

# FORT WORTHINGTON COMMUNITY SUMMARY

The Baltimore City Planning Department is currently in the INSPIRE planning process for Fort Worthington Elementary School. This plan will ultimately determine recommendations and budgeting priorities for short and long-term improvements in the ¼ mile area surrounding Fort Worthington.

From August 2014 to early March 2015, planning staff worked with residents to better understand their neighborhood experiences, concerns, and needs. The following is a summary of what we heard from stakeholders through a community workshop, student workshop, and survey. Throughout this engagement phase, we were able to collect the feedback of over 100 residents and stakeholders.

## 1st INSPIRE WORKSHOP

On October 23, 2014 we held the first INSPIRE workshop for Fort Worthington at the school. Participants learned about the INSPIRE process and collaboratively examined the existing conditions of the area surrounding the school, specifically identifying **strengths**, **weaknesses**, and **opportunities**. Forty-six people participated in the workshop, including representatives from the school, neighborhood, and stakeholder organizations.

## Key workshop findings:

### COMMUNITY

Weekly community dinners at school  
Active community groups; long-term residents  
High voter turn-out  
School manages a recycling program engaging youth in a positive community activity  
Better promotion of weekly community dinners to get more participation

### TRANSPORTATION

Low car ownership; many in-zone students don't qualify for school busing  
Need alternative transportation options for students due to safety concerns such as bad weather especially for former Dr. Rayner Brown students transferring to Fort Worthington  
Need more crossing guards and stop signs  
Need more enforcement of truck routes, especially along Oliver and Federal  
Marked crosswalks needed

### CRIME/NUISANCES

Major drug activity on eastern edge of the neighborhood, especially along Milton  
Gang activity southeast of school  
Trash disposal and dumping  
Dogs off-leash

### RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Recreation Center at school is an anchor for the community and greatly needed  
Frank C Bocek park is over-run with drug and gang activity  
Want to expand opportunities for positive recreation for all ages  
Opportunities for community gardens or other community managed open space

### COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT/HOUSING

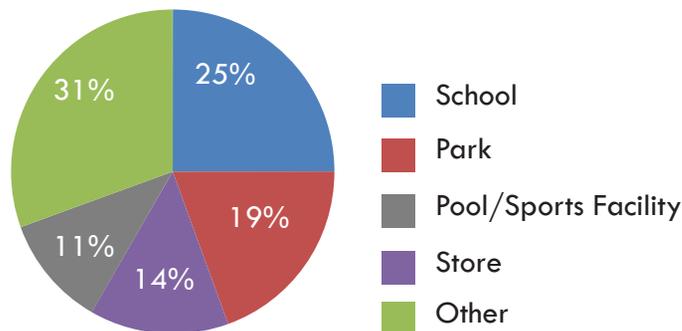
Need to address high vacancy along Milton Ave. and east side of neighborhood  
Nodes of commercial along Milton need to be strengthened  
Several large old, industrial buildings throughout the neighborhood



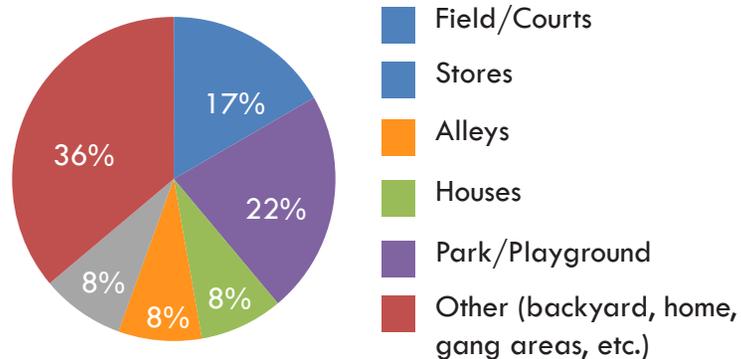
# STUDENT WORKSHOP

On February 13, 2015, we met with two Fort Worthington 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes to talk with students about their experiences and needs related to the surrounding neighborhood. Here is some of what we heard.

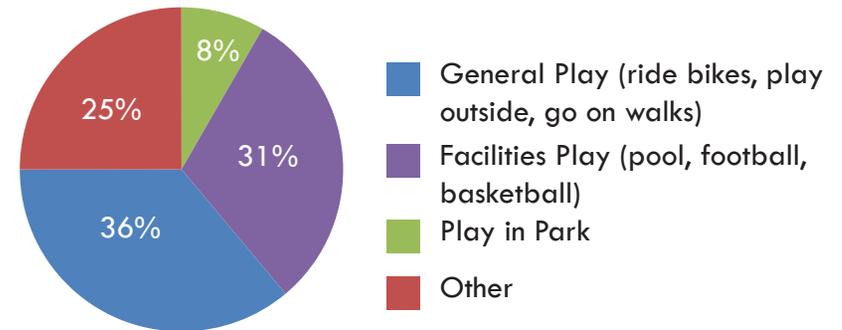
## What is your favorite place in the neighborhood?



## What is your least favorite place in the neighborhood?



## What do you like to do in your neighborhood?



## How will the new school improve my neighborhood?

- They may not do the stuff they do around kids
- It will be a better place to learn
- More space, more fun, more grass
- A lot of kids will start going to school
- It will be better because people will want to come here
- The new school will not improve my neighborhood
- A clean neighborhood

## If I could add one thing to my neighborhood it would be...

- Beter home for the people
- To get school supplies store
- A library
- I would add a sports center
- A mall and a food place
- More space
- A pool and the zoo and the museum and rich people
- A lot of friends

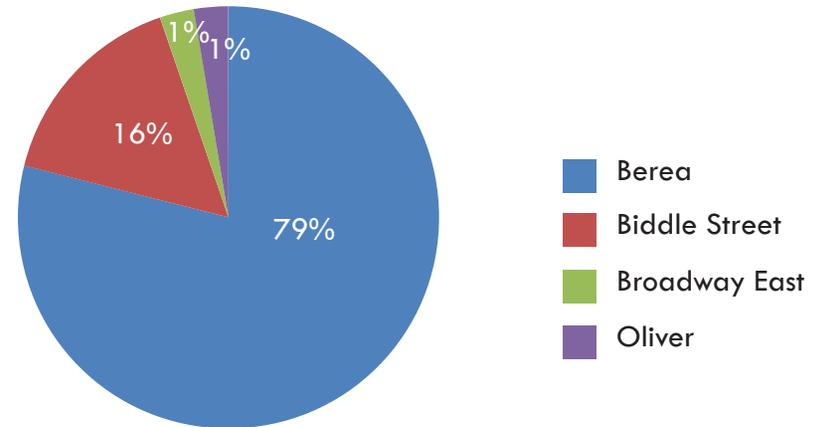


## SURVEY RESPONSES

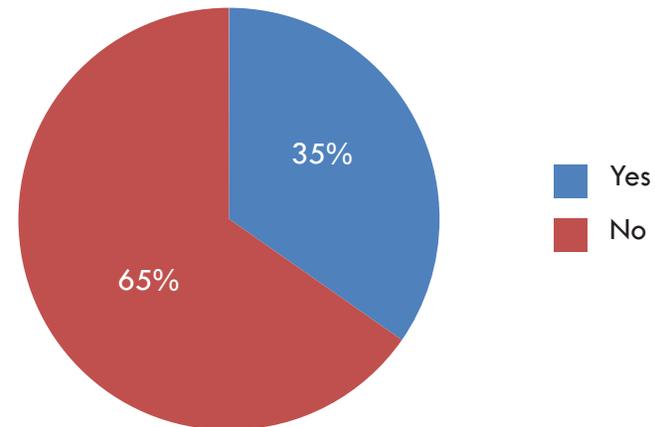
We administered a survey that received 50 responses from community members. The survey was administered to parents, family members, and teachers at pick-up and drop-off times in front of the school. The survey was also available online for any interested community member to take and share with others.

## WHO DID WE TALK TO?

Which neighborhood do you live in?

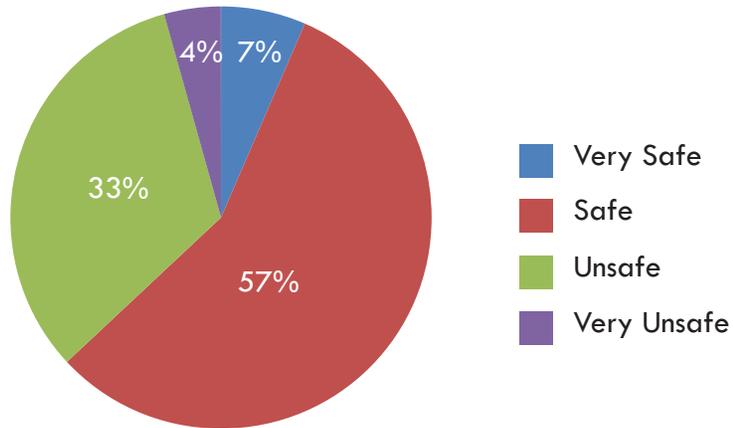


Do you have a child at Fort Worthington ES?



# SAFETY

## How safe do you feel walking around in your neighborhood?



## If you answered “Unsafe” or “Very Unsafe,” where do you feel the most unsafe and why?

Preston Street, Milton Ave due to drugs and the dealers  
The general area at the most; always a shooting close by on the East side of town  
Drugs, Methadone Clinic, people doing drugs in front of you  
Biddle and Luzerne, Milton and Biddle, Patterson Park and Preston congested with various artists  
Preston and Potomac Street; a liquor store on Preston  
Areas with boarded up houses outside of a 3 or 4 block radius; People hanging out  
Luzerene/Oliver

## What might make you feel safer in the neighborhood?

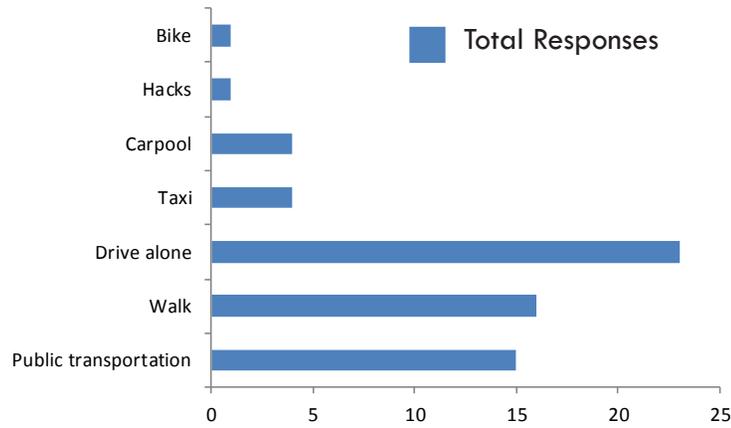
More police or some type of neighborhood watch  
So far, I’m okay with the neighborhood  
Lighting and homeowners  
Keep corner clear of trespassers  
More policemen on foot  
More peoples to care about each other  
Clean neighborhood; no loitering, police presence  
Community that I always lived in; grew up here; lived in the community for 57 years  
The lights in Fort Worthington’s playground Need to be ON AT ALL TIMES.  
Street lights on Hoffman go out too often  
More patrol officers. Stop assuming that because we live not that far from the Eastern District Police Station that it’s safe. Make people shovel their sidewalks



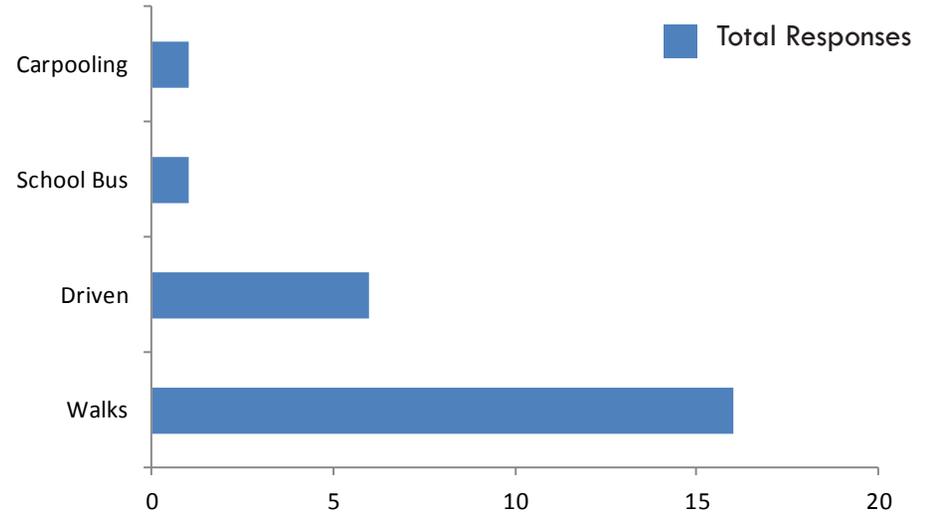
# TRANSPORTATION

## How do you get around?

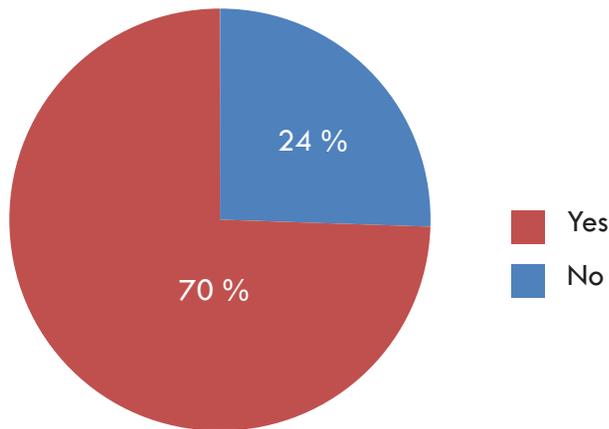
(For work, school, social activities, worship, etc)



## How does your child usually get to school?



## Does your household own a vehicle?

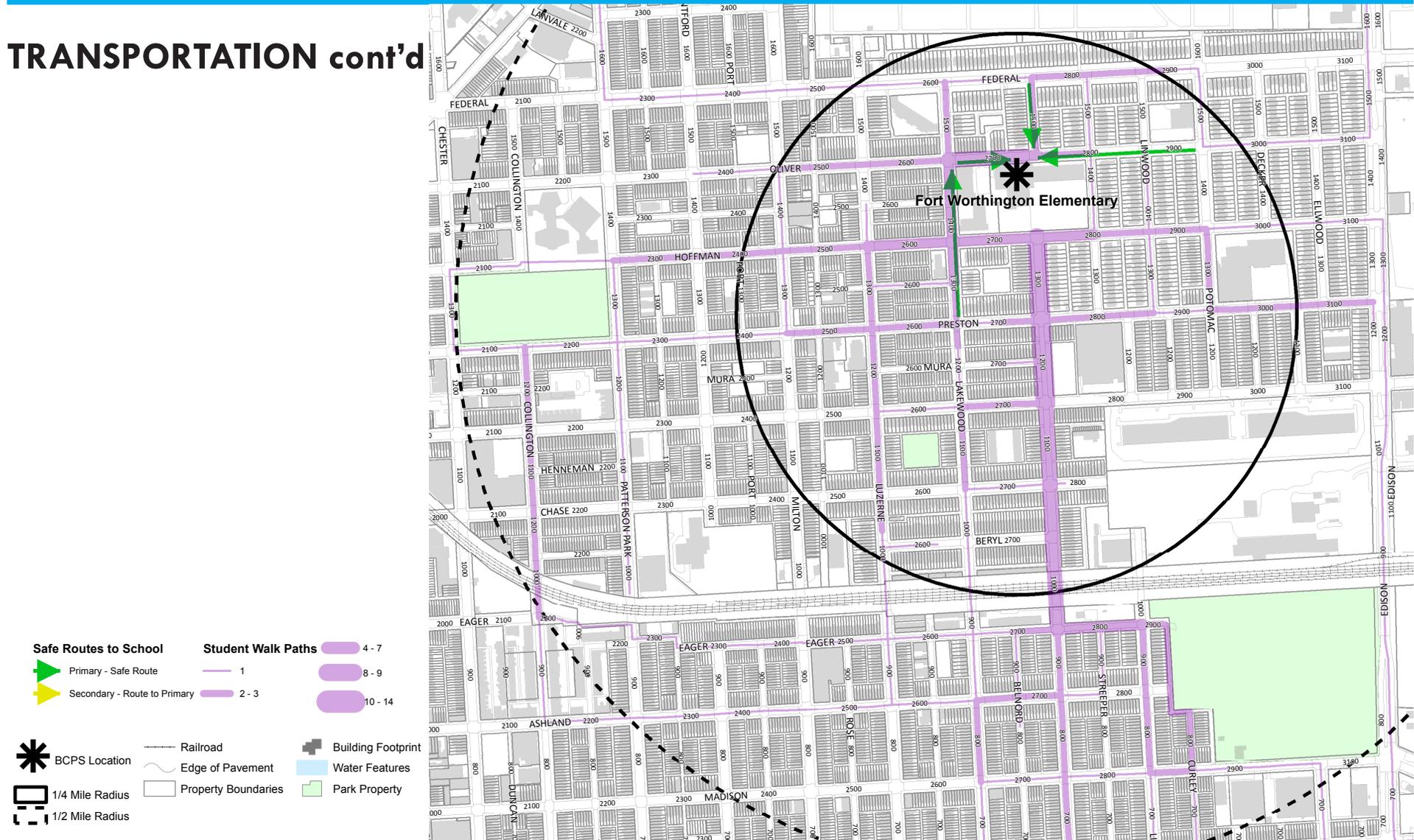


## Is there anything that makes it difficult for you or your child to walk and/or bike throughout the neighborhood?

- Needs something to block off Ally's; cars drive too fast through the allys during the am when we walk to school; Unruly drivers
- No crossing guard to Biddle St.
- Not now, we walk everyday to school. But when the school moves, it will be hard to get to the new school by walking.
- Icy Road/Snow
- Looking out for Pit bull running around or Group of young people acting out
- All of the sidewalks are not the same width so sometimes I will walk in the street
- Some bad or seemingly unsafe area; deteriorating alleys
- Walking time
- It's a long walk through sometimes rough neighborhoods. In addition, when it snows nobody shovels so my grandson has to walk in the street. Very unsafe!



# TRANSPORTATION cont'd



This map shows school routes identified by 4<sup>th</sup> graders of Fort Worthington. Some of the major routes are on North Kenwood Avenue, East Hoffman Street, East Oliver Street, East Preston Street, North Luzerne Avenue, and North Lakewood Avenue.



# QUALITY OF LIFE

The majority of respondents rated the neighborhood as a “fair” to “good” place to raise children.

## What are the major challenges that you face in raising your children in the neighborhood?

### Lack of positive activities for kids

A lot of kids around hanging out too late

Unsupervised children

Better schooling, More activities after school, State of the art recreation center, Science Center, Art Center

Not enough activities after school. My grandson needs better technology and text books

Poor Recreation, 2. Poor Education

1. Children getting older want to follow crowd, 2. Children can't play in Luzerne Park due to drug dealers mingling in the area, 3. Not enough positive activity to occupy kids.

### Violence

Crime; loitering on the street corner; Drug Dealers

Violence, Shooting, Killing

Gang fighting or picking; Police picking on certain kids

Crime in surrounding neighborhoods

### Other

Too much neighborhood blight, abandoned buildings, trash and debris on the streets.

Less homeowners and too many section 8 homes. Section 8 we don't need

Safe environment; Alleys not clean so children can play



## QUALITY OF LIFE cont'd

If you could change one thing to your neighborhood to help improve it what would it be?

### Recreation/Youth Acitivity

Decent neighborhood park  
Activities for youth; sports leagues; a safe and clean playground  
Improve playground areas  
New school and recreation center  
I would like to see positive men and women engage our youth in positive activity

### Neighborhood Vitality

A full service supermarket with a parking lot  
Rehab vacant homes  
Bring life back to the neighborhood  
I would clean up the 1200 blk of Decker Ave. Everyone knows that is a drug corner. No police, no progress.  
Clean Alleys and bus stops  
Rat Abatement  
Encourage homeownerhsip; less Section 8 and renters

### Community Cohesion

Love and peace in the neighborhood  
More unity in the community  
Stop crime

What do you like most about your neighborhood?

### Peaceful

Peaceful, quiet  
It's quiet. It's usually well kept by the homeowners

### Community of Neighbors

Respectful neighbors  
Neighbors who are polite, courteous, and know how to co-habitat and work together  
Meeting with community of Berea to have open discussions about the community  
The feeling of a home grown community.  
Homeowners that have invested and care more about their community  
People who you went to school with knowing the family history such as family members

### Location/Accessibility

It's good in close to bus stops, stores, and schools  
Close to local hospitals, downtown & access to local highways  
Easy to get to a lot of places (shopping, church, neighbors)  
Shopping and convenience stores are not too hard to get to

