

CROWDSOURCED CONVERSATIONS 2024

SURVEY REPORT: "SEVERANCE TOWN CENTER"



Some topline stats

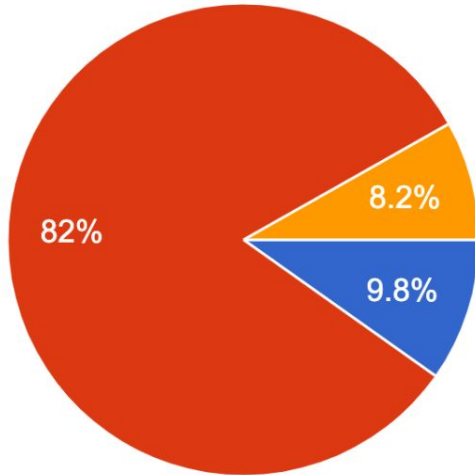
- There were a total of **734 responses**:
 - **88.4% Cleveland Heights residents**; 6.4% former/elsewhere; 5.2% University Heights.
 - **88.3% homeowners**; 9.8% renters; 1.8% other.
 - **58.2% have lived in their homes +20 years**; 14.7% 1-5 years; 12% 11-20 years; 11.9% 6-10 years; 2.3% 0-1 years; 1% don't live in the Heights.
 - **64.8% identified as a woman**; 31% as a man; 2.5% preferred not to say; 1.7% as trans*/nonbinary/genderqueer.
 - **51.9% as under the age of 60**; 46% identified as over the age of 60; 2.1% preferred not to say.
 - **80.2% identified as White**; 9.6% as Black; 5.2% preferred not to say; 2.5% as multi-racial; 1.2% as Asian; 0.8% as Indigenous; 0.4% as Hispanic.

Importance of Severance Town Center

“The Downtown” of Cleveland Heights

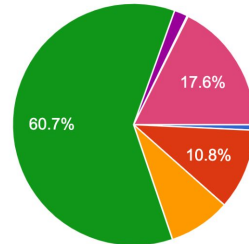
Do you currently consider Severance Town Center to be the "Downtown" of Cleveland Heights?

- No - 602 responses (82%)
- Yes - 72 responses (9.8%)
- Unsure - 60 responses (8.2%)



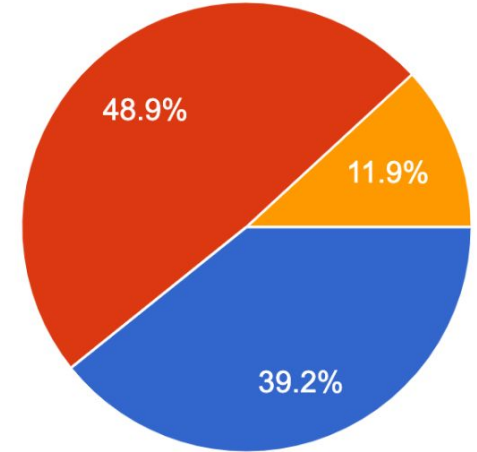
If you said "no" or "unsure," which other business district would you consider the "downtown" of Cleveland Heights?

- Cedar Lee - 411 (60.70%)
- Coventry Village - 73 (10.80%)
- Cedar Fairmount - 56 (8.30%)
- Cedar Taylor - 12 (1.80%)
- Cain Park - 5 (0.70%)
- Noble - 0 (0%)
- None of these - 119 (17.60%)



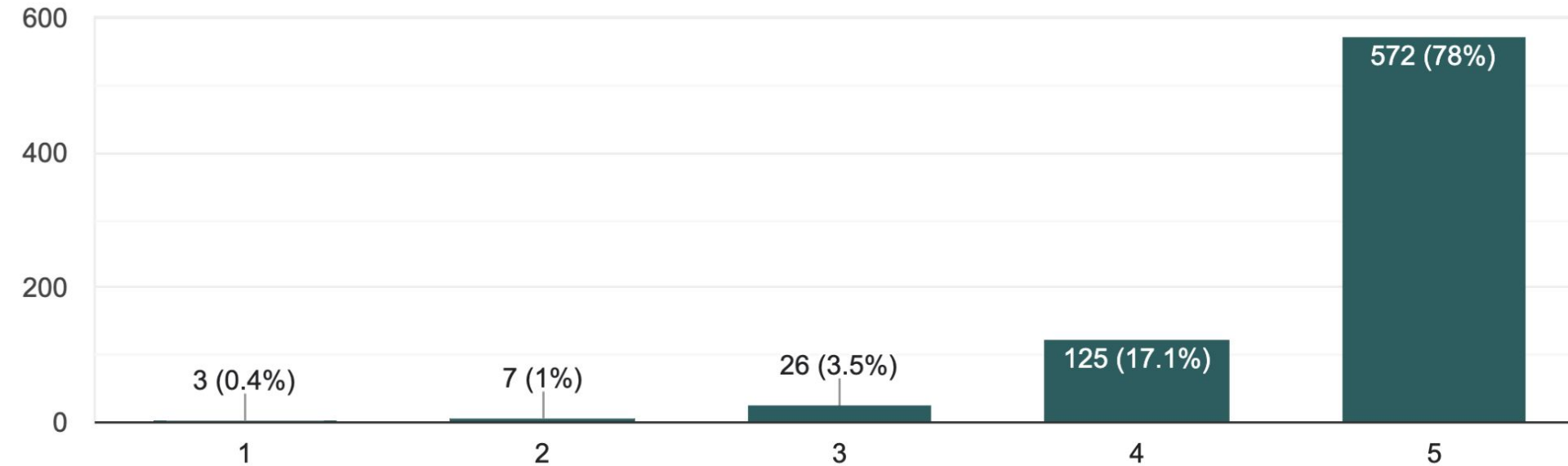
Would you want Severance to be a new "Downtown" for Cleveland Heights?

- Unsure - 359 responses (48.9%)
- Yes - 288 responses (39.2%)
- No - 87 responses (11.9%)



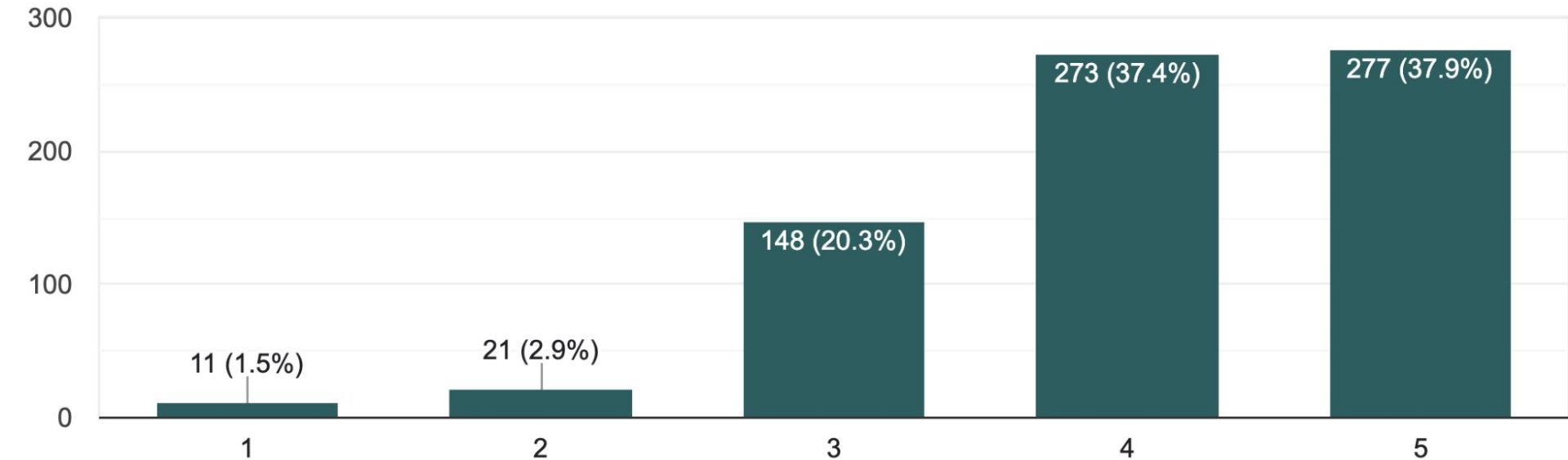
Respondents rated the importance the redevelopment of Severance Town Center has for the community-at-large

697 respondents (95.1%) rated a 4 or higher, indicating high/extremely high importance; 26 (3.5%) rated it a neutral 3; and 10 (1.4%) rated it a 2 or lower, indicating a low/extremely low importance.



Respondents rated how a redeveloped Severance Town Center would improve life for them, personally, in the Heights

550 respondents (75.3%) rated a 4 or higher, indicating high/extremely high importance; 148 (20.3%) rated it a neutral 3; and 32 (4.4%) rated it a 2 or lower, indicating a low/extremely low importance.



Respondents indicated the redevelopment of Severance would impact the community-at-large in the following ways:

1. Improved economic health - 626 responses (85.30%)
2. Opportunity to bring in new businesses - 623 responses (84.90%)
3. Improved land use - 617 responses (84.10%)
4. Redevelopment would bring energy and excitement to the community - 561 responses (76.40%)
5. Opportunity to create a place where the community can gather - 459 responses (62.50%)
6. Opportunity to bring in more greenspace/park space - 446 responses (60.80%)
7. Cleveland Heights would feel more cohesive/connected - 387 responses (52.70%)
8. Opportunity to bring in new housing - 385 responses (52.50%)
9. Redevelopment would bring an opportunity to improve ethnic, racial & cultural acceptance, interactions & relationships - 282 responses (38.40%)
10. Opportunity to improve public transit/public transit routes - 249 responses (33.90%)
11. Opportunity to partner with educational institutions - 232 responses (31.60%)
12. Opportunity to bring in more medical facilities - 190 responses (25.90%)

63 respondents selected "other" (8.60%)

Some of the self-reported ways respondents reported the redevelopment of Severance would impact the community-at-large:

- Anything would be better than the current blight (15)
- It would change the perception of Cleveland Heights (14)
- Redevelopment would boost/see a resurgence of community pride (13)
- It would bring more people from outside the community to Cleveland Heights (10)
- We need more retail (7)
- We need tax-revenue-generating usage for land (7)
- Make Severance a family friendly destination (5)
- Make Severance a “date night” destination (5)
- Revitalizing Severance could have a positive ripple effect to help Noble (5)
- Redevelopment should pave the way to the future/meet the needs of future generations (5)
- Opportunity to bring in new housing (4)
- There is a need for affordable housing for seniors (4)
- Make it pedestrian-friendly (4)
- Make it a space that everyone from all backgrounds can utilize (3)
- Making use of/improving the current building would be enough (3)
- No more housing is needed (3)
- Encourage/support more small businesses to come to Severance (2)
- Redevelopment could help improve property values (2)
- Opportunity to create more jobs (2)
- Every neighborhood is unique and shines in its own way (2)
- It would be proof that democracy works (2)
- It would nurture/foster the community's creativity (2)
- No big box stores (2)
- Opportunity to establish a regular farmers' market (2)
- We need more recreational opportunities (2)
- It would have a regional economic impact (2)

Respondent priorities for a redeveloped Severance Town Center

Top Priority

1. Retail and services (441)
2. Parks/greenspace (252)
3. Community gathering space (243)
4. Construct new housing (180)
5. Arts/theater space (175)
6. Public Transit Hub (96)
7. Medical facilities (82)
8. Education facilities (66)

Second Priority

1. Community gathering space (189)
2. Construct new housing (185)
3. Parks/greenspace (174)
4. Arts/theater space (163)
5. Public Transit Hub (162)
6. Medical facilities (148)
7. Education facilities (141)
8. Retail and services (135)

Third Priority

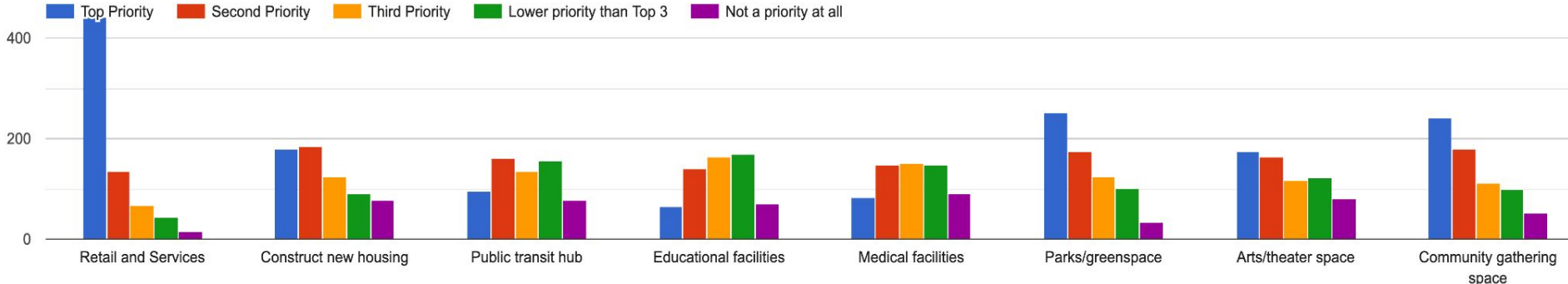
1. Education facilities (164)
2. Medical facilities (152)
3. Public Transit Hub (136)
4. Parks/greenspace (125)
5. Arts/theater space (117)
6. Community gathering space (112)
7. Retail and services (67)
8. Construct new housing (64)

Lower priority than Top 3

1. Educational facilities (168)
2. Public Transit hub (155)
3. Medical facilities (147)
4. Arts/theater space (122)

Not at all a priority

1. Medical facilities (90)
2. Arts/theater space (80)
3. Construct new housing (79); Public Transit hub (79)
4. Educational facilities (71)



Some of the self-reported items respondents consider a top priority for the redevelopment of Severance:

- Sports/fitness facilities (14)
- Senior housing (12)
- Van Aiken but with Cleveland Heights flair (12)
- Safe walking/biking trail (11)
- New food/restaurant options (not chain restaurants) (11)
- Entertainment center with bowling, roller skating, mini-golf, batting cages, etc. (10)
- Mixed use for mixed income residents (10)
- Aesthetics should be appealing (10)
- Anything that generates revenue and helps lower taxes (9)
- Pedestrian/cyclist-friendly land usage (9)
- Outdoor space with shade trees and benches, etc. (9)
- Car-free/car-lite development (9)
- Offices/business park (8)
- Light industrial businesses (8)
- Park/outdoor recreation space for families (8)
- Repair/maintain roadways & parking lots (7)
- Affordable housing (7)
- Welcoming spaces for youth/teens (7)
- Attract unique retail (7)
- Retail & restaurants//revenue generating (6)
- Indoor/outdoor pool (6)
- Hotel (5)
- Safety/more police in the area (5)
- Anything that creates stability (4)
- Community garden (4)
- Better city facilities (city hall, police, etc) (4)
- Anything that creates jobs (4)
- Severance should feel like a destination (4)
- No big box stores (4)
- Factory/manufacturing (3)
- Increase medical presence/health and wellness hub (3)
- Anything that brings new people to Cleveland Heights (3)
- Movie theater/theater (3)
- Prioritize environmental considerations of development (3)

Land Use

Respondents indicated interest in the following types of businesses in a redeveloped Severance Town Center:

1. Family-friendly restaurants - 558 responses (76%)
2. Coffee shop/bakery - 534 responses (72.80%)
3. Retail/gift stores (including books, cards, toys, etc.) - 426 responses (58%)
4. Grocery store - 410 responses (55.90%)
5. Retail/clothing stores - 398 responses (54.20%)
6. Ice cream shop - 373 responses (50.80%)
7. Fitness-related businesses (gyms, yoga studios, etc.) - 362 responses (49.30%)
8. Retail/hardware store - 318 responses (43.30%)
9. Pharmacy/convenience store - 317 responses (43.20%)
10. Retail/big box stores - 241 responses (32.80%)
11. Retail/electronics - 223 responses (30.40%)
12. Bars/nightlife - 211 responses (28.70%)
13. Convenience store - 103 responses (14%)

28 respondents selected
“none of the above” (3.80%).

Respondents indicated interest in the following types of services in a redeveloped Severance Town Center:

1. Nonprofits/community services - 431 responses (58.70%)
2. Public transportation hub - 330 responses (45%)
3. General medical services, like doctor or dentist offices - 319 responses (43.50%)
4. Urgent care medical services - 276 responses (37.60%)
5. Speciality services, like insurance or realtor offices - 177 responses (24.10%)
6. Veterinary offices - 171 responses (23.30%)

93 respondents selected
"none of the above" (12.7%).

Respondents indicated interest in the following types of greenspace in a redeveloped Severance Town Center:

1. Walking/biking path - 606 responses (82.60%)
2. Playground - 445 responses (60.60%)
3. Community Garden - 397 responses (54.10%)
4. Activity spaces for teens/discovery centers (i.e. rock climbing walls, BBall courts, skateboarding, etc.) - 362 responses (49.30%)
5. Gazebo area - 306 responses (41.70%)
6. Dog park - 289 responses (39.40%)
7. Smaller open field/meadow - 255 responses (34.70%)
8. Larger open field/meadow - 186 responses (25.30%)

20 respondents selected
“none of the above” (2.7%).

Respondents indicated interest in the following types of dwellings/housing in a redeveloped Severance Town Center:

Styles of Dwellings:

1. Townhouses - 399 responses (54.40%)
2. Apartment buildings - 314 responses (42.80%)
3. Single family houses - 236 responses (32.20%)
4. Two family houses - 174 responses (23.70%)

175 respondents selected "none of the above" (23.8%).

Groups housing could serve:

1. Housing for seniors - 462 (62.90%)
2. Mixed-income housing - 442 (60.20%)
3. Housing for those with physical disabilities/limitations - 292 (39.80%)
4. Market-rate housing - 258 (35.10%)
5. Housing for veterans - 219 (29.80%)
6. Housing for LGBTQIA+ - 206 (28.10%)
7. Low-moderate income housing - 200 (27.20%)
8. Luxury housing - 91 (12.40%)

112 respondents selected "none of the above" (15.3%).

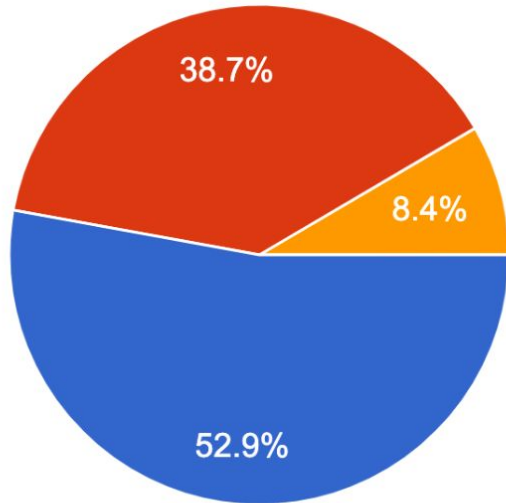
All land use categories / Severance Town Center, ranked:

1. Walking/biking path - 606 responses (82.60%)
2. Family-friendly restaurants - 558 responses (76%)
3. Coffee shop/bakery - 534 responses (72.80%)
4. Housing for seniors - 462 responses (62.90%)
5. Playground - 445 responses (60.60%)
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38. Convenience store - 103 responses (14%)
39. Luxury housing - 91 responses (12.40%)

Respondents interest in community-use spaces in a redeveloped Severance Town Center:

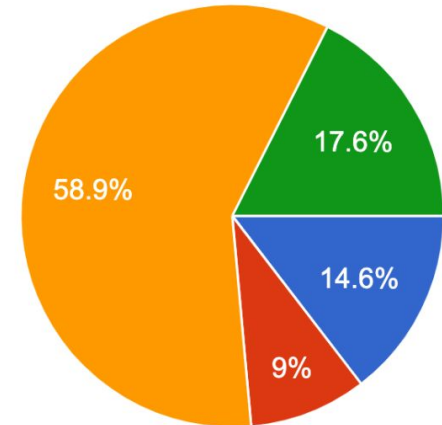
Would you be interested in having community-use space:

- Yes - 388 responses (52.90%)
- Maybe - 284 (38.70%)
- No - 62 responses (8.40%)



Programming preferences

- I would like to see a balance of both - 432 responses (58.90%)
- I am indifferent - 129 responses (17.60%)
- I would prefer to see more programming in community-use spaces (such as fitness classes, concerts, etc.) - 107 responses (14.60%)
- I would prefer to have fewer programs and simply have the space to use in an unstructured way - 66 responses (9%)



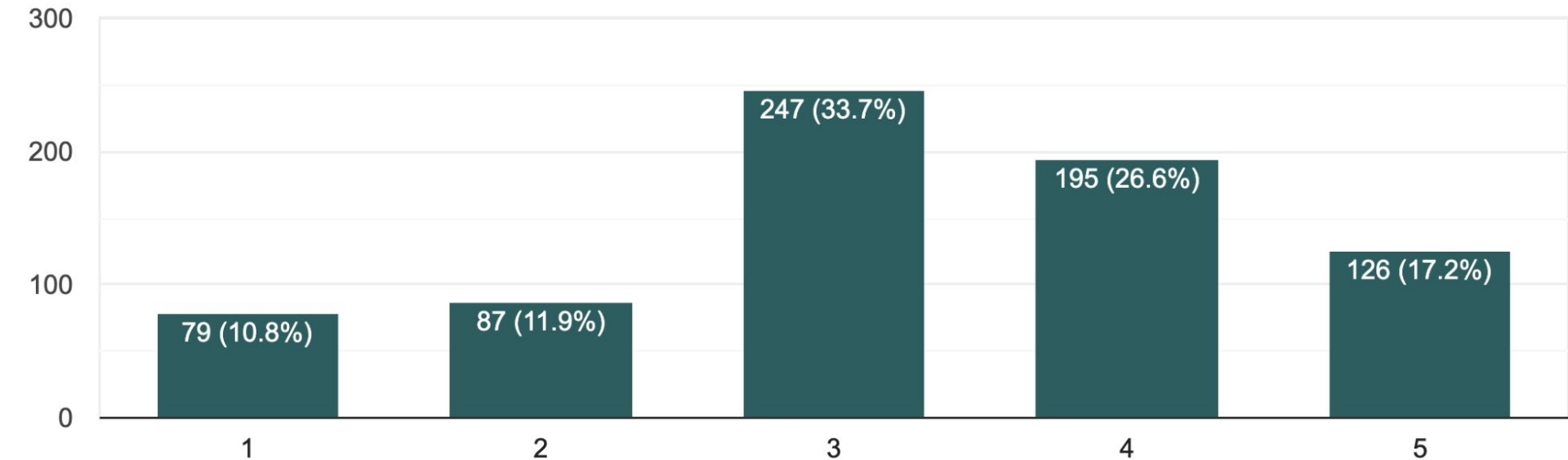
Some of the self-reported ideas from respondents regarding land use in a redeveloped of Severance Town Center:

- Create a multi-use connective neighborhood with greenspace, businesses, and housing (examples: Mueller's Parks; DeBartolo Common) (26)
- Sports complex for travel sports, fitness classes, swimming, etc. (21)
- Variety/unique retail (19)
- Less concrete, more greenspace (14)
- Single story housing for seniors (12)
- Design to be car-free/car-lite with pedestrian and cyclists in mind (10)
- Unique restaurants (no chains) (9)
- Anything that's family-friendly/good for kids (9)
- Use the space for what the city doesn't already have/don't duplicate what's already available in the community (9)
- No big box stores (7)
- Anything that builds community (7)
- Outdoor eating spaces/restaurants with outdoor seating (7)
- Health & Human Services Campus/Research Facility (6)
- Trees (6)
- Bandshell/performance space (5)
- No more housing (5)
- Indoor activity/entertainment center (5)
- Light manufacturing/factory (5)
- Businesses that will add to the tax base (5)
- Movie theater (4)
- Something like Van Aiken or Pinecrest (4)
- Childcare/daycare/nursery (3)
- LGBTQIA+ is a protected class and doesn't need special housing (3)
- Improved public transportation (3)
- Anything that creates well-paid employment opportunities (3)
- Art gallery (3)
- Large retail (like a bookstore) (3)
- Water feature/fountain (3)
- Whatever brings new people to Cleveland Heights/boosts the local economy (3)
- ADA accessible (3)
- Hotel (3)
- Rentable pavilions/small event spaces (3)

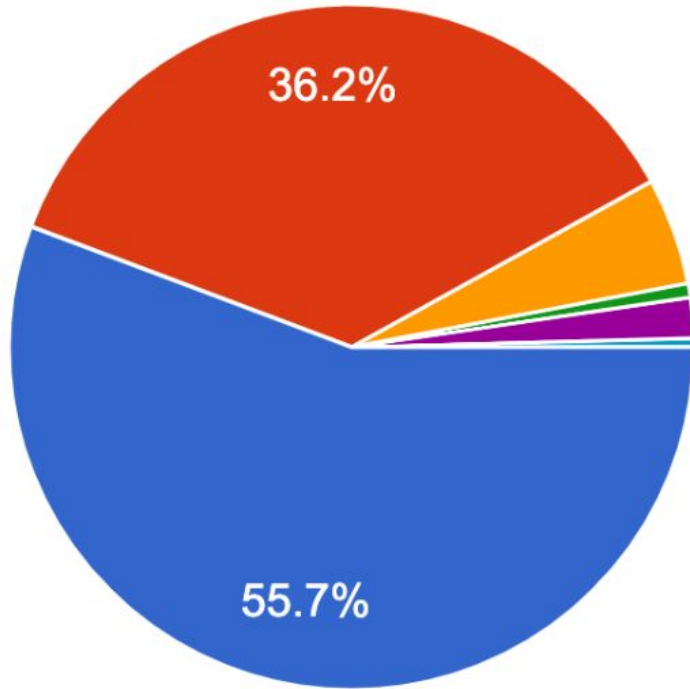
ACTION

Respondent likelihood of attending community-engagement events hosted by MPact Collective & other partners:

321 respondents (43.8%) rated a 4 or higher, indicating high/extremely likelihood; 247 (33.7%) rated it a neutral 3; and 166 (22.74%) rated it a 2 or lower, indicating a low/extremely low likelihood.



Respondent opinion on the importance of resident input in a project like the redevelopment of Severance Town Center:



- Extremely important - 409 respondents (55.70%)
- Important - 266 respondents (36.20%)
- Neutral - 37 respondents (5%)
- Unimportant - 5 respondents (0.70%)
- Extremely unimportant - 14 respondents (1.90%)
- Unsure - 3 respondents (0.40%)

Some of the feedback from respondents regarding the importance of community engagement around redeveloping Severance Town Center:

- Resident feedback is important (43)
 - "Too many cooks" can stave off progress (13)
 - There needs to be evidence for how community feedback is being considered/incorporated (13)
 - Residents don't always know what is economically best for development (12)
 - The future of Severance is pivotal for the future of Cleveland Heights (10)
 - The challenge is that a vocal few sometimes speak for the entire community and advocate for things the broader community does not want (9)
 - The developer will do what makes them money, ultimately (7)
 - Whatever is productive is good (6)
 - History has taught me not to trust developers/the city (6)
 - Need a blend/balance of resident and "expert" recommendations (5)
 - Severance is a disgrace (4)
- Feasibility study would help the process (3)
 - Redevelopment needs to lead to economic successes (3)
 - More education is needed to help residents understand what kind of redevelopment ideas are economically sound (2)
 - Community input/how important this project is may depend largely on where the input is coming from (what assets are already available in any given neighborhood) (2)
 - I am confused by FutureHeights' role in this process (2)
 - *Note from FutureHeights: we do not have a role in the redevelopment – Severance was a topic selected by the Heights community for the 2024 round of Crowdsourced Conversations.*
 - I don't think the developer/city will listen to residents unless the residents are saying what they want to hear (2)
 - Leave it to the experts (2)
 - Resident input does not matter (2)
 - Non-resident feedback is also important (2)
 - I am too busy to attend meetings or other related events (2)

Respondents indicated which of the following types of community-engagement activities primarily led/facilitated by MPact Collective & partners would be the most meaningful to participate in

1. Engage on an interactive website that can allow you to add your input and see the input of others from the community - 448 responses (61%)
2. Complete survey(s) that allow you to share your thoughts - 442 responses (60.20%)
3. Presentations that clarifies the process & possibilities of redevelopment - 420 responses (57.20%)
4. Attend an in-person charette (urban planning technique for consulting with stakeholders and involving them in the physical design or planning of the community) - 267 responses (32.40%)
5. Participate in focus group activities - 221 responses (30.10%)
6. Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions - 163 responses (22.20%)
7. Participate in a citizens' committee that has regular check-in meetings - 132 responses (18%)
8. Engage on social media - 141 responses (14.20%)

50 respondents indicated not being interested in any community-engagement activities (6.8%). 19 respondents selected "other" (2.6%).

Respondents' "other" suggestions regarding community-engagement around the redevelopment of Severance:

- "Those in power" will just do what they want, regardless (4)
 - Any presentations should be accessible online as well as in-person (3)
 - I have participated in community engagement before but didn't feel heard (2)
 - Do not do a website where you can see others' input - it would devolve into NextDoor (1)
 - There is too much negativity around change in this community (1)
 - Flip the power dynamic from top-down to bottom-up (1)
 - Instead of a charette, the developer should offer a few concepts and show them to the community (1)
 - Yes to charrettes (1)
 - I'd like to do an Eco Village charette (1)
- Engage with PTAs (1)
 - Discuss the benefits of cohousing (1)
 - We need new voices to get involved instead of hearing from the usual people (1)
 - I prefer to engage online instead of in-person (1)
 - I would love for this redevelopment project to garner national media attention (1)
 - Resident voices matter more than outside consultants (1)
 - Not all residents have internet/technology at home so that should be factored in to any engagement strategies (1)
 - Walking tour that explains the history would be helpful (1)
 - Group chats at Stone Oven (1)
 - Severance is a disgrace (1)

Respondent likelihood of participating in the following:

DEFINITELY WOULD PARTICIPATE

1. Complete survey(s) - 328
2. Engage on an interactive website - 185
3. Attend process/possibilities presentations - 108
4. Engage on social media - 96
5. Attend an in-person charette - 89
6. Participate in focus group activities - 68
7. Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions - 59;
Participate on a citizens' committee - 59

WOULD PARTICIPATE

1. Engage on an interactive website - 260
2. Complete survey(s) - 257
3. Attend process/possibilities presentations - 182
4. Participate in focus group activities - 153
5. Engage on social media - 141
6. Attend an in-person charette -125; Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions - 125
7. Participate on a citizens' committee - 100

MIGHT PARTICIPATE

1. Attend process/possibilities presentations - 241
2. Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions - 220
3. Attend an in-person charette - 217
4. Participate in focus group activities - 205
5. Participate on a citizens' committee - 189
6. Engage on an interactive website - 176
7. Engage on social media - 163
8. Complete survey(s) - 110

PROBABLY WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE

1. Participate on a citizens' committee - 213
2. Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions- 186
3. Attend an in-person charette - 169
4. Participate in focus group activities - 162
5. Engage on social media - 129
6. Attend process/possibilities presentations - 110
7. Engage on an interactive website - 57
8. Complete survey(s) - 10

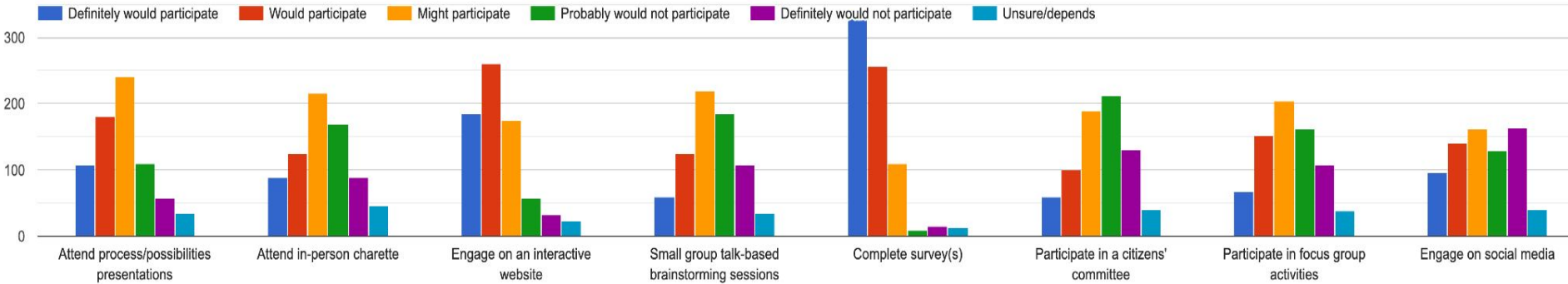
Respondent likelihood of participating in the following (cont'd):

DEFINITELY WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE

1. Engage on social media - 164
2. Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions - 109
3. Participate in focus group activities - 108
4. Participate on a citizens' committee - 132
5. Attend an in-person charette - 88
6. Attend process/possibilities presentations - 58
7. Engage on an interactive website - 33
8. Complete survey(s) - 15

UNSURE/IT DEPENDS

1. Attend an in-person charette - 46
2. Participate on a citizens' committee - 41; Engage on social media - 41
3. Participate in focus group activities - 38
4. Attend process/possibilities presentations - 35; Small group talk-based brainstorming sessions - 35
5. Engage on an interactive website - 23
6. Complete survey(s) - 14



Additional comments from respondents regarding how residents could contribute to the process of redeveloping Severance:

- I think there should be in-person engagement but I likely would not attend (4)
- I hope to participate but my age/health prevents me from in-person activities sometimes (4)
- People are busy so you'll reach more people through online engagement (3)
- History makes me think the city/developers do not listen to residents (3)
- I like the engagement options provided (3)
- Developer/city should create an overview presentation of what is feasible and share that with residents to solicit feedback (2)
- Canvassing (2)
- I do not use social media (2)
- Posting on social media can lead to negative commenters (1)
- Cleveland Heights residents should have the most input (1)
- Reach out to families via the schools (1)
- Severance Action Group (SAG) may be able to help identify tenants (1)
- Consult with a climate scientist during this process (1)
- Community-engagement is great but most residents don't know what's economically feasible (1)
- Visual presentations might be helpful for residents (1)
- Don't allow community engagement to slow down the process (1)
- Keep the current tenants and grow from there (1)
- Have a creative solution contest (1)
- Survey regarding single-family housing priorities (1)
- Actively participate in community meetings, seminars and public hearings organized by the government or relevant institutions. (1)
- During any redevelopment/construction, there should be an emphasis on supporting local businesses (1)
- I don't have the technology to participate in app-based/smartphone-based engagement (1)
- In-person meetings would be great (1)
- Various stakeholders should meet separately and then come together to present their ideas (1)
- Any new development should have "something for everyone" in the community (1)
- Every resident should be involved (1)
- Well-publicize any community-engagement efforts (1)

TAKEAWAYS

Topline Takeaways:

- 95.1% of respondents indicated that the redevelopment of Severance Town Center is important/extremely important. 75.3% reported the redevelopment would significantly improve their lives. 55.7% rated resident feedback as “extremely important” in the redevelopment process. Only 43.8% reported a high likelihood that they would participate in community-engagement efforts made around the redevelopment process.
- Currently, Cedar Lee is thought of the most as the “downtown” of Cleveland Heights (60.7% of respondents). 48.9% are unsure if they’d like a redeveloped Severance Town Center to become the “downtown” of Cleveland Heights.
- The biggest hope respondents have for a redeveloped Severance is improved economic health for the City of Cleveland Heights. Bringing in unique businesses and improving the overall use of the land could lead to excitement in the community and attract more people from nearby cities to come to Cleveland Heights, either as new residents or to utilize the new businesses/services that come along with the redevelopment.
- When thinking about land use in a redeveloped Severance, survey respondents urge everyone involved to consider what might be missing from Cleveland Heights currently and prioritize bringing those goods/services in instead of duplicating what we see other places in the community.
- When it comes to community-engagement, most respondents preferred participating in remote/virtual ways, such as watching a presentation streamed online, interacting on a website, or completing surveys. In-person activities were less popular for reasons varying from limited availability to health/mobility issues to indicating online/virtual is simply easier.

What is noteworthy:

- Respondents clearly indicate that redevelopment is important and that community-engagement matters. At the same time, many are cynical or believe that resident input won’t really be influential – OR that only certain input will be truly considered.

FACTS ABOUT

Who what when where why how

OUR STATS

About this survey:

This survey was created and distributed as part of the [Crowdsourced Conversations 2024 Forum Series](#), being conducted in partnership with FutureHeights, MPact Collective, Home Repair Resource Center, Heights Libraries, Cleveland Heights Green Team, Heights Bicycle Coalition, representatives of Cleveland Heights City Council, and many dedicated Heights residents and change-agents.

Survey data was collected from September 15 through October 15, 2024. Respondents completed an online-only Google Form that was distributed via email, on social media, through the media, via fliers, and through word of mouth. Options for survey completion assistance were offered.

This survey data analysis was completed by FutureHeights and shared with forum series partners, including elected officials, and is available for the community to review.

Any questions, please contact Sarah - swolf@futureheights.org.