

WELCOME TO THE

CITY OF LAKE GENEVA, WI STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

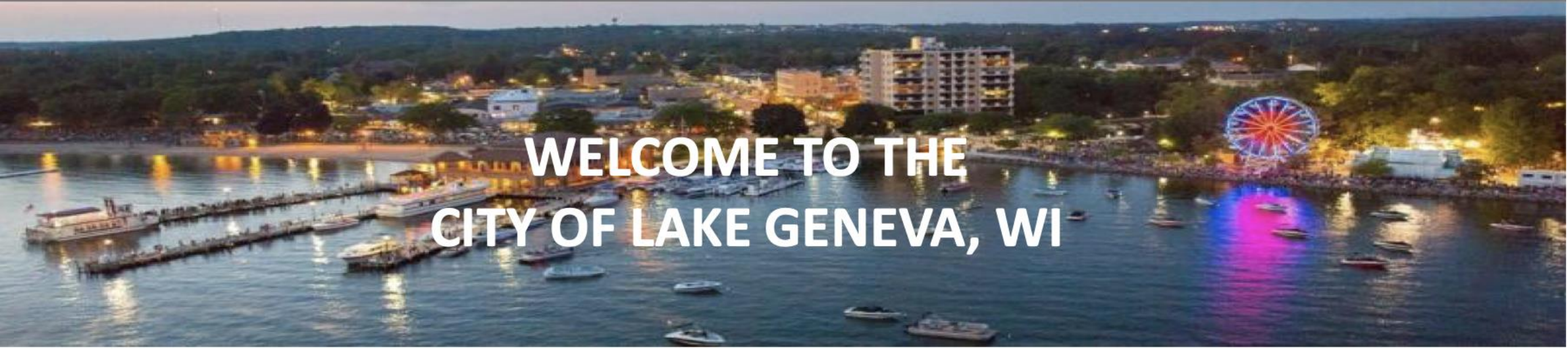
PROJECT



Developing Actions for the Strategic Pillars

March 11, 2026





WELCOME TO THE CITY OF LAKE GENEVA, WI



Existing Conditions Report

January 2026





1.1 Population Dynamics

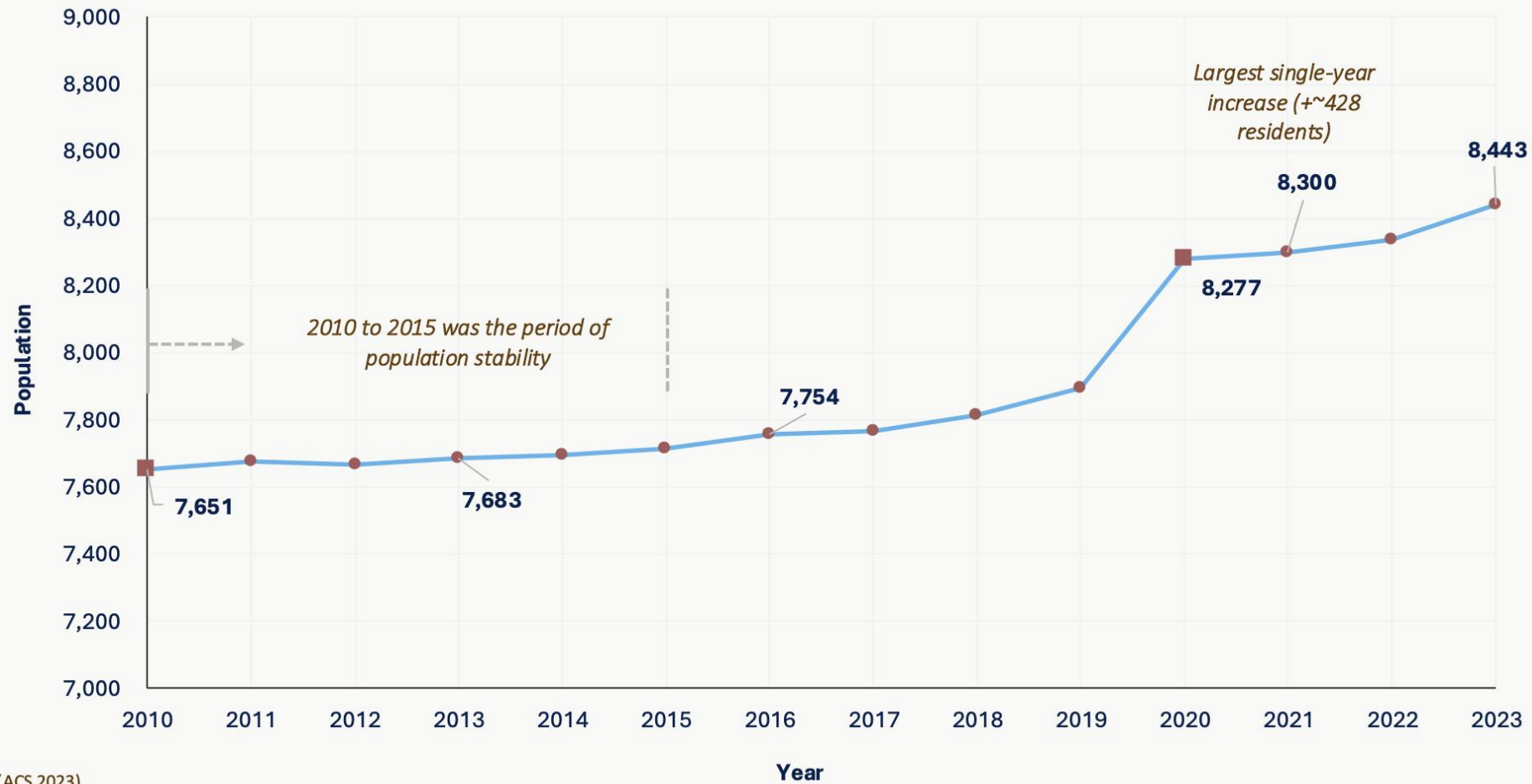
Total Population

Lake Geneva’s population has increased steadily since 2010, rising from 7,685 to 8,443 residents in 2023. Population levels were largely stable between 2010 and 2015, followed by gradual growth from 2016 to 2019.

The most significant change took place between 2020 and 2021, when the City experienced a noticeable population increase.

What key population trends have emerged in Lake Geneva since 2010?

Number of Residents in the City of Lake Geneva (2010 - 2023)



Sources: Decennial Census 2010 & 2020; American Community Survey (ACS 2023)



1. LONGITUDINAL DEMOGRAPHIC & SOCIAL PROFILE

1.4 Age and Sex

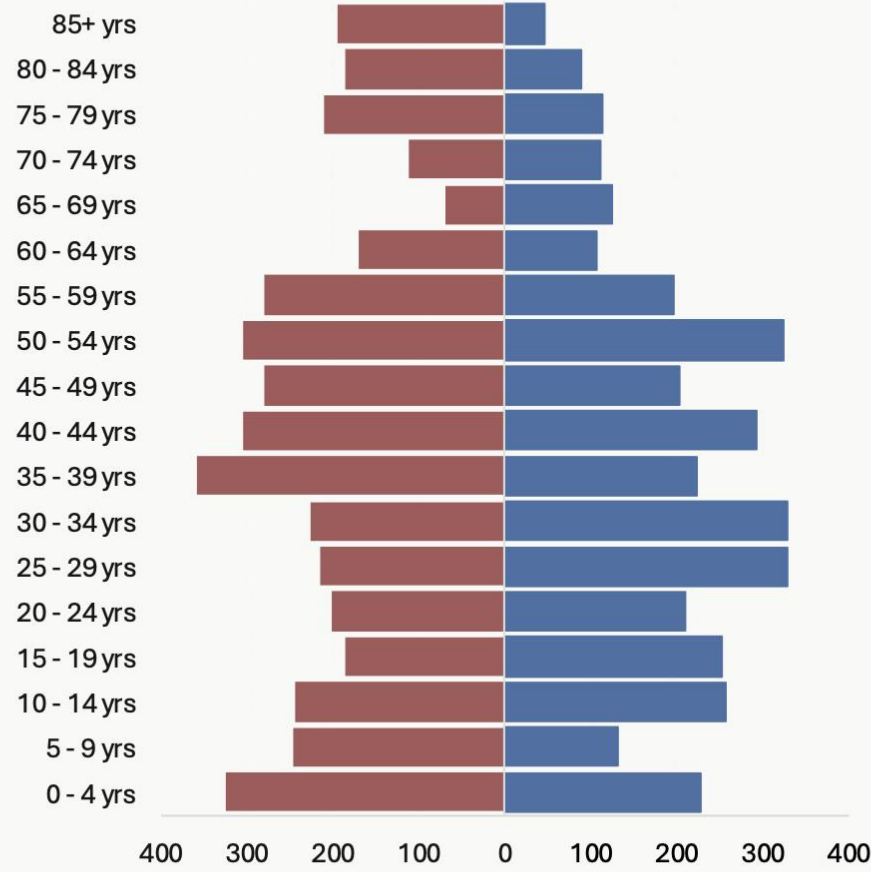
Population Pyramid

How have the age and sex of the population living in Lake Geneva changed over the years?

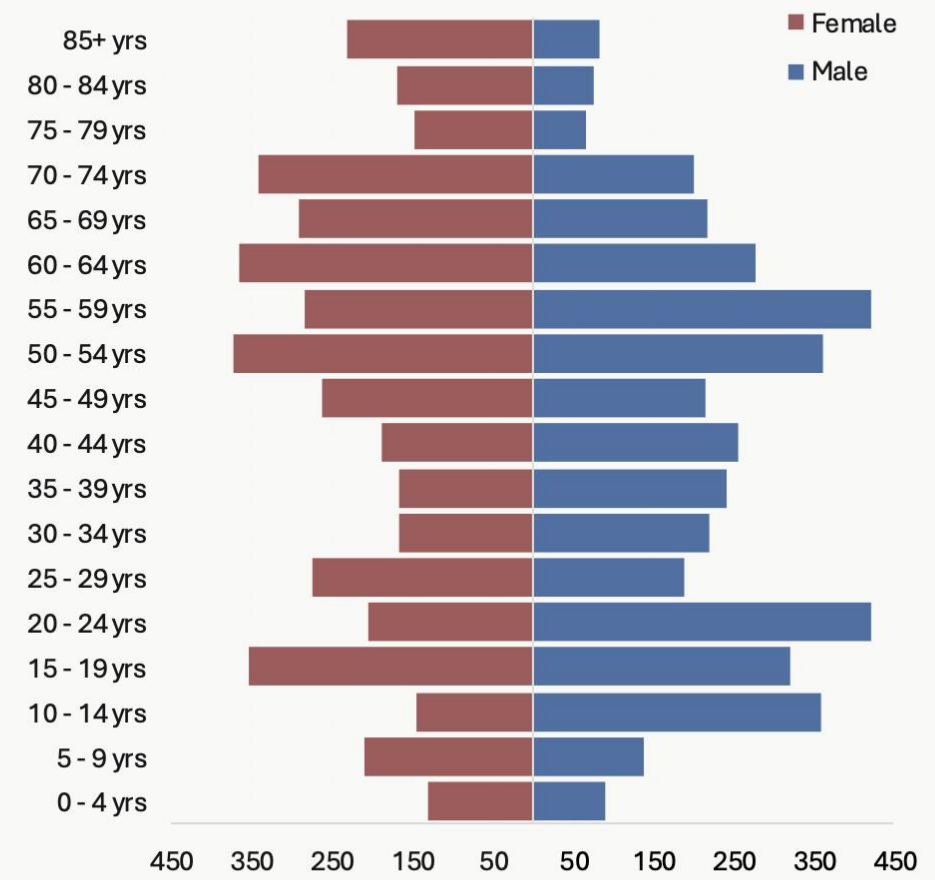
Lake Geneva's population has shifted toward older age groups, with noticeable growth among residents ages 50–74 and 65+, especially among women.

At the same time, the base of the population has narrowed, with fewer children and younger working-age adults than in 2010.

Age & Sex Pyramid (2010)

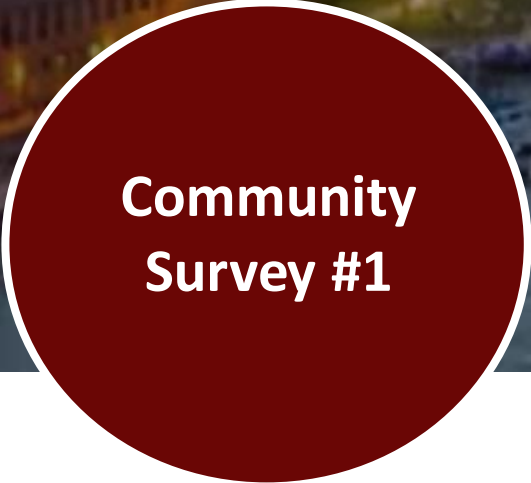


Age & Sex Pyramid (2023)



Sources: American Community Survey (ACS 2010 & 2023)

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Community Survey

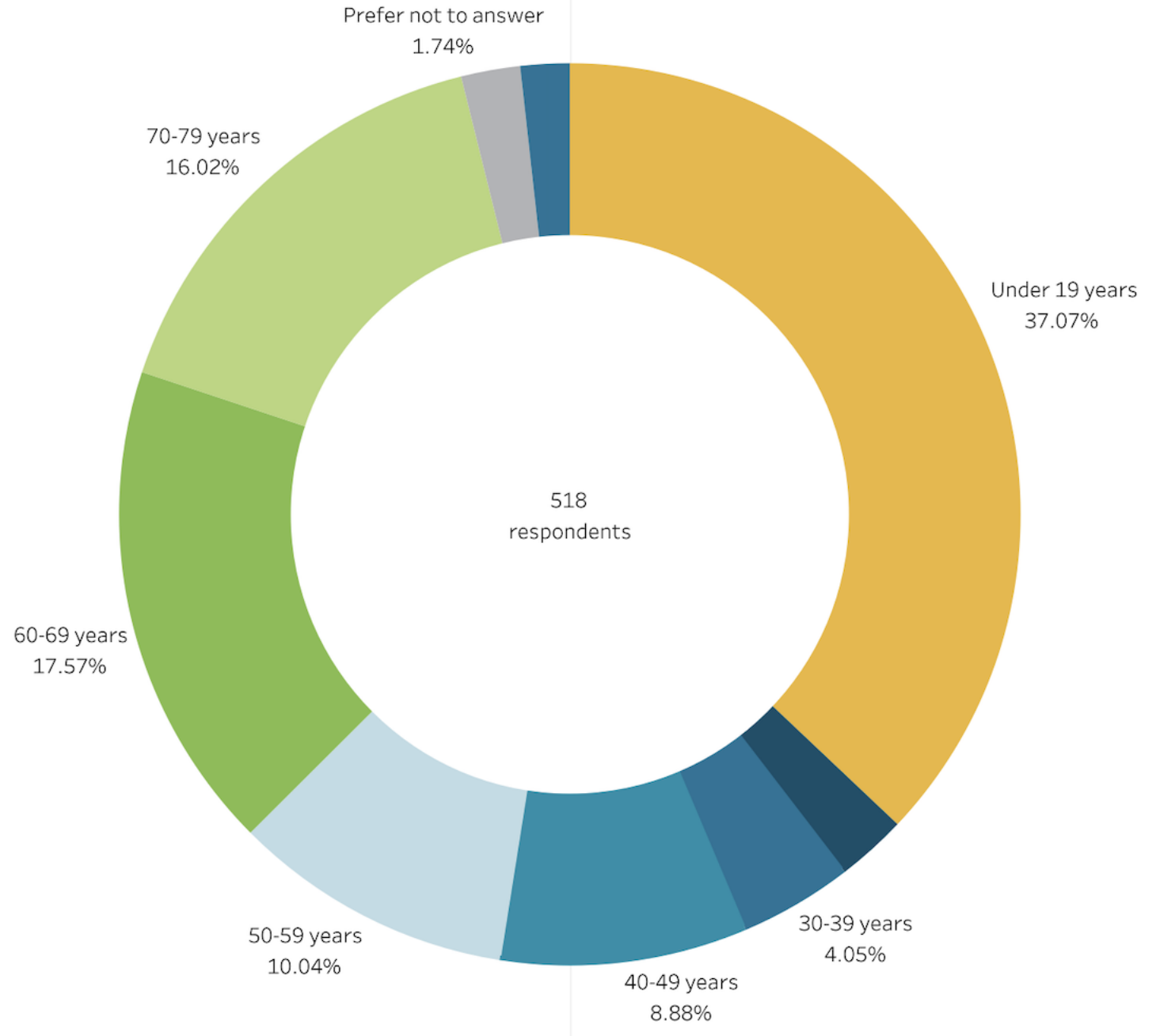


Community Survey

What is your age grouping?



(N=518)



**Lake Geneva
High School**

**Senior Homeroom
Strategic Planning
Session**

February 16, 2026



Community Survey



High level of support for developing a shared vision and strategic plan

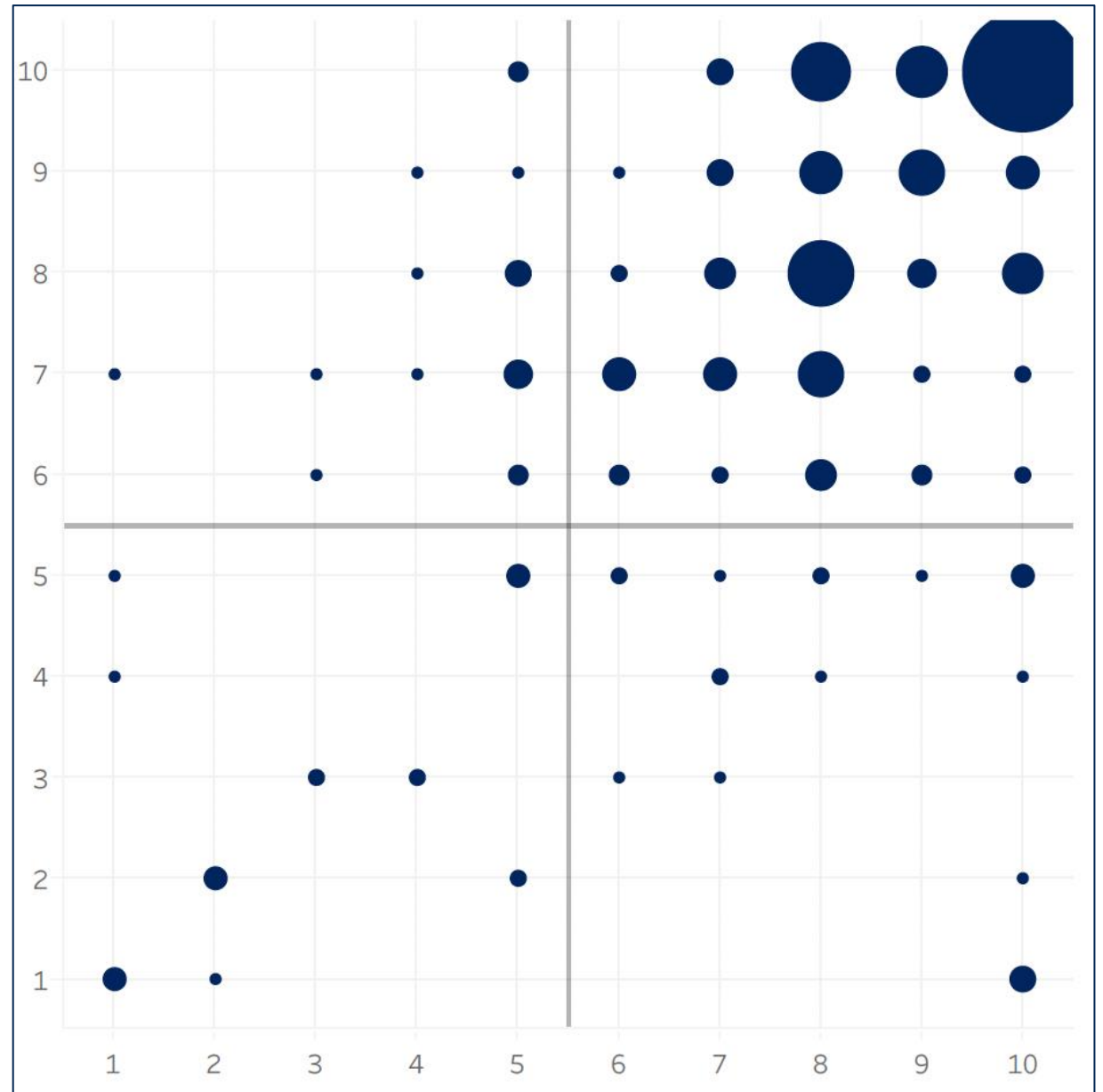
Very Important



Importance of Strategic Plan



Not Important



Not Important



Importance of Community Vision



Very Important

Community Survey

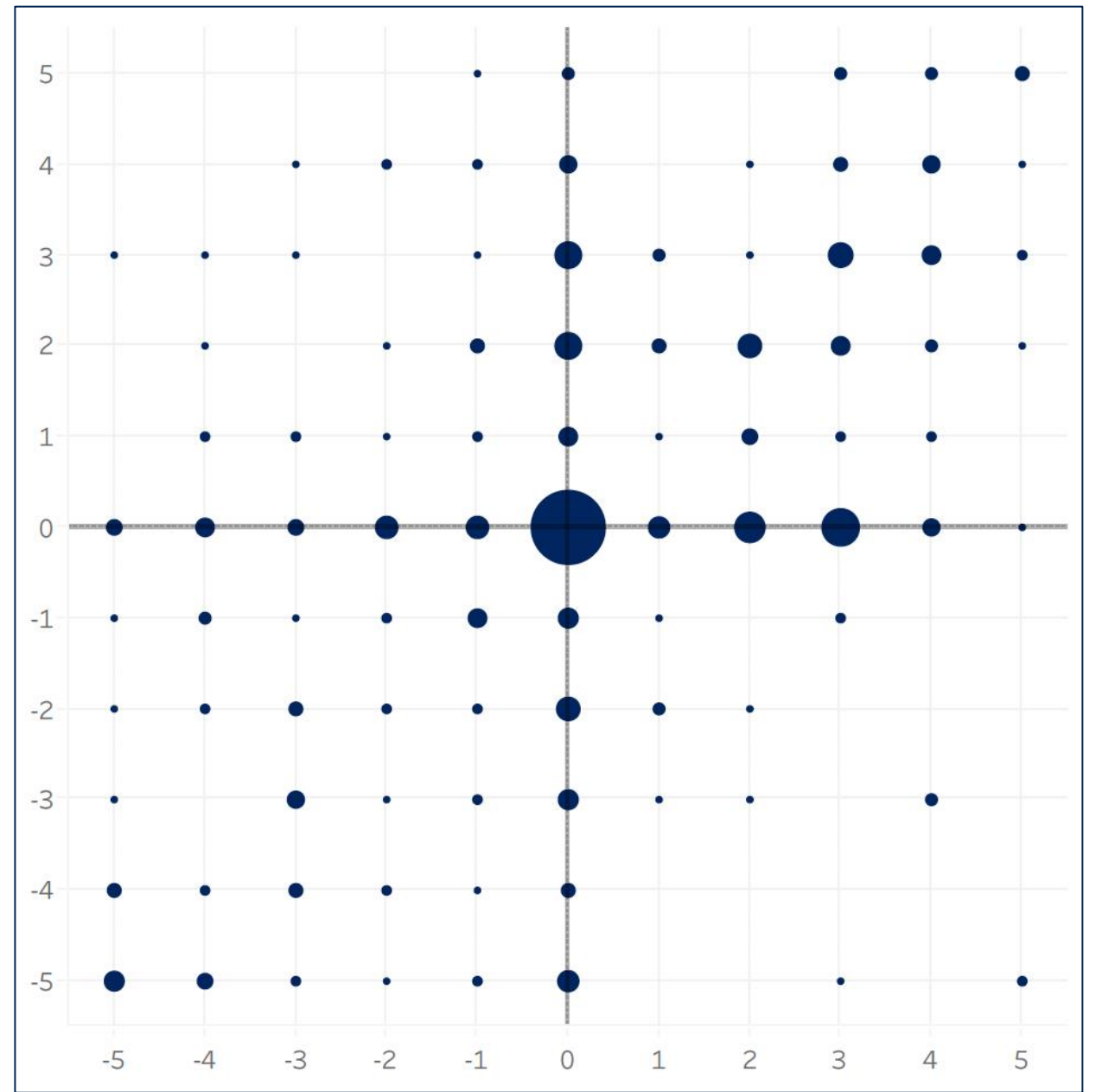


Broad spread of views about the direction and ability to guide the future.

Very Well Equipped

Ability to Adapt to Change

Poorly Equipped



Very Concerned

Current Direction

Very Excited

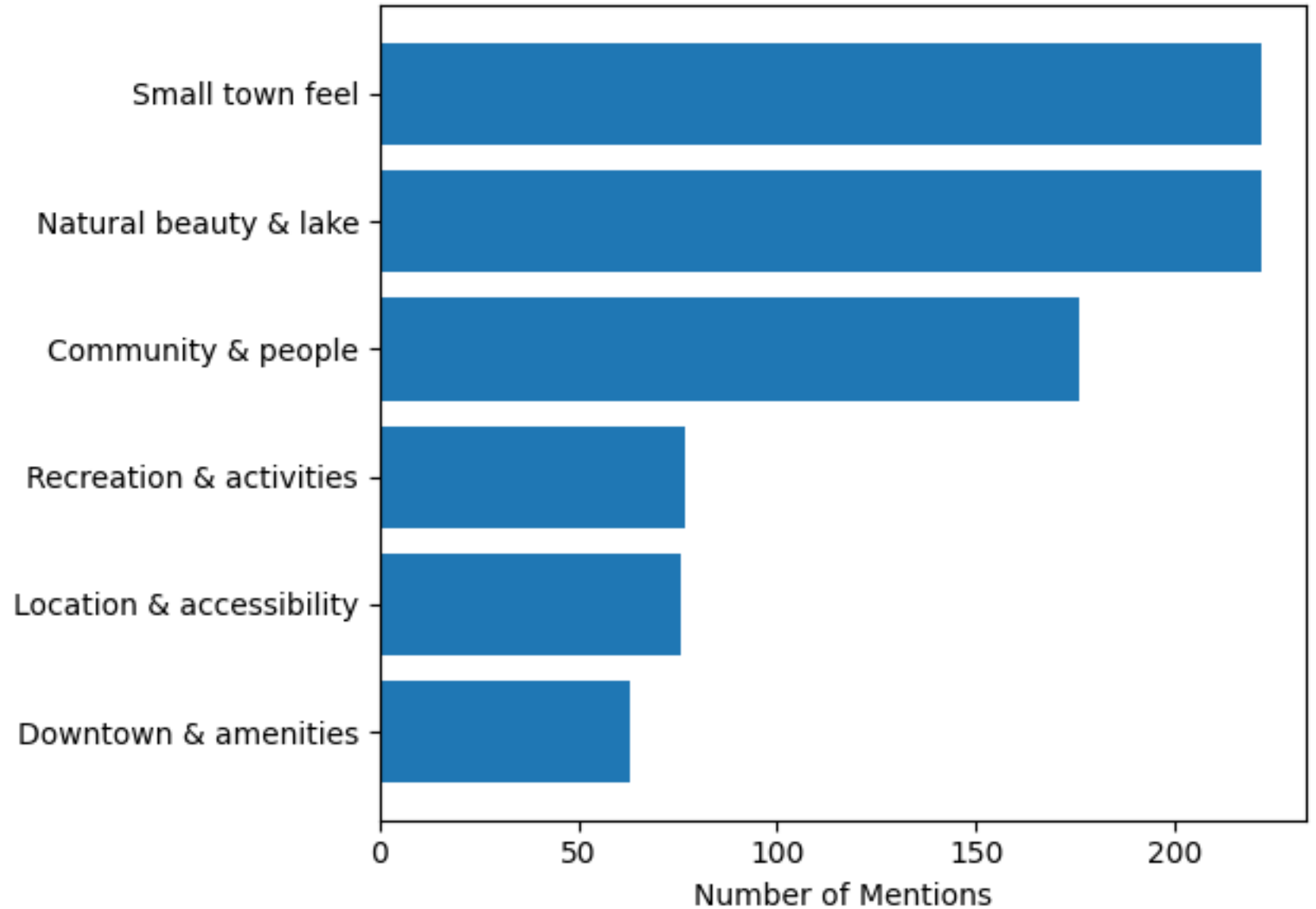
Community Survey

Responses from across open-ended questions

Strong connection to place and attachment to core traditional value proposition



What People Love About Lake Geneva



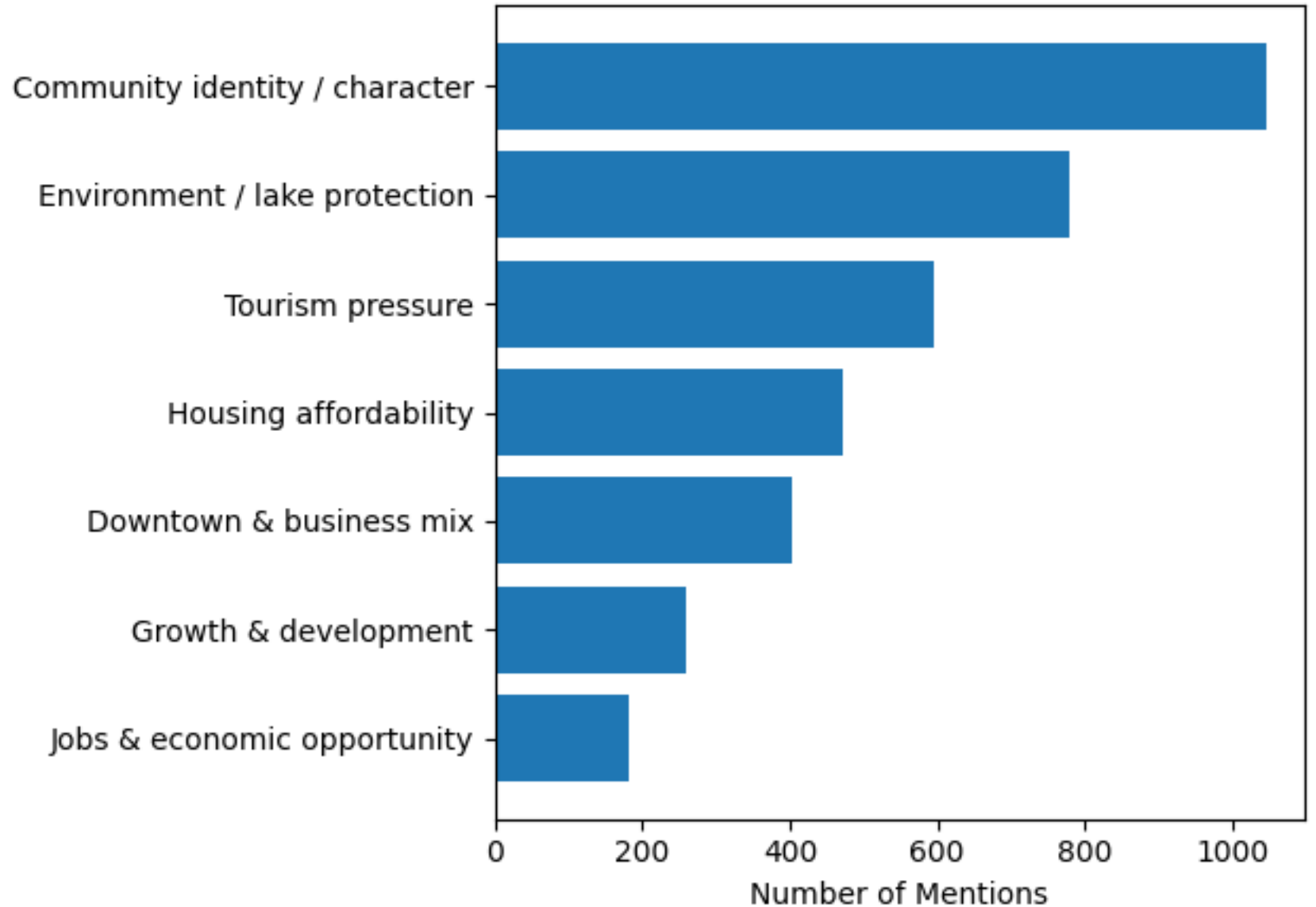
Community Survey

Responses from across open-ended questions

Deep concern about losing connection to the the core community identity character and traditional value proposition



Main Concerns Raised in Lake Geneva Community Survey





Survey insights and strategic implications

1. The central strategic challenge is not whether Lake Geneva should change, but how it should change

The survey does not indicate a community that is resistant to the future. Rather, it indicates a community seeking a clearer framework for managing change.

2. Lake Geneva is at risk of success becoming destabilizing

The data suggests the city's strengths are also creating pressure (e.g. destination appeal is contributing to affordability pressure). The implication is that Lake Geneva needs to transition from a tourism-dependent model toward a **managed destination / livable community model**.

3. Housing is not a standalone issue; it is a system-level issue

Housing pressure interacts with workforce sustainability, local business vitality, family retention, and long-term community continuity. This means housing should not be positioned narrowly as a social policy issue.

4. The community's strongest shared asset is place identity

The most consistent narrative across the survey is attachment to the lake, landscape, small-town feel, and sense of community. This indicates that Lake Geneva's future value proposition should be built around **place-based distinctiveness**, not generic growth.



Survey insights and strategic implications

5. The strongest fault line is livability versus visitor pressure

Tourism itself does not appear to be contested as an economic asset. What appears contested is the current balance between visitor convenience / resident experience / downtown function.

6. Younger respondents are a strategic early-warning signal

Younger cohorts are relatively positive, but they are also disproportionately alert to affordability, opportunity, and visitor pressure. This is important because younger residents are often the first group to register whether a community has a durable future for staying, living and working.

7. The community is ready for a stronger strategic framework

Support for a shared vision and action plan is high enough to suggest legitimacy for a more explicit long-term agenda. The opportunity is not simply to produce a plan, but to articulate a coherent future proposition - **What kind of place is Lake Geneva becoming, and what must be protected, strengthened, and rebalanced to get there?**



Survey insight – Strategic Implications



A strong takeaway from the survey would be that people think:

Lake Geneva's next strategic phase is about moving from successful destination to resilient community — balancing tourism, livability, environmental stewardship, and long-term economic vitality.



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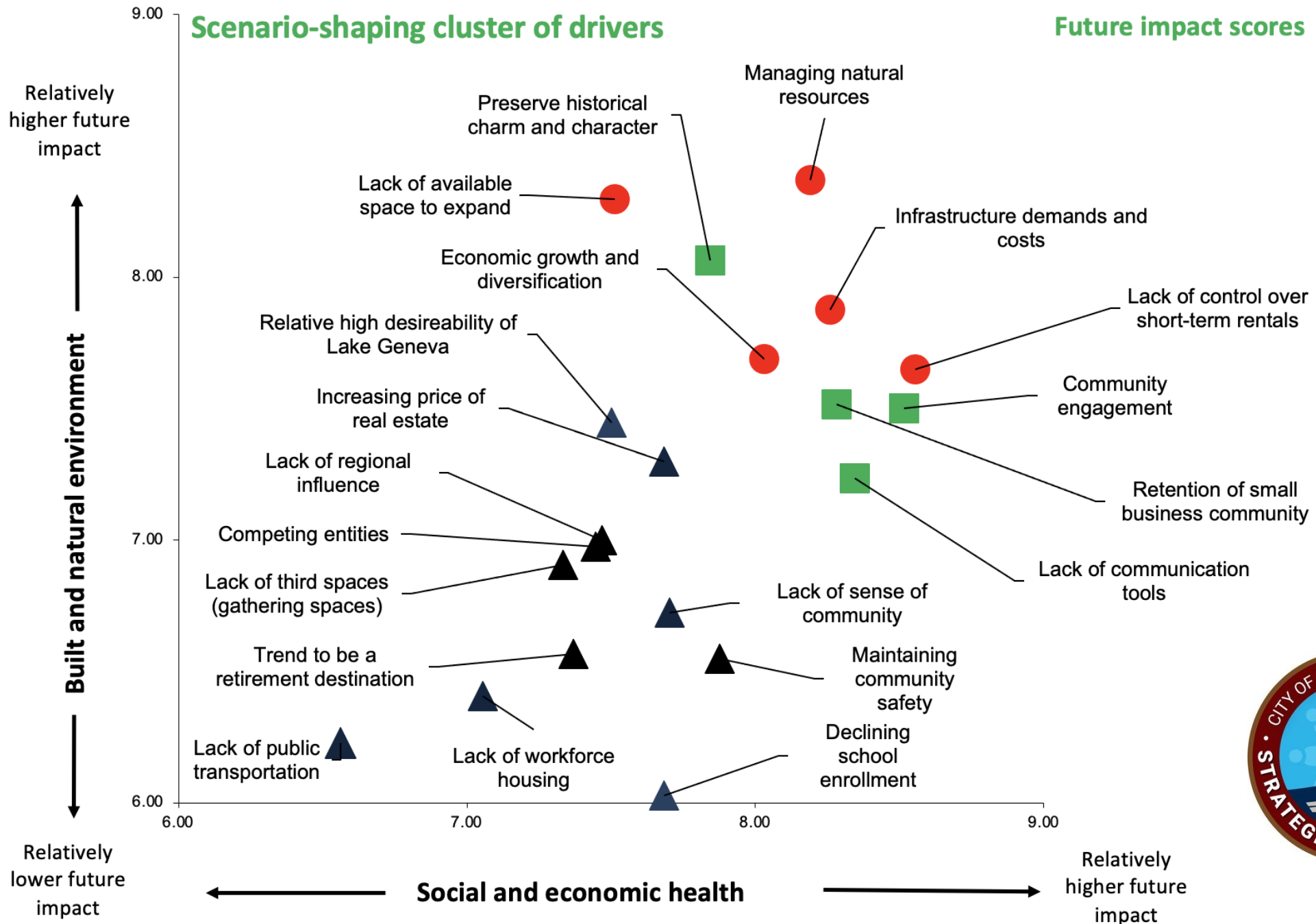


**Lake Geneva Strategic Action Plan
Think-Tank**



Key Drivers

1. Lack of control over short-term rentals
2. Increasing price of real estate
3. Relative high desirability of Lake Geneva
4. Lack of workforce housing
5. Declining school enrollment
6. Trend to be a retirement destination
7. Competing entities
8. Managing natural resources
9. Lack of available space to expand
10. Lack of sense of community
11. Economic growth and diversification
12. Community engagement
13. Lack of third spaces (gathering spaces)
14. Maintaining community safety
15. Retention of small business community
16. Lack of regional influence
17. Preserve historical charm and character
18. Lack of public transportation
19. Lack of communication tools
20. Infrastructure demands & costs



Future-splitting themes – based on clusters of drivers

Development Trajectory

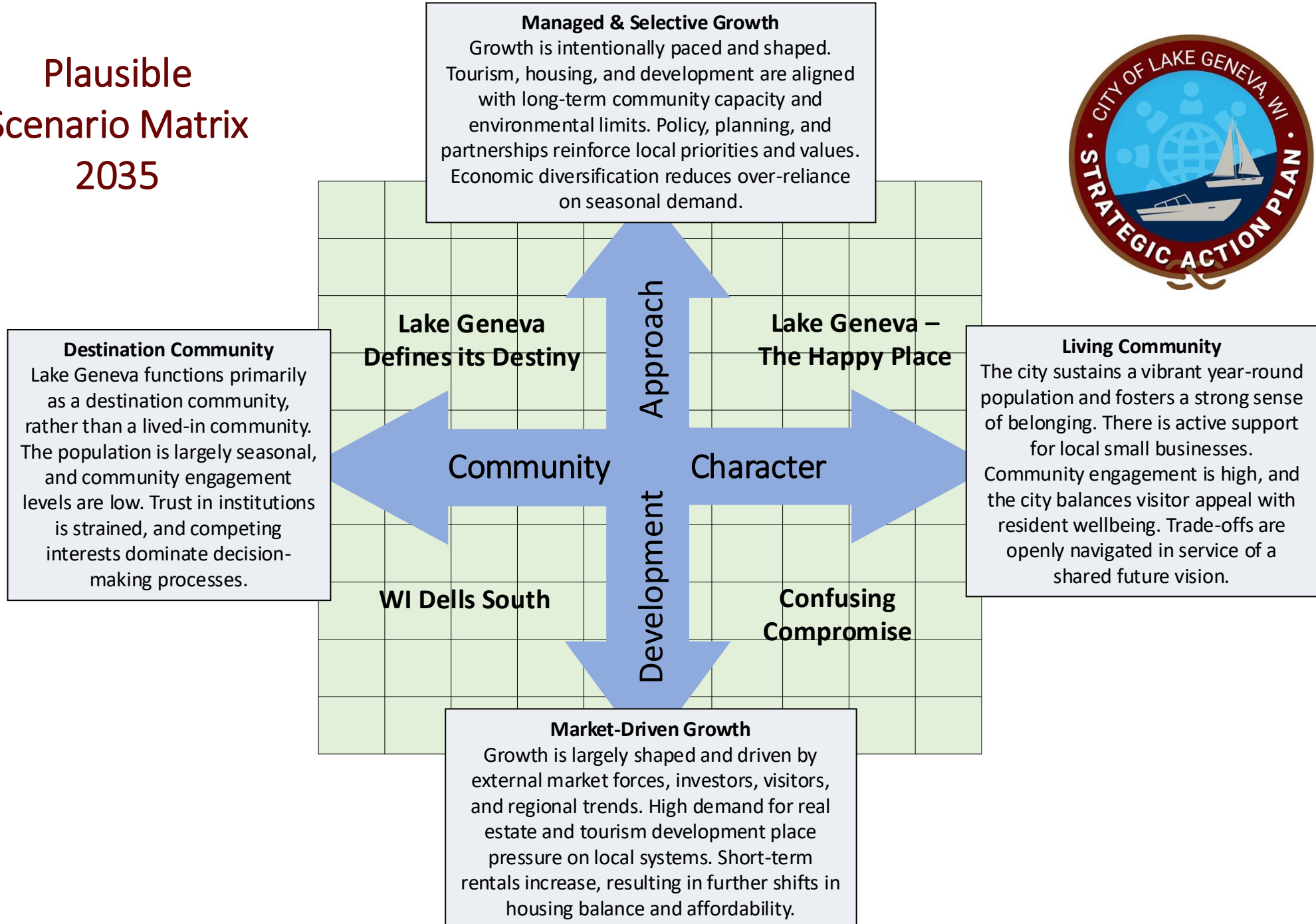
- Managing natural resources
- Lack of control over short-term rentals
- Infrastructure demands and costs
- Lack of available space to expand
- Economic growth and diversification

Community Character

- Community engagement
- Preserve historical charm and character
- Retention of small business community
- Lack of communication tools

Key drivers were clustered under future splitting themes – based on data in scatter plot. These clusters are used to formulate the scenario matrix.

Plausible Scenario Matrix 2035



Heatmap Survey



(N = 60)

Think-Tank Participants
Community Update Participants



Lake Geneva Think-Tank Report



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Strategic Pillars



STRATEGIC PILLARS

March 11, 2026



Community Character

Living Community

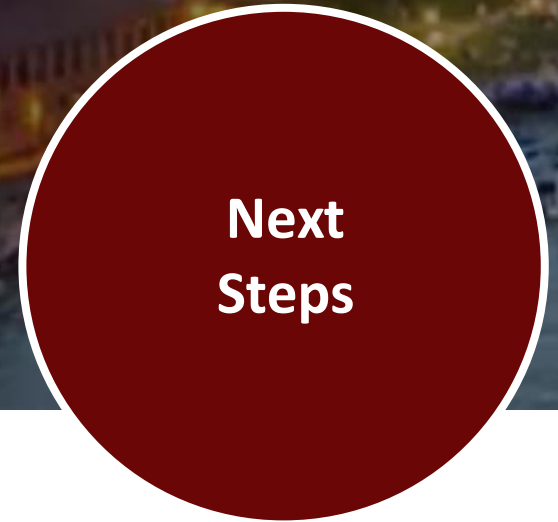
The city sustains a vibrant year-round population and fosters a strong sense of belonging. There is active support for local small businesses. Community engagement is high, and the city balances visitor appeal with resident wellbeing. Trade-offs are openly navigated in service of a shared future vision.

Development Trajectory

Managed & Selective Growth

Growth is intentionally paced and shaped. Tourism, housing, and development are aligned with long-term community capacity and environmental limits. Policy, planning, and partnerships reinforce local priorities and values. Economic diversification reduces over-reliance on seasonal demand.

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Next Steps





City of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin Strategic Action Plan Process

