



Town of Upper Marlboro



2018 Door Knocking & Resident Feedback Survey Overview

December 2018

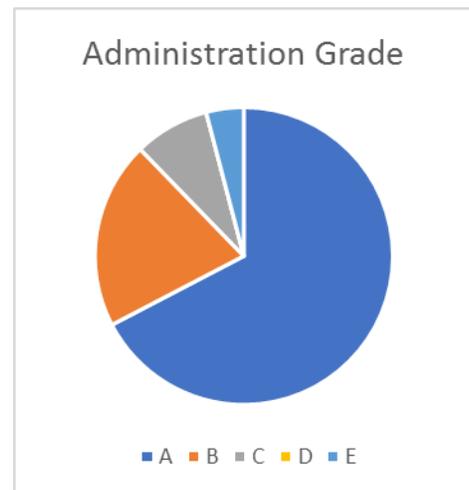


Overview:

On Saturday December 8th, 2018, Town Commissioners and Staff divided up into three teams to go door to door surveying all Town residents on their municipal services. In cases where no one answered the door, the team left a door hanger with a link to the Town website where they could take the survey online instead. This effort proved to be a success, providing Town Commissioners and Staff with valuable insight of resident's concern, as well as what they thought the Town government was doing correctly. Below is a breakdown of the overall grade of the Administration, which is overall an A.

What grade would you give the current Administration?

A	67.35%	33
B	20.41%	10
C	8.16%	4
D	0.00%	0
E	4.08%	2
TOTAL		49



Residents were satisfied with Town services, with the majority, 67% of residents polled, providing the administration with an A grade. However, there were several issues brought up by residents, so this document lays out a plan on what steps the Town can take to mitigate these concerns.

Resident Feedback & Comments:

The next few pages contain a list of all responses on why the grade was given to the administration, and what improvements residents would like to see. Each response was placed under the most appropriate category. At the end of each category, there are Town action items that need to be taken by the respective Department heads to ensure the resident's concerns are acted upon. Please note that these responses have not been altered, and were copied directly out of the comments, so please excuse any grammatical errors.



General Government Operations

Regarding Town General Government, residents seemed content with the operations of the Town's Administrative functions. There were concerns regarding budgeting and planning, along with Town Staff continuity, and grant funding.

- “I worry about adversarial relationships with county and court leadership and hope the new county leadership will work with the town better. I am glad for the positive relationships being built at the state level, and hope that further funding is earmarked for the town through bonds and grants (and we absolutely need to show results worthy of the funding provided so that future requests are reviewed in a positive light).”
- “I worry as well about the town staff, as there has been a bit of turnover in the past year. I want them to be happy and successful in their jobs, so that they stay and there is continuity to our town operations. I am very happy with the staff interaction that I have had, and although they are busier than ever, they have always been able to help me.”
- “Lack of planning for budgetary spending and ad hoc events. A mission/plan should be prepared outlined and adhered to strictly, with spending set aside for emergencies.”
- “I like how there is more outreach to the local community and more events to bring us together.”
- “Too arrogant.”
- “Likes that the Town is making improvements and actually out in the community.”
- “These small moves make me have faith that our cute and historic town could become an upscale place like Waterford, Va or one of those other quaint places people love. A place we could be proud of.”
- “I support our public servants and trust all are working hard.”
- “Better publication of events and agenda. I pledge to be more proactive and involved in the community.”
- “Stay the course stop being arrogant.”
- “Keep up the good work.”
- “Continue focus on winning grants and showing that the money is going to good use for the community so that further grants may be received in the future.”

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

- Continue to research and apply for grant funding which would benefit the Town
- Rehire quality employees to help stabilize the Town government and ensure continuity.
- Continue to overhaul Town financial procedures to ensure strategic spending
- Continue to work to improve relations with County officials and agencies.
- Continue to maximize community outreach and resident engagement through Social Media, website, and the *Landings* newsletter.
- Ensure that the agenda and meeting packets are posted on the Town website several days prior to meeting to allow residents time to review and prepare for Town meetings.



Public Works & Beautification

Residents noticed the ongoing beautification efforts that had been underway for the past several months and commented how much nicer and clean the Town looks. There were concerns of the need to repair existing sidewalks, and install additional ones.

- “The town is clean, better landscaped, and certainly presents a much better image than a year ago.”
- “New lighting LED lighting.”
- “The beautification makes it clear that Upper Marlboro doesn’t have to die.”
- “Been pleased by decorations and public safety awareness driving around.”
- “love the dog stations. doesn't like the "no parking" signs that are in the neighborhood (Marlborough Towne).”
- “more safety signs for children and speed signs.”
- “Would like to see Two Day Trash collection a week.”
- “More sidewalks.”
- “Speed bump, sidewalk, school In.”
- “Glad someone picks up leaves.”
- “Cracked/Damaged sidewalks.”
- “Work with the county/state to lessen the flooding by curbing development in surrounding areas that affect us upstream.”

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

- Continue to complete and plan beautification projects around Town.
- Work with Pepco to research LED street lighting upgrades.
- Work with SHA and County DPW&T to continue to upgrade and construct new sidewalks along non-Town roadways.
- Continue to replace aging street signs and install safety signs for roadways with children.
- Work with WSSC paving contractor to integrate speed bumps and sidewalks into the planned repaving projects they will be doing after their sewer line rehabilitation work around Town.
- Have Town Public Works crews survey all Town walkways and identify areas of concern, and work to mitigate any risks.
- Continue to work with DPW&T on their Western Branch floodplain project to reduce flooding.
- Work with Pepco, and research grant funding, to possibly upgrade Town street lights to LEDs.



Public Safety

Overall, residents felt safe within Town. However, concerns were raised of an incomplete Police Department and school bus stop safety program.

- “Your police dept shuts down at 11pm. Crime doesn’t stop. My neighborhood has been targeted several times. Just recently rims were stolen right out from of his house.”
- “feel safe walking around. love the area.”
- “concerned about the jail released individuals roaming the neighborhood.”
- “A better police department and hire a real chief.”
- “Move Obama Elementary School Bus stop from MD 725 to Spring Branch Drive.”

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

-The Town has hired a new Chief who starts January 2nd and will be sworn in at a Town Meeting.

-The new Chief of Police will be rebuilding and growing the Department to maximize coverage and patrols over the coming months with high quality officers.

-The new Chief should coordinate with the County Department of Corrections regarding the release of inmates from the detention center.

-The Town will reach out to PGCPS regarding the relocation of the bus stop, however in the meantime, UMPD should ensure officers are stationed at bus stops during pick-up/drop off hours to enhance visibility and to slow drivers down.



Code Enforcement

The primary concern of residents was vacant and abandoned properties within Town. Several other issues such as some non-visible house numbers and pets were identified by staff as well.

- “the vacant properties in town, OMES foremost, but commercial properties as well.”
- “Paying attention to vacant properties.”
- Street Numbering and Address (Identified by Staff)
- Pet Licensing (Identified by Staff)

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

-Code Enforcement Officer is working to identify and track all vacant properties in Town (both residential & commercial). This list of vacant properties will be shared with the Police Department on a regular basis to ensure these properties are secure and not being used by squatters. Code Officers will also work with property owners to ensure these vacant properties are kept in good repair and in compliance with Town Ordinances.

-Code Officer will research and recommend any Town legislation to expand the Town’s authority to monitor vacant properties.

-Code Officer will research and recommend any Town legislation regarding animals.

-Code Enforcement Officer should identify and cite any properties whose house numbers are not easily visible from the street using existing Town Ordinance covering this violation.



Events & Recreation

Overall, residents noticed and appreciated the increased number of different events, as well as recommending some new events

- “more events such as Halloween event.”
- “There are more community events (that we should attend).”
- “More employment and family social events free public events for children to stay out of trouble.”
- “Liked the Halloween event. upset about running out of candy.”
- “more summer fall activities.”
- “Take advantage of the waterway surrounding the town to make it more accessible for fishing and kayaking.”

Below are comments from residents on what events they would like to see happen:

What Events Would you like to See?

More outdoor activities; block parties, 5k races, events for singles, etc
 Marlborough Day, Car Show
 Marlboro Day, Haunted Tours, Historic House Tour/Event
 Street Fair. Close Main Street for a Summer concert
 More movies. Outdoor music. Public arts.
 I like the food truck Friday events. I would also like to see more holiday themed events for families. (Fun kid activities).
 anything exciting
 events for the kids
 Marlboro day

upper marlboro day
 upper marlboro day come back... christmas tree is beautiful
 Bring Marlboro Day back!
 Events for people looking for employment
 Not sure
 More events. I really like the Halloween event on Main St.
 not sure yet
 More movies at the pond. Maybe a block party?
 Nothing specific
 Better policing.
 Community service, meet n' greets

Have you attended any of the Town Events?

Yes	33.33%	21
No	66.67%	42

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

- The Town will work to improve existing Town events using this feedback, and work to identify new events that would benefit the community including the Marlborough Day Festival.
- The Town submitted a Maryland Natural Resources Conservation Grant application to fund the design and construction of a Western Branch Nature Park area which would include a fishing pier, kayak pier, picnic area and bicycle rest stop near the Cahn Memorial off MD 725.
- Town will work to improve outreach to increase Town resident participation in Town events (postcards, *Landings* newsletter, Social media etc.).



Economic Development

Overall, residents expressed their desire to have more shops and restaurants in the Downtown area, and to have the burnt-out building on Main Street rebuilt.

- We need good incentives to get and keep good businesses downtown, and the residents/workers in the area to support them
- I know the administration wants downtown revitalization and new businesses, but I'll believe it when I see it. It doesn't seem like any progress is being made on that front. There's been a burned-up building just sitting there for two months and it doesn't seem like there's any new activity being done on Main Street.
- would like to see more healthy options.
- Unrealistic but I'd like to see the bail bondsmen gone and businesses in.
- Please get Main Street together. More shops more Condos and office space and less government and more private business.
- more eateries,
- Focus on keeping good businesses that we have and getting better businesses downtown.
- Make the downtown more small-town looking and inviting. Work to increase the type of businesses in downtown that are directed at the Townspeople. Make the town more walkable

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

-Town will continue to work on creating a Request for Proposals to redevelop the Downtown Upper Marlboro area. This will include attracting a variety of new shops, eateries, and other businesses that will help make Downtown Upper Marlboro a desirable destination.

-The Town will continue to work with the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce (PGC/CoC) to stand up (open) an Upper Marlboro Branch of the CoC, to have a focused view on business development in Upper Marlboro. This new branch will provide Upper Marlboro businesses with a uniform voice and representation to promote business growth within the Town.

-The Town has seen two new businesses open up Downtown this year. It is also anticipating several new businesses opening, and existing businesses expanding, in the coming months.



Town Meeting Poll

During the Door Knocking, residents were also polled to see if they participated in Town Meetings, and if not, why. Overall, the majority of residents did not know when the meetings were held. Many did cite that they are too busy to attend but appreciated the meeting packets and additional information being posted online to keep them informed.

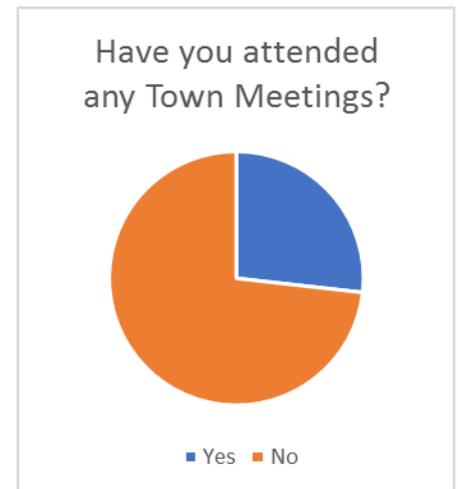
Do you know when the Town Hall meetings are?

Yes	36.51%	23
No	63.49%	40

If so, have you attended any?

Yes	26.79%	15
No	73.21%	41

Below are responses from residents as to why they do not attend Town Meetings:



Why don't you attend Town Meetings?

Work. I don't get home until very late.
Meeting times coincides with my work schedule
Meeting times
just hearing about them
Busy
busy
schedule
Don't know where they are
Transport
Timing
Scheduling
Work

Timing
no reason. not aware of location
personal time
Commute home and picking up child from daycare.
Scheduling
Scheduling
Don't know date or time
new to town
I've been too apathetic. Sorry...
Information publicized more broadly
Would like to watch them live

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

- Continue to work to broadcast Town meetings over the Town access channel and online.
- Continue to post meeting agendas, packets, and minutes online. Also work to better publicize these features of the Town website and have residents sign up to receive alerts when a meeting packet/agenda is published.
- Continue to promote Town meeting dates and times.



Town Outreach Poll

A fair amount of Town residents follow the Town's website, however, even less follow the Town on its other social media outlets.

Are you signed up on the Town Website?

Yes	41.27%	26
No	58.73%	37

If so, have you signed up to receive Info & Emergency Alerts?

Yes	17.46%	11
No	82.54%	52

Did you know you can request Public Works services and Police House Checks?

Yes	35.48%	22
No	64.52%	40

Do you follow the Town on Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor)?

Yes	32.79%	20
No	67.21%	41

Town Action Items to Address these Issues:

- Continue to promote the Town's website and social media outlets to Town residents.
- Ensure all content is posted across all Town media outlets.
- Better promotion of the Town's website online services and capabilities to Town residents and visitors (online Public Works requests, online Police House Check requests. etc.).
- Continue to promote the Town's Emergency Alerts notification system on the Town website.