



GLADSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Chambers – 1100 Delta Avenue
March 03, 2026
5:15 PM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chairperson, Howard Haulotte, called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT	ABSENT
Howard Haulotte	
John DeFiore	
Sam Hewitt	
Mike Kennedy	
Jason Leonard	
Nick Nastoff	
Jennifer Harding (Arrived at 5:16)	

Staff Present: Patricia West, Wendy Taavola, Rob Spreitzer

WPPI Present: Brett Niemi

APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTIONS OF:

1. Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes - February 3, 2026

Motion made by Leonard, Seconded by Nastoff to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2026.

Voting Yea: Haulotte, DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Nastoff, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

West distributed a summary of the sign survey feedback which was not included in the packet for review during agenda item number 6.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2. Master Plan Annual Review

Goal 5: Environment & Recreation

West introduced Wendy Taavola, Director of Parks and Recreation, who provided a line-by-line update on each objective and strategy. Many of the initiatives are ongoing; however, Taavola highlighted several key efforts, including planned harbor improvements, continued pursuit of ADA accessibility, campground upgrades, completion of the pickleball court at the Sports Park, and reconfiguration of the tubing runs at the ski hill. She also discussed the removal of the previous boardwalk and the

continued pursuit of grant funding for its replacement, as well as a pram rental program in partnership with the Gladstone Sail School. The Recreation Plan is a five-year plan implemented in 2022, and it is anticipated that it will be reviewed again in 2027.

No action was taken on this agenda item. Discussions and updates on the Master Plan for the additional goals will be planned for in the next Planning Commission Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

INFORMATION SHARING

3. Data Centers & Cryptomining Presentation by WPPI Energy

West introduced Brett Niemi, Senior Energy Services Manager for WPPI Energy, who provided a presentation on data centers and crypto-mining operations. Niemi outlined the differences between traditional data centers and crypto-mining facilities and discussed the potential benefits and challenges communities may face when considering these types of developments. He also noted that non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) can sometimes complicate the public process and limit opportunities for community input. Niemi further explained that, on a national scale, current energy supply is not sufficient to meet the growing demand from proposed data center developments.

Commissioner Haulotte asked whether Gladstone's proximity to water would make the community attractive for these types of operations. Niemi responded that while the location could be appealing, the City currently lacks the electrical infrastructure needed to support the estimated 5–20 megawatts required for such facilities without constructing a new substation.

Commissioner Leonard inquired about potential sound impacts on surrounding areas. Niemi indicated he was not able to speak to that topic.

Commissioner DeFiore asked for clarification regarding the need for a new substation versus a new power plant. It was clarified that the City would be responsible for constructing a new substation if required, while WPPI Energy would be responsible for securing the necessary power supply.

4. Leading Rural Michigan Program Updates

West provided an update on the leadership program she is participating in, noting that she attended an in-person workshop in Gaylord the previous month.

5. North Shore Development Updates

West provided several updates on the North Shore Development, noting that the City Commission approved proceeding with engineering plans for infrastructure improvements, including water, sewer, and road systems.

Additionally, the staff will be requesting permission from the City Commission to pursue Congressional Directed Spending through the office of Senator Gary Peters to support infrastructure for the project.

6. Sign Ordinance Survey Feedback

West distributed and summarized sign survey feedback, which is included as an attachment to the meeting minutes.

7. Planning Commission Training Opportunities

West shared several Planning Commission training opportunities for consideration.

8. Upcoming Dimensional Variance Request

West shared that a dimensional variance request for the United Methodist Church (1920 Lake Shore Dr.) will be considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals on Monday, March 23 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Chambers. Notice of the public hearing has been distributed to the required entities.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Hewitt thanked Brett Niemi for the information he provided on data centers and crypto-mining.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 PM ET.

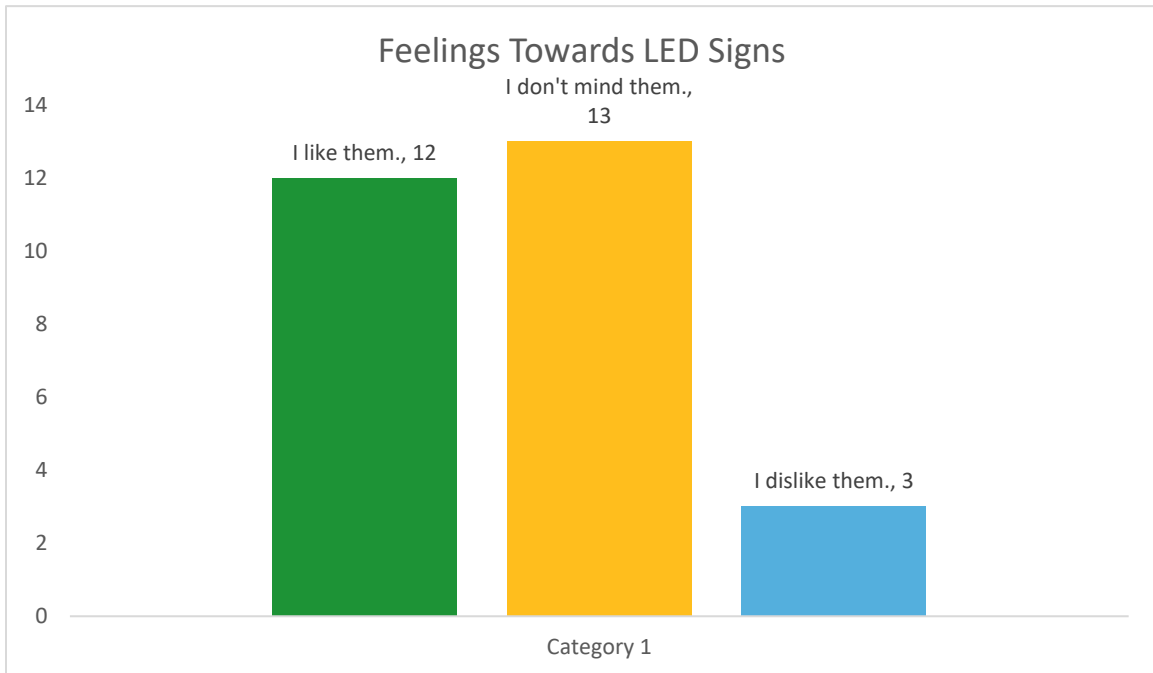
Gladstone

PLANNING COMMISSION

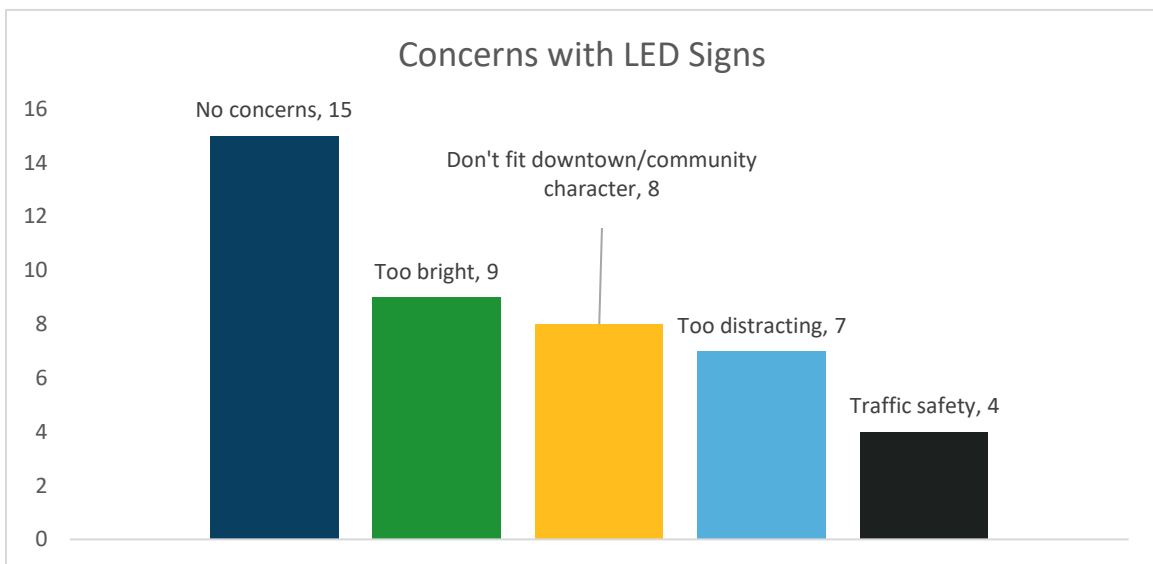
Sign Survey Feedback

Total Responses: 29

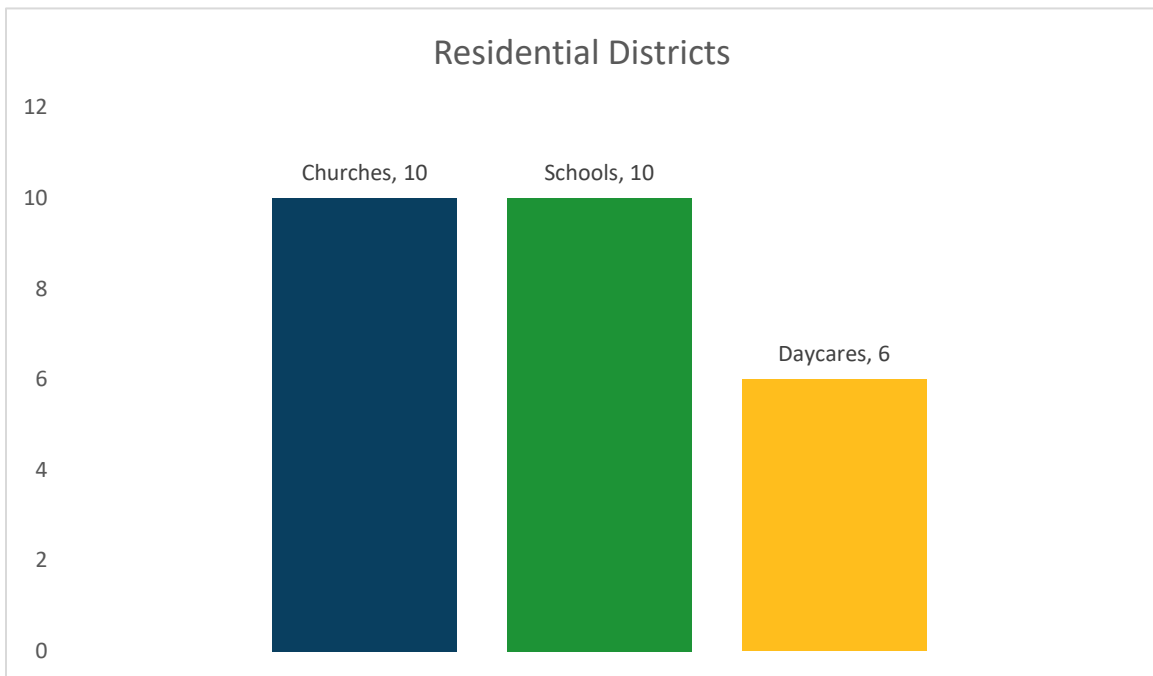
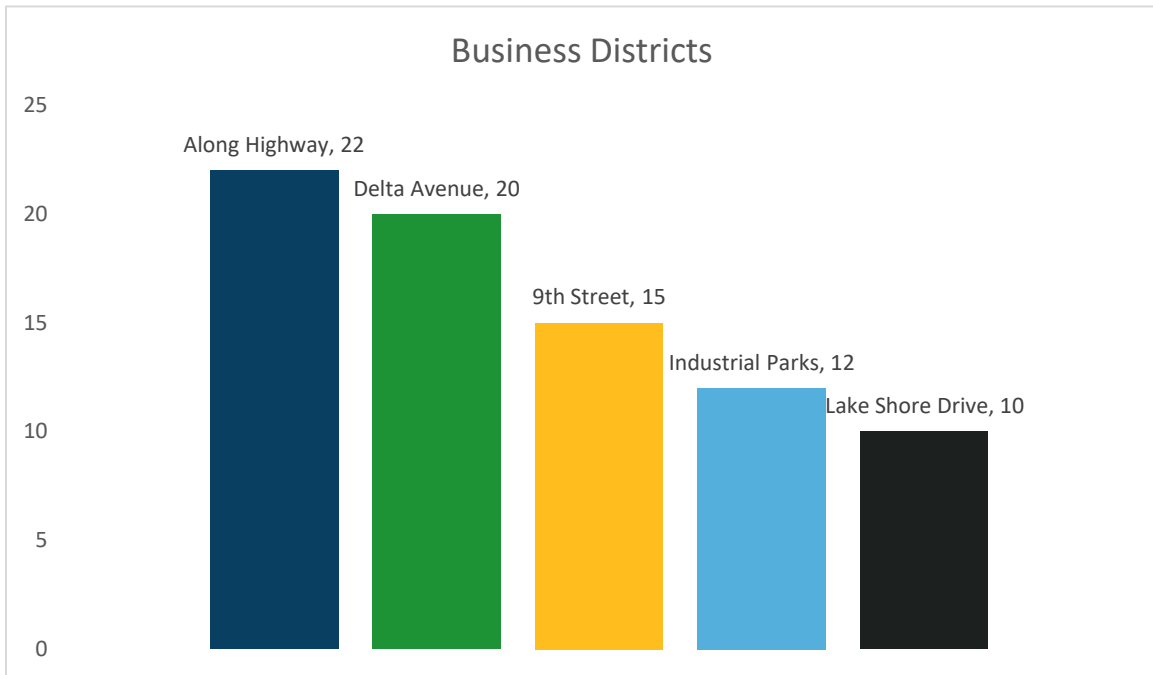
What best describes your feelings about LED or electronic signs in the Gladstone community?



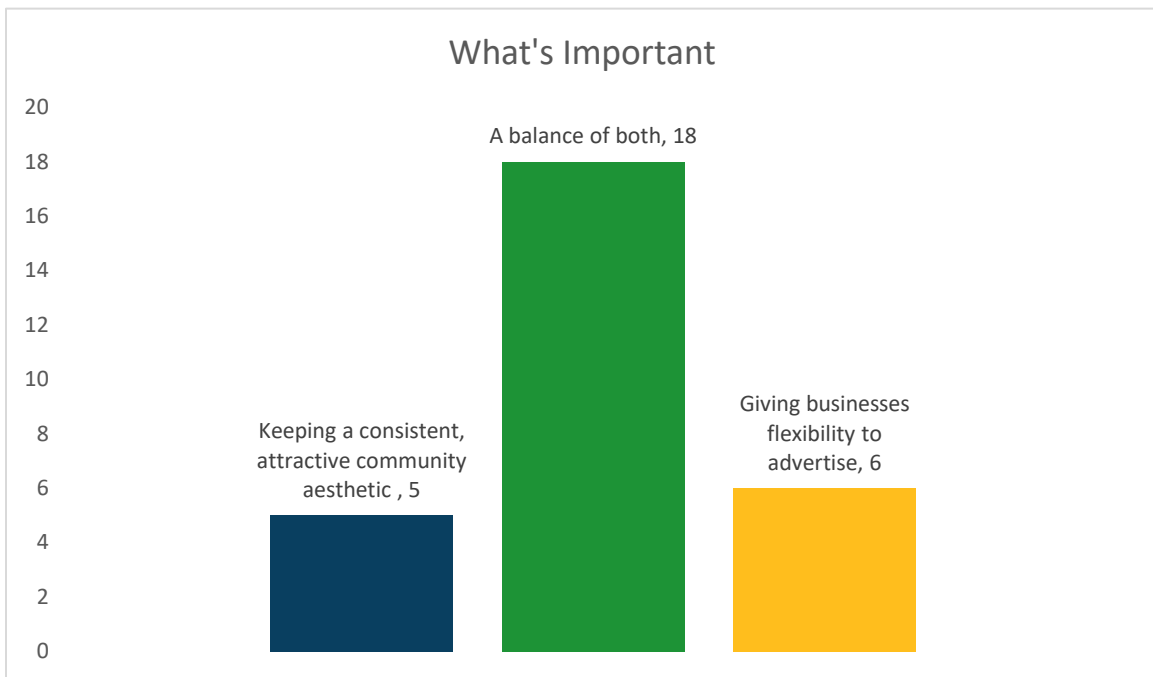
What concerns, if any, do you have about LED signs and digital message boards? (Check all that apply)



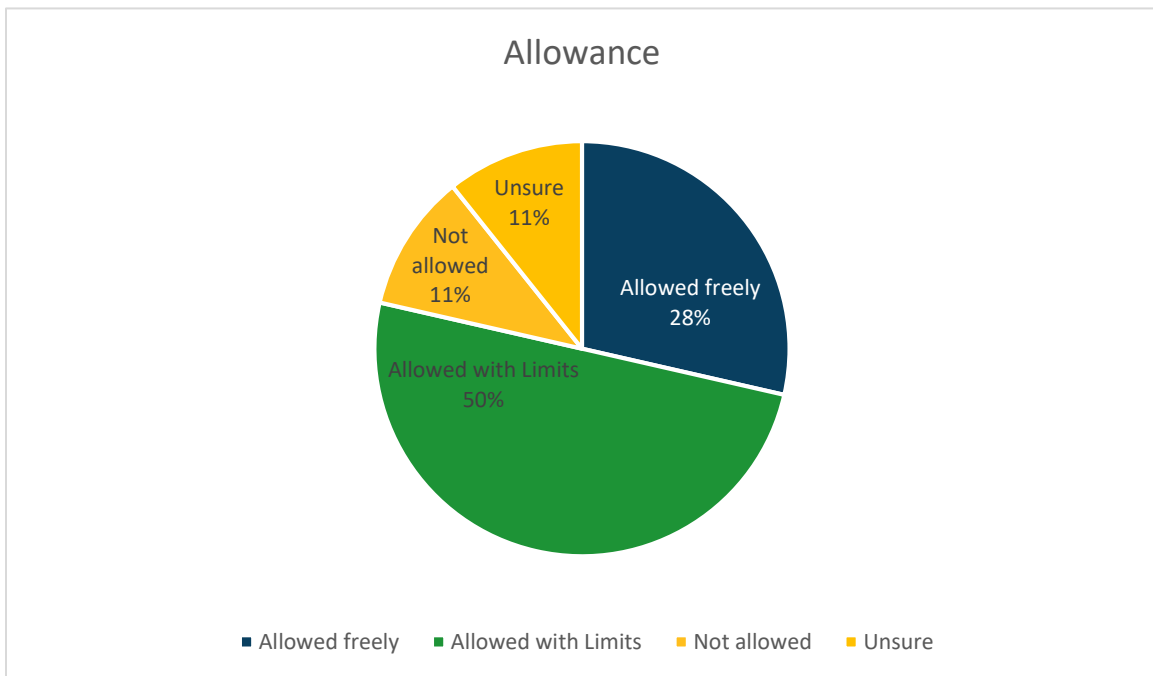
Where, if anywhere, do you think LED signs and digital message boards make sense? (Check all that apply)



Which matters more to you?



In your opinion, LED signs and digital message boards should be...



Is there anything you'd like the City of Gladstone to consider when it comes to signage, especially LED and digital message boards?

- My only real concern is illuminated signs being too bright in residential areas. There should be a time limit to use them or a way to limit brightness to under a certain candlepower etc.
- How much would it cost to implement this project, cost to post messages or should it be only for sharing community information and who would determine what can be posted?
- Being able to have digital signs that can be updated with current information (change of hours, closed for weather, special events, etc.) seems better than a stagnant printed sign. City leaders should have some

rules about the signs to help the community keep its character, but they can be useful technology when used properly.

- Gladstone is a historical community. Maintaining this integrity is vital.
- Where they should be allowed is where signs are permitted. I feel the restrictions should be based on other things such as speed and brightness of messages.
- Each business has its own financial amounts. Allowing the. Business to decide on the size, shape, and color of the sign would be most helpful. I understand making sure the sign is high enough over the sidewalk to avoid pedestrians hitting it, but there doesn't need to be a rule for how big or small it should be. Let the business decide that.
- Signage is every thing
- I dislike the type of movable letter message boards that have letters that fall off. They are dated and now look very unprofessional.
- Personally I think they bring a lot of attention to businesses in a positive way! It catches people's attention whether they are walking or driving a scenic route to that specific business.
- The First Lutheran Church on Minneapolis Ave. put one in without asking and it can be awful at night. Every 10 seconds a new color scheme, message and image changes and it flickers down the street through the windows. I really wish these were banned within the city residential areas. They are so bright they light up bedrooms at night trying to sleep. I wish they had hour limits, like 8am to 8pm. At night they should be turned off or dimmed.
- surveys should be done more often
- Businesses need to advertise. If you live in a business district/DDA you should expect signage.