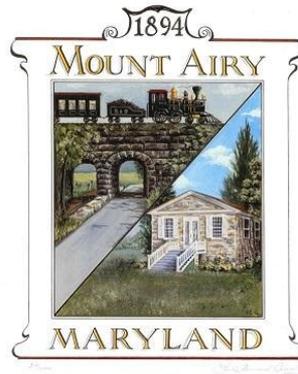


# Growth and Development Task Force



## Town of Mount Airy 2020 Community Survey ***SURVEY RESULTS AND REPORT***

**Presentation to Mount Airy Town Council  
November 2, 2020**

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# Survey Design & Top-Level Results

## Design

- 23 questions. All responses anonymous. Five thematic areas:



- 20% of questions similar to 2007 survey.
- Many questions asked for choices to be ranked or rated.
- Demographic information / written comments encouraged.

## Results

- A positive Survey response rate of 26%. For context, survey research literature indicates typical survey response rates of 5 – 30%.
- Good representation of views for neighborhoods spanning the town of Mt. Airy.
- 933 surveys (49%) contained detailed, thoughtful written comments.
- Summary results are presented here. Refer to the [Survey Results Report](#) for the full presentation of all results and written comments; comparisons to 2007.

# Views on Mount Airy Quality of Life & Attributes

- Ninety-Nine percent viewed overall quality of life in Mount Airy as *Good, Very Good, or Excellent*.
- Respondents expressed a strong sentiment for Mount Airy’s small town environment (ranked #1), and value the importance of safety (ranked #2).

Summary: Top Five Most Liked Attributes of Mount Airy		
Relative Ranking	Town Attribute	Total Number Selected
1	Small Town	1042
2	Sense of Safety	916
3	Family Oriented	770
4	Quiet Community	745
5	Location	702

Summary: Top Five Most Disliked Attributes of Mount Airy		
Relative Ranking	Town Attribute	Total Number Selected
1	Shopping	982
2	Employment Opportunities	870
3	Traffic	771
4	Recreational Facilities	676
5	Municipal Services	235

# Top Mount Airy Issues and Needs

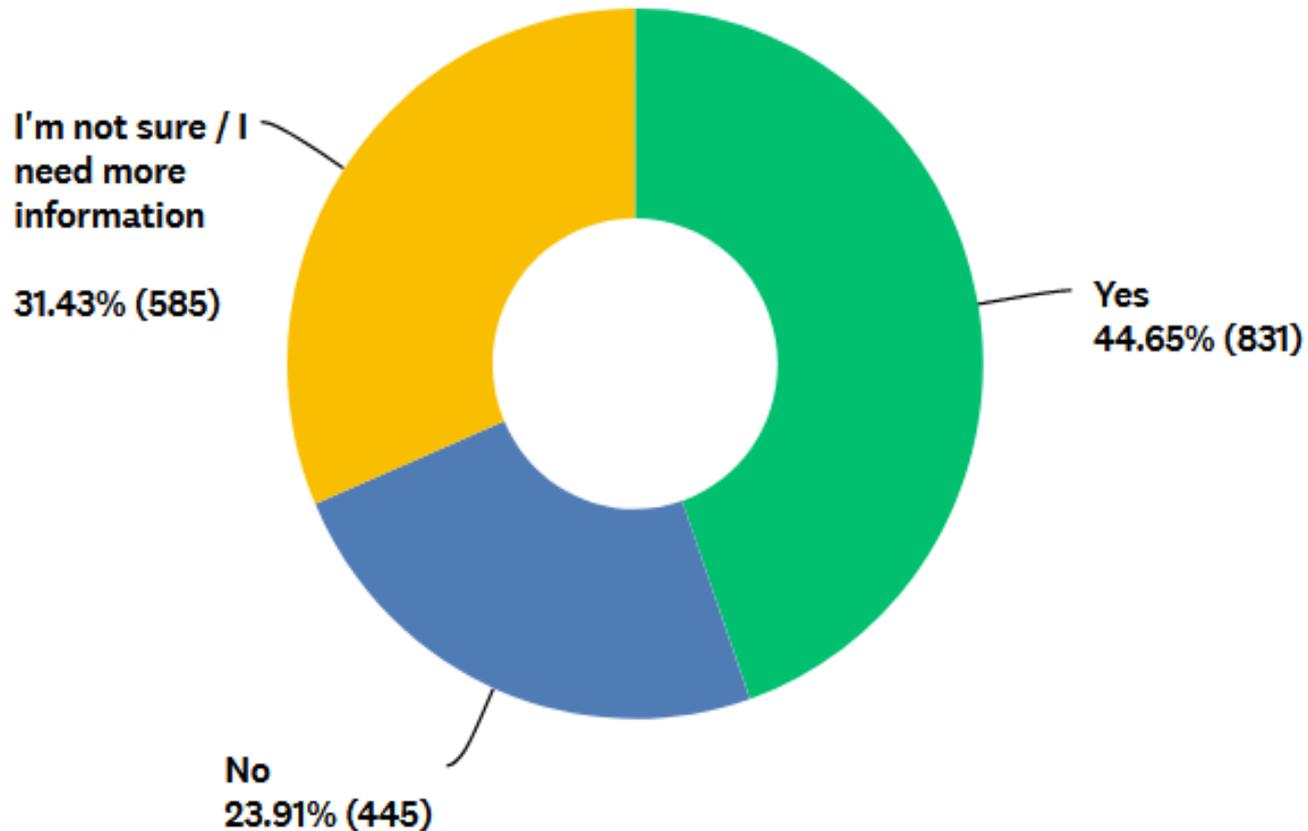
Issue or Need	Degree of Need
Lack of commercial growth & improvements in downtown district	<b>#1 Major concern / urgent action needed</b>
Traffic safety on Main Street	<b>#2 Major concern / urgent action needed</b>
Vandalism of personal property / crime / drugs	<b>#1 Needs improvement / some action needed</b>
Overall strength of Mount Airy's commercial district economy	<b>#2 Needs improvement / some action needed</b>
Lack of affordable housing	<b>#1 Not an issue / no action needed</b>
Existing level and pace of residential growth	<b>#2 Not an issue / no action needed</b>

# Commercial Business Growth Preferences

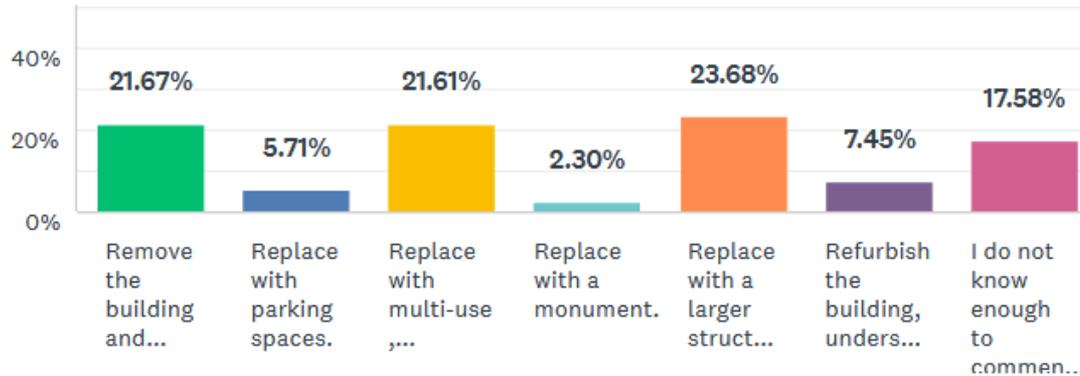
	1	2	3	TOTAL
▼ Concentrate in Existing Commercial Areas	76.10% 1,216	21.09% 337	2.82% 45	1,598
▼ Identify New Areas	22.26% 295	51.47% 682	26.26% 348	1,325
▼ No Additional Businesses Needed	20.18% 253	21.93% 275	57.89% 726	1,254

- A preference to concentrate growth in existing commercial areas. In a separate question, respondents selected **small retail stores** and **restaurants** as their top two choices for the most desired types of businesses needed. Hotels received the least amount of interest.
- Respondents expressed a strong belief (92%) that Mount Airy businesses should be participating in the Town's recycling program.

# The Connection of Center Street Enabling Direct Passage from Route 27 to Main Street



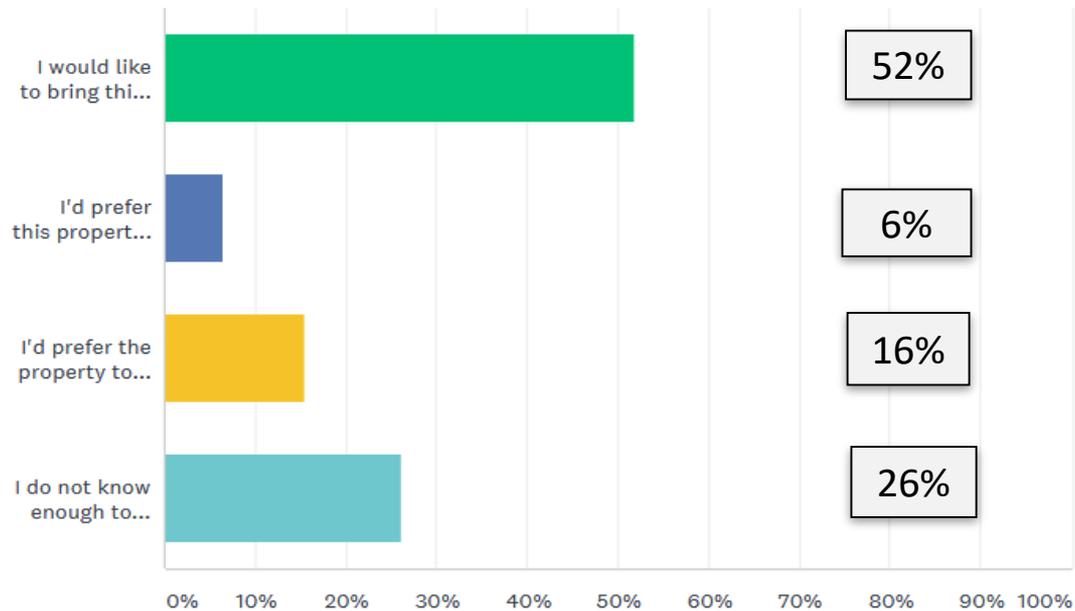
# How Do You Want Your Tax Dollars Spent on the Future Use of the Flat Iron Building Property?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Remove the building and stabilize the land; fill in with grass, shrubs, trees (least cost).	21.67% 387
Replace with parking spaces.	5.71% 102
Replace with multi-use, park-like, benches, small plaza with no building structure.	21.61% 386
Replace with a monument.	2.30% 41
Replace with a larger structure as recommended by the consultant with the benefits noted in the description. Since it is set back, no Main Street closures would be required (most expensive option).	23.68% 423
Refurbish the building, understanding the high cost and limited uses (e.g., bathrooms; elevator for mobility impaired).	7.45% 133
I do not know enough to comment. I look forward lo the public hearing should this move forward.	17.58% 314
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,786</b>

# Opinions on the Harrison-Leishear Property

Answered: 1,799 Skipped: 102



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I would like to bring this into town with the pros as noted.	51.86% 933
▼ I'd prefer this property be developed under county control.	6.39% 115
▼ I'd prefer the property to remain as is and do not believe it will develop in the county.	15.56% 280
▼ I do not know enough to comment. I look forward to the public hearings should this move forward.	26.18% 471
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,799</b>

# Views on Need for Affordable Housing

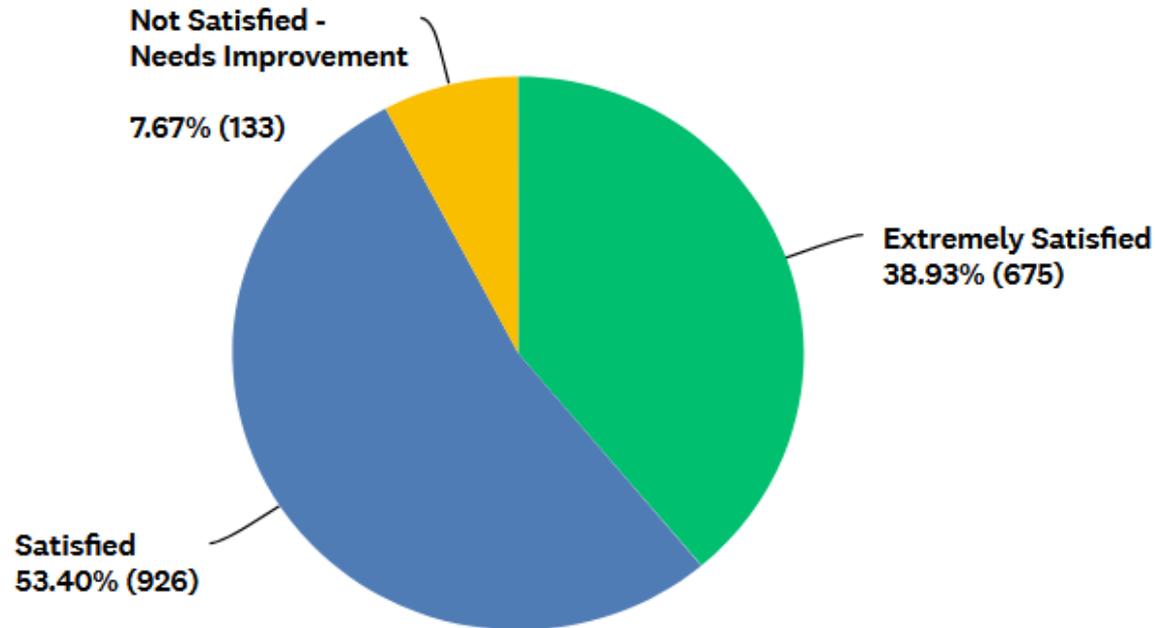
	1	2	3	TOTAL
▼ Apartment Complexes	39.04% 114	25.34% 74	35.62% 104	292
▼ Single Family Homes	58.49% 503	28.95% 249	12.56% 108	860
▼ Townhouses	25.06% 199	53.40% 424	21.54% 171	794
▼ Condominiums	30.19% 160	30.57% 162	39.25% 208	530
▼ I do not support any additional affordable housing options	88.46% 843	6.09% 58	5.46% 52	953

- Responses in rank order were: (1) no additional affordable housing needed, (2) single family homes, (3) townhouses, (4) condominiums, (5) apartments.
- Of those who selected no additional affordable housing needed, they did so strongly, ranking it #1 88% of the time.
- Reinforced by earlier questions indicating lack of affordable housing, and existing pace of residential growth were the top two choices NOT being an issue or needing any action.

## A Clear Choice for Recreational Facilities that offer Leisure Activities in the Natural Environment

	1	2	3	TOTAL
Rollerblading / Skateboarding Park	23.62% 47	39.70% 79	36.68% 73	199
Basketball / Tennis Courts	24.77% 53	43.93% 94	31.31% 67	214
Ball Fields	42.93% 176	32.20% 132	24.88% 102	410
Playground Equipment	27.36% 116	33.49% 142	39.15% 166	424
■ Picnic Facilities	13.76% 83	31.01% 187	55.22% 333	603
■ Wooded Areas/ Natural Open Space	33.03% 331	45.31% 454	21.66% 217	1,002
■ Nature Trails/ Walking, Bicycling, and Jogging Paths	61.57% 889	27.70% 400	10.73% 155	1,444

# Top Safety Concerns & Police Performance



- Very positive (92%) overall level of satisfaction. Eight percent *Not Satisfied*.
- Of those who selected *Not Satisfied*, a higher percentage (16%) of them were from the Twin Ridge neighborhood.

## Top Safety Concerns & Police Performance (cont'd)

- Respondents selected **drug violations/activity** as their most serious safety concern, ranking it #1 or #2 collectively 70% of the time relative to all other choices (e.g., theft; burglary & assault; traffic safety).
- **Traffic safety** was a frequent concern.
- Respondents expressed a clear choice for **neighborhood watch information/assistance** (ranked #1), and **crime prevention strategies** (ranked #2) as being the most beneficial services that could be offered to citizens by the Mount Airy Police Department's (MAPD) Community Services Unit.
- There was a noticeable theme regarding safety, MAPD in written comments; further review & analysis of these and all safety-related questions in a holistic manner may yield additional insights.

# Town Government Services and Engagement

- Three areas were presented for opinion: (1) I receive good value for Town of Mount Airy taxes I pay; (2) Town government welcomes citizen involvement and opinions; and (3) Town government cares about what people like me think.
- Most respondents agreed with these statements (65-70% chose *agree* and 15-20% chose *strongly agree*).
- The area “Town government cares about what people like me think” received **the highest negative opinion**, selecting disagree or strongly disagree 18% of the time when evaluating this area.
- Twenty percent of respondents had experiences involving the review and resolution of Town Code and Zoning requirements / violations. **Of these that did, 58% were satisfied or very satisfied with the resolution of their issues; 42% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.**

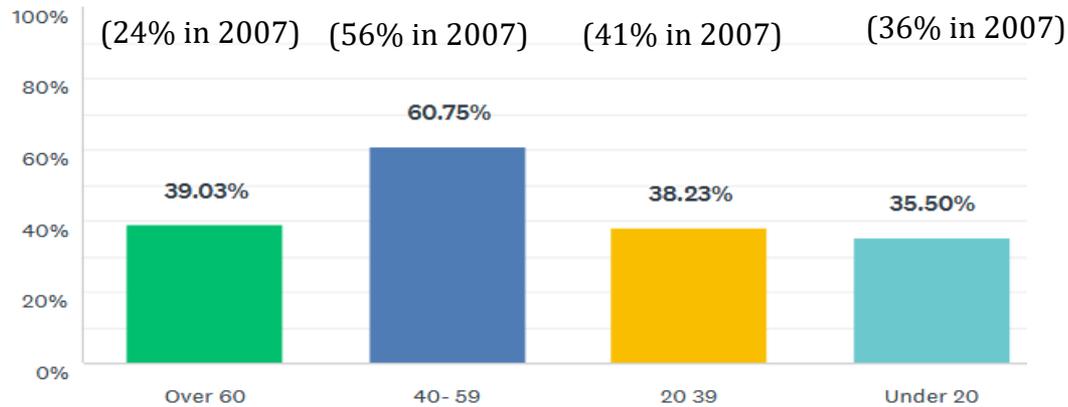
# Performance of Town Council and Commissions

	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT	NOT FAMILIAR ENOUGH TO OFFER AN OPINION	TOTAL
Economic Development	12.79% 218	30.38% 518	15.89% 271	4.22% 72	36.72% 626	1,705
Planning and Zoning	11.67% 199	30.26% 516	18.24% 311	4.57% 78	35.25% 601	1,705
Recreation and Parks Board	5.23% 89	25.10% 427	29.75% 506	10.58% 180	29.34% 499	1,701
Recycling and Sanitation	2.46% 42	21.64% 370	36.43% 623	14.62% 250	24.85% 425	1,710
Streets and Roads	6.31% 108	28.86% 494	28.21% 483	11.74% 201	24.88% 426	1,712
Sustainability	4.34% 72	23.73% 394	21.14% 351	6.02% 100	44.76% 743	1,660
Town Council	4.22% 71	28.86% 486	25.24% 425	9.32% 157	32.36% 545	1,684
Water and Sewer	3.63% 62	24.97% 427	30.76% 526	11.81% 202	28.83% 493	1,710

- Survey respondents selected *Average*, *Very Good*, and *Not Familiar Enough to Offer an Opinion* most frequently.
- Results suggest that roughly one-third of Survey respondents may not be fully aware of the responsibilities and associated performance of the Town's government organizations.

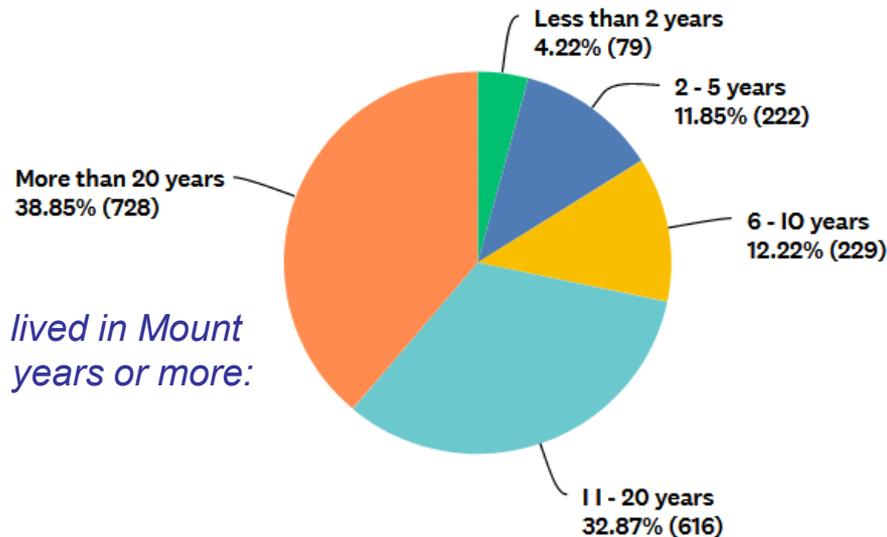
# Selected Demographic Results

What Age Groups Live In Your Residences?



*A 15% increase in "Over 60" age group.*

How Long Have You Lived in Mount Airy?



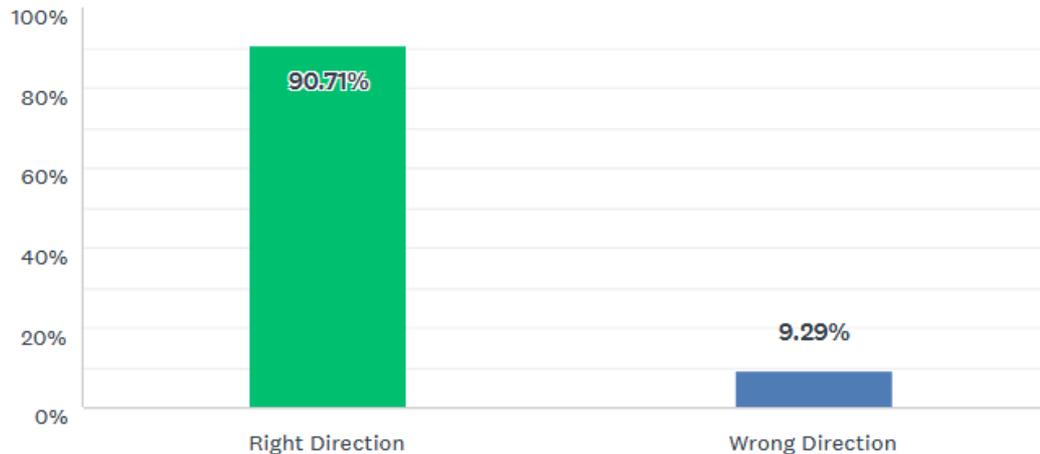
*72% have lived in Mount Airy for 11 years or more:*

# Extensive and Thoughtful Written Comments

- Written comments were provided by Survey Respondents in 933 (49%) of surveys. An initial key word search was done; some themes found are highlighted below:

Results of Customized Word Search on Key Words and Phrases	
Key Words	Number of Comments Containing Key Words
Development	140
Housing / Affordable Housing	143
Residential	34
Businesses	123
Growth	88
Downtown	122
Bank / Old Bank Building / Blight / Vacant	160
Community Center	20
Main Street	87
Flat Iron	77
Harrison Leishear	24
Center Street	26
Traffic	170
Mayor / Town Council	44
Safety / Crime / Drugs / Police	207
Caboose / Train / Museum	40

# Respondents Expressed A Clear View (91%) that Mount Airy is Headed in the Right Direction



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Right Direction	90.71%	1,435
▼ Wrong Direction	9.29%	147
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,582</b>

- Main Street (19%), Park Avenue (20%), and Mount Airy East (21%) each had relatively higher percentages of respondents who selected wrong direction compared to other locations.
- A review of written comments of respondents who selected wrong direction may provide additional insights.

# Products, Recommendations, & Path Forward

## ■ *Stakeholder Outreach*

- ✓ Make Survey Results Report available to the public via Town Web Site.
- ✓ Presentations to Town Council, and Commissions as requested, in public settings.
- ✓ Information exchanges with stakeholder/community groups where there is interest.

## ■ *Products*

- ✓ **Survey Results Report** presenting all results and written comments.
- ✓ **Survey Monkey** software user license; contains results.
- ✓ **Excel Database** of results to facilitate data analysis.



## ■ *Further Analysis to Gain More Insights and Support Town Decision Making*

- ✓ Additional “analytical lenses” to gain deeper understanding of all written comments and question-specific results by location and other demographic information.
- ✓ Tailored topic-specific profiles or dashboards (e.g., growth and development; safety) looking at the information above in a holistic manner.
- ✓ Perform analysis “on demand” to help inform Town government as issues arise.

# Thank You!

*Our Great Citizens of Mount Airy!*

*Mayor Patrick Rockinberg*

*Mount Airy Town Council*

*Wendy Rimbey – Our Task Force Chairperson*