

# Maplewood Master Plan Public Workshop #1

## Workshop Summary

The first in-person Maplewood Master Plan public workshop took place at The Woodland on Tuesday October 25, 2022, from 7:30-9:30pm. About 30 people were in attendance, including several members of Maplewood's Master Plan Steering Committee, and members of Maplewood's consultant team comprised of BFJ Planning and FHI Studio. The workshop started with introductions and explanations, continued with a presentation from the consultant team, and concluded with a town hall-style discussion. Mayor Dean Dafis opened the workshop, first welcoming attendees, then explaining the function of the public workshop and the purpose and scope of a master plan. Mayor Dafis then handed it off to Karen Pisciotta, Maplewood's Planning Board Chair, who explained the components of a master plan and the importance of community input.

Susan Favate, Principal in Charge at BFJ Planning continued thereafter, starting by facilitating an interactive "Poll Everywhere," which allowed participants to answer questions about their present and future visions of Maplewood, and watch their answers appear in real time, forming a word cloud. Ms. Favate continued the presentation, sharing with attendees lessons learned from previous Township staff meetings, various stakeholder meetings, and community engagement events, and walked attendees through Maplewood's existing conditions.

Kelsey Kahn, Senior Planner at FHI Studio, handled the Virtual Workshop portion of the presentation, discussing feedback from the virtual activities. Maplewood residents were invited to complete online, over the summer, prior to this public workshop. In the virtual workshop participants were asked to complete three activities: 1) ranking their priority issues, 2) sharing ideas they have for Maplewood, and 3) selecting areas in Maplewood that they love and/or areas that they would like to see changed. With over 1,000 activities completed by residents, there were strong themes that emerged, such as respondents being primarily concerned with Maplewood's walking/biking/transit and shared mobility, street safety, and economic vitality. Ms. Kahn also conducted a live "Poll Everywhere," during her presentation, which gave attendees a chance to respond to the feedback presented by other



Please join us for the second round of public engagement for the Maplewood Master Plan.

### Pre-registration

You can pre-register for the event by scanning the QR code below or visiting the following website:

<https://forms.gle/21wHNw5AKnhLCSNC7>

Pre registration is not required, but appreciated.



For more information, visit the Township of Maplewood website at:

[www.maplewoodnj.gov/government/township-master-plan](http://www.maplewoodnj.gov/government/township-master-plan)

### Meeting Details

**25** Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> 2022

**7:30 pm to 9:30 pm**

**The Woodland**  
60 Woodland Road  
Maplewood, NJ 07040

### Participate to:

- Hear about the Master Plan process
- Get an overview of the draft existing conditions report
- See feedback from the virtual workshop, including community priorities



Maplewood residents, gauging whether or not they agreed with their neighbors, and adding or expanding on ideas or themes that they felt were not covered.

The full presentation is attached to this summary report.

Once the presentation concluded, attendees were invited to engage in a town hall-style discussion, led initially by guiding questions, and then by the natural flow of the conversation. Below, the comments, ideas, and concerns heard has been summarized and categorized by the major themes that emerged.

### **Open Space, Recreation, Conservation**

- Residents feel that there are few options for outdoor activities for young athletes
- Residents desire more public places for teens/adolescents to safely “hang out”
- There were several calls to revitalize Maplewood’s defunct movie theater
- Attendees expressed desire to improve upon Ricalton Square in a way that would encourage more multi-modal forms of transit
- Interest in improving connectivity with Chyzowych Field’s planned greenway
- The Maplewood Community Pool:
  - o Residents want more access to the pool
  - o Suggestions were offered to make the pool’s grounds more useful during its off season, such as the parking lot serving as a commuter parking lot for jitney users, and/or as a winter marketplace
- Maplewood has a need for more dog parks/dog-friendly outdoor locations
- An idea to provide free public Wi-Fi in parks was met with support
- There was interest in developing more “pocket parks” around Maplewood
- Maplewood Country Club:
  - o Occupies large swaths of land, which has potential for other uses
  - o Some residents feel that the country club “isn’t always the best neighbor” since it isn’t transparent about the type and volume of the chemicals they use to maintain their grounds, and their valet system is disruptive to nearby residents

### **Economic Development**

- Business owners in attendance want to ensure that Maplewood business owners are included as a distinct stakeholder group as the planning process continues
- Attendees questioned:
  - o Will long-term capital planning be paired with implementation of future recommendations in order to ensure actual execution of said recommendations?
  - o Can small businesses help out with the tax burden implicated with implementation of future recommendations?

### **Community Facilities, Cultural Resources, and Equity**

- Parents noted that there is a lack of afterschool childcare opportunities
- Attendees reported crowding in schools
- Residents expressed frustration with the level of communication ahead of community engagement events; many feel that these events need to be better publicized

- The community wants to be more involved in planning and decision-making processes for new developments in Maplewood
- Attendees showed interest in hosting more “Coffee with Cops” events to strengthen the relationship between community members and police officers
- A suggestion to make meeting notes from planning processes publicly available was met with support
- Attendees proposed including the Community Coalition on Race, SOMA, and families with disabled members as stakeholder groups as the planning process continues
- An idea to make shared public office space available in the community for residents that work from home was met with support
- There was strong desire to see more coordination between various township agencies and the Maplewood community.
- Some feel that Maplewood should provide more resources to families with disabled children

### **Circulation, Mobility, and Parking**

- Issues raised with Maplewood Station were met with unanimous agreement, especially:
  - o Lack of appropriate accommodations leaves residents with mobility issues unable to use the station, and board trains
- Residents value the Maplewood’s Jitney Service highly as a driving alternative, but had various suggestions to improve and expand it, such as:
  - o Increasing the jitney fee around “Event Times” in Maplewood to generate more supportive income
  - o Extending jitney service to the weekends
  - o Offering free or lower cost jitney fees to children and adolescents to provide them with a safe, reliable form of transit
- There was strong interest in establishing a bike lane network, to improve connectivity between connect parks, mass transit, residences, and community hubs.
- Attendees noted many pedestrian safety concerns including:
  - o Poor lighting on crosswalks
  - o Need for more street lighting which increases visibility for both pedestrians and drivers
  - o Several known dangerous intersections
  - o Crumbling and/or non-existent sidewalks which pose a danger for runners, parents with strollers, senior residents, etc.
- There is a need in Maplewood for more enforcement on traffic rules and regular ticketing
- Residents agreed that corner lots need to maintain their landscaping in a way that does not diminish visibility for drivers, peds, bikers, etc.
- Lack of parking, especially surrounding community hubs, is an issue for residents
- There was strong support for implementing more passive traffic calming techniques
  - o Attendees also expressed a willingness to try new, cutting edge traffic calming techniques, (such as usage of bollards, raised crosswalks, etc.) as observed in other municipalities

## **Housing**

- Attendees showed support for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and feel that the township should do more to incentivize creation of ADUs and educate homeowners
- Attendees suggested hiring a Maplewood grant writer to apply for funding for affordable housing
- Some feel that Maplewood should allow for higher density developments to account for the “missing middle” (housing affordable to middle class families)

## **Infrastructure and Sustainability**

- There was strong support for increased incentivization of solar panels and education on their benefits for Maplewood homeowners
- Maplewood residents value their iconic tree canopy, and some attendees had suggestions for maintaining its health and purpose, such as:
  - o Replacing aging trees on a regular basis
  - o Providing public resources and education for residents on tree care
  - o Increasing general upkeep of street trees
- Recent hurricanes revealed several areas of Maplewood which have low stormwater absorption capabilities; attendees agreed that those areas need increased intervention to mitigate flooding after a major stormwater event
- There was general support for encouraging sustainable living among residents and increased decarbonization efforts by the township
- Attendees agreed that attractive, functional green infrastructure should be woven into any planned infrastructure or streetscape improvements
- Some wanted to ensure that resiliency tenets are incorporated into any infill developments, and/or ADUs, since empty (permeable) lots add to Maplewood’s stormwater retention capabilities
- Light pollution is an issue which sees little enforcement and should be addressed
- There were calls for revitalization of “back blocks” to keep them cleaner and improve their aesthetics
- Leaves tend to clog on street sewer drains and impact Maplewood’s ability to move stormwater after a weather event; public education and action on the matter is desired
- Some residents want to promote environmental stewardship of community in general
- Attendees feel that the poor lighting needs to be addressed in several areas such as:
  - o the Hilton neighborhood
  - o Memorial Park
- Residents want streets to be repaved on a more consistent basis



# Township of Maplewood

## Master Plan

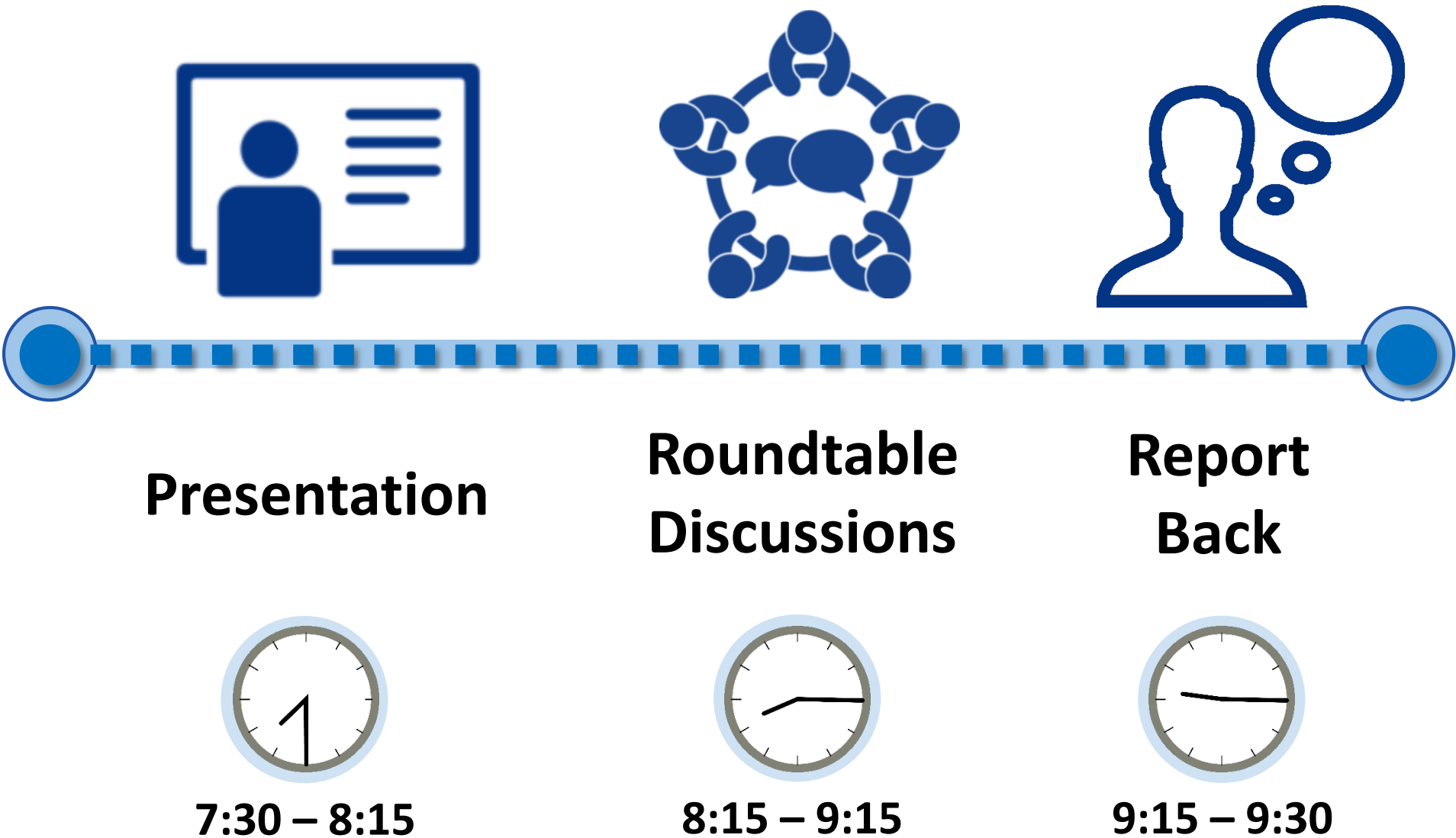
Public Workshop #1, October 25, 2022



M A P L E W O O D



# Agenda



# Introductions



## Master Plan Steering Committee

**Dean Dafis – Mayor**

**Frank McGehee – Township Committee**

**Karen Pisciotta – Planning Board Chair**

**Tom Carlson – Planning Board Member**

**Liz Ward – Planning Board Member**

**Morgan McCray – Zoning Board Chair**

**Veda Truesdale – Green Team Member**

**Cat Delett – Village Alliance Manager**

**Nicole Wallace – Springfield Avenue Partnership Executive Director**

**BFJ Planning**



## Consultant Team

**Susan Favate, AICP, PP – Principal in Charge**

**Peter Van den Kooy, AICP, PP – Project Manager**

**Christine Jimenez, LEED GA – Project Planner**

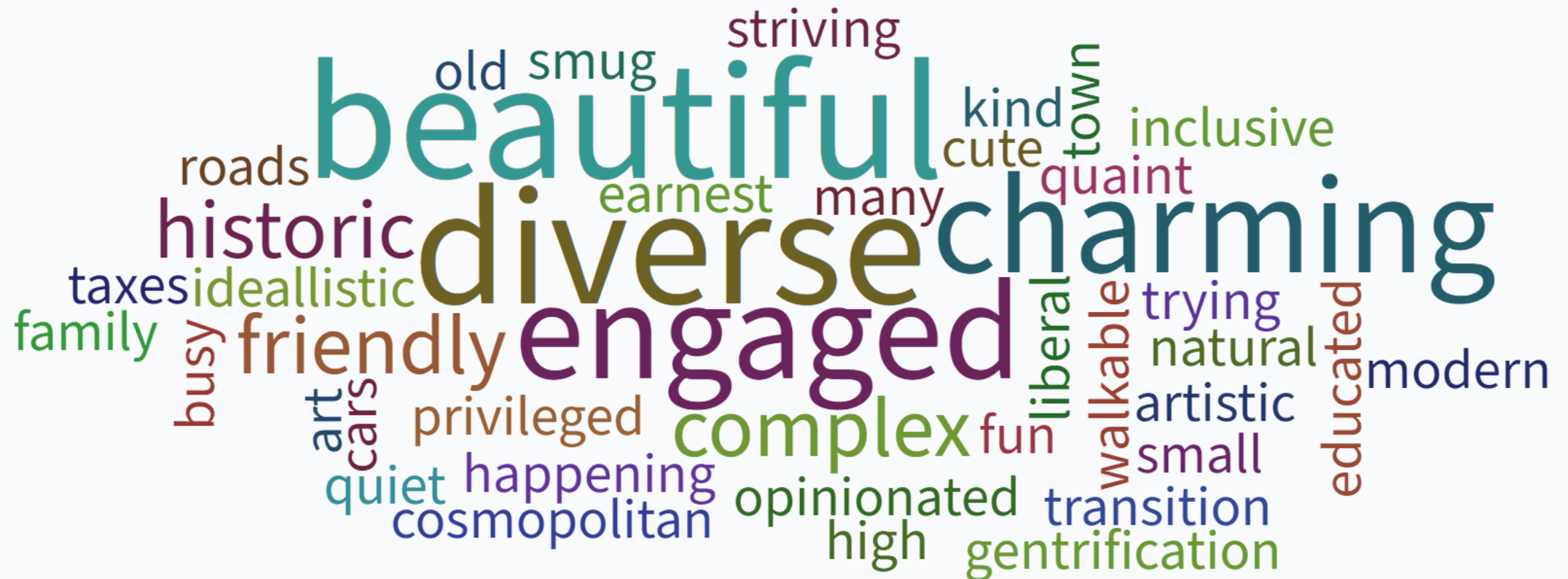
**Nile Johnson – Planner + Community Engagement**

**Chris Henry, AICP – Mobility Manager**

**Ryan Walsh, AICP, PP – Community Engagement Manager**

**Kelsey Kahn – Senior Planner**

**What top words describe Maplewood today? (Choose 2-3 words, no commas needed)**



diverse  
inclusive  
equitable  
engaged  
sustainable  
friendly  
charming  
art  
vibrant  
walkable  
historic  
equity  
car-centric  
spaces  
active  
outdoor  
hip  
enriching  
harmony  
welcoming  
smart  
dense  
stay  
heterogeneous  
socially  
better  
economically  
happy  
great  
sane  
green  
viable  
attractive  
lots  
modern  
studio  
neighborhood  
downtown  
climate  
friendliness  
less friendly  
community  
centered  
leader  
use



# Project Overview



# Project Overview

Community Engagement	Maplewood Today	Recommendations & Draft Plan	Draft & Final Plan
Ongoing	April - September	September - December	December - March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online Engagement</li><li>• Master Plan Steering Committee Meetings</li><li>• Focus Group Meetings</li><li>• Virtual Engagement</li><li>• Public Workshops</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review Prior Plans and Studies</li><li>• Township Staff and Agency Meetings</li><li>• Data and Trend Analysis</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vision, Goals, and Planning Themes</li><li>• Plan Elements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft Master Plan</li><li>• Public Hearing, Revisions, and Adoption</li></ul>

# What is a Master Plan?



- An expression of the community's shared vision of the future.
- Primarily a land use policy document.



- Does not contain laws or mandates, but gives elected officials and administrators a guide for decision-making on land use, zoning, and capital investment.

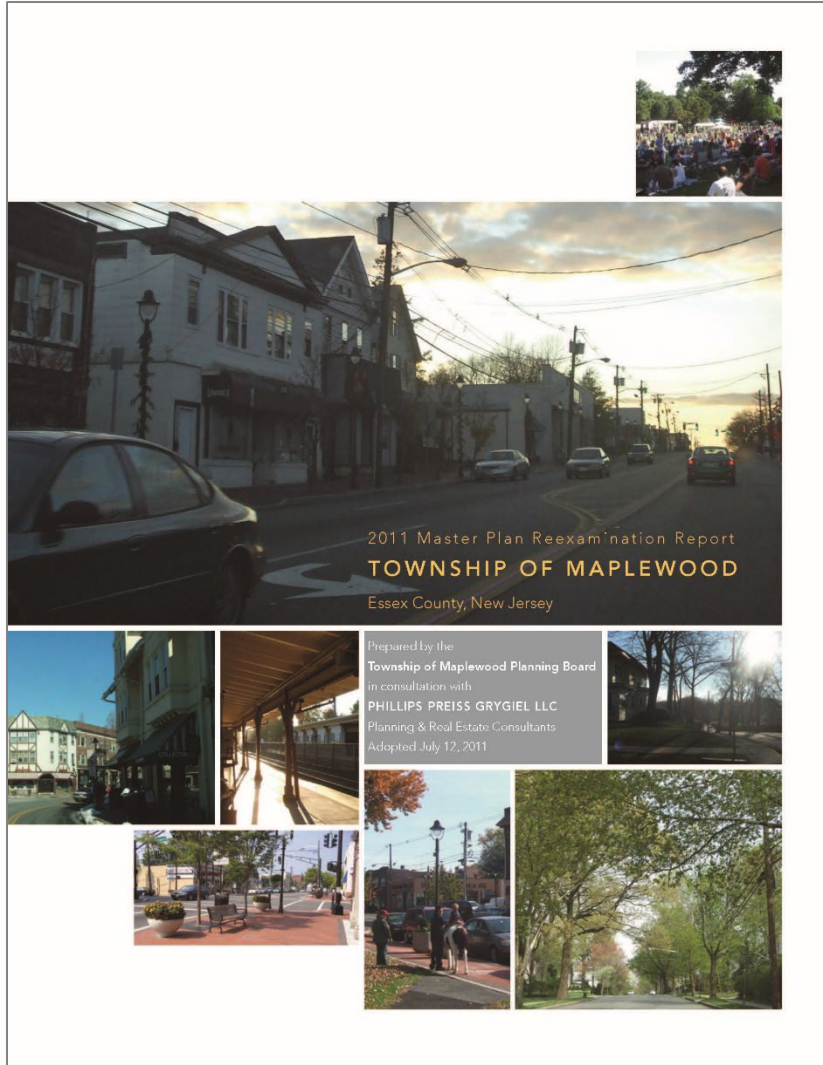


- A “to do” list for the Township to track implementation of short-, medium-, and long-term goals.



# What is a Master Plan?

- The Master Plan must be updated or “re-examined” every 10 years. The prior plan was adopted in 2004 and was last re-examined in 2011.
- A lot has happened in the past 10+ years...



# Master Plan Elements

Statement  
of Goals,  
Objectives,  
and Policies




Land Use  
Plan



## Other Potential Elements

Open Space,  
Recreation  
and  
Conservation



Community  
Facilities  
and Cultural  
Resources



Circulation,  
Mobility,  
and Parking




Economic  
Development



Housing



Infrastructure  
and  
Sustainability



# Who Have We Heard From So Far?

## Township Department Staff/Agency Meetings

- **Economic Development – June 9, 2022**
- **Public Works, Engineering, and Public Safety – June 9, 2022**
- **Parks, Recreation, and Sustainability – June 14, 2022**
- **Arts, Historic, and Cultural Resources – June 15, 2022**
- **Zoning, Housing, and Development – June 15, 2022**

# Who Have We Heard From So Far?

## Stakeholder Meetings

- **Seniors Advisory Committee** – August 11, 2022
- **Arts, Historic, and Cultural Resources** – August 17, 2022
- **Sustainability** – August 17 and September 22, 2022
- **Transportation and Mobility** – August 23, 2022
- **Hilton Neighborhood Association Meeting** – September 15, 2022
- **Downtown and Commercial Corridors** – September 21, 2022
- **Village Alliance Board** – October 11, 2022

## Pop-Up Events

- **Maplewoodstock** – July 9, 2022
- **Senior Center Bingo** – July 27, 2022
- **MAPSO Funk Fest** – August 27, 2022



# Maplewood Today





# What We've Learned

## Maplewood Today: Overview of Existing Conditions & Trends

- Introduction and Planning Context
- Population and Socioeconomic Trends
- Land Use and Zoning
- Transportation and Mobility
- Community Facilities, Resources, and Programs
- Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Resiliency

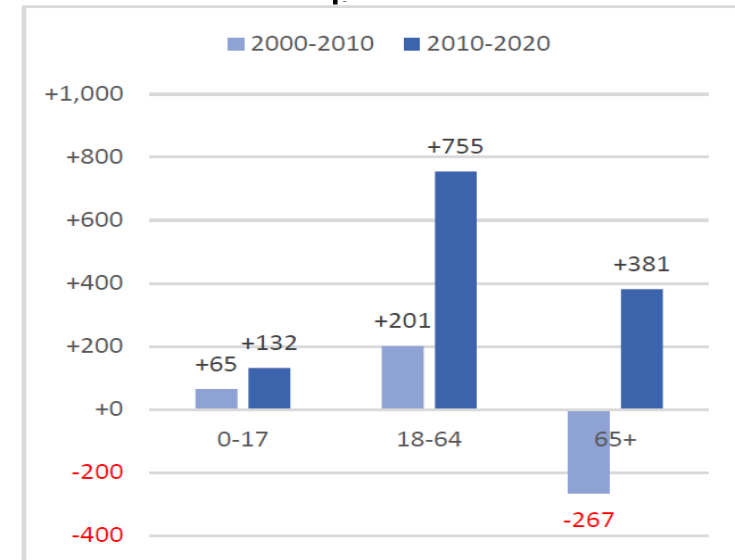


# What We've Learned

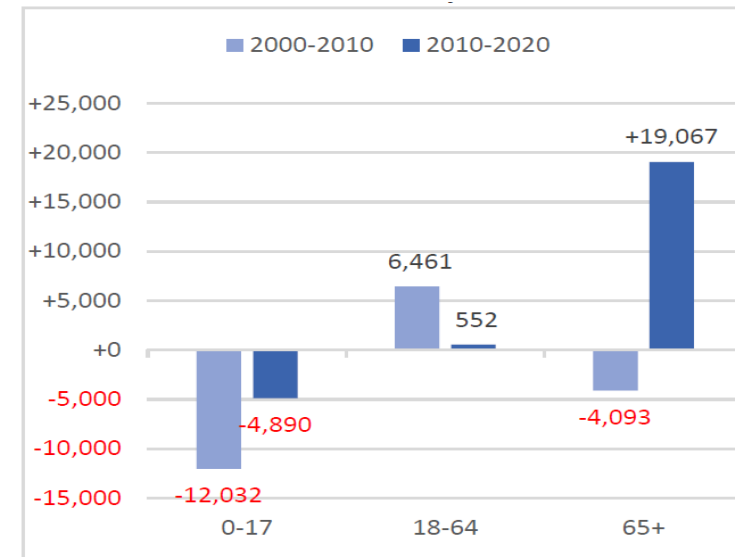
## Maplewood Today: Population and Socioeconomic Trends

- After declining in the 1990s, Maplewood is at a population high of 25,700.
- Growth since 2010 led by seniors (65+) at 15%, but at a lower rate than Essex County (+21%).
- Township is seeing growth in children, at 2% and younger adults (18-34) at 19%. These trends are counter to the County and much of the region.
- Maplewood remains diverse but racial/ethnic composition is changing. Share of Hispanic and multiracial population is up, share of Black population is down.

Maplewood



Essex County

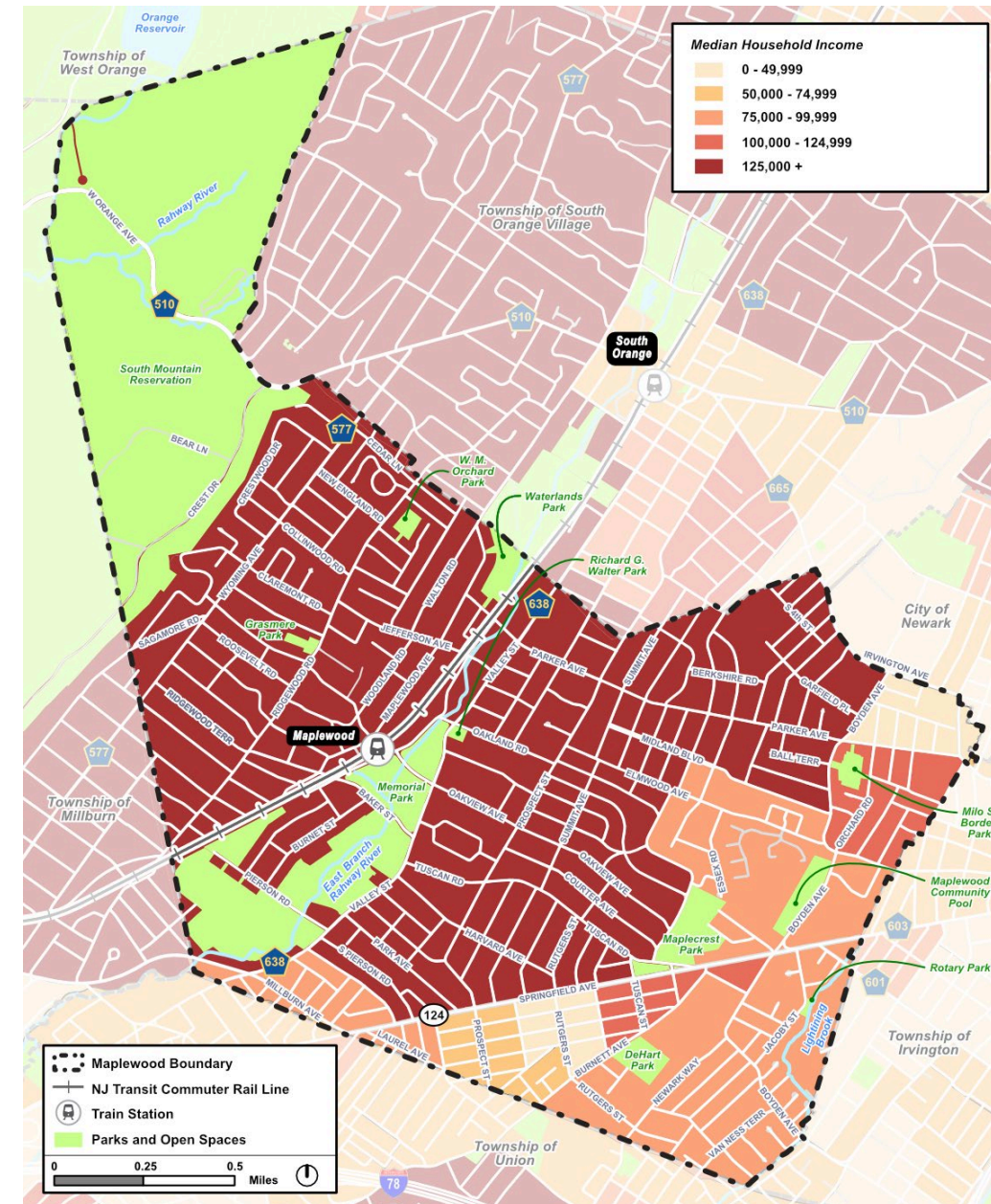




# What We've Learned

## Maplewood Today: Population and Socioeconomic Trends

- Township has seen substantial growth in financial well-being of its residents.
- Changes have led to positive quality-of-life indicators (e.g. lower crime), the Township is attractive for growing families, and it remains diverse (though in differing ways).
- But some existing residents struggle to afford their homes, and the high cost of housing makes it hard for those just starting out.

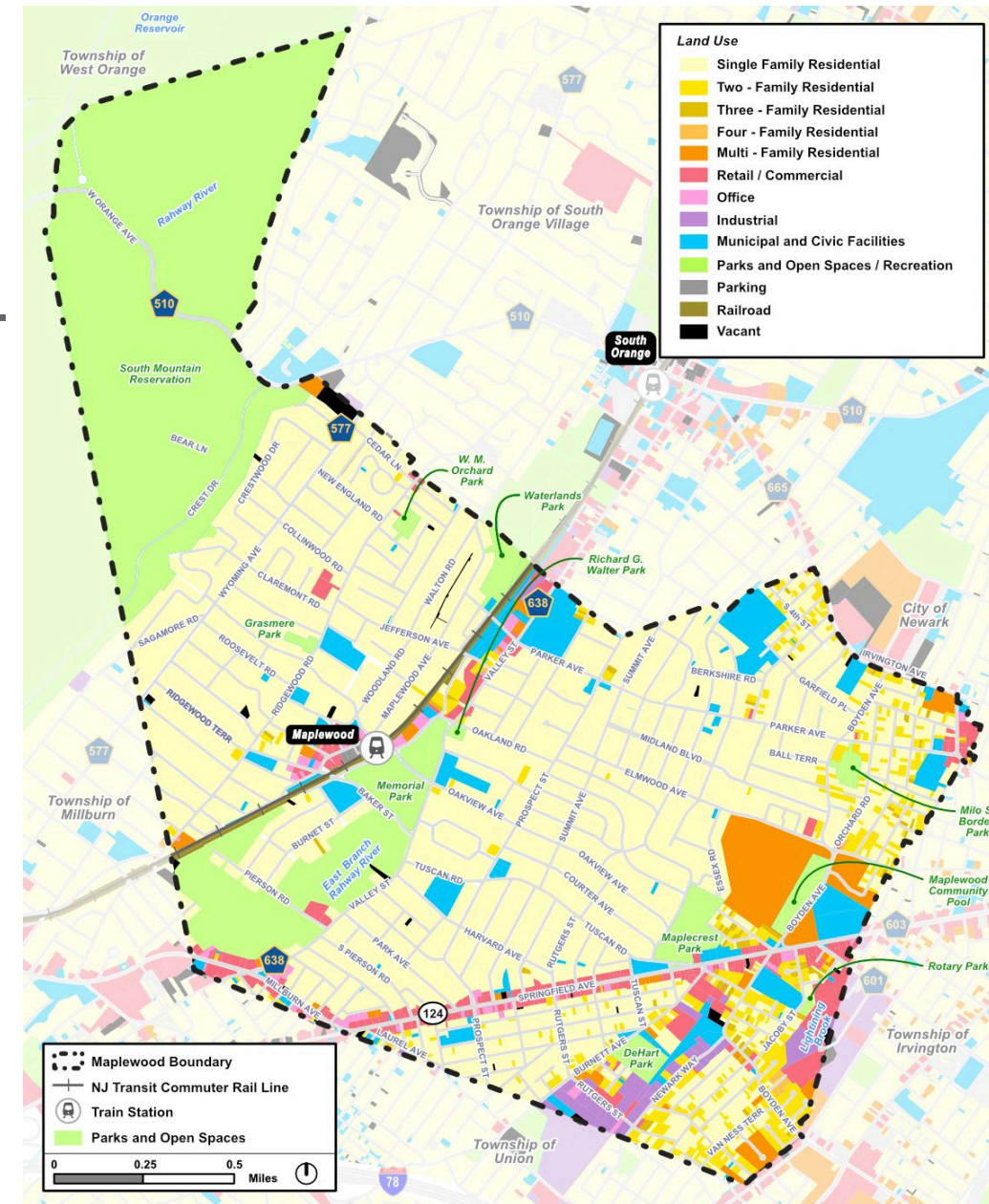




# What We've Learned

## Maplewood Today: Land Use and Zoning

- Maplewood is built-out, solidly low-density residential.
- Township has seen major multifamily development in past decade, especially at train station and eastern Springfield Avenue. Pressure will remain due to affordable housing obligations.
- Adoption of Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance has expanded housing opportunities in single-family areas – but ADU development has not yet occurred.
- Based on variance data, there may be a need to adjust parking and setback regulations.



# What We've Learned

## Maplewood Today: Transportation and Mobility

- Maplewood is highly walkable, but dedicated bike infrastructure is lacking.
- Concerns raised about ADA access to transit.
- Crash cluster areas indicate need for complete streets improvements, traffic calming.
- More data needed on parking utilization.
- Some neighborhoods are especially affected by new development due to availability of land, zoning in place.

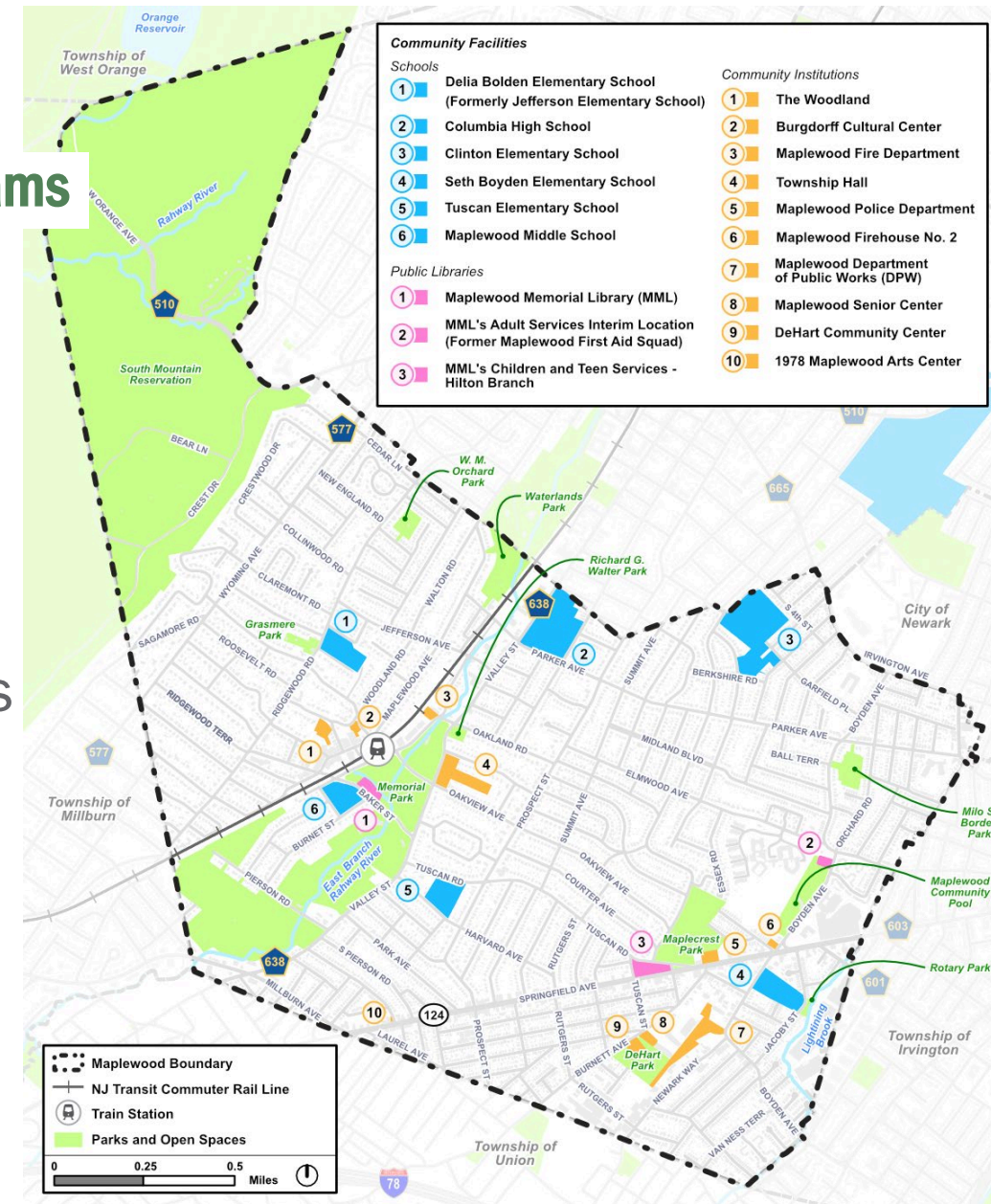




# What We've Learned

## Maplewood Today: Community Facilities, Resources & Programs

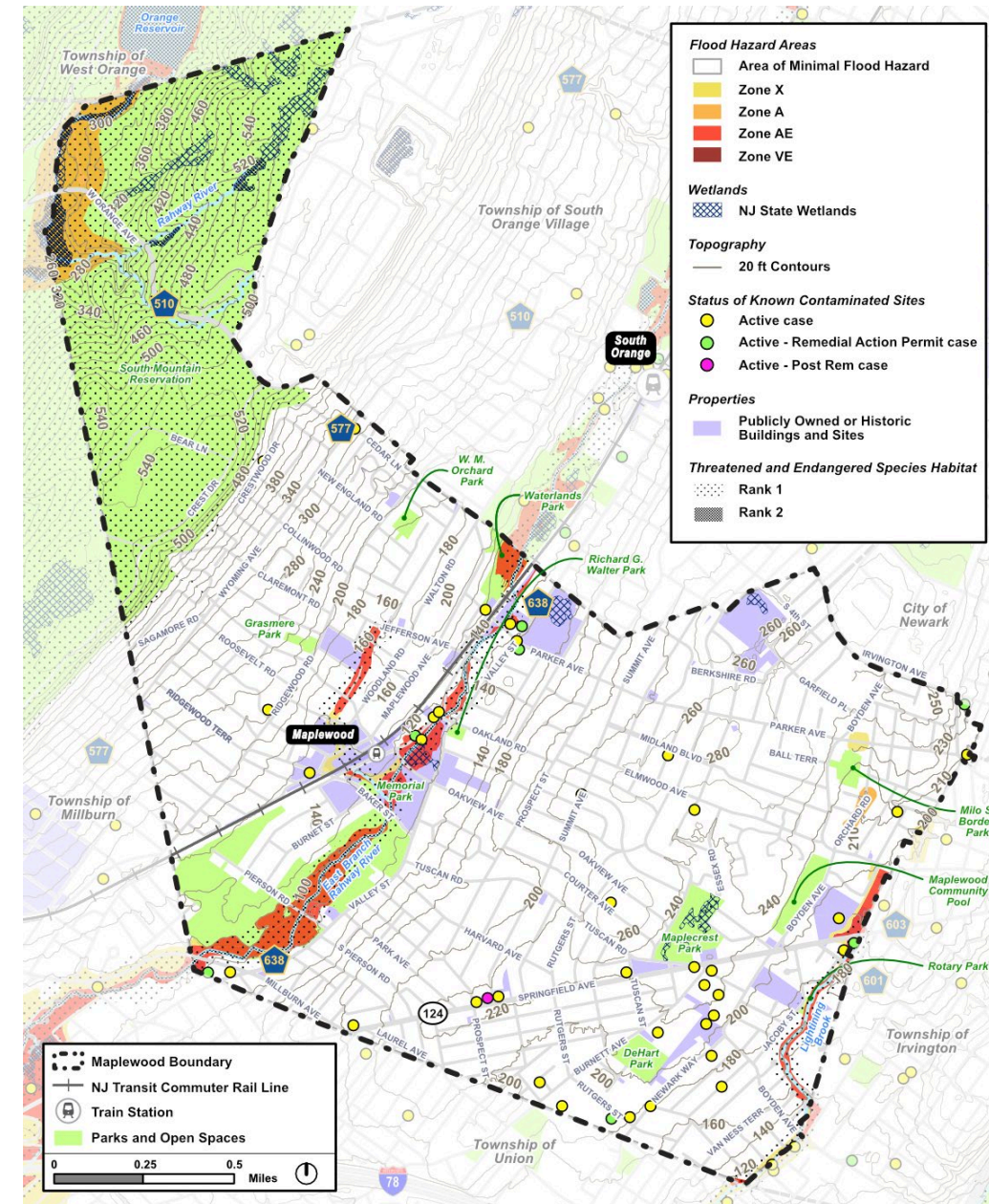
- Most facilities clustered at Maplewood Village or Hilton neighborhood.
- Opportunity to connect existing resources with greenways, create new pocket parks?
- Hilton residents, survey respondents raised issues about affordability/equity (e.g. pool passes).
- Challenges on consistent communication with residents.



# What We've Learned

## Maplewood Today: Sustainability, Infrastructure & Resiliency

- Township is active on sustainability; opportunities to continue efforts in concert with resiliency goals
- Green Infrastructure:
  - Protect/enhance tree canopy
  - Reduce impervious coverage
  - Potential daylighting of previously filled areas?
- Resiliency:
  - Flood mitigation
  - Energy transformation





# Virtual Workshop

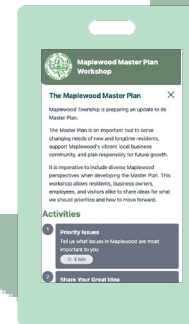
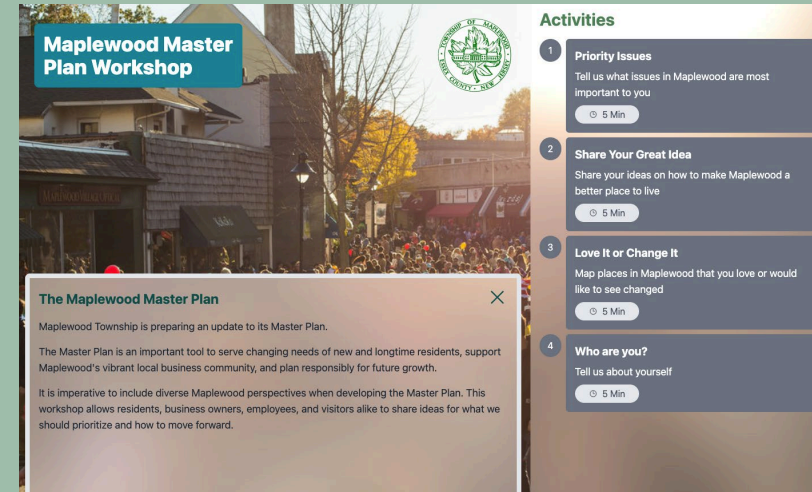




# Virtual Workshop

## Initial Outreach

- Township weekly E-blast
- E-blast to Maplewood contact list and project stakeholders including media
- Pop-up at Maplewoodstock, Senior Center, MAPSO Funkfest
- Flyering at:
  - Municipal building
  - Train station
  - Memorial Park
  - Stop & Shop
  - Extra Supermarket
  - Community Fridge
  - Pool
  - Libraries

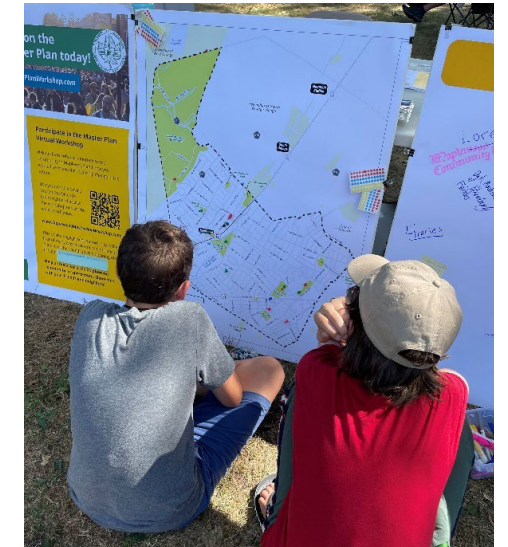


# Virtual Workshop

## Further Outreach

- Connected with South Orange-Maplewood School District
- Further outreach to MAPSO Legends, Maplewood Coalition on Race, and Maplewood Youth Advisory Committee
- Emailed apartment management companies
- Attended Hilton Neighborhood Association meeting (September 15)

**Over 1,000 Activities Completed!**





# Virtual Workshop

## Activity 1: Priority Issues

- Tell us what issues in Maplewood are most important to you

## Activity 2: Share Your Great Idea

- Share your ideas on how to make Maplewood a better place to live

## Activity 3: Love It or Change It

- Map places in Maplewood that you love or would like to see changed

### Priority Issues

**My Top Issues**

- None Selected
- None Selected
- None Selected

**Select your first top issue:**

<b>Walking, Biking, Transit and Shared Mobility:</b> Improving the ability to get around without a car.	<b>Affordable Housing</b> Maintaining or expanding affordable options.	<b>Parks and Open Space</b> Creating or improving open spaces, parks, and plazas.
<b>Revitalization</b> Revitalizing vacant, underused, and/or blighted assets.	<b>Development Standards</b> Modifying community standards for the design and scale of new or expanded development.	<b>Street Safety</b> Addressing safety for all road users.
<b>Parking</b> Supply, location, pricing, or policy issues.	<b>Placemaking</b> Creating a sense of "place" or cultural expression in the public realm.	<b>Economic Vitality</b> Supporting or attracting local retail, office or other businesses.
<b>Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Local Environment</b>	<b>Resiliency</b>

### Share your Great idea

**My Idea**

What policy, project, or program would make Maplewood better?

0/200

Share Idea

**Others' Ideas**

We've got to get the tree thing right. The canopy is aging out. People need guidance on maintaining healthy trees, recognizing when they're dangerous, and support planting new ones.

60

More focus on mental health, especially in the school system. We need to focus more on equality for the special needs community, rather than just focusing on race.

44

Eliminate single family zoning and parking minimums to allow density and walkability.

44

Let our sports organizations have the tools and permission they need to address the field problems.

22

I think we should have affordable day passes to the pool. I also think running the jitneys on certain days/times could promote more socialization and retail for those who live farther away from town.

22

Not sure, but I have noticed that a lot of the apartment buildings and density are added to outer edges of town. Us on the outer edge want to feel like we still live in a town without overcrowding too

22

### Love it or Change it

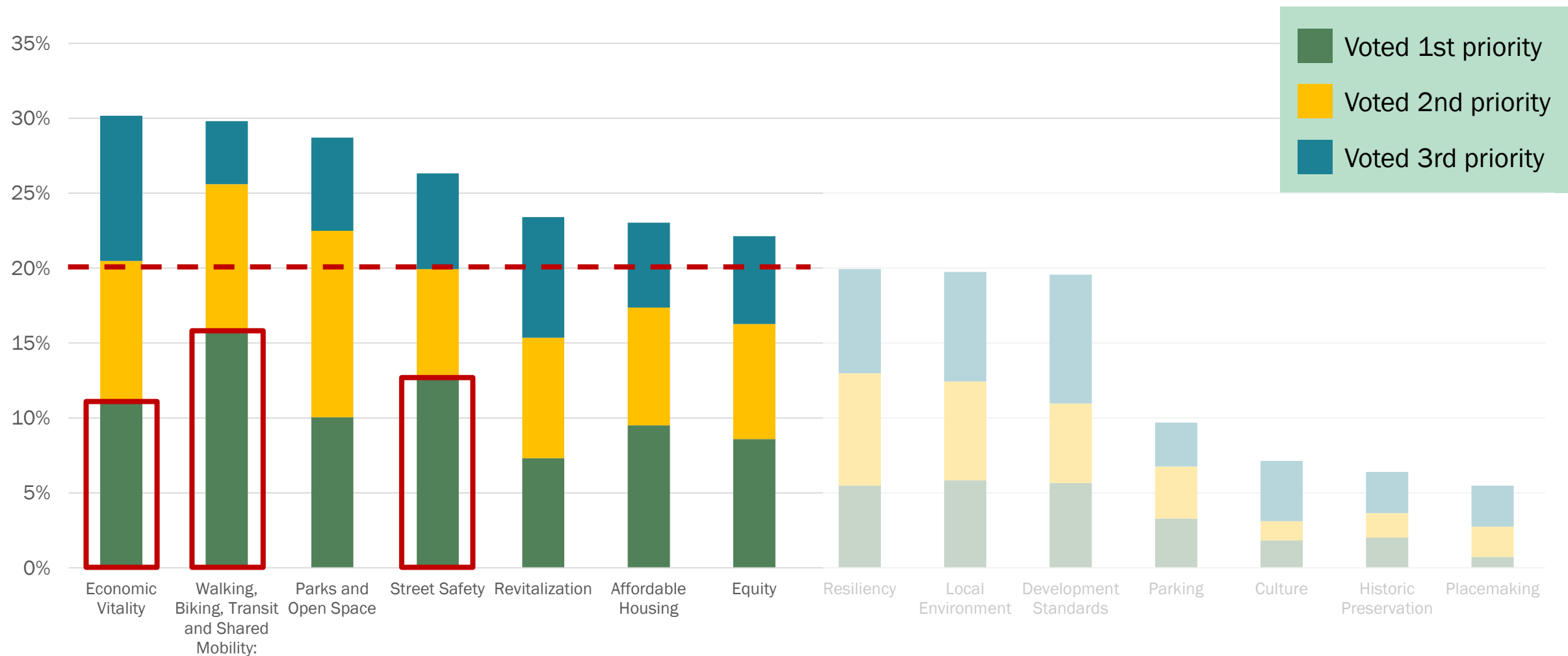
**Where is a place that you love in Maplewood?**

- Zoom and pan the map to a place you love.
- Click on the map to mark your location.
- Complete the follow-up questions.



# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Priority Ranking



# Activity 1: Priority Issues

Economic Vitality

← **Priority Issue**

Reduce tax burden on homeowners by attracting and retaining businesses that reflect the diversity and needs of Maplewood.

← **Theme**

I hope that more **successful businesses would contribute taxes** and help reduce the tax burden for individual families. Our taxes are a barrier to moving here and to staying here.

**Small businesses add to our town's appeal.** Let's make sure they keep thriving while also ensuring diversity in both business types and who the business owners are.

**We need town to be affordable for not just lower income, but retirees and middle income homeowners** that have made Maplewood such an amazing town. Anything to stop increase in taxes.

← **What we heard from you**

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Economic Vitality

Bring more enticing businesses and services to Springfield Avenue and other areas.

**Springfield Avenue is the eyesore of Maplewood,** and much can be improved upon in the neighborhoods surrounding it. It could be the next downtown Milburn if there were businesses worth visiting.

It is important to me that we add to our economic base and options. **More food, retail and service businesses on the Springfield Avenue** corridor and along Valley Street toward South Orange would be an asset.

**The movie theater has languished so long...** there is keen interest from locals and cinema lab to do something, but nothing has happened.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Walking, Biking, Transit and Shared Mobility

Reduce reliance on cars to create safer streets.

Our towns are impossible to navigate by car during busy times. **We need more shuttles, scooters, or public transportation options** to reduce the number of cars on our congested streets.

**I don't think walking and biking are safe enough in Maplewood.** All the schools, especially Columbia High School need better school zone signage on Valley and Parker telling cars to slow down <25mph.

I'd love to bike around town but am **terrified that I'll be sideswiped by a distracted driver.** The bike lanes we have are kind of a joke since they're actually part of the roadways.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Walking, Biking, Transit and Shared Mobility

Expand greenway and bike lane networks.

**Development of Greenway connecting to South Orange Greenway development.**

**I'm excited about the bike path being built behind Chyzowych Field** to connect Maplewood and South Orange via bike. I'd love to see more bike paths and for Chyzowych Field to be cleaned up.

We'd love to see bike lanes to bike with our family. **There are so many hills in Maplewood, it makes it difficult to do so. We often take our bikes to bike in other towns.**

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Walking, Biking, Transit and Shared Mobility

Ensure transit options are equitable and accessible for all ages and abilities.

**The NJ Transit train station in the village is not wheelchair accessible and it should be.** It is shameful that disabled Maplewood residents are forced to go other stations such as South Orange.

As a senior with increasing discomfort with driving, **I would like both day and evening transportation within MAPSO that could run on the jitney routes** but not limited to train commuters.

**Equity means access for those of us who cannot drive,** and climate justice means we reduce reliance on cars and instead create livable, walkable, resilient and sustainable communities.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Parks and Open Space

Improve condition and maintenance of parks and open spaces.

**We have wonderful green spaces, but they could use some more love.** For example, Maplecrest Park is beautiful, but its playgrounds are a bit tired and much of the land isn't fully utilized.

**[Our parks] are closed five months of the year. Our restrooms are trashed and frequently closed. Our fields are neglected.** This is only going to get worse as we become more dense.

**Our facilities for outdoor youth sports are subpar and should be improved,** particularly for baseball and softball. Fields don't drain, diamonds aren't maintained, too many weeds, need more mowing, etc.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Parks and Open Space

Expand recreational facilities and opportunities in parks.

**More use of park for multi-purposes.**

Open-air concerts, sprinklers in the summer, etc.

**More robust farmers markets, pop-up markets,**  
and truly engaging events for the community in  
our open spaces.

**Maplewood has far less public land for recreation than we need.** We have voted 2x for an Open Space Trust Fund. NONE of the \$ has gone to acquire recreational open space. This needs to change!



# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Street Safety

Address driver behavior to control speeding and aggressive driving.

I live on Ridgewood Road and have two school aged children. **Cars are speeding at excessive rates and kids are unsafe crossing the street** or walking through a crosswalk. Speed humps are necessary.

In the last 5-10 years **streets have become extremely hazardous due to impatient drivers and increased traffic and seeming decreased enforcement.** It makes walking and driving dangerous.

**Drivers are always “blocking the box” at certain intersections, always in a rush, rolling through stop signs.** Not safe for other drivers and especially for pedestrians and kids walking to school.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Street Safety

Improve intersections/traffic infrastructure.

**Street cameras are needed on 44th St;** cars continue to drive the one-way street. 44th St. and Jacoby St. still need to be repaired, and 44th St. (toward Chancellor Ave) needs to be a dead-end street.

**We need a 4-way stop sign at Wellesley Street and Hilton Ave.** Cars cut through Wellesley St at dangerous speeds.

**Change timing on light at Parker Ave/Valley St.** When on Parker trying to make left onto Valley, the light lets 1 or 2 cars go. Perhaps an early left turn signal first. People drive aggressively to beat light!

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Street Safety

Create a safer pedestrian environment,

**Stop signs can sometimes be treated as a suggestion over a rule.** I was almost hit this summer by a person who ran a stop sign by Maplecrest Park.  
**Maybe more lit cross walk signs?**

Combined with a school district that does not prioritize children safe travel to schools which are increasingly forced to travel longer distances,  
**more attention is needed to sidewalk safety.**



# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Revitalization

Address vacant, underused, and dilapidated spaces while maintaining community character.

In addition to Chyzowych Field, **there are so many unused properties along Valley Street, which could be a vibrant commercial center** like Springfield Avenue if businesses were attracted.

**Vacant, underused, and blighted areas exist at the Union, Newark, and Irvington borders.** Lately, many of these have been converted to apartments or condos. We can do better.

**Hold accountable owners who do not maintain their properties with fines.** This include removing junk, maintaining their properties in a manner befitting to the standards of other comparable towns.

**There is so much potential here to revitalize, (keeping our historic and architectural character in mind)** and it helps to keep the area exciting.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Revitalization

Prioritize community-oriented development and revitalization.

**The potential for places like the Woodland and the Burgdorff Center, or the train station...**[they] could be amazing for cultural and community events yet they are so run down and do not seem safe.

There are opportunities to develop underused properties and spaces and rezone for:

- 1. More daycare and family centers**
- 2. Public spaces for teens and teen programs**
- 3. A space for an indoor public pool.**

Maplewood is a green suburb. **Adding community gardens and patches of green will reinforce Maplewood's identity.** Shared gardens may also contribute to a stronger community and new ideas.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Affordable Housing

Focus on equity and protecting diversity.

**Maplewood has grown more expensive and exclusionary over the past two decades** and is losing much of its socioeconomic and racial diversity.

Maplewood has become incredibly popular in the last 5 years, which means **housing prices are soaring**. If we want to stay a diverse community, we need to make sure we have affordable housing.

**We have a serious and profound lack of affordable housing in our community.** Public workers, seniors, and people of color are leaving or struggling to stay.  
We can fight that trend proactively!



# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Affordable Housing

Utilize different policies to reduce housing cost burden.

**Build, build, build, to expand the housing supply** and thereby create more affordable options. Revise the zoning code to allow more "as-of-right" development without extremely costly plan-review delays.

To maintain a socio-economically diverse citizenry, Maplewood needs more affordable housing options. **Every new development should have the maximum required affordable housing units or more.**

**Not just affordable housing but trimming the property taxes.** Easy to combine services with South Orange.

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Equity

Ensure community resources and infrastructure is accessible to all residents.

**I would like to see a long-term plan to fund the Maplewood Pool, so that it is accessible to all Maplewood residents.**

**Access to swimming pool, day care options for working parents, transportation to school for bussed children** (as needed), all important equity issues that should be addressed and managed.

**The area is getting more expensive and without public access to important resources, like community events, camp, or learning to swim, a lot of families will be forced to do without.**

# Activity 1: Priority Issues

## Equity

Protect diversity of Maplewood and increase community connections.

Most of my work here in South Orange-Maplewood revolves around the issue of Equity and racial justice.

**I want the voices of POC to be heard and even prioritized if related to areas of town dominated by POC.**

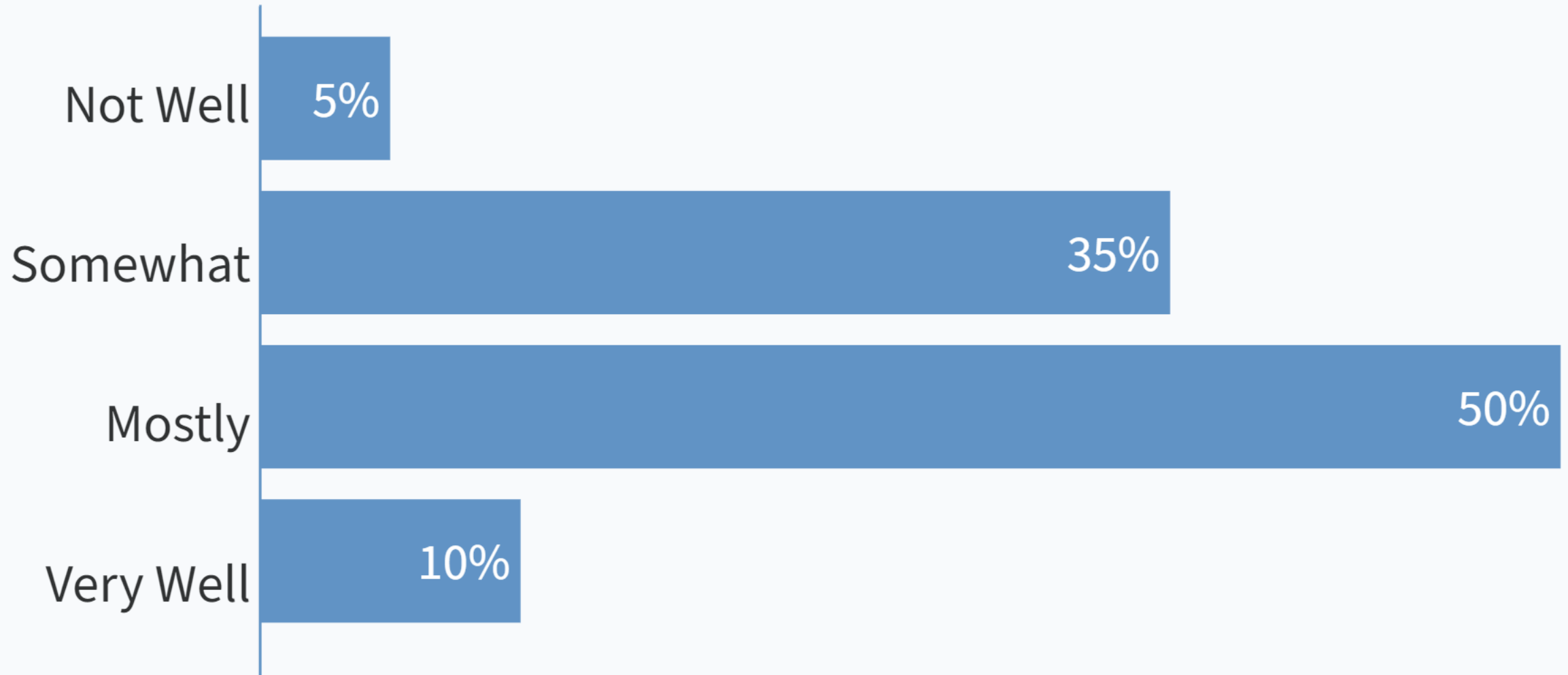
A lot of rich white progressives in Maplewood but as a WOC, I feel like it's a lot of virtue signaling or lawn sign posting. **True change needs to happen in economic development, housing and education.**

I have 3 Black boy teenagers and I fear the police - I fear the police may hurt them as we have all seen in the news. **A few years ago, the town was having coffee with a cop events, can we have more?**





## How well do these themes capture your priorities for Maplewood?





## What is missing?

“ Park improvement ”

“ Playground improvements ”

“ Consistent communication ”

“ Maintaining attractive public realm. ”

“ Dafus for governor ”



## What is missing?

“ Sustainability ”

“ Cultural Life ”

“ Did not see anything addressing families with special needs or neuro-diverse children ”

“ Dog walking areas ”

“ Climate change planning. Energy efficiency ”





## What is missing?

Did not see anything addressing families with special needs or neuro-diverse children ”

“ Dog walking areas ”

“ Climate change planning. Energy efficiency ”

“ Issue of government transparency ”

“ Decarbonization effort. ”

# Activity 2: Great Ideas

## Most “Liked” Ideas

### Walking, Biking, Transit & Shared Mobility

Shuttles from Springfield Ave to downtown Maplewood and back -- make more places accessible without a car.

66 

### Equity

I think we should have affordable day passes to the pool. I also think running the jitneys on certain days/times could promote more socialization and retail for those who live farther away from town.

65 

### Culture

Bring the movie theater back

59 

### Resiliency

We've got to get the tree thing right. The canopy is aging out. People need guidance on maintaining healthy trees, recognizing when they are dangerous, and support planting new ones.

60 

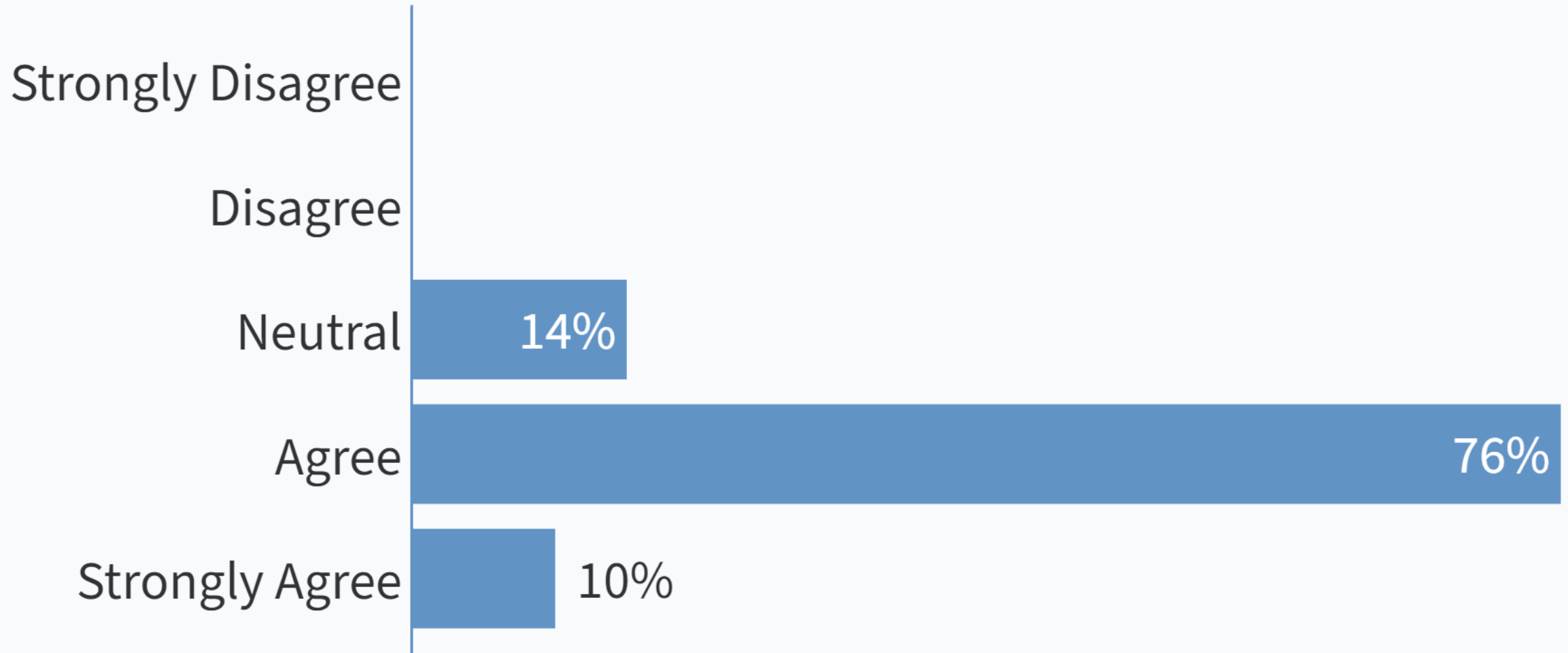
### Walking, Biking, Transit & Shared Mobility

Greenway between Maplewood and South Orange and bike lanes to all schools would be huge!

66 



## Do you agree that these Great Ideas would improve Maplewood?





## **Are there any critical Great Ideas missing?**

“ More Volunteer opportunities ”

“ Busing for schools ”

“ Affordable housing has to be in the top if we believe in equity ”

“ Affordable units in all neighborhoods. ”

“ Solar panels on school and municipal buildings ”





## Are there any critical Great Ideas missing?

“Astroturf ”

“Retaining wall for Lightening brook ”

“No turf ”

“Planning for energy transformation ”

“Public spaces for teens ”



## Are there any critical Great Ideas missing?

Retaining wall for Lightning Brook

“ No turf ”

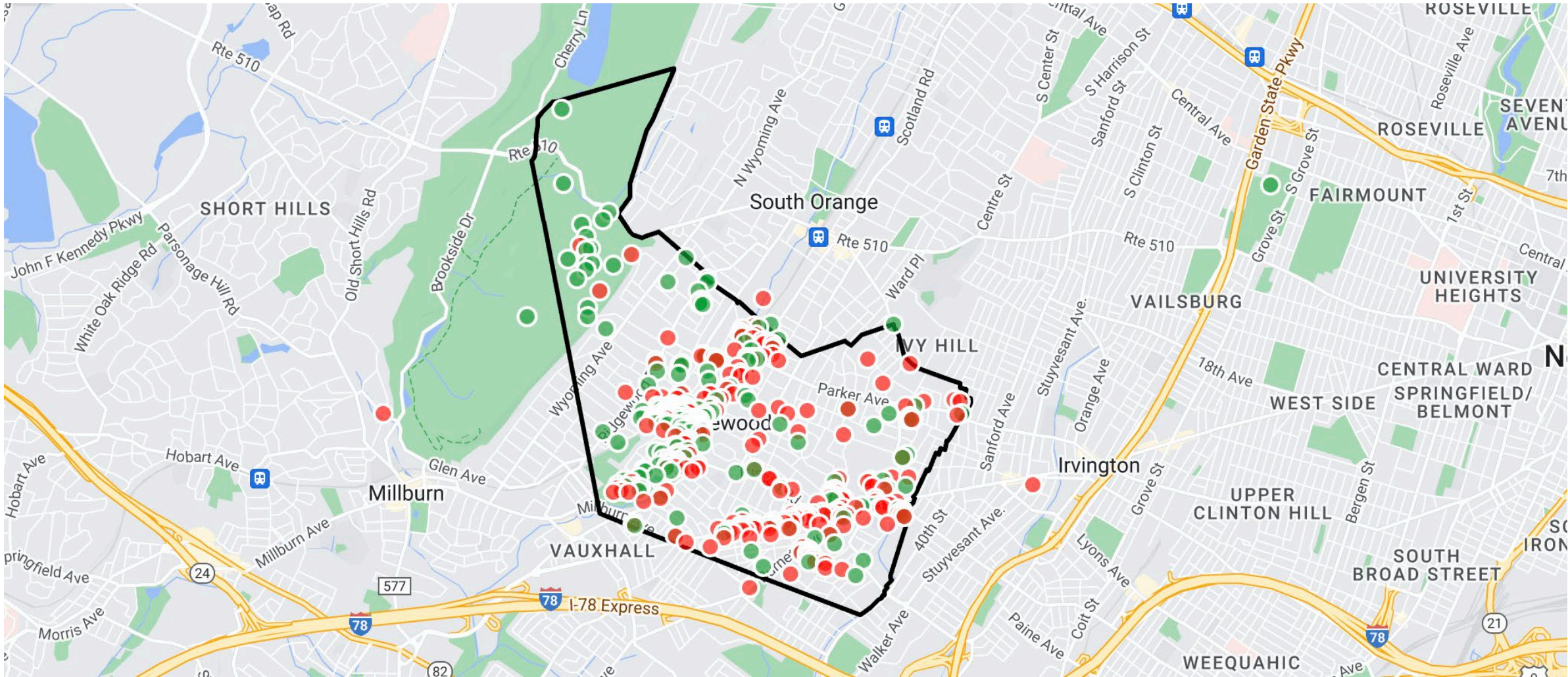
“ Planning for energy transformation ”

“ Public spaces for teens ”

“ We need a turf field to better support growing youth sports here ”

# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Distribution of Comments





# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## “Love It” Heat Map



**Maplewood Village**

**Memorial Park Area**

**Maplecrest Park**



## Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Heat Map Zoom-in



# Maplewood Village

Our downtown is  
so inviting,  
vibrant, I always  
see people I  
know.

Main Street is the backbone of this town.

The markets at different times of the year are fun.

## Room for Improvement

Now that it's  
closed to vehicles  
on weekday  
evenings, it's  
[even more  
walkable]

The rate of turnover/quality of businesses/empty spaces on Maplewood Ave is sad and distressing. Better businesses!

# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Heat Map Zoom-in



### Memorial Park Area

Accessible gathering place for families and residents of Maplewood.

Wonderful park, used so well for community activities.

Multi use area, sledding, concerts, dog owners meet there, kids hang out.

#### Room for Improvement

The library is a welcoming place for all ages, a place to feel a sense of community.

Not a fan of golf courses or country clubs, especially in an area so close to where there could be transit-oriented development.

# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Heat Map Zoom-in



### Maplecrest Park

All types of people use this park. I love the pick-up soccer games.

I love that it allows for mingling of residents across socioeconomic backgrounds.

I love it because it's not too manicured and I hope it retains that beauty.

#### Room for Improvement

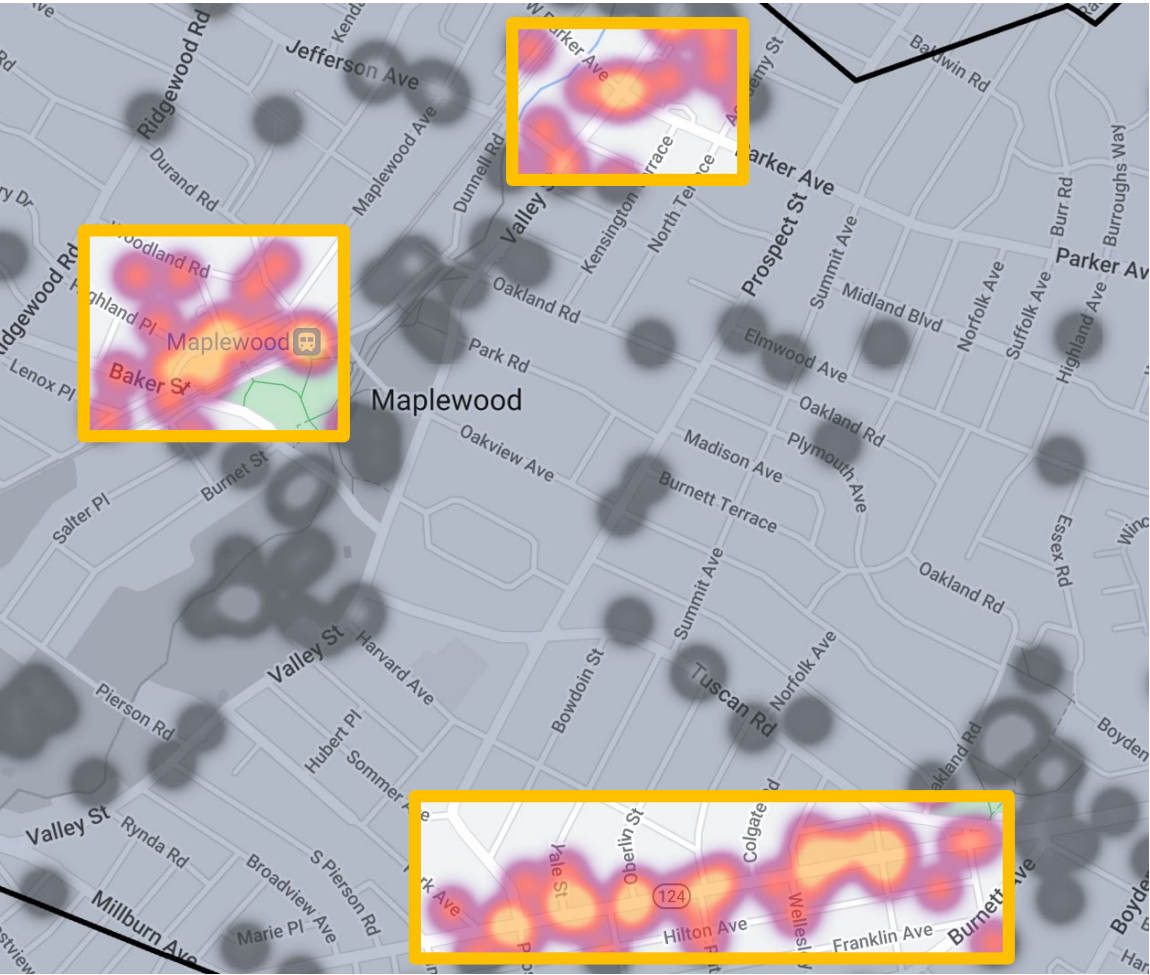
This park is near my home and I spend many hours a week here with my kids.

More garbage cans at the baseball diamonds and skate park. Tennis courts have been neglected for years. Could fit a small dog park closer to Springfield Ave.



# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## “Change It” Heat Map



**Maplewood Station**

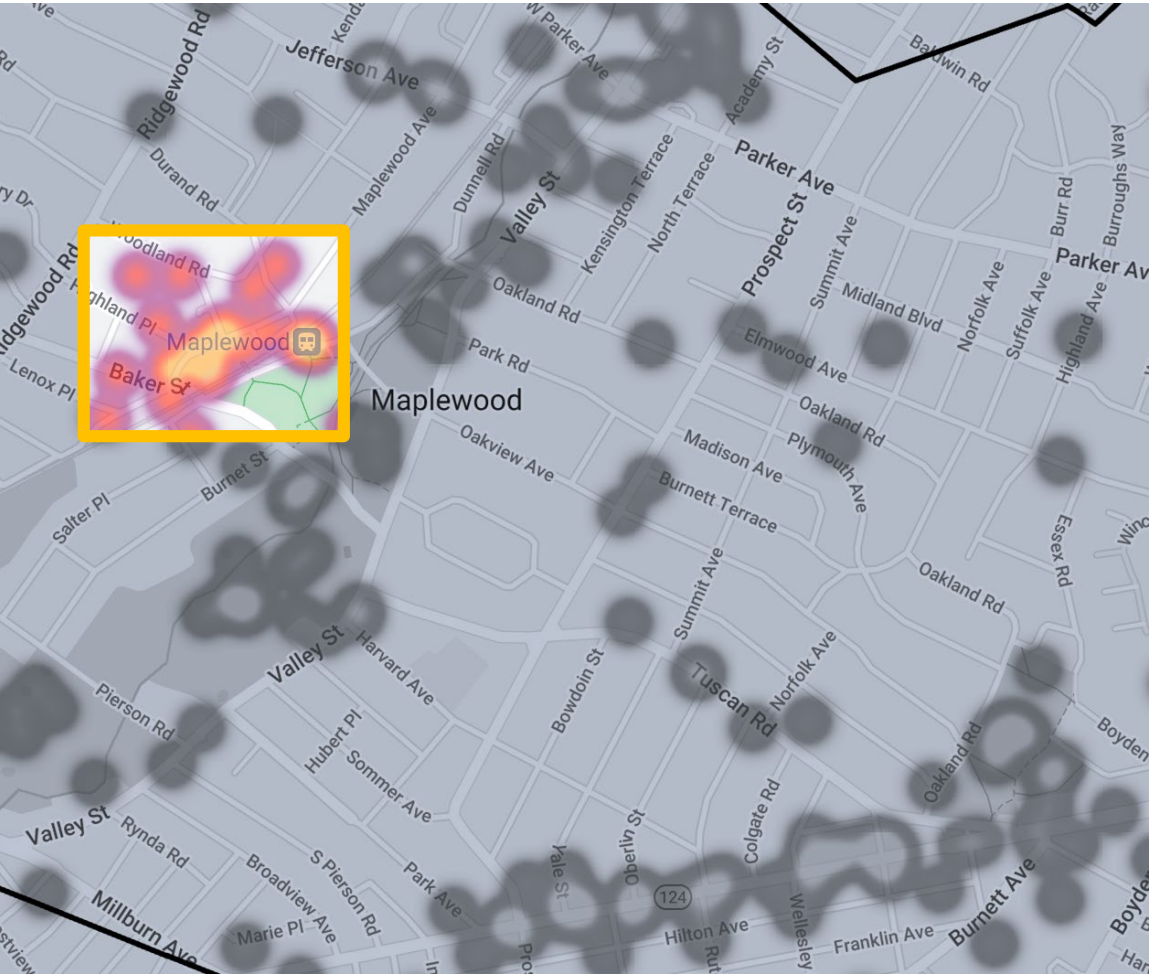
**Valley Street & Parker Avenue**

**Springfield Avenue**



# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Heat Map Zoom-in



### Maplewood Station

Add bike/scooter storage, food and drink, and a co-working/ community meeting space

These large steps are inaccessible for strollers and wheelchairs. Can we work on a ramp?

Need more parking and accessibility. It is difficult for elderly people to get on and off train.

#### Aspects to Appreciate

It would be great if the village's commercial center extend to the other side of the train station.

Train station has such potential.  
  
It's the center yet maintains the charm of the town.

## Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Heat Map Zoom-in



## Valley Street & Parker Avenue

Intersection of Valley and Parker gets congested, and I find myself avoiding it for safety reasons, particularly when students will be entering or leaving the area.

Traffic here is only going to get worse with the dense housing at the former Gleason site.

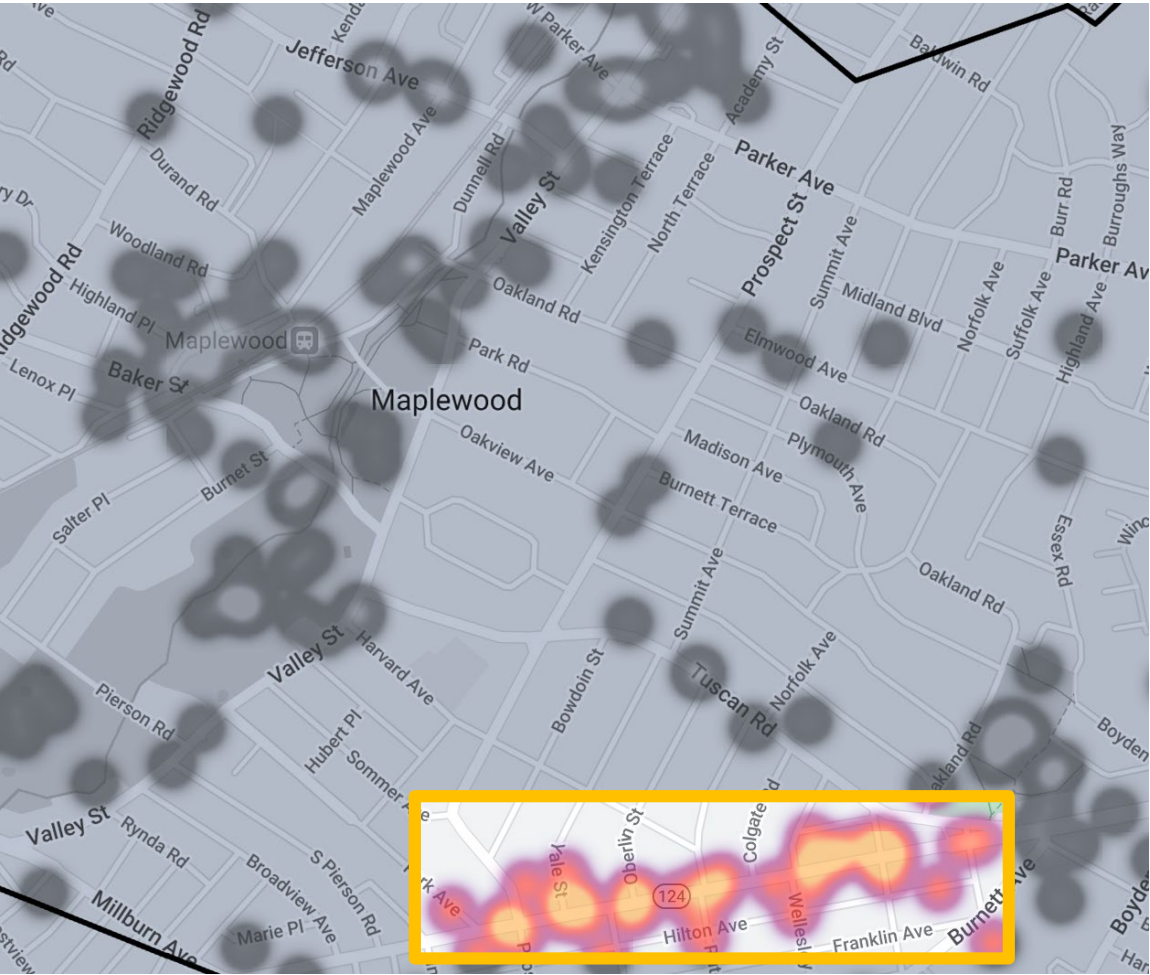
## Aspects to Appreciate

Worst intersection in town. Needs to have alternating turn lights.

It's a great little center with some good food and services. Would love to see enhanced with coffee (the high school!), yoga, or something for kids (proximity to the Y).

# Activity 3: Love It or Change It

## Heat Map Zoom-in



### Springfield Avenue

I live in Hilton and I feel like we need more interesting business around.

Improved public transit from Maplewood village to this area – parking is spotty.

We are struggling to keep anchor businesses, maybe a restaurant row concept?

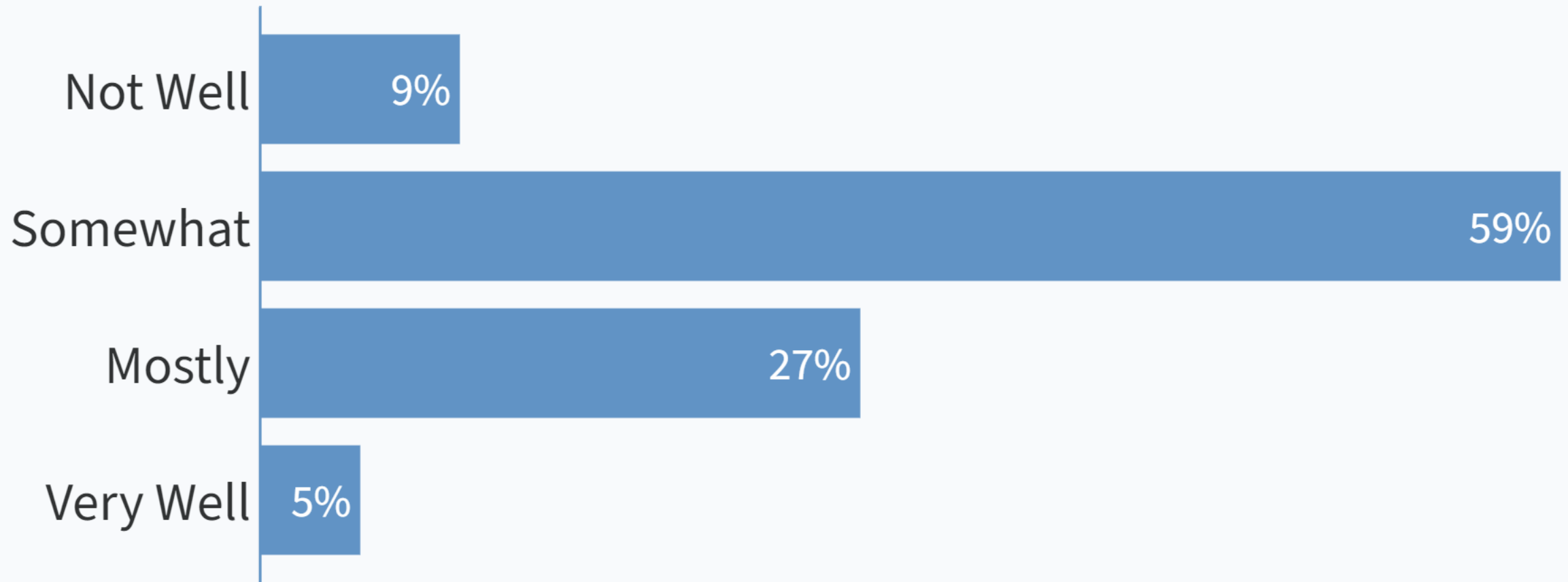
#### Aspects to Appreciate

Feels like living in the city here versus the wealthier area of town by the reservation.

This is a great pedestrian area right off the park and merging of neighborhoods. With the gazebo, library, and picnic tables it's a community meeting place and event spot for music, poetry, reading.



## How well do these locations and themes capture what you would like to see change in Maplewood?







## Is there anything critical that we did not mention?

“ Plan for years long abandoned spaces ”

“ Flood memorial park in winter for ice skating. ”

“ Main corridors - prospect, valley, Springfield ”

“ Industrial area ”

“ Municipal posture towards the golf course ”



## **Is there anything critical that we did not mention?**

municipal posture towards the golf course

“ Irvington Ave ”

“ Improved sports fields and playgrounds for special needs children ”

“ No new businesses by Olmsted park ”

“ Valley between Tuscan and Baker ”

# What's Next?

## Roundtable Discussions

- 45 Minute Discussion
  - *1 Note Taker*
  - *1 Presenter*
- Report Back



# Next Steps

## Check Master Plan website:

*<https://www.maplewoodnj.gov/government/township-master-plan>*

## Stay tuned for:

*2<sup>nd</sup> Public Workshop (Winter)*

