



Appendix C

Public & Stakeholder Engagement



APPENDIX B: WEST END REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES PLAN

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

ABSTRACT

The City of Staunton is working with a consultant team to facilitate a Revitalization Strategic Plan process for its West End neighborhoods. This effort is the first holistic plan for Staunton's West End area. An engagement process aims to define the community's vision, establish goals, and detail a list of subsequent actions to implement the plan. The final Strategic Plan, scheduled to be complete in the summer of 2024, will present Strategic, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) actions to guide the West End's revitalization.



West End Revitalization Strategies Plan

Public and Stakeholder Engagement Report

In recent years, the City of Staunton designated the West End as one of its high-priority areas. In the fall of 2020, members of the Staunton City Council attended a West End Community meeting and gathered comments on community needs. In subsequent months, the City Council held a retreat to develop the “Staunton Plan,” which identified the West End as a strategic focus area and committed to providing resources “to promote this community as a vibrant area that has diverse business opportunities, cultural offerings, and great potential for economic growth and stability.” Various initiatives began advancing a West End effort in the ensuing years, but the City still needed a holistic plan to establish a cohesive vision. However, local officials pursued a new initiative in 2023 that would establish a West End Revitalization Strategic Plan, which aims to:

- Develop a **cohesive vision** that bridges livability and economic development.
- Develop achievable approaches to **revitalize the commercial corridor**.
- Improve the overall **quality of life** in the West End.

Community engagement was the driving force of this planning process and the final RSP document. Participants identified concerns, needs, challenges, and assets. Public feedback led to the vision statement, goals, and recommendations. That engagement began before the actual project process began. Feedback from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment was beneficial in providing a baseline from an earlier series of meetings and a community survey. Under the RSP effort, public involvement included an online survey and map survey, two open houses, and a workshop. There were several other informal opportunities for the community’s voices to be heard and help guide the direction of this plan.

Quick Facts:

- 289 total people participated
 - 4% of Primary Study Area population
- 213 took online survey in the Winter of 2023/2024
 - 74% of participants throughout this process
- 1290 unique comments received
 - 279 from community meetings
 - 1,011 from online survey and map survey

West End Engagement Efforts

The West End Revitalization Strategies Plan (RSP) would be a community—and data-driven process. As such, City officials wanted to ensure a robust and inclusive engagement effort to develop the plan. The City’s consultants (EPR, P.C.) worked with a staff team to develop an outreach and engagement plan, with initial efforts beginning in late 2023.

This report details public and stakeholder work related to the West End RSP. The following pages summarize engagement strategies, document results, and describe the next steps.



Overview of Activities

The West End RSP process involved the following elements. This report documents the results from each.

- Past Engagement
- Stakeholder Discussions (November 2023 to January 2024)
- Community Open House Event (January 9, 2024)
- Community Survey (December 2023 and January 2024)
- Community Workshop (March 5, 2024)
- Community Open House (May 7, 2024)
- Final Survey (May 2024)

Public feedback produced consistent results, with common themes in each engagement strategy. Community comments guide the RSP process and the plan content. The final plan will clearly explain how public feedback led to the West End's vision statement, goals, and recommendations.



Past Engagement

Previous West End Efforts

In recent years, the City of Staunton collected community feedback in the West End as part of different efforts. For the RSP, the first step for the City's consultant team was to collect engagement results from these recent processes, which included a Brownfields Assessment Grant.

Brownfields Assessment Grant

In 2020, the City submitted a grant application for a Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant under the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This process included public meetings and a community survey.

Survey

The Brownfield survey aimed to achieve the study's goal of a true community-driven revitalization strategy for priority brownfield sites. The survey closed in April 2021 and captured 335 responses. Of those responses:

- 78 percent were West End residents.
- 90 percent were homeowners.
- 10 percent were business owners.
- 12 percent were either city staff representatives, community stakeholders, faith-based organizations, or non-profit organizations.

Survey topics covered:

- Current perceived issues for the West End
- Housing improvements
- Community facilities
- Commercial uses in the West End
- Infrastructure conditions
- The West End's vision

When asked what the current state of West End looks like to respondents, common words included neglected, forgotten, and depressed. However, the respondents are hopeful for the future state of the West End and used words such as vibrant, welcoming, green, and livable when asked to describe its future. The top three pressing issues identified were the availability and quality of goods and services, neighborhood reputation, and storefront appearance.

In summation, priority improvements include housing rehabilitation, neighborhood recreation and community facilities, small businesses, and improved streetscapes. Respondents additionally believe existing local businesses are somewhat meeting local demand, and current demand will support new businesses. The top three desirable commercial tenants were:

- Fresh produce sellers,
- Sit-down family restaurants, and
- Bakery and/or ice cream parlors.



Business owners were an important cohort for the survey, with questions tailored to those respondents. Most business owners indicated that they had frequent customers from Staunton and Augusta County, while some stated their business typically served the West End neighborhoods. A smaller percentage stated that their business attracted customers from other areas, including the Central Shenandoah Region to national and international markets. Businesses believed they would attract additional customers to the West End if there were street landscaping/beautification, improved sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, and an increased number of special community events or additional community attractions.

Refer to the Appendix for a detailed report on survey results.

Community Meetings

The City hosted community meetings during the Brownfield process, where consultants presented materials and collected additional comments. The Appendix includes a PowerPoint from the April 27, 2021, meeting. Feedback was consistent with the survey, summarized in the same PowerPoint.

Other Community Discussion

Local officials collected other feedback by attending neighborhood meetings and recording other citizens' comments. Common themes included:

- Invest in a holistic plan for the West End – this led to the RSP effort.
- Fill abandoned buildings, especially along West Beverley.
- Improve walkability with new and improved sidewalks.
- Pursue beautification efforts.
- Foster housing and retail in the Chestnut Hills area.
- Relocate the Juvenile Court to the West End.
- Help create new gathering spaces, such as coffee shops and restaurants.
- Improve roadways and bike amenities.
- Provide an outdoor pavilion for a farmers market space.
- Recruit businesses to choose West End.

Stakeholder Discussions

As part of the West End Revitalization Strategy Plan process, the City's consultant team coordinated stakeholder discussions and spoke with residents in one-on-one discussions. This dialogue included:

- A meeting with City Departments and local organizations,
- Attendance at the Staunton West End Business Association (SWEBA) meetings, and
- Conversations with other stakeholders.

Department and Organization Meeting

The City's consultant team scheduled a department and organization meeting at City Hall on November 28, 2024. Stakeholders represented several City departments, agencies, and other community service groups. Attendees included:

- The Office on Youth
- Habitat for Humanity
- The Housing Authority
- The Community Development Office
- Public Works
- The City Manager's Office
- Economic Development

Consultants asked attendees specific questions about community challenges in the West End, possible risks, and strengths.

Strengths

EPR consultants asked participants to identify community strengths in the West End.

- **People:** Several attendees live in the West End or grew up in those neighborhoods. They mentioned the sense of community. Many residents are attached to their homes, and families are deeply rooted.
- **Safe:** Many parts of the West End are safe. Police data supports that claim.
- **Historic:** These neighborhoods have a rich history that is essential to the stories of Staunton and the Shenandoah Valley.
- **Parks and Recreation:** There are two large parks (Montgomery Hall and Gypsy Hill) with numerous amenities.
- **Industrial Opportunities:** There are existing sites available and ready for industrial use.
- **Community Services:** Community organizations, such as the Salvation Army, serve and support the community. services,
- **Existing Businesses:** The Staunton West End Business Association is active. Several businesses offer affordable goods and services.
- **Location:** The West End has easy access to Woodrow Wilson Parkway and downtown. It is also a stopping point for regional travel.
- **Neighborhood Feel:** The West End has a neighborhood feel and is a unique place, different than downtown.

Weaknesses

Participants mentioned various challenges for the West End.

- **Stormwater:** In the West End, slopes and topography make flooding a recurring issue. The existing infrastructure cannot convey enough stormwater, causing flash flooding. Occasionally, these issues flood basements in certain neighborhoods.
 - There are two stream restoration projects in the study area to help address these needs.
 - Participants suggested pervious surfaces, stream daylighting, and on-site stormwater features.
- **Water Pressure:** Possible water pressure issues were discussed. The Juvenile Courts project on West Beverley will help address some of these needs.
- **Sewer Capacity:** There was some discussion about whether there would be adequate sewer capacity if additional developments occurred in the West End.
- **Walkability:** A common theme was the lack of sidewalks and bike amenities. Participants also discussed safe routes to the school and parks. This topic can also overlay with childhood obesity.
- **Small Business:** The group asked about opportunities to add small, locally-owned businesses.
- **Health:** The discussion included health statistics, including obesity, tobacco use, and other factors. The consultants would follow up by examining Augusta Health data.
- **Aging Population:** As part of the health topic, the West End neighborhoods are aging. Coupled with limited incomes, concerns about property upkeep and affordable housing existed.
- **Coordination:** There are several efforts and organizations conducting work in the West End, but these groups can operate in silos.
- **Branding:** It may be difficult to brand the West End, given its collection of different neighborhoods.

Opportunities

Consultants recorded possible opportunities discussed in the meeting.

- **Land:** There are several vacant and underutilized properties, especially along West Beverley and with the rural parcels to the south. Some areas are a blank slate and present unique opportunities.
- **Health Services:** There could be opportunities to attract additional access to health care services.
- **Juvenile Court Project:** The City is relocating the Juvenile Courts building to West Beverley Street. The project will replace a vacant commercial building and offer opportunities for reinvestment in the West End.
- **Stream Restoration:** Two stream restoration projects are underway, which will help address the stormwater issues.
- **West Beverley Improvements:** There are existing streetscape projects that will help address bike and pedestrian needs.

Threats

The risks conversation involved future threats. However, the topics were similar to the challenges discussion.

- **Health:** Existing community health issues could worsen, given the aging population. The consultant team would need to conduct additional research.



Staunton West End Business Association (SWEBA)

City officials and their consultants attended two SWEBA meetings to discuss the RSP process and coordinate efforts. The Business Association agreed to share information through their social media channels. Individual members advised how to reach out to West End residents and later helped direct people to the January 9th Open House event. The two SWEBA meetings were on December 12th, 2023, and January 9th, 2024.

Other Discussions

Consultants spoke with other residents and departments about the West End. Parks and Recreation discussed active plans for the two parks and recent improvements for the golf course at Gypsy Hill.



Open House Event

The City of Staunton hosted a kick-off meeting for its West End Revitalization Strategy effort on January 9, 2024. The event was the first of three community meetings and the beginning of the in-person outreach process. There were 52 total attendees, 46 of whom were members of the public. The meeting was an open house format where participants could arrive any time within the 90-minute time window. Posters and activities encircled the room for participants to learn about this plan and give feedback.

The meeting had three objectives:

- Build awareness,
- Identify community needs, and
- Guide goal themes.

The posters emulated these objectives. A welcome poster, project timeline, demographic and business data, and past engagement summary all gave awareness of the project. Then, the following three posters collected information on community needs. Additionally, a computer screen with the Social Pinpoint map allowed attendees to add to the survey online. Lastly, posters helped to define goal themes and guide the community's vision for the West End.

Below is a summary of the results for each interactive poster included in this meeting.

Welcome Activity

On the "Welcome Poster," meeting attendees were asked, "What do you expect from this process?" and to place their responses on a sticky note. Common expectations from attendees included tangible change and action, focus on community input, and improvements related to stormwater, green spaces, and sidewalk and road improvements.

Past Engagement Activity

On the "Past Engagement Poster," attendees could add comments on past engagement efforts that should be included in this plan. Attendees said there was an extensive list of needs and wants in the last community meeting for the Brownfields Grant. However, the community was never provided with an accurate or completed list or a description of the dollar amount spent on the Brownfields Grant. Attendees also want to consider different communities within the West End, as each neighborhood may have different needs.

Three Words Activity

Attendees were asked to write three words describing the West End on sticky notes. The words written were as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| • Potential (7) | • Dynamic (2) |
| • Historic | • Neglected (4) |
| • Green (2) | • Underserved |



- Diverse
- Growing
- Residential
- Close Knit
- Characteristic
- Changing
- Evolving
- Community
- Spirited
- Isolated
- Dreary (3)
- Under-utilized (2)
- Parks
- Home
- Childhood
- Neighborly
- Rough
- Convenience
- Refreshing
- Affordable
- Quiet (2)
- Tree-less

Assets and Challenges Activity

Attendees were asked to identify assets contributing to their quality of life in the West End. Then, they were asked to identify challenges faced in their community.

Assets

Attendees identified a wide range of assets within the West End community:

- Gypsy Hill Park
- Montgomery Park
- History and historic buildings
- Housing
- The people
- Affordable
- Valley Mission
- Jones Garden
- Juvenile Court
- Potential for growth
- Potential for connectivity to parks and businesses
- Local businesses
- Quiet
- Not a lot of traffic

Challenges

Attendees identified a wide range of challenges with the West End community:

- Walkability and sidewalks
- Walking access to schools
- Transportation
- Road quality
- Roadside parking in residential areas
- Limited places to gather and need for third spaces
- Investment purchases and absentee landlords
- Housing in bad condition
- Valley Mission
- Homeless tent camps
- Lack of trees and green infrastructure
- Need more small and local businesses
- Limited SDDA resources in the West End
- Feels disconnected from the rest of Staunton
- “Dreary” and “lackluster”
- Flooding issues
- Section 8 housing needs to be improved
- Too many auto-centric businesses
- Lack of retail
- Storefront beautification
- Food quality and access to local produce and foods
- Need bus lines for working people

Photo Prompts Activity

In the Photo Prompts Activity, two posters displayed four pictures, each of specific and general features that exist within the West End. Attendees were asked to use sticky notes to comment on the photos and identify concerns and opportunities about what the pictures represent within the West End. The pictures used are listed below:

- A. Building Reuse
- B. Community Garden
- C. Transit
- D. Rural Land to the South
- E. Parks
- F. West Beverley Street
- G. Neighborhood Streets
- H. Intersections

Building Reuse

Attendees saw many opportunities related to building reuse in the West End. Opportunities included turning old buildings into housing, tax incentives or local funding for reuse, turning properties into greenspace, adaptive reuse for small-scale clean manufacturing, and reusing buildings to highlight the West End's history. One attendee identified a junkyard in the study area and generally expressed concern over how certain property uses impact the community.

Community Garden

Attendees mainly commented on wanting more community gardens, identifying them as a great way to unite the residents and provide food access. Attendees emphasized the need for more of these and the introduction of rain gardens.

Transit

Attendees see many non-car needs. There are opportunities for mixed transit, more sidewalks, rehab creeks with trails, and safe biking. Additionally, attendees wanted to see all bus stops with roofing for weather protection, especially those located at major activity centers.

Rural Land

Attendees saw rural land as an opportunity for sustainable agriculture, tree farms, or other commercial agricultural purposes, as well as preservation and green space. Attendees expressed concern about the rural land becoming developed, especially with more storage facilities.

Parks

Attendees had positive comments about the parks in the West End. Attendees commented that these were welcoming and beautiful, had great hours, were safe, and hosted good events. Attendees were concerned about limited access to the parks from the West End, primarily for pedestrians, and would like to see more access opportunities within and around them.

West Beverley Street

Attendees emphasized the opportunity for adding sidewalks and improving sidewalks. Additionally, attendees commented that light poles and powerlines should be moved or buried since they take up most of the sidewalks. Attendees commented that there needs to be sidewalks on both sides of the street since there is only one sidewalk to get to and from downtown, and the addition of trees,



streetscapes, and greenery will make West Beverley better. There were also concerns about the lack of retail between downtown and the new court building.

Neighborhood Streets

Attendees primarily identified needs for neighborhood streets. Neighborhood streets need sidewalks, streetlights, defined lanes, and better neighborhood regulation of front yards. One attendee expressed the need for a better definition of neighborhoods in this plan. The attendee suggested that multiple communities should be identified and provided as focal points instead of focusing on the West End.

Intersections

Attendees identified better crosswalks, reflectors for visibility during rain, signalized crosswalks, street diets, shielded lights, wider sidewalks, and more trees and greenery. One attendee raised concern about how dangerous some intersections are and how concerns related to this never seem to be fixed or take a long time.

Goal Themes Activity

Attendees were asked to add goals and comments related to themes on the poster. The themes were:

- Health
- Economy
- Transportation
- Housing
- Environment
- Other

Health

Attendees identified sidewalks and walkability/bike-ability as primary goals. Having a safe community to walk and bike in, especially to schools and parks, would make the West End a healthier community. Additionally, attendees identified goals for clean streams, more trees and greenspaces, restaurants and cafes, and medical facilities.

Economy

Attendees would like to see more support for local businesses and non-profit organizations. These include small green technology, clean manufacturing, clean auto repair, coffee shops and restaurants, entertainment, and family-friendly businesses.

Transportation

Attendees would like to see goals towards traffic calming, crosswalks and sidewalks, road diets, and green infrastructure.

Housing

Attendees would like to see goals towards more affordable housing, multifamily housing, incentives to rehabilitate vacant or unlivable homes, initiatives to help those who cannot financially maintain their homes, and a renter's Bill of Rights.



Environment

Attendees would like to see goals towards trees, cleaning up Buttermilk Spring, landscaping and screening, welcoming streetscapes, green infrastructure, permeable pavement, and stormwater management.

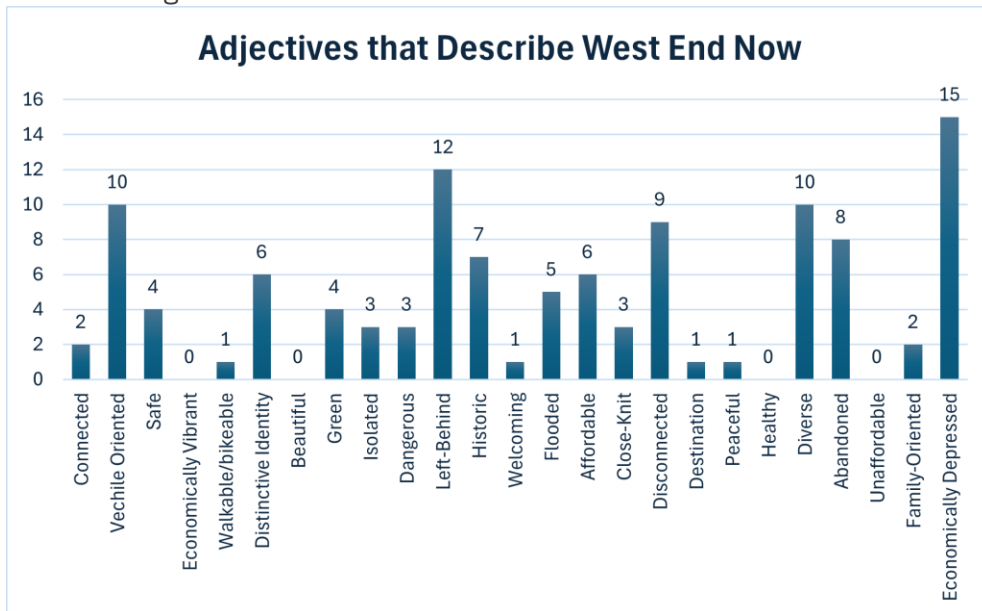
Other

Attendees were asked what other themes they would like to see. Attendees identified youth centers like Booker T. Washington, training for traditional trades, and moving a police station to the new J&DR location for safety.

Adjectives Activity

Meeting attendees were asked to place a dot sticker next to the adjective they thought best described the West End in the present and then in the future. The “West End Now Poster” had the following adjectives:

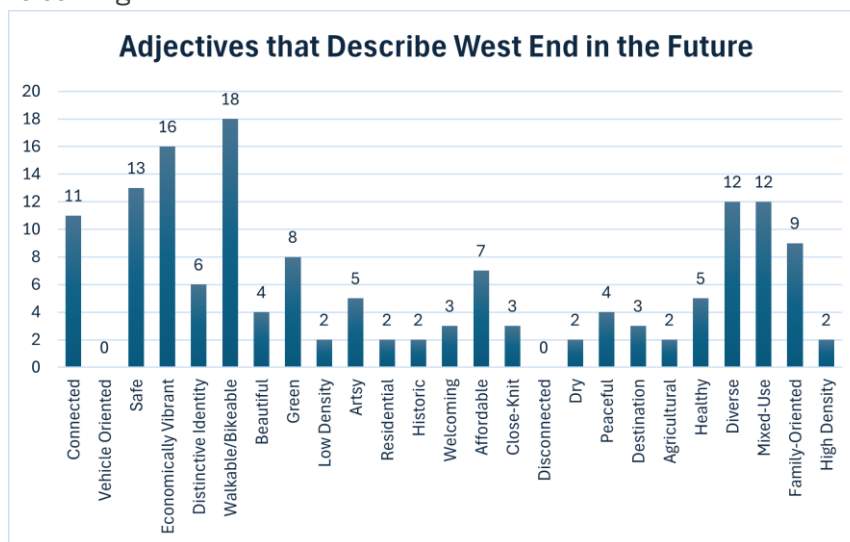
- Connected
- Vehicle Oriented
- Safe
- Economically Vibrant
- Walkable/bikeable
- Distinctive Identity
- Beautiful
- Green
- Isolated
- Dangerous
- Left-Behind
- Historic
- Welcoming
- Flooded
- Affordable
- Close-Knit
- Disconnected
- Destination
- Peaceful
- Healthy
- Diverse
- Abandoned
- Unaffordable
- Family-Oriented
- Economically Depressed



The “West End Now Poster” had 113 dots. Negative words received the most dots. For instance, economically depressed received 15 dots, left-behind received 12 dots, and vehicle-oriented received ten dots. Other adjectives received a moderate number of dots, including distinctive identity, historic, diverse, and affordable.

The “West End in the Future” poster had the following adjectives:

- Connected
- Vehicle Oriented
- Safe
- Economically Vibrant
- Distinctive Identity
- Walkable/Bikeable
- Beautiful
- Green
- Low Density
- Artsy
- Residential
- Historic
- Welcoming
- Affordable
- Close-Knit
- Disconnected
- Dry
- Peaceful
- Destination
- Agricultural
- Healthy
- Diverse
- Mixed-Use
- Family-Oriented
- High Density



The “West End in the Future Poster” had a total of 151 dots. Walkable/bikeable received 18 dots, Economically Vibrant received 16 dots, Safe received 13 dots, and Diverse and Mixed-Use both received 12 dots. Words that were included on both posters are listed below:

- Connected
- Vehicle Oriented
- Safe
- Economically Vibrant
- Walkable/Bikeable
- Distinctive identity
- Beautiful
- Green
- Historic
- Welcoming
- Affordable
- Close-Knit
- Disconnected
- Peaceful
- Destination
- Healthy
- Diverse
- Family-Oriented

The adjectives “distinctive identity” and “affordable” all received about the same number of dots on both boards, which may represent what the community would like to maintain. The adjective “Dangerous” received three dots on the present poster, yet the “Safe” adjective on the future board received 13 dots. The definition of safety may need to be further broken down to understand the needs the community feels are lacking and would want in the future.

Conclusion

The kick-off meeting was successful in achieving its objectives. The meeting raised awareness of the West End Revitalization Strategic Plan, collected details on the community’s needs, and helped guide the community vision. General themes from the community feedback, in no particular order, include:

- Feeling left-behind
- Wanting community gathering space
- Green infrastructure and beautifying the West End
- Walkability and bike-ability
- Stormwater management
- More retail and restaurant commercial opportunities





West End Community Survey

In December 2023, the City of Staunton and its consultants launched an online survey to West End residents, business owners, property owners, and organizations involved with the study area¹. An online platform included two ways of collecting feedback:

1. **Standard Survey:** The project website presented a standard survey containing multiple-choice and free-response questions to help identify community needs and guide a vision for the West End Revitalization Strategy Plan. Two optional demographic-related questions collected information on the respondents. Staff collected seven hard-copy survey responses at the first community meeting in January 2024.
2. **Interactive Map:** Using a Social PinPoint platform, respondents could add comments to an online Map. These location-specific comments allowed participants to identify spots they valued, areas of concern, and opportunities.

Distribution

The City and its consultant team employed several strategies to distribute the survey.

1. **Project Website:** The City's consultants created a website with a link to the survey and the interactive map.
2. **Social Media:** Staunton's communications staff posted survey information on the City's website and social media pages.
3. **Stakeholders:** There were discussions earlier in the process involving local organizations, businesses, and residents. Staunton's consultants communicated with these groups to help distribute the survey through existing networks.
4. **Public Open House:** The City collected hardcopy survey responses at a January 9th event in the study area and shared links to the project website.
5. **Postcard:** The consultant team created a postcard with a QR code for the project site and distributed it to local stakeholders at the Open House event.

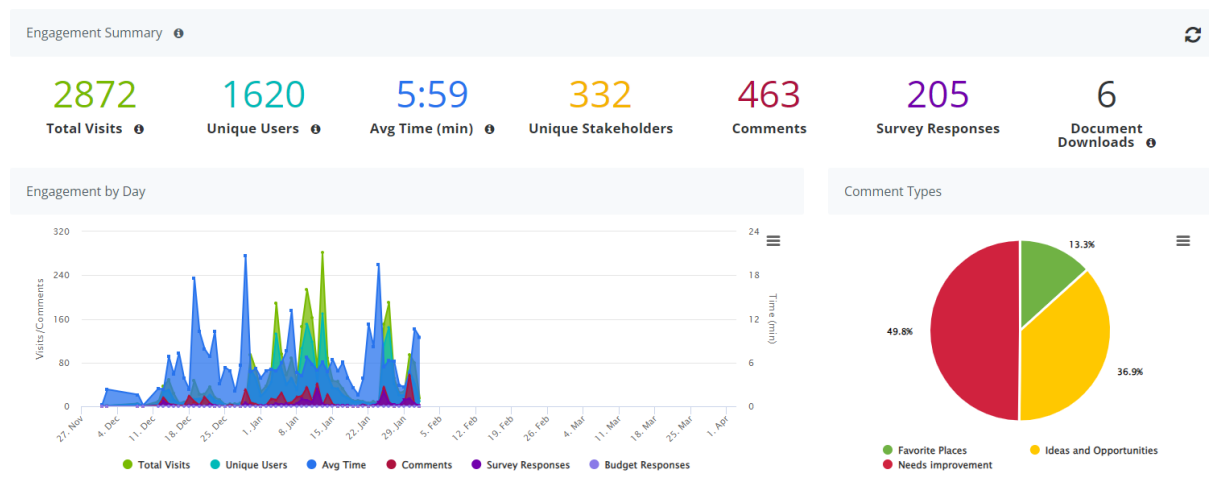
Survey Results Summary

The following summarizes the survey results and comments on the Social Pinpoint map. Major themes include opportunities for business development, needs for bike and pedestrian improvements, maintenance at underutilized properties, and increasing community amenities.

¹ Refer to the West End Study Area memo, which defines the West End and sets a primary and core study area.



Responses by the Numbers



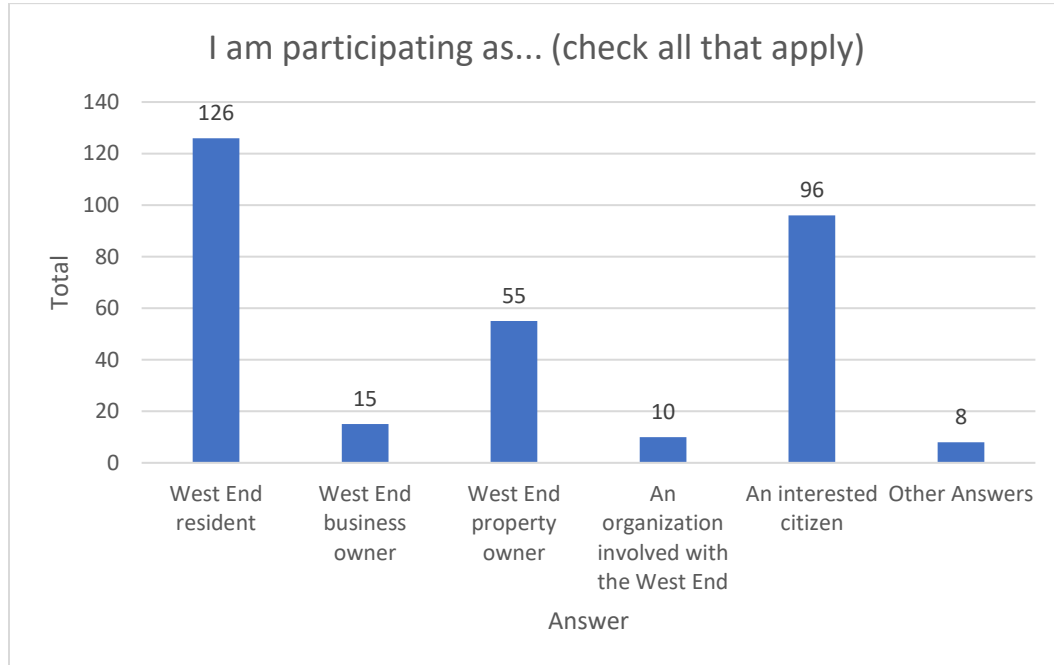
- **Total Visits:** The project website received 2,872 hits. Some individuals visited the site multiple times, while others viewed it to learn more about the project but may not have intended to respond to the survey.
- **Unique Users:** 1,620 individuals visited the project site.
- **Average Time:** Visitors stayed on the site for just under six minutes.
- **Unique Stakeholder:** 332 people responded to the survey or the interactive map.
- **Comments:** The interactive map collected 463 comments.
- **Survey Responses:** The survey instrument collected 205 responses. NOTE: There were seven additional hard-copy surveys.



Summary of Responses – Standard Survey

Question #1: Participant's Role

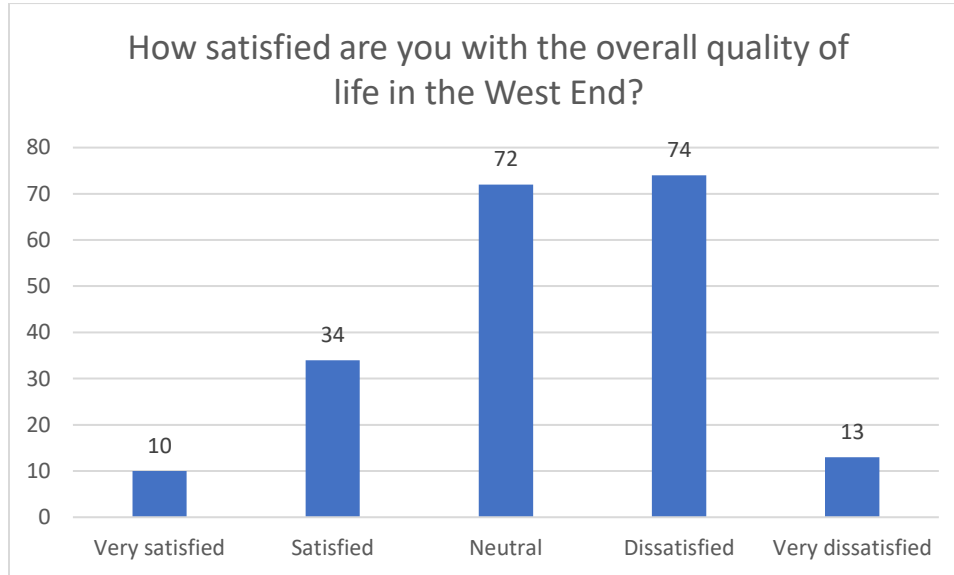
The purpose of this question is to allow the City to understand better who completed the survey.



The survey received 212 responses, including seven hard-copies and 205 online records. Of all responses, 41 percent indicated that they were West End residents, 31 percent were other local citizens, and 18 percent were property owners in the study area. Other responses included participants who live in Augusta County but work in the city or use the West End for shopping and services in the study area.

Question #2: Rating Satisfaction

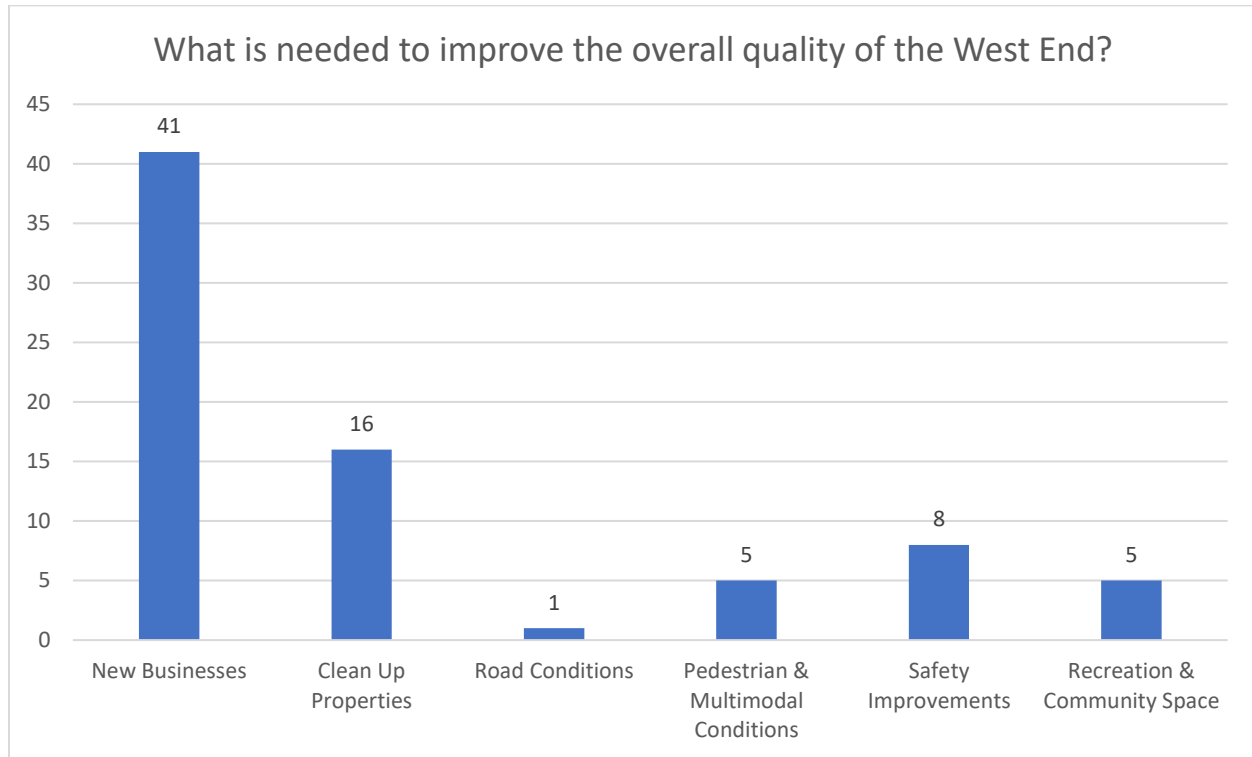
This question aimed to determine the community's overall satisfaction with the West End. Responses help the consultant team with an existing conditions report and to better understand community needs.



Responses show that 41 percent of respondents feel dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the overall quality of life, 35 percent feel neutral, and only 21 percent indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied.

Question #3: How to Improve Quality of Life

Through the survey, consultants hoped to collect information to guide recommendations and strategies for the West End. Responses to this question will help staff develop materials for a March 5th community workshop, where participants will begin to develop strategies. The final Revitalization Strategy Plan will employ an Action Tables section referencing these responses.



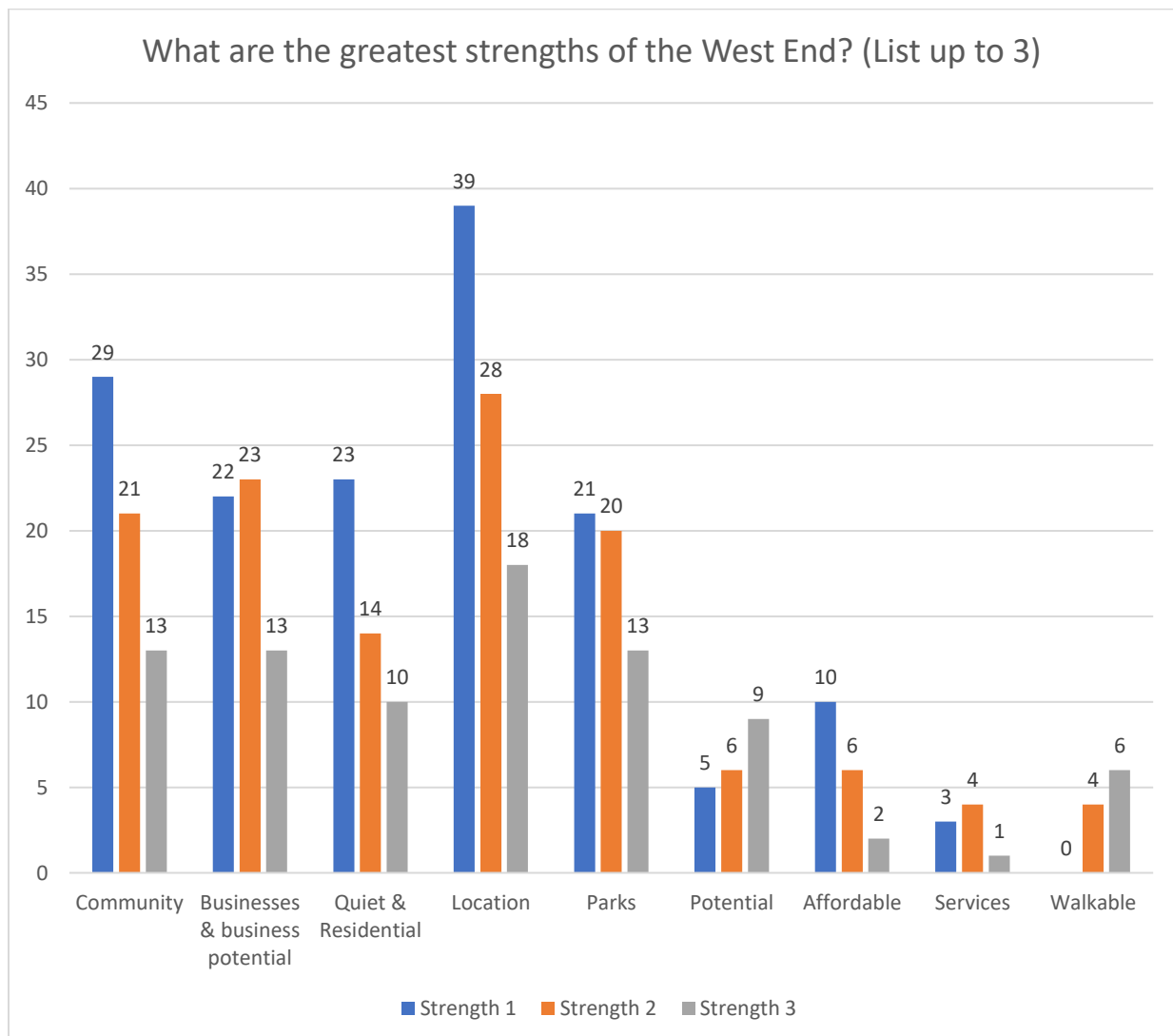
Respondents used this free-response question to identify needs in the West End. Consultants sorted each response into categories:

- **New Businesses:** This theme is repeated throughout free response questions within this survey. Participants overwhelmingly recommended new businesses to improve the overall quality of the West End. New business suggestions included:
 - Restaurants,
 - Retail, and
 - Small businesses.
- **Clean Up Properties:** Survey responses that fell into the “Clean Up Properties” category expressed that the West End felt “depressed” and could benefit from maintaining vacant or disinvested properties.
- **Improve Road Conditions:** Improving road conditions, like repaving streets, as suggested by one respondent, can also help implement pedestrian and multimodal facilities, either by stripping, improving sidewalk conditions, or creating bike amenities.
- **Improve Pedestrian and Multimodal Conditions:** Respondents felt the inclusion of improved pedestrian and multimodal facilities would improve the quality of life. People cited unsafe crosswalks and sidewalks. They wanted to feel safer biking on West Beverley and other streets. Participants also stated that they wanted to walk to businesses.

- **Safety Improvements:** Survey respondents expressed safety concerns and referenced drug-related crimes in the West End. Several comments focused on Valley Mission².
- **New Recreation and Community Space:** Respondents expressed interest in more community space, either recreational or meeting space. Comments highlighted the benefit of having places that are welcoming and provide activities for those under 21 years of age. A consistent issue in the survey responses was access to existing parks. While there are two large parks in the study area, there are few pedestrian connections to them.

Question #4: Strengths

The Revitalization Strategy Plan includes a SWOT analysis that explores how the community can take advantage of its Strengths, overcome Weaknesses, seize Opportunities, and mitigate Threats. Responses from question four inform the first section of this analysis.



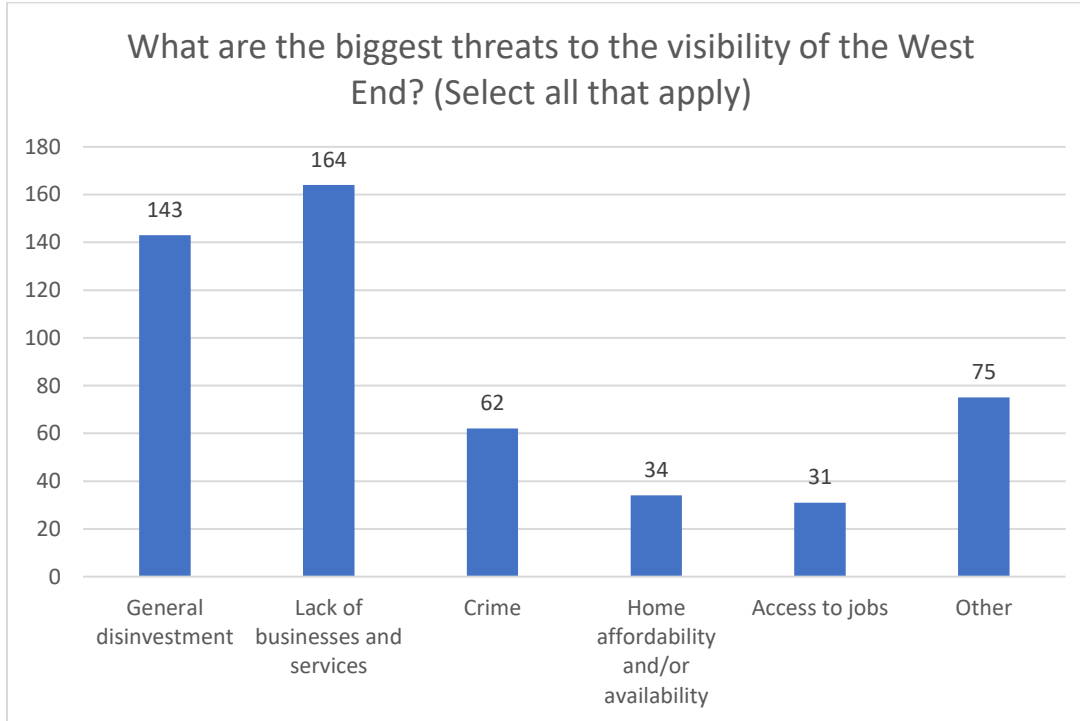
² Staff corresponded with the police department and collected additional crime statistics. This preliminary analysis indicates that these crime-related concerns may be a perception issue.



Consultants calculated an average for the responses. The number one strength identified by respondents was “location.” Respondents felt its proximity to downtown, its two large parks, and access to Woodrow Wilson Parkway (Route 262) are the West End’s greatest strengths. Additionally, respondents referenced the community of people in the West End and businesses (current and potential) as the other top three strengths of the study area.

Question #5: Threats

As with the previous question, these responses inform the SWOT analysis. This feedback also helps the consultant team inventory community needs and develop strategies to address those concerns.



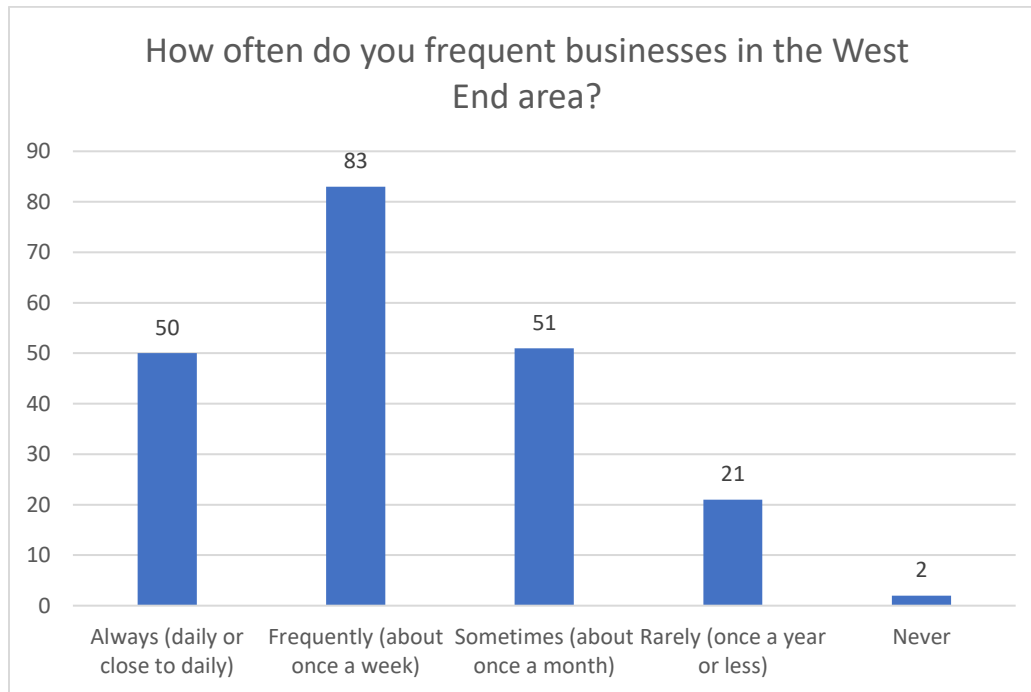
Of all responses, 28 percent indicated the lack of businesses and services as the key threat to the West End. Other popular responses included general disinvestment and crime. Again, police data does not support the crime concerns. If crime activity is unreported, then the police data would not reflect those issues.

The “other” responses category included:

- Lack of walkability, pedestrian safety, and accessibility
- Property vacancies and poor conditions
- Reputation and stigma.

Question #6: Visiting Business

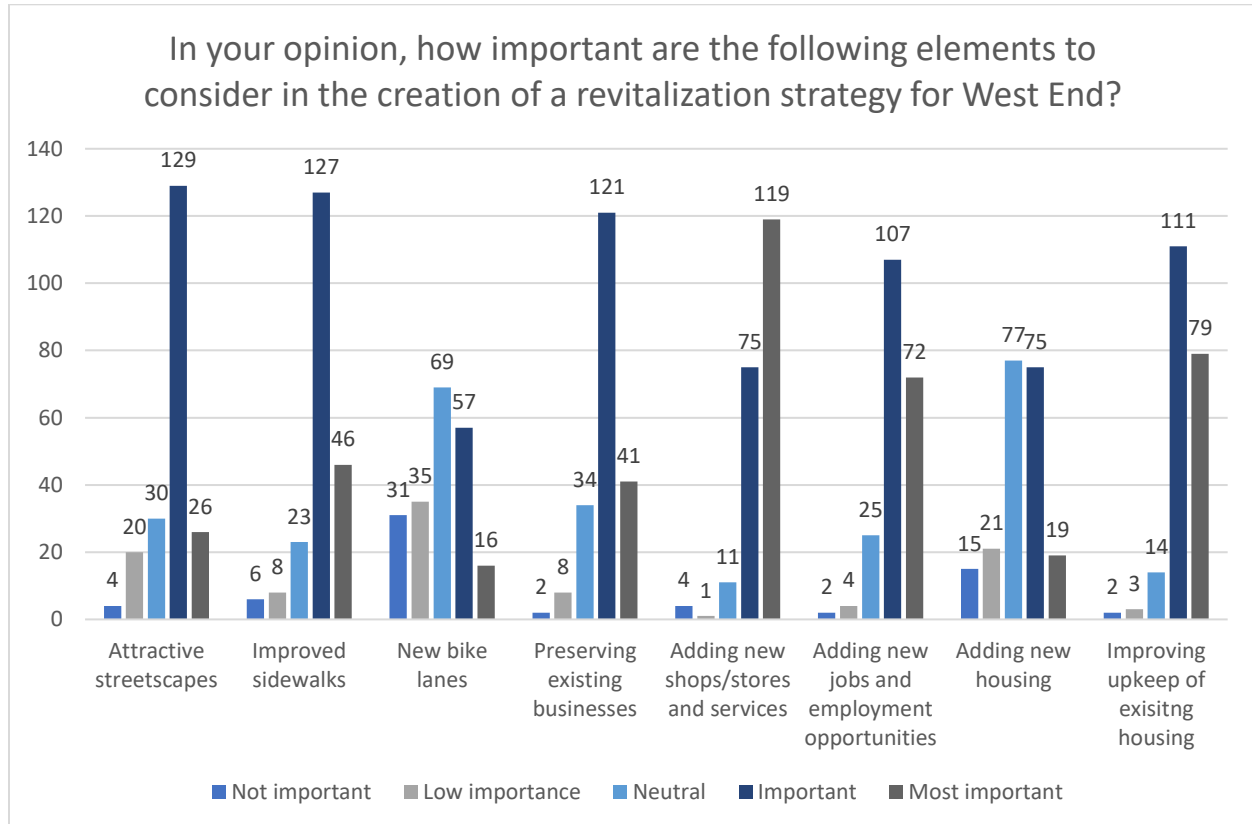
This question provides insights into who responded to the survey. Responses help to bring additional context to comments related to business.



The results show that 64 percent of participants visit businesses frequently, including daily or about once a week. This information suggests that respondents rely on West End businesses and could benefit from further goods and services in the area.

Question #7: Scoring Community Elements

This question helps the City's team identify community needs and begin to develop strategies to address the West End's most important elements. Additionally, this feedback can guide the development of goal statements.

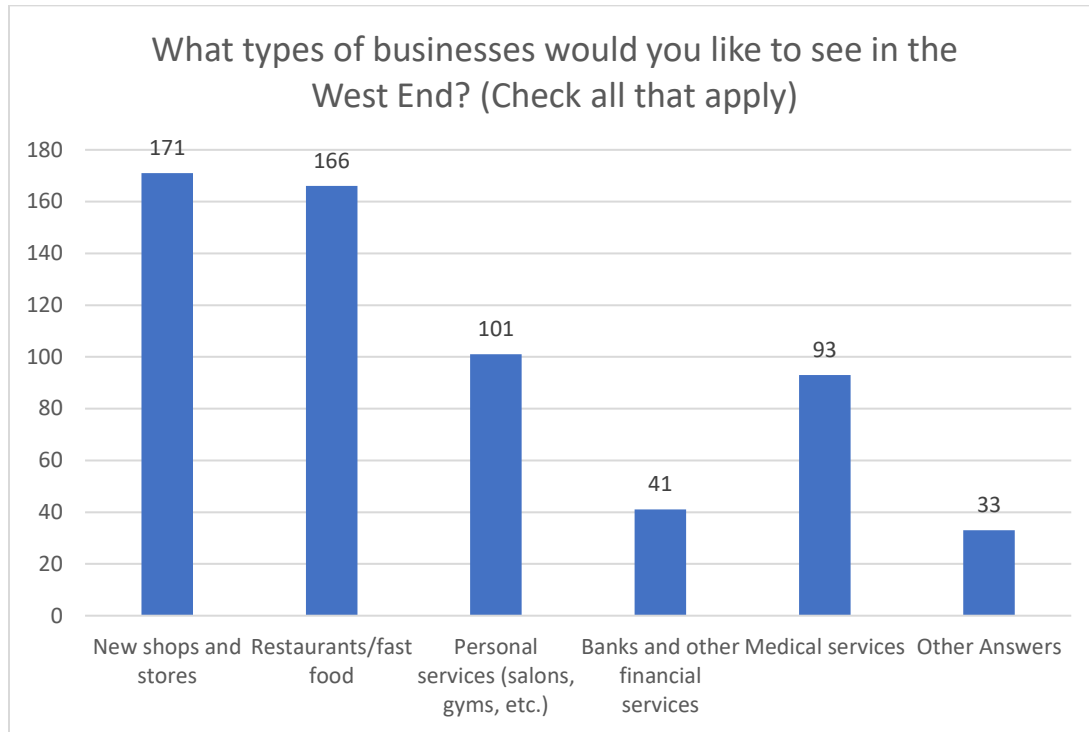


Survey respondents indicated which of the following elements should be considered for the West End revitalization strategy, from “not important” to “most important.”

- Most Important – New Businesses:** Averages indicate that adding new businesses and services is the most important element for improving the West End, reflecting previous survey answers.
- Important – Streetscapes:** Secondly, responses suggest that attractive streetscapes, improved sidewalks, and preserving existing businesses are important elements for improving the West End.
- Important – Lower Priority:** New bike lanes received lower importance levels than other elements. However, the survey responses suggest that bike and pedestrian improvements are critical to participants.

Question #8: Preferred Businesses

These responses are essential for the analysis conducted by the City's economic consultants. The complete economic analysis requires this information to determine the market for these preferred businesses.

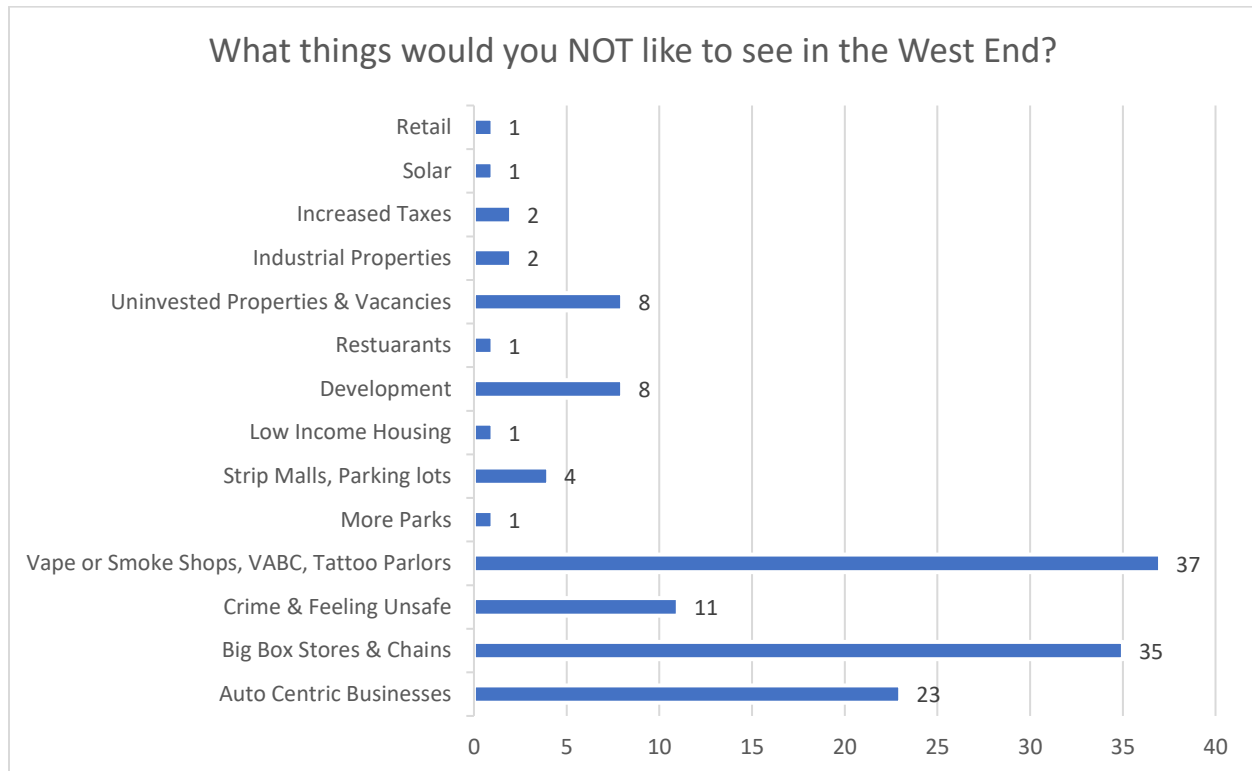


Responses indicated a preference for new shops, stores, restaurants, and fast food. Participants could also include open-ended comments, which included:

- **Smaller and Local Businesses:** Participants indicated that they would like to see small shops and restaurants, like mom-and-pop stores, bakeries, specialty groceries, and coffee shops.
- **Amenities:** Other suggestions included community space, indoor recreation, arts and entertainment, and places for people under 21, including children.
- **Childcare:** Responses also included the need for daycare or preschools.

Question #9: Visioning

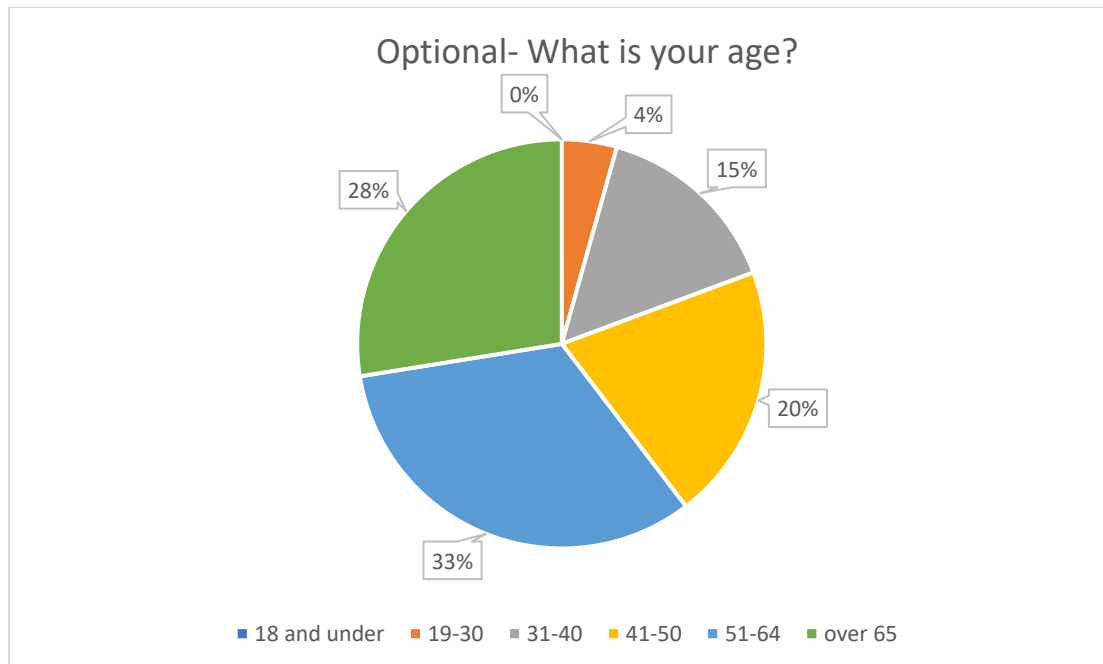
The Revitalization Strategic Plan presents several community goal statements. As a community-driven process, visioning work must start with residents, local businesses, and West End property owners. Responses from question nine directly influence the goal language, which the community will review at a workshop on March 5.



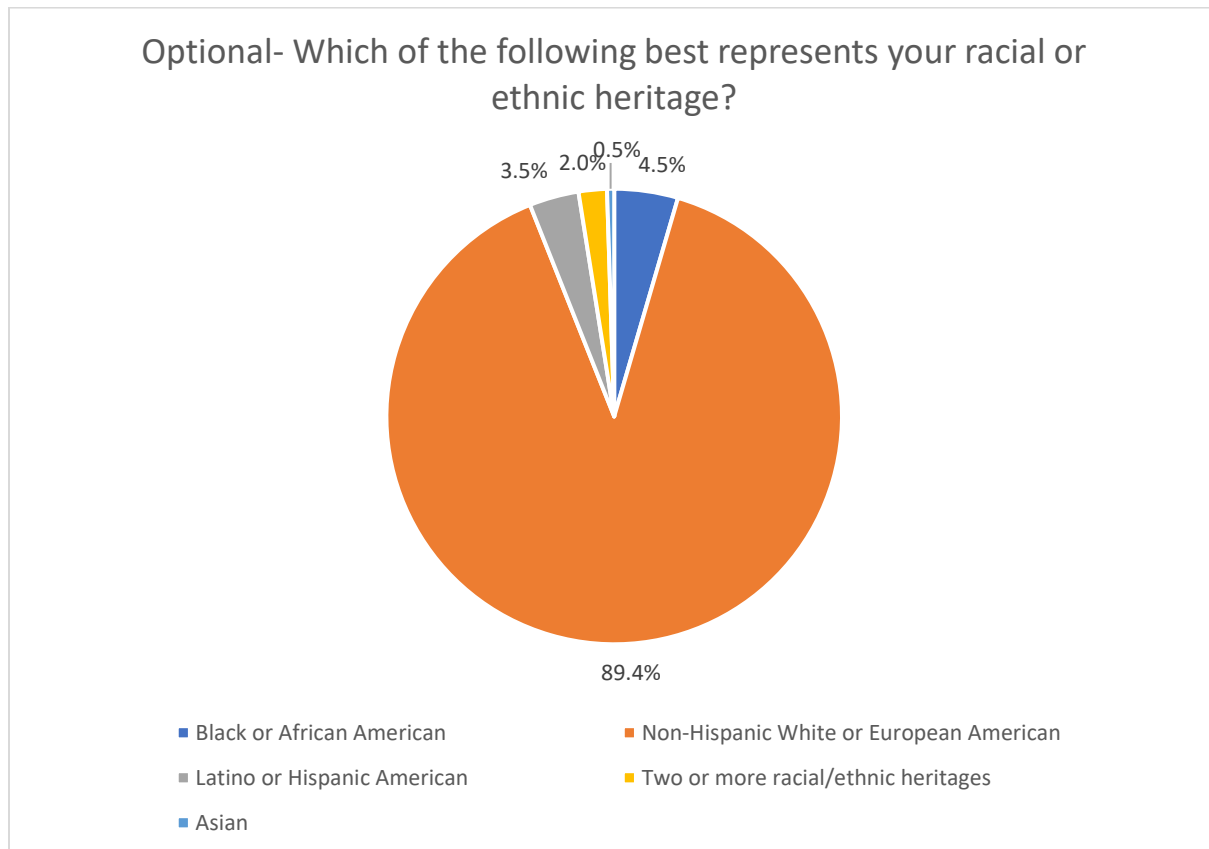
This free-response question allowed survey participants to describe what they would like to avoid in the West End. The consultant team reviewed every comment and organized them into categories. Results show that 27 percent of responses indicated wanting to avoid seeing stores related to vaping or smoke shops, VABC, or tattoo parlors. Under this question, 26 percent wanted to avoid big box stores or chains. Other responses highlighted crime and discussed concerns about auto-centric businesses (like gas stations and convenience stores). Participants also mentioned run-down and vacant properties. Eight respondents wanted to avoid new developments.

Optional Questions

At the end of the survey, participants answered two optional questions about their age and race. These responses help the City's consultants conduct additional analysis of the survey results. Additionally, the optional questions help identify what groups are missing from the process.



Most survey participants were between the ages of 51 and 64. None of the people who chose to answer this question were 18 years old or younger. For the remainder of the planning process, the City's consultant team will strive to reach those under 40 years old. Youth-related groups may be able to help gather input from school-aged kids. More networking is necessary to engage those in their 20s and 30s.



Most participants who chose to answer this question were non-Hispanic white or European American. Next steps in the planning process should focus on collecting feedback from African American residents and other underrepresented groups. The consultant team began plans to engage these communities for next steps.

Map Comments

In addition to the survey, people could virtually comment on an interactive map of the West End to provide insight on areas that **Need Improvement**, where they have **Ideas and Opportunities**, and their **Favorite Place**. The map received 473 comments, and respondents placed 189 points in the core study area. Most map comments had similar themes to the survey response:

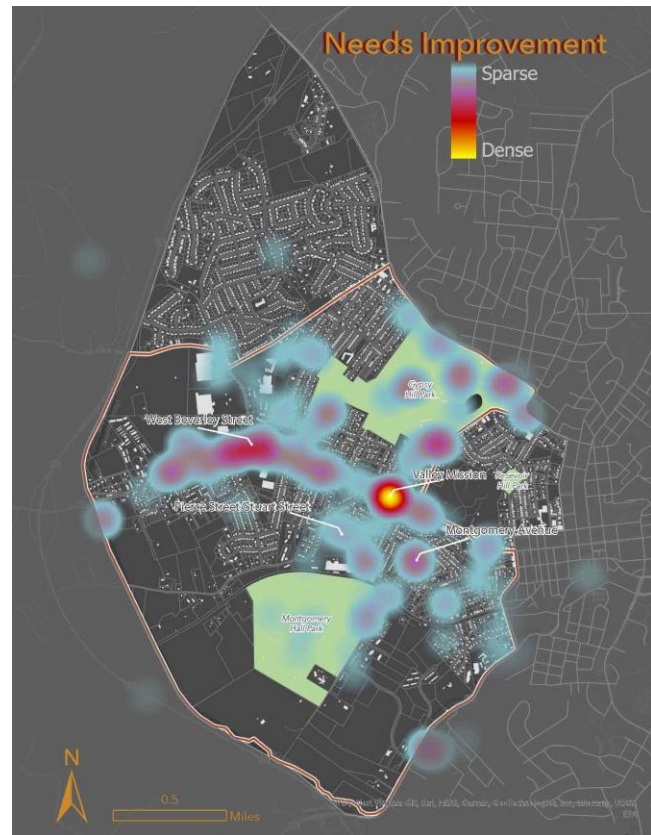
- Requesting small business and retail ideas,
- Needs for better pedestrian infrastructure and accessibility,
- Park improvements and additions,
- Road condition improvements and road safety concerns,
- Needs for more community space, and
- Ideas for fixing up buildings or helping clean up properties.

This section includes heat maps that show the density of comments. Areas in yellow received more comments than areas in blue.



Needs Improvement

Needs Improvement comments were made along West Beverley Street, Pierce Street, Stuart Street, and Montgomery Avenue. There were additional points at the Valley Mission and within Montgomery Hall and Gypsy Hill parks. Feedback along West Beverley identified intersections that needed pedestrian and traffic safety improvements, pedestrian accessibility locations, areas that need landscaping and property maintenance, and unfavorable business types. Comments related to Valley Mission expressed concern over safety and homelessness. Both parks in the West End need accessibility improvements inside and outside of the parks. Lastly, Pierce Street, Stuart Street, and Montgomery Avenue comments were related to speeding, needed roadway improvements, and pedestrian needs. Other **Needs Improvement** feedback included improving Booker T. Washington Community Center, better walking routes to schools, pedestrian and roadway improvements in specific areas, and locations needing aesthetic or landscaping improvements.



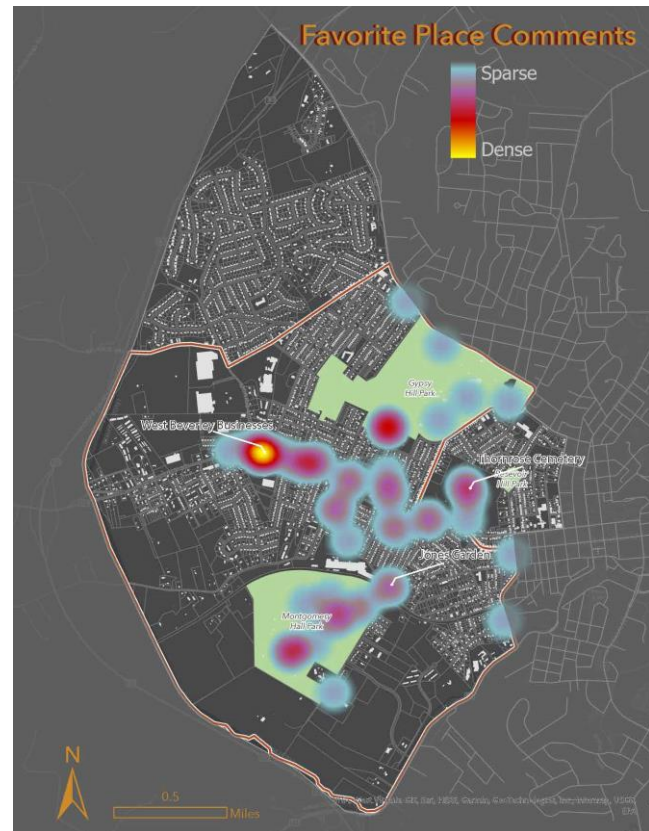
Ideas & Opportunities

Ideas and Opportunities comments were popular along West Beverley Street, Churchville Avenue, at the Valley Mission, and within Montgomery Hall and Gypsy Hill Parks. Feedback along West Beverley Street and Churchville Avenue included ideas for new businesses, community gathering space locations, vacant or underutilized property development, and ways to represent the West End along the corridor visually. Valley Mission had similar comments to the Needs Improvement category, mainly centered around homelessness and safety concerns. Ideas and Opportunities related to the parks identified specific locations within and outside of the park that could use pedestrian access. Some comments about Gypsy Hill Park addressed alternative options for the 18-hole golf course. Other **Ideas and Opportunities** comments identified specific properties that could be improved, repurposed streets that could use pedestrian and safety amenities, and locations for community gathering spaces.



Favorite Places

Commenters identified their **Favorite Places** within the West End. Many highlighted specific businesses and properties along West Beverley Street that they think have improved. Other popular Favorite Places include Montgomery Hall Park, Gypsy Hill Park, and Thornrose Cemetery. Commenters like the community pool, trails, scenery, and natural playground in Montgomery Park, to list a few. Commenters also selected the dog park, golf course, scenery, and tot lot in Gypsy Hill Park. Lastly, Thornrose Cemetery is a favorite place to walk and bike.



Next Steps

Feedback from the survey will help structure the community workshop event on March 5th. The survey results guided draft goal statements and potential solutions that participants will review at that meeting. Workshop activities will focus on developing and detailing community actions. Survey responses will also serve as the foundation for an economic analysis, which will be a central element to the Revitalization Strategy Plan.



Community Workshop

The City of Staunton hosted a community workshop meeting on March 5, 2024, for its West End Revitalization Strategies Plan effort. The event was the second of three community meetings and the beginning of the recommendation development phase of this effort. There were 43 total attendees from the community. The meeting started with a 15-minute presentation, and the remaining time involved an action brainstorming activity. Below are the results of the interactive portion of the meeting.

Draft Vision and Goals Comments

Community members were asked to make comments on the Draft Vision and Goals. When shared in the presentation, most people seemed happy and represented by the vision and goals. Participants were also asked to leave comments on sticky notes on a poster that provided space under each draft goal. Below are the comments received on this poster.

Draft Vision Comments

- Add preserve green space/reference to green
- How is the diversity aspect of the vision incorporated into these goals?

Draft Goal A:

No comments

Draft Goal B:

Transit should be included

Draft Goal C:

No comments

Draft Goal D:

No comments

Action Brainstorming Activity

After the presentation, community members were asked to brainstorm actions to fit each goal and write them on a sticky note. After brainstorming, each action idea was added to the appropriate goal board. Consultants and City staff sorted the action ideas into categories on each goal board. Then, each goal board was taken to a table, and participants were asked to choose a goal to work on action detailing and sit at the respective table.

The facilitators for each table reviewed the action ideas with their group and asked their group what action categories may be missing. After adding additional action ideas, the group prioritized the categories using dot voting. Below are the results of the Action Brainstorming Activity.

Goal A: Vibrant Commercial Corridor

Foster a vibrant commercial corridor along West Beverley Street, which will be an active center of local businesses that serve the diverse needs of the West End's neighborhoods and the surrounding areas of Staunton.



Types of Businesses: 3 votes

- Provide more fast-food restaurants on the West End.
- Coffee shop at the old Tastee Freeze location.
- Develop empty buildings to provide needed services between Thornrose and 262. (Hardware, Pharmacy)
- Make West End desirable by developing a destination like a market place.
- Area for community yard sales.
- Give the Booker T. Washington school to a group to develop a local community center.
- Attract businesses that would appeal to multiple generations.
- Marketing as a distinct area.
- Areas for kids- small play area.
- Small upscale grocery stores.

Grants and Incentives: 1 vote

- Provide city matching funds to businesses to beautify and update the appearance of the main corridor.
- Identify types of new businesses that Staunton lacks and could perhaps prosper here. Make the list public and provide support and incentives (financial, counseling on how to) to prospective business owners/entrepreneurs.
- Invest in small business buildings/provide funding for businesses to improve their façades.
- Find Virginia and Federal grants to support economic development programs by the city.
- Incentivize new commercial buildings.
- Offer benefits for local businesses to open and do business on the West End. (Tax breaks, expectations to corridor rules, etc.)

Zoning: 1 vote

- Keep/ensure that the zoning allows and encourages home-based businesses.
- Zone out skill game facilities.
- Create zoning laws to foster a unique look and flavor to the area.
- The whole West End should be considered for economic development including Churchville Avenue and Springhill Road.

Beautify: 1 vote

- Use wayfinding to encourage people to come to the West End for restaurants and shopping.
- Add attractive street lights.
- Encourage business owners on W. Beverley Street to upkeep and beautify their businesses/buildings.
- Add murals on buildings and sculptural art along the corridor.
- Programs and Organizations:
- Promote the West End and its needs.
- Using the Grow Waynesboro program as a guide, encourage small businesses and local B2B partnerships.
- New locally focused program/organization to support new/existing businesses/grant program for business start-ups and community improvements.
- Educate business owners on incentives offered by being in the West End.



Goal B: Health and Safe Connections

Shape a healthy and beautified West End that creates a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Community Services/Facilities: 9 votes

- Provide mental health, social services, and housing resources for the homeless camp located behind Food Lion.
- Additional community facilities in the West End that could be a part of the J&DR, Food Lion plaza, and Booker T. Washington.
- Primary care facility.
- Set up connections with local farmers and an appropriate venue for a year-round farmers market in the West End.
- Sidewalks: 8 votes
- Provide safe and adequate sidewalks for the West End.
- Sidewalk along Middlebrook Avenue connecting West End with downtown.
- Provide easier walking paths and sidewalks to schools and parks.
- Create wider sidewalks and/or dedicated walking paths away from roads meant for cars.

Transit: 6 votes

- Improve and add public transportation i.e. bus lines. Adding bus access to expanding housing off Middlebrook Avenue and Seth.
- Need transit access for courts.
- Improve signage that delineates bus stops and add amenities and posted schedules to stops.

Lighting: 4 votes

- Provide well-lit sidewalks so that walking safely is possible.
- Find pathways and lighting throughout neighborhoods.
- Install more lighting on West Beverley Street.

Biking Facilities

- Create dedicated bicycle lanes away from roads meant for cars.
- Include bike parking racks near West End businesses.
- Put in a walking and biking lane in Gypsy Hill Park so pedestrians don't have to worry about cars hitting them.

Maintenance

- Upgrade/repair roads that have experienced growth.
- The road off Moor Street which is considered Middlebrook Avenue needs much better road maintenance. Many people use that road and it is really in need of maintenance.

Misc.

- Provide public parking spaces accessible to new businesses.
- Creating a safe street due to speeding, needs more regulated for safety.
- Update the corridor main roads to better curb appeal; the corridors need to be beautiful.
- Please no sidewalk or walking path through the lower part of MHP from the parking lot to the playground.



Goal C: Green Neighborhoods

Preserve and strengthen the West End's environmental assets, promote green infrastructure, and offer enhanced city parks and community spaces.

Walking and Biking Access to Parks: 5 votes

- Build pedestrian access to Montgomery Hall Park.
- Provide bike and running paths from Middlebrook Avenue to Montgomery Hall Park (via Lacy B King Way)

Native Plants: 3 votes

- Encourage the planting of native plants to promote pollinator gardens, especially in small spaces.
- Preserve and attract native birds and insects by ensuring the horticulturist is planting native species.

Preserve Existing Parks and Open Space: 3 votes

Why Parks and Open space are important: green spaces provide mental and physical health, help to break up the urban landscape, preservation of character and uniqueness of the city

- Preserve Lewis Creek's wildness along Middlebrook Avenue
- Preserve existing green space and add additional green space to beautify modal routes.
- Connect property owners with resources to protect already existing green spaces i.e. Vally Conf. Council, Alliance for Shen Valley, etc.)

Trees: 2 votes

Why trees are important: makes the community inviting and healthy.

- Create more shade from tree canopies to reduce heat radiation from pavement blacktop and make the whole area more comfortable.
- Protect the tree canopy in neighborhoods because it is apart of the neighborhoods' character.
- Plant trees

New Parks: 2 votes

- More dog parks using existing green spaces next to businesses in vacant lots.
- Make a new green space by implementing the Miller Heritage Park.

Impervious Reduction:

- Pay attention to how much paved space there is and create more trees, plants, grass, gardens, etc. Less impervious spaces.

Community Gardens:

Why community gardens are important: creates buy-in and stewardship of the neighborhood.

- Plant a community food forest.
- Promote green spaces and healthy eating by collaborating with local ag companies and stakeholders.



Streetscape Beautification:

- Provide matching funds for businesses that beautify their parking lots with trees, bushes, flowers.
- Organize a West End Beautification Association.;
- Promote beautification along West Beverley with benches, citizen volunteers for maintenance, and individual planters full of flowers.

Goal D: Reinvestment and Affordability

Foster reinvestment in the West End's neighborhoods and homes while maintaining affordable living and homeownership opportunities.

Maintenance: 17 votes

- Enforce or create ways to enforce maintaining homes so curb appeal is maintained.
- Identify properties that are blighted and need fixing up.
- Provide safe access for emergency services for the growing neighborhood located on Middlebrook Avenue.
- Middlebrook Avenue homes need to have maintained and safe road access and the neighborhood roads should be brought up to standard and should have better city maintenance.
- Widen, pave, and maintain the thriving neighborhood in the Middlebrook Avenue area.
- Enforce or create ways to enforce maintain homes so curb appeal is maintained.
- Booker T. needs to be a priority with programs and a safe area with amenities for children.

Programs: 11 votes

- Educate landlords or homeowners that live outside of the area to provide tenants with better strategies to keep/upgrade curb appeal.
- Educate renters about their rights to acceptable living conditions.
- Educate on homeownership and provide resources for how to attain homeownership.
- Investment in existing government housing to improve their living conditions.
- Create an advocate group that is well connected to the neighborhood they represent like a neighborhood associate to speak to the city council.
- City council host an advocate workshop meeting with the city manager in attendance.
- Assist local arts organizations with funding to have a community arts space in the West End.

Open House Meeting Summary

Staunton West End Revitalization Strategy

The City of Staunton hosted a community open house event on May 7th, 2024, for its West End Revitalization Strategy effort. At this open house, the City's consultants presented community ideas for achieving the West End Vision and Goals, which residents proposed during the March 5th event at Montgomery Hall Park. 21 Participants arrived during the 90-minute open house window. Informational and interactive posters were distributed throughout the space to gather final feedback on the Plan.

A virtual option was also provided for those who could not in-person attend the Open House. A recorded presentation was added to the project's website, sharing the posters presented in the in-person meeting and linked to a survey so those watching the video could participate in the activities. During the two-week window for the virtual open house, 49 people filled out the survey. The following summarizes the combined results of both the in-person Open House and the survey option for the virtual open house.

Meeting Objectives

- **Validation:** The consultant team organized draft actions from the March 5th community workshop. In May, attendees confirmed whether the conclusions were consistent with the community's views.
- **Define Opportunities:** Open house attendees helped prioritize the recommended actions and were able to provide additional details regarding the recommendations.

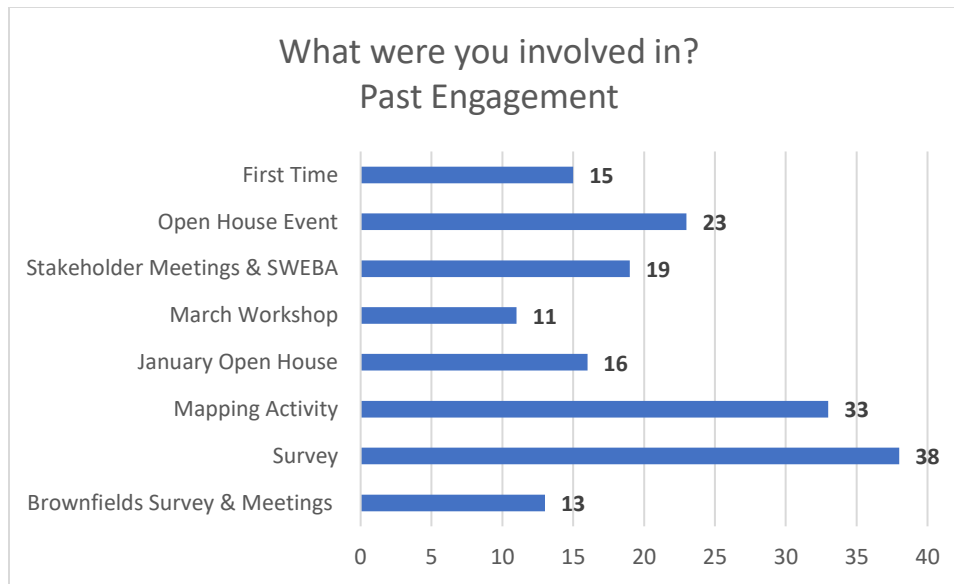
Meeting Summary

The meeting space was set up into two stations: 1.) Introduction and 2.) Goals and Actions. The first station reintroduced the project, study area boundaries, and community engagement opportunities before and during the process that informed the plan. The second station introduced the final draft vision and goals and followed the draft actions to achieve each goal. The attendees were asked to additionally prioritize the actions to narrow down the most important actions for the West End community.

Station 1: Introduction (Awareness)

There were two interactive posters in the introduction portion of the open house. Located at the sign-in table, participants were asked to place a dot sticker where they live or work in the West End. This map shows what areas of the West End are best represented in this process.

A poster asked participants to indicate how they had engaged with past meetings and activities. Attendees placed a dot sticker next to each opportunity they had participated in. Virtual participants were also asked a similar question. The combined results are shown in the graph below.



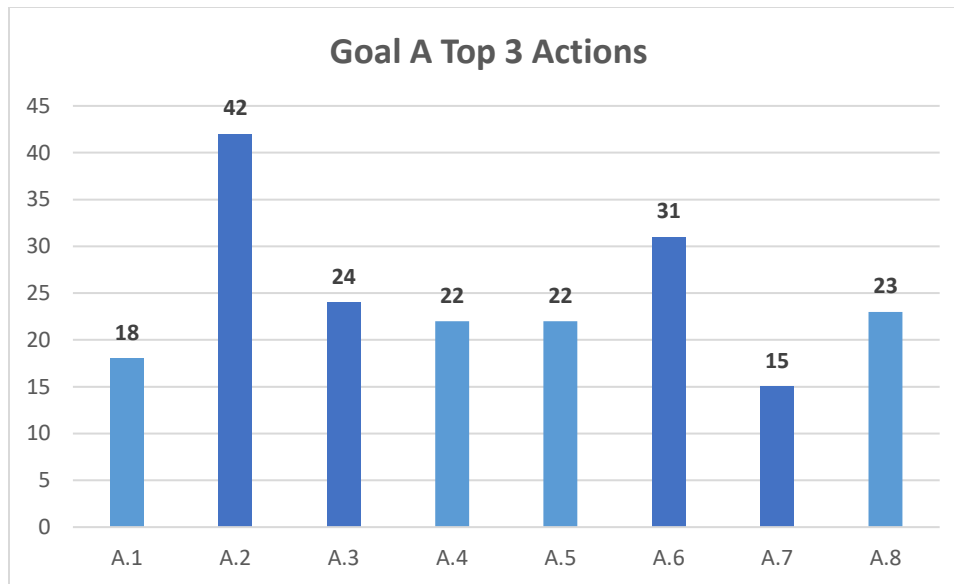
Station 2: Goals and Actions

The second station presented the plan's draft vision, goals, and actions. Participants were asked to prioritize draft actions and give final comments and additions for each goal. As a final chance to give final input, a conclusion poster asked participants, "What did we miss?" to capture final thoughts and anything that could have been missed during the process.

The following sections share the results of each prioritized action by goal and any additional participant comments.

Goal A: Foster a vibrant commercial corridor along West Beverley Street, which will be an active center of local businesses that serve the diverse needs of the West End's neighborhoods and the surrounding areas of Staunton.

- **Action A.1:** Connect current and future entrepreneurs with existing business services and educational opportunities to meet the needs of businesses in the West End.
- **Action A.2:** Add the West Beverley Street corridor to the City's Enterprise Zone, allowing new and existing business owners and vacant or brownfield locations access to Enterprise Zone incentives.
- **Action A.3:** Connect long-term businesses in redeveloping areas to rehabilitation grants and loans. Provide educational materials to West End businesses about tax relief to preserve existing businesses as property taxes increase.
- **Action A.4:** Establish a pop-up market in vacant lots, closed side streets, or commercial parking lots for seasonal events and vendor stalls to support local artists and small businesses.
- **Action A.5:** Implement the entrance corridor overlay update to reflect the desired designs and layouts that foster small business development and enhance community character.
- **Action A.6:** Encourage business and property owners on W. Beverley Street to upkeep and beautify their buildings and lots.
- **Action A.7:** Explore using Tax Increment Financing to support infrastructure investments.
- **Action A.8:** Develop a neighborhood arts program with murals and other installations beautifying the West End.



Prioritized Actions:

1. **A.2:** Add the West Beverley Street corridor to the City's Enterprise Zone, allowing new and existing business owners and vacant or brownfield locations access to Enterprise Zone incentives.
2. **A.6:** Encourage business and property owners on W. Beverley Street to upkeep and beautify their buildings and lots.
3. **A.3:** Assist long-term businesses in redeveloping areas by providing rehabilitation grants, loans, or tax relief as property taxes increase.
4. **A.7:** Explore using Tax Increment Financing to support infrastructure investments.

Goal A: Comments and Additions

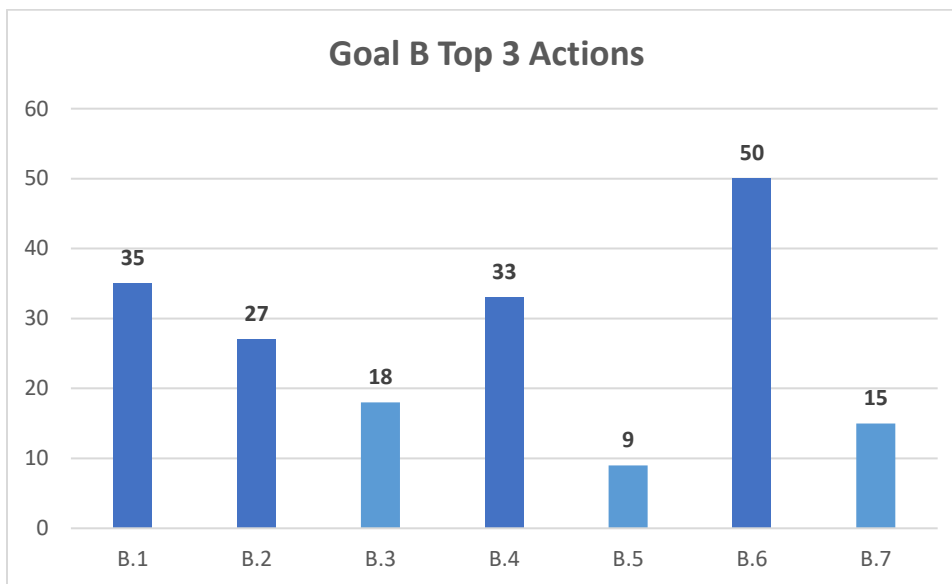
- More "green corridors" and pocket parks
- Complementary mixed-use/village corridor instead of commercial corridor. Utilize zoning and streetscape improvements to encourage this type of development
- TIF has caused challenges in other communities
- DHCD – No demo programs. Small incremental improvements are key
- Murals are difficult to represent everyone, and most murals seem to exclude a certain group of people now.
- Different local businesses like hardware stores, low-cost grocery stores, or breakfast spots and to discourage chains and convenience stores
- Community connection points such as Free Little Libraries and small gardens with benches. These projects take a small area of land, beautify it, are inexpensive, and elevate the area so the public can start to take pride in where they live.
- Children and under 18 hang-out options
- Focus on crime

Responses from Proposed Revisions

- Detail Actions:
 - A.2 Enterprise Zone
 - A.6 Upkeep and Beautification
 - A.7 Tax Increment Financing
- Move Action A.8 to Goal D.

Goal B: Shape a healthy and beautified West End that creates a safe and comfortable environment for people walking, biking, and taking transit.

- **Action B.1:** Implement bike and pedestrian improvements identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that connect City parks, Downtown, West Beverley Street, schools, and bus stops for transit users.
- **Action B.2:** Add high-visibility crosswalks and the appropriate facilities to all community destinations and heavily traveled intersections.
- **Action B.3:** Add sheltered bus stops and benches to select locations and improve sidewalks to allow riders safe access to transit.
- **Action B.4:** Install pedestrian-scaled lighting features along West Beverley Street and neighborhood sidewalks to increase pedestrian visibility and improve feelings of safety.
- **Action B.5:** Install bicycle facilities within Gypsy Hill Park and Montgomery Hall Park, allowing visitors to bike to the parks, secure their bikes, and safely bike throughout the park on designated paths.
- **Action B.6:** Repair and maintain sidewalks and roads in the West End.
- **Action B.7:** Conduct a speed and safety study and implement the proper speeding reduction measures to reduce speeding and increase pedestrian safety.



Prioritized Actions:

1. **B.6:** Repair and maintain sidewalks and roads in the West End.
2. **B.1:** Implement bike and pedestrian improvements identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that connect City parks, Downtown, West Beverley Street, schools, and bus stops for transit users.
3. **B.4:** Install pedestrian-scaled lighting features along West Beverley Street and neighborhood sidewalks to increase pedestrian visibility and improve feelings of safety.
4. **B.2:** Add high-visibility crosswalks and the appropriate facilities to all community destinations and heavily traveled intersections.

Goal B: Comments and Additions

- Add sidewalks on Beverley and sidewalks



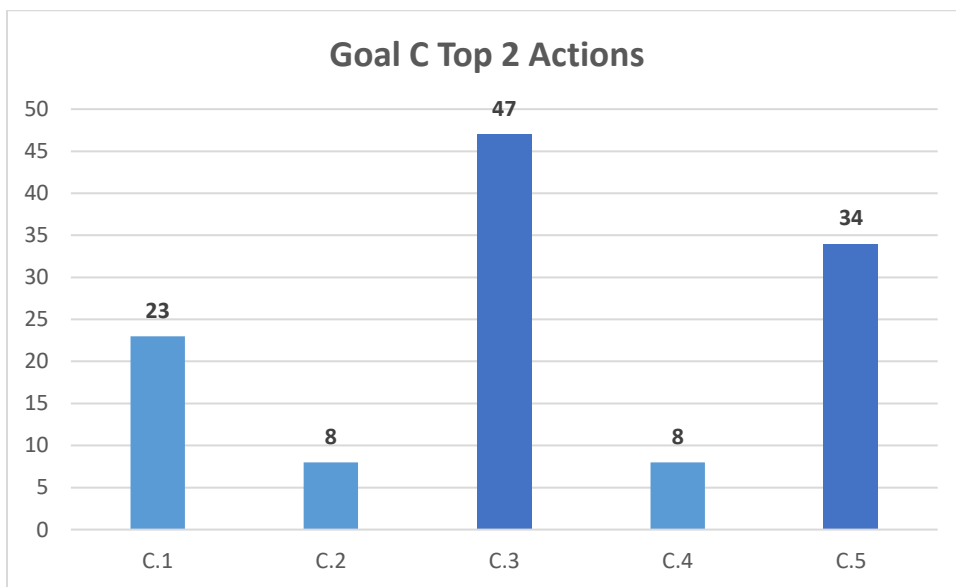
- B.7: Well-designed crosswalks should reduce vehicle speed; therefore, B.7 may not be necessary.
- Bus stops and sidewalks should be a given.
- Reduce emphasis on corridors and then connect adjoining neighborhoods
- ALL OF THESE are very important priorities.
- Need to add sidewalks along Beverley and maintain
- Lighting should enhance ACTUAL safety (not just “feeling”)
- There should be an emphasis on sidewalks connecting to school; kids walk to school on the road
- People walk up and down the street at night and should be prevented from doing that
- The West Loop needs to start at an earlier time to get to work (get to the Hub)
- Speed humps and medians/refuge islands in large intersections
- Emphasis on crime prevention

Responses from Proposed Revisions

- Detail Actions:
 - B.6 Street Maintenance
 - B.1 Bike and Pedestrian Improvements
 - B.4 Street Lighting – change to Public Safety Measures
 - B.2 High Visibility Crosswalks

Goal C: Preserve and strengthen the West End’s environmental assets, promote green infrastructure, and offer enhanced city parks and community spaces.

- **Action C.1:** Create a streetscape beautification program or association comprised of community volunteers that host clean-up days, native plant planting days, and invasive species removal days.
- **Action C.2:** Create a West End specific pop-up program from the City’s Stormwater Education Program demonstrating easy stormwater reduction actions for residents and property owners during Flood Awareness Week.
- **Action C.3:** Create additional pocket parks and greenspace throughout the West End.
- **Action C.4:** Encourage native vegetation planting through education.
- **Action C.5:** Plant street trees along West Beverley Street and encourage property owners to plant more trees.



Prioritized Actions:

1. **C.3:** Create additional pocket parks and greenspace throughout the West End.
2. **C.5:** Plant street trees along West Beverley Street and encourage property owners to plant more trees.

Goal C: Comments and Additions

- C.1: Yes to this plan – however it should not be strictly volunteer based – investment from the city is needed.
- All planting requires maintenance! Who is going to do this? How will it be paid for? Need city and citizens to work together on this.
- All streetscape plans should include swales, permeable paving, etc. the streets are the challenge; too much asphalt!
- The primary visual difference between thriving neighborhoods and those suffering is the absence of trees/parks in the latter. MORE TREES AND PARKS PLEASE.
- EV charging stations
- Remove street parking and create off-street parking for housing
- Children play areas



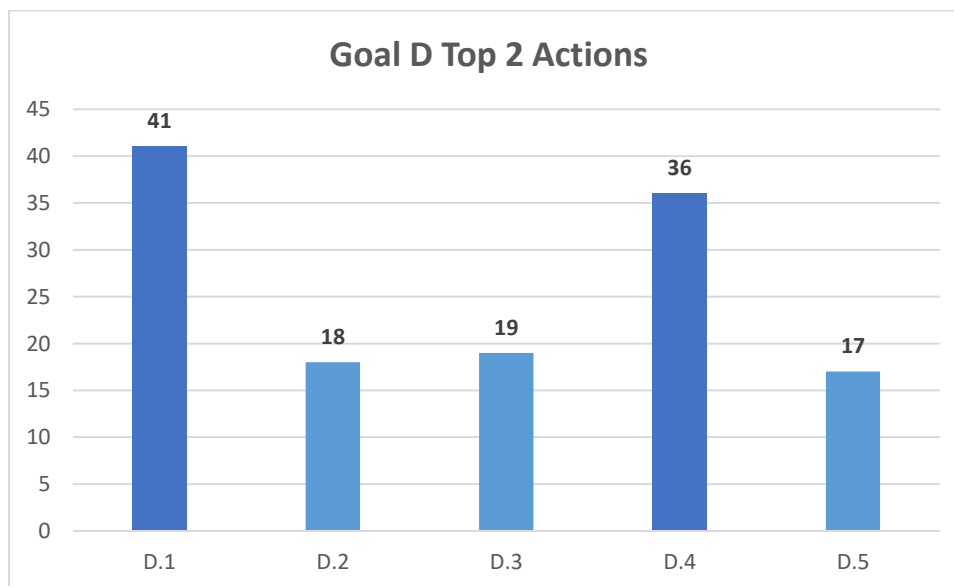
- C.5: Careful planning for locations of trees planted to prevent visibility issues and growth into utilities
- Involve the Master Gardeners and Horticulture clubs and nurseries

Responses from Proposed Revisions

- Detail Actions:
 - Improved Access to Parks
 - C.3 Pocket Parks – changed to Open Space Options
 - C.5 Street Trees

Goal D: Foster reinvestment in the West End’s neighborhoods and homes while maintaining affordable living and homeownership opportunities.

- **Action D.1:** Connect the community to existing resources that will assist homeowners with renovating their homes to address building and property maintenance code violations.
- **Action D.2:** Create informational materials for homeownership that list resources for City programs, grants, loans, and education to increase homeownership, particularly among low-income aspiring homeowners.
- **Action D.3:** Establish neighborhood advocate groups for each neighborhood and public housing represented by full-term residents of their respective communities that report issues and needs directly to the city council and the city manager.
- **Action D.4:** Develop a Healthy Homes Program that works with homeowners to assess the current condition of their homes and then performs moderate repairs to improve the home’s sustainability, health, and affordability.
- **Action D.5:** Provide renter education programming to inform renters about standard living conditions and Virginia renter’s rights.



Prioritized Actions:

1. **D.1:** Connect the community to existing resources that will assist homeowners with renovating their homes to address building and property maintenance code violations.
2. **D.4:** Develop a Healthy Homes Program that works with homeowners to assess the current condition of their homes and then performs moderate repairs to improve the home's sustainability, health, and affordability.

Goal D: Comments and Additions

- D.5: Focus on the rehabilitation of government-assisted housing facility conditions. Giving people hope with a decent place to live will give them at least a chance to wish to better their community.
- SWEBA are leaders for all the West End.
- D.4: Develop a city matching grant program to assist qualifying property owners in reinvesting in their properties.
- Identify historic buildings and encourage rehab.
- Develop advisor guidelines that educate about quality building improvements and incentives for rehab.
- Provide additional support to non-profit organizations assisting our community's unhoused and homeless population so services can be expanded.
- Connect the West End population to existing community services and resources, possibly through the use of small satellite offices, pop-up hours, or the creation of a community center. Bringing community services to the West End could assist in reducing the burden of access and transportation issues for low-income residents (ideas for services such as VCSB, DSS, WIC, Library, VDH or Augusta Health mobile health unit, etc.)
- Give a tax break or credit for homes in the West End neighborhoods to counteract rising property taxes.
- Enforce existing building code and rental owners responsibilities for properties
- Legal advocate for tenants
- Fines for noncompliance of existing ordinances
- Involve the Historical Association and National Register of Historic Places.

What did we miss?

- Businesses not included on Spring Hill Road
- City needs to lead. Why do the plans for the courts not follow the corridor guidelines?
- Signage on the by pass to direct people to the businesses in the West End
- Societal attitudes and actions are a huge challenge for West End business development.
- Create a venue-annual meeting to check on progress of the plan. Offer people opportunity to express concerns.
- Crime prevention actions
- Do not impose more regulations on business owners
- Prioritize lighting and safety.
- Market the West End
- A community center, gathering place, meeting place, event space
- Better resource support for the homeless
- Free sports equipment and pool pass at the library
- Booker T. Washington.
- Park facilities need improvements, why are they not included



Responses from Proposed Revisions

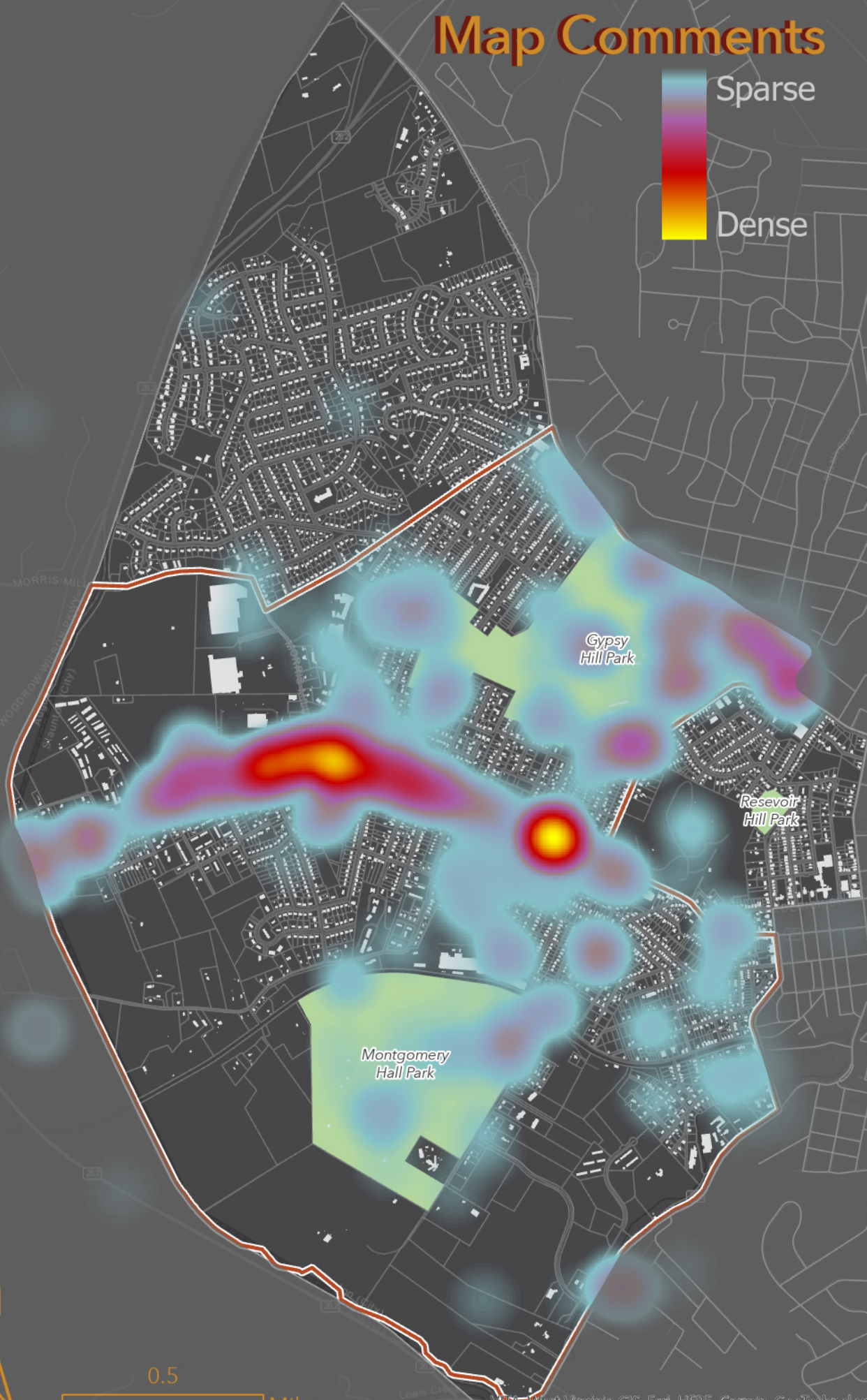
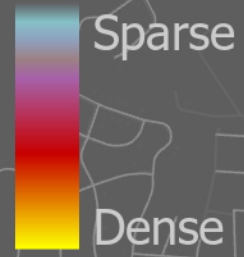
- Detail Actions:
 - D.1 Home Renovation Assistance
 - D.4 Healthy Homes Program
 - A.8 Neighborhood Arts Program



Attachments

- Heat Maps of Social PinPoint Comments
- April 2021 PowerPoint Presentation and Survey Summary
- Brownfield Survey Results
- May PowerPoint Presentation

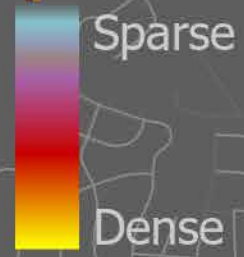
Map Comments



0.5

Miles

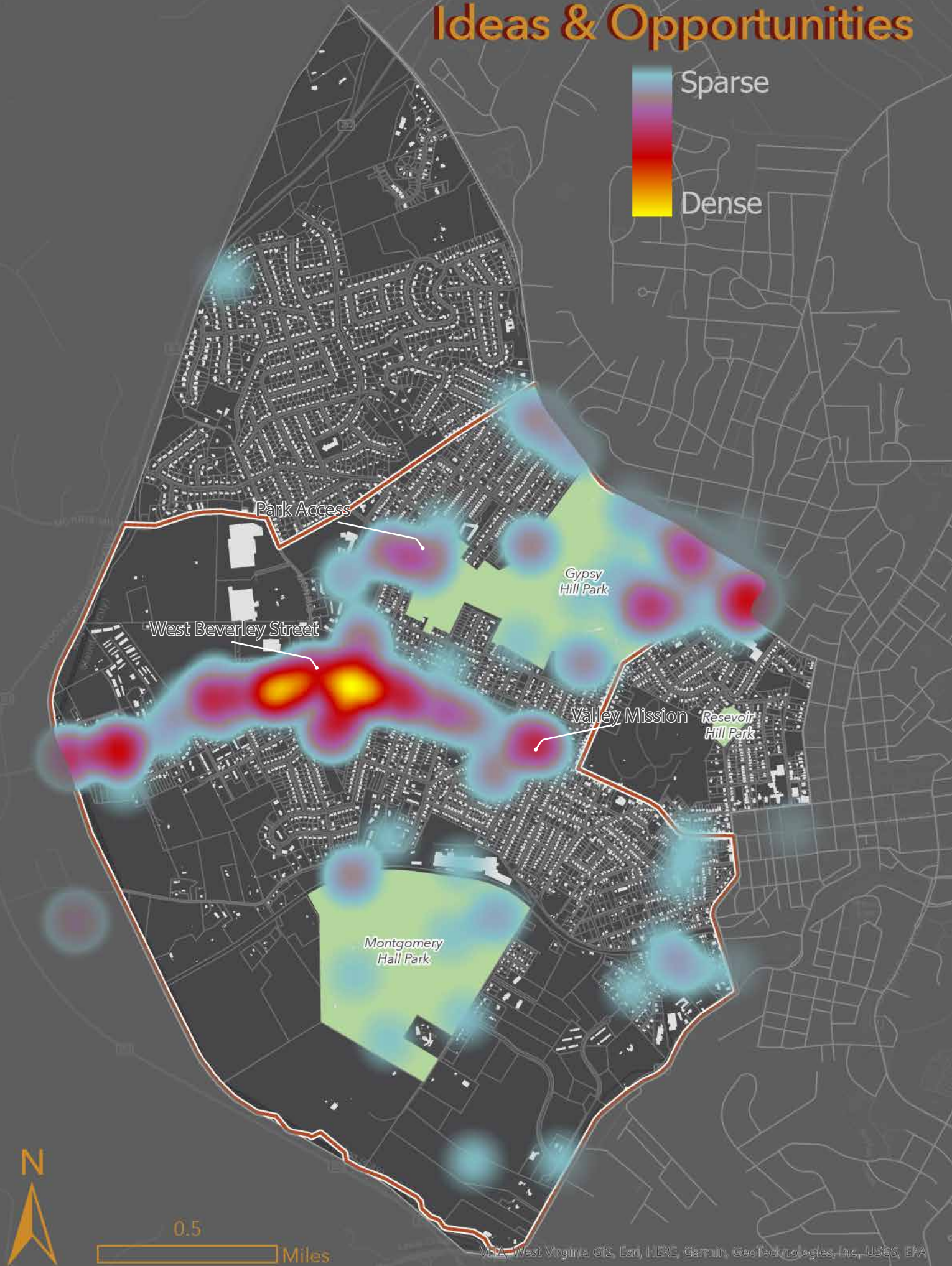
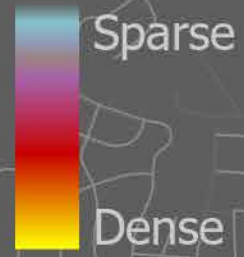
Needs Improvement



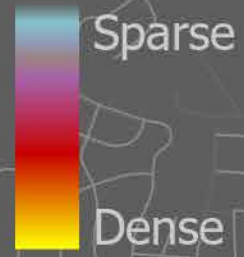
0.5

Miles

Ideas & Opportunities



Favorite Place Comments



0.5

Miles

West End Community Meeting #3

April 27, 2021



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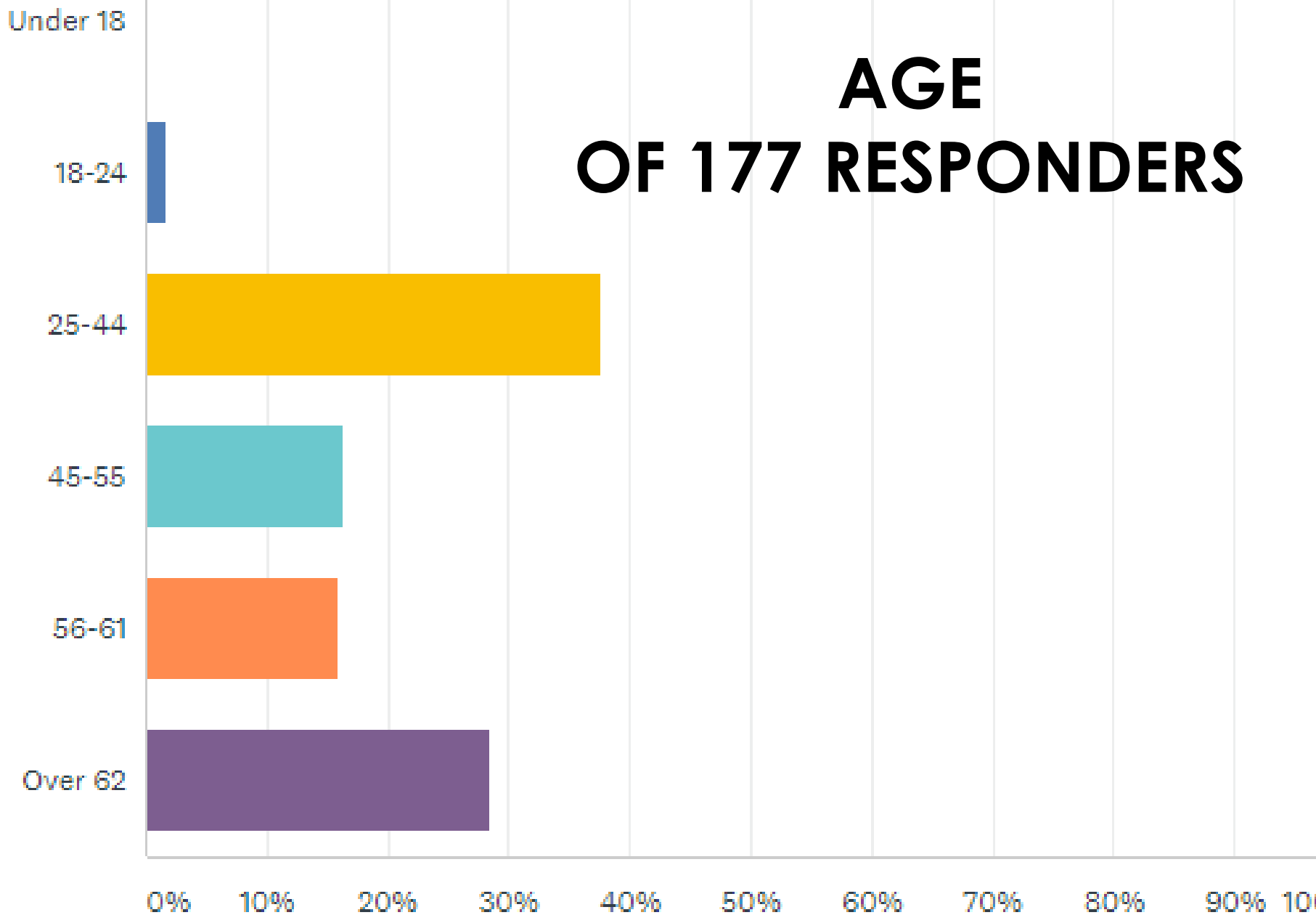
WEST END COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- DISCLAIMER: This was NOT a scientific survey!
- 170 or so responses
- 78% residents, 10% businesses, 12% other
- Almost 90% of resident responses were homeowners, fairly evenly distributed as to length of tenure



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AGE OF 177 RESPONDERS



INCOME OF 175 RESPONDERS

Under
\$15,000

3%

\$15,000 –
\$25,000

4%

\$25,000 –
\$40,000

15%

\$40,000 –
\$75,000

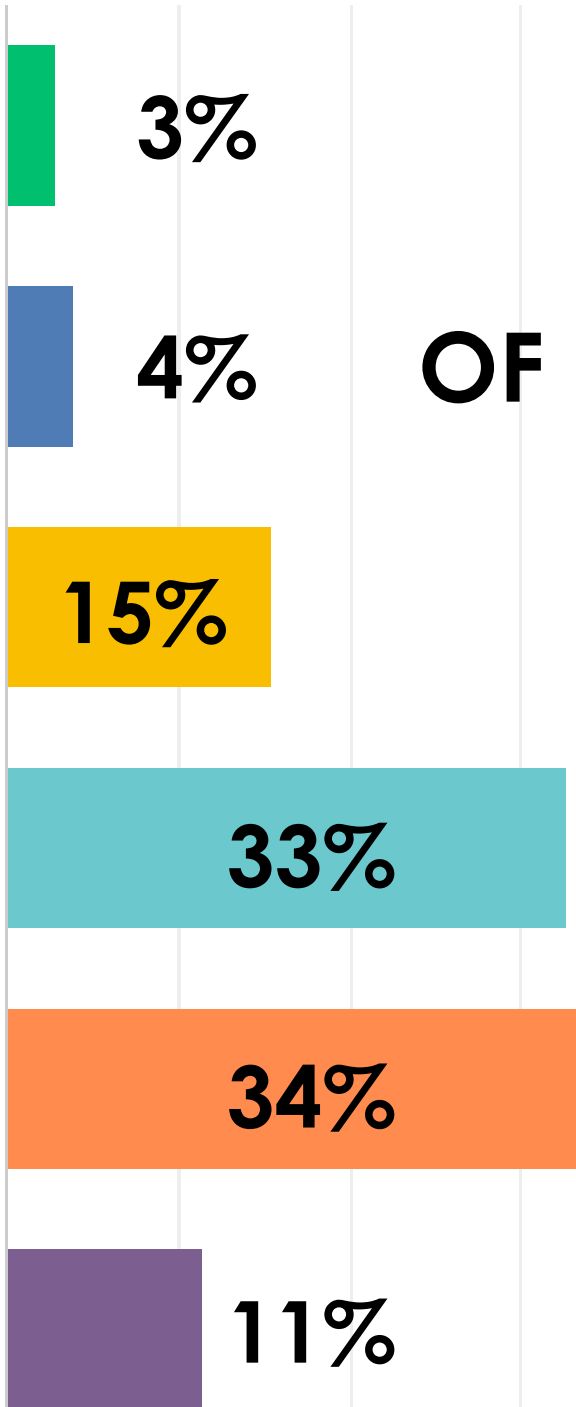
33%

\$75,000 –
\$125,000

34%

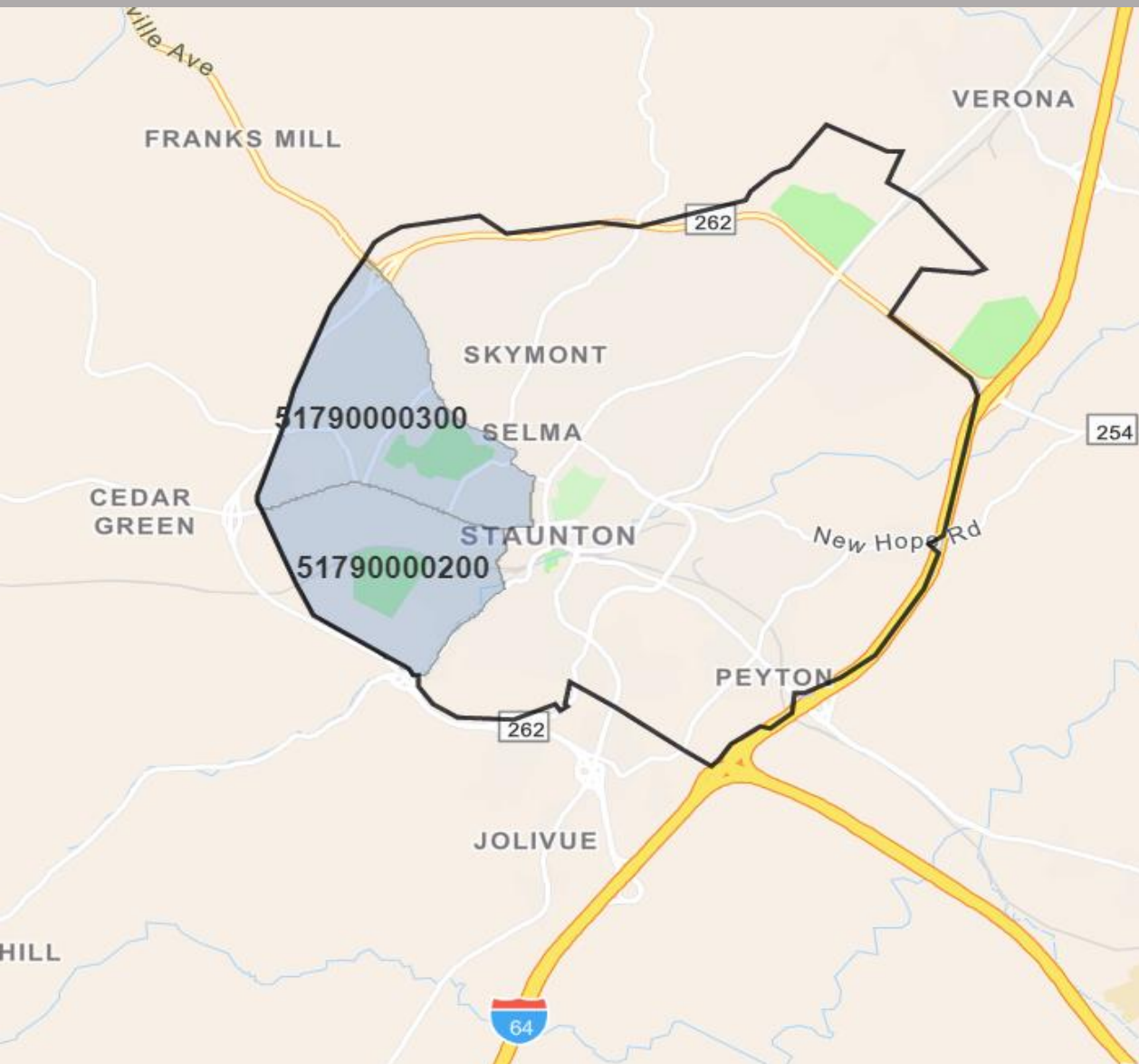
Over
\$125,000

11%



WEST END GEOGRAPHICALLY DEFINED

- **West Beverley** from Cemetery to By-Pass
- Area from **Churchville** to **Middlebrook**
- Gypsy Hill and Montgomery Hall
- Some included Lewis Street / Newtown, Springhill Road, Grubert Avenue



Staunton's West End

WEST END'S CURRENT STATE

**Run
Down**

SAD

Neglected

DEAD

Depressed

POOR

**LOW
INCOME**

Abandoned

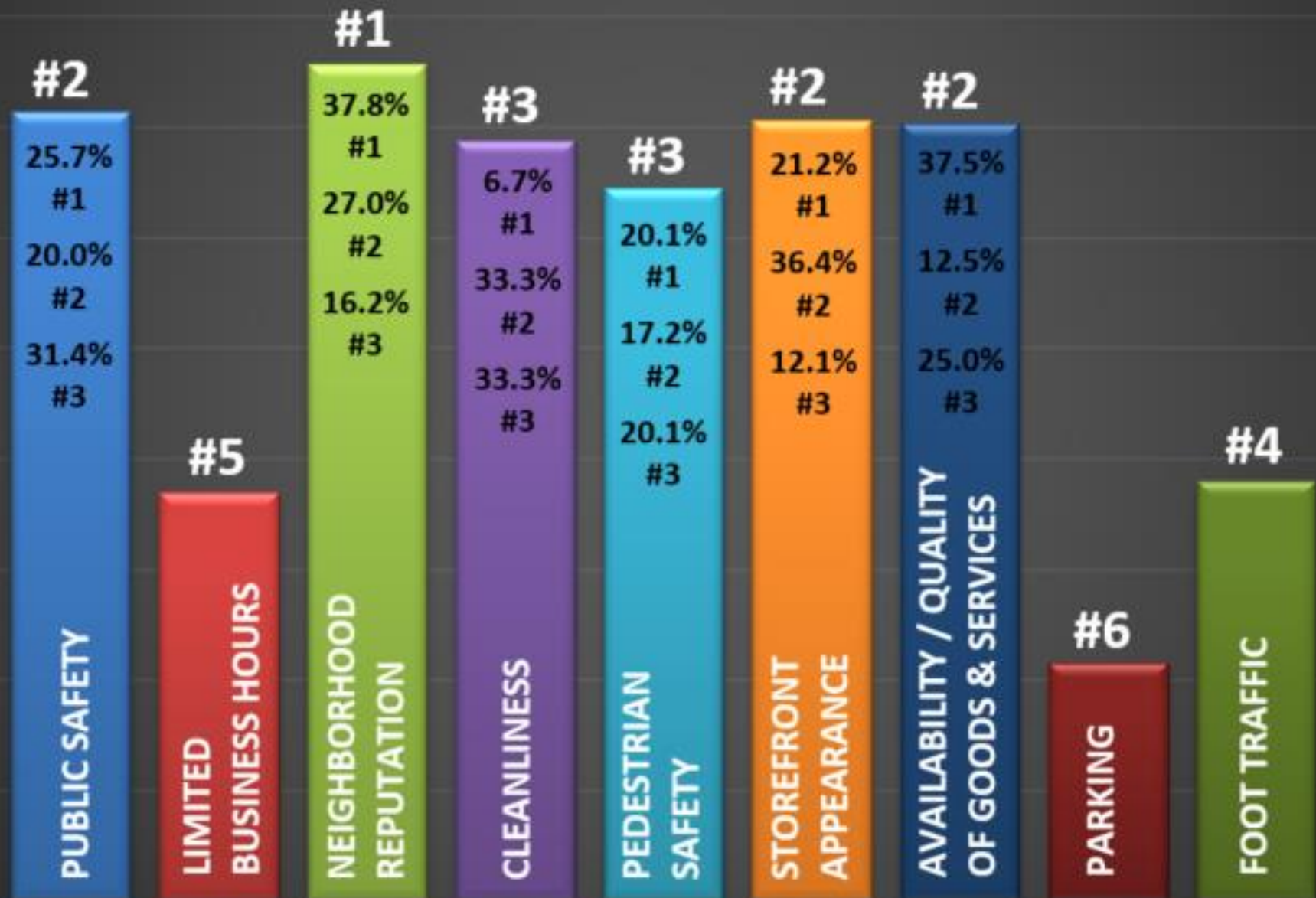
FORGOTTEN

VACANT

EMPTY

In Need

What are the most pressing issues that should be addressed in the West End?



West End Survey Themes

Housing

Community Facilities

Commercial

Infrastructure Improvements

Housing Theme

- **56% Single Family Housing Rehab or New Construction**
- **38% Multi-family Rehab or Reconstruction**
- **36% Multi-family New Construction (small scale)**



Community Facilities Theme



- **48% Small Neighborhood Park**
- **31% Active Community Center**
- **27% Youth & Senior Services**

Commercial Theme

- 71% New Small Businesses
- 20% Expanding Existing Businesses
- 10% Large Scale Industrial



Infrastructure Improvements Theme



- **60% Streetscape & Lighting**
- **25% Stormwater Storage & Conveyance**
- **22% Communication & Broadband**

West End Business Responses

- About 25 business responses
- Almost 30% in business for more than 25 years,
- Almost 26% in business for less than 1 year
- 39% with less than 5 employees

West End Business Responses

- Most (64%) identify Staunton/August County as primary market area
- 95% of customers are local residents, 5% identified as tourists



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Own a home in
the area



Employed in
the area

29%

Proximity to
other local...



Proximity to
downtown...

29%

Walkability of
community

35%

Attractiveness
of community

29%

Local events



Cultural /
historical...

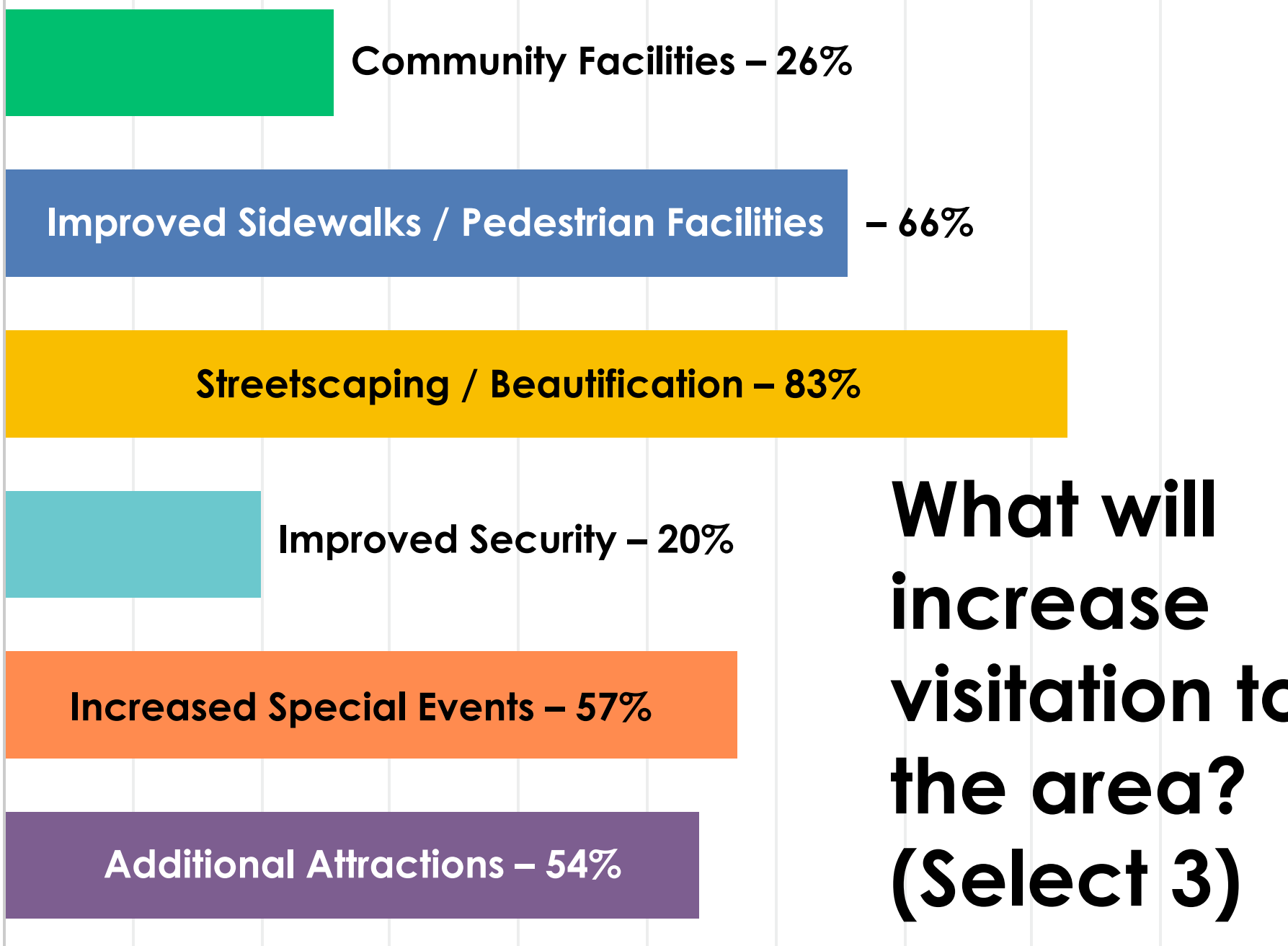


**Which
categories
attract most
of your
customers?
(Select 3)**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

West End Business Responses

- Most (71%) identify advertising/marketing as most critical factors for success and growth
- 2nd and 3rd most important were Public Access (33%) and Financing (30%)
- Labor and Foot Traffic tied for 4th (24%)



Community Facilities – 26%

Improved Sidewalks / Pedestrian Facilities – 66%

Streetscaping / Beautification – 83%

Improved Security – 20%

Increased Special Events – 57%

Additional Attractions – 54%

What will increase visitation to the area? (Select 3)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

What will attract services / businesses to West End?

“Create small business incubator hub with grants and tax incentives... Include food , artists, small manufacturing, specialty retail and make it all walkable.”



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What will attract services / businesses to West End?

“We need to pick a theme for West End, whether it's going to be a center for culture and entertainment or Staunton's discount mile.”



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What will attract services / businesses to West End?

“Showcase current businesses to show future businesses that we are interested in their growth.”



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What will attract services / businesses to West End?

“Need affordable access to programs and services to engage child and adolescent population as well as senior population.”

What will attract services / businesses to West End?

“Partner with Mental Health America of Augusta for workplace mental health programs.”



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What will attract services / businesses to West End?

“Not Family Dollar or businesses that go to low-income areas. Tax incentives for high quality businesses that provide jobs.



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West End's Future State

Vibrant

NEW

Welcoming

clean

diverse

Community

LIVABLE

Revitalized

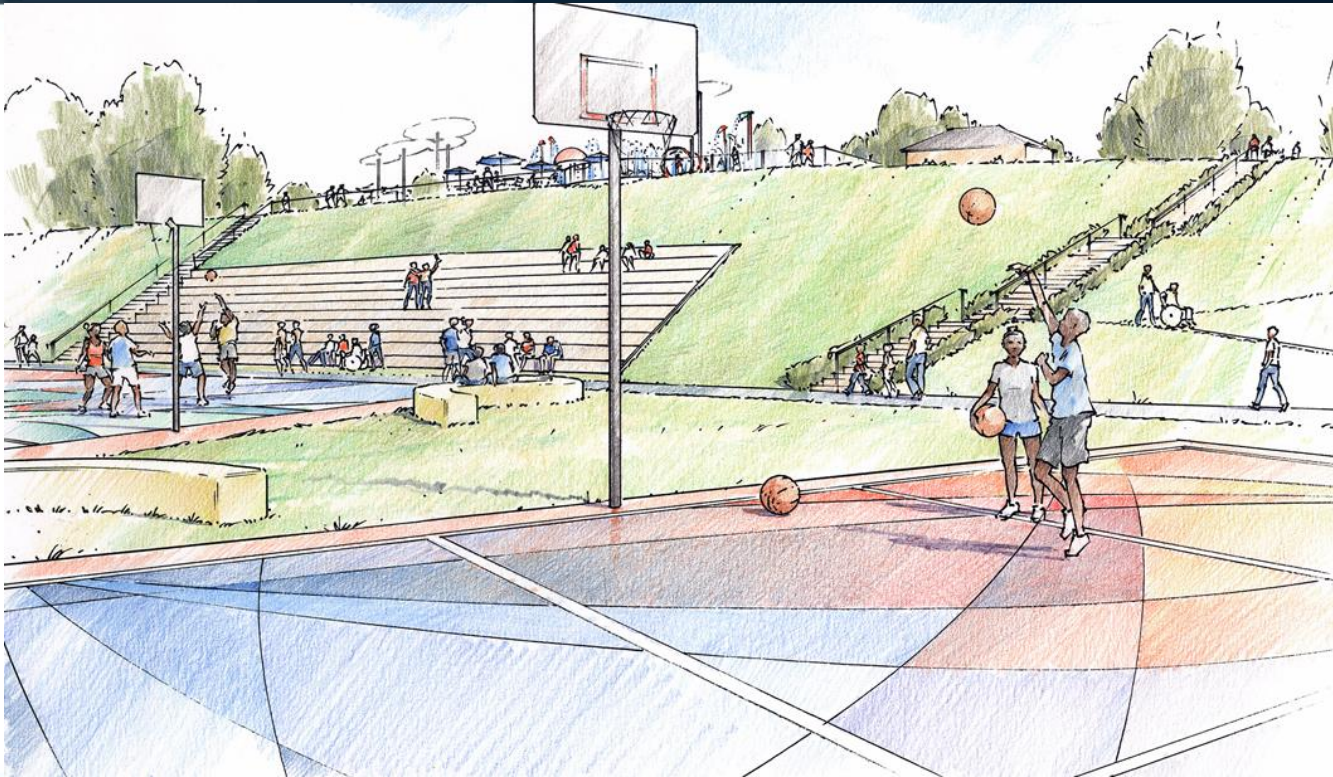
GREEN

**Mixed
Use**

beginning

PEOPLE

Where do we go from here?



Preliminary Revitalization Strategy



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Preliminary Revitalization Strategy

- Initiate Revitalization Task Force
- Coordinate with City Departments
 - Planning & Zoning
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Public Works & Engineering
 - Economic & Community Development
 - Redevelopment & Housing Authority
 - Finance
- Engage Consultant



Staunton Community Survey West End Revitalization Strategy Planning

All Pages ▼

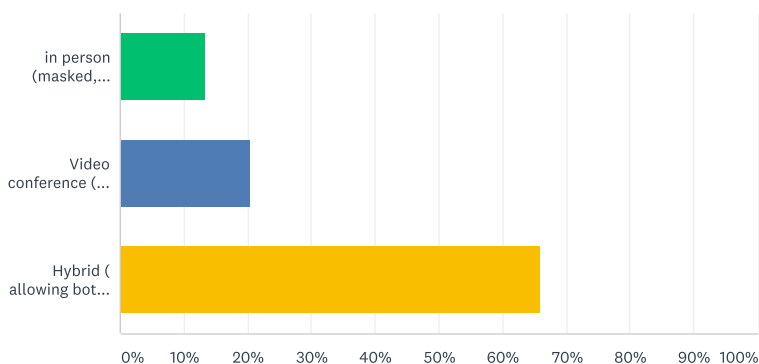
Q1



Pre-survey question: Please let us know thoughts on this first question, whether you complete the survey or not. Responses to this question will help inform our meeting location, preparations and set up! ThanksBased concurrent regional conditions, how would you prefer to meet?

▲
Add a comment

Answered: 335 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

in person (masked, socially distanced in a large group setting, e.g., Gypsy Hill Gym)	13.43%	45
Video conference (Teams, Zoom, Facebook Live)	20.60%	69
Hybrid (allowing both in-person and video attendance for those not comfortable with either of above settings)	65.97%	221

TOTAL

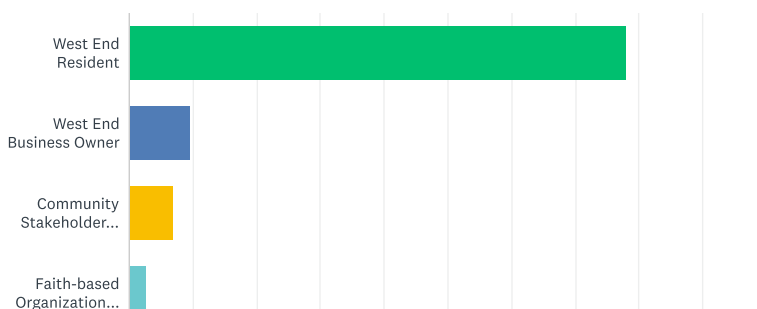
335

Q2



I am participating as (check all that apply):

Answered: 146 Skipped: 189



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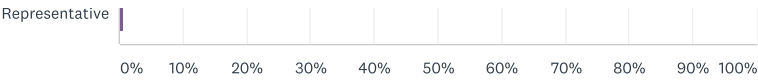
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
West End Resident	78.08%	114
West End Business Owner	9.59%	14
Community Stakeholder (elected or appointed representative)	6.85%	10
Faith-based Organization (clergy, leader, member or employee)	2.74%	4
Non-profit Organization (leader, board member, director, member or employee)	12.33%	18
City Staff Representative	0.68%	1
Total Respondents: 146		

Q3



If a Resident, please provide the number of persons living in your household:

Answered: 164 Skipped: 171

Q4



Do you currently rent or own your home?

Answered: 176 Skipped: 159



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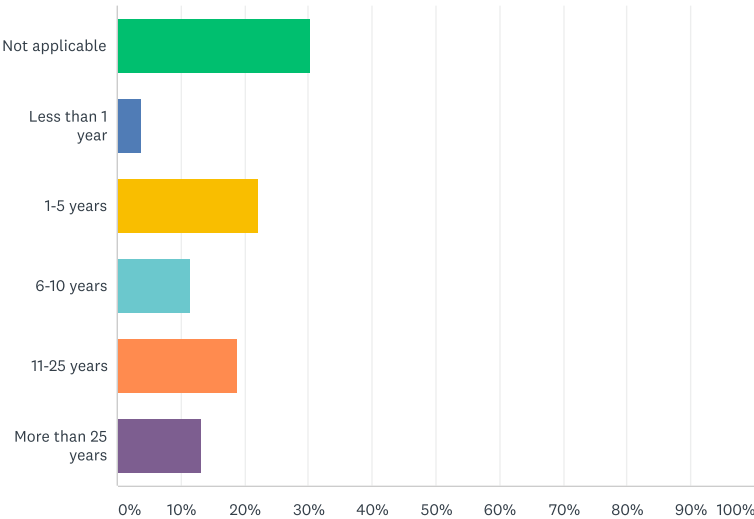


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Rent	10.23%	18
Own	89.77%	158
TOTAL		176

Q5

How long have you lived in the West End?

Answered: 181 Skipped: 154



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not applicable	30.39%	55
Less than 1 year	3.87%	7
1-5 years	22.10%	40
6-10 years	11.60%	21
11-25 years	18.78%	34
More than 25 years	13.26%	24
TOTAL		181

Q6

Identify the geographic area (street boundaries, specific corridors, general area(s), etc.) most people think of when referring to West End.

Answered: 182 Skipped: 153

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Q7



When you think of West End in it's Current state, what word or phrase immediately comes to mind:

Answered: 190 Skipped: 145

Q8



When you think of West End in its FUTURE state, what word or phrase immediately comes to mind? (NOTE: This should be creative and colorful... it might end up being our tag line!):

Answered: 182 Skipped: 153

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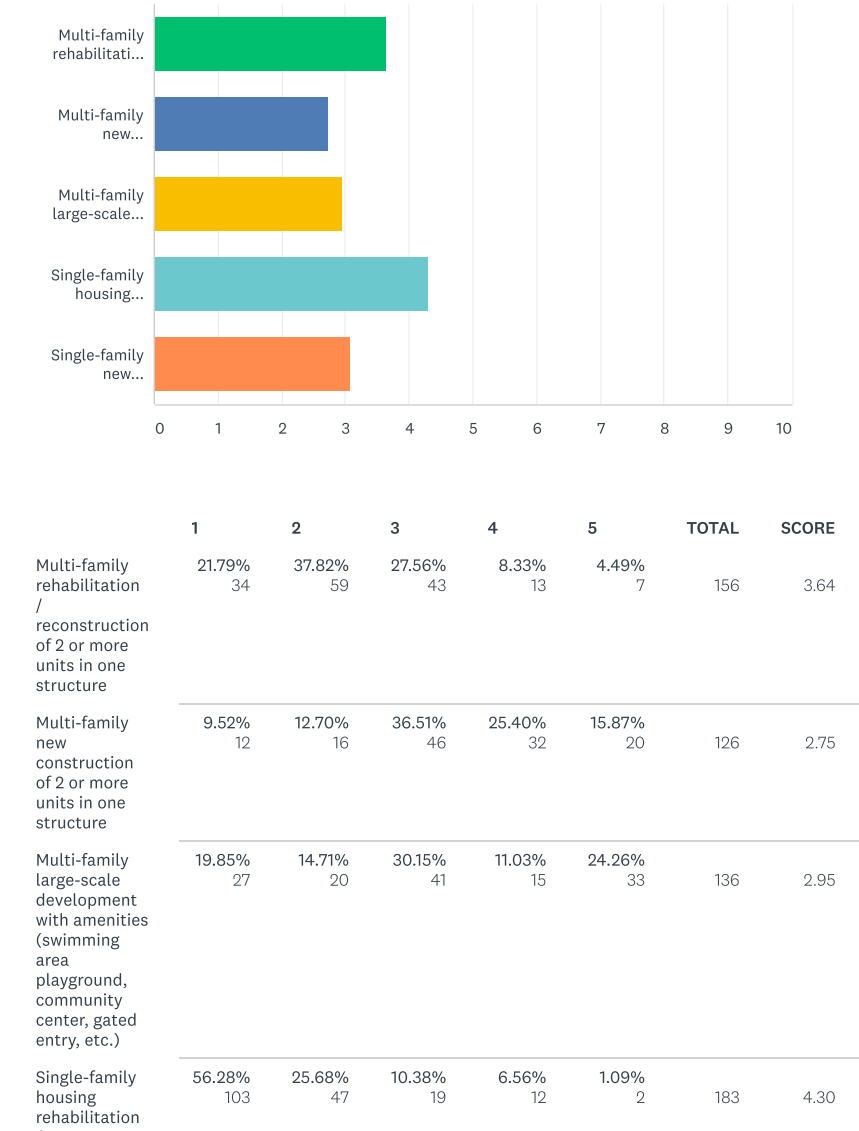
335 responses



Q9

Considering the following revitalization activity, Housing Improvements, rank the top 3 (1= highest, only use numbers 1-3).

Answered: 192 Skipped: 143

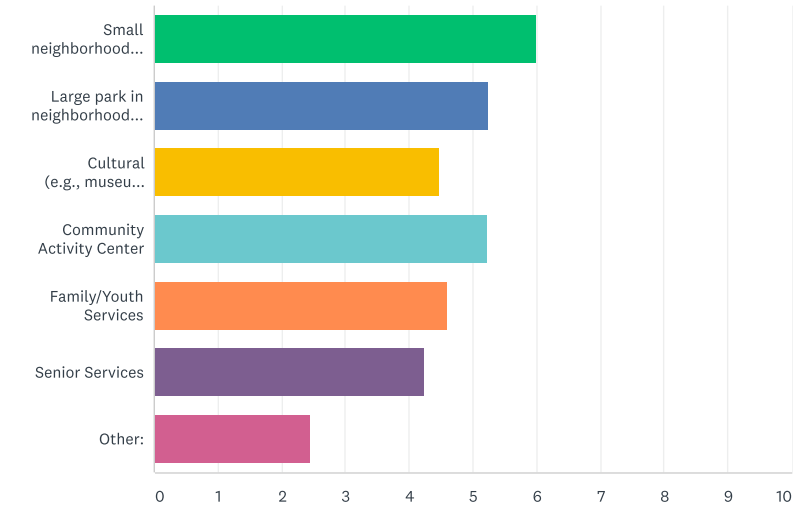




Q10

Considering the following revitalization activity, Community/Recreational/Expansion Improvements; rank top 3 (1 = highest. only use numbers 1-3)

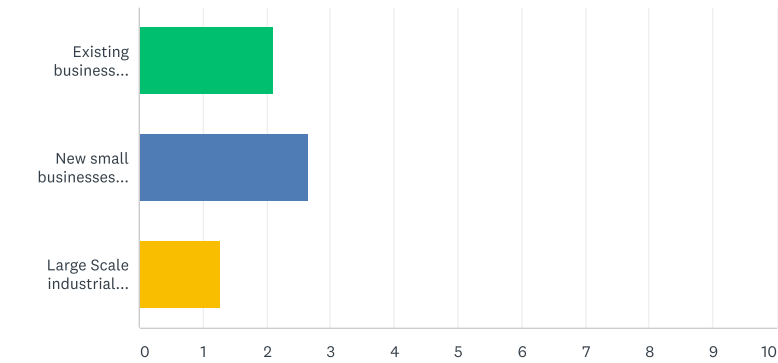
Answered: 190 Skipped: 145



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Small neighborhood park, playground, jogging/bike, walk trail	48.63% 71	21.23% 31	20.55% 30	2.74% 4	4.79% 7	2.05% 3	0.00% 0	146	6.00
Large park in neighborhood with pavilions, sport courts, pool/water feature, playgrounds, bike/walk trail	37.61% 44	19.66% 23	12.82% 15	10.26% 12	6.84% 8	6.84% 8	5.98% 7	117	5.26
Cultural (e.g., museum, history or heritage center)	7.55% 8	29.25% 31	20.75% 22	11.32% 12	12.26% 13	15.09% 16	3.77% 4	106	4.48
Community Activity Center	16.23% 25	31.82% 49	25.97% 40	14.94% 23	7.79% 12	3.25% 5	0.00% 0	154	5.24
Family/Youth Services	11.19% 15	25.37% 34	20.90% 28	10.45% 14	20.15% 27	10.45% 14	1.49% 2	134	4.60
Senior Services	13.08% 17	12.31% 16	27.69% 36	10.00% 13	10.00% 13	23.85% 31	3.08% 4	130	4.25
Other:	10.11% 9	2.25% 2	13.48% 12	3.37% 3	1.12% 1	5.62% 5	64.04% 57	89	2.44

Q11

Answered: 190 Skipped: 145

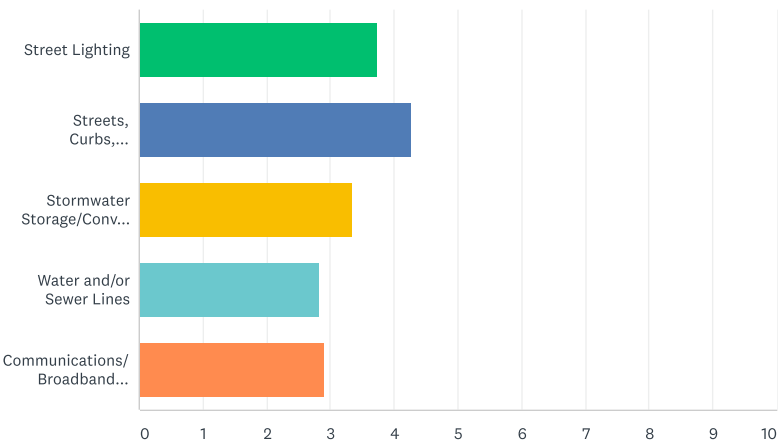


	1	2	3	TOTAL	SCORE
Existing business expansion	20.79% 37	69.66% 124	9.55% 17	178	2.11
New small businesses added	71.28% 134	23.40% 44	5.32% 10	188	2.66
Large Scale industrial expansion	10.49% 17	7.41% 12	82.10% 133	162	1.28

Q12

Considering the following revitalization activity, Infrastructure Improvements/Expansion, rank the top 3. (1= highest, only use numbers 1-3)

Answered: 190 Skipped: 145



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Street Lighting	20.53% 31	45.70% 69	25.17% 38	5.96% 9	2.65% 4	151	3.75
Streets, Curbs, Sidewalks	47.49% 85	34.08% 61	16.20% 29	1.12% 2	1.12% 2	179	4.26
Stormwater Storage/Conveyance	25.00% 32	14.84% 19	37.50% 48	15.63% 20	7.03% 9	128	3.35
Water and/or Sewer Lines	12.50%	19.17%	24.17%	27.50%	16.67%		

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Q13



What new program(s) or events could be implemented to have a significant impact in the target area?

Answered: 161 Skipped: 174

Q14



What public improvements to the community, if any, would you like to see completed in the next 5-10 years?

Answered: 168 Skipped: 167

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Q15



How would you suggest needed services and businesses be attracted to the area and what might those services and businesses be?

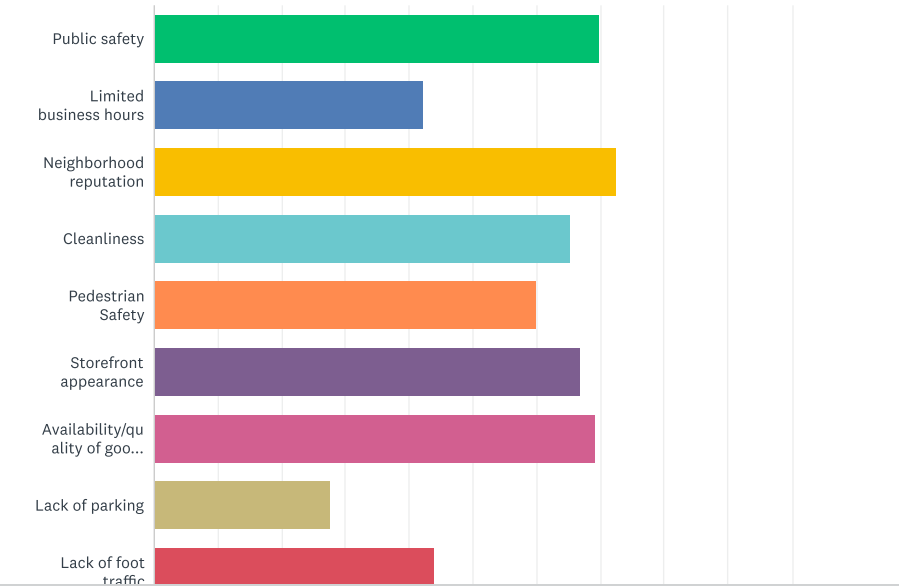
Answered: 163 Skipped: 172

Q16



What are the most pressing issues that should be addressed in the West End? Rank top 3 choices. (1 = most pressing. Only use numbers 1-3)

Answered: 191 Skipped: 144



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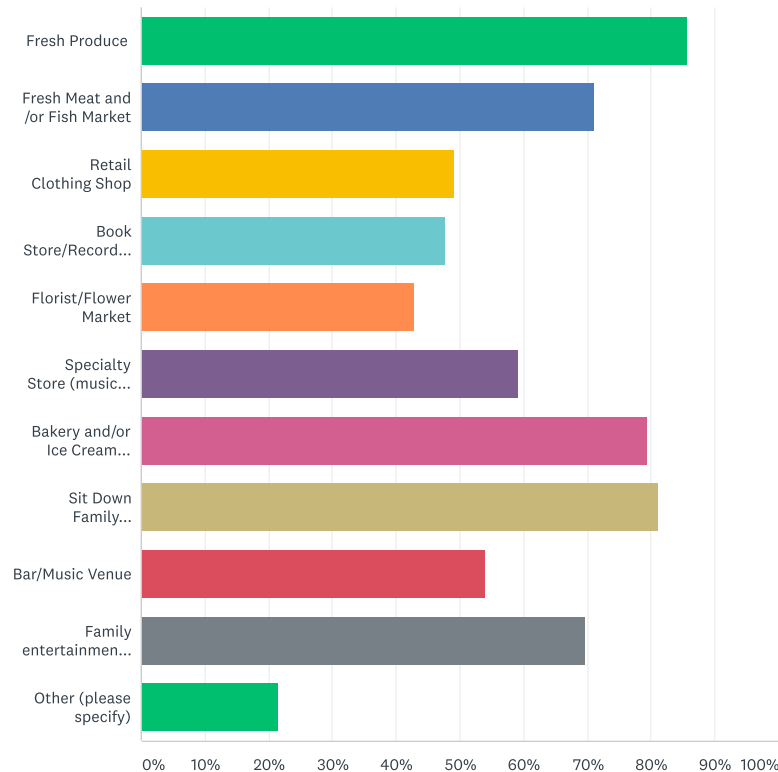
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL
Public safety	26.13% 29	21.62% 24	25.23% 28	9.01% 10	4.50% 5	3.60% 4	4.50% 5	4.50% 5	0.90% 1	111
Limited business hours	0.00% 0	6.76% 5	8.11% 6	16.22% 12	16.22% 12	10.81% 8	17.57% 13	13.51% 10	10.81% 8	74
Neighborhood reputation	37.41% 52	18.71% 26	16.55% 23	9.35% 13	5.76% 8	5.76% 8	4.32% 6	0.72% 1	1.44% 2	139
Cleanliness	8.47% 10	26.27% 31	28.81% 34	7.63% 9	11.86% 14	11.02% 13	3.39% 4	2.54% 3	0.00% 0	118
Pedestrian Safety	16.51% 18	15.60% 17	16.51% 18	10.09% 11	12.84% 14	11.93% 13	8.26% 9	5.50% 6	2.75% 3	109
Storefront appearance	21.37% 28	27.48% 36	19.85% 26	3.82% 5	5.34% 7	8.40% 11	9.16% 12	3.82% 5	0.76% 1	131
Availability/quality of goods & services	31.33% 47	18.00% 27	24.00% 36	4.67% 7	2.67% 4	6.67% 10	8.00% 12	2.67% 4	2.00% 3	150
Lack of parking	1.20% 1	7.23% 6	2.41% 2	1.20% 1	6.02% 5	3.61% 3	9.64% 8	40.96% 34	27.71% 23	83
Lack of foot traffic	5.32% 5	18.09% 17	14.89% 14	7.45% 7	5.32% 5	2.13% 2	4.26% 4	7.45% 7	35.11% 33	94

Q17



The stakeholder planning process has identified the following preliminary list of types of tenants as both desirable and appropriate for this district. With which do you agree? (Check all that apply):

Answered: 191 Skipped: 144



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

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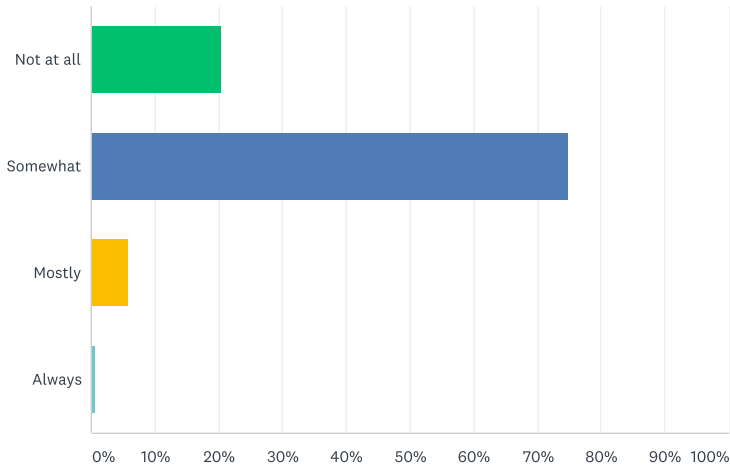
Florist/Flower Market	42.93%	82
Specialty Store (music, art, crafts, antiques, etc.)	59.16%	113
Bakery and/or Ice Cream Parlor	79.58%	152
Sit Down Family Restaurant	81.15%	155
Bar/Music Venue	53.93%	103
Family entertainment (arcade, bowling alley, putt-putt, etc.)	69.63%	133
Other (please specify)	21.47%	41
Total Respondents: 191		

Q18



To what extent are existing local businesses meeting local demand for retail goods and services?

Answered: 191 Skipped: 144



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not at all	20.42%	39
Somewhat	74.87%	143
Mostly	5.76%	11
Always	0.52%	1
Total Respondents: 191		

Q19



Is there sufficient demand to support new business in any of the desired tenant categories?

Answered: 183 Skipped: 152



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ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Yes	84.70%	155
No	15.30%	28

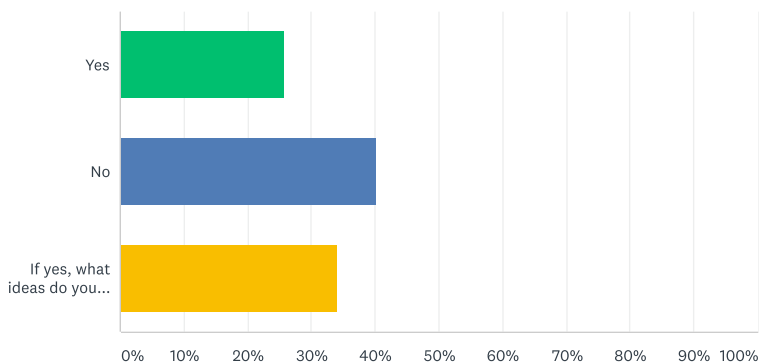
Total Respondents: 183

Q20



Are there other categories of retail or service businesses that might be more likely to succeed in the district given current market conditions?

Answered: 167 Skipped: 168



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

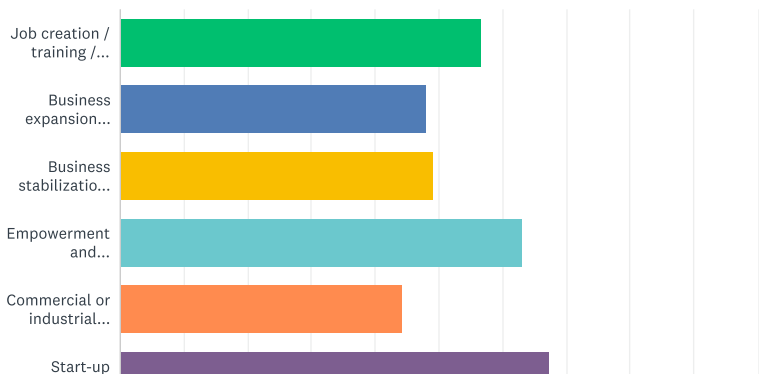
Yes	25.75%	43
No	40.12%	67
If yes, what ideas do you have:	34.13%	57
TOTAL		167

Q21



When considering economic development in West End, what do you consider as the top priorities. (Check all that apply)

Answered: 187 Skipped: 148



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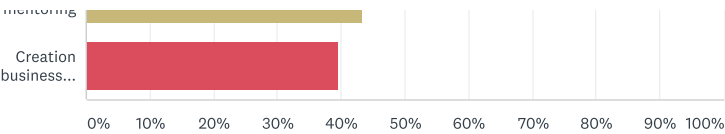
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Job creation / training / placement	56.68% 106
Business expansion through loans or grants	48.13% 90
Business stabilization through loans or grants	49.20% 92
Empowerment and self-sufficiency opportunities reducing generational poverty in federally subsidized housing	63.10% 118
Commercial or industrial improvements related to economic expansion	44.39% 83
Start-up business assistance	67.38% 126
Small business loans	49.20% 92
Business mentoring	43.32% 81
Creation business incubator providing space to assist new firms	39.57% 74

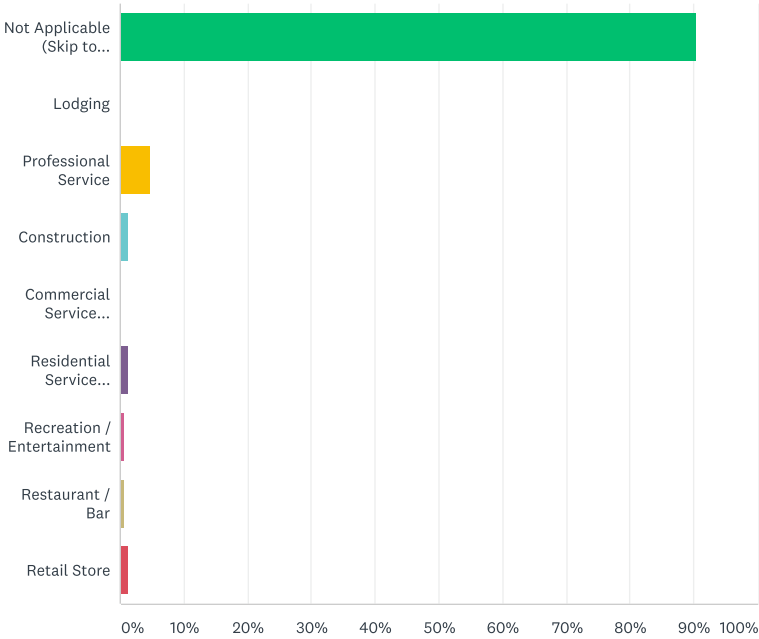
Total Respondents: 187

Q22



If you are a West End Business Owner or Commercial/Institutional Representative, what is the nature of your business?

Answered: 165 Skipped: 170



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not Applicable (Skip to Optional Questions at end of survey)	90.30% 149
Lodging	0.00% 0
Professional Service	4.85% 8

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335 responses



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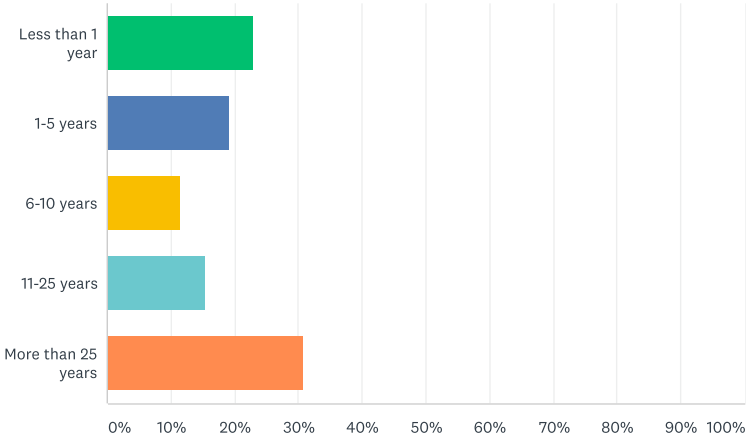
Recreation / Entertainment	0.61%	1
Restaurant / Bar	0.61%	1
Retail Store	1.21%	2
Total Respondents: 165		

Q23



How long have you operated your business at this location?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 309



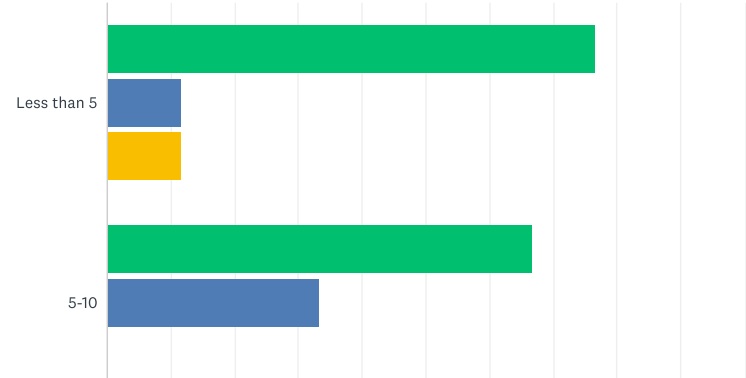
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 1 year	23.08% 6
1-5 years	19.23% 5
6-10 years	11.54% 3
11-25 years	15.38% 4
More than 25 years	30.77% 8
TOTAL	26

Q24



How many employees do you have?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 312



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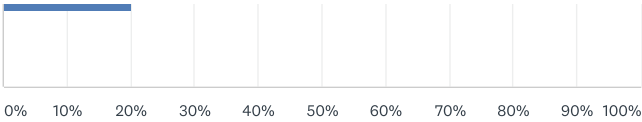
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Full-Time Part-Time Seasonal

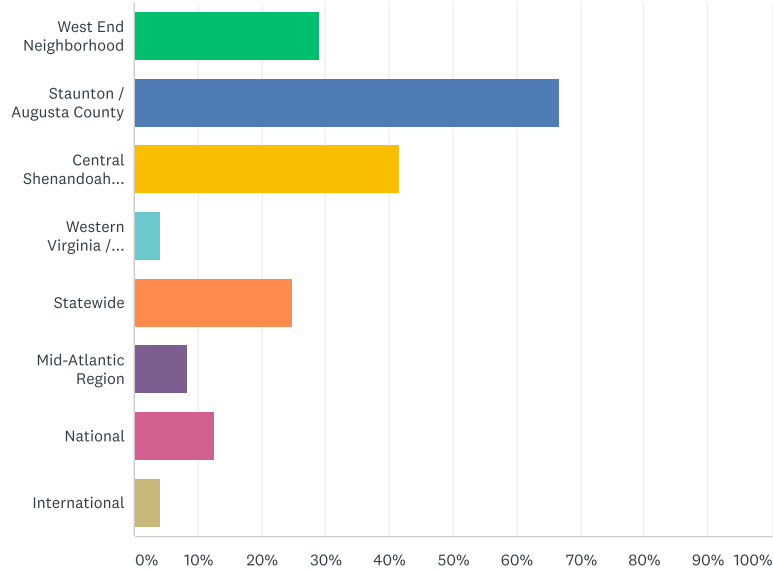
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	SEASONAL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Less than 5	76.47% 13	11.76% 2	11.76% 2	17	1.35
5-10	66.67% 2	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	3	1.33
More than 10	80.00% 4	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	5	1.20

Q25



What is/are primary market area(s) for the majority of your sales or business (select any that apply):

Answered: 24 Skipped: 311



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
West End Neighborhood	29.17%	7
Staunton / Augusta County	66.67%	16
Central Shenandoah Region	41.67%	10
Western Virginia / Eastern West Virginia	4.17%	1
Statewide	25.00%	6
Mid-Atlantic Region	8.33%	2
National	12.50%	3
International	4.17%	1
Total Respondents: 24		

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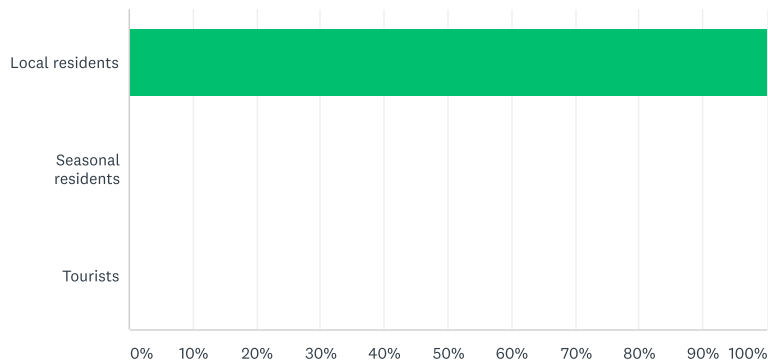


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sales or business?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 317



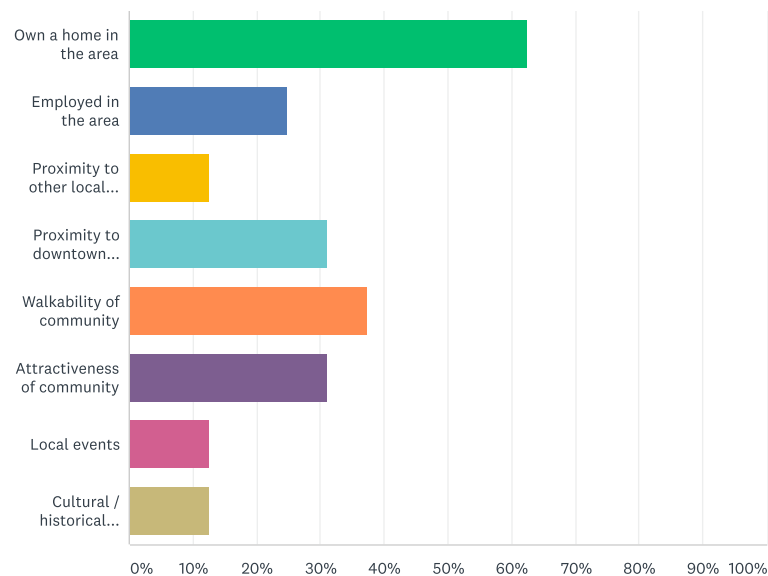
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local residents	100.00%	18
Seasonal residents	0.00%	0
Tourists	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

Q27



Which of the following categories do you think attracts most of your customers? (Select up to 3)

Answered: 16 Skipped: 319



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Own a home in the area	62.50%	10
Employed in the area	25.00%	4
Proximity to other local services / amenities	12.50%	2
Proximity to downtown Stanton	31.25%	5

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Cultural / historical attractions

12.50%

4

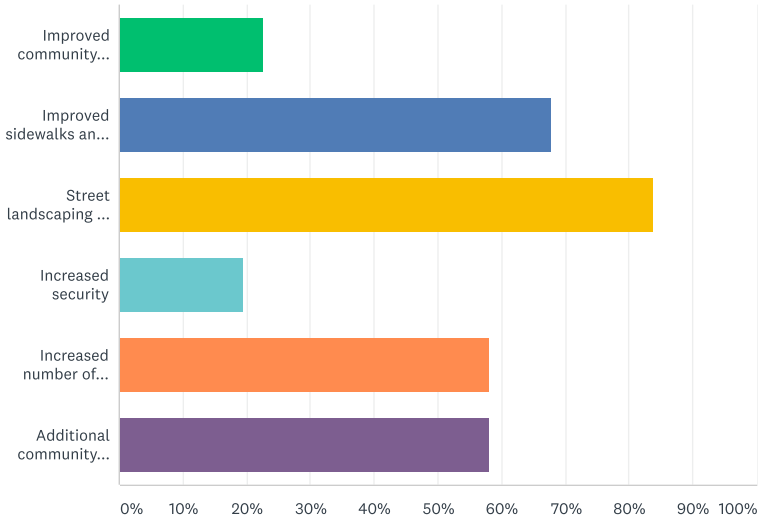
Total Respondents: 16

Q28



Based on customer comments and personal experiences, which of the following should be addressed in order to increase visitation to the area? (Select up to 3):

Answered: 31 Skipped: 304



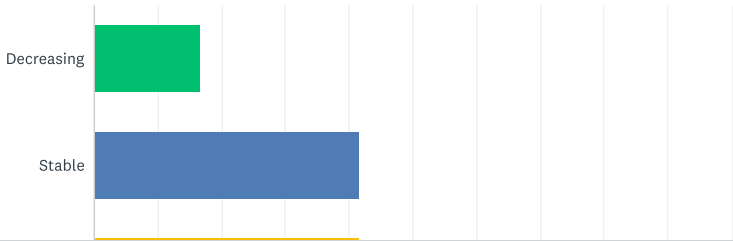
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improved community facilities (e.g., public restrooms)	22.58%	7
Improved sidewalks and pedestrian amenities	67.74%	21
Street landscaping / beautification	83.87%	26
Increased security	19.35%	6
Increased number of special/community events	58.06%	18
Additional community attractions	58.06%	18
Total Respondents: 31		

Q29



How would you characterize your business activity level over the past 1-2 years of operation (pre-pandemic)?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 311



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ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

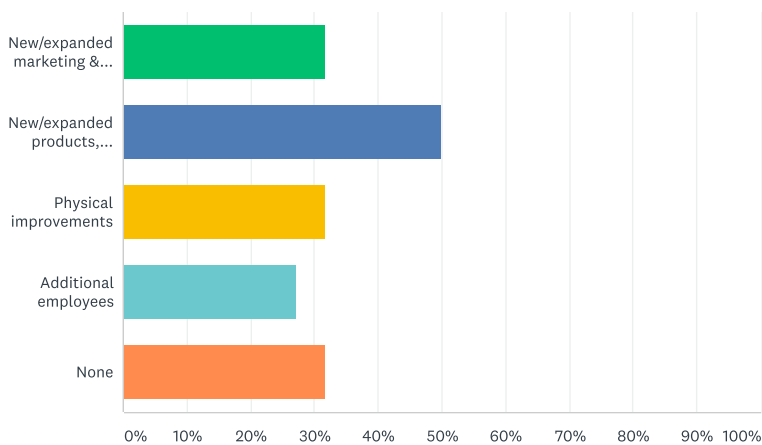
Decreasing	16.67%	4
Stable	41.67%	10
Increasing	41.67%	10
TOTAL		24

Q30



Check any type of investment or improvement you plan on making in the next 1-2 years:

Answered: 22 Skipped: 313



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

New/expanded marketing & promotional activities	31.82%	7
New/expanded products, services, or inventory	50.00%	11
Physical improvements	31.82%	7
Additional employees	27.27%	6
None	31.82%	7

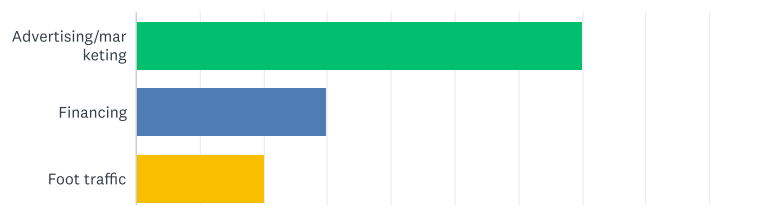
Total Respondents: 22

Q31



In addition to a strong economy, what are the critical factors for the success and growth of your business? (Check all that apply):

Answered: 20 Skipped: 315



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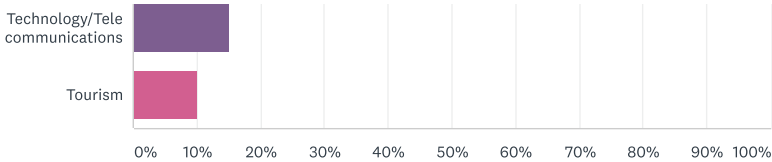
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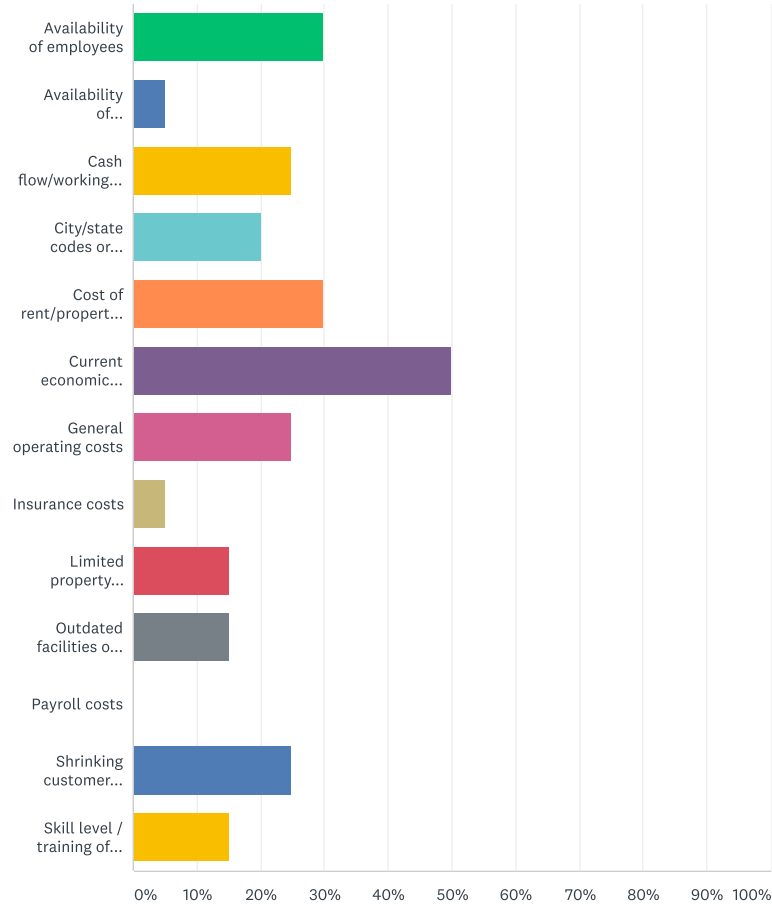
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Advertising/marketing	70.00%	14
Financing	30.00%	6
Foot traffic	20.00%	4
Public access	30.00%	6
Qualified labor	25.00%	5
Technology/Telecommunications	15.00%	3
Tourism	10.00%	2
Total Respondents: 20		

Q32



What are some of the major issues or obstacles facing your business today? (Check all that apply):

Answered: 20 Skipped: 315



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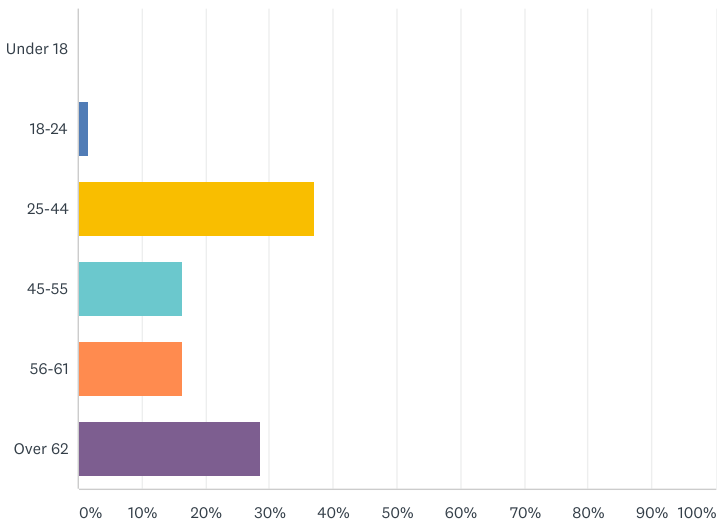
City/state codes or regulations	20.00%	4
Cost of rent/property taxes	30.00%	6
Current economic conditions	50.00%	10
General operating costs	25.00%	5
Insurance costs	5.00%	1
Limited property improvements	15.00%	3
Outdated facilities or equipment	15.00%	3
Payroll costs	0.00%	0
Shrinking customer traffic	25.00%	5
Skill level / training of employees	15.00%	3
Total Respondents: 20		

Q33



Optional Personal Data:Note: All data provided will remain anonymous and is requested only for purposes of further defining our community and to clarify and enhance results of the survey.My Age is:

Answered: 178 Skipped: 157



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	1.69%	3
25-44	37.08%	66
45-55	16.29%	29
56-61	16.29%	29
Over 62	28.65%	51
TOTAL		178

Q34



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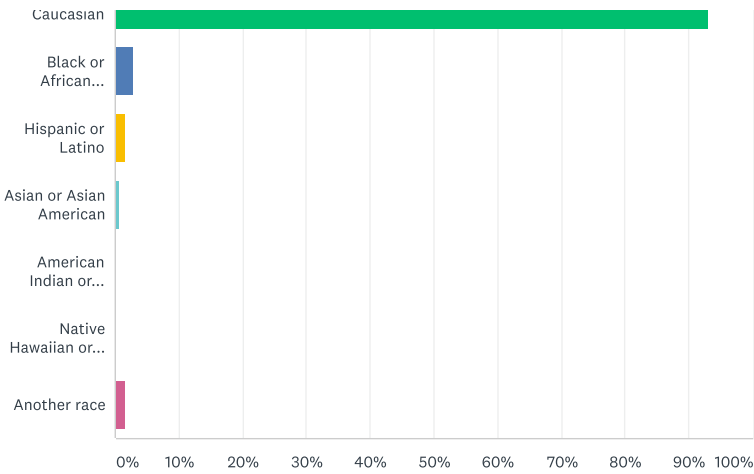
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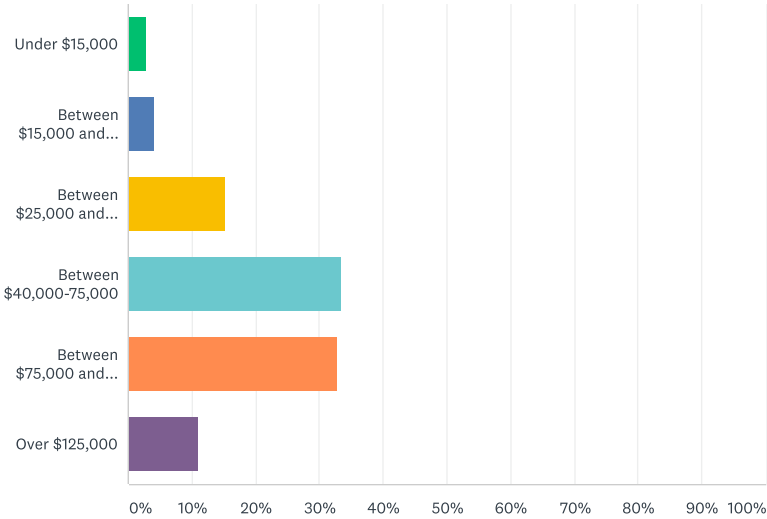
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White or Caucasian	93.02%	160
Black or African American	2.91%	5
Hispanic or Latino	1.74%	3
Asian or Asian American	0.58%	1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.00%	0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
Another race	1.74%	3
TOTAL		172

Q35



Yearly household income is:

Answered: 170 Skipped: 165



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under \$15,000	2.94%	5
Between \$15,000 and \$25,000	4.12%	7

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West End Revitalization Strategies Plan

Public Open House Summary



Open House Overview

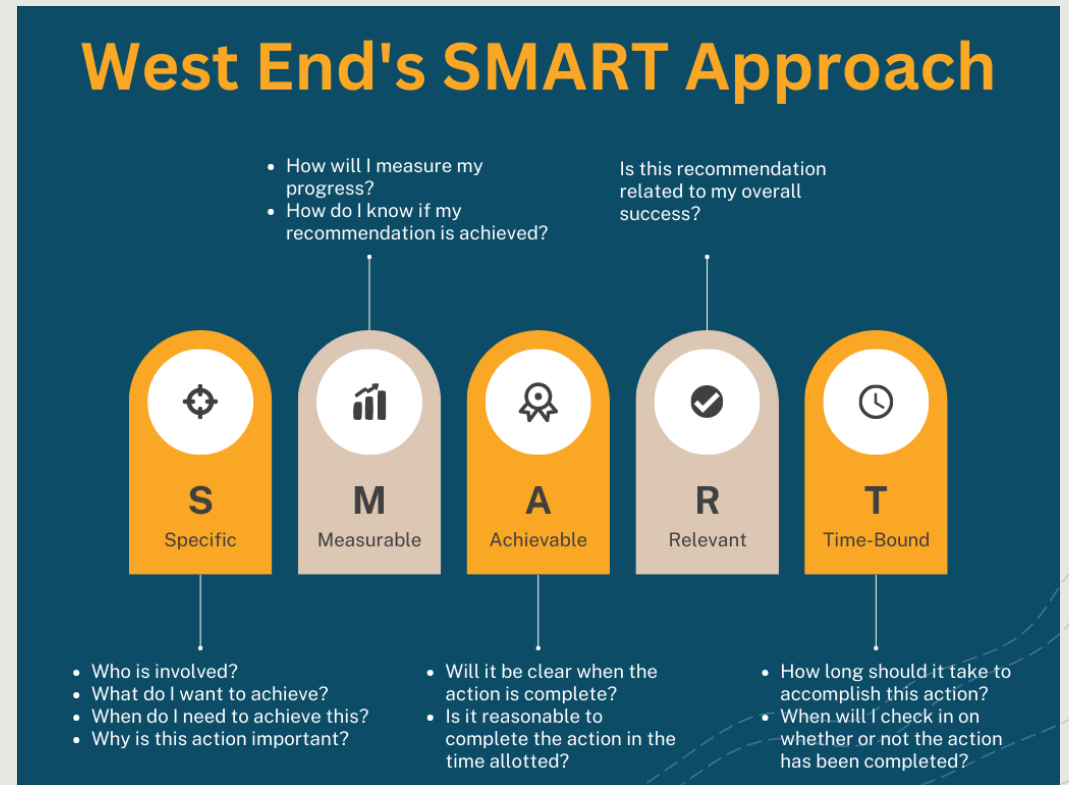
- + Poster exhibit format
- + Gypsy Hill Park Gymnasium
- + Nearly 30 participants were present
- + Participants were from different areas of the West End
- + Exhibits included information, recommendations, and prompts for feedback



Welcome and Background Station

The West End is a strategic focus area where the City Council has committed to providing resources “to promote this community as a vibrant area with diverse business opportunities, cultural offerings, and great potential for economic growth and stability.”

The West End Revitalization Strategy Plan uses a data- and community-driven process to define the project study area, document its needs, develop community goals, and detail **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-based (SMART) recommendations that will offer the West End a thriving future.





Welcome and Background Station

What is the West End Revitalization Strategy Plan?

This plan is the first comprehensive planning effort focused on the West End. It provides detailed recommendations, clear action steps, and accountability to facilitate a vibrant West End community.

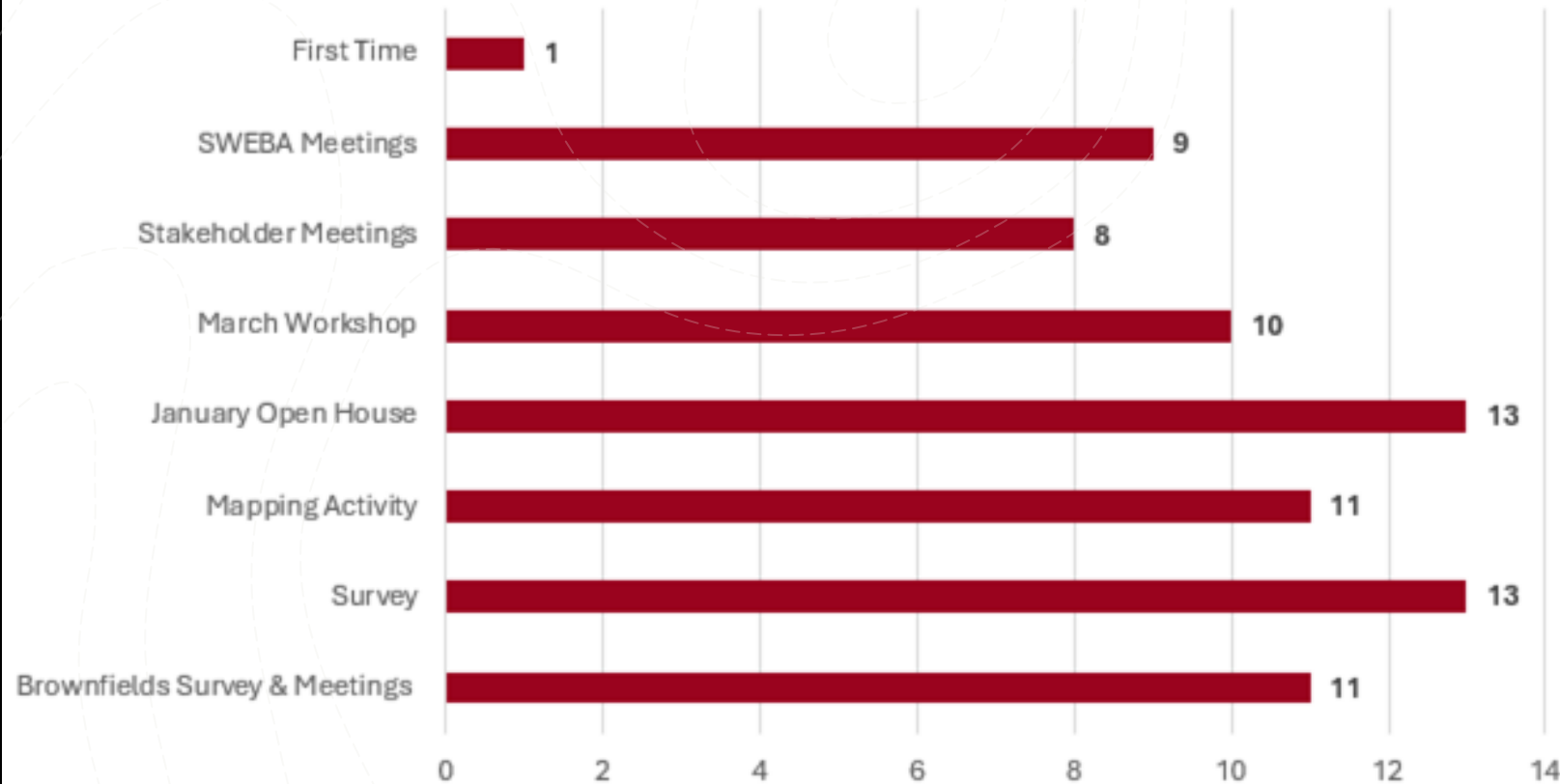
Welcome and Background Station

How are current and past efforts in the West End related to this plan?

Past and current efforts in the West End inform this Plan's process. Past public engagement, collected data, and reports were considered in each step of this process in conjunction with data and community input collected throughout this project. Past and current efforts include:

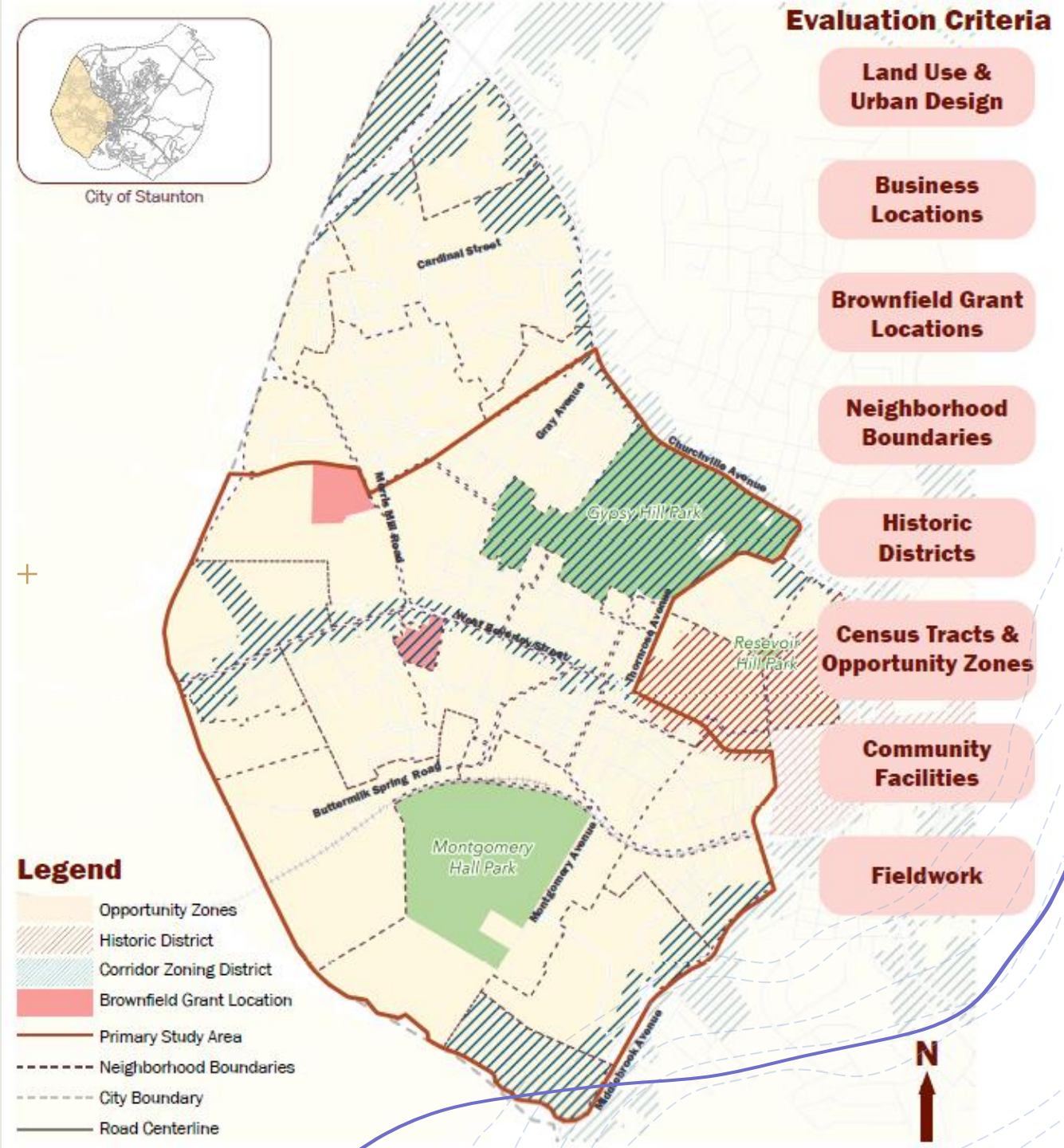
- + USEPA Brownfields Grant
- + Stormwater Management and Stream Restoration
- + Staunton West End Business Association (SWEBA)
- + Historic Staunton Foundation

Past Engagement Poster



Study Area

For the purposes of this study, the plan identifies a primary and core study area.



Engagement To-Date

The community's input, ideas, and comments have been a priority throughout this process.

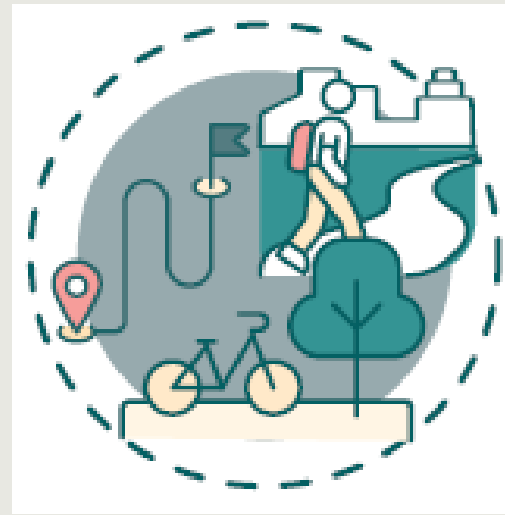
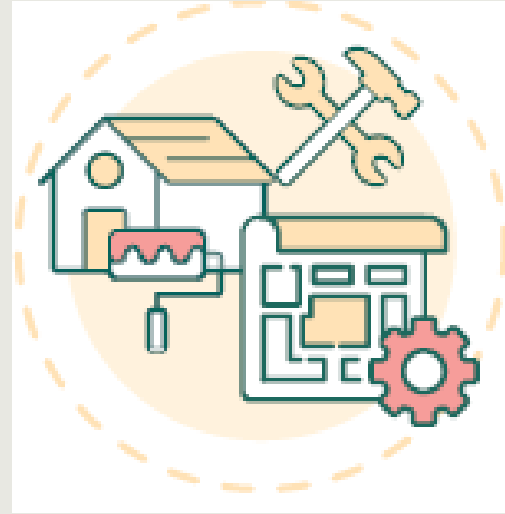
- + **2021:** USEPA Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant Survey & Meetings
- + **Ongoing:** Stakeholder & Staunton West End Business Association Meetings
- + **Winter 2024:** West End Revitalization Strategy Survey
- + **January 2024:** West End Open House
- + **March 2024:** West End Community Workshop



Vision and Goals

Vision

"The West End will be a vibrant, diverse, and multimodal community, where residents can safely and conveniently access their thriving commercial corridor, consisting of local shops and services that function as a proud gateway to Staunton's western neighborhoods."



Goals

- + **Draft Goal A: Vibrant Commercial Corridor** - Foster a vibrant commercial corridor along West Beverley Street, which will be an active center of local businesses that serve the diverse needs of the West End's neighborhoods and the surrounding areas of Staunton.
- + **Goal B: Healthy and Safe Connections** - Shape a healthy and beautified West End that creates a safe and comfortable environment for people walking, biking, and taking transit.
- + **Goal C: Green Neighborhoods** - Preserve and strengthen the West End's environmental assets, promote green infrastructure, and offer enhanced city parks and community spaces.
- + **Goal D: Reinvestment and Affordability** - Foster reinvestment in the West End's neighborhoods and homes while maintaining affordable living and homeownership opportunities.

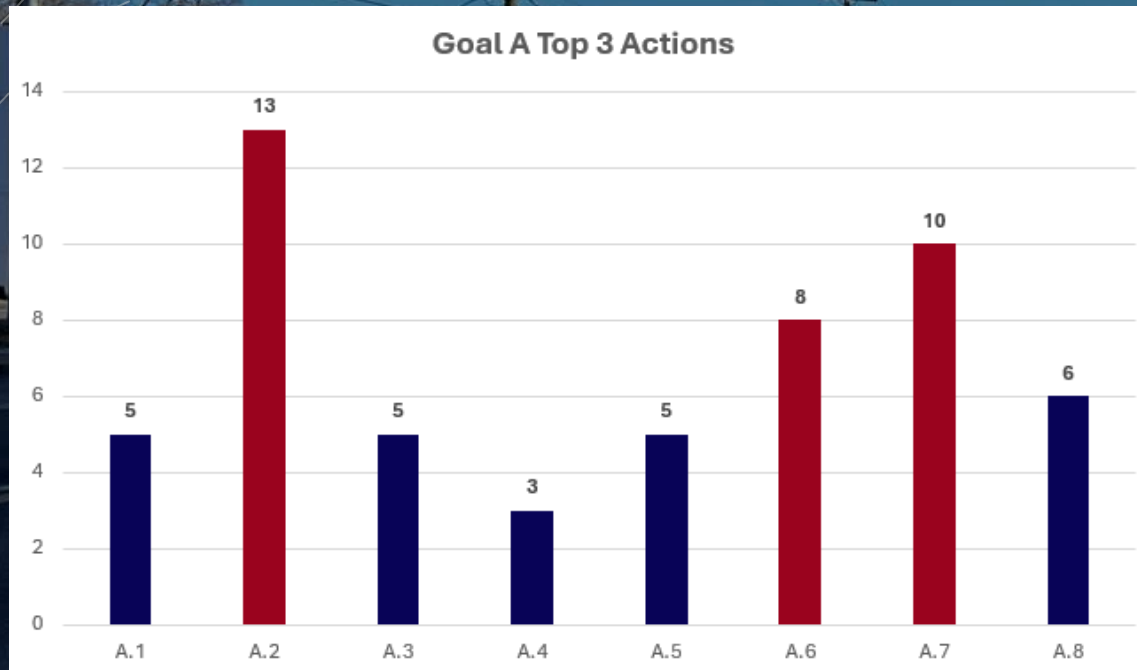
Draft Goal A: Vibrant Commercial Corridor



Foster a vibrant commercial corridor along West Beverley Street, which will be an active center of local businesses that serve the diverse needs of the West End's neighborhoods and the surrounding areas of Staunton.

- + **Action A.1:** Connect current and future entrepreneurs with existing business services and educational opportunities to meet the needs of businesses in the West End.
- + **Action A.2:** Add the West Beverley Street corridor to the City's Enterprise Zone, allowing new and existing business owners and vacant or brownfield locations access to Enterprise Zone incentives.
- + **Action A.3:** Connect long-term businesses in redeveloping areas to rehabilitation grants and loans. Provide educational materials to West End businesses about tax relief to preserve existing businesses as property taxes increase.
- + **Action A.4:** Establish a pop-up market in vacant lots, closed side streets, or commercial parking lots for seasonal events and vendor stalls to support local artists and small businesses.

Draft Goal A: Vibrant Commercial Corridor



- + **Action A.5:** Implement the entrance corridor overlay update to reflect the desired designs and layouts that foster small business development and enhance community character.
- + **Action A.6:** Encourage business and property owners on W. Beverley Street to upkeep and beautify their buildings and lots.
- + **Action A.7:** Explore using Tax Increment Financing to support infrastructure investments.
- + **Action A.8:** Develop a neighborhood arts program with murals and other installations beautifying the West End.

Goal A: What is missing?

- + "More 'green corridors' and pocket parks"
- + "Complementary mixed-use/village corridor instead of commercial corridor. Utilize zoning and streetscape improvements to encourage this type of development"
- + "TIF has caused challenges in other communities"
- + "DHCD - No demo programs. Small incremental improvements are key"



Goal B: Healthy and Safe Connections

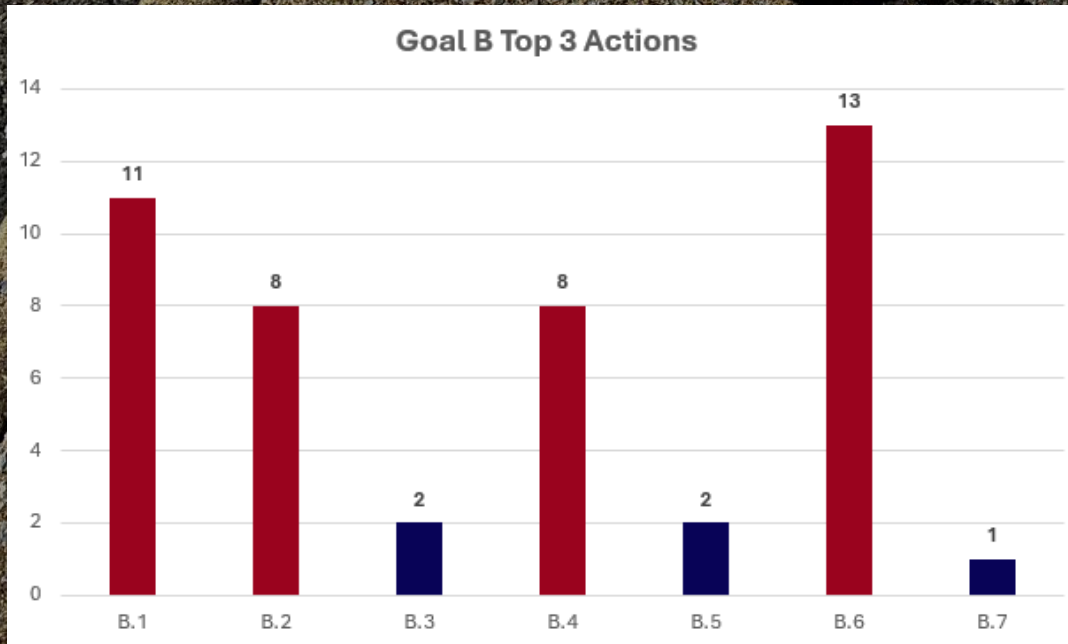


Shape a healthy and beautified West End that creates a safe and comfortable environment for people walking, biking, and taking transit.

- + **Action B.1:** Implement bike and pedestrian improvements identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that connect City parks, Downtown, West Beverley Street, schools, and bus stops for transit users.
- + **Action B.2:** Add high-visibility crosswalks and the appropriate facilities to all community destinations and heavily traveled intersections.
- + **Action B.3:** Add sheltered bus stops and benches to select locations and improve sidewalks to allow riders safe access to transit.
- + **Action B.4:** Install pedestrian-scaled lighting features along West Beverley Street and neighborhood sidewalks to increase pedestrian visibility and improve feelings of safety.

Goal B: Healthy and Safe Connections

- + **Action B.5:** Install bicycle facilities within Gypsy Hill Park and Montgomery Hall Park, allowing visitors to bike to the parks, secure their bikes, and safely bike throughout the park on designated paths.
- + **Action B.6:** Repair and maintain sidewalks and roads in the West End.
- + **Action B.7:** Conduct a speed and safety study and implement the proper speeding reduction measures to reduce speeding and increase pedestrian safety.



Goal B: What is missing?

- + "Add sidewalks on Beverley and sidewalks"
- + "B.7: Well-designed crosswalks should reduce vehicle speed; therefore, B.7 may not be necessary."
- + "Bus stops and sidewalks should be a given."
- + "Reduce emphasis on corridors and then connect adjoining neighborhoods."
- + "ALL OF THESE are very important priorities."
- + "Need to add sidewalks along Beverley and maintain"
- + "Lighting should enhance ACTUAL safety (not just 'feeling')"

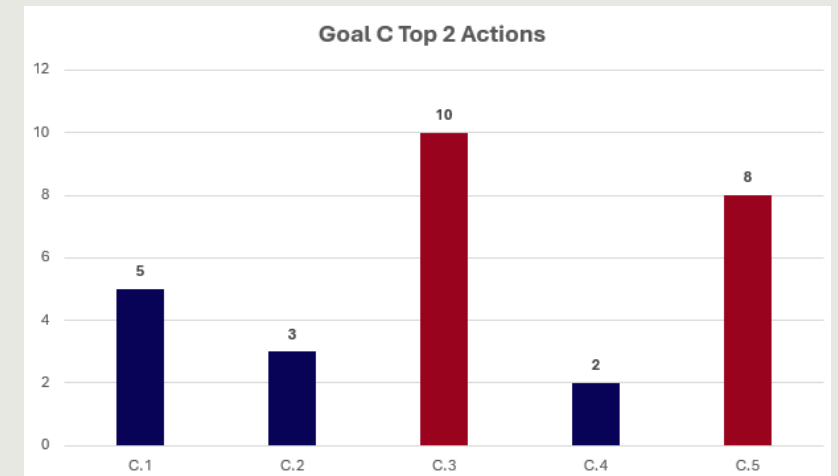


Goal C: Green Neighborhoods



Preserve and strengthen the West End's environmental assets, promote green infrastructure, and offer enhanced city parks and community spaces.

- + **Action C.1:** Create a streetscape beautification program or association comprised of community volunteers that host clean-up days, native plant planting days, and invasive species removal days.
- + **Action C.2:** Create a West End specific pop-up program from the City's Stormwater Education Program demonstrating easy stormwater reduction actions for residents and property owners during Flood Awareness Week.
- + **Action C.3:** Create additional pocket parks and greenspace throughout the West End.
- + **Action C.4:** Encourage native vegetation planting through education.
- + **Action C.5:** Plant street trees along West Beverley Street and encourage property owners to plant more trees.



Goal C: What is missing?

- + "C.1: Yes, to this plan - however it should not be strictly volunteer-based - investment from the city is needed."
- + "All planting requires maintenance! Who is going to do this? How will it be paid for? Need city and citizens to work together on this."
- + "All streetscape plans should include swales, permeable paving, etc. the streets are the challenge; too much asphalt!"
- + "The primary visual difference between thriving neighborhoods and those suffering is the absence of trees/parks in the latter. MORE TREES AND PARKS PLEASE."
- + "EV charging stations"

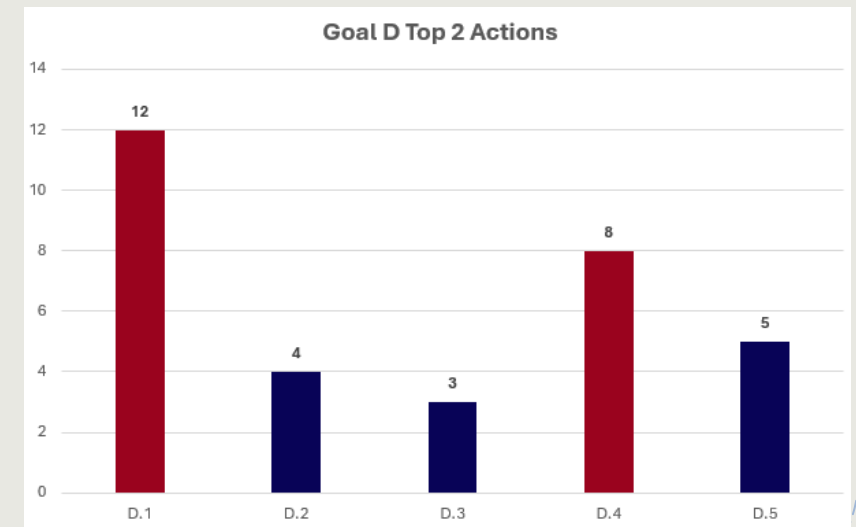


Goal D: Reinvestment and Affordability



Foster reinvestment in the West End's neighborhoods and homes while maintaining affordable living and homeownership opportunities.

- + **Action D.1:** Connect the community to existing resources that will assist homeowners with renovating their homes to address building and property maintenance code violations.
- + **Action D.2:** Create informational materials for homeownership that list resources for City programs, grants, loans, and education to increase homeownership, particularly among low-income aspiring homeowners.
- + **Action D.3:** Establish neighborhood advocate groups for each neighborhood and public housing represented by full-term residents of their respective communities that report issues and needs directly to the city council and the city manager.
- + **Action D.4:** Develop a Healthy Homes Program that works with homeowners to assess the current condition of their homes and then performs moderate repairs to improve the home's sustainability, health, and affordability.
- + **Action D.5:** Provide renter education programming to inform renters about standard living conditions and Virginia renter's rights.



Goal D: What is missing?

- + "D.5: Focus on the rehabilitation of government-assisted housing facility conditions. Giving people hope with a decent place to live will give them at least a chance to wish to better their community."
- + "SWEBA are leaders for all the West End."
- + "D.4: Develop a city matching grant program to assist qualifying property owners in reinvesting in their properties."
- + "Identify historic buildings and encourage rehab."
- + "Develop advisor guidelines that educate about quality building improvements and incentives for rehab."



Other Comments

- + "Businesses not included on Spring Hill Road"
- + "City needs to lead. Why do the plans for the courts not follow the corridor guidelines?"
- + "Signage on the bypass to direct people to the businesses in the West End."
- + "Societal attitudes and actions are a huge challenge for West End business development."
- + "Create an annual meeting to check on the progress of the plan. Offer people the opportunity to express concerns."

