Executive Summary: "Play on the Pike" Event and Park Survey Analysis

This executive summary outlines the successful "Play on the Pike" placemaking event hosted by The Marlboro Pike Partnership in collaboration with MNCPPC Planning Department and the City of District Heights. The event featured a Virtual Reality experience by Salynt's NewView VR team and highlighted findings from a community park survey. Key insights on park usage, accessibility, safety, and recreational preferences were gathered, informing future urban planning strategies for Prince George's County.

Event Overview and Highlights

The **"Play on the Pike"** placemaking event, hosted by **The Marlboro Pike Partnership**, in collaboration with the **MNCPPC Planning and Parks & Recreation Departments** and the **City of District Heights**, successfully engaged the local community in reimagining public spaces along Marlboro Pike. This event provided an exciting platform for residents to experience urban planning through Virtual Reality (VR), delivered by **Salynt's NewView VR team**. In parallel, the event highlighted key findings from our community survey, which provided additional insights into park usage, accessibility, safety, and recreational preferences.

1 Virtual Reality (VR) Experience

The NewView team created an immersive VR experience allowing attendees to virtually explore redesigned versions of Marlboro Pike landmarks, including Penn Mar Shopping Center and Forestville Mall. This provided a hands-on way for residents to engage with future urban planning projects and offer feedback.

2 Community Engagement

Local residents were deeply involved in the interactive VR simulation, providing invaluable feedback on park and public space design. This feedback is critical for informing future MNCPPC Planning Department projects and urban planning strategies.

3 First State Contract for Salynt

This event also marked a significant milestone for Salynt as it represented the company's first state contract with MNCPPC Planning Department. The event showcased how the integration of VR and AI technology can enhance public planning efforts, fostering more informed decision-making and transparency with the community.

Survey Findings and Event Insights

Our park usage survey, combined with the "Play on the Pike" event, offers valuable insights for MNCPPC's future park planning and placemaking efforts.
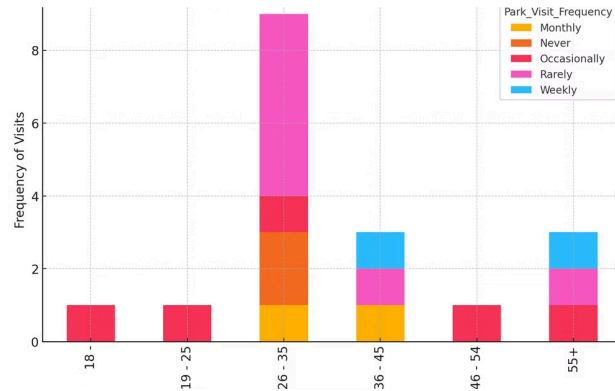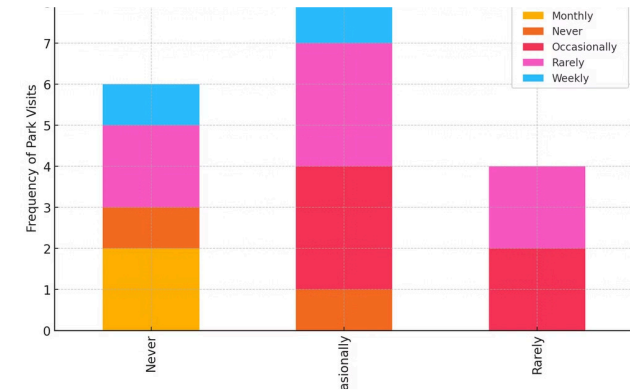

Park Visit Frequency by Age Group

The **26-35 age group** emerged as the most frequent park visitors, with strong interest in **sports** and **community events**. The event's interactive VR component resonated well with this group, showcasing the need to engage younger demographics in future park and public space development.
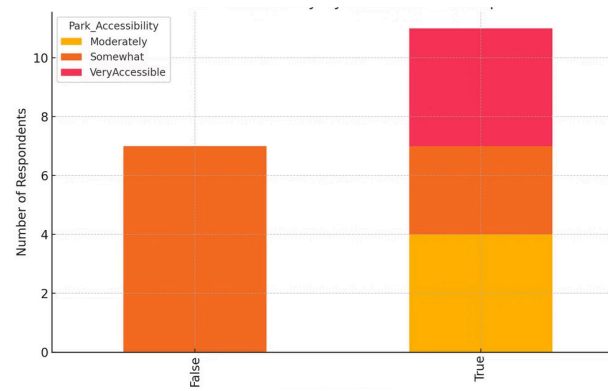
## Park Accessibility by Vehicle Ownership

Our survey indicated that residents without vehicles often perceive parks as less accessible. This was reinforced at the event, where attendees expressed concerns about transportation barriers. Improving public transit access to parks and community spaces should be a key focus for future MNCPPC projects.

Public Transit Usage vs. Park Visit Frequency

Survey results showed that individuals who rarely use public transit visit parks less frequently. Enhancing public transportation options to parks would likely increase visitor numbers, a sentiment echoed by event attendees.

Additional Survey Findings
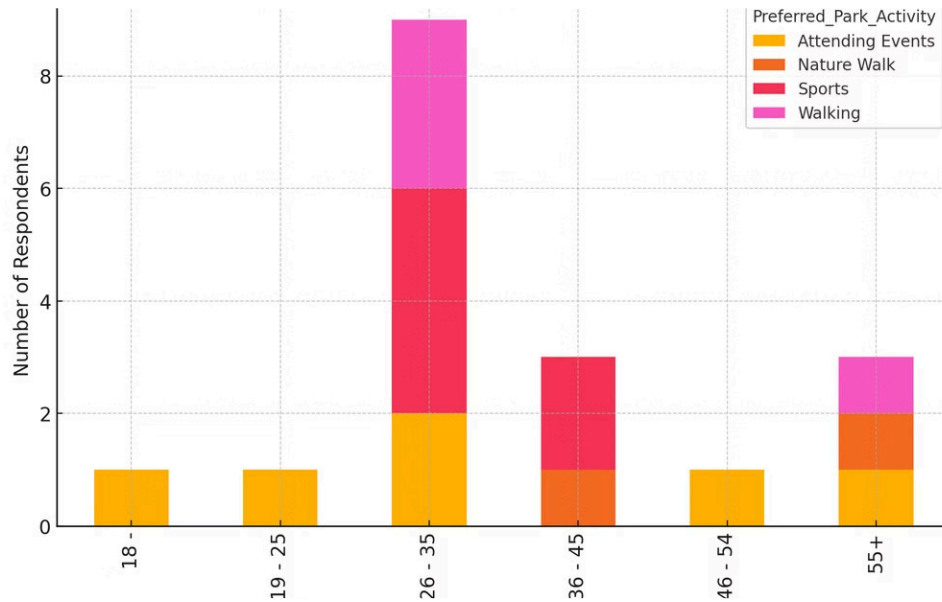
Preferred Park Activities by Age Group

The **26-35** age group favored **sports** and **walking**, while older respondents preferred **nature walks** and **community events**. Tailoring park facilities to meet these preferences will ensure higher engagement and satisfaction across age groups.
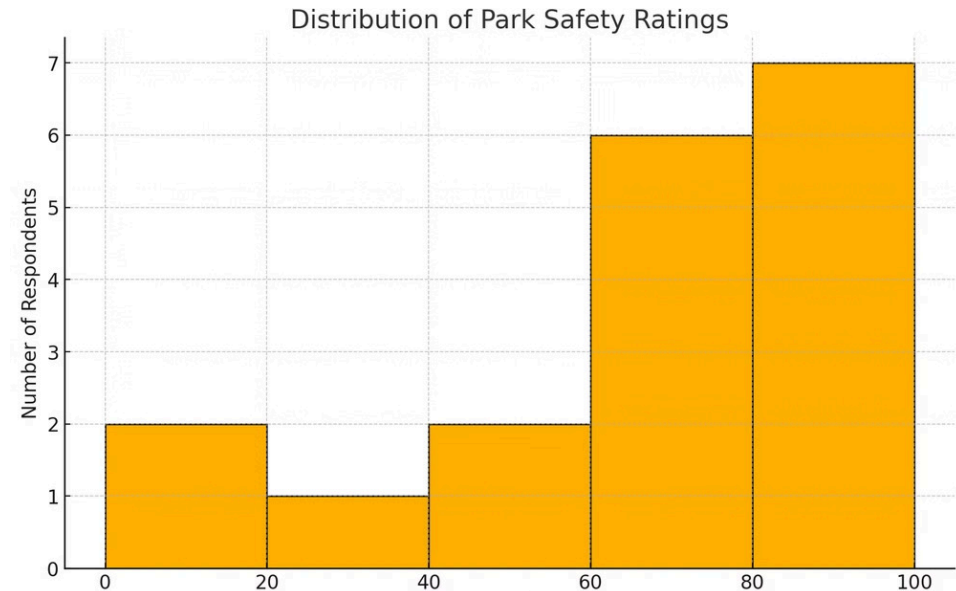
Park Safety Concerns

Safety was a major concern among survey respondents and event attendees. Improving park safety through better lighting, increased security presence, and community-driven initiatives was a recurring theme in the feedback collected.

Key Outcomes and Next Steps

1   Community-Driven Development

The VR simulation provided direct **real-time** community feedback on desired park features, including safety improvements and more diverse recreational options. This feedback will help guide future MNCPPC projects.

2   Strengthened Partnerships

The success of the "Play on the Pike" event has solidified partnerships between MNCPPC Planning Department, The Marlboro Pike Partnership, Salynt, and other local stakeholders. This collaboration positions Prince George's County as a leader in using advanced technology for urban planning.

3   Technological Showcase

The event demonstrated the potential of VR and AI technology in enhancing urban planning efforts. By using data-driven analysis and real-time community feedback, local governments can make more informed decisions on public space design and development.

Recommendations for MNCPPC

Expand Technological Engagement

Continue to leverage **VR** and **AI** in placemaking projects to encourage more community participation and enhance transparency in decision-making processes.

Improve Park Accessibility

Increase public transportation links to parks and public spaces, ensuring that residents without vehicles can easily access these areas.

Enhance Park Safety

Incorporate better lighting, visible security, and community-led safety initiatives to address the concerns raised by residents and survey participants.

Age-Specific Park Features

Develop a range of park facilities catering to different age groups, including sports facilities for younger adults and walking trails for older visitors, to boost park usage across demographics.

Conclusion

The combination of findings from the "Play on the Pike" event and the park survey provides actionable insights for MNCPPC leadership. By integrating technology like **VR and AI**, addressing **accessibility** and **safety concerns**, and designing parks that cater to diverse community needs, MNCPPC Planning Department can continue to lead the way in creating vibrant, inclusive public spaces that serve all residents of Prince George's County.

Future Implications

The success of the "Play on the Pike" event and the insights gathered from the park survey set a new standard for community engagement and urban planning in Prince George's County. By continuing to leverage innovative technologies and prioritizing community feedback, MNCPPC Planning Department is well-positioned to create public spaces that truly reflect the needs and desires of its diverse population. This approach not only enhances the quality of life for current residents but also makes the county more attractive to potential new residents and businesses, contributing to long-term growth and development.

Technological Innovation

Continued use of VR and AI in urban planning projects

Community Engagement

Increased participation in decision-making processes

Improved Accessibility

Better public transit options to parks and public spaces

Enhanced Safety

Implementation of community-driven safety initiatives

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