

104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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Project Overview

The City is exploring the creation of a new Entertainment District (District) on 104 Street between Jasper Avenue and 104 Avenue, allowing for the extension of food and alcohol service into the street when the roadway is closed. This would make it easier to activate the area, reduce red tape, help bring vibrancy to the neighbourhood and support local businesses that have invested in 104 Street.

104 Street is the second Entertainment District to be proposed in Edmonton. The Rice Howard Way Entertainment District was approved in May 2024 and enjoyed a successful first summer of events, paving the way for additional districts in the future. In fall 2024, a [survey](#) was conducted to collect data about the Rice Howard Way District. Of those that responded, 63% indicated that they would like to see more entertainment districts in Edmonton.

104 Street was selected as the second District due to the high concentration of businesses that are street facing, including pubs, restaurants, cafes, retail and service-oriented businesses. This mixed-use commercial area, combined with its high density residential population and pre-existing annual events, is a good choice for Edmonton's next entertainment district.

Engagement Approach

An online survey was conducted to collect feedback from Edmontonians about this project, with a subsequent in person Business Information Session being hosted specifically for those who operated businesses on 104 Street. There were also select 1-on-1 conversations held throughout the engagement phase with individual stakeholders.

Survey Overview

The public engagement survey was conducted to understand Edmontonian's opinions about the creation of an entertainment district on 104 Street between Jasper Avenue and 104 Avenue. The survey combined quantitative and open-ended questions, allowing respondents to express their views on having an entertainment district on 104 Street.

Business Information Session Overview

After the closure of the survey, a Business Information Session was hosted on February 20, where those who operated businesses on 104 Street were invited to learn more about the details of the Entertainment District and again offer their feedback on whether it should be established. Given it is the businesses on this street that would be able to activate the Entertainment District, the Business Information Session provided an opportunity for participants to learn more about the details and responsibilities of activation.

How We Engaged

In December 2024, prior to the open link survey and Business Information Session, The Downtown Vibrancy Team conducted in-person visits to 104 Street businesses to have informal conversations with staff and owners. These conversations were used to gauge the level of support for the project and to inform stakeholders about upcoming engagement opportunities.

Survey

The Open Link survey was publicly available online from December 4 to 17, 2024. On December 4, an email inviting people to participate in the survey was sent out to various downtown and 104 Street stakeholders. For a complete list of questions asked in this survey, see [Appendix A](#).

Survey postcards that directed respondents to edmonton.ca were left at local businesses to target responses from both staff and customers. The survey was promoted on social media (X, Facebook and Instagram) and through a public engagement PSA. An [Engaged Edmonton page](#) was set up, including a link to the survey and FAQs about the project overall. The page also included a Q&A option, where participants had the option to submit a question directly to City staff.

Business Information Session

Business owners and managers were sent invitations to attend the session via email. The session included a short presentation that provided an overview of what the Entertainment District on 104 Street would involve and the economic benefits that it could bring to local businesses. Following the presentation there was an open forum for discussion and time to ask questions of the city representatives.

Who Was Engaged

Survey

In total, 419 participants completed the online survey, including business owners, Downtown residents, people who work on/near 104 Street, people who visit 104 Street for shopping, dining or entertainment. For an overview of how survey respondents identified their connection to 104 Street, see the [Appendix B](#) of this report.

Business Information Session

The following groups attended or were connected with in-person after the session:

- Non-Profit Organizations: (2 participants)
- Restaurants/Bars: (8 participants)
- Retail Businesses: (1 participant)
- Cafés: (2 participants, outside of this session)

What We Heard

The following sections will summarize the findings from feedback collected in the public engagement survey and Business Information Session respectively. For a complete list of survey questions and individual question result tables, see [Appendix A](#).

Survey Key Takeaways

Overall levels of support:

Overall levels of support for this project are high, from both survey respondents and the Business Information Session participants. Out of the total 419 survey respondents, 4 out of 5 (80%) reported somewhat agreeing or strongly agreeing that an entertainment district should be created on 104 street. On the other hand, just under 1 out of 5 (17%) reported either somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed that one should be created.

100% of those who attended the Business Information Session either strongly supported or somewhat supported the creation of an entertainment district on 104 Street.

High level themes in written survey responses:

Themes below are drawn from the survey question asking respondents to explain their level of agreement with establishing a 104 Street Entertainment District.

- A District on 104 Street could bring vibrancy and animation to the area
- A 104 Street District could increase interest in local businesses and would align with the downtown areas of vibrant Canadian and international cities
- Maintaining access to businesses is important
- Adequate noise control/security must be in place
- The area must be kept clean
- Those who did voice a concern about the proposed 104 street District indicated that safety, parking and noise were among their top concerns.

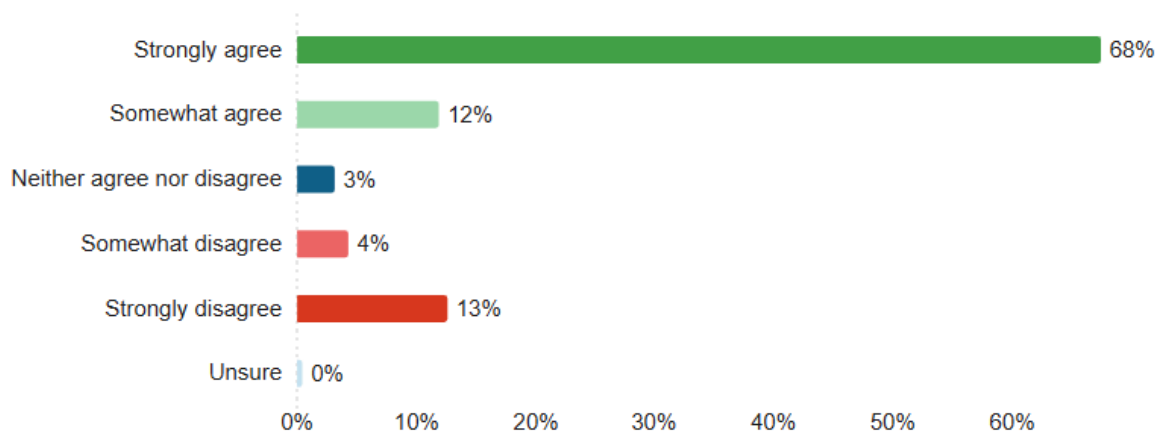
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Support for establishing a 104 Street Entertainment District (General)

The following table summarizes to what percentage of survey respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement: **"I support the creation of an entertainment district on 104 Street between Jasper Ave and 104"** (Survey Question 3, N=419)



Support for establishing a 104 Street Entertainment District (Connection to 104 Street)

Levels of agreement varied depending on the connection respondents described themselves having to 104 Street. Respondents who **live, work, operate a business or visit** 104 Street showed the highest levels of agreement (82% to 84%), and lowest levels of disagreement (11% to 14%).

Those who identified as having an **'other'** connection or stated they **do not visit** 104 Street had the lowest levels of agreement (71% and 44% respectively) and highest levels of disagreement (32% to 58%).

Graphed data for these responses can be found in the [Appendix C](#) of this report.

Support for establishing a 104 Street Entertainment District (GBA+ Spotlight)

Levels of agreement varied among underrepresented or marginalized groups. Around 3 out of 4 respondents who identified as being either **racialized/visible minority** (77%), as being a **person with disabilities** (72%), as being born **outside of Canada** (76%) and/or being **2SLGBTQIA+** (8%) expressed agreement with The District. These survey respondents also noted similar levels of disagreement to one another, ranging from 13% to 19%.

Graphed data for these responses can be found in the [Appendix C](#) of this report.

104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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Support for establishing a 104 Street Entertainment District *(Summary of Written Responses)*

Respondents were offered the opportunity to explain their level of agreement regarding the creation of an entertainment district on 104 Street. Below is a summary of main themes in respondent written responses.

It was not mandatory to submit a written response to complete the survey, so some respondents did not elaborate further on their level of agreement. The themes are organized based on whether the respondent had previously identified themselves as agreeing, disagreeing, or being neutral/unsure about creating an entertainment district on 104 Street.

The number of times each theme appeared is noted in brackets "(X)" following the theme. Themes that are noted but only appeared once in the survey are not followed by a number.

Respondents who either **somewhat agreed** or **strongly agreed** (N=333) with the creation of an entertainment district noted the following:

- The District would promote vibrancy, increase overall entertainment and be good for the community of 104 Street/Edmonton (179)
- The District would benefit the local economy, particularly the businesses on 104 Street and surrounding area (46)
- The District would make Edmonton positively feel more like other urban centres, both in Canada and abroad (19)
- The District would promote better management of the area and increase safety in the area, largely based on increased foot traffic along the street (25)
- The District would be installed on a timely basis, both in terms of it being spring and the lead up to the Downtown Edmonton Farmer's Market as well as promoting the post-COVID recovery of Downtown (13)
- Concerns were also raised among those who agreed with the creation of The District. These included:
 - The District may increase traffic and congestion (7)
 - The District may increase noise pollution (6)
 - The District may cause issues with public drunkenness (2) or public safety (5)

Respondents who were either **neutral** or **unsure** (N=14) about the creation of an entertainment district noted the following:

- The District would not help with issues of cleanliness or public drunkenness Downtown (3)
- The District would not improve the Downtown space
- The District should be decided on by business owners specifically
- The District would not be a good use of taxpayer money

Respondents who either **somewhat disagreed** or **strongly disagreed** (N=71) about the creation of an entertainment district noted the following:

- The District would increase issues with public drunkenness or drug consumption (9)

104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

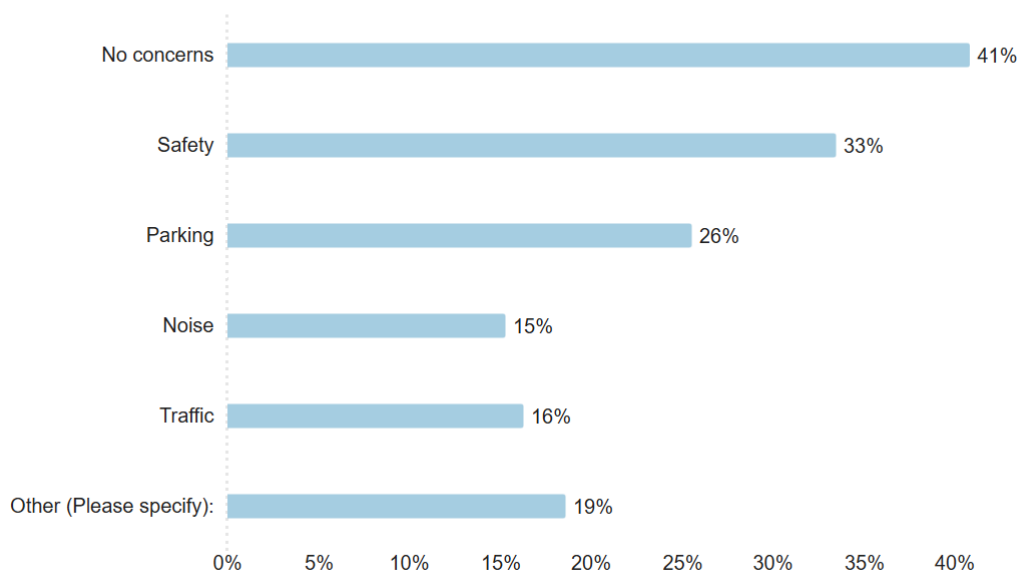
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- The District would cause safety concerns (6)
- The District would cause more noise pollution (6)
- The District would be a poor use of tax payer dollars (4)
- The District would encourage activities that should remain indoors (3)
- The District should be kept only on Rice Howard Way (2)
- Although disagreeing with the statement that an entertainment district should be established on 104 Street, some respondents agreed the District would create a positive impact on the street through more business and better overall vibrancy (9) and that it could mimic the success of other cities with similar areas both within Canada and abroad (2)

High Level Concerns with Establishing Entertainment District *(Multiple Choice)*

Survey respondents were also asked in a multiple choice question to identify if they had any of the high level concerns listed. This list was drawn from an earlier engagement that had been completed for the Rice Howard Way Entertainment District. This question was consistent with the Rice Howard Way Entertainment District Survey, allowing administration to better understand which issues were of greatest concern to respondents. The responses inform the mitigation strategies that may be used when the district is in operation. The table below summarizes the findings from this question, with the percentages listed indicated the proportion of people who selected that option (N=419).



As shown above, 41% of respondents noted that they did not have any concerns with the creation of the district. Of those who did select a concern, safety was the most common response at 33%, and parking second with 26%.

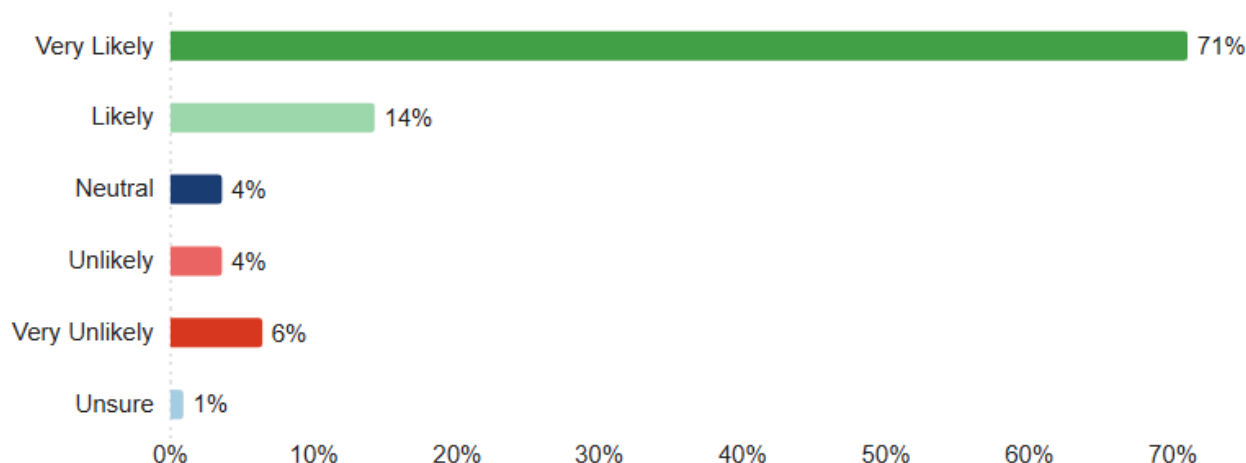
104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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Likelihood to attend a 104 Street Entertainment District (Overall)

Respondents were told “**The district would be open for all and could be activated during activities such as the Downtown Farmers’ Market, street parties, holidays events, etc.**” The following table summarizes how likely respondents are to participate in an entertainment district on 104 Street.



Likelihood to attend a 104 Street Entertainment District

(Connection to 104 Street)

- 78% of respondents who worked on or near 104 Street indicated that they were very likely to attend the Entertainment District
- 77% of respondents who own or operate a business in the area indicated that they are very likely to participate
- Of respondents who already visit this part of 104 Street, 79% indicated that they were very likely to participate in the Entertainment District.

Graphed data for these responses can be found in the [Appendix C](#) of this report.

Likelihood to attend a 104 Street Entertainment District

(Age)

- All age groups indicated that they were very likely to attend with those aged 25-54 being the most likely to participate in the Entertainment District (85%).
- 75% of respondents aged 45-54 indicated that they were very likely to attend
- 70% of respondents aged 35-44 indicated that they were very likely to attend

Graphed data for these responses can be found in the [Appendix C](#) of this report.

104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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Likelihood to attend a 104 Street Entertainment District

(GBA+ Spotlight)

- A majority of underrepresented or marginalized groups who responded indicated that they were very likely to attend
- 89% of Indigenous respondents indicated that they were very likely to attend
- 80% of respondents identifying as new Canadians indicated that they were very likely to attend
- 73% of respondents identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+ indicated that they were very likely to attend

Business Information Session Key Takeaways

High Level Themes from the Business Information Session responses:

- More pedestrian traffic will help to support local businesses
- The District will help businesses to expand
- Great support to local businesses
- There are opportunities to build business partnerships
- The District will help to grow 104 Street as a destination
- Event producer costs will be reduced
- Will bring more entertainment opportunities to the area

Attendees of the Business Information session overwhelmingly supported the creation of the District on 104 Street, with only one business noting that it did not align with their particular business model. Of those businesses, 10 out of 11 participants at the Business Information Session strongly agreed with the creation of the District, while one participant somewhat agreed with the creation of the District.

Next Steps

The next steps for this project include presenting a report to the Urban Planning Committee on May 13, 2025.

If approved, the Downtown Vibrancy team will work with the 104 Street stakeholders to implement the new Entertainment District.

104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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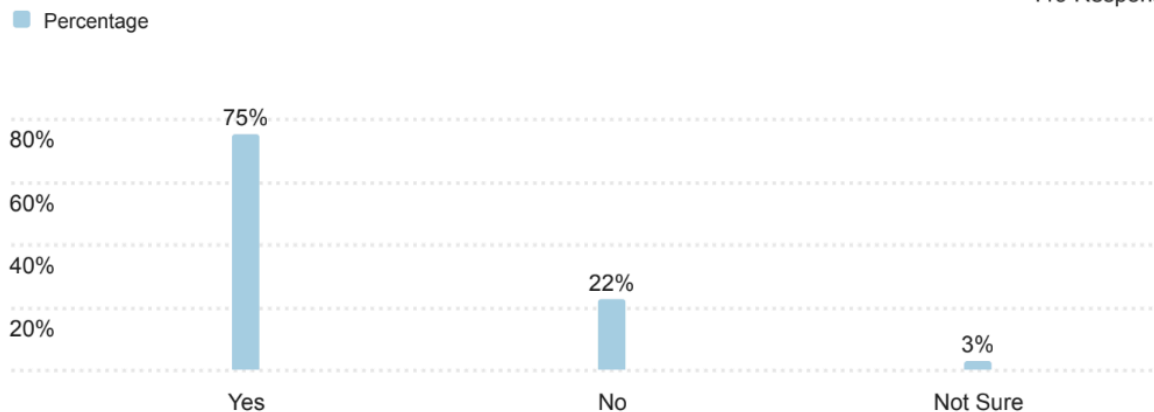
APPENDIX A - Survey Result Tables

Below is a summary of the questions asked in the survey, as well as the responses received. Results percentages are shown after each question.

Question 1

Q1 - Before today, were you aware of the City of Edmonton Entertainment Districts?

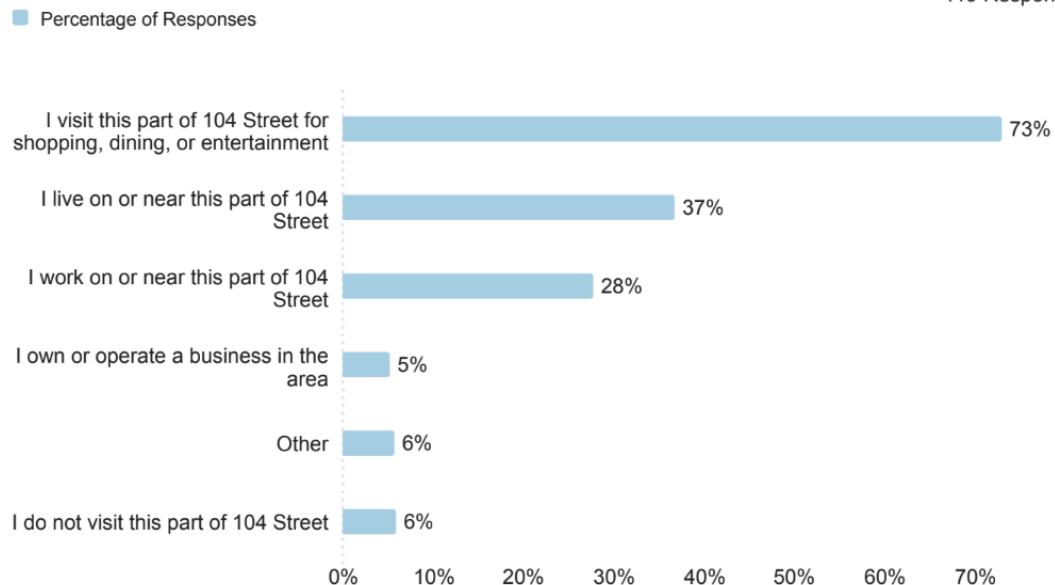
419 Responses



Question 2

Q2 - How do you typically use 104 Street., between 104 Avenue and Jasper Avenue? Select all that apply.

419 Responses



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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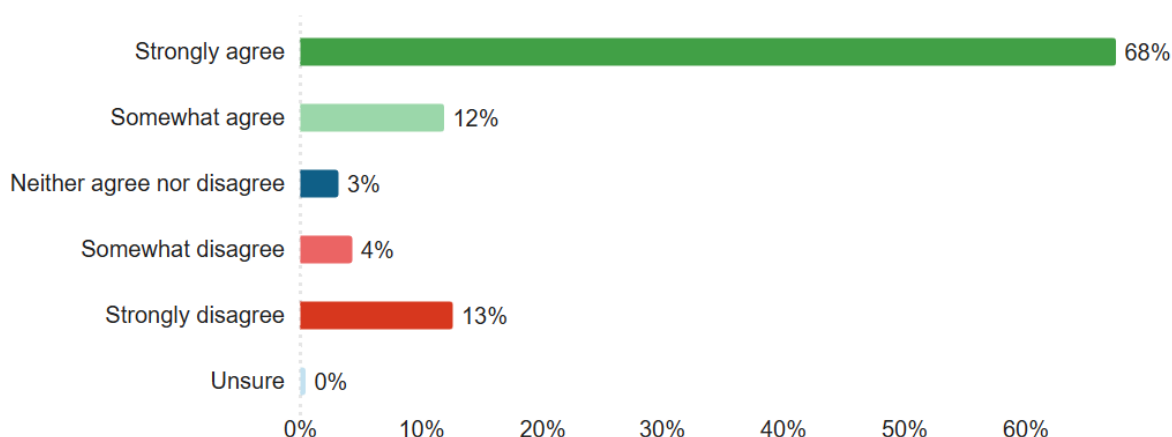
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Question 3

Question 3 was followed by an open response text box with the title, “Please tell us the reason for your choice.” Results for this box can be found in the “Support for establishing a 104 Street Entertainment District (Summary of Written Responses)” section.

Q3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I support the creation of an Entertainment District on 104 Street between Jasper Avenue and 104.

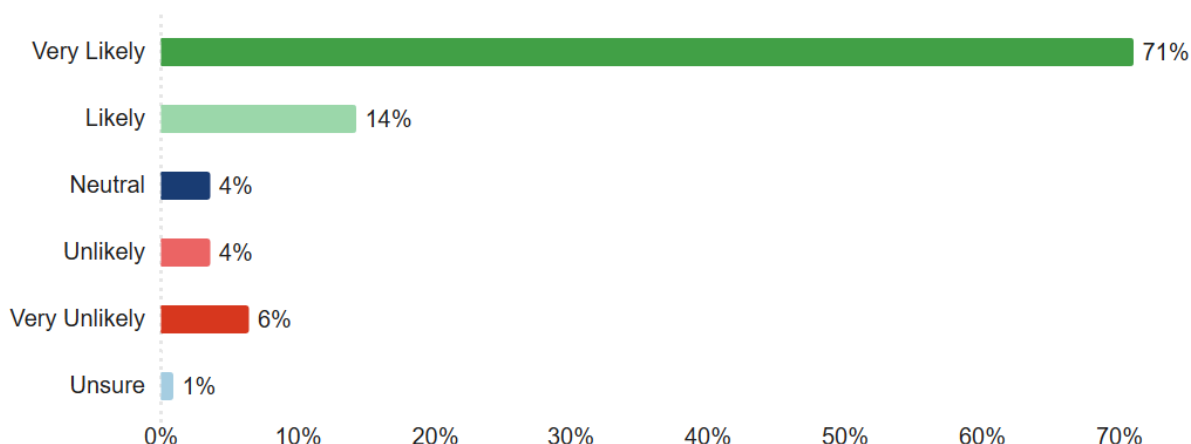
419 Responses



Question 4

Q4 - The district would be open to all ages and could be activated during activities such as the Downtown Farmer’s Market, street parties, holiday events, etc. To what extent are you likely to participate in the Entertainment District on 104 Street?

419 Responses



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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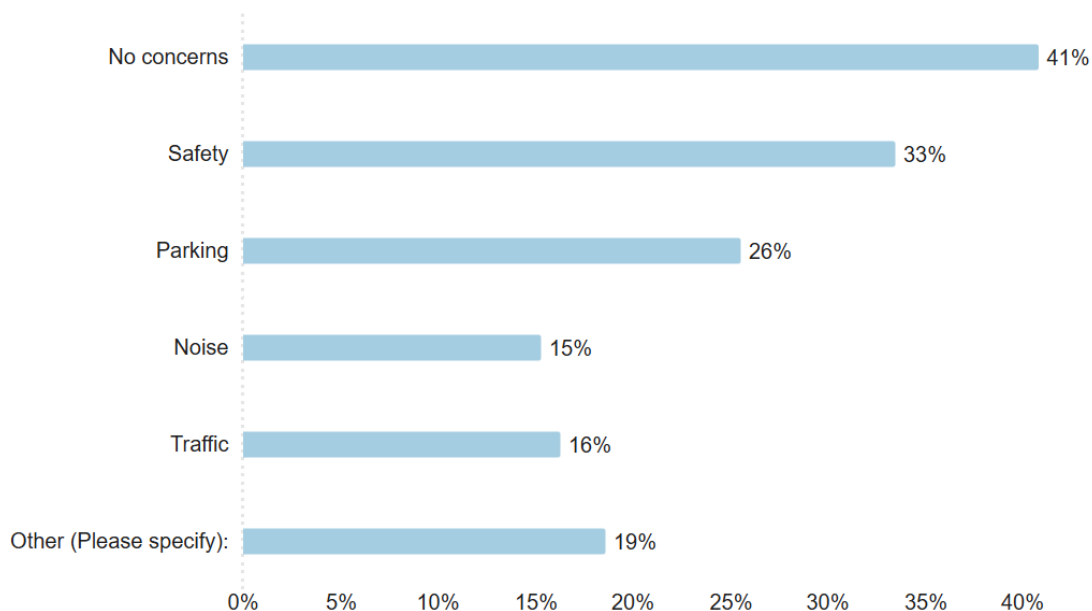
Question 5

Q5 - Do you have any concerns about the proposed Entertainment District? (Check all that apply) -

Selected Choice

419 Responses

Percentage of Responses



Question 6

Online survey respondents were asked if there were any other comments that they would like to share about the proposed Entertainment District on 104 Street. This was not a required question. These are the overarching themes found in those who chose to respond (N=186)

- Expressed support for the idea of an Entertainment District on 104 Street (99)
- Does not support the idea of an Entertainment District on 104 Street (12)
- Would like to see bike parking/access for the District (2)
- Would like to see cannabis use permitted (2)
- The District should be linked to other city plans (1)
- Expressed safety concerns (19)
- Expressed noise concerns (15)
- Expressed concerns regarding social disorder (3)

104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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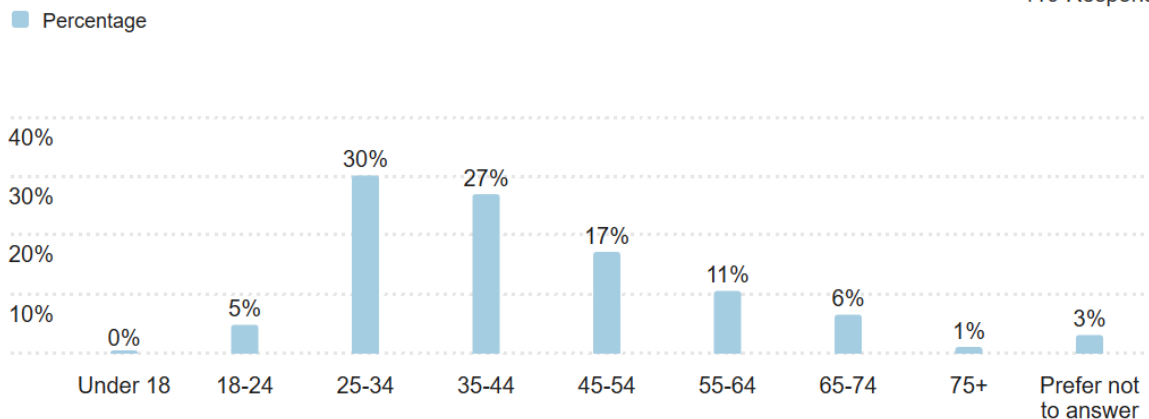
- Expressed concerns with the cleanliness of the area (3)
- Would like to see public seating added (2)
- Expressed concerns with parking (9)
- Expressed concerns regarding access issues if the road is closed (5)
- Suggests visual indicators of the Entertainment District (banners/signage) (1)
- 104 Street should be permanently car free (9)
- This is a waste of taxpayer dollars (1)
- Entertainment Districts should be city wide (1)
- Keep is on Rice Howard Way only (1)
- Concerns with promoting substance abuse (1)

Appendix B - Demographic Questions

Below is a summary of responses to the survey's demographic questions. These questions were asked to ensure there was not a major gap in feedback from equity deserving or hard to reach groups.

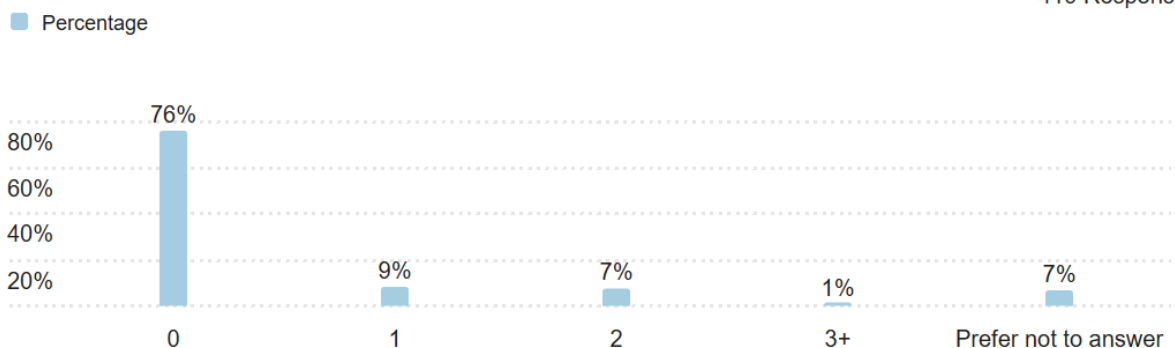
D2 - What is your age category?

419 Responses



D3 - How many children under the age of 18 reside in your household?

419 Responses



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

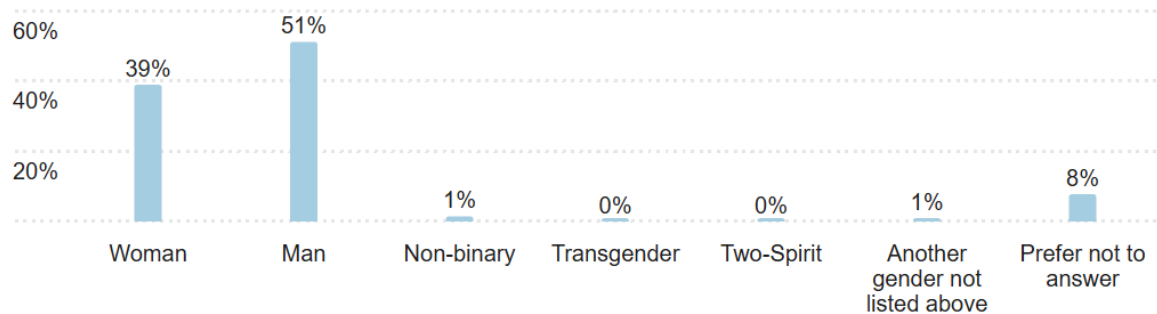
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D4 - What gender do you identify as? Choose all that apply.

419 Responses

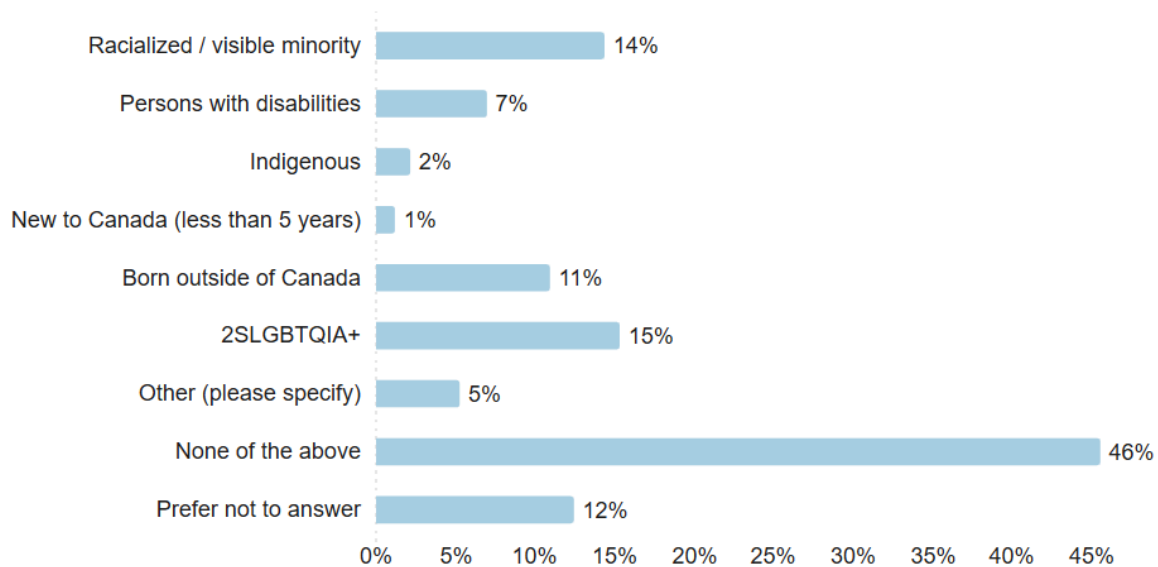
Percentage of Responses



D5 - Do you identify with any of the following? Choose all that apply

419 Responses

Percentage of Responses



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

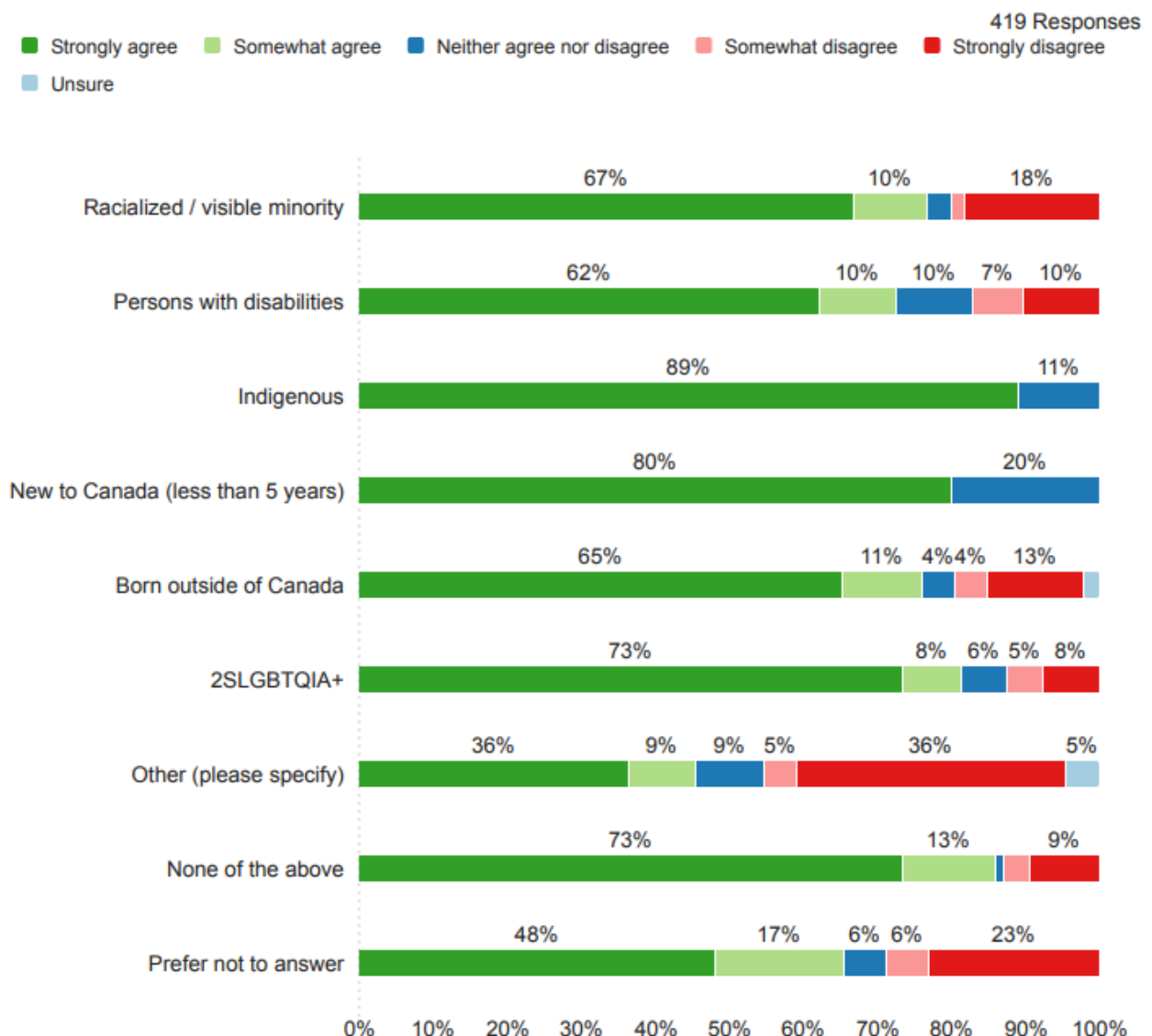
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Appendix C - Crosstabs

The chart below shows the correlation between underrepresented or marginalized groups identified as and their support for the creation of the Entertainment District on 104 Street.

Q3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I support the creation of an Entertainment District on 104 Street between Jasper Avenue and 104.



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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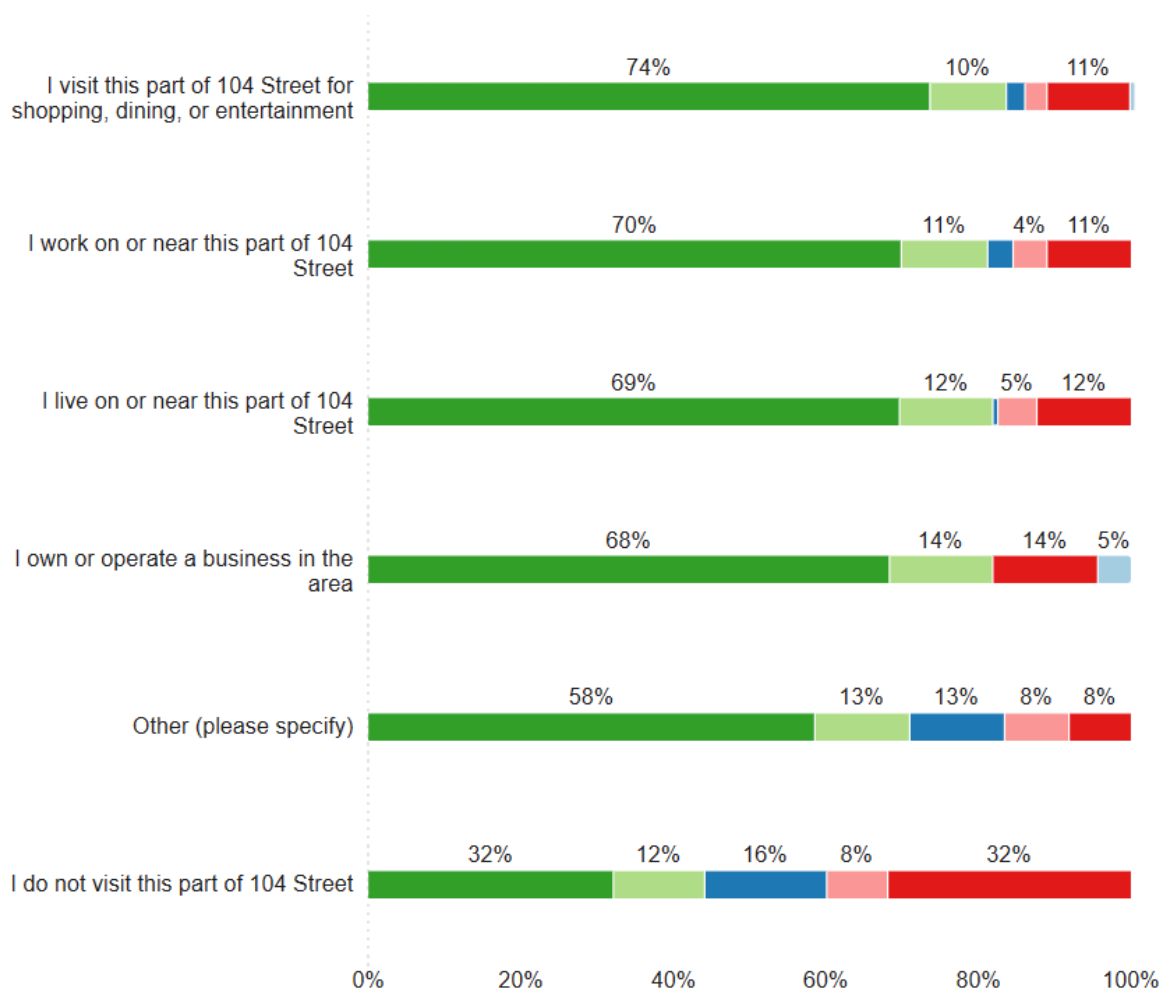
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This chart explains the correlation between how respondents use 104 Street and whether or not they support the creation of an Entertainment District on 104 Street:

Q3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I support the creation of an Entertainment District on 104 Street between Jasper Avenue and 104.

419 Responses

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Unsure



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

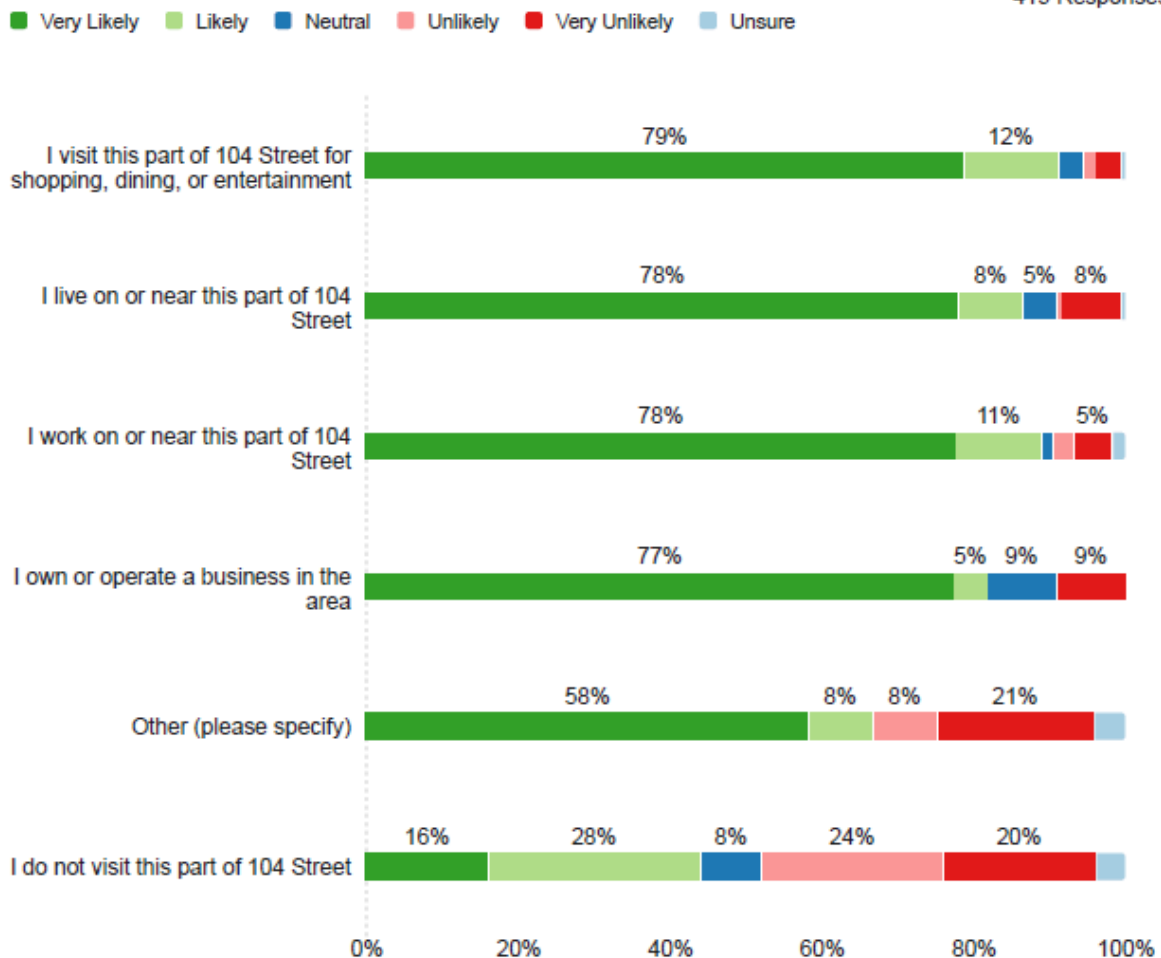
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The chart below explains the correlation between how people use 104 Street and how likely they are to participate in the Entertainment District.

Q4 - The district would be open to all ages and could be activated during activities such as the Downtown Farmer's Market, street parties, holiday events, etc. To what extent are you likely to participate in the Entertainment District on 104 Street?

419 Responses



104 Street Downtown Entertainment District Engagement Summary

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The chart below shows the correlation between respondents age and their likeliness to participate in the 104 Street Entertainment District:

Q4 - The district would be open to all ages and could be activated during activities such as the Downtown Farmer's Market, street parties, holiday events, etc. To what extent are you likely to participate in the Entertainment District on 104 Street?

419 Responses

