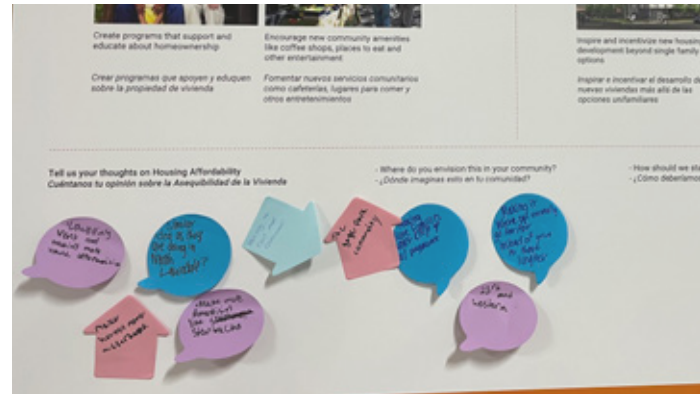


# STITCHING IT TOGETHER

## Session II: Generating a Vision Together



# Community Engagement Summary

ENGLISH VERSION



October 2024

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A planning initiative by:



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## STUDY BACKGROUND

**Stitching It Together** is the first of a multi-phased planning initiative led by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) that aims to center local voices in a vision to strengthen connections between the Brighton Park and Gage Park communities and improve access to the new Park District facility at 48th Street and Western Boulevard. This initial phase will lay the groundwork and direction of all future planning phases, which may include DPD and other relevant departments and sister agencies.

**Stitching it Together** includes areas of Brighton Park and Gage Park . This planning initiative will serve as a vision for the communities and inform future planning work.

This study will explore ways to:



### Improve the Public Realm

Make it safer and more comfortable to move around and access the Park District facility through public realm improvements



### Support Local Business

Foster thriving commercial corridors by supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs



### Manage the Impacts of Industrial Operations

Articulate design ideas that help to mitigate the impacts of existing industrial operations



### Improve Public Health & Safety

Provide a future vision for the area that raises up and leverages community, institutional partners, and City investment toward a safer and healthier Brighton Park and Gage Park

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

### Why is planning important?

Urban planning helps create a vision for the future of communities and City by helping understand how residents experience, work, grow, and interact with the urban environment. Recommendations and decisions in urban planning give shape to neighborhoods by informing future economic development, locations for public assets such as parks and open space, community centers, and other public amenities, and improving physical and cultural connections.

The planning process brings together diverse representatives from the community to help shape a future that elevates quality of life for residents.

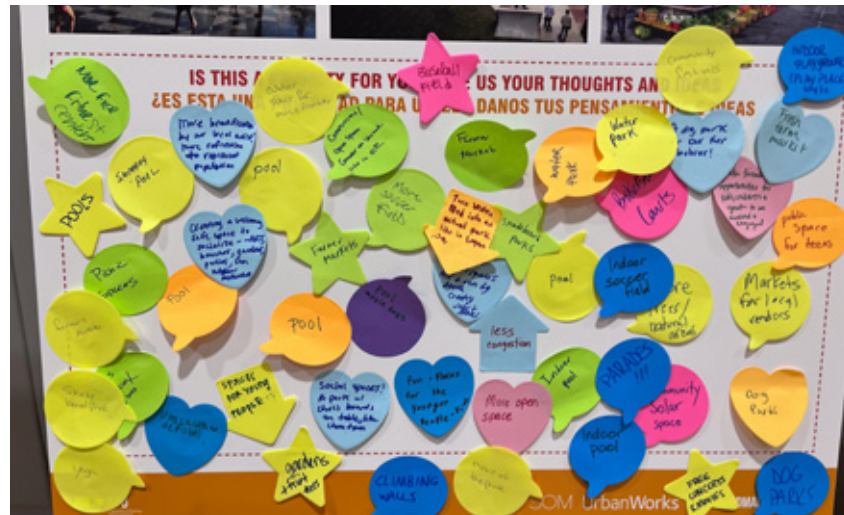
### What will the engagement process look like?

**Stitching It Together** began in late 2023 and is anticipated to continue through late 2024. **Stitching It Together** is the first stop that will help to inform future phases of planning in these communities.

There will be multiple opportunities to engage and provide comments, ideas, and feedback. These opportunities will include: community open houses, focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and opportunities at pop-up or other community events.

There will be four engagement sessions for this initiative. The first engagement session was completed in early spring. The second engagement session was completed in late summer. Each engagement session will include a Community Engagement Summary Report that will document the event, findings, and next steps. Future engagement opportunities will be announced in advance on social media outlets and through community and governmental partners.

Questions or comments regarding the engagement process are welcomed at [dpd@cityofchicago.org](mailto:dpd@cityofchicago.org).



## SUMMARY

The goal of these engagement sessions is to incorporate community ideas and feedback into a future vision for this area of the city. DPD's goal is to be inclusive of the many voices that comprise the community and have an understanding of community's priorities and needs.

In this session, the main goal was to share what the team has heard from the community and demonstrate how the engagement process is informing the development of the priorities and recommendations will frame this vision plan. For this session, DPD engaged with the community at a variety of venues from block parties to back to school events. This summer, over 800 community members were engaged in this study. The team received a significant amount and informative feedback through surveys, conversations, workshops, and insights from the community.

In the next engagement session, DPD will share a summary of the ongoing engagement process, an updated set of recommendations informed by the feedback that has been received, and thematic vision diagrams that will demonstrate how priorities and recommendations could be implemented in the neighborhood. Similar to the summer engagement format, DPD will distribute this material and engage with community members through events, pop-ups, and online platforms.

The recommendations the team has drafted through the project scope and the community engagement process will require the collaboration of multiple City Departments and Sister Agencies. This will be a great opportunity for the City and the community to shape a framework for a vision that will guide the future of Brighton Park and Gage Park.

## STAY INFORMED

**Stitching It Together** is expected to continue through 2024. There will be multiple opportunities for community engagement. DPD will provide additional information regarding community engagement events once an engagement plan is finalized.

The team looks forward to working together towards a future, equitable vision in Brighton Park and Gage Park.

If you have any questions, or if you would like for the team to keep you informed of any future public meetings and events, please email DPD at:

[DPD@cityofchicago.org](mailto:DPD@cityofchicago.org)

## SESSION #2 ENGAGEMENT TEAM

### DPD

Lead by: Roberto Astudillo, Nolan Zaroff, Luke Mich  
Supported by: Rodrigo Martel, Haley Canon, Carmen Martinez, Jo Peña, Marta McReady, Alonso Raimilla-Couture, Ferras Coulibaly, Ethan Kang

### SOM

Prime Consultant: Jennifer Skowlund, Tanvi Parikh

### Urban Works

Maria Pellot, Jose Esquinca

## ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

In our first session of the community engagement session, the team captured feedback on pressing issues, concerns, ideas and aspirations from community members via an open house held on March 5, 2024, a survey, and various pop-ups at local community events. For our second community engagement session, DPD shared this feedback on boards, a community engagement report, and through various channels such as the project website, email list, and community advisory group and partners.

During the engagement process, the team identified 6 overall Community Priorities:

- Prioritize Safe Streets and Community Spaces
- Community Programming for All
- Housing Affordability
- Economic Development and Opportunity
- Open Space and Beautification
- Health and Environment

In this second session, members were asked to select their top priorities. Each priority includes a set of draft recommendations informed by various map and engagement exercises, and input by community representatives, organizations and members as well as ongoing coordination with other City departments and sister agencies. Community members were asked for their input in identifying which draft recommendations were most important to them.

Overall, the second session of the community engagement process helped inform and guide the priorities and draft recommendations that will be included in this study. With community input, the team can begin to develop a general framework for this vision plan.



## Open House #2

This event took place at St. Gall Church (5511 S. Sawyer Ave.) on May 29, 2024 from 6-8 pm. The open house included a resource fair tables with community partners, sister agencies, and other organizations.

The following organizations participated in the resource fair: SGA - Family and Youth Services, Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Chicago Public Library, PODER, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Safety Ambassadors.

At this event, DPD shared the feedback that was received from the first engagement session on a series of boards that presented the results, comments, and ideas from the community. Attendees were asked to share any comments on the findings. DPD provided a community engagement summary report of this session in both English and Spanish.

The team provided materials that explain the implementation process in the City of Chicago. This included information on key partners, roles and responsibilities, and example projects around the region. Attendees had the opportunity to ask anything related to the implementation process.

The team shared a list of draft recommendations generated from the community engagement process. Attendees were asked to share their thoughts on the recommendations and highlight any key steps that should be prioritized for a recommendation to be successful. Lastly, participants were asked to give preference to their top 3 community priorities and offers any additional feedback.

About 35 individuals attended the event. Given the low attendance, DPD participated in a wide variety to community events to capture additional feedback from community members of all ages.

## Community Events

The team participated in the following engagement events during the Summer of 2024:

Date	Event Name
July 2	4th of July Celebration at Kelly High School
July 18	Salud y Sabor at Esperanza Health Centers
July 20	Water Day at the Brighton Park Community Campus (Park District HQ)
July 26	Community Fiesta at Gunsaulus Scholastic
August 8	Senka Park Back to School Fair
August 10	Mother Ship Back to School at the Brighton Park Community Campus (Park District HQ)
August 14	Sawyer Block Party
August 16	Community Fiesta at Columbia Explorers Academy
August 29	Southwest Senior Fest

Overall, about 800 community members were engaged. At these events, community members responded to a survey offered to understand the recommendations they favored and responded to a poll to identify their top community priorities.

In total, the team received 227 completed surveys. Community members answered surveys as family units, which included parents, children, and grandparents. Community members responded to the priority polling individually.

DPD shared information about the study and ways to continue to provide feedback in this process.

## WHAT WAS HEARD

### Sharing what he heard from Session #1

Boards summarized feedback that was shared during the first engagement session. This included the number of comments received, highlights from what was heard, ideas, key takeaways, and specific goals and aspirations. Each board also included a series of maps and/or key information and community insights along with images and survey results if applicable.

Participants were asked to provide comments, missing items, and correct any inaccuracies.

These boards were separated into four categories:

- Open Space, Recreation and Wellness
- Mobility and Connectivity
- Community Spaces
- Economic Opportunity and Development

A Community Engagement Summary report in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) can be found here. This report summarizes the feedback received during the first session of engagement.

### Draft Recommendations

#### Introducing Recommendations

The team drafted a series of recommendations informed by the community engagement process. Each set of recommendations was categorized under priorities to demonstrate how priorities can be achieved through a set diverse of recommendations.

The team surveyed community members to identify recommendation preferences. During the pop-up events, opportunities to have conversations with community members helped inform the team on additional issues, priorities, and ideas for the neighborhood.

Overall, community members stressed the importance of the following:

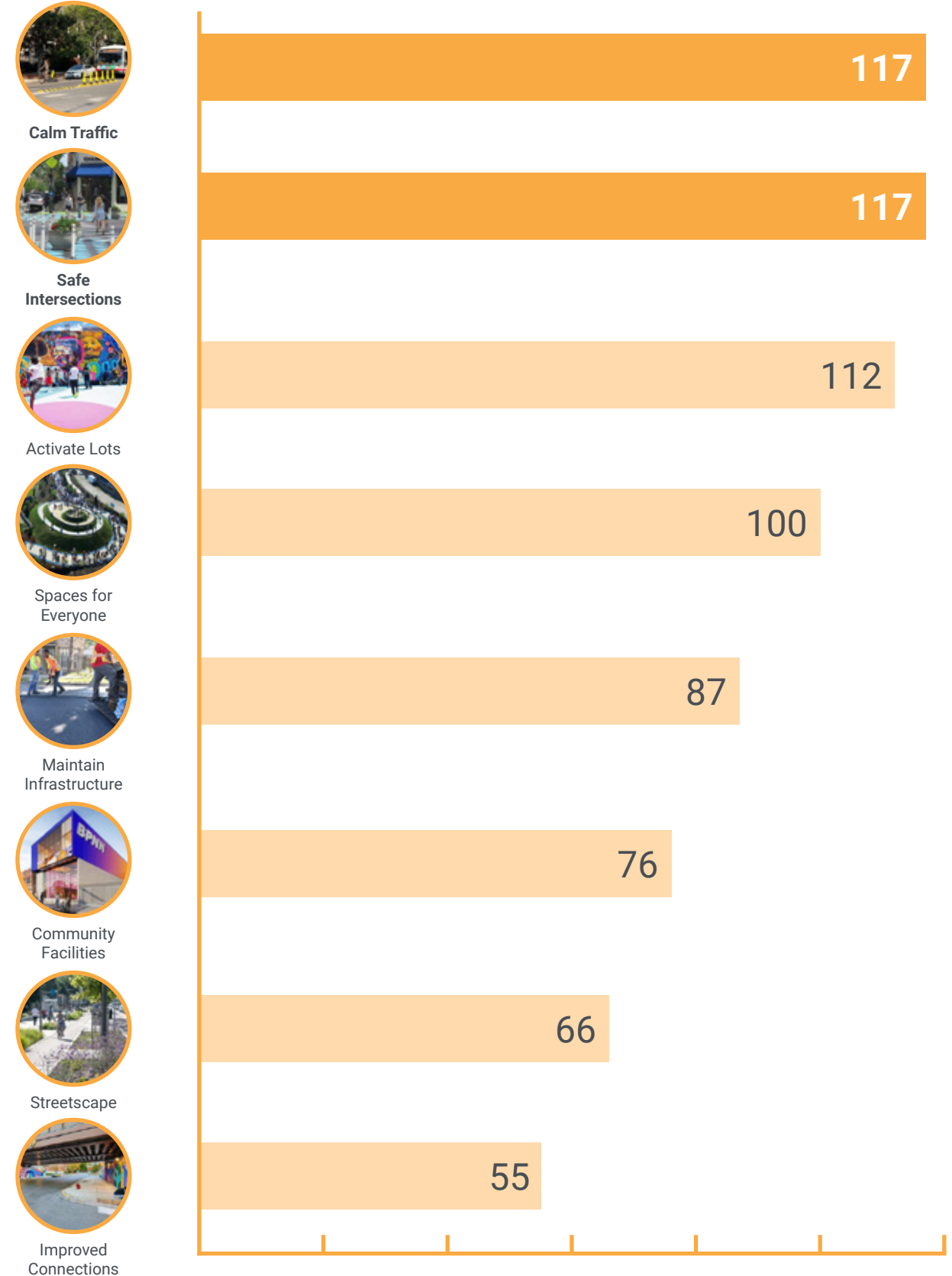
- Community and safe streets
- Services for the youth and elderly
- More public spaces
- Affordable rents and housing availability
- More community amenities
- The need for clean-up and maintenance

Due to the scope of this study and the needs identified through the community engagement process, the recommendations the team has drafted will require the collaboration of multiple City departments and sister agencies. This vision plan will provide a framework that will guide the City's future work in Brighton Park and Gage Park.

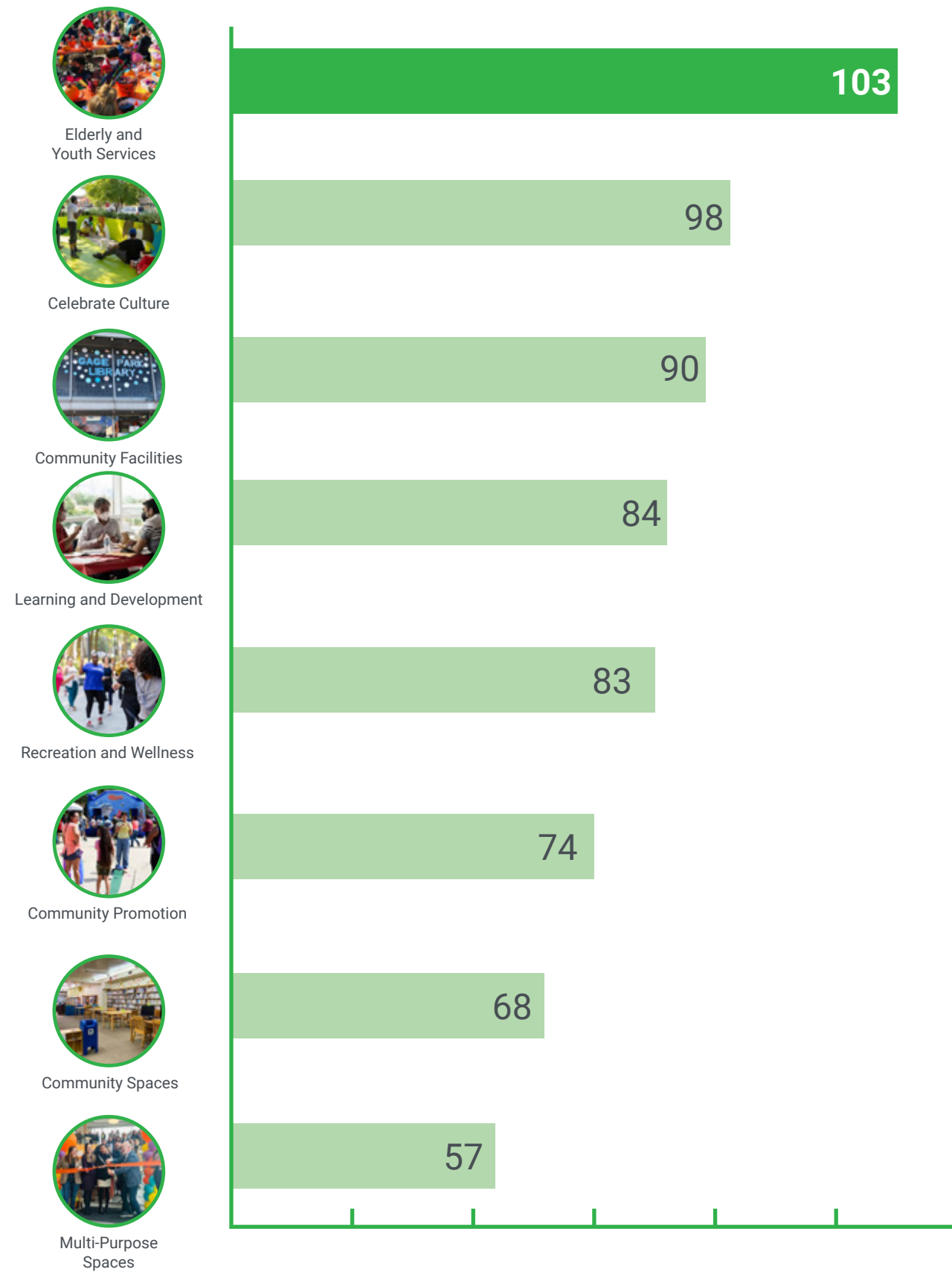
The following graphics illustrate what we heard from the community regarding the draft recommendations.

## Recommendation Survey Results from 227 Surveys

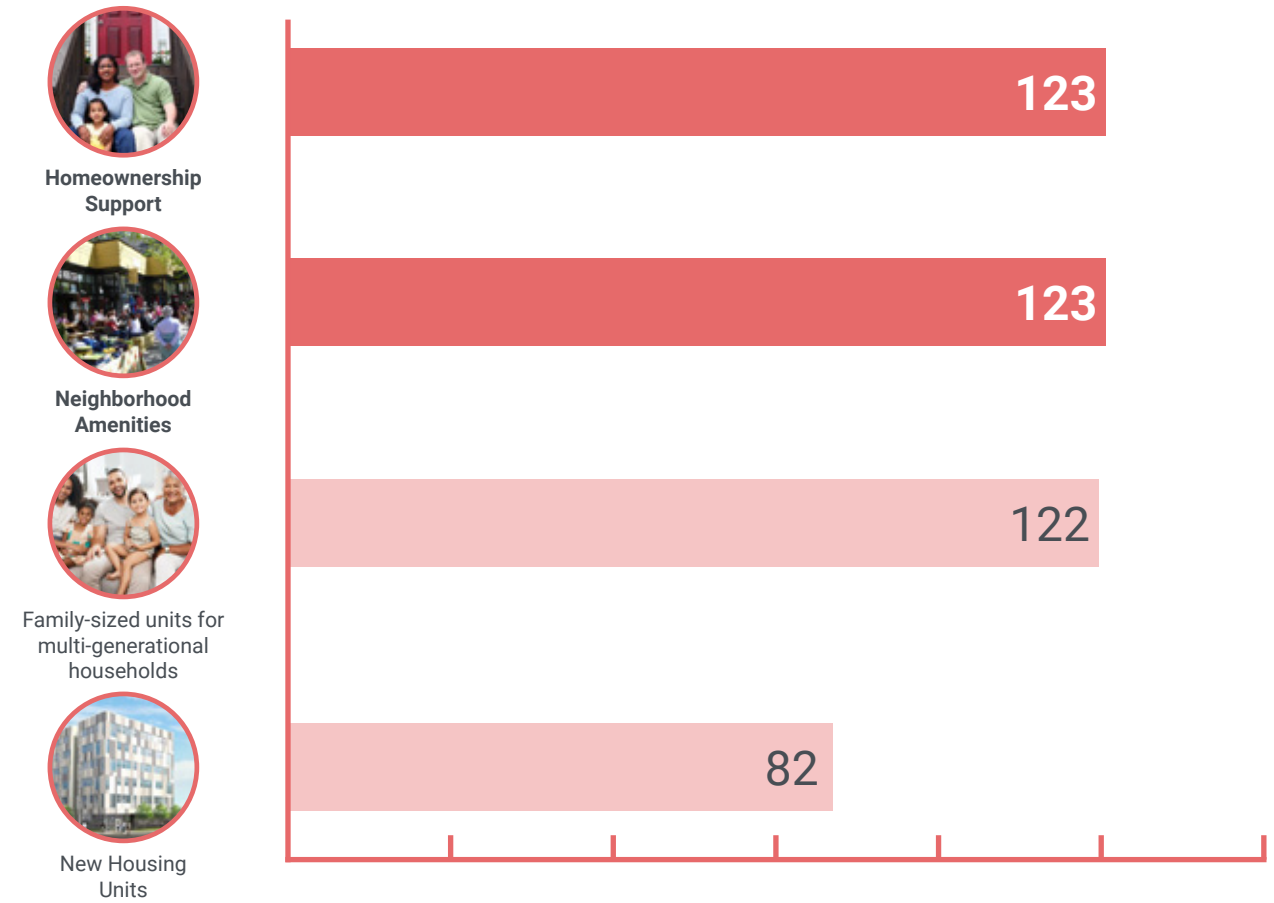
### Prioritize Safe Streets and Community Spaces



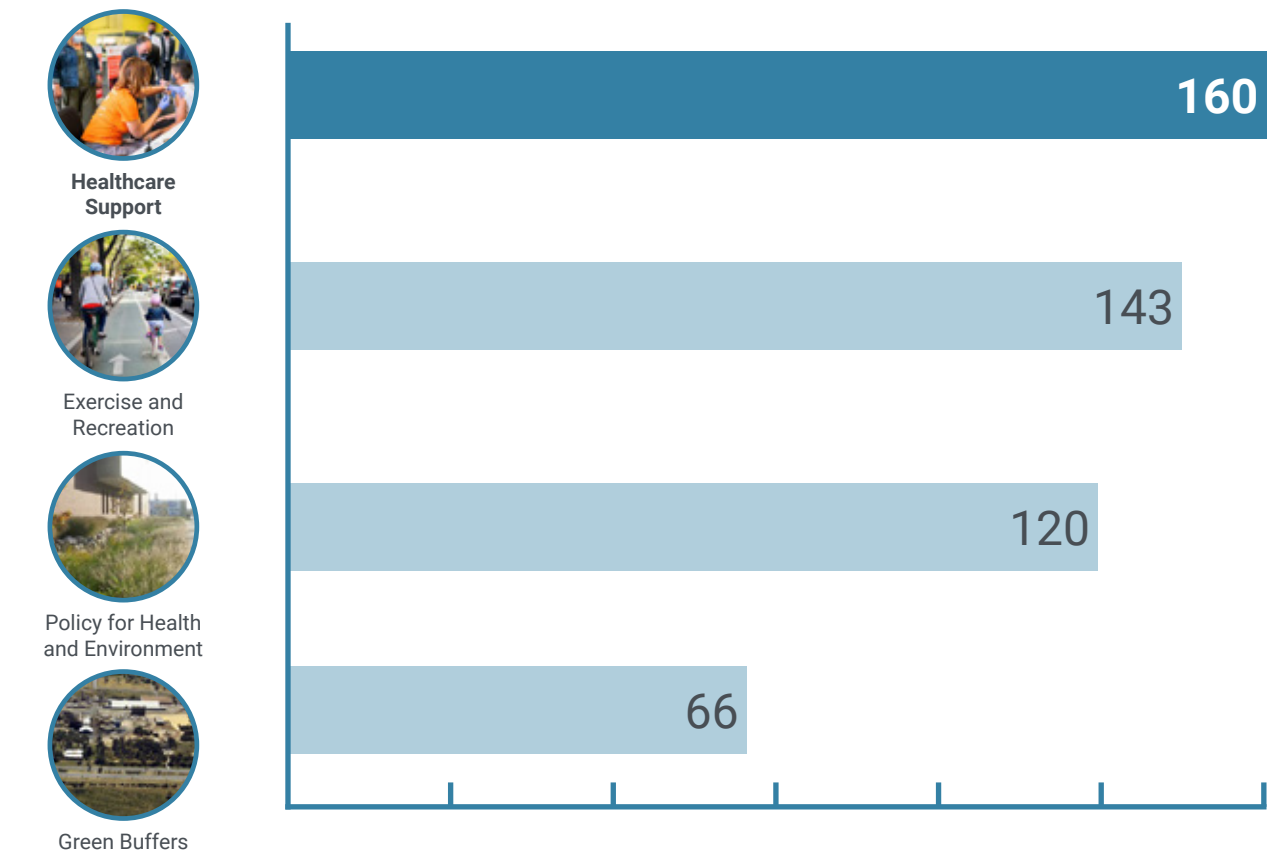
## COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING FOR ALL



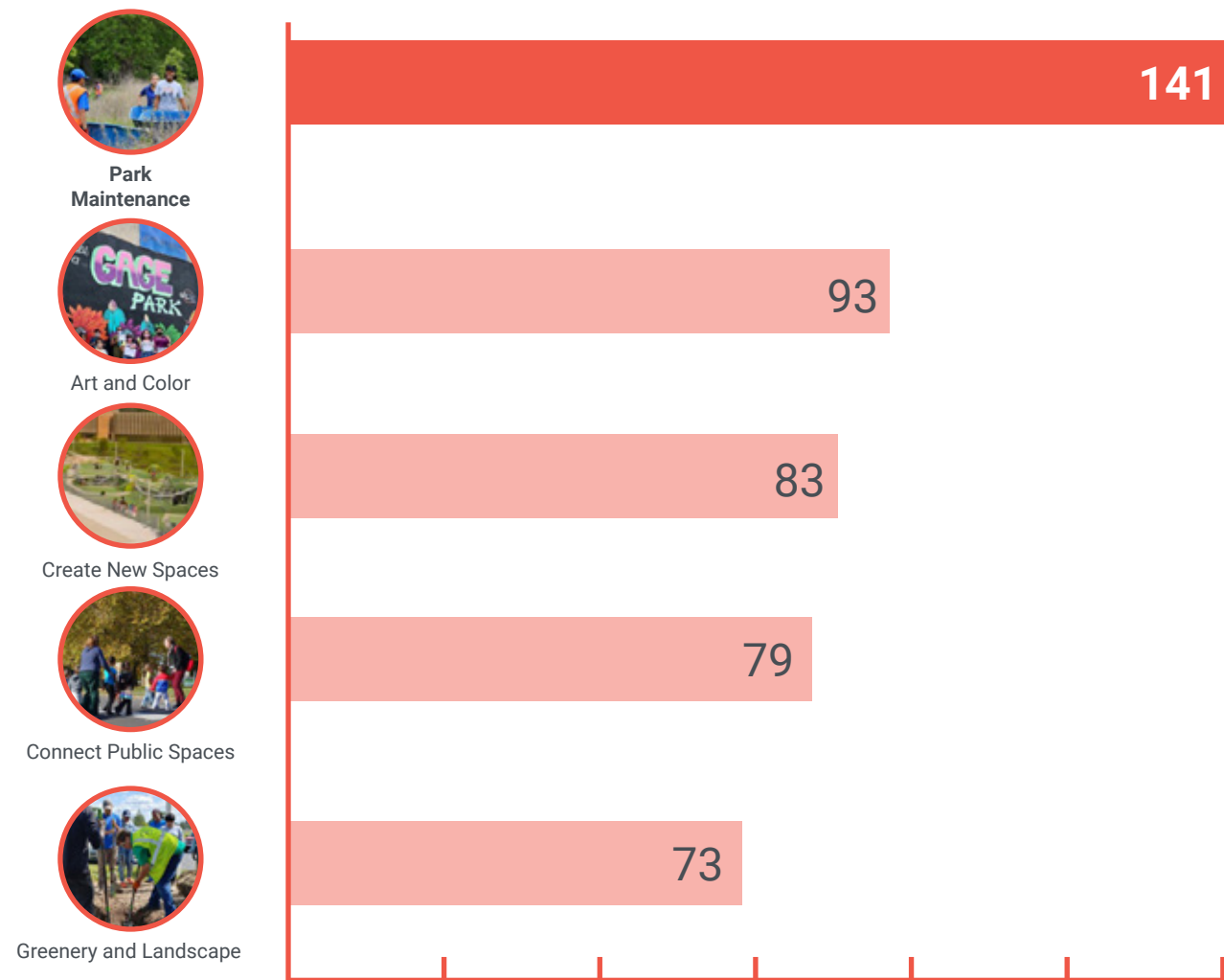
## Housing Affordability



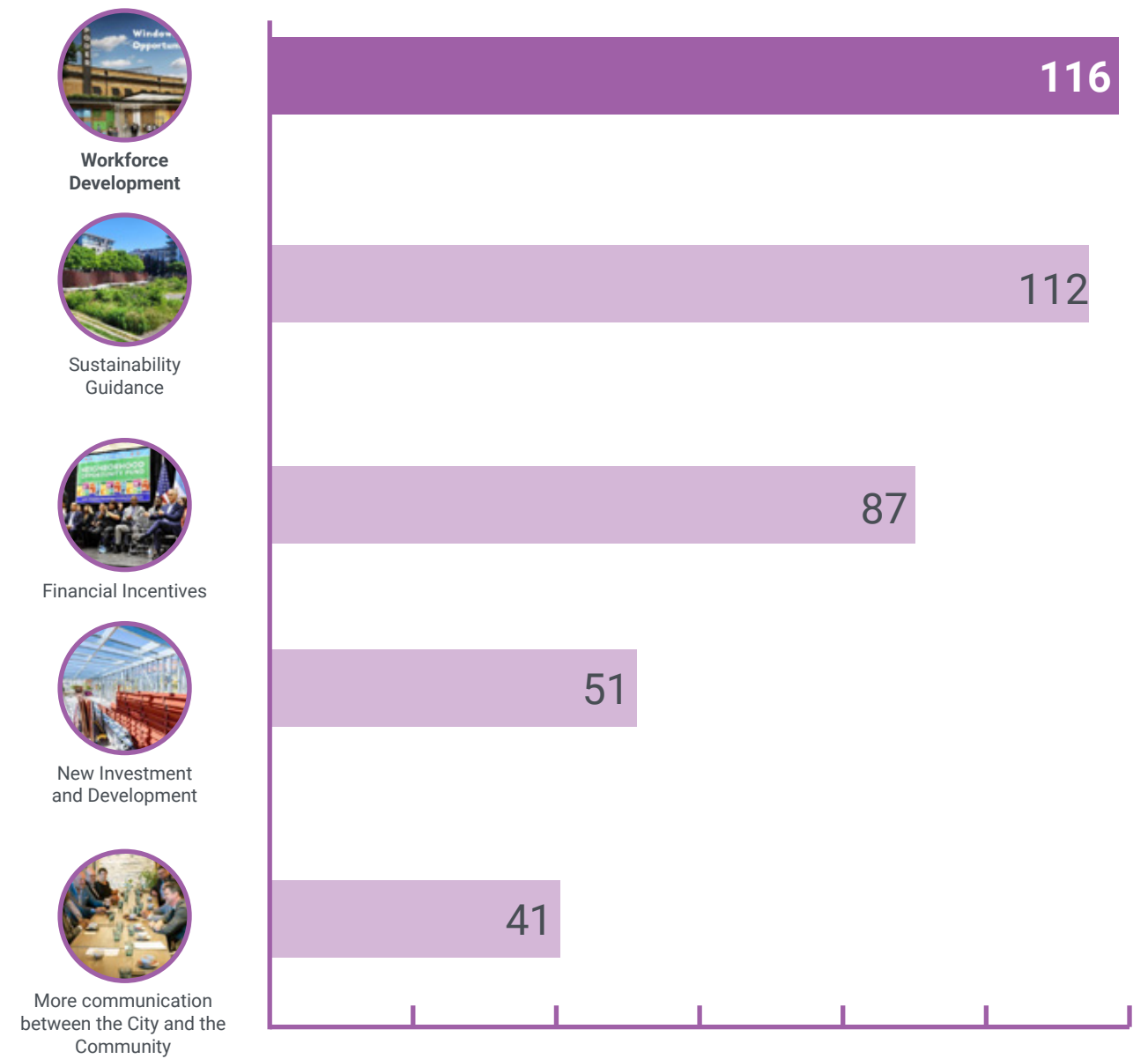
## Health and Environmental Justice



## Open Space and Beautification

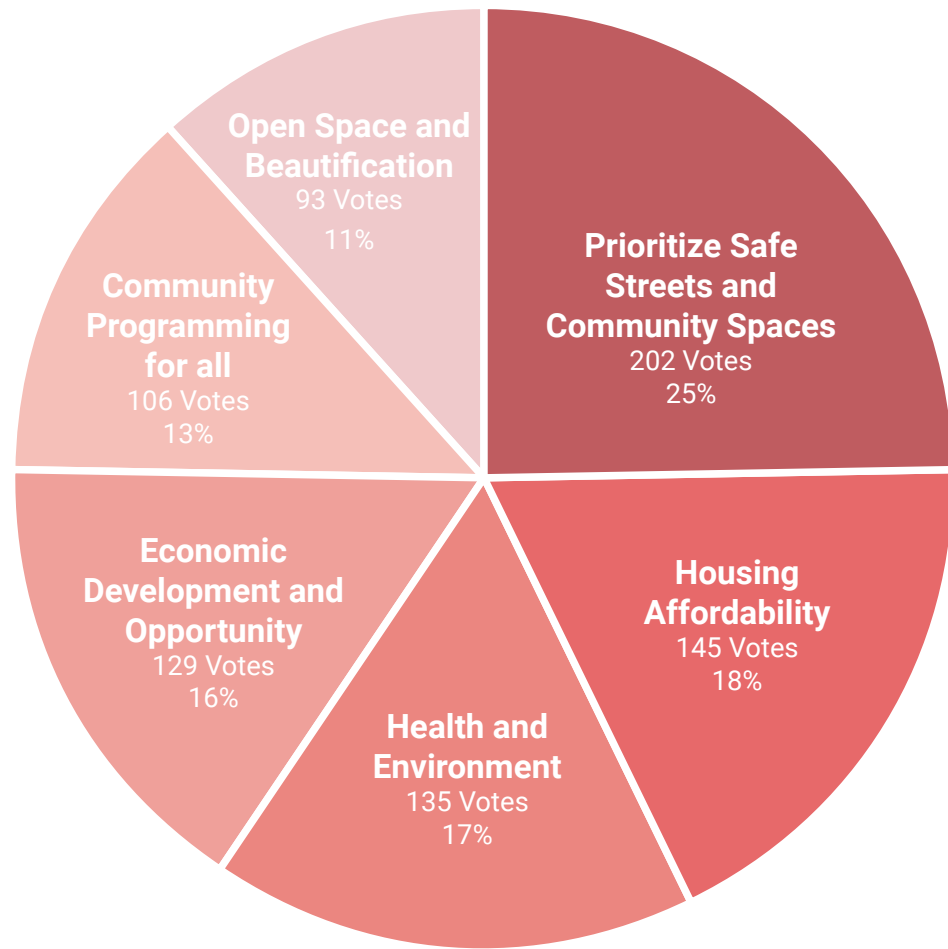


## Economic Development and Opportunity





## Priorities Poll



## Polling Priorities

### Introduction

This chart shows how the community prioritized these 6 priorities

- Prioritize Safe Streets and Community Spaces
- Community Programming for All
- Housing Affordability
- Economic Development and Opportunity
- Open Space and Beautification
- Health and Environment

### Priority Polling

Community members were asked to select their top three priorities after reviewing draft recommendations to familiarize themselves with how each priority could be achieved through a variety of potential recommendations.



