Community Outreach Summary

ROUND 1 | SPRING 2024

ROUND ONE OUTREACH OVERVIEW

The first round of community outreach for the Cohesive Ketchum Comprehensive Plan update took place in the spring of 2024 and provided participants with an opportunity to discuss the existing conditions and trends impacting Ketchum's growth and development. Both in-person and online input opportunities were provided, as described below.

- **In-person meetings.** The project team hosted two public presentations (with translation services) on April 24 and 25, 2024 to share information about existing conditions and trends that influence Ketchum's future growth and development. The presentations were followed by open houses where attendees were invited to explore posters with more detailed information, ask the project team questions, and provide feedback. The April 25 presentation included an option for participants to join virtually. A recording of the April 25 presentation, the slides used at both meetings, and the open house posters can be found on the project website. Approximately 80 people attended the public presentations.
- **Online Survey.** The Planning for Growth survey was available on the project website from April 26 through May 13. A total of 302 respondents participated in the survey.

Feedback collected from the in-person meetings and online survey is summarized below. Many of the in-person discussions and written comments echo the sentiment of responses provided in the survey. Not every question from the survey is summarized in its original format, however, all responses gathered from the survey and all written comments received during the open houses are attached at the end of this document for additional review.

KEY THEMES FROM ROUND ONE OUTREACH

Community Vision and Core Values

Participants generally support the proposed Core Values but would like more clarity around what each Core Value entails. When asked how well the proposed Core Values aligned with their vision for the future of Ketchum, 63 percent of respondents reported the Core Values aligned very well/well with their vision for the future and only 13 percent of respondents reported the proposed values did not align with their vision for the future.

How well do the proposed Core Community Values align with your vision for the future of Ketchum?

Response	Percentage
Very well	22%
Well	41%
Somewhat well	23%
Not well	7%
Not well at all	6%
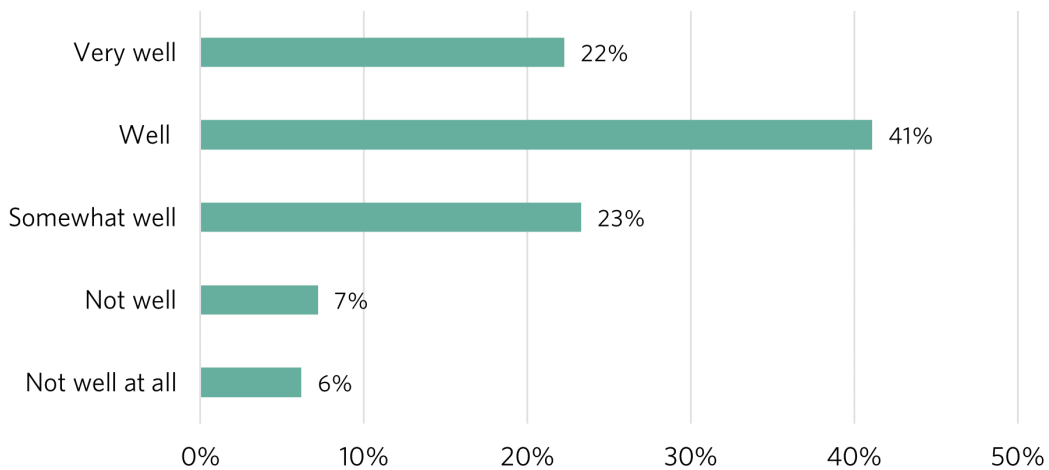
Nearly 160 respondents provided written comments for how to better align the proposed Core Community Values with respondent's vision for the future. Common topics from those responses are summarized in the table to the right. Concerns about the shape and size (form) of buildings were most common among written responses.

Topic	Number of Mentions
Core Value Critique (needing clarity)	29
Economy	11
Frustration with Local Policies	12
Growth and Development (building form, density, parking, infrastructure)	47
Housing	25
Quality of Life (public safety, ability to live in town)	21
Sustainability	5
Transportation	9

Housing

Overall, respondents would like more opportunities for full-time residents to live in Ketchum, though there is no consensus for how to make that goal a reality. While many respondents are in support of creating opportunities for local workforce housing within Ketchum, many others see housing as a Valley-wide issue that could be better addressed by neighboring communities. Based on the feedback gathered during the public presentations, many participants think of housing in Ketchum in two distinctive types: detached single-family homes and "big box" apartment complexes. This likely informs how community members think about density when picturing future housing development in Ketchum.

Survey respondents had mixed feelings about where and how to support higher-density and infill housing developments. Nearly 60 percent of respondents support higher-density housing development in mixed-use areas, though over half of those are only in favor if the housing is restricted to those working in Ketchum.

Would you support higher-density housing development in Mixed-Use areas (such as Downtown) to accommodate more housing options?

| Category	Percentage
Yes	25%
Yes, but only if it is housing for our workforce	34%
No	34%
Unsure	7%
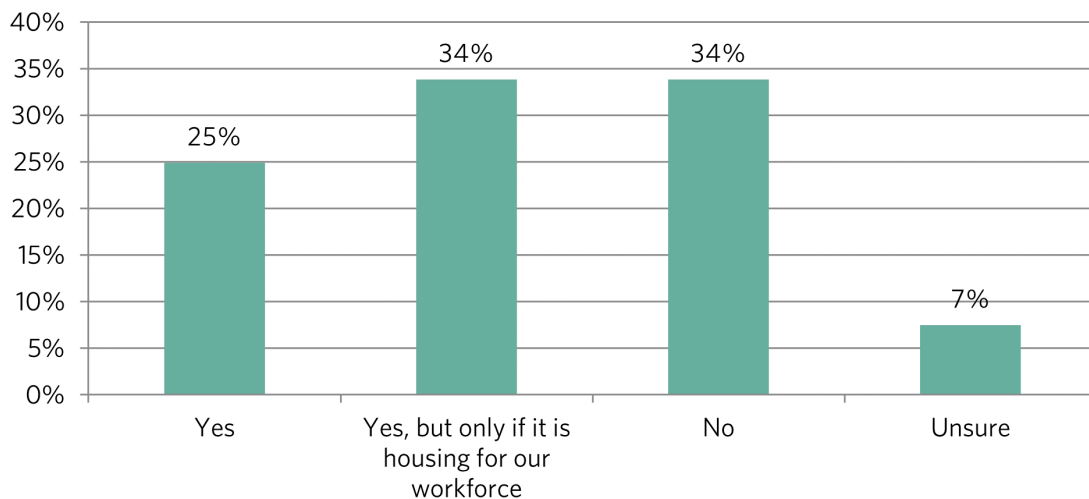
Respondents were slightly more likely to support developing additional housing in Low Density Residential areas (66%), again with roughly half of those in favor wanting restrictions for housing local workers.

Would you support additional development in Low Density Residential areas to accommodate more housing options?
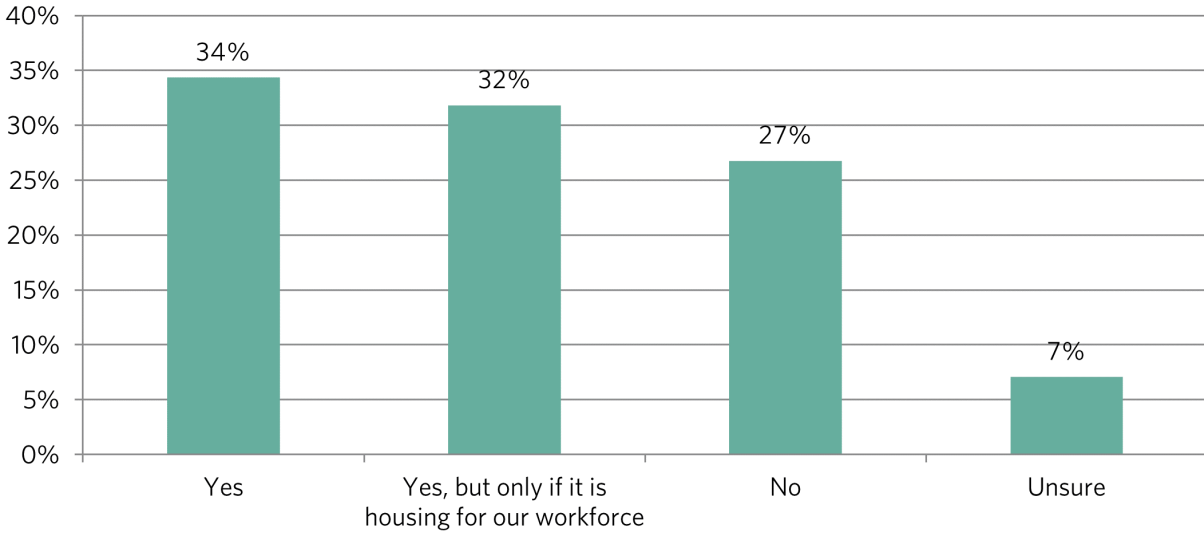
Respondents were also asked to identify where in Ketchum additional housing density should be encouraged. The most popular responses were to develop housing outside of Ketchum city limits (with 20 respondents specifically suggesting additional housing development near St. Luke's hospital) and the Industrial Areas.
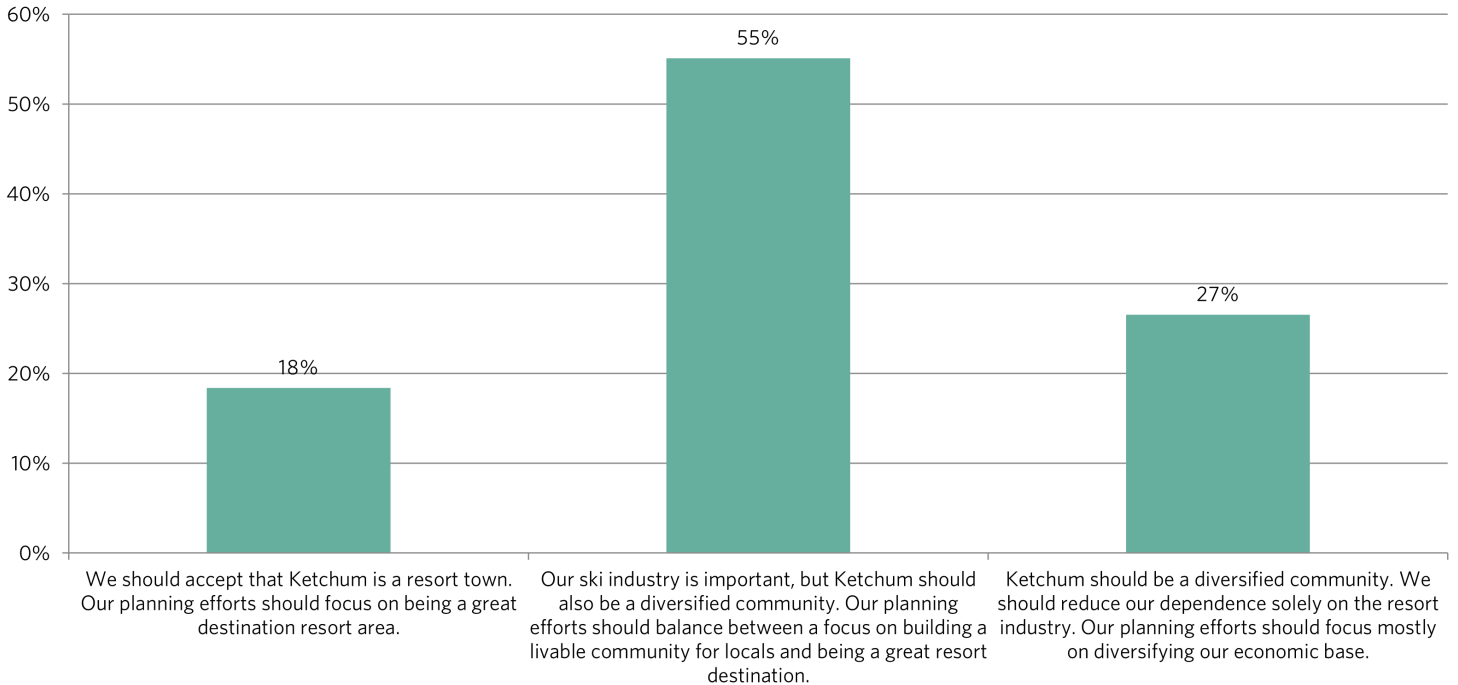
Where in Ketchum should additional housing density be encouraged?
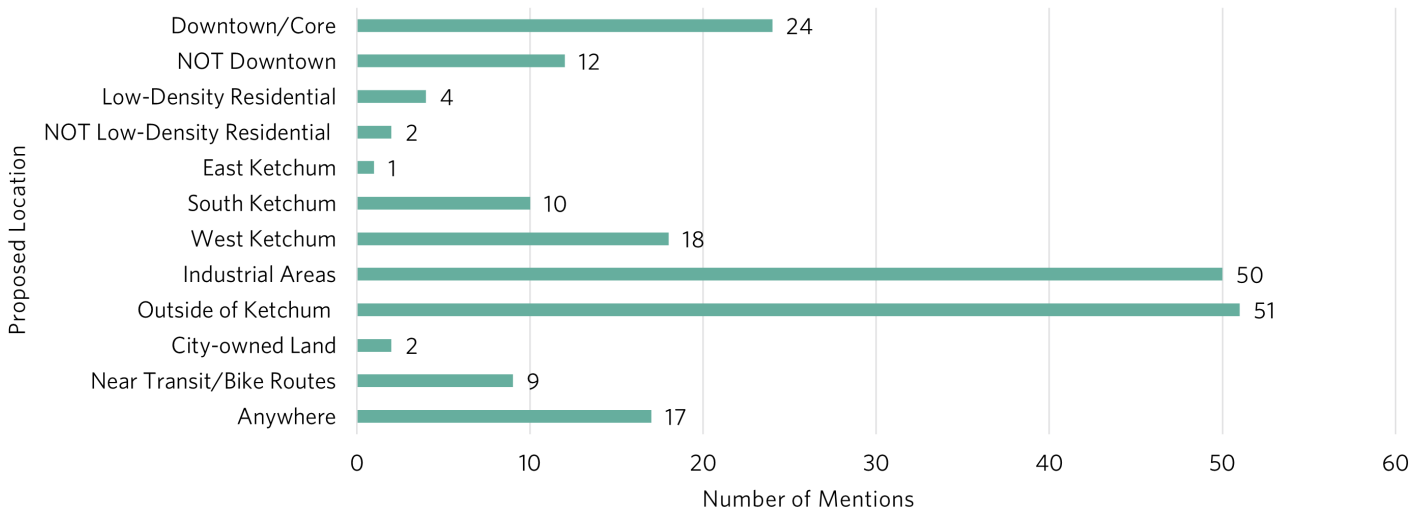
Economy

Both in-person and survey participants provided strong support for creating a more resilient local economy.

Which of the following statements do you agree with most?

- 55% — Our ski industry is important, but Ketchum should also be a diversified community. Our planning efforts should balance between a focus on building a livable community for locals and being a great resort destination.
- 27% — Ketchum should be a diversified community. We should reduce our dependence solely on the resort industry. Our planning efforts should focus mostly on diversifying our economic base.
- 18% — We should accept that Ketchum is a resort town. Our planning efforts should focus on being a great destination resort area.

When asked for feedback on how to strengthen Ketchum's economy, the following ideas were provided:

- **Business Opportunities:** Calls for more diverse employment opportunities beyond the tourism and resort industry, including support for local businesses and startups.
- **Commercial Space:** Need for more affordable commercial space to establish new businesses and allow existing businesses to relocate and/or grow.
- **Diversified Industries:** Need to attract non-tourist-related businesses and knowledge-based industries.
- **Parking and Transportation:** Calls for improvements in parking and transportation to support local businesses and reduce commuter traffic.
- **Cultural and Recreational Events:** Support for events that attract visitors year-round.
- **Affordable Housing:** A strong emphasis on increasing affordable housing options for local workers, young families, and year-round residents.

Although respondents believe there is value in creating a more resilient local economy, they generally do not believe (or are not sure) that it is necessary to designate more land for commercial, industrial, or employment uses to achieve this goal.

Should the City seek opportunities to increase the amount of land designated for commercial, industrial, and/or employment uses in the future (potentially decreasing the amount of land designated for residential uses)?
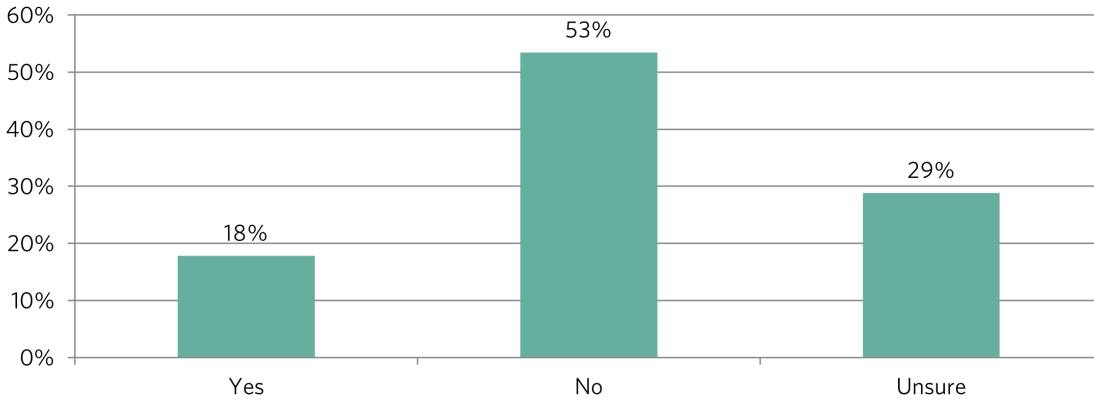
Industrial Redevelopment

Many participants believe that Ketchum's Light Industrial areas provide valuable year-round employment opportunities for local workers and are essential to Ketchum's reputation as a small-business incubator. When asked how the City should address redevelopment in the Light Industrial area, nearly half of all respondents were in favor of encouraging redevelopment of any kind, including residential redevelopment. Many of those who selected 'Other' were in favor of mixed-use development within the Light Industrial area, with ground floor commercial or industrial uses below housing.

How should the City address redevelopment in the Light Industrial area (Lewis Street and Northwood)?
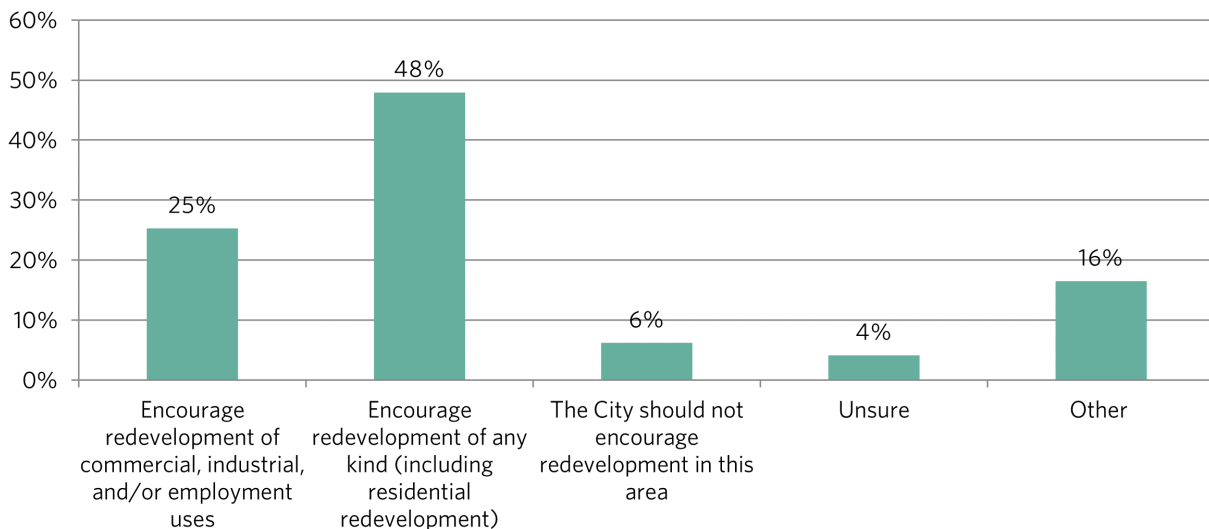
Community Character

Participants feel strongly that Ketchum's character is defined by both the physical place and the people in it, and that that character should be preserved. When asked to describe Ketchum's character, in-person and survey participants commented on the following topics:

The People

- Friendly, caring, and supportive community of individuals who value an active lifestyle
- Laid-back residents and atmosphere (as opposed to other resort communities)
- Importance of having families and residents with a mix of ages, backgrounds, and economic statuses
- A strong local business community with small, independently-owned shops and an entrepreneurial spirit

The Place

- Proximity to mountains, natural beauty, and outdoor recreational activities such as skiing, hiking, and fishing
- Maintaining and preserving the historic Main Street buildings and other old structures, reflecting Ketchum's mining and ski heritage
- Preference for charming, classic architecture over modern, industrial designs
- Retaining a bit of "funkiness" and individuality, resisting overly commercial or homogeneous developments

Participants also commented on trends that are hurting the character of the community, as described below.

- Large (tall and wide) buildings Downtown that do not fit with the context of existing buildings
- Excessively large, new homes in residential neighborhoods
- The rise of second/third homes and short-term rentals

Sustainability

There was mixed support among respondents about how the City of Ketchum should address sustainability in the Comprehensive Plan. When asked to describe what a "greener" community means to them, 8 percent of respondents commented that it was not the City's place to manage sustainability. Other respondents grouped "greener" practices into the following general topic areas.

What does a "greener" community mean to you?
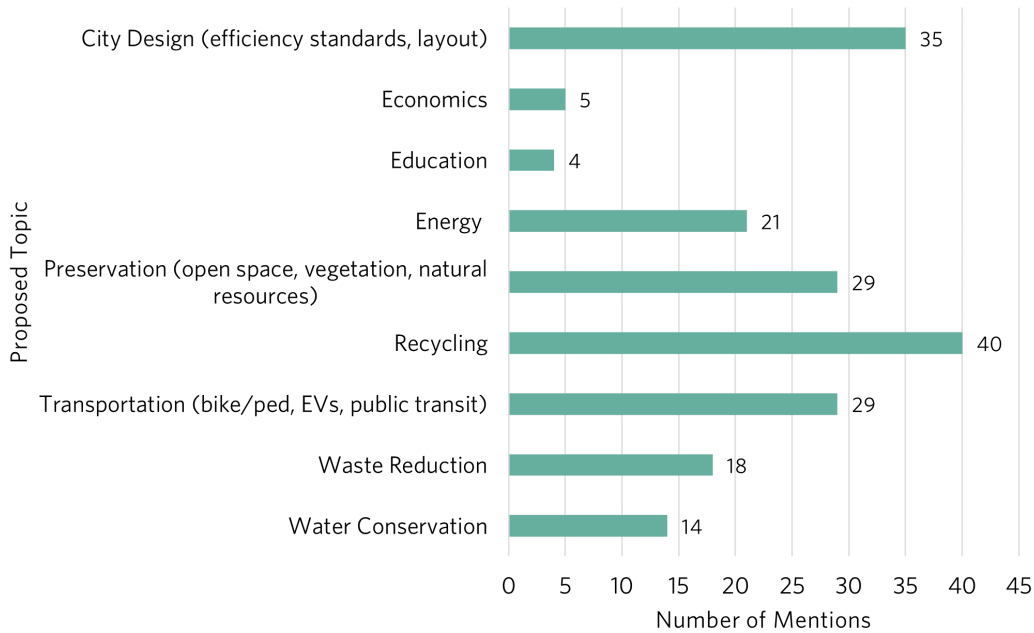
When asked to rank the four topic areas from 5B CAN (Blaine County's Regional Sustainability and Climate program) in order from most to least important, respondents identified land and water conservation as the most important environmental and sustainability issue facing Ketchum.

Please arrange the environmental and sustainability issues described below in order from most to least important for Ketchum to address in the future.
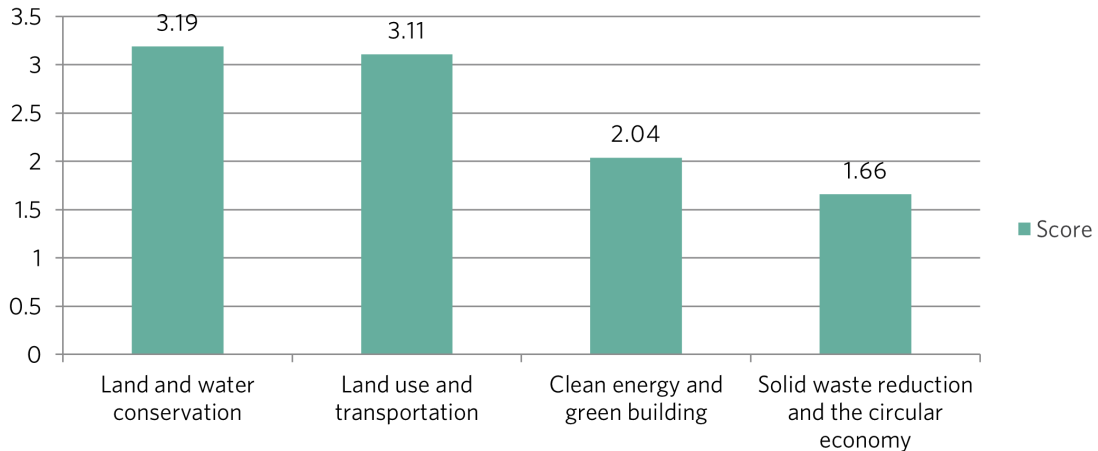
Health and Wellbeing

Many participants identified community health and wellbeing as an important issue to include in the Comprehensive Plan. When asked what actions the City can take to improve community health and wellbeing, the following ideas were provided:

- **Transportation Infrastructure:** support for funding/improving Mountain Rides program, building out bike lanes and pedestrian paths, and providing parking options near businesses.
- **Healthcare Access:** interest in partnering with healthcare providers to support community health needs, including access to mental health providers.
- **Affordable Housing:** emphasis on developing more affordable housing options, particularly for local workers and families.
- **Communication:** support for open houses, surveys, and meetings to engage with the community and ensure diverse voices are heard.
- **Local Governance:** calls for more transparency in decision-making, listening to local residents' needs, and ensuring City actions align with community goals and values.
- **Public Spaces:** interest in improving and maintaining public parks and plazas and encouraging multi-generational interaction.

On average, respondents rated their sense of community and belonging in Ketchum as 62 (on a scale of 1-100).

How would you rate the sense of community and belonging you feel in Ketchum?