

NW Lancaster County Regional Plan

Public Survey Findings Summary

May 15, 2023

Respondents: 360

- 90.8% are residents of the area
- 95.0% are between 18 and 64 years of age, with 39.2% being between 25 and 44
- 99 (27.5%) are from Etown, 29 (8.1%) from Conoy Township, 109 (30.3%) from Mount Joy Township, and 109 (30.3%) from West Donegal
- 92 Written Comments

Respondents cared most about the following places:

- Farmland and Rural Areas
 - Q1A1 (Top Answer): 57.8% place it within top 3 most important places
 - Q1A1: 63.1% place “Preserve large, contiguous areas of agricultural and natural land” in the Top 3 most important ways to Take Care of What We Have
 - Q3A3: 82.8% place “Build in areas that won’t impact the Region’s farmland or natural areas” in the top 3 most important ways to meet development needs
 - 20 comments are about Farmland, Rural Areas, or Small Town Characteristics
 - 17 of which are in favor of preserving farmland
- Forests and Trails
 - Q1A1: 42.8% place it within top 3 most important places
 - Q7:
 - A3: 28.3% see Etown to the Conewago Trail as a top 3 connection
 - A4: 33.6% see Etown to Bainbridge/Northwest River Trail as a top 3 connection
 - A5: 31.4% see Northwest River Trail to Conewago Recreational Trail as a top 3 connection
 - Q8A1: 61.9% think that a top 3 connection issue is that many trails in the Region don’t connect to important destinations and need to be expanded
 - 18 comments concern Nature, Water, or Greenspace and 9 concern Trails, Walking, Biking, or Transit
- Downtowns, Local Restaurants, and Shops
 - Q1A9: 40.6% place Local Restaurants and Shops within Top 3 most important places
 - Q1A5: 31.1% place Historic Towns and Villages (Etown and Bainbridge) within Top 3 most important places
 - Q6A1 (Top Answer): 83.3% place “Make our downtowns more vibrant, safe, and attractive” in the top 3 most important ways to creating great places
 - Q7: 4 write-in answers mention a need for better connectivity in downtowns or within Etown
 - 19 comments concern Downtowns, Small Business, or Mixed-Use
- Respondents overwhelmingly support redevelopment and infill as options to meet development needs.
 - Q2A4 (Top Answer): 79.4% place “Reuse existing buildings and maintain public infrastructure” in the top 3 most important ways to take care of what we have
 - Q3A4 (Top Answer): 95.3% place “Turn vacant, already built properties into new residential or commercial uses” in the top 3 most important ways to meet development needs

- Q4A2 (Top Answer): 85.3% place “Prioritize redevelopment and infill in Urban Growth Areas” in the top 3 most important ways to grow responsibly
- Respondents chose the following options most to meet housing need:
 - Q5A1: 65.8% place Mixed Use development in their top 3 options
 - Q5A3: 63.6% place Missing Middle Housing in their top 3 options
 - Q5A6: 54.7% place Single Family Neighborhoods in their top 3 options
 - Q1A4: Note that “Suburbs and Single-Family Neighborhoods” was tied for 2nd least chosen top 3 most important place, at 22.5%
 - Q1A4 & Q5A6: Respondents who chose “Suburbs and Single-Family Neighborhoods” as a most important place chose “Single Family Neighborhoods” as a best new housing option 5.2% more often overall than those who did not (23.5% vs 18.3%)
- A few themes arose around connections:
 - Q7: Respondents want better access to Rt 283 according to Q7 and comments. Multiple comments specified a new access point to or across Rt 283.
 - Rheems needs better connectivity:
 - Q7A2: 48.9% saw Rheems to Etown as needing more connectivity, the highest option that did not include Rt 283
 - Cloverleaf Road and particularly the railroad bridge south of the Rt 230 intersection are a problem. Written in 5 times on Q7 and brought up in 2 additional comments.
 -
- Respondents do not like warehouses.
 - Mentioned negatively in 19 comments

Comment breakdown:

Topic	# of Comments
Total	92
Farmland/Rural/Small Town	20
Traffic/Roads/Parking	19
Warehouses	19
Nature/Water/Greenspace	18
Downtowns/Small Business/Mixed-Use	19
Municipality/Taxes	16
Retail/Business/Employment	15
Survey/Plan/Zoning	11
Trails/Walking/Biking/Transit	9
Growing Responsibly/Redevelopment	8
Social Issues	6
Antigrowth	5
Housing	5
Other	7

Notable comments on a variety of topics:

- " The thing that gets me most excited is if you can find ways to make Elizabethtown more walkable! I live fairly close to the WD township building but there's a busy street with no sidewalk between me and it/downtown etown. If there were a safe way to walk there my kid and I would do it all the time!
- " We need more businesses and shopping opportunities to support the tax base without impacting home owners.
- " I would like to see a dog park in Conoy Township
- " [Transit] is a HUGE concern, especially as so many work across county lines. We also need to be able to walk and bike safely to more businesses from residences.
- " Our elected officials need to see the area as a wheel (or hub) where education, zoning, transportation, infrastructure, emergency services (police, medical & fire) need to all be looked at from a regional approach. Housing needs to be concentrated in other areas than farming, and forest areas. Connecting bicycle and walking trails within the downtown & residential areas. Encourage instead of discouraging low income housing.
- " Industrial development needs to grow. They are great additions to communities and provide a solid tax base that doesn't exist when residential uses are in the area...
- " We would like to see the region involve people of color, and invite them to share what would make them feel more comfortable and truly welcome here in our midst. More affordable housing would help; but hearing directly from them would be good. Maybe have a Diversity Equity and Inclusion committee as an ongoing part of local governance.
- " I also think this area is in desperate need of more outdoor recreational areas. It's great Mount Joy Township has parks on the east, West, and north central area - adding a space in the south central section of the township where there are many residential areas along Cloverleaf and nearby Rheems would be very popular.
- " It was disappointing to see that the project at Cloverleaf Rd and Rt 230 get voted down. It makes sense to develop areas that are within the commercial corridor, and Etown needs more retail and other business options.

New (Since April 2023)

- " Continue to hear the voices of residents in/nearby areas slated for development. Communicate reasons/benefits for development clearly to all residents. Consider reuse of development once "its day is past" down the road.
- " Focus on reinvigorating Etown's downtown, not expanding our borders with businesses that take away from our downtown. Bring in more restaurants and taverns - take a lesson from our neighbors - Mt. Joy, Middletown and Marietta all have a much greater selection of eateries than Etown.
- " Build communities that people like to live and work in. Please slow traffic growth and cultivate community instead of a bedroom community.
- " Keep the local salary in mind. The majority of our township makes less than 50,000 a year.
- " There are so many unsafe areas around that I won't let my children walk on or bike on alone. We could use paved paths in the parks in Conoy Township other than the River trail. A safe sidewalk on Turnpike Road would be very beneficial for exercise and connecting Etown to Conoy Township/rec areas already established.