UMASS ENGAGE
AMHERST TOGETHER

Prof. Flavia Montenegro-Menezes
UMass Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning
Team

Research Analyst

Jennifer Stromsten

Surveying Volunteers, Spring 2015

1. Stephen Meno
2. Madison Burke
3. Jeremy Price
4. Lara Furtado
5. Marika Kopp
6. Johanna Pacek
7. Thomas Kelley
8. Frederico Pina
9. Gabriell Mirolli
10. Hannah Logan
11. Catherine Connoly
12. Liza Twomey
13. Chloe Ferguson
14. Jacob Menacker
Public Participation Class, Fall 2014
OUTREACH: 1,285 PARTICIPANTS

Goal: To hear as many voices as possible, in a process as inclusive as possible

Target Population Engagement

- Elderly Centers: 12 participants in focus groups
- ARPS Family Center: 26 participants in focus groups
- Local Businesses: 11 participants in interviews
- College Students: 6 participants in focus groups, 113 comments on boards
- Middle-School Students: 480 students (74 participants in focus groups, 181 comments on graffiti wall, 359 responses in marble jars)
- Town residents: 181 comments on maps and boards

116 in-depth responses and 475 comments

Community Wide Survey

- Amherst Together Initiative: News articles, school campaign, thousands of posters and flyers town-wide (businesses and homes), 50 organizations emailed, 14 community leaders and organizations contacted in-person
- 247 surveys collected online
- 209 surveys collected in-person in every residential area in town.

456 Survey Responses, among which 31 were from neighboring towns, mostly Pelham, Leverett and Hadley but also Shutesbury, Sunderland and Belchertown.
COMMUNITY WIDE SURVEY

Spring 2015
GEOGRAPHIC CLUSTERING SAMPLE

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

- Neighboring Towns: 7%
  - 1: 10%, 9%
  - 2: 9%
  - 3: 9%
  - 4: 9%
  - 5: 9%
  - 6: 10%
  - 7: 9%
  - 8: 10%
  - 9: 9%

Find your polling place online at: www.amherstma.gov/vote
**Languages Represented**

- Arabic
- Bulgarian
- Bangla
- Cambodian (Khmer)
- Chinese
- Chinese (Cantonese)
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Creole
- Creole (Haitian)
- Creole (Portuguese)
- Czech
- English
- French
- German
- Hindi
- Hungarian
- Japanese
- Italian
- Korean
- Persian
- Persian (Farsi)
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish

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**Gender**

- Female: 34%
- Male: 64%
- Other: 2%

**Age**

- 19 or less: 8.8%
- 20-29: 23.3%
- 30-39: 10.1%
- 40-49: 19.2%
- 50-59: 21.3%
- 60 or more: 21.3%

**Last Year of School**

- Doctorate: 29.5%
- Masters Degree: 29.5%
- Professional Degree: 14.6%
- Bachelors degree: 4.8%
- Some college or...: 5%
- High school or...: 14.6%
- Middle school: 0.2%
- Elementary school: 0.2%
- No formal education: 0.2%

**First Language**

- English: 86%
- Non-English: 14%

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**Occupation**

- No past job: 27.6%
- Seeking for work: 4.6%
- Employed part time: 23%
- Employed full time: 44.1%

**Area of Occupation**

- Culture, Services: 11.8%
- Administration: 11.5%
- Construction: 11.5%
- Health: 7.2%
- Business, Commerce: 6.5%
- Agriculture: 3.8%
- Education: 1.8%

**Length of Residence**

- Don't live in Amherst: 23%
- Born in Amherst: 1.9%
- 21 years or more: 1.9%
- 11 to 20 years: 22.3%
- 7 to 10 years: 10.6%
- 4 to 6 years: 12.9%
- 1 to 3 years: 19.7%
- Less than 1 year: 7.7%

**Intention to Move**

- No: 41%
- Maybe: 20%
- Yes: 39%
Culture:
“... the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterizes a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs...”

UNESCO Mondiacult Conference, 1982
CULTURAL IDENTITY

Number of Coding References

- Origin: 169
- Values: 165
- Color and race: 117
- Religion: 83
- Activity: 44
- Personal traits: 42
- Social status: 39
- Gender: 32
- Political view: 22
- Educational attainment: 17
- Age: 10
- Familial status: 9
- Social system: 8
- Multicultural: 18
- Negative Perceptions: 13
- Unclear: 21

TOTAL: 809

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- Origin: 169
- Descent: 70
- Native: 99
CULTURAL IDENTITY

VALUES
- altruism: 26
- tradition: 25
- family: 21
- culture and the arts: 15
- diversity: 14
- social relation: 13
- education: 13
- nature: 13
- health: 5
- freedom: 5
- peace: 5
- work: 4
- integrity: 4
- humanism: 2

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THE ROLE OF CULTURE

Culture helps me to understand the world and its people

Culture is important for my personal development

Culture encourages a sense of community

Culture encourages a sense of local identity

Culture has a high value for my community

[Bar chart showing the percentage of responses for each statement, with categories for Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]
VALUES (A)

- Having contact with your family
- Spending time with friends
- Helping people around you, caring for their well-being
- Learning about people from other cultures and lifestyles
- Listening to and respecting people even if you disagree
- Having support in time of crisis, illness or injury
- Counting on neighbors and friends for responsibilities of daily life
- Trusting people you know in your community
- Eating healthy, fresh food
- Practicing sports, doing physical activities
- Being in contact with nature
- Having open access to information
- Investing in your education and personal goals
- Respecting parents and elders
- Committing to traditional culture
- Partaking in events in your own customs and beliefs
- Going out and enjoying good restaurants, clubs, and concerts
- Having a life filled with adventure and novelty
- Making your own decisions, being free to choose your own goals
- Leading a spiritual life
VALUES (B)

- Resolving disputes around you
- Enjoying music, arts or theater
- Having a good and comfortable house
- Living in an area with environmental quality, clean air and water
- Being healthy
- Having the time to rest and enjoy life
- Having job stability and security in the future
- Maintaining the safety and security of your loved ones
- Having freedom to say what you think
- Having freedom to lead the kind of life you value
- Having an open government, understanding how things are done
- Having clear rules of conduct and policies
- Having a say in public decisions that impact your life
- Preventing the gap widening between rich and poor
- Promoting justice for everybody, protecting the weak in society
- Living in a less impersonal, more humane society
- Caring for nature, looking after the environment
- Avoid wasting natural resources and polluting the environment
- Feeling affinity for the people and place you live in

Legend:
- Opposed to my values
- Nor at all important
- Important
- Very important
- Extremely important
PERCEPTIONS (A)

I feel a sense of belonging, I am accepted in this community
We live in a vibrant interesting place, with stimulating activities
We can enjoy music, arts and theater; there are good performance spaces
Our community values different cultures and traditions; cultural diversity can thrive
We have affordable and good quality housing available
I am able to balance work, leisure and family time
Our community has sporting events and diverse opportunities to practice sports
We have public transportation to go to places we want, when we want
We have accessible markets, restaurants and good places to buy healthy food
People from different origins and cultures make the community more interesting
There is solidarity in my community, people care for each other
Health care and medical centers are available to meet my needs
We have supportive public and social services
The elders are well taken care of
We have good public schools and opportunities to study what interest us
We have good library services, we can easily access information
Children can play safely in our parks and open spaces in our neighborhood
The government is transparent, we understand how decisions are made in our...
I understand the rules and laws that have a direct impact on my activities
Everyone has equal opportunities for education and employment
PERCEPTIONS (B)

- We can influence public decisions
- I can count on neighbors and friends for help with life's daily responsibilities
- I keep close contact with my family, they make a positive contribution to my life
- There are good jobs available with steady pay and benefits
- We take good care of natural resources for future generations
- Our community has active recycling programs
- From my home, I have easy access to parks and green areas
- There are many nice open spaces where I can gather together with friends
- There are social events in my own tradition, I can share my culture and beliefs
- The air and water are clean and fresh
- Everyone is respected, even if they are different
- The night life is active, with a variety of good restaurants, clubs, and concerts
- People tolerate one another's religious beliefs and practices, or lack thereof
- When there is a problem, people talk openly and get together to work on it
- We generally can trust people in the community
- I feel that I can choose and pursue my own goals
- I have freedom to live the kind of life I value and have reason to value
- I am free to express my opinions and ideas, to which my community is receptive
- People have equal rights in their everyday lives at every level of society
- My neighbors are friendly, they speak to me or invite me into their homes
PRIORITY VALUES AND PERCEPTIONS

[Diagram showing values and satisfaction levels for various aspects such as autonomy, voice, freedom, information, education, health care, environmental quality, environmental stewardship, health food, recycling, sense of community, social services, economic equity.]

VW Survey | Montenegro-Menezes | UMass LARP 2015
### Priority Values and Perceptions

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**Health care**  Being healthy  **Health care and medical centers are available to meet my needs**

| **Environmental quality** | Living in an area with environmental quality, with clean water and clean air | The air and water are clean and fresh |
| **Environmental stewardship** | Caring for nature, looking after the environment | We take good care of natural resources for future generations |
| **Recycling** | Avoid wasting natural resources and polluting the environment | Our community has active recycling programs |
| **Sense of community** | Feeling affinity for the people and place you live in, a sense of belonging | I feel a sense of belonging, I am accepted in this community |
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**Environmental stewardship**

- Caring for nature, looking after the environment
- We take good care of natural resources for future generations

**Recycling**

- Avoid wasting natural resources and polluting the environment
- Our community has active recycling programs

**Sense of community**

- Feeling affinity for the people and place you live in, a sense of belonging
- I feel a sense of belonging, I am accepted in this community

**Social services**

- Having support in time of crisis, illness or injury
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**Economic equity**

- Preventing the gap widening between rich and poor
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**Justice**

- Promoting justice for everybody, protecting the weak in society
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<td>Promoting the gap widening between rich and poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>People have equal rights in everybody, protecting their everyday lives at</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weak in society</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

VW Survey | Montenegro-Menezes | UMass LARP 2015
6% of people have gone without food and medicine in the past year
15% felt unsafe at night or experienced robberies in their neighborhood
30% had problems with alcohol and drugs in the street
30% experienced racism and discrimination to some degree
OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION

- Satisfied: 48%
- Dissatisfied: 11%
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied: 17%
- Extremely Satisfied: 21%
- Extremely Dissatisfied: 3%

Bar graph showing responses to statements:

- In most ways my life is close to ideal: 49.9% Agree, 19% Disagree
- The conditions of my life are excellent: 49% Agree, 18.4% Disagree
- I am satisfied with my life: 53.1% Agree, 50.8% Strongly Agree
- So far I have gotten the important things I want in life: 24.1% Agree, 25.4% Strongly Agree
- I would change almost nothing in my life: 30.4% Agree, 20.8% Strongly Agree

Legend:
- Orange: Strongly Disagree
- Yellow: Disagree
- Green: Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Brown: Agree
- Dark Brown: Strongly Agree
WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT AMHERST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Coding References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of community</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Institutions</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical setting</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livability</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Perceptions</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,017</td>
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WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT AMHERST

- Sense of community: 310
- Opportunities: 260
- Formal Institutions: 147
- Physical setting: 132
- Livability: 111
- Negative Perceptions: 56
- Unclear: 21
- TOTAL: 1,017

- Sense of community
- diverse: 68
- open-minded: 63
- progressive
- friendly: 41
- cohesive: 35
- educated
- caring: 27
- environmentally aware: 18
- socially conscious: 22
- intellectually vibrant: 15
- 8
WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT AMHERST

Number of Coding References

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Cultural and educational</td>
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<td>Outdoors</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>General opportunities</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
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WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT AMHERST

Number of Coding References

- Formal Institutions: 147
- Schools: 69
- Universities: 57
- Governance: 12
- Libraries: 9

Category

Sense of community: 310
Opportunities: 260
Formal Institutions: 147
Physical setting: 132
Livability: 111
Negative Perceptions: 36
Unclear: 21
TOTAL: 1,017

VW Survey | Montenegro-Menezes | UMass LARP 2015
WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT AMHERST

Category | Number of Coding References
--- | ---
Sense of community | 310
Opportunities | 260
Formal Institutions | 147
Physical setting | 132
Livability | 111
Negative Perceptions | 56
Unclear | 21
TOTAL | 1,017

Physical setting
- landscape: 32
- access to nature: 32
- small town feel: 32
- location: 17
- pleasant downtown: 11
- rural environment: 8
WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT AMHERST

Number of Coding References

- Sense of community: 310
- Opportunities: 260
- Formal Institutions: 147
- Physical setting: 132
- Livability: 111
- Negative Perceptions: 36
- Unclear: 21
- TOTAL: 1,017

Livability: 111
Safety: 38
Local food and farms: 25
Raising children: 16
Peaceful: 11
Transportation: 8
Public services: 5
Housing: 5
General quality of life: 3
WHAT YOU WOULD CHANGE IF YOU COULD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Livability</td>
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<td>Nothing</td>
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</table>
WHAT YOU WOULD CHANGE IF YOU COULD

- Physical Setting: 110
  - transport infrastructure: 56
  - downtown development: 49
  - amenities: 16
  - environmental solutions: 5

- Sense of community: 179
- Institutions: 103
- Livability: 86
- Opportunities: 70
- Nothing: 25
- Unclear: 5

Total: 578
WHAT YOU WOULD CHANGE IF YOU COULD

- Institutions: 103
- Government: 40
- School: 37
- University: 26
WHAT YOU WOULD CHANGE IF YOU COULD

- Livability: 86
- Housing: 39
- Cost of living: 22
- Alcohol and drugs abuse: 11
- Services: 9
- Police: 5

Categories:
- Sense of community
- Physical Setting
- Institutions
- Livability
- Opportunities
- Nothing
- Unclear
- TOTAL

Number of Coding References
0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700
WHAT YOU WOULD CHANGE IF YOU COULD

![Bar Chart]

- Opportunities: 70
- Activities: 22
- Social connection: 20
- Employment: 11
- Volunteering: 1

### Code References by Category

- Sense of community: 179
- Physical Setting: 110
- Institutions: 103
- Livability: 86
- Opportunities: 70
- Nothing: 25
- Unclear: 5

TOTAL: 578

---

VW Survey | Montenegro-Menezes | UMass LARP 2015
SPACES AND ACTIVITIES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elderly activities</td>
<td>14.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills development</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's programs</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covered Marketplace</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community gardening</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gathering spaces</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and entertainment facilities</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.9</td>
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<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>49.5</td>
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</table>
TARGET POPULATION ENGAGEMENT

Fall 2014
OVERALL PERCEPTION OF ASSETS

- Local culture, intellectually engaging community
- Diverse population, people from “all walks of life”
- Well-renowned educational facilities, and related cultural atmosphere - museums, performances and art events
- Sense of safety, tolerance, friendship and kindness
- Small town feel, great mix of rural and urban advantages
- Downtown walkability, diversified restaurants and activities
- Local food and sustainable farms
- Beautiful landscape, conservation lands, public parks and outdoors activities
- Great place! Needs more…
ISSUES HIGHLIGHTS

- Families
- Businesses
- College Students
- Middle Schoolers
- Elders
FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

[Bar chart with categories such as Academic culture, Affordability, Agriculture and Farming, Atmosphere, Built environment, Commerce, Community Culture, Cultural Vibrancy, Development, Diversity of People, Family Values, Grassroots Movements, Governance, Housing, Justice, Opportunity, Participation, Relationship, Safety and Security, School System, Sense of Belonging, Social and Health services, Social dominance, Social Networks, Student culture, Tax issues, Tradition and Heritage, Transportation, Universities, ASSET, ISSUE, VISION]
FAMILY ISSUES HIGHLIGHT

Justice:

- Unequal access to transportation, housing, jobs, and essential services due to race, language barrier, socio-economic status or power dynamics.
- Class sorting based on recreational activities people can afford to do, such as skiing.
- Student's exclusion from educational opportunities, such as travel programs and certain sports teams, based on transportation and additional cost.
- Experiences of unfair treatment by public officials, public safety officers, and landlords - sense that enforcement is uneven.
- Racial prejudice experienced, both personally hurtful and limiting access – e.g. bus bypassing people of color.
- Lack of diversity among personnel in administration, public schools, libraries, and colleges.
- Competition with college students for buses, housing and jobs notably.

“...it’s hard for lower class people trying to move forward”.

“I think that it would be better if there was a police officer that spoke Spanish because they can’t communicate the issue and everyone gets frustrated.”
FAMILY ISSUES HIGHLIGHT

School System:

- Poor communication and communicating effectiveness between school and parents. Sense of ‘not knowing’, ‘not being heard’, or having no follow-through after important initiatives or incidents.
- Incongruous or excessive use of suspensions.
- Dropouts among minority boys and limitations for special needs, challenged and non-college bound students.

“Problems are not addressed well enough, and it is coming from the top. We deserve answers, and we are not even allowed to go to the school committee. We can not go to the town manager, no one can do anything.”

Transportation:

- Pedestrian safety, lack of sidewalks particularly during snowy periods.
- Inappropriate bus schedule and routes reducing students’ access to educational and extra-curricular programs, and parents’ and guardians’ access to services and activities.

“The buses don’t even run early enough to get to the events that the school puts on; breakfast with the principal at 8:30. How am I supposed to make that? I can’t get all my kids on the bus and get to that breakfast.”

“I live by the Hess gas station and the bus stops running in the summer time, the buses revolve around students. The buses stop around the students’ vacations too.”
BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

[Bar chart showing various categories with bars in blue, red, and green representing ASSET, ISSUE, and VISION respectively.]

Target Population Engagement | Montenegro-Menezes | UMass LARP 2015
**BUSINESS ISSUES HIGHLIGHT**

**Development:**
- Sense of local NIMBYism, quaintness, resistance to change and growth.
- Tax burden, high rental costs and slow process make it a difficult entry for small businesses and young entrepreneurs.
- Student-oriented businesses. Colleges insulate businesses from economic downturn but only contribute meaningfully for 6.5 months per year (school-year economy).

**Governance:**
- Disconnect between town government and businesses’ concerns. Feeling unheard or poorly accommodated.
- Dominance of a small, politically active elite.
- Constraining rules and bureaucracies. Existing processes don’t consistently work, or aren’t designed to work for local businesses in particular.

“They need to be more business friendly. They need to let mom & pop back in.”

“They need to let businesses know about meetings and projects ahead of time, not at the last minute. The town needs to include them as well. They tend to forget the businesses.”

“While much effort is made to foster relationships with the local (tax exempt) colleges, I feel that similar effort should be made to foster new and existing small business”
University:

- UMass ‘competes’ with local businesses; money revolves around the schools, rather than the town.
- Burden of service costs not distributed well between town and colleges.
- Disconnect between town and UMass. UMass is becoming self-contained, revenue moves from campus to town less and less. UMass is a huge employer but 71% of employees don’t live in Amherst.

“In the 90’s, when I went to UMASS, businesses downtown thrived. Delanos had lines all of the time. They cannot compete with UMASS anymore. Costs are a big reason. UMASS only has to break even, they don’t care about the price of the product.”

“UMASS prevents small businesses from advertising to students. They don’t know that these businesses are here.”

“Why should students leave campus? Everything is there now.”

“UMASS prefers to be isolated. Keep the kids on campus. They are not part of the community. They are working on it...”
Opportunity:

- General lack of opportunities - social activities, amenities and employment – for young families and entrepreneurs (AGE GAP 25-35 years old).
- Housing affordability.

Student Culture:

- Feeling unwelcome by the locals. Some references to ‘discrimination’ against college students.
- “Zoomass” stereotype.

“As a student yeah [I’ve been discriminated against]. Students definitely get a negative rep, they affect a lot of the locals.”

“I figure we’ll eventually grow up to be one of those people that hates the college students.”

“When I think of Northampton, I think of it as more of a community, Amherst is clique-y with students.”

“Northampton is special because Smith College blends into the community, nobody in Northampton looks down on Smith students just because they’re college students, in Amherst we’re seen as ‘UMass kids’, in Smith students are more in tune with local community.”
COLLEGE STUDENT ISSUES HIGHLIGHT

University:

- Disconnect between town and campus. UMass doesn’t “blend” into the community.
- UMass absorbs or out-competes local business. Students have a full complement of resources on campus including bookstores, dining services, health services and convenience stores.

“Feel like I live in an UMass bubble, I’m not really aware of anything outside of campus.”

“I know about town center events because I look for things but it is not well advertised. I’ve never seen anything around UMass.”

“I feel as though the town and UMass don’t get along.”

“UMass is a “living” thing, so people come in and out by the thousands every year. I’ve never felt as though I actually contribute to what the town itself decides. Whatever the town decides goes because you live here too. Being that we are the largest influential part of the population, there really isn’t a representation of our voice.”

“The whole economy depends on us being here. It’s a sort of trade off, yeah we may be a pain in the butt but you rely on us for business, so the question is how do we nurture that?”
MIDDLE SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE

[Bar chart showing various categories and their corresponding values for ASSET, ISSUE, and VISION]
Justice:

- Stereotypes, assumptions based on an individual’s characteristics that conflict with one’s true and self-defined identity.
- Frustration or confusion related to adult's experiences and culture manifested in town. How can such an open, progressive culture and diverse place be seeing conflict, fear and hate.
- Bullying and threats towards students and the school staff.

**“The last couple of months there's been a lot drama like bomb threats, it happens because people get bullied.”**

Relationship:

- Lack of spaces for social gatherings - social landscape is a major contributor to perceived quality of life.
- Social world most often limited to home and school. Sports seems to foster a sense of community among participants, allowing for third place for socializing.
- Importance of places, experiences, and mechanisms that foster relationships.

**“I like being at the middle school more because... I get to meet a lot of kids from everywhere.”**
School system:

- Substance of the curriculum and workload, with the most prevalent topic being homework.
- Critiques on how discipline or infractions are handled.
- Feeling of not being heard or respected in their individuality.
- Dress code and start time, particularly as it impacts kids who travel from outside Amherst.
- Teacher-student interactions.

"I would change the school system because it's annoying and bad."
"We can not tell a simple joke without being yelled at by a teacher saying it is inappropriate."

"The schools <3"
"The teachers teach because they want to not because they have to (like at my old school)."
"Teachers, they care about teaching and their students."
Academic Culture:

- Exclusion - Source of rich cultural offerings, but not everyone may feel part of Amherst's college town and campus culture. Living in Amherst can be hard if you are not part of that culture.

  “I lived on Dana street and everybody who lived down the street was at the University or Amherst College. We were invited to everything down on the street. But I think a lot of people who just have this ordinary, um, job, they didn't look at Amherst as being a very friendly place at all.”

  “We bought a house in Amherst but because we had gone to Amherst College we were included in a great number of things. For those people who did not have that kind of connection, living in Amherst would be terrible. You know, the connection with either the University or with both the college. I would be resentful and I suspect they are.”

  “We have plays, we have groups that do Shakespeare, we have concerts, we have dancers. We have Mullin’s center, which brings in many classic acts, we have all kinds of recital halls at Amherst College where there is wind ensembles and there is string ensembles and there is all sorts of classical music presented and I meant those things are all available, but they are not really available unless you have those connections.”

  “Academia.. is a world unto its own and the ordinary people have jobs and they don't feel that being an academia is having a job. It is a calling.”
Diversity of People:

- Pride in a community seem as multi-cultural, multi-racial and fostering of individual friendships across differences and feel that race conflict and intolerance should not be happening.

  “Something that bothered me this past year was the school being accused of being racist, because this really is not a racist place. You know, so, that was a little disturbing.”

  “…the one thing I don’t understand…. is the racial questions about the young people in the schools today.”

Justice:

- Class divide and elitism. Diverse languages, cultures and races, but important socioeconomic divide.

  “I think there are lots of people in Amherst that are having a hard time- just making it. It is an expensive place to live.”

  “I feel very sorry for the people. I have a lot of people work for me and I try to do the best I can for everything but I still feel that they haven’t had a fair chance.”
COMMUNITY VISION
DIRECTIONS FOR ACTION

▪ **Mutual Understanding** – Create collaborative fact-finding, conflict-resolution and follow-through mechanisms; improve information flow within both formal and informal institutions.

▪ **Expression of Diversity** – Facilitate cross-demographics interactions; promote multicultural activities that value the diversity that exists; increase receptivity to diverse worldviews and opinions.

▪ **Equitable Access** – Clarify neighborhood quality issues; assess transportation and service delivery from the perspective of underserved constituencies.

▪ **Policy Appraisal** – Gain a better understanding of impacts of and review polices within formal institutions (town, university and school).

▪ **Downtown Vibrancy** – Assess and meet the needs of multiple publics and businesses.

▪ **Collaboration Structures** – Share existing resources to meet common goals.
Thanks to

@ amherst together

LARPS

Landscape Architecture & Regional Planning

ARPS

Town of Amherst

flaviamontm@larpumass.edu

THANK YOU!