

APPENDIX PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY





Introduction

Throughout the planning process, the Comprehensive Plan Committee made a number of efforts to gather public input, employing a variety of tactics to garner as much input as possible. Stakeholder meetings were held over a two-day period in September and a public input survey was provided in utility bills and available through the Town's website. Public input workshops were also conducted, one as part of the kickoff of the project and one as part of the review of the drafted plan.



Public Input Survey

Residents of all ages were invited to complete a survey to provide input into helping make Shepherdstown a great place to live and work in the future. A total of 327 people participated in the survey including 325 online submissions and 2 hardcopy submissions. The survey covered four demographic questions and twelve discussion questions. The responses to these questions were utilized throughout the development of the plan recommendations. A summary of the responses to each question are listed below as submitted by the survey participants.





Questions 1 and 2: Demographics

The age of the participants in the survey trended toward an older demographic, with nearly a simple majority of the responses coming from residents between the ages of 41 and 65. In total, 95% of the responses were received from residents over the age of 25. Interestingly, a slightly larger share of the responses were received from persons residing outside of the corporate limits, but given the small size of Shepherdstown's population, the rate of participation from residents of the corporation was significant.

Figure 1 - Age

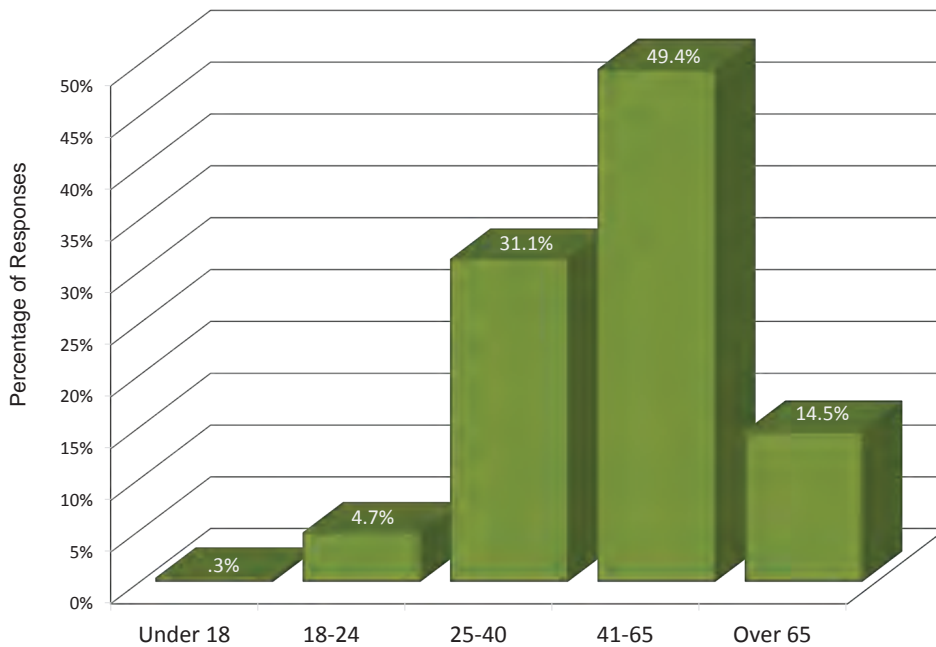
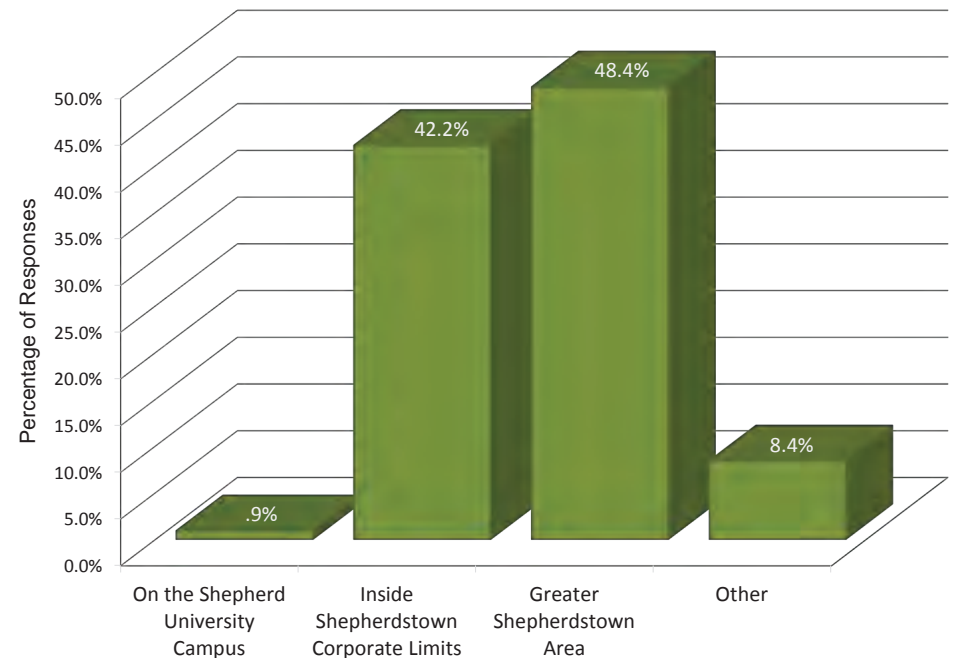


Figure 2 - Residence Location





Questions 3 and 4: Demographics

Over half of the participants work either within the town or surrounding area, or are retired. Nearly one-third of the participants work outside of the local area, while fewer than 5% indicated that they were students at Shepherd University. The length of time that survey participants have lived in Shepherdstown is distributed fairly evenly, but with a slightly larger share of long time residents (20+ years) participating than the other groups. Also, participation was divided nearly evenly between participants who have lived in Shepherdstown more than 10 years or fewer than 10 years.

Figure 3 - Work Location

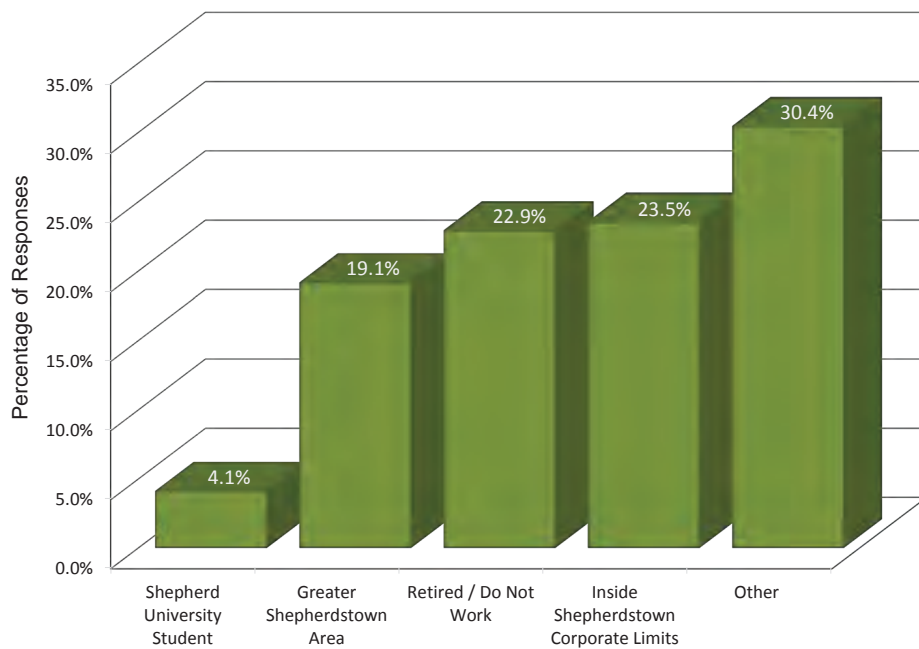
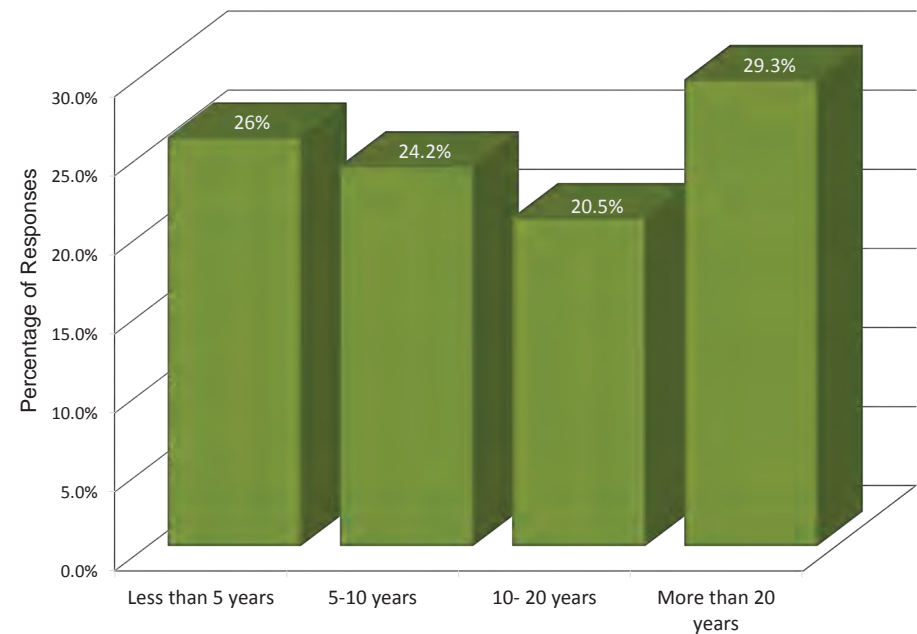


Figure 4 - Years a Resident





Question 5: Annexation

Survey Question: *The Corporation of Shepherdstown provides a wide range of municipal services and benefits to residents and businesses within its corporate limits. Should the Town pursue the expansion of these services, and the benefits of residing within the corporate limits of Shepherdstown, throughout a larger portion of the greater Shepherdstown area? Do you think that this would have a positive or negative impact on current residents of Shepherdstown?*

When asked about the possibility of Town services being expanded to a larger portion of the greater Shepherdstown area, more participants responded favorably than unfavorably to the question. There were a substantial number of responses that were not sure or responded without a definitive answer, indicating a need to better inform the public about annexation.

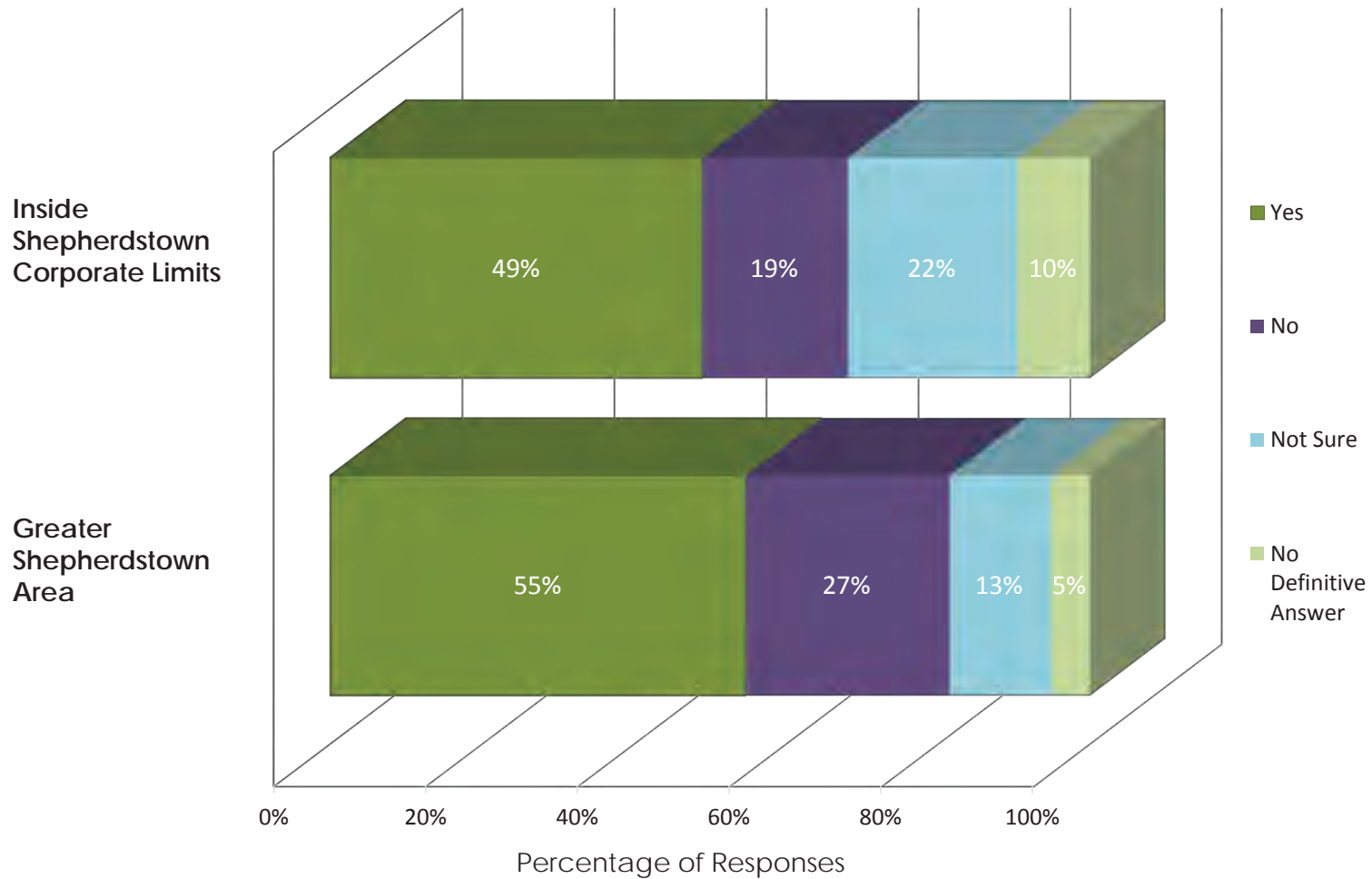
The responses received to this question demonstrates that there is not a significant degree of distinction between place of residence, either inside or outside of town, and whether the respondent appeared to be in favor of or opposed to annexation, though slightly more of the respondents from outside of town appeared to have a positive view of annexation than participants who live inside of town. Most notable was the number of in-town residents who appeared to lack enough information to give a response favorably or unfavorably.

Table 1 - Annexation / Growth

Answered Question 209
Skipped Question 115

	Yes	No	Not Sure	No Definitive Answer
Greater Shepherdstown Area	53	26	13	5
Inside Shepherdstown Corporate Limits	46	18	21	9
On the Shepherd University Campus	1	0	0	0
Other	5	5	0	2
Blank (Did not specify residence)	3	0	0	2
	108	49	34	18

Figure 5 - Comparison of Responses by Place of Residence





Question 6: Downtown Shepherdstown

Survey Question: *Downtown Shepherdstown is a cornerstone of the community, serving as a hub for social, cultural and economic activity in town. What do you see as being the most important assets to protect in the downtown area to ensure its viability and sustainability? What types of investments could be made to help improve downtown?*

- The primary assets that were associated with downtown Shepherdstown included its historic character, small local businesses and status as a destination for tourists.
- Other assets that were identified include the walkability of downtown, the library, restaurants, green space and the Potomac River.
- Parking was the most frequently identified need for additional investment, primarily focused on adding capacity.
- A close second behind parking was the need to continue the improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- The third most frequently mentioned topic for investment was economic development. This centered primarily on helping small businesses with assistance through an entrepreneurial incubator, lower rents, grants, incentives and similar ideas.



Question 7: Shepherd University

Survey Question: *A significant number of opportunities are created by the physical, social and economic links between the Town and Shepherd University. What assets do the Town and University have that can be leveraged to enhance the quality of life for both residents and students? How do you perceive the current relationship between the Town and University, and how could that relationship change or evolve to better serve the needs of each entity?*

- Overwhelmingly, most respondents see a positive relationship between the University and Town. A significant number perceive that this has improved in recent years, with many attributing this to the current leadership of the University and the Town. Equally stressed was the need for a good working relationship and continued cooperation and communication between the two entities.
- Respondents were very pleased with the number and diversity of assets shared between the University and Town. Assets most frequently cited include:
 - Wellness Center
 - Library
 - McMurrin Hall
 - University
 - The Wall
 - Events & Activities



- Again, the number one topic most cited by respondents is parking. Many see the lack of parking as bad for the University AND Town. It's seen as the number one issue that would promote better relations.
- Respondents commented that involvement between students and residents is lacking and needs to be improved. Several offered ideas ranging from business relationships to volunteer activities. Specific suggestions included internships, discounts for students at town businesses and restaurants, a University store, and a volunteer database.
- Increasing involvement was not just between students and residents. Several commented that faculty need to support the Town - live in town (if lower rents), work with local businesses to promote internships and/or projects.
- Many responses indicated that more participation in university activities is desired, but there is a lack of public information about events, activities and/or programs. Several stated that the cost of using facilities is too high.



Question 8: The Potomac River

Survey Question: *The Potomac River is a key foundation of the Town's origins and history, but over time development has moved away from the river, with the Town essentially turning its back to the Potomac as its economic importance declined. How, and where, can the Town take better advantage of its location on the Potomac to enhance the quality of life for residents and the experience of visitors to Shepherdstown?*

- The responses indicated a general desire to not “over commercialize” the riverfront – instead maintaining the area primarily for recreation in a more natural setting, especially given the flooding potential along the river.
- The appearance and upkeep of the riverfront, particularly around the boat ramp, was cited as needing improvement by many respondents.
- A large number of responses indicated a desire to restore and better utilize the tobacco warehouse, particularly for a river related use such as a paddlesports outfitter.
- The majority of responses where people suggested some sort of “development” of the riverfront requested passive recreational facilities, such as a boardwalk/walking trails, picnic areas, wildlife viewing areas, overlooks and similar features.
- Pedestrian connectivity from downtown to the riverfront and between the boat ramp area and the Rumsey Monument was a frequent suggestion, as was the need to provide better directional signage to the river.





Question 9: Cultural Assets

Survey Question: *Shepherdstown has a diverse base of cultural resources, with significant artistic, historic and architectural assets that enhance the livability and attractiveness of the Town. Of these assets, which do you feel are most critical to the long term success of the Town? What is missing from the cultural experience in Shepherdstown?*

- Responses to this question overwhelmingly focused on the Town's historic architectural resources and the need to preserve and enhance them.
- The Contemporary American Theater Festival was frequently cited as the most important cultural event in Shepherdstown.
- Many responses cited the need to better market / promote the Opera House and make better use of the facility.
- The presence of the University and the cultural opportunities that it provides was noted as being important to the cultural life of the town.
- The most frequently cited missing link in the town's base of cultural resources was the need for affordable space for studios and galleries for artists.
- Several responses noted the need to better market and publicize the events that are being offered in town.
- There was general consensus in the responses that maintaining and expanding the town's cultural of are critical to its long term success and overall vibrancy.



- Interestingly, a number of responses focused in the need to include food in the list of cultural resources and better integrate that into the town's overall base of cultural resources.
- A major sentiment included in the responses was to maintain the historic character of the town without becoming like Harpers Ferry, Williamsburg or similar communities (the environment is too sterile or over commercialized).





Question 10: Community Services

Survey Question: *The Corporation of Shepherdstown strives to provide its residents and businesses with high quality and efficient services. Are there any services that are not currently provided by the Town that it should offer to the community? Are there any services that the Town currently offers that would benefit from improvements and what would those improvements be?*

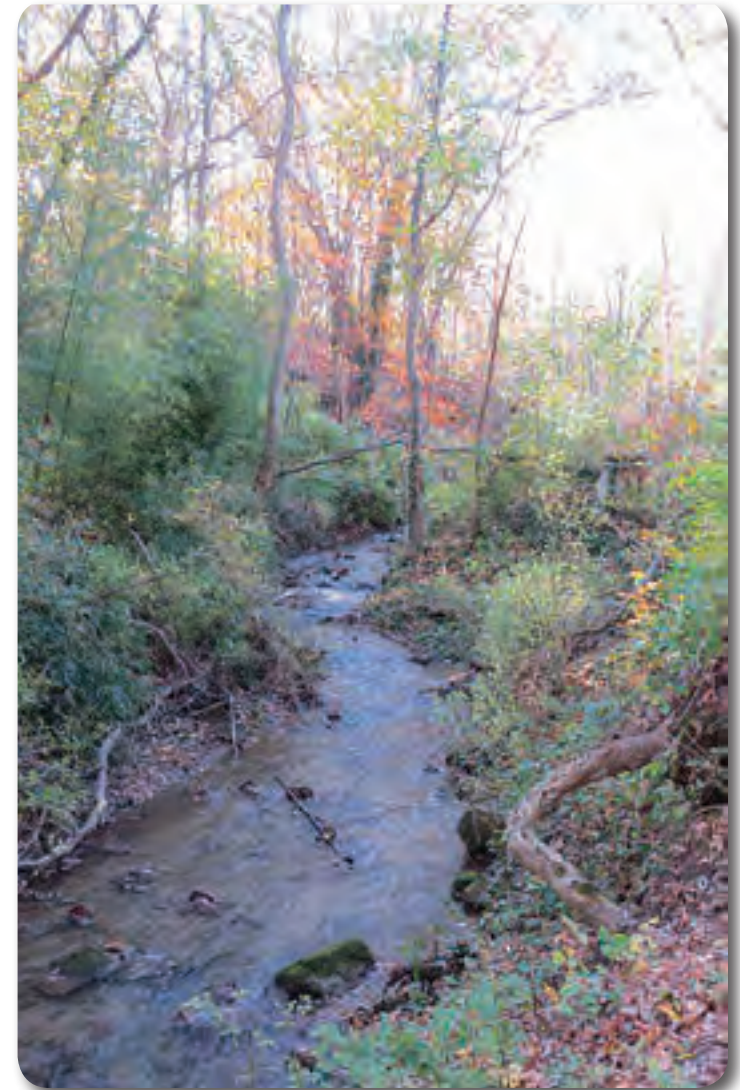
- Most responses regarding the quality of existing services said that they were excellent.
- Suggestions for improvements included the quality of the drinking water, recycling services and public transportation.
- Responses were generally complimentary of the police force, with suggestions aimed primarily at expanding the size of the force to be able to better offer services on a 24 hour per day basis.
- Suggestions for new services included free wireless internet service throughout town, leaf collection in the fall, building code enforcement and composting of organic waste.
- Some respondents seemed to be unaware of the full range of services that are provided by the town.



Question 11: Natural Resources

Survey Question: *The natural environment plays a significant role in the attractiveness of Shepherdstown and the surrounding region as a destination for both residents and tourists. What are the most significant natural and environmental resources in the area, and what role should the Town play in helping to preserve and protect these critical assets?*

- Responses to the survey indicated that the Potomac River as an important asset for the town for both environmental and quality of life reasons. The primary concern regarding the river was protecting water quality.
- The tree canopy, and natural vegetation in general, were cited as important contributors to the aesthetic beauty of the town. Respondents stated that they would like to see efforts to preserve existing trees and a greater emphasis on planting new trees by the town.
- Parks and open spaces such as Morgan's Grove Park, the Rumsey Monument Park, and the C&O Tow Path were all identified as important open spaces to protect.
- A large number of responses indicated that the preservation of open space, through farmland and battlefield preservation efforts, should be a top priority as these are seen as critical components of Shepherdstown's rural charm.
- Town Run was also cited frequently as a natural asset that needs to be protected, preserved and improved due to its prominent location in town and the contributions that it makes to the town's character.



Question 12: Economic Development

Survey Question: *In recent years, education, tourism and the arts have played significant roles in the local economy, driving much of the economic growth in Town. What economic sectors might the town want to pursue if it were looking to diversify its economy? What role should the Town play in supporting economic development, such as through business retention efforts, incentives for new or expanding businesses or similar efforts?*

- The survey results indicate that there is a general feeling that high rental rates impair the ability of small businesses to succeed and are a prime cause of vacancies in the downtown area. Many of the responses indicated a belief that lowering or subsidizing rental fees would allow the town to build a more diverse economic base and help existing businesses remain downtown.
- Along with high rental rates, responses to the survey indicated that the lack of available parking was a negative influence on the ability of downtown businesses to thrive. Many believe that by increasing the amount of parking as well as providing shuttle services businesses will see a spike in activity.
- The outdoor recreational assets found in and around Shepherdstown were frequently cited as areas of great potential for the town to expand the share of tourists to the region that it captures in relation to neighboring communities. Respondents cited the need to better connect these assets as a way to improve the attractiveness of the area, including ideas for developing bike share programs oriented to tourists, who could use them to visit various sites in and around town.



- Many responses to the survey cited the lack of “practical” retail in the downtown area. Residents o indicated that they would like daily necessities such as a grocery store or market, laundry or dry cleaner and similar essential services provided in the core of the town.
- The town’s proximity to the greater Washington area was frequently cited as a key potential driver of the local economy, with answers particularly focused on the potential for high-tech industries and employment.
- The farmland surrounding the town is thought of as an asset to the community; however the potential for its relationship with the town is underutilized. Responses to the survey indicate a desire for the town to take better advantage of its proximity to valuable farmland and encourage sustainable agriculture and work on developing a retail market for locally produced agricultural goods.



Question 13: Housing

Survey Question: *Shepherdstown has a large stock of single family dwellings in its historic neighborhoods, and a large amount of group housing for students on the campus of Shepherd University, but little diversity in the overall housing supply. Is there any demand in the market for the Town to expand and diversify its housing stock? Which areas of Town (or outside of Town) might be most appropriate to accommodate new types of housing, and what types of housing development should the town seek to accommodate?*

- Surveys indicated that the gap that currently exists in the Shepherdstown housing market are quality, well designed, and affordable housing options for older residents and moderately priced homes for young professionals and families.
- Due to the town's historic character, many residents feel that any growth in and around town should be consistent with historic architectural precedents.
- Some respondents felt that there is no need to expand the town's housing stock to accommodate a larger residential population. These residents fear that by expanding the opportunities for development the results will be poorly built homes in generic suburban developments that are not in character with the town's reputation as a quaint historic village.
- Another theme that emerged from the housing survey question was a general desire for new residential development to occur within a reasonable walking distance of downtown.



Question 14: Transportation

Survey Question: *The ability to move safely around town by automobile, bicycle or as a pedestrian is a key factor in the attractiveness of the community and its long term sustainability. What are the most important improvements that can be made to enhance the safety or functionality of the local street, walkway and bikeway systems? Which areas outside of Town, if any, should be connected to the Town with a trail system?*

- Responses to this question focused overwhelmingly on improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities in and around the town, with very few responses suggesting any improvements solely for motor vehicle facilities, except in the context of making them safer for bikes and pedestrians.
- Most frequently cited in the responses were the need to construct a bike and pedestrian connection to Morgan's Grove Park and to improve the current connection to the Maddex Square area. These were followed closely by River Road and Shepherd Grade Road
- River Road and Shepherd Grade Road were the second most cited roads that respondents identified as needing improved bike and pedestrian facilities.
- A general desire was expressed for the improved availability of designated bike lanes on streets in town.
- Other topics included the need to strictly enforce speed limits and laws on cell phone use, maintaining sidewalks in a safe condition and improve the visibility of pedestrian crossings.





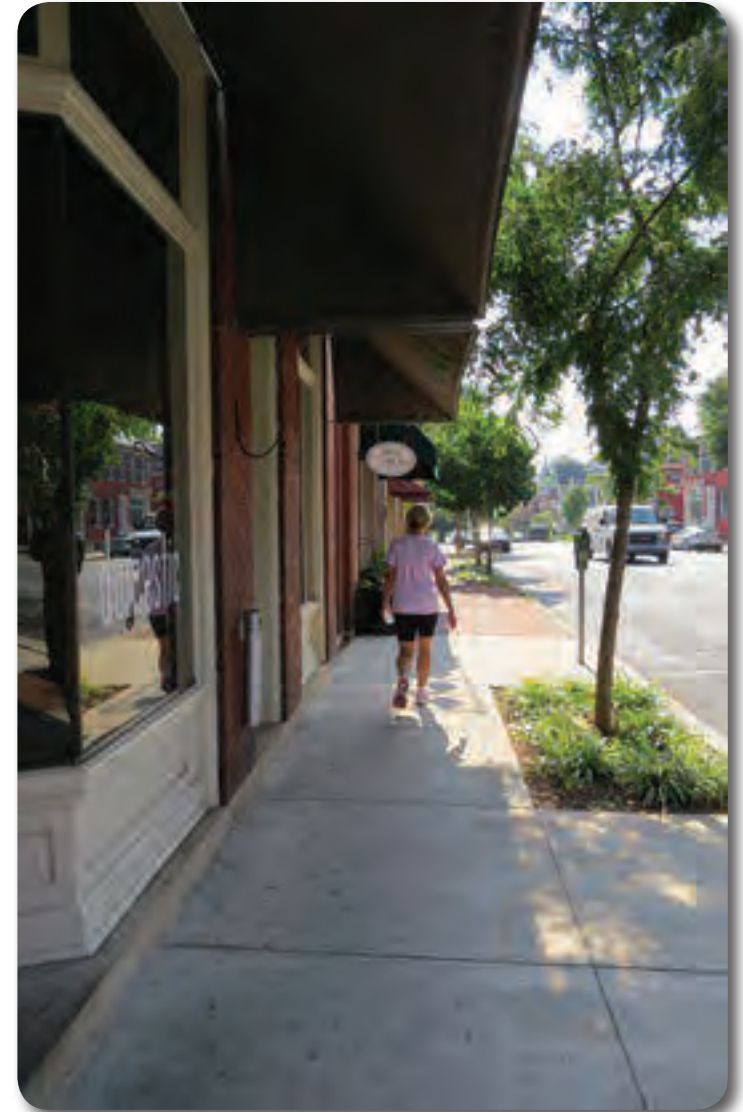
Question 15: Shepherdstown's Future

Survey Question: *Imagine that it is 20 years from today and all of your ideas for improving Shepherdstown have been successfully implemented. What is the Town like in this ideal future? What is the most important idea that you contributed to help Shepherdstown grow into a more livable and prosperous community?*

The following list represents the main themes that were most frequently cited in response to this question:

- Retaining the small town atmosphere and character
- German street is thriving and full of businesses
- Fewer cars on the roads and more walking/biking by residents
- An environmentally sustainable community
- A diverse population – especially in terms of age
- No generic “Anytown, USA” development
- A broader tax base
- Historic buildings are preserved
- More parking options

Overall, responses were very positive about the future of the town.





November Public Input Meeting summary

On November 21, at 6:30 pm, the first public workshop was held at Community Club in the War Memorial Building on German Street. The meeting was attended by over 70 persons. The consultant team staff worked closely with steering committee members, West Virginia University Law students and experienced facilitators from within the community to lead small groups in detailed discussions of hypothetical future development scenarios. The roundtable format enable the consulting team to gain an understanding of the community's needs and aspirations for future development and growth, while encouraging residents to share their thoughts and ideas with their neighbors. These scenarios and the responses to them are summarized below. Participant responses directly contributed to the Plan's goals and strategies.



Topic #1: Land Use, Development and Community Character

Scenario 1-1: *You have company coming to town for the weekend and would like to take them on a short tour to introduce them to the community. Your time is short, and you need to pick the three places in the community to visit that will give them the best impression of the character of the town. What would those three places be, and what about those places makes them the most representative of the town's unique character? Do you feel that recent development activity in and around Shepherdstown is reinforcing the community's unique character? Identify what you feel has been developed in the most compatible manner and what has been incompatible? What about each example makes it compatible or incompatible?*



- Places identified that best represent the character of the town include:
 - German Street / Downtown
 - Old Tobacco Warehouse
 - O'Hurley's General Store
 - C&O Canal
 - Potomac River
 - Town Run
 - The Wall
 - Rumsey Monument
 - Library
 - Alleys
 - Churches
- Thoughts on recent development activity included: :
 - Need better quality housing to attract young families
 - No more strip malls
 - Need more pedestrian connectivity
 - New town hall fits well
 - New performing arts center is not compatible
 - New development not following traditional architectural patterns
 - New development causing light pollution





Scenario 1-2: *A developer is proposing a mixed commercial and residential project in the community on a vacant tract of land that is in a prominent and highly visible location. You are interested in the project and have decided to speak at the public hearing on the zoning change that they need to make the project move forward. What are the conditions that you would encourage the Town Council to impose as part of the development approval process to help ensure that the new development will be compatible with Shepherdstown's unique character? Are there examples of similar projects, either in nearby communities or elsewhere, which you feel could be a model for this type of development in Shepherdstown?*

- Comments received on this topic focused primarily on:
 - Maintaining high quality of architectural design
 - Development needs to fulfill a defined community need
 - Need to reflect the small town character of Shepherdstown
 - Concerned about gentrification
 - Needs to be attractive to young families
 - New development should be "green"

Scenario 1-3: A developer mentions to you that they have acquired a vacant 10 acre tract of land that they would like to develop for residential use. They then ask your advice on what type of housing would best serve the needs of the community and sell/lease quickly in the local housing market once it is built. What would you tell them to build? Overall, what gaps do you see in the local housing market? Is there a high demand for certain types of housing that is not being filled by the current housing stock? Who is being left out of the local market? Where are they looking to buy/lease instead of Shepherdstown?

- Most of the discussion of this scenario centered on the links between housing, commercial activity and employment.
- It was also noted that there is some desire for assistance of some sort from the town to help homeowners improve existing dwellings in town.
- Interestingly, parking was also a main point of this discussion, with the need to ensure adequate parking for new residents, particularly in conjunction with higher density housing.



Scenario 1-4: *You have been assigned to a committee that is working on a plan to develop a long range annexation plan for Shepherdstown. Using the provided map, develop a phased approach to the growth of the Town, identifying those areas that you feel should become part of the corporation in the short-term (within 5 years), medium term (5-10 years) and long term (20 years) using different colors for each type of area. What are the most important criteria that you used in the process of determining which areas should be considered for annexation and the timeframe in which they should be annexed? What criteria did you use to decide which areas should not be considered for annexation? How do you think that annexation of the areas that you depicted on the map would impact the town, and will this be positive or negative?*



- Areas identified for potential annexation were focused primarily on areas in very close proximity to the current corporate limits, particularly the older residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the town.
- Vacant land that was identified was typically chosen to balance the desire to protect land from development as well as provide for growth.
- Of particular note, the Clarion Hotel property, Maddex Farm, Morgan's Grove Park and local schools were discussed frequently as candidates for future annexation.
- Most annexation areas that were shown/discussed focused on land lying to the south, east and west of town, but not to the north.
- There was a diversity of opinion on whether the town should even consider annexing new property, which is reflective of what was seen in the survey.
- Concerns expressed about annexation focused primarily on costs, the ability to provide equitable services, and the potential challenges related to bringing in new people to participate in town government.
- Of particular concern was the need to ensure that zoning and development regulations could accommodate both what exists today in Shepherdstown as well as newly annexed areas.

Scenario 1-5: *You own a house in a part of town in which garage apartments and other types of accessory dwelling units are not allowed by the zoning ordinance. Your neighbor approaches you and states that their family wants to bring an aging parent to live with them, but they do not have room in their house to accommodate an additional family member. So, they are considering approaching the Town Council to request a change in the zoning ordinance that would allow them to construct an accessory dwelling on their property. This change would make this possible on all residential lots in this zoning district. What would be your concerns if the ordinance was changed to allow this? What types of conditions could be imposed on such structures through the ordinance to ensure that they created as little impact as possible on neighboring residences? Would you be in favor of such a change if adequate conditions were in place?*



- Concerns expressed during the discussion included:

- Maintaining historic compatibility
- Providing adequate parking
- Population density
- Constraints on town services and infrastructure
- Noise from tenants
- Short term renters not taking care of property
- Lack of local building inspections

- Potential conditions to mitigate these concerns included:

- Limiting the number of tenants allowed in an accessory dwelling
- Putting good enforcement mechanisms in place
- Requiring a special permit
- Limits on square footage of accessory dwellings
- Designed for historic compatibility

Topic #2 Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Services

Scenario 2-1: *Shepherdstown has been awarded a grant that will allow it to make a significant investment in the local road transportation network. The value of the grant will be matched to meet the needs of one project, regardless of cost. If you were given the responsibility of making the decision of selecting the project, what project would you choose to construct? How would the project address the needs of the community and its residents? How would the project affect traffic patterns? Would the project be oriented toward improving safety, relieving congestion, or making the local transportation network more efficient at moving traffic through or around town?*

- Potential improvements discussed included:
 - A method to route trucks around town
 - Extending the Highway 45 “bypass” from Morgans Grove to Highway 230 on the southeast side of town.
 - Adding a new crossing over the Potomac upriver of Shepherdstown
 - Extending University Drive to the west to link Shepherd Grade to Route 45 west of the developed portion of the corridor.
 - Improving street lighting
 - Expanding MARC service to the area
 - More public transit options, including in-town shuttles



Scenario 2-2: *The Town Council has appointed you to a committee that is studying community needs for telecommunications services, including both wired and wireless services for voice and data transmission. How would you characterize the current level of service that is being provided in Shepherdstown today? Does this meet the needs of residents, businesses and other entities that rely on these services? What types of service improvements or expansions are needed? Is there a need / desire for expanded wireless telecommunication service? If new towers are necessary for wireless service expansion, what would be your concerns regarding the placement of new towers, and are there alternatives to erecting towers? What is the town's role in fostering a more robust telecommunications environment? Who are some potential partners if expanding service was deemed to be a priority for the town?*

- Need to define what the community needs are to best determine how to meet them
- The town and county need to plan together with Shepherd University to expand broadband access
- Town should institute town-wide Wi-Fi service
- Lack of service is a barrier to small business growth
- Telecomm should be seen as an essential service





Scenario 2-3: *You are appointed to a committee that is tasked with evaluating the public services provided by the Town, and your ultimate responsibility is to make a recommendation for either improving a service that is currently provided or instituting a new service that the Town will provide to the community. Which service would you recommend that the Town improve or begin providing? Would you recommend that residents pay a fee for this service, should it be supported by taxes, or should a combination of the two financing methods be used? Which service that the town currently provides is most important to the quality of life in Shepherdstown? Do you think that areas outside of the corporate limits would benefit from receiving the same types of services that corporation residents receive? If the town annexes adjacent neighborhoods, how do you think that would impact its ability to provide its current level of service?*

- Ideas for new services included:
 - Town Wi-Fi service
 - Solar power generation
 - Electric vehicle plug-ins
 - Smart meters for electric service – sponsored by the town
 - Composting
 - Rainwater harvesting
- The Services that were discussed as being most important to quality of life focused primarily on police services and the public water system.





Scenario 2-4: *You and your friends enjoy walking and biking around Shepherdstown for recreation as well as a means of traveling for errands and other daily activities. Through your travels around town, you and your friends have noticed a number of gaps in the bike/pedestrian infrastructure, areas where it could be improved or expanded along new routes, as well as safety issues. Your group decides that they want to advance a plan to the Town Council that will address the issues that you have noticed. Using the provided map, meet with your group of like-minded bike and pedestrian enthusiasts and map out where these improvements or expansions to the bike and pedestrian infrastructure should be made. Include routes both inside of Town as well as the surrounding area. What are the primary origin and destination points/areas? What are the top priorities for improvements?*

- The following bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements were identified as part of his discussion:
 - A greenway trail along Town Run from the river to Morgans Grove Park
 - A pedestrian connection along the Potomac from the Rumsey Monument to Shepherd University

- Dedicated bicycle facilities along:
 - Kearneysville Pike to Morgans Grove
 - Shepherd Grade Road
 - Across the Potomac to the C&O Canal Tow Path
 - Martinsburg Pike to Maddex Farm.
 - Potomac Farms Drive
 - High Street
 - German Street
 - Washington Street
- Improved pedestrian facilities from town to Morgans Grove Park on Kearneysville Pike and along Martinsburg Pike to Maddex Farm.
- The top priorities were
 - Improved pedestrian and bike facilities to Morgans Grove
 - An improved pedestrian crossing at Maddex Farm
 - Safety improvements at the rail crossing on Washington Street

Topic #3 Economic Development and Tourism

Scenario 3-1: *One sunny summer Saturday afternoon you are walking down German Street and you are stopped by a group of people visiting town from DC for the weekend. They ask about things to do in town during their visit. What would be the top three recommendations you would give them (assuming no special events were taking place). How well do you think the Town markets itself to tourists? Is it telling the right story to bring them here? Who is the typical tourist to Shepherdstown, and has that changed in recent years? Who should tourism marketing and promotions be aimed at, and where do they live?*

- Places to send tourists included:
 - Rumsey Monument
 - The Potomac river
 - The tobacco warehouse
 - Visitors center
 - Local restaurants
 - C&O Canal



- Comments on marketing included:
 - A need to focus marketing on the downtown area
 - Focus marketing on free attractions
 - Highlight Civil War history
 - Publish local wayfinding maps with attractions
 - Market local restaurants
- Other comments included:
 - Don't want to be like Harpers Ferry
 - Provide better access between the town and the C&O towpath
 - Develop the "music scene"
 - Improve the boat ramp area
 - Improve the visitors center





Scenario 3-2: A relocation consultant is visiting town this week to do research to advise their client on whether to move their small information technology services firm to Shepherdstown. The Town asks you to help make the pitch to the consultant about why they should choose Shepherdstown over other communities in the region. How would you make your pitch and what would be the top selling point? Assuming that the consultant made their recommendation to their client to relocate to Shepherdstown, what would have been the deciding factors in that decision? Conversely, assuming that the consultant advised his client to instead choose Charles Town or Martinsburg, what would have made that a better option for their client?

- Selling points of the town included:
 - High education levels
 - Easy access to major NE cities
 - God support among small businesses
 - Low crime
 - Good community vibe – small town
 - Reasonably priced housing
 - Workers could live close to the office – short commutes
 - Good quality of life
 - Great place to live
 - Shepherd University
 - Any company coming would be a “big fish in a little pond”
 - Access to MARC
- If another nearby community was chosen, reasons listed included:
 - Lower rents
 - Better access to the interstate
 - Offering a better economic incentive package
- A critical deciding factor that was identified was the presence or absence of high speed telecomm infrastructure





Scenario 3-3: *Tired of long commutes to a suburban DC office park every day, you decide it's time for a change of pace. A recent inheritance has given you the ability to make a change in your life, and you have always wanted to own a business in downtown Shepherdstown. While you are financially secure to take this on, you know it will have to be profitable within a year, or it is back to the long drives and the boring desk job. What type of business would you open? Who would be your target market? What impediments do you see that could stand in the way of your business succeeding? What could the town do to help ease the path to success and help you and your fellow business owners grow your businesses?*

- Potential business opportunities that were identified included:
 - Veterinary clinic
 - Brewery – associated with the river?
 - Anything offering staples – groceries etc.
 - Organic / specialty food stores
 - Local agriculture coop
 - Business to business support services
 - Antique stores
 - Art galleries
- Ideal target markets identified included:
 - Students
 - Tourists
 - Young families
- Potential impediments include:
 - High rents
 - Limited parking
 - Antiquated zoning
 - Limited market size
- Ways the town could help pave a path to success included:
 - Working to lower rents
 - Promoting business through social media
 - Ensure that businesses have the flexibility needed to survive
 - Promote local festivals
 - Help to develop partnerships
 - Improve parking



Scenario 3-4: *You are standing behind the cash register at your downtown business when a tourist comes through the door frantically waving a dollar bill above her head. "Quick, I need change for the parking meter – I see them coming down the street right now!" she exclaims. Knowing the drill, you hand over 4 quarters and wish her luck, hoping that she and her friends will come back to buy something from you. Tired of constantly making change, and wondering once again if you've lost a sale because a meter was running short on time, you start thinking about parking management in Shepherdstown (for the third time this week). You decide to write down a plan to improve how on-street parking is managed? What are your top recommendations for the town to better manage its on- street parking? How will your ideas improve the visitor experience and create more economic opportunities? Assuming that Shepherd University builds a new parking deck close to downtown, how would that influence the parking situation, and your recommendations for parking management?*



- Ideas for better managing parking included:
 - Developing a pedestrian mall downtown
 - Eliminating parking meters
 - Implementing a shuttle for Shepherd University
 - Build a parking garage on campus
 - Free or lower cost parking downtown
 - Build a parking structure adjacent to downtown
 - Free 30 minute parking
 - Pay by phone system for meters
 - Parking payment kiosks
 - Allow merchants to purchase and resell parking passes
 - Use vacant lots downtown for parking – privately owned but town maintained
 - Tiered fines for meter violations – start low for tourists – go high for repeat violations

Topic #4 Environmental and Natural Resources and Conservation

Scenario 4-1: *The Town Council appoints you to a committee that is tasked with developing an action plan that will improve the environmental sustainability of the community. What would be your top three recommendations for ways that the local government, businesses and residents in Shepherdstown could be more sustainable in their activities and reduce environmental impacts? What actions would need to be taken to achieve those sustainability goals, and what types of resources would be needed? Who would be responsible for carrying them out? Would you focus on mandatory measures, such as regulatory ordinances, to achieve these goals, or would you incentivize sustainable behavior and actions by creating the conditions that make sustainable activity easier to achieve?*

- Discussions on developing an environmental sustainability plan included the following:
 - Requirements to preserve land as open space for new development
 - Encourage the generation and use of renewable energy
 - Use Town Run for small scale hydroelectric generation
 - Need to clean up streams, replace old sewer lines and require stormwater detention.
 - Allow historic homes to use more energy efficient components / materials and generate renewable energy.
 - Encourage more recycling



- Encourage more bike and pedestrian activity to improve air quality
- Focus commercial development in the core of town
- Don't urbanize the waterfront
- Provide more parking on the edge of downtown to encourage more walking
- Provide public transportation

Scenario 4-2: You are a developer who has acquired a large tract of land just outside of Town. The land is located near the river, and is currently being used for farming, but also contains a large section of wooded area, as well as streams and wetlands. You want to develop the property in a way that is environmentally friendly, but you also need to realize a profit from your development. You decide that you will prepare a sustainable growth plan for the site that will be aimed at preserving the most important environmental features on the property. What would be the primary elements of the plan? How would you integrate your development into the natural landscape to reduce potential impacts on the environment? Who would you reach out to for assistance in preparing your plan? Are there any examples of an environmentally sustainable development in the local area, or elsewhere, that you would try and emulate for your project?

- Ideas for developing a sustainable growth plan for the property include:
 - Prioritizing the preservation of land along streams
 - Preserve wetland areas
 - Preserve high quality farmland
 - Establish riparian buffers
 - Continue active farming on the land



- Maintain a low impervious surface ratio
- Use gravel roads
- Maintain rural viewsheds
- Preserve trees and other native vegetation
- Use cluster development techniques

Scenario 4-3: *You are starting an organization whose goal is to promote the preservation of an important environmental / natural resource in the area that no other group is currently advocating for at the local level. This could include farmland, open space, a greenbelt around Shepherdstown, the Potomac River, a scenic vista, heritage trees or similar features in the local environment. What would you choose to advocate for, and how would you go about promoting the preservation of the resource that your group chooses? Who would you look to partner with? Where would you get funding to achieve your goals, and what could or should the Town's involvement be?*

- Town Run as a resource preservation effort:
 - Focus on waterfront to Morgan's Grove
 - Partner with:
 - WV Department of Natural Resources
 - Environmental Protection Agency
 - Property owners
 - Town of Shepherdstown
 - Town could work to acquire property or easements
- Potomac River as a resource preservation effort:
 - Need to bring people to the river to enhance knowledge of issues and heighten community awareness
 - Develop boat ramp area to bring people to the river
 - Need to work with the state to enforce water quality rules
 - Restore historic sites on the river to increase access



Scenario 4-4: *You serve on the board of a conservation organization whose mission is to acquire land for open space, as well as promote the preservation of active farming in the Shepherdstown area through the acquisition of conservation easements. You are leading a committee of the board that is tasked with developing a strategic land acquisition program, and are meeting with the group to brainstorm about which properties you should target for preservation. Using the map provided, identify those tracts of land that you feel would be most important to preserve from potential development. Assuming that funds were not limited and property owners were willing to either sell or donate their property or grant conservation easements if asked, what criteria would you use to identify the properties that would be most beneficial to preserve? What impacts would the conservation of these properties have on the environment? How would the preservation of these properties affect growth patterns in the area?*

- Discussion on this topic focused on the following:
 - Dual benefit of protecting farmland and preserving green space around town
 - Benefit to local food economy
 - Marketing tie-in with ecotourism
 - Could support a year round farmers market
 - Creating a rural buffer along highway corridors
 - Can be used as a way to preserve battlefield areas
 - Can be used to provide greenway connections to outlying areas



Topic #5 Recreation, Cultural and Historic Resources

Scenario 5-1: *A building in Town that is viewed as a cornerstone of the historic fabric of the community has been acquired by a developer, who is now proposing to tear it down and redevelop the property. The building has deteriorated to the point that this course of action makes the most financial sense for the developer, and they have promised that they will build something that fits well with the community. You and your neighbors want to do something to stop the developer and encourage them to renovate and reuse the structure. What would be your first step toward achieving this? Who would you reach out to for help with this? What roadblocks might the developer encounter if they agree to renovate and preserve the structure? How could the town help to make the preservation of the property a reality? Which building or other historic site in town would be most likely to push you into action if it were threatened with being redeveloped?*

- Discussion on this question focused more on the general historic preservation efforts in town including:
 - The citizen led effort to restore the Entler Hotel that involved a significant amount of social equity.
 - The establishment of the formalized Historic District in the 1970s.
 - The expansion of the Historic District in 1986 that encompassed nearly all of the town.
 - The need for more public outreach, educational forums and advertising regarding the historic preservation process.



Scenario 5-2: *You serve on a committee that is tasked with developing and enhancing parks and other recreational facilities in the community. You are currently working on a long range plan for both facilities and recreation programs. The committee is meeting to merge their recommendations, and each member is expected to limit their “wish list” to three items, with one being the improvement of an existing facility, one being the creation of a new facility and the third being the creation or improvement of a recreation program. What would your recommendations be? Using the provided map, identify any locations both inside Shepherdstown that you feel would be good candidates for the development of new parks or recreation facilities. Who would be the target population for your new or improved facilities or programs? Are there any resources that are present in the local area that are not being utilized to their full potential? How could they be used more effectively to serve the needs of local residents?*

- Discussion on this question focused on the following:
 - Lack of recreation opportunities for children
 - Using the tobacco warehouse for overnight lodging for bikers on the C&O path
 - The library is a good resource for activities
 - Need more local youth sports opportunities
 - Establish a greenway trail along Town Run from the river to Morgans Grove
 - Better utilize the riverfront for boating and fishing areas
 - Add local watersports opportunities





Scenario 5-3: *You serve on the board of a group whose mission is to enhance and promote the cultural life of Shepherdstown and the surrounding region. Your group would like to develop marketing materials, including a website and brochures that will be used to promote activities and resources to residents and visitors to the area. What would be the highlights of your marketing effort? Who would your marketing effort target? What is missing from the region that your group would be actively working to bring to the local cultural landscape? What could your group do to establish any missing links in either cultural facilities or programs at the local level? Who would you look to partner with to establish a new cultural facility or program?*

- Ideas for developing new cultural resources included:
 - Promoting weekend cycling in and around town
 - The need to bring in people to events and activities from nearby cities
 - Using the riverfront for music performances
 - Developing space for artists
 - Look at Charlottesville for precedent

- Local cultural resources identified in this discussion included:
 - The diversity of the community
 - Local businesses where people gather – Lost Dog, Sweet Shop etc.
 - Rumsey Monument
 - The Wall
 - Farmers Market
 - The library
 - Christmas events
 - CATF
 - Two Rivers Orchestra
 - Shepherd University performances
 - Legislative Center speakers
 - Community Club
 - Civil War historic sites
 - Churches
 - Freedom Run