



# CONCEPT SURVEY RESULTS

## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### OVERVIEW

The Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan concept online survey was run for five weeks from February 26 to April 4, 2018. Print and online advertising was used, along with brochures in select stores in the neighbourhood, to reach as many people as possible.

Detailed results and participant demographics are presented in the following pages, organized by each of the three questions asked in the survey.

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. We talked to residents about 8 topics. *Look at each one and tell us if you agree with what they said.*
2. The Historic Downtown concept is made of many elements. *Use the stars to prioritize what is most important to you.*
3. Eight projects from the concept are mapped here. *Click and choose the 3 most important ones you think would bring the Historic Downtown concept to life.*



**6,271**  
**PARTICIPANTS**



# 1. WHAT WE HEARD

# SHOPPING DISTRICT

The first question in the survey provided statements about what people preferred during earlier engagement events in the summer of 2017, and asked whether there was agreement with this direction.

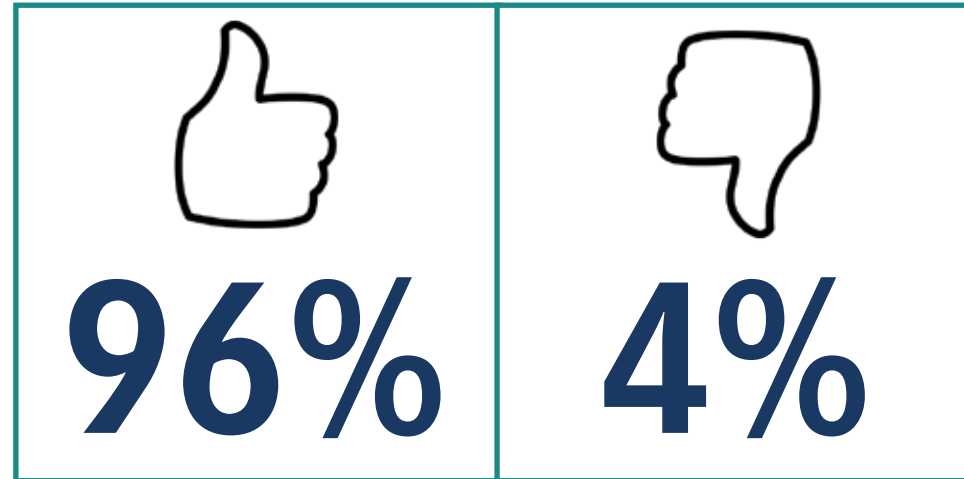
## STREETS

People preferred streets with patios, small scale retail, and seating.



photo credit: flickr | brew books

Do you agree with this direction?



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (108 comments)...

"Absolutely agree, that is the character of downtown."

"We love Fort Langley for its opportunities to be outdoors, shopping, spending time with loved ones all at the same time. The vibe is great. We would love this closer to home."

"Creating outdoor areas people can sit and enjoy is essential to a vibrant area."

"Of course, though don't forget it rains for months on end, so the patios and outdoor seating will not work other than in the summer."

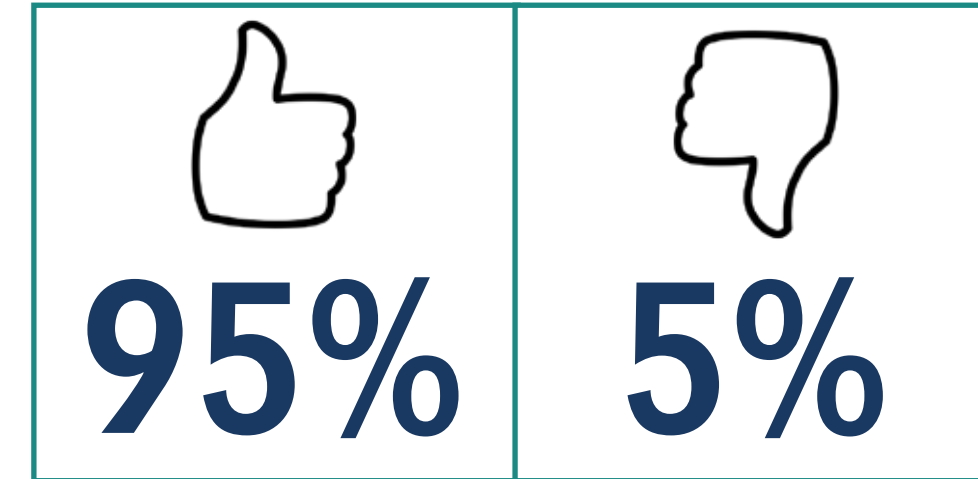
## HISTORIC CHARACTER

People preferred protecting historic buildings, and complementing and/or replicating historic character in new development.



photo credit: john iring

Do you agree with this direction?



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (85 comments)...

"Keep the historic feel, it is a great way to bring people."

"I agree that protecting historic buildings is important when the buildings are in good shape, and have an aesthetic that compliments the neighbourhood"

"This is what gives the downtown its charm and character!!"

"By replicating you create a 'cookie cutter' neighbourhood. Push developers to use heritage or historic materials but in new and forward thinking designs."



# 1. WHAT WE HEARD

# PARKS & NATURE

## PARKS & PLAZAS

People preferred green spaces, plazas, water features, and play areas.



photo credit: montgomery county planning commission

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (178 comments)...

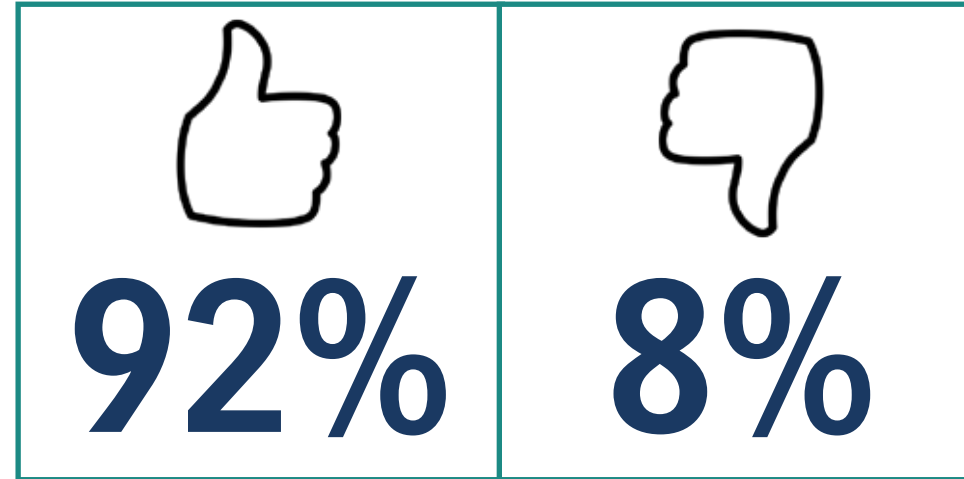
"We need a fantastic water park other than Mill Lake. Fountains that kids can run through."

"Green spaces are key for community, physical and mental health."

"Please be sure to include benches/seating dispersed around the area so that everyone can enjoy these spaces."

"Big YES. If downtown is to be come a true hub for the city, these types of areas are needed."

Do you agree with this direction?



## NATURAL FEATURES

People preferred greenways, trails, and street trees.



photo credit: traveling mom

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (115 comments)...

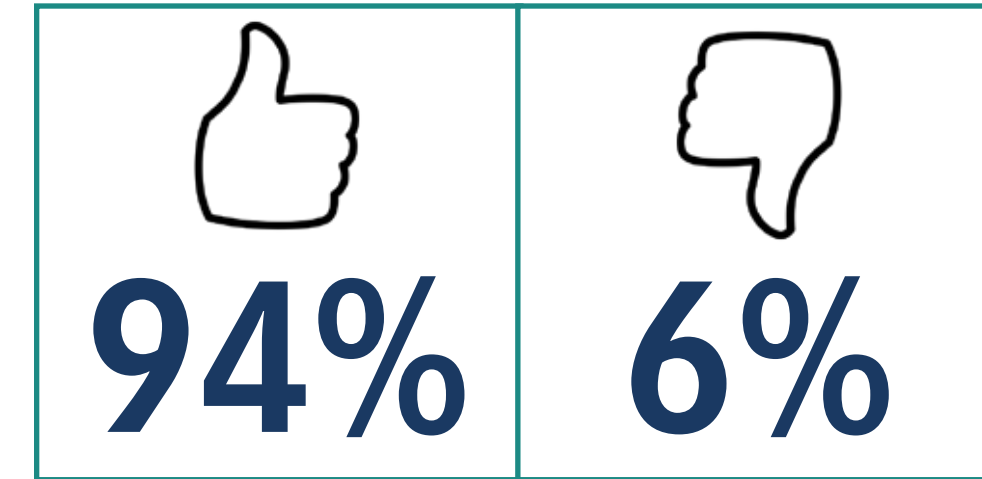
"I agree that greenways and trails are important, but I also want these features to actually go somewhere useful. I want them to be a part of my day-to-day getting around to places in the city, not just for recreation."

"Incorporating nature in a downtown district looks amazing and shows Abbotsford is an up and coming city."

"This city desperately needs more pedestrian friendly areas. It is one of the most unwalkable places I have ever lived."

"Yes!!! How can you go wrong with this kind of thinking? And street lights with hanging baskets and banners!"

Do you agree with this direction?





# 1. WHAT WE HEARD

# TRANSPORTATION

## MOBILITY CHOICE

People preferred more walking, biking, and transit amenities, with safer street design.

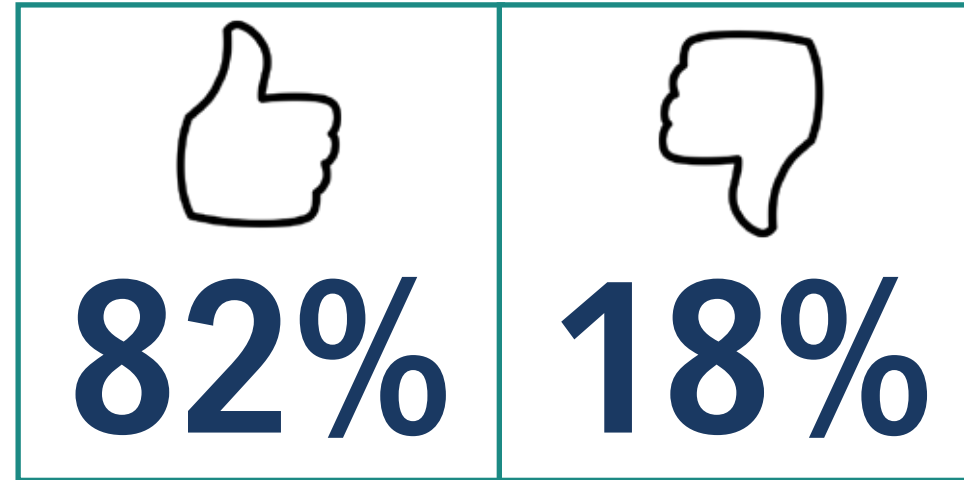


photo credit: flickr | la citta vita

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (248 comments)...

- "Agreed, but with plenty of parking close by as well so others that have to drive there can also enjoy walking around."
- "All redeveloped streets should be "complete streets" with sidewalks and protected bike lanes on both sides of the street."
- "More public transit options please!"
- "I would agree with this if public transit amenities worked well in Abbotsford."

Do you agree with this direction?



## PARKING

People were willing to walk between 3 to 5 blocks to their destination after parking.

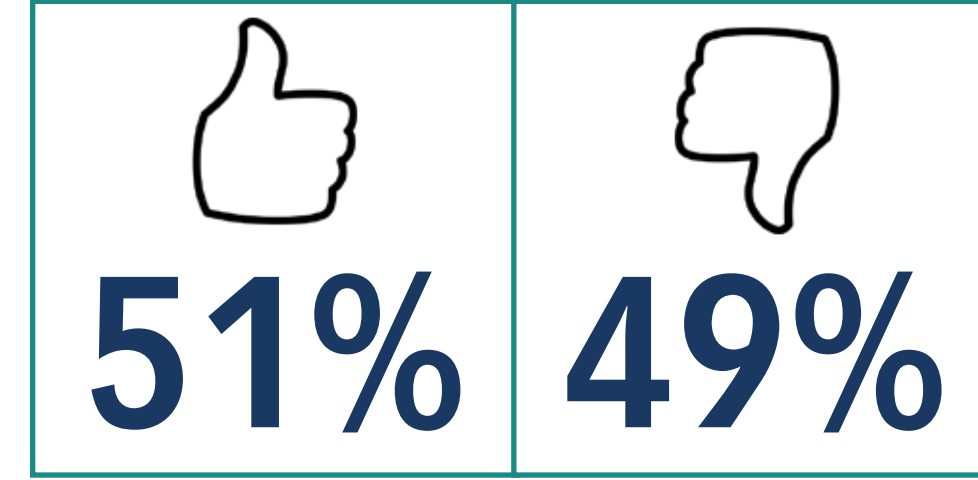


photo credit: google streetview

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (108 comments)...

- "Generally, 3 blocks is where I feel most people would easily tend to look for parking, but not much farther."
- "Only when health lets them, many people have health issues and there are very limited disability spaces."
- "I've gone home and decided to come back later if I couldn't find parking within one block."
- "The distance that people will walk depends on the experience. If it is a nice day, yes. If the street is attractive, yes. More than 2 blocks in Abbotsford might be a challenge."

Do you agree with this direction?





# 1. WHAT WE HEARD

# HOUSING & AMENITIES

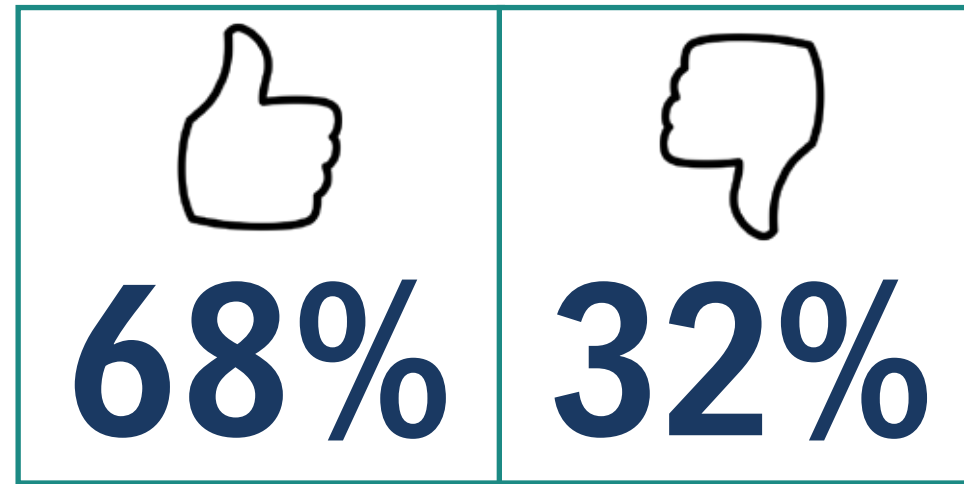
## HOUSING OPTIONS

People preferred townhouses and apartments for families and live-work lifestyles.



photo credit: flickr | brew books

Do you agree with this direction?



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (223 comments)...

"With the right amenities, like green and play space, apartments are a suitable permanent place to reside."

"I wish the entire historic downtown had mixed use buildings. More people living in the area will naturally activate the street."

"There needs to be a mix. That's great for some people but doesn't work for everyone. I'm okay with the immediate downtown core being this way, but the surrounding areas need to have a variety of options."

"Especially because a lot of people cannot afford single family dwellings."

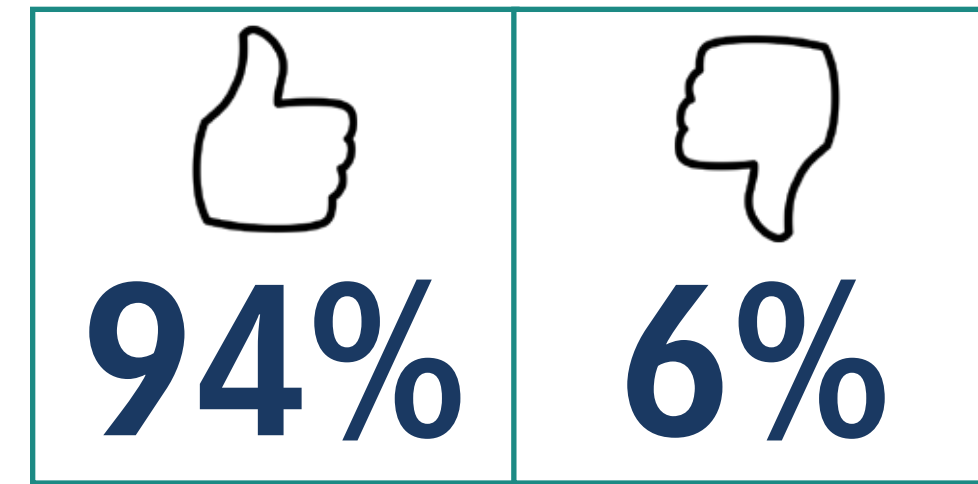
## AMENITIES & EVENTS

People preferred outdoor events, seasonal activities, and gardens.



photo credit: att children

Do you agree with this direction?



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS (113 comments)...

"The Farmers Market is one of my favourite fall, spring, and summer events."

"Abbotsford has been held as a no-fun city for far too long, and more events and activities should be available. This means activities for everyone, not just family friendly activities."

"While I enjoy outdoor events at gardens, I would love some more indoor events during rainy/cold."

"I love the berry festival and the Christmas tree lighting."



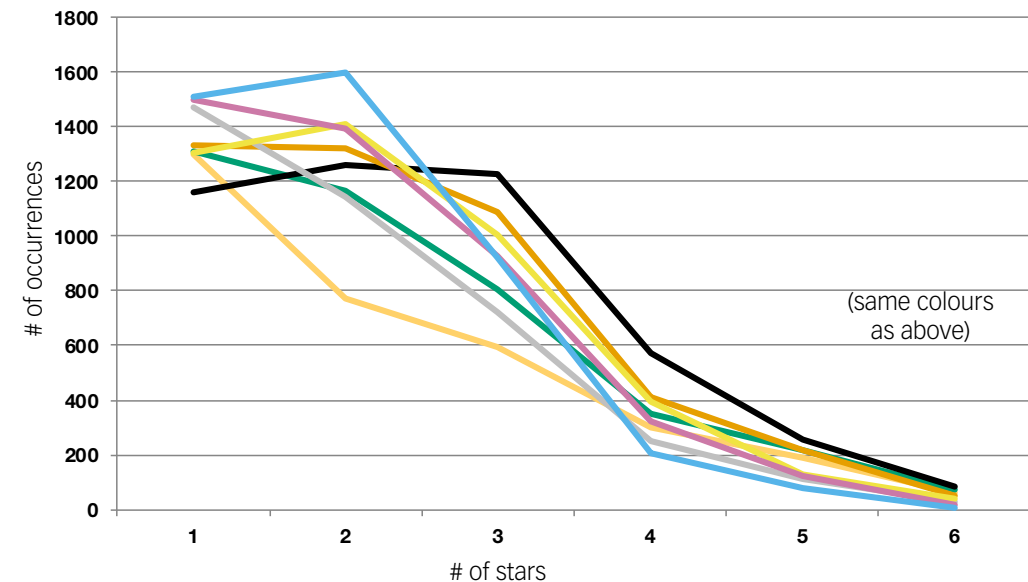
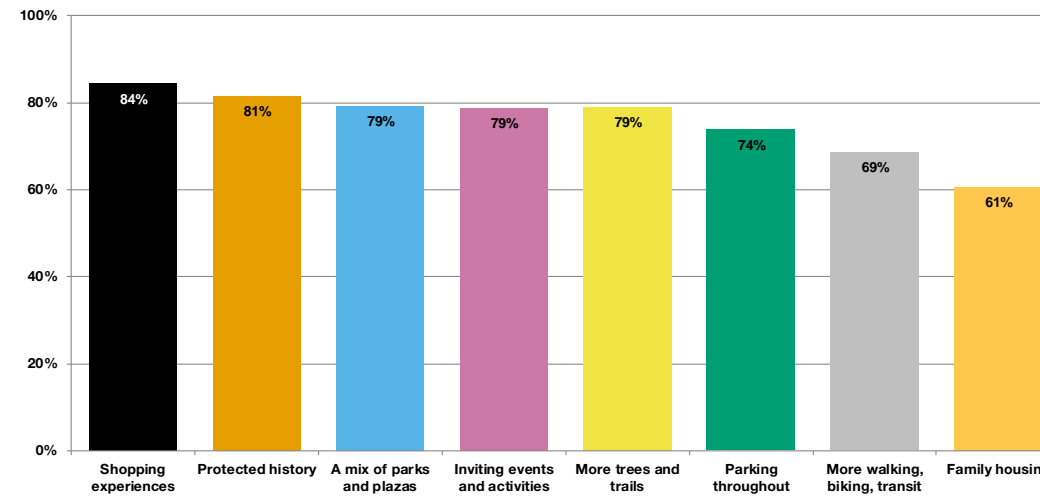
# 2. PRIORITY AREAS

The second question in the survey listed 8 priority areas and provided participants with a 'budget' of 15 stars to place on the priorities that were the most important to them.

## PRIORITY AREAS BY FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Participants selected two priority areas more than 8 times out of 10, and an additional three priority areas almost 8 times out of 10. These top five priorities could be considered the most broadly appealing of the eight available options.

It should be noted these top five priorities by frequency are not in the same order as the average ratings on the facing page. A possible explanation for this is a priority that may be less broadly appealing could elicit a stronger reaction from fewer people who rate it higher, pushing the average rating up despite fewer people selecting it as a priority.



## PRIORITY AREAS BY DISTRIBUTION OF STAR RATING

Participants used 15 stars and distributed them across their choice of the eight priority areas. The distribution of these ratings shows "a mix of parks and plazas" had the highest 1 and 2 star ratings but received much fewer ratings greater than 2 stars.

Three other priority areas received high 1 star ratings but quickly dropped below other priority areas over 1 star: "more walking, biking, transit", "parking throughout", and "family housing".

One priority area, "shopping experiences", received consistently high ratings with the most 3, 4, 5, and 6 star ratings out of all priority areas.

Although not shown on the chart, two priority areas, "family housing" and "parking throughout", received the most ratings over 6 stars, illustrating stronger reactions to the priority among fewer participants.

### SHOPPING EXPERIENCES

(Streets that have an engaging and comfortable shopping and retail experience.)

2.17 average rating



### PROTECTED HISTORY

(Protect historic buildings and have new buildings use complementary architecture.)

1.93 average rating



### PARKING THROUGHOUT

(Parking throughout the neighbourhood for visitors and employees alike.)

1.82 average rating



### MORE TREES & TRAILS

(Add trees and trails to make the area green, inviting, and enjoyable to move through.)

1.81 average rating



### INVITING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

(Host outdoor and seasonal events to invite people into the neighbourhood.)

1.70 average rating



### A MIX OF PARKS AND PLAZAS

(Provide parks and plazas of all shapes and sizes throughout the neighbourhood.)

1.61 average rating



### FAMILY HOUSING

(New housing includes units with 3 or more bedrooms for families.)

1.45 average rating



### MORE WALKING, BIKING, TRANSIT

(Emphasize walking, biking, and transit as ways to get to the neighbourhood, and move around in it, instead of prioritizing cars.)

1.44 average rating





# 3. PROJECT IDEAS

The third question in the survey mapped and described 8 projects to build in the neighbourhood, and asked participants to choose the top 3 most important for Historic Downtown.

## GATEWAY PLAZAS

Create new gateway plazas to create a sense of arrival in Historic Downtown. This could include market space, patios, seating, and multipurpose seasonal event space.



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

- "Great idea, I love it!"
- "Would definitely increase the amount of people going to visit downtown Abbotsford as a location to spend the day."
- "Public art should be integral to part of the redesign."
- "And trees! But YES! More reason to go downtown and STAY downtown for a while."

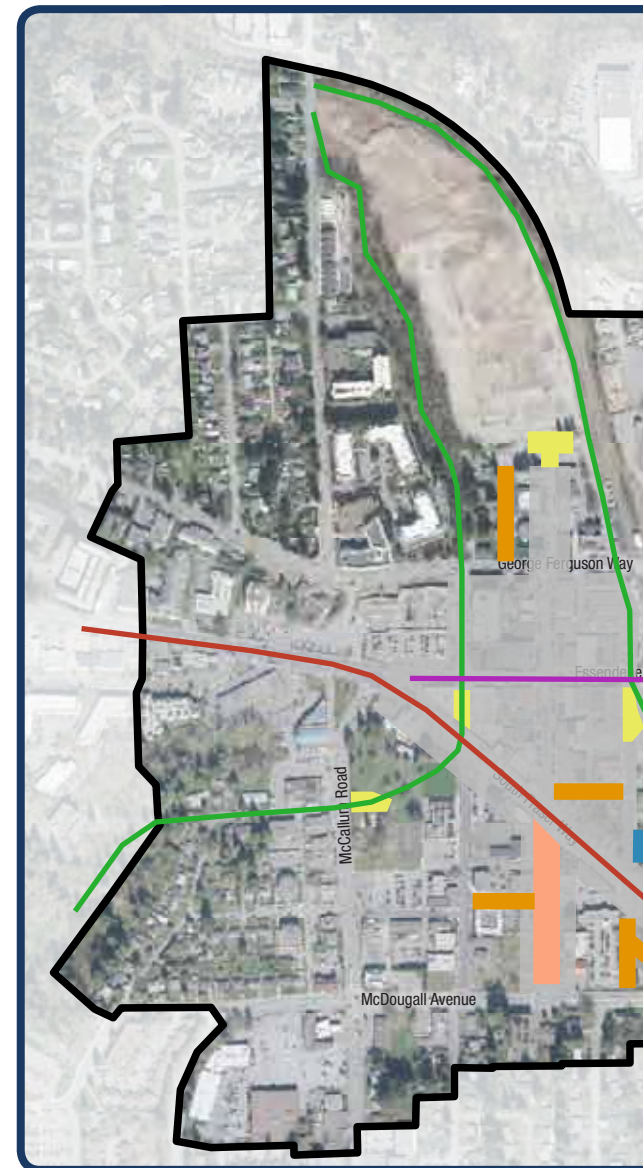
## TRAILS AND PATHS

Build trails and paths to and through the neighbourhood, connecting it to destinations such as Jubilee Park, Ravine Park, Mill Lake, the railway corridor, and the Discovery Trail.



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

- "If trails and paths were in place it would be an incentive for me to walk, love this idea."
- "This would be nice so that people could come without their vehicles and spend the afternoon or choose an evening stroll."
- "Yes, make sure to include bike lanes, and running and walking paths."
- "The trails need to be well lit at night and safe for everyone."



## REDESIGN ESSENDENE

Provide more space for sidewalks, bikes, patios, and street trees on Essendene Avenue by reducing vehicle space, and keeping on-street parallel parking.

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

- "Look at how the city of Nelson allows space on the street for patio expansions."
- "Top priority because Essendene is useless / impossible to drive / park and seems so dangerous to be on foot. Need better driving routes AROUND, and parking within downtown."
- "As long as they create a new east-west through fare elsewhere to make up for the lost lanes."



## PARKADE

Build a multi-level parkade to provide for long term parking needs, designed with on street retail.

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

- "I'm not keen on a parkade but realize that a lot of people will drive here, and will need parking spots. It's pretty hard to find parking downtown some days."
- "Greater than 2 hour parking is needed. People will walk if they don't have to worry about time."
- "Parking close to downtown makes it easy for out of town traffic, need to be safe, secure and cost effective so people don't shy away."



# 3. PROJECT IDEAS

## SIGNATURE CORRIDOR

Build a signature corridor along South Fraser Way that connects the neighbourhood to the City Centre and Civic Precinct. The corridor could be expanded to other areas in the future.



  
**1,506**

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

"I like this idea IF it creates a walkway / bike path that is protected from vehicles - and ONLY if it does NOT take current lanes away from a roadway."


"Right now we have two distinct areas of Abbotsford. It would be great to see them connected."

"There should be real coordination between these two areas. Driving they are one minute away, so it would be great to have a cohesive plan and look for this area."

## TRANSIT STREET

Create a transit street along the south end of Montrose Avenue that includes retail space, trees and benches, with high quality urban design.



  
**1,346**

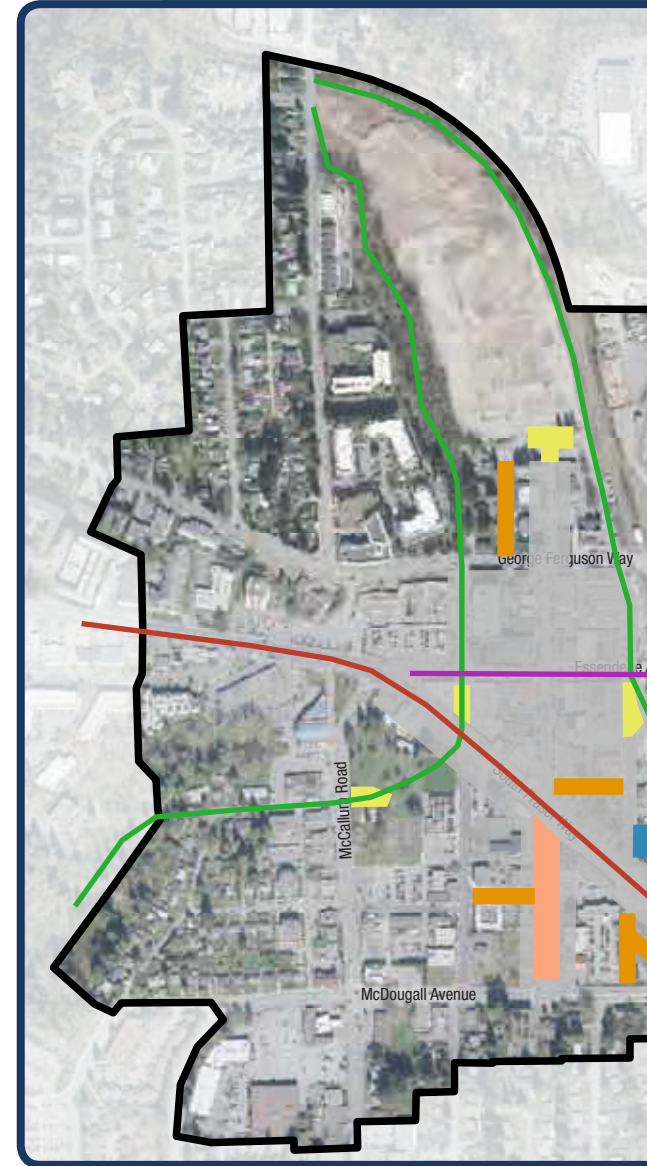
### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...


"This would be a priority for me only if the transit routes were also revamped."

"Assuming this option includes an improved transit system?"

"If the improvements cut down on time it takes getting to and through town."

"Too much emphasis on design could lose out on what's needed: transit."



  
**1,406**



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

"As long as the design is historic."

"Downtown has come a long way over the last 10 years, let's keep improving it!"

"And not some hodgepodge of various stuff, but a well thought out an complimentary design and concept."

"This seems costly without enough benefit."

  
**1,116**



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

"It is already difficult to park downtown. Without new parking areas, the expansion on everything else is useless."

"A central parkade will work better."

"Definitely could use more parking downtown as the area expands."

## STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Improve and maintain high quality design along target shopping streets in the historic core.

## PARKING STREETS

Design some streets to provide the most amount of parking possible, similar to Gosling Way today.



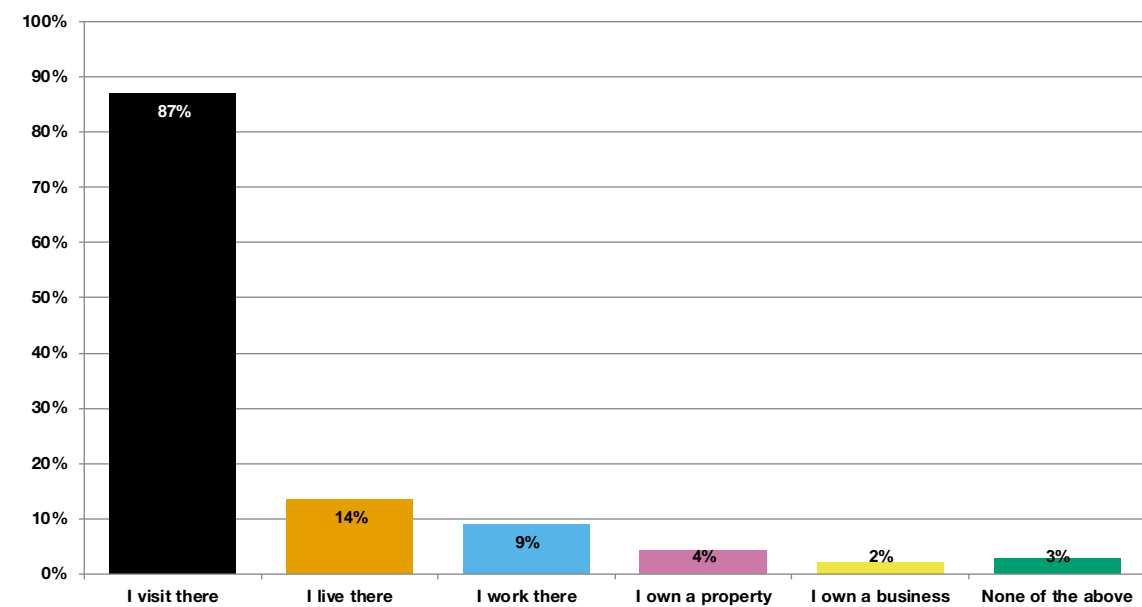
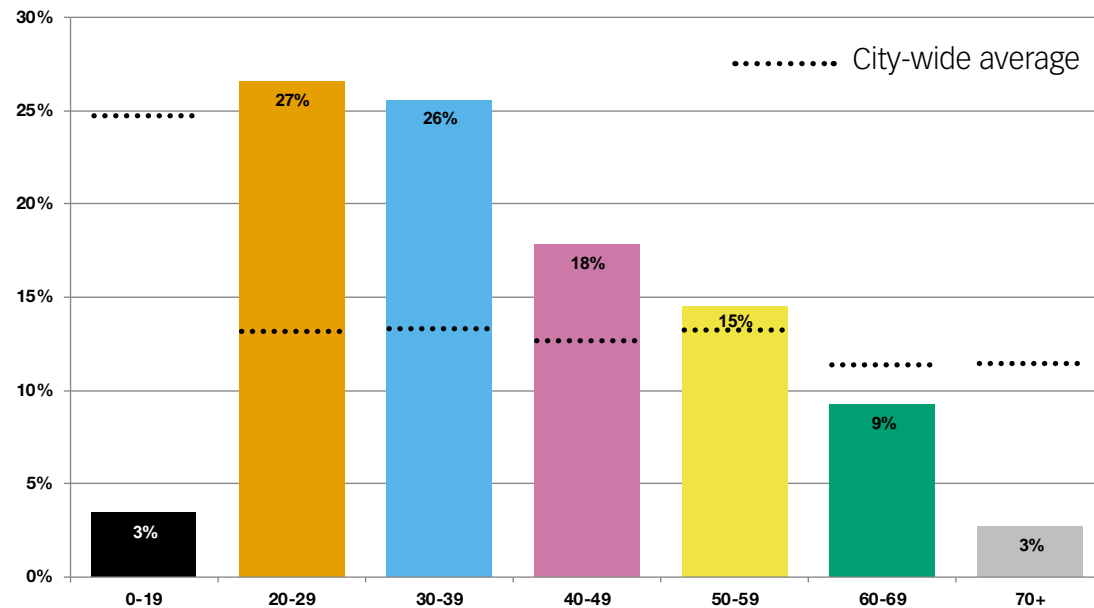


# DEMOGRAPHICS

## AGE

Participants in the online survey had a relatively balanced age profile, with roughly half of participants under 40 and half over 40 years old.

Within narrower age brackets, representation was particularly high in two categories with greater than City average representation: 20 to 29 and 30 to 39 year olds. Three other categories had representation comparable to the City average: 40 to 49, 50 to 59, and 60 to 69 year olds. And two categories had representation less than the City average: 0 to 19 and 70 and above years old.

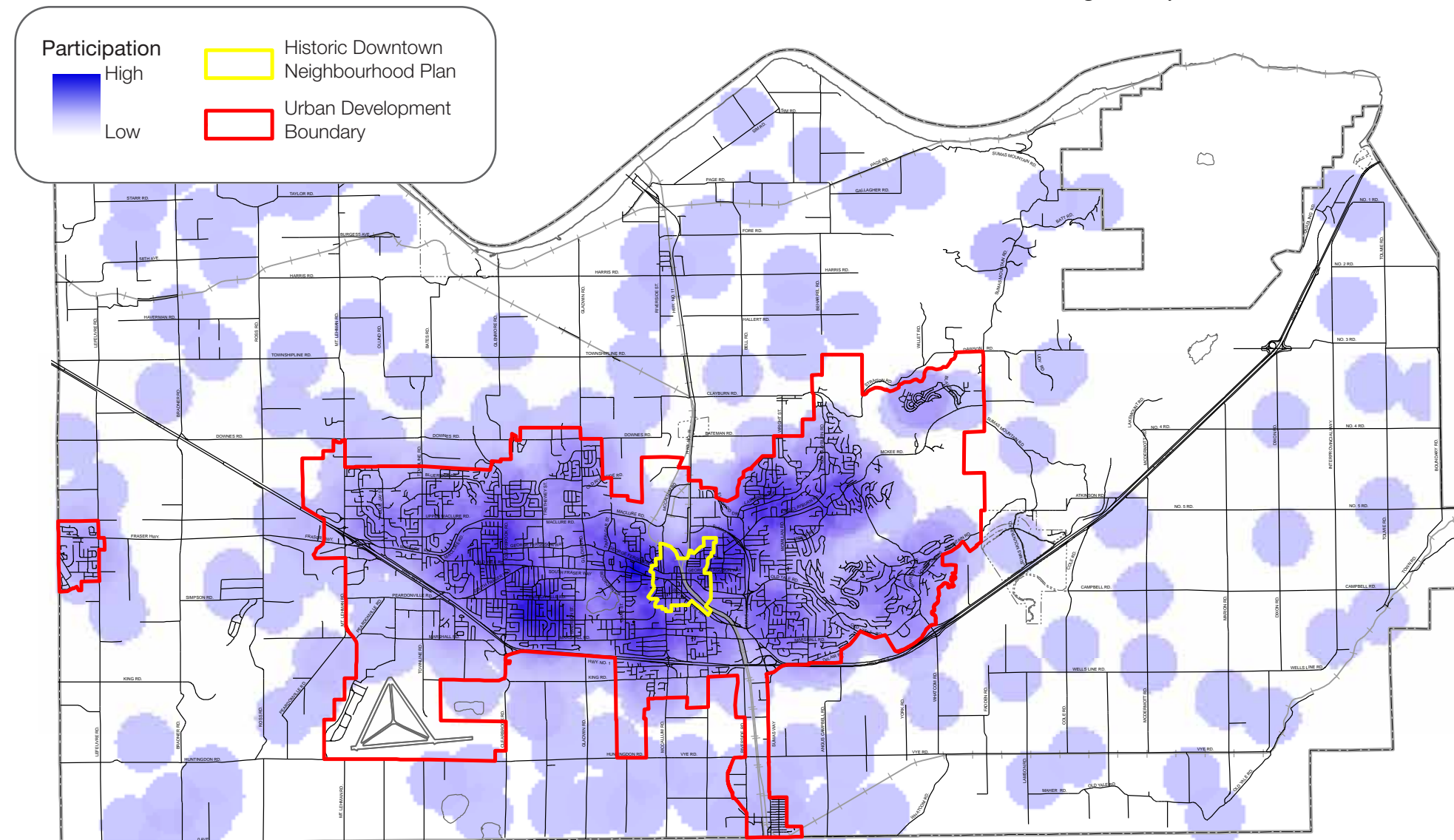


## RELATION TO DOWNTOWN

Participants in the online survey could choose multiple options to describe their relationship to downtown. The most frequently selected option was “I visit there” at 87% of all participants. This finding reflects Historic Downtown’s broad appeal as a destination for visitors.

The second and third highest selected options reflect Historic Downtown’s less prominent roles as a place for people to live and work. Increasing the number of people who live and/or work in Historic Downtown is one of the anticipated outcomes of the neighbourhood plan.

## POSTAL CODE MAP



# RESULTS SUMMARY



## AGREEMENT WITH PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT

When asked whether they agreed with earlier engagement results, participants said 'yes' to STREETS and HISTORIC CHARACTER the most.

### STREETS

People preferred streets with patios, small scale retail, and seating.



96%



4%

### HISTORIC CHARACTER

People preferred protecting historic buildings, and complementing and/or replicating historic character in new development.



95%



5%

## TOP 3 PRIORITIES

When asked what their top 3 priorities for the neighbourhood were, participations rated SHOPPING EXPERIENCES, PROTECTED HISTORY, and PARKING THROUGHOUT the highest.

### SHOPPING EXPERIENCES

(Streets that have an engaging and comfortable shopping and retail experience.)

2.17



average rating

### PROTECTED HISTORY

(Protect historic buildings and have new buildings use complementary architecture.)

1.93



average rating

### PARKING THROUGHOUT

(Parking throughout the neighbourhood for visitors and employees alike.)

1.82



average rating

## TOP 3 PROJECTS

When asked what their top 3 projects to build in the neighbourhood were, participants chose GATEWAY PLAZAS, REDESIGN ESSENDNE, TRAILS AND PATHWAYS the most.

### GATEWAY PLAZAS

Create new gateway plazas to create a sense of arrival in Historic Downtown. This could include market space, patios, seating, and multipurpose seasonal event space.



2,131

### REDESIGN ESSENDENE

Provide more space for sidewalks, bikes, patios, and street trees on Essendene Avenue by reducing vehicle space, and keeping on-street parallel parking.



1,951

### TRAILS AND PATHS

Build trails and paths to and through the neighbourhood, connecting it to destinations such as Jubilee Park, Ravine Park, Mill Lake, the railway corridor, and the Discovery Trail.



1,851