



DATE: June 22, 2018

TO: General Release

SUBMITTED BY: LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

RE: City Centre Survey Results

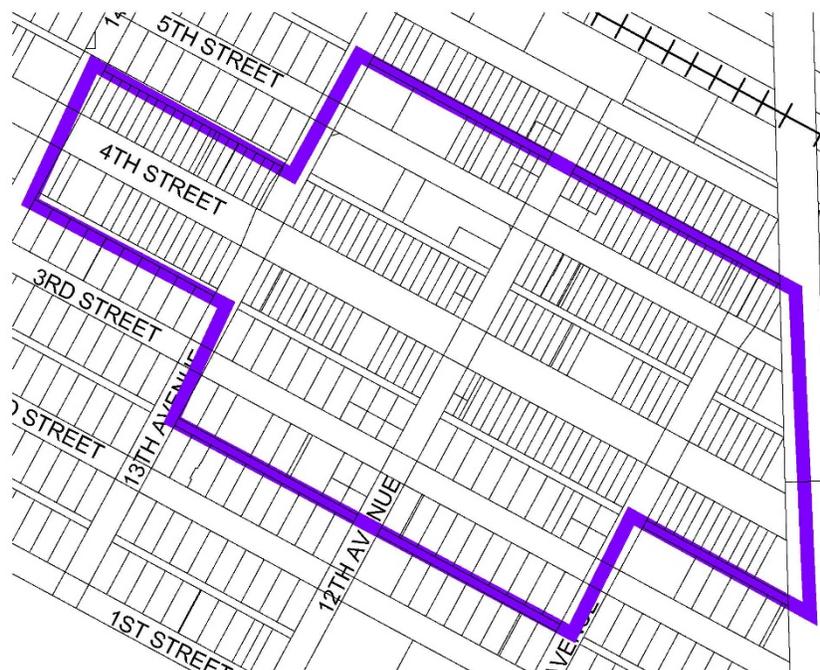
The following is a summary of preliminary findings for the Community Identity and Vision survey. These results may change somewhat as the survey will be up on our web-site for several months, while the kiosk version was changed to the next survey in the list.

In total, we had a total of 184 completed surveys, through our 4 kiosk locations (Hillview Manor, Trinity Tower, the Leisure Centre and our Utility Desk) and online through our web-site.

People are still completing surveys and will have access to do so until the fall. For this reason, the survey data will be updated at that time.

Here are what people told us:

Downtown Area:

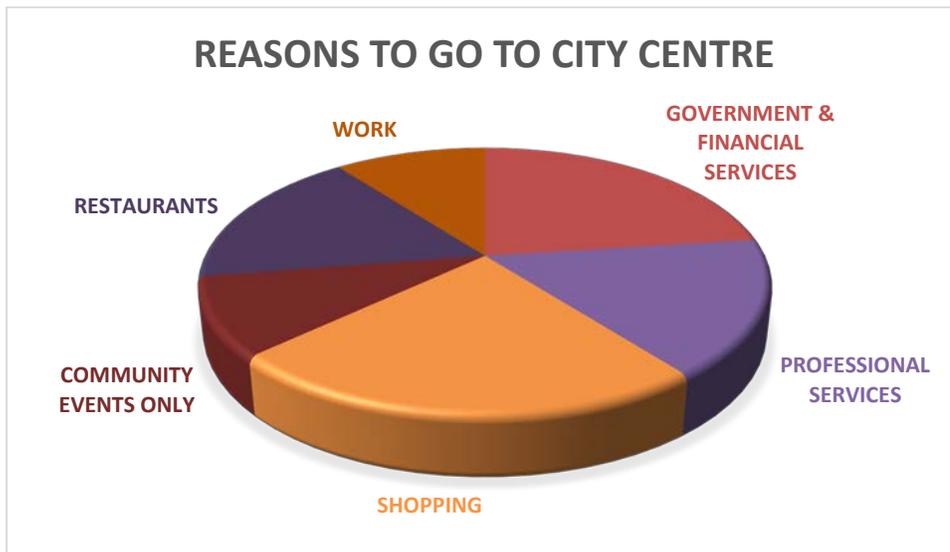


1) How often do you visit the City Centre for business, leisure or shopping?



42% of the respondents go to the City Centre less than once per week. What this tells us is that a large amount of people only go to the City Centre occasionally. For some reasons further explained below, the City Centre does not provide an attractive place for many people to go to as a destination.

2) When you go to the City Centre, what is your primary reason for doing so?



Government & Financial Services and Shopping total about 47% of the storefronts that are reasons for people to go to the City Centre.

3) In terms of land use activities, what would make the City Centre area more attractive to you as a place to visit?



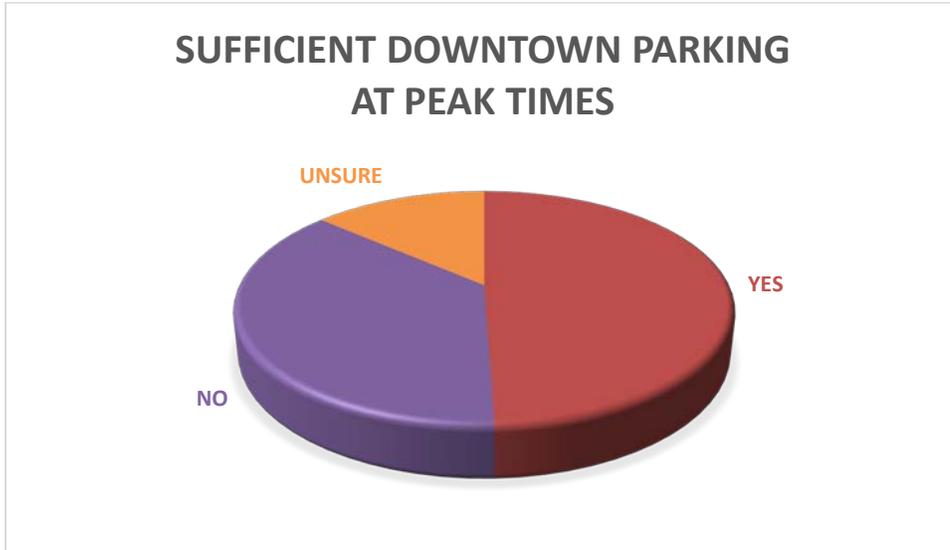
The respondents are clear that more community events in the City Centre area during the summer would be an asset to making our City Centre a more attractive place to visit. More vegetation, outdoor places to sit and children oriented stores (Note: YourToyStoreAndMore just moved out of the City Centre) would also help.

4) Should the City encourage, when City Centre sites are redeveloped, the creation of multi-storey buildings with commercial businesses on the street level and residential development on the upper levels?



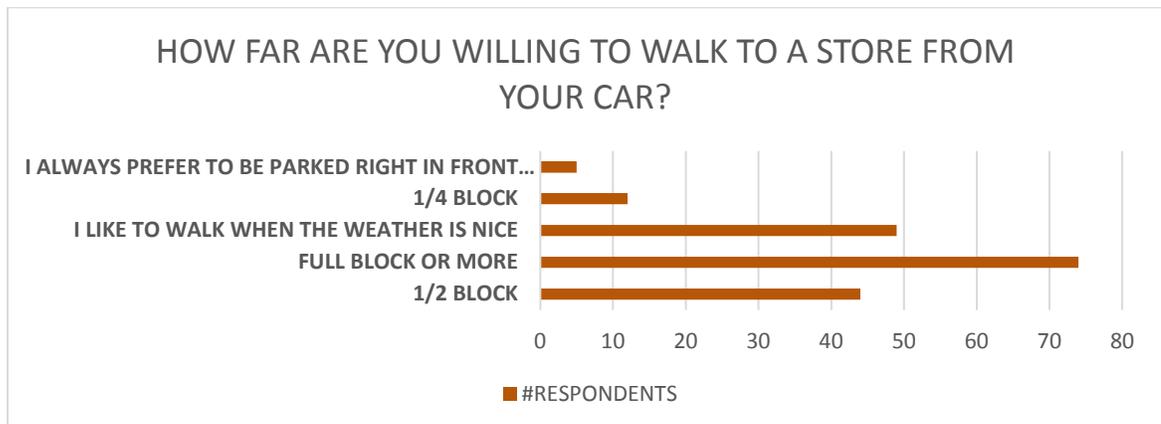
The results of this question may indicate that this type of development would be welcomed, but that it should be restricted to certain criteria rather than being encouraged throughout the City Centre. As an example, making this type of use a discretionary one would allow for community input rather than a staff approval.

5) Does the City Centre have sufficient parking at peak times?



Almost half (49%) of respondents are happy with current parking opportunities in the City Centre area. 37% of respondents are not happy with current parking opportunities in the City Centre Area. Comments provided, if acted upon, may help raise this number.

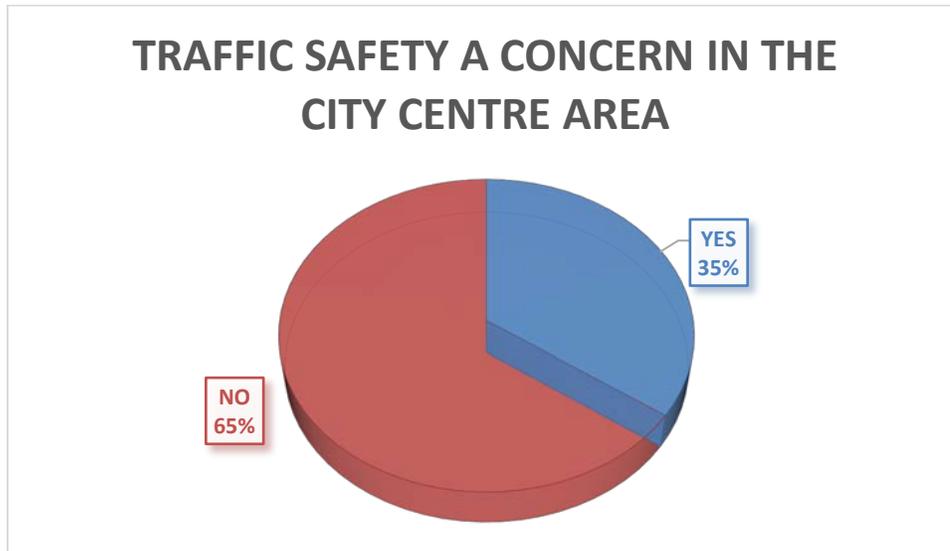
6) How far are you willing to walk to a store from your car if you don't have anything heavy to carry?



People are willing to walk a reasonable distance to get to their favourite shop. Land Development Services will be conducting further work on coverage from parking lots to

City Centre shops to identify any gaps that may exist with parking services in the City Centre areas.

7) Is traffic safety a concern in the City Centre?



Possible reasons for this answer are brought forward in the comments that were provided as part of the survey.

COMMENTARY PROVIDED IN THE SURVEYS:

WHAT WOULD MAKE THE CITY CENTRE MORE ATTRACTIVE AS A PLACE TO VISIT?

- Lower the commercial tax so people can afford to start a business in this town. Taxes alone are too much to start a business
- Consider dropping to two lanes road. (assume 4th street). Allow for patios for a coffee shop or a pub.
- Better sidewalks, Corners are too tight at banks and movie theatre
- not sure if we need a theme, but the downtown needs a clean up . A lot of lots are in bad shape
- need more downtown restaurants and retail.
- would visit more if there were more useful stores in downtown
- need a performing arts centre
- need more green in the downtown
- need more parking by the theatre.
- public rest room
- 5th street needs a facelift, no theme necessary
- Preserve our historic buildings

- need patio street seating
- better businesses to shop at
- close streets for the farmers market
- destroy some of the run-down buildings
- Its fine the way it is

IS TRAFFIC SAFETY A CONCERN?

- people enter crosswalks prior to giving vehicles a chance to slow to a stop
- vehicles don't always stop at red lights or obey rules at uncontrolled intersections
- red lights on crosswalks are ignored at times
- crosswalks mid-way on 1100 and 1200 blocks are more of a hazard to pedestrians
- people drive like idiots in this City
- Speed limit did not need to be reduced to 50 Khmu
- drivers sometimes turn without looking for pedestrians in crosswalks
- lights are a little short for some people to make it across in time.
- Drivers ignore the flashing crosswalk areas
- Pedestrian crosswalks are mis-used
- sunlight in morning or at sunset makes it difficult to see clearly on 4th street
- driving speeds are too fast
- very difficult to cross, even at the crosswalks
- The crosswalk lights are hard to notice
- With small kids would prefer to park in the rear, not all stores have rear access
- Not enough people obey traffic signals
- remove the mid-block traffic lights

POSSIBLE PLANNING DIRECTIONS:

Based upon the feedback received to this date, the following planning directions may be applicable to City Centre planning. It should be noted that these directions should be taken within the context that other survey data has not yet been analysed; and the capacity of the City to address possible planning directions has not been assessed.

42% of respondents stated that they only go to the City Centre less than once per week. This raises the question as to why this number is so low. Is it because of a lack of interest in what the City Centre has to offer or are other factors that make shopping malls and other retail outlets more attractive than the City Centre?

40% of visitors to the City Centre area are for government, financial and professional services. A further 40% go to the City Centre for shopping and restaurants. For a healthy City Centre the number of visits needs to be increased. The next question, therefore, is what can be done to generate more traffic into the City Centre?

During the warmer seasons, more community events in the City Centre were highlighted to generate additional traffic in the City Centre. Children's themed stores and a more pedestrian friendly environment were also brought forward as reasoning to generate more City Centre visits. Economic Development would suggest that the increasing number of vacant store fronts is an important factor.

It should be noted that a City Centre theme to make the City Centre more attractive came in fourth in the priority list. So, though it might be something nice to aspire to, a City Centre theme with associated façade improvements was not the top priority for people.

A separate survey on Parks and Recreation¹ is showing that a high priority for respondents is to have a trail system that connects various parts of the City. The Community Vision and Identity survey concurs with this to the extent that trail and pedestrian linkage are a respondent priority for the future.

The question of multi-use and multi-storey buildings was raised, and the respondents were split on this issue. 58% of the respondents were in favour of the multi-storey and multi-use approach (i.e., a store with a condo or rental unit on the second floor. Research has found that having people living in an area does reduce the crime rate in that area as people will be more reluctant to vandalize or break into store fronts when there are nearby residents.

Based upon the results, the City may wish to tread carefully on this issue. Some multi-storey mixed-use buildings may be appropriate in the City Centre provided the site can provide be adequately serviced and have adequate off-site parking. It is expected that any development of this nature may likely require a new building to be constructed as many of the commercial City Centre buildings are not designed for mixed use.

The final issues discussed in the City Centre survey involved parking. 49% of respondents appear to be satisfied with the parking opportunities provided in City Centre, though a large number of people are not satisfied. 2/3 of respondents were not concerned with traffic safety.

¹ All analysis of Parks and Recreation is due in early July.

When the survey process is complete the comments provided will help inform policy directions with respect to City Centre issues. At this point, the following comments are highlighted as having planning significance.

- On-street patios
 - This matter is already being examined due to a request from a City eatery. Primary issues are impacts on parking, non-interference with traffic movements and pedestrian movements through or around the patio area.
- A more pedestrian friendly downtown
 - Land Development Services will work with Parks and Recreation regarding the overall Recreation plan for trails within the City.
- Outdoor public restroom.
 - Land Development Services will work with Parks and Recreation on this issue. It is recognized that asking to use a private bathroom in a place where you are not shopping is sometimes problematic. Also, public restrooms have their own costs and concerns.
- More community events
 - Land Development Services is actively working with Economic Development to find a means to encourage more community events in the City Centre. This could include the temporary closure of City Centre street(s) and the use of parking lots that are typically used by businesses on weekdays.
- Historical Buildings
 - There are several buildings, primarily churches, that are generally regarded as historical in nature. Owners of these buildings can apply to have those buildings given a national, provincial or municipal historical designation given to their properties.

Currently, the City of Estevan does not have a historical designation policy. A policy would assist with determining whether a building is a good fit for a designation as a Municipal Historic Site. It is the intent of Land Development Services to include a framework for a policy in the Official Community Plan and to have a detailed policy and process for Council consideration once the OCP has been finalized.

Some municipalities offer tax breaks as an incentive to the landowner to maintain the building. Others allow for development credits where a developer of a nearby lot would purchase credits from the historical building lot owner to develop something of a higher density. There are other options as well, each of which must be evaluated by Council and Administration to determine which are the best fit for Estevan. The merit of these approaches will be weighed by Council as part of the historical policy provisions of a new OCP.

Until a policy and designations are issued, Land Development Services will be forwarding all development and where appropriate, all building permits on buildings regarded as historical to Council for consideration no matter if the subject property has a historical designation or not.

- Destroy Run Down Buildings
 - Land Development Services has identified this as an issue for buildings of various types in the City of Estevan. To the layman, tearing down an old home or commercial building and then replacing it with a newer building may seem like a daunting task. The City is currently preparing a brochure to explain the process and to assist landowners with projected costs. Having a program for relaxation of landfill fees and other charges would be a Council budget decision.

One of the questions that offered respondents an opportunity to comment on was the question regarding traffic safety. Many of the comments provided deal more with pedestrian and driver attitudes, but some were land use planning related. For the non-planning related comments, they will be forwarded to the applicable City Departments for consideration. The following is an initial response to those comments:

- Not all stores have rear access, and as a result, the store is not as convenient for entry/exit as it could otherwise be.
 - A possible planning direction from this comment would be to require as part of new development or as a change of use permit that a rear public access be provided on stores fronting 4th Street if the building offers public parking in the rear or adjacent to the rear of the building. This type of rule would have to be subject to practicality as it may not be easy to implement depending on the building.
 - Another action that will be taken is to forward this comment to the Downtown Business Association for their consideration.