

AGENDA ITEM
14A

Date: October 7, 2021

Council Meeting Date: October 18, 2021

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Alex D. McIntyre, City Manager
SUBJECT: Main Street Moves Survey Results

SUMMARY

On September 21, 2021, the City released the Main Street Moves survey in partnership with Downtown Ventura Partners to engage the community and businesses about the future of Main Street in Downtown Ventura through the www.futureofmain.info website. As of October 5, 2021, the response is historic with over 10,000 unique submissions, significantly in favor of the outdoor program. This workshop will provide a summary of the Main Street Moves Survey results and garner feedback from Council in preparation for the land use options discussion at the November 8, 2021 City Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive a summary of the Main Street Moves survey results and provide feedback for staff.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In conjunction with Downtown Ventura Partners (“DVP”), Main Street Moves (“MSM”) was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic shut down, to allow for businesses fronting Main (from Fir to Figueroa) and California (from Main to Santa Clara) streets to use the public right-of-way for outdoor dining and retail sales. The goal was to create a safe environment where businesses could continue operations while facing one of the greatest economic impacts of recent history. The project has proven successful, with six new food/beverage establishments opening and restaurants reporting sale increases upwards to 30%. With the City’s Emergency Ordinance and the MSM Special Use Permit scheduled to expire on January 7, 2022, City Staff and DVP are working on an ambitious timeline to fulfill the Community and Council’s desires on the future of MSM.

In June 2021, City Council approved an agreement with Sargent Town Planning Consultant Group (“Sargent”) to create conceptual designs for making existing commercial building and street frontages comfortable, safe, and attractive environments for outdoor dining, related business, and social activities. The contracted services were split into two phases, one specifically for Downtown and one Citywide. Once design concepts were created for phase one, City staff and DVP were tasked to engage with key stakeholders, business partners, property owners, and residents to seek feedback on what to further explore.

The following data is intended to provide Council with an overview of community sentiment while encouraging analysis of the responses to help form the larger picture of MSM, highlighting the important aspects for staff to focus on for the formal MSM recommendation on November 8, 2021.

City staff, in collaboration with DVP, created a survey available in both English and Spanish through Survey Monkey, with questions gauging the public’s reaction to the existing MSM and what they desire for the future program. There are a total of fourteen questions, twelve that are formed responses and two that are open for comments. Questions range from age of the respondent, parking and visiting behaviors, how they identify in the city, if they patronize MSM, the permanency of the program, and the preferred scope for future use. The goal is to compile the common themes with research from Sargent and staff to provide a program that is set up for success and championed by Council and the community.

The public survey, with over 10,000 individual responses, is just one part of extensive outreach efforts. DVP and City staff have presented at all Community Councils, and measured feedback from businesses, property owners, and residents both inside and outside the current MSM boundaries. DVP reports overwhelming support of the continuance of MSM from the Downtown district, including property owners, restaurants, retailers, and those who live in the immediate area. Economically, Downtown continues to see positive effects, with a vacancy rate at its lowest in decades and a growth in foot traffic which averaged over 50,000 individuals per month in early summer, using data that tracked unique cell phones. Likewise, comments from the Community Councils echoed the same sentiment, encouraging staff to continue with MSM future planning.

The majority of survey responses were from adult Ventura residents between the 20-65 age range with resounding support for the continuance of MSM with 64% affirming they visit Downtown more since the closure. Enjoyed activities rank almost evenly between outdoor dining, no vehicular traffic, ability to appreciate the outdoors, community events, and other. When asked if Main Street should be closed to traffic, 88% were in favor. Currently, MSM is closed to vehicle traffic from Fir Street to Mission Park and 81% would like to see this same footprint moving forward. The full results of the survey are shown in Attachment A.

With the knowledge gleaned from the survey and outreach, staff encourages City Council to provide any feedback that will help staff formulate a recommendation, including:

- What aspects of the program do you enjoy?
- What items in the current MSM program should be kept in the formal recommendation?
- What factors below would you rank as the top priorities to consider in the recommendation?
 - Cost of the improvement
 - Time needed to implement
 - Long term vitality and economic impact
 - Safety measures
 - Traffic flow
 - Parking
 - Design

Feedback from City Council will help inform staff's recommendation for the November 8, 2021 Council Meeting. The focus can then pivot to land use, infrastructure, and development. Staff recommendations and discussion on November 8 will revolve around what form MSM takes that best incorporates the desires of Council, the community, and the downtown businesses while balancing costs, designs, usability, and long-term vitality of downtown.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no direct financial impacts from the current action. Staff time to prepare the report and presentation are programmed in the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

Prepared by: Meredith Hart, Interim Economic Development Manager

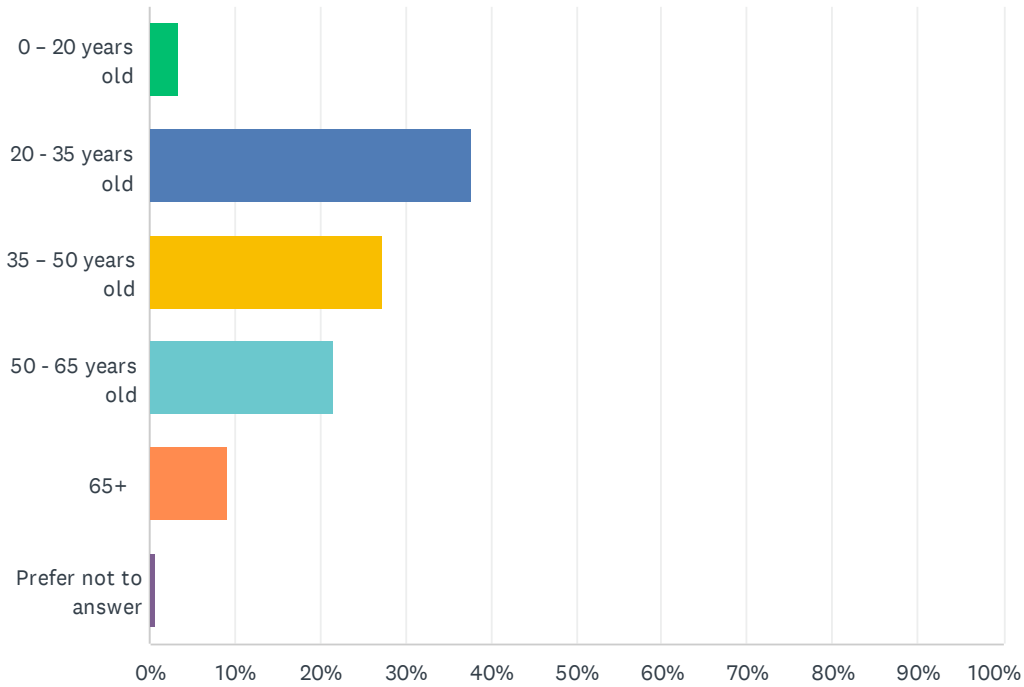
ATTACHMENTS

- A Main Street Moves Survey Results

ATTACHMENT A
Future of Main Street - Downtown Ventura

Q1 What is your age?

Answered: 9,992 Skipped: 19

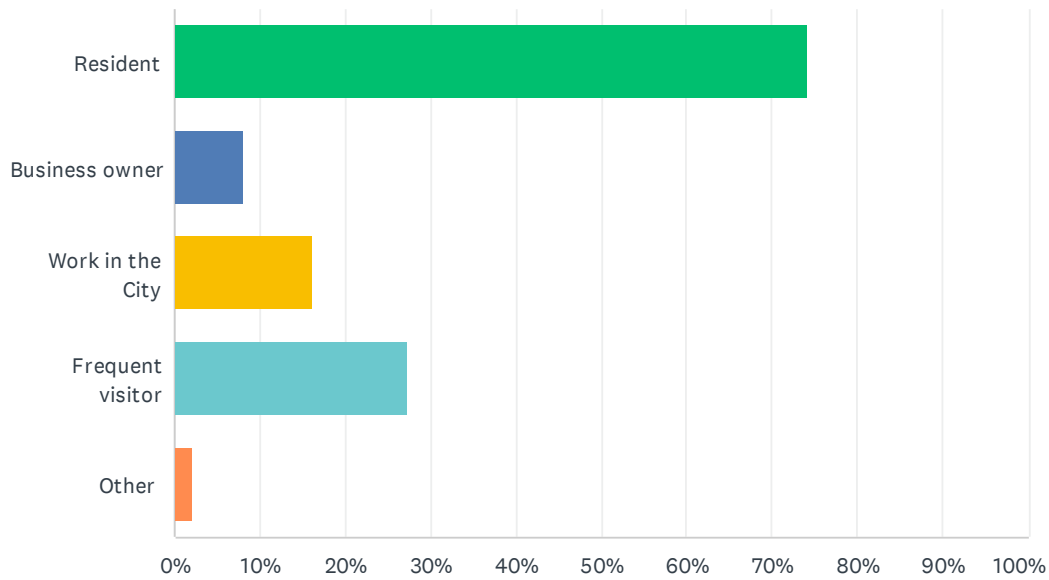


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 – 20 years old	3.41%	341
20 - 35 years old	37.75%	3,772
35 – 50 years old	27.35%	2,733
50 - 65 years old	21.60%	2,158
65+	9.19%	918
Prefer not to answer	0.70%	70
TOTAL		9,992

Q2 How do you identify in the City of Ventura? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 9,991 Skipped: 20

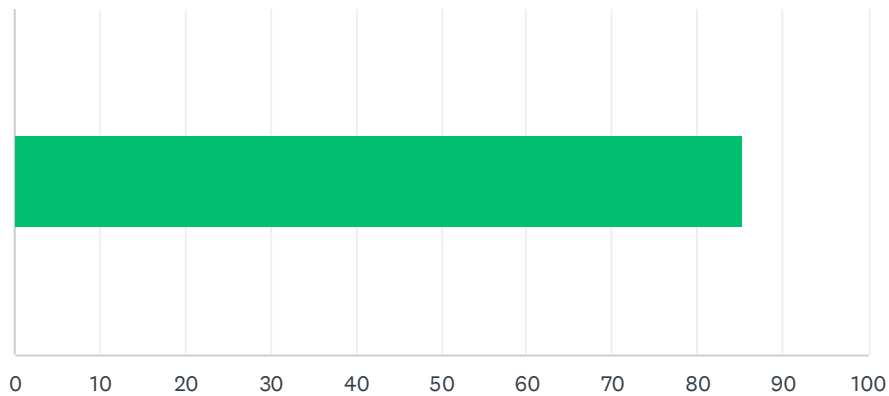
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Resident	74.27%	7,420
Business owner	8.20%	819
Work in the City	16.10%	1,609
Frequent visitor	27.37%	2,735
Other	2.07%	207
Total Respondents: 9,991		

Q3 On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being extremely dissatisfied and 5 being extremely satisfied), how much do you like Main Street Moves in Downtown Ventura.

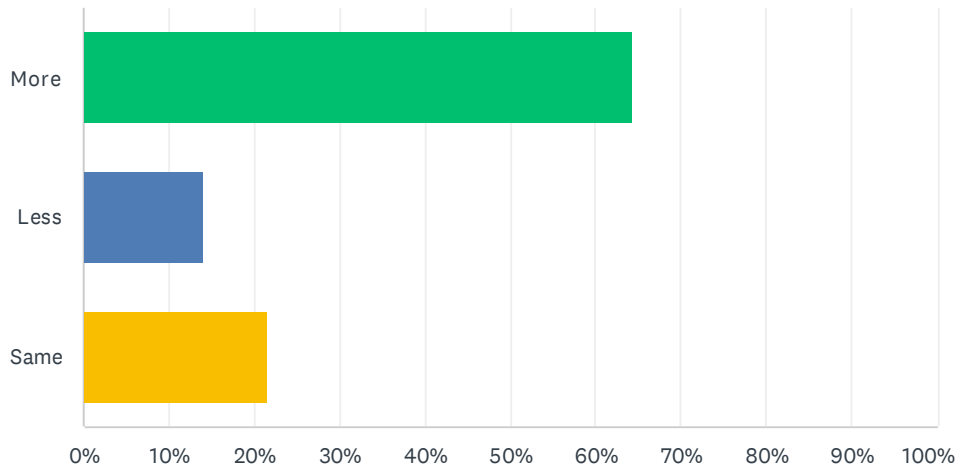
Answered: 9,941 Skipped: 70



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	85	846,933	9,941
Total Respondents: 9,941			

Q4 Do you frequent Downtown Ventura more or less since the Main Street Moves closure?

Answered: 9,979 Skipped: 32

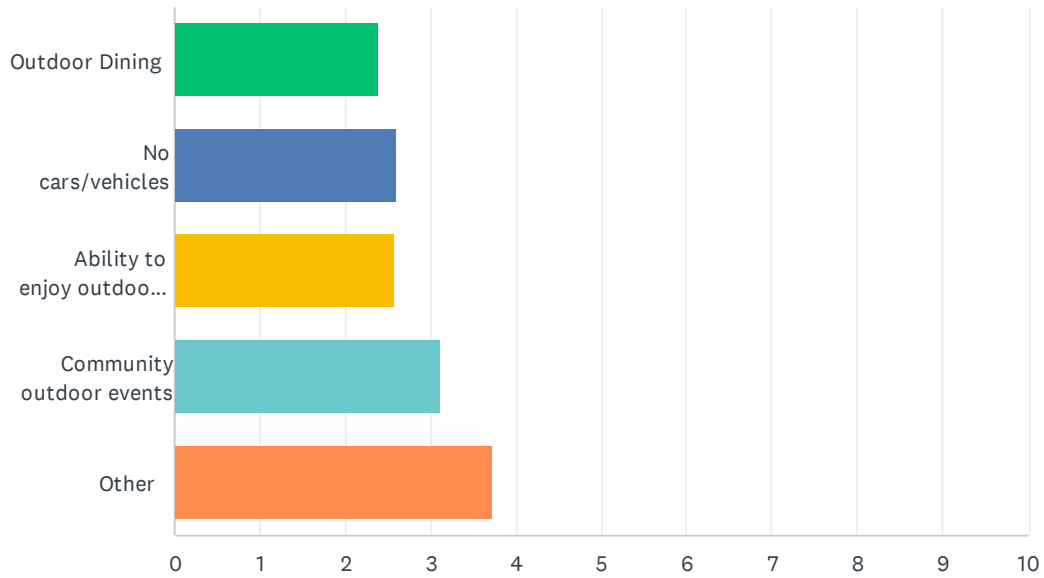


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
More	64.40% 6,426
Less	14.01% 1,398
Same	21.60% 2,155
TOTAL	9,979

Q5 What part of Main Street Moves do you like the most? (rank 1 -5, 1 being the least, 5 being the most)

Answered: 9,931 Skipped: 80

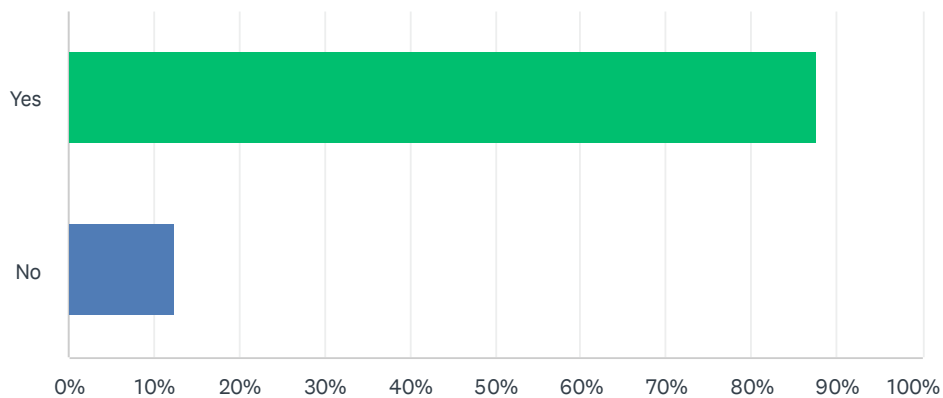
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	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Outdoor Dining	11.41% 901	11.49% 907	17.63% 1,392	22.88% 1,807	36.60% 2,890	7,897	2.38
No cars/vehicles	12.69% 1,011	15.95% 1,271	19.47% 1,551	23.56% 1,877	28.33% 2,257	7,967	2.61
Ability to enjoy outdoor space	4.67% 376	13.66% 1,100	35.51% 2,859	25.98% 2,092	20.17% 1,624	8,051	2.57
Community outdoor events	6.88% 564	41.45% 3,396	19.50% 1,598	21.13% 1,731	11.03% 904	8,193	3.12
Other	60.43% 3,714	6.30% 387	4.00% 246	3.97% 244	25.30% 1,555	6,146	3.73

Q6 Do you want to see Main Street stay closed to all vehicle traffic permanently?

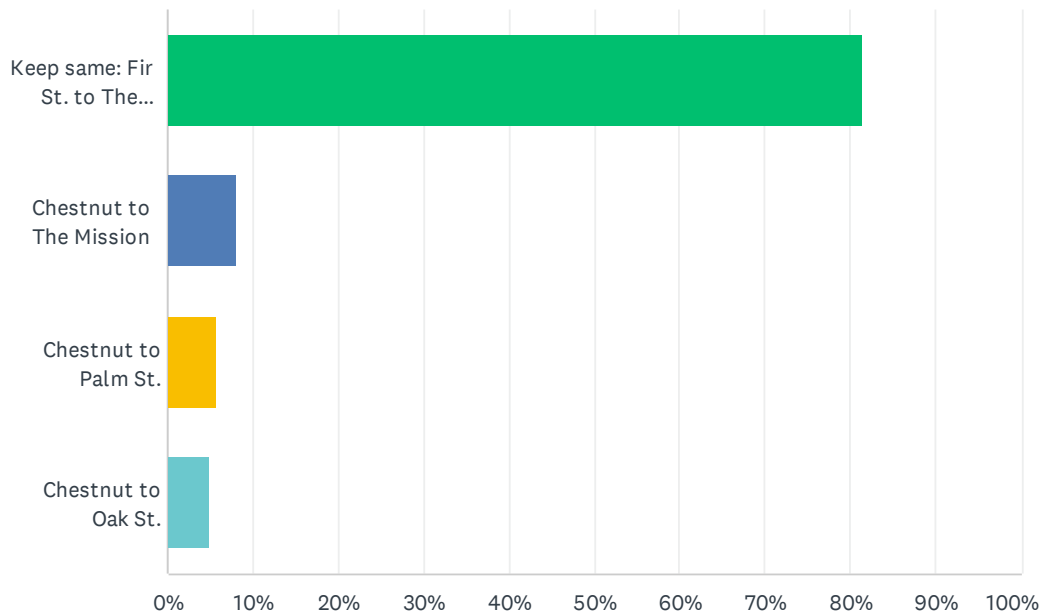
Answered: 9,975 Skipped: 36



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	87.60%	8,738
No	12.40%	1,237
TOTAL		9,975

Q7 What city blocks on Main Street would you like to be closed to vehicle traffic?

Answered: 9,567 Skipped: 444

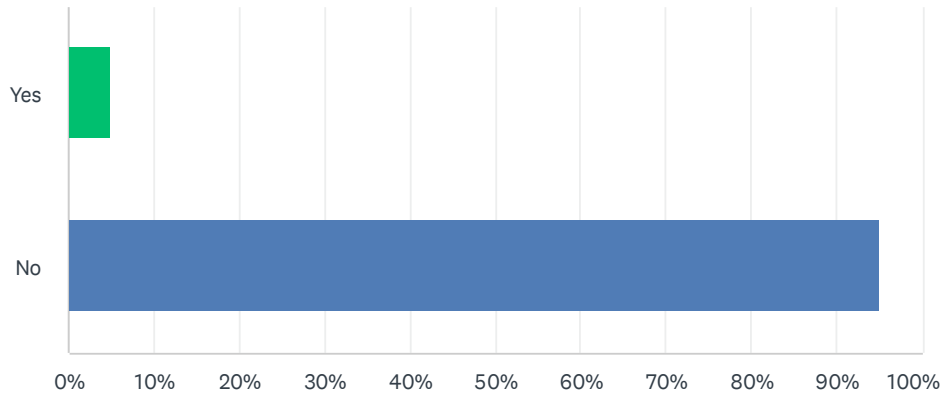


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Keep same: Fir St. to The Mission	81.38%	7,786
Chestnut to The Mission	8.12%	777
Chestnut to Palm St.	5.69%	544
Chestnut to Oak St.	4.81%	460
TOTAL		9,567

Q8 Do you use the bus system in downtown Ventura?

Answered: 9,980 Skipped: 31

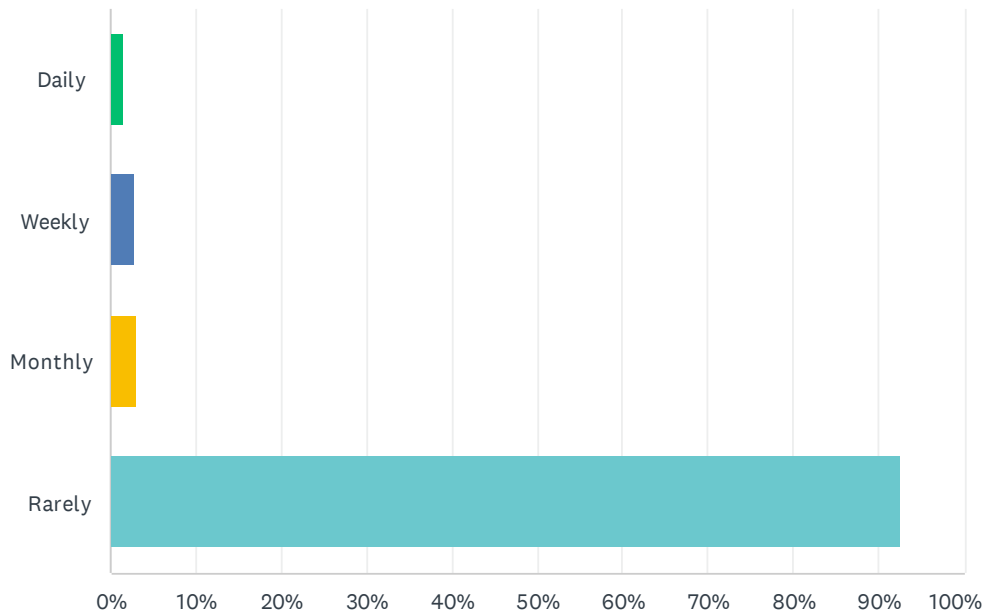
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	4.83%	482
No	95.17%	9,498
TOTAL		9,980

Q9 If you answered yes, how often do you use the bus system in downtown Ventura?

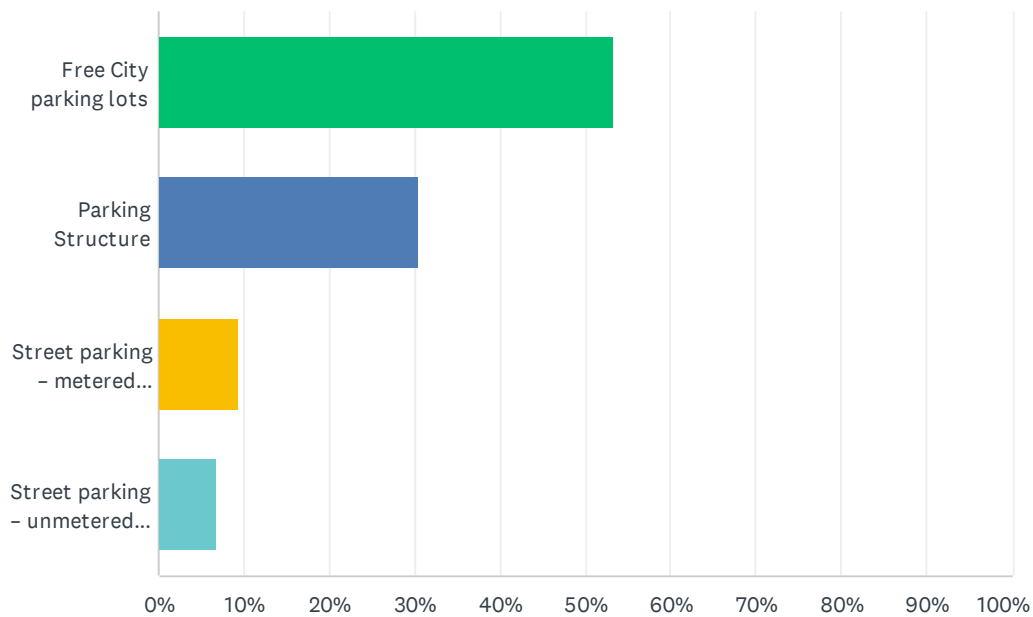
Answered: 4,951 Skipped: 5,060



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	1.56%	77
Weekly	2.85%	141
Monthly	2.97%	147
Rarely	92.63%	4,586
TOTAL		4,951

Q10 When parking downtown, where do you park?

Answered: 9,960 Skipped: 51

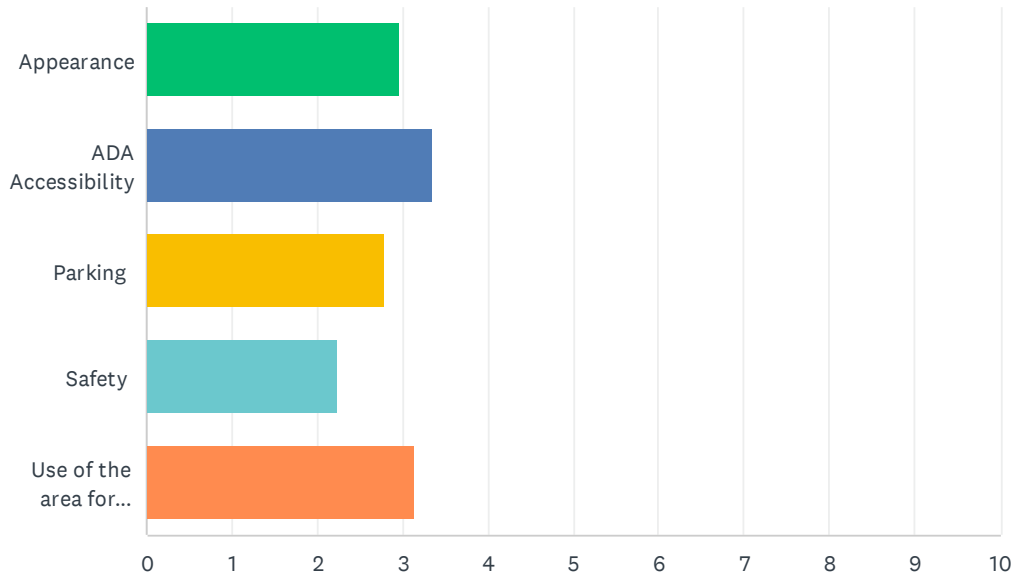


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Free City parking lots	53.35%	5,314
Parking Structure	30.53%	3,041
Street parking – metered parking	9.31%	927
Street parking – unmetered parking	6.81%	678
TOTAL		9,960

Q11 How important are these issues to you? (rank 1-5, 1 being the least important and 5 being the most important)

Answered: 9,869 Skipped: 142

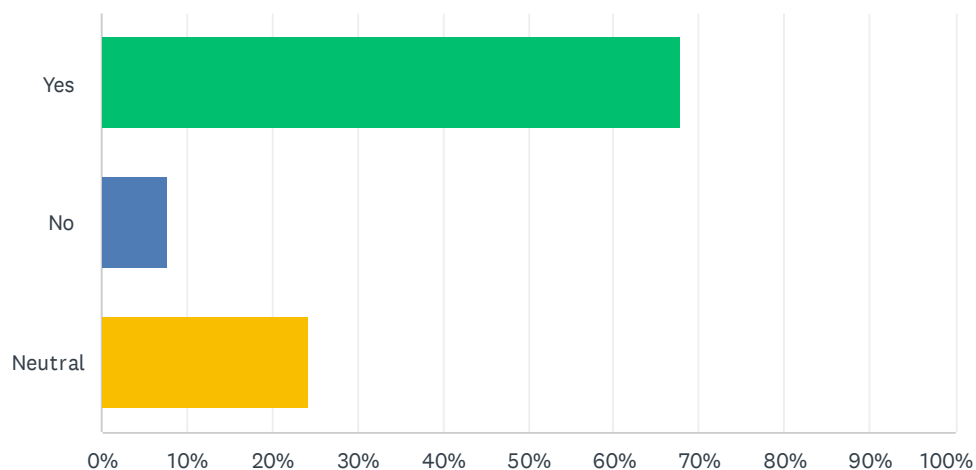
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	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Appearance	17.32% 1,389	19.71% 1,580	23.25% 1,864	22.32% 1,790	17.40% 1,395	8,018	2.97
ADA Accessibility	26.12% 2,079	24.42% 1,943	19.54% 1,555	16.93% 1,347	12.99% 1,034	7,958	3.34
Parking	11.55% 961	18.74% 1,559	25.42% 2,114	26.14% 2,174	18.14% 1,509	8,317	2.79
Safety	10.74% 930	10.36% 897	15.17% 1,313	19.73% 1,708	44.01% 3,810	8,658	2.24
Use of the area for community events	26.61% 2,260	19.84% 1,685	16.11% 1,368	15.40% 1,308	22.03% 1,871	8,492	3.14

Q12 If Main Street remains closed to traffic, would you like to see the farmers market hosted there instead of its current location?

Answered: 9,968 Skipped: 43



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	67.86%	6,764
No	7.77%	775
Neutral	24.37%	2,429
TOTAL		9,968

Q13 If parts of Main Street were to remain closed permanently, are there any enhancements you would like to see?

Answered: 6,669 Skipped: 3,342

Q14 Do you have any other comments on the future of Main Street in Downtown Ventura?

Answered: 5,493 Skipped: 4,518