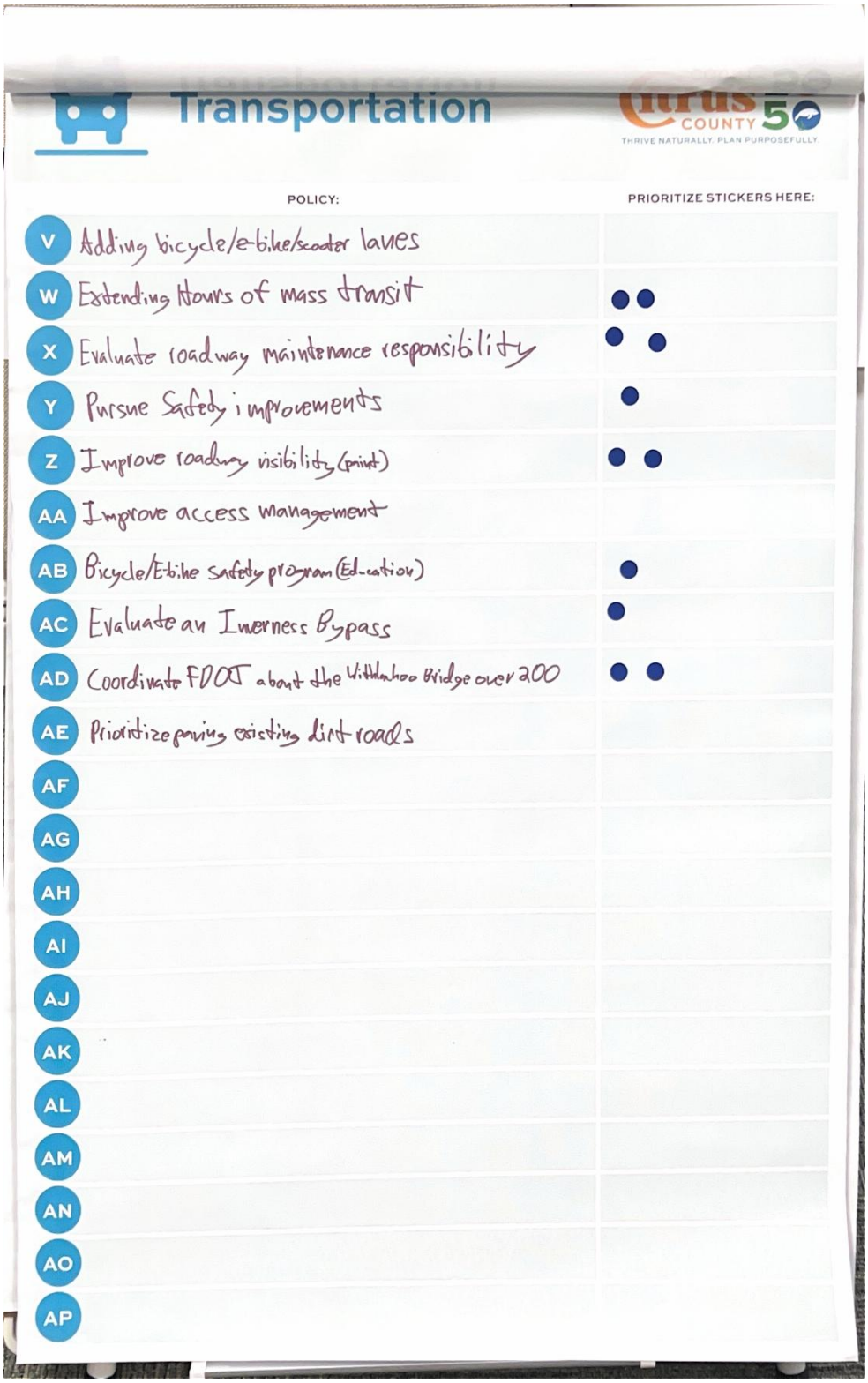
Attachment F: Transportation Strategies Boards



Transportation

Citrus County 2050
THRIVE NATURALLY. PLAN PURPOSEFULLY.

	POLICY:	PRIORITIZE STICKERS HERE:
A	Expand the sidewalk and trail network within the County, particularly around public facilities, such as schools, parks, and in residential areas.	
B	Pursue the creation of buffered/separated bike lanes throughout the County.	
C	Require multi-use trails for new development.	
D	Pursue state/federal grants for roadway improvements.	
E	More mass transit in an urban area ✓	
F	Paving roadways	
G	Address Congestion Issues	
H	Reevaluate roadway surface standards	
I	More traffic enforcement officers	
J	Driver Education programs ✓✓	
K	Limit traffic residential areas	
L	Implement traffic calming strategies	
M	Create more transportation choice	
N	Create more walkable communities	
O	Incentivize developers to implement multi-modal transportation	
P	Implement Sychronized Signal Coordination ✓	
Q	Incentivize residents to use mass transit	
R	Require developers to pay for transportation ✓✓✓ improvements (concurrency)	
S	Create pedestrian bridges (underpasses) & other safe pedestrian crossings ✓	
T	Implement wildlife crossings (over or under)	
U	Incentivize a community based rideshare program (carpooling) ✓	



Transportation

Citrus County 2050
THRIVE NATURALLY. PLAN PURPOSEFULLY.

	POLICY:	PRIORITIZE STICKERS HERE:
V	Adding bicycle/e-bike/scooter lanes	
W	Extending Hours of mass transit	●●
X	Evaluate roadway maintenance responsibility	● ●
Y	Pursue Safety improvements	●
Z	Improve roadway visibility (print)	● ●
AA	Improve access management	
AB	Bicycle/E-bike safety program (Education)	●
AC	Evaluate an Inverness Bypass	●
AD	Coordinate FDOT about the Withlacoo Bridge over 200	● ●
AE	Prioritize paving existing dirt roads	
AF		
AG		
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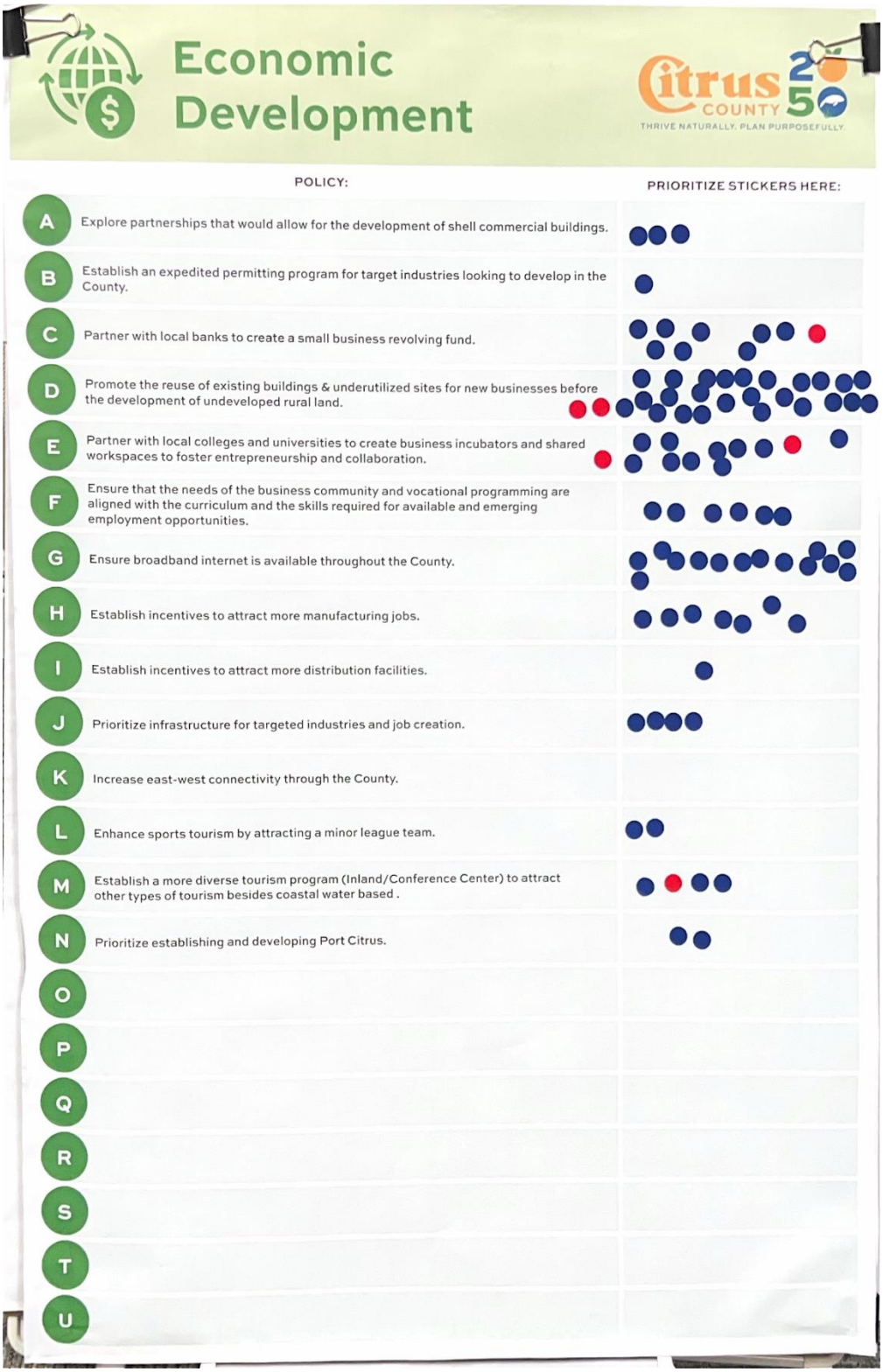
Attachment G: Housing Strategies Board



Attachment H: Economic Development Strategies Board



Attachment I: Community Idea Wall

