

Modesto General Plan Update Virtual and In-Person Community Workshops (March 2022) Issues and Vision

As part of the first phase of community engagement for the Modesto 2050 General Plan Update, the City conducted virtual and in-person community workshops. The virtual community workshop occurred on Thursday, March 24, 2022, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on Zoom, with 15 participants. The in-person community workshop occurred the following Wednesday, March 30, 2022, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Greens on Tenth in Downtown Modesto, with 21 participants who signed in. The content of both meetings was identical, but the events were held at different venues and dates to accommodate and capture more voices from the Modesto community. The purpose of these meetings was to hear from community members about their vision for the future of Modesto and what issues the General Plan should address to support that vision.

After a presentation and Q&A about the Modesto 2050 General Plan, community members worked in small groups to discuss four questions regarding the future of Modesto. Responses to each question are summarized in the bullets below.

Question 1: What do you like most about Modesto?

- a. What are the top three things about Modesto that residents appreciate most?
- b. What are the top three things about Modesto that businesses appreciate most?
- A good balance of small-town feel and charm with big city amenities
- A collaborative, welcoming, and diverse community
- Community pride
- A rich cultural and agricultural history
- Easy access to local and regional destinations, including through bicycle connections
- A variety of activities and attractions (e.g., car shows, museums, theaters, concert series, recreation, and open space)
- Quality health care
- Well-managed growth
- Revitalized Downtown (e.g., Tenth Street Place)

Question 2: What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?

- Community Character
 - Create attractive gateways into the city.
 - Maintain a cohesive and unique identity for Modesto, even as it grows.
 - Promote redevelopment of blighted areas in the city.
 - Connect the parts of Modesto that are east and west of State Route 99.

 Address homeless encampments in parks to improve park vibrancy and encourage community use of parks.

Housing

- Provide diverse housing types in Modesto, including dense multi-family housing and housing that supports all life stages and abilities.
- Encourage innovative housing approaches to meet community needs.
- Promote infill housing and accessory dwelling units.
- Continue efforts to house homeless people.

Economic Development and Education

- Develop an aggressive economic plan for skilled labor and vocational programs.
- Attract high quality, good-paying jobs.
- Capitalize on local and regional recreation and agricultural tourism opportunities to attract tourists to Modesto.
- Work with the school districts to develop solutions that reduce high school drop-out rates.
- Attract additional educational institutions to Modesto, including a four-year university.

Environmental Justice

- Direct affordable housing to places that are safe, healthy, and have access to services.
- Improve infrastructure in disadvantaged communities.
- Increase access to affordable and healthy food, including through community gardens, and avoid concentrations of tobacco and liquor stores in disadvantaged communities.
- Address the disparity in the distribution and safety of schools, parks, and open space in the city, including in unincorporated county islands and areas near State Route 132.
- Examine the higher incidence of air quality issues and asthma-related health risks in some areas of the city.

Transportation and Connectivity

- Consider more mixed-use development to promote walkability in neighborhoods.
- Encourage more community members to use transit to reduce traffic and improve air quality.
- Connect and improve conditions along the Dry Creek Trail, Virginia Corridor Trailway, and trails along the Tuolumne River.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections and safety conditions throughout the city.
- Support development of the Altamont Corridor Express station in Modesto.

Sustainability

- Address climate change.
- Promote aesthetically pleasing and drought-tolerant landscaping.
- Provide water conservation programs for homeowners and businesses.
- Incentivize solar installations.
- Provide more electric vehicle charging stations.

Downtown

- Introduce metered parking in Downtown.
- Improve connections to Downtown.
- Develop the County Court House site into a high density, mixed-use affordable housing project.
- Local Government
 - Expand engagement to seek input on development projects from a diverse representation of Modesto residents.

Question 3: Rank the following issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address:

- 1. Job creation
- 2. Growth management
- 3. Environmental justice
- 4. Connections to open space
- 5. Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
- 6. Housing availability and affordability
- 7. Community services and public safety
- 8. Other

While some groups felt that all topics are important, the following bullets summarize the issues that received the most attention from small groups at both workshops. The level of interest across groups and specific issues related to each topic are discussed below.

- Housing. Housing issues were rated highly by many groups. Some discussions groups suggested focusing on the development of affordable housing for underserved/unserved communities because there are long waiting lists for housing programs and an unequal distribution of affordable housing stock, especially for people with special needs.
- Environmental Justice. Environmental justice issues were also rated highly by some discussion groups, who also tied the conversation to housing, noting that new affordable housing development should not be located in areas with existing air quality, infrastructure, and access disparities.
- Job Creation. Groups were divided on the importance of this topic; some groups ranked it as a top priority, while others ranked it at the bottom. Participants who ranked this topic as a high priority felt that there are too many warehousing/logistics jobs, which can be viewed as low-paying and low-quality. Instead, they would like better quality and good-paying jobs to support the tax base and encourage young people to stay in Modesto. Some participants also noted that many Modesto residents have long commutes to good-paying jobs in the Bay Area, suggesting that residents should be able to work and live in Modesto. For those ranking this topic as a low priority issue, participants explained that "jobs create themselves" and should not be an issue for the City to address.
- Growth Management. Growth management was rated as a high priority by most discussion groups. Participants would like Modesto to become a regional tourism destination known for its agricultural industry, citing the importance of preserving remaining farmland and avoiding greenfield development. Groups also urged the City to annex unincorporated county islands in existing urban areas.

Question 4: Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?

- Generally, there was consistent support for infill development. As part of this discussion, participants suggested that the City promote innovative housing projects in smaller, denser configurations, to reduce sprawl and maintenance needs. In addition, participants supported a focus on infill development as a tool for preserving agricultural lands and heritage, with many expressing support for preservation of Wood Colony.
- Participants also supported redevelopment and investment in existing neighborhoods, especially those that lack public improvements and those with older, dilapidated buildings. Participants would like to see the burned areas on the east side of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad be

redeveloped. There was strong interest in redevelopment with a mix of uses in these areas, along with a focus on promoting equity through redevelopment and investment, including by avoiding gentrification as areas are redeveloped.

Participants also considered where future development might be appropriate at the edge of the city, noting possible development areas on the western, eastern, and northeastern edges of Modesto. Participants would also like more industrial land to be available for development.

Comments and Group Notes



Small Group Discussion Questions

- 1. What do you like most about Modesto?
 - a. What are the top three things about Modesto that residents appreciate most?
 - b. What are the top three things about Modesto that businesses appreciate most?
- 2. What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?
- 3. Rank the following issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address:
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 - Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
 - Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
 - Connections to open space
 - Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
 - 4 Housing availability and affordability
 - 5 Community services and public safety
 - ___ Other _____
- 4. Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?



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Date: 2022.03-30

COMMENT CARD

Please fill out this form if you have any comments about the General Plan Update. (Name and contact information are optional.)

Name: Dave Hoover Affiliation (if applicable): Address: _ Phone / Email: Comments (Use back if necessary): _ Plan to leverage our new courthouse site with current downtown I walking integrate located near J St. improvements sonable, adequate) tenance of existing and new Enable 1 neprov empy - Liver leverage this asset moreny to have. communities 100/18 Leaconobl ment of treffix lauge. your economic base. Diveren

Sam Yanez

GENERAL PLAN Missing is mention of climate change.

Modesto's GP cites 'A unified theory of urban living' which does broach the extrememly important subject.

From A Unified Theory of Urban Living:

It is time for a science of how city growth affects society and environment, say Luis Bettencourt and Geoffrey West.

Online collection

At the start of the twenty-first century, cities emerged as the source of the greatest challenges that the planet has faced since humans became social. Although they have proven to be humanity's engines of creativity, wealth creation and economic growth, cities have also been the source of much pollution and disease. Rapid urbanization and accelerating socio-economic development have generated global problems from climate change and its environmental impacts to incipient crises in food, energy and water availability, public health, financial markets and the global economy1,2.

At www.army.mil, find an article titled ' Army Introduces Strategy to Combat Climate Change Threats'.

The 2017 State of California General Plan Guidelines mention the term "Climate Change" a total of 231 times. The topic of Climate Change HAS ITS OWN CHAPTER in that document.

WHY IS CLIMATE CHANGE NOT MENTIONED EVEN ONCE IN THE MODESTO GP????

Climate Change has a minor mention in the Executive Summary of the General Plan Master Environmental Impact Report. Why the shyness in mentioning a topic with such wide and deep impact??



Small Group Discussion Questions

Spokesperson: Brad, but others will weigh in.

- 1. What do you like most about Modesto?
 - a. What are the top three things about Modesto that residents appreciate most?
 - i. Accessible; easy to get to destinations quickly.
 - ii. Still feels like a small town; see people we know around town (even though city has grown).
 - iii. Modesto celebrates our diversity. Collaborative. Communities work together. E.g., MACs, mayor, City Council, Planning Commission.
 - 1. While we have growth, need to be smart to maintain affordable housing/better jobs. Contrast between preserving character of ag (imp), but also growth & smart growth need to do some work to make sure we get it right. Need a balance with smart growth & preserving integrity of Modesto.
 - iv. Modesto's people. Great friends/people. But lost way as a selfidentified community over the years; now too much of a suburb for the Bay Area. Want Modesto to have its own unique identity.
 - v. Affordable housing is important, but also need to serve long-term residents who may not need affordable housing.
 - b. What are the top three things about Modesto that businesses appreciate most?

- 2. What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?
 - a. ~15 years ago more vibrancy in park: workers, pools, family activities. Feel like we've lost some of that. Also affected by poverty & homelessness. Would like to see more activities for families & children; take back parks so that safe for children again.
 - b. Tackling homelessness has been difficult. Visual aspect turns people away from DT. Our business was impacted by this. Too much or the wrong help can enable the problem. Need to continue to work on this.
 - c. EJ community where new 132 fwy is. No parks, schools, outdoor space. Decided to build houses there in 1980s. Think every area in Modesto had some kind of park, class 1 bike trail, etc. Our community is isolated from shopping areas from this fwy. Look at google map for how parks and shopping are distributed and ensure every neighborhood has something that is positive for that neighborhood. Some neighborhoods have a lot; some have nothing. Need better distribution.
 - i. Brad: notes that city broken up into park planning areas; will review.
 - d. Would like more community members using transit. There are great resources already; new things to do: media campaign to promote transit. Would help with air pollution, which is a big issue in valley, asthma.
 - e. Example: Stockton tackled transit issues by providing bus pass to high school students. Instilled sense of mobility/access via transit to that generation. They are comfortable w/ using the bus and helps to increase ridership.

- 3. Rank the following issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address:
 - _____ Job creation
 - ____ Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
 - Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
 - _ Connections to open space
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 - ____ Housing availability and affordability
 - _ Community services and public safety
 - ___ Other _____

Every point is important. To prioritize, affordable housing is important, especially for unserved/underserved communities. Long waiting list for housing programs. Inventory and distribution of affordable housing is unbalanced, especially for people with special needs.

Job creation: my kids left state. Don't want to stay and deal w/ bay area commute. Want a community that is self-reliant; can get work here or work for lower wages than can get in bay area. Related: we don't have a tourism industry here. Would like to see opp to develop that. Almond blossom tour was a first step; great ag industry. Potential geographic features that are unique: opportunity for job creation related to tourism. Brad note: classic car museum being developed. Ginny: also this is the center for mountain climbers. Also river rafting in region. Modesto could be heart for those regional recreation attractions. But also want to consider the tourism that can happen in the city, especially with the great products made here -> restaurants.

As we develop/infill housing, ensure affordable, ensure communities are safe, considering pollution/air quality, etc. Don't want to create communities that are more affordable but less safe b/c of lack of services/care. Relates to EJ.

- 4. Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?
 - Depends on zoning and kind of growth that we have. In the past, issues with Modesto annexing, but quite a few exciting infill projects. In favor of infill. Respects boundaries of our neighbors. Depends on the types of developers we attract.
 - b. Preserve Wood Colony. Rich history. Could be part of the ag tourism. If start building houses, will ruin historic aspect of community, as well as ag resource. Support infill development and don't change boundaries that are in place today. It's a benefit to city to do that.
 - c. What about tearing down all the rotting houses and building them new? What can we do with all the empty buildings?
 - i. Brad: policy language on how to ID redevelopment sites and how to best redevelop or add res to comm site for MU/mini-community.
 - d. Eyesore on community: buildings neglected/unoccupied. Should be community standard laws to avoid blight e.g., on McHenry & ____ Ave. These properties all over the place.

Other comments:

- Would like more youth participation so we can talk to them about how to keep youth from leaving after high school. Relates to community pride. This GP is about the future, so we need to hear from the youth. Make Modesto more desirable and interesting for youth.
 - \circ Suggest approach high schools, essay competition, etc. to feed into the GP to participate.
 - Include school districts, youth organizations.
 - Would love to land a 4-year university here &/or other types of education facilities.

- Our politicians all talk about MJC. So many ppl started locally. Came back to give back to community; want to make it a better place. That is a positive message – helps us to enhance the image of Modesto – community love & community pride. Still small-town feel where you can help/give back to the community. Given diversity, we should celebrate it. Should tap into this group who wants to give back.
- Modesto was #1 for national night out.



Small Group Discussion Questions

- 1. What do you like most about Modesto?
 - a. What are the top three things about Modesto that residents appreciate most?
 - b. What are the top three things about Modesto that businesses appreciate most?
- The amount of services available to at risk residents
- History of Modesto
 - o Cultural
 - Agricultural
- Smaller town feel
- Quality Medical Care
- There's a lot of things to do
- Big City Feel
- Historical Facts
- Diverse Food Options
- Growing Bicycle and Pedestrian Connection
- Great River-Park System
- Great Parks and Rec for a smaller city
- American Graffiti
- New Attractions

- \circ Car Museum
- o Children's Museum
- Cultural Options through:
 - \circ Theater
- Good Balance of big city amenities and small town feel
- Keep big city feel downtown and rural character feel outside of downtown area

- 2. What would you like to see changed in Modesto to make it a better place to live and work?
- Pedestrian, Bicycle, Public Transit, Green, Sustainable, Keep Residents Locally, Keep Economy Moving, environment green and sustainable
- Responsive Local Government
 - o Local Government listening to special interest groups
 - Muni golf course
 - Downtown Ball Park
- Water use issues
 - Landscaping that is aesthetically pleasing and conserves water
 - Conservation programs for homeowners/businesses
- County Islands
 - o Infrastructure Pockets in disadvantaged communities
- Housing
 - Innovative approach to housing
 - More than Single family
 - o Infill
 - o ADUs
- Air Quality Inequity Issues
 - In certain census tracts more than others
- Parks and Recreation
 - Park Safety and Accessibility for unincorporated areas

- 3. Rank the following issues in order of importance for the General Plan Update to address:
 - _____A. Job creation
 - _____B. Growth management (balancing urban and service expansions with demand, accommodating the continuation of viable agricultural operations)
 - C. Environmental justice (healthy food access, safe and sanitary housing, pollution exposure, public facilities, physical activity, community engagement, and prioritization of improvements addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities)
 - ____ D. Connections to open space
 - E. Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian circulation and recreational trails
 - _____F. Housing availability and affordability
 - ____ G. Community services and public safety
 - ___ Other _____

Person 1.

- 1. Everything equally important except job
- 2. C is #1, F is #2, G is #3, E, B
- 3. Dependent on philosophy
- 4. Environmental Justice, Housing, Safe and Convenient bicycle and pedestrian, open spaces, Growth management, Public Safety, Job Creation (not warehouses or logistics, quality-well paying jobs, stay local)
- Environmental Justice (C), 2. Connections to Open Space (D), 3. Housing Affordability (F), 4. Community Services (G), 5. Safe and Convenient Bike & Ped (E), 6. Growth Management (B), 7. Job Creation (A)

4. Should future development be focused as infill development (i.e., to already developed areas), or should it be allowed to extend beyond the current city limit? If beyond the city limit, where should that be allowed?

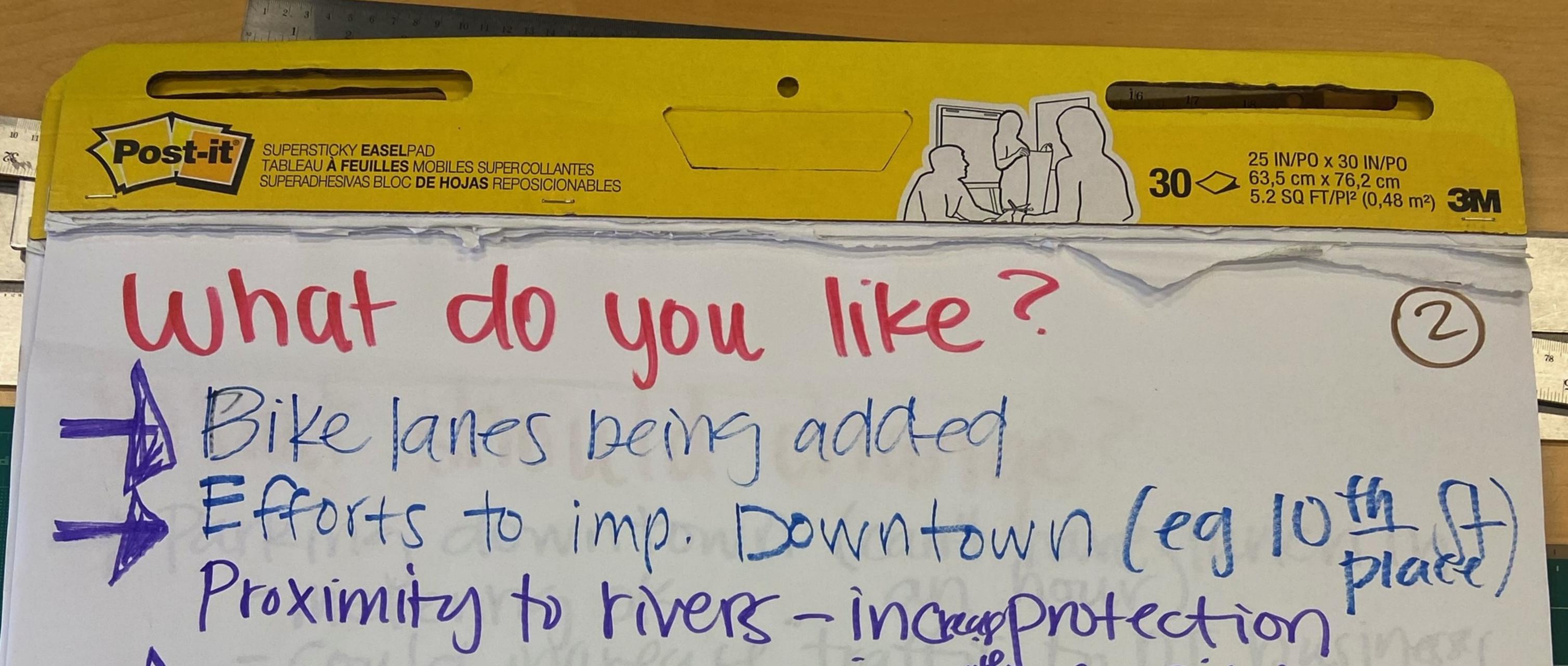
Redevelopment – before annexation

- a. Burnt businesses on the other side of the railroad
- b. Mixed use development

Infill, innovation, than expanding out (X2)

- c. More multifamily units
- d. Vertical than horizontal
 - i. More effective use of land
 - ii. Less urban sprawl
 - iii. Less infrastructure maintenance
 - iv. More housing in a smaller denser area
 - v. Repurpose older developments to mixed use homes (can be historical)
 - vi. Declining birth rates
 - vii. Multifamily, high density homes for younger new generations
 - viii. County Court House -> High Density Affordable Housing with businesses nearby \rightarrow keeping economy and people local
 - ix. Larger homes on large lots require more maintenance while smaller homes on smaller lots do not need to
 - x. Growth Projections
 - xi. Need for different types of homes and amenities
 - xii. Repurposing old commercial space (golf course for housing)
 - xiii. Preserve ag heritage with the remaining land that we have (Wood Colony)

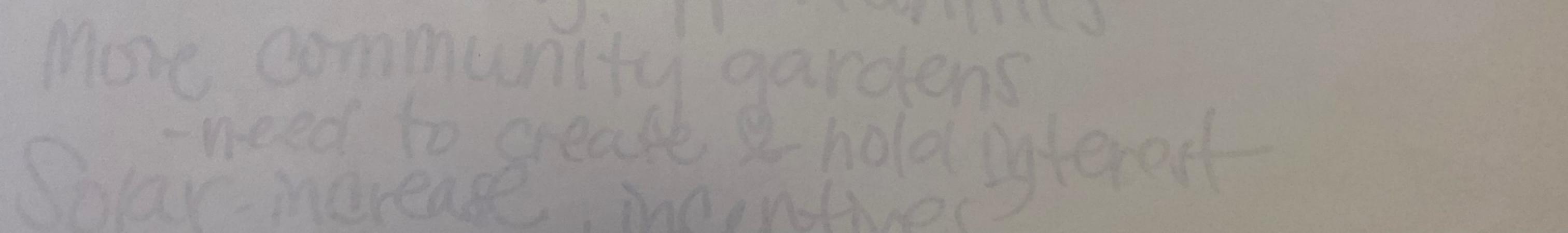
Homes more affordable



Size - sweet spot - Gallo ctr, MJC (culture / and Still know neighbor but not too big around town Dry Creek trail / park - good example (caution: don't ever develop) Businesses: proximity to ag

has transportation (99/5) airport

Appreciate the roundabouts

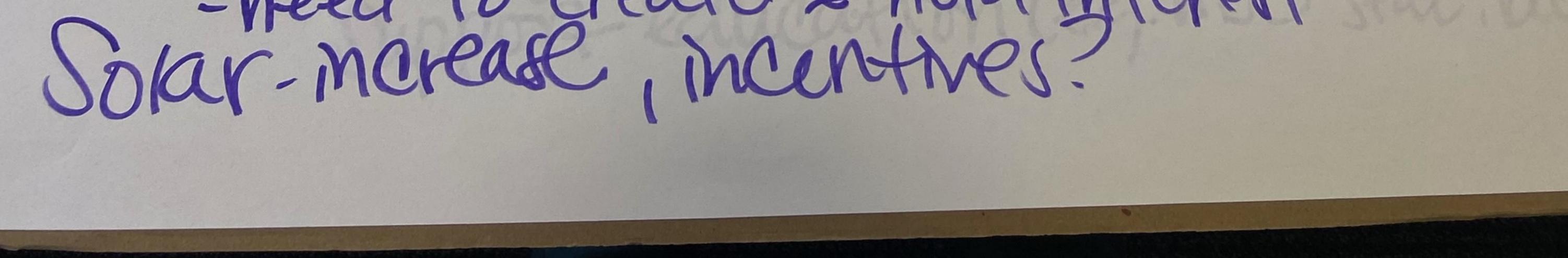


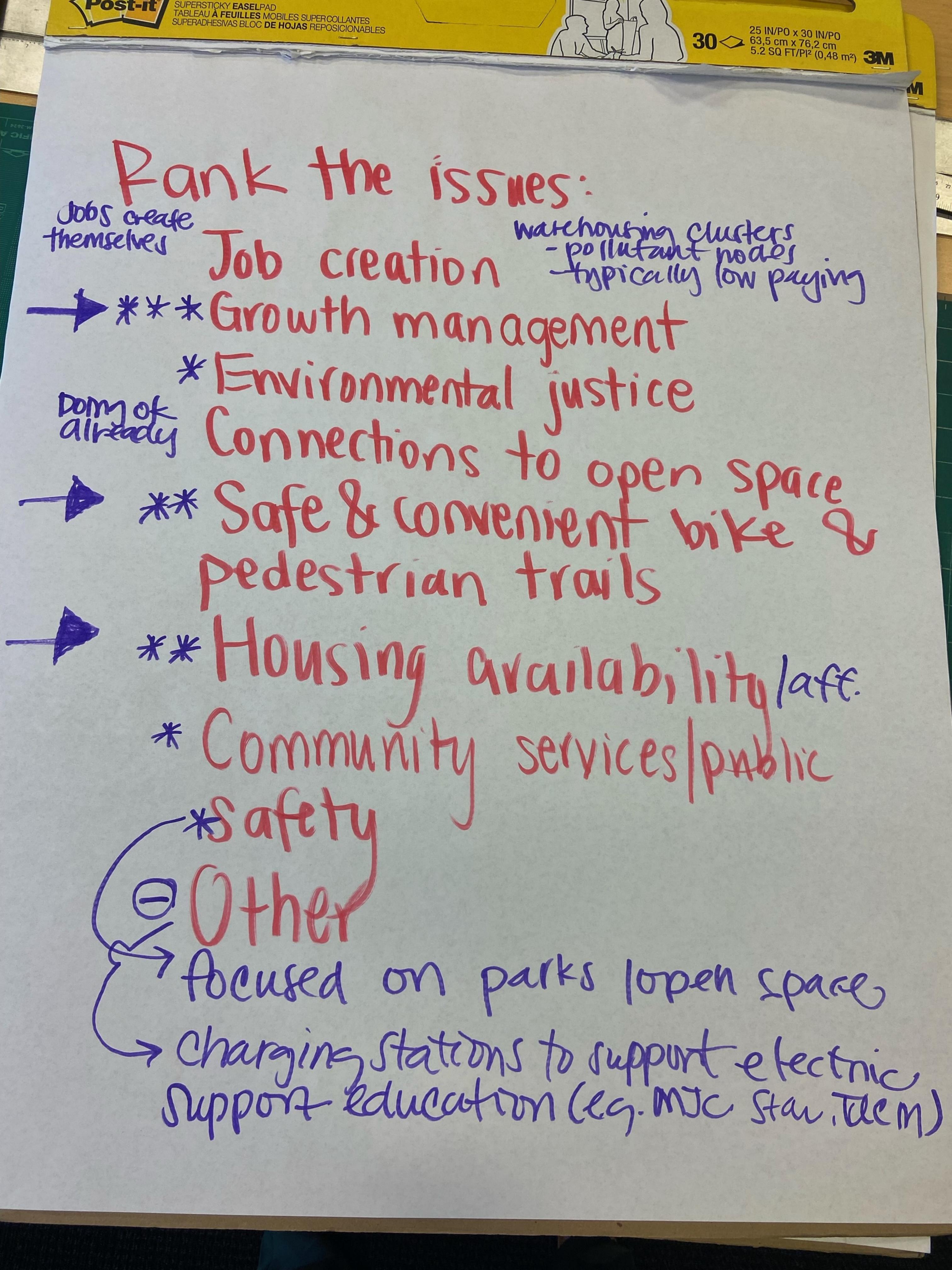


what should change? Parking downtown (can't have lunch in - metering ok an hour)
- metering ok an hour)
- could increase traffic to DT business
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- Infill pusmesses (vacant blags eg Osh rousing)
- Flous mg (more affordable, smaller) Toyskus
- more range of housing Homelessness Dumping is a problem (curpside recycling no longer offered) Packagins poor driving habits - impact to ped bikes Build up (more stories)-not out -move efficient use of lang 7-->) Infill - options for multiple life stages less to maintain) - could encourage less anima More walking opportunities More community gardens -need to create 2 hold interest

25 IN/PO x 30 IN/PO

30 5.2 SQ FT/PI² (0,48 m²) **3M**

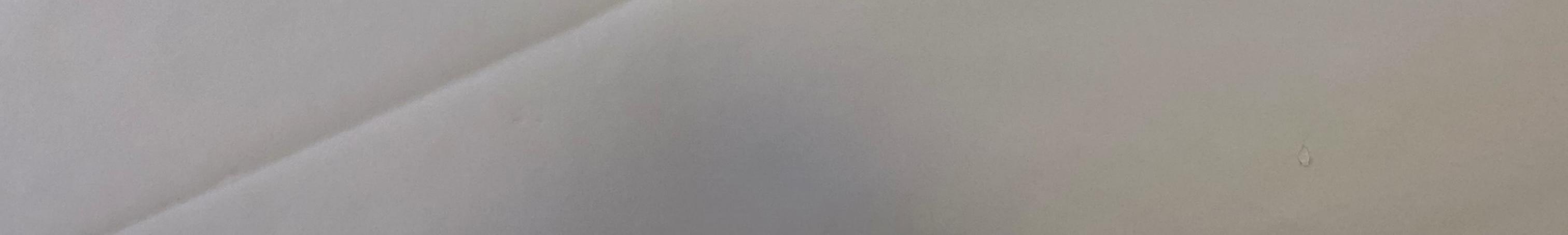


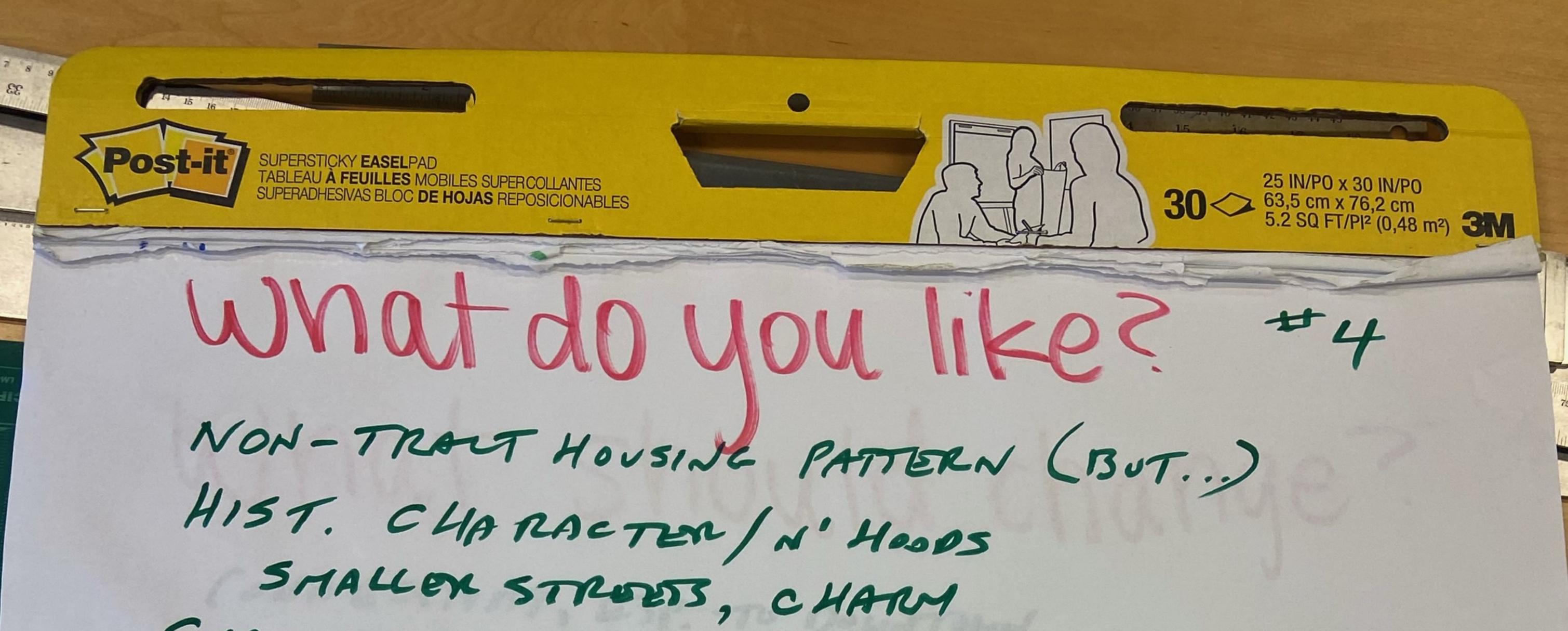


33 SUPERSTICKY EASELPAD TABLEAU À FEUILLES MOBILES SUPERCOLLANTES SUPERADHESIVAS BLOC DE HOJAS REPOSICIONABLES 25 IN/PO x 30 IN/PO 63,5 cm x 76,2 cm 5.2 SQ FT/PI² (0,48 m²) CM Future development? Infill over expansion pref. Incorporate County islands?

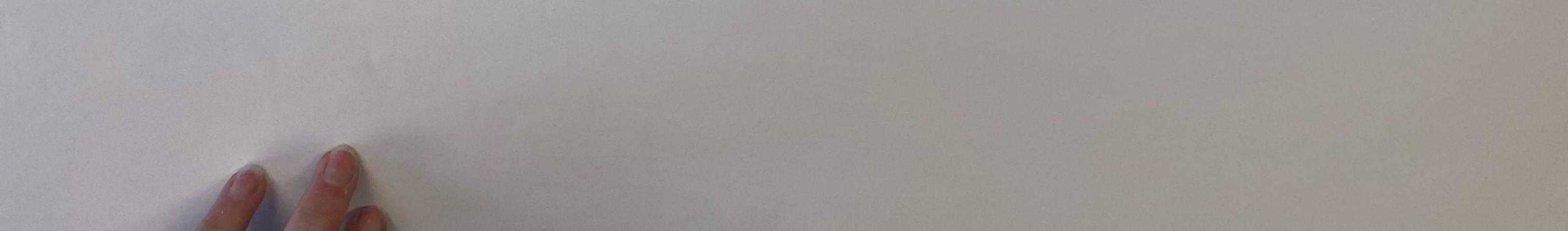
>Peinestment in areas -caution gentrification Western expansion (across 99) -accers is sues on north PR, exchanges on 99

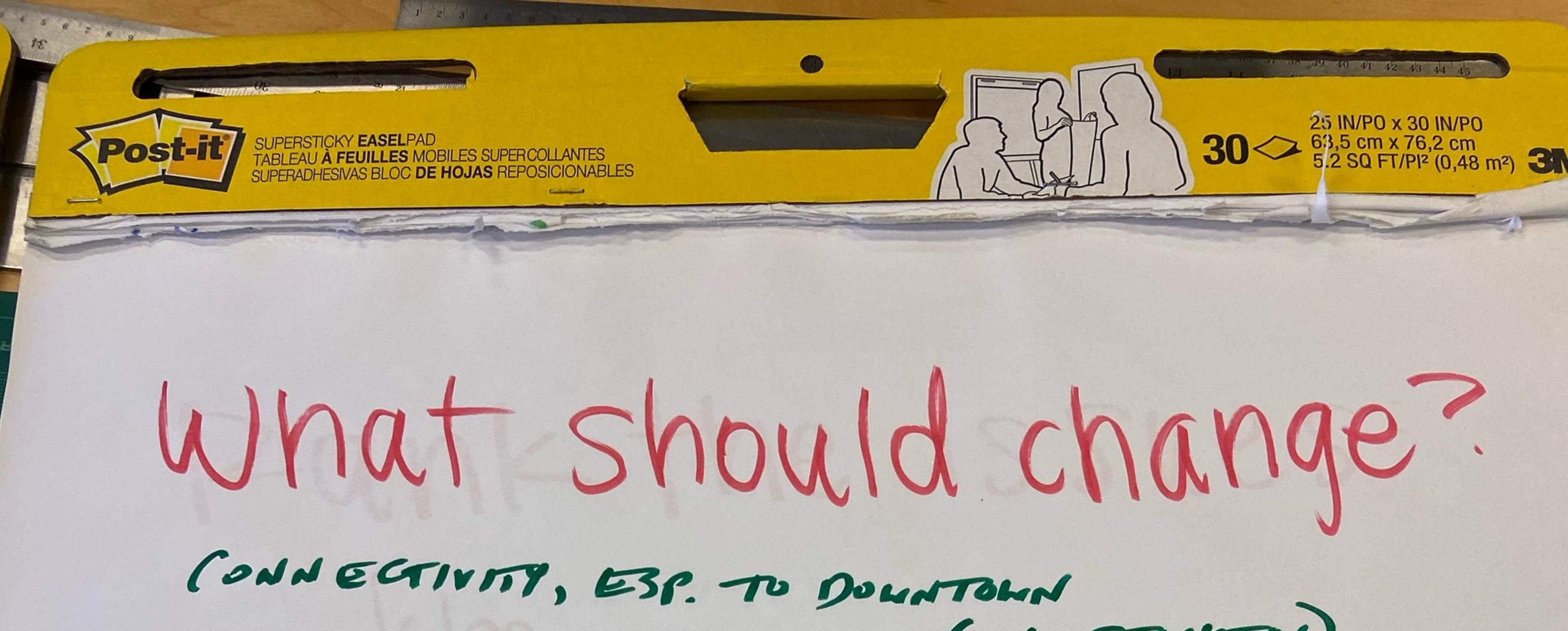
6ther: Climate Change not currently actl. in Current GP





STALL . TOWN FEEL B.T BIG GTY FEATURES DOWNTOWN, CULTURE, PERF. ANTS SUMMER CONCENT ACRICULTURE ("DON'T MESS MITH 17") -? TRAIN TOWN HISTORY WELL - MAINTAINED PARKS / SCHOOLS IN EACH N'HOOD

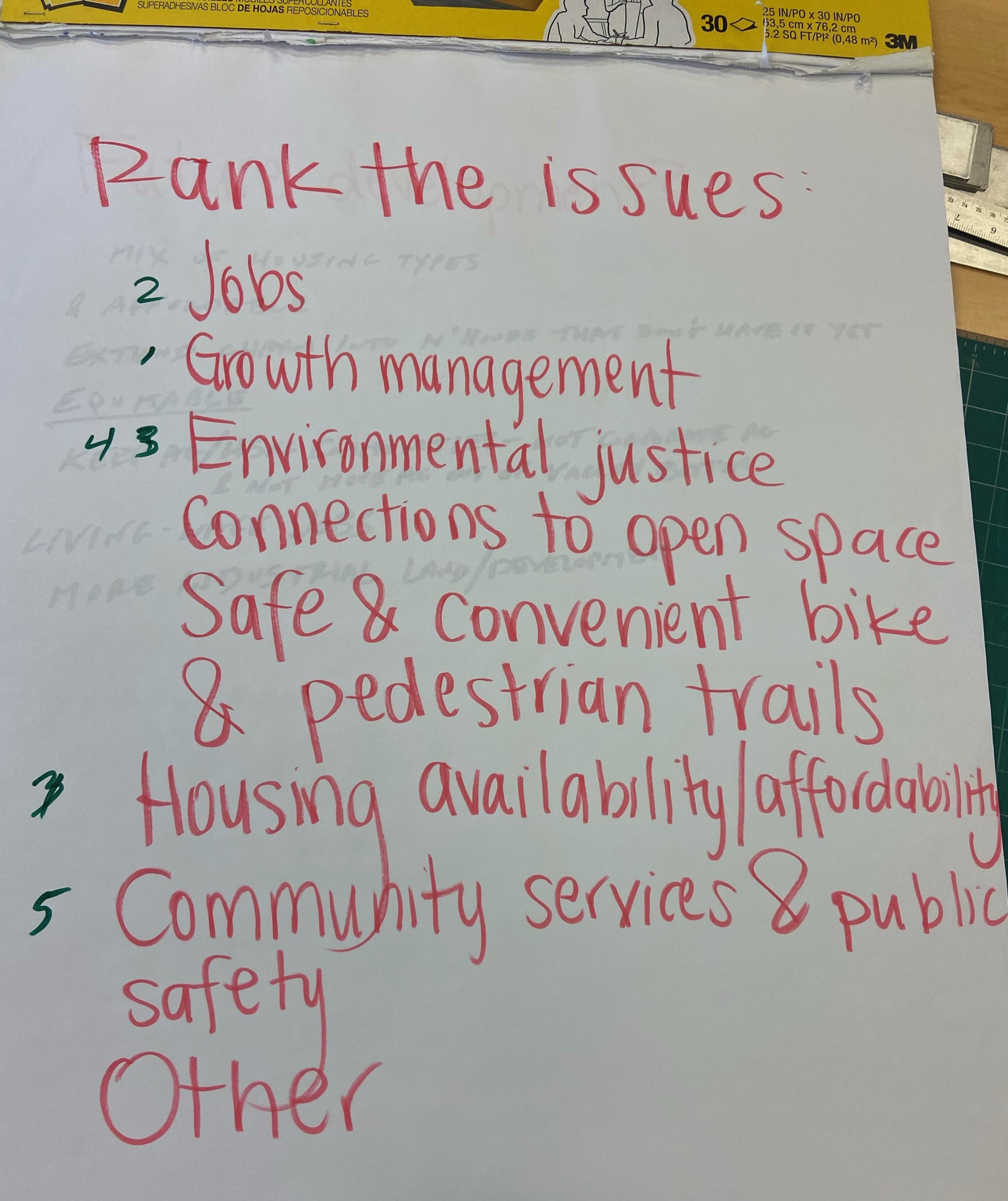


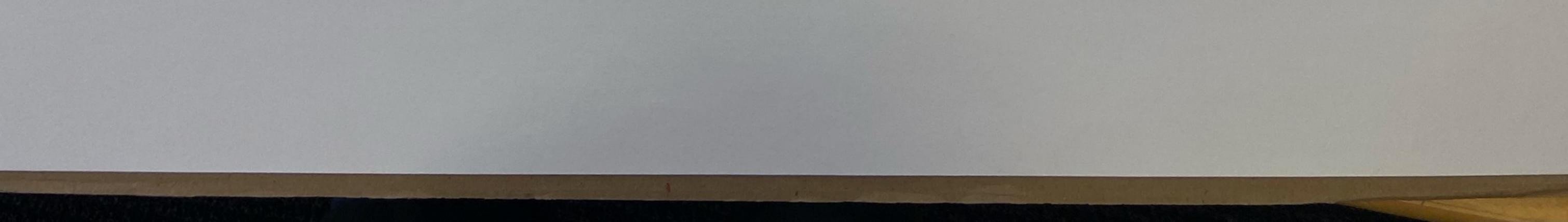


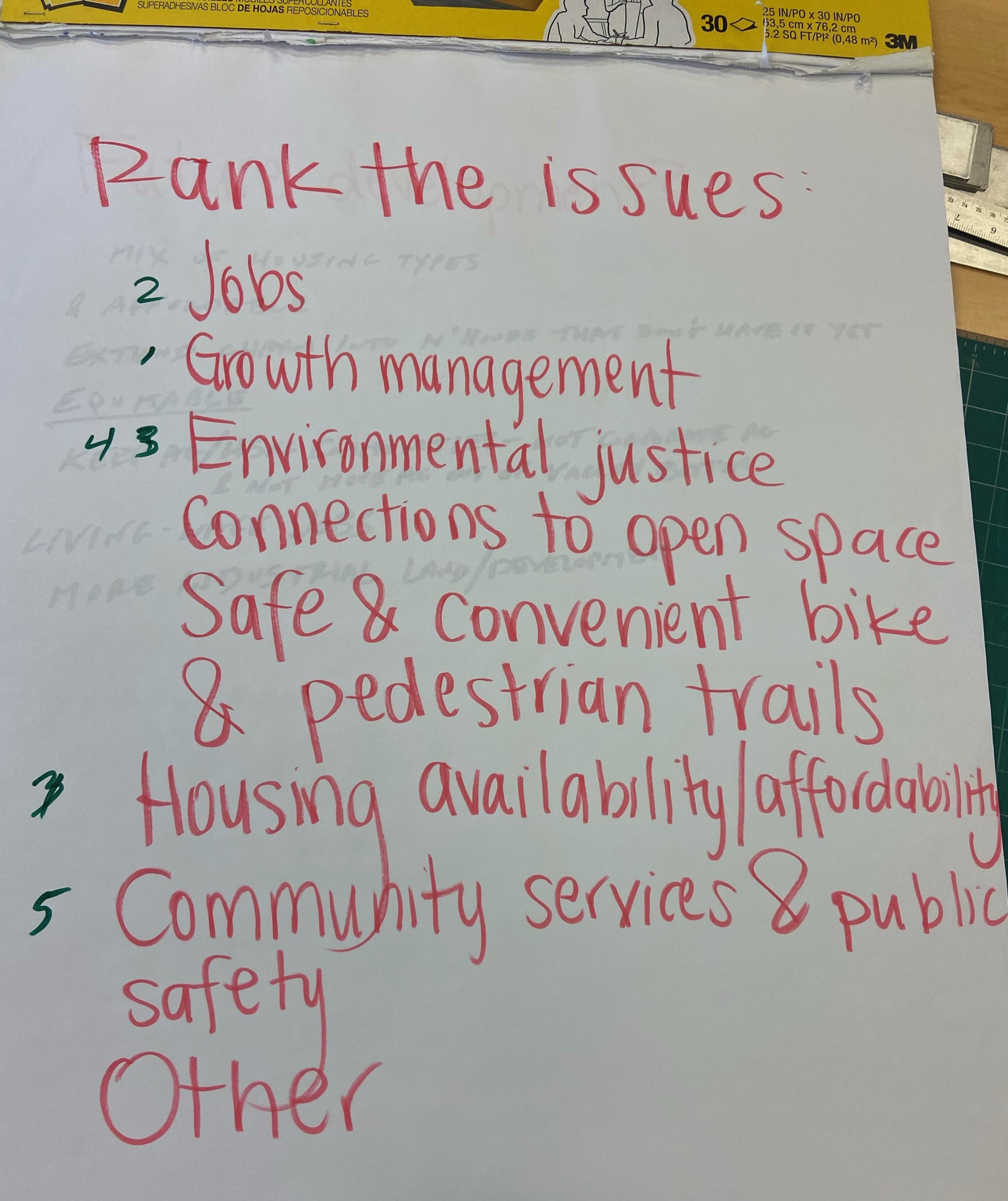
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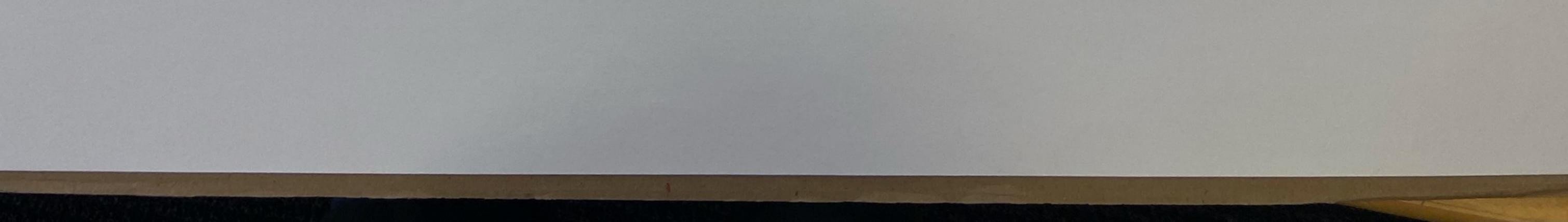
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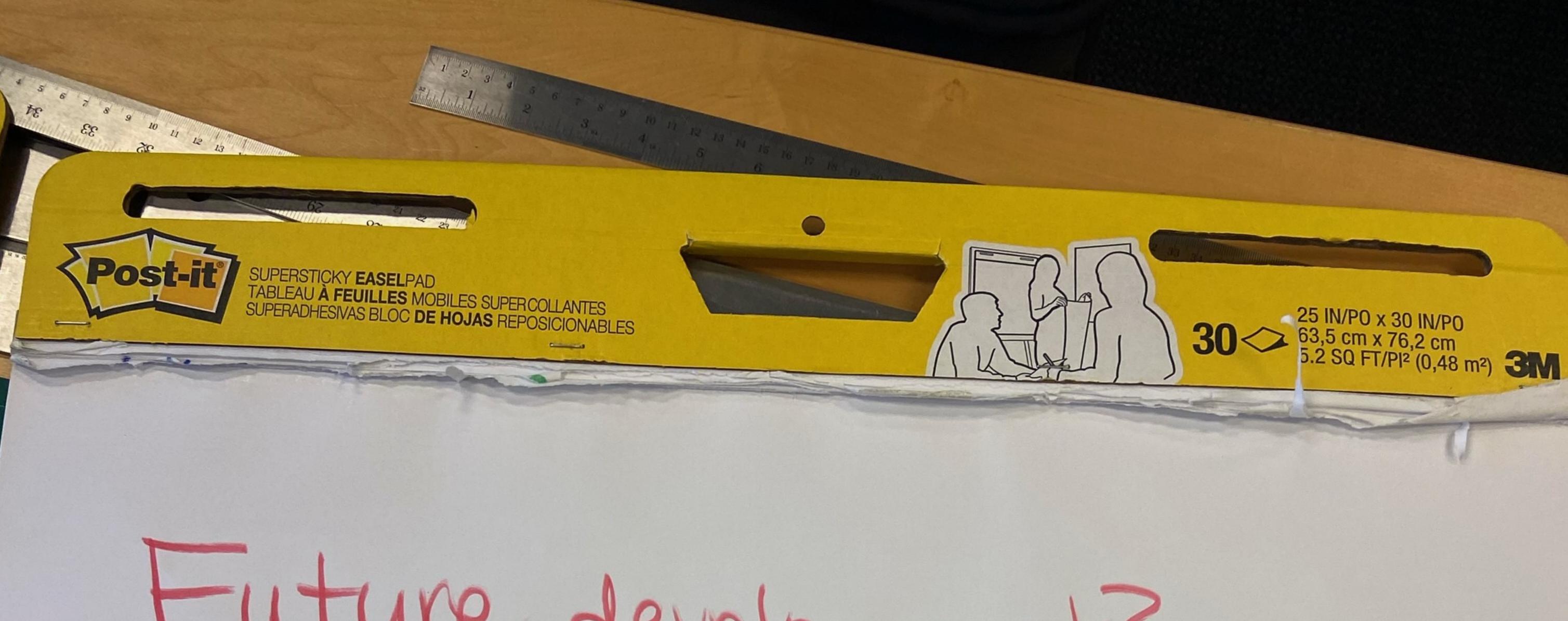
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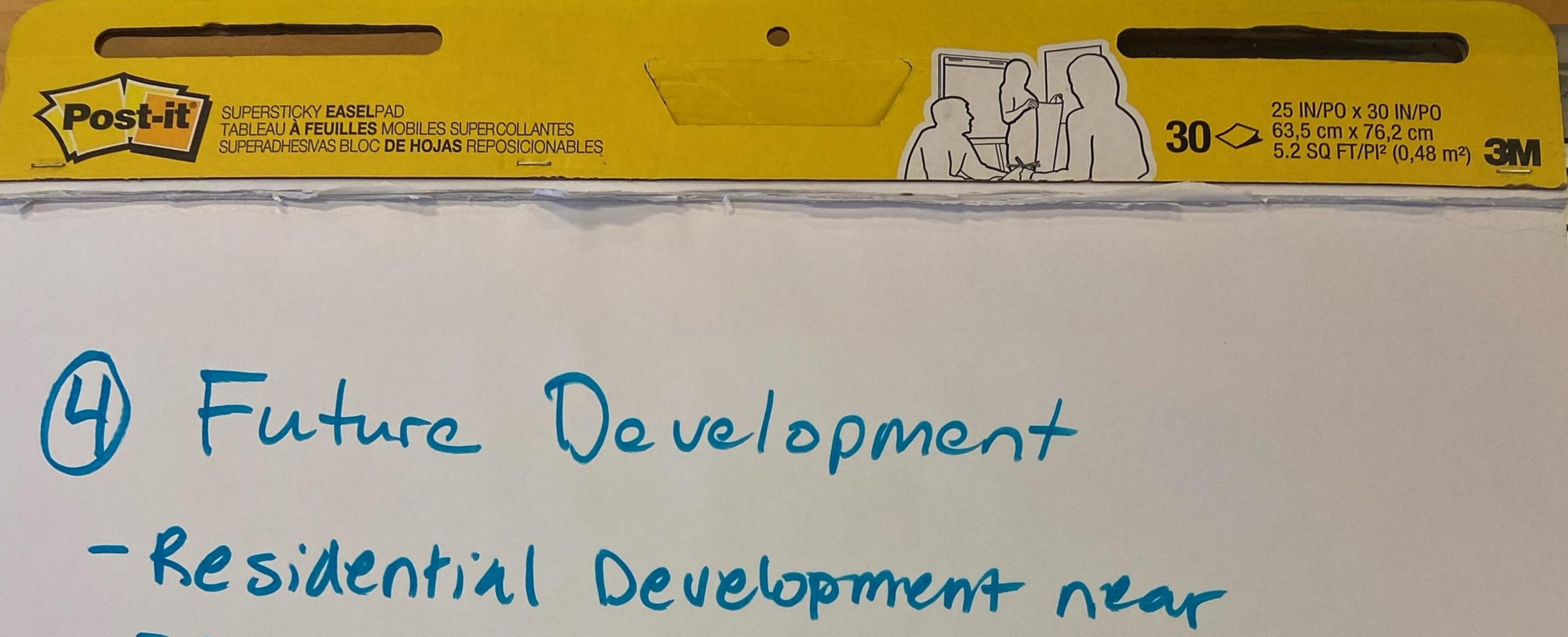
TUTURe development?

MIX OF HOUSING TYPES

& AHOMABLE EXTEND CHARA INTO N'HNDS THAT DON'T HAVE IT YET

EQUMABLE KEEP AG/HSAG CHANNATIES - NOT CABAME AG I NOT HOVE AG ONT OF VALLEY BOTTOM

LIVING-MAGE JOBS MORE INDUSTRIAL LAND/DEVELORMENT



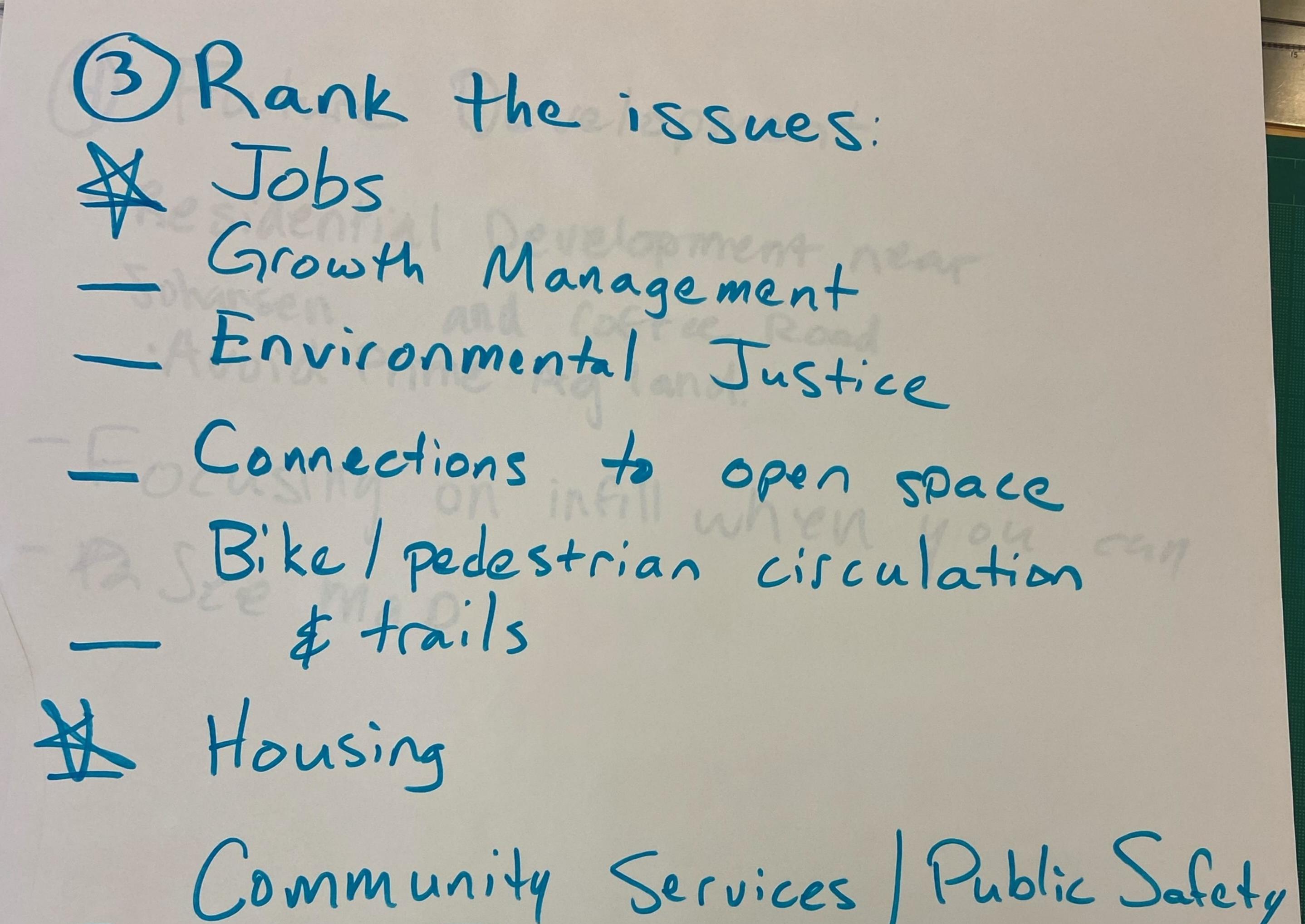
Scharsen and Coffic Road Avoid Prime Agland.

-Focusing on infill when you can -ASZE MAP



ES SUPER

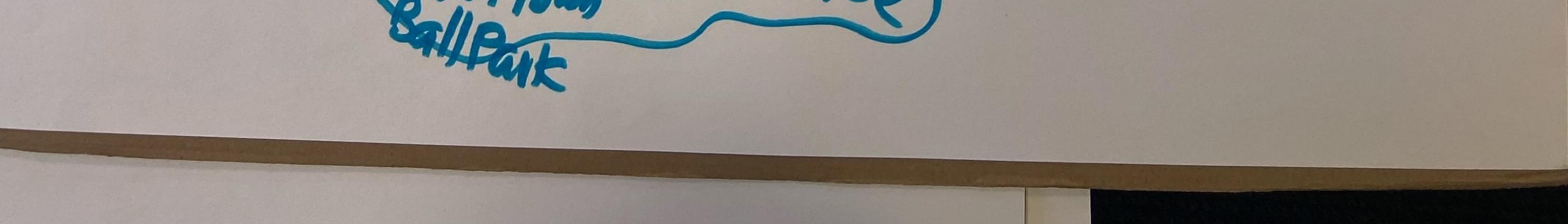
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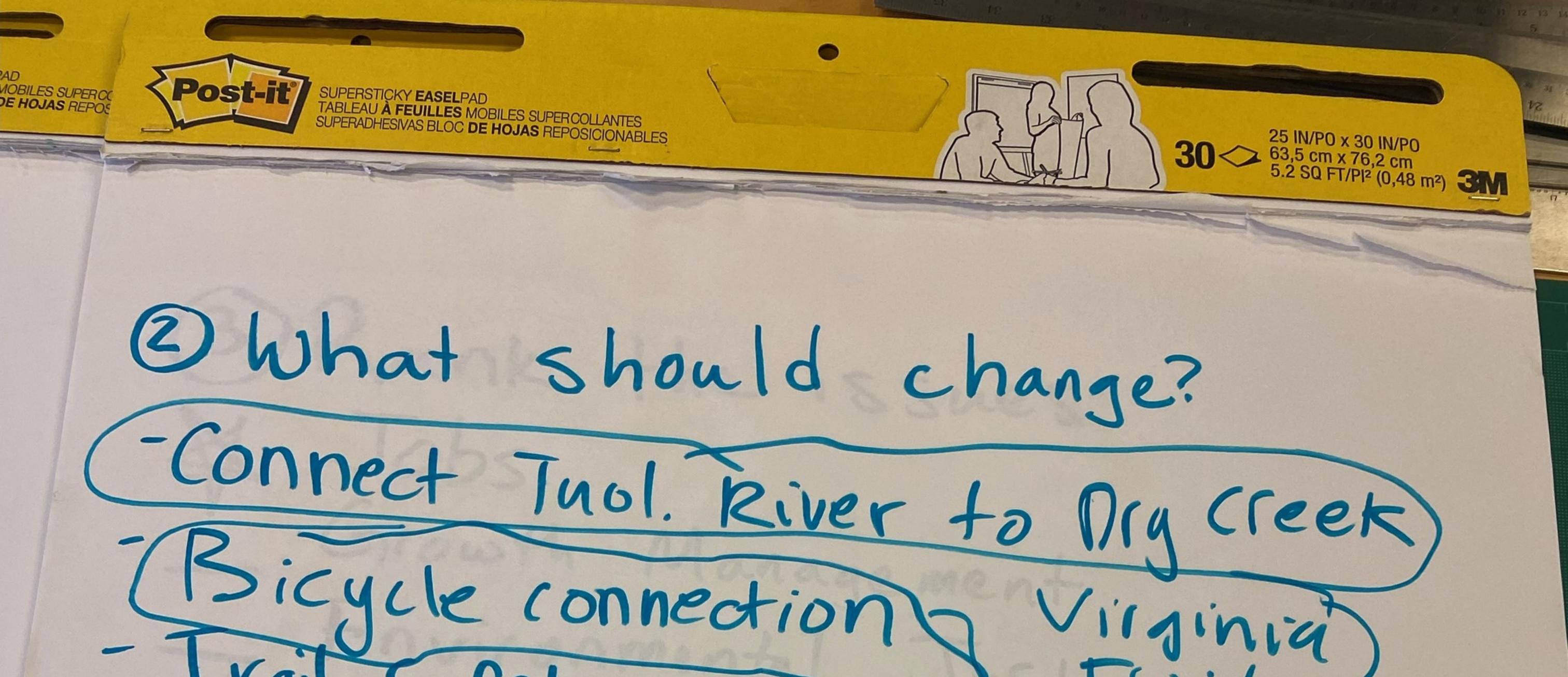


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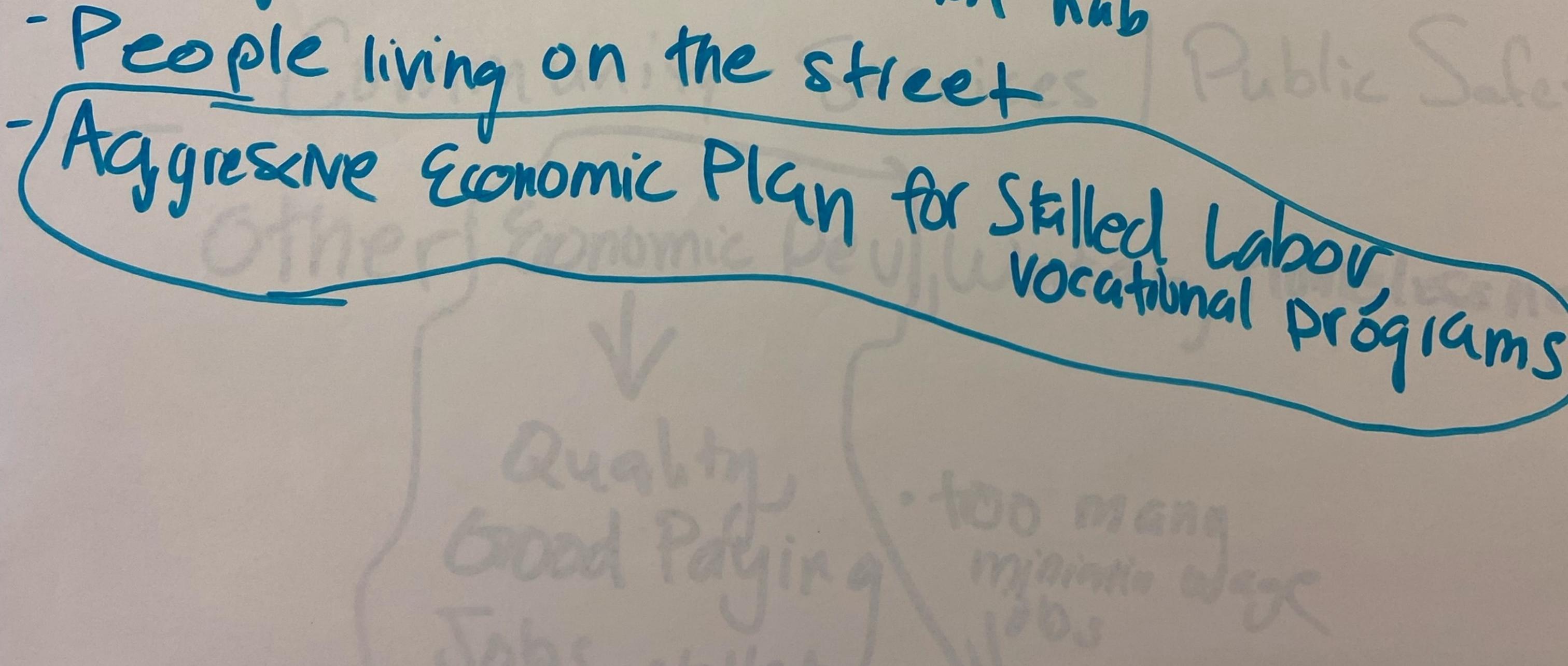
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Other Ewnomic Peu, Water, Monelasnes Qualty, too many Good Payir 9 minimin alage Jobs, skilled Down the Workforce

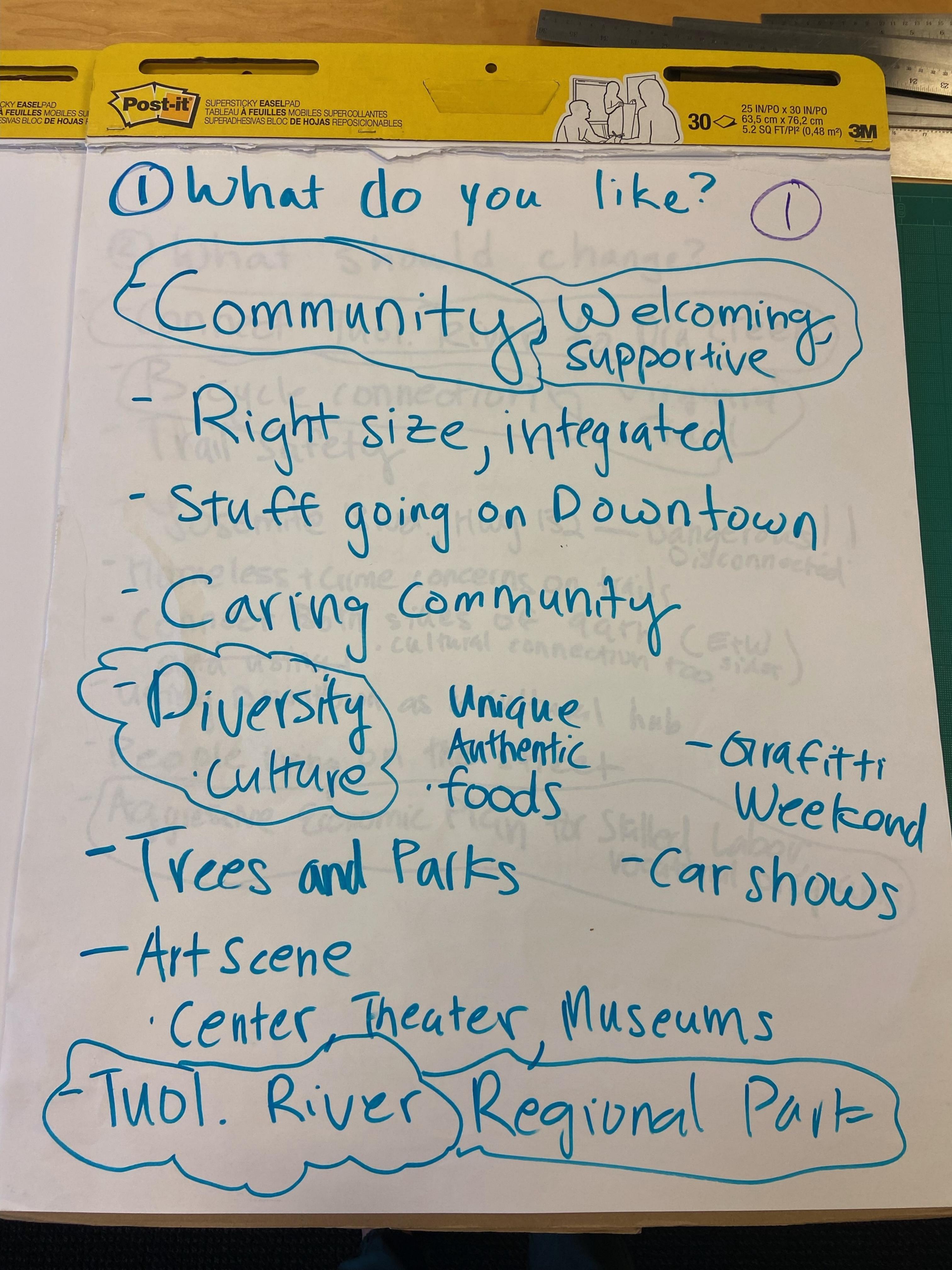


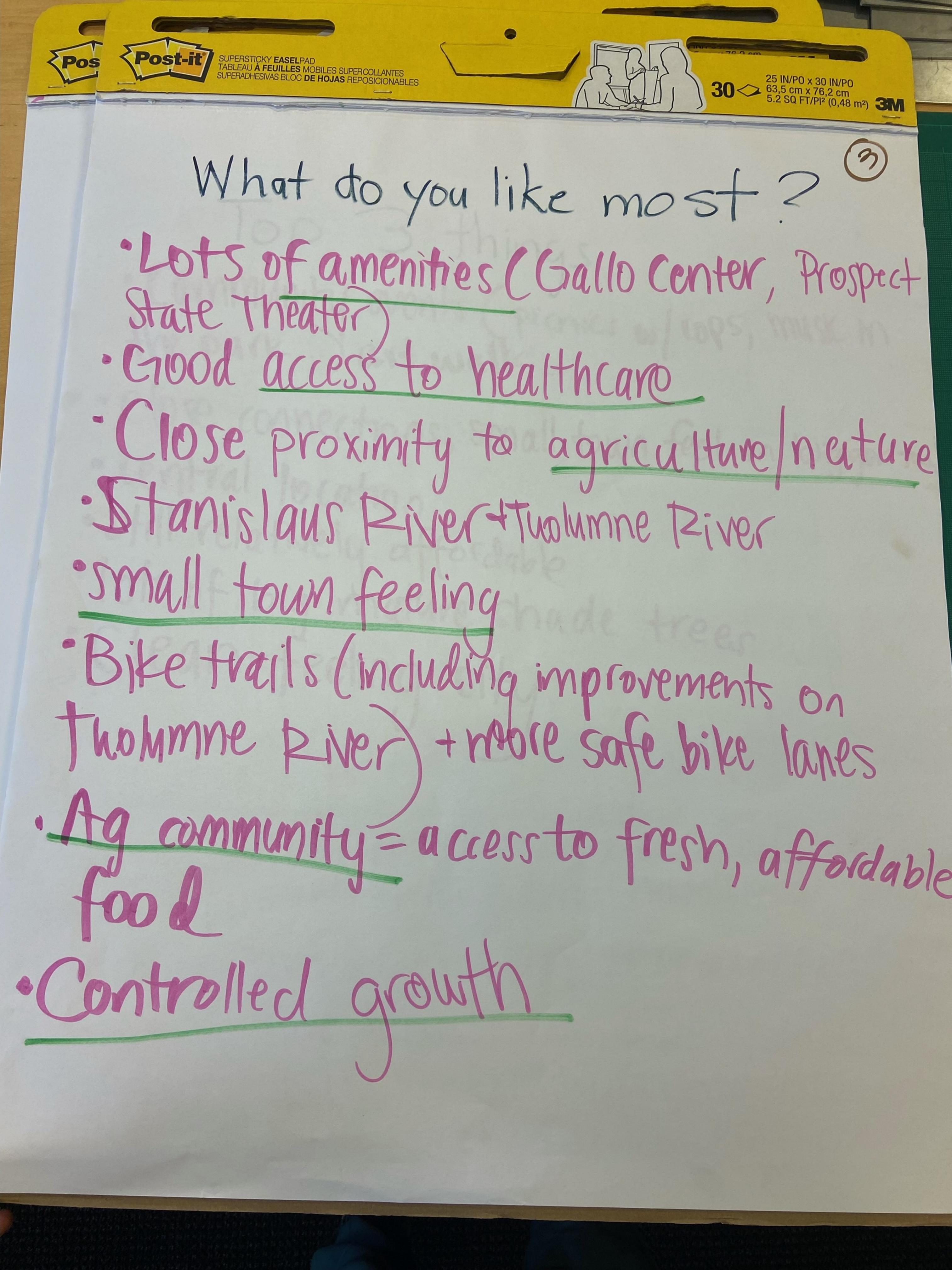


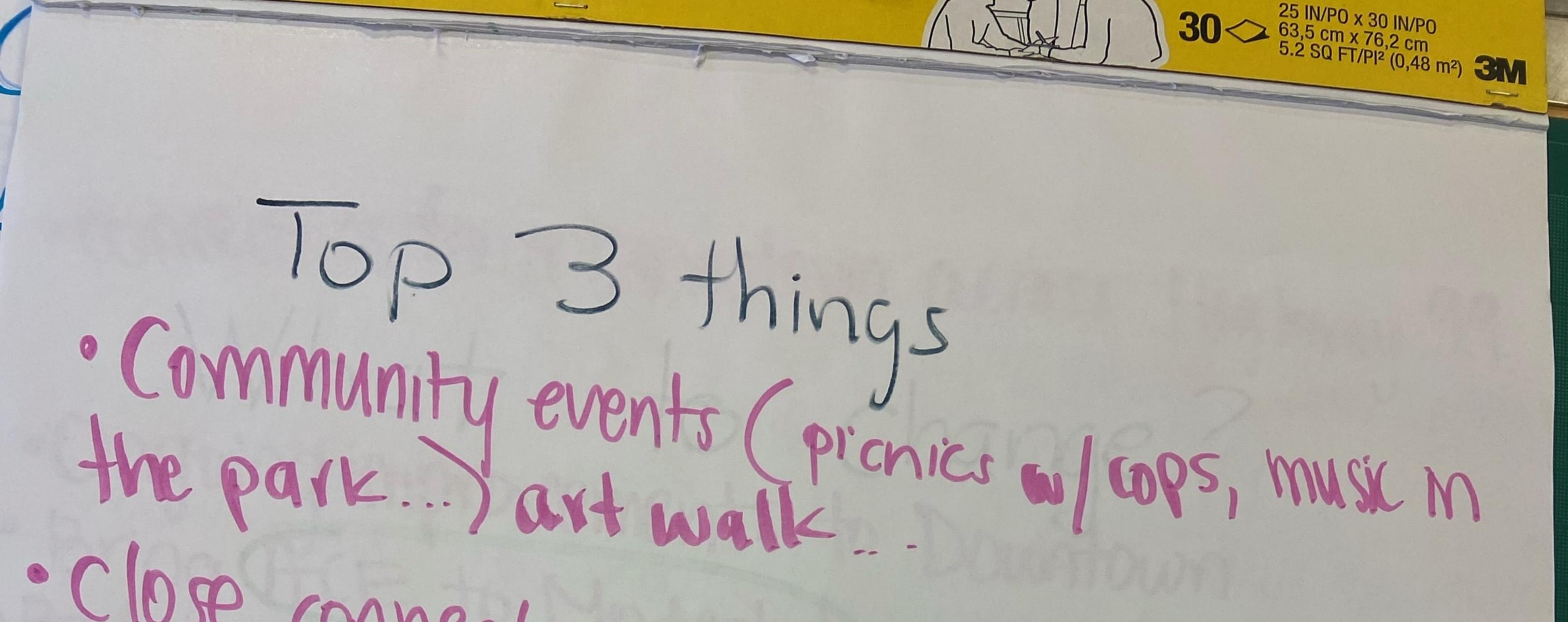
- Trail Safety - Josemite Blud., Hwy 132 - Dangerous!! - Homeless + Crime concerns on trails - Connect Both sides OF garh (Etw) - and using 1 - cultural connection to sider) - Using Downtown as a Cultural hub



Other the Watter Co

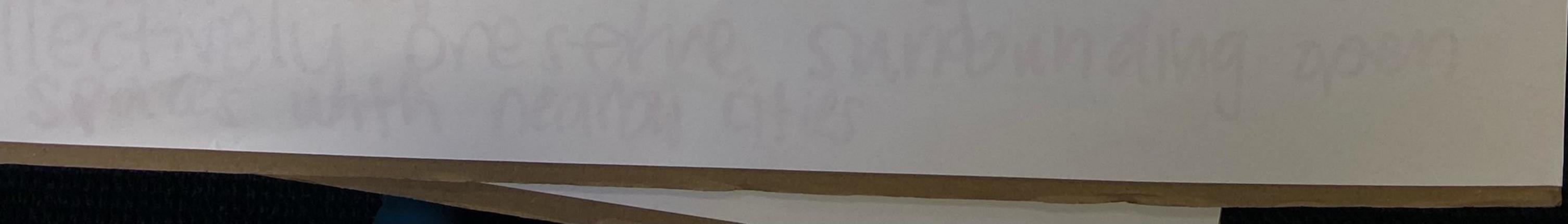


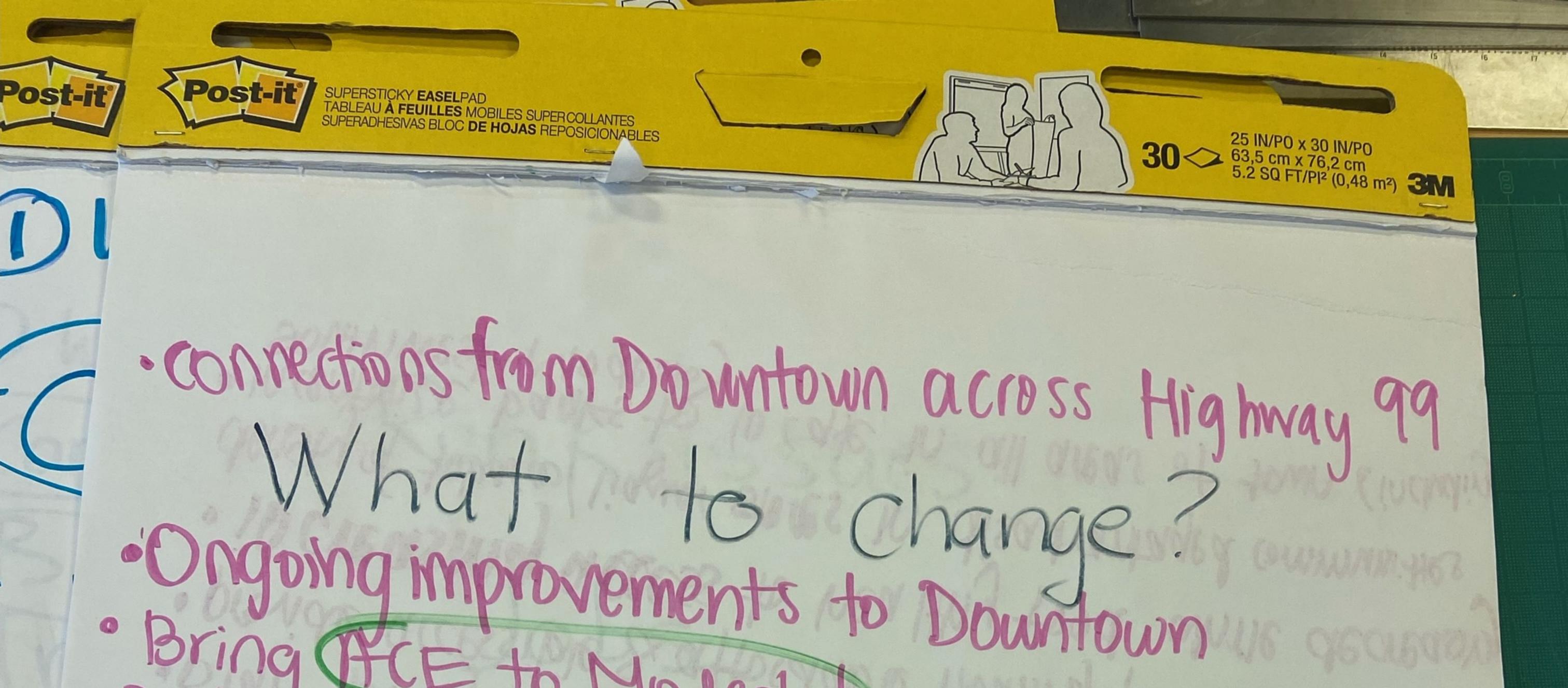




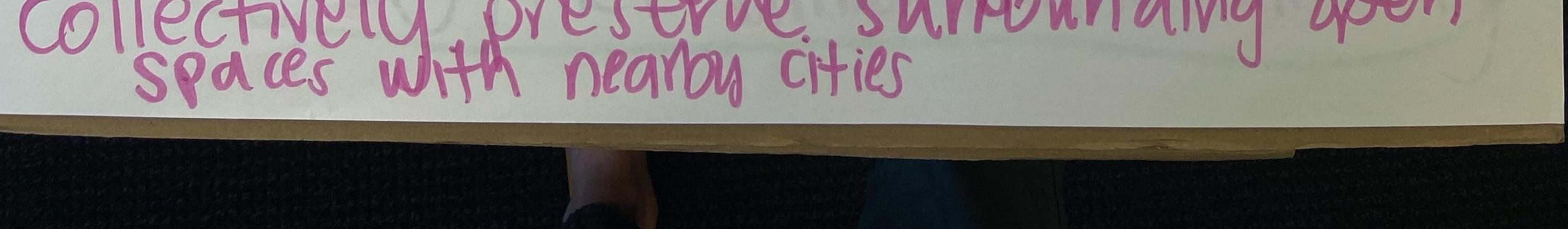
· Close connections, small town feel in bigger tom · Central location still relatively affordable lots of big mature shade trees Clean-feeling city

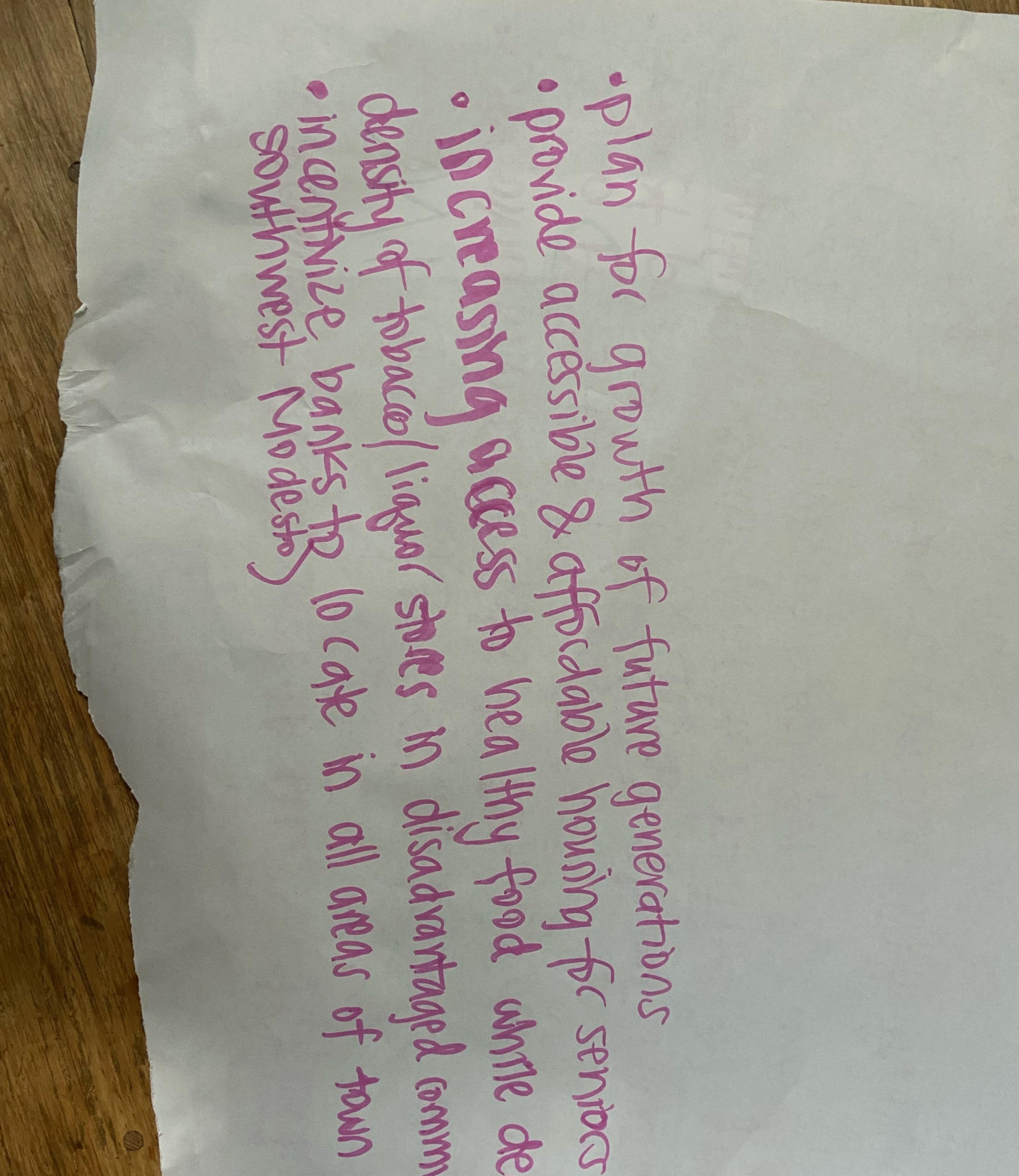
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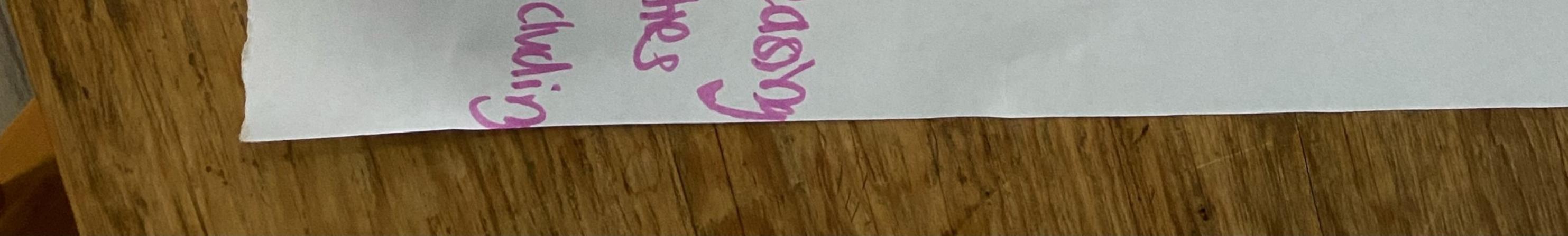


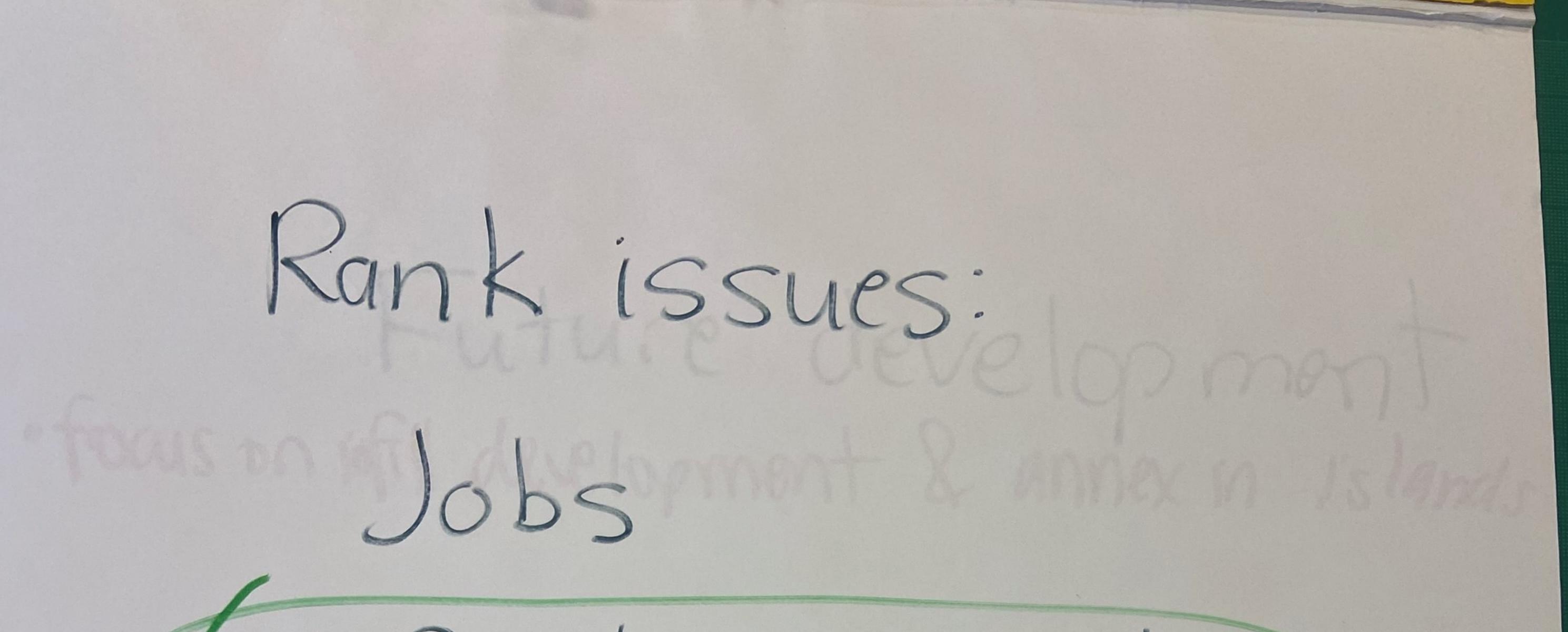
· Bring OFCE to Modesto · Protect prime soils & Chink about gouth Thoughtfully assign privrities to types of growth we want and types of open space we want to · look for opportunites to provide multi-family (or denser)infill housing ·more mixed use zoning everywhere to enourage walk abitity & transit use support small neighborhood shopping that supports surrounding residential areas continue to focus (rty resources in South Nodesto & close infrastructure gaps in "islands" without displacing existing residents collectively preserve surpounding open spaces with nearby cities



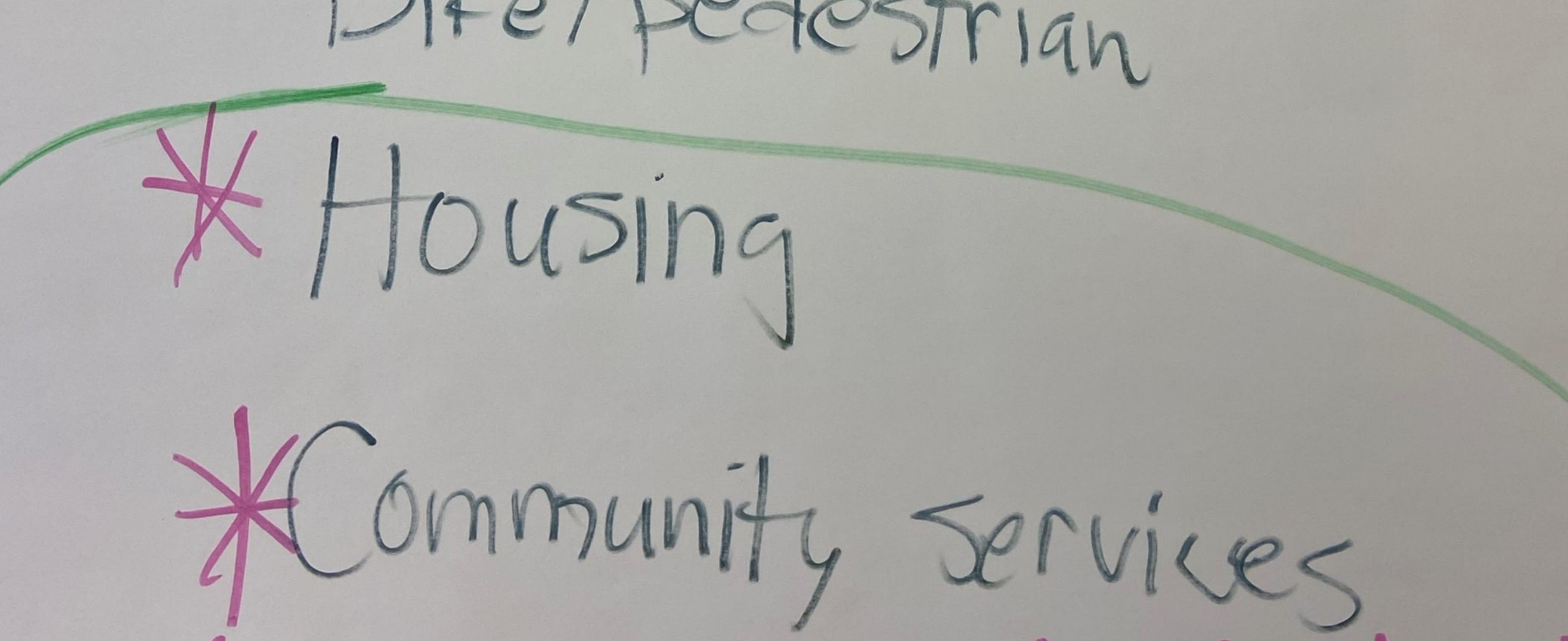


access to healthy food white deal all areas of town (in

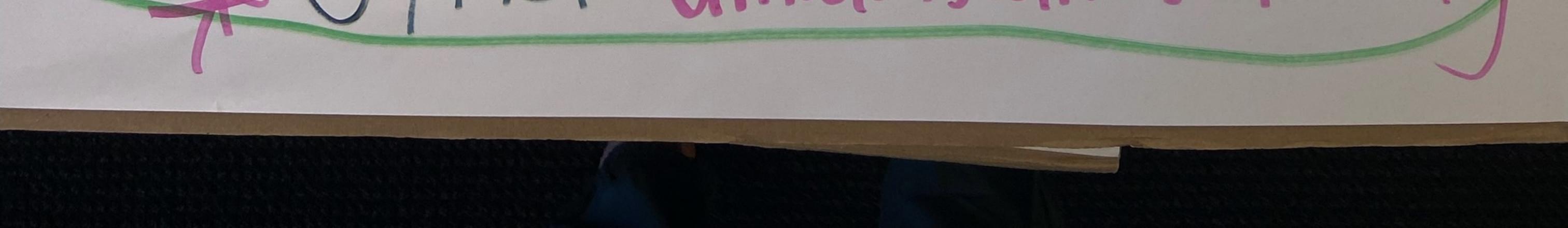


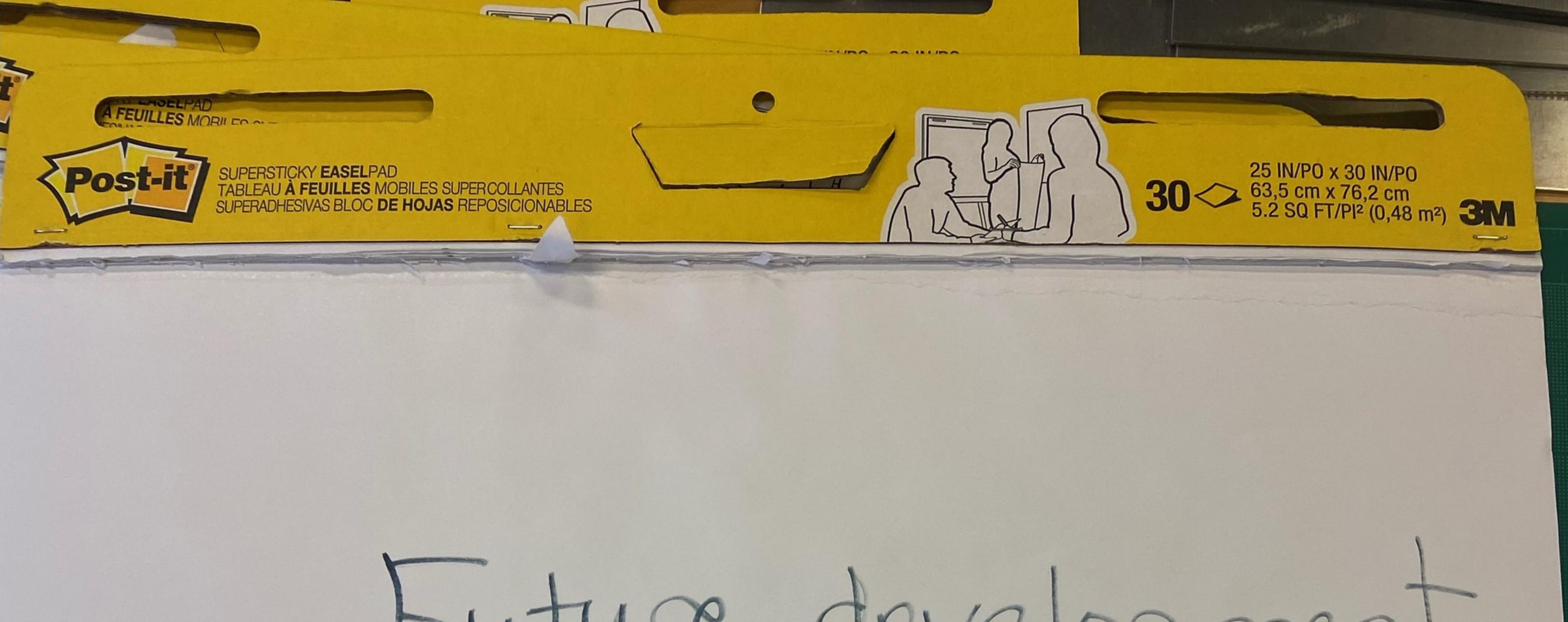


* Growth management *Environmental Justice Open Space Bike/pedestrian



Sether annex islands into city





• focus on infill development & annex in islands

