



# **PLANNING BOARD MEETING - NOVEMBER 12, 2025**

## **AGENDA**

**Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 7:30 PM**

### **Online via Zoom**

Members of the public who wish to review hard copies of any documents which are available for online inspection in the packet, should contact the Land Use Administrator, Robin Tillou via e-mail at [planning@penningtonboro.org](mailto:planning@penningtonboro.org) or telephone at (609) 737-0276 x3.

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#### Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86887834555?pwd=AWF1ZGgzOV4mUkrq9E0aSGao6UcW6.1>

OPENING STATEMENT: Adequate Notice of this meeting has been given to the Hopewell Valley News and Trenton Times and was posted on the bulletin board at Borough Hall at 30 North Main Street and on the Borough website according to the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL: Blackwell ( ) Caminiti ( ) Davy ( ) Jackson ( ) Kassler-Taub ( ) O'Neill ( ) Stern ( ) Tracy ( ) Rex ( ) Upson ( ) Reilly ( )

### **PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

### **MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE UPDATE**

[Land](#) Use Plan Element Discussion

### **OLD BUSINESS**

[Follow](#) Up to Fair Share Housing Center Response to Housing Element and Fair Share Plan

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### **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

[\\*October](#) 8, 2025 Minutes

\*Indicates Action May be Taken

Adjournment\_\_\_\_\_

# **PENNINGTON BOROUGH MASTER PLAN**

## **Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (CCRHVA) v1**

For incorporation into the Land Use Plan element.

### **Requirements**

In 2021, the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28 was amended to include a provision requiring that a vulnerability assessment for hazards related to climate change be included in the land use plan element of any future Master Plan. The amendment requires that the climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment meet the following criteria:

1. Municipalities to analyze current and future threats to, and vulnerabilities of, the municipality associated with climate change-related natural hazards.
2. Include a build-out analysis of future residential, commercial, industrial, and other development in the municipality, and an assessment of the threats and vulnerabilities identified above related to that development.
3. Identify critical facilities, utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure that is necessary for evacuation purposes and sustaining quality of life during a natural disaster, to be maintained at all times in an operational state.
4. Analyze the potential impact of natural hazards on relevant components and elements of the master plan.
5. Provide strategies and design standards that may be implemented to reduce or avoid risks associated with natural hazards.
6. Include a specific policy statement on the consistency, coordination, and integration of the climate-change related hazard vulnerability assessment with certain other plans adopted by the municipality.
7. Rely on the most recent natural hazard projections and best available science provided by the New Jersey DEP.

The purpose of this vulnerability assessment is to assess Pennington Borough's vulnerability and resilience to the impacts of climate change using the best available data, to inform any future policy and development decisions for which climate-related hazards are relevant considerations, and to recommend actions the Borough can take to improve its resilience to climate change-related hazards.

### **Climate Change-Related Natural Hazards**

This vulnerability assessment considers the extent to which Pennington Borough is at risk from various natural hazards, several of which are projected to increase in frequency or become more severe due to climate change. This section was developed using the best available science and natural hazard projections including the NJ DEP's 2020 Scientific Report on Climate Change and the Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

<https://www.mercercounty.org/departments/emergency-management-public-safety/mercercounty-hazard-mitigation-plan> .

The 2020 Scientific Report on Climate Change describes multiple climate change-related natural hazards that may impact Borough residents and infrastructure.

#### Rising temperatures

On average, New Jersey is warming faster than the rest of the Northeast. Heatwaves are expected to occur with increased frequency, longer duration, and in larger areas. Higher temperatures and heatwaves have negative health impacts and lead to increased electricity use, air pollution, and water use, as well as impacts on local ecosystems. <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/dsr/heat-wave-analysis.pdf>

#### Wildfires

Increasing temperatures will lead to hot, dry periods during which wildfires are especially likely. As a result, wildfire seasons could be lengthened, and wildfires will likely increase in frequency. Wildfires not only threaten life and property but even at a great distance, they can impact air quality increasing adverse health effects.

#### Increased annual and extreme precipitation

Annual precipitation in New Jersey is expected to increase by 4% to 11% by 2050. Over the last 50 years, storms that resulted in extreme rain increased at a faster rate in New Jersey (71% increase) than anywhere else in the United States. Extreme precipitation events are expected to continue to increase in intensity due to climate change, resulting in flooding from both waterways and stormwater that can impact safety and the ability for Pennington to access emergency services, <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/dsr/nj-rainfall-studies-summary.pdf>.

#### More severe weather

Due to the warming atmosphere, storms may continue to become more intense resulting in increased power outages and damage from strong winds, flooding and hail.

#### Drought

Due to changes in expected precipitation patterns, droughts may occur more frequently during the summer months.

#### Decreased water and air quality

Climate change is expected to lead to an increase in air pollution due to meteorological changes (known as the ozone-climate penalty) and as noted above from wildfire smoke. Water quality may also decrease as contaminants, pathogens, and heat enter surface and groundwater due to runoff from more intense rain events. Extreme temperatures and more frequent droughts may also stress the water supply.

#### Infestation and invasive species

Increasing temperatures will shift the ranges of invasive pests, meaning that they may spread into forest areas where they were not previously found.

## Vulnerability Assessment

The 2021 update to the Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) assesses the vulnerability of the Borough to various natural hazards and the Borough's adaptive capacity with respect to each hazard. The methodology of the assessment is described below, and results are summarized in the table.

The hazard ranking, which evaluates risk or vulnerability, "involves an assessment of the likelihood of occurrence for each hazard, along with its potential impacts on people, property, and the economy as well as community capability and changing future climate conditions" (Mercer County HMP, 9.10-20). Based on these considerations, the risk to the Borough from each natural hazard is ranked on a scale of Low to High.

The Mercer County HMP also considers adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity is "the ability of systems, institutions, humans and other organisms to adjust to potential damage, take advantage of opportunities, or respond to consequences" (IPCC 2014). According to this definition, the Borough ranked its capacity to adapt to various natural hazards on a scale of Weak to Strong, where a rating of Strong indicates that the capacity exists and is in use, a rating of Moderate indicates that the capacity may exist, but is not used or could use some improvement, and a rating of Weak indicates that the capacity does not exist or could use substantial improvement.

Hazard	Risk/Vulnerability	Adaptive Capacity
Dam Failure	Low	Moderate
Disease Outbreak	High	Moderate
Drought	Medium	Moderate
Flood	Medium	Moderate
Hurricane/Tropical Storm	High	Moderate
Infestation and Invasive Species	High	Moderate
Nor'Easter	Medium	Moderate
Severe Weather	High	Moderate
Severe Winter Weather	High	Strong
Wildfire	Low	Moderate

*Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2021 Update. Volume II. Tables 9.10-8 and 9.10-12.*

### Flooding

As with much of New Jersey, flooding is the most frequent and impactful climate hazard that occurs in Pennington Borough. With multiple waterways running through town, and significant amounts of impervious surface and aging infrastructure, the Borough is vulnerable from both fluvial (non-tidal) and pluvial (stormwater) flooding.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified special flood hazard areas within the Borough. The hazard area consists of 2.1 acres of AE regulatory floodway and 1.3 acres of AE base floodplain areas, where AE indicates a 1% annual chance of flood. The rest of the Borough is considered by FEMA to have minimal flood hazard. The map below shows the areas of special flood hazard, which are located along Stony Brook and its tributaries, adjacent to

King George Road. However, FEMA mapping is based on historical data and is not representative of potential increases in climate change-induced flooding. In fact, FEMA estimates that approximately 20% of flood impacts occur outside of mapped floodplains.

New Jersey rainfall studies released by the NJ DEP in 2021 show that data used to inform flood potential was out of date, and that the state was experiencing extreme precipitation 2.5-10% higher than 2006 depending on specific locations in the state. These studies further projected a high likelihood that precipitation intensity will increase in the latter half of the century. For example, projections suggest that the amount of precipitation associated with the 100-year, 24-hour storm is likely to increase by up to 36% in Mercer County. Such an increase in the amount of precipitation in a single event is likely to result in significant additional flooding in Pennington Borough.

Recognizing that New Jersey is already experiencing regular flooding that is more extreme, and extends further than FEMA mapping, and based on the 2021 rainfall studies, in 2023 the NJ DEP adopted Inland Flood Protection rules that increase the extent of areas regulated by the NJ Flood Hazard Area Control Act. These new regulations increase the fluvial design flood elevation (height of the lowest floor level of a building) to 3-feet above the FEMA mapped 1% annual floodplain and thus extends the extent of the regulated floodplain. The geographic extent of this new area is estimated by Rutgers University and provided at <https://www.njfloodmapper.org/> and is shown in the map below. Areas mapped as prone to fluvial flooding remain limited and include the intersection of E. Delaware and King George Road (Stony Brook), and within Kunkel Park (confluence of Lewis Brook, Lewis Brook tributary, and Stony Brook), areas that have flooded multiple times in recent years.



*Flooding in Kunkel Park from an unnamed storm on December 18, 2023, near the confluence of Lewis Brook, Lewis Brook tributary, and Stony Brook. Picture downloaded from <https://mycoast.org/nj/>.*





*Flooding of the Stony Brook over East Delaware Avenue from an unnamed storm on August 22, 2021.  
Picture downloaded from <https://mycoast.org/nj/>.*



*Flooding of the Stony Brook onto King George Road, near the intersection with E. Delaware Avenue,  
from an unnamed storm on August 22, 2021. Picture downloaded from <https://mycoast.org/nj/>.*

The Borough has also experienced flooding at several other locations during heavy rainfall events. Areas of concern include the intersection of Route 31 and West Delaware Avenue, the railroad underpass at Broemel Place, and the intersection of E. Franklin Avenue and Lewis Brook Road, which have experienced flooding on multiple occasions. The flooding at the intersection of Route 31 and West Delaware Avenue notably involves stormwater management infrastructure controlled both by the state and by surrounding properties.

Multiple private properties also experience flooding, particularly along tributaries to the Lewis Brook due to culverts that pipe streams under roads and private homes and are unable to sufficiently drain at a rate commensurate with recent storm events. There is one repetitive loss property in the Borough that has repeatedly filed National Flood Insurance Program claims. Flooding can occur near Stony Brook, Lewis Brook and their tributaries and also as a result of overwhelmed stormwater systems.

Tropical Storm Ida impacted the region on September 1, 2021, causing one of the most severe flooding events in the Borough's recent history. During Ida, flooded roadways included the intersection of Route 31 and West Delaware Avenue, Broemel Place at Green Street, King George Road at East Delaware Avenue, Eglantine at East Franklin, and North Main Street at Brookside (CentralJersey.com, 9/2/2021). Three motorists were stranded in their vehicles at the intersection of Route 31 and West Delaware Avenue and were rescued by the police department. Several roadways became impassable, which would have severely hindered the ability of emergency vehicles to enter the Borough should an unrelated emergency have occurred. Notably, many of the flood prone areas in Pennington occur near county- and state-owned infrastructure, including Route 31 (NJDOT), and East Delaware Avenue (Mercer County).

The Borough should consider infrastructure improvements, stormwater management improvements, reduction of impervious cover, and other strategies to mitigate this flooding without exacerbating flooding downstream.

The Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies 11 flood events and 5 severe weather events that impacted Pennington Borough in the years from 2008 to 2015. Note that multiple recent floods and severe weather events are referenced in this CCRHVA that occurred after 2015.

Finally, the Stony Brook Regional Sewerage Authority (SBRSA) Pennington Treatment Plant experienced major flooding from Stony Brook during Tropical Storm Ida. A likely cause was the build-up of a large beaver dam on Stony Brook just east of the East Delaware Avenue bridge. The beaver dam was eventually washed away by Ida and the flood abated somewhat. The plant treats all of Pennington Borough's wastewater and sewage. While the plant is not located in Pennington Borough, the Borough is concerned about the risk of damage to the plant if another severe flooding event were to occur.

#### Severe weather

Intense storms can cause interruptions in the power supply, and so critical infrastructure and facilities, including those that supply water or serve as cooling centers, should have backup power sources. The Borough has identified two critical facilities that do not currently have



backup power. In particular, the Senior Center on Reading Avenue and Well 7, the second highest generating well in the Borough, lack backup power sources.

### Wildfire

The New Jersey Forest Fire Service developed the Wildfire Risk Explorer tool (<https://wrap.newjerseywildfirerisk.com/>) which includes multiple datasets to inform local risk to wildfire hazards. Both the 'Burn Probability' and 'Structure Exposure Score' identify the northeast corner of the Borough, roughly the area to the east of Weidel Drive, has having the highest exposure (low 3/10) and burn probability (low 2/10). Wildfire Fuel Hazard data set, which shows that the Borough overall is at low risk from wildfire (see Appendix Map 1). NA: Can't find this online. While these tools show a low probability of wildfire, the Borough is not risk-free. In fact, in early March of 2025, the largest forest fire in Mercer County occurred just outside of town in Hopewell Township between Woosamonsa and Poor Farm Roads burning 293 acres over two days.

Water quality and availability NA: Suggest moving this to Strategies.

There currently are four active water supply wells in the Borough. Failure of the wells may reduce the amount of water available for consumption and firefighting. In addition, during heavy precipitation and flooding events, inflow and infiltration issues result in higher rates of wastewater, which has the potential to lead to sewage overflows and other related problems.

### Infestations and invasive species

The Borough's Pin Oak trees have been impacted by Bacterial Leaf Scorch (BLS). Public Works has removed many dead and dying trees but there are 50-60 very large Pin Oaks that are outside of the Department's capabilities due to their size. Falling trees may result in damage to infrastructure and private property, as well as injuries or death in a worst-case scenario. The NJ DEP's 2020 Scientific Report on Climate Change projects that BLS may become more prevalent as temperatures increase and that other pests and diseases may also spread more easily.

Emerald ash borer was first discovered in New Jersey in 2014 and has taken a toll on the Borough's ash trees. Fallen trees also clog streams and culverts and can aggravate flooding. Regular removal of dead tree branches and trunks from streams near the entrance to culverts is a good practice to follow.

### Extreme Heat

New Jersey is warming faster than any other state in the Northeast, resulting in extreme heat events occurring more frequently, lasting longer, and impacting more areas. The summer of 2024 ranked as the third warmest summer in the state since recordkeeping began in 1895. Extreme heat events also significantly impact daily activities and public health, particularly for vulnerable populations such as the young, elderly, those with chronic health issues, and those who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Federal statistics over a 30-year period show extreme heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States.

Communities in New Jersey are particularly at risk during extreme heat events due to the Urban Heat Island Effect, when urban areas are hotter than surround rural or forested areas. While Pennington Borough's greenery and location in a rural area mitigates the most extreme impacts from heat, it is not immune from this climate hazard.



There are multiple tools that assess vulnerability to extreme heat, many of which are located on Heat Hub NJ (<http://heathub.nj.gov/>), New Jersey’s one-stop hub for information regarding extreme heat. One such tool – The Urban Heat Island Effect and Land Surface Temperature in NJ – shows land surface temperature from satellite measurements during the summer of 2022 (see map below). It shows the hottest areas in the northwest portion of the Borough, generally along the Route 31 corridor, as well as on the Pennington School campus, Toll Gate, and in the town center. These areas show surface temperatures between 113 and 123-degrees F. Areas with less impervious surface (e.g. buildings, roads) and more green space have lower temperatures.

Similarly, the 2024 Heat Severity Map shows areas that are hotter than the average temperature for the area as a whole. In the Borough, the post office, Cambridge School, Straube Center and portions of Heritage townhouses and Pennington Point show as “extreme.” Notably, other areas adjacent but important to Borough residents also show as extreme, including Timberlane Middle School, Hopewell Central High School, and the Pennington Quality Market strip mall/parking lot.

Interestingly, a tool called “Where Will Tree Planting Improve Urban Heat Health?” seeks to identify areas that would benefit most from planting more trees to mitigate against extreme heat. Pennington Borough rank 2.3 on a scale of 1-5, suggesting some improvement could be made through a tree planting campaign.

Finally, Heat Hub NJ includes a mapping application called “Chill Out NJ” that identifies places to visit in order to seek relief from the heat, but that are not necessarily official “cooling centers.” In Pennington, the Borough Library and Senior Center are both identified, as are multiple county parks and the Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library system in the surrounding area.

### Air Quality

Along with extreme heat, and wildfire in more recent years, come air quality impacts. New Jersey’s air quality will be impacted by climate change, leading to increased exposure to pollutants (e.g., ground level ozone and particulate matter), which has been associated with symptoms ranging from eye irritation to severe respiratory distress, and exacerbates pre-existing conditions. Additionally, as experienced multiple times in recent year, most dramatically in 2023, smoke from wildfires also has a significant impact on air quality and has pushed the Air Quality Index to reach “unhealthy” and “very unhealthy” levels.

### **Build Out Analysis**

The Borough is almost entirely built out with respect to impervious surface but in 2025 submitted a Housing Plan to the state the contemplates the redevelopment of multiple parcels, which would result in growth for Pennington. While vacant land is not in large supply, as Pennington considers redevelopment and rehabilitation of existing facilities it is important to contemplate how these changes, from commercial to residential or mixed use, for example, will impact the Borough’s vulnerability to climate change-related natural hazards.

Two properties with “Realistic Development Potential” (RDP) were identified in a report by the Borough Planner (Borough Council Special Meeting Minutes, 1/17/23). These properties are the

former landfill site and adjacent land owned by the Borough (Block 206, Lots 4, 5, and 12, ~8.3 acres) located between West Delaware Avenue and Broemel Place, and the Hopewell Valley Senior Center (Block 701, Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8, ~3.3 acres) located on Reading Street.

An LSRP was contracted to conduct a preliminary environmental assessment and a floodplain analysis of the former landfill site to inform future development. The assessment indicated that due to the landfill materials present on the property and environmental constraints associated with Lewis Brook, which runs through the property (wetlands, wetland transition areas, flood hazard areas and riparian buffers), development of the site will be significantly constrained unless the landfill materials are removed. The results of the environmental study will allow the Borough to ensure that future development is not vulnerable to flooding.

There is no known flood hazard associated with the Hopewell Valley Senior Center property. Redevelopment will only occur once the new senior center in Hopewell Township has been completed as a replacement for the senior center in Pennington Borough. Any future development of this and other properties should take into account the risk from those climate change-related natural hazards that will have a general impact on all properties in the Borough, such as increased temperatures and severe weather.

### **Critical Facility Identification**

In the event of a disaster, certain facilities, utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure must remain functioning to ensure the safety and quality of life of residents or for evacuation purposes. The Borough identified 34 critical facilities in the Mercer County HMP using FEMA's community lifelines approach. The locations of these facilities are shown in Appendix Map 2.

<b>Critical Facility</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>
NJ State Highway Route 31	Roadway
East and West Delaware Avenues	Roadway
North Main Street	Roadway
NJ Transit Bus Line	Transit
West Delaware Avenue Bridge over CSX railroad	Bridge
Route 31 Bridge over CSX railroad	Bridge
North Main Street Bridge over CSX railroad	Bridge
Pennington Borough Hall	Government
Pennington Fire Department	Community Facility
Pennington Police Department	Community Facility
Hopewell Valley Senior Center	Community Facility
PWC Active Wells (4)	Potable Water
Drinking Water Storage Tank	Potable Water
Curlis Avenue Pumping Station	Wastewater Utility
Sked Street Pumping Station	Wastewater Utility
Schools, Childcare, and other Education (5)	Educational Facilities

The chart above lists critical facilities that may be vulnerable to natural hazards or that are especially important for safety, quality of life, and evacuation purposes. FEMA's community lifelines approach may assist the Borough in allocating adaptation investment among critical facilities.

#### Critical Facility Vulnerability.

There are no critical facilities located in the 1% floodplains identified by FEMA or the expanded flood prone areas identified by Rutgers University (FEMA +3 ft) <https://www.njfloodmapper.org>

As noted previously, two potable water-related critical facilities may be at risk from wildfire (the Mercer County HMP does not specify which specific facilities these are). In addition, several roads in the Borough are known to flood during periods of significant rainfall, including the busy intersection of Route 31 and West Delaware Avenue, and Broemel Place, which is an important means of access for the Fire Department to the rest of the town. Finally, Well 7 and the Senior Center are vulnerable to severe weather that may impact the power supply as they lack backup power sources.

The EMS facility on Broemel Place floods during heavy rain events and is an essential facility to the Borough. Flooding limits the ability of the facility to provide critical services. The facility also lacks backup power. The EMS facility has reverted back to Borough ownership since the First Aid Squad went out of business.

#### **Climate Change Resilience Strategies**

The Borough should continue to reduce its vulnerability to the climate change-related natural hazards discussed in this report. Existing measures and potential strategies to reduce vulnerability are described below.

The most critical long-term resilience strategy is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that exacerbate climate change. Pennington Borough should do all it can to limit government emissions and promote policies that incentivize and do not hinder individual action.

#### Planning and General Strategies

Potential planning strategies include:

- 1) Increase public outreach and education about natural hazard risks, wildfire prevention, flood risk, extreme heat and other emergency preparedness topics
  - a) Document and provide access to the public, locations and circumstances of flooding in the borough.
  - b) Engage residents in documenting flooding, using the free online tool <https://mycoast.org/nj>.
  - c) Include educational material in regular borough outreach strategies, such as the borough newsletter.
  - d) Assess the needs of limited-income and socially vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, who may be at increased risk from natural hazards and work to build climate

- resilience within these communities through outreach and emergency planning at the municipal level.
- e) Target education and outreach to socially vulnerable populations and collaborate with appropriate messengers such as the Mercer County Office on Aging, Senior Advisory Board, and Board of Health to promulgate messaging.
  - f) Welcome to Pennington information package for new residents, including information on climate resilience and hazard mitigation, in addition to other important government information (unrelated to resilience), and promoting local business.
- 2) Identify and pursue funding opportunities to ensure investment in the adaptation measures needed to protect the Borough's residents and businesses from climate change-related natural hazards
    - a) Use the [NJ Climate Resilience Funding Directory](#) to identify grant and program opportunities for resilience projects.
    - b) Assess the opportunities for financing of projects that include resilience from the [NJ Infrastructure Bank](#), which includes opportunities for water infrastructure, transportation, and resilience projects.
    - c) Partner with private landowners to implement mutually beneficial risk mitigation strategies, such as green infrastructure. One example of such an opportunity is to implement the [Green Infrastructure Site Designs](#) prepared by the Watershed Institute.
    - d) Maintain and monitor climate resilience and risk mitigation actions continuously to ensure goals are met and new challenges are addressed.
  - 3) Pennington Borough is in two watersheds (HUC11) and is surrounded by another municipality and so is significantly impacted by decisions outside its borders. Consider participating in regional planning programs (such as [Resilient NJ](#)) and continue working with regional partners, such as Mercer County, Hopewell Township, and the Watershed Institute, to address climate impacts.
  - 4) Incorporate resilience and hazard mitigation into all capital projects and adopt a "dig-once" policy to align construction projects.
    - a) For example, when repaving streets, take the opportunity to install upgraded water/sewer lines; install stormwater green infrastructure that also acts of traffic calming; place sidewalks on the opposite side of the street from power lines allowing tree-planting to mitigate heat impacts on pedestrians.
  - 5) Incorporate and incentivize resilience and hazard mitigation into redevelopment projects, including green infrastructure, open space, tree planting, and shade structures.
  - 6) Engage all borough boards, commissions, and committees in climate resilience; each has purview over resilience and risk mitigation activities, and/or represents communities/sectors that are impacted.
  - 7) The Borough lacks an adopted Disaster Debris Management Plan.
  - 8) The Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership (GMPHP) has released a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). It does not include climate change related health issues but it is described as a living document that will be amended as additional data and resources are identified. Our Board of Health representative on the GMPHP could suggest the addition of a climate change section in an expanded CHIP referencing the Health Addendum to the Science Report. <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/items/8d5e35b0-bf75-40a0-9955-dff93eae3711>

Topics to cover are the effects of climate change on:



- a) Increase in vector-borne diseases
- b) Stress from extreme heat or cold
- c) Declining air quality
- d) Mental health coping with a disaster

### Flooding

The Borough has taken many steps to improve its resilience to flooding, one of the most urgent natural hazards it faces. Among other measures, a Municipal Stormwater Management Plan was adopted in 2005, updates to the Stormwater Control and Flood Damage Prevention ordinances have continually been made to remain in compliance with NJ DEP rules, and in 2020, an Impervious Surface Assessment and Reduction Plan for the Borough was prepared by the Watershed Institute, which can be used to assess and guide future policies. However, the Borough continues to experience flooding during extreme rainfall events and new tools and data are available, and a regional stormwater study is forthcoming. Pennington should consider developing updated and climate-informed ordinances that will improve resilience and reduce flooding. Potential strategies to improve resilience to flooding include:

- 1) Work with the county and state to address flooding on Delaware/Rt. 31, on North Main St., and regarding other state/county-owned infrastructure which reduce efficiency of the provision of emergency services.
- 2) Increase the drainage or absorption capacity of the current stormwater management system, prioritizing stream sheds with flood prone locations (add/enhance detention or retention basins, relief drains, vegetated planters or swales, perform logjam and debris removal, enhance culverts etc.).
  - a) Most, if not all, stormwater management infrastructure in Pennington will have been built based on requirements that are out of date and do not consider increasing precipitation from climate change. Such infrastructure becomes pinch points, or fails to manage stormwater, during extreme events and may flood adjacent areas, including transportation infrastructure. The borough should assess all stormwater management infrastructure and prioritize the replacement/ appropriate sizing or increasing of drainage/absorption capacities of those deemed inadequately designed.
- 3) Update ordinances to restrict increases in and reduce impervious surfaces throughout the Borough.
- 4) Ensure that redevelopment and construction of new critical facilities, utilities, and community facilities meets or exceeds statewide minimum stormwater standards and occurs away from floodplains.
- 5) Conduct a hydrology and hydraulic study of the watersheds feeding into our tributaries to identify the locations with the most severe flooding and to determine appropriate mitigation actions.
- 6) Identify and address stormwater inflow and infiltration issues during heavy rainfall events.
- 7) Address the following specific areas of deficient stormwater pipes and drainage
  - a) the pipes to the landfill from the Route 31 and West Delaware Ave intersection,
  - b) the driveway bridge on the landfill property,
  - c) the tunnel from the landfill under the CSX tracks,
  - d) the channel under the CSX railroad tracks at Knowles and Bixby,
  - e) the bridge tunnel and pipes at the Green Street and Broemel Place intersection,

- f) the tunnel under the garage on the Blackwell property,
- g) the culvert under the rear yards of 20 and 22 East Franklin Avenue.
- 8) The Lewis Brook bridges under Green Street, Main Street and Eglantine Avenue are old and in a poor state of repair.
- 9) Inflow and infiltration issues result in higher rates of wastewater during heavy precipitation and flooding events.
- 10) Consider the use of open space funds to acquire properties both inside and outside of the borough to acquire properties to 1) attenuate existing flooding, and 2) that if developed would result in additional flooding with the borough.
- 11) Consider the acquisition/purchase or elevation/moving of the most flood-prone residential properties, including but not limited to the one repetitive loss property in the borough
  - a) Convert properties to open space designed to flood during extreme events, and mitigate flooding in the area.
  - b) Offset housing and ratable loss with increased density in the town center and appropriate redevelopment areas.
- 12) Consider daylighting streams in the borough that have been piped. Returning streams and buffers to natural function improves flood attenuation and slows stream flow, reducing flood impacts. Co-benefits of such action include heat island mitigation, additional open space, improved water quality, restored habitat, and neighborhood beautification.
- 13) Add green infrastructure throughout the borough, prioritizing public lands to lead by example.
  - a) Work with Watershed Institute to utilize public green infrastructure for use as demonstration projects, education, and training opportunities
  - b) Resurface impervious pavement with pervious surfaces, such as borough-owned parking lots, to promote stormwater infiltration.
  - c) Incorporate stormwater green infrastructure in road designs that serve to mitigation stormwater flooding, act as traffic calming, and beautify neighborhoods.
  - d) Adopt and implement a Complete and Green Streets policy.

### Severe Weather

The Borough has made concerted efforts to ensure that its critical facilities can remain functional in the event of a power interruption. So far, the municipal building, which serves as a cooling center, traffic signals at Main and Delaware and Route 31 and West Delaware, and other critical facilities have been equipped with auxiliary power systems.

Potential strategies to improve resilience to severe weather include:

- 1) Work with PSE&G to ensure that the electrical grid is more resistant to severe weather, including high-speed winds (replace utility poles, reinforce key infrastructure, bury power lines, manage vegetation/prune trees near power lines, etc.)
- 2) Ensure that remaining critical infrastructure facilities have auxiliary power systems installed and regularly exercised.
- 3) Increase the Borough's long-term resilience through distributed renewable energy.
- 4) Assess the vulnerability of the Borough's Historic District and other cultural resources to determine if adaptive measures are needed.

- 5) Assess the opportunity to enhance borough hall/library into a resilience hub. Resilience hubs are typically existing community-serving facilities that are upgraded to provide local communities with shelter and electricity during extreme heat events, poor air quality, and disasters. Resilience hubs should also act as education centers, where community members can go to learn about climate-related hazards and other effects, how to prepare and respond to them, and enhance community connections to increase adaptive capacity.
- 6) Ongoing natural weather hazards warrant the need for additional integration to allow for better emergency preparedness.
- 7) Backup power sources are necessary to maintain critical services for critical facilities. The Senior Center on Reading Avenue lacks a backup power source. The Senior Center is used as a warming and cooling center. The facility can also be used as backup emergency shelter

### Extreme Heat and Air Quality Impacts

The Borough has been recognized as a Tree City for over 30 years and canopy or tree cover was estimated at 80-90% in the 2016 Community Forestry Plan. The presence of a healthy urban tree canopy is extremely helpful in mitigating the urban heat island effect. Approximately 92% of the Borough is considered urban, and 7.5% upland forest (NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover Mapping, 2015). While the opportunities to address air quality impacts, which largely occur at a regional scale, are limited, there are some actions that Pennington can take.

Potential strategies to improve resilience to heat and air quality include:

- 1) Maintain or increase vegetated cover and shade tree plantings where possible to mitigate the urban heat island effect, especially adjacent to walkways and the shopping district.
- 2) Promote the use of heat-reflective building materials, shade structures, and other heat adaptations.
- 3) Plan for extreme temperature events to protect Borough residents that are uniquely vulnerable to extreme heat waves by promoting awareness of cooling centers and the signs and symptoms of heat related illness.
- 4) Coordinate with PSE&G to limit unnecessary tree loss, and to promote appropriate tree planting.
- 5) Prioritize tree planting in areas with hotter than average temperatures, including the post office, Cambridge School, Straube Center, and portions of Heritage townhouses and Pennington Pointe.
- 6) Enforce anti-idling regulations, which negatively impact local air quality, particularly for vulnerable populations (e.g youth, elderly, those with pre-existing conditions).
- 7) Promote “green transportation” such as walking, biking, public transit, and electric vehicles, including the infrastructure to support and incentivize those uses. For example:
  - a) Install EV charging stations
  - b) Ensure that sidewalks and walkable areas are shaded
  - c) Install bike lanes
  - d) Work with NJ Transit to install shade-providing bus shelters at stops in the borough, or if needed, install shade and seating at bus stops.
- 8) The Borough’s pin oak trees have been impacted heavily by bacterial leaf scorch (BLS). This has resulted in many stands of dead or dying trees, presenting a risk of falling branches and trees on infrastructure and private property. In a worst-case scenario, falling trees may result

in injuries or death. Public Works have removed many trees but estimates there are 50-60 very large pin oaks remaining that are outside of the Department's capabilities due to their size. Ash trees have also become a problem due to the emerald ash borer invasion.

### Wildfire and Drought

While Pennington has a low risk of wildfire, recent events demonstrate a need to remain vigilant. Additionally, while drought response is largely addressed by state resources, there are actions that the borough can take to ensure that we do our part to limit extensive impacts.

- 1) Ensure that public buildings are resistant to fire and manage risk from wildfire on an ongoing basis using forestry management strategies, wildfire fuel management, etc.
- 2) Consider participating in the Firewise Communities Program, a foundational action for community wildfire preparedness, and one included in the Sustainable Jersey program.
- 3) Prepare a drought emergency strategy, which may include:
  - a) criteria or triggers for drought related actions,
  - b) a communication plan,
  - c) agreements for secondary water sources,
  - d) mandatory water conservation measures for non-essential usage beyond state minimums (also a Sustainable Jersey action).

### **Impacts on the Other Elements of the Master Plan**

Land Use Plan Element. The Land Use Plan Element informs and underpins the Borough's zoning and potential redevelopment areas. As discussed in this analysis, natural hazard vulnerability is a key consideration for the Borough as it plans for redevelopment. Climate change-related natural hazards are relevant to all land uses in the Borough.

Community Facilities and Services Plan Element. This element analyzes the existing and proposed locations of educational, cultural, health- and safety-related, and other community facilities in the Borough. The risk to community facilities from natural hazards and opportunities to improve their resiliency are discussed in this vulnerability assessment.

Public Works Services Plan Element. Risk from natural hazards, especially flooding, is a key concern for the Utility Service Plan Element. The element considers the need for and location of water supply and distribution facilities, drainage and flood control facilities, sewage and waste treatment, stormwater management facilities and others. Heavy rainfall and flooding, damage from severe storms, and pollutant infiltration may impact the continued operation of the Borough's utilities.

Mobility Plan Element. Extreme rainfall and flooding events and wind storms, most notably during tropical storm Ida in 2021, have historically impeded circulation in the Borough. The assessment of existing and future development should address mobility concerns due to these stressors.



Economic Development Plan Element. The Economic Plan Element considers all aspects of economic development in the Borough. Economic activity is impacted by natural disasters when businesses suffer damage or losses or business is interrupted by power loss or road closures. Resilience planning for businesses includes working with the county, state and landowners to ensure that stormwater is managed to reduce flood disruption and damage and that trees are planted to reduce daytime heat in business areas.

Historic Preservation Plan Element. Pennington's Crossroads Historic District consists of properties and landmarks whose historic character and architecture the Borough seeks to preserve. Severe storms, wind, flooding, and other natural hazards have the potential to cause damage to the historic district and its properties. The Borough and the Historic Preservation Commission should explore how to improve the resilience of these properties, and repair them if damaged, while maintaining their historic character.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Element. Flooding and damage from other hazards to the Borough's open spaces and recreation areas may negatively impact quality of life. The design of open spaces and recreation facilities can incorporate natural hazard adaptation measures as well as tree canopy and stormwater management measures that have the potential to enhance the Borough's overall resilience. Open space acquisition that can prevent future or reduce existing flooding or local heat, or protect water quality should be prioritized.

Conservation Plan Element. The Conservation Plan Element addresses the conservation, preservation, and utilization of the Borough's natural resources. Climate change and natural hazards are projected to impact wildlife habitats, water supplies, forests, and other natural resources. Conservation efforts can be strategically planned to increase the resilience of Pennington's environment and community.

Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element. The assessment of opportunities related to renewable energy systems, water conservation and reuse, the interactions between buildings and the environment, and the Borough's carbon footprint are fundamentally linked to future climate impacts and the costs associated with those impacts. Strategies discussed in the Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element have the potential to reduce the Borough's contributions to climate change, reduce future costs and improve its long-term resilience to natural hazards.

### **Consistency with Other Plans**

This assessment is intended to help Pennington Borough reduce its vulnerability to climate-change-related natural hazards by identifying risks and suggesting strategies to improve resilience. This document builds upon and is consistent, coordinated, and integrated with the Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan as well as the Borough's Master Plan, Community Forestry Management Plan, and the Municipal Stormwater Management Plan.

In 2025, Pennington Borough joined with Princeton, Hopewell Township, and Lawrence Township in a collaborative effort to address stormwater management requirements for the Stony Brook Watershed. The Borough Council approved a resolution authorizing participation in this

regional initiative to develop a comprehensive Watershed Improvement Plan (WIP). The partnership will allow the four municipalities to share resources and expertise while working with a respected watershed management firm to collect essential technical data needed to meet state stormwater discharge requirements and plan for climate change. Work on the project is expected to be completed by fall 2026, in advance of state deadlines for required reports. The resulting data and recommendations will help Pennington identify effective strategies to improve water quality, address pollutants, and mitigate flooding issues within the Stony Brook Watershed, benefiting both residents, businesses, and the environment for years to come.

With an understanding that mitigating for climate impacts is generally understood to be credit positive, the Borough will continue to implement and explore policies that improve resilience to climate change-related natural hazards and that align with and, where appropriate, exceed state and federal minimums. The findings and recommendations described here, in addition to the best available science, will be used to guide the Borough's resilience efforts and should be incorporated into future planning efforts and updates.

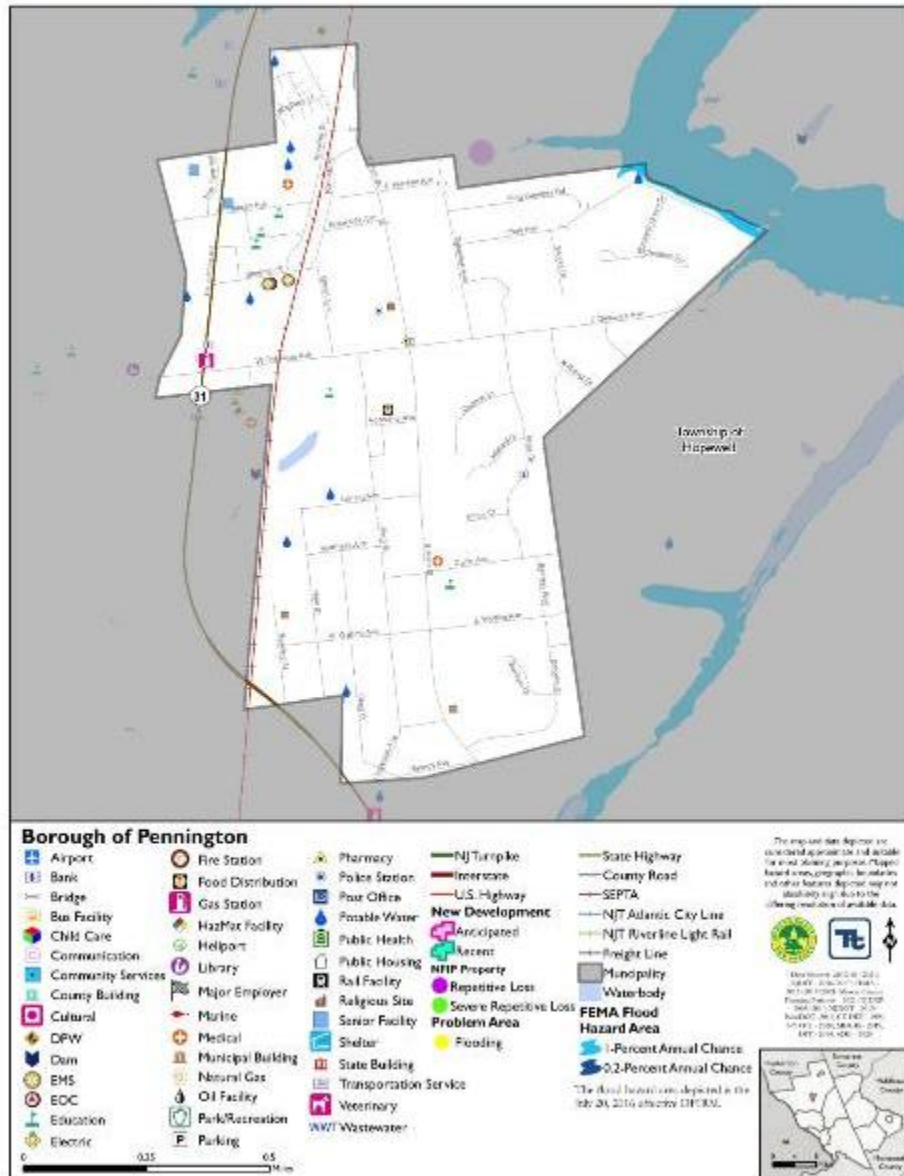
**APPENDIX AJ:** I compressed all the maps to shrink the document some more. I'll return them to full strength for the final document. All Maps except 1 and 3 added by Nick Angerone

## 1. Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan Critical Facilities Map



### SECTION 9.9 - BOROUGH OF PENNINGTON

**Figure 9.9-1. Borough of Pennington Hazard Area Extent and Location Map 1**

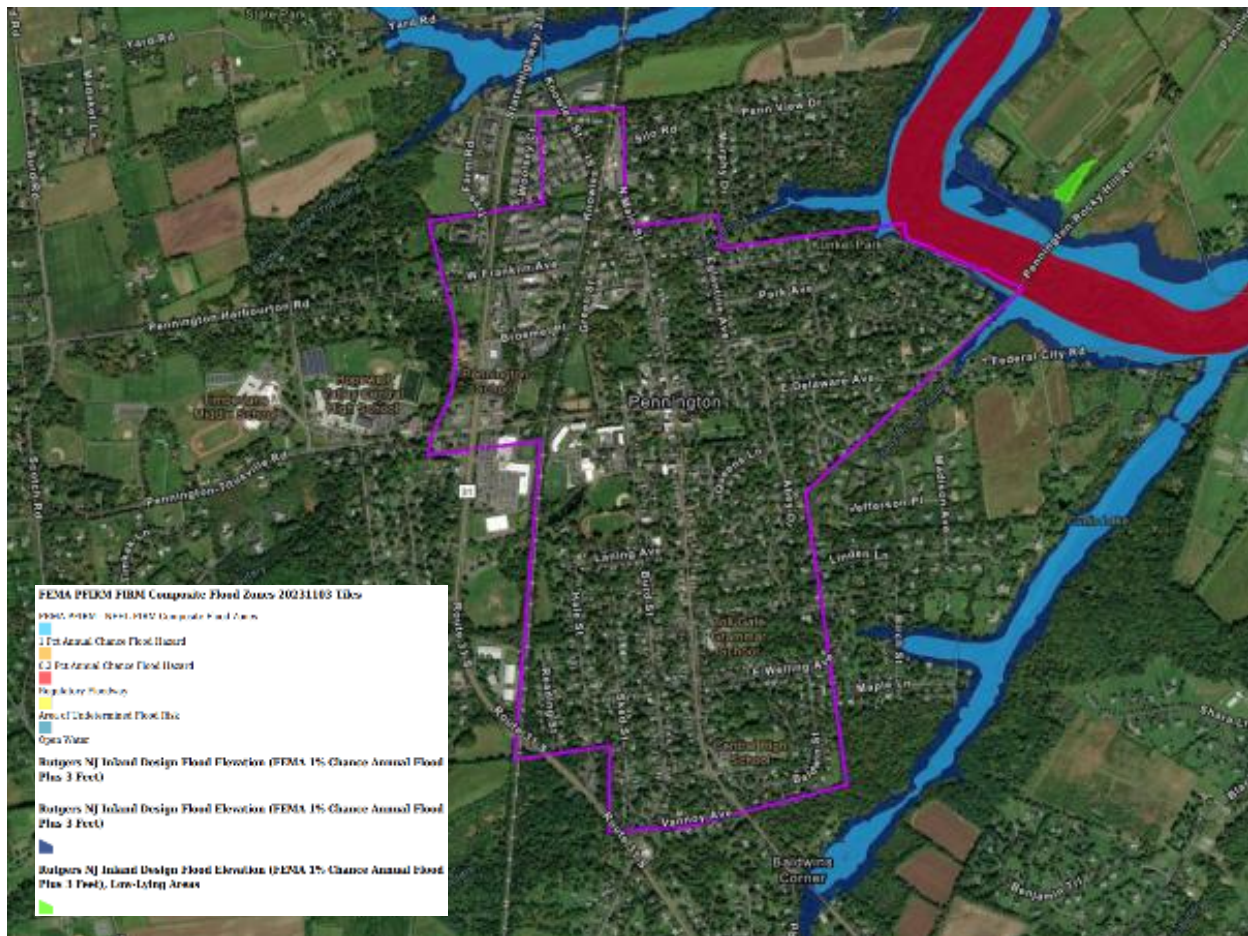


DMA 2000 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update - Mercer County, New Jersey

9.9-15

October 2021

## 2. Flood Hazards



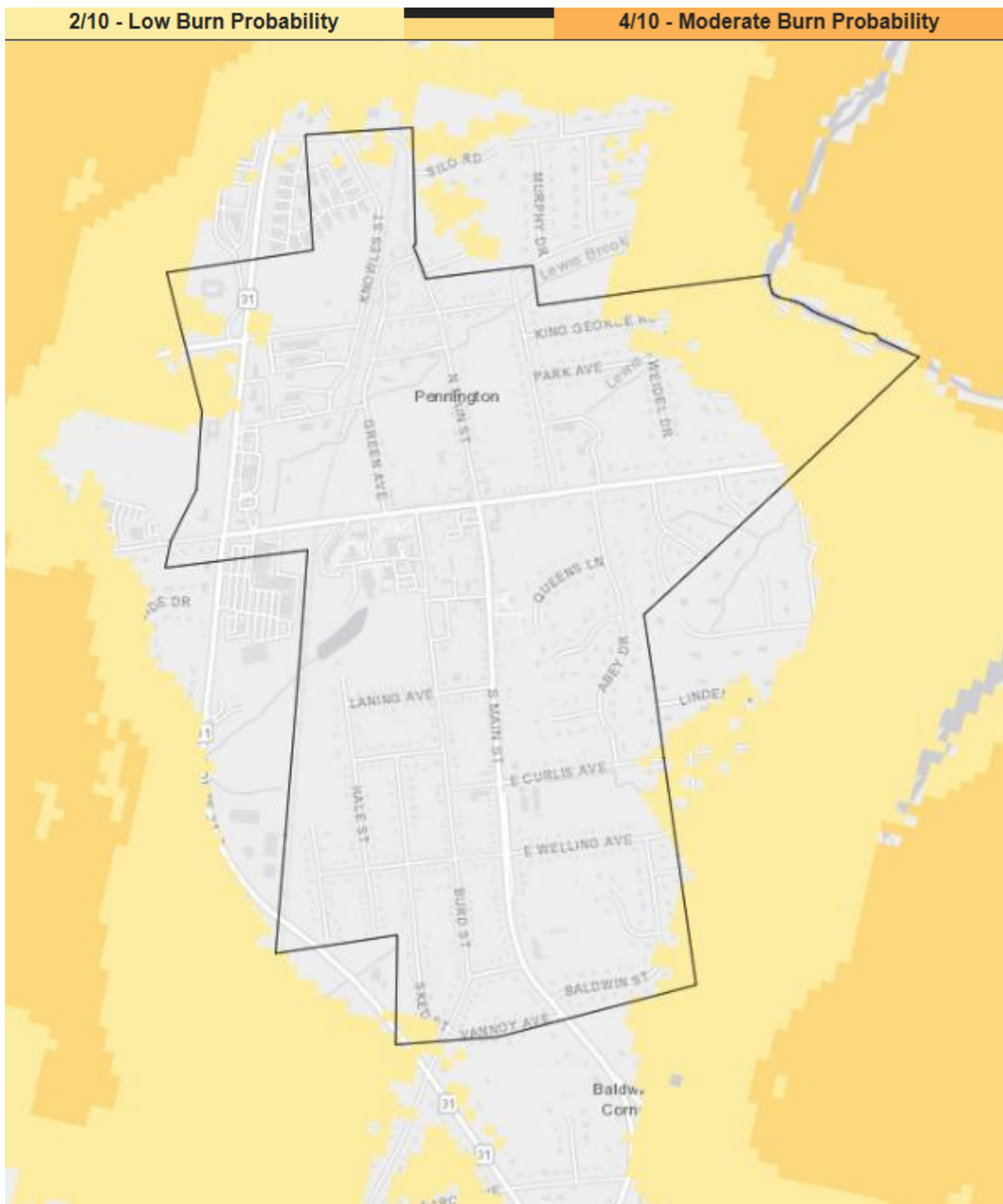
NJ FloodMapper (<https://www.njfloodmapper.org/>)



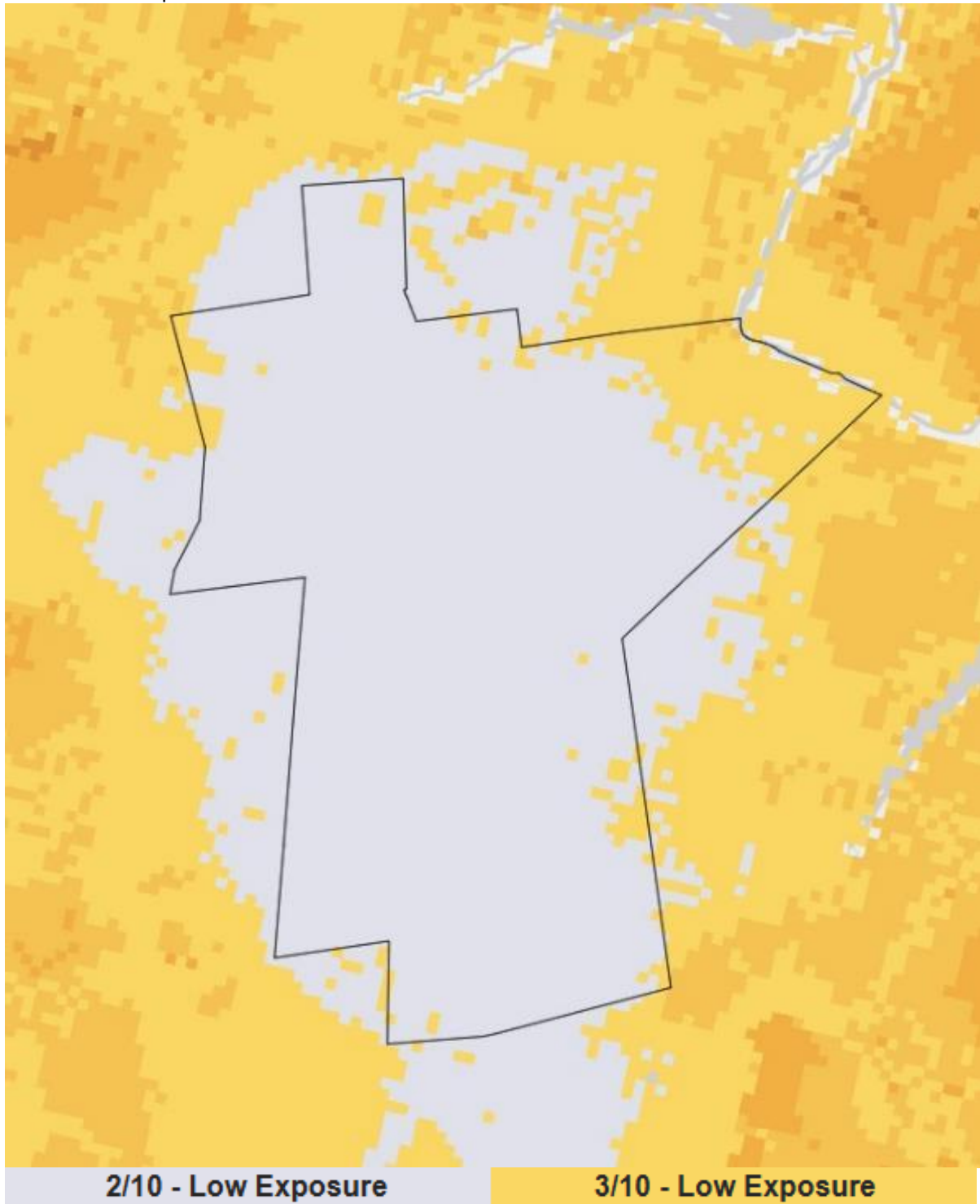
### 3. Wildfire Fuel Hazard Overlay Map



#### 4. Burn Probability

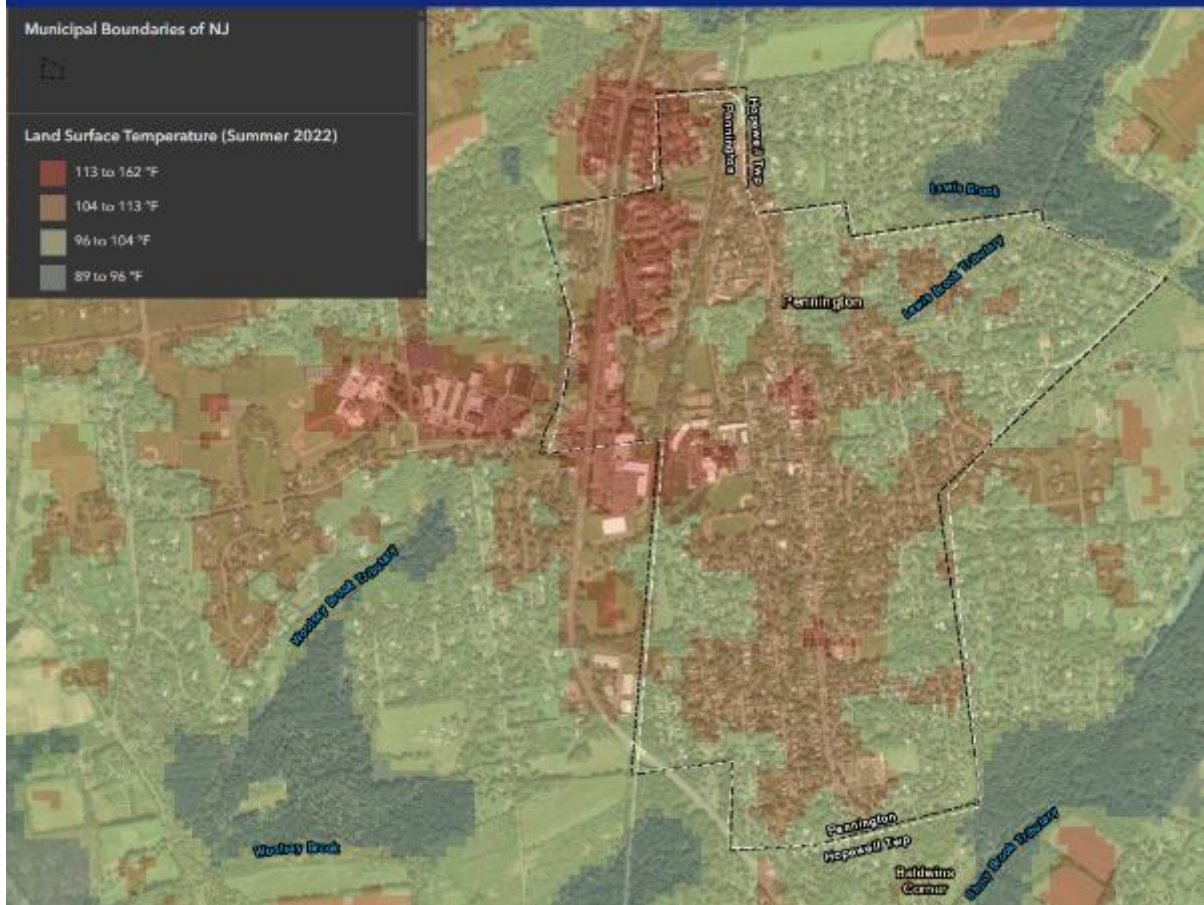


5. Structure Exposure Score



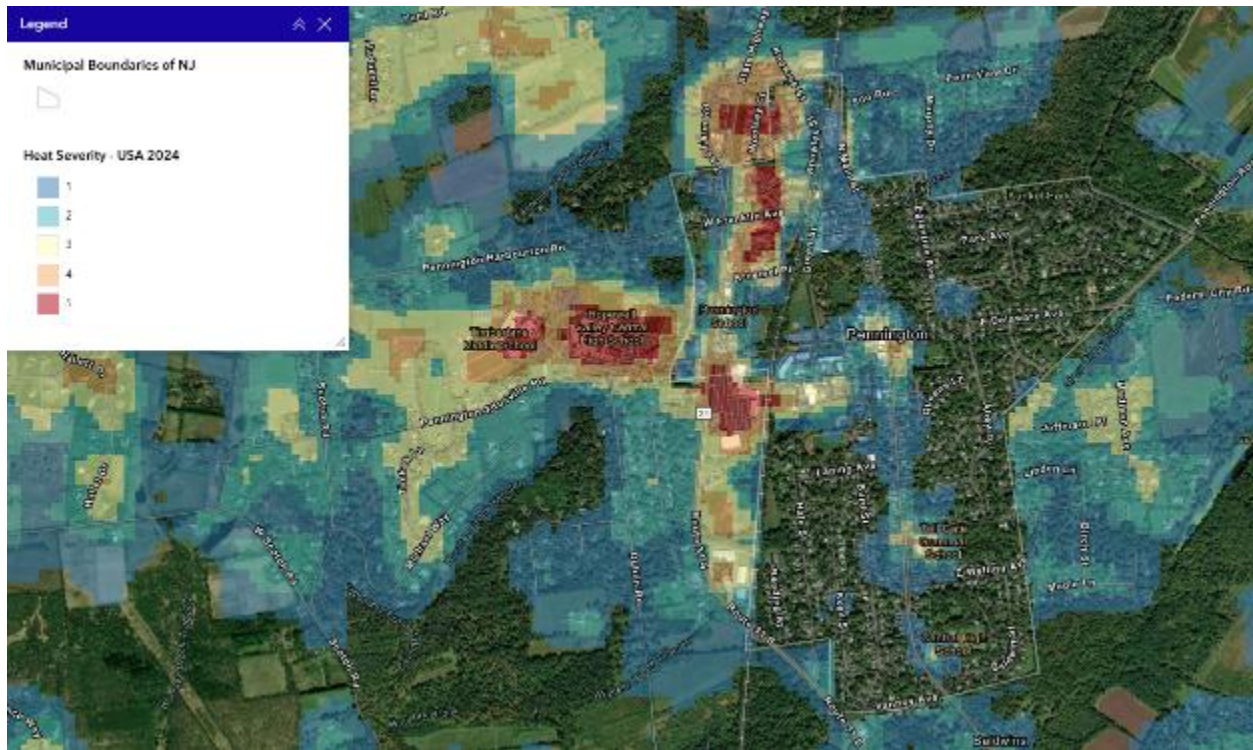
6. Urban Heat Island and Land Surface Temperature

## The Urban Heat Island Effect and Land Surface Temperature in New Jersey





## 7. Heat Severity Map

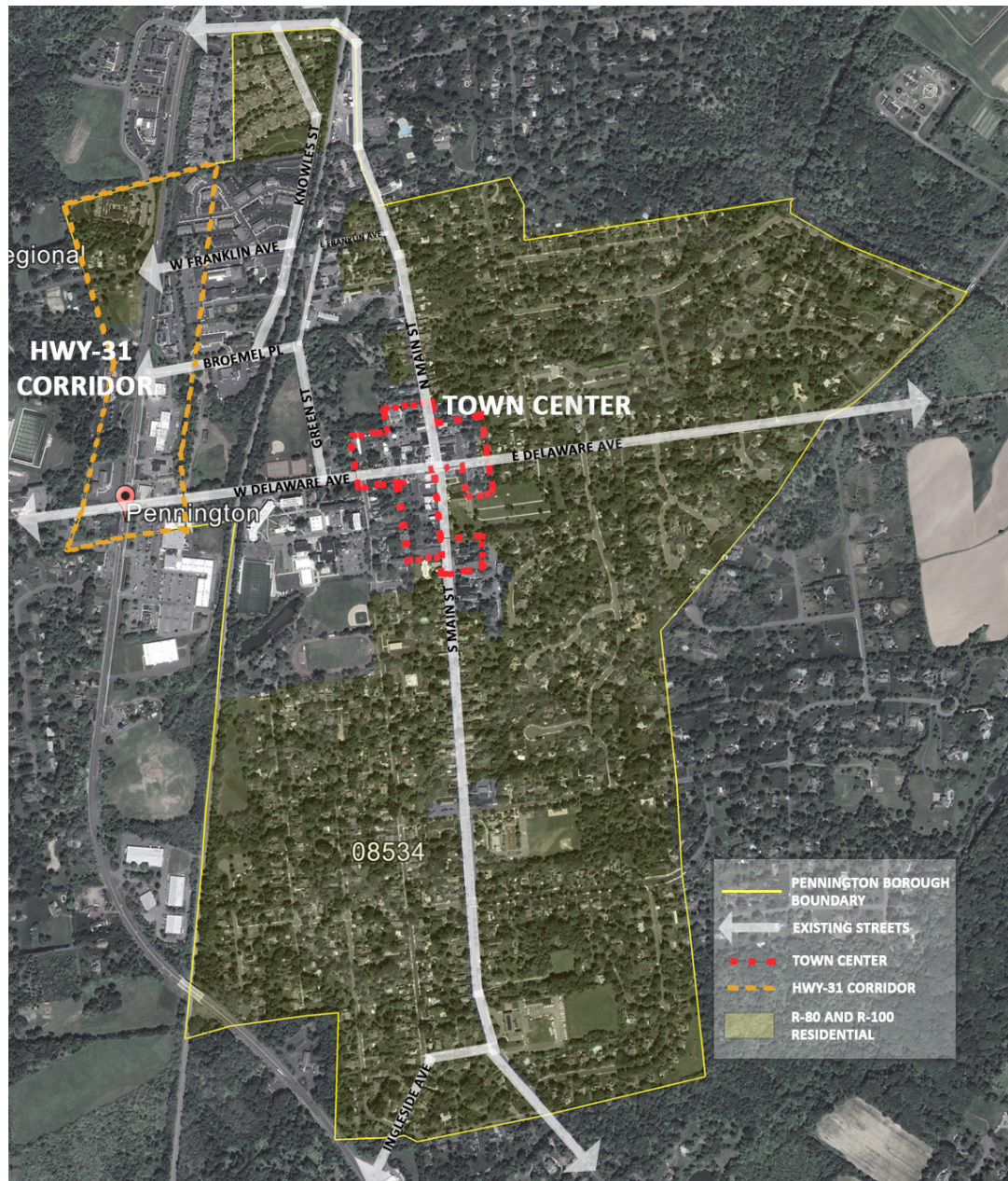




## Pennington Borough Master Plan Survey Results Summary

The goal of this survey is to identify key issues and priorities to inform the development of Pennington Borough's Master Plan, specifically the Land Use Plan, the Economic Development Plan and the Housing Plan.

The survey consists of 5 brief sections and a total of 18 questions with multiple choice, visual preference choices and open-ended responses.

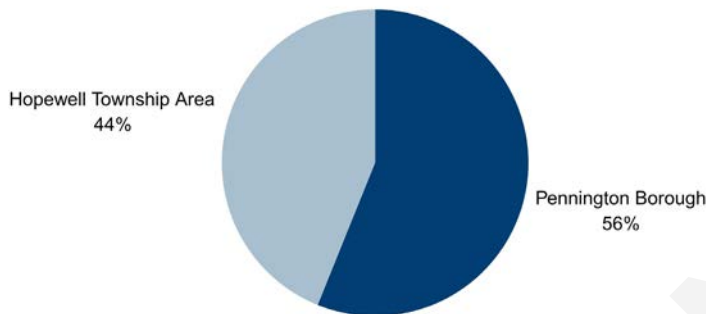


## Introduction

This survey was conducted from July 28 to August 15, 2025 and received a total of 550 responses. Participants live in Pennington Borough (56.8%) and the Hopewell Township Area (38.6% from Hopewell Township and 4.6% were single responses including Hopewell Township locations as well as areas immediately adjacent). Results are based on Survey Total (550 Responses), Pennington Borough (309 Responses) and Hopewell Township Area (241 Responses).

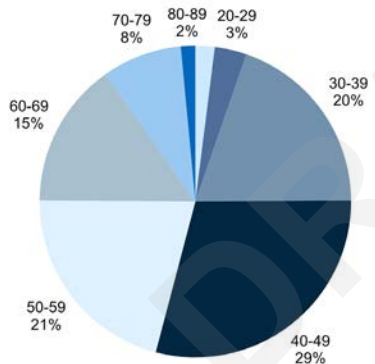
## Survey Demographics

### Q16. Do you live in Pennington Borough?

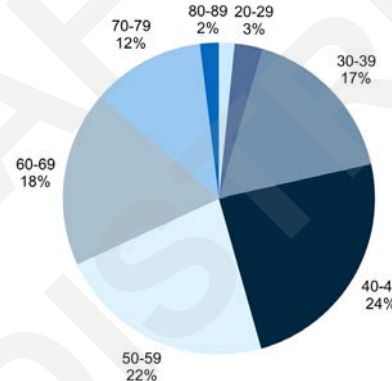


### Q17. What is your age?

Age Distribution  
Survey Total

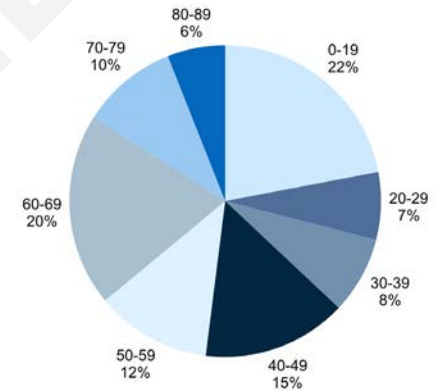


Age Distribution  
Pennington Borough



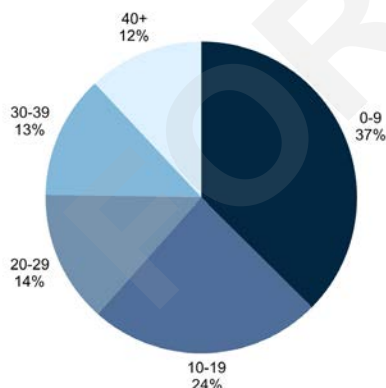
Age Demographic of  
Pennington Borough

ACS 2023 5-year

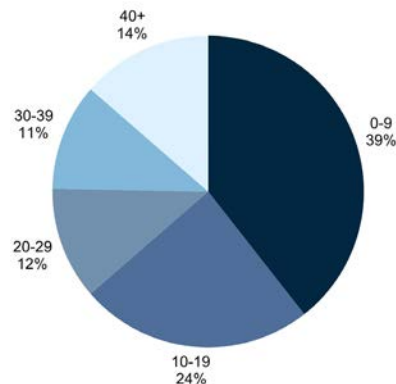


### Q18. How long have you lived in the area?

Survey Total



Pennington Borough



#### About Survey Analysis:

Quantitative & Qualitative Analysis  
(Thematic Analysis)

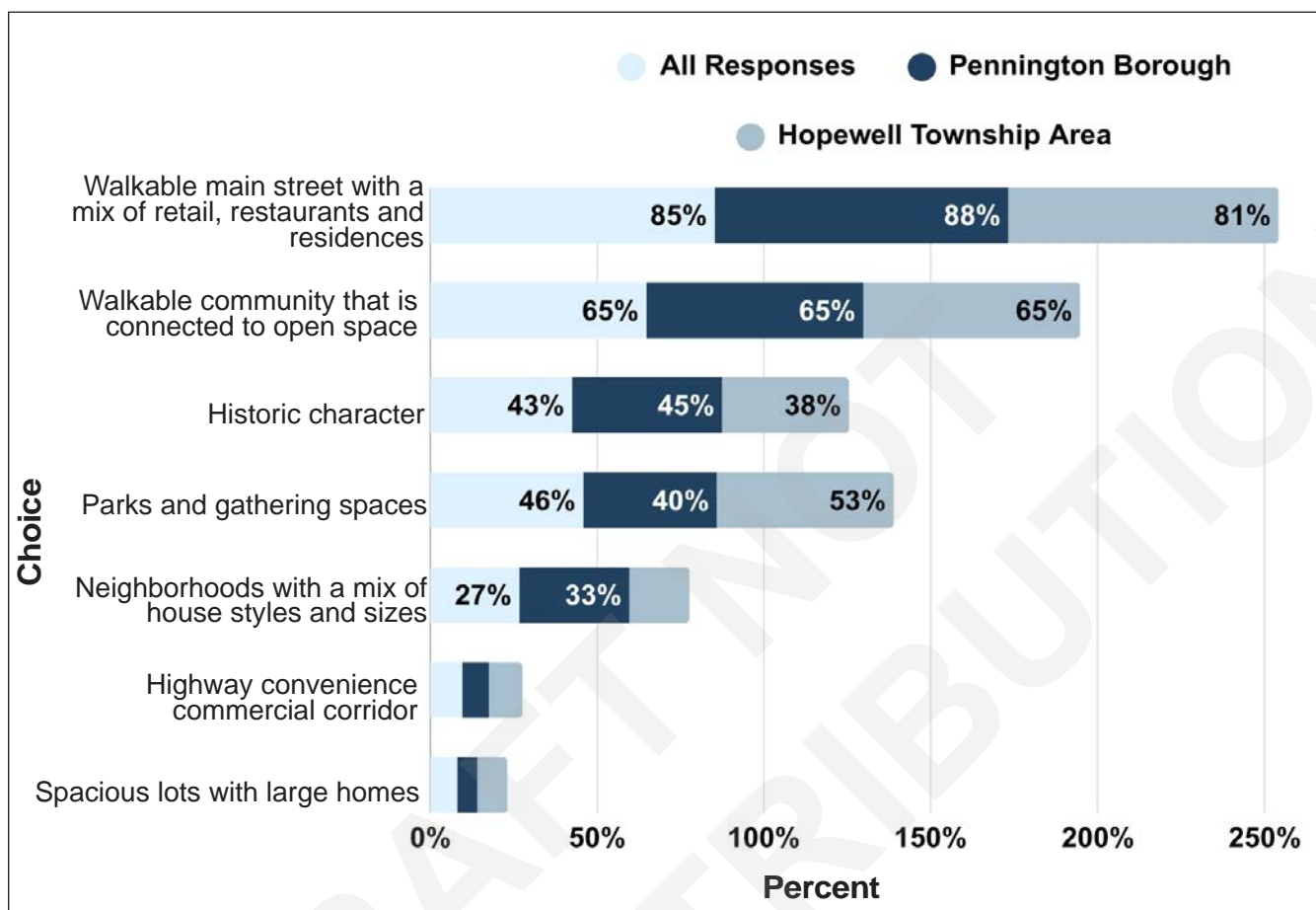
AI Disclosure: How AI was used in  
this survey and Analyst's specific  
methodology:

After foundational quantitative and  
qualitative analysis was established,  
AI was utilized as a word processing  
and data processing tool within  
an extensive analog process  
and oversight to sort data, create  
thematically analyzed summary  
drafts and draft categorical lists.



# Q1. Which of the following attributes do you value most about Pennington Borough?

Multiple Choice / Select Three



Participants were asked to select images that represent what they value most about Pennington. The top (3) selections were:

**85% chose “Walkable main street with a mix of retail, restaurants and residences”**



**65% chose “Walkable community that is connected to open space”**



**46% chose “Parks and Gathering Space”**

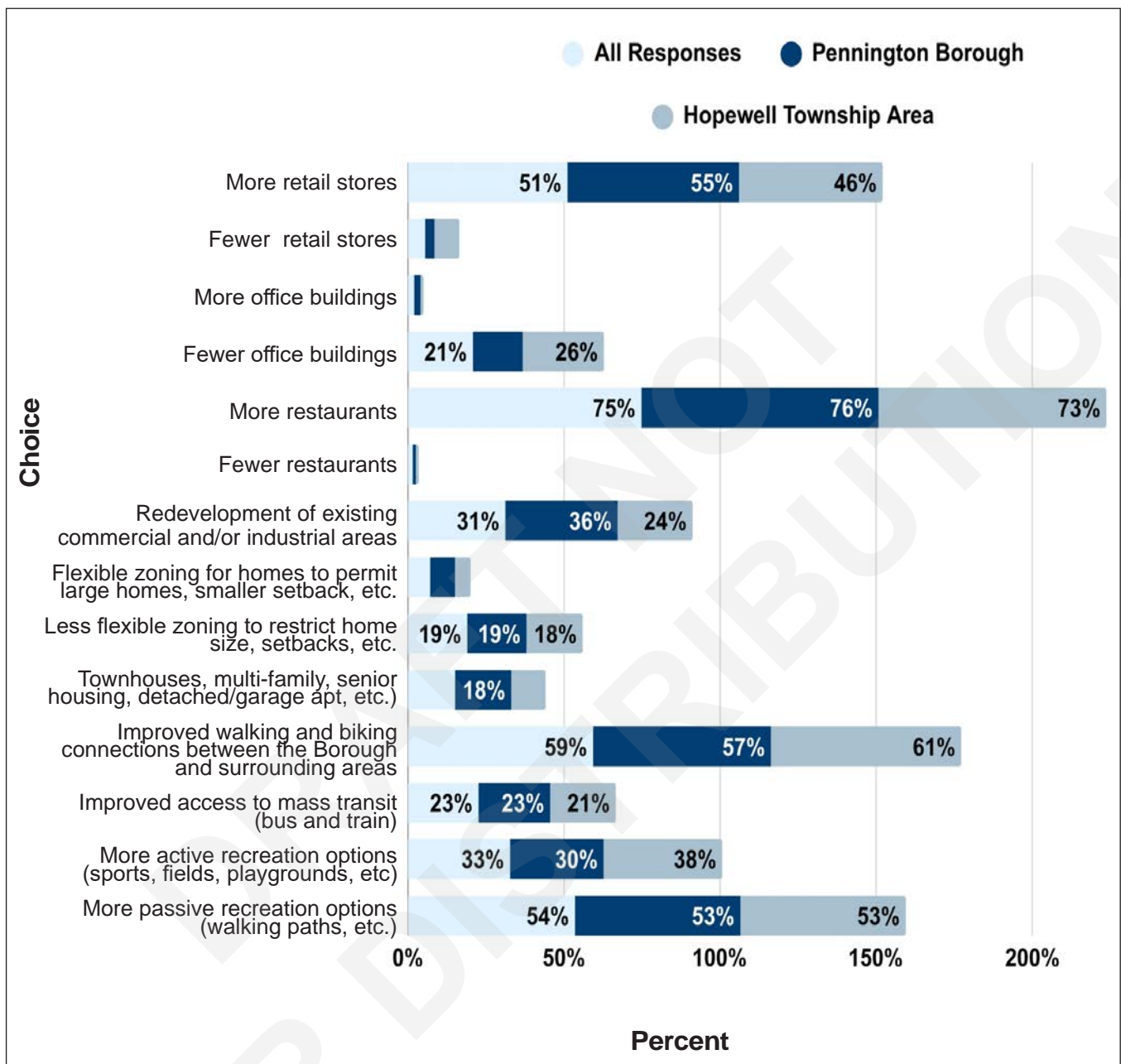


## Write-in Responses (“Other”)

- low criminal rate
- Open space and parks
- Safe, comfortable Bicycle infrastructure
- Single family homes that are reasonably sized and priced. No need for huge homes but some people don’t want townhouses.
- It’s like Mayberry !
- ability to use a bicycle for transportation
- a good dedicated coffee shop

## Q2. What changes would you like to see in Pennington Borough?

Multiple Choice



Respondents' top four selections align with the purpose and vibrancy respondents envision for Town Center as well as the priorities for the Hwy-31 Corridor.

The request of Fewer Office Buildings suggests a preference for public-facing businesses over private, professional spaces. In terms of development, respondents tend to prefer re-use of existing properties over new construction. There is a clear interest in more housing choices reflecting the respondents' concerns over affordability, while respondents are divided over zoning preferences. Overall, responses indicate mixed feelings on development, from opposition and distaste for styles and aesthetics to an interest in more housing choices and the desire for greater affordability and variety of living options. Respondents request the addition of active recreation to (in both Town Center & Hwy-31 Corridor). Lastly, respondents expressed a need for better bus and train access to connect the Borough to a wider region.

## Q2. What changes would you like to see in Pennington Borough?

Multiple Choice

### Write-in Responses ('Other')

- ""The Blackwell property at the bottom of the hill on North Main Street is a safety/environmental/flood/health hazard + eye sore, why the [expletive] are these decrepit old buildings being allowed to rot away in the middle of the borough?""  
""cleanup the Blackwell mess""
- ""NO MORE BUILDING!!!! The infrastructure cannot handle it. Flooding will continue in low lying areas! Please keep this in mind. Do not develop anymore!""  
""NO MORE CONDOS AND/OR DEVELOPMENTS!""  
""No development""
- ""Closure of Ingleside to Rt 31 traffic.""  
""Safer access to 31 via traffic lights, right turn only, etc. Better traffic flow near middle & high school""
- "Primary Concern: the Pennington Shopping center is disgusting. Needs to take on a face lift similar to what the Newtown, Pennsylvania shopping received in the past few years."
- ""DOGE audit of the school district budget to keep them from hemorrhaging costs""  
""lower property taxes""
- "Places for teens or older children to gather, places of interest for kids to encourage pos interactions, more shops or hobby type places like beading/pop up shop opportunities, dessert shops, toy store (miss Twirl)!"
- "Rigorous planning review of any permitting and uses to better assure compliance with zoning. Zoning written that is more airtight so that zoning officer(s), planning committees and permit requesters have no flexibility in interpretation without a variance process"
- "Better flood management through daylight of Lewis Brook where possible"
- "Fix the sidewalk and install proper curbs on a Main Street to protect our children going to toll gate"
- "Places for teens or older children to gather, places of interest for kids to encourage pos interactions, more shops or hobby type places like beading/pop up shop opportunities, dessert shops, toy store (miss Twirl)!"
- "Primary Concern: the Pennington Shopping center is disgusting. Needs to take on a face lift similar to what the Newtown, Pennsylvania shopping received in the past few years."
- "Rigorous planning review of any permitting and uses to better assure compliance with zoning. Zoning written that is more airtight so that zoning officer(s), planning committees and permit requesters have no flexibility in interpretation without a variance process"
- ""cleanup the Blackwell mess""  
""Redeveloping the old garage area but not into large homes or condos. Preferably mixed use much like the center of Main. A few rentals with retail below and some open space""
- ""Fix the sidewalk and install proper curbs on a Main Street to protect our children going to toll gate""  
""Improve infrastructure. Bury power lines""
- ""NO MORE CONDOS AND/OR DEVELOPMENTS!""  
""No development""
- ""Safer access to 31 via traffic lights, right turn only, etc. Better traffic flow near middle & high school""  
""Bridge over 31 on Delaware at light for safe crossing - especially w new housing coming and now Starbucks- it's getting really dangerous""
- "Regarding more/less retail stores and restaurants: I would like to see the current empty storefronts to be filled, as opposed to more physical buildings/structures built."
- ""Bowling, gymnastics, ice skating, roller skating""  
""Gym or ymca with a pool""
- "More in-borough events (Pennington Day/Farmers Market) within the central business area to encourage economic development"
- ""More flexible zoning to permit ADU's, multi family density""  
""Less mass housing complexes.""
- ""A dedicated coffee shop""  
""Keep the grocery store""
- "Walking and biking connections across rt 31 are especially needed. Would also be amazing to make the commercial area along 31 more walkable with plantings/barriers/shade"
- "More educational/ developmental center for kids and teenagers"



## Pennington Borough Town Center



### ***Question 3: Visual Preference Survey: Elements that could make Pennington Borough's Town Center more vibrant.***

Participants were asked to rate the desirability of images of elements that they feel could make Pennington Borough's Town Center more vibrant.

### ***Question 4: What would bring activity and purpose to the Town Center?***

Open-Ended Response: Participants were asked to share what they think would bring activity and purpose to the Town Center.

### ***Question 5: What kinds of businesses and restaurants do you want to see in Pennington's Town Center?***

Open-Ended Response: Participants were asked to share what kinds of businesses and restaurants they would like to see in Pennington's Town Center.

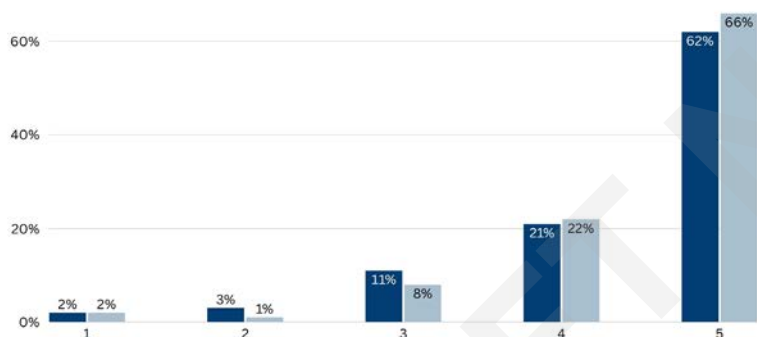
### Q3. Elements that could make Pennington Borough's Town Center more vibrant.

Visual Preference Survey: Rate on a scale of 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



#### ***Pedestrian ways with a mix of businesses, residences, and outdoor dining***

This single preference is the embodiment of the town's vision: It directly creates the outdoor seating and shop space, achieves the desired car-reduced environment, and represents the key mixed-use/density goal.



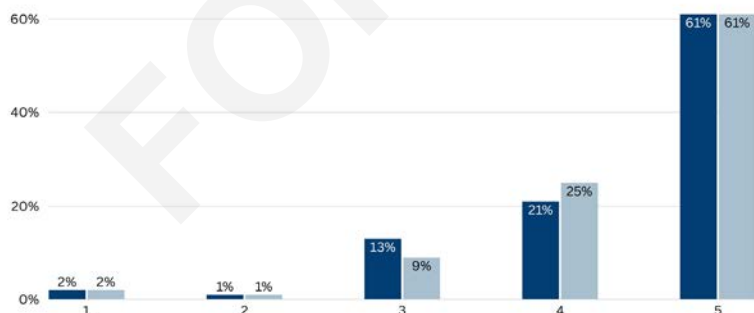
1 Least Desirable

5 Most Desirable



#### ***Sidewalks with space for shade cover, bicycle racks, seating and outdoor dining***

Directly fulfills the demand for comfortable, shaded seating and public amenities. It also provides crucial space for restaurants to expand operations via outdoor dining.



1 Least Desirable

5 Most Desirable



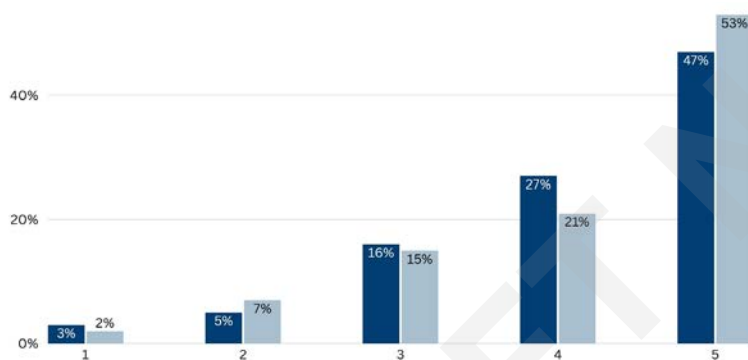
### Q3. Elements that could make Pennington Borough's Town Center more vibrant.

Visual Preference Survey: Rate on a scale of 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



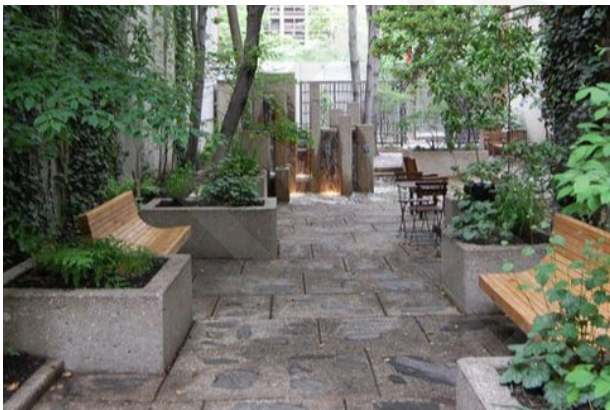
**Sense of place created by streetscaping, plants, trees, seasonal lighting, and public art**

Representative of respondents' request for outdoor spaces to casually socialize and creates an engaging and biophilic experience of the Town Center.



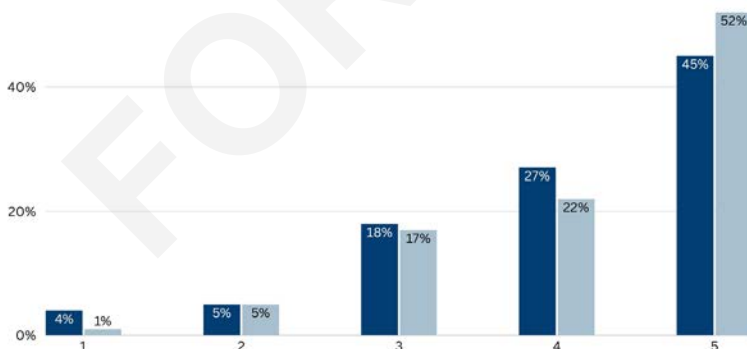
1 Least Desirable

5 Most Desirable



**Pocket parks and/or 'greenways' that connect to areas around the center**

Provides the small parks and green spaces requested. These spaces also serve as informal community gathering spots or family play areas.



1 Least Desirable

5 Most Desirable

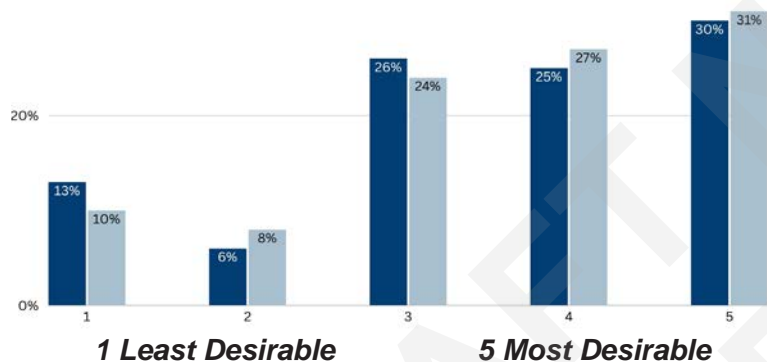
### Q3. Elements that could make Pennington Borough's Town Center more vibrant.

Visual Preference Survey: Rate on a scale of 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



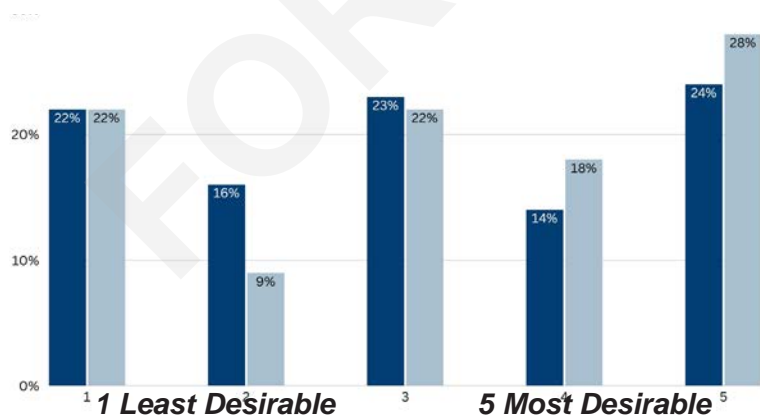
#### **More mixed-use development**

This is a primary tool for achieving the necessary density. By integrating residences above retail, it ensures a built-in customer base to support the increased number of shops and restaurants desired.



#### **Accessible sidewalks with improved pedestrian crossings that are visible and engaging**

Directly addresses safety and accessibility concerns. By improving crossings, it safely links the town center's attractions to the surrounding neighborhoods, supporting the goal of walkability.



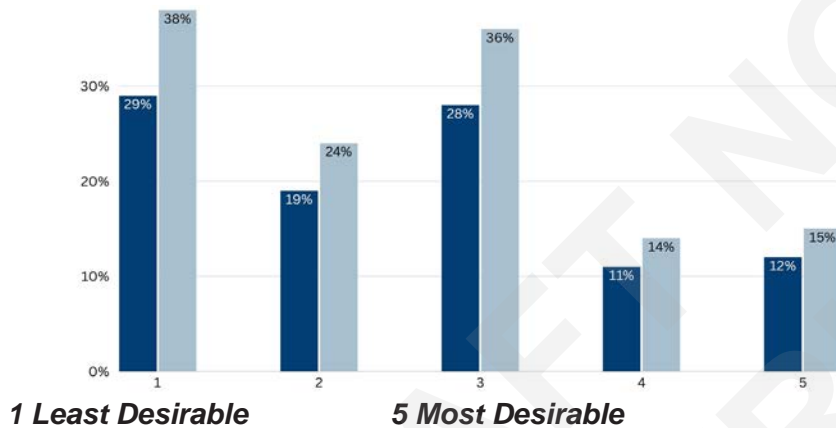
### Q3. Elements that could make Pennington Borough's Town Center more vibrant.

Visual Preference Survey: Rate on a scale of 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



#### Inns and bed-and-breakfasts

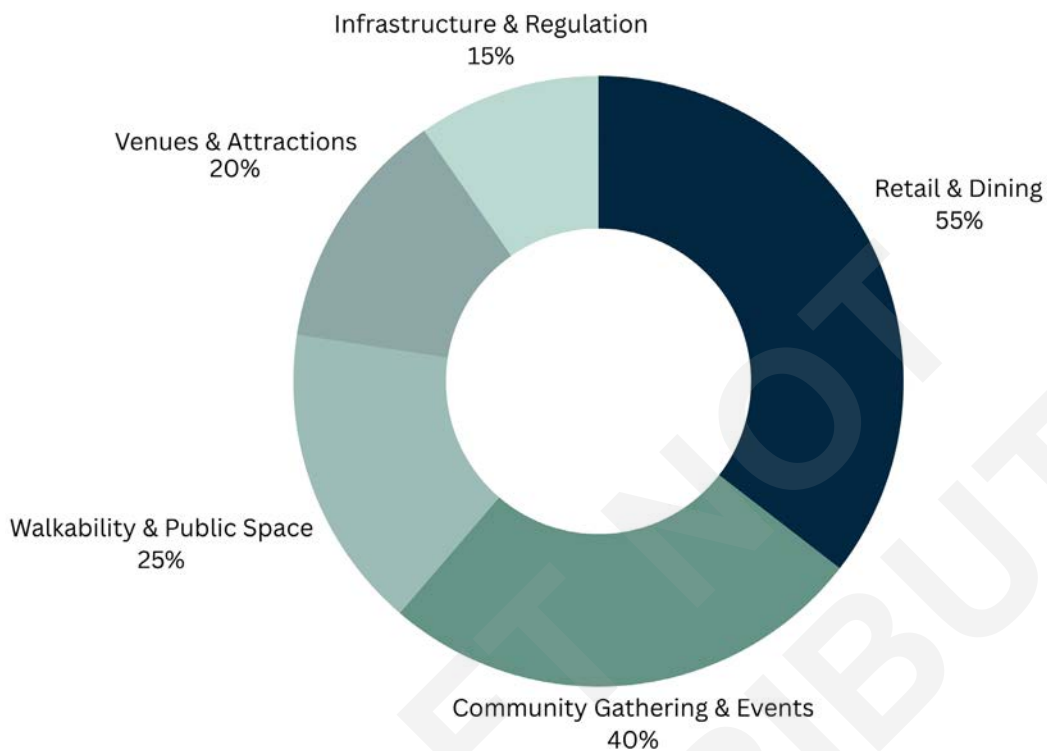
Attracts out-of-town visitors, creating external revenue to support local shops and restaurants. It adds a new type of specific hospitality amenity to the list of town attractions and can contribute to the social and dining scene respondents desire.



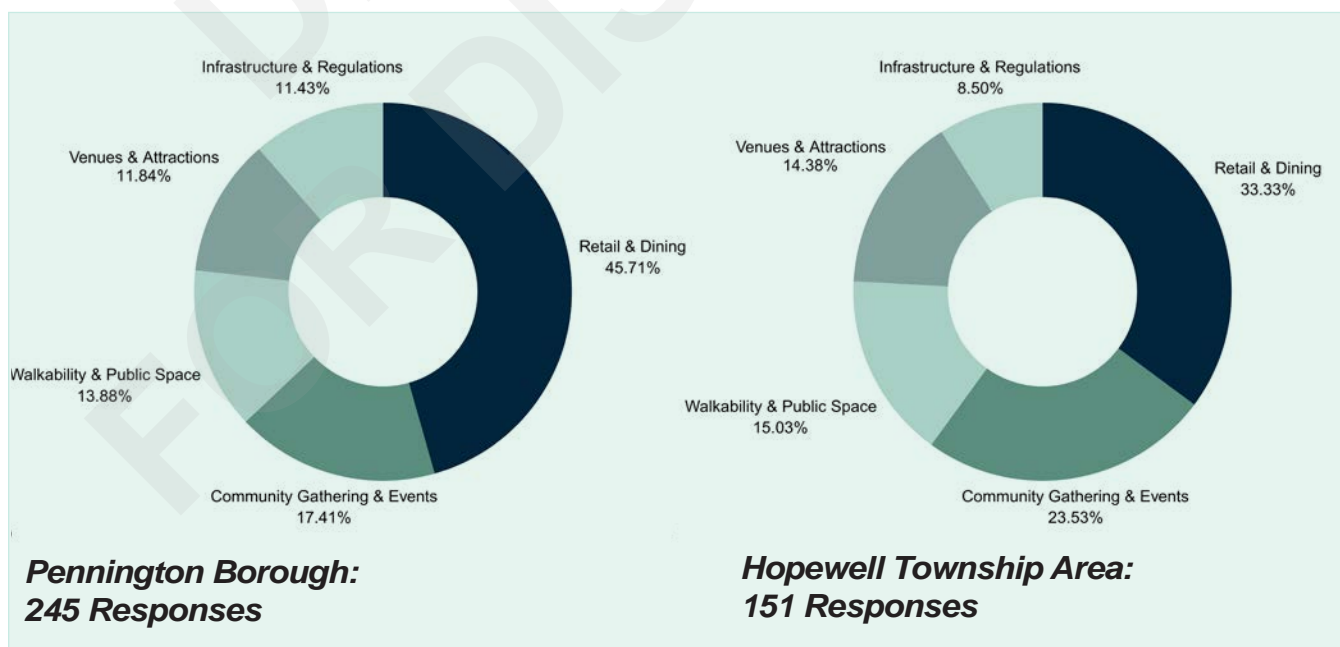


#### Q4. What would bring activity and purpose to the Town Center?

Open-Ended Response



**Survey Total:**  
**395 Responses**



#### **Q4. What would bring activity and purpose to the Town Center?**

*Open-Ended Response*

### **Summary of Responses for Activity and Purpose**

#### **1. Retail & Dining Expansion**

Approximately 55% of Responses

The most requested element is an increase in diverse and high-quality commercial options, primarily focused on food and retail, with a strong preference for locally-owned, independent businesses.

- **Increase Restaurant Quantity & Quality:** More restaurants in general, including both sit-down dining and affordable, quick, casual dining and breakfast options.
- **Locally-owned:** Respondents showed a strong preference for locally-owned options across all business varieties.
- **Diversify Offerings:** More diverse types of eateries (e.g., sandwiches/salads/burgers, casual dinner, different cuisines).
- **Essential Daily Draws & Everyday Needs:** High-quality, independent cafes and coffee shops, ice cream/dessert shops, and bakeries, as well as stores for everyday needs, including a hardware store.
- **Nightlife:** More bars, pubs, and upscale bars, often tied to the need for more liquor licenses (acknowledging the town's current status).
- **Brewery/Brewpub:** Specifically mentioned as a family-friendly anchor with a liquor license.
- **Outdoor Dining:** Encourage and allow more outdoor seating for restaurants (e.g., sidewalk dining) with comfortable seating and shade cover.
- **Youth-Oriented:** Respondents desire children's stores and playspaces.
- **Incentivize Business:** Offer tax benefits and incentives for small, independent businesses.
- **Longer Hours:** Stores should be open for longer hours to accommodate family lifestyles.
- **Destination Feel:** The goal is to make the Town Center a "destination" comparable to Hopewell Borough, Lambertville, or New Hope.

#### **2. Community Gathering & Events**

Approximately 40% of Responses

These responses center on more opportunities for residents to gather, connect, and participate in shared community experiences. This addresses the respondents' desire to actively use the town center to build a stronger sense of community and provide activities for all ages.

##### ***Events and Arts***

Respondents request frequent and diverse events and activities throughout the year to foster a greater sense of resident engagement and make the town center a hub for connection. Suggestions include utilizing existing or potential new spaces (like the former bank or an arts center) for performances and exhibitions.

##### ***Multi-Generational Activities***

The need for activities and spaces catering to different age groups is a major priority. For families and children, respondents seek more family-friendly dining, playgrounds near the town center, and dedicated activity spaces like a kids' art studio or an indoor play area. For older children and teens, there is a clear request for a Youth Center or safe, engaging hang-out spots. Across all ages, the desire for a formal Community Center is strong, signaling a need for an indoor hub for meetings, clubs, and year-round activities that foster resident engagement.

#### **Q4. What would bring activity and purpose to the Town Center?**

*Open-Ended Response*

##### **Community Gathering & Events (cont'd)**

- **Gathering Spaces:** There is a demand for general gathering spaces (e.g., public squares, plazas, or piazza-like areas) where people can sit and socialize.
- **Dedicated Spaces:** High demand for a “Community center,” an “Arts Center,” or repurposing existing structures (like the former bank building) for mixed-use events, theater, or cultural space.
- **Events and Culture:** Many want more community events and festivals, including live music/concerts (especially outdoors), seasonal & cultural festivals, art shows, cultural lectures, and family-friendly activities like outdoor movie nights.
- **Themed Gatherings:** Organize car shows, sidewalk sales, cultural lectures, holiday walks, and town BBQs, game nights
- **Increase Frequency:** Host more frequent community events, festivals, and year-round festivities.
- **Targeting Different Ages:** Specific requests were made for places and activities catering to families with young children, young adults, and a dedicated teen center or activity space (e.g., escape rooms, craft studios). Community Center: Build a Community Center with space for meetings, activities, clubs, and events.
- **Social Mixers:** Organize events for younger residents and new residents to meet current residents.
- **Community Engagement:** Address low volunteerism (e.g., for the first aid squad) and improve existing annual events (e.g., Memorial Day parade, Pennington Day).

##### **3. Walkability & Public Space**

Approximately 25% of Responses

These responses centered on creating a more pedestrian-focused, inviting, and comfortable outdoor environment that is walkable and safer for both pedestrians and cyclists. This includes demands for improved sidewalks, bike lanes, better connectivity, and measures to slow traffic on Main Street.

A major element is a central, public gathering space—often envisioned as a town green, plaza, or park with seating, tables, benches, and shade. This space should feature elements like shaded seating, benches, and tables to encourage residents to sit, socialize, and linger. It is intended to support both spontaneous meet-ups and organized events. Overall, respondents prioritize a “biophilic natureful town center” with green spaces and a pleasant streetscape.

- **Pedestrian Focus:** Calls for more walkable areas, including “no-car zones” ,temporary street closures (like closing Main Street on weekend evenings), “walkable pedestrian-only street”, “fewer cars, more pedestrian areas” and safer sidewalks and bike paths are common.
- **Connectivity:** Requests for better bike racks and safe bike lanes connected to the Town Center.
- **Parking Management:** The recognition that parking is a major drawback that needs to be solved (whether through better enforcement or dedicated parking alternatives) to allow for increased foot traffic.
- **Green Spaces:** People want the addition of small, accessible green spaces, “pocket parks,” or a central “town green” with shaded seating, tables, and benches for passive recreation.
- **Biophilic Design:** A few responses emphasized improving streetscapes with attractive landscaping, flowers, and prioritizing a more “natureful” town center.

## **Q4. What would bring activity and purpose to the Town Center?**

*Open-Ended Response*

### **4. Venues & Attractions**

Approximately 20% of Responses

Many respondents suggested specific anchors or uses for existing or potential buildings to draw daily visitors.

- **High-Impact Venues:** Repeated requests include a movie theater, an Arts Center/Theater (with specific suggestions to convert the former bank building), and a brewery/pub.
- **Farmers Market:** A consistent, strong suggestion is to move the Farmers Market into the town center (e.g., a car-free square) to serve as a weekly anchor event.
- **Fitness and Wellness:** A local gym or specialized studio (like yoga/barre) was mentioned as a desirable, daily-use business.

#### **Specific Suggestions:**

- “Turn the bank into a community theater/event/mixed-use space.”
- “Bring the farmers market into the town center or at Tollgate on the weekend.”
- “A brewery that is family friendly and promotes local eateries.”
- “We need an independent coffee shop and a local pub where friends and family can safely walk to and from.”
- “Art center - bookstores.” Many respondents suggested specific anchors or uses for existing or potential buildings to draw daily visitors.

### **5. Infrastructure & Regulation**

Approximately 15% of Responses

These responses highlight existing challenges that must be addressed to support a more vibrant town.

- **Parking:** Lack of easy and adequate parking is consistently cited as a major drawback and a factor hindering new business success, along with a need for better enforcement.
- **Traffic Management:** There’s a call to address traffic speed and reducing cut-through traffic from Route-31.
- **Infrastructure:** Improve and expand sidewalks, install bike lanes, and add bike racks.
- **Business Environment:** Concerns were raised about restrictive zoning, antiquated regulations (e.g., grease trap ordinance), and the need for tax benefits/incentives to attract and retain small businesses.
- **Maintenance:** Invest in regular maintenance, clean-ups, lighting, and attractive storefront facades.
- **Transit Connection:** Create better access or connection to regional public transportation (SEPTA/ NJ Transit).
- **Sustainability Program:** Implement a comprehensive sustainability program (better recycling, green energy, community cleanups).
- **Green Infrastructure:** Develop walking and bike paths connecting to nature, and prioritize green community initiatives (e.g., community gardens).
- **Physical Environment:** Preserve unique historic character.

## **Q5. What kinds of businesses and restaurants do you want to see in Pennington's Town Center?**

Open-ended Response

### **Summary of Responses: Business Types**

#### **1. Food & Dining**

This was the most dominant group of requests, with respondents overwhelmingly focused on expanding and diversifying the town's food and drink options.

- **Cafes, Coffee Shops, & Bakeries: 25.9%** This was the single most requested item, emphasizing a desire for "cozy" gathering places, coffee shops, bakeries, and dessert shops.
- **Dining Varieties: (General): 22.2%** A large number of responses made a general request for "more sit-down restaurants," "casual dining," and "finer dining," particularly options open for dinner and with outdoor seating.
- **Diverse Food Choices: 21.0%** Respondents desire a broader variety of diverse food options, including delis, healthy/salad options, and a wide range of ethnic cuisines (especially Indian, Mexican, and Thai).
- **Bars, Pubs, & Breweries: 12.9%** Respondents frequently requested "pubs," "breweries," "beer gardens," and "wine bars," often linking this to a need for more liquor licenses and a more active "night life."

#### **2. Retail & Shops**

This category includes all requests for non-food retail and specific practical services.

- **Specialty Retail & Other Services: 18.0%** This is a broad category that includes requests for boutiques (clothing, home goods), art galleries, artisan/craft shops, gyms/wellness studios, markets, and banks.
- **Bookstore: 12.5%** The desire for a "local bookshop" was so high it stands as its own major category. It was often paired with the request for a coffee shop.
- **Hardware Store: 5.1%** A specific, practical request from many respondents who miss and/or wish for a local hardware store.

#### **3. Community & Family-Focused**

This category includes businesses aimed at children, teenagers, and families.

- **Kid, Teen, & Family-Focused Businesses: 10.4%** This theme includes requests for "ice cream" or "candy" shops, "toy stores," "arcades," and other activity-based centers for young people and families to gather.

##### ***Business Types Sorted by Mentions:***

Coffee Shop / Cafe:	18.0%	Arcade / Teen & Kid Activity Center:	2.1%
Bookstore:	12.5%	Market / Specialty Food Store:	1.8%
Bakery / Dessert / Pastry Shop:	6.0%	Mexican Restaurant / Taqueria:	1.6%
Bar / Pub / Tavern:	5.1%	Toy Store:	1.6%
Hardware Store:	5.1%	General / Convenience Store:	1.4%
Brewery / Brew Pub / Beer Garden:	4.6%	Wine Bar / Wine Shop:	0.9%
Ice Cream / Candy / Sweets Shop:	3.5%	Thai Restaurant:	0.7%
Breakfast Spot / Diner:	3.5%	Greek / Mediterranean Restaurant:	0.7%
Healthy / Salad / Smoothie Shop:	3.0%	Bagel Store:	0.7%
Deli / Sandwich Shop:	2.8%	Donut Shop:	0.5%
Boutique (Clothing/Home/Gifts):	2.5%		
Gym / Fitness / Wellness Studio:	2.5%		
Art Gallery / Artisan / Craft Shop:	2.3%		
Indian Restaurant:	2.1%		



## **Q5. What kinds of businesses and restaurants do you want to see in Pennington's Town Center?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Detailed Responses: Unique or Noteworthy Suggestions**

#### **Experiential & Activity-Based Businesses**

- “Maker Space” / “Apprenticeship Shops”: Multiple respondents suggested a place offering classes and services, such as a “Maker Space” for artists and STEM programs, or “apprenticeship shops” for learning skills like “sewing, blacksmith, pottery, cooking, drawing, woodworking.”
- “Creative Reuse Center”: A store for reselling art and craft supplies.
- “BYO Arcade”: One user specifically suggested a concept like “Yestercades,” a “bring your own” arcade.
- “Small Movie Theater” / “Community Theater”: A desire for local entertainment venues, including a small cinema or a community theater for adults.

#### **Modern & Niche Business Models**

- “Refillery” Store: A store specializing in refillable, bulk goods where customers bring their own containers for items like “soap, oats, beans, rice, etc.”
- “Food Hall” Concept: Several people suggested a food hall, similar to the “Ferry Market in New Hope,” with multiple small food vendors in one space. One person specifically suggested repurposing the “former borough hall or the Blackwell home” for this.
- “Food Trucks”: A suggestion for a rotating selection of food trucks that “leave town by nightfall.”
- “Winery Tasting Room”: A niche spot for local or regional wine tasting.

#### **Community-Centric & “Third Space” Ideas**

- Coffee Shop Hybrids: Rather than just a standard coffee shop, suggestions included a “coffee shop that transforms into [a] cute evening cafe with wine and open mic nights” or a “coffee shop even better if it had a space for kids to play!”
- “Old Fashioned Malt Shop”: A nostalgic “soda fountain” type place envisioned as a “cool place for high school kids to work” and a gathering spot for all ages.
- “A Place for Public Clubs”: A dedicated community space, with one respondent citing “Flemington DIY” as an example.
- “Greener Town Center” for Kids: A unique suggestion combining urban planning with business, proposing “a greener ‘town center’ where kids can meet up” alongside “a small convenience-style store where kids can buy snacks after school.”

#### **Overarching Sentiment**

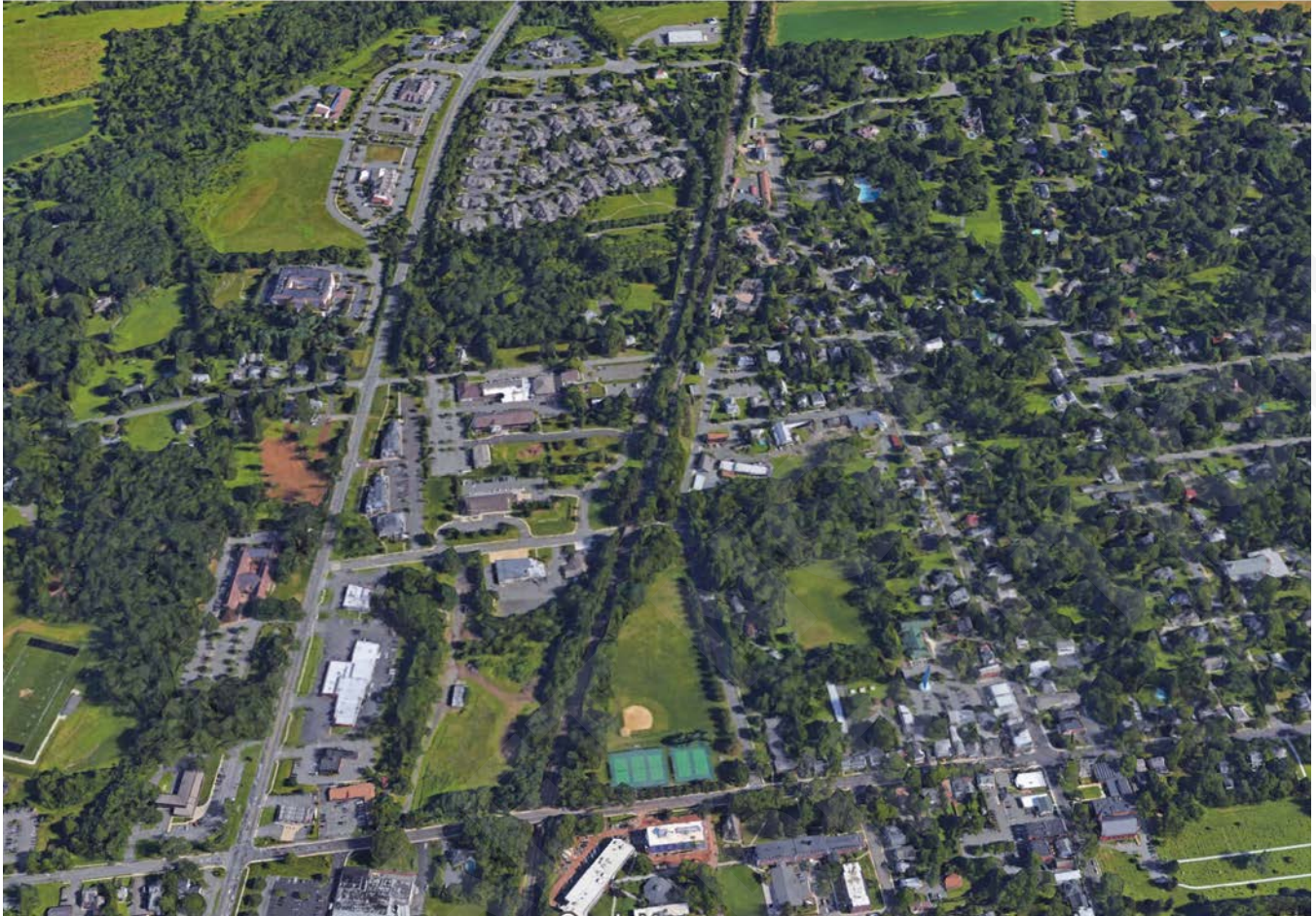
This theme represents the style of business respondents want to see, which applies to all other categories.

- **Local/Independent “Mom & Pop” (Anti-Chain): 12.2%** Respondents repeatedly stressed a preference for “locally-owned,” “independent,” and “small businesses” while expressing strong opposition to “chain stores” and “franchises.”

#### **Other Key Sentiments**

- **Criticism of Existing Businesses:** A common sentiment was frustration with the number of hair salons. (“Less beauty parlors!,” “No more hair salons!!!,” “Not another salon.”).
- **Outdoor Space:** The desire for “outdoor dining,” “shaded outdoor seating,” “picnic tables,” and “beer gardens” was mentioned frequently in conjunction with restaurants and cafes.
- **Inspiration from Other Towns:** Several respondents pointed to other towns as models to emulate, with New Hope (PA), Lambertville (NJ), Doylestown (PA), Princeton (NJ), and Haddonfield (NJ) being the most common examples.

## Hwy-31 Corridor



### ***Question 6: What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?***

Open-ended Response: Participants were asked to share what they envision for the future of the Hwy-31 Corridor. Participants responded with visions, insights, strategies and concerns.

### ***Question 7: The Hwy-31 commercial corridor primarily consists of strip development that prioritizes vehicular access. If you were to think about this area in 10-20 years, which of the following would you like to see.***

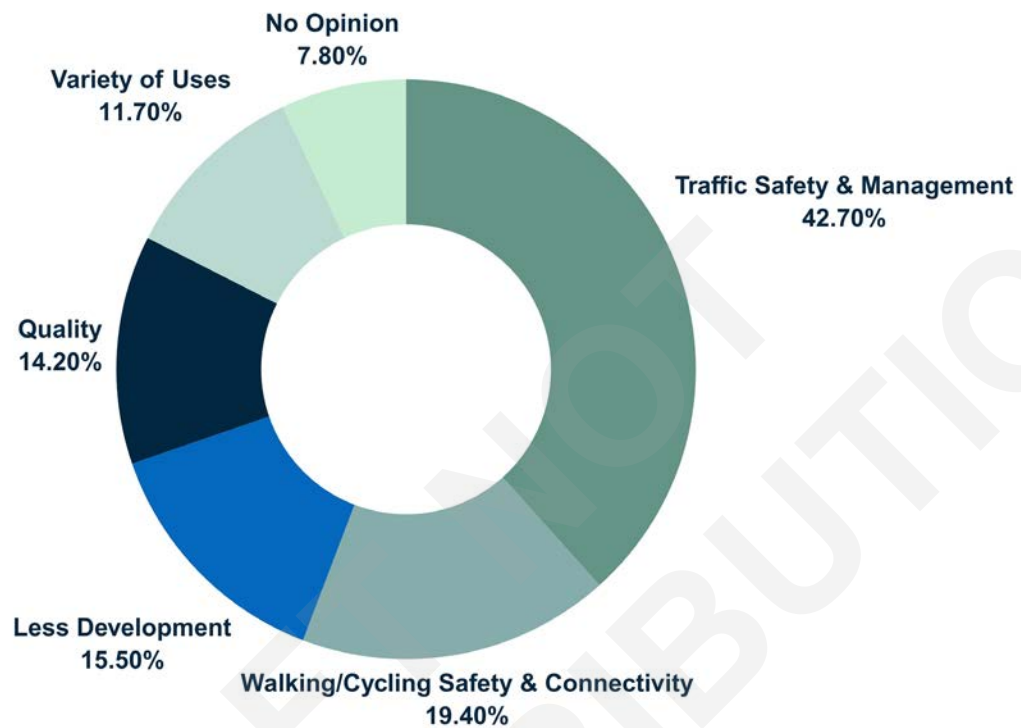
Visual Preference Survey: Participants were asked to rate images based on a scale from 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)

### ***Question 8: 8. What additional considerations would improve pedestrian and cycling in this area?***

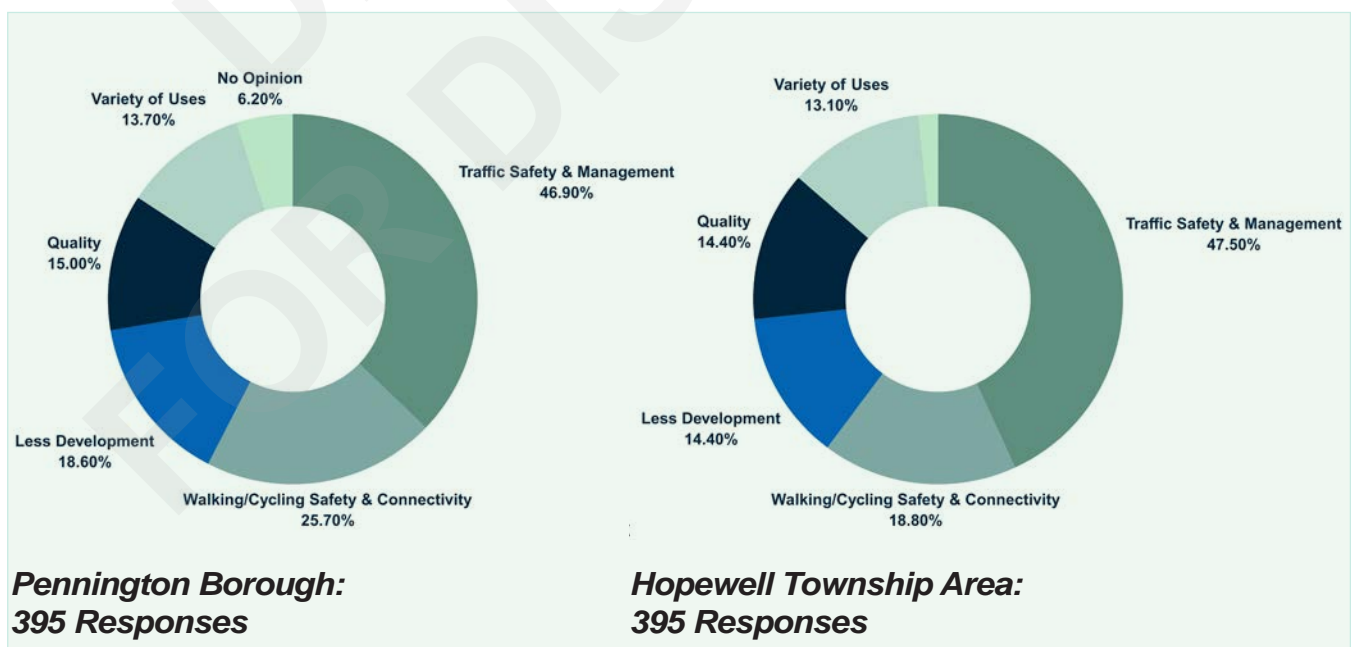
Multiple choice: This question focused on area of Hwy-31 & W Delaware Ave. Participants were asked indicate their priorities for upgrades and improvements to the area.

## Q6. What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?

Open-ended Response



**Survey Total:**  
**395 Responses**



**Pennington Borough:**  
**395 Responses**

**Hopewell Township Area:**  
**395 Responses**



## **Q6. What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Primary Goals and Areas of Focus for Changes along Hwy-31 Corridor**

- **Traffic Safety & Management:** A clear demand to control the corridor by calming traffic, reducing or banning heavy trucks, and fixing notoriously dangerous intersections.
- **Pedestrian Connectivity:** A strong desire to connect the community with safe infrastructure, most notably through repeated requests for a pedestrian bridge or overpass.
- **Vision & Development:** A vision to beautify and redevelop the existing “depression era” strip malls, replacing “seas of asphalt” with green space, trees, and updated facades that match the Borough’s character.

#### **1. Traffic Safety & Management**

*Total: 42.7%*

*Pennington Borough: 46.9%*

*Hopewell Township Area: 47.5%*

This was the most dominant theme. Respondents expressed frustration with the speed, volume, and type of traffic on Route 31. This category includes three major sub-themes:

- **Specific Intersection Fixes:** The most common requests were for proper traffic light at the Ingleside Avenue intersection (the “Sinclair gas station”). There were also numerous demands to fix or remove the Pennington Circle.
- **Truck Restrictions:** A very high number of responses called for banning or restricting heavy trucks (tractor-trailers), often citing noise (engine brakes) and danger.
- **Speed & Congestion:** General pleas to “lessen traffic,” “lower the speed limit” (often to 35 mph), and increase traffic enforcement were frequent.

#### **2. Walking and Cycling Safety & Connectivity**

*19.4%*

*Pennington Borough: 25.7%*

*Hopewell Township Area: 18.8%*

Directly linked to the traffic theme, this category focuses on the safety of pedestrians and cyclists as well as a request for the improvement and expansion of walking and cycling paths.

- **Safety & Accessibility:** The most common requests were for “safer crosswalks,” “wider sidewalks,” and “protected bike lanes” to connect the Borough to the schools and shopping centers. A frequent, highly specific solution proposed by many was a “pedestrian bridge,” “overhead crossing,” or “elevated walkway,” almost always to help students safely cross Route 31 at Delaware Avenue.
- **Infrastructure and Planning:** This was often in context of improving walkable and bikable connections between the Borough and surrounding areas, as well as acknowledging its frequent use and the need to make it significantly safer. There a few mentions mass transit, requesting easier access and more route/destination options.

## **Q6. What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **3. Vision & Development**

#### **A. Less Development / As-is**

15.5%

*Pennington Borough: 18.6%*

*Hopewell Township Area: 14.4%*

A strong contingent of respondents voiced opposition to further development, viewing it as the primary cause of traffic and congestion. This theme was defined by phrases like “no more development,” “stop building,” “less commercial,” and “no more housing.”

Many explicitly stated that any new development should be left to other areas (like Route 1) and that the focus in Pennington should be on preserving “open space,” “green space,” and the “small town feel.”

#### **B. Quality**

14.2%

*Pennington Borough: 15.0%*

*Hopewell Township Area: 14.4%*

This category captures the vision for improving the look and feel of the existing corridor rather than adding to it. Respondents want to “reimagine the current strip malls” and “enhance frontages,” often citing Newtown, PA, as a positive example.

Key requests include “more trees,” “more landscaping,” “more greenery,” and repurposing “massive parking lots” to create a “boulevard” feel.

This also includes items like banning “flag signage” and addressing “light pollution.”

#### **C. Variety of Uses**

11.7%

*Pennington Borough 13.7%*

*Hopewell Township Area: 13.1%*

In direct contrast to the anti-development theme, this group of respondents wants to see more or different commercial options.

This includes requests for more retail and restaurants, medical offices, activities and recreation, often in a pedestrian-oriented environment, with a desire for outdoor dining.

Respondents showed a preference for local, non-chain businesses, while there were requests for specific large chains like “Target,” “Wawa,” “Chick-fil-A,” and “Trader Joe’s.”

Additionally, some respondents envision a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use commercial & residential mix with greenspace and gathering spaces.

#### **D. Indifference or No Opinion**

7.8%

*Pennington Borough: 6.2%*

*Hopewell Township Area: 1.9%*

A small but notable portion of respondents had no specific vision for the corridor, responding with “don’t know,” “not sure,” “none,” or “no preference.”



## **Q6. What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Specific Ideas, Suggestions & Insights by Respondents**

#### ***Traffic Safety & Management***

The most urgent and frequently mentioned theme is the desire to control what is perceived as a dangerous, high-speed, and overly-congested corridor.

- Install a full traffic light at the Ingleside Avenue intersection (the “blinking light”).
- Ban or severely restrict heavy truck traffic (tractor-trailers, 18-wheelers).
- Create No air-brake zone
- Lower the speed limit and increase enforcement.
- Redesign or remove the Pennington Circle.
- Implement advanced traffic management and road design.
- Improve traffic flow
- Regulate speed and flow
  - Traffic cameras
  - Traffic calming mechanisms
  - Increased speed enforcement
  - More traffic lights
- Turn restrictions
- Turning radius improvements
- Reconfigure shopping center access & flow
- Clear labels on traffic lanes and at circle
- Grade separation for pedestrians and cyclist: pedestrian overpass (bridge) or underpass (tunnel)
- Install safe bike lanes and wider sidewalks to connect the town.
- Widen Sidewalks
- Elevated Crosswalk
- Widen shoulders
- Reduce speed limit
- Boulevard design to separate paths from roadways
- Colorful and well-lit intersection crossings
- Planted barriers / safety rails

#### ***Walking/Cycling Safety & Connectivity***

There is a strong insight that the corridor severs the community, creating a critical safety hazard for students and residents trying to walk or bike between the Borough, the schools, the library, and the shopping centers.

- Add more sidewalks to connect Pennington Borough to the surrounding area:
  - W Delaware & Hwy-31 connect to library and schools
  - Connection between Main St and Hwy-31
  - N Main St & Hwy-31
  - North and South along Hwy-31 (from I-295 or Denow to Cream King and beyond)
  - Greenway connections between Hopewell Township and Pennington Borough
  - More frequent crossings
  - 2 mile walking radius of the schools
- Improved and more efficient between shopping areas
- Pedestrian-oriented parking lots: reduced and/or reconfigured layouts
- Fewer curb-cuts
- Wayfinding to direct traffic to divert/reduce traffic toward destinations

## **Q6. What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Vision & Development**

#### **Less Development / As-is**

- A significant insight is the strong belief that the area is “full” and cannot support more development, especially housing, due to the existing strain on traffic and schools.
- Prioritize open/green space or school resources over new development.
- No development
- Remove retail
- Fewer stores
- Maintain current level of development
- Keep as-is
- No multi-family
- No expansion
- Replace with open space
- Preserve open space

#### **Quality & Variety of Uses**

- Many respondents feel the current strip malls are ugly, outdated, and poorly designed. The vision is to replace “seas of asphalt” with human-scale, green, and attractive spaces.
- Create pedestrian-oriented commercial areas with outdoor dining, green spaces
- Reduce large surface parking lots and/or redesign existing to add vegetation & rain gardens
- Relocate parking lots to be less prominent
- Redevelop existing strip malls with a “less asphalt, more green” model.
- Emulate successful “village” or “mixed-use” concepts from other towns.
- General beautification (trees, lighting, signage).
- Prioritize open/green space or school resources over new development.
- Reduce light pollution
- Ban temporary signs, flags and banners
- Update existing signage and create uniform aesthetic
- Update storefronts
- Update Exxon station
- Create housing
- Create pedestrian-oriented mixed-use (commercial / residential) with gathering spaces, greenspace, wider sidewalks and landscaping
- Quality, affordable housing
- More Retail & Restaurants
- Focus on local, non-chain businesses
- Attract major fast-food and retail chains.
- Add large-format grocery stores.
- Build community and activity centers.
- Add practical services like medical offices.
- Add activity / recreation uses, IE. ice-skating, sports fields, courts
- Add retail to reduce trips/need to shop on Rte-1
- Home stores
- Family & youth oriented businesses & activities

## **Q6. What changes would you like to see along Hwy-31 Corridor?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **General Ideas & Strategies**

- Move some of that retail to main street.
- Close the intersection of W. FRANKLIN and 31. Make all vehicles use the light at Tree Farm Rd and 31
- Removal of telephone poles, bury utilities. Increased drainage.
- Whatever it is, done with style, landscaping, concern for traffic patterns stormwater. And a connection in some way tot rest of the borough; maybe its a commitment to get involved in EDC, to help with Holiday walk, etc. Maybe a professional center with doctor offices, and related service businesses.
- "The bank building on the corner of rt 31 should be purchased by the school district and made into an administrative and school board office...The old school board office on Main st. should be redeveloped into mixed use.
- Fill the empty retail spaces, connect existing spaces with safe walkable options, flooding control at 31 & Delaware
- "4 lanes - revitalization of PQM shopping center - development of old Ego matic building to create a "center" walkable from town "
- Improve the Pennington circle
- Tree-lined boulevard instead of highway

### **Township Area:**

- Less sprawl, preservation of rural tracts, redevelopment or updating existing business complexes, avoid adding to strip mall tacky appearance, consider traffic plan and avoid further congestion and traffic accidents
- ...We also need a solution for flooding. Again, we can't build more on green space. If anything,

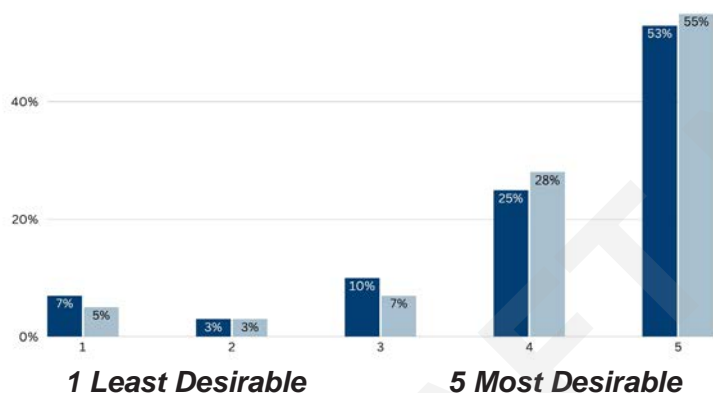
**Q7. If you were to think about this area in 10-20 years, which of the following would like to see?**

Visual Preference Survey: Rate on a scale of 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



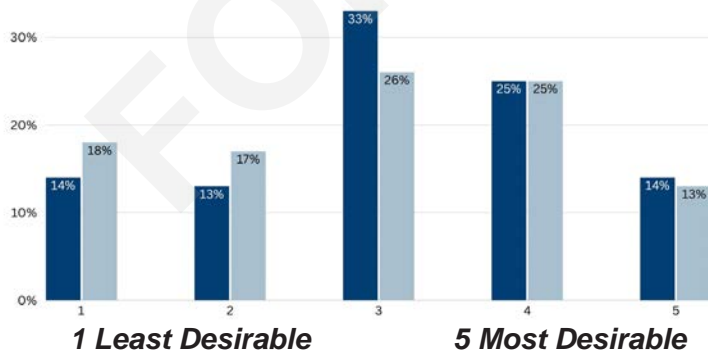
**Outdoor, pedestrian-oriented shopping centers with green infrastructure**

Highly Desired. Seen as the ideal to replace strip malls. Focus is on repurposing excessive asphalt for wider sidewalks, shade, trees, green spaces, and outdoor dining to create a central, walkable, destination center



**Offices over retail and restaurants**

Moderate/Qualified Support. Positive only if it is professional offices (e.g., doctor, service businesses) that bring in tax revenue and people, but not cars. Generally less popular than residential mixed-use, as the focus is on creating a lively, walkable foot traffic environment





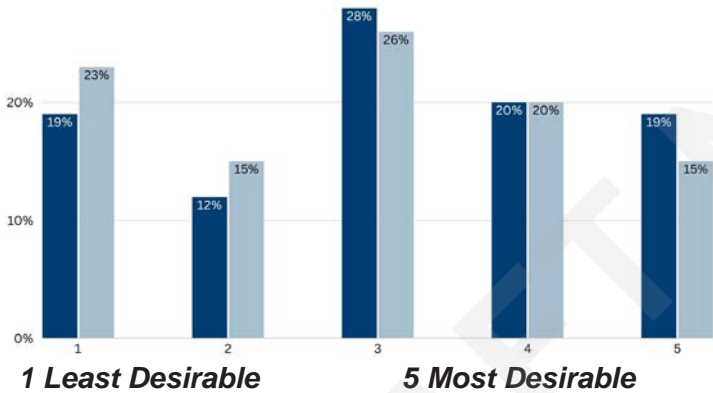
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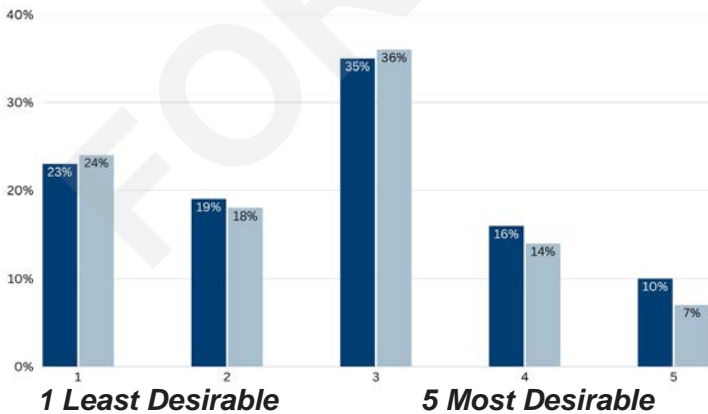
**Residences over retail and restaurants**

Moderate Support (Strategic). Supported vertically downtown or in strategic areas, especially to allow for affordable housing or senior housing. However, strongly conditioned to be well-planned and of quality-design.



**Same as is  
(commercial, retail, offices and services)**

Low/Non-Existent. The current state is frequently described as “depressing,” “ugly,” “outdated,” and “highway strip mall appearance.” There is a strong desire for a facade refresh and better traffic flow.



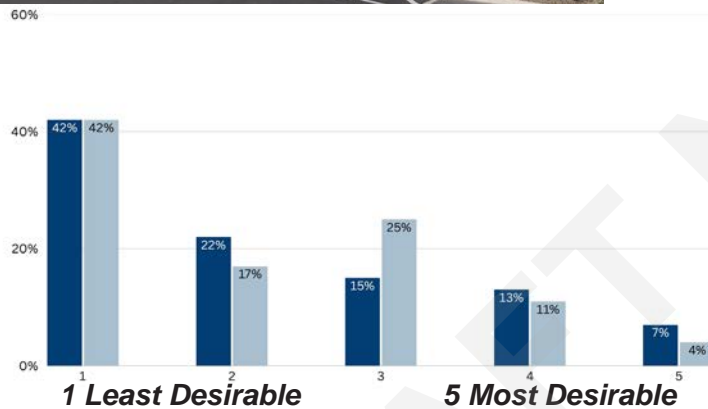
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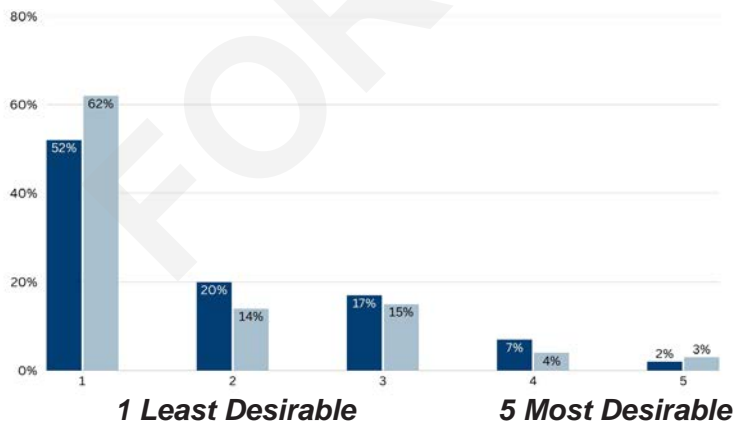
**Parking and highway oriented shopping center**

Strongly Disliked. These represent the “strip mall tacky appearance” and car-centric design the community wants to move away from. Drive-throughs are seen as adding to traffic congestion, though a few responses wished for a drive-through Starbucks or Wawa.



**Hotels**

No Mention/Not a Priority. There was no significant mention or expressed preference for hotels. The focus is overwhelmingly on residential, commercial amenities, and safety/infrastructure.



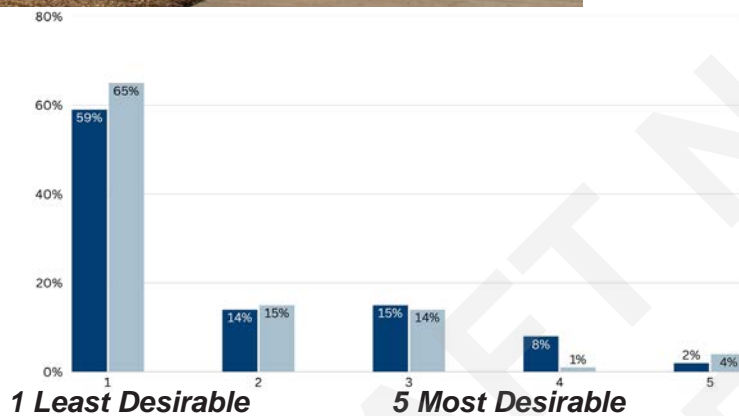
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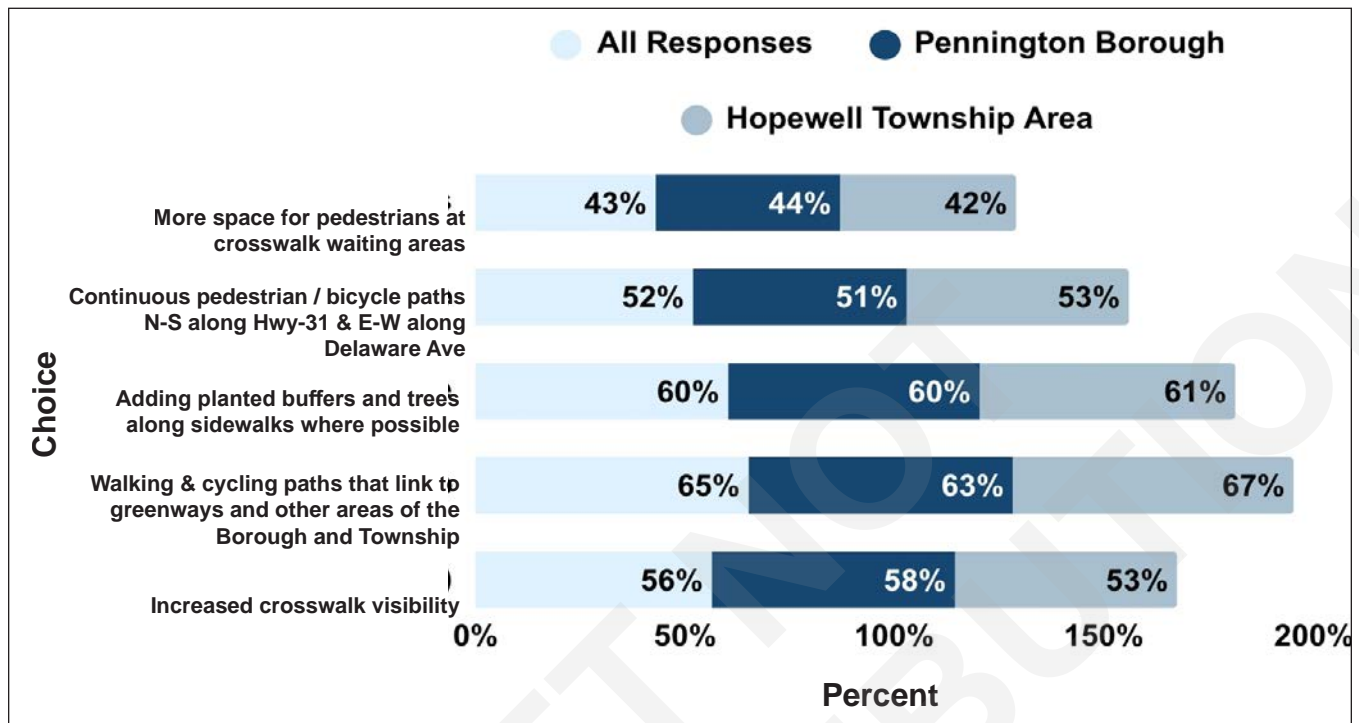


**Multi-unit residential**

Strongly disliked, but highly contributes to walkability. Respondents associate this with negative views on development. Its density is a primary driver of walkability, providing the essential population base needed to support neighborhood retail and transit.



**Q8. Hwy-31 & W Delaware Ave: What additional considerations would improve pedestrian and cycling in this area?**



**Respondents** are generally united in their priorities for the Hwy-31 and W Delaware Ave with the top three choices:

- Adding planting buffers and trees along sidewalks where possible
- Walking & cycling that link to greenways and other areas of the Borough and Township
- Continuous pedestrian / bicycle paths N-S along Hwy-31 & E-W along Delaware Ave

These choices emphasize connectivity (paths that link) safety (pedestrian/cyclist buffers) and increased vegetation ('greening'), which closely align to respondents' overall vision for a Hwy-31 corridor that is safe for pedestrians & cyclists with extensive walking & biking opportunities supported by green infrastructure.

These choices are closely followed by the two options focused on safety interventions at the intersection itself. A number of respondents opted to write-in "Pedestrian Bridge" (or similar grade-separation).



**Summary of Write-in Responses ('Other')****Pedestrian/Bicycle Overpass/Bridge over Route 31**

Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge/Overpass (General)	12
Bridge over 31 for those going straight/at PQM/Delaware Ave	4
Bridge over 31 - Keep it historic/wrought iron/fancy	2
Bridge/Overpass/Tunnel (ADA-compliant)	2

**Traffic Lights/Signals**

Real light/Traffic light needed at Ingleside Rd/Eglantine (with 31)	3
Continuous Stoplight Monitoring of the 31 traffic circle	1
Lengthen green light phase for Delaware traffic	1
North Main light needs attention	1
Prioritize activation of pedestrian signal with push button	1

**Pedestrian Crossing/Movement**

Increased Crosswalk Visibility (patterns, markings, lighting, etc.)	2
All-way/Diagonal crossing allowed (at Main St/Delaware or all directions)	3
Safer pedestrian crossing signage (flashing lights to alert drivers)	1
PEDESTRIAN ONLY PHASE where all traffic is stopped	1
Move crosswalk further from the corner	1

**Sidewalks/Walkable Connectivity**

More sidewalks (general or on specific roads like Pennington Harbournon)	3
Connect township to borough in a walkable/bikeable way	1
Need additional crosswalks across W Delaware (Boro Mkt - PQM)	1
No sidewalk immediately bordering traffic lanes	1

**Bicycle Lanes/Paths**

Bike lanes (general mention)	2
Bike lanes need to be protected/separate (like greenway paths)/Physical barriers	3
Bike path along Delaware from Stony Brook bridge to high school	1
Bike path along Rt 31 may not be safe/Keep bikes off 31	2
Pedestrian and bicycle paths parallel to 31/Delaware (not on road)	1
Bike path along Delaware from Stony Brook bridge to high school	1
Bike path along Rt 31 may not be safe/Keep bikes off 31	2
Pedestrian and bicycle paths parallel to 31/Delaware (not on road)	1

**Traffic Calming/Speed Reduction**

Reduce speed/Slower speed	2
Radar/camera ticketing/Photo enforced/Speed monitoring	3
Rumble strips to slow down traffic / Traffic calming features to slow traffic	2
Flashing warning signs to drivers of upcoming busy pedestrian area	1
Reduction of oversized trucks <sup>1</sup> Divide north and southbound lanes	1
Raised walkway/crosswalk for additional clarity	1

**Roadway/Geometric Improvements**

Expanding the roadway to provide a buffer between sidewalk/road edge	1
Fix no right turn signs (make visible)	1
Widening Delaware slightly	1
Fix Pennington-Titusville Road between Rt 31 and the high school	1

**Regulation/Other**

No right on red	1
Car-Free Zones similar to Europe	1
Contest for the noise the cross walk makes (bird sounds)	1
Keep people and bikes off 31 / Keep pedestrians away from the highway	2
Tree to wait in shade to cross	1
Increased crosswalk visibility WITHOUT political/cause influence	1
Address the flooding	1
Less development	1
Golf card friendly community (electric only)	1
No signs near road that block visibility	1
Connecting the Twp to the Borough in a walkable/bikeable way is so important	1

## Housing & Development

**Pennington Borough** largely consists of single-family housing. While Pennington does have duplexes, townhouses and apartments nestled in single-family neighborhoods, there is a lack of housing diversity and a limited amount of vacant or developable properties.

In addition, Pennington, like all towns in New Jersey, has a constitutional obligation to plan for affordable housing. To meet these obligations, and offer diverse housing options, Pennington must have zoning that allows and incentivizes housing variety.

Some opportunities for affordable and accessible housing include a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, courtyard apartments, and garage/detached apartments (ADUs). Sometimes referred to as “Middle Housing”, this variety of housing helps address housing affordability and provide more walkable, diverse, and vibrant neighborhoods.

### ***Overview of Pennington Borough’s Housing Demographics***

Pennington residents have a median household income of \$171,282 and mean income of \$206,343. 6.5% of children (under the age of 18) live in poverty, compared to 13.8% for the County and 13.3% for NJ.

67.4% of the Borough is single-family detached housing, and 12.3% single-family attached. 79.3% of single-family houses are owner-occupied. Pennington’s houses tend to be older, and larger, than the County and State. The majority of Pennington’s housing was built before 1939. Most houses in Pennington Borough are 4 BR and 3BR, whereas the county and state are 3BR and 2BR.

Pennington’s median home value at \$608,200 (\$697,000 in Aug-2025) compared to \$351,000 for Mercer County, and \$427,600 for NJ. 32.3% of residents’ homes are valued at \$750,000 - \$999,999. 7.1% of County residents are valued at this amount.

The average sale price in Pennington in 2024 was \$648,072 with 29 total sales that year. In Mercer County, the average sales price was \$500,349 with 2514 total sales in 2024.\

79.5% of Pennington’s houses are owner-occupied. 20.5% of Pennington Residents rent their homes.

Of the 20.5% renters, more than half pay rents around \$1500 - \$1999, which is nearly twice the amount of Mercer County residents who pay the same amount.

In terms of development, the Borough has permitted roughly 7.7 housing units annually since 2013 (85 total). Pennington Borough saw an office boom in 2013 and 2015, with over 8,556 new office spaces, and none since, with no new retail growth in over a decade.

*Summary based on ACS 2023 5-year*

## About Housing Varieties, Scale & Density

**“Missing Middle Housing”** is an essential concept for addressing housing shortages, increasing diversity, and fostering walkable communities. It refers to a range of multi-unit building types that provide context-sensitive density within existing residential neighborhoods.

- **What it is:** House-scale, multi-unit buildings that gently increase density by fitting seamlessly into residential blocks while housing multiple units. Duplexes, Triplexes, Fourplexes, Townhouses, Cottage Courts
- **Where it fits:** Single-family homes → Missing Middle Housing → Mid-rise apartment buildings  
The “missing” gap between detached single-family houses and large apartment buildings.
- **Why it matters:** Provides more diverse and attainable housing options for various household sizes and incomes, and supports walkable, sustainable neighborhoods.
- **Why it’s missing:** Largely restricted by post-WWII single-family zoning regulations.



### Housing Types in this Survey

#### Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

Smallest; secondary unit (e.g., above garage, basement) on a single-family lot.

Adds gentle density; income stream for homeowner; retains primary single-family lot use.

#### Duplex

House-scale; two units side-by-side or stacked under one roof.

Matches the massing and architectural identity of a single-family home.

#### Single-Family to Apt. Conversion

Maintains existing single-family structure.

Preserves historic integrity of the original home; repurposes existing building stock.

#### Triplex

House-scale; three units under one roof.

Blends into single-family neighborhoods with higher housing capacity.

#### Cottage Court

Small, detached units clustered around a shared yard or courtyard.

#### Cottage Court (Cont'd)

Emphasizes shared open space and a strong sense of community feel; units are typically smaller.

#### Townhouses (Attached)

Attached row of individual units, each with private ground-level entry.

Maximizes use of long, narrow lots; each unit is a separate property with its own lot ownership.

#### Courtyard Apartments

Units arranged within a single building or around one large, defining shared courtyard.

Higher density than a cottage court but still human-scale; courtyard provides central shared amenity.

#### Multi-Unit Multi-Family Apartment Building

Medium-Large scale; typically three or more stories.

Provides significantly more housing units per acre (maximizing land efficiency and addressing housing supply shortages) while still being low enough to feel integrated into a suburban area, avoiding the height and mass of high-rise towers.

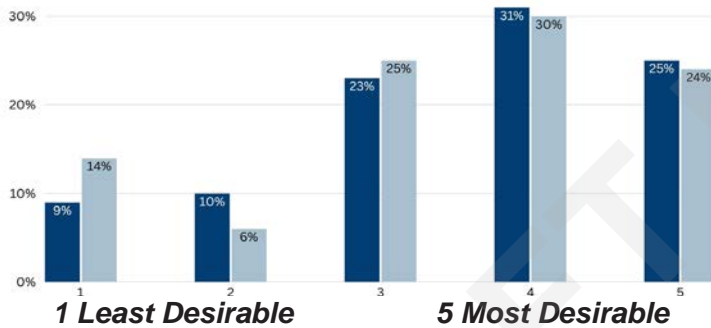
## Q9. Visual Preference Survey: Housing Types

Rating Scale: 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



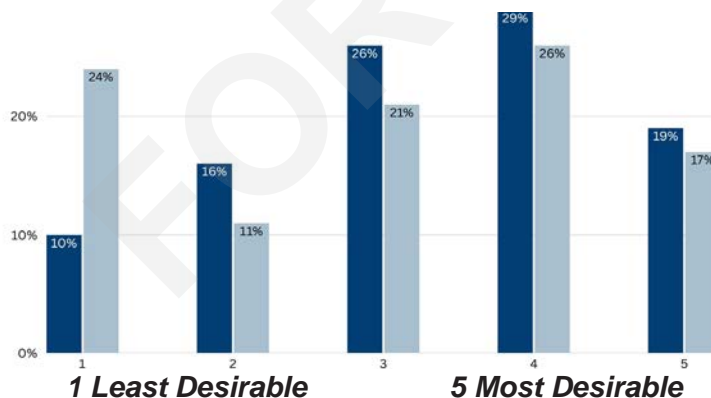
### Cottage Court

Highly desirable for its ability to foster a sense of community (shared courtyards) and appeal to specific groups (e.g., grandparents/seniors downsizing) while maintaining neighborhood scale.



### Duplex

Perceived as a good choice for gentle density that maintains the visual identity and massing of a single-family home, making it the least intrusive multi-unit option.





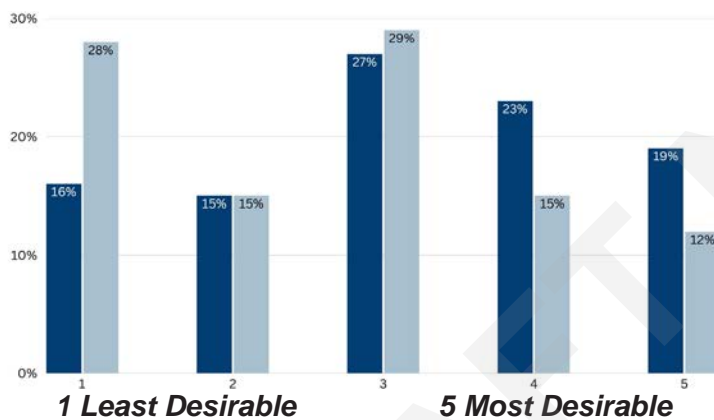
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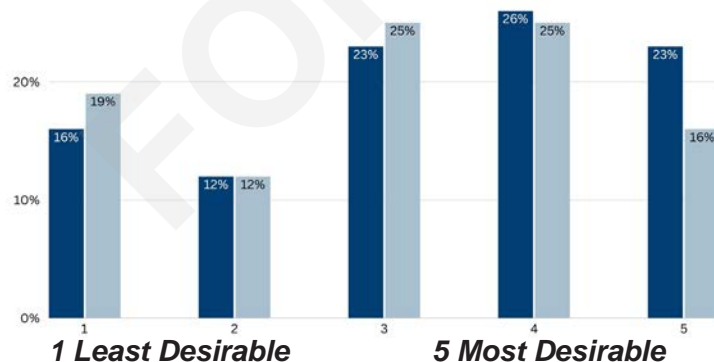
### Accessory Dwelling Unit (detached / garage apartment)

Recognized for its potential to help with family housing and provide an income stream, but met with concern over its impact to on-street parking and the potential for changing the feel of residential streets.



### Mixed-Use

Viewed positively as a necessary step to vitalize downtown (galleries, cafes) and provide tax support, moving away from residential-only growth and creating the desired walkable community.



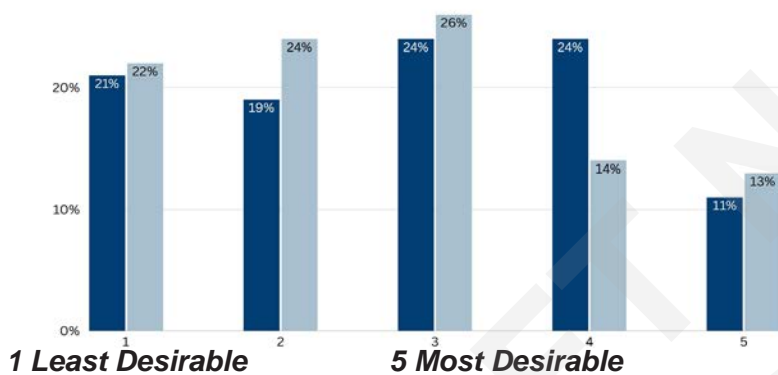
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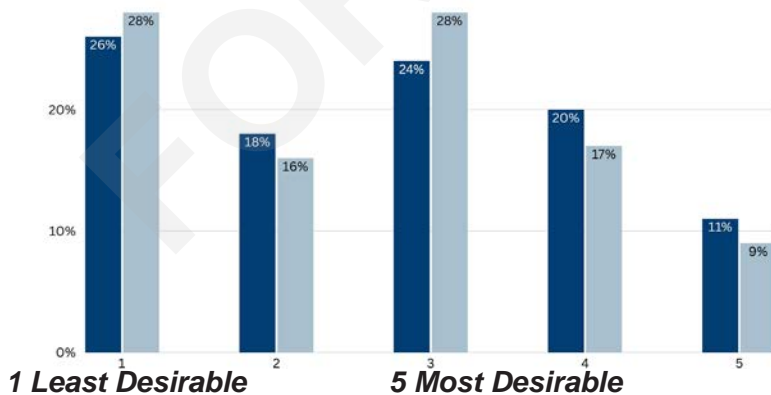
### Single-family to multi-unit conversion

Seen as a way to preserve historic integrity of older homes, but concerns exist about whether the resulting units are cost-effective and if this model adequately addresses large-scale housing needs, but also is reflective of respondents' request to reuse existing buildings.



### Courtyard Apartment

Offers moderate density and a shared amenity, and can vary in scale, and creates a shared green space.



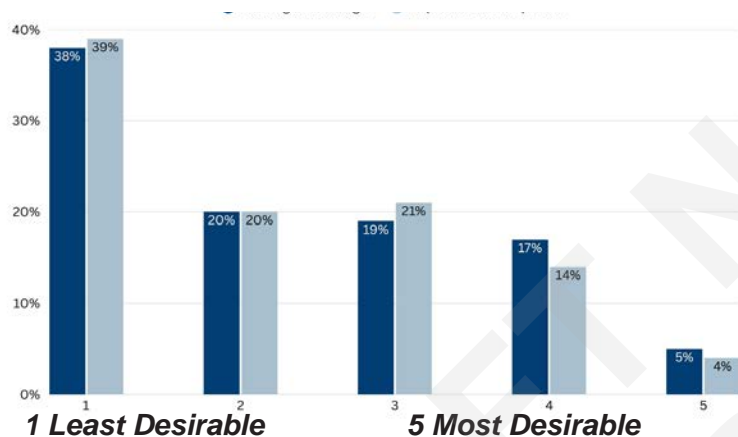
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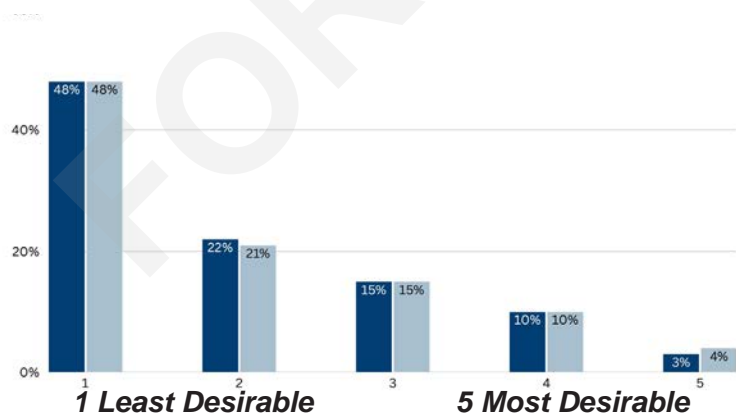
### Townhouses

Throughout the survey, respondents are critical of townhouses in reference to 'housing factors and concerns' where they are described as "cheap," "ugly," "barracks-like," and "too dense."



### Multi-unit multi-family

Strongly disliked and similar to the response in the Hwy-31 Corridor for being monolithic, ugly, and out-of-character. These structures represent the concern respondents associate with new development. This type of density can maximize land value and encourage walkability.





**Q10. What are the most important factors for you when considering new housing development in your community?**

*Open-ended Response*

**Summary (431 All Responses), Pennington Borough (255 Responses)  
Hopewell Township Area (176 Responses)**

**Factor 1: Physical & Social Environment (*Neighborhood Character*)**

This is the most dominant theme by a significant margin. Respondents are deeply concerned with preserving the existing aesthetic and “small town feel” of the Borough

- 38.9% All Respondents
- 42.4% Pennington Borough
- 34.1% Hopewell Township Area

**Definitions of ‘Neighborhood Character’ per Response Context**

**63.1% of respondents** used the general terms like ‘character’ or ‘small town feel’ without further clarification.

Key Concerns: “impact on character,” “small town feel,” “loss of charm,” “impact on community,” “ruining the character,” “fits in with the community,” “small village feel.”

- “Infrastructure, character, amenities”
- “Affordability and neighborhood character”
- “Impact on neighborhood character”
- “Losing small town feel”
- “Impact on community”

**26.2% of respondents** stated explicitly aesthetic / physical attributes, citing a desire to preserve the historic look and avoid ‘cookie-cutter’ design.

Key Concerns: “copy & pasted townhouses,” “ugly” or “cookie-cutter” design, “historic look,” “McMansions,” and preserving a “human scale.”

- “The most important thing is its impact on our character. Rows of copy & pasted townhouses jammed into small areas are an abomination.”
- “Any new developments should be held to a pretty, historical looking standard to match the character of the town.”
- “...new housing must be compatible in terms of scale, massing, materials, appearance”
- “Preserving the best of existing neighborhood character, providing low-rise solutions, preserving historic buildings...”

**10.7% of respondents** expressed factors that were explicitly exclusionary, linking new housing to “crime” or “demographics.”

Key Concerns: A perceived link between new residents and “crime,” a desire to and concerns over “demographics.”

- “Keeping crime low and the character of the neighborhood intact. Maintaining a high-trust population.”
- “Don’t change our neighborhood character & safety!”
- “Keep out the riff raff”
- “Keeping crime low and the character of the neighborhood intact. Maintaining a high-trust population.”
- “Affordable housing WILL bring more crime... I am very concerned about the kind of people that will be moving in.”



**Q10. What are the most important factors for you when considering new housing development in your community?**

*Open-ended Response*

**Factor 2: Impact on Infrastructure (Schools, Traffic, Services)**

This is the second-most-frequent concern. It includes all mentions of “infrastructure,” “schools” (and “overcrowding”), “traffic,” “congestion,” “parking,” “sewers,” “stormwater,” and the “capacity” of public services (police, fire, etc.).

- 29.9% *All Respondents*
- 25.5% *Pennington Borough*
- 31.3% *Hopewell Township Area*

**Factor 3: Green Space & Environment**

This is the third pillar of community concern. It includes all mentions of “green space,” “open space,” “trees,” “environment,” “flooding,” and “drainage.”

- 25.1% *All Respondents*
- 21.6% *Pennington Borough*
- 18.2% *Hopewell Township Area*

**Factor 4: Affordability**

This is a major and highly-polarized theme. This count includes all mentions of “affordability,” “affordable,” “cost,” “low income,” “middle class,” “economic diversity,” “senior housing,” “55+,” and “renters.”

- 22.0% *All Respondents*
- 23.5% *Pennington Borough*
- 16.5% *Hopewell Township Area*

**Factor 5: Opposition to Development**

This theme captures all explicit, overarching statements to stop development, such as “Stop the building,” “NO MORE DEVELOPMENTS!,” “No further development,” and “We don’t need anymore housing.”

- 12.1% *All Respondents*
- 7.8% *Pennington Borough*
- 8.5% *Hopewell Township Area*

**Factor 6: Access to Amenities, Walkability, & Transportation**

This category includes all mentions of “access to amenities,” “walkability,” “walking paths,” “transportation,” “mass transit,” and “bus stops.”

- 10.9% *All Respondents*
- 9.8% *Pennington Borough*
- 7.4% *Hopewell Township Area*

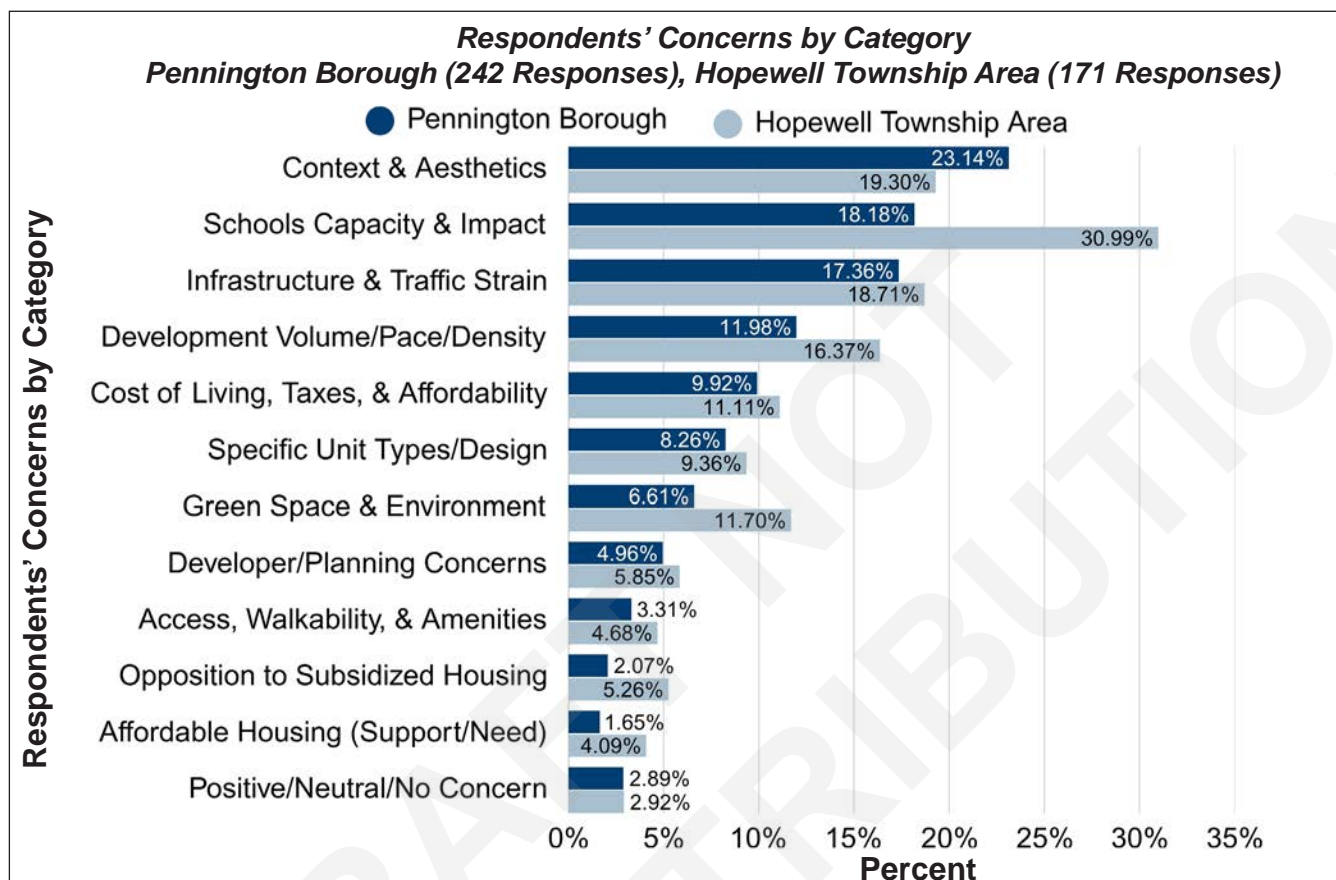
**Factor 7: Financial Impact (Taxes & PILOTs)**

This is a specific but passionately-voiced theme, including all mentions of “taxes,” “property taxes,” and strong opposition to “PILOT PROGRAMS” and “developers deals.”

- 5.1% *All Respondents*
- 3.1% *Pennington Borough*
- 1.7% *Hopewell Township Area*

**Q11. What concerns, if any, do you have about the pace or type of housing growth in your area?**

Open-ended Response



**Q11. Summary: (All Responses 413)**

**Concern 1: Infrastructure and Capacity**

This is the most frequent concern, representing a fear that the community is losing its ability to function effectively due to a lack of capacity.

53% All Respondents

- **School Overcrowding:** Respondents repeatedly express about the impact on schools, citing both increased classroom sizes (“overcrowding”) and funding limitations.
- **Traffic Congestion:** “Traffic, traffic, traffic” is a constant refrain and “roads cannot handle congestion.”
- **Fiscal/Tax Burden:** Many believe new developments, especially those with PILOT programs (tax breaks), do not generate enough tax revenue (ratables) to cover the school and municipal service costs they create.
- **Municipal Services:** Concerns extend to the capacity of the fire/police, water demand, sewer access and utilities to keep up with the pace of development.

## **Q11. What concerns, if any, do you have about the pace or type of housing growth in your area?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Concern 2: Type of Development & Aesthetics**

Respondents strongly oppose the type of housing being built, arguing it damages the community's unique identity.

*18% All Respondents*

- **Views on Development:** Respondents who chose the area for its rural character and small-town identity, view new development as an intrusion of urban-scale density that threatens to erode those qualities. The growth is seen as “ruining the community,” “losing our small town feel”.
- **Design Quality:** There is a strong response to the design of high-density housing. Townhouses and apartments are cited as “cheap and ugly,” “monolithic” and “barracks-like.” Respondents call for high quality design and construction that is sensitive to the historic character and scale.
- **Oversized Infill:** Concerns about “tear downs of smaller homes for mega-homes” that are “out-of-scale”
- **Developer Intent:** A strong belief exists that developers “only care about profit,” resulting in poorly constructed, “cookie cutter” developments with little regard for the local context or environment.

### **Concern 3: Pace of Development**

This theme focuses on the volume and speed of construction, particularly in the immediate surrounding area.

*14% All Respondents*

- **Pace is “Out of Control”:** Phrases like “Too much, too fast!” “It is out of control!” and “Pace is way too fast” are pervasive.
- **Lack of Plan:** Many feel the development is unmanaged and not coordinated with infrastructure upgrades: “It gets built up too quick with no master plan.”
- **Scale:** There is significant concern over “excessive [growth] in Hopewell Township” (near ShopRite, Scotch Road) and its impact on traffic and schools.

### **Concern 4: Affordability and Equity**

Concerns are voiced regarding who the new housing is actually serving.

*8.6% All Respondents*

- **Price of New Houses:** Respondents note that the new “glamour townhouses” are often “overpriced” and “not affordable to middle class,” pushing out the younger families the town supposedly needs to attract.
- **Social Anxiety / Bias:** A segment of respondents expressed concern about the mandatory state requirements (Mount Laurel), linking “low income housing” to “more crime” and a reduction of “trust we have with our neighbors”.
- **More Affordability:** A counter-argument highlights that “young families are being priced out” and that the town needs more variety of housing, such as smaller homes (1500 sq ft) or housing for seniors (grandparents). Respondents expressed support for affordable housing and a variety of housing types: “Must have mixed income housing.” “Affordability- genuine affordability for more folks.” “Add seniors housing.” “Currently, young families are being priced out... we need to make space for young families with kids.” “We need more housing of more types!”

### **Concern 5: Environmental and Open Space**

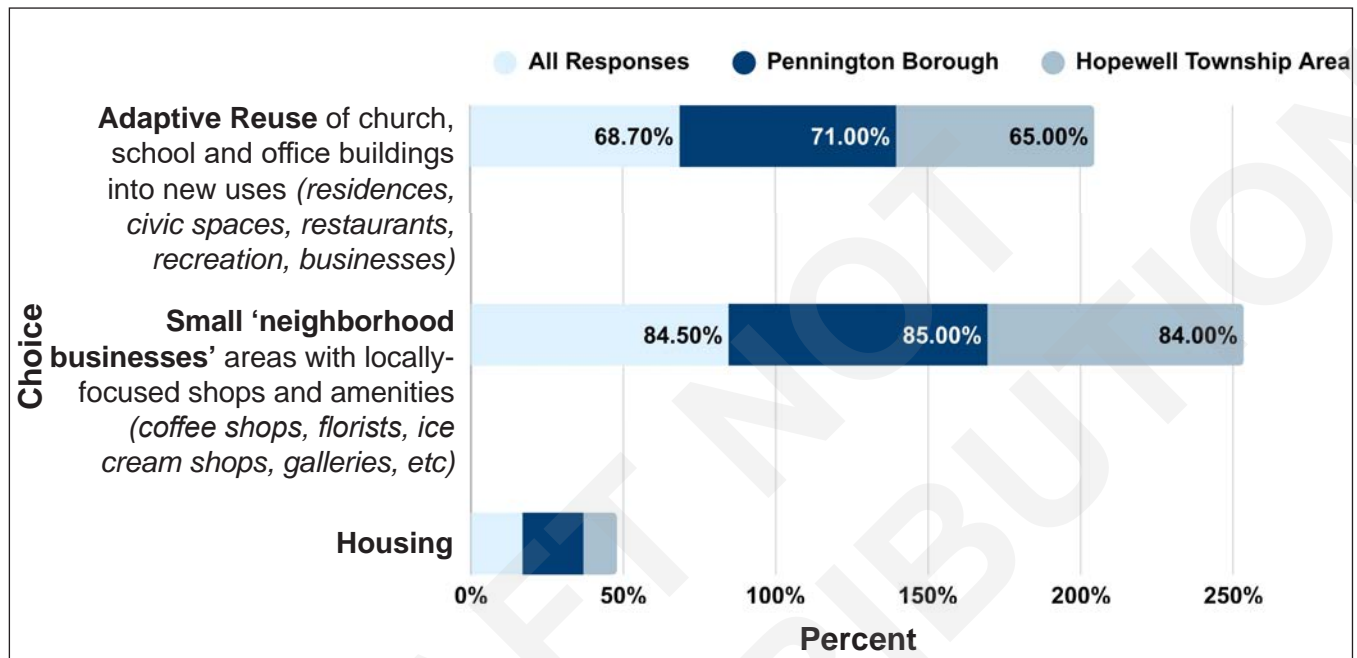
Growth is frequently framed as a zero-sum trade-off against the natural environment.

*6.9% All Respondents*

- **Loss of Green Space:** Development is seen as “losing all our green space,” paving over nature, and converting farmland into “huge housing developments.”
- **Flooding Risk:** Concerns about “flooding in areas is already an issue” and the new homes making the problem worse due to more impervious surfaces are common.
- **Wildlife:** Development is cited as contributing to the loss of nature and impacting wildlife.

**Q12. Buildings may become available for reuse, and areas that are limited in their zoning but may be able to offer more community amenities. Which do you feel would be positive considerations for Pennington Borough's future development?**

Multiple Choice



**Write-in Responses ('Other')**

**Pennington Borough (19 Responses)**

- Open space preservation
- As I said above- a large center/facility that will attract multiple demographics to increase foot traffic to other parts of town.
- farmers market / town park with entertainment space
- Housing, Cultural activities
- Housing, Evolve or die.
- Housing, Retrofitting churches is very expensive and then there's the issue of cemeteries and memorial gardens on those spaces. I like the idea of the building being useful but not at the cost of losing historical or cultural value.
- Housing, Somewhere for youth to gather
- More green spaces and family friendly restaurants with outdoor seating
- No more new buildings for housing- True what we have
- All of the above as long as they stay in keeping with the environments around them
- Na
- None
- See answer above
- Definitely not housing, unless it were a limited number of beautiful apartments or condos. We don't need to be packing 20 or 30 people into a building that used to house 4 or 5. That would not be in keeping with the character of the town. It's mostly a single-family town and should stay as such, not an urban center.



**Q12. Buildings may become available for reuse, and areas that are limited in their zoning but may be able to offer more community amenities. Which do you feel would be positive considerations for Pennington Borough's future development?**

*Multiple Choice*

**Write-in Responses ('Other') (Cont'd)**

- I am totally opposed to developing the HVRSD administration building into additional housing. Why would that be done. Taxpayers would then have to pay for district to build an admin building elsewhere? Why? What is the purpose? To build more and destroy more land and create more problem with drainage. The land behind admin building has been used as playing fields for students. According to the school district there is a great need for playing fields. Why would the district then sell this property and take away the field and pay money for a building elsewhere. If people were so concerned with environment then why would there be thought of building g more and more and covering more earth with cement and non previous surfaces.
- Limited adaptive reuse excluding franchises
- not housing unless single family
- Single family homes or green space
- This question is poorly worded, but I don't think any of the above should be adapted for reuse or rezoned unless the question is clarified.

**Hopewell Township Area (13 Responses)**

- Flood control.
- Mixed use
- All are good options. If things are converted to businesses, I'd prefer to see ones that are more "interactive" (shops/restaurants) rather than just office spaces since those don't add much of interest to the community or draw in visitors from outside.
- community farms, community walking paths connecting more places outside of car oriented streets
- Housing is focused on high density infill with access to trails, bike paths, green spaces, and public transportation
- Medical offices
- Throw out old zoning; look at form based codes of neighborhood overlay zones that focus on mixed-uses and appropriate density and scale
- Youth center
- Gym like lifetime, a community center similar to Woodbridge community center.
- None!!!! Stop pulverizing our town with these projects and leave it alone!!!
- parks, garden, green community initiatives
- No more residences!
- The school district needs athletic fields. There should be consideration of redevelopment of some of these spaces for the school district's needs. The town has already committed to significant over development of the area and as such this has an impact on our school district. At the present time builders are not helping to make sure that the needs for the district are taking care of. Instead current taxpayers are footing the bill for all of this. A two-faceted approach where portions of the land can be used for athletic fields or building other needs for the school district should be considered along with having any developer or company that seeks to come into the area contribute to the needs of the school district.

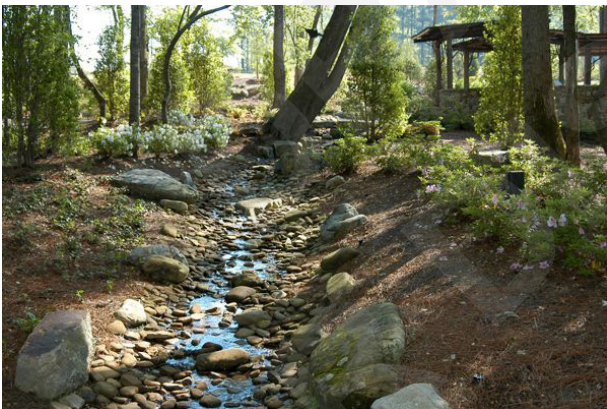
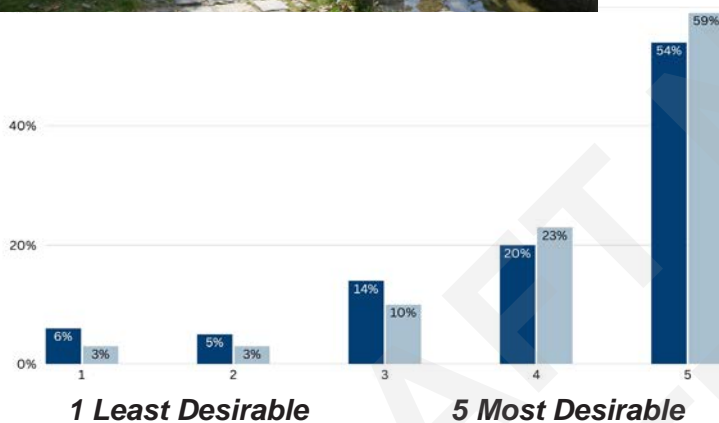
**Q13. Visual Preference Survey: What type of approaches to stormwater management do you feel would be positive or worthwhile additions to the quality of life in Pennington Borough?**

Rating Scale: 1 (least desirable) to 5 (most desirable)



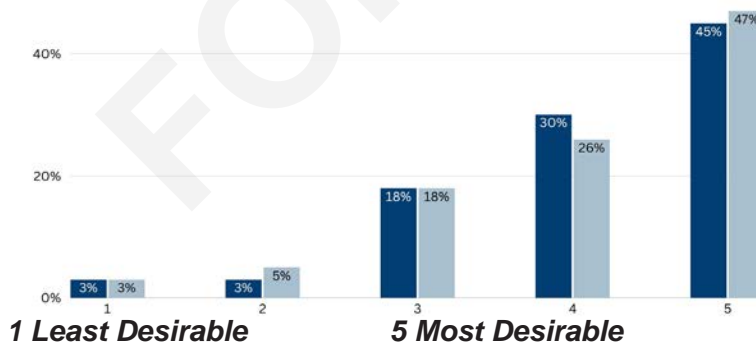
***Integrating multiple strategies where possible to create engaging and enriching experiences***

Strongly backed for its dual benefit as a strategic measure that mitigates flood issues while simultaneously creating valued public amenities and gathering spots, enhancing the 'Sense of Place.'"



***Uncovering and restoring previously buried, or culverted, streams (or sections of streams)***

Attractive concept that provides a significant natural amenity and solves flooding, but may be seen as lower priority due to the higher cost and potential need for major land-use changes compared to simple buffers or gardens.



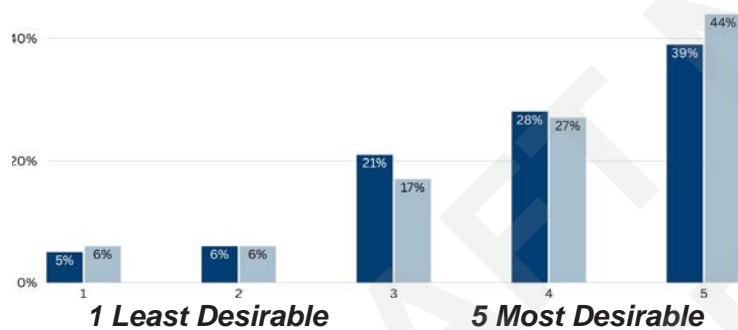
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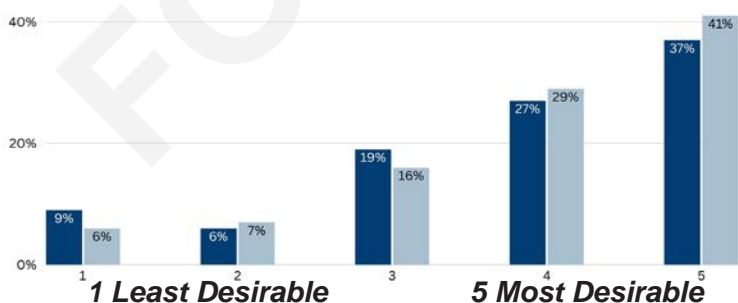
***Buffers between sidewalks and roadways with plants and/or shade trees***

Highly desired as a dual-purpose feature that provides physical safety/separation for pedestrians while immediately enhancing the visual quality of the streetscape.



***Integrating green infrastructure into existing strip malls and setbacks, where possible***

Strong support for repurposing underutilized asphalt (the hated “strip mall look”) to address stormwater issues and enhance aesthetics without requiring new development.





**Q13. Visual Preference Survey: What type of approaches to stormwater management do you feel would be positive or worthwhile additions to the quality of life in Pennington Borough?**

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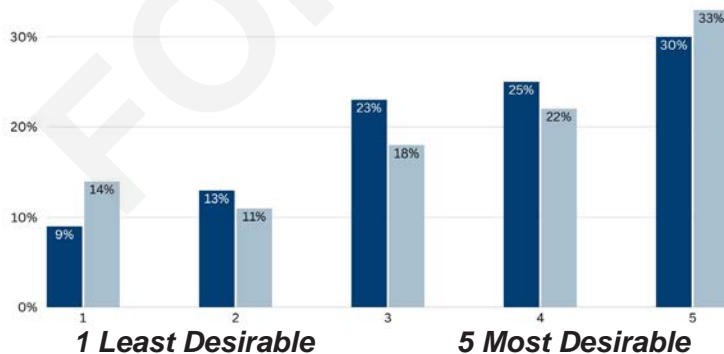
***Parks and recreation spaces integrated with retention basins***

A practical and functional compromise that takes necessary infrastructure (basins) and transforms it into a positive recreational asset (a park) for the community.



***Lawns with native plantings and meadows***

Simple, cost-effective change that directly addresses the desire for more green space and less artificial sprawl, contributing positively to the town's "natural feel."





**Q14. Do you have any ideas for how to address stormwater issues in your neighborhood?**

*Open-ended Response*

**Summary**

**Pennington Borough (138 Responses)**

**1. Focus on hands-on actions** that the Borough and residents can undertake immediately to manage water flow.

- Storm Drains/Curbs/Pipes 18.84%
- Green Infrastructure/Planting 18.12%

**2. Focus on addressing specific, large-scale problems** like Lewis Brook, key problem properties, and the impacts of development.

- Lewis Brook/Stream Management 8.70%
- Blackwell Property/Eyesore 5.07%
- Reduce Impervious Surfaces 4.35%
- Development Control/Density 4.35%

**3. Requests for specialized knowledge, structural fixes, and an acknowledgment of the issue's severity.**

- Lewis Brook/Stream Flooding 2.90%
- Retention/Drainage Basins 2.90%
- Property Grading/Runoff Control 2.90%
- Expert Advice/Education 2.17%

**Hopewell Township Area (78 Responses)**

**1. Implement nature-based and structural solutions** to mitigate runoff, with a particular emphasis on reducing paved surfaces.

- Green Infrastructure/Planting 26.92%
- Reduce Impervious Surfaces 10.26%

**2. Focus on the functional needs** of the existing system and controlling the volume of new construction, which is seen as a primary cause of water issues.

- Development Control/Density 15.38%
- Storm Drains/Maintenance 11.54%

**3. Requests for specialized structures, stream management, and educational support.**

- Retention Basins/Tanks 6.41%
- Lewis Brook/Stream Management 3.85%
- Specific Structural Fixes 3.85%
- Public Education/Incentives 3.85%

## **Q15. What would improve your quality of life in Pennington Borough?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Summary (354 All Responses)**

#### **1. Social Vitality and Downtown Activation**

This is the most frequently mentioned theme, centered on transforming Main Street into a highly active, all-hours social destination.

- Dining and Entertainment: Respondents requested more dining options (40+ mentions), especially affordable, diverse ethnic cuisine, upscale bars/cocktail lounges, and places with outside seating (10+ mentions). The lack of evening activity is a major pain point.
- Vibrant Downtown Hubs: Desire to create a “vibrant Main Street” (15+ mentions) or a “Palmer Square-like” center that acts as a destination with useful shops, cafés, and gathering spots that stay open later.
- Community Events: High demand for more structured and informal events, including music, festivals, concerts, food trucks, and a better location for the Farmers Market.

#### **2. Activities and Spaces for All Ages**

Respondents emphasized a significant gap in programming and facilities for specific demographic groups.

- Families and Youth: High demand for activities for young families, children, and teens (30+ mentions). Specific requests include a Community Center with a pool/gym (5+ mentions), indoor play spaces, and places for teens to congregate safely.
- Adults and Seniors: Increased demand for activities for adults (15+ mentions), including dining with liquor, adult education, and dedicated recreation like pickleball.
- Civic Spaces: A lack of general, publicly owned, weather-independent civic spaces for meeting and gathering was noted (10+ mentions), beyond the limited capacity of Howe Commons.

#### **3. Green Infrastructure and Walkable Environment**

This directly links environmental quality and aesthetics to functional mobility.

- Green Infrastructure: Widespread support (25+ mentions) for Green Infrastructure, including planting more trees (for shade/CO2 absorption) and adding green spaces. The idea of Repurposing Surface Parking into Green Spaces was repeatedly identified as a high-value action (10+ mentions).
- Walkable Environment: Strong focus on safety and maintenance, including requests for repairing/adding sidewalks (10+ mentions), addressing the Blackwell eyesore property (5+ mentions), and enforcing noise ordinances and speed limits to make walking and biking safer.

## **Q15. What would improve your quality of life in Pennington Borough?**

*Open-ended Response*

### **Detailed Response Categories: Pennington Borough & Hopewell Twp Area**

#### **Pennington Borough (222 Responses)**

1. This category represents over half of the feedback, dominated by the need to create a destination that is both lively and physically appealing.

- Restaurants/Dining 22.07%
- Green Space/Repurposing Parking 18.47%
- Activities/Events/Vibrancy 16.22%

2. This category focuses on the functional needs of residents, particularly young families, and addresses key issues of access and cost.

- Family/Kids/Youth Focus 12.16%
- Walkability/Bikeability/Transit 9.91%
- Affordability/Cost 5.86%
- Retail/Shops 4.50%
- Community/Civic Spaces 4.05%
- Infrastructure Stress/Traffic/Safety 3.60%

3. This final category groups requests about aesthetics, specific sites, and low-frequency functional needs.

- Neighborhood Character/Historic 3.15%
- Blackwell Site/Eyesores 0.90%
- Farmers Market 0.90%
- Housing/Density 0.90%
- Liquor Licenses/Bars 0.90%

#### **Hopewell Township Area (132 Responses)**

1. These three themes account for nearly 70% of the feedback, dominated by the desire to transform the physical landscape and activate it with events and dining.

- Green Space/Repurposing Parking 29.55%
- Activities/Events/Vibrancy 20.45%
- Restaurants/Dining 19.70%

2. This category focuses on creating a fully functional town that is safe for all ages to navigate and provides dedicated, non-commercial spaces for gathering and activities.

- Family/Kids/Youth Focus 12.12%
- Walkability/Bikeability/Transit 9.09%
- Community/Civic Spaces 6.82%

3. This final category groups requests about financial management, commerce, and maintenance issues.

- Affordability/Cost/Taxes 5.30%
- Retail/Shops 3.03%
- Infrastructure/Maintenance 3.03%
- Housing/Development Control 2.27%

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Ian T. Hammett

Ralph S. Mason (1913-1988)  
Gordon D. Griffin (1919-2016)  
Craig H. Davis (1947-1997)

Also Admitted in:  
<sup>†</sup> PA    <sup>▼</sup> NY

## Of Counsel

Trishka W. Cecil<sup>†</sup>  
Elizabeth Zuckerman

## Associates

Lisa M. Maddox<sup>†</sup>  
Keri Reid McNally<sup>▼</sup>  
Priscilla M. Schoendorf  
Clayton R. Paley

October 10, 2025

### Via Electronic Mail

Fair Share Housing Center  
C/o Joshua Bauers, Esquire

**RE: In the Matter of the Borough of Pennington**  
**Docket No. MER-L-209-25**

Dear Mr. Bauers:

This firm represents Petitioner, the Borough of Pennington (“Borough”), relative to its above-captioned Fourth Round Affordable Housing Declaratory Judgment action. Please accept this letter in response to the non-challenge letter filed by Fair Share Housing Center on August 31.

The responses (in *italics*) of the Borough’s Planner, Jim Kyle, PP, AICP to each of Fair Share Housing Center’s requests (in **bold**) are as follows:

**1. The Borough is required to provide a Housing Element in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:27D-310, including all components described therein.**

*Response: The Borough believes the components required in the Fair Housing Act have been provided within the adopted plan, which includes the following:*

*a. An inventory of the municipality's housing stock by age, condition, purchase or rental value, occupancy characteristics, and type, including the number of units affordable to low- and moderate-income households and substandard housing capable of being rehabilitated, and in conducting this inventory the municipality shall have access, on a confidential basis for the sole purpose of conducting the inventory, to all necessary property tax assessment records and information in the assessor's office, including but not limited to the property record cards;*



- b. A projection of the municipality's housing stock, including the probable future construction of low- and moderate-income housing, for the next ten years, taking into account, but not necessarily limited to, construction permits issued, approvals of applications for development and probable residential development of lands;*
- c. An analysis of the municipality's demographic characteristics, including but not necessarily limited to, household size, income level and age;*
- d. An analysis of the existing and probable future employment characteristics of the municipality;*
- e. A determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share for low- and moderate-income housing and its capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share for low- and moderate-income housing, as established pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2024, c.2 (C.52:27D-304.1);*
- f. A consideration of the lands that are most appropriate for construction of low- and moderate-income housing and of the existing structures most appropriate for conversion to, or rehabilitation for, low- and moderate-income housing, including a consideration of lands of developers who have expressed a commitment to provide low- and moderate-income housing;*
- g. An analysis of the extent to which municipal ordinances and other local factors advance or detract from the goal of preserving multigenerational family continuity as expressed in the recommendations of the Multigenerational Family Housing Continuity Commission, adopted pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection f. of section 1 of P.L.2021, c.273 (C.52:27D-329.20);*
- h. For a municipality located within the jurisdiction of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council, established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2004, c.120 (C.13:20-4), an analysis of compliance of the housing element with the Highlands Regional Master Plan of lands in the Highlands Preservation Area, and lands in the Highlands Planning Area for Highlands-conforming municipalities. This analysis shall include consideration of the municipality's most recent Highlands Municipal Build Out Report, consideration of opportunities for redevelopment of existing developed lands into inclusionary or 100 percent affordable housing, or both, and opportunities for 100 percent affordable housing in both the Highlands Planning Area and Highlands Preservation Area that are consistent with the Highlands regional master plan; and*

*i. An analysis of consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, including water, wastewater, stormwater, and multi-modal transportation based on guidance and technical assistance from the State Planning Commission.*

*If Fair Share Housing Center feels that one or more of these components are not adequately addressed, the Borough will agree to update the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan as needed. Given that the spending plan and certain other elements will require revision, the Borough will need to readopt the plan and can address this issue.*

**2. The Borough should provide description of additional mechanisms that will fully meet its cumulative Prior and Third Round unsatisfied obligation of 157 units and Fourth Round unmet need of 8 units.**

*Response: The Borough has provided mechanisms that address a substantial portion of Unmet Need for the Fourth Round and has met the requirement to address 25% of the Unmet Need requirement per the amended Fair Housing Act. If additional mechanisms are sought to address a portion of Unmet Need from the third round, the Borough will incorporate such mechanisms into a revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.*

**3. To address its Fourth Round obligation the Borough relies, in part, on a program to extend expiring controls on six for-sale affordable housing units that received 30-year deed restriction in 1995 at Pennington Point. To receive credit for this type of program the Borough should be required to address how this program meets the requirements for extension of expiring controls in both the COAH regulations (N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14) as well as the updated UHAC regulations from HMFA.**

**The COAH regulations generally address the required documentation and some criteria for which developments are eligible. Those criteria are as follows:**

- **The Borough must show that the unit meets the criteria for prior-cycle or post- 1986 credits. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(a)(1).**
- **The Borough must show that the affordability controls are actually scheduled to expire during the compliance period. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(a)(2)**
- **The Borough must show that the unit to be extended has received a “continuing certificate or occupancy” or a statement that the unit meets all code standards. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(a)(3).**

- **The Borough must show that all units which need rehabilitation or repair to receive a certificate of occupancy and/or to be brought up to code will receive the required rehabilitation. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(a)(4).**
- **The Borough must provide a written commitment from the owner to extend the controls, or evidence that the controls have been extended in accordance with UHAC. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(b)(2).**
- **The Borough must provide the proposed or filed deed restriction for the extended controls. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(b)(3).**
- **Where the Borough has identified that units to be extended will need rehabilitation the Borough must provide particulars for the rehabilitation program including: a pro forma of the costs for the rehab, documentation of the source of funding, a resolution of intent to fund those rehab costs, a rehab manual, an affirmative marketing plan, and an administrative agent to oversee the program. N.J.A.C. 5:97-6.14(c).**

**In addition, in accordance with A4/S50, the UHAC regulations now have more specific and updated requirements specifically as to funding extension of expiring controls. The UHAC rules now require the municipality to “exercise the right of first refusal to extend the affordability controls” by electing via municipal ordinance to extend the controls “not later than 180 days prior to the end of the affordability control period.” N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.6(h). The municipality must also contribute funds to the preservation of units by paying “at least \$20,000 . . . to support the preservation.” The municipality must also demonstrate that the affordability period including the initial period and the extended period shall equal at least sixty (60) years. N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.6(a)(3).**

**Here, the Borough has provided very little information on this program other than a quick paragraph in the HEFSP. The Borough should provide the required information before this program can be approved.**

*Response: The Borough is currently working with Community Grants, Planning & Housing, its administrative agent, to prepare documentation demonstrating compliance with these regulations. The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan will be revised to provide more detail on compliance with the requirements.*

**4. The Borough should recalculate its administrative expense maximum in the Spending Plan pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:27D-329.2(b)(5), which requires that “not more than 20 percent of the revenues collected from development fees shall be expended on administration, in**

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**accordance with rules of the department.” No extraneous funds may be used in the calculation of the administrative expense maximum, including interest on development fees or development fee revenue that was previously allocated in a prior Spending Plan.**

*Response: As the spending plan will need to be revised upon N.J.A.C. 5:99 being amended, the Borough will revise as needed to address this comment.*

**5. The Borough should correct its calculations to demonstrate how it will comply with family-unit-minimums and age-restricted-unit-cap requirements, including:**

- **The Borough shall satisfy a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the actual affordable housing units, exclusive of any bonus credits, created to address its prospective need for affordable housing obligation through the creation of housing available to families with children. N.J.S.A. 52:27D-311(l).**
- **The Borough shall satisfy a minimum of twenty-five (25) percent of the actual affordable housing units, exclusive of any bonus credits, to address its prospective need for affordable housing obligation, through rental housing including at least half of that number available to families with children.**
- **The Borough shall not satisfy more than thirty (30) percent of the affordable housing units, exclusive of any bonus credits, to address its prospective need for affordable housing through the creation of age restricted housing.**

*Response: The Borough believes the calculations provided on pages 19 and 20 of the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan are correct based on the compliance mechanisms addressing the fourth round obligation which includes RDP of 3 units and unmet need of 55 units. As noted in the section on page 19 entitled “Fourth Round Obligation Requirements”, calculations are based on the 40 units actually provided. If Fair Share Housing Center would prefer these calculations be based on the 58 unit fourth round obligation, this can be included in a revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.*

**6. The Borough should provide additional administrative documents, including an Accessory Apartment Manual and resolutions appointing a Municipal Housing Liaison and an Administrative Agent, in accordance with the forthcoming regulations at N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1, et seq. and N.J.A.C. 5:99 after they are adopted and before March 15, 2026.**



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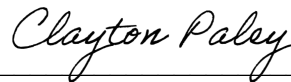
*Response: The Borough agrees to provide this documentation in the revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan after regulations are finalized. The resolutions appointing the Municipal Housing Liaison and Administrative Agent can be provided in early November after the Governing Body's November 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.*

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In accordance with the foregoing, the Borough will continue to provide revisions and documentation for Fair Share Housing Center's review as they become available.

The Borough is hopeful that Fair Share Housing Center will accept the Borough's responses at this time as a good faith effort toward the Borough's receipt of a Final Judgment of Compliance and Repose relative to its Fourth Round affordable housing.

Very truly yours,



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Clayton R. Paley

Direct Dial: (609) 436-1213

Direct E-Mail: [c.paley@mgplaw.com](mailto:c.paley@mgplaw.com)

cc: Jim Kyle, PP/AICP (via email)  
Edwin W. Schmierer, Esquire (via email)

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 8, 2025 7:30 PM**

**TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING**

The Meeting of the Pennington Borough Planning Board was held on October 8, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Jim Reilly, Chairperson to the Planning Board, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and announced compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

**STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

Adequate notice of this meeting has been posted in Borough Hall and sent to the officially designated newspapers: Hopewell Valley News and The Times of Trenton.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Gian Paolo Caminiti; Mayor James Davy; Andrew Jackson – Vice-Chair;  
Amy Kassler-Taub; Kate O'Neill; Jim Reilly – Chair; Nadine Stern – Borough Council; Jennifer Tracy; and Nazli Rex, Alt I

**ABSENT MEMBERS:** Mark Blackwell; Casey Upson, Alt II

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH PROFESSIONALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Robin Tillou, Pennington Borough PB Secretary/Land Use Administrator  
Jim Kyle, Board Planner

**PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Chair Reilly opened the meeting to the public. With no public comment for items not on the agenda Chair Reilly closed the public forum.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Letter from Protect our Corner of Pennington Community Group**

Mr. Kyle advised that the Borough was assigned a fourth round obligation that was given in March 2025. Significant developer fees were not collected in the Borough as compared to other municipalities. We did not have the subsidy that most developers require. The Borough is entitled to take the vacant land adjustment but it did not wipe out all of the obligations. The exercise of the housing plan was to find locations that can be viable for some type of an inclusionary project. The inclusionary project is to contain a certain percentage of 15% -20% of affordable units and market rate units. The Housing Plan can be revisited and that is the option that the Borough took and is being worked on currently. The Land Use Plan is also being worked on in correlation with the affordable housing and that is being planned for by the end of the year.

Chair Reilly opened the meeting to the public for the “Letter from Protect our Corner of Pennington Community Group” agenda item.

Christian and Katie Davis, Reading Street, Pennington, NJ, stated their concerns of a possible redevelopment site intended for affordable housing at the address of Reading Street, Block 701 Lot(s) 5-8. They would like that location removed from the possibility of affordable housing. The concern is the emergency response, traffic congestion and pedestrian safety. It lacks access to public transportation and is not walkable to essential services.

Alicia Kapheim, Hale Street, Pennington, NJ is concerned of the potential 31 unit multifamily housing development. Her concern is the light pollution.

Veena Juroshek, Reading Street, Pennington, NJ is concerned of the increased traffic in the area if the affordable housing does go through for this property. The streets are narrow and that will cause a safety concern. The water runoff will also be a concern.

Molly O’Connor, Hale Street, Pennington, NJ is concerned that access to jobs, schools, healthcare and groceries will be limited in this location. It should also be near public transit and community services. Also children may cross the train tracks to get to certain schools.

Pat Totaro, Reading Street, Pennington, NJ stated that her concern is the narrow access and one way in and one way out for emergency vehicles, school buses and sanitation trucks.

John O’Connor, Hale Street, Pennington, NJ stated his concern are the narrow roads in the area and were not designed for a multi-unit or heavy access that a multi-unit housing would require. There is also no fire hydrant near the proposed development.

Bronwyn Haley, Hale Street, Pennington, NJ stated concerns of safety, light pollution, drainage and emergency vehicle access and feels that location should serve as another community service center.

Mayor Davy stated he will stay in contact with the Protect our Corner of Pennington Community Group regarding the next steps.

Ms. Stern advised there will also be a public hearing regarding the Master Plan on a date to be determined and the date will be announced via the Pennington Borough website. All residents should sign up for the news and announcements and the agendas for the Boards on the Pennington Borough website (<https://www.penningtonboro.org/AlertCenter.aspx?AID=Sign-up-to-Receive-the-Pennington-Boroug-7.>)

With no other public comment for this item on the agenda Chair Reilly closed the public forum.

### **APPLICATION**

#### **25-003 The Pennington School – Demo and Renovate Stairs at Gymnasium – Application Withdrawn**

Mr. Kyle explained that the application that was submitted was modifying one area that was shown to be a staircase for the gymnasium to be demoed and constructed in a different way. There is no impact to circulation, parking or impervious surface. He and the Board Engineer agreed that they should submit an as-built or survey to show how it was constructed.

Mayor Davy asked if that was what was built in between the fields.

Mr. Kyle responded that was part of a previous site plan approval so no further action by the Board is required.

### **MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE (MPC) UPDATE**

#### **Relation to Other Plans Element**

Vice-Chair Jackson advised this element was addressed at the August 13, 2025 PB meeting and Mayor Davy requested a more detailed look at the PB responsibilities and the Council's responsibilities for interactions with other entities. Those amendments were incorporated in the most recent version of the Relation to Other Plans Element.

#### **MOTION TO CONDITIONALLY ADOPT THE RELATION TO OTHER PLANS ELEMENT:**

Mr. Jackson

SECONDED: Mr. Caminiti

The motion was unanimously approved by all Planning Board members present eligible to vote to conditionally adopt the relation to other plans element.

Vice-Chair Jackson went over the updates to the elements that were revised. The updates can be found at <https://www.penningtonboro.org/1260/Master-Plan-2025-Under-Development>.

The Board voted to conditionally adopt the remaining elements listed below, which were previously conditionally adopted but have since been revised.

#### **MOTION TO CONDITIONALLY ADOPT THE REVISED ELEMENTS OF: MOBILITY PLAN, UTILITY SERVICES PLAN, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES PLAN, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN, CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN, GREEN BUILDINGS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:**

Mr. Jackson

SECONDED: Mr. Davy

The motion was unanimously approved by all Planning Board members present eligible to vote to conditionally adopt the revised elements.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Fair Share Housing Center Response to Housing Element and Fair Share Plan**

Mr. Kyle explained that the Fair Share Housing Center has filed over 400 challenges to municipal plans. There is no objection to Pennington Borough's housing element and fair share



plan but they want more information. They want that information by Friday and Mr. Kyle will be working with Mr. Schmierer, Board Attorney to get the information in and they will give them a timeline to submit all of the information.

### **MINUTES**

**August 13, 2025**

Upon a motion from Mr. Caminiti and Ms. Kassler-Taub offering a second, the August 13, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved with amendments by those eligible to vote.

### **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

There being no further business, Mr. Caminiti made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Ms. O'Neill offering a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

### **CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY**

I, the undersigned, do at this moment certify;

That I am the duly elected secretary of the Pennington Borough Planning/Zoning Board and that the minutes of the Planning Board, held on October 8, 2025, consisting of four (4) pages, constitute a true and correct copy of the minutes of the said meeting.

IN WITNESS of which, I have hereunto subscribed my name to said Planning Board Meeting this November 12, 2025.

*Robin Tillou*

Robin Tillou, Land Use Administrator