

How the questionnaire was created

At the first meeting of the Marshall Township Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee in September 2020, the group identified potential key issues and questions that should be asked of the community to help inform direction for Marshall Township's future.

A draft questionnaire was developed in SurveyMonkey. The Steering Committee and staff reviewed and provided feedback that was incorporated in the final version. The questionnaire was open from mid-October through December 1, 2020.

Distribution

Township staff printed and mailed to every address a postcard introducing the project and providing a link to the questionnaire and project website, planmarshall.org. The SurveyMonkey link also appeared on the Township's website and was promoted via its social media accounts and Savvy Citizen, as well as circulated by Steering Committee members among their own networks. Local businesses, including T-Bones, distributed postcards to customers. Notice appeared in the North Hills edition of the Tribune-Review and at triblive.com. Pashek+MTR distributed flyers with the survey link at a community trick-or-treat event. For residents who preferred to complete a paper questionnaire, the Township provided hard copies upon request. Staff also provided hard copies for residents at The Waters. Staff manually entered all received hard copy responses into SurveyMonkey.

Response rate

The questionnaire received a total of 907 responses. In validating the data, we flagged any IP address (the address of an individual device) associated with four or more responses, acknowledging that multiple members of a single household could respond using the same computer. There were five such instances. However, a detailed review of the responses seems to indicate that all are unique and unlikely to be the result of any effort to unduly influence results. We also examined the 20 responses that indicated that respondents do not live in the Township but are interested in its future planning. We reviewed these responses and decided that they were appropriate and included them in the questionnaire totals.

This questionnaire was not intended to achieve statistically valid results. We find value in qualitative information generated by the questionnaire, especially the responses to open-ended questions, and typically use this data to identify trends. That said, if this were a random sample distribution, the response rate of 907 for 9,355 would represent a 95% confidence level of accuracy within a 3.1% margin of error. The diligent outreach efforts of staff and the Steering Committee helped deliver a large pool of responses that provides valuable insight on the questions asked.

The results

Pashek+MTR summarized the most important responses to the questionnaire. For additional tabulations and *much* more detail in qualitative comments, see the full questionnaire printout.

Q1 How long have you lived in Marshall Township? (886 responses)

| Age range | Respondents as % |
|---|------------------|
| Less than 5 years | 23% |
| 5 to 20 years | 42% |
| More than 20 years | 33% |
| I do not reside in Marshall Township but am interested in planning for its future | 2% |

Q2 What are the best features of living in Marshall Township? Please rate the importance of these factors, with 1 being very satisfied and 5 being not satisfied. (890 responses)

The highest-ranking four features were, in order:

1. Safe and healthy place to raise children (Weighted average: 1.47)
2. School district quality (1.50)
3. Open space and natural scenery (1.57)
4. Convenient access to major highways and destinations (1.61)

Q3 If a Township quality or feature is important to you but was not listed in Question 2, please list it here. (187 responses)

Rural character was by far the most frequently mentioned quality or feature mentioned.

Q4 How satisfied are you with the following aspects of life in the Township? Please rate your satisfaction, with 1 being very satisfied and 5 being not satisfied. (879 responses)

The highest-ranking five aspects were, in order:

1. Public safety (police, fire and emergency services) (Weighted average: 1.60)
2. Township road snow clearing (1.69)
3. General maintenance of Township property (1.88)
4. Park facilities within the Township (1.90)
5. Township road maintenance (1.94)

For context, 87% of respondents were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with public safety, while 44% felt the same way about connectivity. This question received 193 comments.

Q5 If a you have strong feelings about a Township service and/or facility not listed in Question 4, please explain it here. (194 responses)

Lack of connectivity via bike/hike was the most frequently mentioned issue.

Q6 Initial conversations among Township officials and residents suggest some issues that may be especially important to the community. Please rank the following issues in order of importance. (701 responses)

Where respondents are asked to rank various options, SurveyMonkey provides an overall score for each option by weighting the responses. The highest score reflects the highest overall ranking across responses.

1. Balancing growth/development with preservation of existing rural character (7.31)
2. Finding solutions for traffic problems, particularly along the Route 910 corridor (6.12)
3. Increasing safe connections within and beyond neighborhoods for walking and biking (5.97)
4. Preserving and enhancing environmental quality (5.38)
5. Building a cohesive sense of close-knit community (4.99)
6. Further developing Warrendale as a walkable town-center neighborhood (4.65)
7. Increasing resilience (ability to endure, adapt and recover from adverse situations, such as infrastructure failure or severe weather) (4.16)
8. Defining a unique identity and branding for Marshall Township (4.02)

Q7 Does Marshall Township have other issues that are important to you but not listed in Question 6? Please explain. (174 responses)

The most frequent “other” comment was the need to limit development in the future.

Q8 What do you think distinguishes Marshall Township from neighboring communities? In other words, if the Township ought to be known and appreciated for something, what would that be? (367 responses)

The top three most frequently mentioned characteristic that distinguishes Marshall Township is:

1. Rural, quiet community
2. Good access to roads and shopping
3. Greenspace and trees

Q9 The availability of utilities like sanitary sewage and public water on the western portion of the Township has provided an opportunity for development. What kind of development would you prefer to see happen in this area? (656 responses)

| | Respondents as % |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Single-family homes with large private lawns | 42% |
| Other (please specify, including any combination of the above) | 20% |
| Accessible, low-maintenance independent living options for seniors, such as a patio home village | 17% |
| Single-family homes clustered on smaller lots with preserved open space | 15% |
| Continuing care facilities for seniors that combine housing with health services | 4% |
| Townhomes | 2% |
| Apartments and/or condominiums | 0.5% |

In the “others” comments, the top three most frequently mentioned preferences for development were:

1. No development
2. Various combinations of Single Family homes
3. Homes for seniors and empty nesters

Q10 Which of the following represents the best future land use scenario for the area along Route 910 within the Township? (Wexford Bayne Road roughly between the I-79 interchange and Blue Heron Dr.) (663 responses)

| | Respondents as % |
|---|-----------------------------|
| This area should remain single-family residential | 48% |
| This area should be mixed-use with neighborhood-scale retail and services | 27% |
| Other (please specify, including any combination of the above) | 11% |
| This area should be residential with some multi-family options | 10% |
| This area would be appropriate for commercial development. | 4% |

When looking at the entire 910 corridor within Marshall Township, the most frequent suggestion was to maintain green space and to not develop the land along 910.

Q11 What is/are the most serious problems when thinking of traffic generally within Marshall Township and specifically on Route 910? (669 responses)

Respondents could select multiple options.

| | % |
|--|-----|
| Too much traffic/congestion | 70% |
| Lack of pedestrian and bicycle amenities | 28% |
| Speeding | 24% |
| Pedestrian routes/safety | 19% |
| Bicycle routes/safety | 15% |
| Other (please explain) | 11% |

Lots of suggestions regarding traffic. Most frequently mentioned were:

1. Widen 910
2. Add left turn lanes
3. Better enforcement of regulations by police and more regulatory signs

Eight people said that the congestion was a perception and not a reality.

Q12 Would you walk and/or ride a bicycle along Route 910 if pedestrian/bike facilities were added? (678 responses)

| | Respondents as % |
|---|---------------------|
| I would not walk or bike along Route 910 | 39% |
| I would both walk and bike on a shared path | 23% |
| I would walk on a sidewalk or shared path | 14% |
| Not sure | 14% |
| Other (please explain) | 8% |
| I would bike on a shared path | 2% |

The “other” comments were roughly split between willing to walk/bike and never interested in walking/biking.

Q13 Township leaders intend to fully study demand and feasibility for a community center facility as part of an upcoming Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. At this point, do you feel that finding a way to build and operate a community center in Marshall Township should be a priority? (673 responses)

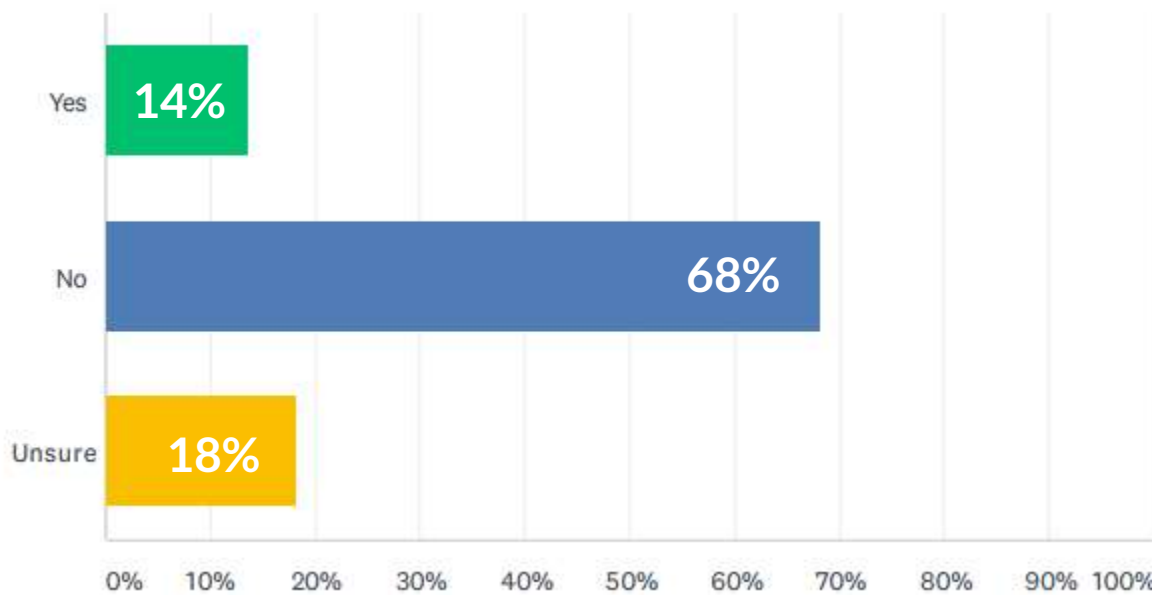
Yes: 37.3%
No: 37.9%

Unsure: 24.8%

The “other” comments were also roughly split between supporting and not supporting a community center.

Q14 Marshall Township’s population (currently about 9,355) is below the traditional National Recreation and Park Association standard for a community center (20,000 residents), which suggests that financing this type of facility may require an additional funding effort of some type. Generally speaking, would you support a property tax rate increase to finance development of a community center in Marshall Township? (678 responses)

Most of the “other” comments were against a tax increase for a community center.



Q15 Benchmarking: If you've seen a community feature, neighborhood or entire community elsewhere that you would like Marshall Township to emulate, please name and describe it here. (201 responses)

The two most frequently mentioned “other” comment were park and recreation facilities other communities have (Pine, Cranberry, Hampton) and communities that do a good job of preserving nature (Fox Chapel, Bradford Woods, Hilton Head).

Q16 Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns about Marshall Township not addressed in this questionnaire? (183 responses)

The top five “other” comments were:

1. Concern with future development – don’t allow or slow down
2. Poor internet/cable service
3. Speeding
4. Lack of trails
5. Need for more parks and recreation

Q17 In what age range do you fall? (677 responses)

| | Respondents as % | TOTAL Township Residents as %* |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 19 or younger | 0% | - |
| 20-34 | 8% | 15% |
| 35-54 | 49% | 46% |
| 55-64 | 24% | 19% |
| 65 to 74 | 15% | 13% |
| 75 or older | 4% | 6% |

*The census information by age group was prorated to not include ages less than 20 for a more accurate comparison. This suggests that the respondents were similar in age range to the community as a whole.

Q18 How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? (675 responses)

| | Respondents as % |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| None | 51% |
| 1 | 15% |
| 2 | 22% |
| 3 | 9% |
| 4 or more | 2% |

Q19 The Covid-19 public health crisis may have long-term implications for commuting patterns, traffic, shopping habits, home design and other aspects of daily life. The following questions will help us learn how these changes will impact Marshall Township. If you are employed, where was your primary work location prior to the Covid-19 public health crisis? (661 responses)

The top five locations were, in order:

1. In or close to the City of Pittsburgh (26%)
2. Not applicable (21%)
3. I was working remotely prior to the Covid-19 crisis (12%)

4. Other North Hills community (Pine, McCandless, Hampton, Ross) (10%)
5. Within Marshall Township (9%)

Q20 If you are employed, do you expect that your primary work location will change in the long term from the location selected above as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic? (660 responses)

No: 42%
N/A: 23%
Maybe: 8%
Yes: 23%

Q21 Do you expect that your daily habits have been permanently changed as a result of new routines developed since the beginning of the Covid-19 public health crisis? Please check all that apply. (666 responses)

Respondents could select multiple choices.

The top five selections were, in order:

1. I anticipate spending more time using local parks and trails (46%)
2. I anticipate getting more of my shopping done online (44%)
3. I expect that my daily habits will all return to normal once the crisis is over (44%)
4. I would still prefer to shop in-store once the crisis is over (41%)
5. I anticipate making trips to the grocery store less often (39%)

Q22 395 respondents submitted contact information to be kept in the loop on as the project develops.