

# Upper Main Street Planning Project Kickoff





# Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Goals for Tonight's Meeting
3. Planning Context
4. Planning Process
5. Small Group Discussions
6. Report Back
7. Wrap Up and Next Steps



# Tonight's Meeting



# Tonight's Goals

1. Kick-off the site planning process
2. Share information about the planning process and outcomes
3. Hear from attendees about the site
4. Encourage people to stay involved



# Planning Context





# What is the opportunity?





## What is the opportunity?

The Town of Essex purchased a 32-acre property at 80 and 90 Upper Main Street in November 2023

- Part of Selectboard work plan
- Identified as future municipal complex: Town Office, fire station, library, community space
- Opportunity to do more in addition to municipal uses: private development, public spaces, trails, etc.



## How does this site fit into the Town?

*Town Plan* and *ETC Next* both envision a vibrant Town Center here

- Municipal uses will establish new civic center for Essex
- Balance of site can achieve other Town goals: housing, diversified economy, open space, etc.



# Essex Town Plan

## Some relevant goals

- 1c. Essex Town Center is a focus of concentrated growth and community life
- 2c. Foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, sustainable growth, and job creation
- 3c. Transition to a multi-modal focus that increases investment in walking, biking, and transit use
- 4b. Housing meets the needs of all residents and is located close to basic needs
- 9a. Quality level of municipal services and facilities





# Essex Town Plan

## Some relevant actions

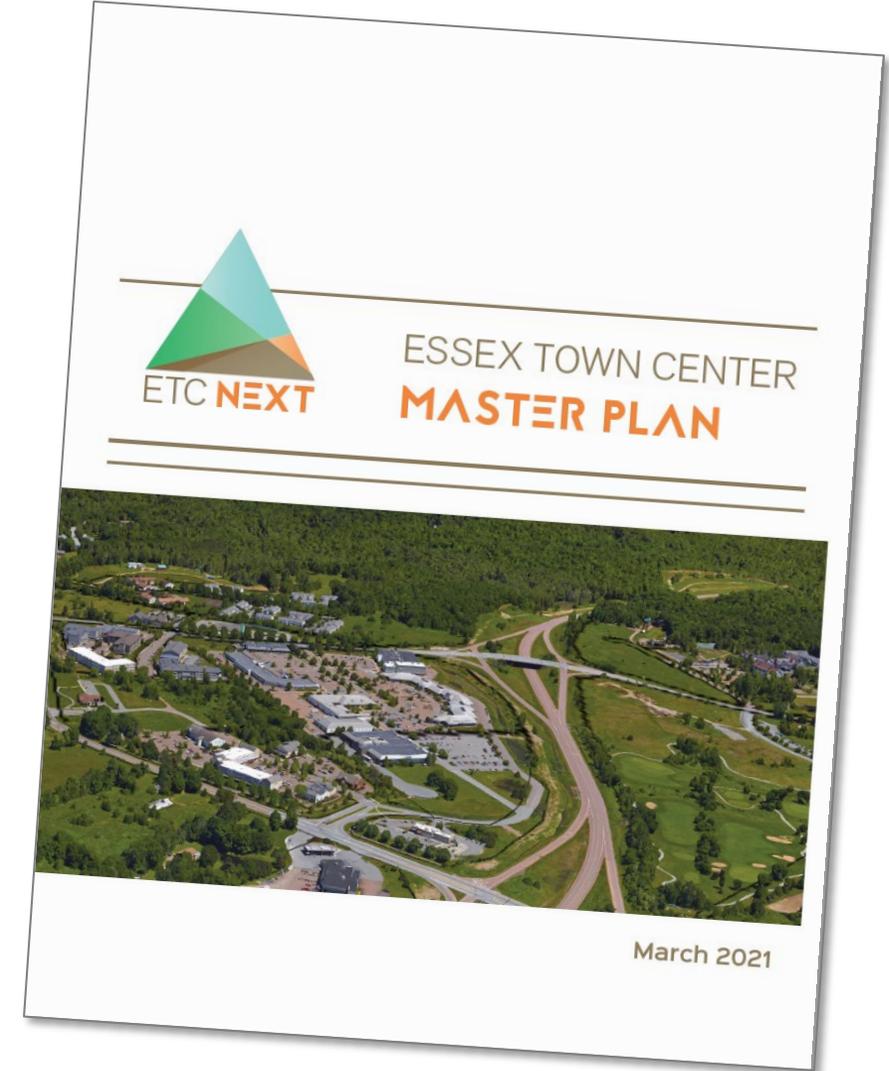
- 1.1 Implement the 2021 ETC NEXT Master Plan.
- 1.3 Relocate Town Offices and other municipal facilities to the Essex Town Center.
- 2.2 Commit to and follow the plan and action items for the new Town Center in the ETC NEXT Plan.





# ETC Next

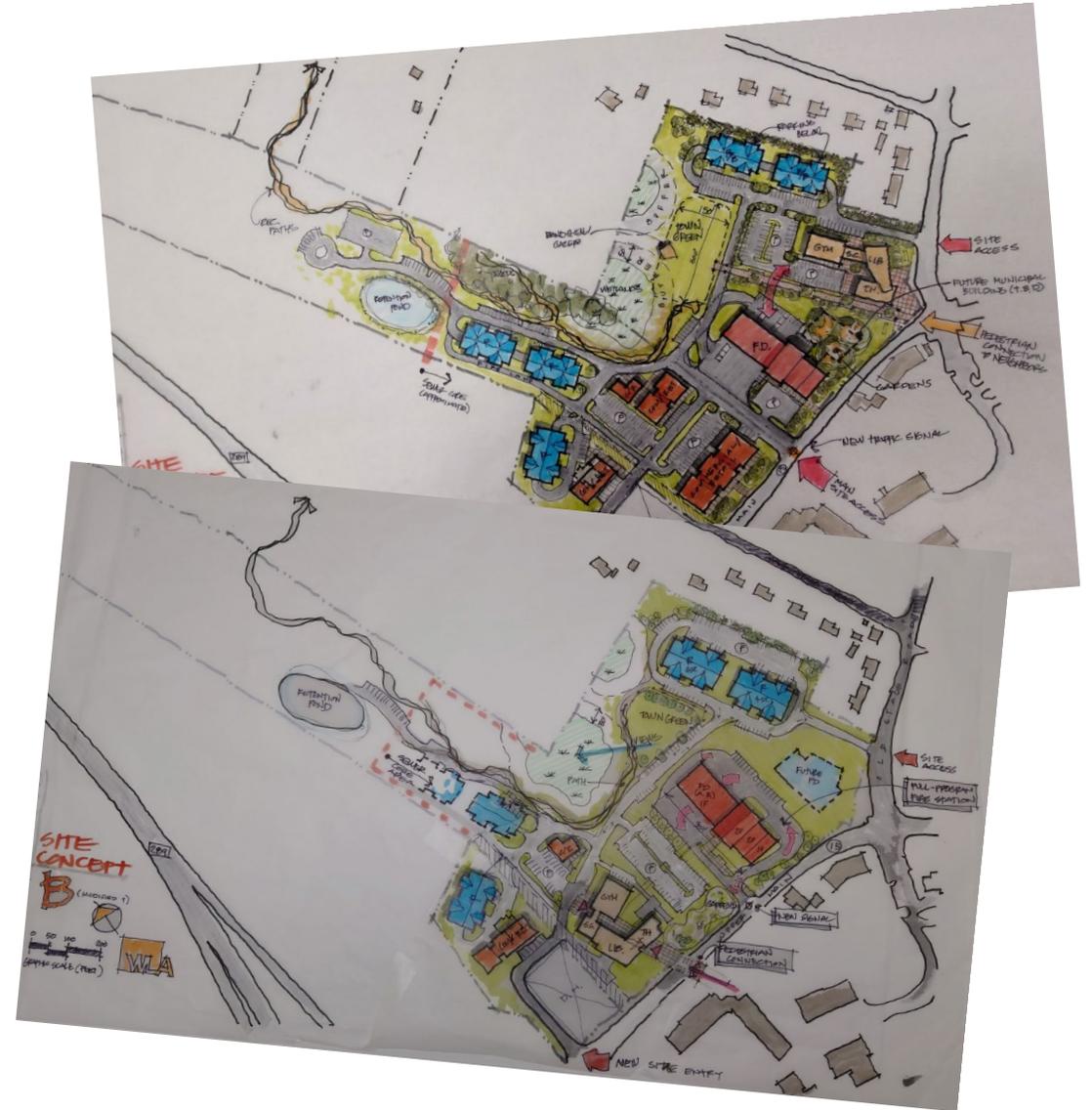
- Upper Main Street site is part of Mixed-Use North neighborhood
  - Emphasis on diverse residential and mixed residential/commercial
  - 2-4 story buildings
  - Connections to adjacent areas
  - Continue established 'greenbelt' along Rt 15
  - Gateway features





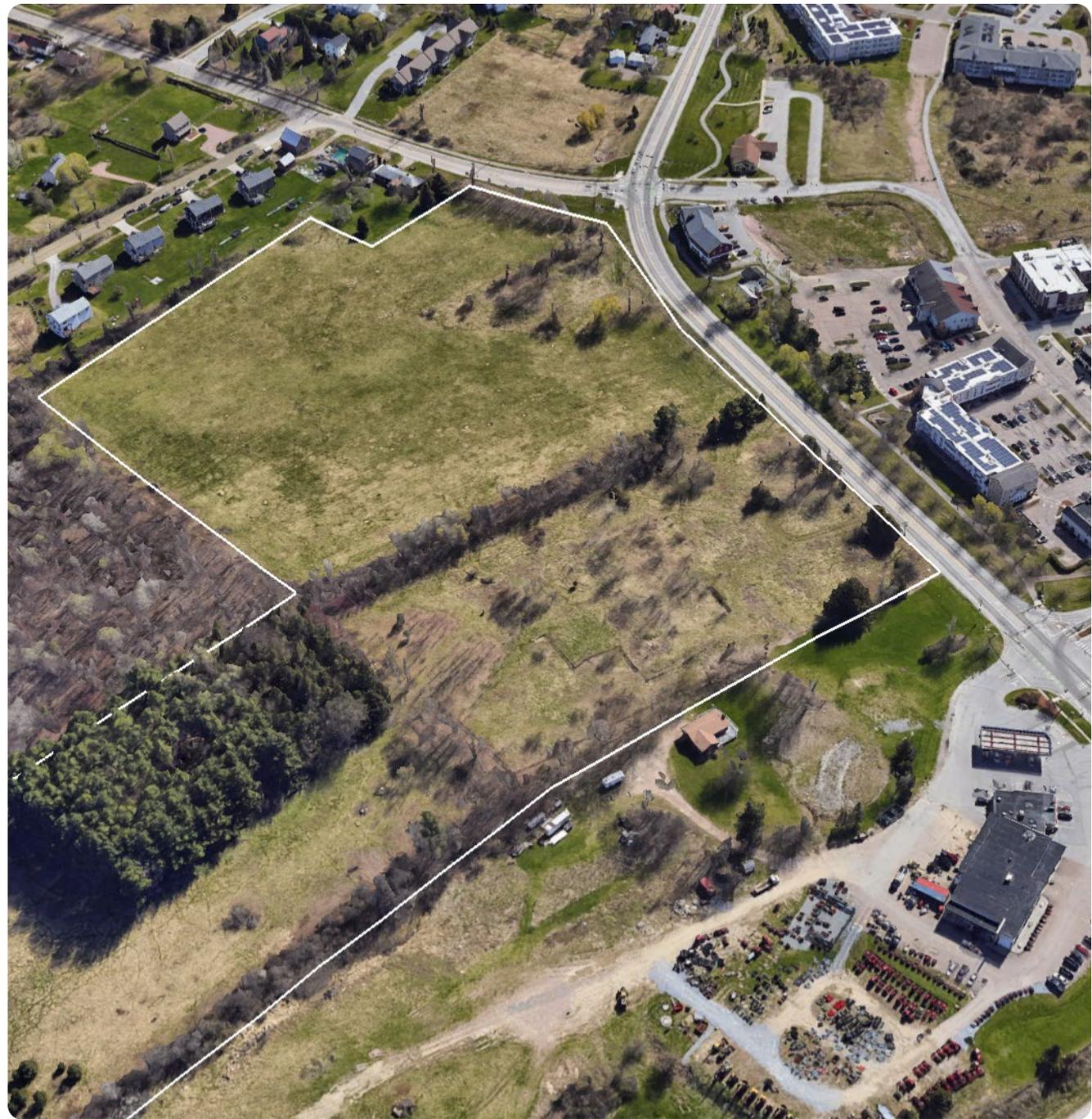
## Other plans

- VT Route 15 Segment Study
  - Shared use path along north side
  - Pedestrian plaza at Old Stage
- Work completed in due diligence phase prior to purchase
  - Traffic, natural resources, soil assessments
  - Preliminary concepts



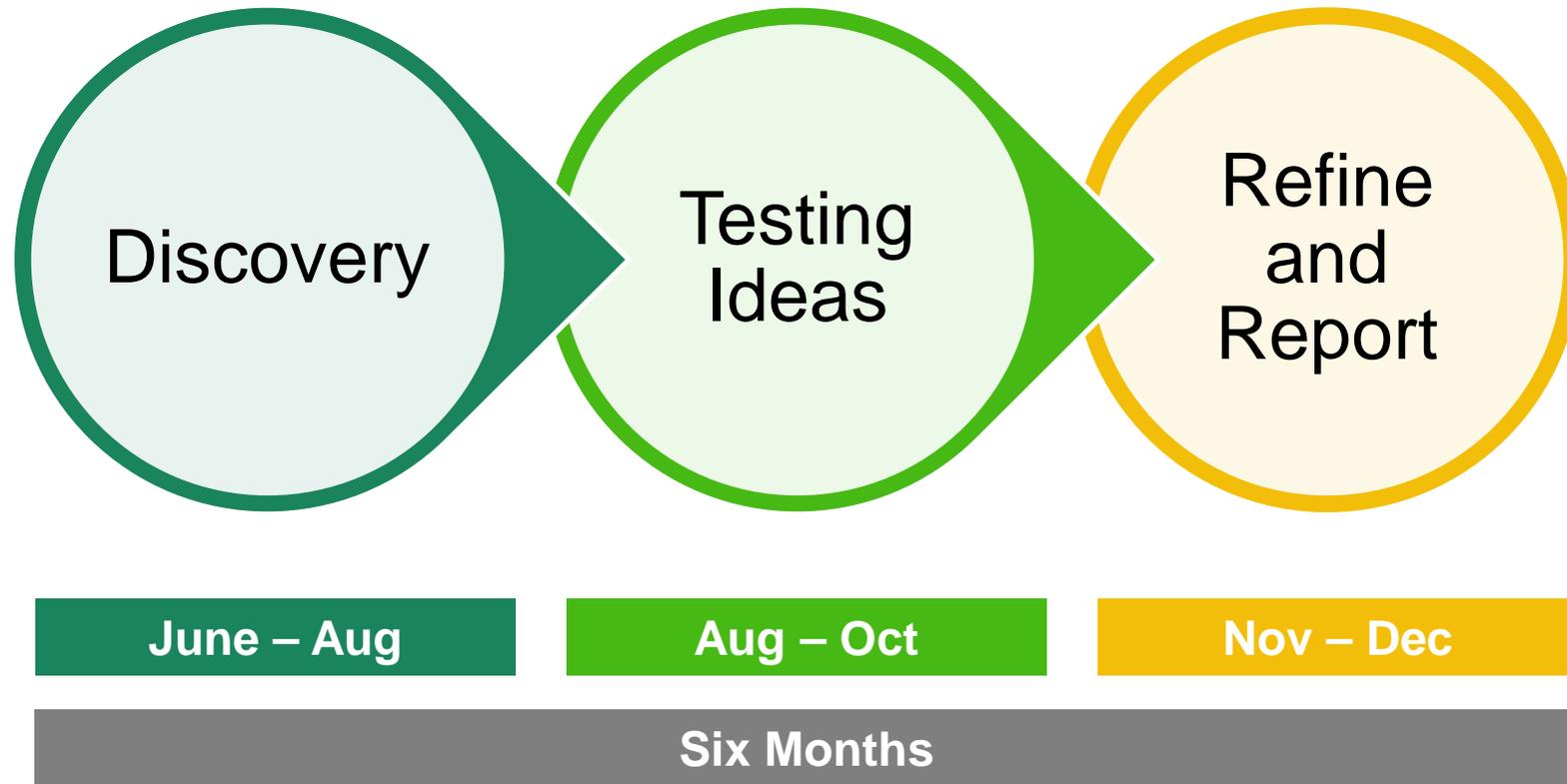


# Planning Process





# Planning Process





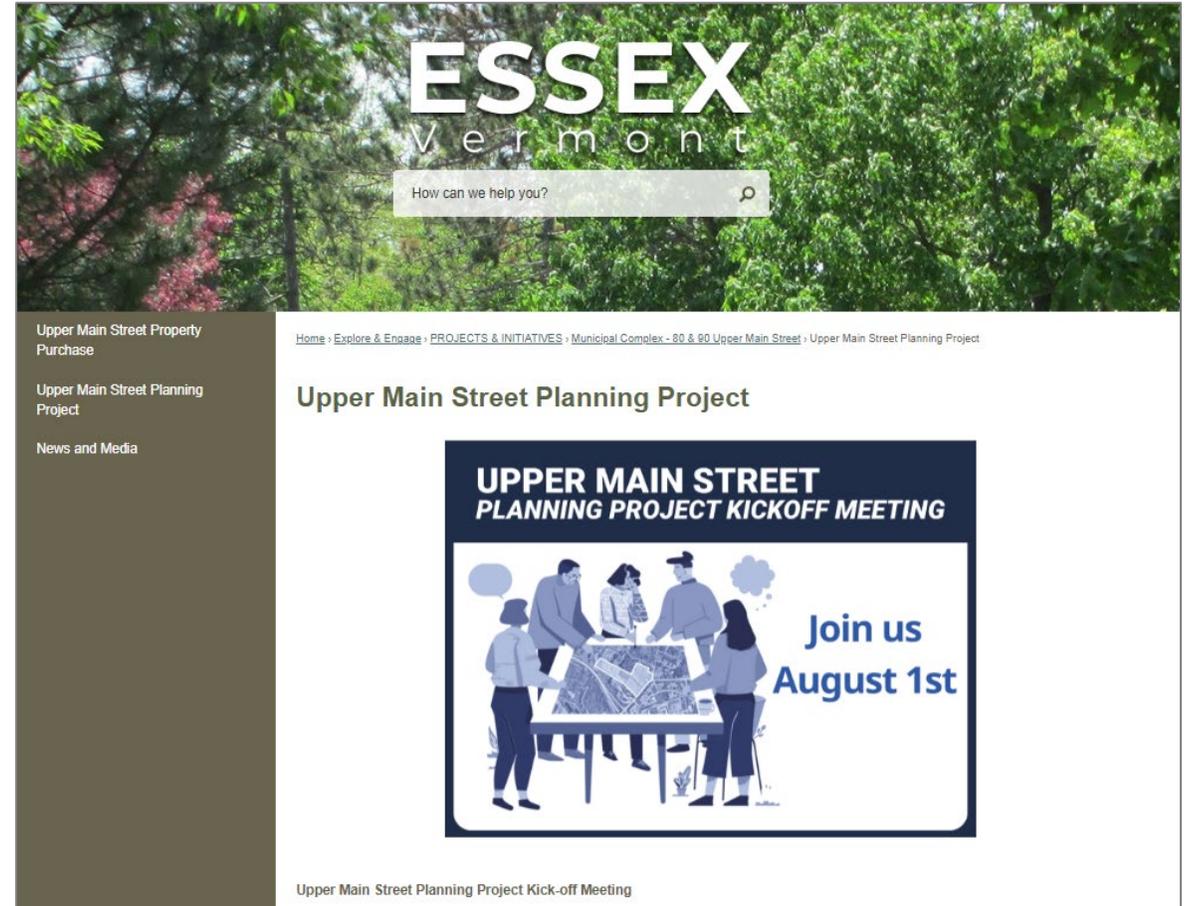
# Hearing from you

- Tonight's kickoff meeting is the first of several public input opportunities
  - Master plan alternatives workshop: Fall 2024
  - Preferred plan open house: Winter 2024
- Pop-up events
  - Bringing planning process information to local events



# Online engagement

- Project website:  
[www.essexvt.org/uppermain](http://www.essexvt.org/uppermain)
  - Survey posted after tonight's meeting with similar questions for those who could not attend
  - Future online input opportunities





# Outcomes by the end of 2024

- Preferred master plan concept for site
- Conceptual design for Town Office, fire station, library buildings
- Zoning, phasing, infrastructure recommendations



# Future development focused along Rt 15





# Assumptions

- Back half of site likely open space use
- Front half of site is developable (+/- 17 acres)
- New Town Office, Library, and Fire Station will be located here
- Other uses could include housing, some retail, public gathering space... or ???



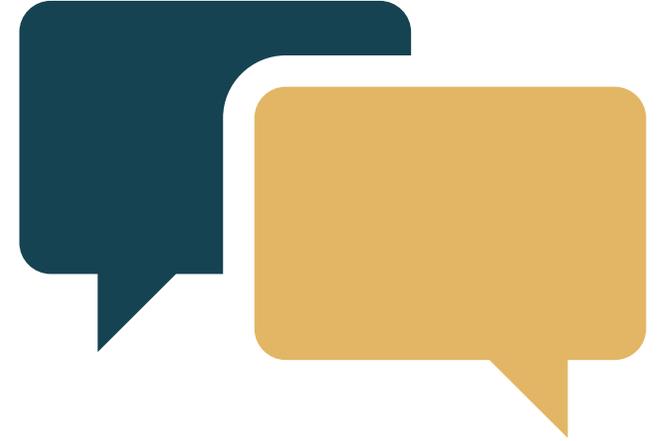
# Small Group Discussions





## Talking to each other, learning from you

- Approx. 45 minutes of small group discussion
- Use discussion guide and table map
- **Write everything down!** Use table maps and forms to record group and individual feedback.
- Team members available to answer questions





## **Brief report-back from each group**

- Each group will have 1-2 minutes for a representative to share a common priority or key takeaway from their discussion



## Next steps

- Planning team will review feedback from tonight's meeting and incorporate online survey responses
- Team will develop initial site plan concept alternatives using public feedback and information from Town departments
- Next public meeting in fall will present alternatives for your feedback to help us work toward a preferred alternative



# Project information and updates

[www.essexvt.org/uppermain](http://www.essexvt.org/uppermain)

Tell your neighbors and friends about the **online survey**  
– we want to hear from many more people!

**Thank you**

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