

# Morse High School Reuse Study

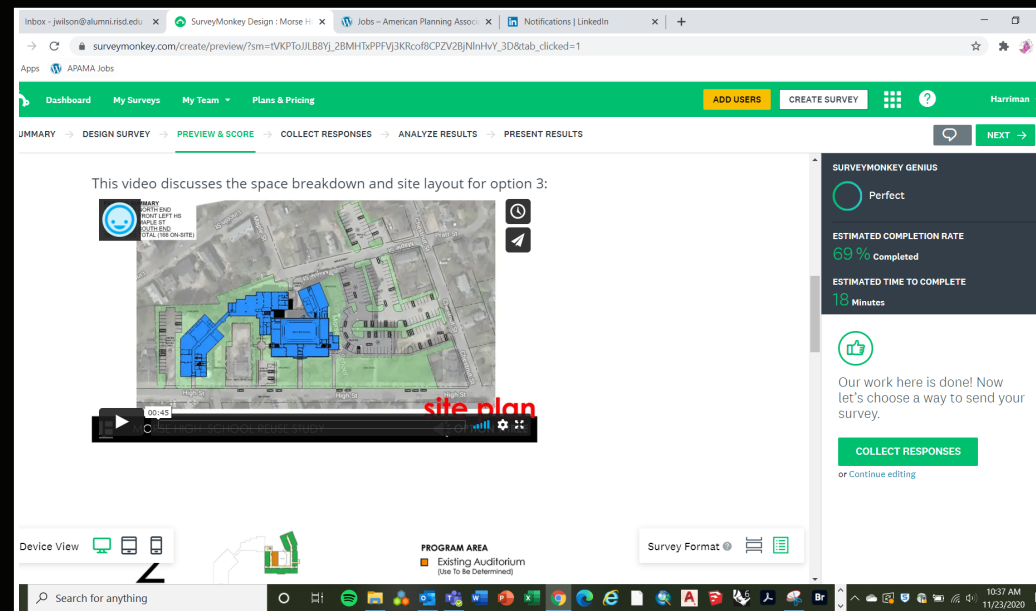
**Presentation:** Online  
Workshop #2 Results

November 2020



# Introduction

## Online “DIY Workshop”



- Demographics and Business Development
- Option 1: Housing + Fire Station
- Option 2: Mixed Use
- Option 3: Housing Focus
- Options Comparison
- The Auditorium, The Pit, and Open Spaces
- Additional Questions and Comments

# Demographics and Business Development

Figure 1: If you don't live in Bath, where do you live?

- Woolwich, ME (12)
- Phippsburg, ME (9)
- West Bath, ME (7)
- Arrowsic, ME (4)
- Topsham, ME (3)
- Georgetown, ME (4)
- Brunswick, ME (4)
- Harpswell, ME (2)
- Bowdoinham, ME (1)
- Bowdoin, ME (1)
- Portland, ME (1)
- China, ME (1)
- Friendship, ME (1)
- Windham, ME (1)
- Wolfeboro, NH (1)
- Pinehurst, NC (1)
- High Point, NC (1)
- Anacortes, WA (1)
- Washington DC (1)
- Lebanon, OR (1)
- Dresden, Germany (1)
- Vancouver, BC (1)
- Antarctica (1)
- Lisbon, Portugal (1)

Figure 4: Do you live in Bath?

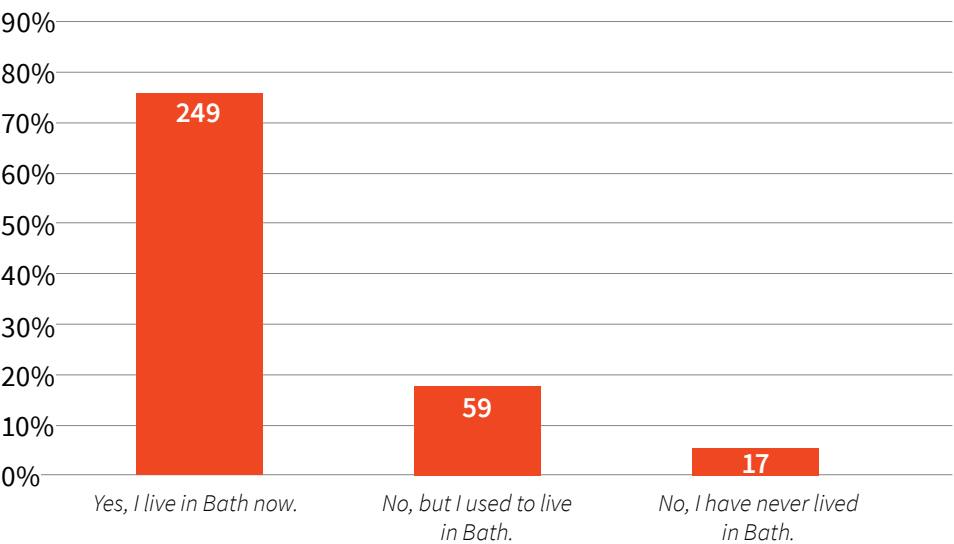


Figure 5: How long have you lived in Bath?

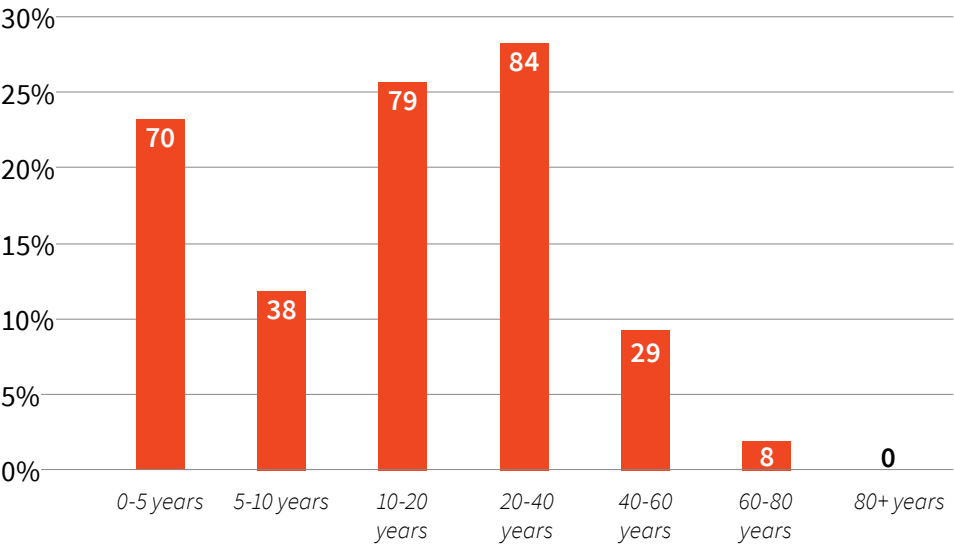


Figure 2: Did you attend Morse High School?

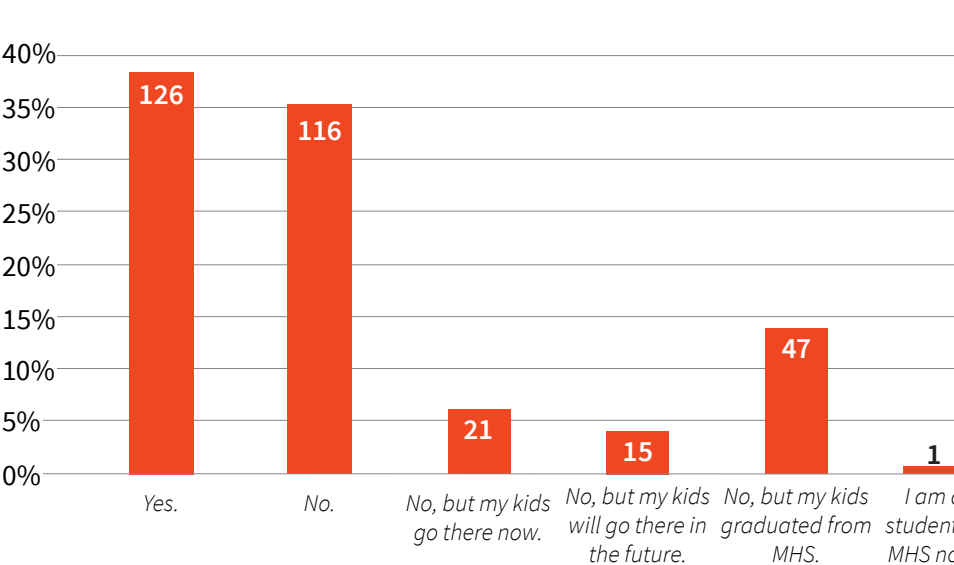
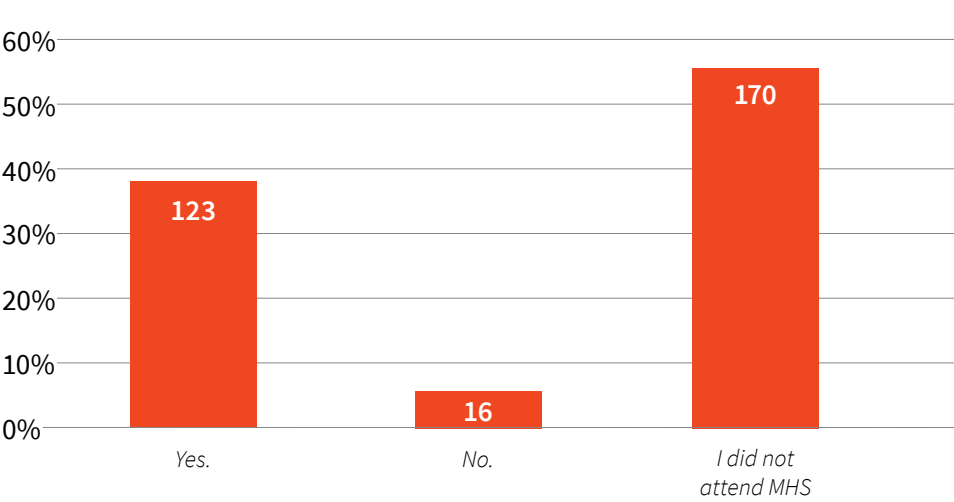


Figure 3: When you attended Morse High School, were you living in an RSU1 community?



# Demographics and Business Development

Figure 6: How many square feet is your business?

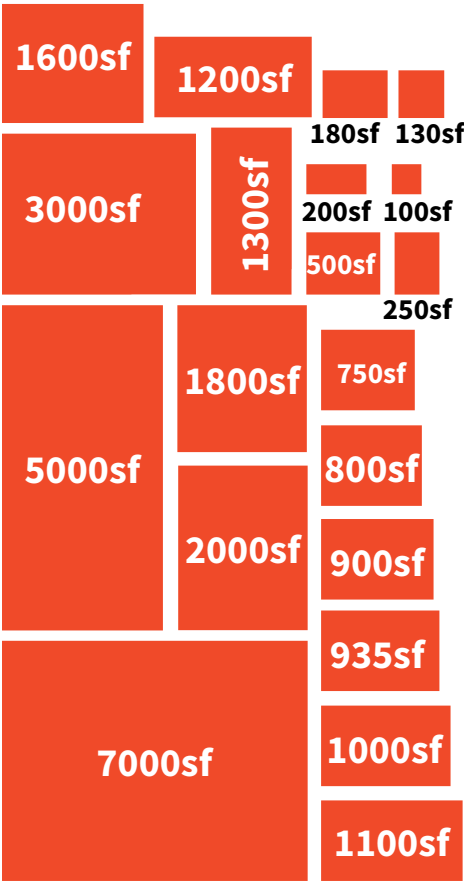


Figure 11: If MHS were redeveloped into moderately priced condominiums, would you be interested in living there?

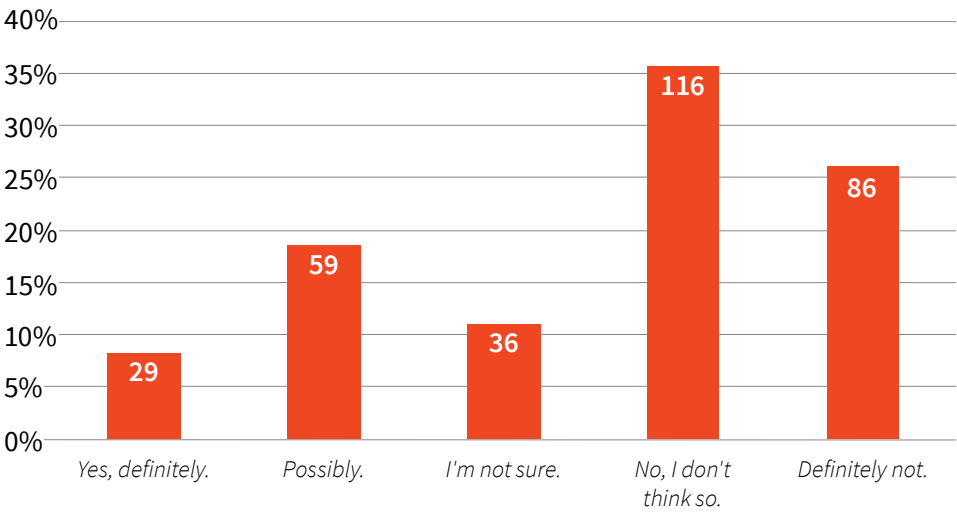


Figure 7: What type of business do you have?

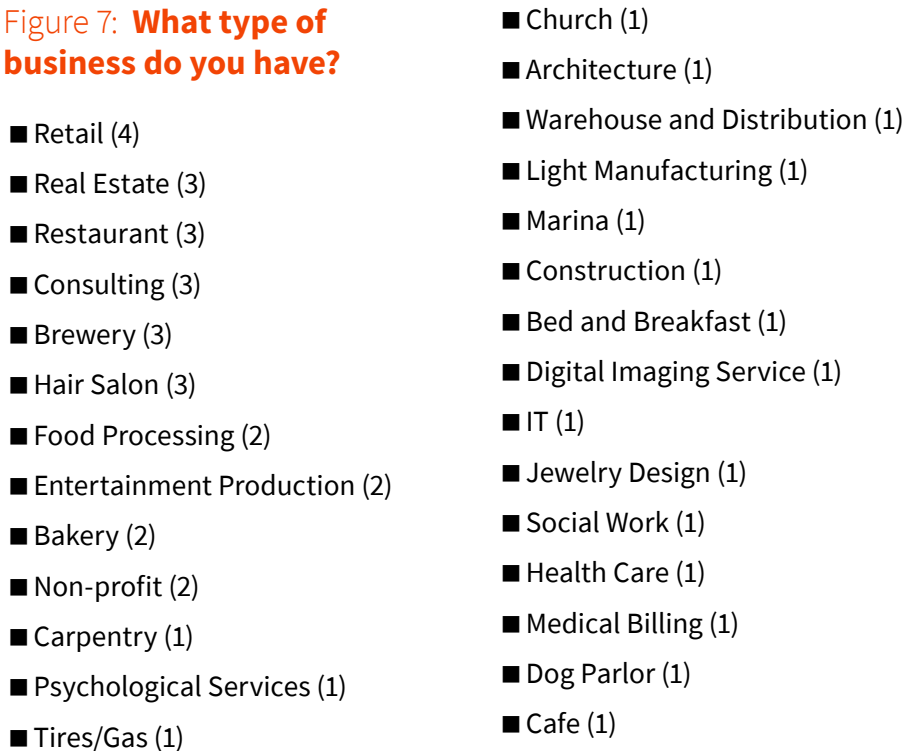


Figure 8: Would you consider relocating your business to MHS?

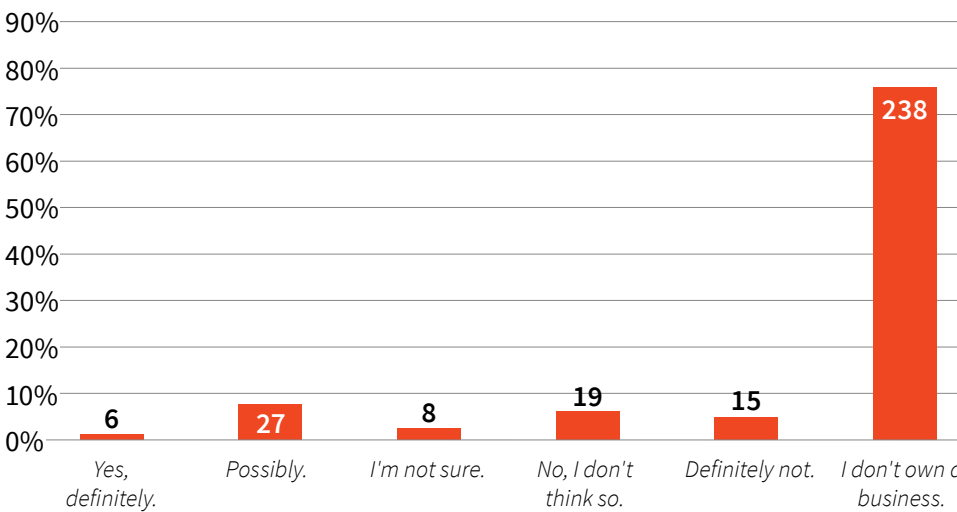


Figure 12: Are you a small business owner?

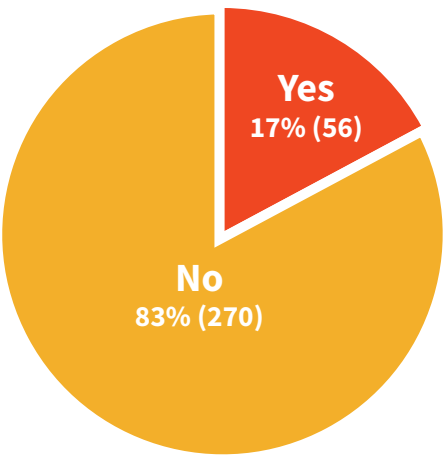


Figure 9: Have you been inside the MHS Building?

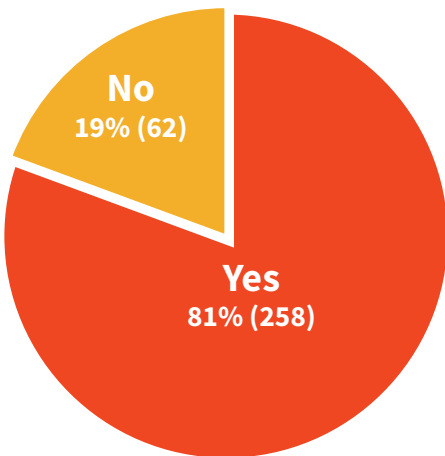


Figure 10: Where is your business located now?



## Key Take-aways:

- There are a wide range of business types and sizes that need space.
- Remote work, co-work, live-work, and flexible work arrangements are more in-demand than ever.
- There is a balance of long-term residents and newcomers with different needs.





# Option 1: Housing + Fire Station

Figure 13: Please indicate your preference toward option 1.

3.2  
average rating

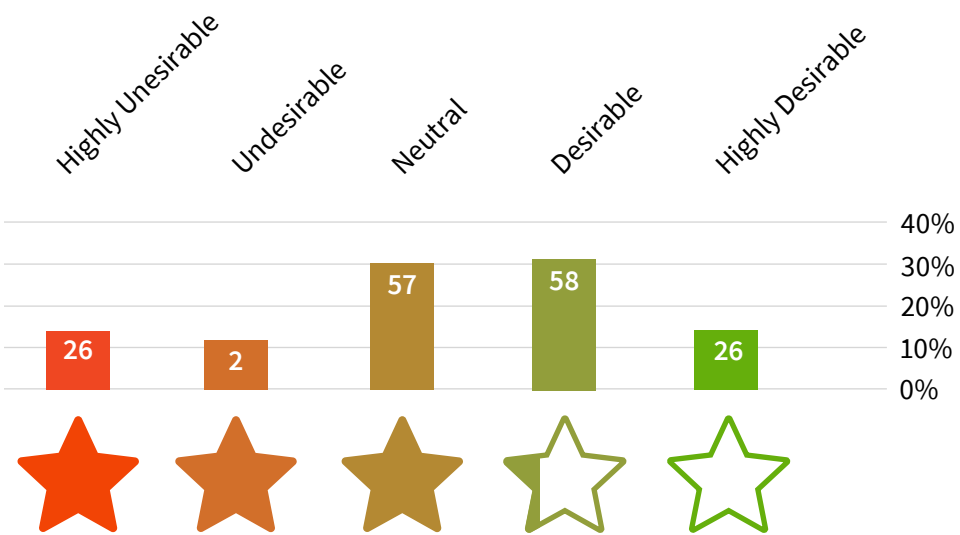
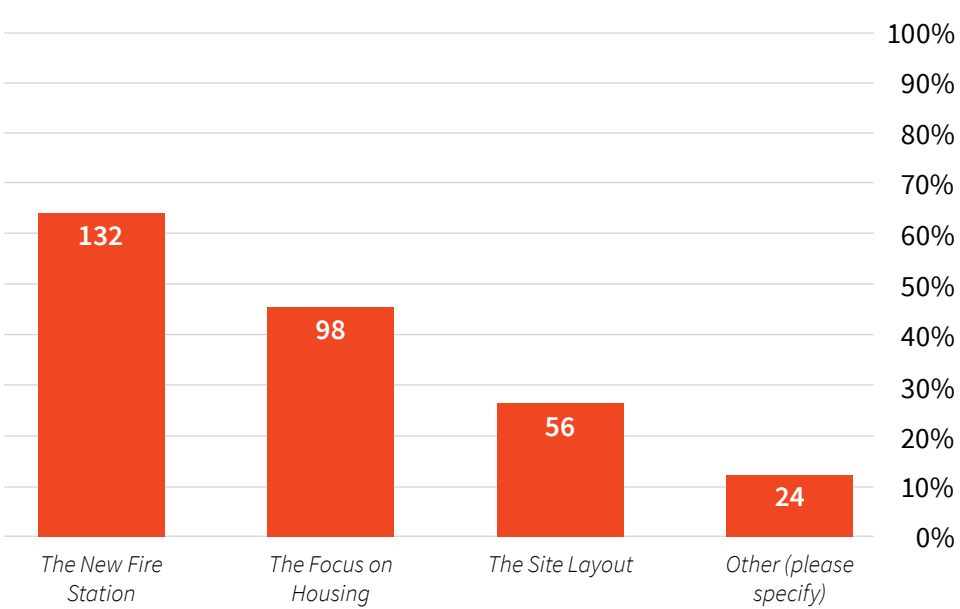


Figure 14: What do you like about option 1? Select all that apply.



## Key Take-aways:

- Most desirable option.
- A new fire station is favorable.
- Concern about noise of fire station.
- Need for senior housing.
- Questions regarding fate of the existing fire station.
- Raise property values (high-income housing) vs. lower property taxes (low-income housing).
- Desire to strengthen Bath's tax base.

# Option 2: Mixed Use

Figure 15: Please indicate your preference toward option 2.

2.9  
average rating

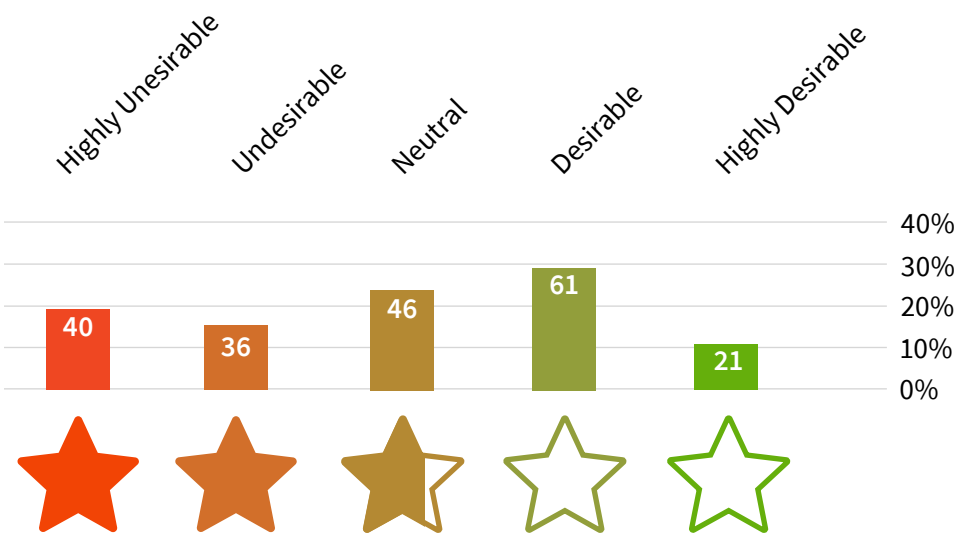
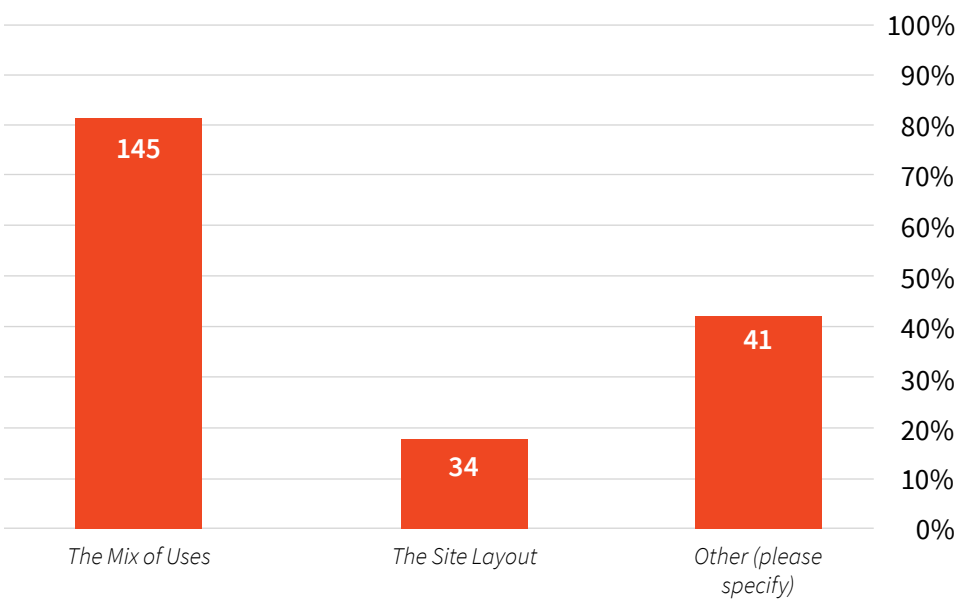


Figure 16: What do you like about option 2? Select all that apply.



## Key Take-aways:

- Favorable mix of uses.
- Preference toward community uses over housing.
- Concern over competition with downtown businesses.

# Preferred Hybrid Option

Option 1:

**Housing  
+ Fire  
Station**

Option 2:

**Mixed Use**

Preferred Hybrid:

**Mixed Use + Fire Station**





# Option 3: Housing Focus

Figure 17: Please indicate your preference toward option 3.

2.7  
average rating

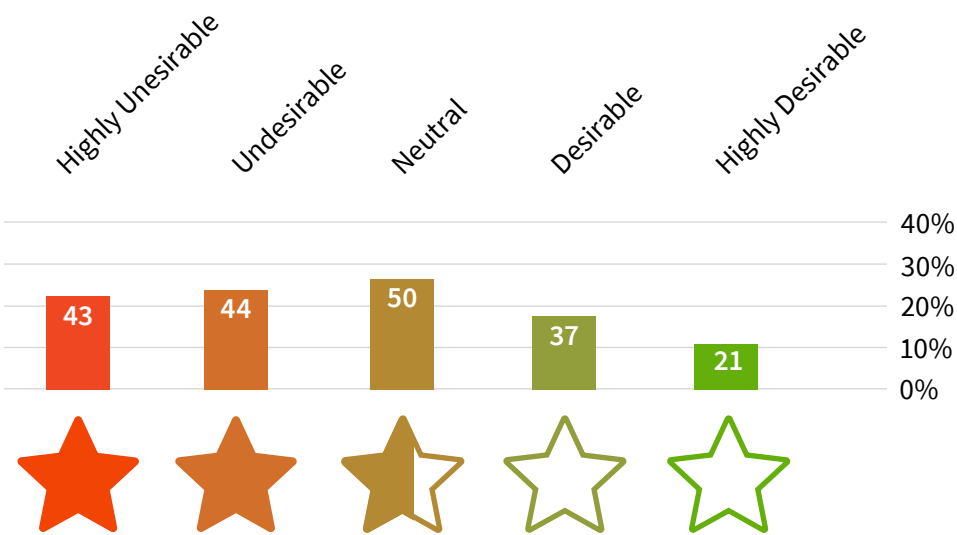
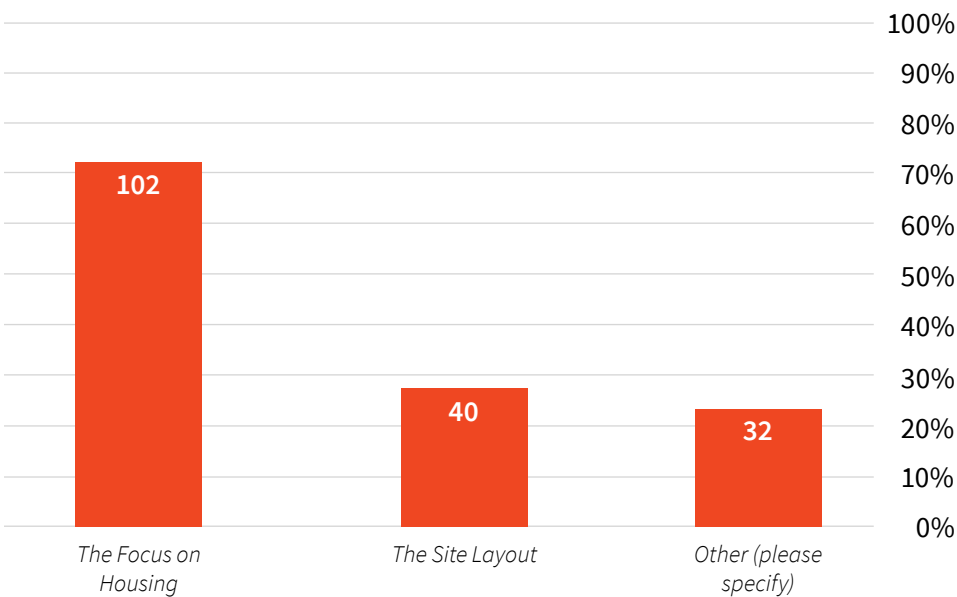


Figure 18: What do you like about option 3? Select all that apply.



## Key Take-aways:

- Controversy between high rate of subsidized housing and high rate of youth homelessness. (Need for increased tax revenue vs. need for affordable housing.)
- Missing middle housing.
- In need of smaller, market-rate units for seniors and others looking to downsize.

## Option 3: Housing Focus

### 3 Schools of Thought...



Bath has too much subsidized housing which burdens the Town's resources and tax base. The new use/s should generate tax revenue for the town to boost the local economy.



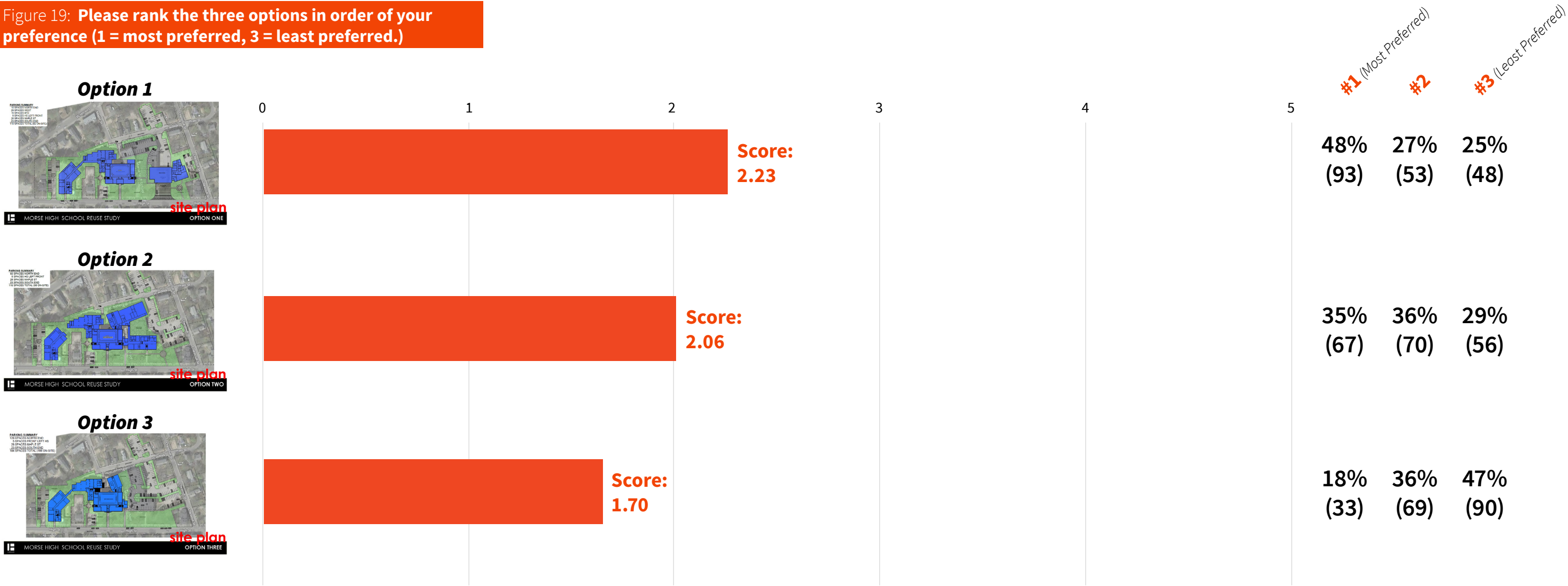
"The Missing Middle" Bath needs smaller, market-rate units for seniors who want to age in place and others who want to downsize.



There is still a large youth homeless population and a high demand for affordable housing. High end condos might attract part-time residents who don't contribute as much to the community.

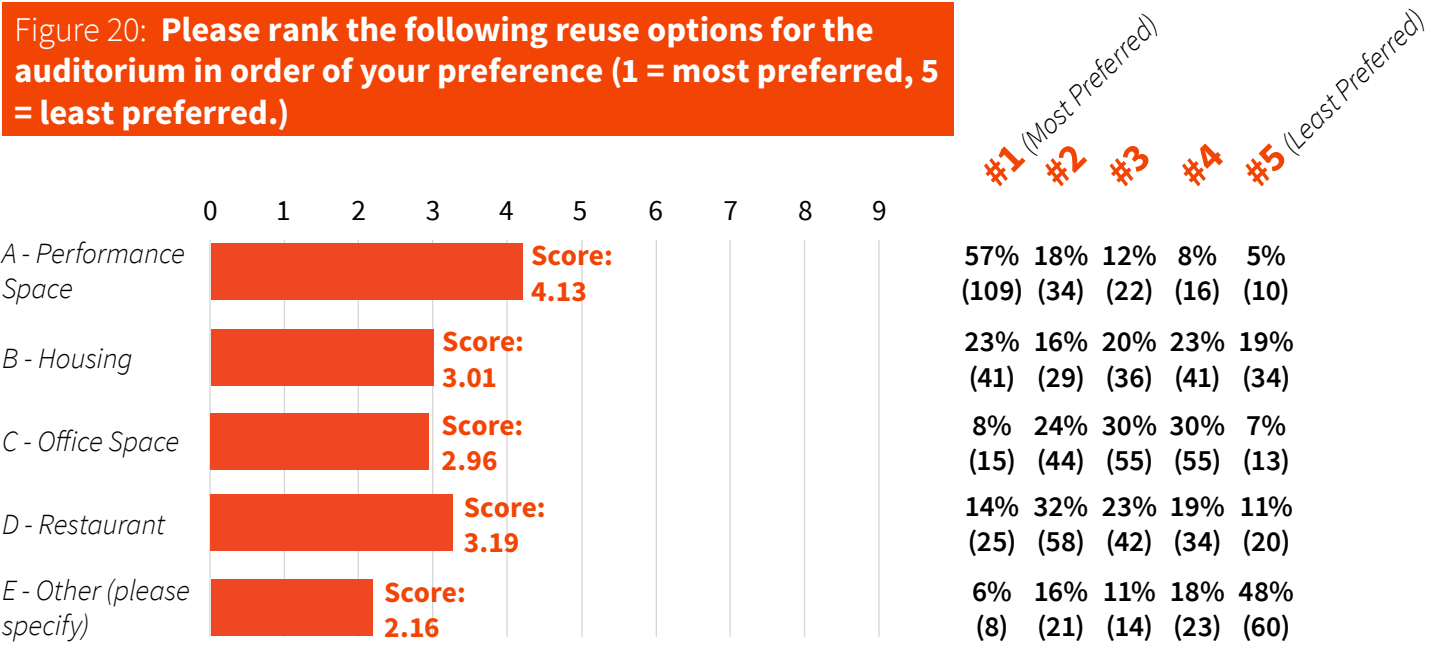
# Options Comparison

Figure 19: Please rank the three options in order of your preference (1 = most preferred, 3 = least preferred.)



# The Auditorium

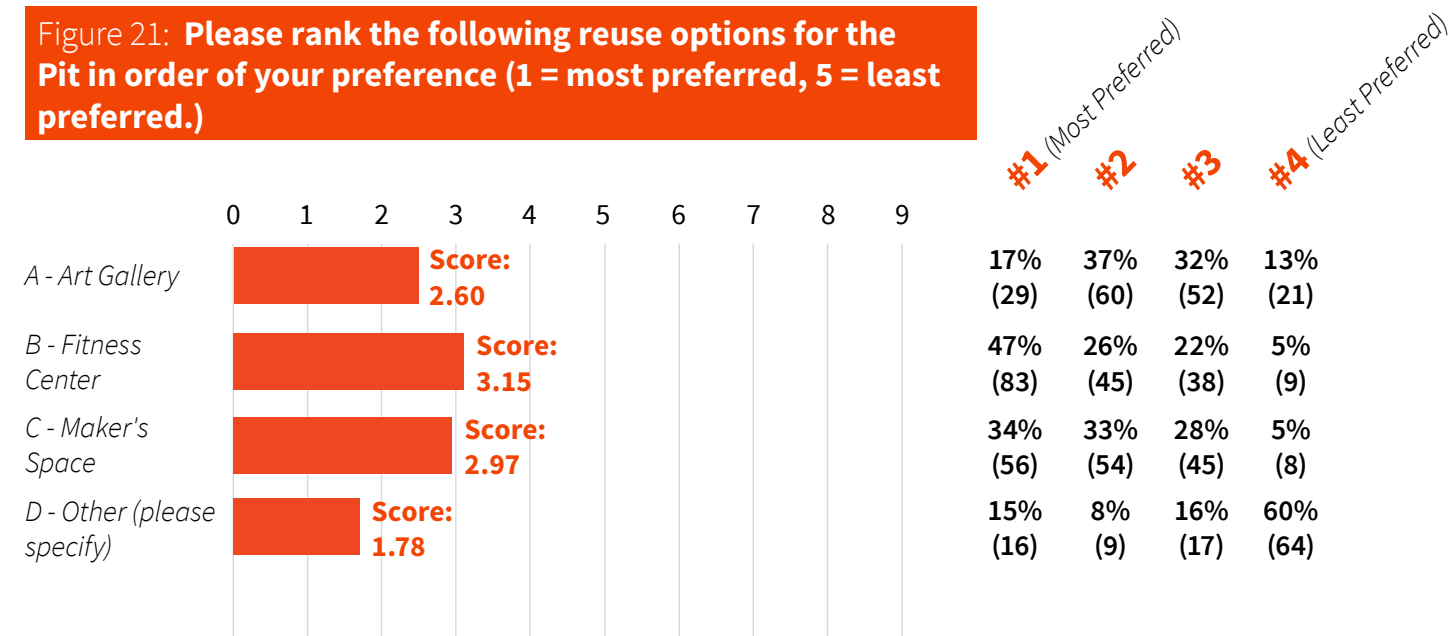
Figure 20: Please rank the following reuse options for the auditorium in order of your preference (1 = most preferred, 5 = least preferred.)



## Key Take-aways:

- Need for community meeting space.
- Need for winter-friendly indoor activities/recreation.
- Strong support for the arts.
- Existing organization are interested in the space.
- Proposed alternatives: market space; bowling alley; movie theater; dinner theater; art ehxibits; child care; recreation/fitness center; indoor park; library/archives/museum.

Figure 21: Please rank the following reuse options for the Pit in order of your preference (1 = most preferred, 5 = least preferred.)



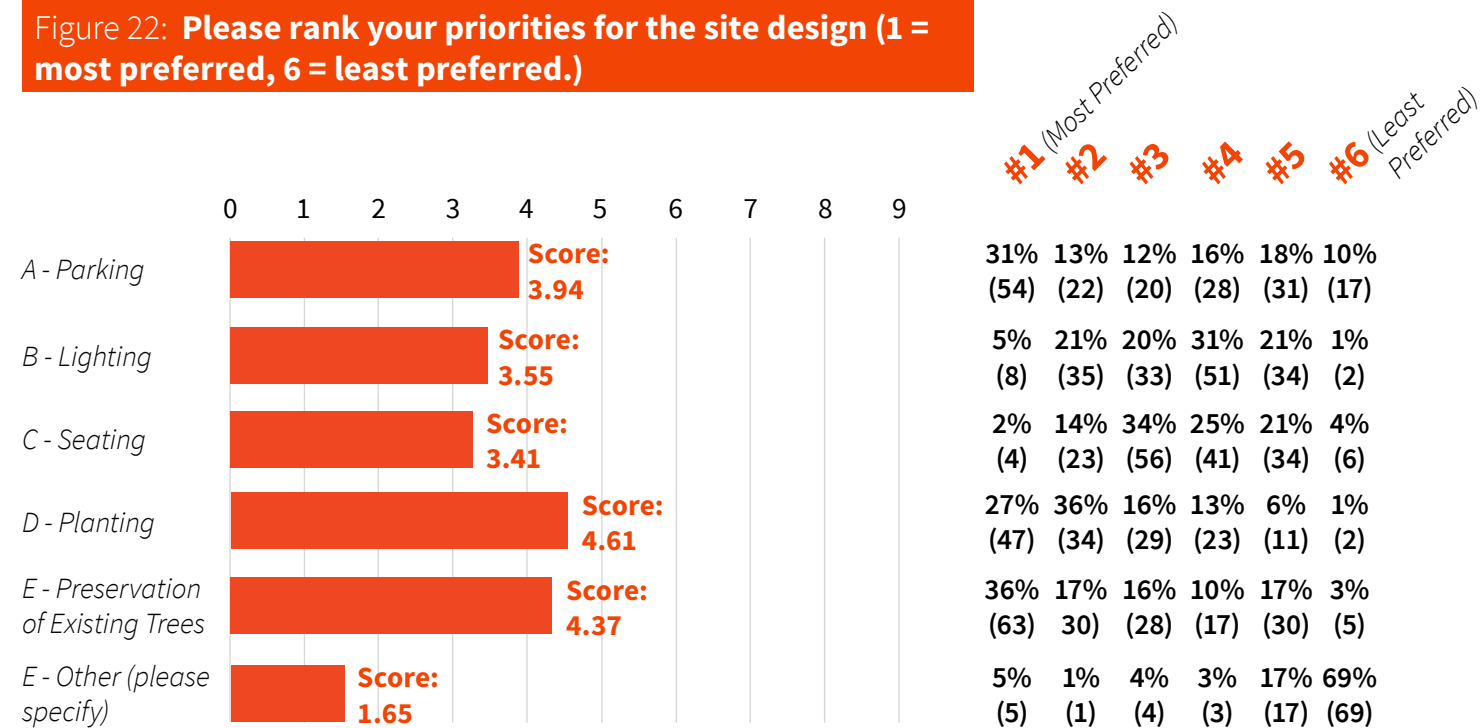
■ Proposed alternatives: Fitness/ Recreation (keep wrestling, basketball); Rock Gym; yoga/dance studio; laundry room; market space/retail; offices/ workshops; community gardening center; bowling alley; movie theater; child care; brewery; concert venue.

## Key Take-aways:

- Strong support for a maker's space.
- There are enough art galleries downtown, no need for another.
- YMCA sufficiently meets town fitness and recreation needs vs. the Y is not sufficient and more affordable indoor fitness options are needed.
- Best use for the Pit and Auditorium depends on other uses chosen for the building.
- "Gut it" vs. "Save the Pit" (majority want to save).

# Open Space

Figure 22: Please rank your priorities for the site design (1 = most preferred, 6 = least preferred.)



■ Proposed alternatives: Art/sculptures; fountains/splash pad; amphitheater; outdoor dining; green infrastructure (rain gardens and pollinator habitat), dog park.

## Key Take-aways:

- Must balance need for parking with need for open space.
- Strong desire for intergenerational play spaces (children's playground; cornhole; bocce; horseshoe pits; etc.)
- Strong desire for community gardens, return of agriculture to Bath.
- Emphasis on walking and biking access/network.
- Important to preserve existing trees, especially those planted in honor of former MHS students.
- Lighting: safety concern (pro-lights) vs. ecological concern (anti-lights).



# Additional Questions and Comments

- Who makes the decisions?
- What are the implications for taxes?
- What is the project timeline?
- Will there be opportunities for in-person comment?
- What type of housing is being proposed?
- Why isn't full demolition and re-building new being considered?

*Bath  
needs a fresh,  
young, lively place for  
teens and adults alike to  
share in and enjoy our  
community.*

*I would personally love to have  
there be a maker space in the  
local area as I could meet & work  
with others who are creative and  
entrepreneurial. In addition, it would  
help to make Bath more innovative.*

