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Memorandum

To: Master Plan Steering Committee

From: Keenan Hughes, AICP, PP
Spach Trahan, AICP, PP
Pooja Lakshmi Hegde

Date: November 15, 2023

Re: Online Community Survey Results

In the start of August 2023, the Township of Teaneck released a city-wide community input survey to gather the community's insights and opinions on a range of issues related to the components addressed in the Master Plan. This survey was developed and made available online through Survey Monkey, with versions available in both English and Spanish.

The survey questions covered the following topics:

i. Housing
ii. Revitalization of commercial corridors/business districts
iii. Traffic and mobility
iv. Design and aesthetics
v. Open spaces

A link to the English survey was posted on the Township's website around August 1, 2023, and the Spanish survey was posted on August 7, 2023. To ensure widespread access, the Township used various outreach mediums for promotion including social media channels, posting flyers, sending Nixle notifications and emails, and mailing postcards to over 16,000 addresses, including renter households and businesses. The survey remained open for approximately 11 weeks, until October 20, 2023.

The survey included various question types including ranking questions, Likert scale questions, multiple-choice, and one open-ended question. The survey amassed a total of 1,860 responses, indicating a healthy response rate. However, it is important to note that out of the total responses received, only approximately 1,550 respondents proceeded to take the survey after the first question, resulting in a ±83% response rate. The responses had a relatively even geographical representation, from the northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest quadrants of the Township (Table 1).

A significant portion of the survey participants were long-time residents (59.5%) having resided in Teaneck for over two decades. The next highest tenure of

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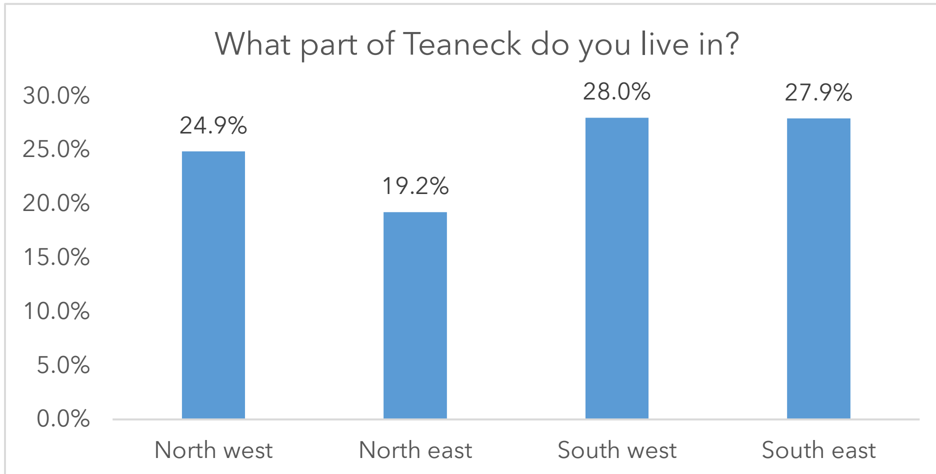
respondents (27%) had lived in Teaneck for 7 to 20 years, followed by roughly 12.5% having lived in the Township for less than 5 years.

Figure 1: Geographical representation of respondents



Employment and Journey to Work

Of those surveyed, approximately 15.2% of respondents were employed within the Township while a significant 67.4% were employed outside of Teaneck. Approximately 17.5% of the respondents were not employed. Among the employed, roughly 13.6% worked from home, 33.5% had a hybrid work situation, and 36.8% worked on-site. Furthermore, almost 98.7% of respondents owned a personal vehicle, with 48.8% opting to use it for their daily work commute. In contrast, only 16% reported taking the bus and 1% taking the train to commute to work. 1.31% of respondents also carpooled for their work commute.

Community Perspectives and Priorities

In one of the initial questions, respondents were asked to rank reasons that influenced their decision to move to/stay in Teaneck. Most people chose proximity to New York City as their top reason (22.8%). Many also chose connection to family/friends as their top reason (22.5%). The overall ranks for all choices are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: What most influenced your decision to move to/stay in Teaneck?

Rank	Reasons	Weighted Avg.
#1	Proximity to NYC	9.1
#2	Connection to family/friends	8.7
#3	Diversity (racial/ethnic/cultural)	7.8
#4	Connection to religious community	7.7
#5	Mass transit options	7.2
#6	Job or employment opportunity	7.1
#7	Affordability of housing	6.9
#8	Quality of housing stock	6.5
#9	Quality of education/schools	6.2
#10	Community tradition of inclusivity	6.1
#11	Access to open spaces/recreational activities	5.8

Respondents were then asked to indicate potential reasons that they might leave Teaneck, provided they were existing residents. A significant proportion of respondents chose 'High property taxes' (51%) as their primary concern. A notable 11.8% of respondents opted for 'Others' and provided specific answers that mostly consisted of reasons attributable to overdevelopment, divisiveness, change in quality of life, and crime. Many chose reasons related to housing such as 'lack of affordable housing' (6%) and 'few options of downsize housing' (8%). Additional factors contributing to the decision to leave included 'high traffic congestion,' (7%) and 'Lack of vibrancy in business districts' (6.6%) (see Table 2 below for details).

Table 2: What could be the top reason for you to leave Teaneck?

Reasons	% of Responses
High property taxes	51.0%
Others	11.8%
Few options to downsize housing	7.9%
High traffic congestion	7.0%
Lack of vibrancy in business districts	6.6%
Lack of affordable housing	5.6%
Schools (Low quality, High cost, Lack of variety)	4.9%
Lack of connection to family/friends	3.5%
Lack of public transit	1.3%
Lack of job opportunities	0.4%

Future Housing Development

As per the survey sample, 93.5% of the respondents were homeowners and roughly 89% of residents lived in detached, single-family homes. When rating their overall quality of life in Teaneck on a scale, approximately 75.7% of respondents expressed satisfaction or high satisfaction. Similarly, when asked to rate the quality of housing in the Township, 80.5% of respondents expressed satisfaction or high satisfaction. However, while almost half of the respondents (52.8%) rated their quality of life as being consistent with that of 10 years ago, a notable 30.4% indicated that it was worse, and 16.8% indicated it was better than 10 years ago.

In a ranking question, respondents were presented with choices regarding their housing preferences in future developments. Notably, 54% of the participants expressed a strong preference for single-family homes by ranking it as their first choice, indicating a prevailing desire for this type of housing over any other available options. In an analysis of the overall top three choices, 'Duplex/two family homes' and 'Townhouses' were the second and third most favored housing options among the respondents (see Table 3).

Table 3: Which housing type should be prioritized in future development in Teaneck?

Housing Types	Overall Rank	Rankings by Age Groups					
		Under 35 years		35 - 64 years		Over 64 years	
		Weighted Avg.	Rank	Weighted Avg.	Rank	Weighted Average	Rank
Single family homes	**#1**	7.7	**#1**	7.7	**#1**	6.9	**#1**
Duplex/two family homes	**#2**	6.3	**#3**	5.4	**#3**	4.4	#5
Townhouses	**#3**	6.5	**#2**	5.9	**#2**	5.2	**#3**
Garden apartments	#4	5.6	#5	4.6	#5	5.0	#4
Senior housing/residences	#5	3.5	#6	5.2	#4	6.6	**#2**
Multifamily apartment buildings	#6	5.8	#4	4.4	#6	3.9	#6
Assisted living	#7	3.1	#8	3.5	#7	3.7	#7
Accessory dwelling units	#8	3.2	#7	3.1	#8	3.2	#8
Supportive/ group housing	#9	2.4	#9	2.4	#9	2.3	#9

Along with overall rankings, Table 3 also stratifies the housing preference rankings by age groups. While the rankings among younger age groups (under

35 years) and middle-aged adults (35 to 64 years) are almost identical, the weighted average disparity between single-family housing and other housing types is more pronounced in the middle-aged group. Evidently, senior housing emerged as the second highest ranked choice among the senior population (over 64 years). This preference aligns closely with the demographic concerns of these resident groups.

While it is evident that the community still leans towards single-family homes as their top choice, the survey results reveal a potential willingness among residents to explore and consider alternative housing options, also indicating a gradual shift in housing preferences within the Township.

Revitalization of Commercial Corridors/Business Districts

This section in the survey explored the community's opinions concerning the four main business districts in Teaneck. The most frequented business district, according to the survey, is Cedar Lane (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Most frequented business district in Teaneck

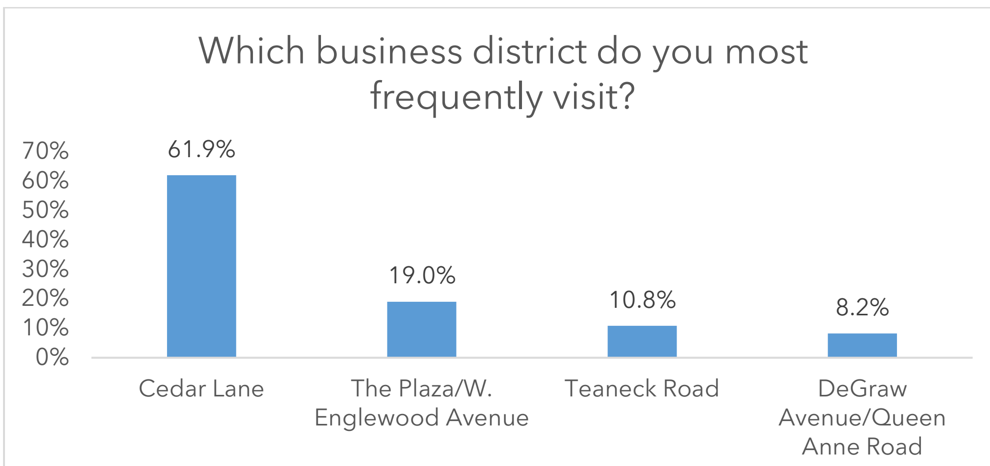
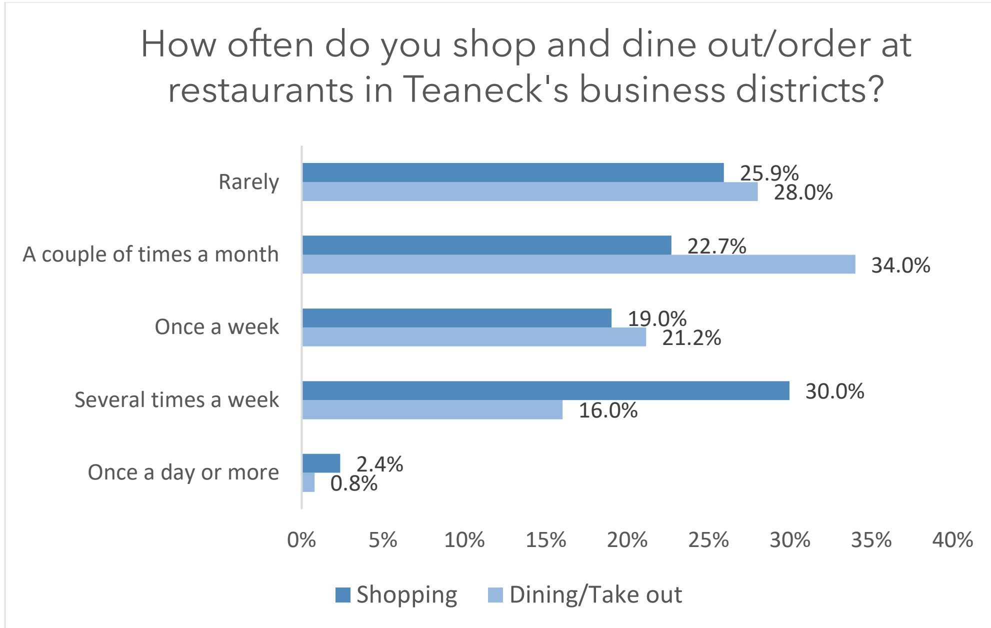


Figure 3 below shows how often respondents shop or dine out in Teaneck's business districts. Responses revealed that approximately 51.4% of respondents shop in one of the business districts at least once a week while approximately 38% dine out/take out from restaurants at least once a week.

Figure 3: How often do you shop/dine out in restaurants in Teaneck?



Some questions asked respondents to rate their level of satisfaction with various services and amenities offered within these business districts, including but not limited to activities for children, commercial gyms and exercise studios, dine-in restaurants, grocery stores, entertainment venues, cafes, etc. Table 4 shows the survey results for the same:

Table 4: Level of satisfaction for listed activities in Teaneck's business districts

Activities	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied
Activities for children	27.7%	26.1%
Art galleries and art studio space	9.3%	37.1%
Cafes and coffee shops	33.3%	43.1%
Commercial gyms and exercise studios (e.g., cycling, yoga, Pilates, dance, etc.)	24.9%	24.6%
Commercial recreation establishments (e.g., climbing walls, bowling alleys, batting cages, etc.)	10.9%	46.5%
Entertainment venues (e.g., movie theaters, performance spaces, etc.)	33.5%	25.1%
Grocery and other food stores	50.8%	34.8%
Non-food stores (retail & personal services)	26.9%	40.9%
Dine-in restaurants and bars	42.9%	34.7%

The satisfaction ratings for various services and amenities indicated mixed sentiments among respondents. Dine-in restaurants received higher satisfaction scores, while commercial recreation establishments and art galleries/studios received lower ratings, suggesting some potential areas for improvement.

Traffic and Transportation

Respondents were asked to rank the top three transportation improvements they would like to see in Teaneck. In a weighted average of priorities, most people placed ‘filling sidewalks/improving pedestrian crossings’ in one of their top three ranks, making it the immediate concern among respondents. In addition, roughly 26% chose ‘expanding access and options for public transit’ as their first choice making it the second highest overall preference alongside ‘improving traffic safety’ (see Table 5).

Table 5: Rankings for transportation improvements in Teaneck

Rank	Transportation Improvements	Weighted Avg.
#1	Fill sidewalk gaps; and/or improve pedestrian crossings	3.9
#2	Explore traffic calming strategies at appropriate locations to slow traffic and improve traffic safety	3.8
#3	Expand access and options for public transportation	3.8
#4	Repair existing roadways and update with new technologies	3.7
#5	Focus on ways to ease congestion and improve the free flow of traffic	3.5
#6	Provide opportunities for safe biking, e-scooters, or other non-vehicular transportation	2.4

Community Concerns

In a ranking question asking for respondents' concerns related to the impacts of new development, it was evident that 'Traffic and Mobility' was the most pressing concern for respondents. 'Affordability' and 'Aesthetics' emerged as the second and third most important considerations, respectively (see Table 6).

Table 6: Rankings for concerns related to impacts of new development

Rank	Concerns related to impacts of new development	Weighted Avg.
#1	Traffic/mobility	6.2
#2	Affordability	5.5
#3	Aesthetics	5.1
#4	Public infrastructure	4.9
#5	Municipal services	4.7
#6	Environmental impacts	4.6
#7	School capacity	3.8

In a separate ranking question, respondents were tasked with prioritizing various issues to be addressed in the Master Plan. In the weighted average of preferences, 'Revitalization of commercial areas' emerged as the highest ranked concern followed by 'Managing traffic concerns' and 'Creating pedestrian and bike friendly streets.' The prominence of traffic management in the rankings highlights the community's desires for improved mobility and safe streets in Teaneck.

Table 7: Rankings for issues to be addressed in Master Plan

Rank	Issues to be addressed in the Master Plan	Weighted Avg.
#1	Revitalization of commercial areas	7.5
#2	Managing traffic congestion and crowding on public transit	6.9
#3	Parks and recreation improvements	6.5
#4	Flooding and drainage concerns	6.4
#5	Creating pedestrian and bike-friendly streets	6.3
#6	Environmental sustainability/resiliency (energy efficient buildings; installing EV infrastructure; planting more trees; storm water management; climate preparedness)	5.9
#7	Expand and/or diversify housing opportunities	5.5
#8	Expansion of schools, houses of worship and other institutions	4.7
#9	Historic preservation	3.8

Community Vision

In the final survey question, respondents were asked to summarize their vision for the community in two to three words. The most common response that emerged from this exercise was 'Affordable,' as shown in the following word cloud, thus signifying a strong desire for reasonable living costs in the Township. Other top responses were 'Safe community' and 'Diversity/Diverse.' In a separate word cloud for the Spanish survey, 'Seguridad' (Safety) emerged as the most common response.

Figure 4: Word Cloud created out of community responses

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Demographics
Towards the end of the survey, respondents were asked optional questions related to demographics. These questions were designed to evaluate how representative the survey's respondents were of the actual population. As described previously, the Township sought inclusive participation and made efforts to promote the survey to all members of the community through various means, including by mailing postcards to the over 16,000 addresses on the Township's rolls. Approximately 1,300 respondents answered the optional questions, amounting to a 70% response rate.

Of those that responded to the optional demographic questions, approximately 53% were middle-aged adults (35-64 years) and 39% were seniors (over 64 years). In contrast, the younger age groups (under 35 years) were relatively underrepresented (7%).

The racial composition of the respondents was predominantly White (64%), while roughly 15% identified as African American/Black, 4% as Asian, and 12.5% identified with 'Other' racial backgrounds. The survey's respondents to this question were somewhat less diverse in comparison to the Township's actual racial composition, where the portion of the population categorized as 'White Alone,' is 43.2%, followed by African/American (23.6%) and Asian (11%) groups.[1] Approximately 12% of respondents identified as Hispanic (of any race), which was also underrepresented compared to the Township's actual composition (approximately 21.5% identify as Hispanic).[1]

In terms of employment status, approximately 54% of respondents were full-time workers and almost 28% were retired. Regarding occupation, most respondents were employed in the Education and Health Services industry (21%), followed by the Finance and Insurance sector (11.4%). In terms of education, almost 33% of the respondents had a Bachelor's degree alone, 40% had a Master's degree, and a notable 13% had degrees higher than a Master's degree. The educational attainment of these survey respondents was higher than the actual population, of which 55.6% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.[2]

[1] US. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020.
[2] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2021, 5-Year Estimates.