

OUR CITY. OUR FUTURE.

Youth Engagement Panel

Survey 14 Results
Downtown Plan

July 2023



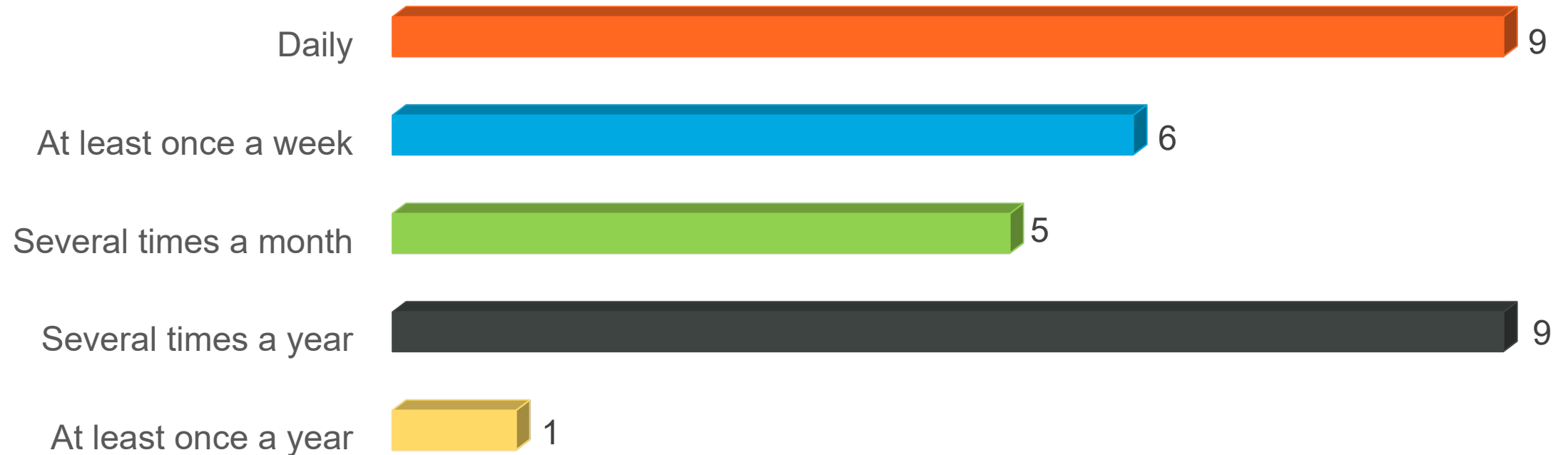
ST. JOHN'S

Downtown Plan

The City is developing a Downtown St. John's Neighbourhood Plan to complement the Envision St. John's land use plan.

Results

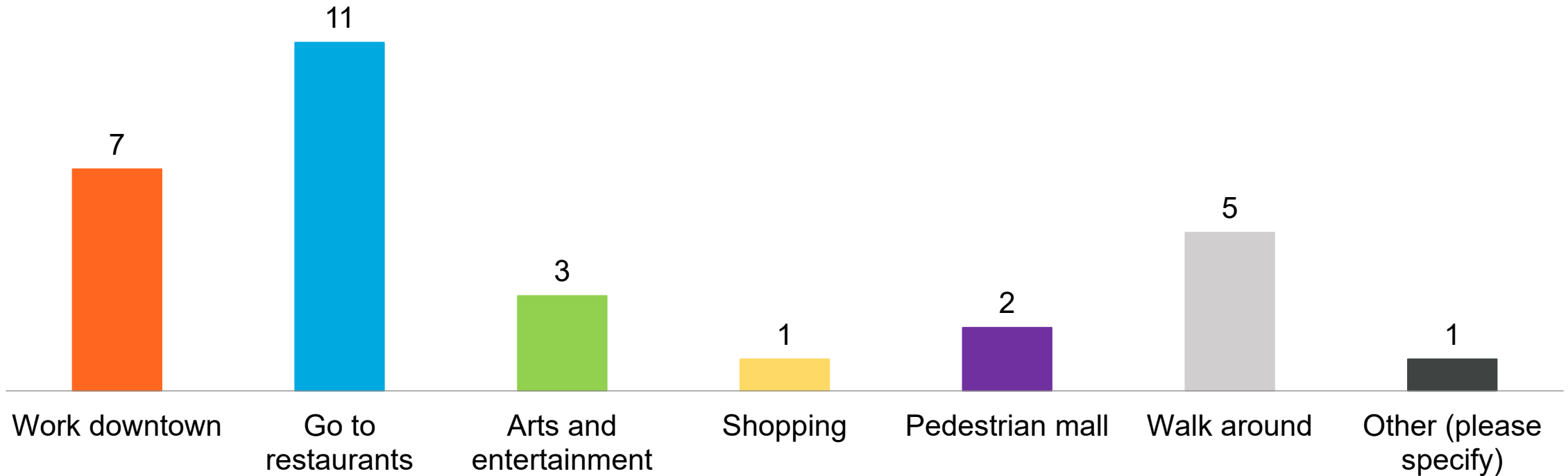
How often do you visit downtown St. John's?



n = 30

Results

What is usually your primary reason for visiting the downtown?

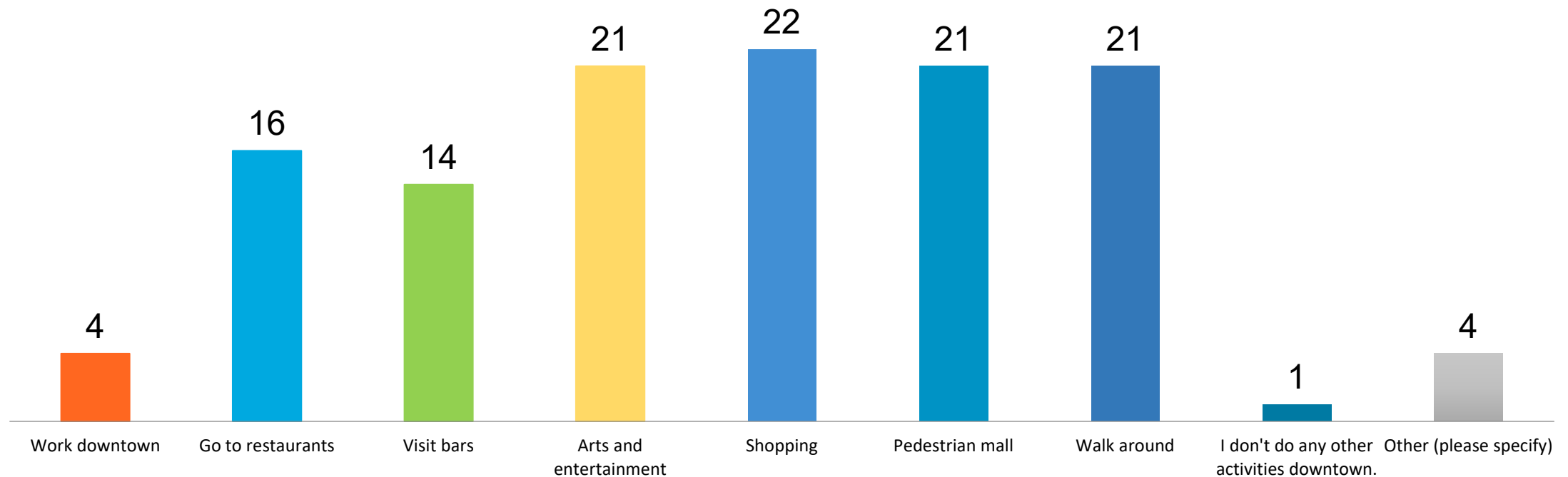


n = 30

Other = Live there

Results

What else do you do downtown? (check all that apply)

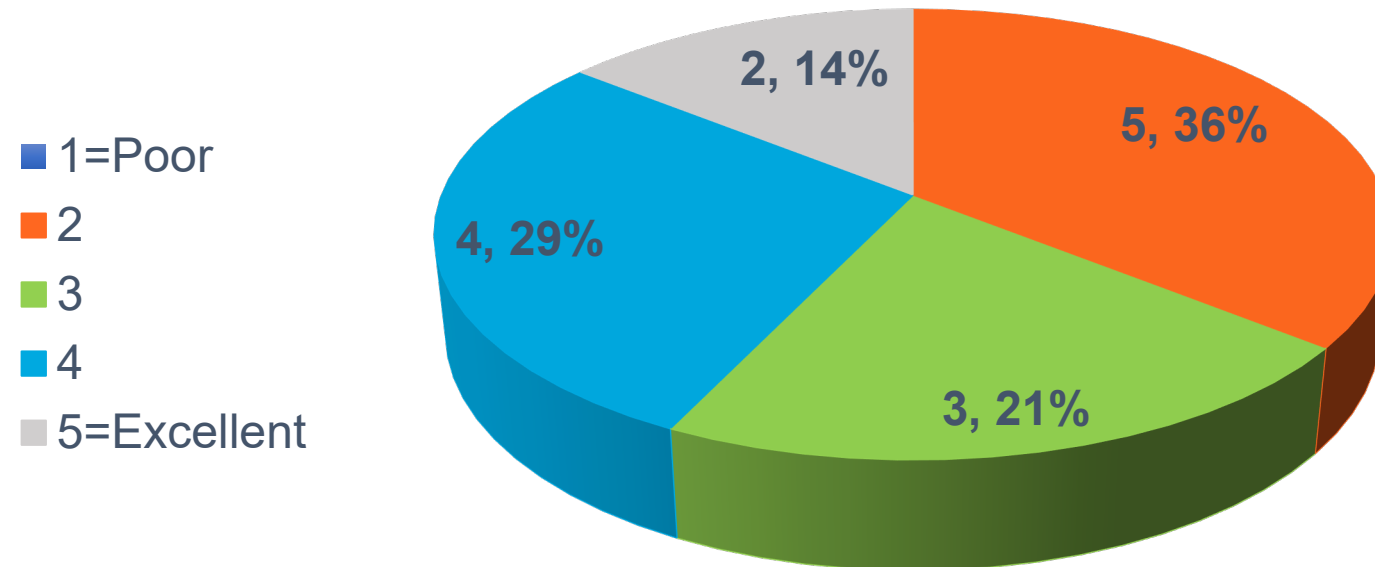


n = 30

Other = Live there (2), look at cruise ships (1), fitness studio (1)

Results

How would you rate the City's downtown as a place to visit?



n = 30

Results

Why did you provide the rating in the previous question? (1/2)

- Some respondents had positive feelings towards downtown and enjoy visiting local restaurants and shops.
- It was noted that the views downtown and the old buildings make it enjoyable.
- Several respondents felt there should be fewer cars downtown and more areas that are pedestrian only and cyclist friendly. It was also expressed that there are not enough places for people to sit.
- There was concern that it is difficult to reach the downtown area using alternate transportation such as public transit and cycling.
- Parking availability was identified as an issue.
- Some respondents would like to see the pedestrian mall open year-round and it was also suggested that more activities should take place downtown during the winter months.

Results

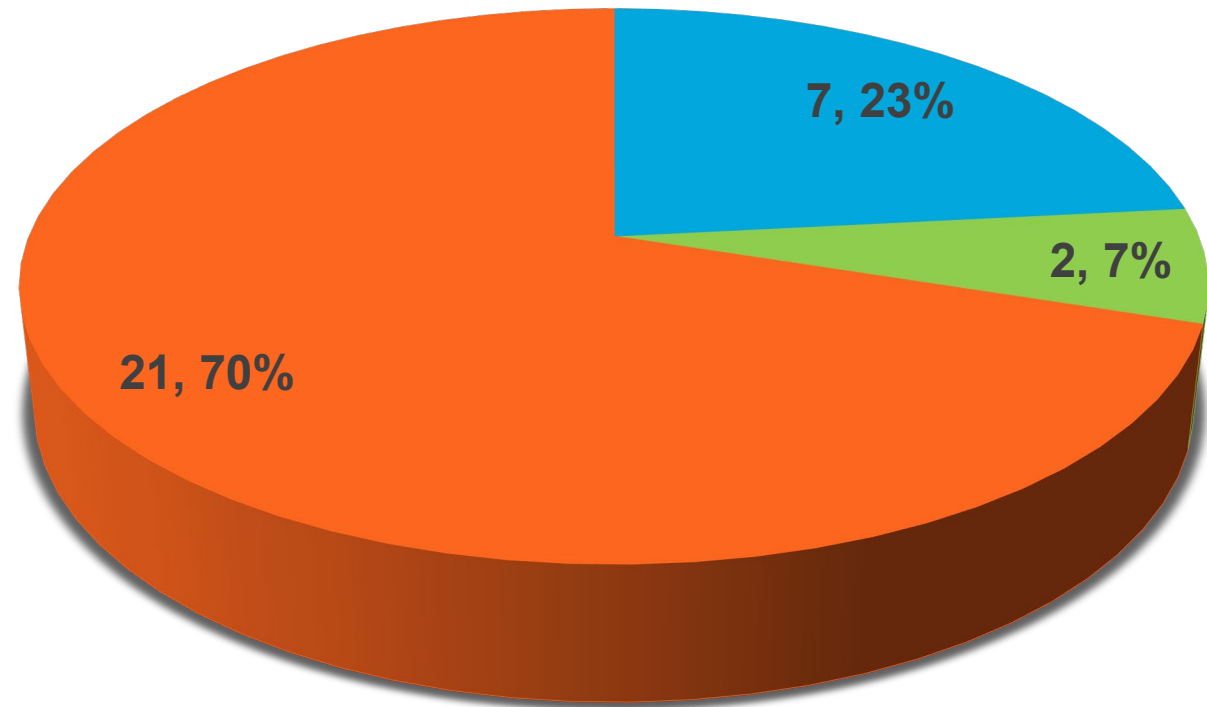
Why did you provide the rating in the previous question? (2/2)

- It was felt that there are not many non-drinking activities offered.
- Some respondents noted that there are accessibility issues downtown for individuals in a wheelchair and with other abilities.
- It was noted that there is no full-scale grocery store available in the area.
- There was concern about the maintenance, cleanliness and overall level of safety downtown.
- Concern was expressed about the number of panhandlers.

Results

Have you ever lived downtown?

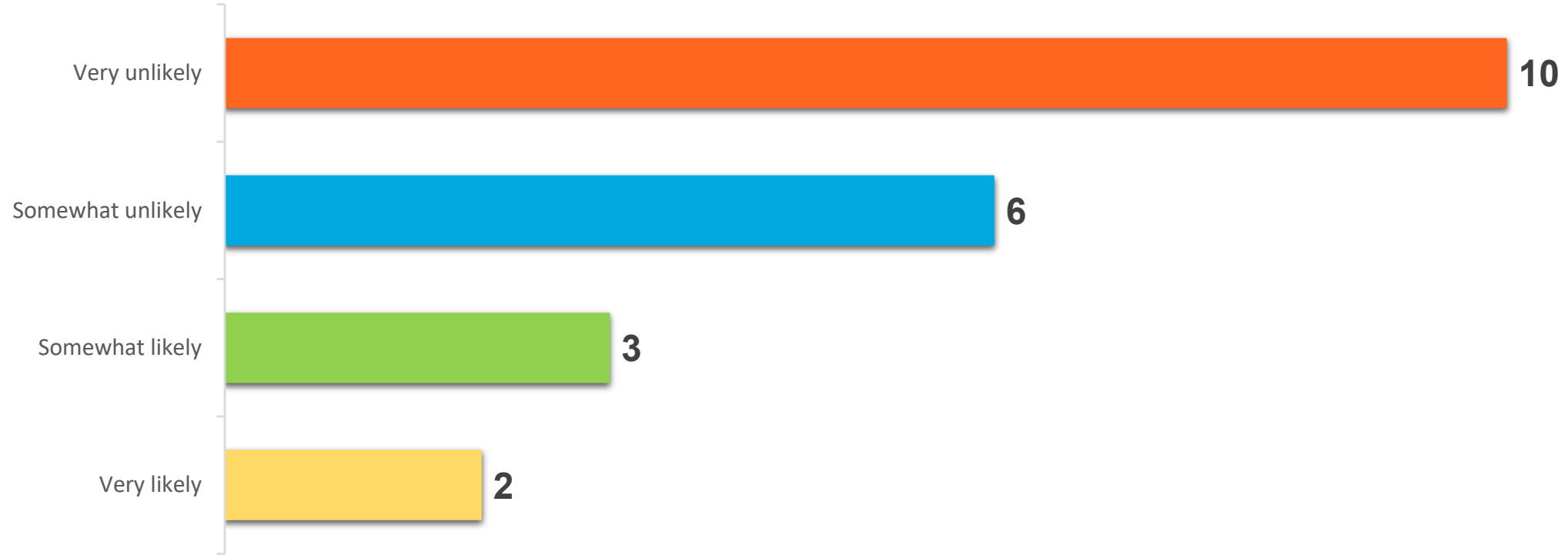
- Yes, I currently live in the area
- I have lived in the area within the past two years
- I do not live downtown



n = 30

Results

How likely are you to live downtown in the future?



n = 21

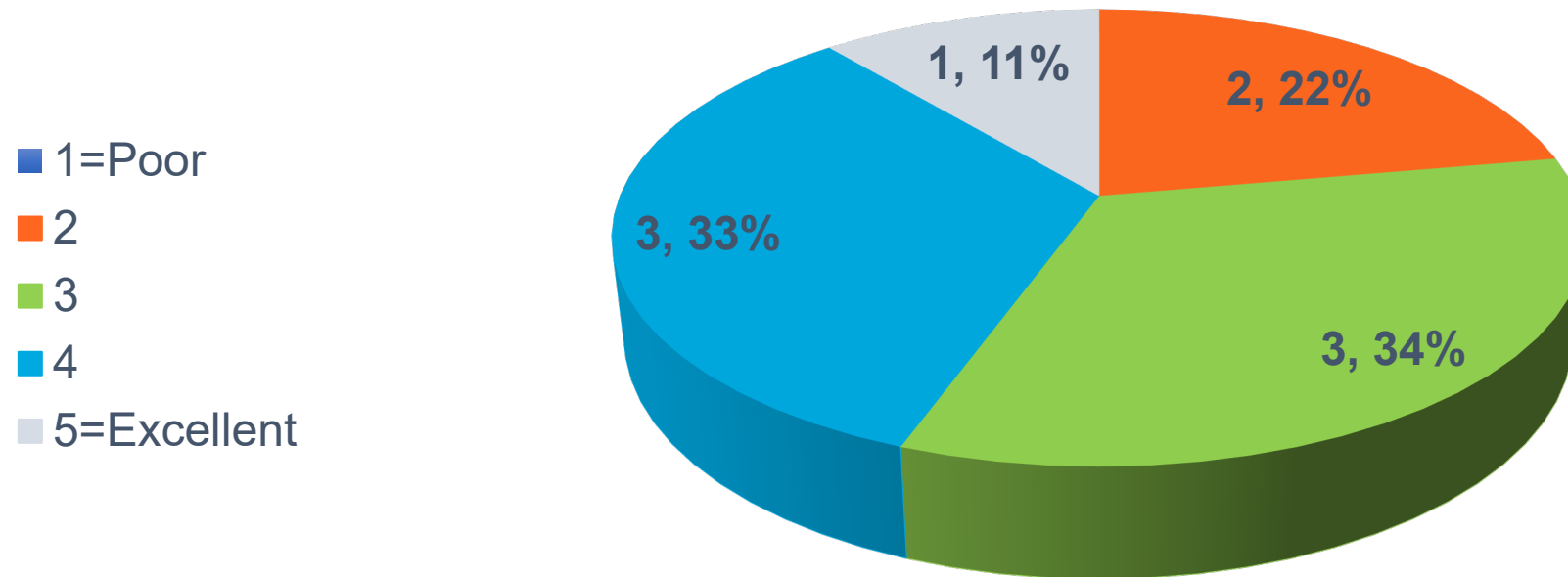
Results

What would impact your decision to live downtown?

- Cost of housing and upkeep
- Safety concerns and the level of crime
- Lack of space and the noise in the area was a factor for some
- Lack of green space for leisure
- Lack of easy access to grocery stores, convenience stores and schools
- Challenges in accessing other areas of the City using alternate transportation
- Challenges with parking
- It was noted that the downtown area isn't somewhere they would raise a family

Results

How would you rate the City's downtown as a place to live?



n = 9

Results

Why did you provide the rating in the previous question? (1/2)

- Living downtown means having gorgeous views of the ocean, being near all businesses without the need of a car, being near frequent bus routes, and having your home be the “hub”. I truly appreciate being close to everything.
- Accessibility is a pain. Vehicular navigating and parking is a headache and pedestrian access is tiresome. Pedestrian crossings are poorly placed.
- No grocery store, doing almost all errands requires leaving the downtown area, this makes it kinda pointless to live down here. Not pedestrian friendly. No sidewalk clearing in winter even though a much higher percentage of population is walkers.
- Could be safer, and I wish there were more grocery stores/places to buy fresh fruit and vegetables!

Results

Why did you provide the rating in the previous question? (2/2)

- I pay for parking garage access, which makes it easier to live downtown. Sidewalks could be more up kept in the winter. More public transit would be great.
- Rent is ridiculously expensive, and the city doesn't act like it cares.
- I love the character but the same things from my previous answer apply [not well maintained].
- Loved being close enough to walk to restaurants & bars, but the closer you are, the louder it becomes, and overall, there was always lots of houses and cars being broken into, even a 30 min walk from George Street.

Results

What would you like to do downtown that is not currently available to you? (1/4)

- Honestly nothing! I wish I had a backyard or at least utilize the front door areas where weeds grow to create small raised gardens to beautify the streets.
- I would like to see more plays and art projects. I would like to go to Martin's Meadow more.
- Have a large waterfront area to visit, have more public seating/areas to visit, pedestrian only streets.
- Go to a public library, enjoy an ocean front board walk (similar to Halifax).
- Enjoy time outdoors in a free public area! Especially near the water! (Like the pedestrian mall, but something permanent).
- A proper boardwalk on the water! Someplace to go and walk along the water with restaurants and local business.
- Ride better public transit, more events.
- Take public transit after midnight.

Results

What would you like to do downtown that is not currently available to you? (2/4)

- Bike routes; more reasons to go down in the winter.
- Safely ride my bicycle with my child onboard or in tow.
- More open outdoor space.
- Not a ton of green space or community use space. As a small apartment renter, really rely on public spaces for fresh air.
- Go to a cafe after 6pm on a weekday.
- Most cafes close around 2 and most stores close by 6. I'd like to be able to get a coffee after work or go shopping.
- I would love to visit more cafes in the areas - I get off work at 4:30 and I often try to meet friends for a coffee or tea after work, but it seems like most cafes in the downtown area close before I am off work or close very shortly after.

Results

What would you like to do downtown that is not currently available to you? (3/4)

- I would like to buy fresh groceries, but it is too difficult to bring groceries home from downtown without a car.
- Run errands. There is no grocery store downtown, the closest is Merrymeeting Rd., which can be a long walk. A grocery store on Water Street would be amazing.
- Would love more pedestrian only areas that don't allow traffic, more experience-based activities like escape rooms, and rooms for breaking objects.
- Access the pedestrian mall all year and have a streetcar that goes from Water Street west to Duckworth.
- The pedestrian mall could be more permanent.
- Pedestrian only areas all year round. Be able to find parking easily.

Results

What would you like to do downtown that is not currently available to you? (4/4)

- Good parking
- Thrift stores!
- More games and fun activities for sober people as well.
- Be safe
- Study
- Just about everything since no one encourages masking in a pandemic anymore.

Results

What amenities would you like to see downtown that are not currently available? (1/2)

- Many respondents noted that amenities and infrastructure were important to them including bike racks, bike rentals, bike lanes and a link between the T'railway near the railway museum and downtown proper.
- Pedestrian-oriented streets and improved pedestrian crossings.
- More outdoor seating, green spaces, garbage bins and recycling options.
- Community gardens.
- Access to grocery stores in the area. While there are some food stores downtown, they do not offer a full grocery selection.
- Increased access to other businesses and services such as banking in the evening, pharmacies, walk-in clinics and a library.

Results

What amenities would you like to see downtown that are not currently available? (2/2)

- Improved accessibility for individuals with all abilities.
- More public washrooms and a digital map of where they are located.
- More food trucks and pop-up food vendors.
- More attempts to make downtown Winter accessible. Heating some parts of the streets and closing streets to allow for more Winter activities.
- More dog-friendly businesses.
- Community centre or care centre for unhoused individuals.
- Improved tourist information.
- Bus to Signal Hill.

Results

If one thing about the downtown could be changed to improve your experience, what would it be? (1/2)

- Remove vehicular traffic from some downtown streets
- Improve safety, including increased lighting and police presence.
- More pedestrian and cyclist-friendly.
- Improve access to downtown using public transit and alternate transportation.
- More green spaces.
- Support for unhoused individuals.
- Clean up the area, including graffiti.

Results

If one thing about the downtown could be changed to improve your experience, what would it be? (2/2)

- Year-round pedestrian mall
- Less tall, modern buildings
- More winter activities in the area
- Improved walkability in winter
- Improved parking
- Decorating for different seasons and holidays, including non-Christian holidays

Results

Anything else you want to tell us about the topic? (1/3)

- There's designated area for pedestrians only for the nightlife with the bars (like George Street) but there's very little for those who enjoy an alcohol-free experience.
- Humans should be valued over vehicles. All members of our community should feel safe to access amenities downtown. Accessibility in every level needs to be taken more seriously in this city.
- Sidewalk accessibility policy seems pitiful. I pass countless sidewalks that are impassable for people with mobility aids or strollers. This sends a message to non-driving people and it's a sad thing to say that they are second-class to cars.
- Ban cars but I say it louder this time.
- I think there is high potential to make downtown neighbourhoods more neighbourly. One idea widely used in Europe is to have neighbourhood roads at sidewalk level with pavers, with no lowered curb from commuter roads. This gives drivers a mental barrier.

Results

Anything else you want to tell us about the topic? (2/3)

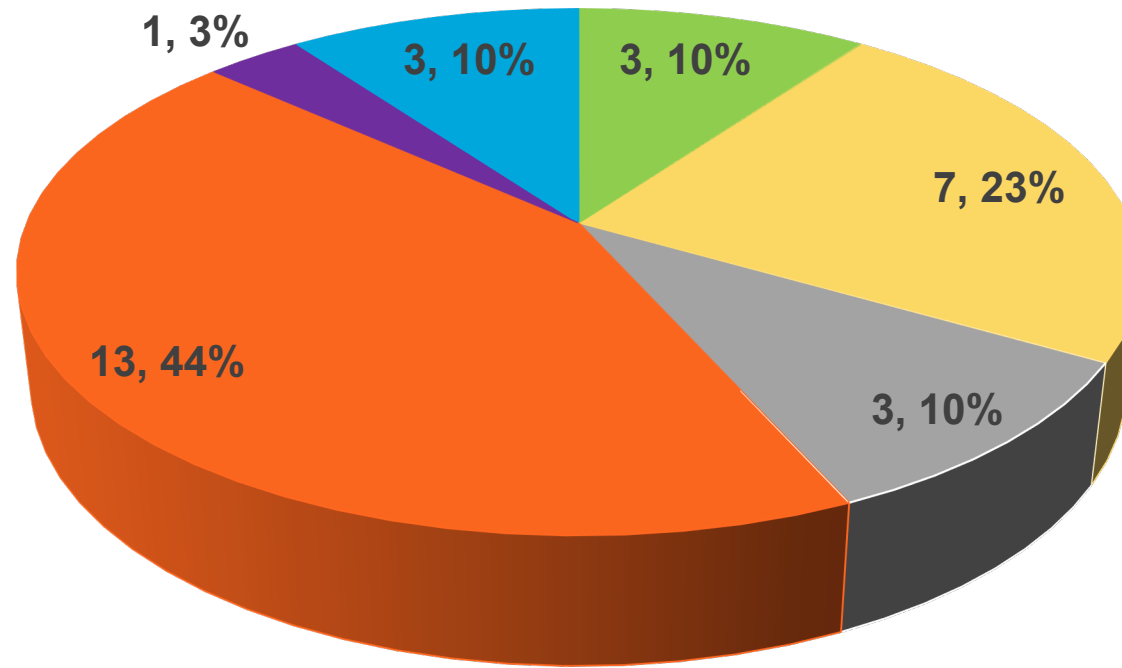
- I love St. John's, especially downtown. However, when looking into the future, the city's accessibility by transit and bike are an important factor in my decision to settle here permanently.
- Pedestrian mall is a good start to what the whole of dt should be like. Spaces for people and families where they don't have to be dodging traffic constantly.
- Year-round pedestrian mall works in so many other places and so many people are asking for it. I don't know why the city is that hesitant.
- Downtown is not what it once was. I work there but hate going there every day. I hate walking there on my own, I don't feel safe.
- Please help local businesses because so many stores are closing down there, and they are very important.
- Empty and/or falling apart buildings doesn't add to the aesthetic.

Results

Anything else you want to tell us about the topic? (3/3)

- I would rather live in a high-density area than suburban sprawl.
- I would love to live downtown much more than the suburbs I'm currently in, but it's not feasible with the current lack of a good non-car transportation network.
- Downtown itself is very expensive overall.
- Need so much more support for those unhoused in the area, more supportive housing and more money put towards social assistance programs to keep people off the street in the first place.
- I have heard a lot of people complain about parking, but I never have any issues!
- So much, I don't have time to organize my thoughts.

Survey Respondents by Ward



■ Ward 1 ■ Ward 2 ■ Ward 3 ■ Ward 4 ■ Ward 5 ■ Not sure

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New surveys and survey results will be published monthly. Check out the details from previous [surveys.](#)

