



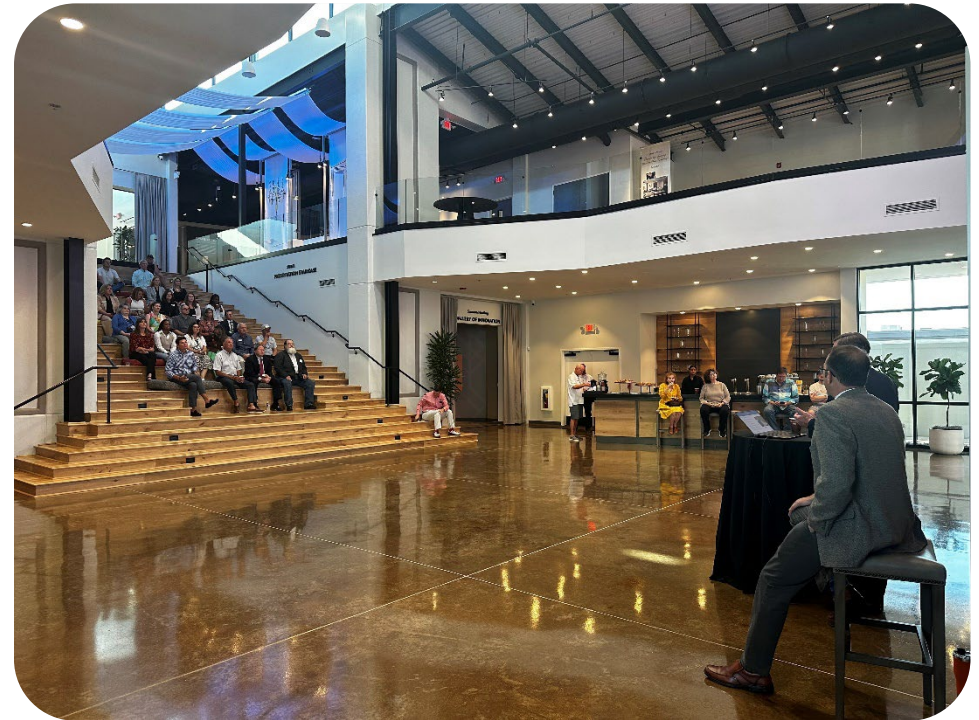
# Downtown Strategic Plan Review

**Public Meeting**  
**August 31, 2023**

BENCHMARK

# Welcome

- Overview of the Process
- Downtown Assessment
- Recommendations
- Next Steps
- Question & Answer



August 31, 2023 – 9am Presentation

# Process

- Board of Directors Meetings
- Executive Committee Meetings
- Downtown Assessment
  - » Community Engagement
  - » Identified a Downtown Coordination Area
  - » Identification of Focus Areas and Activities
  - » Coordination with Partner Organizations
- Recommendations



**12 Month Process**  
(October '22 – September '23)

# Downtown Assessment

- Community Engagement
  - » Listening Sessions
    - October and November
    - Over 70 people were interviewed
    - Business owners, elected officials, city staff, civic organization leaders, real estate and development interests, Forward High Point board members, and others



Listening Sessions @ the Catalyst Club

# Downtown Assessment

- Community Engagement
  - » What did we learn from the listening sessions?
    - Need for a change in the primary role of FHP
    - Coordination with other community organizations in downtown
    - Services/Activities identified to potentially be provided by FHP
    - A name change might help clarify the focus of the organization
    - A need for more funding (potential Municipal Service District)
    - A plan is needed to guide FHP through the transition



# Downtown Assessment

- Community Engagement
  - » Public Survey
    - Entire month of November
    - 546 people participated



**TELL US ABOUT  
DOWNTOWN**

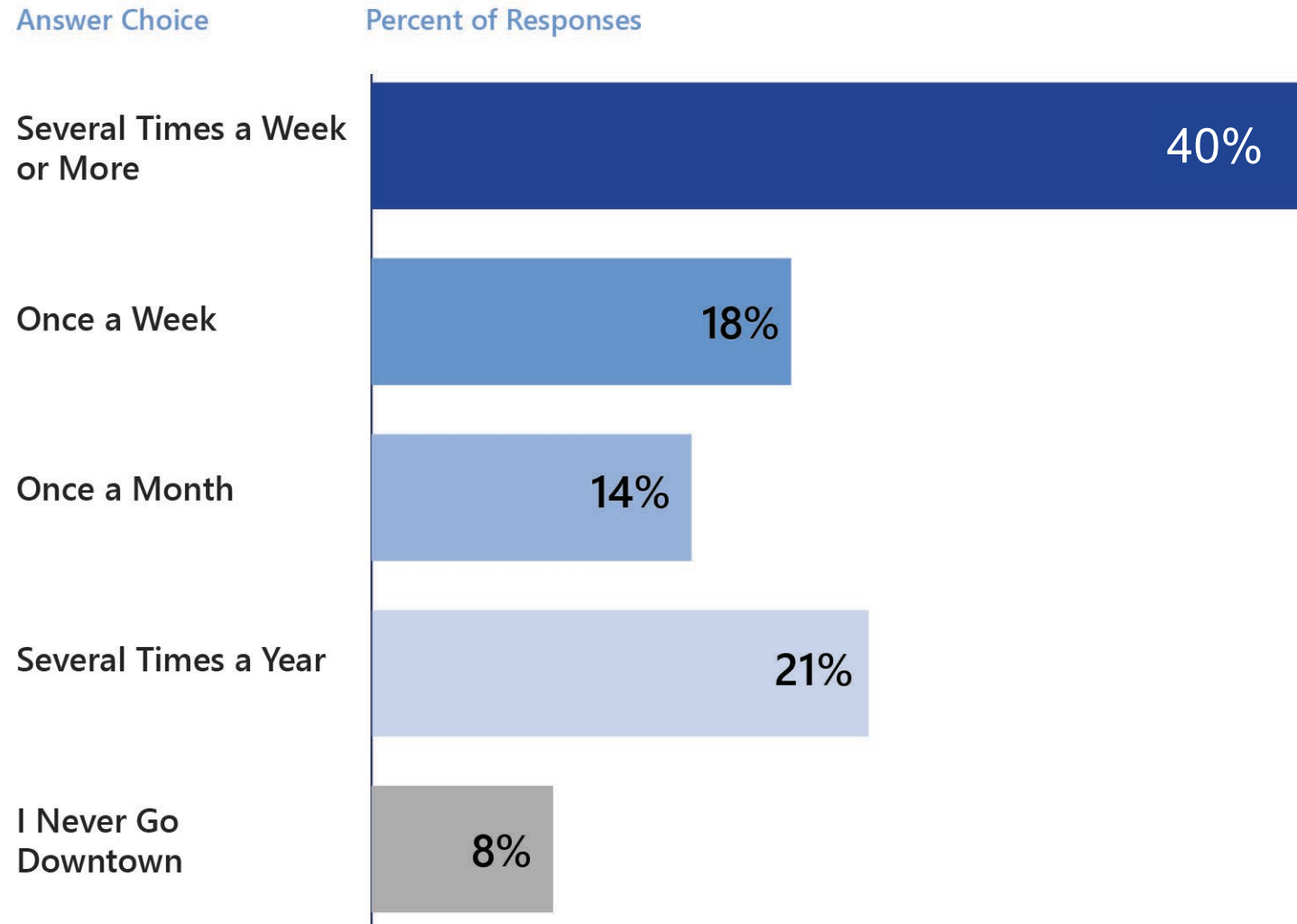
Forward High Point is developing a Strategic Plan for Downtown and wants to hear from you.



**TAKE THE SURVEY NOW!**

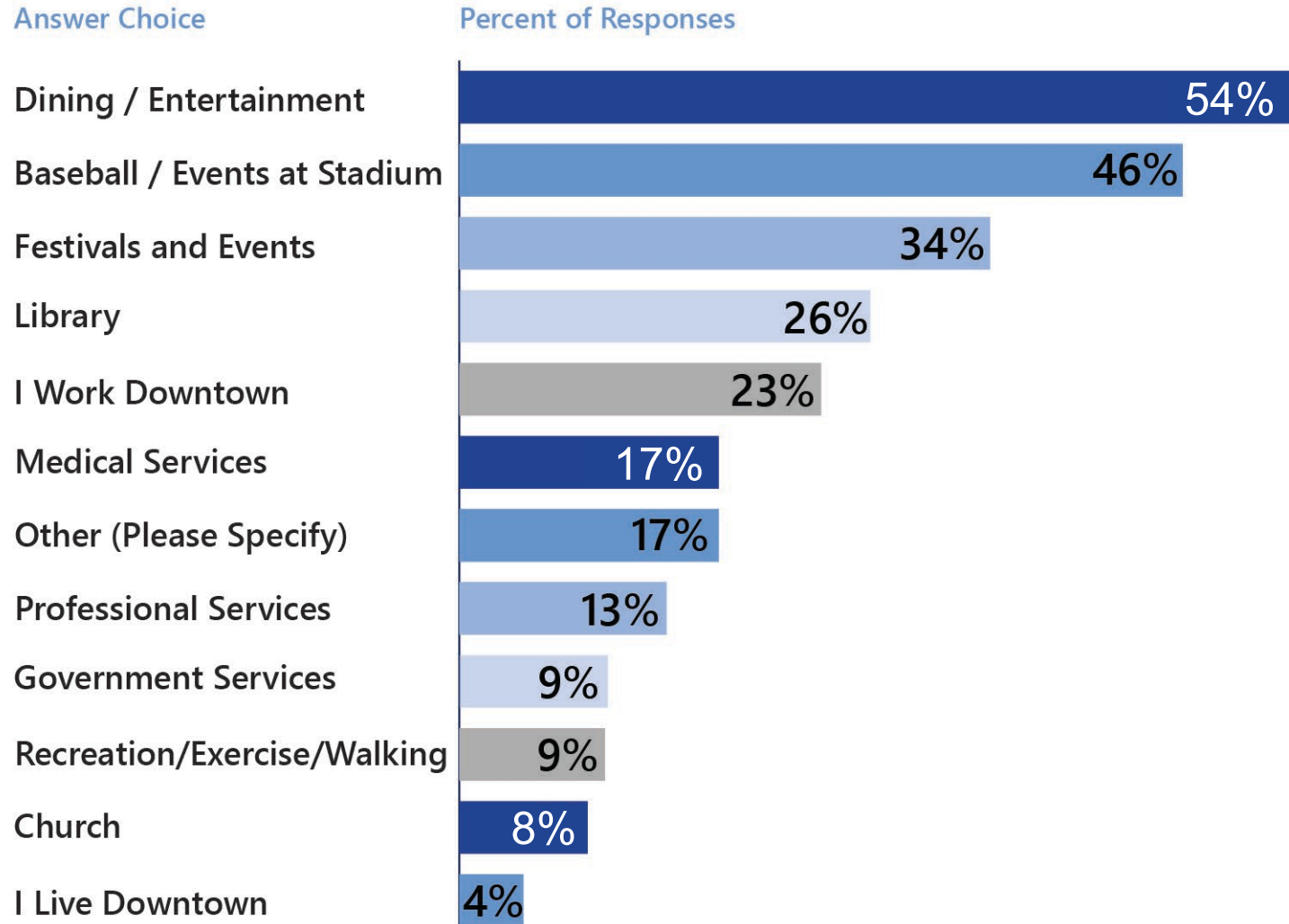
Also, find the survey and more information at [www.DowntownHighPoint.org](http://www.DowntownHighPoint.org)

# Question 1: How often do you visit Downtown High Point?



# Question 2: What are your primary reasons for visiting Downtown?

Multiple Answers Permitted





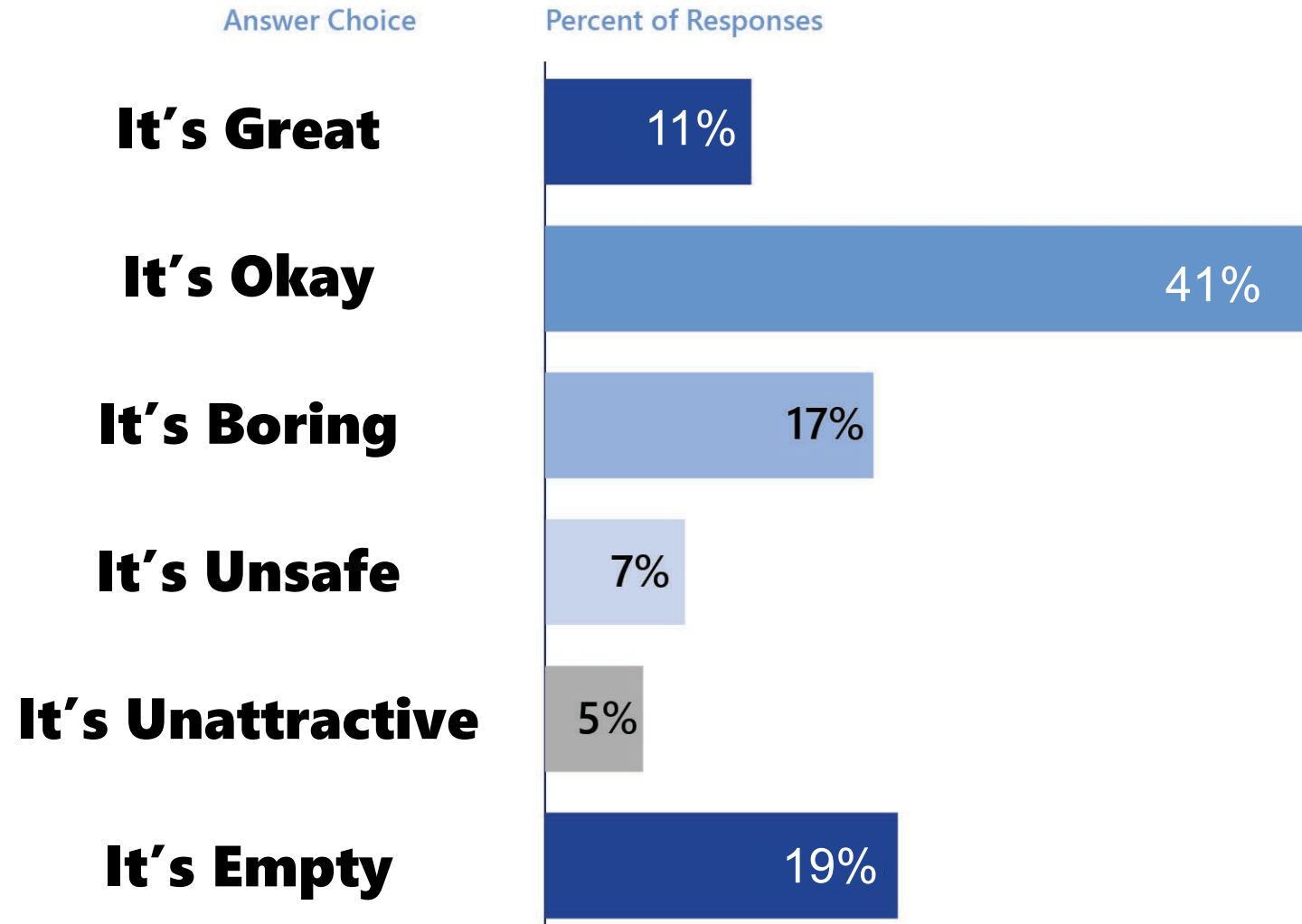
## Question 3: What would make you want to visit Downtown more often?

Results show the responses mentioned in 5% or more of total responses

464 survey respondents submitted responses to this question. The table below provides a summary of their comments (shown as percent of total responses).

<b>% OF RESPONSES</b>	<b>WHAT WOULD MAKE THEM VISIT</b>
64.0%	More / Improved Restaurants, Shops, and Businesses
18.5%	More Things To Do / Varied Entertainment
15.9%	More Family Friendly Events
11.9%	Night Life / Bars / Breweries
11.4%	More Walkable Main Street with a Range of Improvements
6.7%	Improved / More Parking Options
6.5%	Improved Sense of Safety
5.4%	Green Spaces / Parks / Recreation

## Question 4: What is your overall perception of Downtown?



## Question 5: What is your favorite thing about Downtown?

Results show the responses mentioned in 5% or more of total responses

*444 survey respondents submitted responses to this question. The table below provides a summary of their comments (shown as percent of total responses).*

<b>% OF RESPONSES</b>	<b>FAVORITE THING ABOUT DOWNTOWN</b>
32.2%	Truist Point Ball Park and Everything Around It
15.3%	Bars, Restaurants, and Breweries
11.0%	All the New Development / Advancements
9.0%	Stock and Grain Food Hall
7.4%	The Library
6.8%	Architecture and Buildings
6.3%	Congdon Yards
5.0%	Small Shops and Businesses

## Question 6: What is your least favorite thing about Downtown?

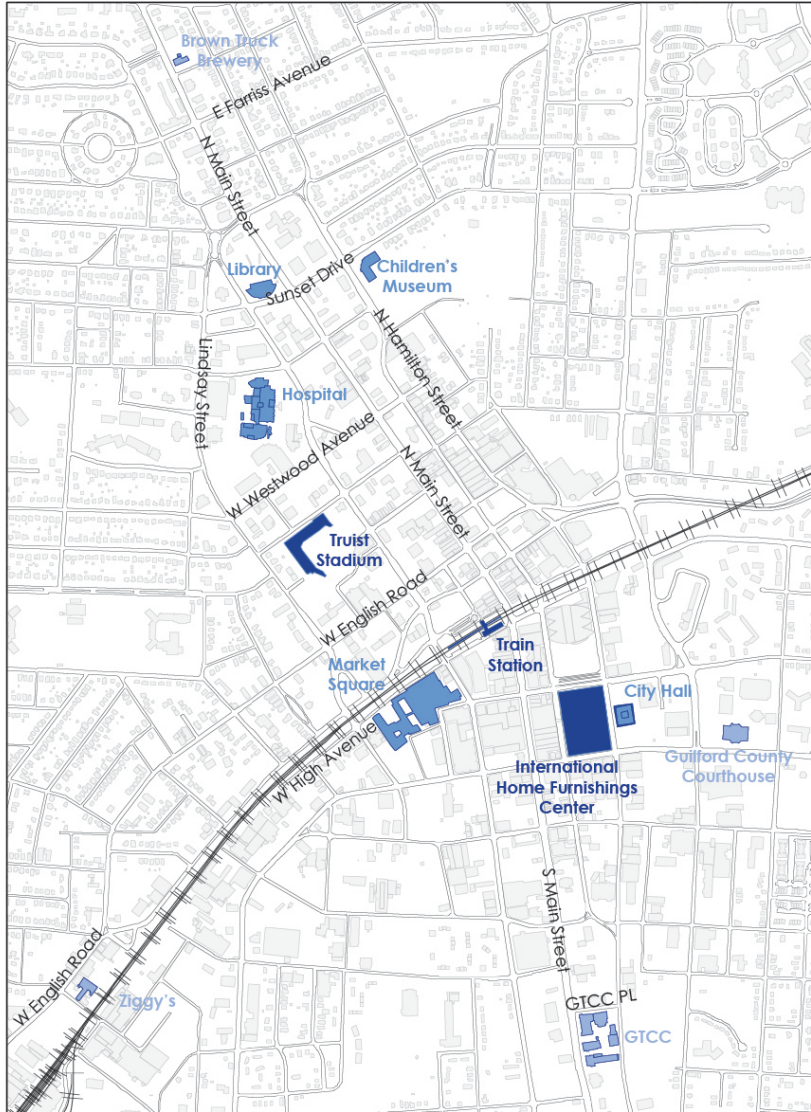
Results show the responses mentioned in 5% or more of total responses

445 survey respondents submitted responses to this question. The table below provides a summary of their comments (shown as percent of total responses).

<b>% OF RESPONSES</b>	<b>LEAST FAVORITE THING ABOUT DOWNTOWN</b>
30.6%	Abandoned / Empty Feeling - Lack of Activity
17.1%	Too Many Showrooms / Lack of Activation of Showrooms
14.6%	Crime / Unsafe Feeling or Perception
11.9%	Not Walkable (design, traffic speeds, number of lanes, etc.)
9.7%	Not Enough Restaurants
8.1%	Appearance (old, dirty, poor lighting, landscaping, etc.)
7.9%	Lack of (Convenient) Parking
7.4%	Need More Shops and Businesses



# Question 7: One of the purposes of the strategic plan is to better define the borders of downtown High Point. Please check any of the following that you consider to be in downtown:



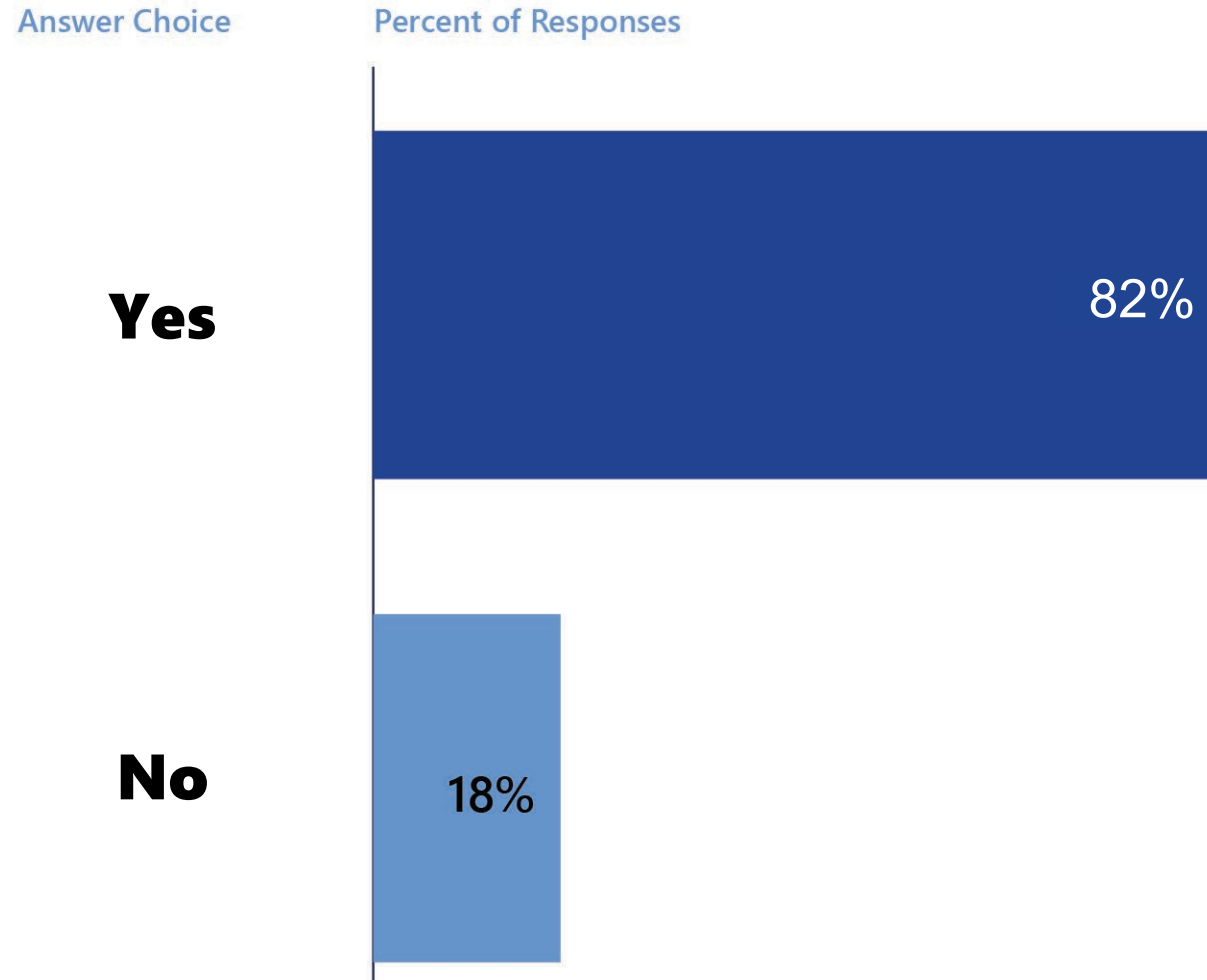
The following list identifies the percent of respondents that feel each location is within downtown:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>38%</b> - Brown Truck Brewery | <b>59%</b> - Market Square                         |
| <b>62%</b> - Library             | <b>75%</b> - International Home Furnishings Center |
| <b>54%</b> - Children's Museum   | <b>54%</b> - City Hall                             |
| <b>62%</b> - Hospital            | <b>45%</b> - Guilford County Courthouse            |
| <b>86%</b> - Truist Stadium      | <b>27%</b> - Cohab Space / Ziggy's                 |
| <b>84%</b> - Train Station       | <b>21%</b> - GTCC                                  |

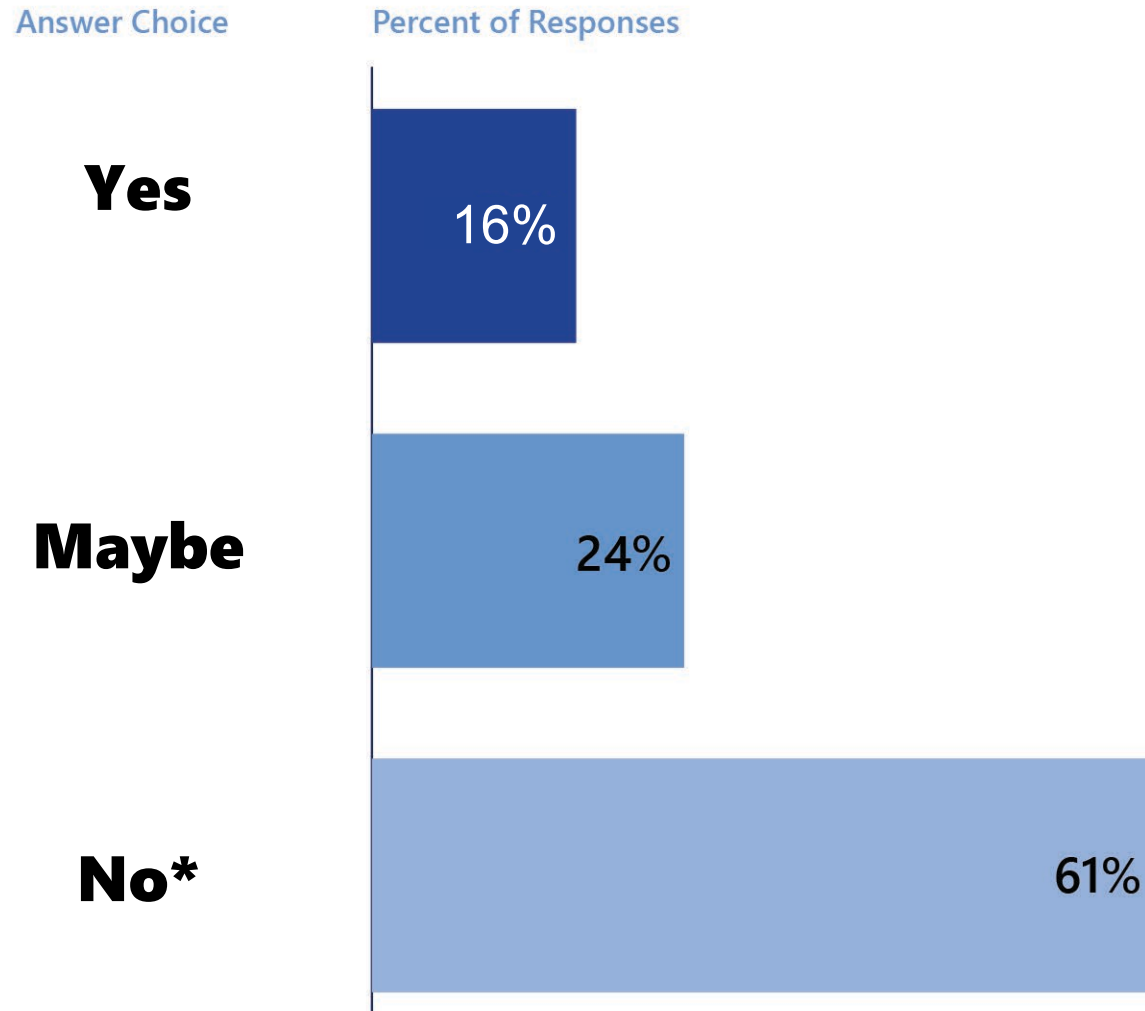
*On the map, locations identified as in downtown by more than two-thirds of respondents are in dark blue; locations identified as in downtown by more than half of respondents are in medium blue, and less common locations are in light blue.*



## Question 8: Have you ever visited Truist Point Stadium?



# Question 9: If new apartments and condominiums were built downtown, would you consider living in Downtown High Point in the future?



\*Most said they were happy with their current home.

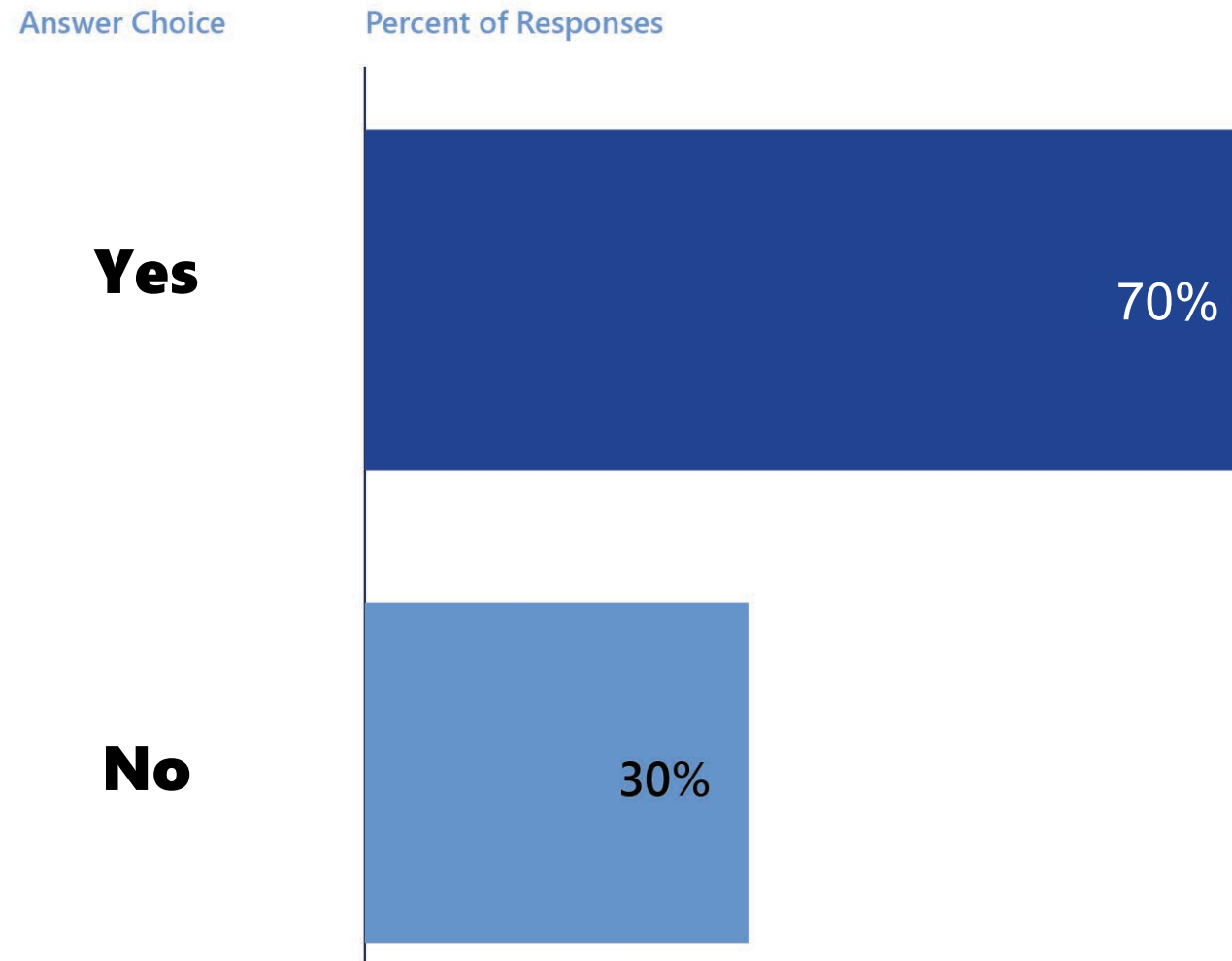
# Question 10: What would like to see change in Downtown High Point in the next few years?

Results show the responses mentioned in 5% or more of total responses

429 survey respondents submitted responses to this question. The table below provides a summary of their comments (shown as percent of total responses).

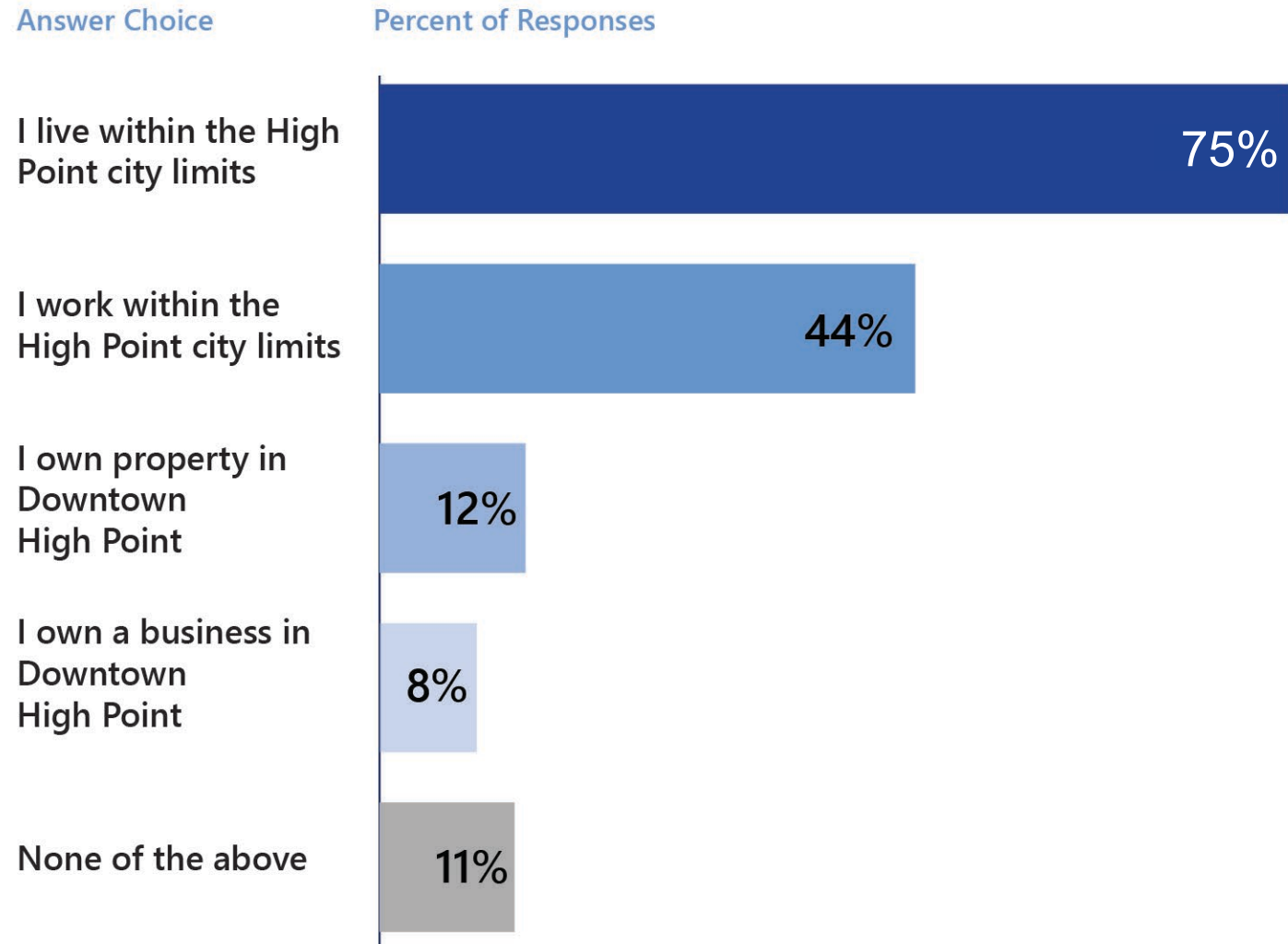
<b>% OF RESPONSES</b>	<b>REQUESTED CHANGES</b>
33.8%	More Restaurants and Bars
33.6%	More Entertainment
31.2%	More Stores / Small Businesses
12.1%	Better Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment
10.3%	Parks / Recreation / Green Spaces
8.2%	Improve Appearance / Clean It Up
7.7%	Residences
7.7%	Enhance Security / Improve Safety
6.5%	Continue Growing
5.4%	Improve Parking Situation

# Question 11: Were you familiar with Forward High Point before you took this survey?



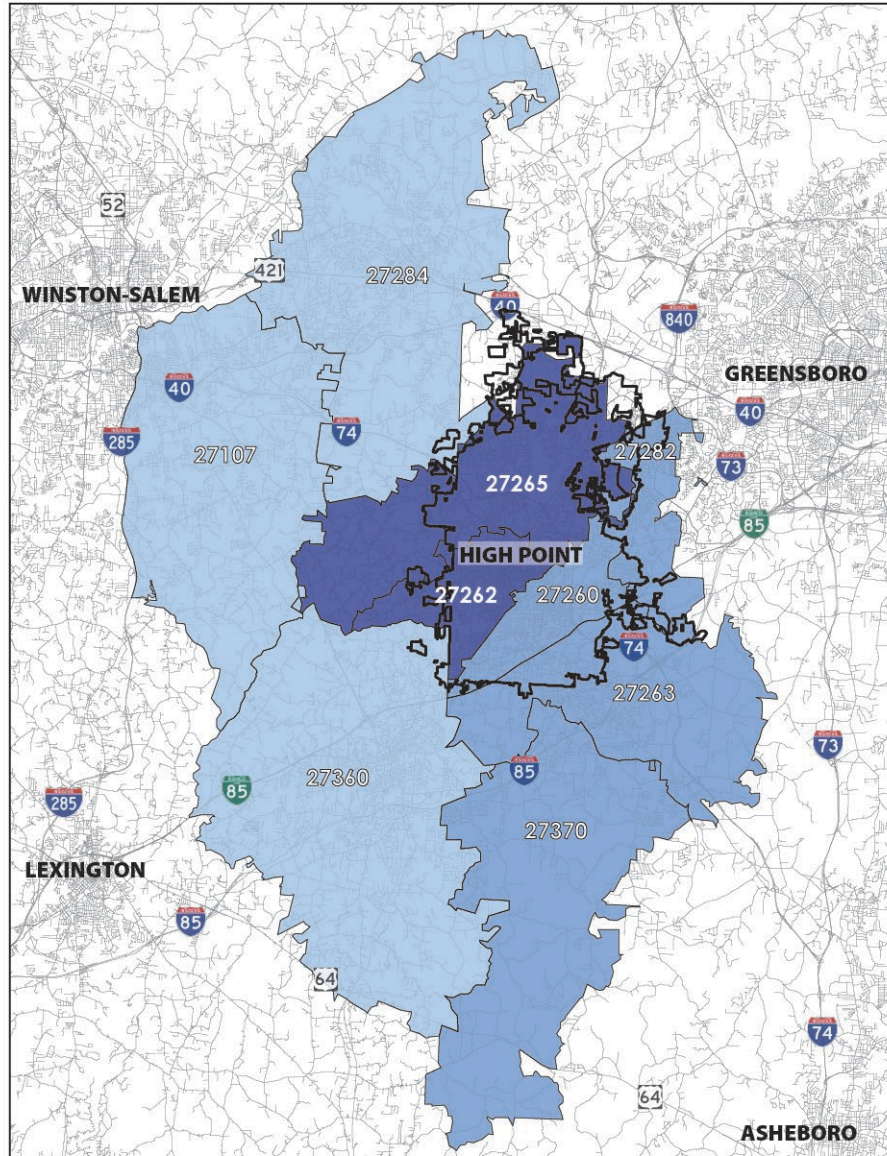
## Question 12: Please check all that apply:

Multiple Answers Permitted



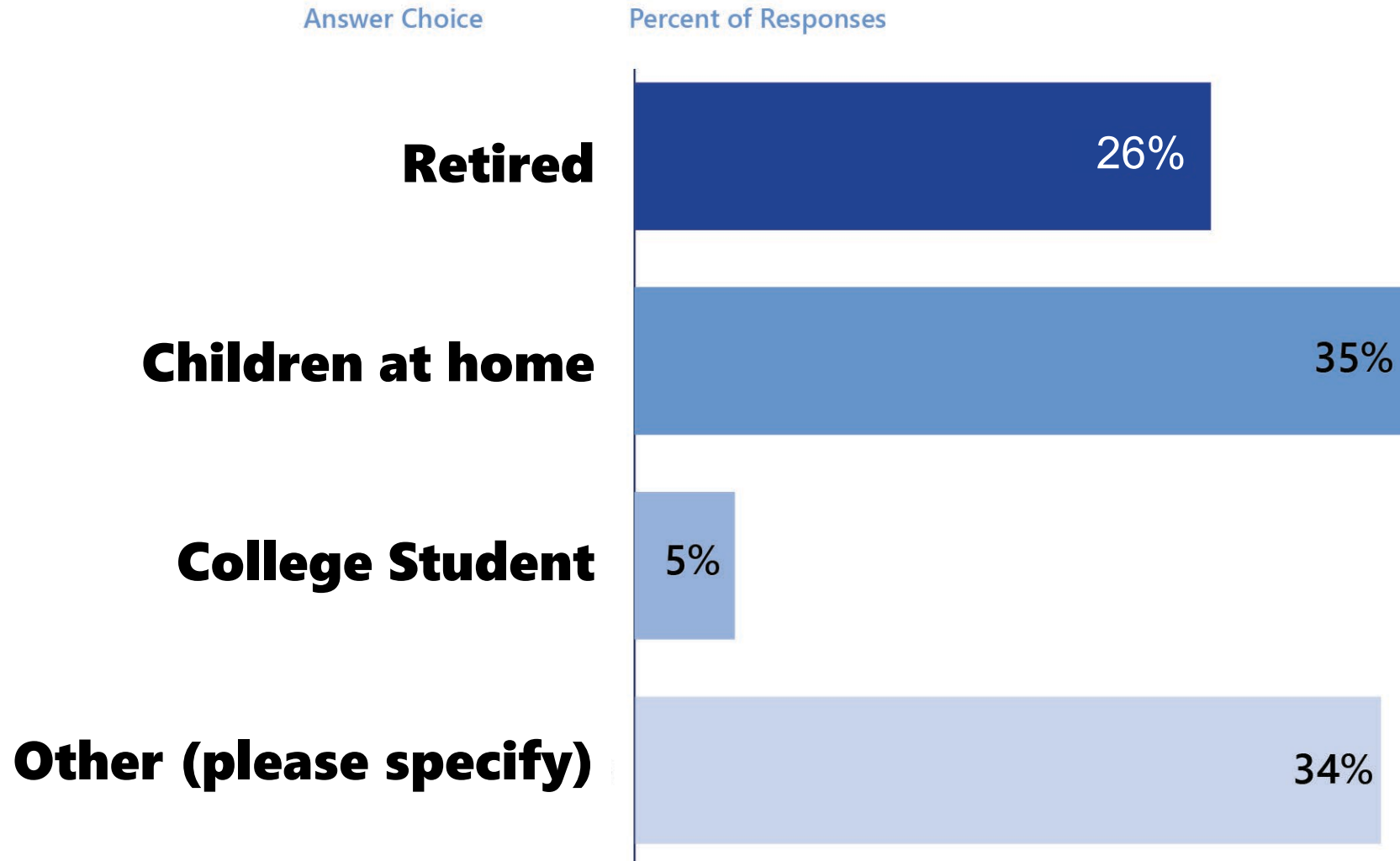


# Question 13: Please tell us your home zip code?



# OF RESPONSES	ZIP CODES
200	27265 (High Point, NC)
186	27262 (High Point, NC)
23	27260 (High Point, NC)
18	27282 (Guilford County, NC)
15	27263 (Archdale, NC)
14	27370 (Randolph County, NC)
8	27360 (Thomasville, NC)
7	27284 (Winston-Salem / High Point, NC)
5	27107 (Winston-Salem, NC)

## Question 14: Please tell us if any of the following apply to you:



# Question 15: If you live in High Point, how long have you lived here?

Answer Choice

Percent of Responses

**Less than 5 years**

12%

**5 – 10 years**

13%

**11 – 20 years**

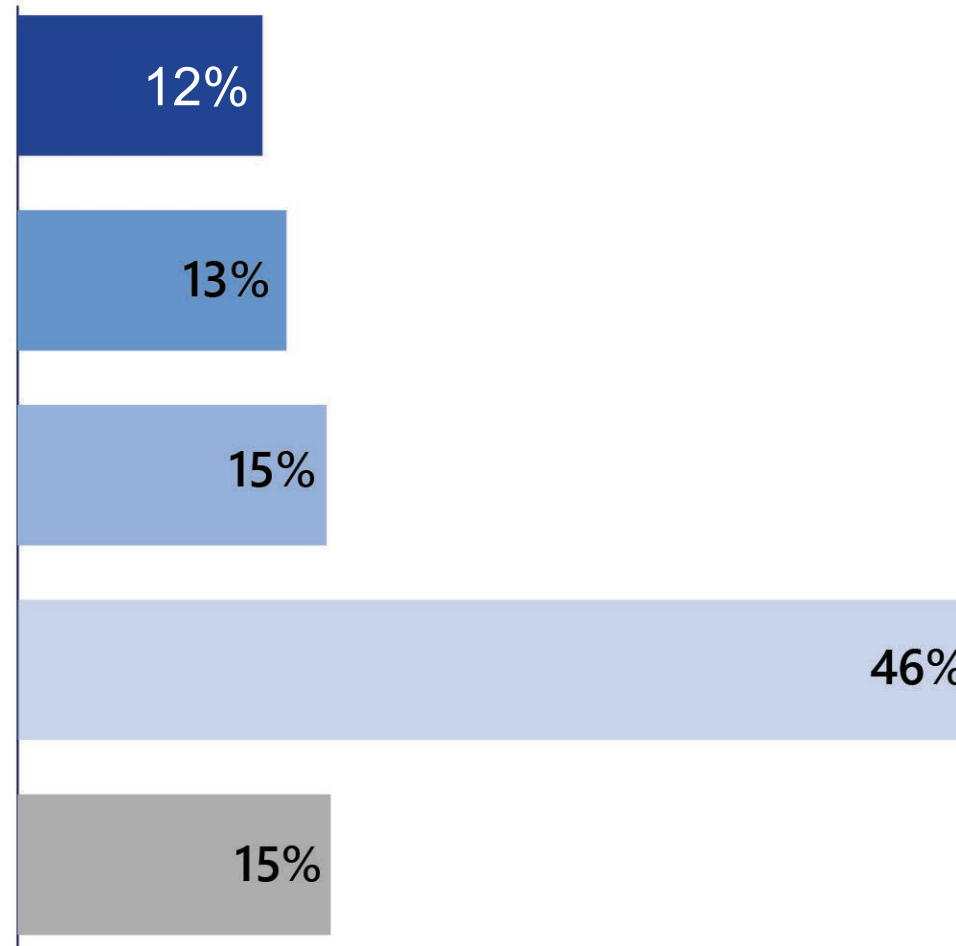
15%

**More than 20 years**

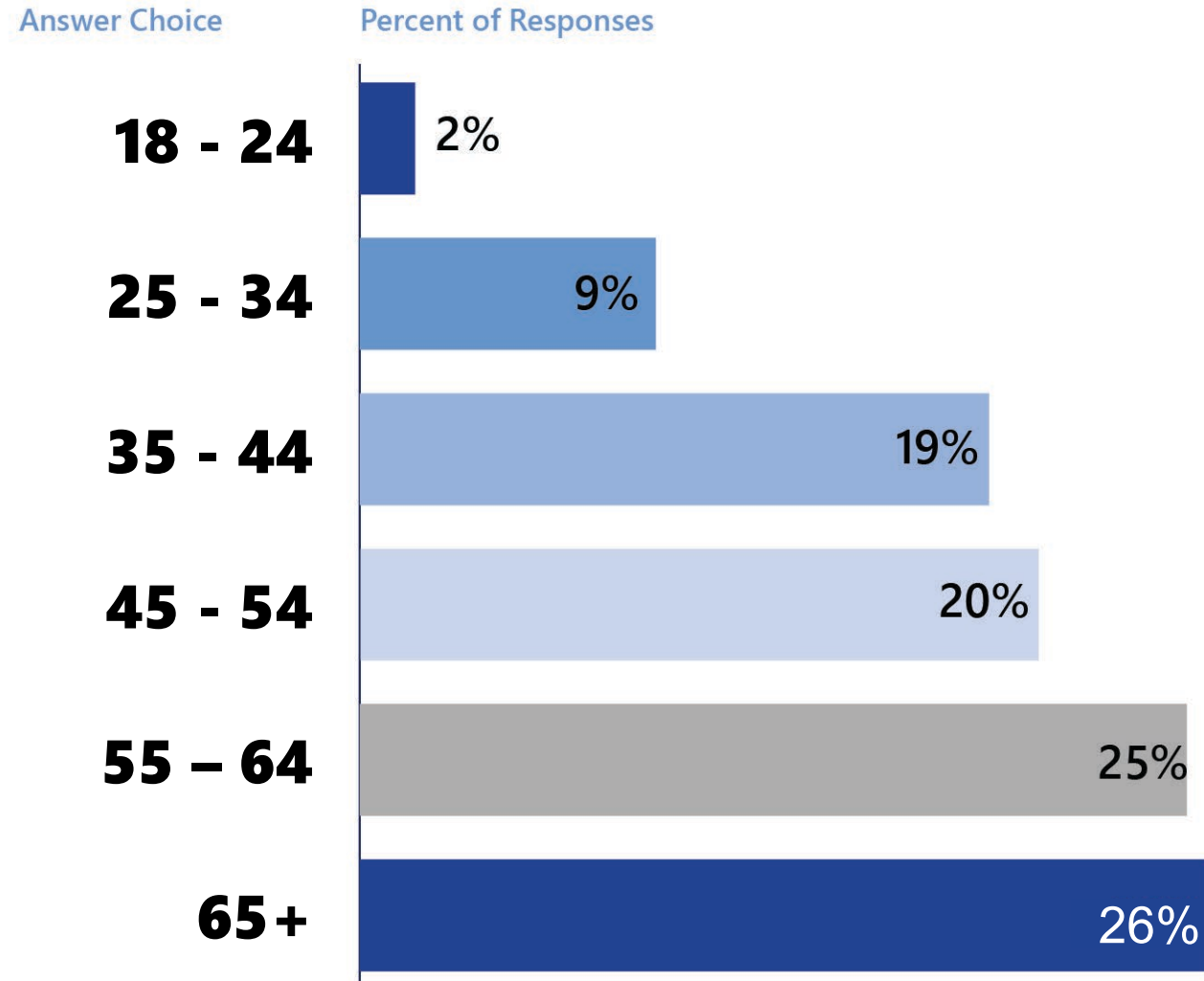
46%

**I do not live in High Point**

15%



## Question 16: Please indicate your age:





# Downtown Coordination Area (DCA)

- Broad coordination area identified
  - North - State Ave
  - South – Grimes Ave
  - East – Centennial St / Hamilton St
  - West – Lindsay St
- Community input and FHP work sessions
- Historical center of High Point
- Focus attention within the DCA
- Does not exclude areas outside of DCA





# Focus Areas and Activities

- Branding and marketing
- Advocate for good urban design
- Engage in the legislative process
- Acquire and hold land for private development opportunities
- Develop/implement programs to support established businesses
- Recruitment of small businesses
- Promote the development of housing

# Focus Areas and Activities

- Plan for and implement projects to activate public space
- Advocate for public safety enhancements / liaison
- Provide supplemental maintenance of public spaces
- Coordinate development projects between stakeholders
- Develop/implement an ambassador/navigator service
- Advocate for historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and the rehabilitation of historic properties

# Coordination with Partner Agencies

## Areas that do not overlap:

- Advocate for good urban design
- Acquire and hold land for private development opportunities
- Promote the development of housing
- Advocate for public safety enhancements / liaison
- Coordinate development projects between stakeholders
- Develop/implement an ambassador/navigator service
- Advocate for historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and the rehabilitation of historic properties

Focus Areas / Activities	VHP	BHP	EDC	MA
Develops a brand for downtown and implements marketing campaigns	●	●		
Advocates for good urban design in both public & private development projects				
Engages in the legislative process at the local and state levels to bring about positive change and protect its interests	●	●	●	●
Acquires and holds land for private development opportunities				
Develops and implements programs to support established downtown businesses		●		
Works with its partners to recruit small businesses to downtown	●	●	●	
Promotes the development of housing within downtown				
Plans for and implements projects to activate public space	●			
Advocates for public safety enhancements and serves as a liaison to local law enforcement				
Provides supplemental (or primary) maintenance of the streetscape and public spaces (inclusive of litter collection, street sweeping, etc.)				●
Coordinates downtown construction and development projects between stakeholders: developers/property owners/city departments/state agencies/etc				
Develops and implements a downtown ambassador / navigator service				
Advocates for historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and the rehabilitation of historic properties				

### NOTE:

- VHP = Visit High Point
- BHP = Business High Point
- EDC = High Point Economic Development Commission
- MA = High Point Market Authority

# Recommendations

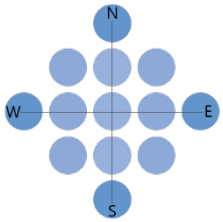
- Vision, Mission, and Goals
- Objectives and Strategies
- Organizational Recommendations
- Conceptual Municipal Service District(s)
- Next Steps

# Vision



Downtown High Point will be a creative and vibrant entertainment, cultural, entrepreneurial, civic, and residential focused downtown area within the core of our city.

# Mission



We will engage downtown stakeholders through programming, marketing, and placemaking initiatives, while advocating for a stronger downtown.



# Goals



## **Placemaking**

Advocate for the development of a strong sense of place.



## **Business Success**

Encourage business retention and the development of new small businesses.



## **Clean & Safe**

Maintain a clean, welcoming, and safe environment.



## **Marketing & Promotion**

Promote and market downtown as a major destination in the City.

# Objectives and Strategies

**Objectives:** 2 to 6 objectives established for each goal

**Strategies:** 2 to 3 strategies for each objective

**Timeframe:** 1 year, 1-3, 3-5 and 5+

GOAL #2 - BUSINESS SUCCESS	1	1-3	3-5	5+
<b>Objective A - Develop and implements programs to support established downtown businesses.</b>				
Strategy 1 - Hold meetings with business owners to identify the types of business support programs that would be most beneficial to downtown businesses.		████████████████████		
Strategy 2 - Coordinate with the City on the selection, review, and implementation of facade and site improvements within the DCA.		████████████████████		
Strategy 3 - Coordinate with partner organizations to develop and implement small business assistance incentives and grant programs.		████████████████████		
<b>Objective B - Work with its partners to recruit small businesses to downtown.</b>				
Strategy 1 - Establish a priority list of business types for recruitment.		██		
Strategy 2 - Develop and implement a recruitment strategy in coordination with partner economic development organizations.		████████████████████		

# Goal #1 - Placemaking

**Objective A:** Advocate for good urban design

**Example Strategy:** *Act as a liaison for City review of downtown projects*

**Objective B:** Acquire & hold land for private development opportunities

**Example Strategy:** *Identify and maintain a list of acquisition targets that align with the mission and development priorities of the organization*

# Goal #1 - Placemaking

**Objective C:** Promote the development of housing within downtown

**Example Strategy:** *Conduct a residential market study and action plan*

**Objective D:** Plan for and implement projects to activate public space

**Example Strategy:** *Engage stakeholders to determine public space priorities*

# Goal #1 - Placemaking

**Objective E:** Coordinate downtown construction and development projects between stakeholders

**Example Strategy:** *Maintain a working relationship with developers, realtors, property owners, city departments, and others to ensure potential projects are identified early*

**Objective F:** Advocate for historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and the rehabilitation of historic properties.

**Example Strategy:** *Work with property owners and the Historic Preservation Commission to prepare individual National Register nominations for eligible properties*

# Goal #2 – Business Success

**Objective A:** Develop and implement programs to support established downtown businesses

**Example Strategy:** *Hold meetings with business owners to identify the types of business support programs that would be most beneficial to downtown businesses*

**Objective B:** Work with partners to recruit small businesses to downtown.

**Example Strategy:** *Establish a priority list of business types for recruitment*



# Goal #3 – Clean & Safe

**Objective A:** Advocate for public safety enhancements and serves as a liaison to local law enforcement.

**Example Strategy:** *Coordinate with stakeholders and partner organizations to identify needed public safety improvements and advocate for the funding and resources needed to enhance public safety*

**Objective B:** Provide supplemental (or primary) maintenance of the streetscape and public spaces (inclusive of litter collection, street sweeping, etc.)

**Example Strategy:** *Prepare an inventory of the current maintenance operations, roles, and responsibilities within the operational boundary*

# Goal #3 – Clean & Safe

**Objective C:** Develop and implements a downtown ambassador / navigator service

**Example Strategy:** *Study successful downtown ambassador programs to identify a model that corresponds to High Point's needs*

# Goal #4 – Marketing and Promotion

**Objective A:** Develop a brand for downtown and implements marketing campaigns

**Example Strategy:** *Work with the City to incorporate its branding into the downtown marketing program*

**Objective B:** Engage in the legislative process at the local and state levels to bring about positive change and protect its interests

**Example Strategy:** *Raise awareness of the Downtown High Point's importance and success among elected officials*

# Organizational Recommendations

## Officers



**Heidi Majors**  
Chair of FHP  
Executive Director  
High Point YWCA



**Alex Moore**  
Vice Chair of FHP  
Senior Partner  
Stratagon



**Dr. Lenny Peters**  
Secretary for FHP  
CEO  
Bethany Medical, Peters Holding & Lenny  
Peters Foundation



**Randy Carda**  
Treasurer  
Retired - former Senior Vice  
President  
Pinnacle

BOD Size & Composition  
✓ Recently Completed

## Board of Directors (11)



**Christi Barbour**  
Founder & Partner  
Barbour Spangle Design



**Tony M. Collins**  
Chief Development Officer  
Collins Global Services, Inc.



**Greg Ferguson**  
Assistant City Manager  
City of High Point



**Megan Oglesby**  
Executive Director  
The Earl and Kathryn Congdon Family  
Foundation



**Monica Peters**  
High Point City Council - Ward 3



**Jay Wagner**  
Mayor  
City of High Point



**Tasha Logan Ford**  
City Manager  
City Of High Point



**Carlvena Foster**  
County Commissioner - District 1  
Gulfport County



**Bill Bencini**  
Sales Representative  
Ultra-Mek, Inc.



**Gary Simon**  
Owner



**Amber Williamson**  
Executive Director  
High Point Discovered



**Melody Burnett**  
President  
Visit High Point



**Tammy Nagem**  
Market President  
High Point Market Authority



**Sandy Dunbeck**  
President/Director  
High Point - Economic Development  
Corporation



**Rachel Moss**  
President/Director  
Business High Point



**Lyndsey Ayers**  
Assistant Vice President for  
University Relations  
High Point University



**Paul Lessard**  
President/Director  
HP Community Foundation

## Non-Voting Liaisons (6)

# Human Resources

- As the organization's mission is changing, more full-time staffing will be needed to meet the needs of a more traditional downtown organization.
  - » Currently 1 full-time and several part-time staff
  - » During year one:
    - 1 additional full-time staff
    - Continued part-time support

# Organizational Identity

- General awareness of Forward High Point
- Some people are unclear what it means/area of focus
- Organizational name change
  - » New name - **Downtown High Point**
  - » Communicates the new mission more clearly
  - » Progress being made toward the name change



# Budget and Funding

- Current Income
  - » \$250,000 City appropriation
  - » \$40,000 Guilford County appropriation
  - » Membership and Corporate contributions
- Recommended Year-One Increase (2024-2025)
  - » \$300,000 City appropriation
  - » \$50,000 Guilford County appropriation

# Budget and Funding

## Income Comparison

(FY 23-24 & FY 24-25)

Income Category	Current	Recommended FY 24-25
City Appropriation	\$250,000	\$300,000
County Appropriation	\$40,000	\$50,000
Donations	-	\$25,000
Memberships	-	\$25,000
Potential Income	\$290,000	\$400,000

# 5-year Budget and Funding

Budget Category	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	FY 26-27	FY 27-28	FY 28-29
<b>Office Operations &amp; Admin</b> (Rent, Utilities, Equipment, Accounting, Legal, Taxes, Phone, Internet, etc.)	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
<b>Staff Salary</b> (Salary, payroll services and tax, 401k, insurance, contractors, etc.)	\$210,000	\$220,000	\$230,000	\$240,000	\$250,000
<b>Programs, Services, &amp; Projects</b> (Placemaking, Business Success, Clean & Safe, Marketing)	\$125,000	\$150,000	\$170,000	\$205,000	\$330,000
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$400,000	\$435,000	\$470,000	\$515,000	\$650,000

# Budget and Funding

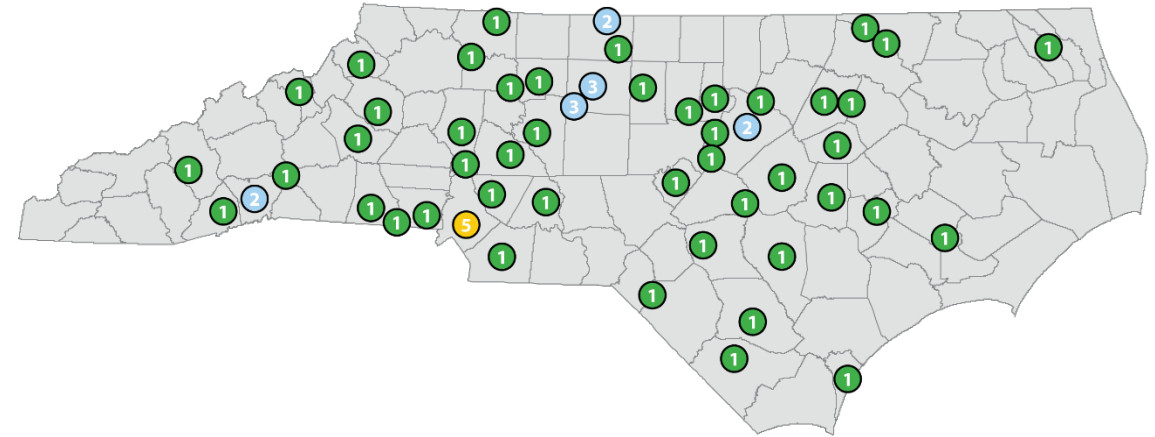
- Potential for an Municipal Service District (MSD)
  - » Long-term consideration
  - » What is an MSD?
  - » What would a potential MSD look like?

# What is a Municipal Service District

- In North Carolina, and across the country, communities have created **Municipal Service Districts (MSDs)** to help achieve their vision and reach their goals
  - Also called Business Improvement Districts (**BIDs**) in other states
- MSDs are driven by the need to generate funding for services and projects at a **greater extent** than those provided on a city-wide basis

# Municipal Service Districts in NC

- Over **60** similar MSDs in NC today
  - Large and small communities
  - Raleigh (2), Durham, Charlotte (5), Greensboro (2), Winston-Salem, Wilmington, Fayetteville, Concord, Salisbury, Lexington, Mount Airy, Sanford, Wilson
  - Average \$0.128 / Rates range from \$0.1 to \$0.27 per \$100 in valuation





# Refined MSD Area (Conceptual)

Area	Taxable Value	Example MSD Rate	Potential Revenue Generated (per \$100 of assessed value)
Refined Area	\$129,151,100	\$0.08	\$103,321



# Immediate Next Steps

- Implement Organizational Recommendations
  - » Board Size and Composition - Completed
  - » Name Change – Progress being made
- Budgeting and Funding for Implementation
  - » Begin process to pursue year-one funding increase
- Implement Priority Recommendations
  - » Organizational, funding & stakeholder engagement actions

# Discussion

**Q & A**