



Public Summary, *Going Places* Participants Process Review Survey

This document summarizes the results of the survey of *Going Places* participants that was conducted by the staff of the consulting team, lead by the Wise Economy Workshop, during December 2012. This survey was designed to help the consulting staff understand the participants' experience during the development of *Going Places*, to date, and to help consulting staff formulate an effective strategy for completing the initiative. Results of this survey will be used, in conjunction with a detailed review of documentation of previous stages and a series of interviews and small group discussions with participants, to inform development of a process to enable transparent formulation of *Going Places*' final phase in 2013.

Since the objective of this survey was to identify points of satisfaction and concern regarding the initiative to date, the reader should keep in mind that both advisory and voting members' perceptions are represented in this survey. As a result, survey results indicating satisfaction or dissatisfaction do not correlate to the voting record of approvals and do not indicate any changes in voting patterns. Results here merely indicate the opinions of all participants, both advisory and those with voting responsibilities.

All survey results have been kept entirely anonymous.

This summary consists of four parts:

- An overview of survey participation;
- Results of the three (3) quantitative questions regarding perceptions of the *Going Places* process, to date;
- A narrative summary of the consulting team project manager's evaluation of overarching trends and themes that appear to surface across the body of written comments included in the survey; and
- A brief overview of next steps.

The reader is encouraged to remember that any survey of this type can contain biases. Although all members of the boards and committees identified below were invited and reminded to complete the survey, persons who chose to complete are likely to have chosen whether or not to participate based on their feelings about the initiative, to date. Although the participation rate was relatively high for a survey of this type, not all members of all four bodies (*Going Places* Steering Committee, *Going Places* Planning Advisory Committee, MVRPC Technical Advisory Committee, and MVRPC Board of Directors) completed the survey.



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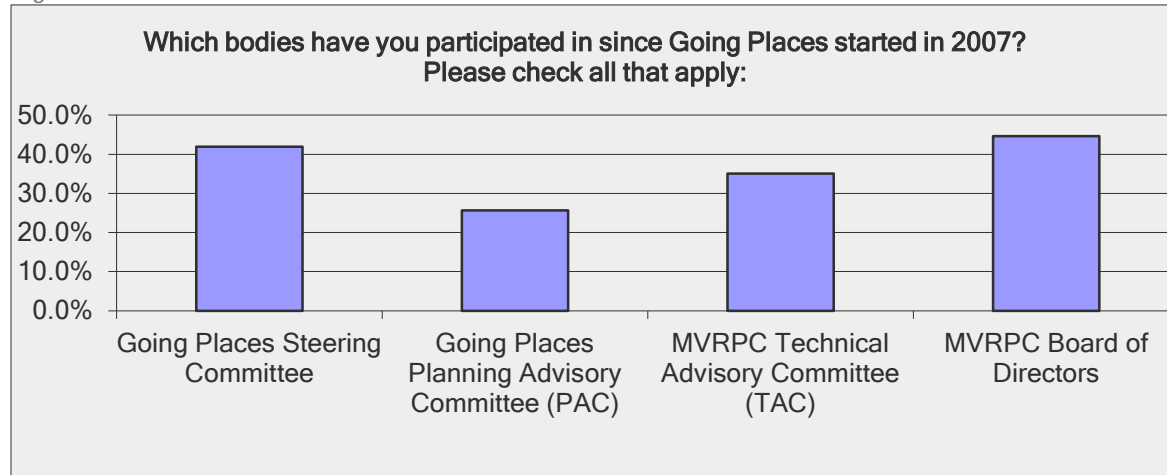
Overview of Survey Participants.

Invitations to complete an online survey were emailed to 170 persons who were listed as current members of one or more of four bodies: the *Going Places* Steering Committee, the *Going Places* Planning Advisory Committee, the MVRPC Technical Advisory Committee, and the MVRPC Board of Directors. Eighty-one participants, or approximately 50% of those invited, took the survey. Because of the substantial overlap between the various bodies, the distribution of participants in Table 1 and Figure 1 below sums to more than the number of respondents.

Table 1

Which bodies have you participated in since Going Places started in 2007? Please check all that apply:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Going Places Steering Committee	41.9%	31
Going Places Planning Advisory Committee (PAC)	25.7%	19
MVRPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	35.1%	26
MVRPC Board of Directors	44.6%	33

Figure 1

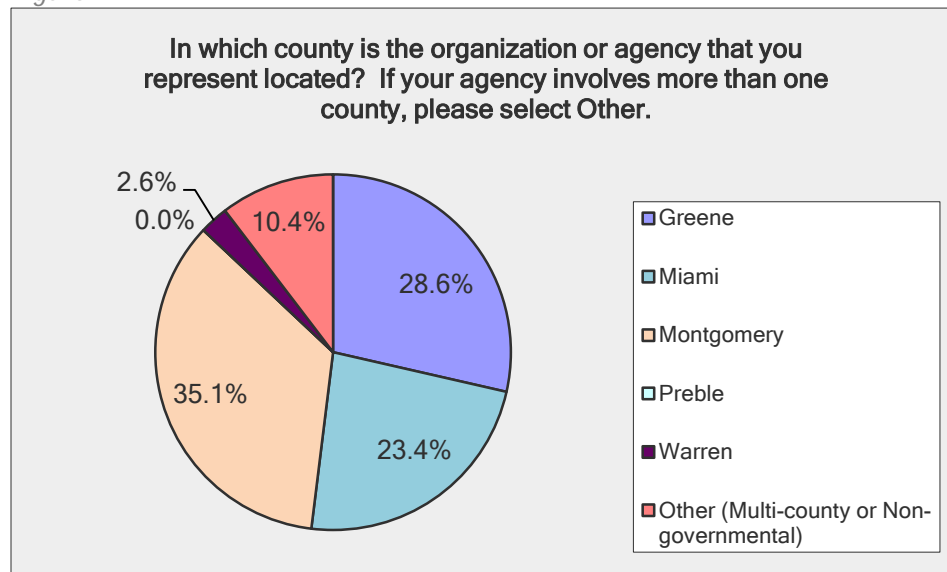


Participants were also asked to identify the county in which the jurisdiction they represent was located.

Table 2

In which county is the organization or agency that you represent located? If your agency involves more than one county, please select Other.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Greene	28.6%	22
Miami	23.4%	18
Montgomery	35.1%	27
Preble	0.0%	0
Warren	2.6%	2
Other (Multi-county or Non-governmental)	10.4%	8

Figure 2



Quantitative Assessment of Going Places Experience

Questions 3, 6 and 9 asked participants to assess their level of satisfaction with the initiative, to date. Each question summarized the intent of the phase as identified in the Tables and Figures below.

The majority of respondents expressed satisfaction with the phases, with the highest levels of satisfaction expressed for the first two phases. Due to the consulting team’s understanding of the more contentious context in which Phase 3 was developed, the question for that section was formulated with a higher level of nuance than the previous two. The numerical majority of respondents to Question 9, regarding the Phase 3 development of the Concentrated Development Vision, expressed some level of satisfaction with the results of this phase.

Again, the reader should note that this question was asked of members of both advisory and voting committees.

Table 3

Phase 1 of Going Places focused on building a shared understanding of the region’s existing conditions and projected trends, based on extensive data analyses. Looking back, are you satisfied with the Phase I results?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Satisfied	80.0%	52
Not Satisfied	20.0%	13

Figure 3

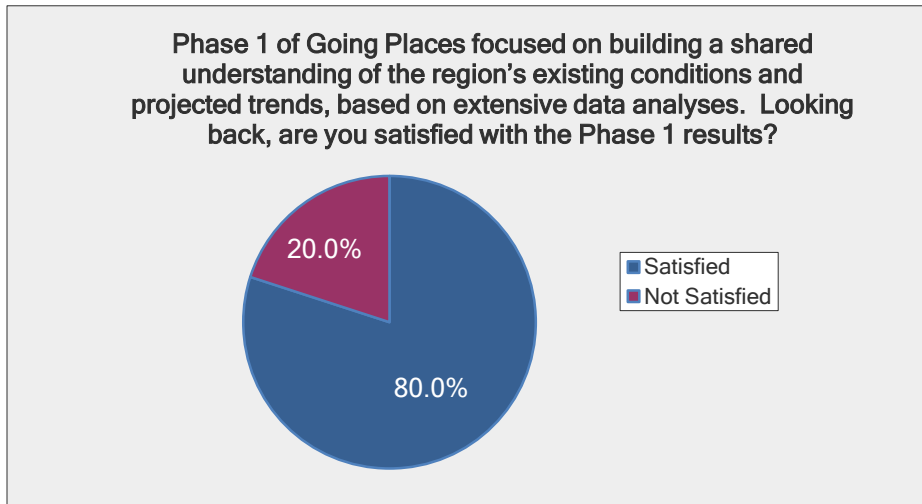


Table 4

Phase 2 of Going Places focused on exploring future options for the region, which resulted in identifying and evaluating seven alternative scenarios. Looking back, are you satisfied with the Phase 2 results?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Satisfied	71.2%	42
Not Satisfied	28.8%	17

Figure 4

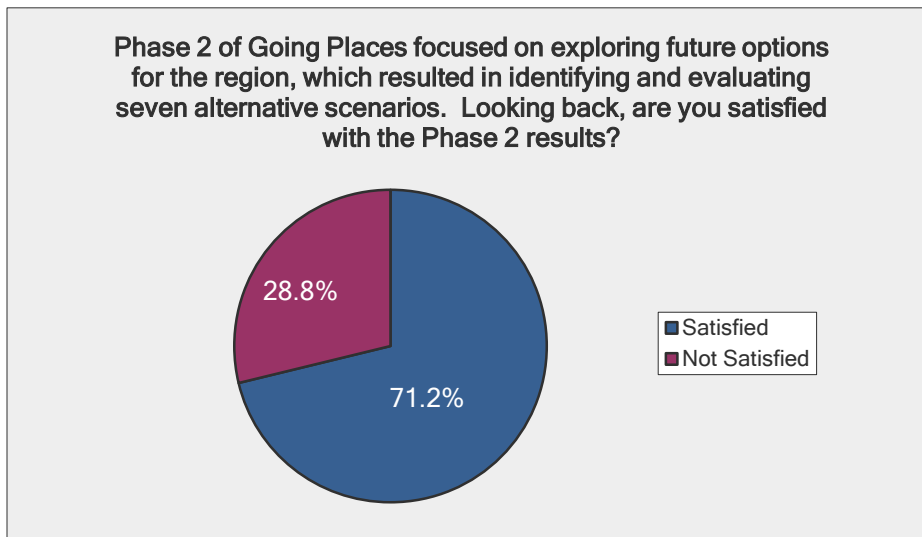
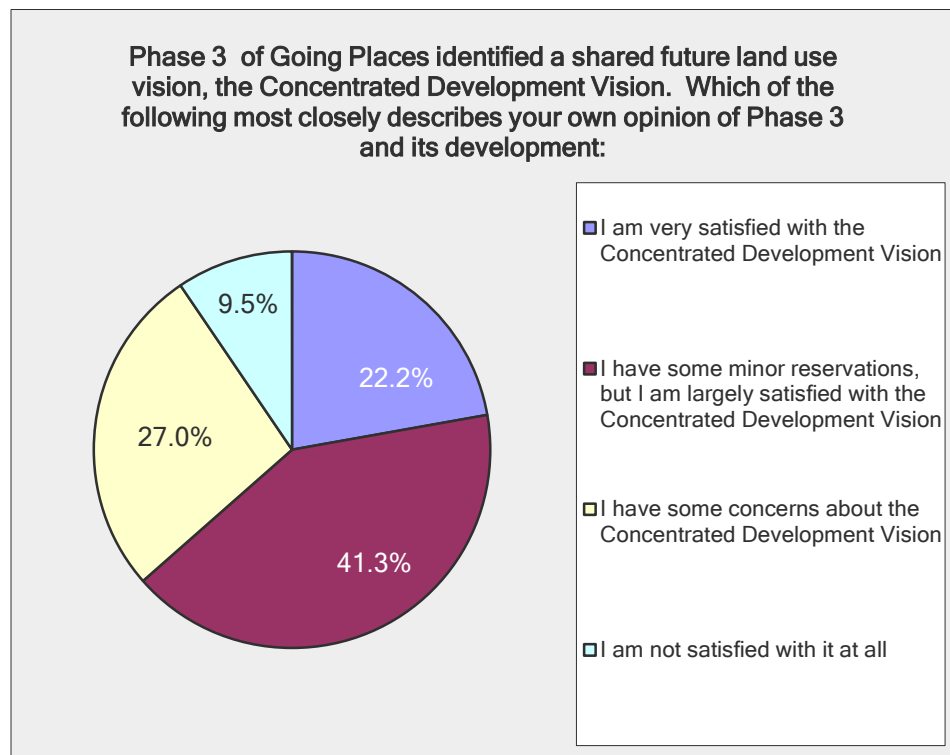


Table 5

Phase 3 of Going Places identified a shared future land use vision, the Concentrated Development Vision. Which of the following most closely describes your own opinion of Phase 3 and its development:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I am very satisfied with the Concentrated Development Vision	22.2%	14
I have some minor reservations, but I am largely satisfied with the Concentrated Development Vision	41.3%	26
I have some concerns about the Concentrated Development Vision	27.0%	17
I am not satisfied with it at all	9.5%	6

Figure 5





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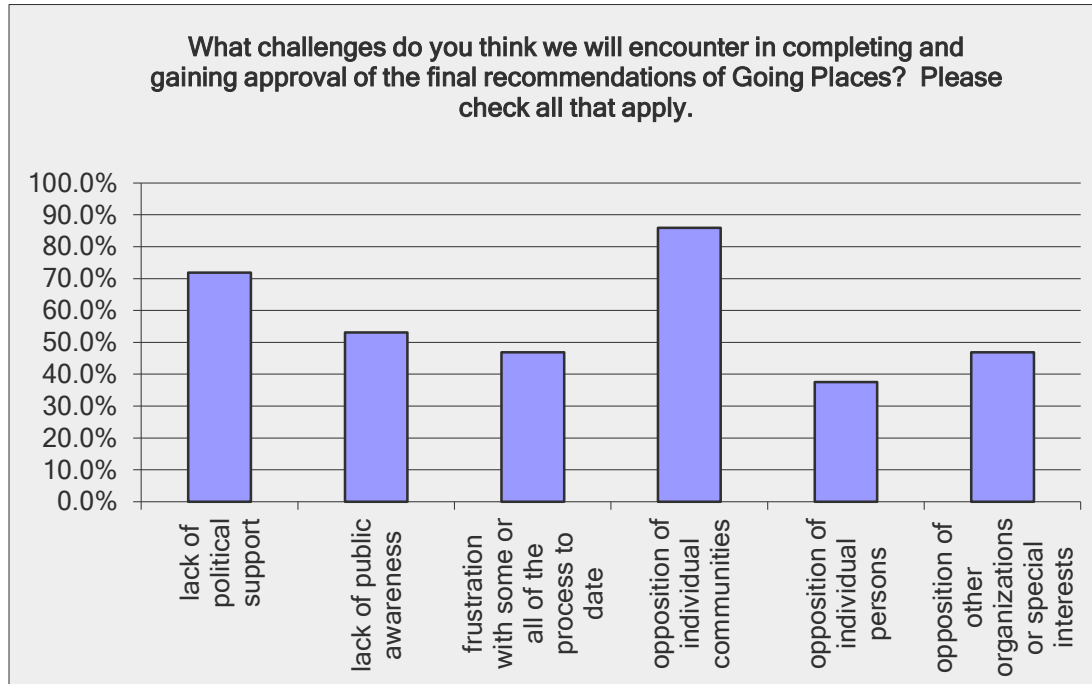
Assessment of Future Challenges

Question 14 asked respondents to assess the challenges that are likely to face the initiative in the future. Table 6 and Figure 6 present those results; written responses from those who chose to respond "Other" are summarized below.

Table 6

What challenges do you think we will encounter in completing and gaining approval of the final recommendations of Going Places? Please check all that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
lack of political support	71.9%	46
lack of public awareness	53.1%	34
frustration with some or all of the process to date	46.9%	30
opposition of individual communities	85.9%	55
opposition of individual persons	37.5%	24
opposition of other organizations or special interests	46.9%	30
Other (please specify)		12

Figure 6

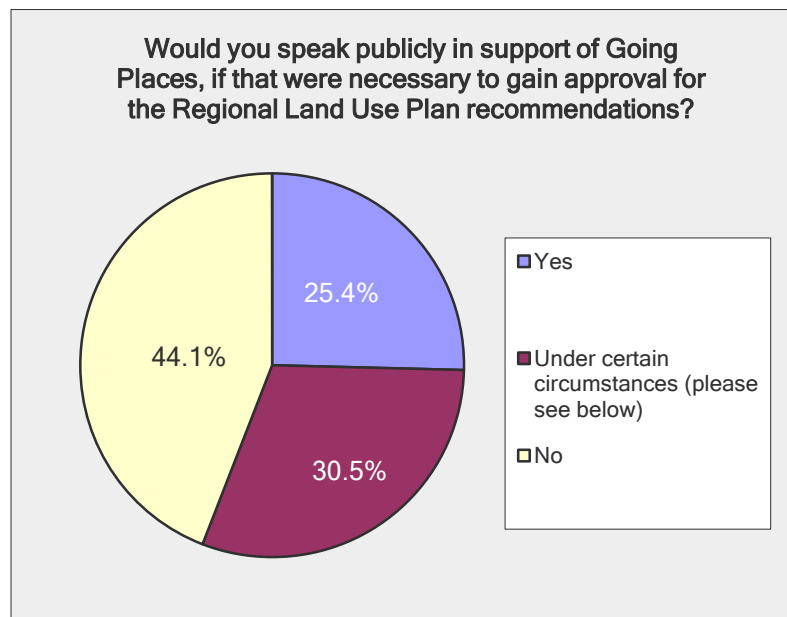


Of the 12 written comments provided to this question, several identified barriers to implementation in the form of policy, tensions around regional and local self-interest, and funding, while others expressed a perception that the process had lacked fairness and equity, to date, or had not fully engaged the region.

Table 7

Would you speak publicly in support of Going Places, if that were necessary to gain approval for the Regional Land Use Plan recommendations?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	25.4%	15
Under certain circumstances (please see detailed comments)	30.5%	18
No	44.1%	26

Figure 7



Overview of Comments Regarding Perception of Initiative to Date and Future.

The majority of the remaining survey questions were formatted to elicit written comments regarding the respondents' perceptions of how the process had unfolded to date, how they would change the past process if they could go back in time and change it, and what advice they would offer the consulting team in determining how best to move forward. Since the comments received to all three types of questions strongly reflect the same themes, the entire group of comments is analyzed together in this section.

The following paragraphs are designed to summarize the Consulting Team Project Manager's assessment of the overarching themes that appear to percolate out of the comments - an assessment that is the result of repeated review and sorting and re-sorting of comments along multiple dimensions. Some of the dimensions examined evaluated whether a specific comment was concerned with fairness, implementation methods, engagement, data issues, staff or process, and others.



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The survey results indicate both themes that indicate elements of support for the initiative and themes that indicate elements of concern or disapproval. In the summary statements below, the theme that was perceived to be dominant is articulated first, and any substantially differing perspective articulated by one or more respondent is offered second.

Themes that indicate elements of support include the following:

- Perception of a concerted attempt to develop a comprehensive regional data and trends basis and to achieve a high level of documentation. A few persons questioned the accuracy of specific items or raised questions regarding the current relevance of data collected in Phase 1.
- Perception of a concerted effort to achieve broad-based inclusion. Some participants felt that outreach had not been adequate or had been skewed by special interests.
- Perception that an appropriate regional perspective had been established.
- Perception that principles commonly associated with constructive urban and regional planning had informed the effort.

The strongest theme of concern expressed throughout the comments appears to relate to the process by which the initiative, to date, has developed. Again, the comments as a whole appear to indicate both a more dominant theme and, in some cases, a theme that reflects a difference in perception.

Process-related themes include:

- Perception that the initiative has taken a long period of time to unfold, to date, and that it has experienced a resulting loss of institutional memory and participant connection to the initiative.
- Concern regarding the level of capacity, effectiveness and transparency of staff with regard to their role in formulating planning elements and managing debate or disagreement.
- The degree and distribution of outreach, including both Phase 2 and 3 outreach by staff to member communities and the visibility of the general public versus representatives of special interests in those outreach activities. As noted above, several respondents also felt that outreach efforts had been pursued in a manner that was as broad and inclusive as possible.
- Concern with a perceived lack of clear process in terms of the methods used to developing the Concentrated Development Vision in Phase 3 out of the preliminary scenarios.
- Participants identified some process confusion in terms of identifying appropriate participant roles, particularly at points where approval was required in Phase 3.
- Participants also identified process confusion in terms of defining appropriate levels of agreement necessary to move forward (consensus versus voting methods) and conflation of silence among participants for agreement at key decision points.
- Some participants identified a lack of clarity about objectives (it is not clear whether there was an actual lack of clarity, or if the time frame impacts created a lack of clarity).

A related thread of concern though the comments has to do with the perception of fairness in the process. Interestingly, statements asserting some kind of unfair treatment, either during this initiative or in earlier organizational history, appear to come from both those who support and those who have concerns with or disagree with the manner in which this initiative has unfolded to date. Assertions of unfair treatment during this initiative to date appear to stem primarily from three issues:

- Perception that key decisions were made without adequate input or transparency in process,
- Perception that challenges to decisions made in this manner were not addressed to participants' satisfaction,
- Perception of shifts in decision-making rules.

It should be noted that these perceptions appear to derive from and relate to the process issues identified previously.

Another related thread that appears in multiple comments has to do with the intent or official purpose of the initiative. As noted previously, it is not clear whether the objectives of the initiative were unclear to participants to begin with, or if they have become unclear due to the passage of time. More significantly, based on the limited sample of written comments, there appears to be some confusion or differences in perception as to the fundamental purpose of the *Going Places* initiative. Some participants appear to believe that the initiative has been extended beyond its original purpose, while others express a perception that the initiative has not achieved the goals that it was designed to address. One outgrowth of this confusion appears to be a sense among some participants of being unsure of whether the initiative is worth their effort or can generate implementable results.

Survey uses and Next Steps in Going Places process

The results of this survey will be used to inform the consultant and agency team's planning for Going Places Phase III in the following three ways:

1. Consulting staff used the survey findings to help formulate lines of questioning for the interviews and small group discussions held in February 2013, as a means of strengthening understanding of participants' experiences, priorities and needs going forward. We will also endeavor to test our preliminary interpretations of the survey results through the interviews and small group discussions.
2. Consulting staff will use it, in conjunction with previous documentation review, and other information to formulate a detailed plan for engagement, deliberation and strategy development with the Steering Committee and PAC, with the objective of completing the final phase of *Going Places* in a timely and effective manner.
3. Consulting staff will review the plan identified in #2 with Steering Committee and PAC participants at the beginning of the reconvened process to make certain that concerns have been correctly heard and a strategy to address them constructively has been developed.