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City of Saskatoon Journey to the District: *Phase I Engaging on Ideas* Open Survey Report

Background & Methodology

In April 2023, the City of Saskatoon (the City) contracted Inshixtrix® Research Inc. (Inshixtrix) to analyze data from a public engagement survey regarding the vision for Saskatoon's Downtown Event & Entertainment District, to be anchored by an event centre located at the north parking lot of the Midtown Shopping Centre. This report summarizes The results of the public survey, *Phase I: Engaging on Ideas*. The objective of this survey is to understand what is important to the community and hear ideas on what should be included in the Downtown Event & Entertainment District.

Mode

- Multi-mode survey: online and paper
- Online data were collected from April 27 to May 18, 2023

Sample Source

- The City administered data collection and transferred survey data to Inshixtrix for analysis

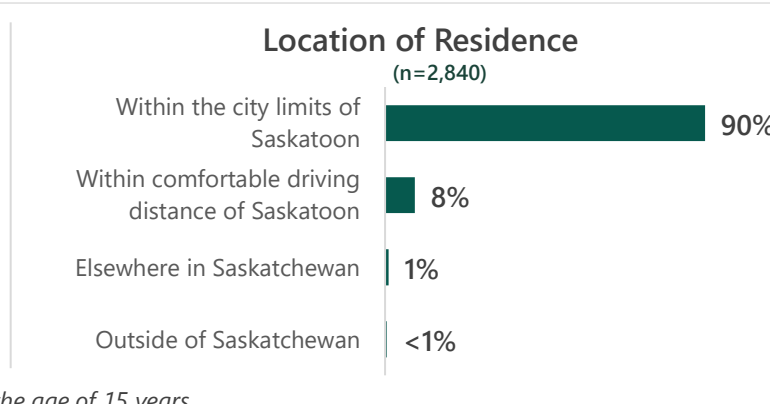
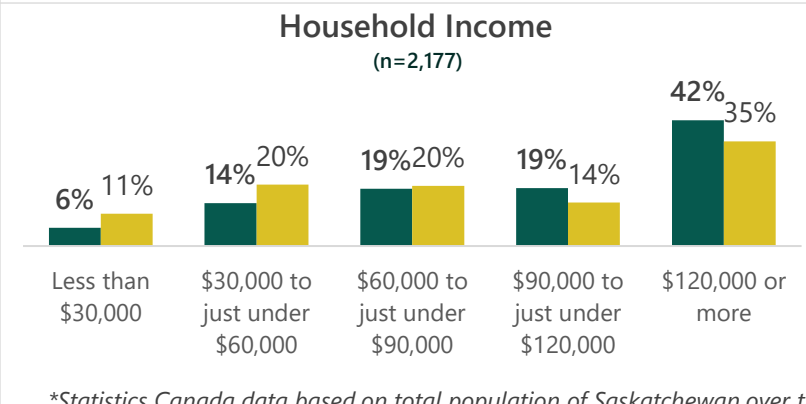
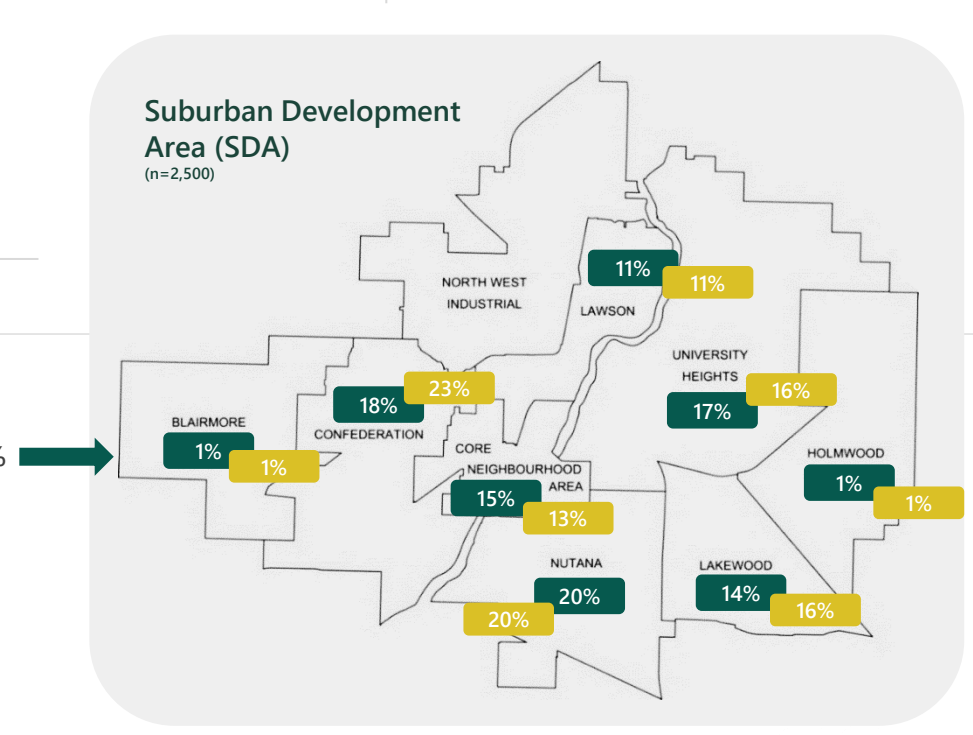
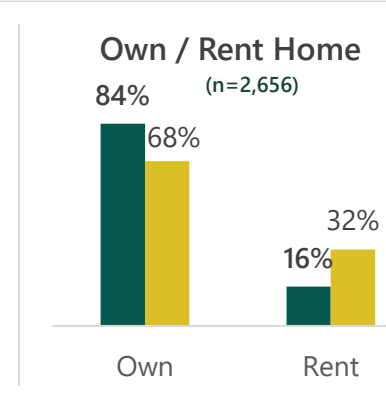
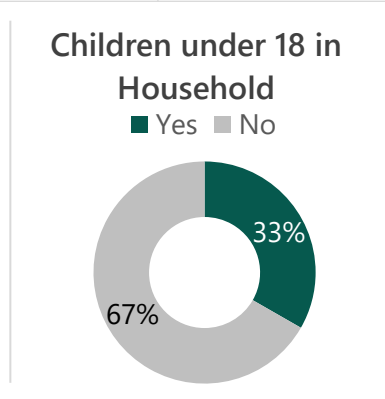
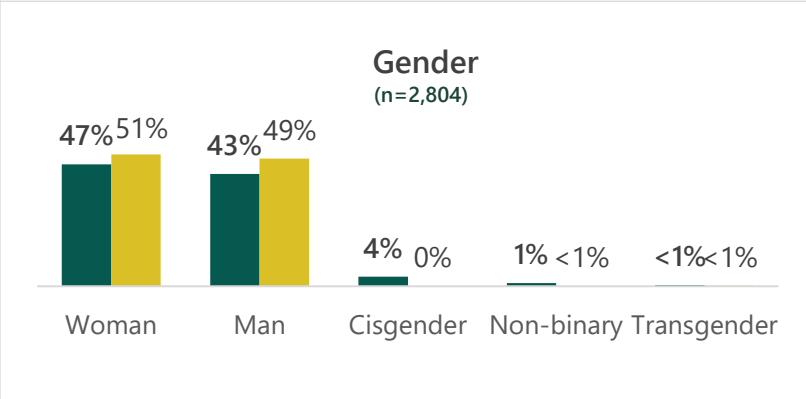
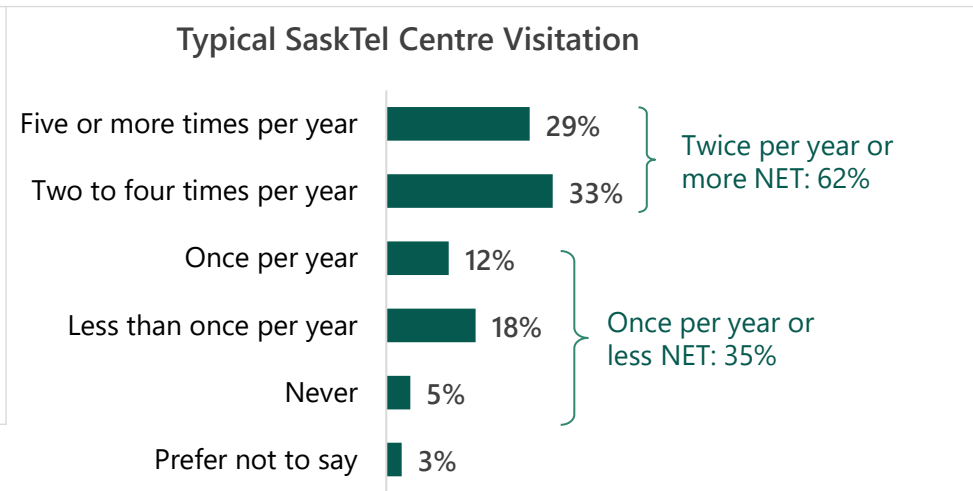
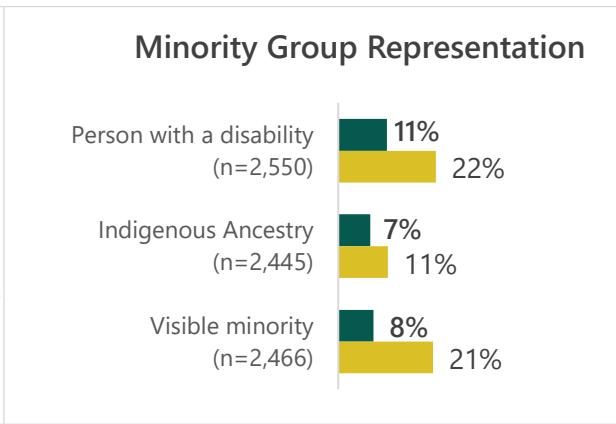
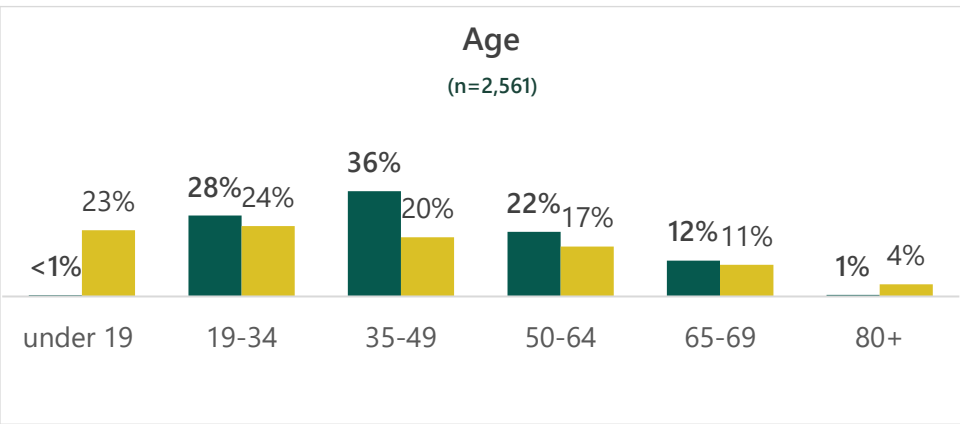
Responses

- A total of 3,134 respondents completed the survey
 - Online: 2,921
 - Paper: 213



Respondent Profile

■ Survey ■ StatsCan 2021*



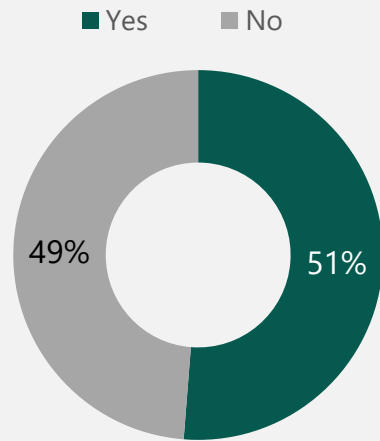
*Statistics Canada data based on total population of Saskatchewan over the age of 15 years.

Note: Paper surveys did not include demographic questions. Respondent profile data represents online survey respondents only.

Respondent Profile – Business Owners and Decision Makers

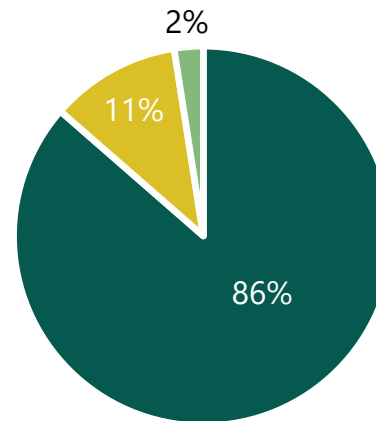
N=81 respondents completed the survey on behalf of their business / organization.

Business / Organization Located in Saskatoon's Downtown

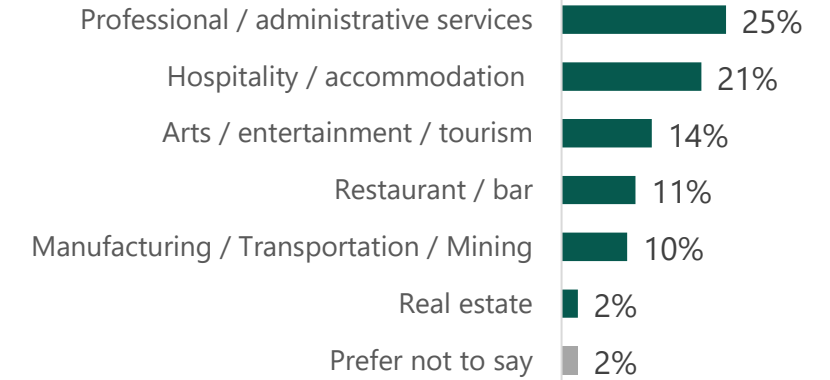


Type of Organization of Ownership / Management

- Business
- Non-profit organization / association
- Government organization / institution



Business Types



Organization / Association Type	Count (n)
Health	3
Association or member-based organization	2
Social Services	2
Government	1
Visual and Performing Arts	1
Religion	1
International	1

Base: respondents who completed the survey on behalf of their business / organization, n=81.



Key Findings

Key Findings

Favourable Downtown Features

Downtown Saskatoon is known for its diverse range of amenities, such as pubs / restaurants featuring local dining experiences (25%), access to the river (20%), shopping (15%), outdoor green spaces (11%), and pathways for active transportation such as walking, biking and hiking (13%).

Suggestions for Making Downtown Welcoming & Accessible

Safety concerns emerge as the top suggestions for making downtown Saskatoon more welcoming and accessible (43%). Specific suggestions include addressing crime (26%) and homelessness (25%). Adding more amenities such as entertainment options (12%) and new businesses (7%) are also common mentions.

More accessible downtown parking is important to residents (32%). Other recommendations for improving access include enhancing the transit system (14%), creating better walking routes (12%), improving traffic flow (6%) and biking infrastructure (6%). Improved cleanliness of streets and walkways along with better snow clearing also emerge as recommendations (9%).

Most Important Features for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District

Residents identify a range of features that are important with respect to the Event & Entertainment District. Places to eat (61%) and vehicle parking (61%) emerge as top priorities. Well lit spaces (55%), opportunities for active transportation (53%), shopping (53%), green space (53%), public washrooms (51%) and places to buy groceries (50%) are also high priority.

Key Findings

Design Considerations

Respondents were asked what should be considered when designing the new event centre/arena and a new or expanded convention centre. In addition to consideration for accessibility/traffic flow (21%), public transportation (15%) and parking (13%), respondents suggest the City consider the esthetics of the new event centre in relation to existing buildings and surroundings (13%).

Access and Transportation Considerations

Respondents were asked what should be considered when designing how people move to and within the District. Improved public transportation and encompassing rapid transit and other transit methods is the top mention (42%).

Uniqueness of Saskatoon

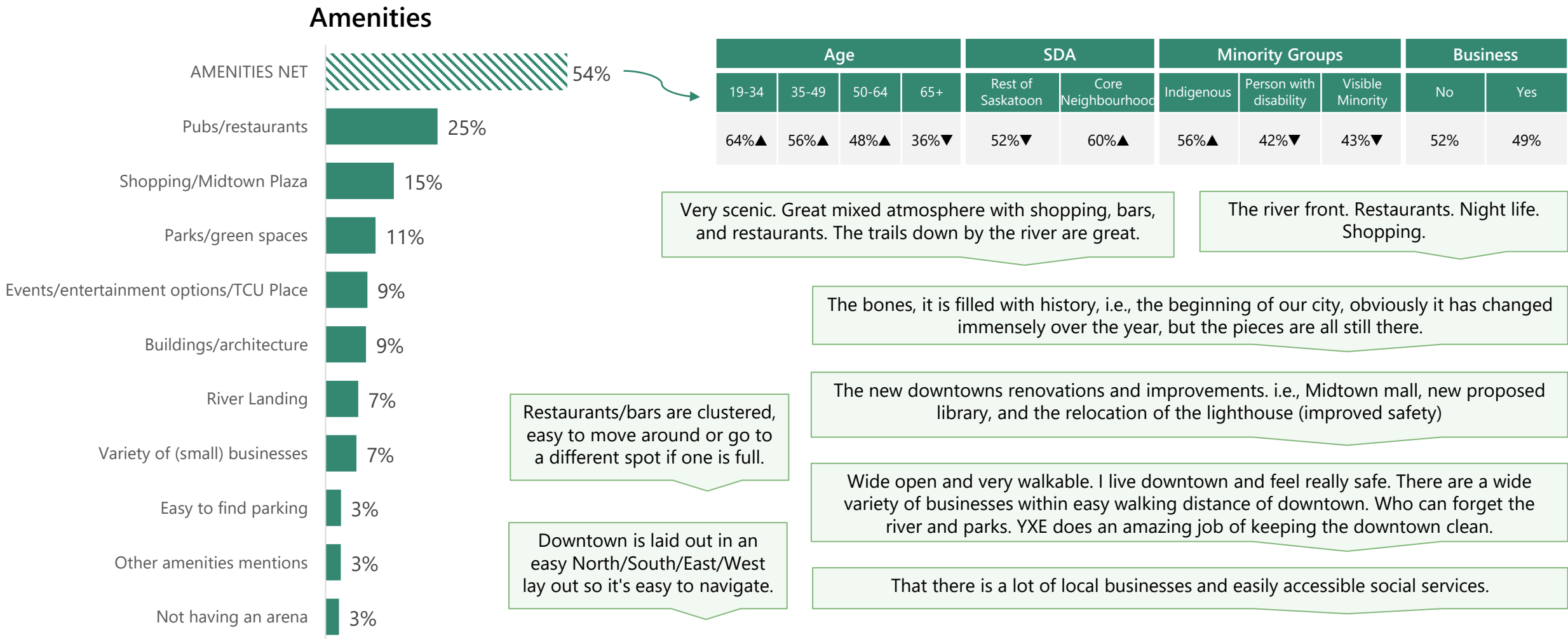
Respondents highlight the river (10%), outdoor/green spaces and parks (9%), local eateries (8%) and Indigenous art and culture (7%) as distinctive Saskatoon characteristics that could be integrated into the District.



Survey Results

Favourable Downtown Features

One quarter of residents highlight pubs and restaurants as their favorite features of downtown Saskatoon, followed by shopping, parks and entertainment options. Downtown amenities are a particular highlight for younger residents and those living in the downtown core.

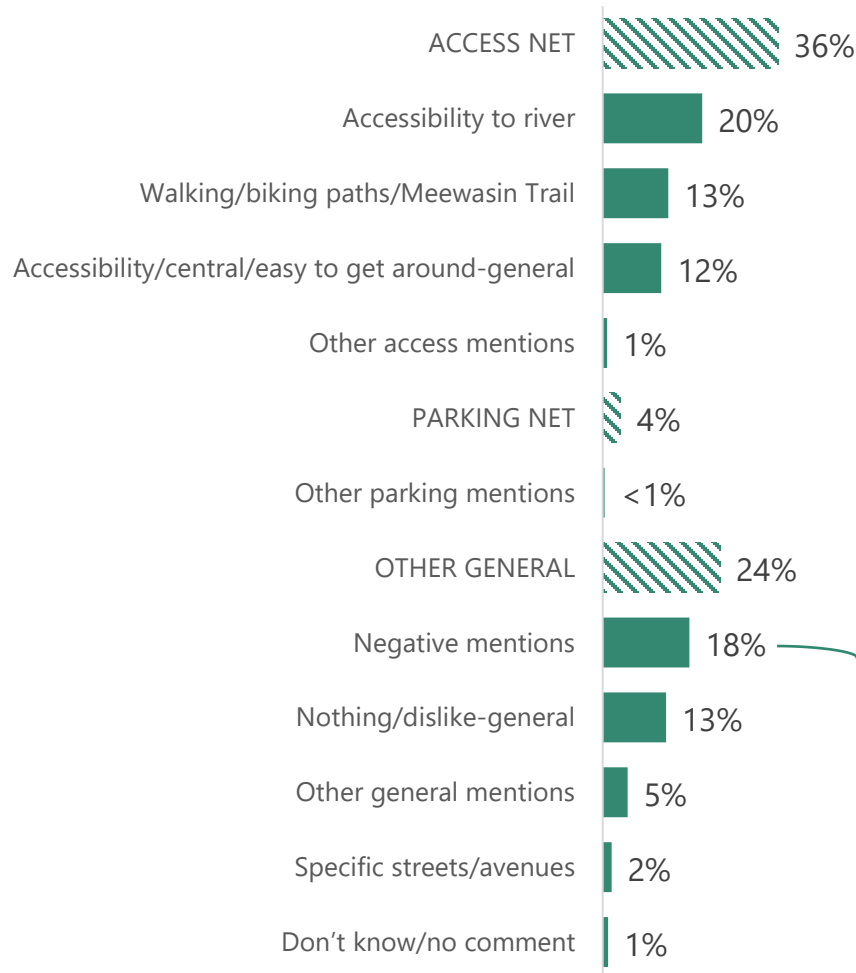


What do you like about our current Downtown? Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Favourable Downtown Features

Access to the river, walking / biking / hiking paths and being a central location emerge as positive qualities of downtown Saskatoon. Older residents are more likely to express negative sentiments about downtown.

Access, Parking & Other Comments



Age				SDA		Business	
19-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Rest of Saskatoon	Core Neighbourhood	No	Yes
37%▲	37%▲	37%▲	29%▼	33%▼	49%▲	35%	33%

Kiwanis park, the ice-skating rink, access to Meewasin trail, the splash pad at River landing. The restaurant and bar scene is pretty notable.

Everything! Walkability, green space and trees, businesses, the river.

Very decent walkability, easy to get around without needing to drive, plenty of parking.

I don't feel safe in the evening [in downtown]. Only there for shopping. Dine and wine area around Midtown plaza is preferable.

I like that it's walkable, proximity to the river, near transit and library, still fairly inclusive to people of different classes and ethnicities.

I don't enjoy going Downtown in Saskatoon. It's dirty and feels dangerous. I prefer to go to other malls outside the Downtown.

There are some nice restaurants, nice architecture, such as the Bessborough. The area around the Bess could be utilized better, see Chateau Frontenac and Quebec city as an example.

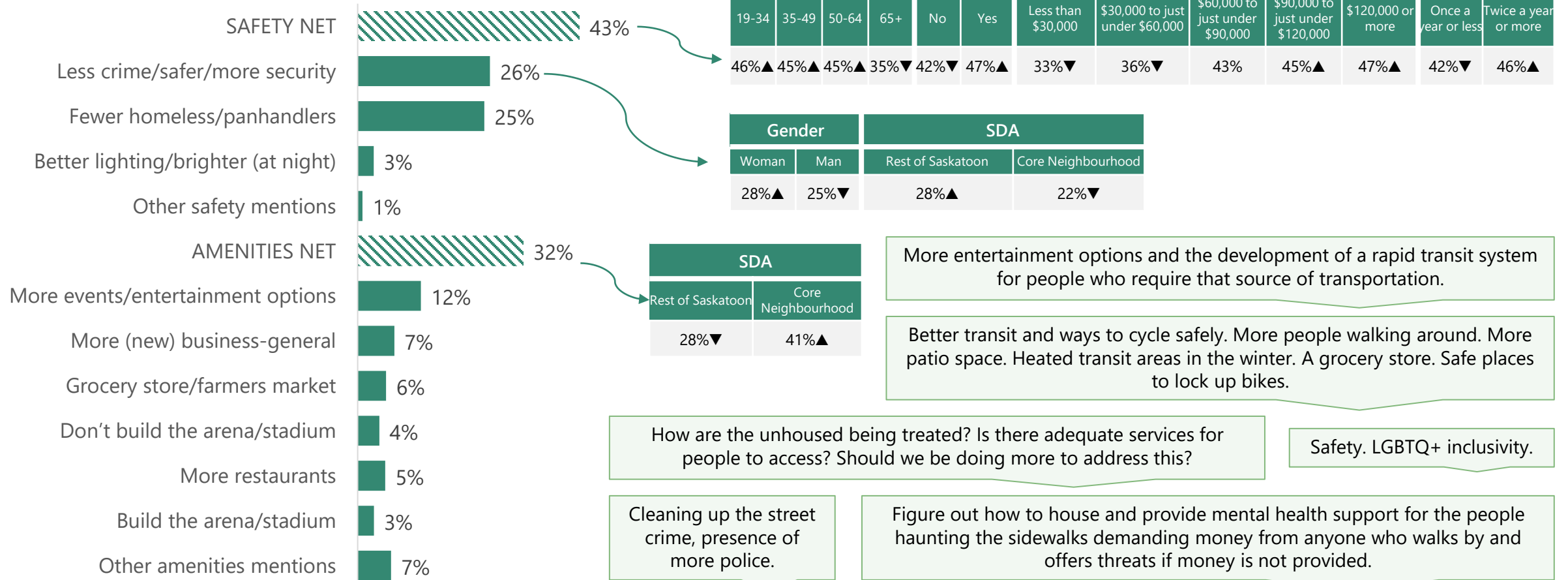
Age			
19-34	35-49	50-64	65+
14%▼	17%	21%▲	23%▲

What do you like about our current Downtown? (Continued) Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Suggestions for Making Downtown Welcoming & Accessible

Safety concerns emerge as the top suggestions for making downtown Saskatoon more welcoming and accessible. Specific suggestions include addressing crime and homelessness. Adding more amenities such as entertainment options and new businesses are also common mentions.

Safety & Amenities

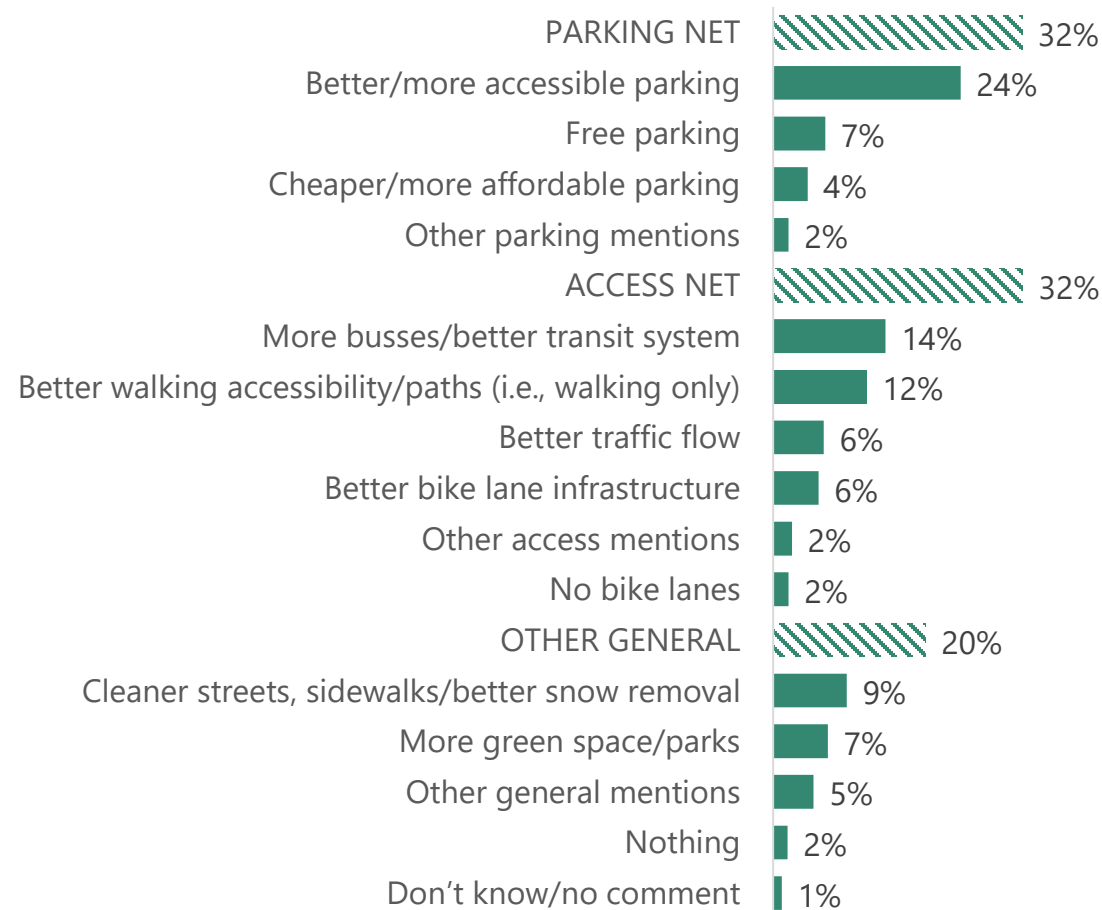


What would make our Downtown more welcoming and accessible at all times of the year? Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Suggestions for Making Downtown Welcoming & Accessible

More accessible downtown parking is important to residents. Other recommendations for improving access include enhancing the transit system, creating better walking routes and improving traffic flow and biking infrastructure. Improved cleanliness of streets and walkways along with better snow clearing also emerge as recommendations.

Parking, Access & Other Comments



Age				Gender		SDA		Business	
19-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Woman	Man	Rest of Saskatoon	Core Neighbourhood	No	Yes
29%▼	33%	33%	38%▲	40%▲	25%▼	35%▲	20%▼	33%▲	22%▼

Age				Gender		SDA		Business	
19-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Woman	Man	Rest of Saskatoon	Core Neighbourhood	No	Yes
43%▲	34%▲	26%▼	18%▼	29%▼	36%▲	32%▼	39%▲	32%	25%

- Indoor playground, biking indoor, volleyball, skiing, skating, places to warm up.
- More parking, trees and green spaces. When I first moved here, I couldn't believe how dirty and grey/brown downtown is compared to everywhere else I've lived due to lack of green spaces.
- I feel that more events such as Taste of Saskatchewan and Jazz fest are a terrific way to attract people to downtown.
- More & more frequent bus routes, Meewasin programming.
- No car zones (like a European plaza) but sufficient parking available nearby. Also, feeling of safety and not like I'm at risk of harm by being there.

What would make our Downtown more welcoming and accessible at all times of the year? (Continued) Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Important Features of Saskatoon's Downtown Event & Entertainment District

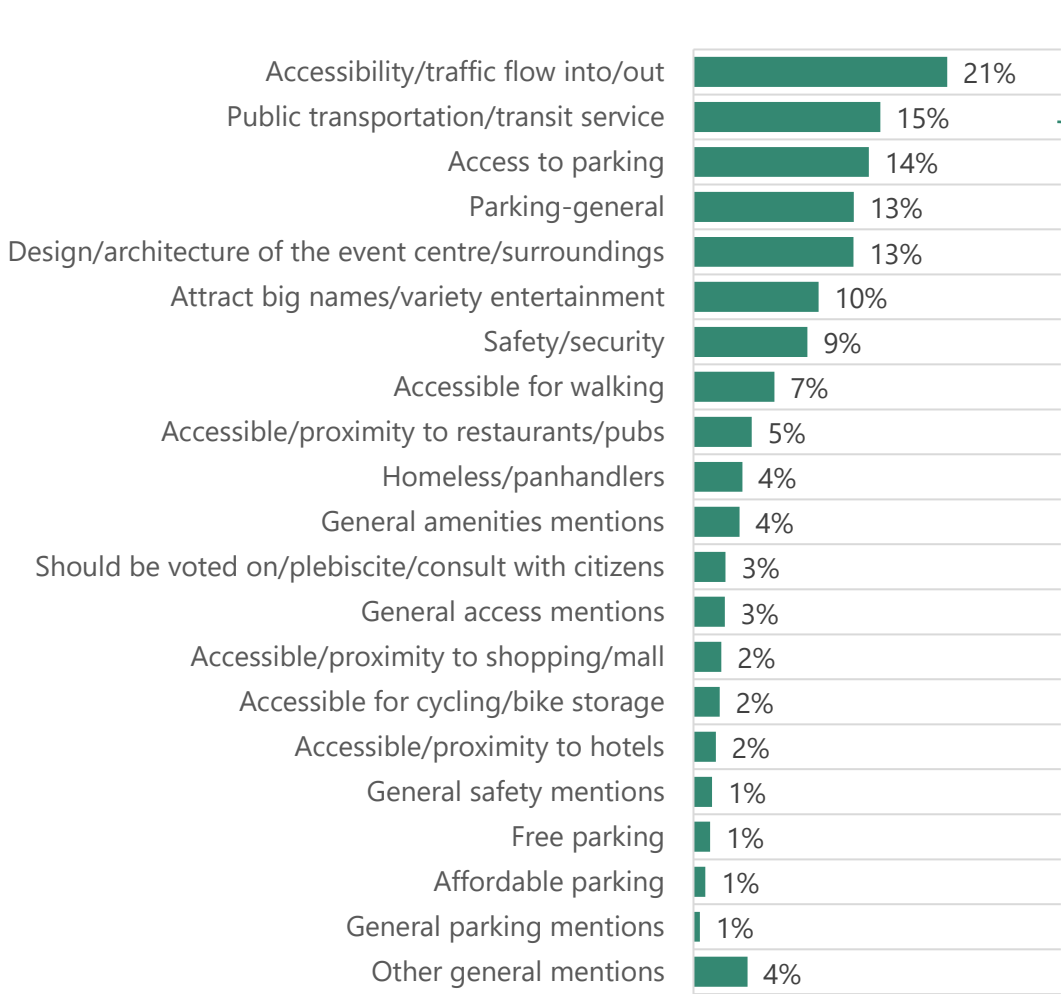
Residents identify a range of features that are important with respect to the Event & Entertainment District. Places to eat and vehicle parking emerge as top priorities. Well lit spaces, opportunities for active transportation, shopping, green space, public washrooms and places to buy groceries are also high priority.

		SDA		Age				Gender	
		Rest of Saskatoon	Core Neighbourhood	19-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Woman	Man
Places to eat	61%	60%▼	69%▲	72%▲	64%	60%▼	48%▼	58%▼	70%▲
Vehicle parking	61%	64%▲	39%▼	57%▼	59%▼	67%▲	69%▲	67%▲	56%▼
Well-lit spaces	55%	56%	58%						
Places to walk, bike or roll	53%	52%▼	67%▲						
Places to shop	53%	53%	58%						
Green spaces	53%	52%▼	65%▲						
Public washrooms	51%	49%▼	57%▲						
Places to buy groceries	50%	47%▼	72%▲	49%▲	41%▼	39%▼	35%▼	45%▼	39%▲
Free places for gatherings	42%	40%▼	52%▲	43%▲	41%▲	33%▼	24%▼	36%▲	38%▼
Outdoor winter spaces	37%	35%▼	50%▲						
Heritage and history	34%	33%▼	40%▲						
Places to live	33%	29%▼	53%▲						
Places for recreation	32%	31%▼	41%▲						
Concessions / vendors	32%	31%▼	37%▲						
Public art	31%	29%▼	51%▲						
Quiet places to relax	30%	28%▼	34%▲						
Places / features for families	30%	28%	31%						
Places to work	29%	28%▼	36%▲						
Hotels	26%	24%	28%						
Bike / scooter parking	25%	22%▼	35%▲						
Places / features for pets	22%	20%▼	25%▲	19-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Woman	Man
Places to party	22%	19%▼	28%▲	34%▲	24%▼	15%▼	4%▼	13%▼	31%▲
Essential services (medical, social)	21%	20%▼	27%▲						
Wellness spaces	19%	17%▼	28%▲						
Other	4%	3%	2%						

Which of the following features do you think would be most important in the District? Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Design Considerations

Top design considerations recommended by residents relate to access, transportation and parking. Consideration for the design / architecture of the event centre relative to surroundings is also a common theme.



Negative comments: 39%
Don't know / no comment: 1%

SaskTel Centre Visitation	
Once a year or less	Twice a year or more
19%▼	23%▲

Age			
19-34	35-49	50-64	65+
22%▲	19%▼	13%▼	8%▼

Gender	
Woman	Man
16%▲	10%▼

If it doesn't have a huge parking capacity the ability to have good transit in and out. Make sure to keep traffic flowing in all directions out of the arena.

Consider our current issue with why downtown feels unsafe. Address the root cause of our city's uprise in safety concerns in the downtown area.

Access between arena and convection center so people are protected from weather.

Connecting key locations with sheltered walkways (2nd Ave, Art Gallery, Persephone, Midtown Mall, Hotels, New Library, Bus Mall, and the new event centre/arena & convention centre.

Build it to last and make it something the city will be proud of. Allow for towers to surround the area to increase density and find a place in the bottom of a massive tower for a grocery store.

Undercover open areas linking existing entertainment and restaurants. Large entertainment complex to attract major artists and shows.

A plaza for walking around where outside vendors or gatherings could be held. Put in as many trees as possible to shade the sun and to preserve or expand our urban canopy.

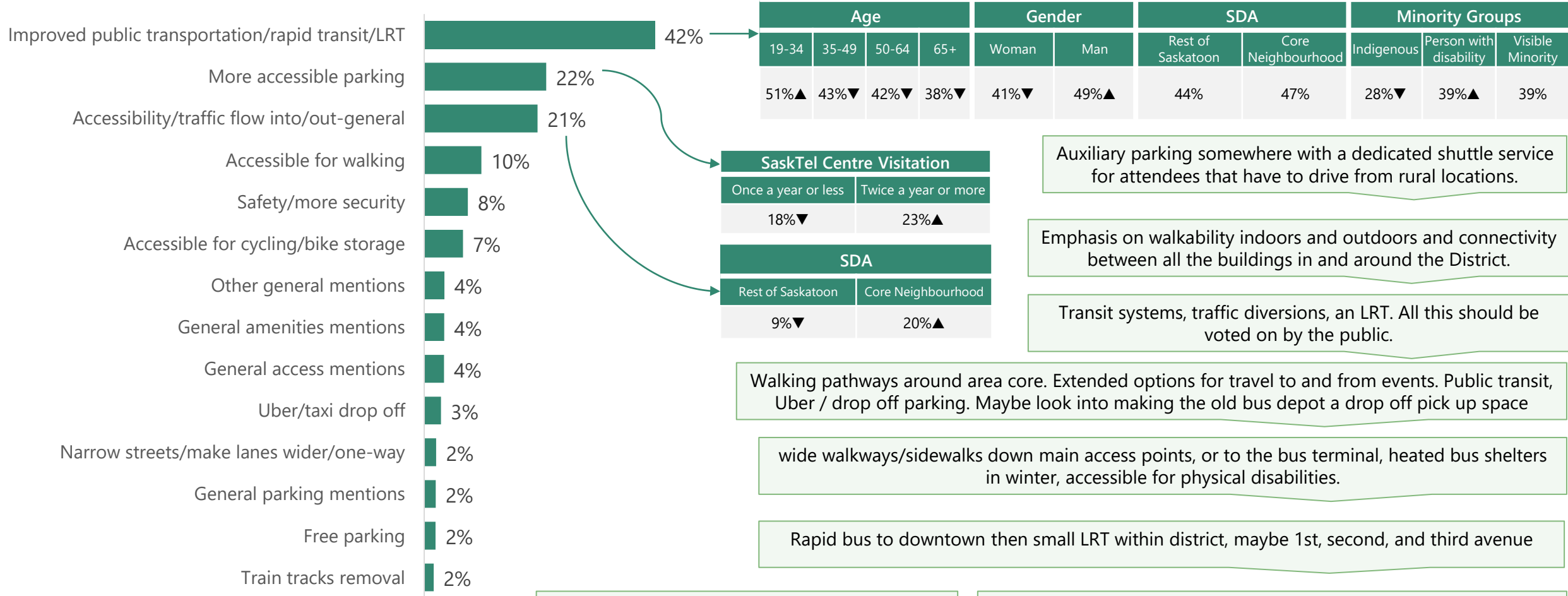
Shuttle service for attendees that have to drive from rural locations.

Design that reflects indigenous history and the land we live on; Making sure it is gender inclusive; Green spaces; Free public spaces to gather; Unhoused people to have a safe place to warm up, cool off and find shelter

What should we consider when designing the new event centre/arena and a new or expanded convention centre (TCU Place)? Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Access & Transportation Considerations

Enhancing the public transit infrastructure / system and encompassing rapid transit, LRT and other transit methods is the top mention to facilitate the movement of people to and from the new downtown district.



Auxiliary parking somewhere with a dedicated shuttle service for attendees that have to drive from rural locations.

Emphasis on walkability indoors and outdoors and connectivity between all the buildings in and around the District.

Transit systems, traffic diversions, an LRT. All this should be voted on by the public.

Walking pathways around area core. Extended options for travel to and from events. Public transit, Uber / drop off parking. Maybe look into making the old bus depot a drop off pick up space

wide walkways/sidewalks down main access points, or to the bus terminal, heated bus shelters in winter, accessible for physical disabilities.

Rapid bus to downtown then small LRT within district, maybe 1st, second, and third avenue

Rapid bus to downtown then small LRT within district, maybe 1st, second, and third avenue

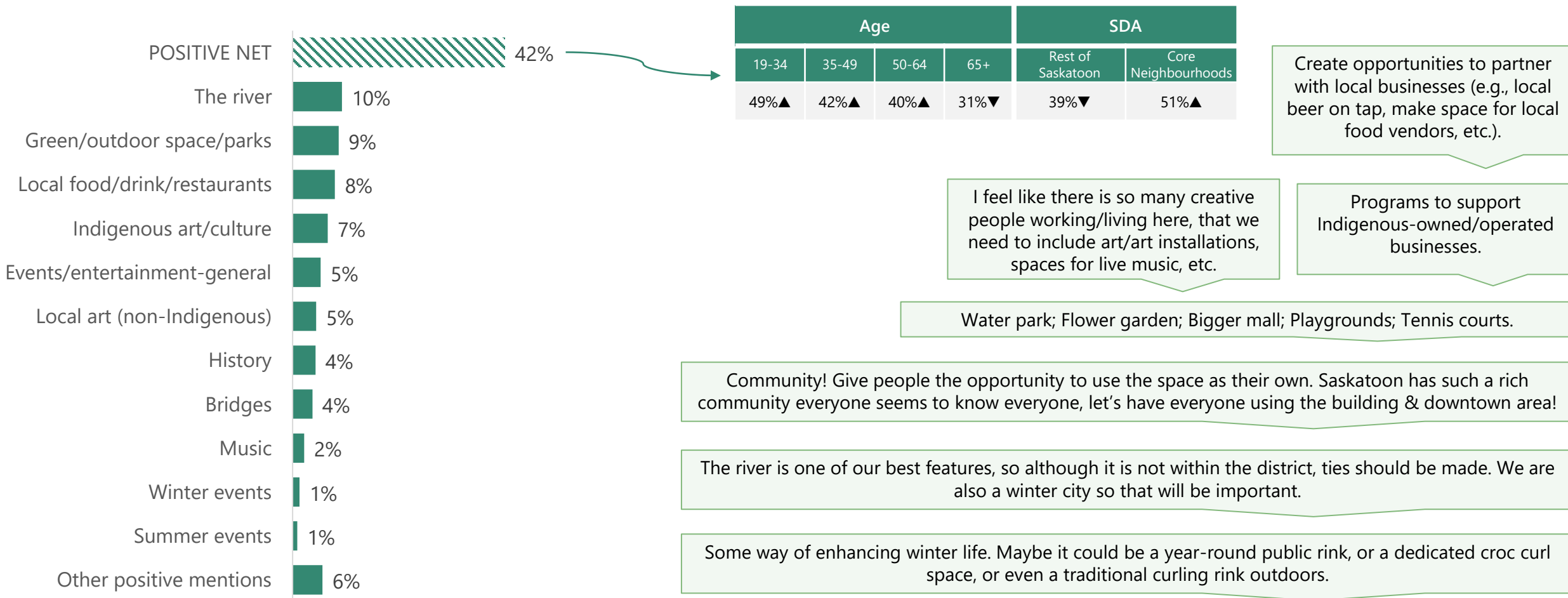
Free public transit with an event or game ticket like Edmonton, park and ride stops. Uber pickup and drop off area. Parking garage

Negative comments: 17%
Don't know / no comment: 2%

What should we consider when designing how people will get to and from, and moving within, the District? Base: all respondents, n = 3,134.

Uniqueness of Saskatoon

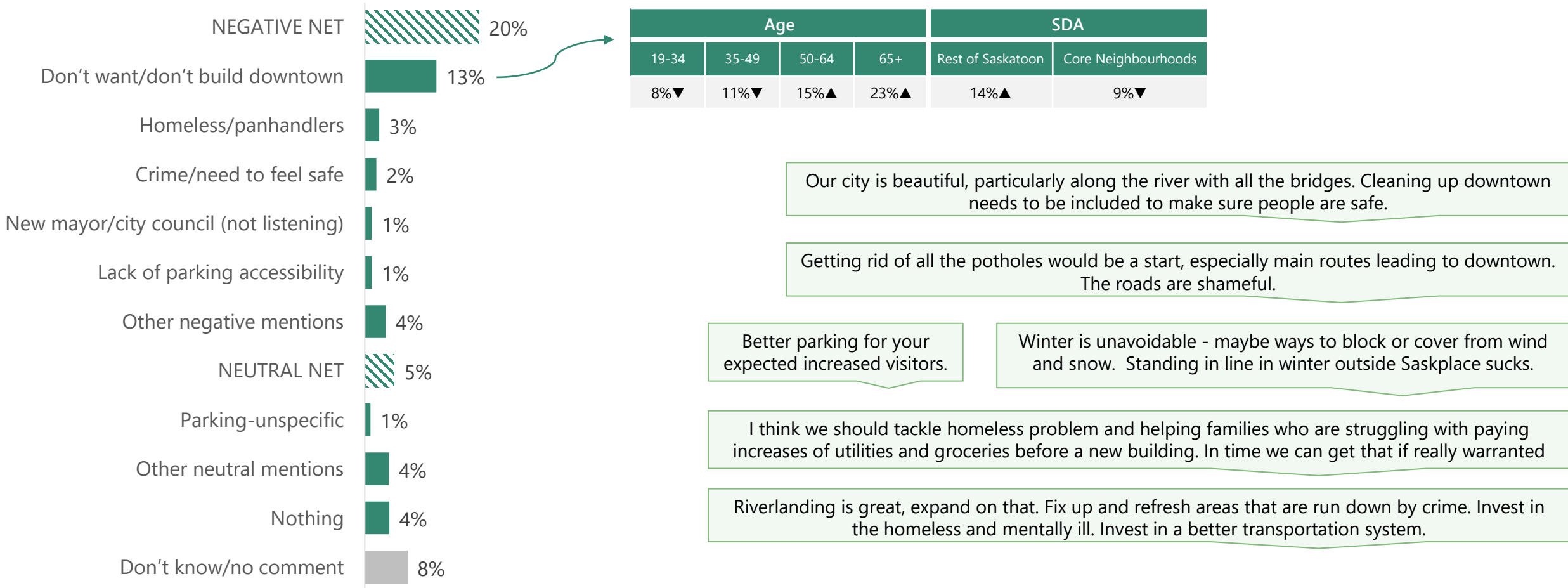
Residents highlight the river, outdoor / green space, local eateries and Indigenous art / culture as distinctive Saskatoon characteristics that could be integrated into the District planning. Younger residents and those living in the downtown core are most likely to highlight positive qualities.



What is uniquely "Saskatoon" that you would like to see included in the Downtown Event and Entertainment District? Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Uniqueness of Saskatoon

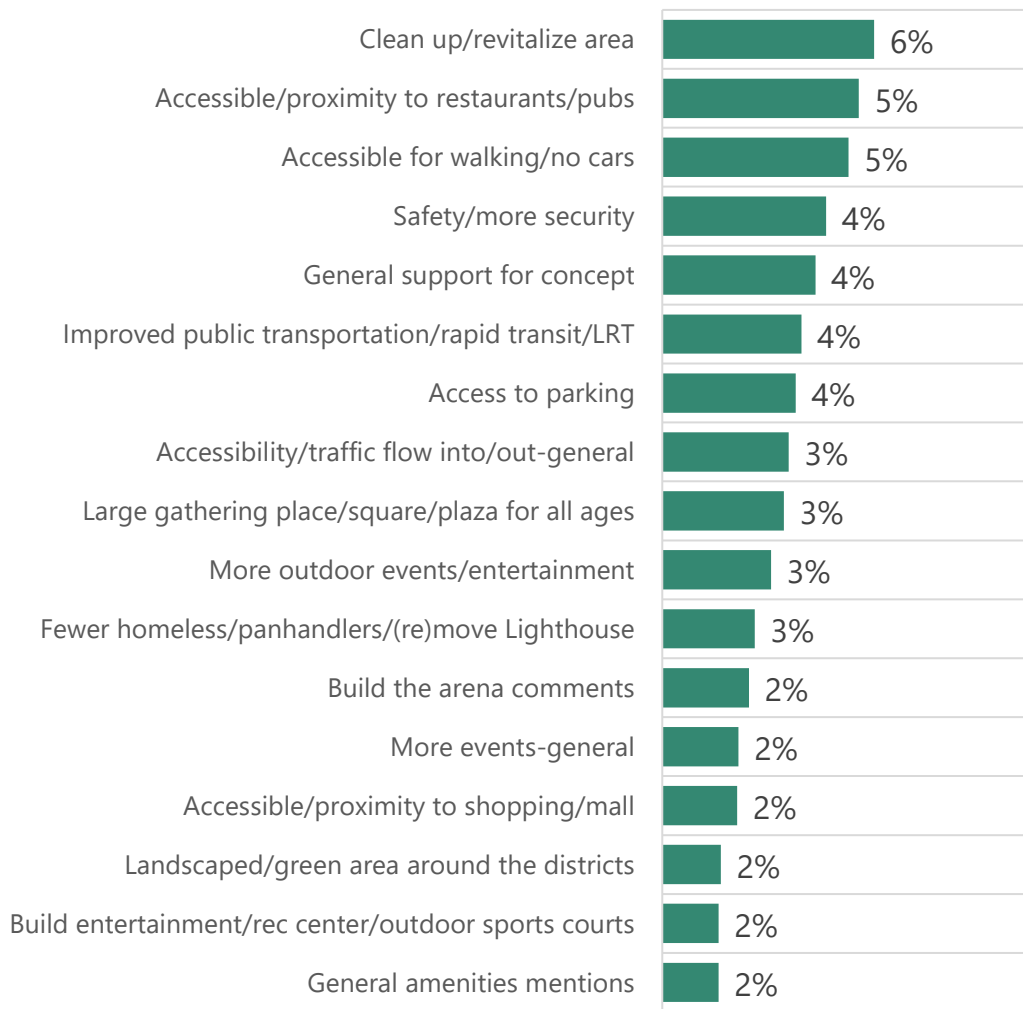
Amidst discussions on incorporating unique 'Saskatoon' elements into the Downtown Event and Entertainment District, some negative opinions arise expressing skepticism about the downtown arena.



What is uniquely "Saskatoon" that you would like to see included in the Downtown Event and Entertainment District? (Continued) Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Big Ideas!

Residents have a wide variety of ideas for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District. Top themes include a revitalized downtown, easy access to restaurants and pubs and walking spaces that are free of traffic.



Eliminate vehicle traffic altogether, creating a greener and more pedestrian/cyclist friendly area.

Have a space that is great to host large events within walking distance to restaurants, bars and hotels. I feel the positive economic impact outweighs the cost of building the area. It also solidifies the vision for downtown to emulate that of a major city.

Central place for entertainment and sports events. Make an evening out if it by going to a restaurant first or drinks after, without having to locate to another part of town.

Public washrooms open to 365 for everyone.

We need a grocery store and better and cheaper parking.

Make a space that has limited vehicle interaction and promotes people to get out and explore.

Publicly owned gathering spaces that are safe and comfortable with good washroom access.

Have local companies sponsor lighting, benches, art, water fountains etc. also sponsor things in arena like bathroom stalls.

Pedestrian only streets.

Walkability and district 'anchoring' between River Landing, the Bessborough, and Midtown/the new downtown event and entertainment district. It needs to be integrated with the rest of the downtown!

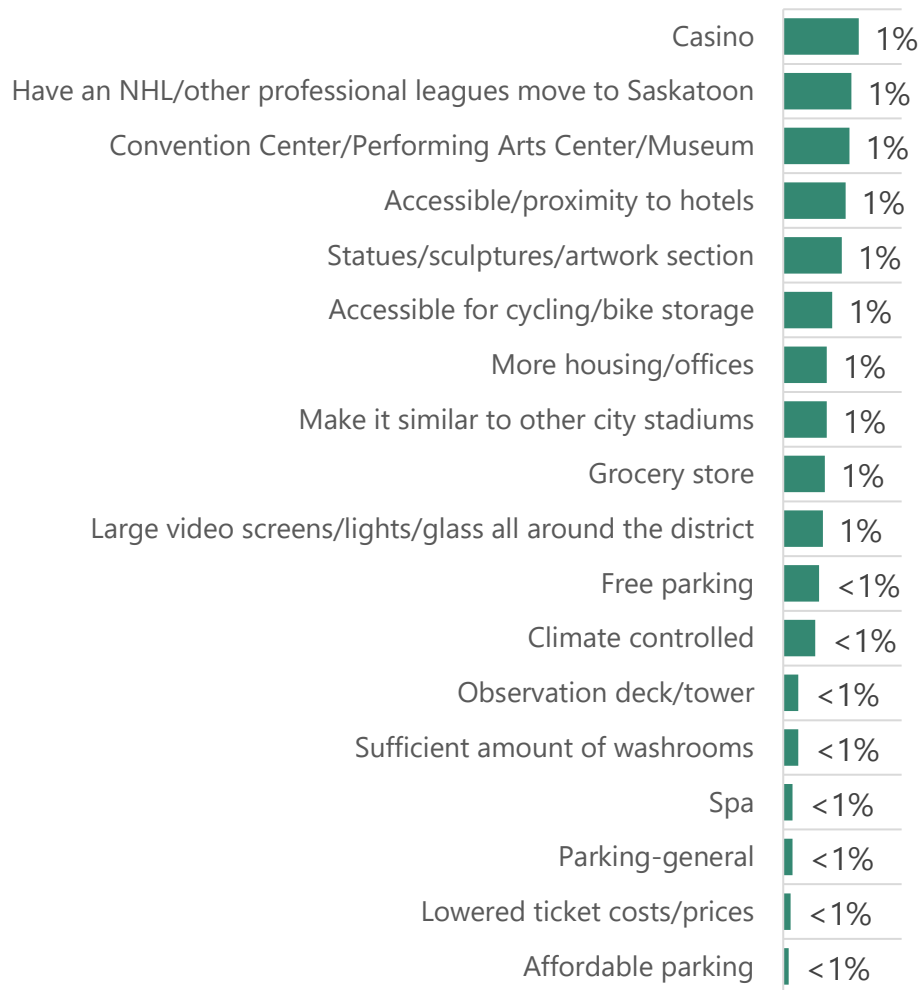
Attached hotel with rooms with views of the arena. An indoor pedestrian system connecting major points: Arena, Convention Center, Midtown, Remail, Sheraton / Bessborough / Meewasin area.

More unique noticeable streetlights like how Riverdale is. Colorful things flashing lights like Vegas.

What's your big idea for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District? Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Big Ideas!

Lesser mentioned themes represent optimism among residents. Varying interests and ideas emerge for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District.



Negative comments: 36%
Don't know / no comment: 6%

Guarded bike parkade for events- summer.
Organized and efficient Uber pickup zones - winter.
Maybe a whole street and exit from the arena dedicated to ride share pickups to be efficient and separate from other event traffic.

Casino, or arena, and a large arcade or recreation center for youth.

Perhaps some tunnel or enclosed walkways for winter.

Roof top restaurant with patio Rush & Blades retail store attached to event centre. Walking street for only foot traffic with ALL restaurants & bars for lively entertainment.

Make it place people want to look at? Something beautiful and architecturally interesting.

Clean up downtown. Ban panhandling and get more boots on the ground that can make the streets safe.

Don't build it until it can be a safe area. Otherwise, people will not go if they don't feel safe not matter what the event is.

Roof top restaurant with patio Rush & Blades retail store attached to event centre. Walking street for only foot traffic with ALL restaurants & bars for lively entertainment.

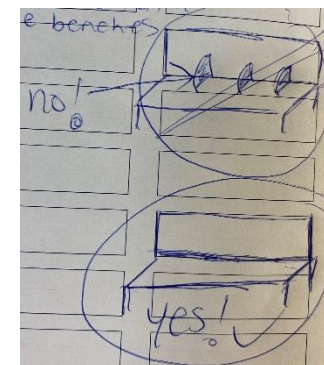
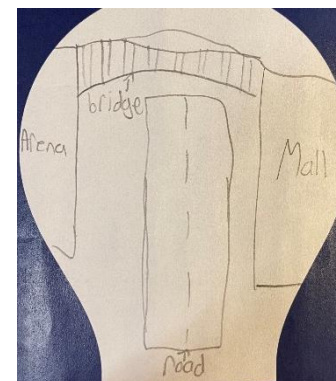
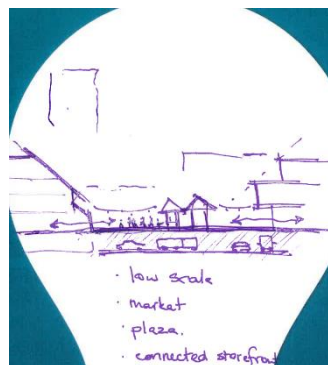
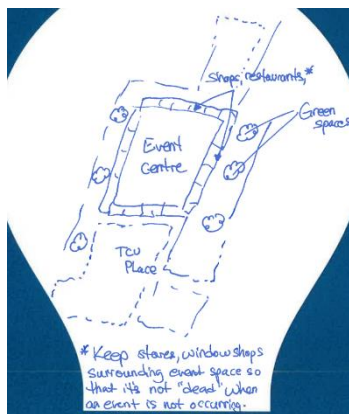
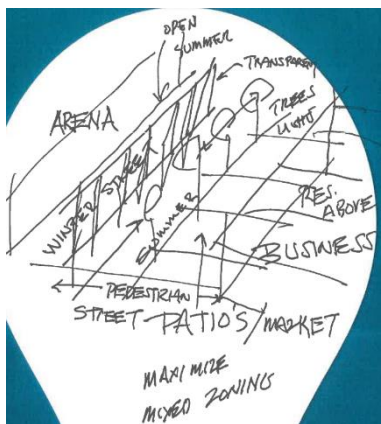
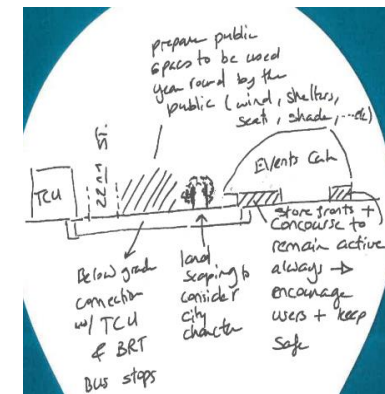
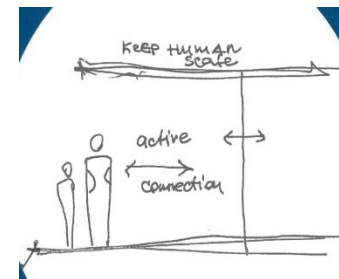
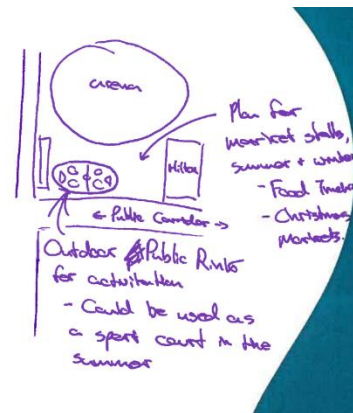
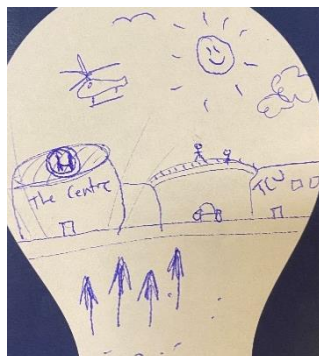
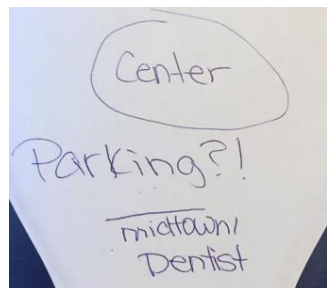
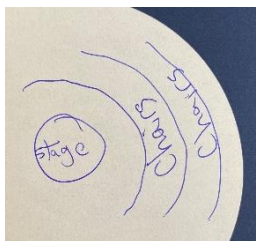
Connect it to business downtown so that it can be walked in the winter.

What's your big idea for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District? (Continued) Base: all respondents, n= 3,134.

Big Ideas!

Paper survey respondents were provided the opportunity to draw out their big ideas. Elements such as comfortable seating, unobstructive theatre set up, bridge and connectivity between the arena and surroundings are highlighted in residents' drawings.

Resident Feedback in Drawing

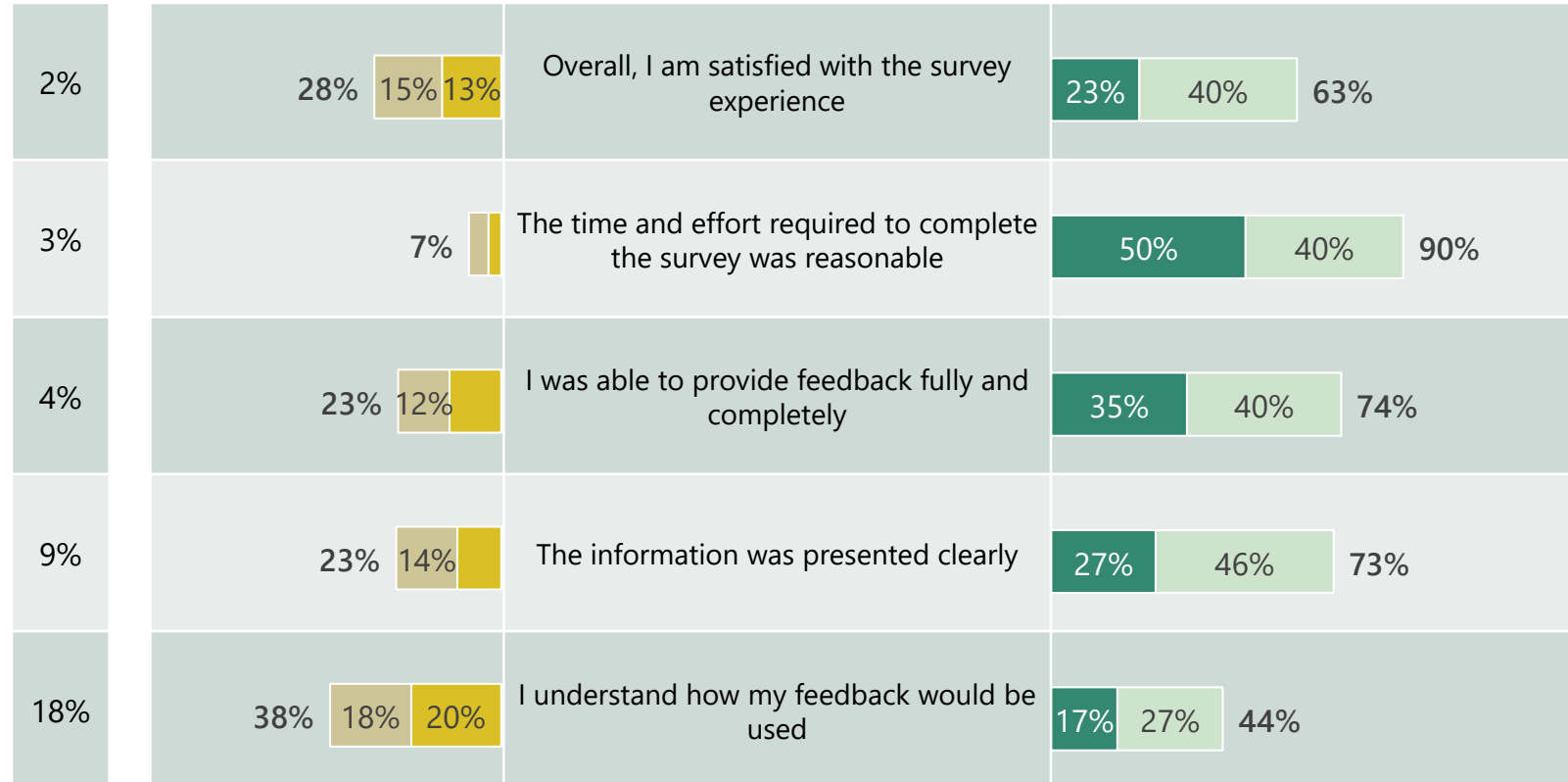


What's your big idea for the Downtown Event and Entertainment District? (Continued) Base: all respondents, n = 3,134.

Residents' feedback on the engagement survey are mostly positive, especially among younger groups and those living in the core neighbourhoods. However, almost half are unsure how their feedback will be used.

Not sure

Survey Experience / Feedback



■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

% Strongly / Somewhat agree Net Demographic Breakdown					
Age				SDA	
19-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Rest of Saskatoon	Core Neighbourhoods
73%▲	66%▼	62%▼	59%▼	62%▼	76%▲
92%	93%▲	91%	88%▼	90%	92%
82%▲	79%▲	73%▼	69%▼	73%▼	84%▲
82%▲	77%▲	68%▼	65%▼	71%▼	81%▲
51%▲	43%▼	44%	42%	43%▼	52%▲

Finally, we'd like your feedback about this survey. Do you agree or disagree with each of the statements? Base: online respondents, n=2,794-2,846.