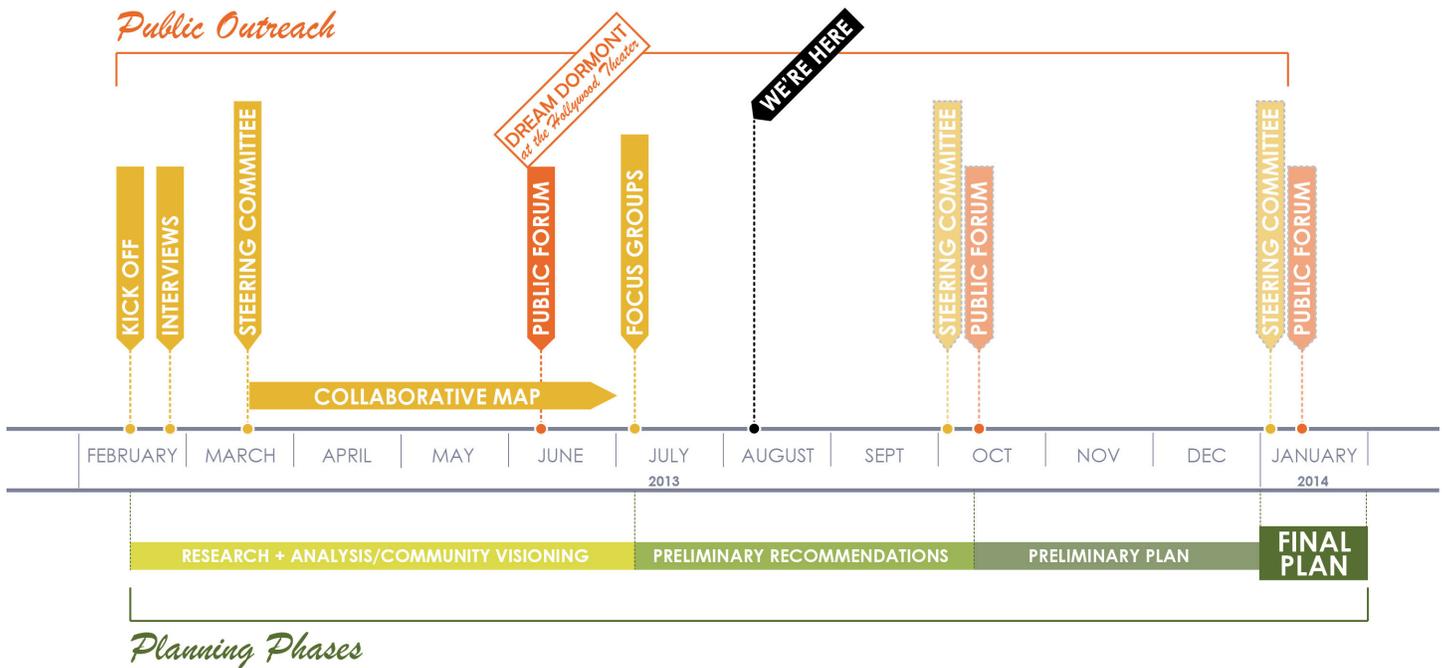


PROGRESS REPORT for the DORMONT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The update of the Dormont Comprehensive Plan kicked off in February 2013 with a visit by the planning team, led by Interface Studio (urban design and planning) and including Sam Schwartz Engineering (transportation) and Duane Morris Government Services (market and economic analysis). During this trip the team collected data and met with community stakeholders. The expected time to complete the plan is 12 months. The first phase of the planning process entailed research and analysis of existing conditions in the Borough and an extensive community input and visioning effort. This first phase of the planning process took place between February and July of 2013, and has just been completed. As we transition from the analysis and community visioning phase of the planning process into the preliminary recommendations phase, we would like to share with you a brief summary of what we have done so far and our findings.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:



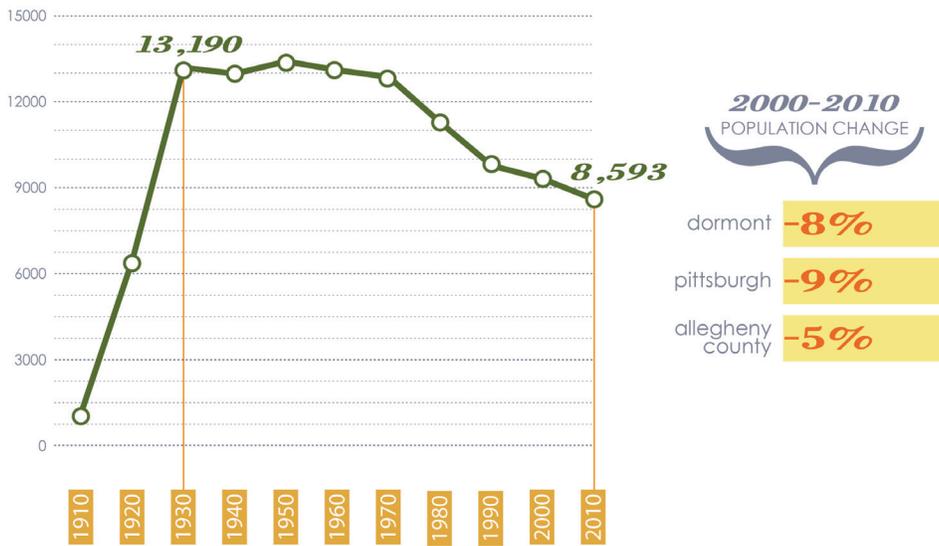
RESEARCH + ANALYSIS

The first phase of the planning process involved data collection and analysis. The planning team conducted field surveys of Dormont in February and March of 2013 to look at the housing, open space, businesses, and street conditions, and compared Dormont's demographic profile with neighboring communities to better understand its unique assets and challenges. The findings of this analysis were summarized and made available to the public at the Dream Dormont public forum in June and also posted on the Dormont Borough website for download.

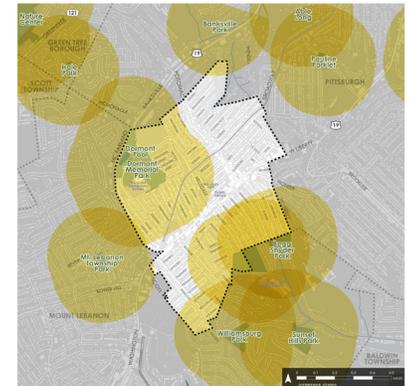
Images from the analysis of existing conditions.

POPULATION CHANGE SINCE 1910

Source: Decennial Censuses of Population, 1910-1990; 2000 & 2010 census summary file 1



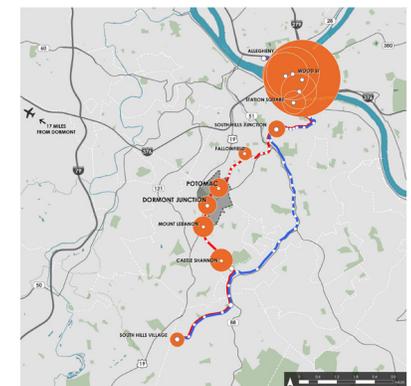
ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE



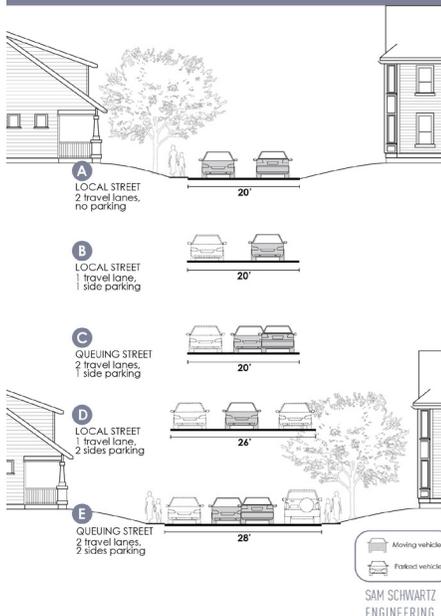
TRANSIT



T RIDERSHIP



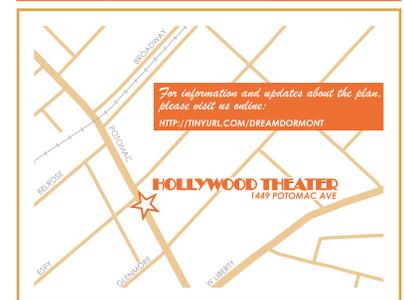
NARROW STREET TYPOLOGIES



PUBLIC OUTREACH PROCESS

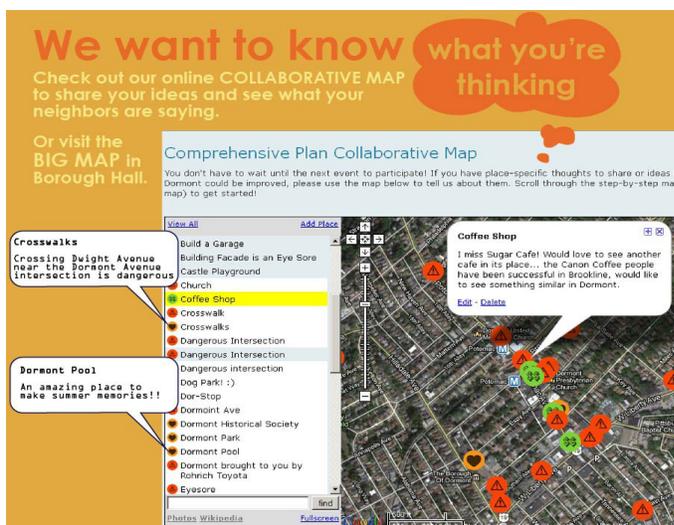
Public input made up the other component of the first phase of the planning process. The goal of the outreach process is to bring as many voices into the plan as possible to get a wide range of ideas and perspectives and build a broad base for implementing the completed Comprehensive Plan. The outreach process involved a variety of different approaches which are described below:

- 1) **Steering Committee:** A Steering Committee was assembled to serve as the driving force behind the Plan. Committee members have attended Committee meetings and weighed in on the design of the planning process to ensure maximum public input. The first public event, Dream Dormont at the Hollywood Theater, was developed with the help of the Steering Committee whose members publicized the event through their networks, handing out postcards at the Dormont Pool and at local businesses, and posting flyers. Steering Committee members also volunteered at the event itself. Going forward they will guide the plan by offering feedback on the analysis, potential strategies, and further public involvement activities. Once the plan is completed, they will continue to be voices of support and ensure the momentum exists to implement the Comprehensive Plan's strategies.
- 2) **Interviews:** The planning team conducted individual interviews with 21 community stakeholders to gain a deeper knowledge of the Borough as part of the data collection and analysis phase of the plan. Interface Studio interviewed Council members, representatives from Borough departments, representatives from community groups, residents, and business owners. The local knowledge gained from the interviews was folded into the analysis of existing conditions.
- 3) **Collaborative Map:** Interface Studio installed a large-scale 6-foot by 6-foot map in Borough Hall for residents to share place-specific observations about the Borough - from the places they like best to those areas that need some work - as well as their ideas for how to make Dormont better. An online, interactive version of the map was also available for input on the Borough website. Both maps were open for comments from March to June 2013.



Interface Studio designed postcards advertising the Dream Dormont public forum.

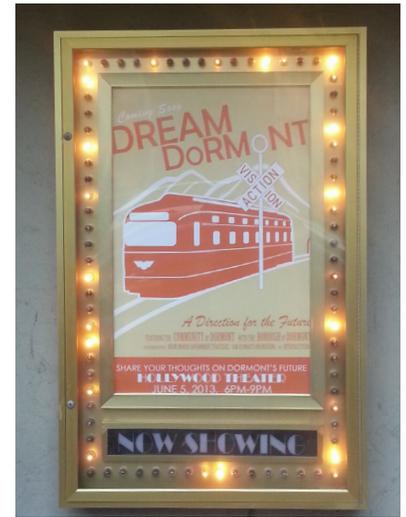
The Collaborative Map, online and in Borough Hall. Although comments are now closed, the online map can still be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/DormontMap>.



4) **Dream Dormont public forum at the Hollywood Theater:** Instead of a traditional public meeting, which offers limited opportunity for meaningful input and interaction, the planning team designed an open house-style public event with interactive activities at the Hollywood Theater. The event was a high profile way to drum up awareness of the plan and encourage public participation. It was advertised through a number of channels, including movie posters at the Theater, flyers and postcards, traditional and social media, and through the Steering Committee.

Participants at the event watched a slideshow containing research and analysis that explained some of the issues Dormont faces today. Then they had a chance to tell the planning team about Dormont's identity, what issues its streets face, what shopping is like in the Borough, how they would spend the Borough's budget, and what their one BIG IDEA is for how to improve the Borough.

The results of this event are summarized in the next section and also on the Borough website and Facebook page.



The Dream Dormont public forum drew almost 100 residents to the Hollywood Theater to share their observations about the Borough and their ideas for its future.



- 5) **Focus Groups:** Based on the themes that emerged from the base analysis and public input (including the interviews, collaborative map comments and results of the Dream Dormont activities), the planning team conducted four focus groups to talk more in-depth about specific topics of concern and to brainstorm ideas for addressing them in the plan. The Borough and Steering Committee helped to recruit focus group participants. The four focus group topic areas were Businesses, Parks and Open Space, Transportation, and Youth.

The findings from the focus groups, combined with the ideas provided through the public input activities, will be folded into the next phase of the planning process - the development of preliminary recommendations.

- 6) **Print, web and social media:** Information about the plan and planning events have been publicized in the Patch, Dormont Newsletter, on the Dormont website, and on Facebook.



Updates and information have been posted on the Dormont website and Facebook pages.

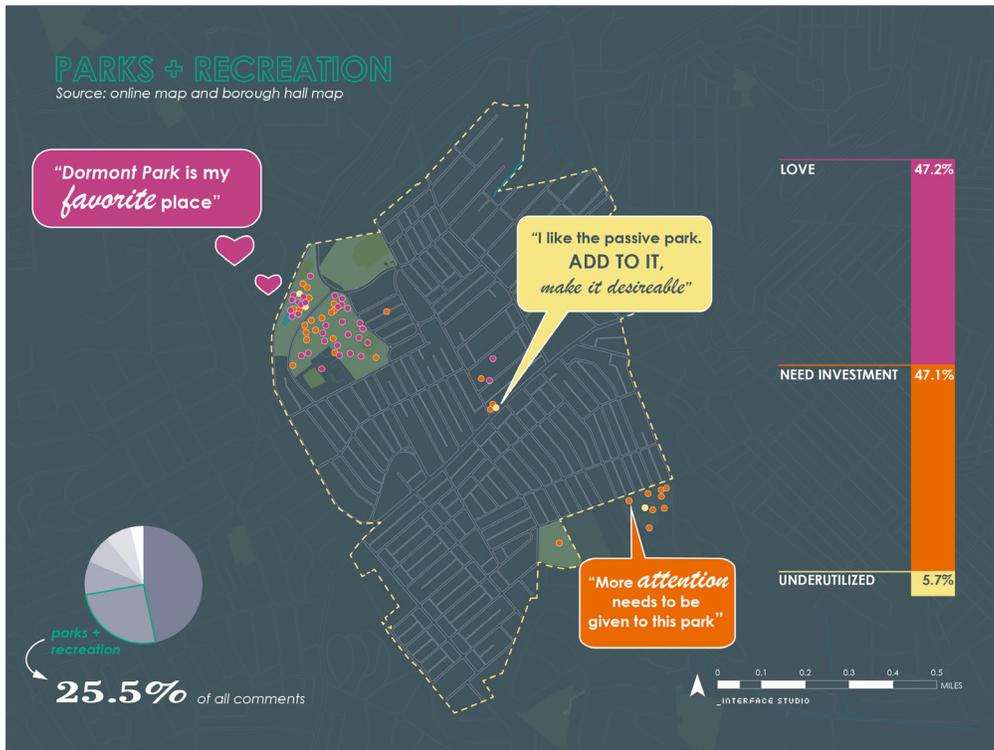
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM PHASE 1 COMMUNITY INPUT + VISIONING



All Collaborative Map comments

Collaborative Map

Combined comments from the map in Borough Hall and the online map yielded a total of 278 comments. As the breakdown at left shows, almost half of the comments had to do with transportation and infrastructure, mainly road repair, traffic safety and parking (represented by the blue dots). These were dispersed throughout the Borough. Parks (green dots) also generated a large number of comments, mostly for Dormont Park and Pool, and Begg Snyder Park. Comments regarding maintenance and appearance (orange dots) were found mainly along Potomac Avenue and West Liberty Avenue, although the salt pile on Dormont Avenue was also mentioned frequently.



Comments related to Parks and Recreation

PARKS AND RECREATION

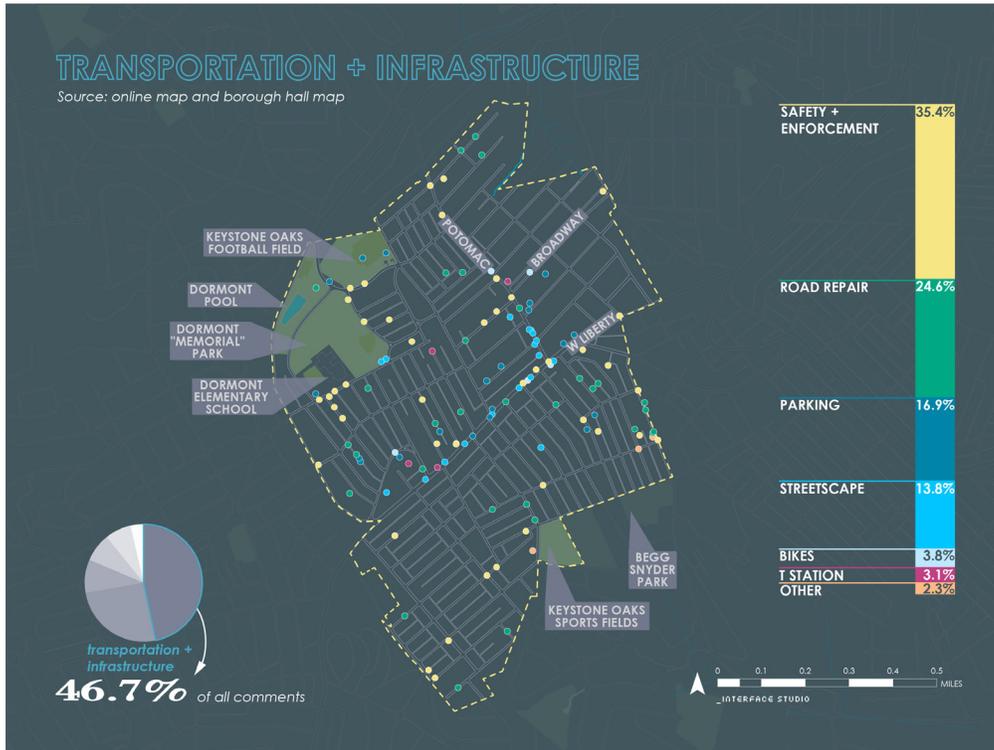
Comments about the parks made up a quarter of the total. Dormont Park and Pool were well-loved but could use some further investment, while many called for investment at Begg Snyder Park to re-activate a space that is currently considered underutilized.



Dormont Park was a FAVORITE PLACE for many.

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

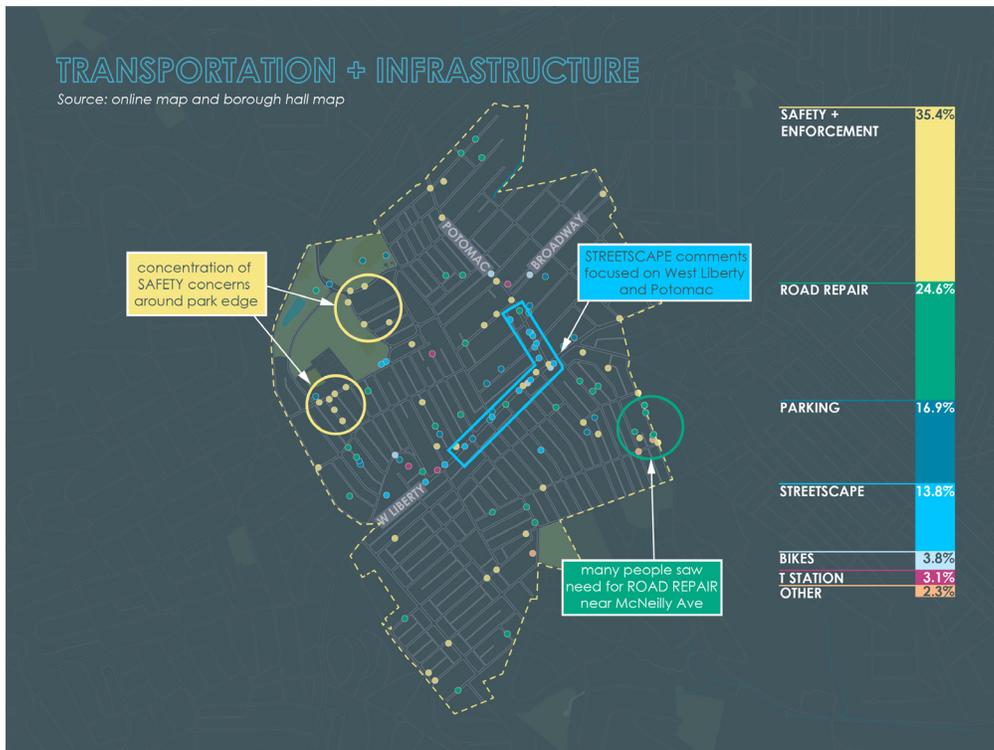
Source: online map and borough hall map



Almost half of the total collaborative map comments dealt with transportation and infrastructure issues. The greatest concerns included traffic safety and enforcement (yellow dots), especially around Dormont Park and Elementary School, as well as around Potomac Station; road repair (green dots) throughout the Borough but concentrated on McNeilly Road and in reference to many of the alleys; and parking (dark blue dots), which were dispersed throughout the Borough. Streetscape comments (light blue dots) were almost entirely focused on Potomac and West Liberty avenues.

TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE

Source: online map and borough hall map



Collaborative Map comments related to Transportation and Infrastructure

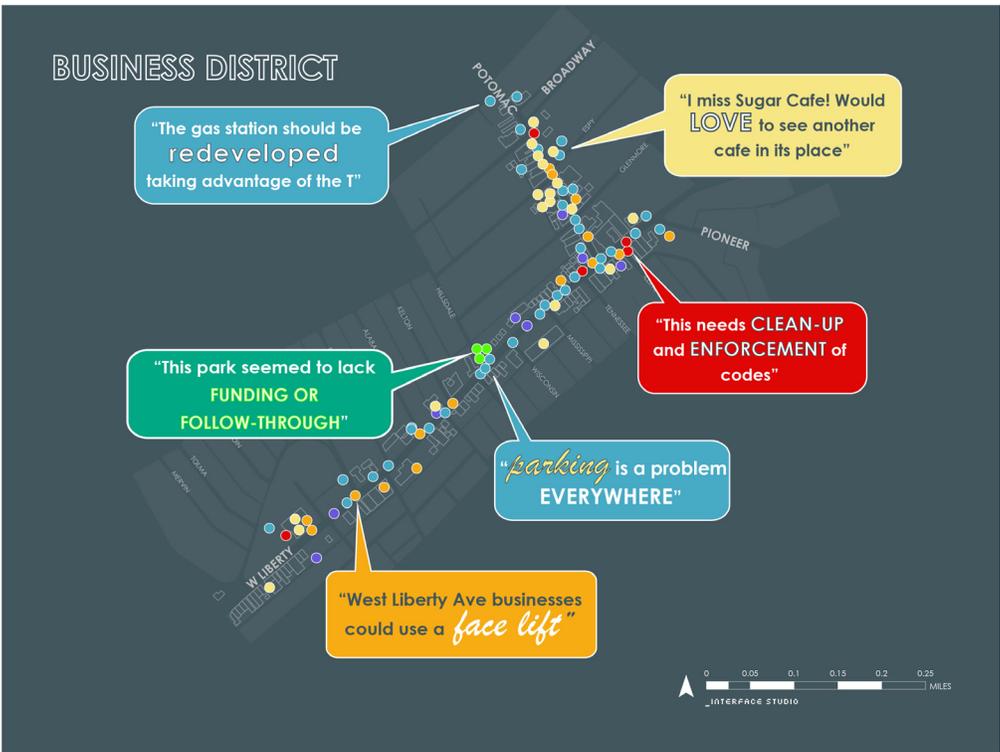
BUSINESS DISTRICT



BUSINESS DISTRICT

Over 30% of the comments were focused on the business district streets: Potomac and West Liberty avenues. The comments addressed streetscape, property and facade maintenance, traffic safety, parking and the type of business mix. As one of the most visible corridors through Dormont, West Liberty was regarded as in need of the most improvement, both in terms of safety and aesthetics.

BUSINESS DISTRICT



Collaborative Map comments related to the Business District

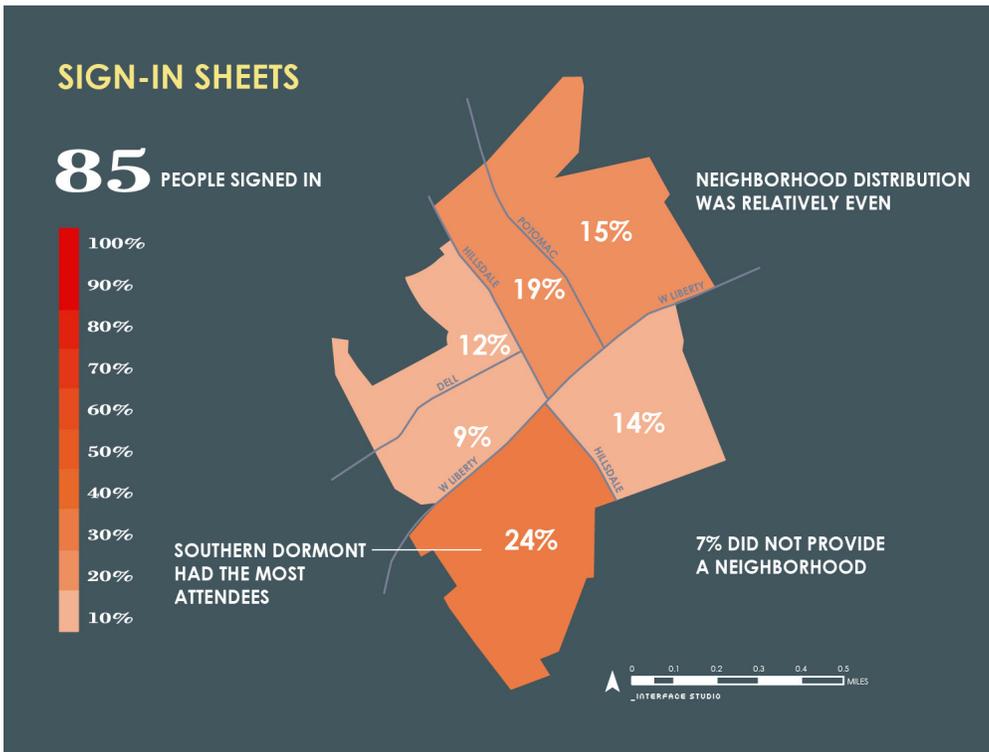
Dream Dormont Public Forum

Residents from all over the Borough attended the Dream Dormont public forum at the Hollywood Theater on June 5. Although 85 people signed in, more attended than signed in.

WHAT IS DORMONT'S IDENTITY?

The first activity asked participants to describe in one word or phrase what Dormont is TODAY and what it could be TOMORROW. People felt positively about Dormont today, describing it as a great community, walkable, with friendly people and the potential to be even better.

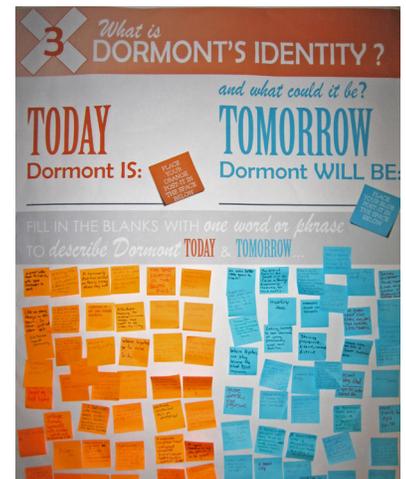
Their hopes for Dormont tomorrow focused on improving the business district, improving streets and properties, making the Borough greener and more progressive, and tackling parking issues.



Dream Dormont participants came from throughout the Borough.

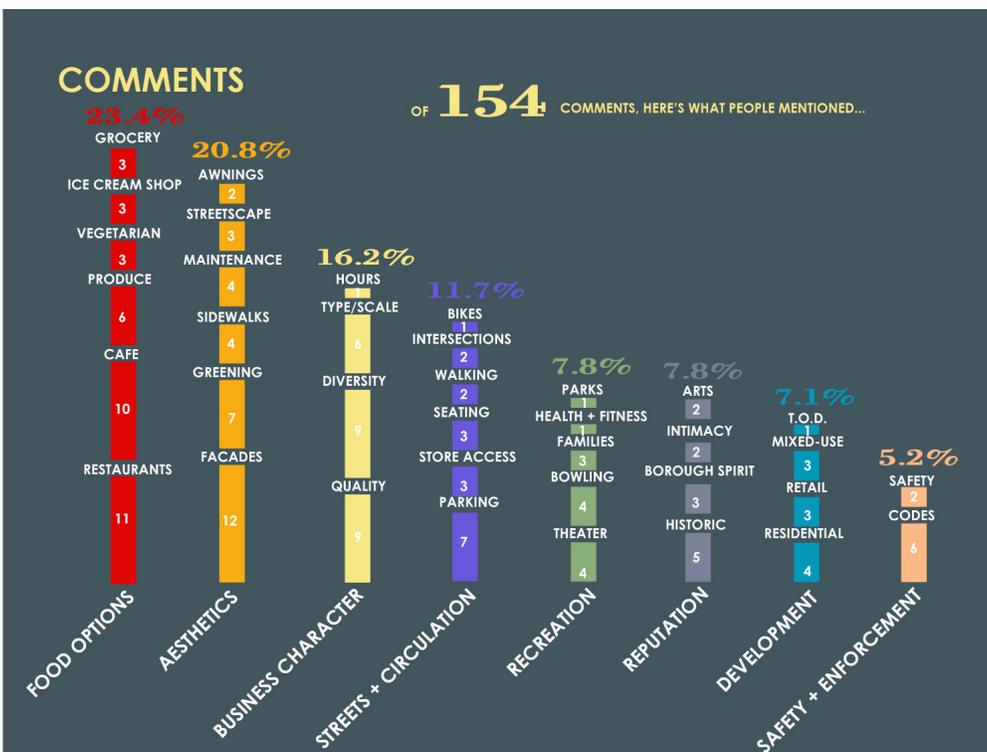
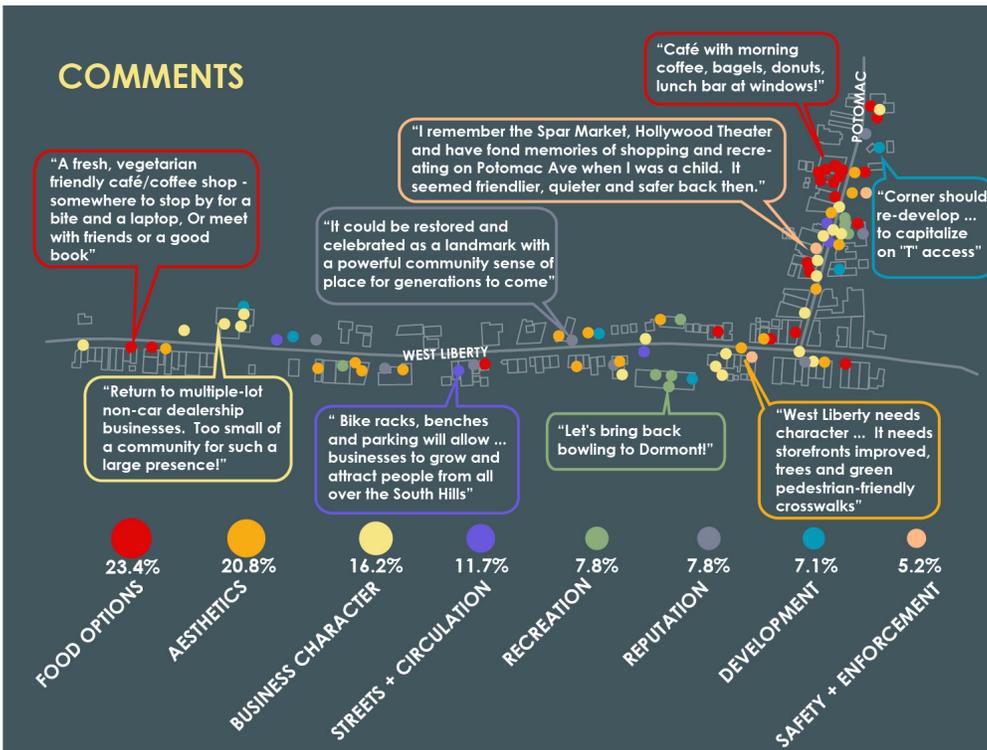


What is Dormont's Identity?



SHOPPING IN DORMONT

Residents were asked to tell us about shopping in Dormont, both what it was like back in the day (for long-time residents) and what it could be in the future. Food-related businesses such as restaurants and cafes topped the list of desired businesses. The appearance of the business district was also a main priority for participants, particularly improving facades and overall storefront and property maintenance, and greening West Liberty to make it more appealing and pedestrian-friendly.

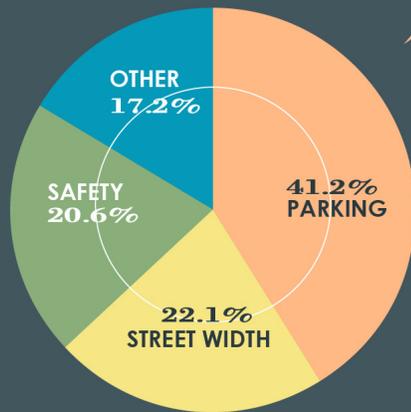


Shopping in Dormont: what was it like back in the day and what would you like to see in the future?

STREETS IN DORMONT

ISSUES WITH STREETS IN DORMONT

68 COMMENTS



"Not enough parking, cars driving the wrong way"

"Streets are too small and cause side swipes"

"Espy is a major cut-through during rush hour for South Hills residents"

Residents were asked to tell us about the issues they face with streets in Dormont, and what they thought of some of the "Complete Streets" treatments other communities have tried to make streets safer for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users.

Parking was the biggest issue for residents. The narrow streets also posed a challenge, particularly on two-way streets not wide enough to accommodate passing cars and parking. Safety issues centered mainly on speeding and cut-through traffic.

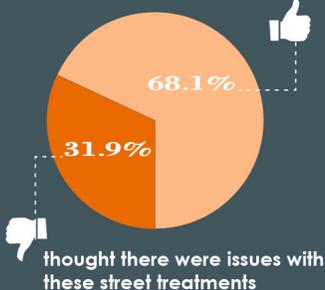
Residents were largely in favor of treatments to make streets safer and slower as long as certain issues and constraints were addressed.

FEEDBACK ON COMPLETE STREETS

WE ASKED YOUR OPINION ON THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF STREET TREATMENTS...

116 COMMENTS

were in favor of slower, walkable or bike-friendly streets

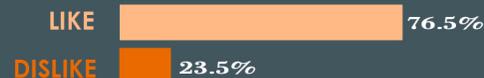


thought there were issues with these street treatments

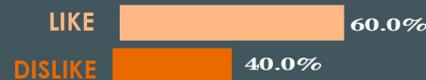
SAFE + SLOW STREETS



PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES



BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE



more feedback ...

Streets in Dormont: what issues do you face and what do think of treatments to make streets safer?

feedback on complete streets

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

34

COMMENTS



LIKE



76.5%

DISLIKE



23.5%



AESTHETICS AND DISTRACTIONS

accounted for 63% of DISLIKES

"Signage and lighting not ideal for aesthetics"



"Promotes walking, activity, community interaction, safety, recreation and supports local businesses"

GENERALLY, PEOPLE WERE IN FAVOR OF IMPROVEMENTS THAT INCREASE WALKABILITY AND SAFETY



ENHANCED CROSSWALK

"Stop for peds signage – a nice reminder!"

Residents were strongly in favor of pedestrian amenities, such as enhanced crosswalks and better signage, but felt that care should be taken so that the pedestrian improvements add to the aesthetics of the community.

feedback on complete streets

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

40

COMMENTS



LIKE



60.0%

DISLIKE



40.0%



NARROW STREETS/CONGESTION

accounted for 44% of DISLIKES

"Difficult because of hills and narrow streets – might be better to make alleys bike-friendly"



"traffic with cars is way too congested in Dormont – need more space for bikes"

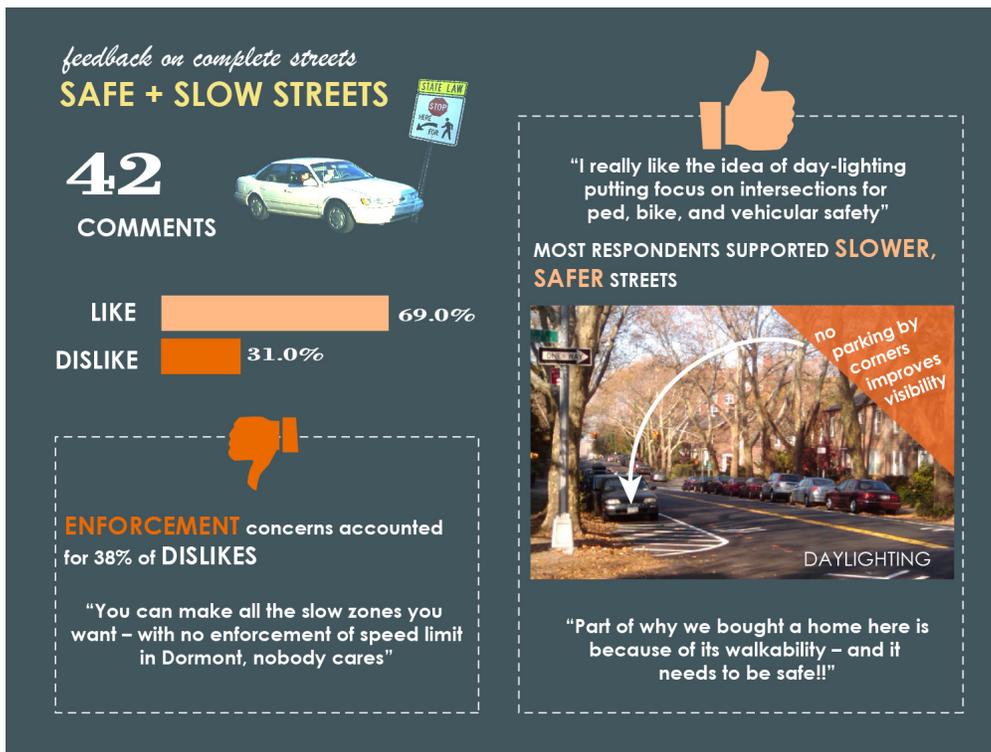
SHARROW WAS THE MOST MENTIONED LIKE



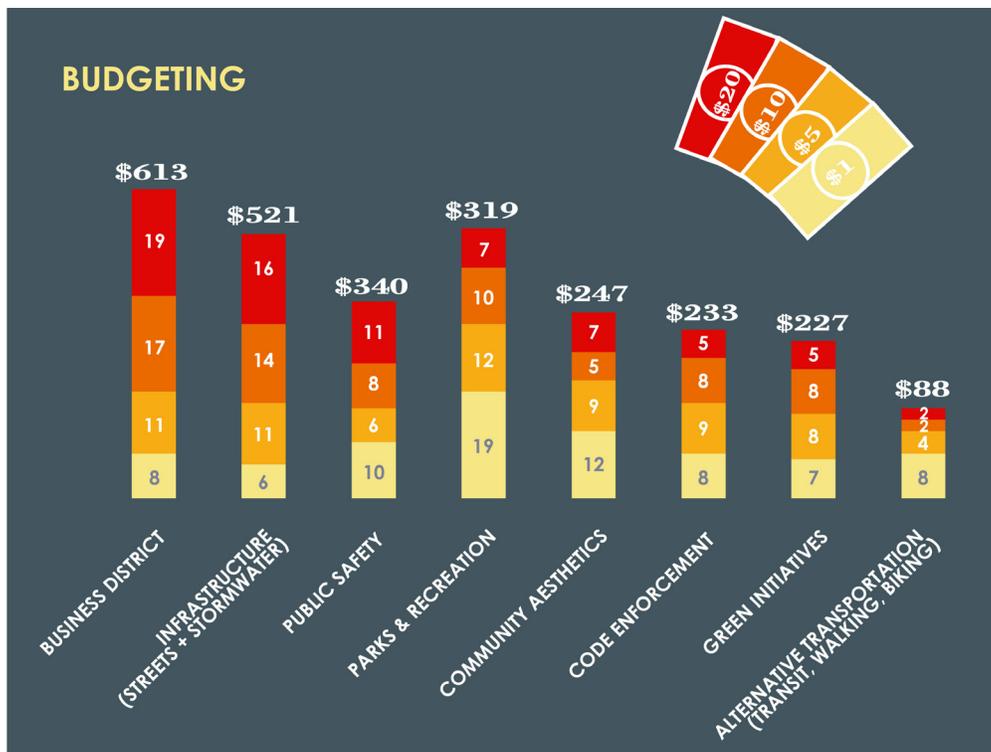
"Roads are tight here. Sharrows might make the most sense."

Although residents generally favored treatments to make bicycling safer, many were concerned that Dormont's streets are too narrow and congested to accommodate bike lanes. Sharrows, which are markings that indicate to cars that the road should be shared with bikes, were seen as more feasible.

Streets in Dormont: feedback on Complete Streets treatments to make streets safer



Streets in Dormont: feedback on Complete Streets treatments to make streets safer



Take Charge of the Budget

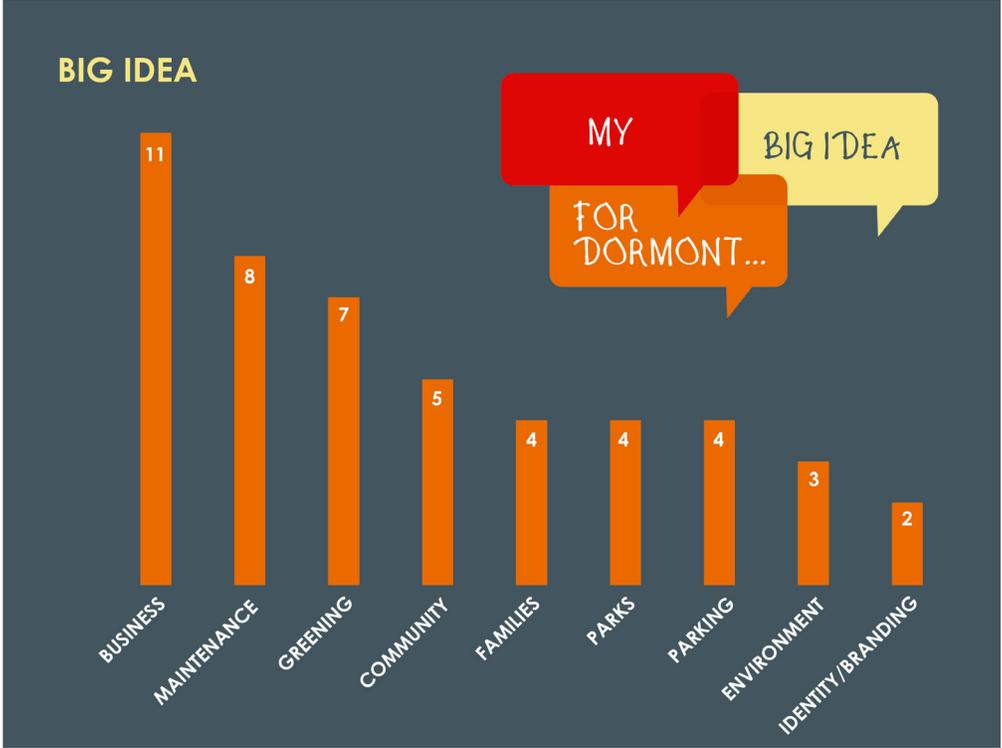
Walkability is a key asset in Dormont so making streets safer is a priority. One of the biggest issues that emerged from the public input activities was speeding in the Borough. Treatments such as speed humps, slow zones, daylighting, and raised intersections were looked upon favorably but residents stressed that enforcement was just as important.



WHAT'S YOUR BIG IDEA?

The final activity at the Dream Dormont public forum asked residents to dream big and tell us about their BIG IDEA for the future of Dormont.

The themes echoed what we had been hearing through the public input process: more businesses, better maintenance and greening to create a more attractive place, and a strong and engaged community.



What's your BIG IDEA?

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Over the course of the community input process, several themes emerged which include the following:

COMMUNITY SPIRIT:

Generally, Dormont is described as a close-knit community with a small town feel. People are friendly and active in the community and the Borough is perceived as a safe place. But at the same time, resistance to change is perceived as a potential barrier to future improvements, as is a lack of a defined vision and identity of what Dormont wants to be. The plan and its implementation is an opportunity to build capacity in the community and define Dormont's identity.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS:

Young professionals are a significant and growing group in Dormont. The diverse housing stock and the Borough's convenience, walkability, amenities and proximity to Pittsburgh are cited as draws. Over the years, the trend of smaller households has meant fewer kids in the Borough, with some concern that not enough youth programming exists outside of sports. Many observed that families often leave the Borough for the suburbs once they have children, especially as they reach school age, for better schools and more space. The plan needs to address quality of life in the Borough that will help to attract and retain young professionals and families with children.

HOUSING:

Affordable and historic housing stock was touted as an asset that attracts residents to Dormont and could be marketed better. However, poor maintenance, especially of rental properties, and code enforcement were cited as important issues to address in the plan. The plan is an opportunity to improve the quality and diversify the Borough's housing stock and market Dormont's housing assets.

OPEN SPACE AND THE ENVIRONMENT:

While the parks are well-loved by residents, more needs to be done to improve them and offer indoor recreational space so they help to attract and retain families with children. Begg Snyder Park in particular was cited as an underutilized space in need of investment to re-activate it. Residents also brought up the lack of trees and greenery; aside from the parks, there are few trees in the public areas of the Borough. The opportunity exists to visibly green Dormont, elevate the parks to their full potential, and provide better access to recreation for all residents.

BUSINESS DISTRICT:

Dormont's Main Street-style business corridor on Potomac Avenue was seen as an important asset to build on, however many called for major improvements in the appearance and character of West Liberty, one of the Borough's most visible and highly trafficked thoroughfares. The walkability of the business district is a positive attribute the plan can build on, but there was concern that parking and shallow parcels constrained the opportunity for it to become more of a destination. Stronger organization of the businesses and more emphasis on buying local were also seen as opportunities for the plan to address.

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING:

Transit was cited as one of the Borough's biggest assets and something to build on. Parking is of great concern both on residential streets and in the business district. Residents noted the limited number of on-street spaces, the underutilization of off-street driveways and garages, and insufficient enforcement of parking regulations. Traffic calming, enforcement, and road repair are also primary concerns for residents. There is an opportunity to re-think the Borough's street network to provide room for parking, traffic calming, and stormwater management.

BOROUGH SERVICES:

There has been turbulence and turnover over the years but things have recently stabilized. Overall, residents and stakeholders expressed a positive outlook about the future and praised the quality and responsiveness of Borough services. The plan will support the continued efforts to professionalize the Borough and provide efficient services, and identify any gaps .

WHERE WE'RE HEADED

In the coming months, the planning team will combine the analysis findings with the community's ideas for the future to develop preliminary recommendations. The planning team will then work with the Steering Committee to plan and design the next public forum, slated for October, to introduce the preliminary recommendations and elicit public feedback. If necessary, additional public outreach to relevant stakeholders will be conducted to vet the preliminary recommendations before refining them and developing the preliminary plan. The preliminary plan will be delivered in December for the Steering Committee and Council to review before finalizing the plan and rolling it out in January 2014.