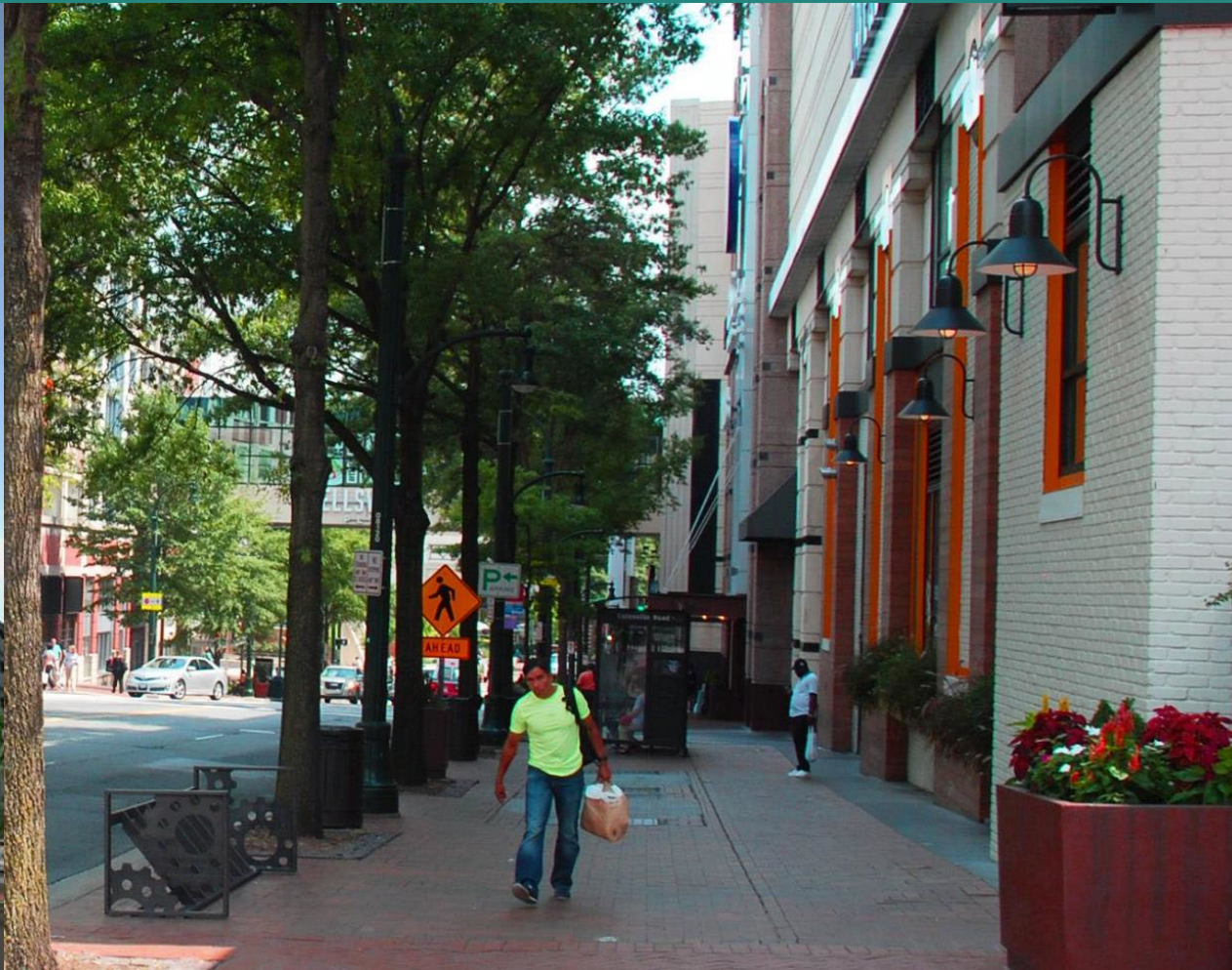


SILVER SPRING

DOWNTOWN AND ADJACENT COMMUNITIES PLAN



December 2020 Update

AGENDA

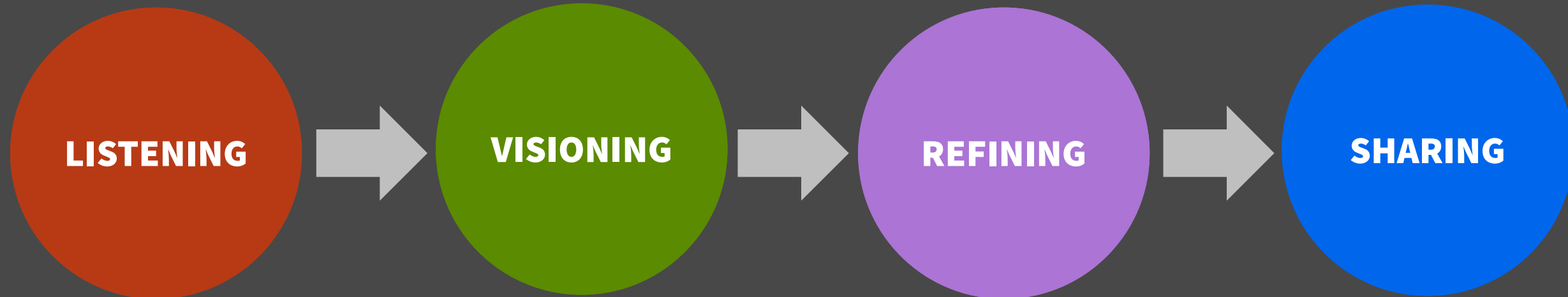
- Engagement Update
 - Engagement Events
 - Equitable Engagement
 - Lessons Learned
- Plan Update
 - Equity in Planning
 - Existing Conditions
 - Upcoming Events





ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

ENGAGEMENT



- Over **500** community members reached so far through:
 - 32 Meetings and Listening Sessions organized through partner agencies and organizations
 - 5 public Listening Sessions offered during July, August and October
 - On-demand Listening Session with Online Survey

ENGAGEMENT: LISTENING SESSIONS

5 Public Listening Sessions
174 Participants

On-demand Listening
Session with Online Survey
203 Respondents



I second the diversity, esp racial

Noted! Thanks. And please do continue adding thoughts into the chat, we also will note these down

As a worker who commutes from the District, I really appreciate that SS is a full-service walkable downtown. You can do errands, shop for groceries, post office, etc. before heading home. Really like the mix of national and local owners.

This is the only place I've lived where I could count on living in a racially diverse building. I love that the neighborhood we were able to buy in is a mix of families who are Black, Latinx, Orthodox Jewish, queer, and folks from a few other countries. There are people with tiny babies and folks who are in their 80s. I don't think that is possible in many place in MoCo

On the accessibility front, I would also love to see more priority placed on improving sidewalks in the CBD that are not ADA compliant

there are MANY

I LOVE all of these ideas! Yes to more accessibility, yes to revamping jessup blair park (might also like to see outdoor exercise space w/ equipment), yes to more community farming/gardening, yes to keeping sustainability in mind (maybe updating parks to include rain water gardens or other things to help deal with runoff)

I agree with every single idea offered! PLEASE attend to Jessup Blair Park!

I definitely agree with wanting Silver Spring to stay affordable. I fear that Silver Spring is becoming out of reach as far as housing prices.

Speeding traffic on Georgia and Colesville is dangerous and detracts from quality-of-life. Would like to see these highways become more like Main Streets in their design.

Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Listening Sessions

Planning Communities Downcounty Planning Silver Spring Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan Equitable Engagement Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Listening Sessions

We are listening! Engagement for the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities plan began in July. The planning team just completed two rounds of online Listening Sessions to hear community members' thoughts, concerns, hopes and ideas about the plan area. If you missed these sessions, don't worry! You can share your thoughts with us by watching the short video introduction to the plan and taking the short survey below. These are the same questions planners asked participants during the Listening Sessions.



ENGAGEMENT: MEETINGS

- **County and partner agencies:**

- Councilmember Tom Hucker
- Silver Spring Citizen's Advisory Board
- Silver Spring Urban District
- MCDOT
- Silver Spring Regional Services Center
- Silver Spring Arts and Entertainment District
- Silver Spring Transportation Management District
- MCEDC
- MC Food Council
- Montgomery College students and facilities
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Progress Place and Shepherd's Table

- **Community organizations:**

- Friends of Sligo Creek
- Silver Spring Village
- Ethiopian Community Leaders
- Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind

- **Business community:**

- Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce
- Entrepreneurs, property owners and business owners
- Consultant interviews as part of retail market study
- Coordination with Retail in Diverse Communities study



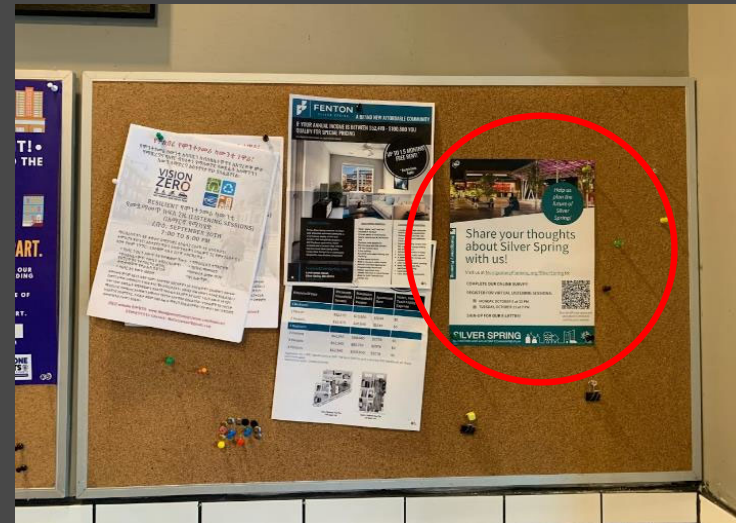
ENGAGEMENT: MEETINGS

- **Civic associations and condo boards:**
 - Woodside Civic Association
 - East Silver Spring Citizens Association
 - Seven-Oaks Evanswood Citizens Association
 - Orion Condo Board
 - Eastern Village CoHousing residents
- **Missing Middle interviews:**
 - Liz Brent, GoBrent
 - EYA
 - Arlington County
 - GLW Planning
- **Neighbors in DC:**
 - Office of Planning
 - Upper Georgia Main St.
 - Shepherd Park Citizens Association

SPREADING AWARENESS



South Silver Spring Walking Tour



Kaldi's Social House



Urban District Tent at Veteran's Plaza



Tropicana Laundromat



Jumbotron in Downtown Silver Spring



TRANSLATION TO SPANISH AND AMHARIC

Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan Listening Survey

English

Español

አማርኛ

English

Español

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We want to hear from you. Please think by completing this survey. Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan. [Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org](#)

Your Thoughts

What do you want to be preserved?

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የእርስዎ ሃሳቦች

በሲልቨር ስፕሪንግ ውስጥ ተጠብቆ የሚቀይ መሆኑን

Encuesta de opinión sobre el Plan del Centro de Silver Spring y Comunidades Adyacentes

English

Español

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English

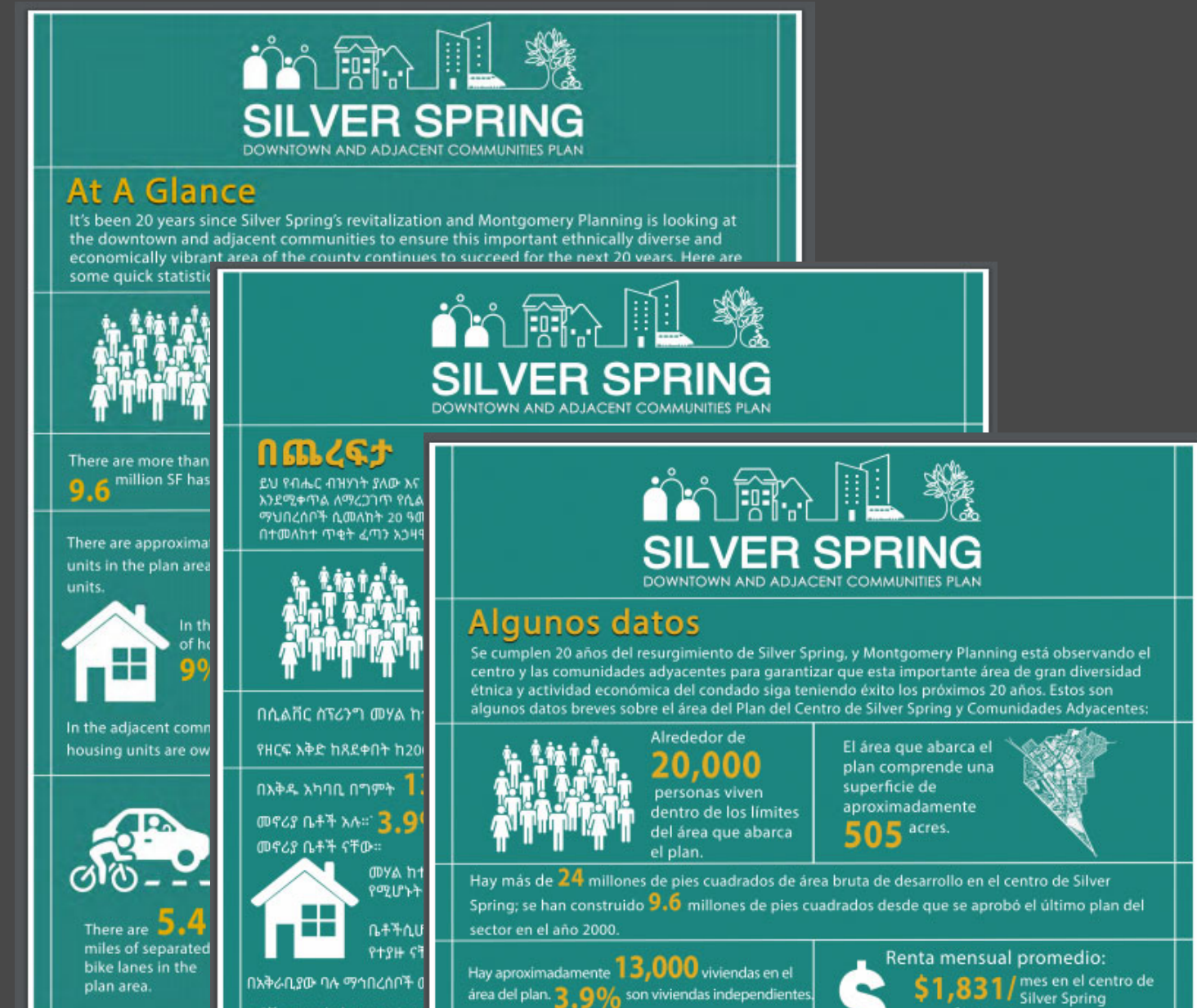
Español

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Queremos que nos cuente qué quiere y qué no quiere ver en Silver Spring. Cuéntenos lo que opina respondiendo la encuesta de más abajo. Si le gustaría comentarnos más cosas, inscribbase para recibir la publicación electrónica Centro de Silver Spring y comunidades adyacentes o escriba a Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org y a Atara.Margolies@montgomeryplanning.org.

Sus ideas

¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de vivir en Silver Spring? ¿O qué quisiera que no se pierda?

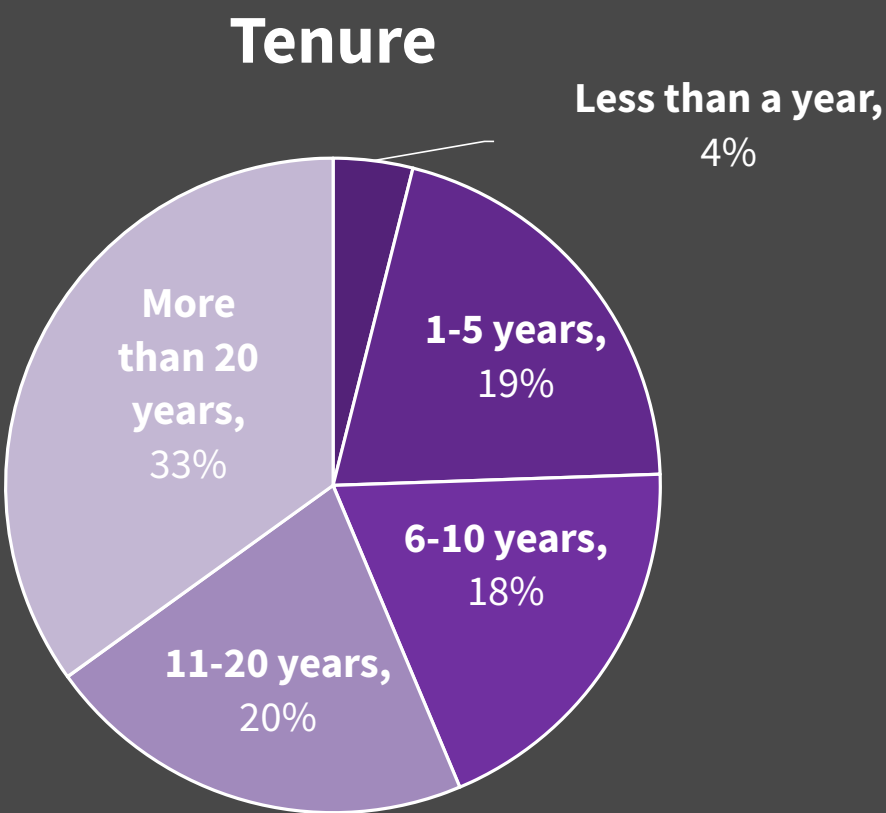
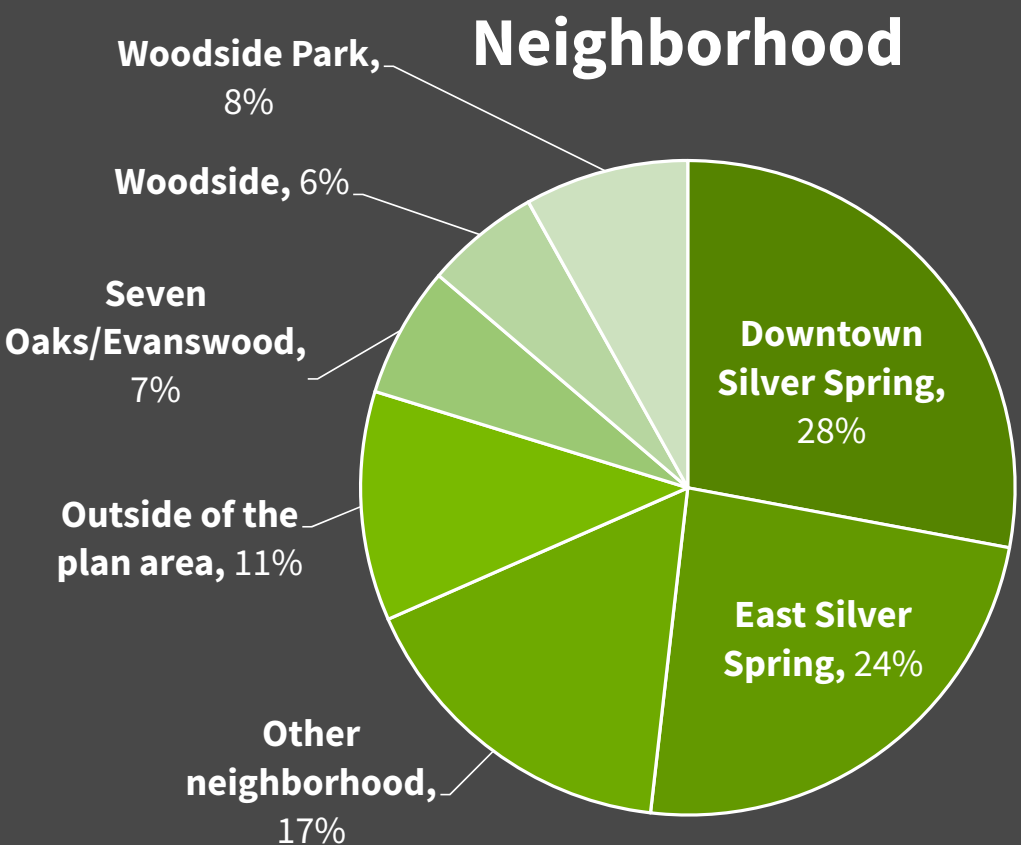


EQUITY IN ENGAGEMENT

- Transparency
 - Collecting demographic information from online survey and post-Listening Session survey to understand who we are reaching and who we are not reaching
 - Sharing what we are hearing throughout the process
 - Will continue to update and make available throughout process
- Reaching out to organizations from communities who have not previously participated

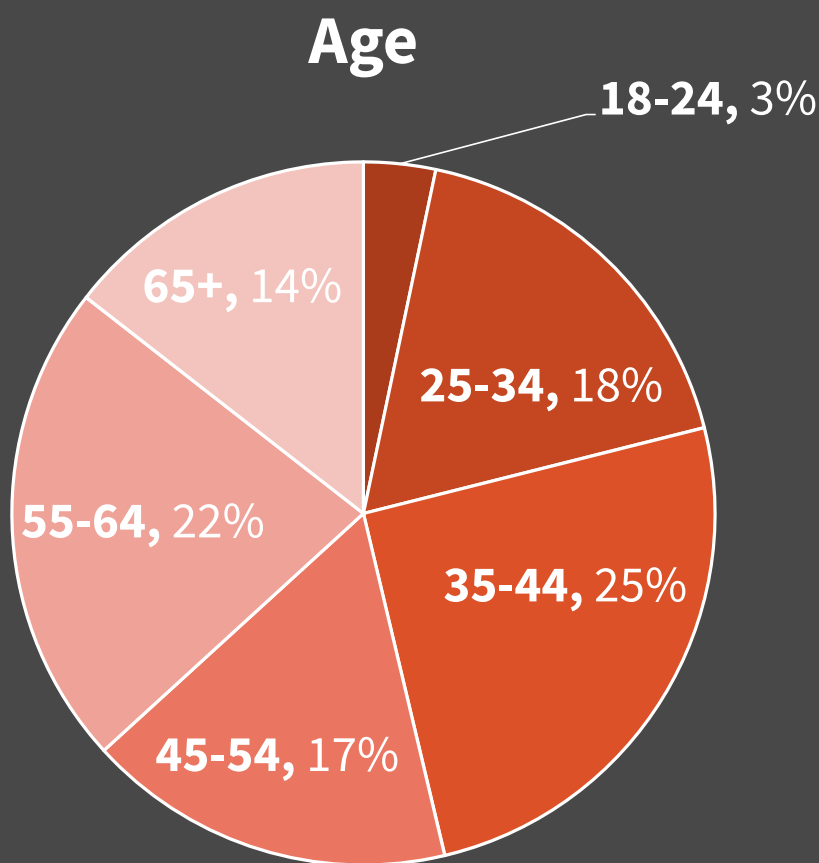
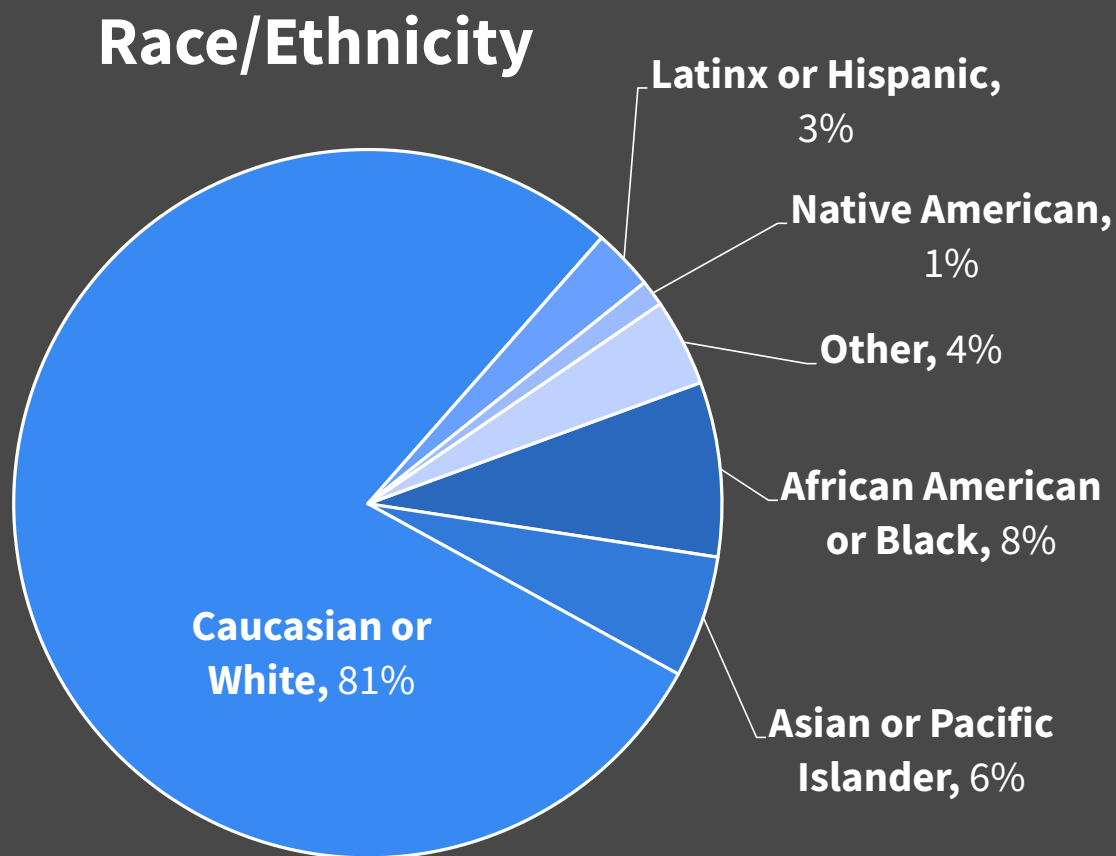
WHO WE'RE HEARING FROM

As of 10/15/20, over 400 Silver Spring community members have participated in Listening Sessions, office hours, completed our online survey or attended community meetings. Of those community members, **244 have shared their demographic information and engagement preferences with us**. We will continue to update this information throughout the plan.



WHO WE'RE HEARING FROM

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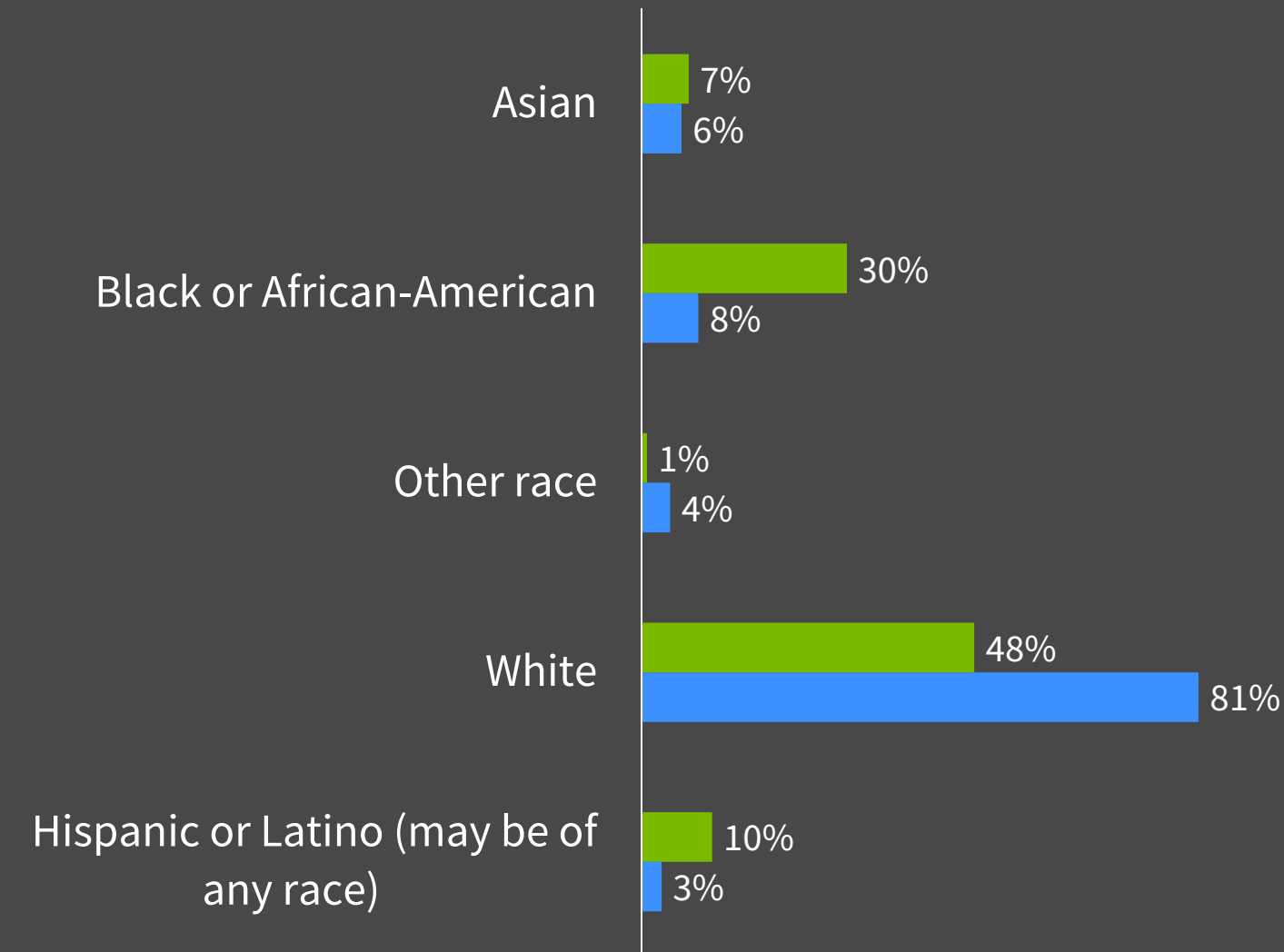


COMPARED TO PLAN AREA

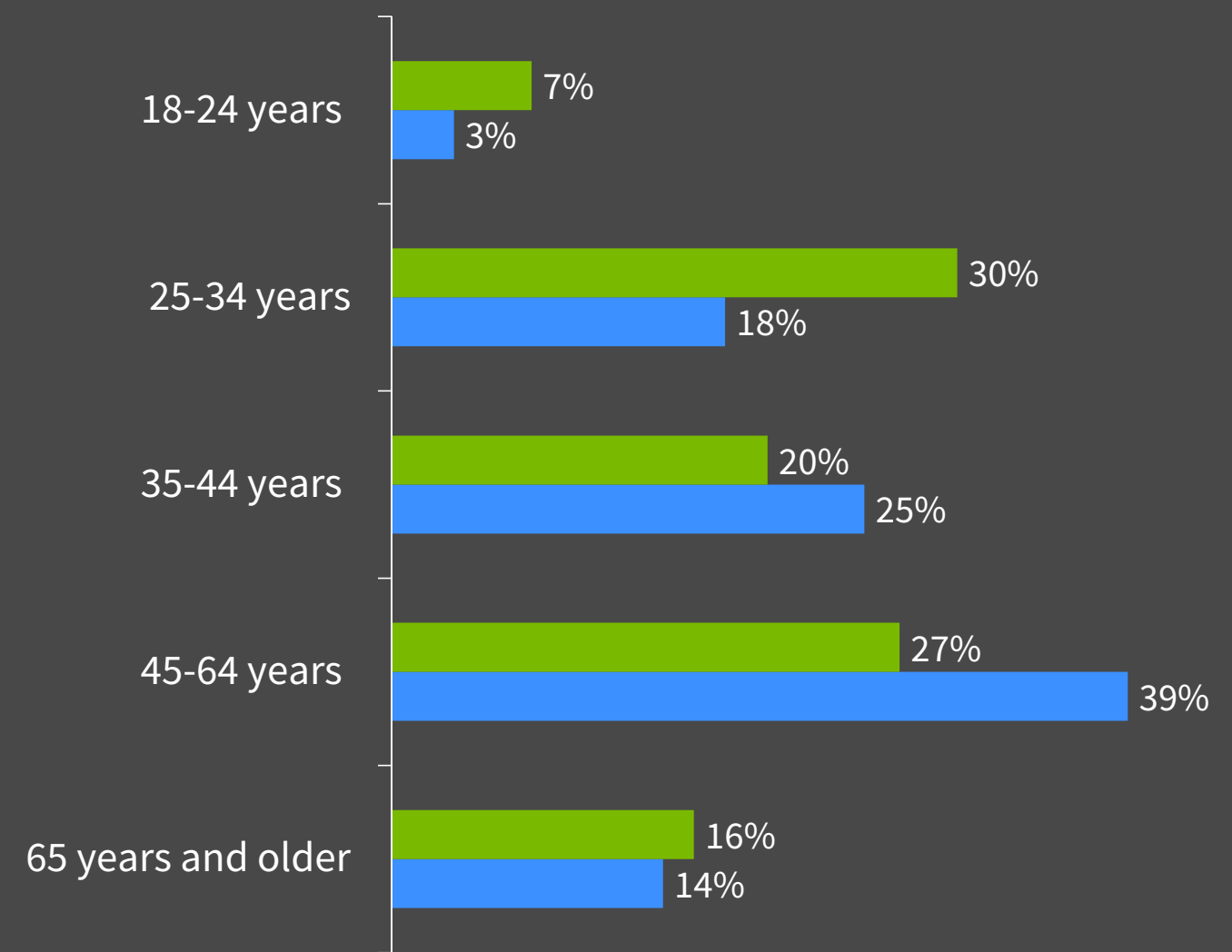
■ ACS 2018

■ Survey Respondents

Comparing Race and Ethnicity (ACS vs. Survey)



Comparing Age (ACS vs. Survey)



LESSONS LEARNED: OPPORTUNITIES

- Web survey was more successful than anticipated, especially with residents under 40
- Virtual events and on-demand viewing makes it more convenient to participate
- Online / virtual engagement allows for simpler collection of demographic info of participants

LESSONS LEARNED: CHALLENGES

- Reaching communities with whom Planning does not have an existing relationship is hard, especially during a pandemic
- Building partnerships with groups of stakeholders who have not engaged with us in the past requires new approaches, new tools and a lot of time
- Limitations of online engagement and limited ability to engage in person
- People register for everything online; may not attend
- Successful online sessions require a lot of back-end work
- Microsoft Teams is an unfamiliar platform for most stakeholders





WHAT WE'VE HEARD

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

At the Listening Sessions and in the online survey we asked these questions:

- What do you like about Silver Spring?
- What do you like most about living in Silver Spring? Or what do you want to make sure is preserved?
- What do you think needs improvement in Silver Spring?
- What do you want to see happen in Silver Spring in the future and why?
- What is your biggest concern about the future of Silver Spring?
- This plan will be a success if _____.

On the following slides we highlight common themes that came up again and again in our discussions with stakeholders thus far. We will continue to refine “what we’ve heard” as we continue to reach a larger and more diverse group of stakeholders.



WHAT WE'VE HEARD: DIVERSITY

I'm concerned about gentrification. I want to make sure that any changes made to Silver Spring include all the restaurants and shops owned by people of color.

I'd like it to stay vibrant and diverse.

I like the general sense of community-mindedness and respect for diversity.

Silver Spring stands out as the place in our region that has the biggest, most diverse crowds out enjoying life on literally any night of the week.

“I love that Silver Spring has different people of all walks of life (income, circumstances, race, religion, ethnicity, straight and queer).”

My biggest concern is that the diversity of people will disappear, that rising housing prices will homogenize it like Bethesda.

I love the diversity here---we generally celebrate cultures.

Diversity like this doesn't happen by design or intention - it's an organic consequence of allowing a tremendous diversity of land uses all in close proximity and augmenting those with good public investments.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: BUSINESSES

Love the local, small independent businesses; would like to see a balance of entertainment options

Love the many Ethiopian restaurants!

Love having a variety of retail and dining options including some national chains but mostly independent small businesses.

“I am concerned for the survival of independent businesses during and after pandemic.”

Support more local stores and restaurants - would love to see the chains that close be replaced with more vibrant options

Save the funk!

Love the cool restaurants and character of SS.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: DENSITY

Scrap single family zoning throughout MoCo and allow mixed use development all around Silver Spring....

If we limit development to the CBD but then keep everything else surrounding it in amber. the problems don't resolve...

It would be a shame to allow over-redevelopment of well-maintained, modest middle/working class suburban neighborhoods which form the true heart of an expansive, varied Silver Spring.

It will be hard to build community with too many multi-family apartment buildings.

“Make it easier to build high density housing... Get rid of minimum parking requirements in high density areas...Upzone, upzone, upzone!”

“My biggest concern is the over-development like downtown Bethesda.”

This plan would be a success if it could comprehensively address increase in density to the benefit of the surrounding community so Silver Spring could be more of a live, work, play community for people of all incomes.

I want to see tasteful infill development that is aesthetically pleasing and addresses housing affordability

To me, unchecked growth of large apartment new buildings is damaging to the community, because of the strain it puts on the community resources.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: HOUSING

We also need more shelter space and expanded services for homeless individuals.

We need more affordable housing. That includes developing areas that are single family home designated areas and putting in multi family homes and apartments."

I'm worried about a lack of diversity in housing options...

It will be hard to build community with too many multi-family apartment buildings.

"I'm all for continuing to diversify the housing, especially near transit stops."

"Preserve the character of the residential neighborhoods."

We need more housing for families. There aren't many 3-bedroom apartments that aren't expensive and have too many bathrooms. More condos for families.

Preserve moderately priced housing.

Though there is a need for different types of housing, it should have been a countywide planning process. It feels like we're the guinea pigs and this wouldn't have happened in Bethesda.

We want to see the diversity of housing options preserved ...We got pushed out of living in DC because of pricing and would hate to see that happen even more here as developers buy up land in the newly expanded CBD.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: CITY VS. SUBURB

Don't let Silver Spring turn into Bethesda!

“Silver Spring is a very large unincorporated SUBURBAN area in Montgomery County, MD with several ZIP Codes.”

I love living in an urban suburb, with a combination of housing styles and types. I love the racial, economic and cultural diversity.

This plan will be a success if Silver Spring becomes the model for urban/suburban life.

“I know many people consider SS a suburb but by now it is a city within a larger city and urban development should be embraced.”

We can't pretend that this is a suburb any more - nor can we cater to the concerns of people who moved here 30-50 years ago and want to pretend it's a suburb.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: TRANSPORTATION

Many of the sidewalks are somewhat narrow and not particularly pedestrian friendly and could be expanded to make it safer for everyone, including those with disabilities.

I've stopped cycling because it is not safe. Sidewalks are not safe.

I am worried about the traffic and cut through in the neighborhood as folks speed through our neighborhood - we have a lot of kids in the neighborhood and folks come driving through at alarming rates.

“Walkability is key!”

Installation of a pedestrian bridge (or two) across the railroad/metro tracks would create more connectivity within the Downtown area.

Silver Spring is negatively impacted by its inability to safely separate road traffic from pedestrians.

“I am worried about the traffic.”

Traffic in DTSS can be pretty bad, along with parking during peak times. Seems like parking, infrastructure, hasn't kept pace with housing growth.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PARKS + PUBLIC SPACES

Developers have been allowed to design terrible looking hardscapes rather than green areas.

We need more green space. Real grass - not astroturf. More parks please!

Spruce up the parks!

More parks, including dog parks.

“I am concerned about the lack of green space. The few parks we have in this area can’t support the number of people that use them.”

Acorn Park is a good example of where [a park] doesn't make sense - it's lightly used at best and not very welcoming.

I would also like to see a greater emphasis placed on Jessup Blair Park. It feels like it's treated as an afterthought.

If more park space is desired, don't close off streets, BUY LAND to build them.

Love having access to a vibrant downtown so near many great parks like the Sligo Creek trail and others.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: ENVIRONMENT

In this time of global climate crisis it is imperative that Silver Spring and Montgomery County preserves as much green space as possible, and that these spaces do not fall victim to continued real estate development.

This plan will be a success if addressing impacts of climate change such as extreme temperatures and extreme weather events.

I love the "100 year-old trees" that contribute to the tree canopy of Silver Spring Park; The open ground space in each single-family property that allows the area to be cooler than the "heat island" of DC.

“Mitigate climate change, reduce emissions, and promote public health. More housing, more walking, more biking, more transit, and far fewer cars.”

“The trees and green spaces in the community need to be maintained.”

United Therapeutics is beautiful and would like to see more businesses take advantage of our office spaces and have a green idea like them.

How will Silver Spring transform to minimize our carbon footprint and create a city that encourages and supports people living more sustainable lifestyles?

The Purple Line is a great opportunity to build on it while reducing car dependence. Our social, health, and environmental future depends on getting this right.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: THE PROCESS

The government is being sneaky with expanding the boundary. Because of this, there is no trust in the planning department Community must be brought in and listened to.

I appreciate you going to this effort to collect feedback from the community in so many different ways. Thank you!

This plan will be a success if the county actually follows through.

“This plan will be a success if ALL residents are valued and included.”

“There is a lot of mistrust.”

Please keep in mind folks with disabilities, immigrants, limited income folks. We can't say we're a welcoming community if our downtown areas only attract the well to do.

The comments on plans like these often amplify the voices of those like me - white, relatively affluent homeowners. Please make sure the process specifically reaches out to renters, immigrant communities, the teenagers who skateboard, the homeless, etc.

There is a lot of mistrust because of dishonest or poor communication in the Purple Line process.

This plan will be a success if you listen to residents and homeowners, not academics and planners who think they know what's best for us.

A grayscale photograph of a row of three-story houses. The houses have multiple windows, some with shutters, and dormer windows on the roof. Large trees are visible in the background and foreground. A dark teal horizontal bar is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'PLAN UPDATE' in white.

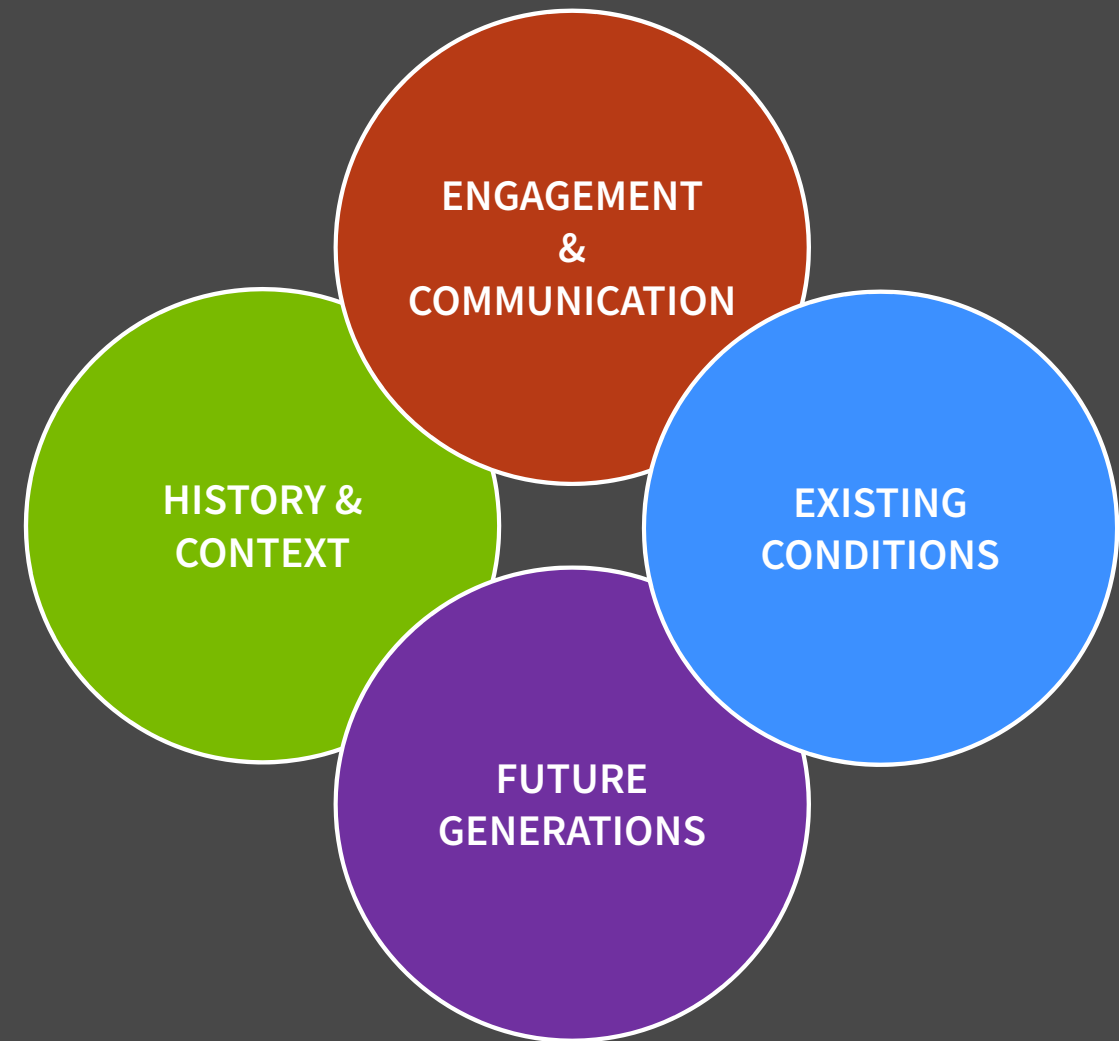
PLAN UPDATE

EQUITY IN PLANNING

- “Planning with Equity” training from Justice and Sustainability Associates completed in October
- Equity Tool in development
- Coordinating with Department’s other equity initiatives

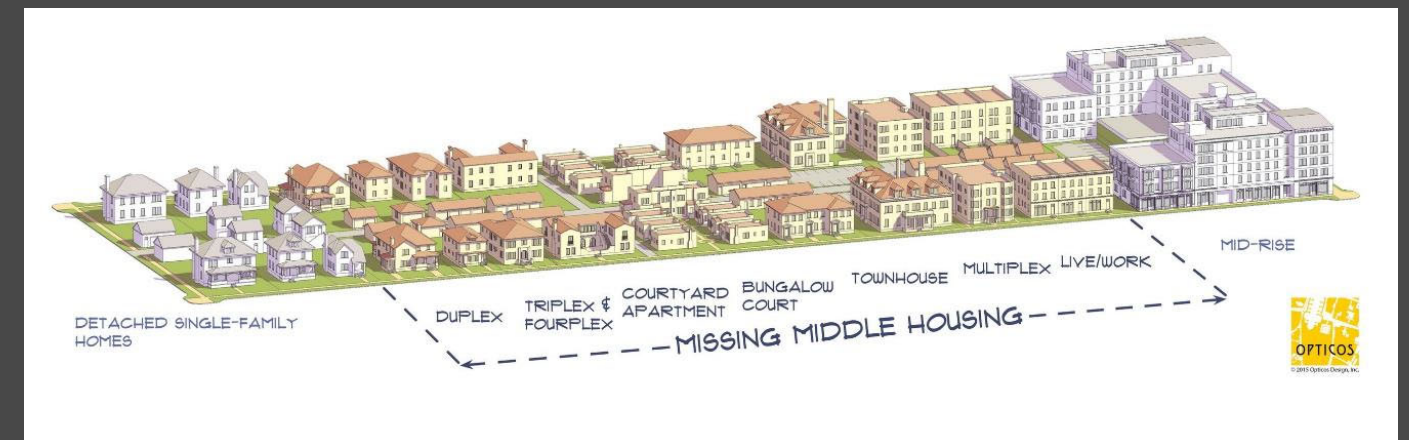
EQUITY TOOL

- Equity Tool: Designed to integrate explicit consideration of equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets.
- The tool is a set of questions that address the issues in this diagram
- The questions are discipline-specific and are used to check that planning recommendations are developed through an equity lens.



MISSING MIDDLE STRATEGIC ADVISOR

- Dan Parolek, Opticos Design
- Continued involvement, strategic points throughout plan
- Educational presentation to community on Missing Middle Housing



EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Team is wrapping up 6 months of existing conditions data gathering and analysis
- Briefing Presentation to community and Planning Board in early 2021
- New data-based analysis in some disciplines
- Historic Preservation scope was significantly increased with boundary expansion; some work to be completed now, and additional scope including an expanded history of Silver Spring focusing on social and racial equity, to be completed later in 2021.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Presentation will address:

- History of Silver Spring
- Demographics: **Who lives in the plan area?**
- Land Use/Zoning and Urban Design: **What is the built environment like?**
- Housing: **Where do people live? Can they afford to live where they do?**
- Public Realm/Public Space and Parks: **Where does the community gather?**
- Transportation: **How do people get around?**
- Environment and Economic Development: **How resilient is this community?**
- Schools and Community Resources: **How is this community supported?**
- Historic Preservation: **What should be preserved for this community?**

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Last round of Listening Sessions:**
 - **Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 5:30 PM**
 - **Monday, Dec. 14 at 7:30 PM**
- **Meetings:** Park Hills Civic Association, Listening Session with Staff, South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association, Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, Woodside Park Civic Association, NAIOP, Tower Companies
- Broader awareness and advertising campaign
- Virtual Engagement Hub on website



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Existing Conditions presentations in January/February
- **Kick-off visioning in February/March:** virtual engagement, web-based interactive content, in-person engagement (dependent on COVID-19)

