



WPI



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URBAN PLANNING: SPRINGFIELD'S NORTH AND SOUTH ENDS

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I. Abstract

We are a group of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute completing our Interactive Qualifying Project. This project will be focused on improving the economic and social conditions of Springfield, MA through a partnership with DevelopSpringfield. Our project center, the Pioneer Valley Project Center, is a two term project site. The C term Pioneer Valley Project Center was aimed at laying out the project and setting up contacts with various business owners and associations in the area. The C term students prepared an anecdotal survey that was conducted in the North and South Ends of Springfield, MA. The survey was aimed at researching the top five challenges that each end currently experiences. Furthermore, the students conducted face to face interviews with business owners. The results were then used to identify certain urban planning prevention and improvement techniques. The final report consists of two sections and will be the foundation for the D term students who will address our recommendations in greater detail through focus groups. In addition, each section is a white paper that will be presented to its corresponding stakeholders.

II. Authorship

The project report was equally written by the students of the C term students of the Pioneer Valley Project Center.

III. Section I: North End

A. Executive Summary

The North End is a neighborhood in Springfield, MA that has faced challenges as a community. It has seen a surge in crime rates and substance abuse, as well as housing challenges. DevelopSpringfield, a non-profit corporation aimed at rebuilding Springfield, is planning to focus on improving the North End in the coming years.

The students of the C term project center devised an anecdotal survey that would rank the top five challenges. The survey was taken by residents, visitors, business owners, police officers, among others at locations including McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts, Medina's Supermarket, community meetings such as C3 Policing, etc. The total number of respondents for the survey was 36. The survey ranked Crime (81%), Substance Abuse (88%), Low Income Level (50%), Lack of Job Training Skills (47%), and Housing (38%) as the top five challenges in the North End.

Following the results of the survey, the students researched Urban Planning methods that have been successfully implemented in other cities across the United States. According to the American Planning Association, Urban Planning "works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations". The North End of Springfield can be improved through crime and substance abuse prevention, workforce and economic development, and the beautification of residential areas. This can be achieved through the blue light system, community artwork, beautification of public and residential areas, community outreach, and increased advertising.

The students of the C term project center will be handing over the suggestions and the final report to the students of the D term project center and Jay Minkarah, CEO of DevelopSpringfield. Finally, the D term students will organize focus groups to gauge the community's response to our proposals and determine the most effective and feasible solutions for DevelopSpringfield to execute.

B. Acknowledgements

As students of the C-term Pioneer Valley Project Center, we would like to thank Jay Minkarah at DevelopSpringfield for sponsoring our project and for providing insight throughout the process. We would also like to thank our advisor, Kevin Sweeney, for continued support and guidance. We hope our work builds the foundation for a comprehensive and useful strategic plan for DevelopSpringfield.

We would also like to thank the graduate students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute who added a lot of depth to our methodology. Furthermore, Professor Diane Sabato and the students of Springfield Technical Community College have given us invaluable insight into the community. Additionally, The New North Citizens Council has been a valuable resource.

Finally, we would like to thank the members of the community in the North End who were kind to share their opinions with us.

C. Introduction

The Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) is a nine-credit-hour interdisciplinary requirement at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), involving applied research that connects science or technology with social issues and human needs.

The IQP is not organized as a course, nor is it related to the major of the students participating. Instead, small teams of students work under the guidance of faculty members from all disciplines to conduct research, using social science methods, directed at a specific problem or need. Students deliver findings and recommendations through formal reports and oral presentations to project sponsors (often nonprofit, municipal, or government agencies) and faculty advisors.

i. Project Objective

Our objective is to develop an improvement plan for the North End in Springfield that would allow our sponsor, DevelopSpringfield, to identify specific strategies that could be implemented in the short-term. DevelopSpringfield is a nonprofit organization that aims to support the economic growth of Springfield through development and redevelopment projects that will revitalize the city. Our plan should suggest innovative solutions to the area's unique challenges. Ideally, it will strengthen the economy, utilize key economic drivers in the area, and serve the needs of the residents. Some key issues we were asked to address are strengthening existing businesses, the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized lots and buildings, and opportunities to provide new business ventures for local residents.

This document records the results of "Phase One" of our project. The project will resume with "Phase Two" on March 14th, 2016 when we hand the project off to other members of our group who will be executing the second half of the project.

During "Phase One" we conducted a large amount of background research, investigated the needs of the community firsthand, and proposed multiple preliminary solutions. In March, "Phase Two" will begin by conducting focus groups with the stakeholders in the North End to determine which one or two preliminary proposals to focus on. The group will take a deeper dive into the chosen ideas that were decided to be

the best options. Ultimately, the result of “Phase Two”, and the entire project, is to create a strategic plan for DevelopSpringfield to implement in the short term.

ii. Background Information

Valuable demographic information about the North End includes:

- The rent price that is lower than most neighborhoods in the United States¹
- Most people work in manufacturing, service jobs, and fast food restaurants²
- The majority of residents are mostly Hispanic with approximately 70% of them being Puerto Rican³
- Other populations include Mexican, Dominican and Italian⁴
- The majority of households speak Spanish as their primary language⁵
- Family income is low, and there is a high rate of childhood poverty⁶
- Crime is one of the major challenges for the population⁷

A recent issue in the North End involved residents expressing their concerns and opposition about an alcohol and substance abuse treatment facility that could be moved to the area. The facility was located in Springfield’s South End, but it had to be relocated to make way for the Springfield Casino.⁸

There are two large projects that we researched that have made, and will make, large changes to the North End area. One of these projects is the giant Baystate “Hospital of the Future” which was completed and certified in 2012. Another significant project underway is the new renovation of Union Station which is planned to be completed later this year.

¹ Springfield, MA (North End). (n.d.). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from <http://www.neighborhoodscout.com/ma/springfield/north-end/>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Baystate Health is a non-profit organization and is among Massachusetts' largest employers. Baystate has locations in Palmer, Westfield, Ware, Greenfield, and Springfield.



Completed in 2012, additions include the “Hospital of the Future”, now known as the MassMutual Wing, and the new Davis Family Heart and Vascular Center. The new facility is three and a half times larger than the existing Emergency Department in Springfield; a total of 640,000 square feet⁹.

The other main project in the North End is a renovation and addition of the original Union Station constructed in 1926. This is approximately an \$80 million dollar project that will be completed later in 2016. The completed project will include a new 26 bay bus terminal and a new train line to Hartford, Connecticut, which is expected to bring more people through the area. The project requires a new much-needed six-level parking garage¹⁰. With the joining of the new bus terminal, the completed, newly renovated Union Station will be renamed the Union Station Regional Intermodal Transportation Center.

⁹ J. K. (2012, February 28). Baystate Health opens MassMutual Wing, the 'Hospital of the Future' for Springfield. Retrieved December, 2015, from http://www.masslive.com/business-news/index.ssf/2012/02/baystate_opens_massmutual_wing_the_long-.html

¹⁰ Springfield Redevelopment Authority: Springfield Union Station. (n.d.). Retrieved December 14, 2015, from https://www.springfield-ma.gov/planning/i/index.php?id=union_station

D. Methodology

The purpose of our project was to find urban planning solutions that would be most effective in the North End of Springfield to better integrate it into the city's broader economy. In order to figure out which solutions would be best, we had to start with very basic research of the North End. We researched background information (see background section) and came across what the media portrayed as the top challenges in Springfield.

The next step was to prove if this information we gathered was a true representation of the North End. We decided to create a survey to ask community members what they believed were the top challenges in the North End based on a list that we created from our background research. The objective was to create an anecdotal survey short enough to get citizens to fill it out in cold-contact on the streets or at local businesses. The survey will serve as a vehicle to get the citizens to express their opinions about the community as well as answer one basic question: "What are the top five challenges in the North End?" The results of this survey served as a baseline for our urban planning research, which led to our preliminary proposals.

In addition to our face-to-face surveying, we interviewed business owners and participated in multiple business owner and community meetings in order to capture more opinions of the community members. Through the three methods of surveying, interviewing, and attending meetings we were able to compare responses, analyze them, and ultimately deduce the top five challenges that we should address through urban planning.

i. Survey

Initially, we brainstormed multiple survey ideas and multiple open response questions. We soon realized we would not be able to send this survey out over the internet because we did not have access to an email list of a diverse population sample. It became apparent that we would likely need to explore the North End and directly talk to people to get the best results and widest range of community member opinions. On-the-street surveying meant that our survey had to be very short, so we decided to only focus on discovering the top five challenges in the North End. We kept our list of open ended questions and used them to help us create a list of interview questions for personal interviews with business owners.

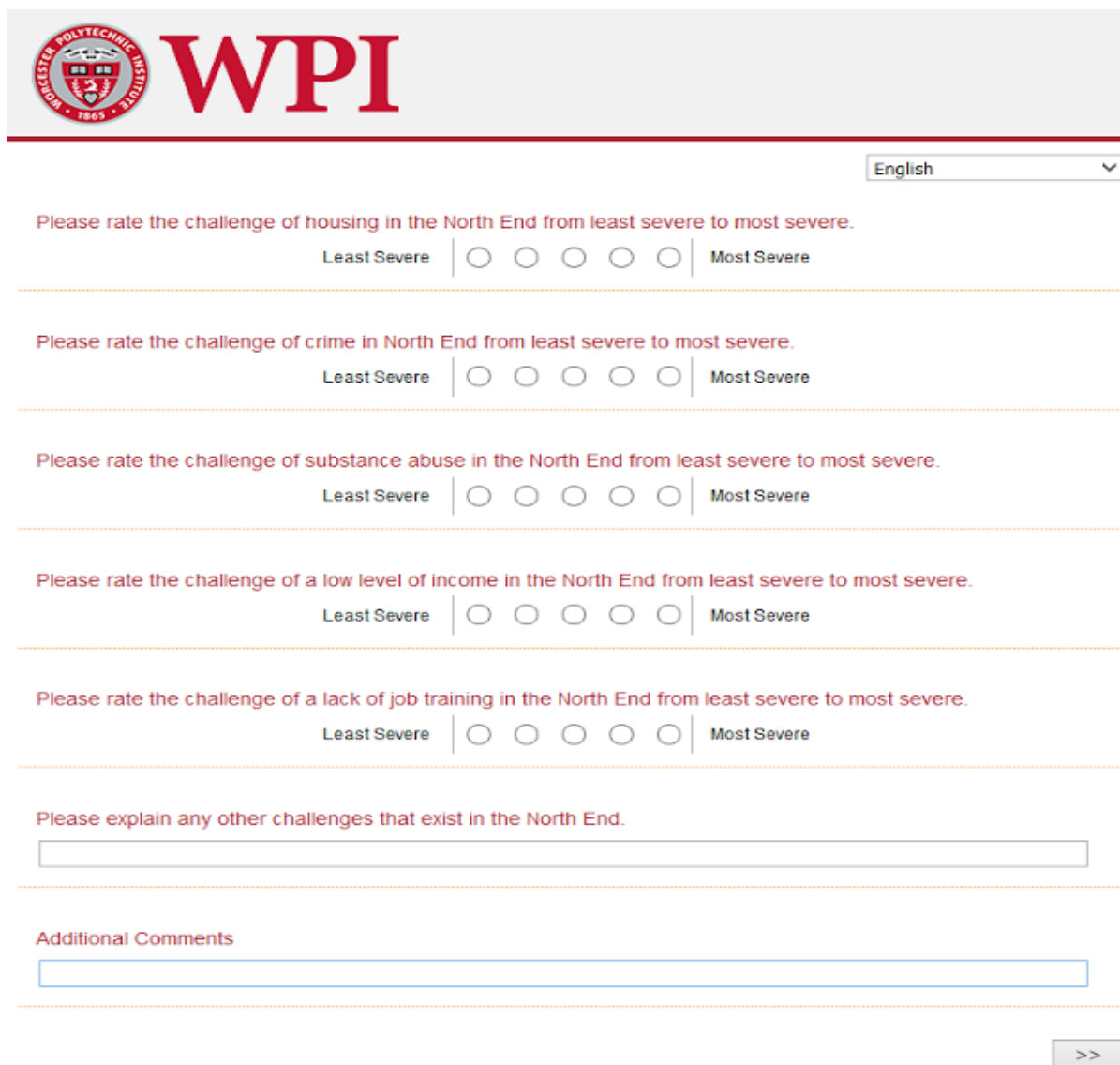
By combining the background research from the North End and the opinions of the Spring Technical Community College (STCC) students, we created a list of multiple challenges. Then, we cut down the list so that it consisted of no more than 14 choices. Once we had the lists, we had to create a survey format. We made two different ideas on survey organization designs.

One design asked the citizens to pick five challenges from the list and order them from one to five in terms of most difficult challenges, and the other idea simply asked citizens to choose the top five challenges. We consulted with our marketing graduate student colleague about these two ideas. Her advice lead us to combine the two survey ideas into one. We decided to use Qualtrics, a computer survey software, to transcribe the survey. Qualtrics was very helpful to us because it allowed us to input citizens' responses on our phones as we talked with them. It also allowed us to easily graphically analyze our responses. In the final survey design, the main question of the final survey asked people to simply choose up to 5 challenges from the list.

Please choose the top 5 challenges in the North End.

- Accessibility to Groceries
- Public Transportation
- Parking
- Housing
- Crime
- Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement
- Substance Abuse
- Accessibility to Health Care/Mental Health Services
- Accessibility to Education
- Accessibility to Entertainment Places
- Low Income Level
- Lack of Land for Recreation
- Lack of Job Training
- Other

Then we added a question that asked if they would like to elaborate on their responses. If they said yes, then they would be brought to a screen where they could rate each of their responses on a scale of one to five (one being least severe and 5 being most severe).



The screenshot displays the WPI logo and a survey interface. At the top right, there is a language dropdown menu set to "English". The survey consists of five rating questions, each followed by a five-point scale from "Least Severe" to "Most Severe". The challenges are: housing, crime, substance abuse, low income, and lack of job training. Below these is a text box for "Please explain any other challenges that exist in the North End." and an "Additional Comments" section. A navigation button with ">>" is located at the bottom right.

WPI

English

Please rate the challenge of housing in the North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of crime in North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of substance abuse in the North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of a low level of income in the North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of a lack of job training in the North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

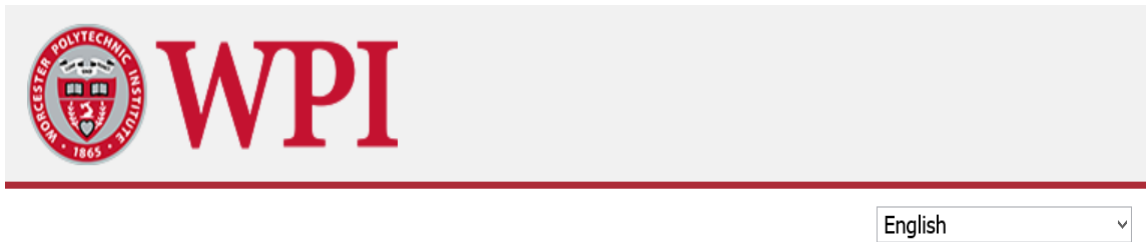
Please explain any other challenges that exist in the North End.

Additional Comments

>>

This design allowed participants to rate each challenge and did not require them to order their five choices, which was important because many survey-takers rated more than one challenge as a four or five on the severity scale.

At the beginning of our survey we have a few demographic questions to analyze trends and disparities among participants. The first question differentiates between North and South End.



Which survey would you like to answer?

- North End
- South End

The next question differentiates between North End resident, business owner, North End resident and business owner, or other.

Do you identify as

- North End Resident
- North End Business Owner
- North End Resident and Business Owner
- Other

The other category split between the following options.

What is your connection to Springfield?

- Non-Springfield Resident Business Owner
- Non-Springfield Resident Visiting
- Non-Springfield Resident Working
- Springfield Resident Business Owner
- Springfield Resident Visiting
- Springfield Resident Working

This question allowed us to differentiate between the responses of those who were from Springfield and those who were not. This was important because we expected responses from those who did not live in the respective Ends to have a different perception than those who did.

ii. Business Owner Interviews

Using some recommendations given to us by Jay Minkarah, CEO of DevelopSpringfield, and background research, we created the following list of interview questions. We used these questions as an outline for how we interviewed business owners face-to-face.

- What are the top five challenges in North End?
- What are the biggest challenges with running a business in the North End?
How do you address them?
- When are busiest hours/seasons of the year?
- Do you have challenges with parking? (How do you address it?)
- Where are your employees from (Community/outside)? How many people are you currently employing?
- What are your business plans/where do you see your business going?
- Where do you face competition?
- What kinds of business do you think would flourish in this area?
- How do we draw medical workers into more local North End businesses?
- What are your thoughts or views on MGM moving into the South End?
- What improvements would help your business the most?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

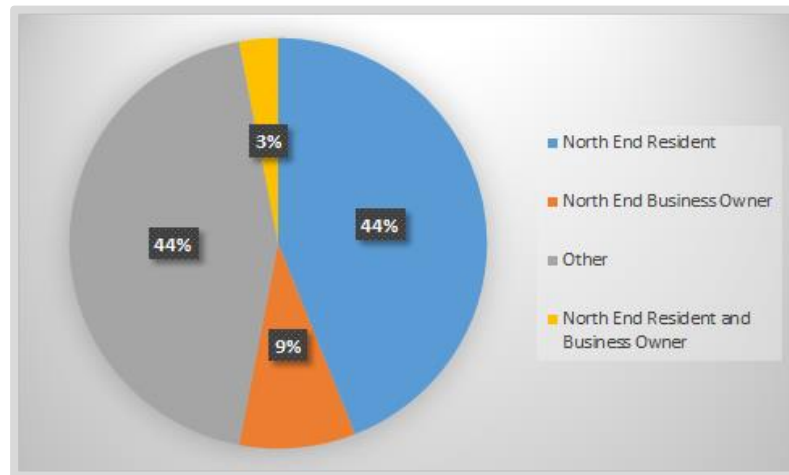
iii. Community Meetings

We attended a community meeting in the North End, the C3 Policing meeting, with the objective of gaining more information from stakeholders. We discovered this meeting through SHERIFF. The C3 policing meeting is a community meeting that discusses pertinent community challenges, initiatives, and successes in order to improve the overall well-being of the community. The purpose of this meeting was to give us insight into current community initiatives and proposed plans for the betterment of the challenge areas.

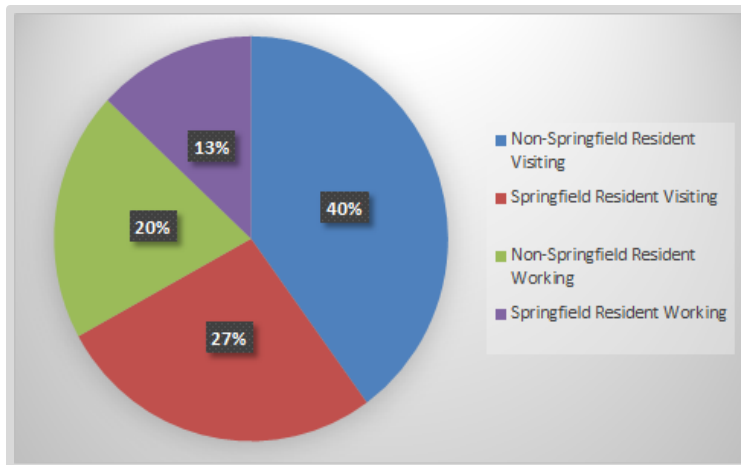
E. Results and Discussion

i. Survey Results

Our survey was conducted in a variety of frequently visited locations such as McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts, Medina's Supermarket, and C3 meeting. We obtained responses from thirty-six participants. The results show that 44% of respondents were North End residents, 3% were North End residents and business owners, 9% were North End business owners, and 44% categorized as other.















The Other category is composed of responses of 40% of Non-Springfield residents visiting, 27% of Springfield residents visiting, 20% Non-Springfield residents working, and 13% Springfield residents working. Non-Springfield resident business owners and Springfield resident business owners did not receive any responses.



The responses from the challenges addressed in the overall survey show three distinct levels of results. Substance abuse (88%), crime (81%), low income level (50%), lack of job training (47%), and housing (38%) all had a high amount of responses. Accessibility to education (31%), accessibility to entertainment places (28%), and lack of communication with law enforcement (28%) all had a moderate amount of responses. Lack of land for recreation (19%), parking (16%), accessibility to groceries (13%), public transportation (6%), accessibility to healthcare/mental health services (6%), and other (6%) show a low amount of challenge responses.

Answer	%
Accessibility to Groceries	13%
Public Transportation	6%
Parking	16%
Housing	38%
Crime	81%
Substance Abuse	88%
Accessibility to Health Care/Mental Health Services	6%
Accessibility to Education	31%
Accessibility to Entertainment Places	28%
Low Income Level	50%
Lack of Land for Recreation	19%
Lack of Job Training	47%
Other	6%
Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement	28%

From our research, we found that there is a perception of different challenges from people who reside outside of Springfield. Our team decided that the best way to make our results accurate was to compare the responses from the North End residents to the responses from all of the participants. Among North End resident responses, we found that substance abuse (93%), crime (67%), lack of job training (67%), housing (47%), and low income level (40%) were also the most selected challenges. This illustrates that our results are not affected by perceptions of people outside the area.

Answer		%
Accessibility to Groceries		13%
Public Transportation		13%
Parking		13%
Housing		47%
Crime		67%
Substance Abuse		93%
Accessibility to Health Care/Mental Health Services		0%
Accessibility to Education		33%
Accessibility to Entertainment Places		27%
Low Income Level		40%
Lack of Land for Recreation		27%
Lack of Job Training		67%
Other		0%
Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement		27%

The additional comments section of the survey gave participants the opportunity to explain other challenges that had not already been expressed in the survey. These comments were: “Mindset that if you talk to a cop, you are a rat,” “traffic on Main Street at rush hour time,” “car accidents,” “high rates of incarceration or travel through correctional systems,” “lack of basic needs,” and “lack of respect from the youth.” Some of these comments are related to the

challenges addressed in the survey. For example, “mindset that if you talk to a cop, you are a rat” can be related to the issue of crime. Also, “lack of basic needs” can be related to the lack of accessibility to groceries as shown in the survey.

ii. Interviews and Meeting Results

We held face-to-face interviews with two North End business owners. Their responses expressed some concerns and possibilities for the North End. They had a positive outlook on the MGM casino because they believe it will bring more jobs, customers, and businesses to the area. Most of the customers that visit their stores are local; it is difficult for the businesses to attract customers from neighboring cities or downtown Springfield because the area is perceived as unsafe. One business owner mentioned that many Baystate workers liked his food, but they are afraid to come to his business because it is in the North End. Both business owners mentioned that criminal activity and low income level were serious challenges in the area.

These responses have a correlation with the results of our survey. Their complete responses can be found in Appendix A: North End.

iii. Community Meetings Results

We were invited by some community members to attend a C3 meeting in the North End. The C3 policing meeting is a community meeting that discusses pertinent community challenges, initiatives, and successes in order to improve the overall well-being of the community. During this meeting, community and police collaborated to discuss multiple challenges in the community. These challenges included: Criminal activity that had happened in the last couple weeks, drug dealing activity in specific areas, beautification in the North End of Springfield, the negative impact of MGM in Springfield, and the need for youth programs for elementary and middle school students. The challenges discussed during this meeting directly support the results from our survey and the opinions received from business owners.

F. Key Takeaways

- **Crime and Substance Abuse are major challenges in the North End.**

The most challenging issues that the residents of the North End have to face are crime and substance abuse. These findings were highly supported by the results of our survey, business

owners' responses, and C3 meeting discussions. Both of these problems are directly related to each other.

- **Low Income Level and a Lack of Job Training require increased workforce development and economic opportunity.**

A majority of the residents in the North End face economic challenges and struggle to find a job with a stable income that satisfies their necessities. There is a correlation between low income level and lack of job training skills. One of the key takeaways from our survey indicated that a workforce development program with training for basic skills would provide the right tools to obtain a more desirable job. This would be helpful in tackling low income levels.

- **There are mixed opinions about the availability of jobs and job training programs.**

There were conflicting points of view about the availability of jobs among the survey participants. Creating more economic opportunity through community outreach programs will improve communication between employers and potential employees in the community. Additionally, seasonal employment opportunities can benefit the residents of the North End.

- **Residential Areas need to be improved through beautification.**

Through inputs from the participants of our survey, we inferred that residential areas need to be improved to create a sense of community. Not only do residents desire better housing, but they desire housing that improves the overall quality of life in their neighborhood.

G. Urban Planning Research

i. Crime

According to opportunity theory, crime results from three factors, the offender, the victim, and the situation. A criminal act can only occur if all three factors are present. Therefore, the elimination of a single factor can help prevent crime. Through the use of urban planning, the opportunity for offenders to encounter a situation that is optimal for criminal activity can be reduced. This principle only applies to criminal activity that is concentrated in urban areas that

have an opportunistic nature, such as shoplifting, vandalism, violence in public spaces, theft, arson and sexual offences.¹¹

There are fourteen principles that are utilized when using urban planning to create safer neighborhoods and communities: territoriality, natural surveillance, access control, image, conflicting user groups, activity support, crime generators, land use mix, movement predictors, displacement, cohesion, connectivity, capacity, and culture. These principles can be combined into four categories: community relationships, appearance, volume of criminal activity, and the positive use of space.¹²

1. Community Relationships

Territoriality is a community's sense of ownership.¹³ When a community possess territoriality, it is less likely for people to commit crimes in that space because they have adopted the space as their own.¹⁴ This sense of ownership can be fostered through signs, community street art, murals, and restaurants with tables that extend outside. These projects should include the community's input so that they gain a sense of ownership.

Cohesion is supportive relations among a community that create a sense of safety.¹⁵ Urban planning can create the opportunity for community members to have positive interactions with each other and create supportive relationships. Crime is less likely to occur in a community that supports and looks out for one another. This sense of community can be fostered through recreational spaces, such as, green spaces, playing fields, and dog parks. Amphitheaters, community centers, multipurpose schools, gazebos, and other meeting places can also promote the formation of positive relationships.

Culture is the overall brand of a location and represents what is unique about the community.¹⁶ It can be artistic, educational, or geographic. A community with a shared culture has social cohesion. This cohesion can be developed through athletics, religion, the arts, and

¹¹ Van Soomeren, P. (2000) Crime prevention solutions for Europe: designing out crime. Paper presented at the conference on the Relationship between the Physical Environment and Crime Reduction and Prevention, Amsterdam.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

recurring community events. Physical spaces such as art galleries, performance venues, murals, memorials, and an overall community brand also develop a community culture.

Connectivity is the social relationships that result from the community that extend beyond neighborhoods and into the entire city.¹⁷ When communities are connected throughout the city, it prevents the Not-In-My-Backyard mindset.¹⁸ This creates a cohesive environment where everyone is working toward the same goal. Safe walkways that connect neighborhoods, as well as offices that serve multiple communities in a central location help unify a city.

Territoriality, cohesion, culture, and connectivity all cultivate positive relations between community members and amenities. Neighborhood gathering places, recreational areas, safe walkways, and local artwork give the community accessible locations that promote ownership and positive relationships. A community with ownership and positivity is a community with less crime.

2. Appearance

Natural surveillance and access control are important qualities when building new infrastructure.¹⁹ The idea of natural surveillance creates areas that are visible from many vantage points, which reduces crime. When an area is visible from homes, businesses, and other highly populated venues, it is more difficult to commit a crime without being seen. Natural surveillance is created through homes and businesses with street facing windows and porches. Access control is the ability to monitor who enters and exits an area.²⁰ Specific locations for entrances and exits makes it more difficult to commit a crime subtly. Therefore, it is important to utilize natural surveillance and access control when designing new infrastructure to make it appear more difficult to commit crimes.

Image is the actual appearance of a location.²¹ A location that looks run down and poorly maintained appears to be a place that tolerates crime. Therefore, properly maintaining store fronts, parks, and other public spaces leads to the assumption that crime is not tolerated in those areas. Regular cleanups, graffiti removal, and the overall beautification of areas can increase the perception of safety.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

3. Volume of Criminal Activity

Crime generators and conflicting user groups increase the volume of criminal activity. Crime generators are areas in a community that facilitate crime.²² Examples of crime generators are dark alleys, parking lots, and twenty-four hour stores. Specifically in Springfield, the bodegas are an applicable example. It is important to understand what locations are crime generators so that they can be monitored and made less desirable to criminals. Conflicting user groups are groups that legitimately utilize a space but do not get along.²³ For example, when building new infrastructure, it would not be ideal to put a nightclub next to a senior center. It is important to take into account conflicting user groups so that unnecessary disagreements do not occur. Through managing crime generators and conflicting user groups, the volume of criminal activity in a community can be decreased.

4. Positive Use of Space

Land use mix, activity support, and capacity all involve the positive use of space. Land use mix is diversifying the uses of land so that the area is always busy.²⁴ This can detract from crime because areas will never be abandoned. For example, by combining residential and commercial areas, a neighborhood would be busy during the day due to businesses and at night due to residents. Activity support is always filling an area with legitimate users.²⁵ For example, an area could be created where community members can use shopping, recreational, and employment facilities. This guarantees that many people will use the area, and it will always be busy. Lastly, capacity is the ability of an area to support its community.²⁶ In other words, community members should be able to live, work, shop, and participate in recreational activities in the same area. These concepts guarantee that spaces will consistently be used for legitimate purposes.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

ii. Housing

Affordable housing can sometimes be minimalistic and usually does not instill a sense of pride in its tenants, but First Resource Companies' housing model builds a sense of community and pride for its tenants. It is a group of construction, real estate management, and development companies that creates affordable housing through the preservation of historic buildings and new construction projects. This company focuses on housing for low income families, the elderly, and disabled persons. They are committed to quality housing that rebuilds and revitalizes the community. They also connect their tenants to neighborhood resources, such as local child care and youth programs. This model of beautiful and affordable housing that connects the community can help increase residents' sense of pride and improve the overall well-being of the community.²⁷

iii. Low Income Level/Lack of Job Training

Training programs can be classified into two different types: perfectly general and completely specific. A training program is perfectly general if it increases the marginal product of labor by the same amount in many firms. Examples of a perfectly general job training include clerical training, general certificate programs like Lean or CPR-AED. A completely specific training program increases the productivity of the worker only in the organization providing the training. An example is a worker trained in a specific software used solely by the company.

Training programs can be incorporated into evening classes at community colleges or can be mandated as a technical course in post-secondary education. RichmondBUILD²⁸ is a program offered in Richmond, CA to low income residents to train them with the necessary technical and vocational skills. Statistics indicate that over 95% of the participants in the program are minorities while over 30% have a criminal record. The program is well known and graduates have a starting salary of \$18.33 per hour.

	Springfield, MA	Richmond, CA
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²⁷ Restore. Rebuild.Revitalize. (n.d.). Retrieved March 13, 2016, from <http://www.firstresourcecompanies.com/about/mission-statement/>

²⁸ RichmondBUILD Academy | Richmond, CA - Official Website. (n.d.). Retrieved February 20, 2016, from <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/1243/RichmondBUILD>

Geographic Location	North-east	South-west
City Population	153,703	103,701
City Area	33.2 sq. miles	52.480 sq. miles
Non-Hispanic White Percentage	36.7	31.4
Black Percentage	22.3	26.6
Hispanic Percentage	38.8	39.5
Asian Percentage	2.4	13.4
Other Percentage	18	21.8
Male Percentage	47.4	48
Female Percentage	52.6	52
University	Springfield Technical Community College	Contra Costa Community College
Founded in	1967	1949
Student Population	8700	7959

H. Preliminary Proposals for North End

In this section, we have combined the information from the survey, interviews, meetings, and urban planning research to create preliminary proposals to improve the lives of residents. The following preliminary proposals will be presented to various interest groups, such as Baystate Hospital, residents, and business owners, in the focus groups in phase II. The focus groups' responses will help determine what proposals DevelopSpringfield will pursue in the future.

i. Crime and Substance Abuse Prevention

Crime and substance abuse can be prevented from occurring in public places through beautifying the North End and creating a sense of pride for its citizens. This can be accomplished through lighting and beautification.

The River Walk, Main Street, and parks are areas in the North End that are perceived as unsafe at night due to criminal activity. An increase in lighting would make the area appear safer, which will increase foot traffic at night. This will make it more difficult to commit crimes without being seen, and therefore will reduce criminal activity. Another suggestion to make these areas safer is to test the emergency blue light system. A few towers can be placed in the high crime areas and tested to see if they decrease crime. The emergency blue light towers immediately connect a person feeling unsafe to the police, which gives community members the confidence to walk at night.

Beautification of businesses, parks, and other community places can instill a sense of pride in residents. This can be accomplished through the creation of community spaces where people can form positive social relationships. The beautification of existing parks and an increase in benches near businesses will give the community a place to gather. The North End can utilize community artists and children to create street art and murals in communal places. Specifically, a community project could be done to decorate the underpasses and parks. Another suggestion is to unify the appearance of storefronts to make the area more inviting. This would improve the overall perception of the North End and draw in more business from Baystate Health.

A new community center is being built in the North End. A community center has the ability to cultivate unity amongst locals. Since the police department has an outreach program, the new community center could be built with office spaces for the Springfield Police

Department. It could be a location for the police officers to do work while on duty, but also a place where they could play basketball and interact with children while on break. This could greatly help their community outreach because it gives them a chance to interact and form relationships with children in the North End. This will help bridge the gap between law enforcement and North End citizens.

ii. Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity

Workforce development and economic opportunity can be created through community outreach. Pamphlets can be a medium through which organizations can reach out to families of low income level. It can contain a list of social events or gatherings that might be happening over the weekend but also have a job listing for seasonal employment. The youth can be reached through social media. Today, the majority of youth are on social media including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. A Facebook page listing all the jobs in the locality can be a cost effective but efficient medium of communication. DevelopSpringfield is currently constructing an innovation center that will offer job training programs and collaborative space for the community. It can be a think tank for young and budding entrepreneurs who wish to pitch an idea and to seek feedback. This will hopefully lead to a rise in small businesses and uplift the economic level of the community.

iii. Beautification of Residential Areas

The beautification of residential areas improves a sense of pride in one's home environment. Beautification of a neighborhood not only increases a sense of safety amongst the residents, but also makes the area likely to have social gatherings or events to bring the community together.

First Resource Companies, a housing company, has nine properties in Springfield that are available to low income families. These apartments have an upscale design and are well maintained. This model improves the appearance of residential areas, while also fostering a sense of community for its tenants. The North End needs more models like this so that more people will desire to reside and remain in the area.

Additionally, North End residents and business owners wanted to see repaved roads and sidewalks. Repaving the roads and cleaning up the residential areas helps fight the negative perception that the North End is a dangerous area. Repaving roads and improving sidewalks

makes the area look well-maintained and goes a long way in attracting visitors and promoting walkability.

iv. Additional Proposals

Our final proposal is to enact a Springfield Pride Campaign or more specifically a North End Pride Campaign. This could include elements of the local culture, such as Hispanic traditions and community accomplishments. Also, festivals have the potential to greatly increase pride, spread culture, and bring in tourism from outside of Springfield. Some festivals are in place but many no longer are; bringing some of these back and advertising them could be a step in starting a new community tradition. The internet, a powerful marketing tool, could be utilized to reach out to people and spread awareness. One way to improve the public relations of the North End is to create YouTube videos that show the pride of the North End. These videos could feature residents explaining what they love about the North End and why they are proud to be North End residents. This would encourage residents to share their own narratives about their neighborhood, as well as promote a more positive image of the North End.

I. Conclusion and Further Research

The North End of Springfield can be improved through crime and substance abuse prevention, workforce and economic development, and the beautification of residential areas. This can be achieved through the blue light system, community artwork, beautification of public and residential areas, community outreach, and increased advertising. The second phase of this project needs to determine the community's opinions on these preliminary proposals, as well as the feasibility of each proposal.

i. Further Research for Phase II

The phase II students need to determine how they will conduct the focus groups. First, they must decide how many focus groups they need and who will participate in them. Then, depending on the participants, the students may need to arrange for translators to attend certain focus group sessions. Finally, they must determine what preliminary proposals they want to present to the focus groups.

After the focus groups, the students must analyze the responses from the participants to determine what proposals best resonated with the participants. Particularly, the students will need to reconcile the differences between interest groups and determine the best proposals for the community.

Lastly, the students will need to determine the feasibility of the best proposals. Ideally, the final proposals should be able to be implemented by DevelopSpringfield in the short term. Therefore, the students must find the approximate cost and time necessary to complete the project to decide if the project is feasible for DevelopSpringfield.

I. Appendix A: North End

North End Business Owners

N.E. Business Owner 1:

- ❖ *MGM, your opinion:*
 - Believes MGM will positively affect everyone
- ❖ *Customers:* Customers are mostly local and walk to the store
- ❖ *Employees:* None
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges:* Everyone has no money; low income
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city:*
 - Believes the city of Springfield should help by offering more grants to beautify store fronts
 - Change the public perception about the community - media only focuses on the negatives which makes people afraid to come to the north end
 - A movie theater or more recreational options
 - Summer camps or more ground level employers to bring jobs to the kids that are getting into drugs
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - Beautification of store front and street

N.E. Business Owner 2:

- ❖ *MGM, your opinion:*
 - Believes MGM is not the answer but will bring more people in
- ❖ *Customers:* Customers are mostly local and walk to the store, around lunch time more visitors will come but many Baystate workers for example are afraid to come into North End because of the media
- ❖ *Employees:* Local ,owner is not local
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges:*
 - City does not help the North End - “they put the money where the money is” - like downtown
 - Taxes/insurance

- Crime is a serious issue - someone stabbed in the restaurant recently
- Low income - food must be cheap enough for people to buy it, but must be expensive enough to make a profit
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city:*
 - Fix up the streets - put any money into improving the appearance
 - The bad appearance only helps the bad media and perception of the area
 - Change the public perception about the community - media only focuses on the negatives which makes people afraid to come to the north end
 - Communication with law enforcement is terrible - “People do not interact with the police because you will be seen as a snitch”
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - Fix up the streets - repave
 - More street lighting

Suggested Further Research:

- ❖ How will the focus groups be conducted? What members of the community will participate in the focus groups?
- ❖ What proposals best resonate with the focus group members?
- ❖ What will the project entail? How much will it cost? How long will it take?
- ❖ Can it be implemented by DevelopSpringfield in the short term?
- ❖ Are there any zoning laws that conflict with the proposal?

Section II: South End

A. Executive Summary

The 2011 tornado devastated Springfield. Amongst the most affected neighborhoods was the South End of Springfield. Residents were left homeless, businesses lost their goods, and the city lost some of its landmarks. It has been an uphill battle for the area to recover ever since. There has been a surge in crime rates and substance abuse, as well as housing challenges. DevelopSpringfield, a non-profit corporation aimed at rebuilding Springfield, is planning on improving the South End in the coming years.

The students of the C term project center devised an anecdotal survey that would rank the top five challenges. The survey was taken by residents, visitors, business owners, police officers, among others at locations including McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts, Frigos, Medinas Supermarket, community meetings such as C3 Policing, etc. The survey ranked crime and Substance Abuse, Low Income Level, Parking, and Accessibility to Groceries as the top five challenges.

Following the results of the survey, the students researched Urban Planning methods that have been successfully implemented in other cities across the United States. According to the American Planning Association, Urban Planning “works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations”.²⁹ The South End of Springfield can be improved through crime and substance abuse prevention, workforce and economic development, additional parking, and the beautification of residential areas. This can be achieved through the blue light system, community artwork, beautification of public and residential areas, community outreach, increased advertising, and possibly a multipurpose parking garage.

The students of the C term project center will be handing over the suggestions and the final report to the students of the D term project center and Jay Minkarah, CEO of DevelopSpringfield. Finally, the D term students will organize focus groups to gauge the community's response to our proposals and determine the most effective and feasible solutions for DevelopSpringfield to execute.

²⁹ What Is Planning? (n.d.). Retrieved March 14, 2016, from <https://www.planning.org/aboutplanning/whatisplanning.htm>

B. Acknowledgements

As students of the C-term Pioneer Valley Project Center, we would like to thank Jay Minkarah at DevelopSpringfield for sponsoring our project and for providing insight throughout the process. We would also like to thank our advisor, Kevin Sweeney, for continued support and guidance. We hope our work builds the foundation for a comprehensive and useful strategic plan for DevelopSpringfield.

We would also like to thank the graduate students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute who added a lot of depth to our methodology. Furthermore, Professor Sabato and the students of Springfield Technical Community College have given us invaluable insight into the community.

Finally, we would like to thank the members of the community in the South End who were kind to share their opinions with us.

C. Introduction

i. Project Objective

Our objective is to develop an improvement plan for the South End in Springfield that would allow our sponsor, DevelopSpringfield, to identify specific strategies that could be implemented in the short-term. DevelopSpringfield is a nonprofit organization that aims to support the economic growth of Springfield through development and redevelopment projects that will revitalize the city. Our plan should suggest innovative solutions to the area's unique challenges. Ideally, it will strengthen the economy, utilize key economic drivers in the area, and serve the needs of the residents. Some key issues we were asked to address are strengthening existing businesses, the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized lots and buildings, and opportunities to provide new business ventures for local residents.

This document records the results of "Phase One" of our project. The project will resume with "Phase Two" on March 14th, 2016 when we hand the project off to other members of our group who will be executing the second half of the project.

During "Phase One" we conducted a large amount of background research, investigated the needs of the community firsthand, and proposed multiple preliminary solutions. In March, "Phase Two" will begin by conducting focus groups with the stakeholders in the South End to determine which one or two preliminary proposals to focus on. The group will take a deeper dive into the chosen ideas that were decided to be the best options. Ultimately, the result of "Phase Two", and the entire project, is to create a strategic plan for DevelopSpringfield to implement in the short term.

ii. Background Information

Valuable demographic information about the South End includes:

- It is a neighborhood of 5,000 residents with a rich cultural history³⁰
- The South End is one of the smallest neighborhoods in Springfield³¹
- Previously, it was a dominantly Italian community³²

³⁰ "South End Revitalization Plan." The City of Springfield. May 14. Accessed March 7. http://www.springfieldcityhall.com/planning/fileadmin/Planning_files/South_End_Revitalization_Coalition/SpringfieldAllDRAFT_05-29-2014-web.pdf.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

- Due to economic decline and heightening crime rates, most of the wealthier Italian residents moved to the suburbs³³
- About 60% of South End residents are Hispanic, one third are white, and the rest identify as other³⁴
- The community has a high unemployment rate, high crime rates, and a disconnected community³⁵
- The median household income is approximately \$18,000 below the federal poverty line³⁶
- The average for rape, murder, and auto theft in the South End are higher than the national average³⁷

A turning point in the South End's history is the building of Interstate 91. The building of the highway in 1965 caused the displacement of two thirds of South End residents to neighboring towns, it also disconnected the neighborhood from the riverfront, therefore changing its geography completely. Except for a small sliver of land between the highway and the Connecticut river, it is mostly underutilized. In 2002, the basketball hall of fame opened in that area between the highway and the river, it has attracted a few businesses such as a couple of restaurants and a hotel. The hall of fame area, however, has been mostly detached from the rest of the South End, because of the location of the highway.³⁸

Currently under construction in the South End, the MGM casino is expected to open in the fall of 2018. It is being built at a budget of \$900 million, and it is expected to bring in about \$25 million per year in revenue to the city of Springfield. MGM has promised to offer jobs to the residents of Springfield with over 3000 direct and 2000 construction related jobs. Over 90% of these jobs will be offered to local and regional residents. However, the residents have mixed opinions about how the casino will affect the community as a whole³⁹.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Editorials, The Republican. "Editorial: Tapping Potential of Springfield's Riverfront." MassLive. February 26, 2010. Accessed March 15, 2016.

http://www.masslive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2010/02/editorial_tapping_potential_of.html.

³⁹ Our Vision. (n.d.). Retrieved March 2, 2016, from <http://www.mgmspringfield.com/mgm-springfield/vision.aspx>

D. Methodology

The purpose of our project was to find urban planning solutions that would be most effective in the South End of Springfield to better integrate these areas into the city's broader economy. In order to figure out which solutions would be best, we had to start with very basic research of the South End. We researched background information (see background section) and came across what the media portrayed as the top challenges in Springfield.

The next step was to prove if this information we gathered was a true representation of the South End. We decided to create a survey to ask community members what they believed were the top challenges in the South End based on a list that we created from our background research. The objective was to create an anecdotal survey short enough to get citizens to fill it out in cold-contact on the streets or at local businesses. The survey will serve as a vehicle to get the citizens to express their opinions about the community as well as answer one basic question: "What are the top five challenges in the South End?" The results of this survey served as a baseline for our urban planning research, which led to our preliminary proposals.

In addition to our face-to-face surveying, we interviewed business owners and participated in multiple business owner and community meetings in order to capture more opinions of the community members. Through the three methods of surveying, interviewing, and attending meetings, we were able to compare responses, analyze them, and ultimately deduce the top five challenges that we should address through urban planning.

i. Survey

Initially, we brainstormed multiple survey ideas and multiple open response questions. We soon realized that we would not be able to send this survey out over the internet because we did not have access to an email list of a diverse population sample. It became apparent that we would likely need to explore the South End and directly talk to people to get the best results and widest range of community member opinions. On-the-street surveying meant that our survey had to be very short, so we decided to only focus on discovering the top five challenges in the South End. We kept our list of open ended questions and used them to help us create a list of interview questions for personal interviews with business owners.

By combining the background research from the South End and the opinions of the Spring Technical Community College (STCC) students, we created a list of multiple. Once we

had the lists, we had to create a survey format. We made two different ideas on survey organization design.

One design asked the citizens to pick five challenges from the list and to order them from one to five in terms of most difficult challenges. The other idea simply asked citizens to choose the top five challenges. We consulted with our marketing graduate student colleague about these two ideas. Her advice lead us to combine the two survey ideas into one. We decided to use Qualtrics, a computer survey software, to transcribe the survey. Qualtrics was very helpful to us because it allowed us to input citizens' responses on our phones as we talked with them. It also allowed us to easily graphically analyze our responses. In the final survey design, the main question of the final survey asked people to simply choose up to 5 challenges from the list:

Please choose the top 5 challenges in the South End.


- Accessibility to Groceries
- Public Transportation
- Parking
- Housing
- Crime
- Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement
- Substance Abuse
- Accessibility to Health Care/Mental Health Services
- Accessibility to Education
- Accessibility to Entertainment Places
- Accessibility to Hall of Fame
- Low Income Level
- Lack of Land for Recreation
- Lack of Job Training
- Other

Next, we had a question that asked if they would like to elaborate on their responses.

Would you like to expand on your choices?

- Yes
- No

If they said yes, then they would be brought to a screen where they could rate each of their responses on a scale of one to five (one being least severe and 5 being most severe).



WPI

English ▾

Please rate the challenge of accessibility to groceries in the South End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of parking in the South End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of crime in South End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of substance abuse in the South End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of a low level of income in the South End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe | | Most Severe

Please explain any other challenges that exist in the South End.

Additional Comments

This design allowed participants to rate each challenge and did not require them to order their five choices, which was important because many survey-takers rated more than one challenge as a four or five on the severity scale.

At the beginning of our survey, the first question differentiates between North and South End.



WPI

English ▾

Which survey would you like to answer?

North End

South End

>>

Then there are a few demographic questions to analyze trends and disparities among participants. The next question differentiates between South End resident, business owner, South End resident and business owner, or other.

Do you identify as

- South End Resident
- South End Business Owner
- South End Resident and Business Owner
- Other

The other category split between the following options:

What is your connection to Springfield?

- Non-Springfield Resident Business Owner
- Non-Springfield Resident Visiting
- Non-Springfield Resident Working
- Springfield Resident Business Owner
- Springfield Resident Visiting
- Springfield Resident Working

This question allowed us to differentiate between the responses of those who were from Springfield and those who were not. This was important because we expected responses from those who did not live in the South End to have a different perception than those who did.

The full survey in the correct order is in the Appendices section.

ii. Business Owner Interviews

Using some recommendations given to us by Jay Minkarah, CEO of DevelopSpringfield, and background research, we created the following list of interview questions. We used these questions as an outline for how we interviewed business owners face-to-face.

- What are the top five challenges in South End?
- What are the biggest challenges with running a business in the South End?

How do you address them?

- When are busiest hours/seasons of the year?
- Do you have challenges with parking? (How do you address it?)
- Where are your employees from (Community/outside)? How many people are you currently employing?

- What are your business plans/where do you see your business going?
- Where do you face competition?
- What kinds of business do you think would flourish in this area?
- What are your thoughts or views on MGM moving in?
- What improvements would help your business the most?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

iii. Community Meetings

We attended two community meetings in the South End, the C3 Policing meeting, and the South End Business Association (SEBA) meeting with the objective of gaining more information from stakeholders. We discovered these meeting through Jay Minkarah. The C3 policing meeting is a community meeting that discusses pertinent community challenges, initiatives, and successes in order to improve the overall well-being of the community.⁴⁰ The South End Business Association is a group of South End business owners that work together to revitalize and promote the area as a great location for residents and business owners.⁴¹ The purpose of this meeting was to give us insight into current community initiatives and proposed plans for the betterment of the challenged areas.

⁴⁰ "What Is C3 Policing?" *C3 Policing Team*. N.p., 05 Nov. 2012. Web. 01 Mar. 2016.
<http://mspc3policing.com/w/hat-is-c3-policing>

⁴¹ South End Business Association. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2016, from <http://www.sebaspringfield.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/JoinSEBA.pdf>

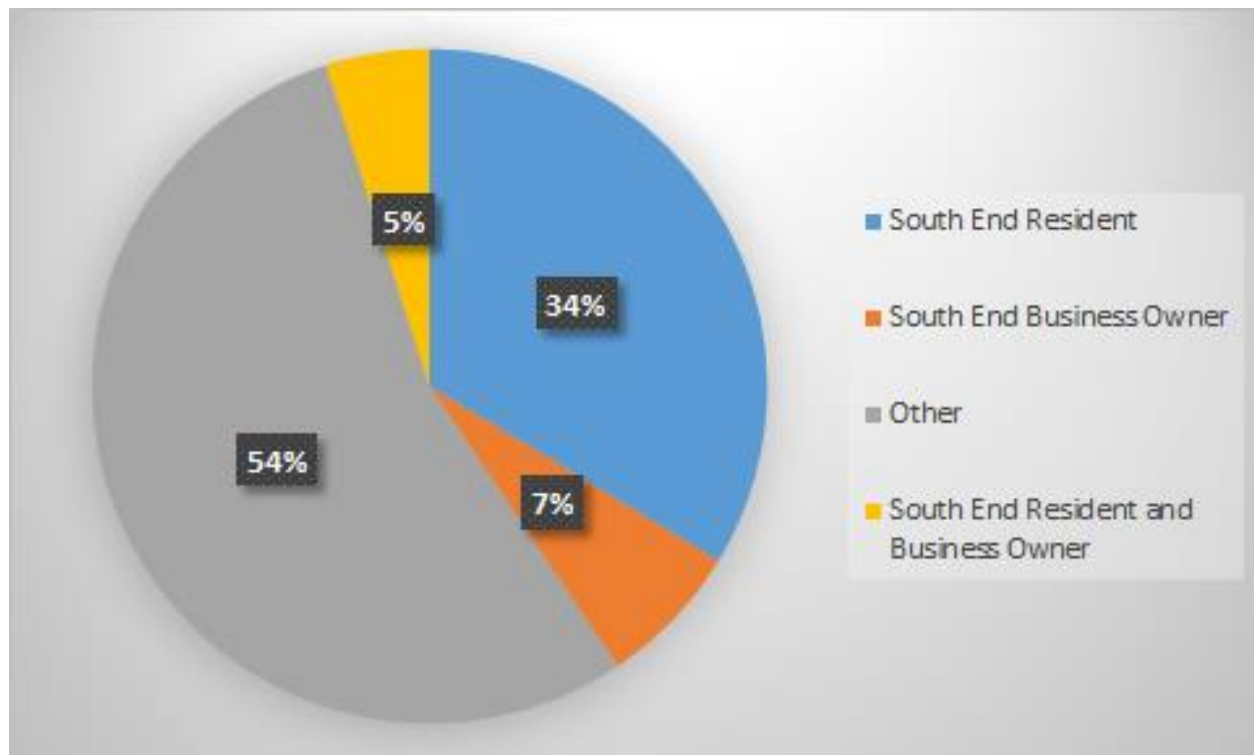
E. Results and Discussion

i. Survey Results

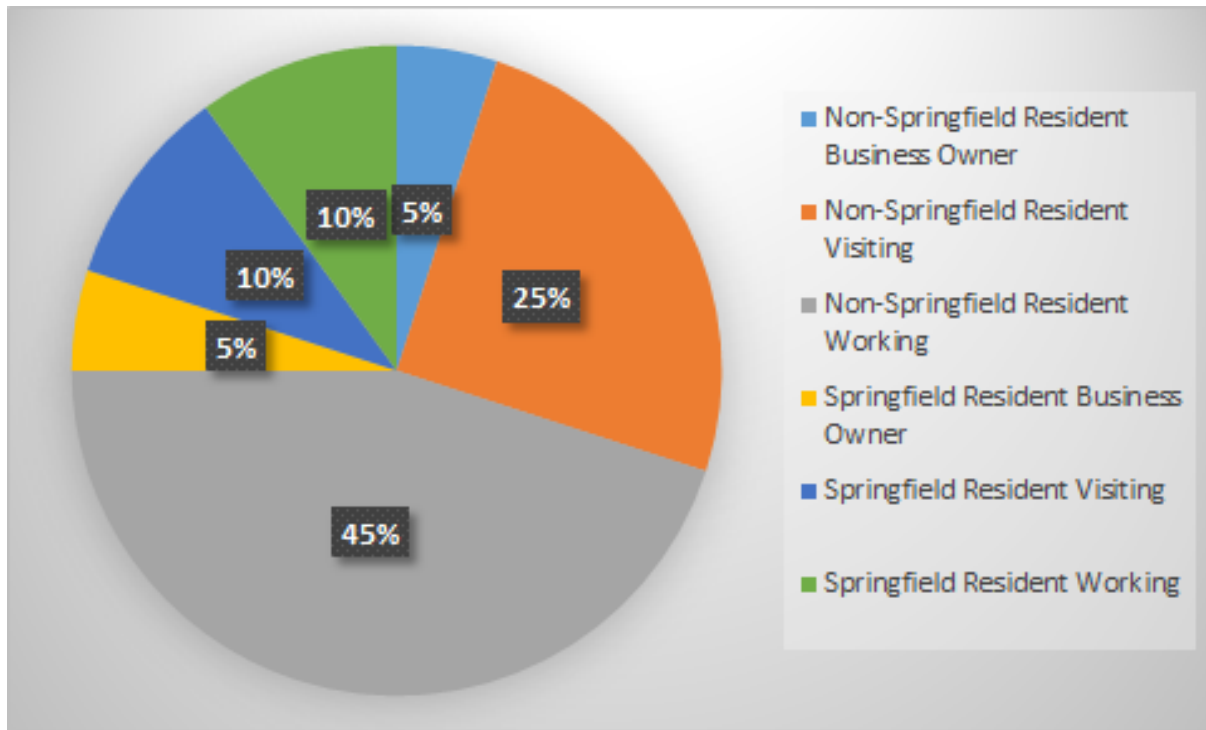
The objective of our survey was to find the top most challenging problems in the South End. We identified several places where we would get a diverse response from residents, business owners, and visitors. The total number of participants in our survey in the South End was 45. We interviewed patrons of several fast food restaurants (McDonald's and Dunkin Donuts) and lunch spots (Frigo's), as well as a food pantry.

A demographic breakdown of those who took our survey is as follows:

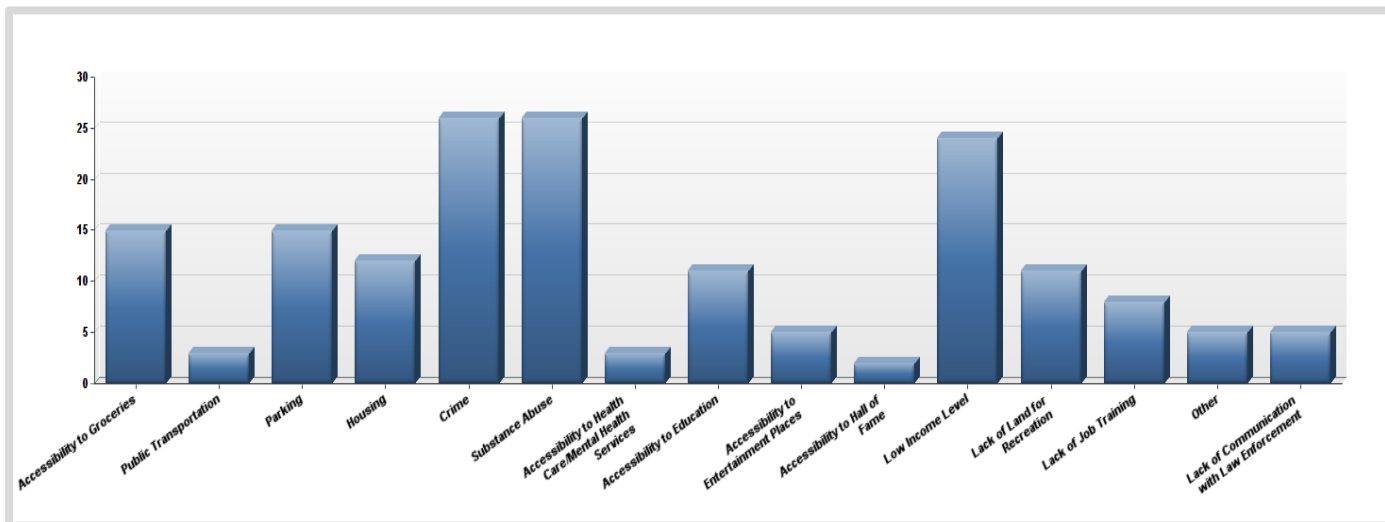
34% of participants were South End residents, 5% were business owners and 7% were both. The majority of those taking the survey fell within the "other" category, however.

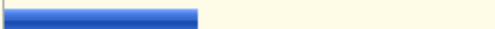

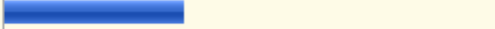














A further breakdown of the "other" category is in the following graph:



The majority of the “other” category was non-Springfield residents working in the South End (45%). The second biggest was non-Springfield residents visiting (25%). The remaining categories were 10% Springfield residents working, 10% Springfield resident visiting, 5% non-Springfield resident business owners, and 5% Springfield resident and business owners.



Answer		%
Accessibility to Groceries		39%
Public Transportation		7%
Parking		37%
Housing		29%
Crime		63%
Substance Abuse		63%
Accessibility to Health Care/Mental Health Services		7%
Accessibility to Education		27%
Accessibility to Entertainment Places		12%
Accessibility to Hall of Fame		5%
Low Income Level		61%
Lack of Land for Recreation		27%
Lack of Job Training		22%
Other		12%
Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement		12%

If we examine the overall result of our survey, we find that the highest rated categories are crime and substance abuse (63% each), followed by low income level (60%), parking and access to groceries (38% each), housing (30%), lack of land for recreation (28%), accessibility to education (28%), lack of job training (20%), access to entertainment places (13%), lack of communication with law enforcement (13%), other (13%), public transportation (8%), access to healthcare and mental health services (8%) and access to the hall of fame (5%).

The participants had an option to write in additional comments at the end of the survey. Some of the suggestions and comments that were brought up by the participants were: “Lack of jobs and job training”, “Surrounding area needs to be taking care of better”, “Lack of city engagement in the area, it seems they’ve washed their hands from the area”, “There’s plenty of low income housing, they want better housing where people would go to work in the morning”. The lack of jobs and job training skills can be related to the issue of a language barrier. As it was mentioned earlier, many of the residents only speak Spanish or another language. Furthermore, the participants indicated the need for good education and after-school programs.

Additionally, the residents who took the survey emphasized the need for city engagement and community outreach programs. Finally, many participants suggested making the surrounding areas safer by keeping a check on crime and substance abuse.

ii. Interviews and Meeting Results

We interviewed several business owners from various types of establishments in the South End. Some of them were Frigo's, Mom & Rico's, Buckeye Bros Smokeshop, McDonald's, HAP Housing, and AC Produce.

Additionally, we sat in on a meeting for the South End Business Association (SEBA), which was focused on beginning a planning process for beautification and improvements in the South End.

F. Key Takeaways

- **Crime and Substance Abuse are major challenges in the South End**

As the two most persistent problems for business owners, residents, and visitors, crime and substance abuse should be in the forefront of any recommendations made to improve the city. An additional topic that needs to be explored further is whether the perception of crime and substance abuse in the South End is as real and intense as outsiders view.

- **Low Income Level requires an increase in workforce development and economic opportunity**

On a micro-scale, we believe that low income could be tackled by providing enough opportunities for small business development and career advancement routes. This could be achieved through several suggestions in the following section.

- **Residents desire improved housing and land for recreation**

Because the majority of South End businesses close by sunset, the city streets and parks become less populated and therefore more dangerous. Therefore, there is a lack of recreational venues safely available for use after business hours. The residents indicated their desire to increase the opportunity for safe recreational space after dark.

Residents and business owners both agreed that the South End should have higher quality

housing that brings more middle class families to the neighborhood. They believe that this would increase the value of residential space and can only be good for business.

- **Non-South End Residents feel there is a need for more accessible groceries, but most residents do not agree**

Our research falls short of explaining this divide between how the South End residents do not view access to groceries as a problem, while non-residents do. Some suggested explanations for this was that the non-residents would like to do all their shopping in one place. Another explanation is that the South End is falsely perceived as a food desert to outsiders.

- **Non-South End Residents feel that parking is an issue**

As expected, visitors of the South End-as well as one business owner- reported that parking was a problem for them. It is more difficult for people from outside the area to find good parking spaces in comparison to locals.

- **Residents and business owners have opposing views on the casino**

As evidenced from the survey and our interviews with business owners, there seems to be a disparity between the opinion of business owners and community members on whether the casino will benefit or harm the community.

G. Urban Planning Research

i. Crime

According to opportunity theory, crime results from three factors, the offender, the victim, and the situation. A criminal act can only occur if all three factors are present. Therefore, the elimination of a single factor can help prevent crime. Through the use of urban planning, the opportunity for offenders to encounter a situation that is optimal for criminal activity can be reduced. This principle only applies to criminal activity that is concentrated in urban areas that have an opportunistic nature, such as shoplifting, vandalism, violence in public spaces, theft, arson, and sexual offences.⁴²

⁴² Van Soomeren, P. (2000) Crime prevention solutions for Europe: designing out crime. Paper presented at the con-

There are fourteen principles that are utilized when using urban planning to create safer neighborhoods and communities: territoriality, natural surveillance, access control, image, conflicting user groups, activity support, crime generators, land use mix, movement predictors, displacement, cohesion, connectivity, capacity, and culture.⁴³ These principles can be combined into four categories: community relationships, appearance, volume of criminal activity, and the positive use of space.

1. Community Relationships

Territoriality is a community's sense of ownership.⁴⁴ When a community possess territoriality, it is less likely for people to commit crimes in that space because they have adopted the space as their own.⁴⁵ This sense of ownership can be fostered through signs, community street art, murals, and restaurants with tables that extend outside. These projects should include the community's input so that they gain a sense of ownership.

Cohesion is supportive relations among a community that create a sense of safety.⁴⁶ Urban planning can create the opportunity for community members to have positive interactions with each other and create supportive relationships. Crime is less likely to occur in a community that supports and looks out for one another. This sense of community can be fostered through recreational spaces, such as, green spaces, playing fields, and dog parks. Amphitheaters, community centers, multipurpose schools, gazebos, and other meeting places can also promote the formation of positive relationships.

Culture is the overall brand of a location and represents what is unique about the community.⁴⁷ It can be artistic, educational, or geographic. A community with a shared culture has social cohesion. This cohesion can be developed through athletics, religion, the arts, and recurring community events. Physical spaces such as art galleries, performance venues, murals, memorials, and an overall community brand also develop a community culture.

Connectivity is the social relationships that result from the community that extend beyond neighborhoods and into the entire city.⁴⁸ When communities are connected throughout

ference on the Relationship between the Physical Environment and Crime Reduction and Prevention, Amsterdam.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

the city, it prevents the Not-In-My-Backyard mindset.⁴⁹ This creates a cohesive environment where everyone is working toward the same goal. Safe walkways that connect neighborhoods, as well as offices that serve multiple communities in a central location help unify a city.

Territoriality, cohesion, culture, and connectivity all cultivate positive relations between community members and amenities. Neighborhood gathering places, recreational areas, safe walkways, and local artwork give the community accessible locations that promote ownership and positive relationships. A community with ownership and positivity is a community with less crime.

2. Appearance

Natural surveillance and access control are important qualities when building new infrastructure.⁵⁰ The idea of natural surveillance creates areas that are visible from many vantage points, which reduces crime. When an area is visible from homes, businesses, and other highly populated venues, it is more difficult to commit a crime without being seen. Natural surveillance is created through homes and businesses with street facing windows and porches. Access control is the ability to monitor who enters and exits an area.⁵¹ Specific locations for entrances and exits makes it more difficult to commit a crime subtly. Therefore, it is important to utilize natural surveillance and access control when designing new infrastructure to make it appear more difficult to commit crimes.

Image is the actual appearance of a location.⁵² A location that looks run down and poorly maintained appears to be a place that tolerates crime.⁵³ Therefore, properly maintaining store fronts, parks, and other public spaces leads to the assumption that crime is not tolerated in those areas. Regular cleanups, graffiti removal, and the overall beautification of areas can increase the perception of safety.

3. Volume of Criminal Activity

Crime generators and conflicting user groups increase the volume of criminal activity. Crime generators are areas in a community that facilitate crime.⁵⁴ Examples of crime generators

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

are dark alleys, parking lots, and twenty-four hour stores. Specifically in Springfield, the bodegas are an applicable example. It is important to understand what locations are crime generators so that they can be monitored and made less desirable to criminals. Conflicting user groups are groups that legitimately utilize a space but do not get along.⁵⁵ For example, when building new infrastructure, it would not be ideal to put a nightclub next to a senior center. It is important to take into account conflicting user groups so that unnecessary disagreements do not occur. Through managing crime generators and conflicting user groups, the volume of criminal activity in a community can be decreased.

4. Positive Use of Space

Land use mix, activity support, and capacity all involve the positive use of space. Land use mix is diversifying the uses of land so that the area is always busy.⁵⁶ This can detract from crime because areas will never be abandoned. For example, by combining residential and commercial areas, a neighborhood would be busy during the day due to businesses and at night due to residents. Activity support is always filling an area with legitimate users.⁵⁷ For example, an area could be created where community members can use shopping, recreational, and employment facilities. This guarantees that many people will use the area, and it will always be busy. Lastly, capacity is the ability of an area to support its community.⁵⁸ In other words, community members should be able to live, work, shop, and participate in recreational activities in the same area. These concepts guarantee that spaces will consistently be used for legitimate purposes.

ii. Housing

Affordable housing can sometimes be minimalistic and usually does not instill a sense of pride in its tenants, but First Resource Companies' housing model builds a sense of community and pride for its tenants. First Resource Companies is a group of companies that works to create beautiful and affordable housing. It is a group of construction, real estate management, and development companies that creates affordable housing through the preservation of historic buildings and new construction projects. This company focuses on housing for low income

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

families, the elderly, and disabled persons. They are committed to quality housing that rebuilds and revitalizes the community, but they also connect their tenants to neighborhood resources, such as local childcare and youth programs. This model of beautiful and affordable housing that connects the community can help increase residents' sense of pride and improve the overall well-being of the community.⁵⁹

iii. Parking

An obvious solution to a lack of parking is to build a new parking lot or parking garage, but these solutions do not beautify the city or provide any other use for its citizens. Therefore, innovative solutions that benefit the community in other ways should be explored.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute has a parking garage with athletic fields on the top level.⁶⁰ Therefore, a parking garage could be designed with a playground, walking track, park, or athletic field on its top level. This would allow for the community to have more parking, but also another place for the community to gather. If its location is close to businesses, customers could go shopping while their children play outside.



Miami, Florida has a parking garage called 11 11 that is also an event space. It is a beautiful building that is used for parking, but can be converted into an event space for weddings, wine tastings, dinner parties, yoga classes, and other events.⁶¹ There is a designer clothing store in the garage, as well as a stunning staircase with artwork at its base. This design

⁵⁹ Restore. Rebuild.Revitalize. (n.d.). Retrieved March 13, 2016, from <http://www.firstresourcecompanies.com/about/mission-statement/>

⁶⁰ Rooftop Field. (n.d.). Retrieved March 13, 2016, from <https://www.wpi.edu/about/tour/rooftop-field.html>

⁶¹ Barbaro, M. (2011). A Miami Beach Event Space. Parking Space, Too. Retrieved March 13, 2016, from http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/24/us/24garage.html?_r=0

offers the necessary additional parking, as well as visual appeal, and event space.



Kansas City's Public Library parking garage appears as a bookshelf. The community gave the library input on which titles should be chosen to adorn the outer walls of the garage.⁶² This makes the parking garage visually appealing and gives the community a sense of ownership in the design. The concept of a themed parking garage could be applied by identifying significant pieces of history or community unifying themes that could make the parking garage a sightseeing opportunity.

⁶² Community Bookshelf. (n.d.). Retrieved March 13, 2016, from <http://www.kclibrary.org/community-bookshelf>



iv. Low Income Level

Training programs can be classified into two different types: perfectly general and completely specific. A training program is perfectly general if it increases the marginal product of labor by the same amount in many firms. Examples of a perfectly general job training include clerical training, general certificate programs like Lean or CPR-AED. A completely specific training program increases the productivity of the worker only in the organization providing the training. An example is a worker trained in a specific software used solely by the company.

Training programs can be incorporated into evening classes at community colleges or can be mandated as a technical course in post-secondary education. RichmondBUILD is a program offered in Richmond, CA to low income residents to train them with the necessary technical and vocational skills. Statistics indicate that over 95% of the participants in the program are minorities while over 30% have a criminal record. The program is well known and graduates have a starting salary of \$18.33 per hour.

	Springfield, MA	Richmond, CA
Geographic Location	North-east	South-west
City Population	153,703	103,701

City Area	33.2 sq miles	52.480 sq miles
Non-Hispanic White Percentage	36.7	31.4
Black Percentage	22.3	26.6
Hispanic Percentage	38.8	39.5
Asian Percentage	2.4	13.4
Other Percentage	18	21.8
Male Percentage	47.4	48
Female Percentage	52.6	52
University	Springfield Technical Community College	Contra Costa Community College
Founded in	1967	1949
Student Population	8700	7959

H. Preliminary Proposals For South End

In this section, we have combined the information from the survey, interviews, meetings, and urban planning research to create preliminary proposals to improve the lives of residents. The following preliminary proposals will be presented to various interest groups, such as the South End Business Association and residents, in the focus groups in phase II. The focus groups' responses will help determine what proposals DevelopSpringfield will pursue in the future.

i. Crime and Substance Abuse Prevention

Crime and substance abuse can be prevented from occurring in public places through beautifying the South End and creating a sense of pride for its citizens. This can be accomplished through lighting and beautification.

The River Walk, Main Street, and parks are areas in the South End that are perceived as unsafe at night due to criminal activity. An increase in lighting would make the area appear more safe, which will increase foot traffic at night. This will make it more difficult to commit crimes without being seen, and therefore will reduce criminal activity. Another suggestion to make these areas safer is to test the emergency blue light system. A few towers can be placed in the high crime areas and tested to see if they decrease crime. The emergency blue light towers immediately connect a person feeling unsafe to the police, which gives community members the confidence to walk at night.

Beautification of businesses, parks, and other community places can instill a sense of pride in residents. This can be accomplished through the creation of community spaces where people can form positive social relationships. The beautification of existing parks and an increase in benches near businesses will give the community a place to gather. The South End can also utilize community artists and children to create street art and murals. Specifically, a community project could be to decorate the underpasses that connect the South End businesses to the Hall of Fame. This project could be extended into a themed path that goes through Main Street of the South End and connects to the Hall of Fame and the MGM casino. These projects would attract more visitors from the Hall of Fame and casino into the South End, as well as give the community a sense of pride in its artwork.

A new community center is being built in the South End, and the Springfield Police Department works on community outreach. The new community center could be built with office space for the Springfield Police Department. It could be a location for the police officers to do work while on duty, but also a place where they could play basketball and interact with children while on break. This could greatly help their community outreach because it gives them a chance to interact and form relationships with children in the South End in a positive setting.

ii. Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity

Workforce development and economic opportunity can be created through community outreach. Pamphlets can be a medium through which organizations can reach out to families of low income level. It can contain a list of social events or gatherings that might be happening over the weekend but also have a job listing for seasonal employment. The youth can be reached through social media. Today, the majority of youth are on social media including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. A Facebook page listing all the jobs in the locality can be a cost effective

but efficient medium of communication. DevelopSpringfield is currently constructing an innovation center that will offer job training programs and collaborative space for the community. It can be a think tank for young and budding entrepreneurs who wish to pitch an idea and to seek feedback. This will hopefully lead to a rise in small businesses and uplift the economic level of the community.

iii. Beautification of Residential Areas

The beautification of residential areas improves a sense of pride in one's home environment. Beautification of a neighborhood not only increases a sense of safety amongst the residents, but it also makes the area more likely to have social gatherings and events to bring the community together.

First Resource Companies, a housing company, has nine properties in Springfield that are available for low income families. These apartments have an upscale design and are well maintained. This model improves the appearance of residential areas, while also fostering a sense of community for its tenants. The South End needs more models like this so that more people will desire to reside and remain in the area.

Additionally, South End residents and business owners wanted to see repaved roads and sidewalks. Repaving the roads and cleaning up the residential areas helps fight the negative perception that the South End is a dangerous area. Repaving roads and improving sidewalks makes the area look well-maintained and goes a long way in attracting visitors and promoting walkability.

iv. Additional Parking

The MGM Casino is building a large parking garage in the South End that is free for anyone to use. This should address the challenge of parking in the South End. If there is still a need for additional parking, the construction of a multipurpose parking garage should be explored. There were three models mentioned in the research section: the WPI rooftop field, the Miami event venue parking garage, and the Kansas City community themed parking garage. These are all viable options that would also improve the community.

In our survey, the South End residents said that they desired more recreational land. The WPI rooftop field parking garage model could address the desire for more parking and the desire for more recreational land. The parking garage could have fields, a playground, or a park on its

second level. This would allow for parents to park their car in the garage, go shopping, and let their children play.

The thematic parking garage from Kansas City could unite the community. The South End community members could vote on the theme for the parking garage. It could relate to the Basketball Hall of Fame, Dr. Seuss, or any other topic the community is passionate about. Springfield is also known as the city of innovation, so it could have pictures of the various inventions that came out of Springfield. The community could then have input on the design that could help create cohesion.

v. Additional Proposals

Our final proposal is to enact a Springfield Pride Campaign or more specifically a South End Pride Campaign. This could include elements of the local culture, such as Italian and Hispanic traditions and community accomplishments. Also, festivals have the potential to greatly increase pride, spread culture and bring in tourism from outside of Springfield. Some festivals are in place, such as a Mt. St. Carmel festival, but many no longer occur. Bringing some of these back and advertising them could be a step in starting a new community tradition. The internet, a powerful marketing tool, could be utilized to reach out to people and spread awareness. One way to improve the public relations of the South End is to create YouTube videos that show the pride of the South End. These videos could feature residents explaining what they love about the South End and why they are proud to be South End residents. This would encourage residents to share their own narratives about their neighborhood, as well as promote a more positive image of the South End.

I. Conclusion and Further Research

The South End of Springfield can be improved through crime and substance abuse prevention, workforce and economic development, additional parking, and the beautification of residential areas. This can be achieved through the blue light system, community artwork, beautification of public and residential areas, community outreach, increased advertising, and possibly a multipurpose parking garage. The second phase of this project needs to determine the community's opinions on these preliminary proposals, as well as the feasibility of each proposal.

i. Further Research for Phase II

There was a disparity between the residents' and the nonresidents' responses to the accessibility of groceries in the South End. This disparity should be explored more through determining what groceries a family has access to in the South End. The students should determine if there are any gaps in the availability of groceries, or if nonresidents have a perception that the residents of the South End do not have access to groceries.

In general, the residents of the South End have a negative opinion of the new MGM casino. This opinion should be explored further, and the students should determine strategies for remedying this negative perception or ways to make the casino a positive addition to the community for residents.

The phase II students need to determine how they will conduct the focus groups. First, they must decide how many focus groups they need and who will participate in them. Then, depending on the participants, the students may need to arrange for translators to attend certain focus group sessions. Finally, they must determine what preliminary proposals they want to present to the focus groups.

After the focus groups, the students must analyze the responses from the participants to determine what proposals best resonated with the participants. Particularly, the students will need to reconcile the differences between interest 3groups and determine the best proposals for the community.

Lastly, the students will need to determine the feasibility of the best proposals. Ideally, the final proposals should be able to be implemented by DevelopSpringfield in the short term. Therefore, the students must find the approximate cost and time necessary to complete the project to decide if the project is feasible for DevelopSpringfield.

J. Appendix B: South End

South End Business Owners

S.E. Business Owner 1:

- ❖ Would like to see a name brand business or a small family business come to the south end or even his street.
- ❖ *MGM, your opinion:*
 - Believes MGM will positively affect his business and the South End.
 - “MGM made a lot of promises to the community”
- ❖ *Customers:* Many visitors from out of town and loyal to the business for many years; many from downtown come for lunch.
- ❖ *Employees:* Majority are from the local community.
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges:* Federal expenses and taxes/insurance. No issues with crime; business is on a safe street.
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city:*
 - Believes the city of Springfield should help by offering more grants to beautify store fronts
 - Clean up the litter and sidewalks and streets. “The area could look a lot cleaner and more attractive with a little work”
 - “The city should give new businesses 2-3 months free of rent to help the business get off to a good start”
 - New signage - bring people in from the Hall of Fame
 - If it were possible to get more working professionals to live and work in the city
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - Beautification of store front and street
 - In the past: Adding more parking improved business

S.E. Business Owner 2:

- ❖ *MGM, your opinion:*
 - Believes MGM will positively affect his business and the South End

- ❖ *Customers*: Many visitors from out of town, also local but many people have low incomes and cannot afford many of the products
- ❖ *Employees*: None, family business
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges*: Federal expenses and taxes/insurance. No issues with crime
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city*:
 - “We need more ground level jobs” - jobs that do not require skills or a degree.
 - New signage - bring people in from the Hall of Fame. “Seclusion of the Hall of Fame is a huge issue”
 - If it were possible to get more working professionals to live and work in the city
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - New signage
 - Bringing over Hall of Fame visitors
 - Street lighting

S.E. Business Owner 3:

- ❖ *MGM, your opinion*:
 - At first he had a very negative view of MGM, but after attending a town meeting with the head of MGM’s project design he began to trust that the casino will help the community
- ❖ *Customers*:
 - Many visitors from out of town
 - Used to have more
- ❖ *Employees*: None, family business
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges*: There’s no community, the city won’t help anyone and they have not done anything in years - “Their ties are too tight”
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city*:
 - Improve the parks and recreational areas
 - Put a bathroom in the park

- Just get some businesses to move in - too many empty buildings on Main Street
- Summer programs to keep kids busy and away from drugs
- More lighting and clean up the sidewalks - “No one should be afraid to go for a walk”
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - Any new business will help especially in the abandoned building across the street or next door - “Maybe 20 people will go there and 2 will come here”

S.E. Business Owner 4:

- ❖ *MGM, your opinion:*
 - Believes MGM will positively affect all local businesses
- ❖ *Customers:* Many visitors from out of town, and many local (not much grocery store competition)
- ❖ *Employees:* nineteen employees, from local area
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges:*
 - Federal expenses and taxes/insurance
 - Panhandlers enter the store and bother customers
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city:*
 - Clean up more storefronts - amount of money should be based on square footage not a flat amount for all businesses
 - More connections with the police - definitely a lack of communication with law enforcement
 - Community Center - integrate police
 - There’s plenty of housing, but a lack of better/nicer housing
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - A local dry cleaners - customers can drop off/pick-up dry cleaning and go grocery shopping
 - Could use an advertizing campaign with other local businesses

S.E. Business Owner 5:

- ❖ *MGM, your opinion:*
 - Believes MGM is a huge opportunity. Views it positively in terms of economic development, but is skeptical in terms of spreading a gambling culture in a vulnerable community. There has to be gambling programs, etc. Doesn't believe MGM would be willing to fund a project like that.
- ❖ *Customers:* Predominantly South End residents
- ❖ *Top Business Challenges:*
 - Can't find parking for staff. They're currently renting parking but lost it. Some of employees are parking on the street and struggling with this a lot.
 - The amount of speculation in the south end about whether other businesses (or MGM) will buy their property is preventing land/lot owners from utilizing their properties.
 - Besides crime and prostitution and panhandling, mentioned ethnic tensions between new immigrants and old ones. The neighborhood needs to figure out its identity.
- ❖ *Your Ideas to help the city:*
 - Envisions a south end that is a dynamic business area that accepts several ethnic group and embraces the diversity.
 - The city needs to bring consultants to the area to figure this out. Believes the city has an attitude towards the south end. There's no commercial activity, the city thinks they did what they could do but it's not enough.
 - The highest priority should be: how can we turn the South End into a vibrant commercial area.
- ❖ *What will specifically help your business?*
 - Public safety is empirical, which is going to be achieved through filling out every empty storefronts.
 - We should be doing everything we can to help businesses support each other.

- Some ideas for new businesses in the South end: some women clothing stores, boutiques, cafes, hair and nail salons, a nice massage parlor, a hot tub place. There should be a spinoff to MGM coming and building a casino there.

❖ *Additional comments*

- Looks forward to walking down Main Street and wandering around the plaza and get food and have Businesses open at night. There's an enormous opportunity to create a business district to get all the spinoff from MGM. There will be a lot of conventions where the spouses have nothing to do. Those are prime customers to wander around and look at art galleries and cafes.

Suggested questions for focus groups

- i. How will the focus groups be conducted? What members of the community will participate in the focus groups?
- ii. What proposals best resonate with the focus group members?
- iii. What will the project entail? How much will it cost? How long will it take?
- iv. Can it be implemented by DevelopSpringfield in the short term?
- v. Are there any zoning laws that conflict with the proposal?
- vi. Does the community struggle with access to groceries? Or is accessibility to groceries a perceived challenge from outsiders?
- vii. Can a family get all of their grocery needs from the South End?
- viii. Can we remedy the residents' negative perception of MGM?

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