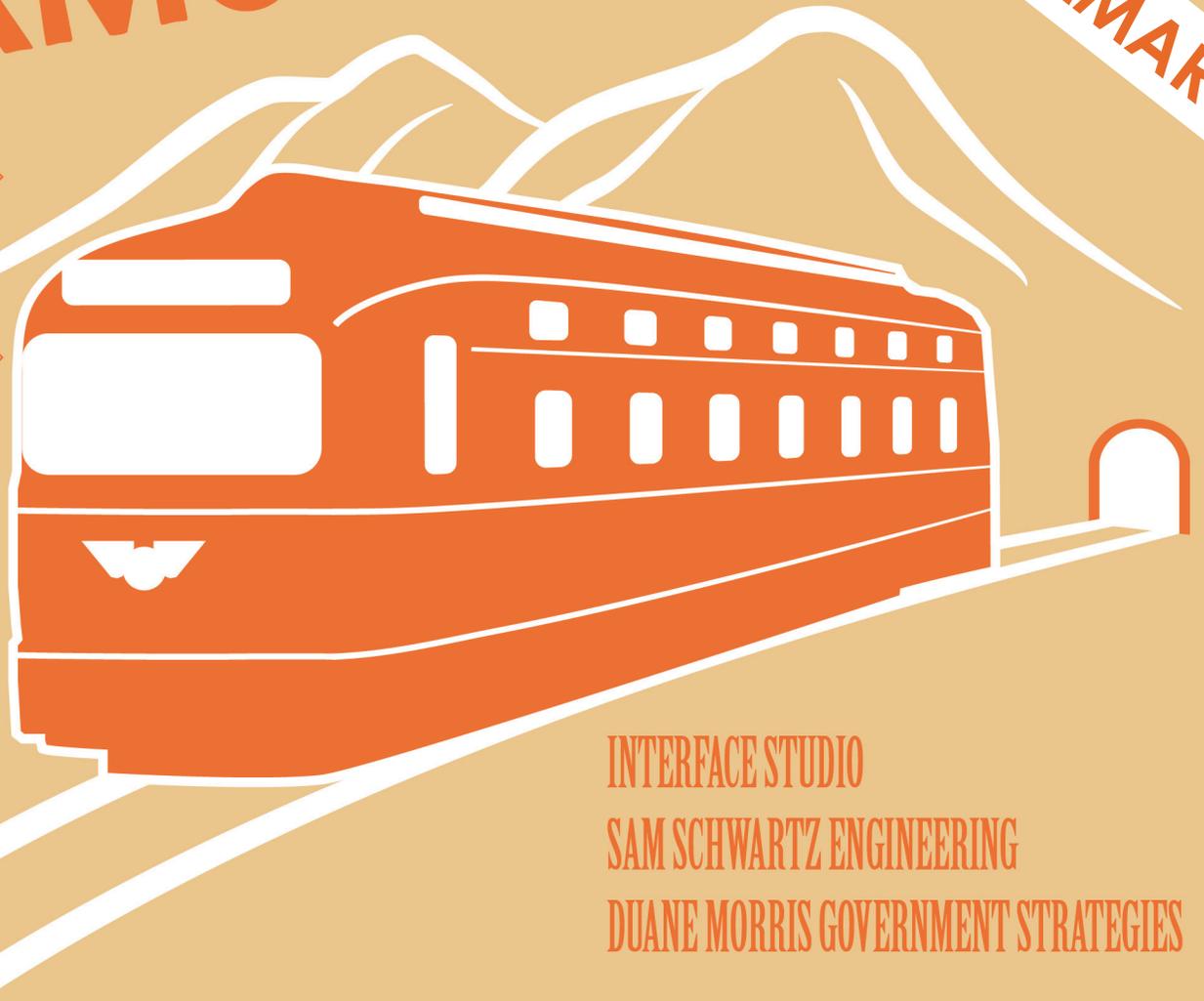


DREAM DORMONT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



*A Direction
for the Future*



INTERFACE STUDIO
SAM SCHWARTZ ENGINEERING
DUANE MORRIS GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

**BOROUGH OF DORMONT
2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dream Dormont Leadership

The Dream Dormont Comprehensive Plan was led by the Borough of Dormont and a committed Steering Committee comprised of local residents and stakeholders. The Steering Committee not only provided guidance on the plan's content but also volunteered for major Dream Dormont events.

To assist the Borough, Steering Committee and residents with data collection, public engagement and the development of strategies, a team of consultants was retained and led by Interface Studio.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Anne Stock – Main Street
Erica Bosh – Keystone Oaks High School and Junior Councilperson
Grant Shiring – Planning and Zoning Board
Jamie Keaney – Resident
Janice Meyer – Resident
Jeremy J. Smith – Resident
Joe Finucan – Keystone Oaks School Board
Leah Petrelli – Resident
Mary Elizabeth Andriko-Moo – Resident
Michelle Ross – Resident
Molly Rush – Resident
Monique Fontaine – Resident
Sarann Fisher – Friends of the Dormont Pool

PLANNING TEAM

Interface Studio LLC
Scott Page, Principal
Stacey Chen, Senior Associate
Caitlin Zacharias, Urban Designer
Diana Gruberg, Landscape Designer

Sam Schwartz Engineering, PLLC
Mark de la Vergne, Principal
Vig Krishnamurthy, Transportation Planner

Duane Morris Government Strategies
Michael P. Pehur, Development Finance Consulting Director

PREFACE

In January of 2012, the voters of Dormont elected a new Council majority. That majority determined that the Borough needed to catch up where behind and move forward in as many areas as possible. They started this with certain key hirings of their Solicitor and Manager in 2012. But they quickly shifted their focus to planning for the Borough's future in 2013. That planning includes the Borough's Strategic Plan and this Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is a catch up item in that the last time it was done was 1995 and it is supposed to be done every 10 years. And it is a moving forward item as it will set the tone and direction for the Borough for the next 10 years.

The Borough wishes to thank the members of the Steering Committee and the residents and business owners who participated in this Comprehensive Planning process to make this document possible.



PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

In Pennsylvania, comprehensive plans must be updated every 10 years, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The development of a comprehensive plan helps a community to:

- Develop a vision for what it wants
- Establish priorities
- Encourage dialogue and action
- Guide decision making
- Determine how best to allocate limited resources
- Raise money for improvements

Data analysis and a community's ideas for the future are combined and turned into action areas of the plan.

The focus areas of this comprehensive plan stem from a rich and interactive public process. The chapters in this plan are comprised of actionable strategies to improve the Borough through targeted investments and new or updated policies. Specifically, the plan is organized into six interrelated chapters:

- 1) **Your Home Sweet Home** focuses on improving housing and residential neighborhoods;
- 2) **Move Around** focuses on addressing the transportation and parking concerns frequently raised in public forums;
- 3) **Bring in the Business** focuses on promoting Dormont's local economy, in particular the business districts along Potomac and West Liberty;
- 4) **Dream Green** focuses on enhancing open space and the environment;
- 5) **Lead Progressively** focuses on Dormont becoming a leader in efficient and forward-thinking borough management
- 6) **Zone for the Future** focuses on progressive land use and zoning policy

The overlapping strategies outlined in these six chapters will help further transform Dormont into an environmentally and fiscally-sound mixed-use community.

Existing development in Dormont is consistent with that of contiguous municipalities (Mount Lebanon and Pittsburgh) and with the county comprehensive plan, *Allegheny Places*.

PLANNING PROCESS

The full planning process for the update of the Dormont Comprehensive Plan, from public engagement and data collection all the way through to the production of the plan, took 12 months.

June Public Meeting Activities:

WHAT IS DORMONT'S IDENTITY?

Residents described in one word or phrase what Dormont is today and what it could be tomorrow.

SHOPPING IN DORMONT

Participants described shopping in Dormont back in the day (for long-time residents) and what it could be in the future.

STREETS IN DORMONT

Residents were asked to explain issues with streets in Dormont and what they think of "Complete Streets" treatments used to make streets safer for all users.

TAKE CHARGE OF THE BUDGET

Participants were given fake money (one each of \$1, \$5, \$10, and \$20 bills) and asked where they would spend it. The business district, infrastructure, and public safety garnered the greatest amount of funding, both in terms of total amount spent and the number of high denomination bills spent.

WHAT'S YOUR BIG IDEA?

The final activity at the Dream Dormont public forum asked residents to dream big for the future of Dormont. Major themes were: more businesses, better maintenance and greening, and a strong and engaged community.

The process had a strong focus on public outreach, which included interviews with community stakeholders, meetings with focus groups, a collaborative map, social media, and public events.

October Public Meeting Activities:

Participants were asked to place smiley stickers on two objectives that they liked and a star sticker on one objective that raised a concern or question. They then filled in comments on cards to explain their choices.

DREAM GREEN

Residents were asked for their feedback on objectives regarding Dormont's parks, recreational facilities, and environmental efforts. Participants were also asked to describe in one word or phrase what their vision for Beggs Snyder Park and the passive park would be.

ENLIVEN YOUR STREETS

Participants were asked for their feedback on objectives relating to neighborhoods, residential streets, and alleys in Dormont.

BRING IN THE BUSINESS

Residents weighed in on objectives dealing with the business district.

WHAT DID WE MISS?

Participants offered any additional thoughts or concerns on notecards on their way out.

5 Enliven YOUR STREETS

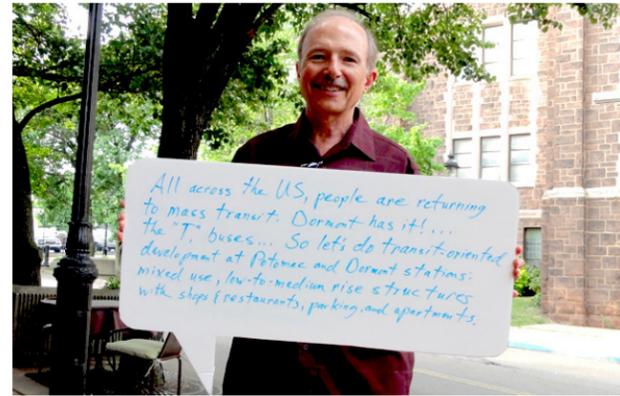
RESIDENTIAL

- INCREASE PARKING OPTIONS**
Ideas: expand residential permit area and enforcement
- CREATE GREEN STREETS**
Ideas: install rain gardens at intersections and on streets (where possible)
- SUPPORT PEDESTRIAN & BIKE FRIENDLY STREETS**
Ideas: create curb parking (add or remove for use as better visibility; launch a Share the Road education campaign)
- CONSIDER CHANGES TO STREET DIRECTION**
Ideas: correct freeway ramps to on-ramp (where possible) to increase space for parking, bike infrastructure, sidewalks, and green infrastructure
- MAINTAIN AND MARKET DORMONT'S LIVABLE AND AFFORDABLE NEIGHBORHOODS**
Ideas: correct freeway ramps to on-ramp (where possible) to increase space for parking, bike infrastructure, sidewalks, and green infrastructure

ALLEYS

- IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**
Ideas: coordinate road repair and alley re-surfacing programs; install porous concrete or cobblestone alternatives and plastic grid overlays with grass or gravel
- MAKE PARKING EASIER**
Ideas: remove garages and replace with parking pods (which will also increase yard size)
- CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR PLAY**
Ideas: designate alleysways as play streets; enforce traffic calming measures through signage

STEP 1 TAKE: Two sticky stickers, one star sticker, one card
STEP 2 PLACE: Label you like best, question of concern
STEP 3 WRITE: questions, concerns, or things you like



DREAM DORMONT

activity checklist

PICK UP CHECKLIST

- SIGN IN AND SIGN UP
- DORMONT TODAY SLIDESHOW
- WHAT IS DORMONT'S IDENTITY?
- TELL US ABOUT YOUR STREETS
- TELL US ABOUT SHOPPING
- TAKE CHARGE OF THE BUDGET
- SHARE YOUR "BIG IDEA"

Thanks You!



- RETHINK THE PASSIVE PARK ALONG W. LIBERTY**
Ideas: level and redesign as park; level and redevelop with businesses and outdoor plaza
- REPURPOSE THE GYM BEHIND BOROUGH HALL**
Idea: turn into a public fitness center with indoor sports
- ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**
Ideas: assist with façade improvements; allow projecting signs; add street furniture, bike racks, and landscaping; screen parking areas with vegetation; reuse underutilized upper stories of businesses for residential or office uses



OVERVIEW

Define Dormont

The convenience of city living with small town values – a place imbued with memories and historic charm that also embraces the next generation and progressive ideas.

OUR DREAM FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY CALLS FOR A DORMONT THAT IS :

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Historic

with events and programs that help residents cherish their heritage

Healthy

with socially and economically healthy environments

Walkable

with a community that walks to transit, local services, and stores

Thriving

with a vibrant business district that offers variety and a unique personality

Progressive

with leadership that efficiently uses land, infrastructure, public facilities, and services in a sustainable manner

PART OF DORMONT'S PROBLEM IS THERE IS NO DEFINITION OF WHAT WE WANT TO BE.

Vision

Goals

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME (HOUSING + NEIGHBORHOODS)

Housing in Dormont should continue to serve and attract residents at different stages of life, including youth, young professionals, families, and retirees.

MOVE ABOUT (TRANSPORTATION + PARKING)

All streets in Dormont should achieve a balance between different users of the road. Their design should enable convenient navigation and parking throughout the Borough while also creating safe, inviting, and livable streets.

BRING IN THE BUSINESS (BUSINESS DISTRICT)

The business district in Dormont should build on its Main Street-style core and promote an attractive and walkable commercial environment. The district should seek to diversify its offerings to serve local needs while becoming a retail and entertainment destination for visitors.

DREAM GREEN (OPEN SPACE + THE ENVIRONMENT)

Through its well-maintained open space, diverse recreational offerings, and active environmental initiatives, Dormont should promote a healthy, committed, and engaged community.

LEAD PROGRESSIVELY (GOVERNMENT)

Progressive and thoughtful leadership guides Dormont in the efficient management and improvement of its infrastructure, public facilities, and services and inspires an engaged and active community.

ZONE FOR THE FUTURE (LAND USE, ZONING, + FUTURE DEVELOPMENT)

Land use and zoning policy is responsive to the current needs of the community and forward-thinking in the consideration of its future direction.

WE CAN MAKE DORMONT A DESTINATION.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 9

LIVE IT UP: ENSURE ADEQUATE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR A DIVERSITY OF RESIDENTS

- Encourage rehabilitation of multi-family units, especially adjacent to transit
- Retrofit existing homes for seniors and develop senior housing
- Pursue new mixed-use development, especially around transit
- Convert underutilized upper floors in commercial buildings into housing and/or office space

BUFF AND POLISH: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE HOUSING STOCK

- Improve code enforcement
- Encourage property owners to invest in and maintain their properties

INVITE THE PARTY: ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS

- Strengthen marketing campaign of Dormont's livable and affordable neighborhoods

SAFETY FIRST: MAKE STREETS SAFER FOR ALL USERS

- Adopt a Complete Streets policy
- Incorporate elements of Complete Streets into Dormont streets to make it easier and safer to bike and walk
- Launch a safety campaign

ACTIVATE YOUR AVENUES: IMPROVE THE FUNCTIONALITY OF STREETS AND ALLEYWAYS

- Adopt treatments catered to different street typologies
- Redesign West Liberty Avenue
- Use Potomac Ave more frequently as a town plaza for special events like festivals, farmer's markets, and performances

- Add bike lanes to Broadway Avenue
- Consider changes in street direction on residential streets
- Create safe spaces for play in alleyways (where possible)

SHOW OFF YOUR GOOD SIDE: IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF STREETS

- Create green streets/green alleys (where possible)
- Improve gateways into Dormont

"T" TIME: ENCOURAGE TRANSIT USE

- Encourage biking/walking to stations
- Improve stations and station areas

PARK SMART: IMPROVE PARKING METERS, ENFORCEMENT, SIGNAGE, AND INFO IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

- Improve information for drivers
- Install Smart meters and/or or automated kiosks

SPACE FOR ALL: ACCOMMODATE THE PARKING NEEDS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF USERS

- Introduce flexible parking opportunities around West Liberty and Potomac
- Provide daytime parking permits for employee use on residential streets
- Offer public parking in TOD garages
- Remove garages and replace with parking pads

Potential TOD areas



Upper stories on West Liberty have potential as housing or office space.



Potomac activated by a street festival



BRING IN THE BUSINESS

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GET SPIFFY: IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF PROPERTIES IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

- Help businesses with improvements to façades, signs, and window displays
- Allow projecting signs
- Establish a LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance) tax abatement district to facilitate improvements to commercial properties
- Pursue the redevelopment over time of key buildings and sites

SITTING (AND WALKING) PRETTY: PURSUE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

- Upgrade street furniture and add decorative/holiday lighting in trees on Potomac Avenue
- Add street furniture and landscaping to West Liberty

FLEX YOUR ECONOMIC MUSCLE: STRENGTHEN LOCAL BUSINESS AND BUILD ON NEIGHBORING ASSETS

- Attract a greater range of retail services
- Encourage collaboration with neighboring Mt. Lebanon and Beechview business districts as a South Hills Transit Corridor

SPREAD THE WORD: IMPROVE MARKETING OF AND INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESSES IN DORMONT

- Generate activity and showcase local businesses
- Market Dormont as a destination for diverse and unique retail and services



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DREAM GREEN

PLAY IT UP: IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF PARKS IN THE BOROUGH

- Activate Beggs Snyder
- Rethink the passive park along West Liberty
- Add new programming to Dormont Park
- Improve maintenance of parks facilities

REV UP RECREATION: INCREASE THE PROGRAMMING AND OFFERINGS OF BOROUGH FACILITIES

- Repurpose the gymnasium behind Borough Hall
- Upgrade the Dormont Pool and add uses
- Expand information and services at the recreation center
- Encourage healthy programs

GO GREEN (AND BLUE)!: ENCOURAGE GREEN AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES AND PRACTICES

- Develop a tree planting plan
- Use stormwater management best practices
- Encourage green practices

(Above) The gymnasium could serve as a public fitness and recreation center for Borough residents.

(Below) Examples of stormwater management best practices

LEAD PROGRESSIVELY

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GET INVOLVED: CREATIVELY MANAGE FOR RESULTS

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME

- Hire a marketing consultant
- Team with universities for data management

MOVE ABOUT

- Involve local government in safe streets campaign and create an advisory board for Complete Streets
- Coordinate streets treatments between residents, borough commissions and the Complete Streets advisory board, and the police, fire, and public works departments
- Create an events board working under guidance of recreation director
- Team with universities to address parking
- Hire an additional traffic enforcement officer to target problem areas

DREAM GREEN

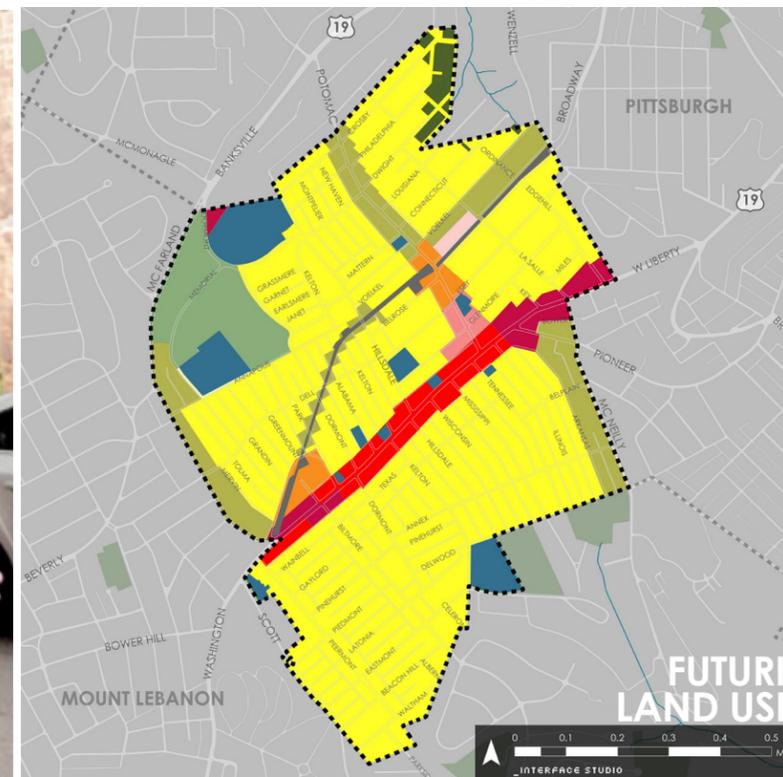
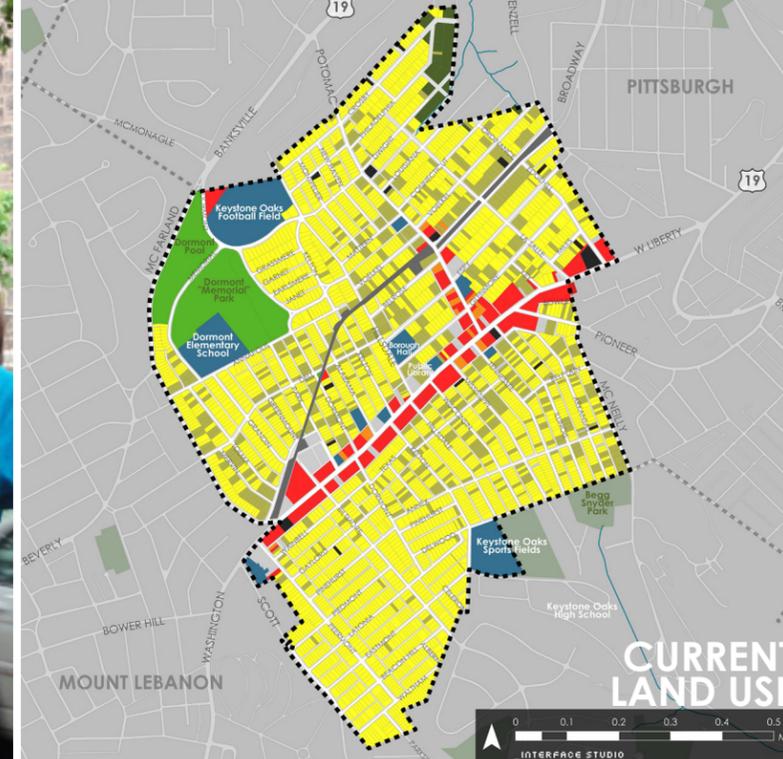
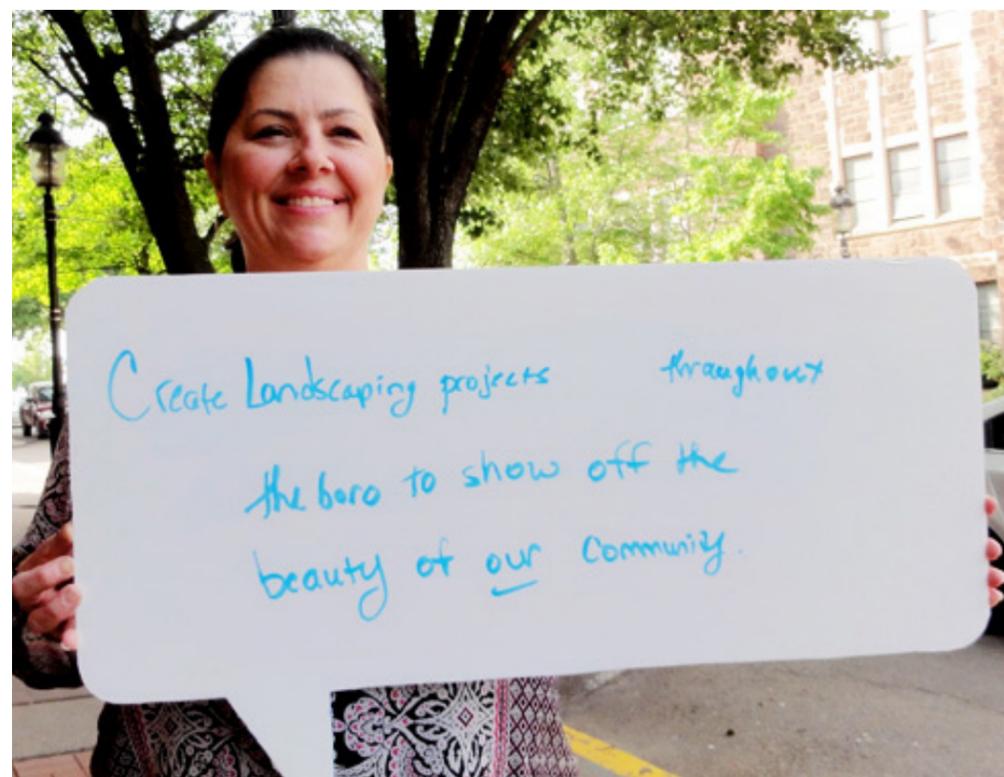
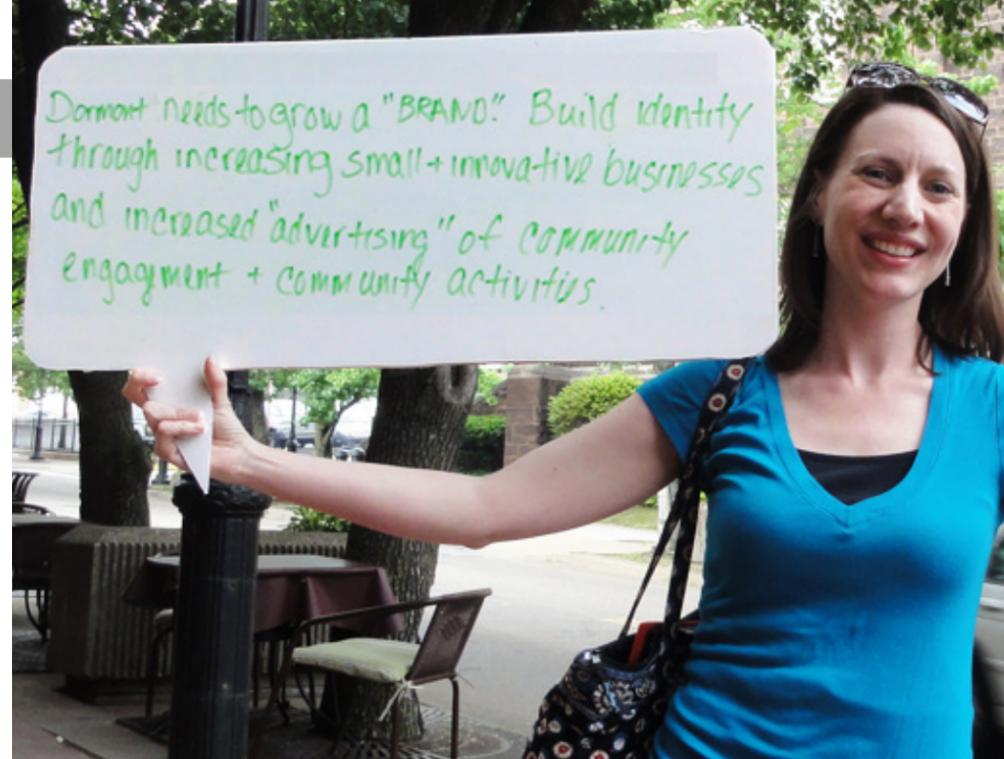
- Re-allocate maintenance staff of parks facilities
- Form a Fitness Center Task Force

BRING IN THE BUSINESS

- Connect and collaborate with neighboring towns

ESTUATE ECONOMICS: PLAN AHEAD ON BOROUGH FINANCES

- Continue financial planning efforts
- Implement department specific budget requests and prioritization of expenditures
- Develop and maintain a 5-yr. capital improvement plan
- Examine new revenue sources



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ZONE FOR THE FUTURE

BOLSTER BUSINESS: DIVERSIFY COMMERCIAL ZONING

- Create three new commercial districts
- Rezone Broadway Avenue
- Create a separate TOD designation

DOWN BY THE T: EXPAND RESIDENTIAL ZONING

- Include the LRT corridor west of Potomac in the R-3 district

POST IT: AMEND SIGN REGULATIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT BUSINESS

- Allow overhanging signs as signs authorized in commercial districts

SCREEN AND GREEN: ADJUST OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING CODES

- Encourage the removal of obsolete garages
- Require screening and landscaping of all parking spaces containing more than five parking spaces

