

After-Action Report

GLEN BURNIE
BETTER PLAZA



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INTRODUCTION



GLEN BURNIE BETTER PLAZA

The Better Block is a 501(c)3 urban design nonprofit that educates, equips, and empowers communities and their leaders to reshape and reactivate built environments to promote the growth of healthy and vibrant neighborhoods. We work to show neighbors that they have the power and resources to affect change in their communities, and we work alongside city staff to identify hurdles and overcome them to bring this change to life.

Based out of the Oak Cliff neighborhood of Dallas, Texas, we work around the world turning empty lots into beautiful plazas; overbuilt streets into markets; and have given run-down, vacant buildings new life. We would never proclaim to know it all or have seen it all, but we have seen a lot and we've learned a lot. We are creative when it comes to roadblocks, tenacious in turning a permitting no into a yes, and adept at finding fixes.

Together with you, The Better Block Foundation, and the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation are collaboratively working to re-envision the possibilities of the Glen Burnie Town Center for the summer. This temporary demonstration



Better Block team, partners, and volunteers during the event day at the Glen Burnie Better Plaza opening.

is free and will be open to the public on Friday, June 6th from 4 - 7 pm and Saturday, June 7th from 11 am - 2 pm at 101 Crain Hwy N., Glen Burnie, MD 21061.

The community-led placemaking event aimed to inspire residents to creatively activate the Glen Burnie Town Center and imagine what it could look like during the summer.

An aerial perspective rendering of a proposed urban plaza at the Glen Burnie Town Center. The central feature is a circular fountain with multiple tiers and a tall water spray. To its right is a large, open paved area with a brown roof structure, possibly a pavilion or shelter. Further down the plaza are several colorful, rectangular structures in shades of green, yellow, and blue, which appear to be modular buildings or kiosks. The plaza is bordered by a multi-lane road on the left with cars and a parking lot on the right. Trees and landscaping are interspersed throughout the plaza. In the background, existing commercial buildings are visible.

INTRODUCTION ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

THE SITE

Our team envisioned transforming the Glen Burnie Town Center into a vibrant plaza that strengthens community connections and fosters local engagement in Glen Burnie. This project not only highlights the immediate potential of reimagining urban spaces but also lays the groundwork for an exciting future! One where this area becomes a permanent community asset, embodying the aspirations and vision of Glen Burnie residents.

This effort was made possible through the partnership of the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation. Their knowledge of the Glen Burnie community, commitment, and strong local relationships were helpful in shaping the project’s direction.

With a shared mission of revitalization, this initiative became a platform for meaningful community involvement. By engaging residents through surveys and in-person interactions, we ensured the design and purpose of the space reflected the community’s unique needs and aspirations. Together, we turned a vision into reality, one that continues to inspire and empower the people of Glen Burnie.

SITE MAP
101 Crain Hwy N., Glen Burnie, MD
21061

6

7

An aerial perspective rendering of a proposed urban plaza at the Glen Burnie Town Center. The central feature is a circular fountain with water spraying upwards, surrounded by concentric circles of different pavement colors (pink, green, blue). To the right is a large, open-air pavilion with a brown roof and wooden support posts. Further right is a long, narrow building with a red roof and large windows. The plaza is bordered by a multi-lane road on the left with cars and a parking lot on the right. Various trees, benches, and pedestrian paths are integrated throughout the space. Small figures of people are scattered across the plaza to provide scale.

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An aerial perspective rendering of a proposed urban plaza at the Glen Burnie Town Center. The central feature is a circular fountain surrounded by concentric walkways in shades of red, orange, and yellow. To the right, there's a large open area with a brown-roofed pavilion and colorful geometric patterns on the ground. A green rectangular building sits near the bottom center. The entire plaza is bordered by streets with cars and trees.

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[illegible]

An aerial perspective rendering of a proposed urban plaza at the Glen Burnie Town Center. The central feature is a circular fountain with water spraying upwards, surrounded by concentric circles of paving. To the right of the fountain is a large, open rectangular area with a brown roof structure, possibly a pavilion or market stall. Further right is a long, narrow green space with a yellow canopy. The plaza is bordered by a multi-lane road on the left with cars and a parking lot on the right. Various trees and landscaping are integrated throughout the design.

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An aerial perspective rendering of a proposed urban plaza at the Glen Burnie Town Center. The design features a central circular area with a fountain, surrounded by colorful paved zones in yellow, blue, green, and red. A large covered pavilion with a brown roof sits in the upper right. To its left is a smaller green-roofed kiosk or food stand. The plaza is bordered by a multi-lane road on the left with cars and trees. Various people are shown walking and sitting throughout the space. In the background, existing brick buildings are visible.

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An aerial perspective rendering of a proposed urban plaza at the Glen Burnie Town Center. The design features a central circular area with a fountain, surrounded by colorful paved zones in yellow, blue, green, and red. A large covered pavilion with a brown roof sits in the upper right, while a smaller green-roofed kiosk is in the lower center. Pedestrian paths are clearly marked, and several trees are planted throughout the space. In the background, existing commercial buildings and a parking lot are visible. The overall scene depicts a vibrant, multi-functional community hub.

INTRODUCTION ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

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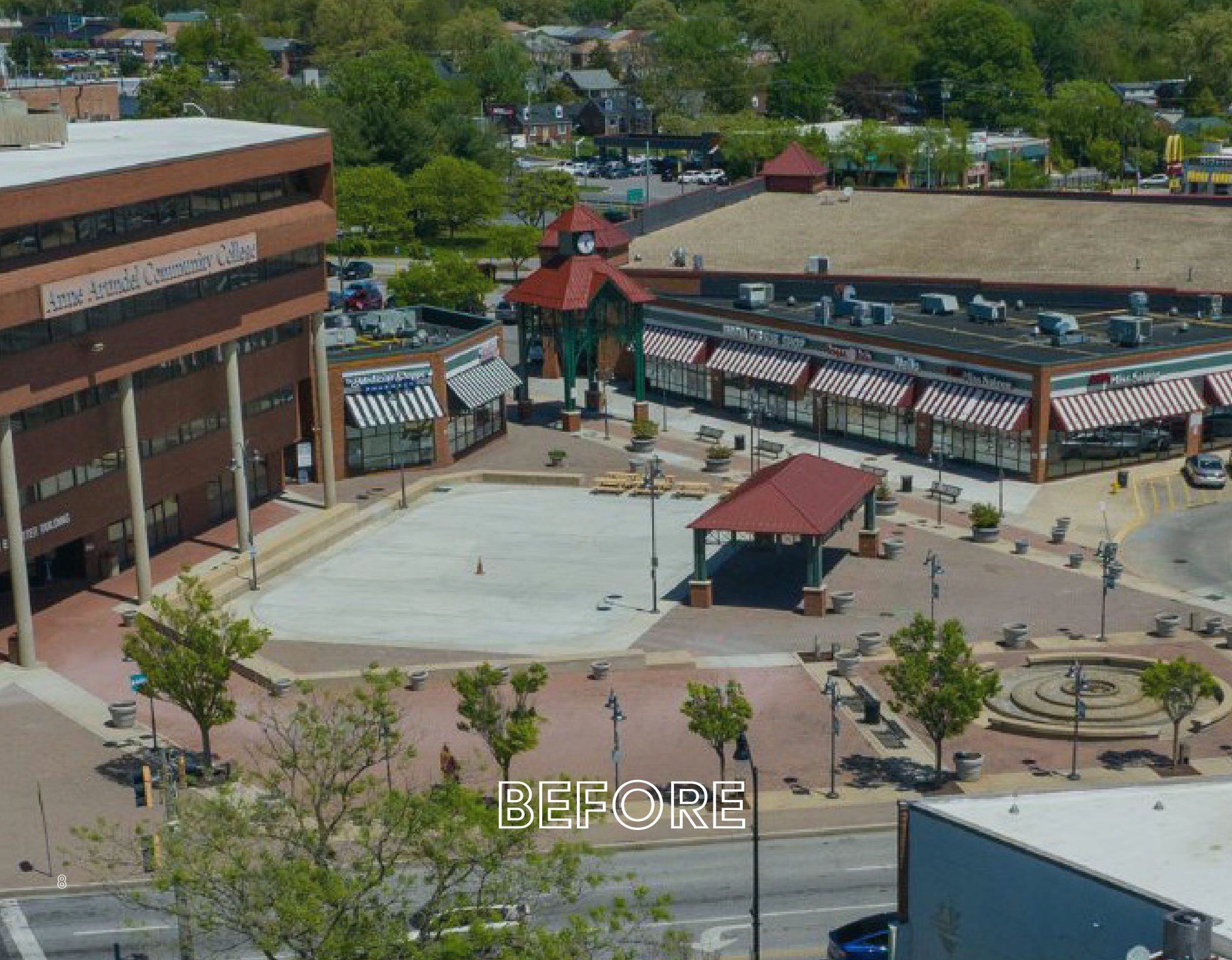
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PRE-PROJECT SURVEY RESULTS

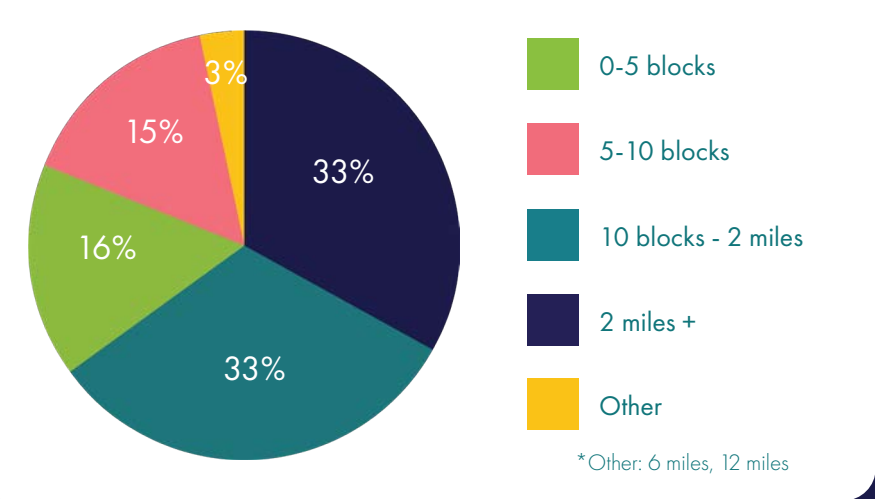
One of the first steps in the project was asking the community for their feedback about and around the site.

With the help of the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, we analyzed past surveys and designs to help us gain a better understanding of the Glen Burnie community and what their needs are for future uses. We also did a new online survey, which resulted in a record-breaking 252 responses. Over the next few pages, we outline what we heard.

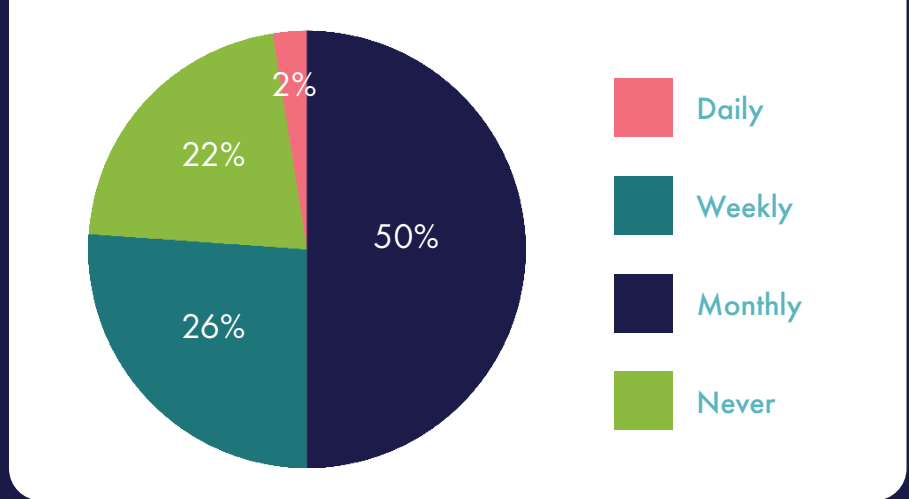
COMMUNITY INTERACTION

To gain a deeper insight into the community, we surveyed residents about their daily experiences and lifestyle within the area.

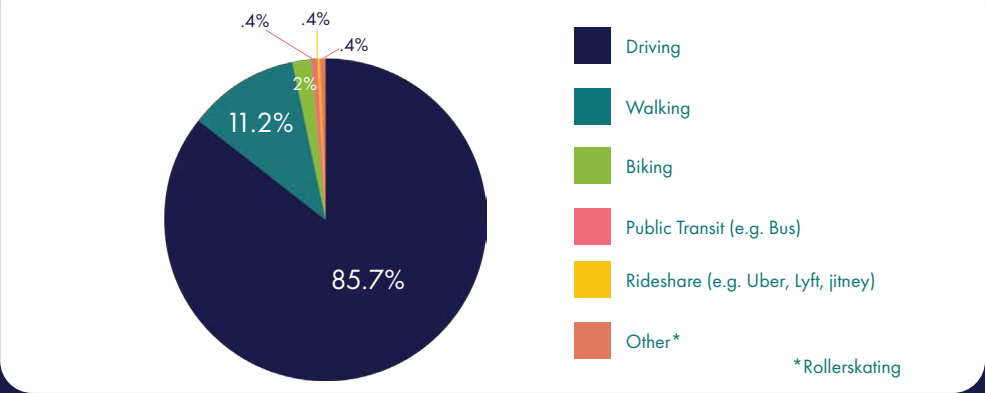
HOW FAR DO YOU LIVE FROM THE GLEN BURNIE TOWN CENTER PLAZA?



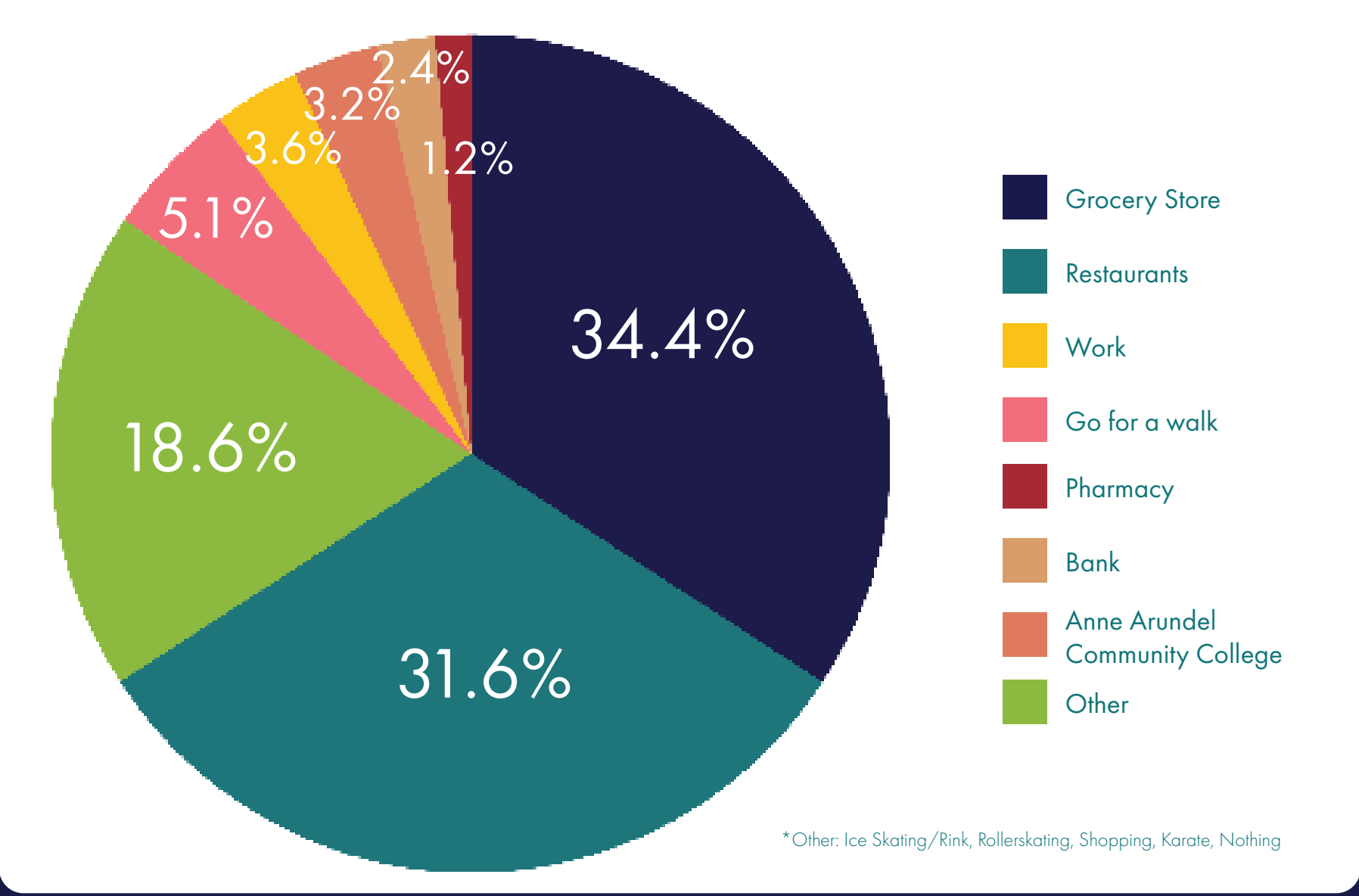
HOW OFTEN DO YOU GO TO THE GLEN BURNIE TOWN CENTER PLAZA?



WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION IN AND AROUND THE AREA?



WHAT MOST FREQUENTLY BRINGS YOU TO THE GLEN BURNIE TOWN CENTER PLAZA?



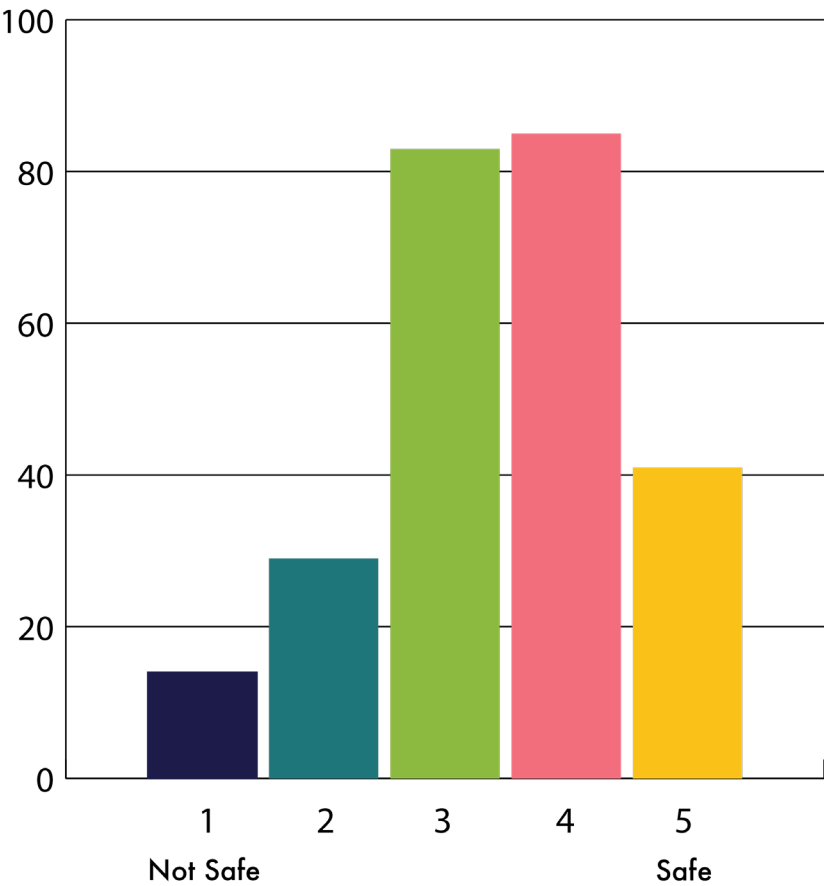
SAFETY & PERCEPTION

We asked survey respondents about their perceptions regarding the safety and pedestrian-friendliness of the area.

WHY OR WHY NOT?

ON A SCALE OF 1-5, HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL IN THIS AREA?

(1 BEING “NOT SAFE”, 5 BEING “SAFE”)



There is **good lighting**, police are nearby, and there are **plenty of businesses around**, meaning if something were to happen, there is a better chance of a witness.

The ice rink has a **lot of lights** and there are usually **plenty of people around**.

I’ve **never had a negative experience** at the location, plus the **amount of foot traffic** and **open concept** make it **feel pretty secure**.

Not well lit at night and **not a lot of foot traffic** in the area to feel a ‘strength in numbers’ if anything bad did happen.

The **closed-off stairwell exit in the parking garage feels unsafe**, but the **open space** in the town center feels fine.

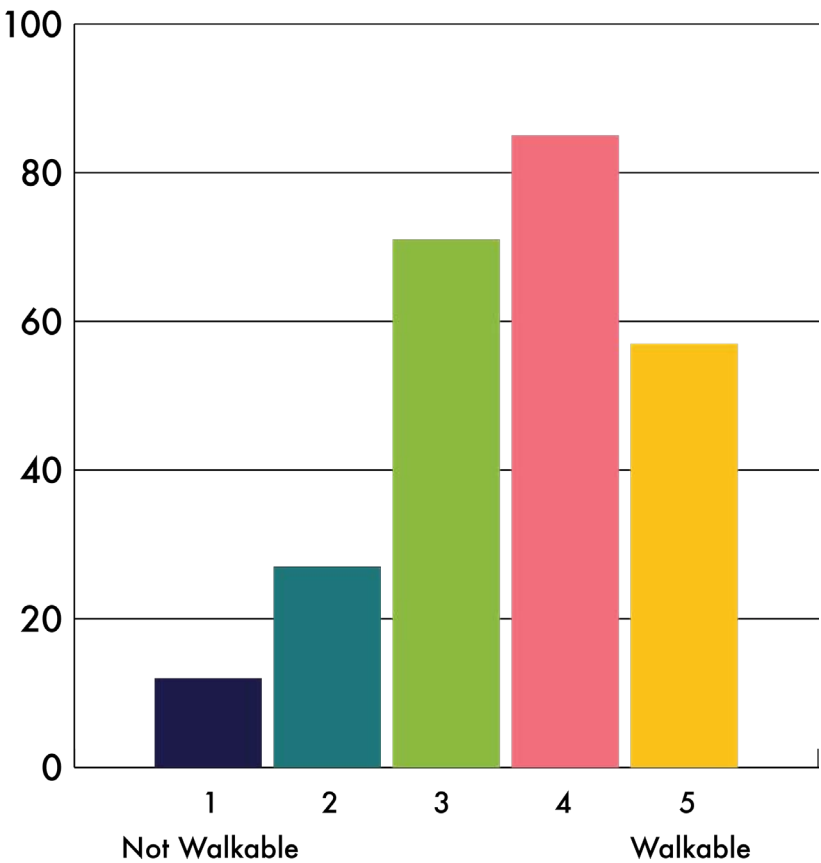
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We asked survey respondents about their perceptions regarding the safety and pedestrian-friendliness of the area. area.

WHY OR WHY NOT?

ON A SCALE OF 1-5, DO YOU BELIEVE THIS AREA IS PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY?

(1 BEING “NOT WALKABLE”, 5 BEING “WALKABLE”)



There are **sidewalks, crosswalks**, and the **B&A Bike/Walking trail...**

The **plaza itself is pedestrian-friendly**. I’m **not sure about the surrounding area**. When we park in the garage for concerts, police are directing traffic to help attendees cross the street.

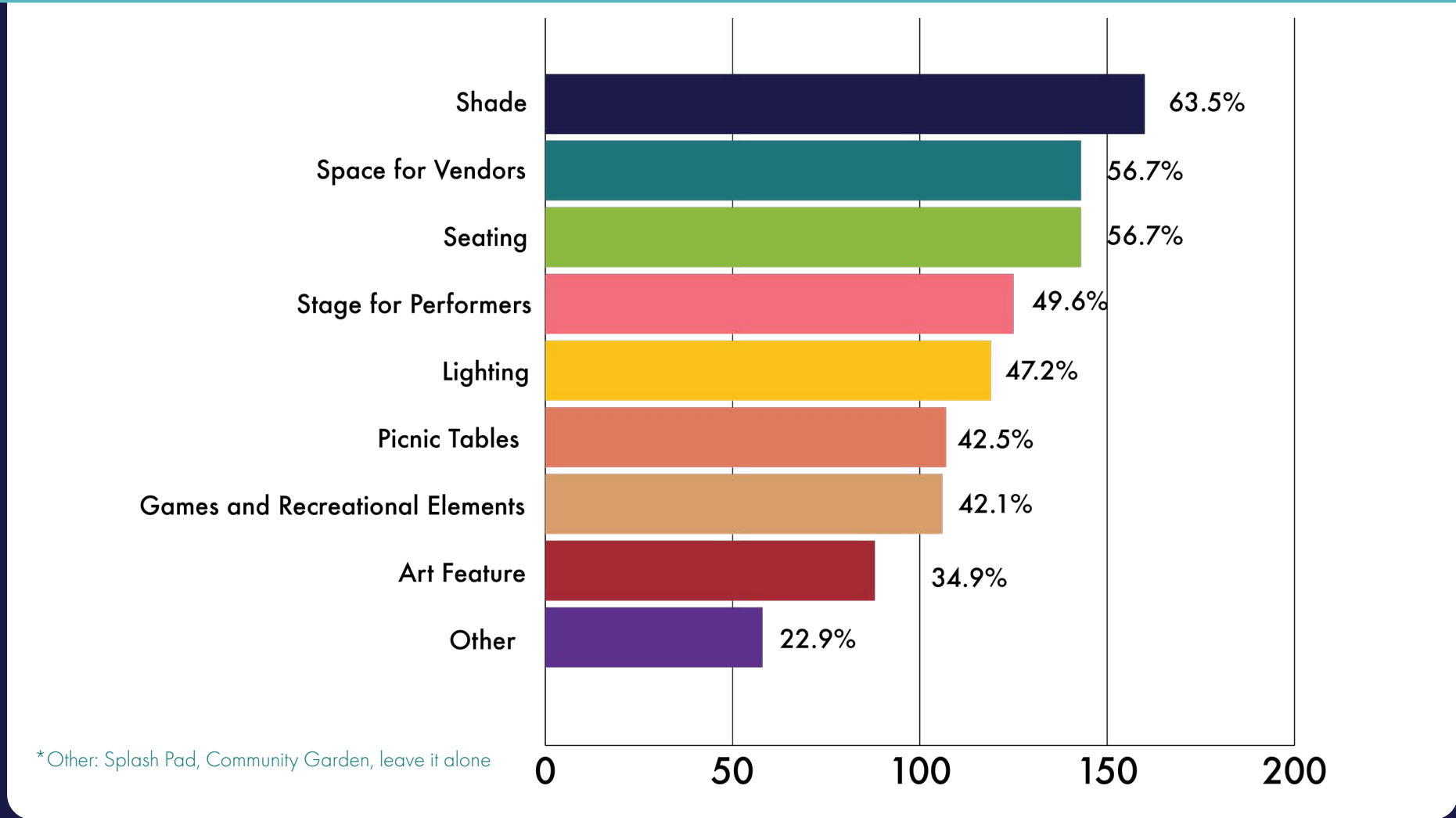
Once you find parking then it is **walkable**, you can **walk to the different restaurants or the skating rink**. It would help to have **more crosswalks** to be able to cross the street and access those stores

Crossing from the Town Center to the parking garage is very dangerous. You have to **go pretty far out of your way to get to a crosswalk**, and even then you are **dealing with traffic** that might be coming or going in several directions at once. There are **too many blind spots** and **cars parked along B&A leading up to Crain Hwy obstruct vision** even further.

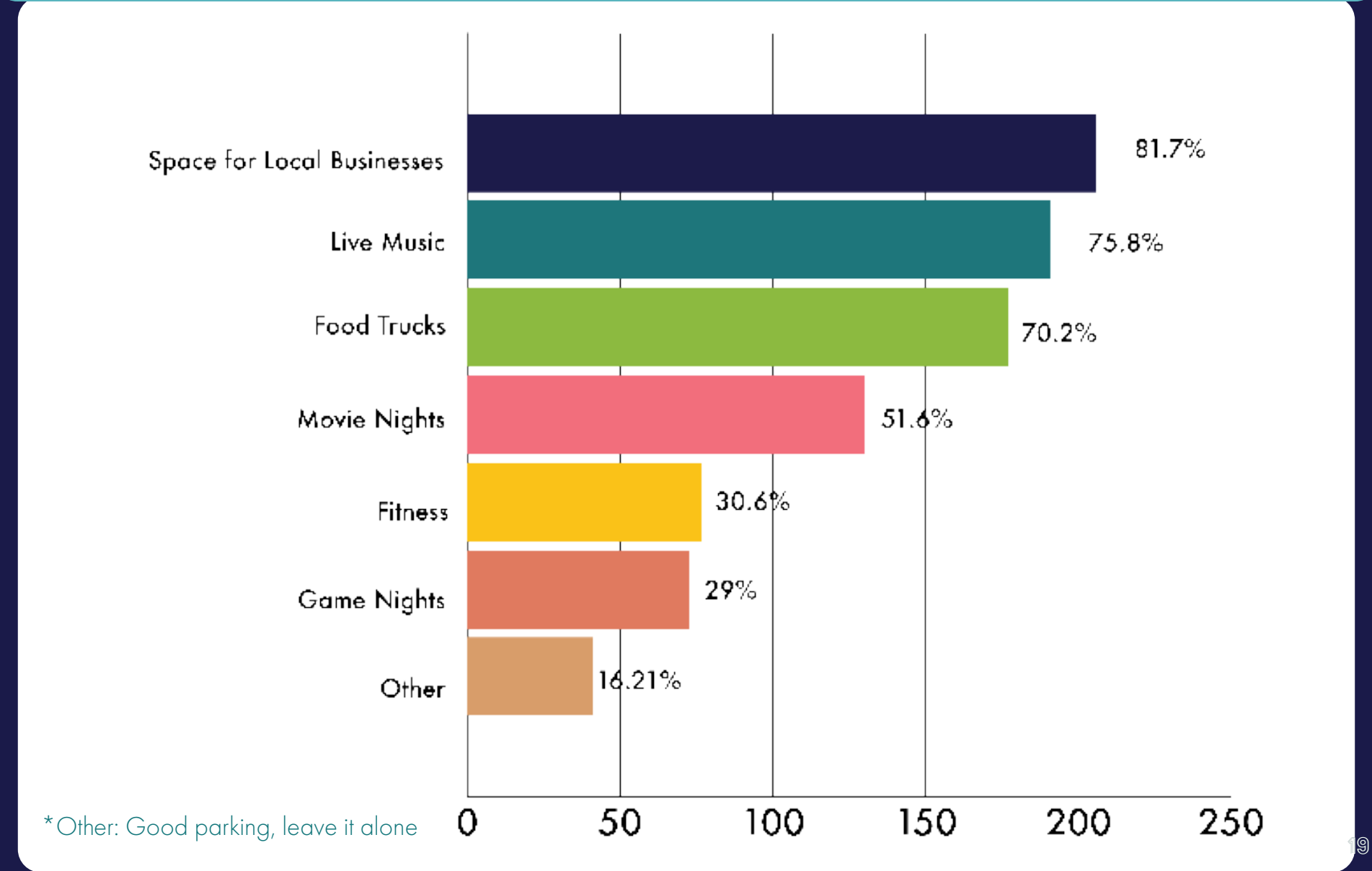
COMMUNITY PREFERENCES & NEEDS

We asked survey respondents on their preferences and needs for the space, aiming to understand what improvements they desire to see.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THIS SPACE?



HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THIS SPACE ACTIVATED?



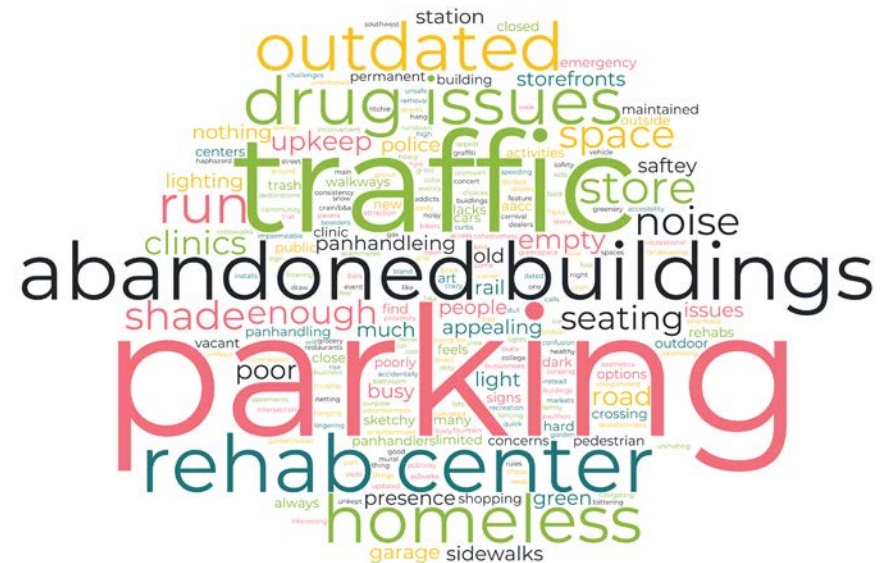
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WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ALONG OR NEAR THE SITE?



WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE THING ALONG OR NEAR THE SITE?



WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS NEEDED IN THE AREA?



COMMUNITY PREFERENCES & NEEDS

We asked survey respondents on their preferences and needs for the space, aiming to understand what improvements they desire to see.

PRE-PROJECT SURVEY RESULTS ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

QUOTES

DESCRIBE THE AREA IN THREE WORDS.

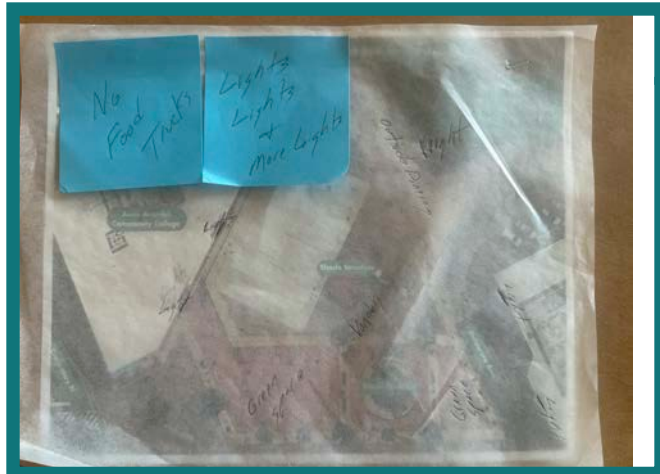


There needs to be a safe crosswalk directly from the garage to the town center.

Getting to the plaza is not very walkable because of Ritchie Highway.

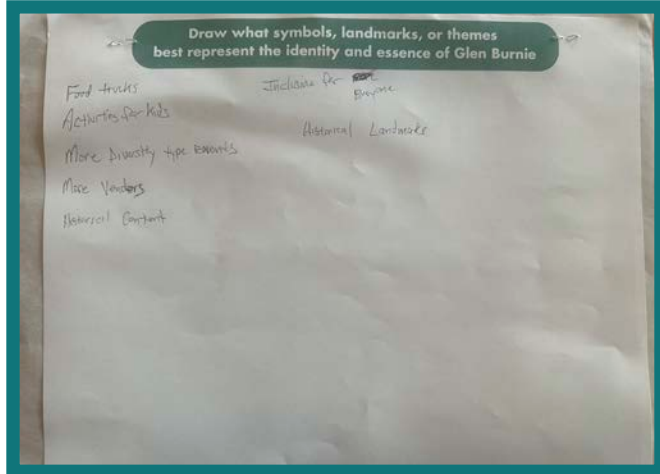
I've never had a negative experience at the location, plus the amount of foot traffic and open concept make it feel pretty secure.

There is good lighting, police are nearby, and there are plenty of businesses around.



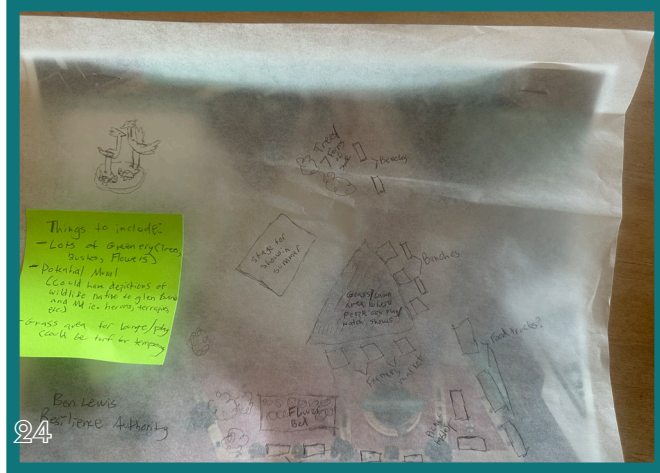
DESIGN 1

- Lights
- Green Space



DESIGN 2

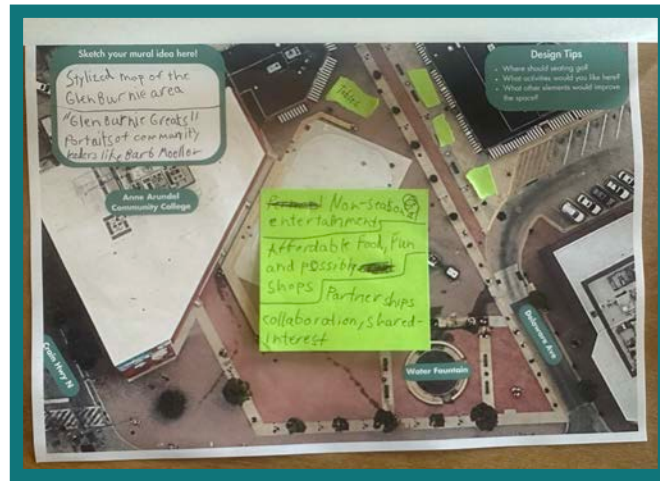
- Food Trucks
- Historical Landmarks



DESIGN 3

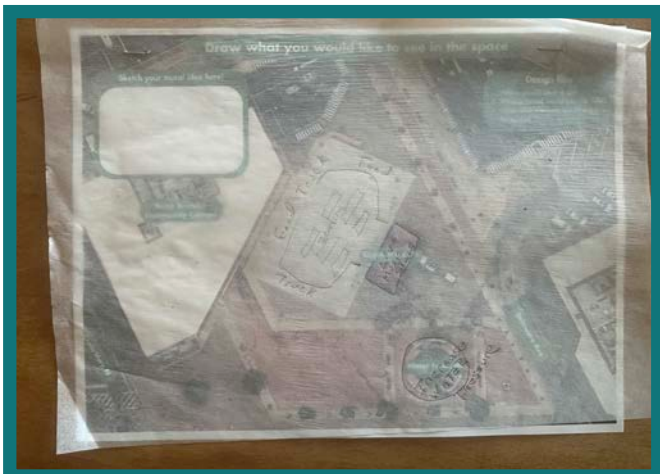
- Murals
- Trees
- Benches

IN-PERSON DESIGN CHARRETTE



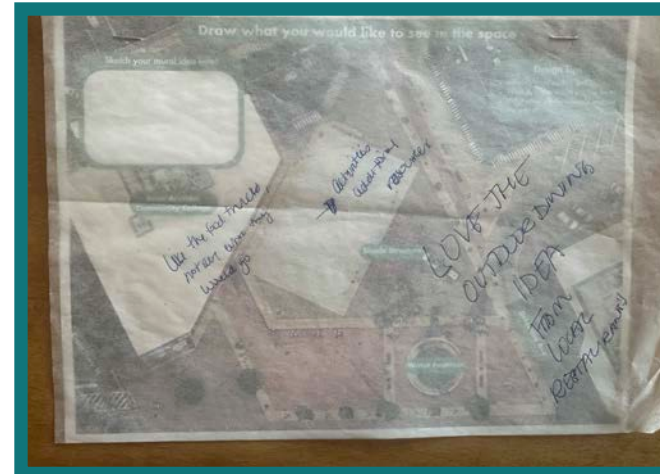
DESIGN 4

- Mural Idea: Stylized map of Glen Burnie
- Affordable Shops



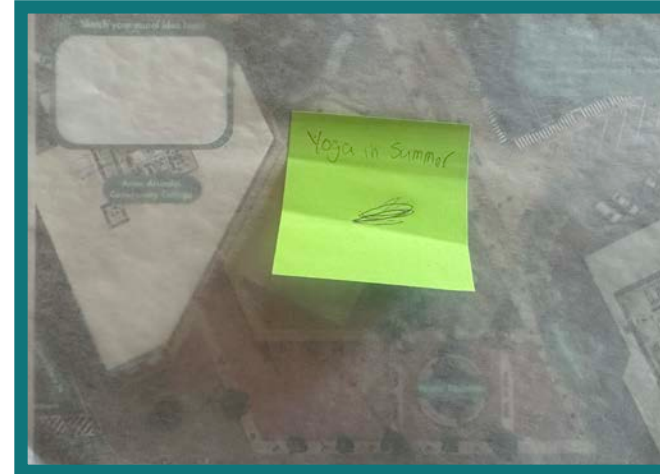
DESIGN 5

- Food Trucks
- Increase Water Pressure



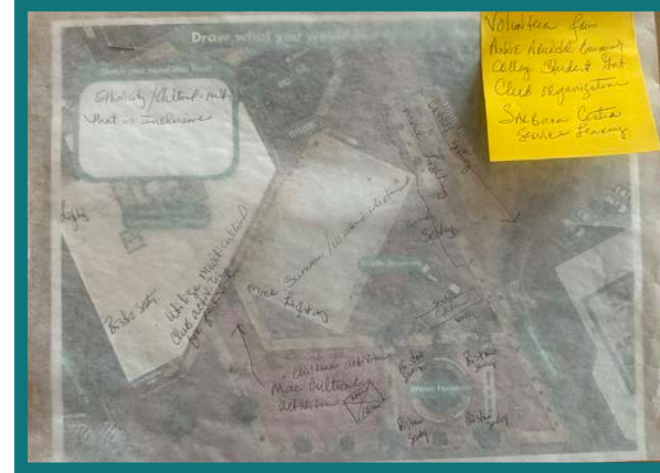
DESIGN 6

- Outdoor Dining
- Activities



DESIGN 7

- Yoga in the Summer



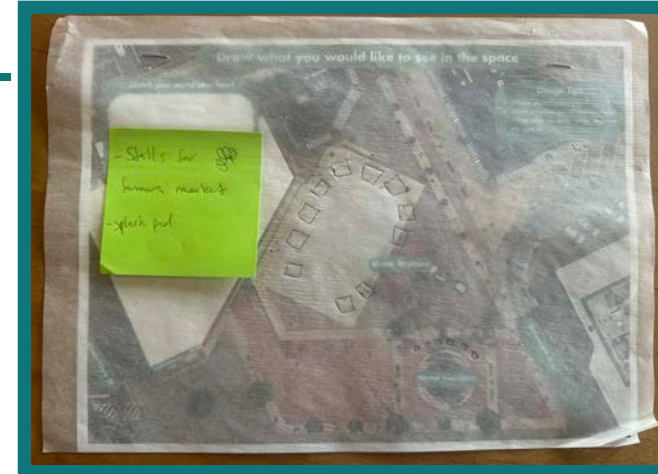
DESIGN 8

- Inclusive Activities



DESIGN 9

- Movie Screen
- Food Trucks



DESIGN 10

- Stalls for Farmers Market
- Splash Pad



DESIGN 11

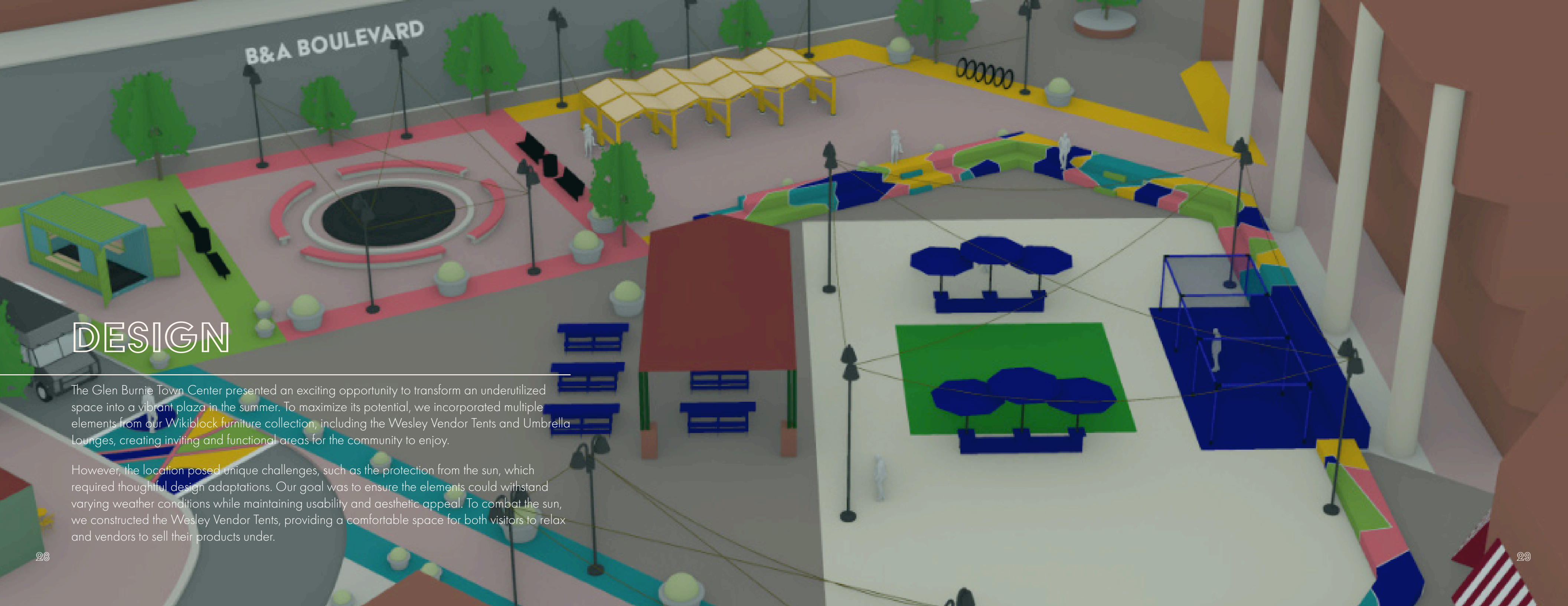
- Stage
- Vendor Stalls

PRIMARY TAKEAWAYS

Glen Burnie has the potential to drive economic growth while also strengthening the social connections within and beyond the community by leveraging its location, encouraging local entrepreneurship, enhancing public spaces with community events and public art, and improving pedestrian infrastructure to promote physical activity and well-being. The community envisions Glen Burnie as a vibrant, resilient neighborhood with ample opportunities for education, employment, and social engagement, enhancing the overall quality of life for its residents.

Glen Burnie Town Center lacks appeal due to poor pedestrian accessibility, safety concerns, and limited programming at times.

Dangerous crossings, blind spots from parked cars, and high traffic discourage foot traffic, while the perception of crime adds to the area’s unwelcoming atmosphere.



DESIGN

The Glen Burnie Town Center presented an exciting opportunity to transform an underutilized space into a vibrant plaza in the summer. To maximize its potential, we incorporated multiple elements from our Wikiblock furniture collection, including the Wesley Vendor Tents and Umbrella Lounges, creating inviting and functional areas for the community to enjoy.

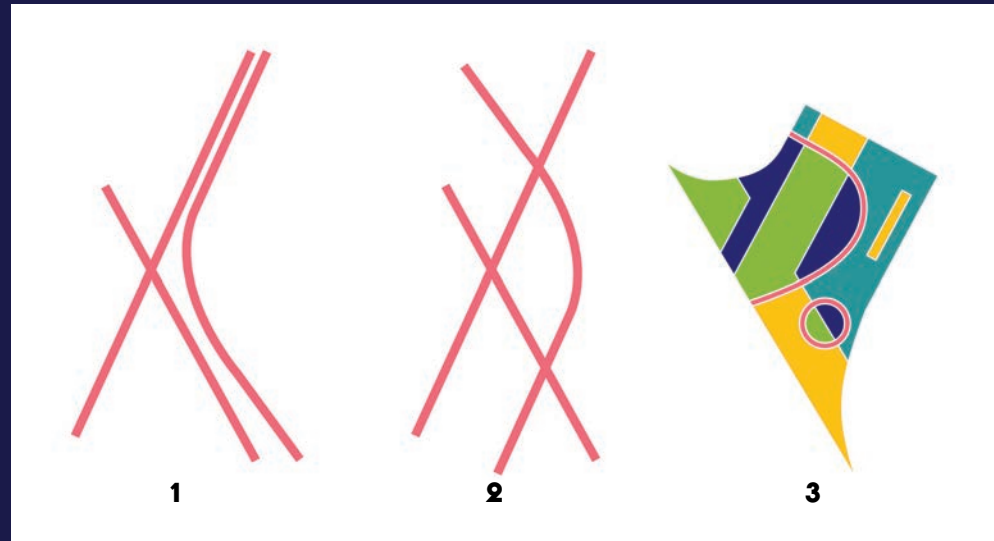
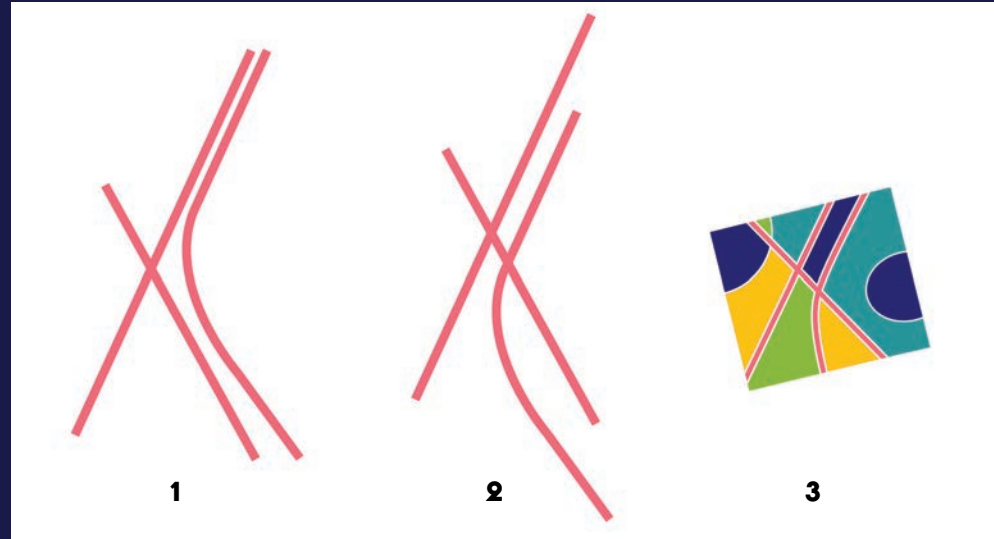
However, the location posed unique challenges, such as the protection from the sun, which required thoughtful design adaptations. Our goal was to ensure the elements could withstand varying weather conditions while maintaining usability and aesthetic appeal. To combat the sun, we constructed the Wesley Vendor Tents, providing a comfortable space for both visitors to relax and vendors to sell their products under.

COLOR SCHEME

DESIGN ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

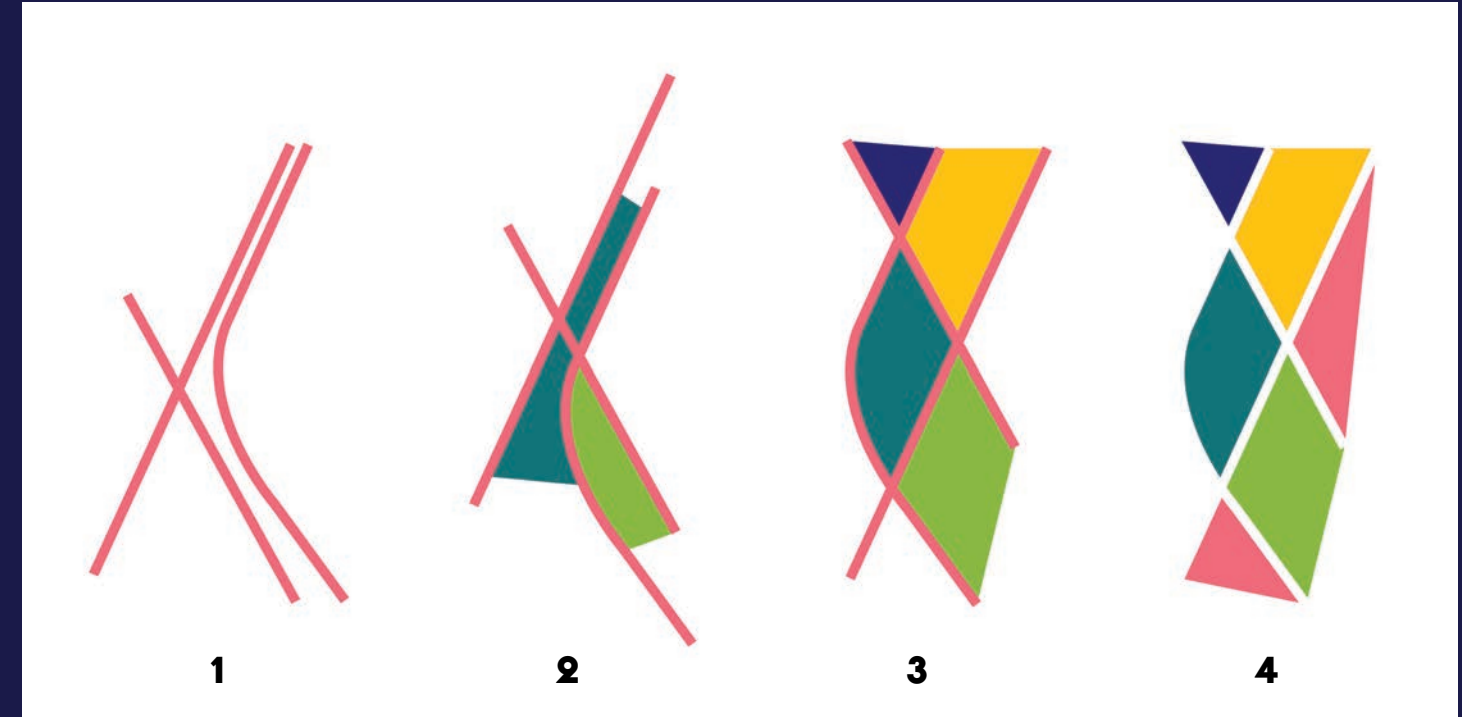
SITE PLAN





MURAL INSPIRATION

MAP OF GLEN BURNIE



MURAL INSPIRATION

MAP OF GLEN BURNIE



SOUTH VIEW
(16 VENDORS, 2 FOOD TRUCKS)



SOUTH VIEW
(31 VENDORS, 2 FOOD TRUCKS)



MARKET AREA

(NO VENDOR SCENARIO)



MARKET AREA

(VENDOR SCENARIO)



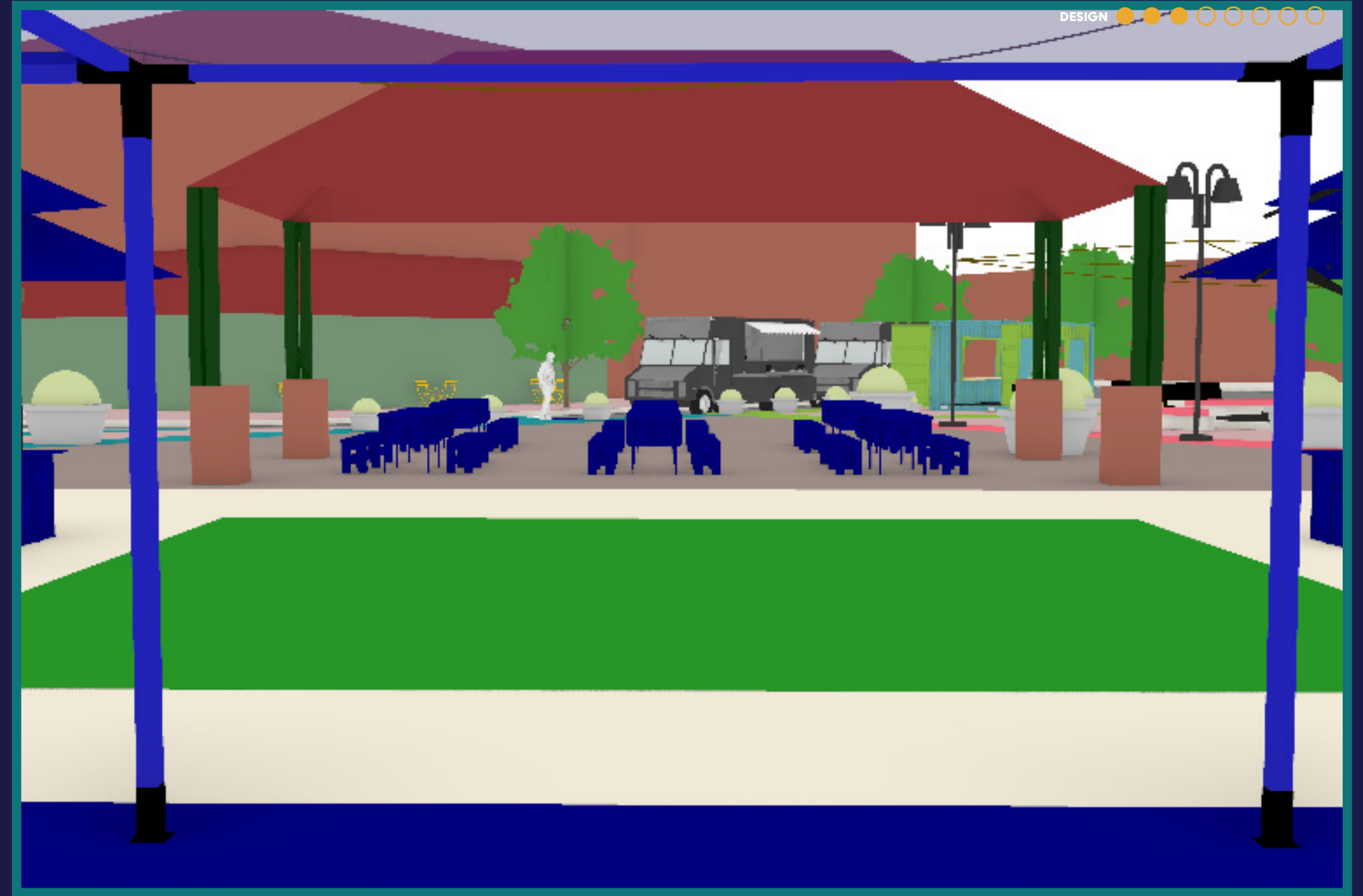
TERRACED LOUNGE



PLAY AREA OVERVIEW



**VIEW ACROSS
PLAY AREA**



VIEW FROM STAGE



BETTER BLOCK IN A BOX



VIEW UP B&A



STOREFRONT SEATING



MAIN WALKWAY



BEACON



BEACON



PARKING LOT CROSSWALK



BIKE PATH CONNECTION



IMPLEMENTATION

Within a mere three days, we worked with more than 100 volunteers to bring about a remarkable transformation of the site. In the following pages, we present the various workshops that brought this project to life, where passion and hard work flowed, with only a few moments of struggle along the way.



THE WORKSHOPS

The volunteers consisted of passionate community members who selflessly volunteered their time, and steered the project with determination and passion. Their commitment was the driving force behind the project's success.

We had a total of **107 volunteers!**



TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

A huge thank you to the core team, AAEDC, Councilwoman Allison Pickard, and partners! Without your incredible support, this project simply wouldn't have been possible. Your active participation throughout the project week by building, painting, and connecting with the community truly made a difference.

We are overwhelmed by the dedication of so many volunteers who gave their time and effort to help bring this vision to life. Seeing the community's pride in the Glen Burnie area and feeling the positive vibes from our collective efforts has been truly inspiring.

Once again, we extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who played a crucial role in this endeavor. Your hard work has profoundly touched our community, and we are so grateful to have embarked on this transformative journey together.

CORE TEAM

Kayliegh De La Puente

Wesley MacQuilliam

Tricia Sanborn

Deeannah Taylor

Zipporah Johnson

Pam Booth

Katie Stower

Shannon and Jose Herrera

Fran McHugh

Lauren Watts



ADDING COLOR

To infuse the space with color and vibrancy, we transformed the Glen Burnie Town Center using their distinctive color palette and style with navy, dark green, light green, pink and yellow. A striking ground mural was painted throughout the Town Center, serving as a focal point that energizes the Town Center and draws attention to the space.

Once the ground mural draws folks to the space, they are greeted with a vibrant terrance lounge mural, which surrounds the performance/flex area. This terrace lounge area is a place to sit and relax and see the enjoy the vibrancy of the space.

To extend the impact and connect the space with surrounding buildings, we painted a muralized crosswalk by the H&R block. This vibrant crosswalk enhances pedestrian safety as drivers are encouraged to slow down by the colors.

This transformation was made possible through the collaborative efforts of our team, dedicated volunteers, and passionate community members. The vibrant colors and thoughtful design elements have garnered overwhelmingly positive feedback, creating a lively and welcoming environment that authentically reflects the spirit and pride of Glen Burnie.



THE BUILD

The build phase of the Glen Burnie Better Plaza project officially kicked off on Tuesday, as the team began setting up solar lighting throughout the Town Center and preparing for the upcoming community workshops.

On Wednesday morning, with the help of volunteers, partners, and community members, we began painting a muralized crosswalk near H&R Block and the Terrace Lounge mural. We also painted Wikiblock furniture for the Beacon art installation, as well as the blue picnic tables. In the afternoon, we launched work on the large ground mural that spans the central plaza. Meanwhile, the team also began constructing the blue performance area, a flexible stage for live programming and entertainment.

On Thursday, the morning workshop focused on completing the ground mural, while the afternoon was dedicated to assembling the Wikiblock furniture, including the Wesley Vendor Tent structure and sail shades. A standout addition was the custom umbrella lounge—a shaded seating area that invites visitors to relax, eat, and enjoy the space. Another highlight was the installation of the Beacon art piece, a tribute to Jack Andraka's groundbreaking work on cancer detection mechanisms.

By Friday, we placed out the café bistro sets, installed Wikiblock A-frame signage, and set up survey stands to collect community feedback. We also began marking the bike connection that links the B&A Trail directly to the Town Center, reinforcing the space's accessibility for cyclists.



IMPLEMENTATION ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○



WIKIBLOCK

For the project, we leveraged our versatile Wikiblock library to build shade, art and seating to enhance the Glen Burnie Town Center. We incorporated **43 sheets of 3/4" Reinforced Globulus Maple plywood**—a sustainable choice that contributes significantly to minimizing our environmental impact. To put this into perspective:

- **Sustainable Poplar Plywood:** The plywood we used is made from poplar, a tree that absorbs a lot of CO₂—about **22 tons per hectare every year**. Poplar trees also help protect rivers from pollution and can grow in flood-prone areas.
- **Carbon Capture Benefits:** The **2.44 m³** of plywood used in this project has a **net positive** carbon footprint, capturing approximately **1,583 – 1,705 kg of CO₂**. This is comparable to the annual carbon absorption of **72-78 mature trees**.
- **Forest Conservation:** The FSC® and PEFC-certified plywood ensured that our materials came from responsibly managed forests, safeguarding **over 1.5 acres of forest** from unsustainable harvesting practices.

This plywood was used to construct three umbrella lounges, eight Wesley Vendor Tents, Glen Burnie Sign for the shipping container, wayfinding signage and the Glen Burnie custom art feature Beacon, showcasing our commitment to sustainable design and reduced environmental impact.



IMPLEMENTATION ●●●●●●●●





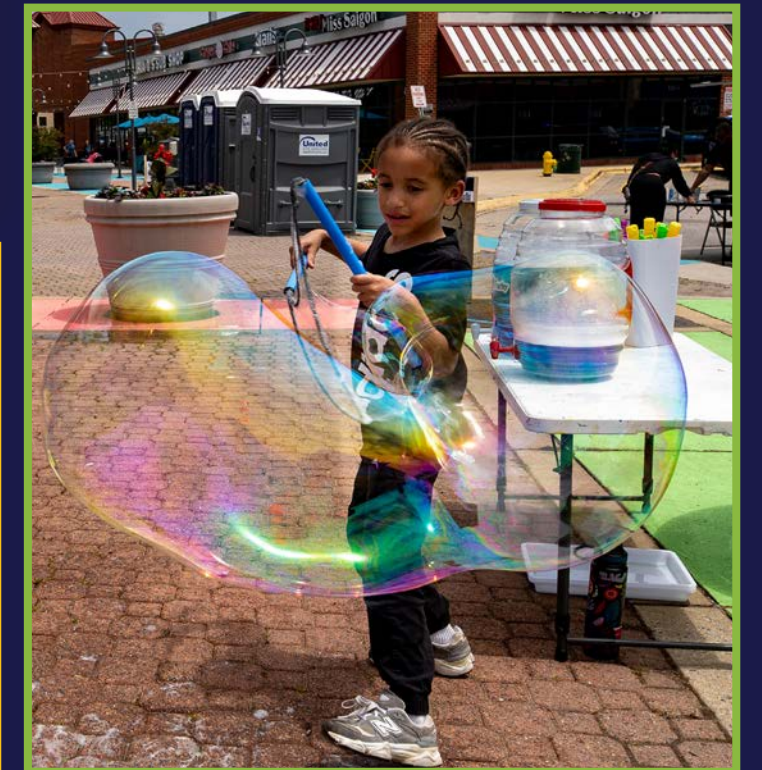
BETTER BLOCK IN A BOX

IMPLEMENTATION ●●●●○○○○

The Better Block in a Box not only provided a semi-permanent onsite storage solution but also created a versatile space for pop-up experiences. Over time, the container has transformed into a recording studio, an art gallery, and even a pop-up clothing store, catering to diverse local needs.

For this event, we partnered with ArtsyPartsy, a community arts program in Glen Burnie led by Jeanette Nunez, to elevate the container's impact by promoting the art programs and doing fun art activities. Visitors enjoyed an interactive art experience, where kids learned about spin art, and crafting. The excitement was amplified by bringing bubbles throughout the space making the experience both fun and engaging.

By encouraging vendors and local organizations to leverage the container to showcase their programs and foster community participation, we can not only highlight local talent but also turn each event into a platform for discovery and engagement.





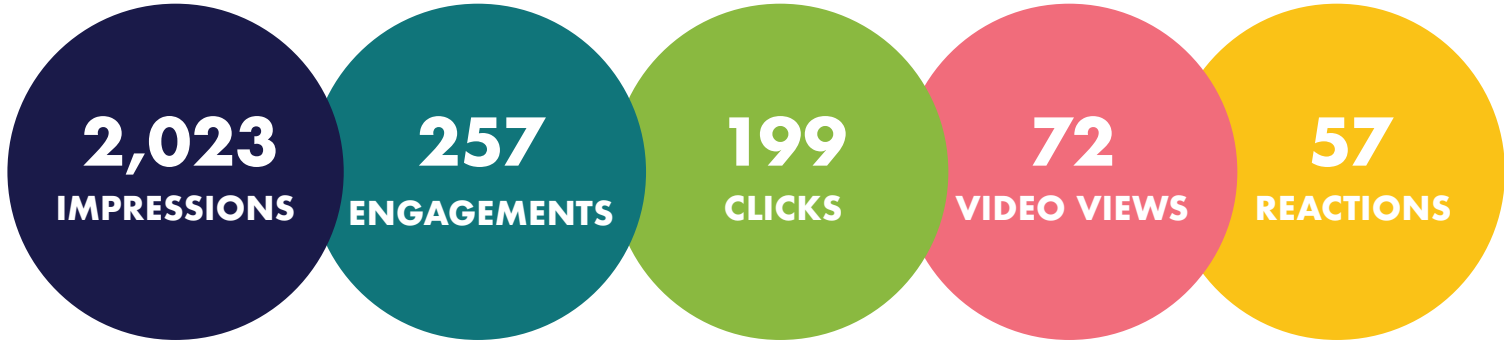
INSTA-INSIGHTS: SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

Here's an overview of the social media stats gathered throughout the entire project process from Better Block's social media channels.

LINKEDIN INSIGHTS

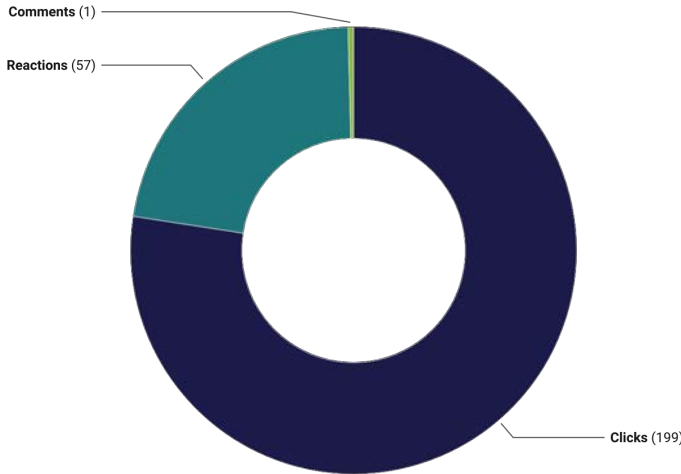


KEY METRICS (TOTALS)

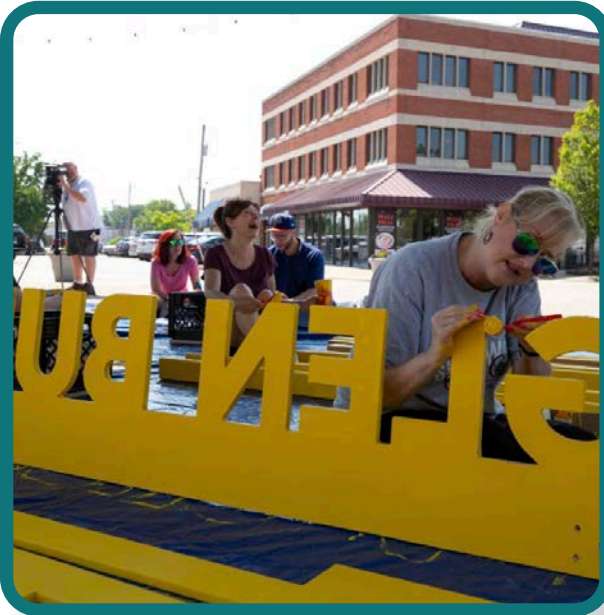


ENGAGEMENT BREAKDOWN

This chart provides a breakdown of LinkedIn engagement types for the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. The data highlights the proportion of Clicks, Reactions, Shares, and Comments received across all LinkedIn posts



Clicks were the primary form of engagement on LinkedIn, accounting for over 70% of total interactions across all posts. This high percentage highlights a strong level of curiosity or interest in the content.

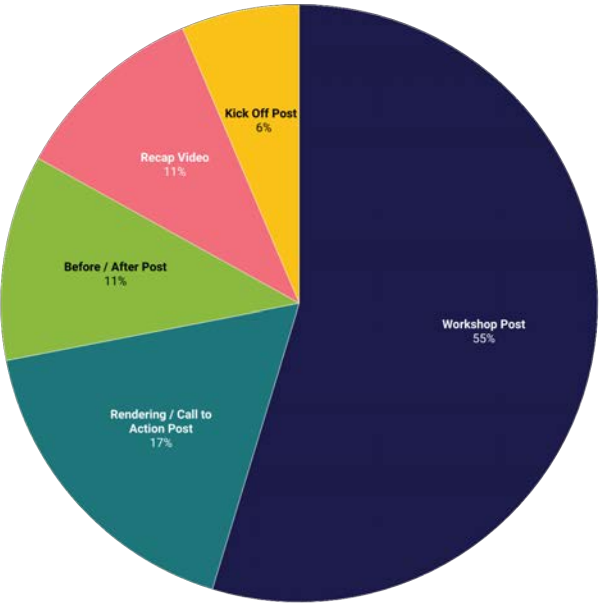


TOP POST



ENGAGEMENT RATE BY POST

This chart illustrates the engagement rate for each LinkedIn post, highlighting the proportion of total interactions (Clicks, Reactions, Comments, and Shares) relative to impressions. It provides insights into which posts resonated most with the audience, helping to identify the content types and topics that drive the highest levels of engagement.



CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR) BY POST

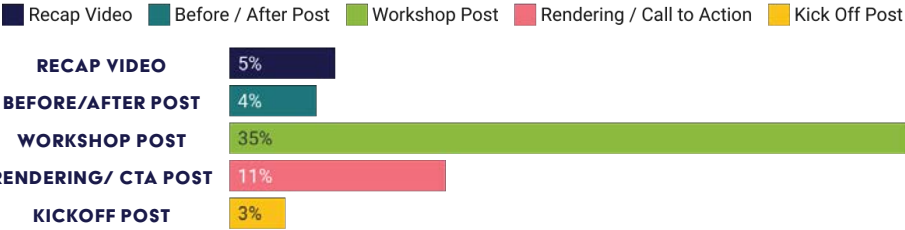
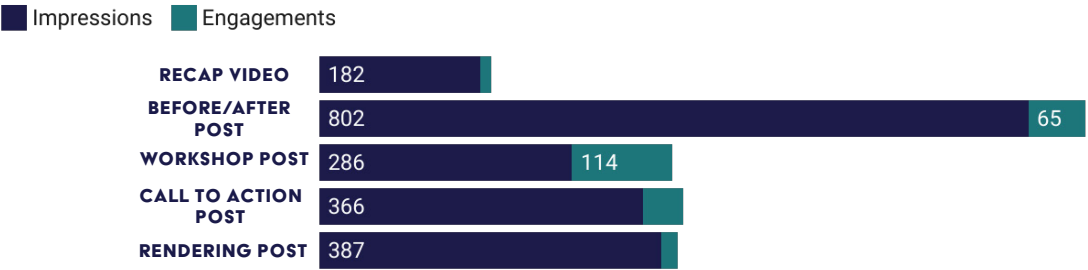
This chart shows the percentage of users who clicked on a post after seeing it, helping us measure how effective each LinkedIn post was at driving action.

CTR (Click-Through Rate) is calculated as:
Clicks ÷ Impressions × 100

A higher CTR means the post successfully motivated more users to engage beyond viewing, such as visiting a link or signing up for an event.

IMPRESSIONS VS. ENGAGEMENTS BY POST

This chart compares the impressions and engagements for each LinkedIn post, showcasing how effectively each post converted views into interactions. It highlights the posts that generated the most audience engagement relative to their visibility, offering valuable insights into the content that resonates most with your audience.



FACEBOOK INSIGHTS

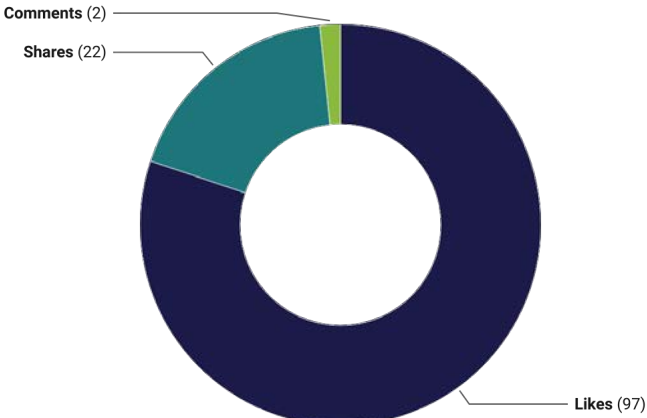


KEY METRICS (TOTALS)



ENGAGEMENT BREAKDOWN

This chart provides a breakdown of different engagement types (Likes, Comments, Shares) for each Facebook post in the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. It highlights which types of engagement were most common for each post type, giving insight into audience preferences for interacting with different content.



Likes were the primary form of engagement on Facebook, accounting for 80% of total interactions across all posts. This high percentage indicates a positive reception, showing that the audience appreciated the content and felt compelled to engage with it.



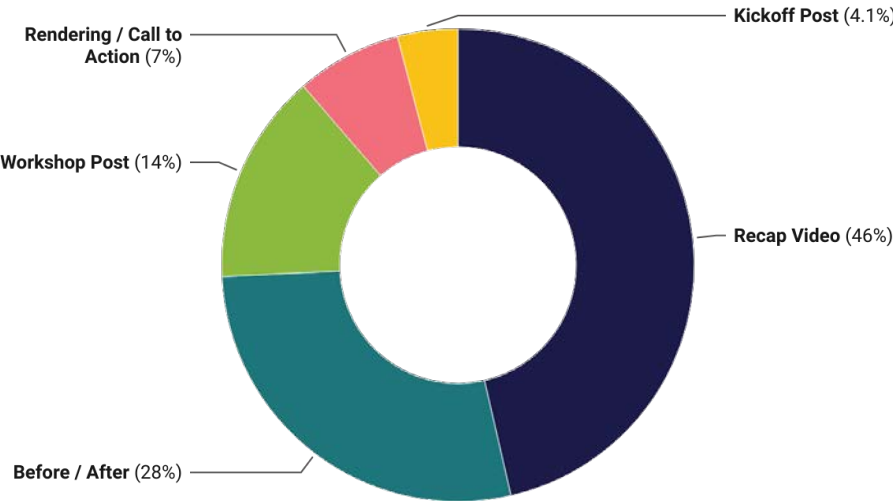
RENDERING/CTA POST

IMPRESSIONS
1,907
POST REACH
1,723
LIKES
7
SHARES
10

TOP POST

ENGAGEMENT RATE BY POST

This chart illustrates the engagement rate for each Facebook post, highlighting the proportion of total interactions (Likes, Comments, and Shares) relative to impressions. It provides insights into which posts resonated most with the audience, helping to identify the content types and topics that drive the highest levels of engagement.

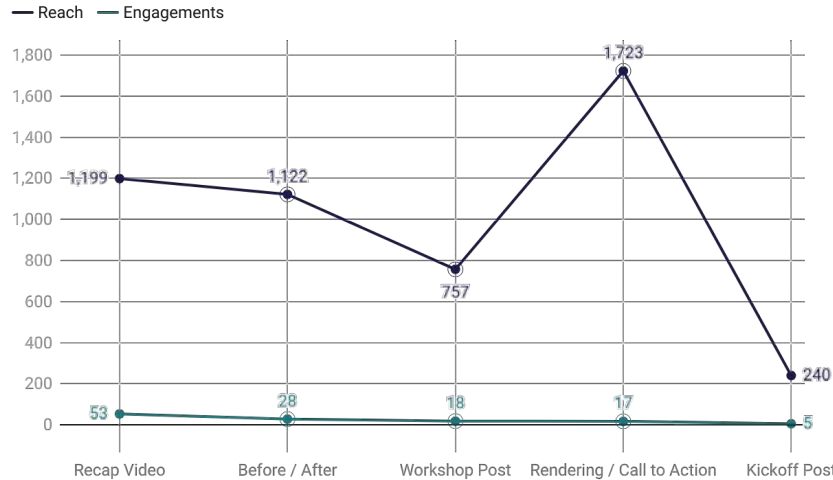


ACCOUNTS REACHED VS ENGAGED BY POST

This chart compares the number of accounts reached and actively engaged for each Facebook post. It highlights the effectiveness of each post in converting passive viewers into active participants through likes, comments, and shares. Posts with a higher proportion of engaged accounts relative to reached accounts indicate strong content resonance, suggesting they successfully captured the audience's attention and encouraged interaction.

IMPRESSIONS BREAKDOWN BY POST

This column chart shows the impressions for each Facebook post type in the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. Impressions represent the total times each post was displayed on users' screens. By highlighting the visibility each post type achieved, this chart provides insights into which content was most frequently seen and had the widest reach in the campaign.



INSTAGRAM INSIGHTS

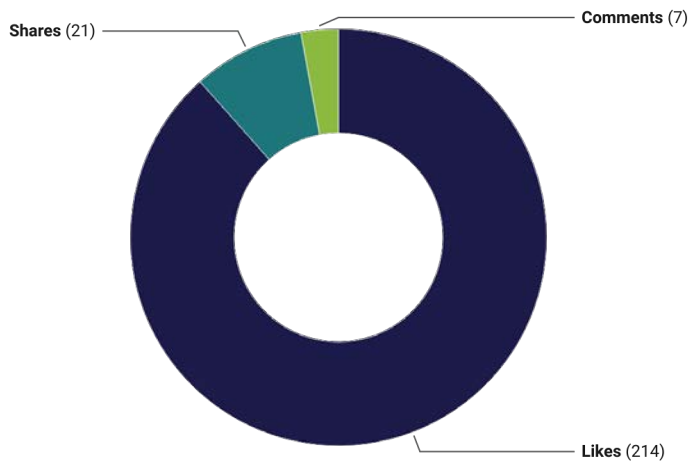


KEY METRICS (TOTALS)



ENGAGEMENT BREAKDOWN

This chart provides a breakdown of Instagram engagement types for the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. The data highlights the proportion of Reactions (Likes), Shares, and Comments received on all Instagram posts.



Likes were the predominant form of engagement, accounting for over 88% of total interactions, indicating strong audience appreciation.



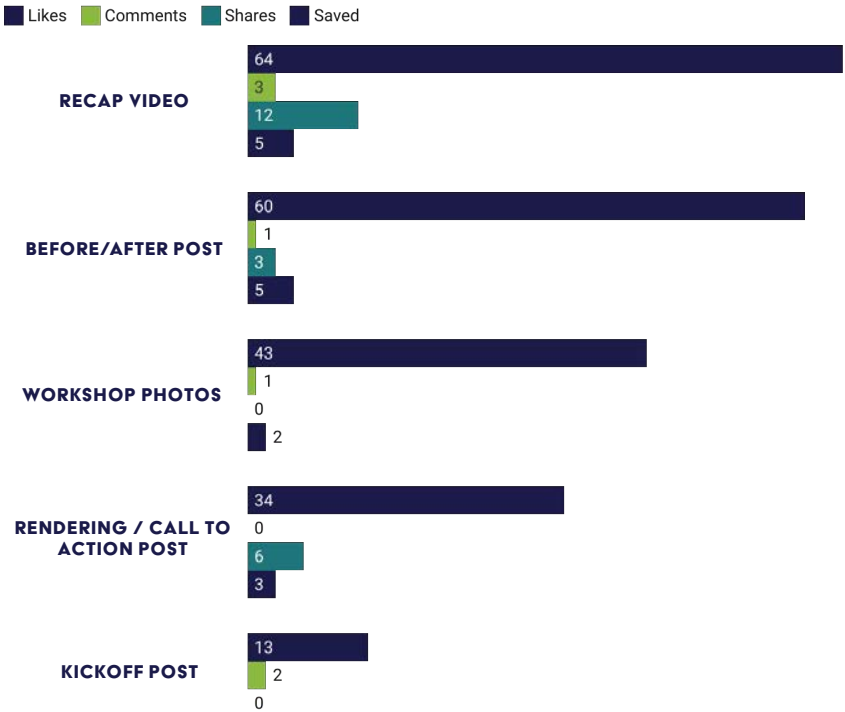
TOP POST

BEFORE/AFTER POST

PLAYS
2,646
INTERACTIONS
69
LIKES
60
SAVES
5

ENGAGEMENT TYPE BREAKDOWN BY POST

This chart shows the breakdown of different engagement types (Likes, Comments, Shares, and Saves) for each Instagram post in the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. It highlights how each type of post attracted varying levels of engagement, giving insight into which interaction types were most common for each post.

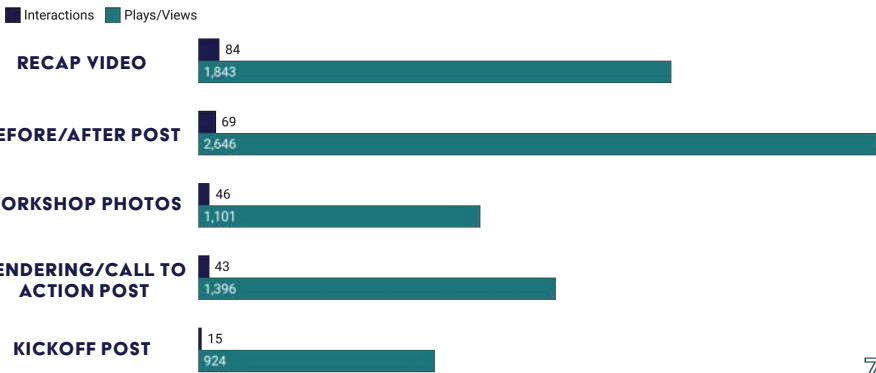
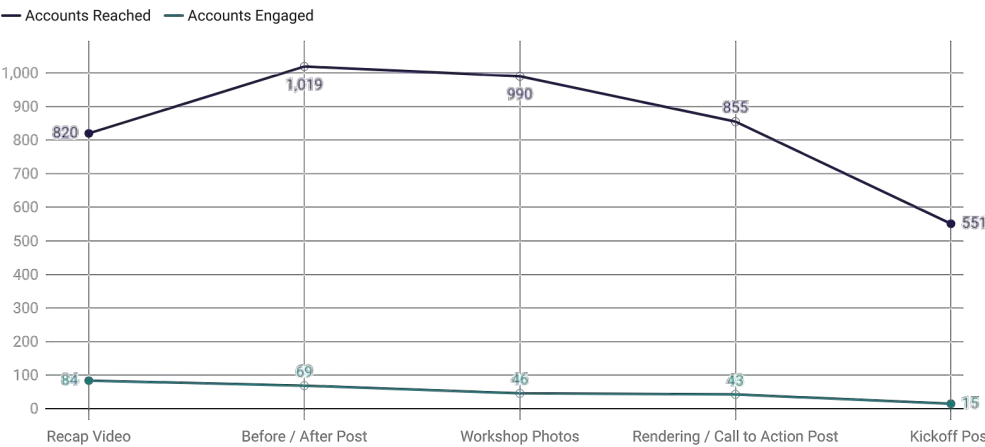


INTERACTIONS AND PLAYS BY POST

This chart displays the total interactions (including likes, comments, shares, and saves) alongside the total plays for video content in the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. It provides insight into the relationship between video views and engagement, highlighting which posts generated the most interaction relative to their views.

ACCOUNTS REACHED VS. ENGAGED BY POST

This chart compares the number of accounts reached versus accounts engaged for each post type in the Glen Burnie Better Plaza. Accounts reached indicates the potential audience, while accounts engaged shows the actual interaction level, helping to understand the engagement effectiveness relative to reach.





THE ACTIVATION

The two-day activation offered residents of Glen Burnie an exciting chance to experience their Glen Burnie Town Center in two unique ways! Friday was focused on music and crafts and Saturday was for a vendor market event. To create a welcoming and lively atmosphere, we provided free snowcones and art workshops, making the event an enjoyable gathering for all ages. The different layouts were to showcase the possibilities of the space as the activations continue throughout the summer.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Over 400 people joined us for the Friday and Saturday activations, making it an incredibly rewarding and energizing experience. What stood out most was how the Glen Burnie Town Center came to life in unique ways across both days.

Friday’s event was designed as a relaxing afternoon for families and workers winding down after the week. With a focus on arts, crafts, and music, the space featured hands-on art workshops led by groups like Chesapeake Arts Center, along with local artists selling their work. The day ended on a high note with a lively DJ set, bringing a fun and upbeat vibe to the space.

Saturday’s event created a vibrant vendor market atmosphere, with local food trucks, small businesses, and live music. The Island Breeze Band drew an enthusiastic crowd, as people relaxed in umbrella lounges, explored vendor booths, and enjoyed free snowcones. Kids played joyfully with bubbles and participated in art activities around the shipping container, making the event feel festive and family-friendly.

A heartfelt thank you to all of our partners, vendors, performers, food trucks, artists, and production crew who helped make this event such a success!

Anne Arundel Economic
Development Corporation

Artsy Partsy

Chesapeake Arts Center

PACAC

Arts Council of Anne Arundel
County

Iconic Desserts

ArtFarm

Spinning Saw Designs

Shiny Dayz Snowballs

James Devil Doggs

Bouch Designs

Healthy Lifestyle - SPN

Form and Felt

Face the Colours Planters, LLC

August Rose Health Center

British Swim School

Cotton Candi Machine

Five Figs Bakery

MidAtlantic Screen Printing

And many more!











ONGOING ACTIVATION

The Glen Burnie Better Plaza project revitalized the area into a vibrant community hub, supporting initiatives like the weekly farmers market and summer concert series. It now serves as a regular venue for activities and events throughout the summer, strengthening community connections and fostering a deeper sense of neighborhood engagement.

ONGOING ACTIVATIONS

Following the Glen Burnie Better Plaza activation, the space will continue to serve as a vibrant and valuable community hub throughout the summer.

Every Thursday, the plaza will host the Glen Burnie Farmers Market from 4 PM to 7 PM, featuring local vendors and farmers. This activation plays a vital role in addressing food accessibility in Glen Burnie, a neighborhood designated as a food desert. The mobile market provides residents with fresh, affordable groceries, helping to overcome barriers created by the lack of a nearby full-service grocery store.

Every Friday, the space will come alive with the Summer Concert Series, organized by local community member Betsy. These weekly events extend the momentum of the activation, offering free, family-friendly programming that brings people together through music and shared experience.

The infrastructure left behind including community seating like the umbrella lounges and bistro café sets ensures the plaza remains functional and inviting. The performance area also serves as a flexible space that can double as a shaded seating zone or stage, depending on the event. Whether people are enjoying a meal, watching a performance, or simply relaxing, these features support ongoing use and comfort.

Together, these elements ensure that the Glen Burnie Town Center continues to grow as a dynamic public space that promotes health, connection, and community pride.



THE PARTNERS



THE FEEDBACK

During the activation, we gathered feedback via onsite surveys. Over the next few pages, we outline what we were told. But at the end, we outline our recommendations, which are a combination of what we were told, what we saw, and the process itself.

FEEDBACK

BELOW ARE A FEW YES OR NO QUESTIONS. PLACE A STICKER UNDER YOUR ANSWER.

	YES	NO
Have you been to the Glen Burnie Town Center before?		
Would you like to see more activites at the Glen Burnie Town Center?		
Did you discover or learn anything new today?		
Did you meet anyone new today?		

FEEDBACK

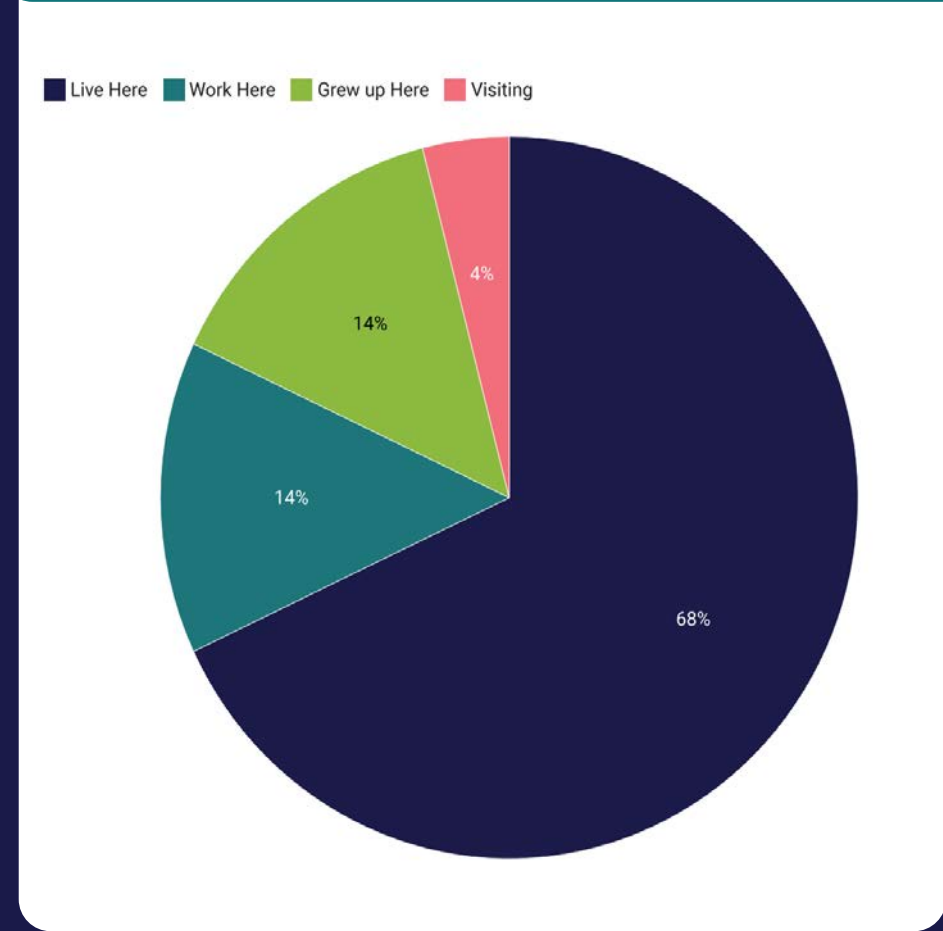
BELOW ARE A FEW YES OR NO QUESTIONS. PLACE A STICKER UNDER YOUR ANSWER.

	YES	NO
Did you enjoy the activites today?		

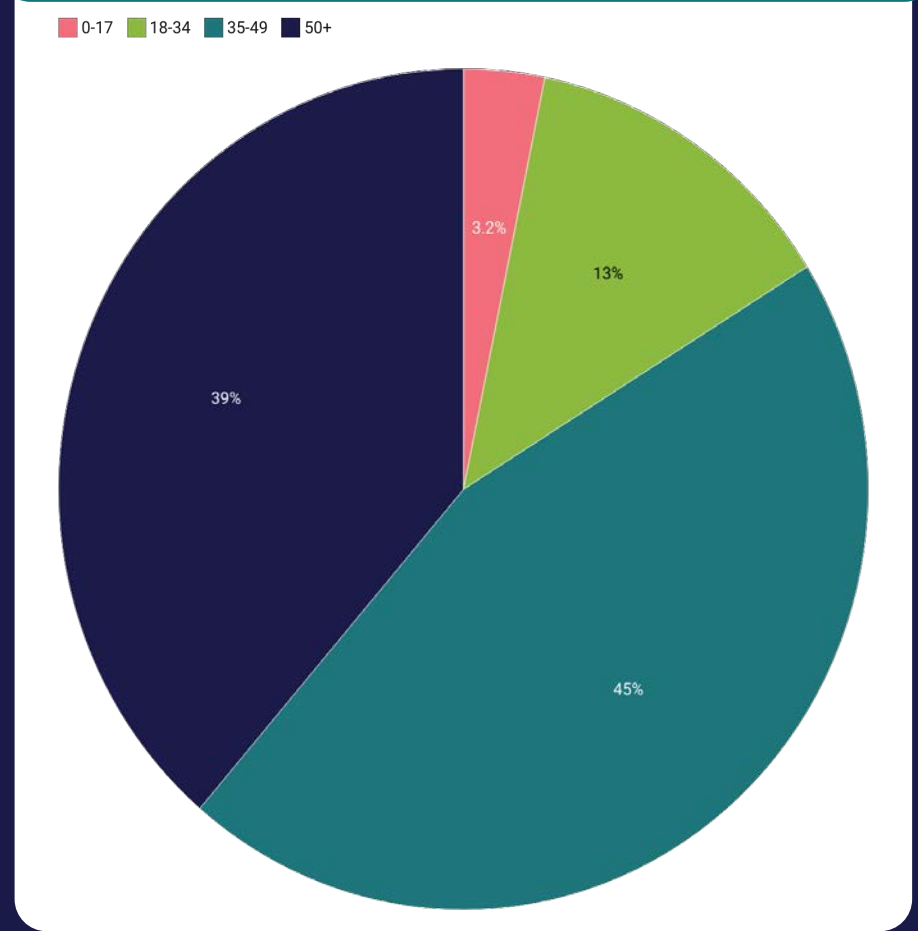
SURVEY FEEDBACK

To gain a deeper understanding of the new space, we conducted a survey with residents during the event to gather their input on desired features and potential activities they would like to see in the area.

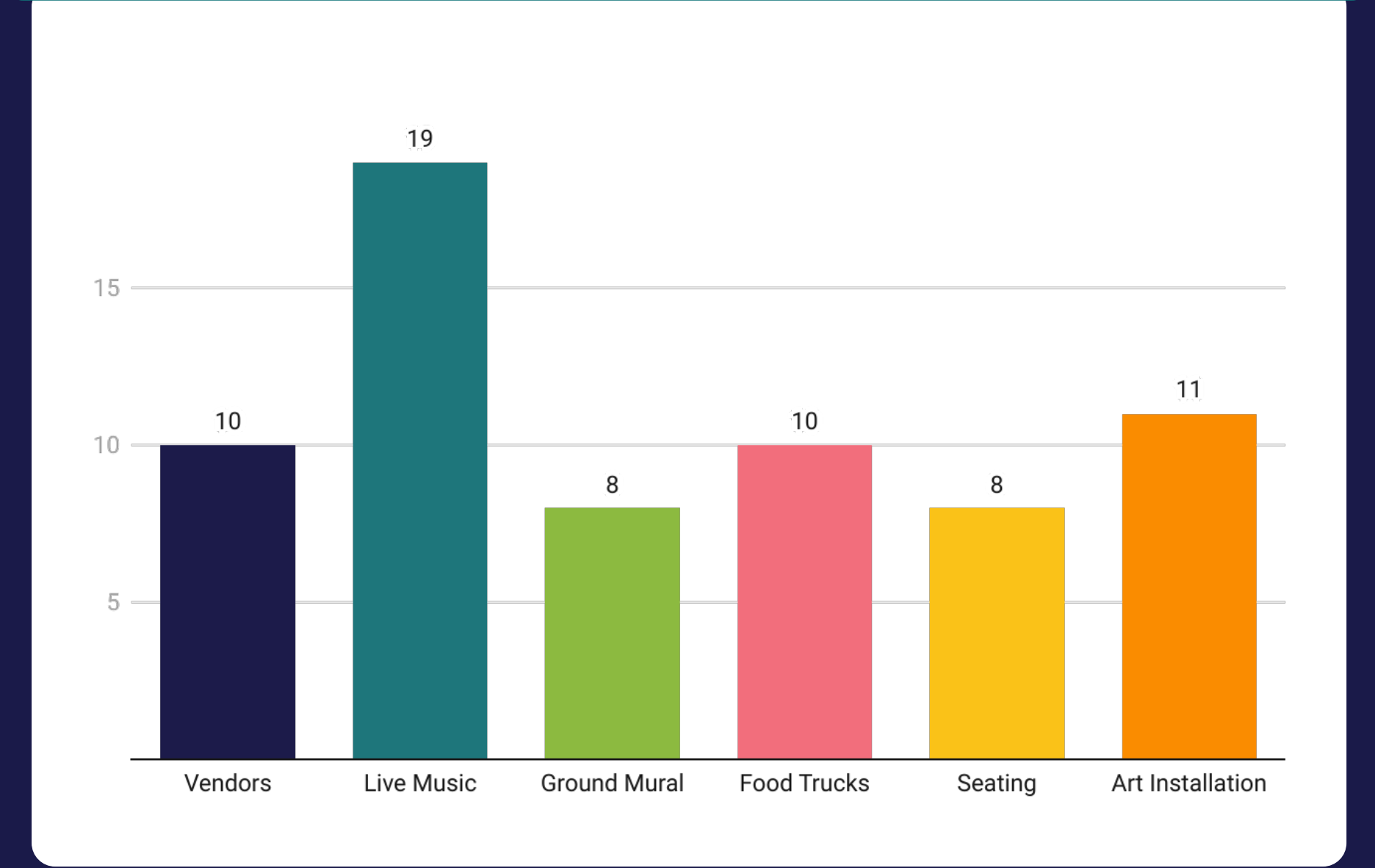
WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO GLEN BURNIE?



WHAT IS YOUR AGE RANGE?



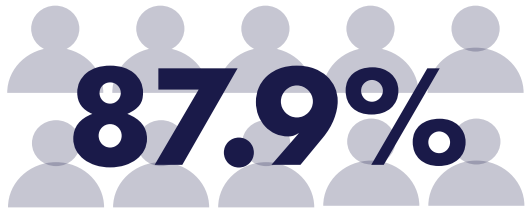
WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE EVENT?



SURVEY FEEDBACK

To gain a deeper understanding of the new space, we conducted a survey with residents during the event to gather their input on desired features and potential activities they would like to see in the area.

HAVE YOU BEEN TO THE GLEN BURNIE TOWN CENTER BEFORE?



have been to the Glen Burnie Town Center before

DID YOU DISCOVER OR LEARN ANYTHING NEW TODAY?



discovered or learned something new at the event

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE ACTIVITIES?



said they would like to see more activities

DID YOU MEET ANYONE NEW TODAY?



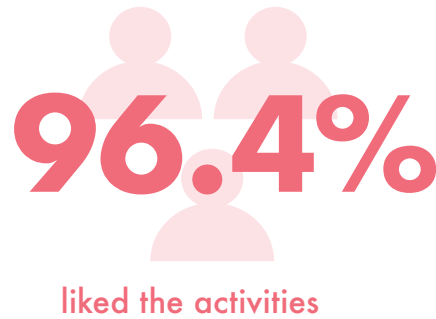
met someone new at the event



SURVEY FEEDBACK

To gain a deeper understanding of the new space, we conducted a survey with residents during the event to gather their input on desired features and potential activities they would like to see in the area.

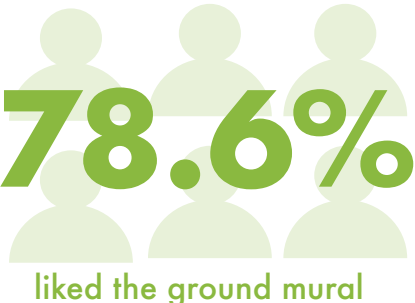
DID YOU ENJOY THE ACTIVITIES?



DID YOU DISCOVER ANY NEW BUSINESSES?



DID YOU LIKE THE GROUND MURAL?



WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN VISITING THE GLEN BURNIE TOWN CENTER AGAIN?



What types of activities, features, or other elements would you like to see in the Glen Burnie Town Center?

Art lessons (crochet)

Let's add beer

No alcohol necessary, more variety of food establishments and entertainment

2nd the beer fest idea!



How did you hear about this event?

AACCC Chamber of Commerce

Driving at Home

Allison Pickard newsletter

Summer Series

Better Block Survey

A friend told me about it

My wife and facebook

NAACCC

Facebook



RECOMMENDATIONS

1 MURALIZED CROSSWALKS

During the project, we identified several key opportunities to enhance walkability and safety around the Glen Burnie Town Center by implementing multiple muralized crosswalks that guide pedestrians toward the space.

As a public gathering spot frequented by families and students—many of whom come to dine or study—the Town Center benefits from improved pedestrian access. With high traffic volumes along B&A Boulevard, particularly during peak hours, these safety enhancements are essential to protect those walking to and from the center.

1 Implement Mid-Block Crosswalks on Delaware Avenue and B&A Boulevard:

We recommend installing a mid-block crosswalk on Delaware Avenue to connect nearby restaurants, such as Mali Thai, directly to the Town Center. In addition, a mid-block crosswalk on B&A Boulevard, linking the parking garage to the Town Center, would significantly improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. According to the State DOT, there are already plans underway for a crosswalk on B&A Boulevard; however, incorporating colorful, muralized elements would increase visibility and draw more attention from drivers, enhancing overall safety.

2 Expand Muralized Crosswalks to Other High-Traffic Areas:

We recommend extending the use of muralized crosswalks to additional high-traffic intersections, particularly at B&A Boulevard and Crain Highway North. Enhancing visibility at this key intersection would further improve pedestrian safety and reinforce the identity of the Town Center as a walkable, welcoming destination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OBSERVATIONS

During the project, we sought to implement temporary mid-block crosswalks at two key locations: B&A Boulevard (connecting the parking garage to the Town Center) and Delaware Avenue (connecting nearby restaurants to the plaza).

However, we encountered challenges in both cases. The State DOT denied our request for a temporary crosswalk on B&A Boulevard due to their own ongoing plans to install a permanent mid-block crosswalk in that location.

On Delaware Avenue, our proposal for a muralized crosswalk was rejected by the County, which cited outdated guidelines from the 2011 edition of the MUTCD. Notably, the updated 2024 MUTCD now supports the type of artistic crosswalk design we proposed highlighting an opportunity to revisit this conversation.

Throughout build week, we observed high levels of pedestrian movement between the parking garage and the Town Center, particularly among workers and visitors. This reinforced the urgent need for a safe and direct mid-block crossing. However, cars parked in front of the Martial Arts Center created visibility issues for pedestrians, making the crossing even more hazardous. While there is a pedestrian median offering some relief, it does not align directly with the Town Center entrance.

We also noted frequent crossings from Delaware Avenue, where people moved between the office buildings, Mali Thai, the fountain, and Anne Arundel Community College. Additionally, many pedestrians were observed using the intersection near Rotary Park to reach the Town Center. Given the high traffic volume at this intersection, adding colorful, muralized elements would significantly improve visibility and pedestrian safety.

2 EXPAND ACTIVITIES

Survey feedback from the Glen Burnie community revealed a strong desire to expand activities and enhance features within the Town Center.

Over 90% of respondents expressed interest in seeing more events and programming, signaling strong community enthusiasm for transforming the area into a vibrant, regularly activated destination. To build on this momentum, we recommend focusing on strategic programming and partnerships that reflect community needs and help establish the Town Center as a dynamic, inclusive gathering space for all residents.

- 1 Host regular events and activities:**
Organize recurring events such as farmers markets, live music performances (like the Summer Concert Series), and hands-on workshops to reflect the top interests highlighted in the community survey—particularly markets and social gatherings. Consistent programming will keep the space vibrant and encourage repeat visits, fostering long-term community engagement. Additionally, offering wellness activities like yoga and partnering with mental health organizations can create inclusive,
- 2 Develop partnerships with local organizations:**
Collaborate with groups like the Arts Council to bring additional resources, programming, and community connections to the Town Center. These partnerships can support:
 - Arts programs – Address creative and educational needs through initiatives like Artsy Partsy workshops.
 - Health and wellness initiatives – Reflect the community’s interest in programs that enhance quality of life, such as yoga classes or mental health awareness events.

OBSERVATIONS

Survey results provided valuable insights into how the community engages with and values the Town Center space:

- **Strong Appreciation for Art and Design:** 96.4% of respondents enjoyed the activities, and 78.6% specifically noted the ground mural as a highlight showing the importance of creative elements in bringing the space to life.
- **Support for Local Businesses:** 80.8% of respondents discovered new businesses during their visit, revealing the potential for future vendor markets and pop-ups to promote local entrepreneurship.
- **Desire for Social and Educational Experiences:** 78.3% of respondents said they discovered or learned something new, while 72% met someone new which highlights the community’s openness to new experiences and social connection.

These findings point to a clear opportunity: expanding accessible, diverse programming that fosters creativity, discovery, and meaningful interaction. By building on these priorities, the Town Center can continue evolving into a vibrant, inclusive hub for Glen Burnie residents.

3 BIKE PATH CONNECTION

When we first visited the site and its surrounding areas, one feature immediately stood out, the Baltimore-Annapolis Bike Trail, located just steps from the Glen Burnie Town Center. This well-used trail presents a valuable opportunity to bring more cyclists and pedestrians directly into the heart of the Town Center. To take advantage of this, we installed temporary wayfinding signage using duct tape to guide trail users toward the center.

To strengthen this connection and encourage even more foot and bike traffic, we recommend the following strategies to better integrate the Town Center with its surroundings:

- 1 Install wayfinding signage from the trail to the Town Center:**
Strategically placed signage near the point where the trail approaches the parking garage can alert cyclists and pedestrians to the nearby Town Center. Clear, inviting signs can encourage trail users to stop for a break, grab a bite to eat, or explore the local shops and restaurants.
- 2 Implement a mid-block crosswalk and ground mural from the trail to the Town Center:**
Installing a muralized mid-block crosswalk where the trail meets the parking garage improves visibility and signals to cyclists and pedestrians that they are welcome to cross and continue into the Town Center. Extending this effort with a ground mural from the parking garage to the Town Center further enhances connectivity, guiding both trail users and parked visitors toward the heart of the space. These visual cues promote walkability and make the area feel more accessible and inviting.

RECOMMENDATIONS ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

OBSERVATIONS

We witnessed firsthand a group of kids biking from the B&A trail to the Glen Burnie Town Center on event day Saturday. The group of kids parked their bikes inside the Town Center flex area and ran to the snowcone truck.

This observation brought to light that creating a safe and inclusive space for people of all ages to enjoy the Town Center can bring vibrancy. It all starts with making a connection to the trail and leading them safely to the space.

The group of kids ended up staying in the space for a while as they realized there was free art workshops at the Better Block in a Box container. The ability to create a welcoming environment encourages independency with the kids and they develop a sense of place at the Town Center to create memories in.

4 MORE YES, LESS NO

During our site visit for the kickoff meeting, we immediately noticed a high number of restrictive signs throughout the space such as "No Rollerblading," "No Loitering," and "No Smoking."

While these signs may aim to maintain order, their abundance can send an unwelcoming message to community members. To foster a more inviting and inclusive atmosphere, we recommend the following steps to reframe the space as a place of belonging and positive activity.

1 Remove Restrictive “No” Signs:

Eliminating overly restrictive signage (e.g. “No

Eliminating overly restrictive signage (e.g., “No Loitering,” “No Rollerblading”) helps create a more welcoming environment where people feel encouraged to stay, relax, and enjoy the space. When people see others comfortably gathering—eating, talking, or simply hanging out—it signals that the Town Center is an active, community-friendly place. This natural social energy attracts more visitors and encourages repeated use, helping the area thrive as a true public gathering space.

2 Install “Yes” Signs:

Replacing restrictive language with inviting signage such as “Rollerskating Welcome” or “Enjoy Your Lunch Here” encourages people to fully use the space. This helps break down mental barriers like “Am I allowed to do this?” and removes the fear of being told to leave. By signaling that the space is meant to be enjoyed, these signs create a more relaxed, welcoming atmosphere that improves the overall pedestrian experience.



OBSERVATIONS

At the activation event, a local resident named Deeanah brought this vision to life—rollerskating throughout the plaza to demonstrate how the space could support alternative forms of movement. Her presence showcased the potential for a more dynamic and inclusive public environment.





BETTERBLOCK.ORG



@BETTERBLOCK



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BETTER BLOCK



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