



## Plan 2040 Kickoff – Public Engagement Summary

The Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning initiated *Plan 2040*, the update of the County’s General Development Plan, in the Fall of 2017 with a series of public outreach events and activities to gather input on key issues and the future vision citizens have for their County. The central feature of this initial outreach was a series of eight Listening Sessions held throughout the County from September 2017 through February 2018, each with structured activities for public participation. Simultaneously, an online survey mirroring the format of the Listening Session activities captured input from those who were unable to attend one of the sessions in person or preferred to provide feedback through a different medium.

Additional outreach efforts during this timeframe gathered information from other stakeholder groups as well. A targeted Youth Survey, adapted from the Listening Session Online Survey, engaged high school students and gathered their perspective on the County’s needs and future. Additional meetings between OPZ staff and dozens of other stakeholder groups, such as the Jessup Improvement Association, the Annapolis Neck Peninsula Federation, and the Greater Severna Park Council, expanded the reach of input opportunities.

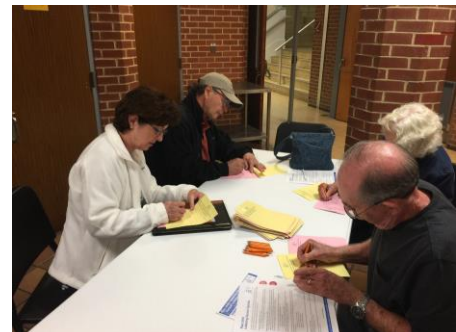
This report outlines the public input from this kickoff phase of the Plan 2040 update. First is a summary of data from the eight Listening Sessions and Online Survey, followed by a summary of the Youth Survey process and input. Finally, there is a record of the additional outreach to various groups and stakeholders throughout the County.

Visit the Plan 2040 website for detailed data from each of the eight Listening Sessions, the Online Survey, and the Youth Survey.

[www.aacounty.org/plan2040](http://www.aacounty.org/plan2040)

### 1. Listening Session and Online Survey

The Plan 2040 update began with a series of eight Listening Sessions held throughout the County from September 2017 through February 2018. Each Listening Session offered opportunities for input from participants through a series of activities that gauged opinions on the issues facing Anne Arundel County and the citizens’ vision for its future. A concurrent online survey matched the format of the Listening Session activities.



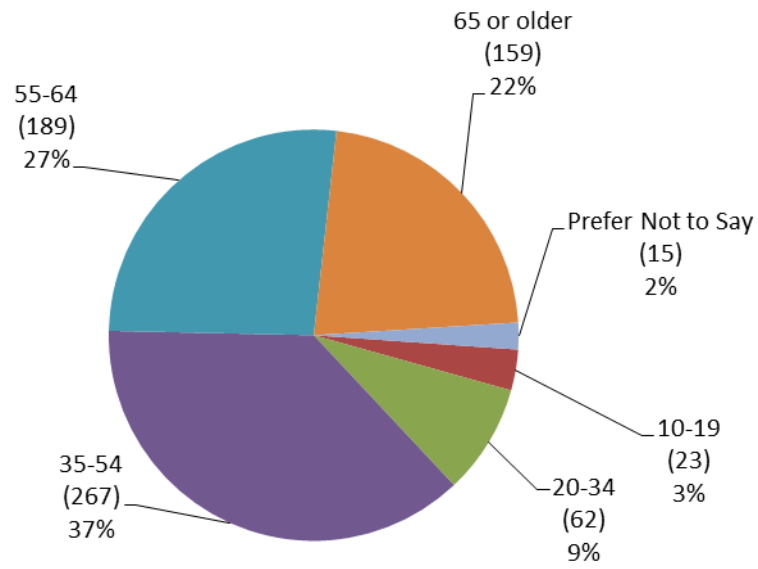
Over 700 responses were gathered over the five-month period from the Listening Sessions and the online survey; with 427 online responses and nearly 300 at the Listening Sessions (totals are inexact due to incomplete participation). While the online survey was structured to allow one response per email address, participation in the Listening Session activities could not be controlled similarly, and attendees may have participated in activities at more than one Listening Session or at events outside of the area they live or work. Because of this, the dataset of responses is not scientific, but the responses do offer a sense of the issues that are important to our residents as the County kicks off its Plan 2040 process.

### ***Who Participated?***

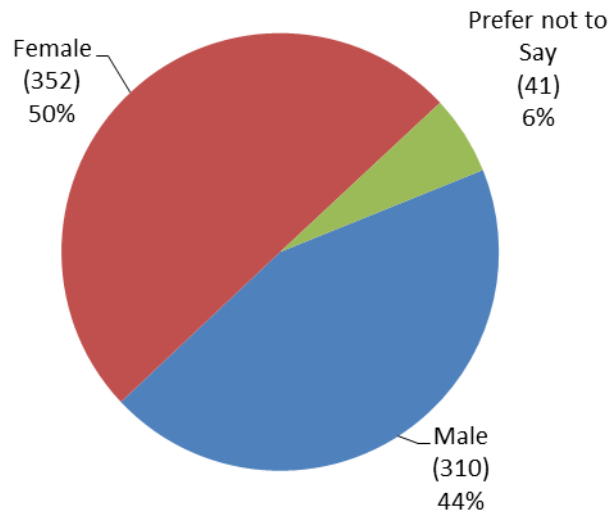
Online and Listening Session survey participants were nearly evenly split between those over 55 years of age and those 54 and younger, with slightly higher participation among females (50% to 44%). The vast majority of respondents were white (84%), above the County's demographic makeup (75% as of 2016). Participants tended to be well-educated (75% with a bachelor's degree or higher), and 55% indicated household incomes above \$100,000. Participation was heaviest from the central and eastern portions of the County, specifically Severna Park, Edgewater, Crownsville, Pasadena, Crofton, Annapolis and Arnold.

The charts and graphics on the following pages depict the demographic make-up of survey respondents from the eight Listening Sessions and online.

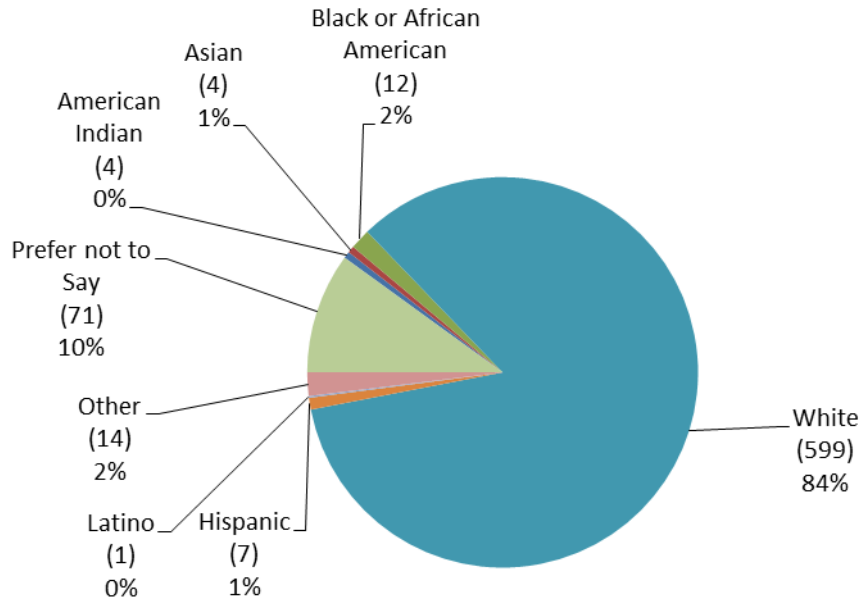
### Age of Respondents



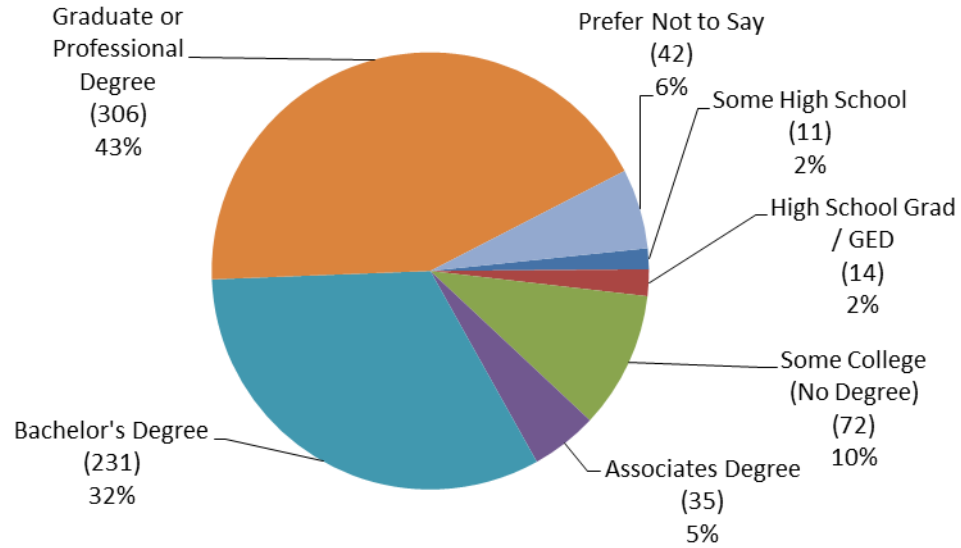
### Gender of Respondents



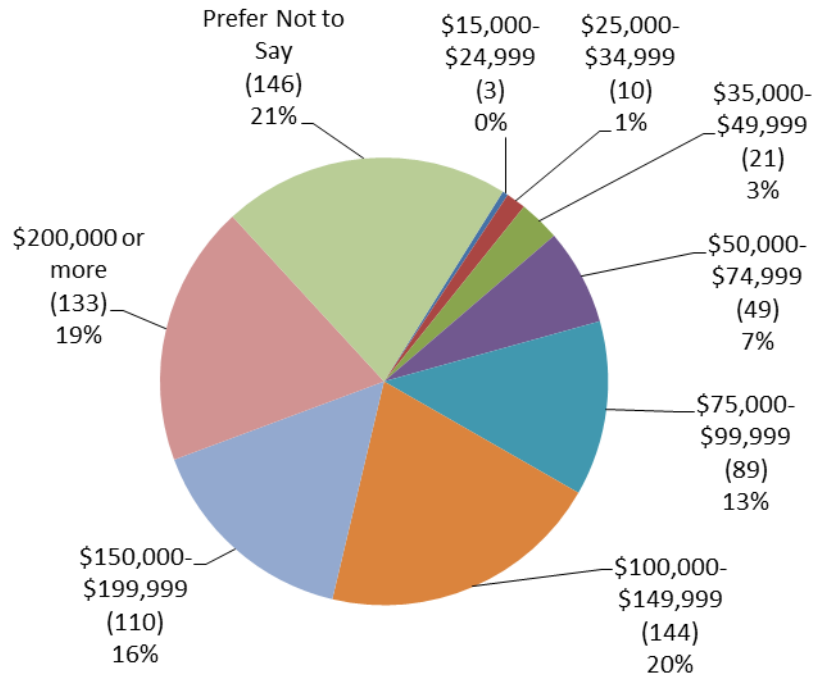
### Race of Respondents



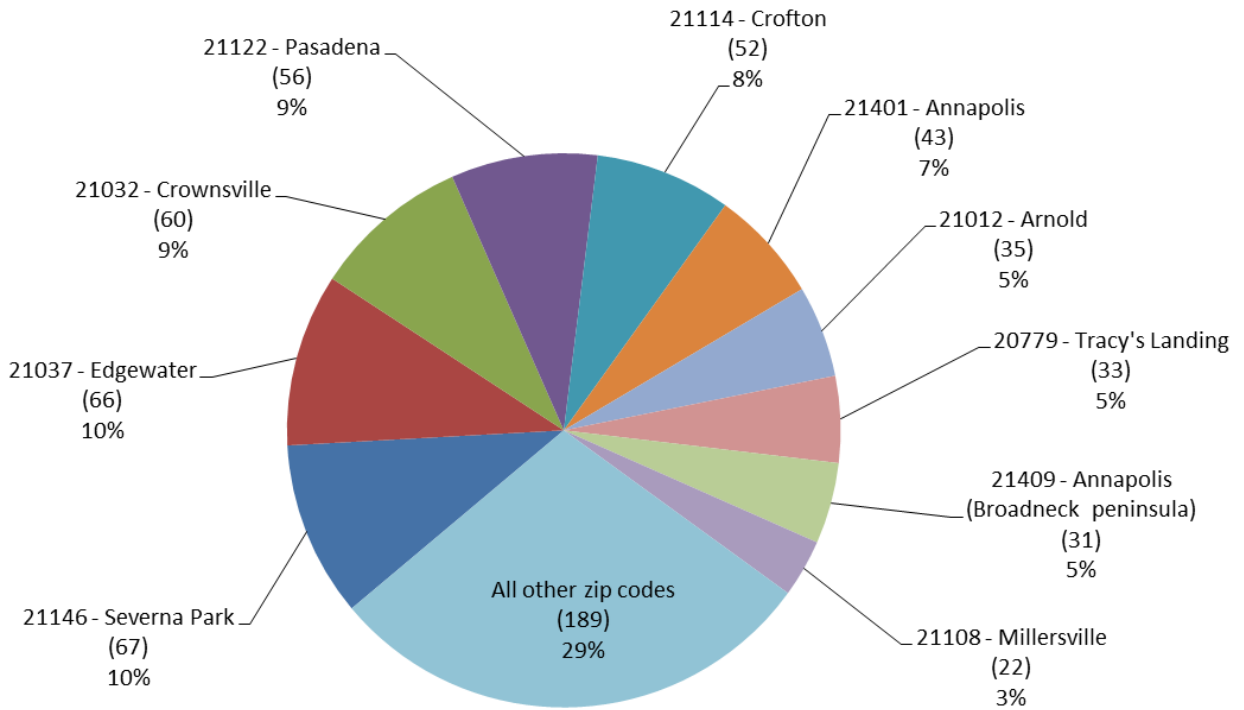
### Respondent Education Level



Respondent Household Income

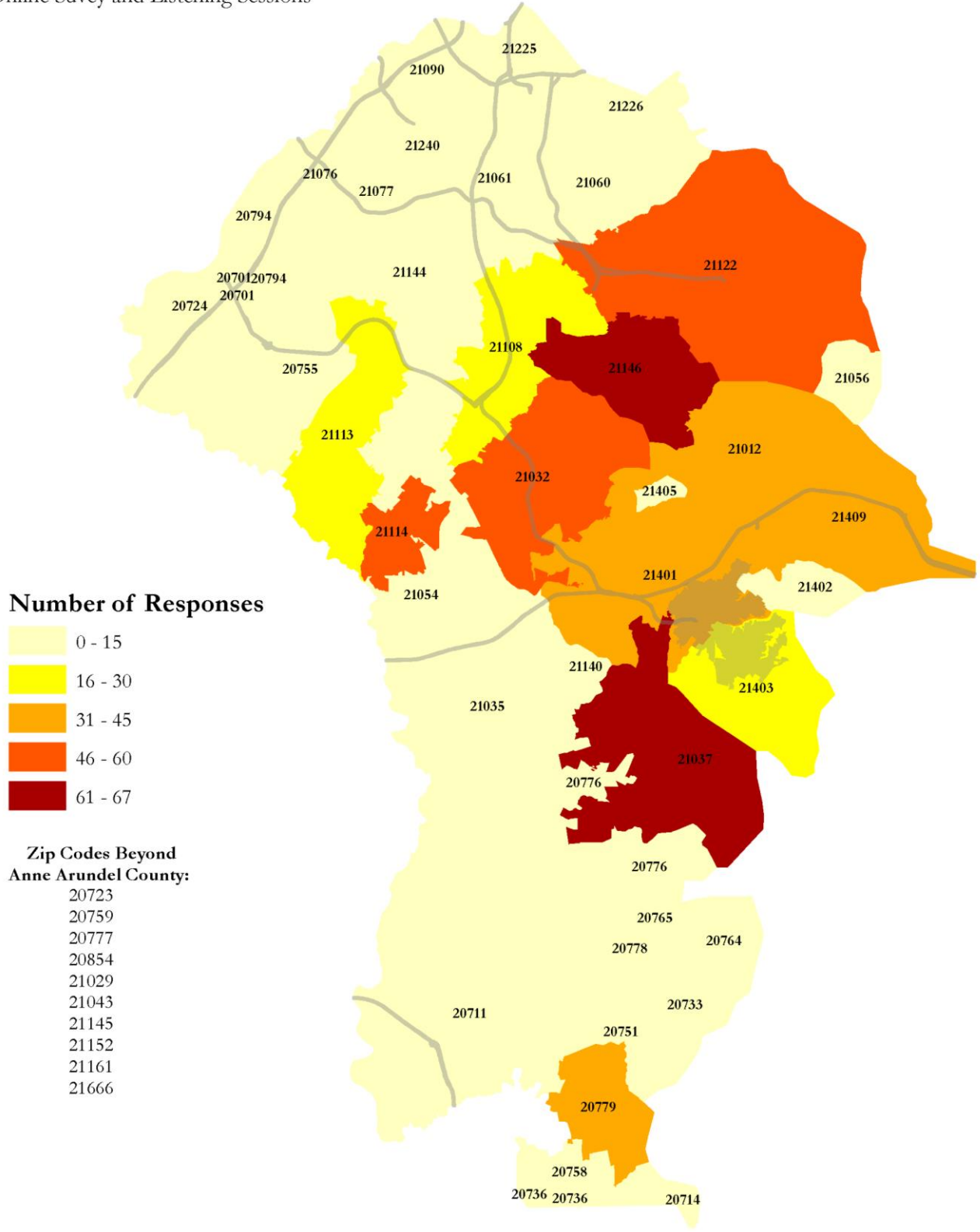


Participation by Zip Code



# Total Survey Responses by Zip Code

Online Survey and Listening Sessions



***What Are our Priorities?***

A Topics Survey asked participants to indicate their choices for issues that are the most important for County planning in each of four areas. Within each topic area, respondents were asked to choose their top three or four priorities, and an “other” category allowed respondents to add a topic or provide nuance or detail to their preferences. While **all** topics will be addressed within Plan 2040, some clear patterns in respondent preference indicate potential areas for future engagement in the process.

**Planning for the Built Environment (Choose Top 4)**

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Development /<br>Redevelopment                               | Housing Varieties                         | Jobs Near Housing  | Utilization of<br>Vacant / Under-<br>Used Properties<br>in Built-up Areas<br>(Infill) |
| 223 votes  | 81 votes                                  | 121 votes  | 288 votes   |
| Revitalization or<br>Redevelopment<br>of Challenged<br>Areas | Transportation<br>System for All<br>Users | Preserving<br>Character of<br>Established<br>Communities | Conserving Rural<br>Areas   |
| 277 votes  | 406 votes                                 | 438 votes  | 551 votes   |
| Historic and<br>Archeological<br>Heritage of the<br>County   | Green Site and<br>Building Design         | Mitigation and<br>Redevelopment of<br>Brownfields        | Other: (list)   |
| 260 votes  | 217 votes                                 | 71 votes   | 90 additional<br>responses  |

Under the Built Environment topic area, voting indicated a preference for development patterns that preserve rural areas, protect community character, and direct development toward areas that are already developed. Multi-modal transportation was also a priority. The open-ended “other” comments expanded on these views, with nearly half of the responses focused on development; ideas ranged from simply “stop development” to comments specific to an area, such as “minimizing development in the Route 2 corridor.” The Built Environment topic area received the most “other” responses of the four topic areas, indicating strong interest and specific opinions to be explored more deeply in the Plan2040 process.

### Planning for the Natural Environment (Choose Top 3)

|  |   |                      |                                     |
|--|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Natural Resources and Sensitive Areas</b> | <b>Agricultural Preservation</b>              | <b>Water Quality</b> | <b>Open Space, Parks, Greenways</b> |
| 532 votes                                    | 233 votes                                     | 582 votes            | 468 votes                           |
| <b>Air Quality</b>                           | <b>Coastal Flooding and Hazard Mitigation</b> | <b>Solid Waste</b>   | <b>Other: (list)</b>                |
| 222 votes                                    | 193 votes                                     | 94 votes             | 25 additional responses             |

The top priorities for the Natural Environment were Water Quality; Natural Resources and Sensitive Areas; and Open Space, Parks and Greenways. “Other” responses included broad environmental priorities such as “storm water management” and “watershed protection,” as well as detailed comments like “promoting organic farming” and “handicapped access to the waterfront.”



**Planning for a Healthy Economy (Choose Top 3)**

|  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Infrastructure Capacity in Line with Population and Development</b></p> <p>642 votes</p> | <p><b>Retention / Expansion of Existing Businesses</b></p> <p>243 votes</p>                              | <p><b>Attracting New and Emerging Businesses</b></p> <p>216 votes</p> | <p><b>Retaining / Attracting / Developing a Skilled Workforce</b></p> <p>283 votes</p> |
| <p><b>Balanced Economic / Adequate Land-Use Mix</b></p> <p>438 votes</p>                       | <p><b>Community Commercial / Civic Nodes (Community-Based Neighborhood Centers)</b></p> <p>254 votes</p> | <p><b>Post-Disaster Economic Recovery</b></p> <p>81 votes</p>         | <p><b>Other: (list)</b></p> <p>38 additional responses</p>                             |

On Economic matters, the clear top priority among respondents is “Infrastructure Capacity in Line with Population and Development.” Second was a desire to ensure land available for various uses matches the County’s economic needs. A strong workforce, neighborhood commercial/civic nodes, and support for existing businesses also received notable support. The added “other” responses were quite varied, ranging from comments on transportation/transit and housing to development pressures and natural resources as economic assets.

## Planning for Healthy Communities (Choose Top 4)

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Education<br><br>499 votes              | Public Safety Services<br><br>266 votes  | Promotion of Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles<br><br>237 votes | Park and Recreation Facilities<br><br>431 votes     |
| Greenways, Open Space<br><br>502 votes  | Arts and Cultural Facilities<br><br>160 votes  | Libraries<br><br>176 votes   | Locally-Grown Food, Access to Food<br><br>234 votes |
| Health Care Facilities<br><br>147 votes | Services / Facilities for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities<br><br>180 votes | Noise Pollution<br><br>179 votes                                       | Other: (list)<br><br>38 additional responses        |

Finally, in “Planning for Healthy Communities,” votes indicated the top priorities as Greenways/Open Space, Education, and Park and Recreation Facilities, though all topics within this topic area received at least 5% of the total votes cast. A number of free response comments specified concerns regarding various forms of pollution, health and public safety service issues, and expansion of bike or pedestrian facilities.

The full results of the Topics survey, including free responses, are available in the Listening Session and Online Survey summaries on the [Plan2040 website](#).

### ***What are our Values?***

A Values Survey asked participants to share their thoughts on three broad questions:

- What do you like about Anne Arundel County?
- What needs to be improved?
- What should the future of the County look like?

The open-ended response format offered respondents the opportunity to express their thoughts in their own words on the issues that are most important to shaping a Vision for the County’s future. While the body of responses offers a wide range of input, one method of analyzing the data is to count the most frequently used words to reveal some of the patterns and themes among the responses. The following discussion is a starting point for analyzing these data, depicting the most frequently used words (after “County,” “Anne,” and “Arundel”) and offering a sample of the variety of contexts in which these words are used.

What do you like about Anne Arundel County?



1. Area

natural areas and natural beauty; Critical Area; rural and agricultural areas; built areas blended with natural; recreation and park areas; Annapolis area; area's variety; historic areas/history of the area; wooded areas; beachfront areas; range of opportunities in the area; proximity and access to metro areas; unique character of the area; diverse, inclusive area; affordable area; crowded area with malls; open or undeveloped areas; suburban residential areas with adequate commercial areas; redevelopment in run-down areas; TOD areas; nice residential areas; Bacon Ridge Natural Area; mixed-use development for Parole area; intense development focused in specific areas; Small Area Planning

2. Water

water quality and clean water; waterways and waterway preservation; waterman history and waterman business; drinkable/swimmable/fishable water; water access and recreation; waterfront; proximity to water; Quiet Waters; development impacts on well water; watersheds; water heritage; deep water boating

3. Community

heart of community; community green spaces; community events; family-oriented or close-knit community; community feeling and connection to community; well-educated community members; community college; community diversity; sense of community and community spirit; music at community centers; community neighborhoods; community leaders; arts community in Annapolis; safe community; faith community; community facilities; implement the community vision; economically inclusive communities; various types of communities; community identity; community pride; embracing the immigrant community; retain what remains of the charming community

## What needs to be improved?



### 1. Development

too much development; infrastructure to support development; overdevelopment; planning for housing development; local control of development; need mixed-use, transit-oriented development; lack of recreation facilities for new development; lack of open space preservation during development; development isn't balanced; uncontrolled development; transparency in development process and notification; infill development; loss of trees to development; development aesthetics; encourage redevelopment; development resistance; facilitate development in targeted areas; development runoff; haphazard development; development variances in Critical Area; less development – on peninsulas, in coastal areas, in wetlands; business development; development modifications; negative costs of limiting development; poor development planning; costs of overdevelopment; residential development and overcrowded schools; development impact fees; cluster development

### 2. Traffic

horrible traffic; traffic congestion – on 178, the Beltway, Route 3, Route 50, Benfield, Ritchie Hwy, I-97, Forest Drive, Mayo Road, Ft Smallwood, Mountain Road; traffic gets worse; traffic at a standstill; little attention to traffic capacity; investments in traffic management; manage traffic and growth; traffic and school overcapacity; traffic is a

nightmare; issues with BWI air traffic; traffic light timing; noise pollution from traffic; bumper-to-bumper traffic; roundabouts for traffic control; traffic safety; air traffic control; outdated traffic impact analysis practices; lack of traffic connectivity

### 3. School

school overcapacity; inadequate school infrastructure; after school programs; developer support to schools; need more and smaller schools; increase school rigor; more efficiency in school special needs programs; school system is weak; schools for post-graduate work; disparity between schools, inconsistent quality; school investment; crowded schools; school bullying; more schools; school class size and teacher/student ratio; school nutrition; school redistricting; school construction lags; school facilities in disrepair; lack of school choice; school board bias; later school start times; make easier to walk/bike to school; cell towers at schools; school funding; poor design of schools



### 1. Development

planned development; less development; future and new development impacts; development in line with infrastructure; limiting development (including commercial development); reduce or slow down development; uncontrolled versus controlled development; stopping overdevelopment; allow development with positive impacts on communities; stormwater impacts from development; high density development; renewed infrastructure development; resilient or sustainable development; quality development;

development approval process; redevelopment; development/open space balance; development of greenfields; infill development; development - on Annapolis Neck, in Odenton Town Center, in South County; high-rise development; mixed-use development; economic development

## 2. Schools

overcrowding/school capacity; new schools and school construction; smaller schools; school safety and security; quality schools; better school funding; cell towers at schools; school hours and calendar; equitable schools; school activities; school supplies; high school at Crownsville hospital; proximity to schools – of marijuana dispensaries, bars, casinos; school teacher salaries; smaller schools; school mental health services; schools on well water; tax dollars to public schools

## 3. Community

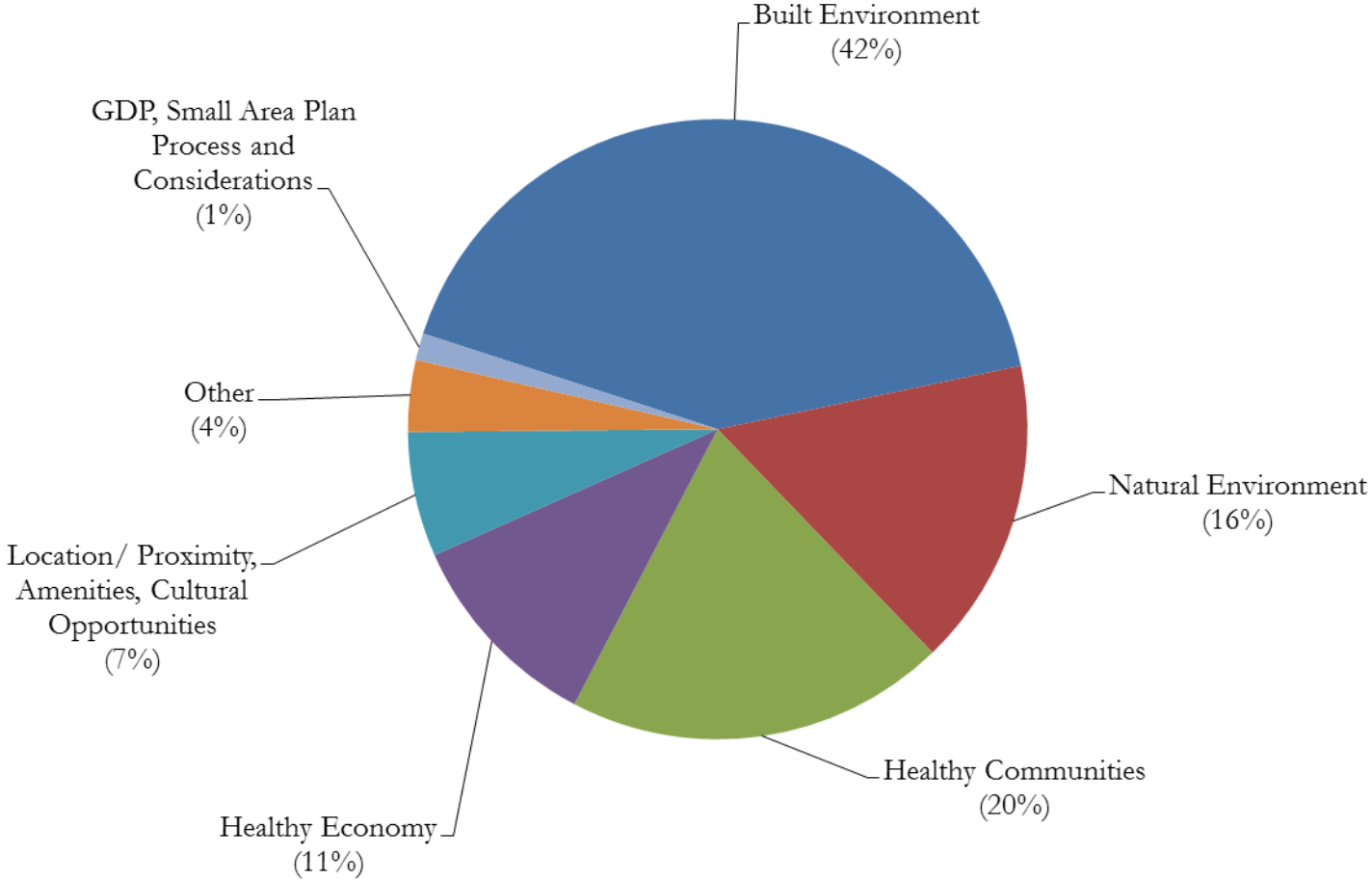
adequate community college opportunities; community spaces; community businesses; the “feel” of a community; community involvement in schools; diverse community; community input in zoning; stop AA County from becoming a bedroom community; safe and thriving community; mixed-use communities; community stewardship; community identity; maintain existing character of communities; quiet or quaint community; active community; community appearance; water access, open space, and community gardens; sense of community and community feeling; local voice in community development; green community; community business areas; community centers; community education; community relationships with police; local community flavor

Grouping all comments from all of the Listening Session activities and the Online Survey provides an interesting snapshot of the citizens’ feedback. Of over 5,000 discrete comments and ideas, the largest portion (42%) focused on the Built Environment, which includes topics such as development, housing, conserving rural areas, conserving rural areas, etc.). That was more than twice as many as the next highest topic area, Healthy Communities (20%), which encompasses recreation, public safety, education, etc. The Natural Environment was the focus of 16% of comments, ranging from natural resources and water quality to open space and agricultural preservation. Ten percent of the feedback focused on a Healthy Economy, such as aligning infrastructure capacity with population and development, balancing land use with economic needs, promoting business development and recruitment, and workforce issues.

Many of the comments do not fit neatly into the survey topic areas. Seven percent of these emphasized the County’s location in the region (near larger metro areas, close to the Bay, etc.) or the amenities and opportunities that Anne Arundel County has. Finally, dozens of comments offered ideas and feedback for past or upcoming GDP and Small Area planning processes.

The chart on the next page depicts the breakdown of all comments received from the initial outreach phase of the Plan 2040 update.

Total Comments by Topic Area



## 2. Youth Survey

On February 27, 2018, the Chesapeake Regional Association of Student Councils (CRASC) and the Anne Arundel County High School Signature Programs organized a General Assembly to discuss land use issues and the General Development Plan with a group of nearly 125 students. The participating students, most of them high school age, began by outlining the state of Maryland and Anne Arundel County in yarn and then identified the high schools within those yarn maps. OPZ staff provided a quick presentation of land use planning and the General Development Plan process, then led the students through an exercise thinking about what is important to them, what makes Anne Arundel County special, and what could be improved. Students broke out into groups to write down their ideas of what they would like in their ideal community. By their respective signature program, they reported out their main themes - like more parks, more public transportation, etc. At the end of the conference, students were given a survey that gauged their opinions about certain land use topics, what they like and feel could be improved in the County. Students were also encouraged to have their friends take the youth survey online as well.



In total, 112 survey responses were collected, offering an interesting youth perspective on the priority issues for the future of the County. Responses emphasized the importance of schools, parks and open space, attraction of health services, and bringing in housing that is affordable to locals. Additionally, students expressed a need for more sidewalks and stressed the importance of conservation and protection of waterbodies and air quality.

The full results of the youth survey are available on the Plan 2040 [website](#).



### 3. Additional Stakeholder Outreach

From September 2017 to March 2018, Office of Planning and Zoning staff met with dozens of additional groups and stakeholders to hear their perspectives on the County’s issues and its future. While each session focused on listening to stakeholder perspectives, the format varied to accommodate the needs and timeframes of each group. Though these meetings were not structured to produce a standardized dataset of input, the summary below offers a representation of the range of themes and ideas from these meetings.

*Stakeholder Audiences: September 2017 to March 2018*

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Greater Severna Park Council                                     | Commercial Realtors  | Dispersed Energy Committee                                       |
| Alliance for Livable Communities                                 | BWI Aerotropolis site developers   | Planning Advisory Board  |
| Advocates for Herring Bay  | Severna Park area stakeholders   | Jessup Improvement Association                                   |
| Land Use stakeholders (via County Executive’s office)            | Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board   | Pasadena Business Association                                    |
| Agritourism Planning group                                       | Broadneck Council of Communities   | Annapolis Neck Peninsula Federation                              |
| Maryland Building Industry Association                           | Agriculture, Farming, and Agritourism Commission   | Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce                             |
| Annapolis Regional Transportation Management Association (ARTMA) | Economic Development Corporation (members of the Maritime Industry Advisory Board and Marine Trades Association) | Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce, Environmental Committee |
| Scenic Rivers Land Trust   | Arnold Preservation Council  | City of Annapolis Planning Director                              |
| Mayo Peninsula residents   | Greater Crofton Council  | Envision Mayo Work Group   |

*Additional interviews and engagements: September 2017 to March 2018*

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| WNAV interview | “Week in Review”<br>(October 20, 2017 and March 23, 2018) |
|----------------|---|

*A representation of themes from these meetings:*

- Transportation: multimodal needs, impact of development on traffic volume and infrastructure, specific area issues, traffic congestion, connectivity
- Government: interagency and interjurisdictional cooperation, citizen voice in the planning process, references to the Small Area Plans
- Development: development impacts on quality of life, transparency and notification in the development process, Adequate Public Facilities assessments, specific site development concerns, adequate infrastructure for growth, impact fees
- Natural Resources and Parks: protection of natural resources, stormwater management, use of new technologies in environmental protection, water access, preservation of rural areas, specific area issues, forest conservation, water quality
- Schools: school capacity concerns, educational quality