

# COMMERCIAL STREET ONLINE SURVEY SUMMARY

An online survey was prepared by Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) as part of the Commercial Street planning process being led by the City of Springfield. This survey was open to the public with a goal of gathering information from a broad audience about their experience and desires for Commercial Street. The survey ran from November 2, 2020 to December 4, 2020. It collected **691 responses**. The survey ran during the COVID-19 pandemic, so several questions were framed to account for the impact of this crisis. The following analysis presents the survey's results.

**Demographics:** Survey participants represented a cross-section of Springfield residents. Respondents were well-distributed by age and income, but less so by ethnicity. Over a third (35%) of respondents live in the 65803 zip code – the home of Commercial Street and the general northside of the city. Furthermore, 53% identified as a non-walking distance Springfield resident, while 20% identified as a nearby (walking distance) resident. 50% identified as a regular shopper/diner on Commercial Street.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Commercial Street Today

- Prior to the pandemic, 7% of respondents spent time on Commercial Street every day. A majority (53%) spent time on Commercial Street once a week or more to a couple times a month on average.
- By a very wide margin, restaurants, bars, and coffee shops most often brought respondents to Commercial Street prior to the pandemic (86%). Secondarily, other popular answers included the C-Street City Market, shopping and art galleries, and events and festivals.
- Once we're past the pandemic, 37% of respondents expect to visit Commercial Street more often than they did prior. (Only 3% expect to visit less.)
  - When isolating results for the northside's 65803 zip code, the results were even more promising. 50% of 65803 respondents anticipate visiting Commercial Street more after the pandemic than they did prior.
- Overall, features of Commercial Street were rated positively, predominately receiving ratings of "very good" or "good." The highest rated feature was "the overall aesthetic and vibe," while safety, variety of merchants, and parking had more mixed perceptions.
- 71% of respondents recognize and refer to Commercial Street as "C-Street" while 33% consider Commercial Street to be a part of Springfield's Downtown.

### Commercial Street Tomorrow

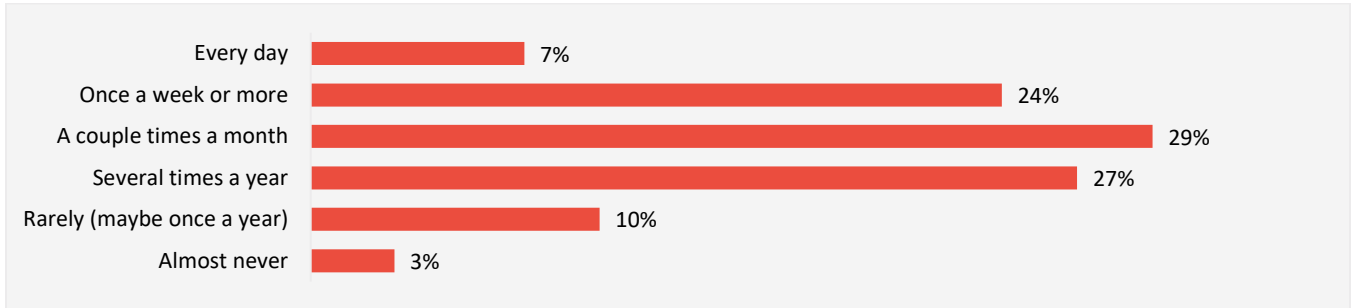
- The six most common words used to describe respondents' vision for Commercial Street in the year 2030, in order, were **vibrant, historic, safe, diverse, fun, and eclectic**.
- When asked to rate the importance of various actions that contribute to the experience on Commercial Street, a majority of respondents rated most of the actions provided as "very important." These include:
  1. Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings (78% rated "very important")
  2. Maintain the historic character (73%)

3. Maintain the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses (70%)
  4. Ensure Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all (68%)
  5. Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods (64%)
  6. Grow Commercial Street as a hub of art and culture (53%)
  7. More restaurants and retail (50%)
- When asked to choose the ONE action (from a list of eleven) that will be *most* important to achieve their vision, the top choices were:
    1. **Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings**
    2. **Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods**
    3. **Maintain the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses**
    4. **Ensure Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all**
  - Respondents were also asked to rate the importance of various public improvements that would support Commercial Street. On the whole, these actions are viewed as less important than the “experience” actions discussed in the prior two bullet points. That said, the highest rated public improvements were:
    1. Provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses on Commercial Street (47% rated “very important”)
    2. Open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge (46%)
    3. Improve connectivity and wayfinding from other parts of the city, including downtown (46%)
  - When asked to choose ONE public improvement (from a list of nine) that will be *most* important, a clear top-two stood out:
    1. **Provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses**
    2. **Open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge**
  - Respondents were also given the chance to provide additional ideas for improvements to Commercial Street in an open-ended format. Ideas and common themes amongst responses included:
    - Outdoor space enhancements – dog park, gathering space/park, small event space/amphitheater, kid friendly, more public outdoor seating, etc.
    - Improved (perception of) safety – many called for some form of an on-the-street safety (or hospitality) presence
    - Mitigation of, and better support for, the homeless population
    - Improved entryways and gateways
    - More dependable and coordinated hours for businesses
    - Decorative lighting – over the street, at intersections, at gateways, holiday-themed, etc.

# FULL SURVEY RESULTS

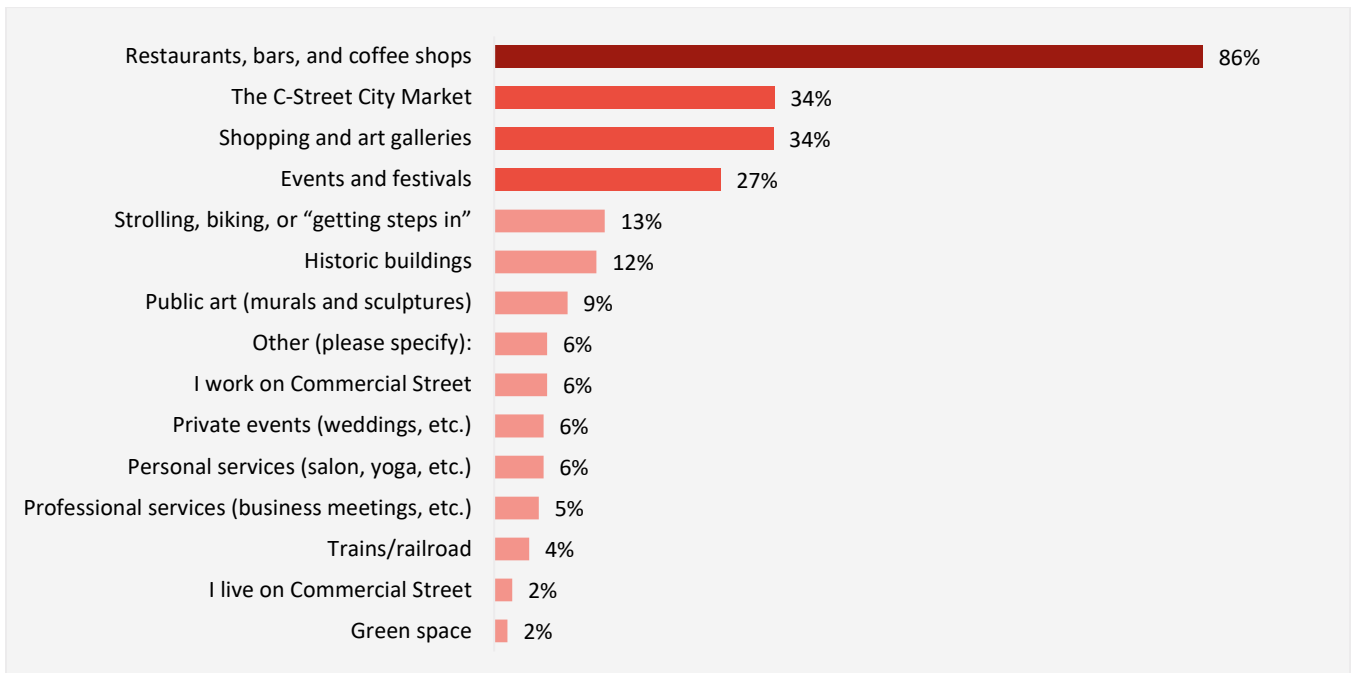
## Q1: Prior to the pandemic, how often did you spend time on Commercial Street?

Answer choices varied amongst survey participants. The most common answer was “a couple times a month” (29%). Other common answers were “several times a year” (27%) and “once a week or more” (24%). Few respondents were “almost never” on Commercial Street (3%).



## Q2: Prior to the pandemic, what most often brought you to Commercial Street?

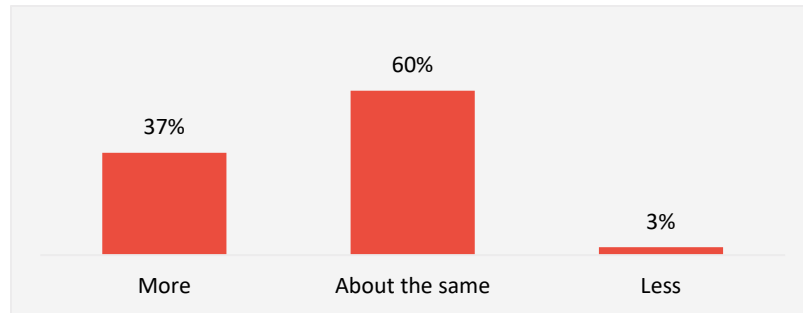
Answers can be sorted into three general categories, as colors in the chart below illustrate. By a wide margin, “restaurants, bars, and coffee shops” most often brought respondents to Commercial Street prior to the pandemic (86%). Other popular answer choices were: “the C-Street City Market” (34%), “shopping and art galleries” (34%), and “events and festivals” (27%). Remaining answer choices were similar in selection rate, all with 13% or fewer. (Note: respondents could select up to three answer choices.)



Common responses from those who selected “other” include: driving through the district, visiting friends/family who work or live in the district, and identifying specific businesses that they visit.

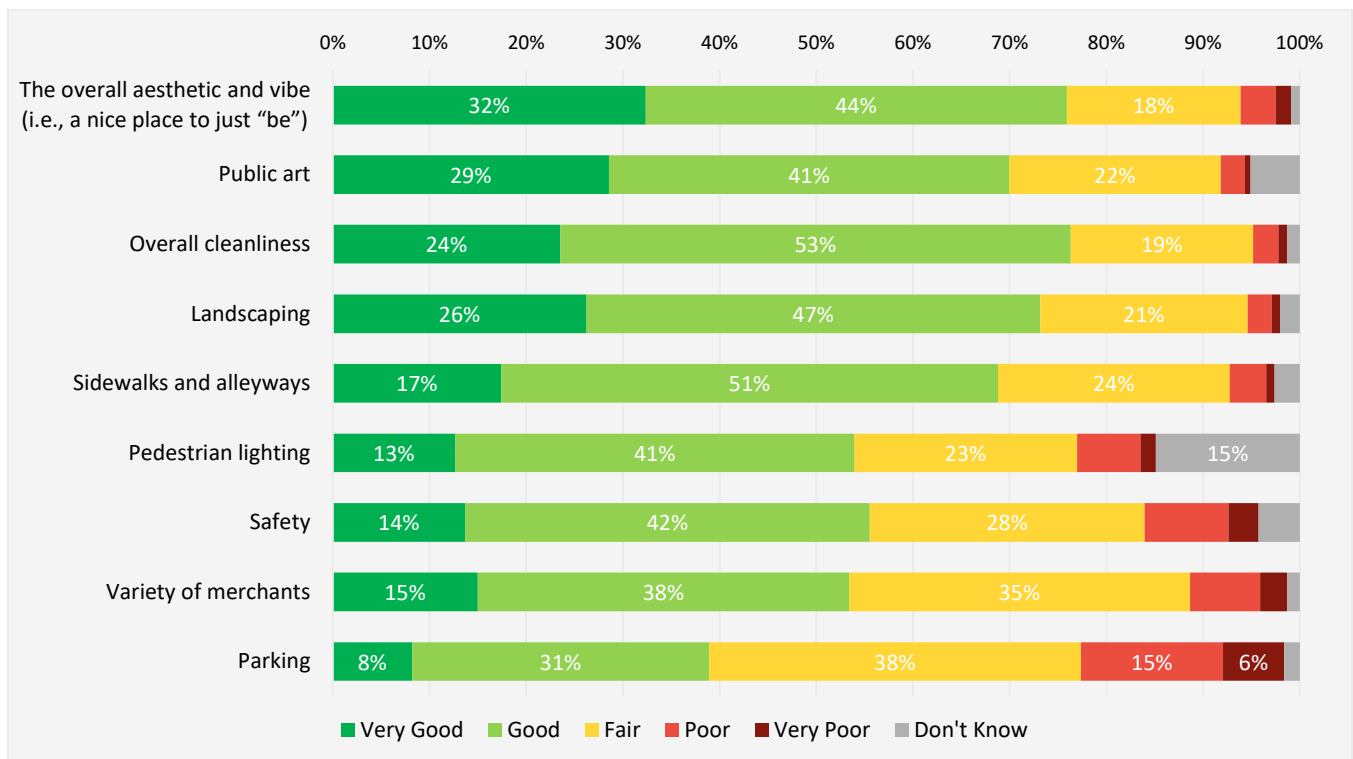
### Q3: Once we are fully past the pandemic, do you expect to visit Commercial Street more, less, or about the same amount as you did prior?

A majority of respondents anticipate visiting Commercial Street about the same amount once the pandemic is in the rearview mirror (60%). Of greater significance, nearly 40% plan on visiting the street more than they did prior, while only 3% plan to visit less.



### Q4: How would you rate the following features of Commercial Street?

Overall, respondents rated the following features positively – most often selecting *very good* or *good*, as the proportion of green in the chart below shows. (Features are sorted by a weighted average, from highest to lowest overall perception.) The highest rated feature was “the overall aesthetic and vibe” of Commercial Street, which 76% of respondents rated *very good/good*. Features with a somewhat more mixed perception included: safety, variety of merchants, and parking. In particular, parking was the only feature for which a majority of respondents didn’t rate as *very good/good*, however, this is not to say it was rated poorly. The most common rating for parking was *fair*.





## Q8: To achieve your vision: How important are the following in contributing to the experience on Commercial Street?

Respondents were asked to rate a series of actions related to experience by level of importance. The chart below is sorted according to the action’s importance, with the most popular answer choice highlighted in gray for each. On the whole, for most of the actions, the majority of respondents rated as *very important*. The top three rated actions, all with 70% or more rating them as *very important*, were:

1. Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings
2. Maintain the historic character
3. Maintain the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses

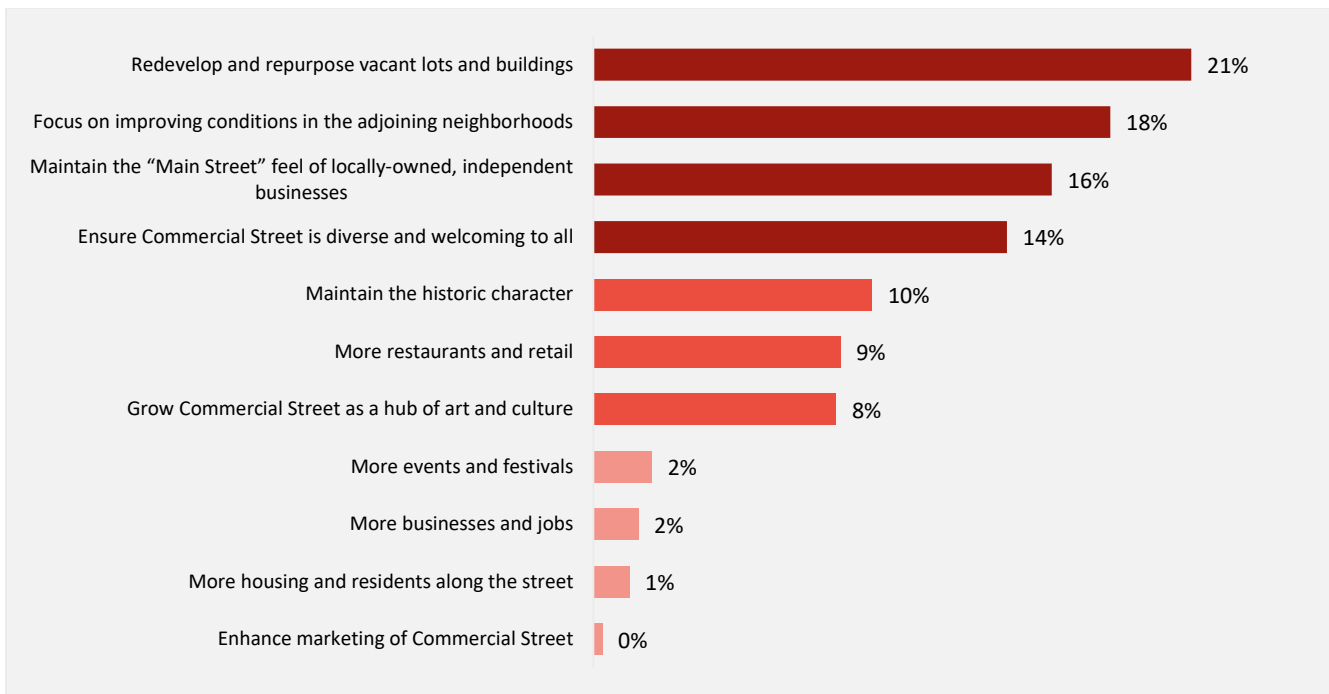
On the other end, respondents were most divided about the importance of “more housing and residents along the street,” with 33% rating as only *somewhat important*.

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings	<b>78%</b>	19%	3%	1%
Maintain the historic character	<b>73%</b>	21%	6%	0%
Maintain the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses	<b>70%</b>	24%	6%	1%
Ensure Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all	<b>68%</b>	22%	7%	3%
Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods	<b>64%</b>	30%	6%	1%
Grow Commercial Street as a hub of art and culture	<b>53%</b>	28%	14%	5%
More restaurants and retail	<b>50%</b>	36%	12%	2%
More events and festivals	<b>45%</b>	40%	13%	2%
More businesses and jobs	42%	<b>42%</b>	14%	2%
Enhance marketing of Commercial Street	38%	<b>43%</b>	15%	4%
More housing and residents along the street	20%	27%	<b>33%</b>	21%

## Q9: Of the actions listed in Question 8, which one will be MOST important?

To further assist in identifying priorities, respondents were asked to select ONE action from the previous question’s answer choices that is most important. When asked to select one action for Commercial Street, there were three tiers of answers, as color-coded in the chart below. (Given the number of answer choices, any that received more than 9% captured more than its ‘fair share’ of votes.)

“Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings” was again the top vote recipient (just as it was in Q8). “Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods” rose up to the #2 selection, with 18% of the vote. Other actions were more or less rated in the same order as in the prior question.



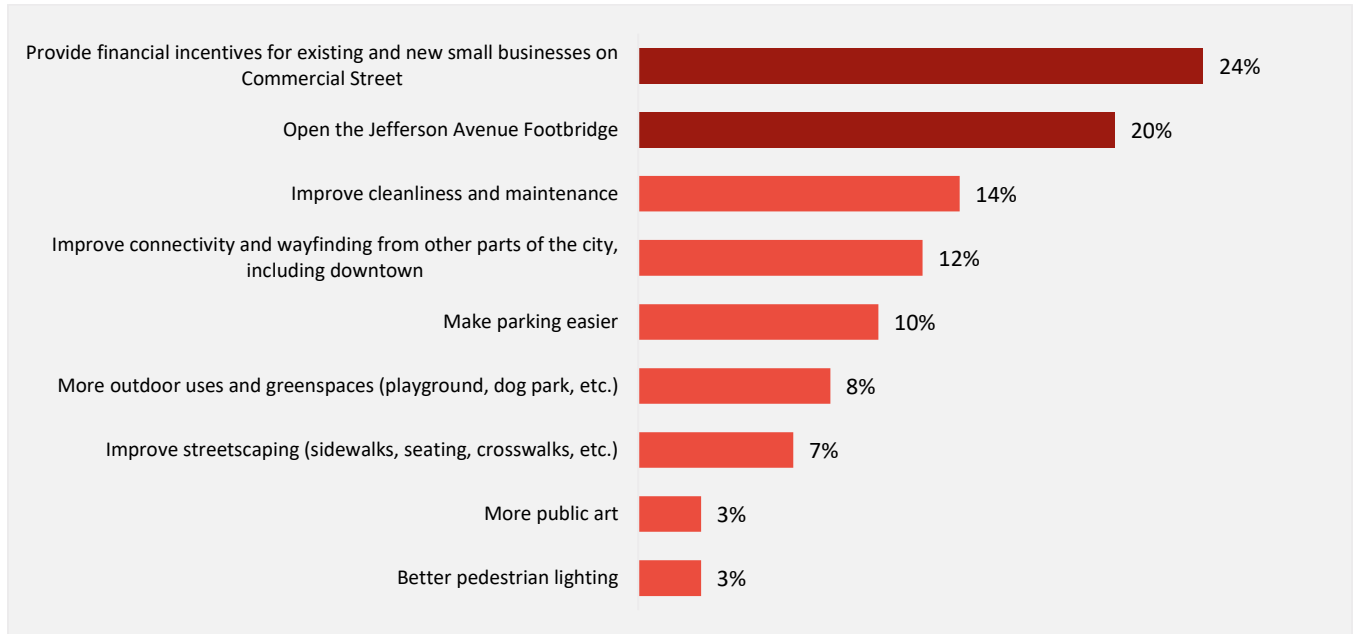
### Q10: To achieve your vision: How important are the following public improvements in supporting Commercial Street?

Like Q8, respondents were also asked to rate a series of public improvements by level of importance. The chart below is sorted by the level of importance. Overall, these actions are viewed as less important than their 'experience' counterparts in Q8 – none of these actions had a majority of respondents rate them as *very important*. There was less consensus from participants amongst this list as well. That said, the highest rated public improvements were: "provide financial incentives," "open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge," and "improve connectivity and wayfinding from other parts of the city."

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses on Commercial Street	47%	35%	14%	3%
Open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge	46%	27%	17%	9%
Improve connectivity and wayfinding from other parts of the city, including downtown	46%	35%	15%	5%
Make parking easier	43%	34%	18%	5%
Improve cleanliness and maintenance	43%	46%	10%	1%
Improve streetscaping (sidewalks, seating, crosswalks, etc.)	36%	46%	16%	2%
Better pedestrian lighting	34%	46%	18%	2%
More outdoor uses and greenspaces (playground, dog park, etc.)	34%	42%	21%	4%
More public art	20%	42%	29%	9%

## Q11: Of the actions listed in Question 10, which one will be MOST important?

When respondents were asked to select one public improvement from the prior list that will be most important, there was a clear top two. Combined, “provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses” and “open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge” received 44% of the vote. On the opposite end, “more public art” and “better pedestrian lighting” only received 3% each.



## Q12: If you could suggest one additional and specific improvement to enhance Commercial Street, not in the lists above, what would it be?

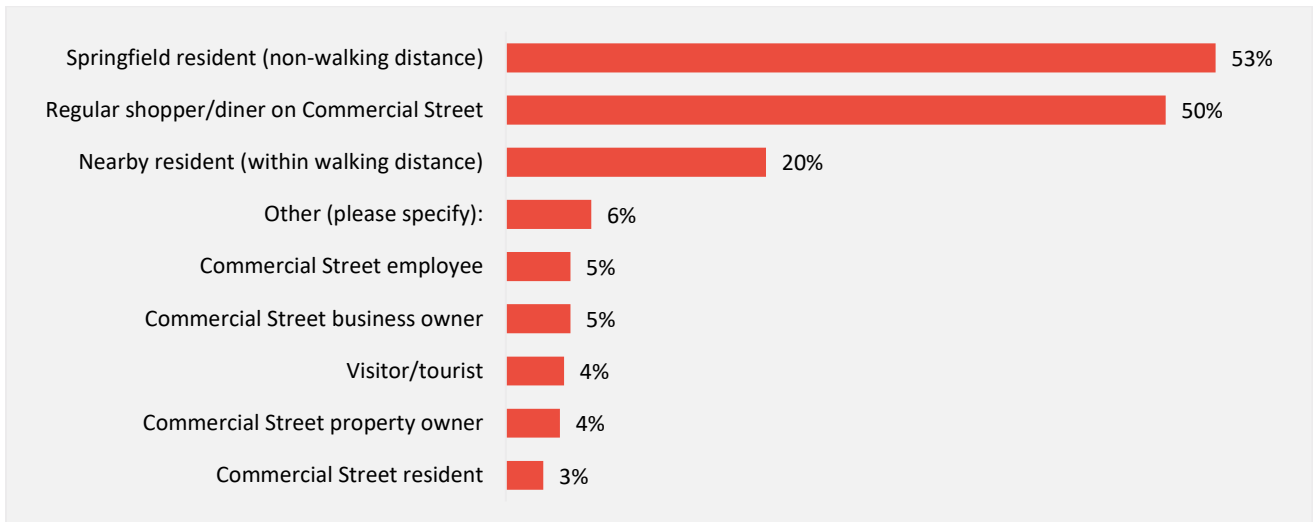
Respondents were asked to provide ideas for additional improvements to Commercial Street in an open-ended format. Roughly half of survey participants provided an answer, with many simply elaborating on answer choices provided in the prior four questions. Ideas and common themes amongst comments included:

- Outdoor space enhancements – dog park, gathering space/park, small event space/amphitheater, kid friendly, more public outdoor seating, etc.
- Improved (perception of) safety – many called for some form of an on-the-street safety (or hospitality) presence
- Mitigation of, and better support for, the homeless population
- Improved entryways and gateways
- More dependable and coordinated hours for businesses
- Decorative lighting – over the street, at intersections, at gateways, holiday-themed, etc.
- Reuse of the former Missouri Hotel
- Expanded hours of the farmers market – year-round, additional days, etc.
- Public restrooms



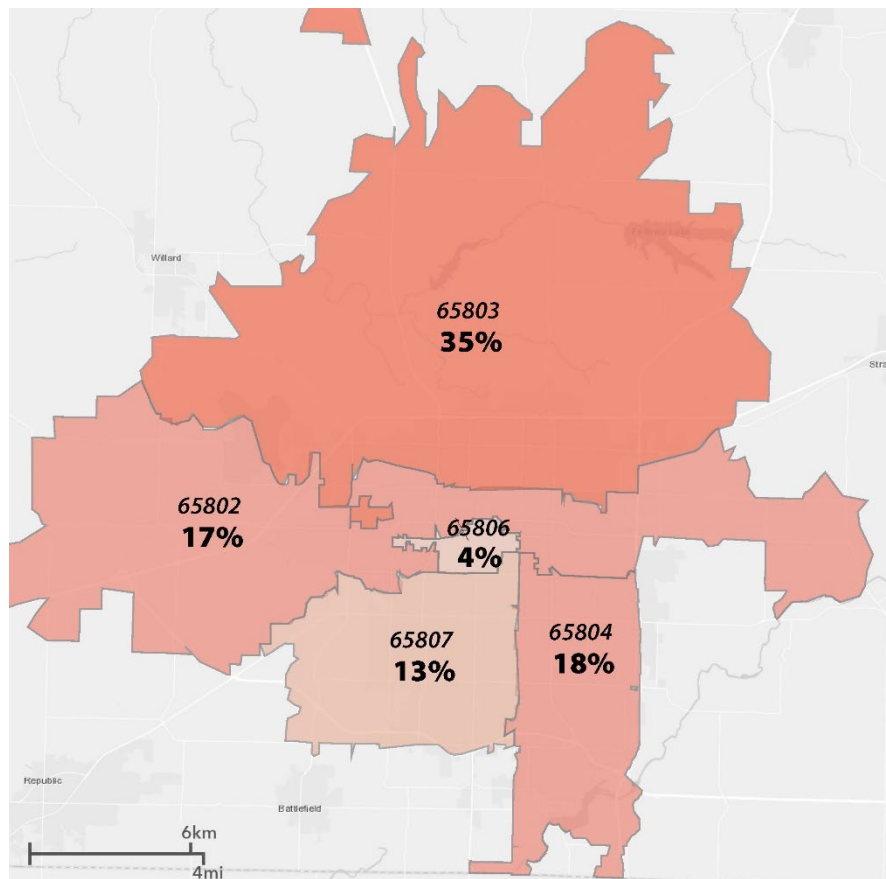
# RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Which of the following best characterizes your primary interest(s) in Commercial Street?

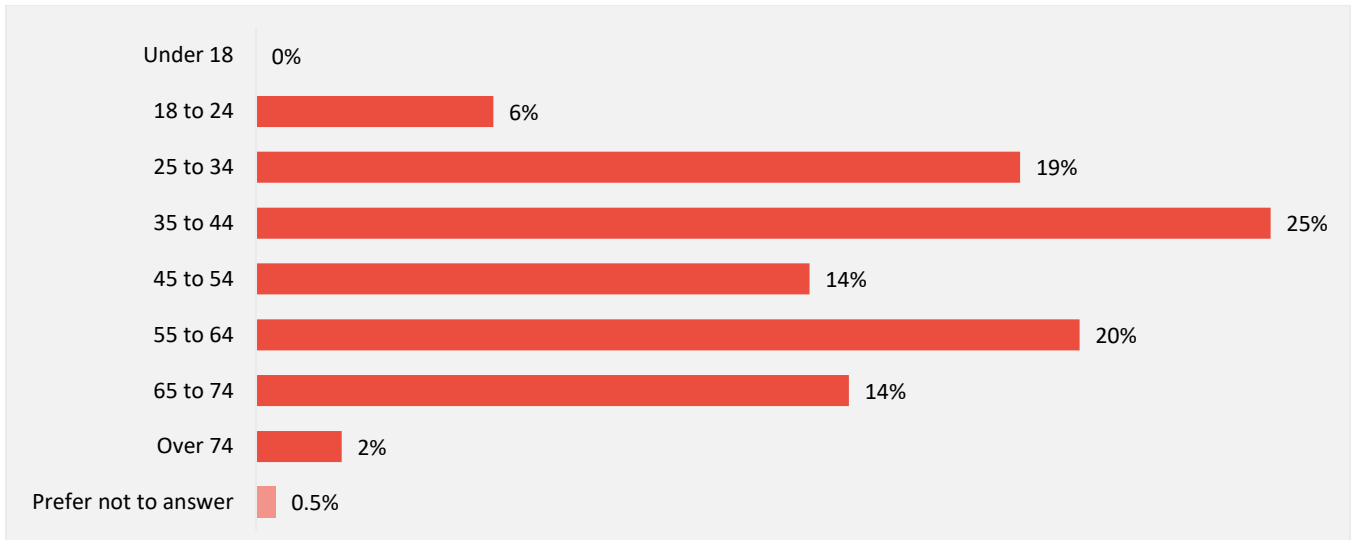


## Home Zip Code

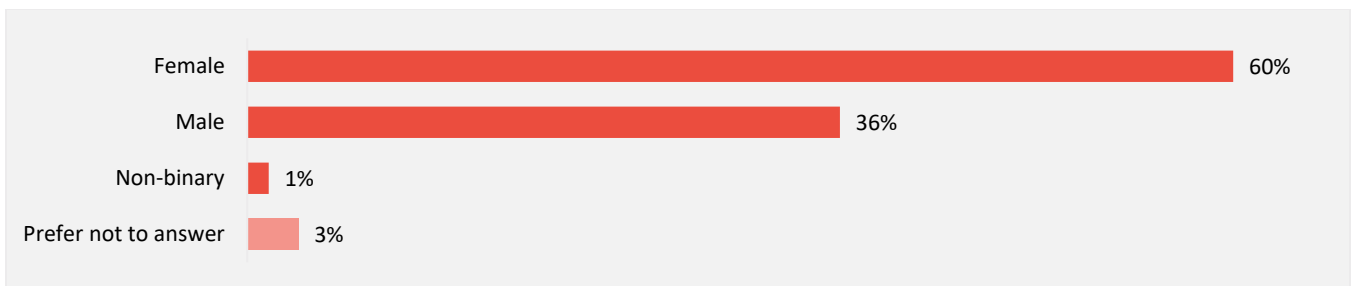
Survey respondents provided 29 different home zip codes. The zip codes with the most representation in the survey data include: 65803 (Commercial Street's zip code), 65804, and 65802. Together, these make up 70% of responses.



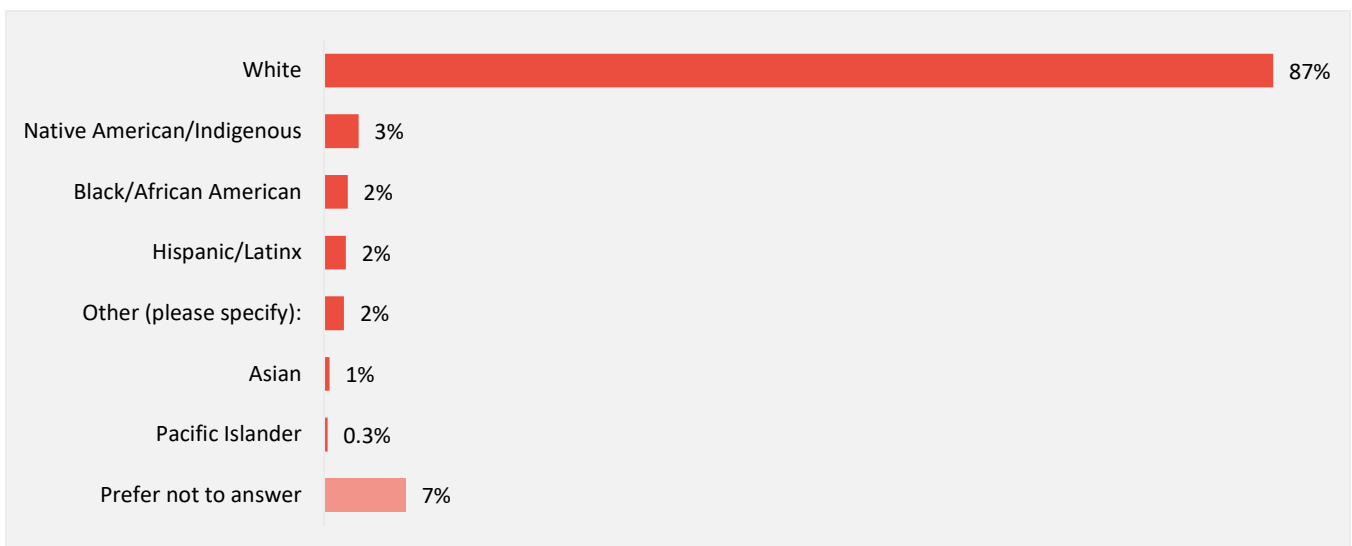
## Age



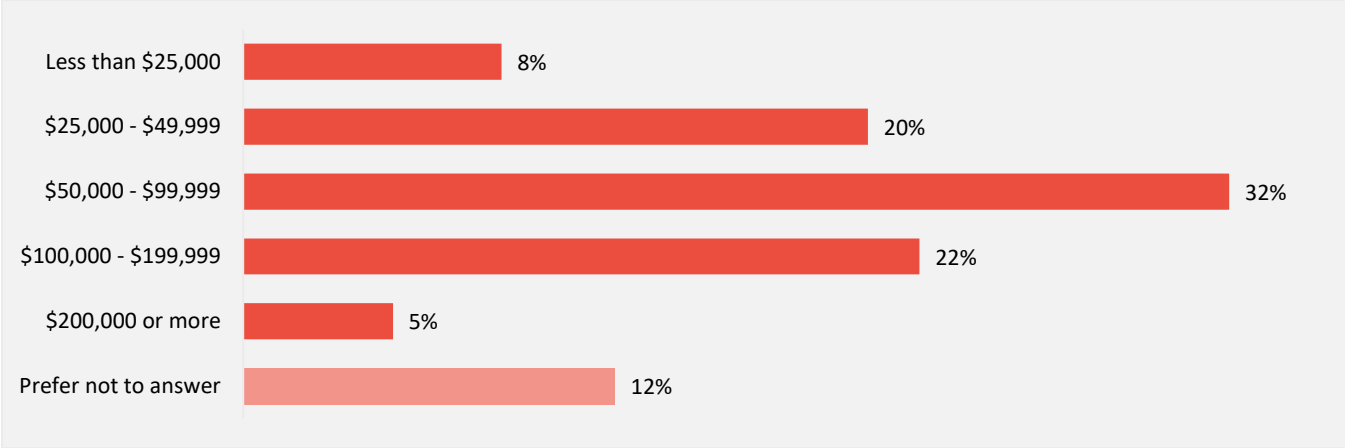
## Gender



## Ethnicity



# Annual Household Income



## CROSS-TABULATIONS

The survey results were cross-tabulated to see if responses differed based on respondent demographics, including age, income, home zip code, and interest in Commercial Street. Results were not cross-tabulated for ethnicity due to low response rates for most of the answer choices. Results to Q9 and Q11 (i.e., the “which one action” questions), analyzed by various demographics are provided below. In the following tables, the top-two responses for each category are highlighted in yellow.

### Interest in Commercial Street

**Q9:** The table below shows some variation in the priority actions, based on what the respondent’s interest is in Commercial Street. Some key differences include:

- Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings was popular across the board. That said, property owners are most interested in redeveloping and repurposing vacant lots and buildings.
- Nearby residents are most interested in focusing on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods.
- Direct Commercial Street stakeholders on the whole (i.e., property owners, employees, residents, business owners) are more interested in growing the street as a hub for art and culture than other respondents.
- Commercial Street residents placed the greatest priority on ensuring the street is diverse and welcoming to all.

	C-Street resident	C-Street employee	C-Street property owner	C-Street business owner	Regular shopper/diner	Nearby resident (within walking distance)	Springfield resident (non-walking distance)	Visitor/tourist
Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings	<b>28%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods	11%	10%	15%	13%	17%	<b>27%</b>	<b>18%</b>	4%
Maintain the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses	11%	<b>13%</b>	15%	<b>23%</b>	<b>19%</b>	11%	<b>18%</b>	14%
Ensure Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all	<b>28%</b>	10%	15%	13%	14%	17%	13%	<b>18%</b>
Maintain the historic character	0%	6%	0%	0%	8%	12%	9%	7%
Grow Commercial Street as a hub of art and culture	11%	<b>13%</b>	<b>19%</b>	16%	8%	6%	8%	11%
More restaurants and retail	6%	6%	0%	0%	10%	6%	8%	4%
More events and festivals	6%	3%	0%	3%	2%	2%	3%	0%
More businesses and jobs	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%	0%
More housing and residents along the street	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	0%	1%	7%
Enhance marketing of Commercial Street	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%

**Q11:** The table below shows modest variation in the priority public improvements, depending on respondent interest. Differences include:

- Prioritization of the Footbridge varied widely by respondent type. Property owners, nearby residents, and business owners all put greater emphasis on opening the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge than other respondent types. Nearly half of property owner survey participants selected this as their top priority.
- Visitor/tourists and Springfield residents (non-walking distance) put greater emphasis on improving cleanliness and maintenance.

	C-Street resident	C-Street employee	C-Street property owner	C-Street business owner	Regular shopper/diner	Nearby resident (within walking distance)	Springfield resident (non-walking distance)	Visitor/tourist
Provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses on Commercial Street	29%	27%	16%	28%	27%	25%	25%	15%
Open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge	29%	20%	44%	31%	21%	36%	13%	22%
Improve cleanliness and maintenance	0%	17%	8%	3%	13%	6%	16%	26%
Improve connectivity and wayfinding from other parts of the city, including downtown	12%	20%	20%	14%	11%	12%	14%	7%
Make parking easier	12%	10%	0%	3%	11%	6%	11%	4%
More outdoor uses and greenspaces (playground, dog park, etc.)	6%	0%	4%	10%	8%	6%	9%	4%
Improve streetscaping (sidewalks, seating, crosswalks, etc.)	12%	3%	8%	7%	5%	6%	6%	11%
More public art	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	4%	7%
Better pedestrian lighting	0%	3%	0%	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%

## Age

*For age cross-tabulations, the 65-74 and 75+ age groups were combined due to response rates.*

**Q9:** There was some variation in survey responses between younger and older participants:

- Younger age groups (<45) placed higher prioritization on redeveloping and repurposing vacant lots and buildings than their older counterparts. The same can generally be said for focusing on improving conditions in adjoining neighborhoods.
- Alternatively, older age groups placed a higher priority on maintaining the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses. They also place more emphasis on maintaining the historic character of Commercial Street.

	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65+
Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings	<b>28%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>	14%
Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods	<b>17%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>	13%	13%
Maintain the "Main Street" feel of locally-owned, independent businesses	14%	16%	10%	<b>17%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Ensure Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all	<b>17%</b>	19%	15%	12%	11%	<b>16%</b>
Maintain the historic character	11%	3%	7%	13%	13%	<b>16%</b>
Grow Commercial Street as a hub of art and culture	6%	5%	7%	14%	11%	8%
More restaurants and retail	6%	7%	8%	5%	9%	12%
More events and festivals	0%	3%	3%	1%	1%	2%
More businesses and jobs	0%	2%	1%	0%	4%	1%
More housing and residents along the street	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%
Enhance marketing of Commercial Street	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%

**Q11:** There was slight variation across age groups when it came to prioritizing public improvements:

- The older participants (55+) are most interested in opening the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge; however, this was a top-two priority for all age groups except 18-24-year-olds.
- The most significant outlier is 18-24-year-olds prioritization of more outdoor uses and greenspaces – an action that directly correlates with age. This youngest age group also placed greater emphasis on more public art; and less on improving cleanliness and maintenance.

	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65+
Provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses on Commercial Street	<b>19%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge	11%	<b>20%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>27%</b>
Improve cleanliness and maintenance	8%	13%	16%	14%	15%	12%
Improve connectivity and wayfinding from other parts of the city, including downtown	11%	16%	12%	11%	15%	7%
Make parking easier	11%	8%	8%	15%	11%	9%
More outdoor uses and greenspaces (playground, dog park, etc.)	<b>19%</b>	9%	9%	8%	5%	4%
Improve streetscaping (sidewalks, seating, crosswalks, etc.)	8%	7%	4%	6%	6%	12%
More public art	8%	2%	3%	4%	2%	1%
Better pedestrian lighting	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	4%

## Household Income

*For the income cross-tabulations, the \$100,000-199,000 and \$200,000+ income brackets were combined, due to lower response rates in the highest income group.*

**Q9:** There was variation amongst income groups when it came to prioritizing actions related to the experience:

- The higher the income group, the more likely respondents were to prioritize redeveloping and repurposing vacant lots and buildings.
- The lower the income group, the more likely respondents were to prioritize ensuring Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all. To a lesser extent, this is also the case for maintaining the historic character and the “Main Street” feel.
- The highest income brackets (\$100,000+) placed much greater emphasis on more restaurants and retail than the other groups.

	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000+
Redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings	16%	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Focus on improving conditions in the adjoining neighborhoods	<b>20%</b>	15%	<b>25%</b>	<b>14%</b>
Ensure Commercial Street is diverse and welcoming to all	<b>18%</b>	<b>17%</b>	16%	9%
Maintain the “Main Street” feel of locally-owned, independent businesses	14%	<b>20%</b>	13%	11%
Maintain the historic character	14%	11%	8%	9%
Grow Commercial Street as a hub of art and culture	4%	11%	7%	13%
More restaurants and retail	4%	3%	6%	<b>14%</b>
More events and festivals	6%	3%	1%	2%
More businesses and jobs	4%	1%	2%	1%
More housing and residents along the street	0%	1%	2%	3%
Enhance marketing of Commercial Street	0%	1%	0%	0%

**Q11:** There was little variation when it came to prioritizing public improvements:

- The highest income brackets (\$100,000+) were an outlier regarding the Footbridge – placing much less emphasis on this action than the other income groups. Alternatively, they placed higher priority on improving cleanliness and maintenance.
- The lower the income group, the slightly higher the prioritization of: improving streetscaping and creating more outdoor uses and greenspaces.
- On the other end, the higher income groups placed slightly higher priority on making parking easier.

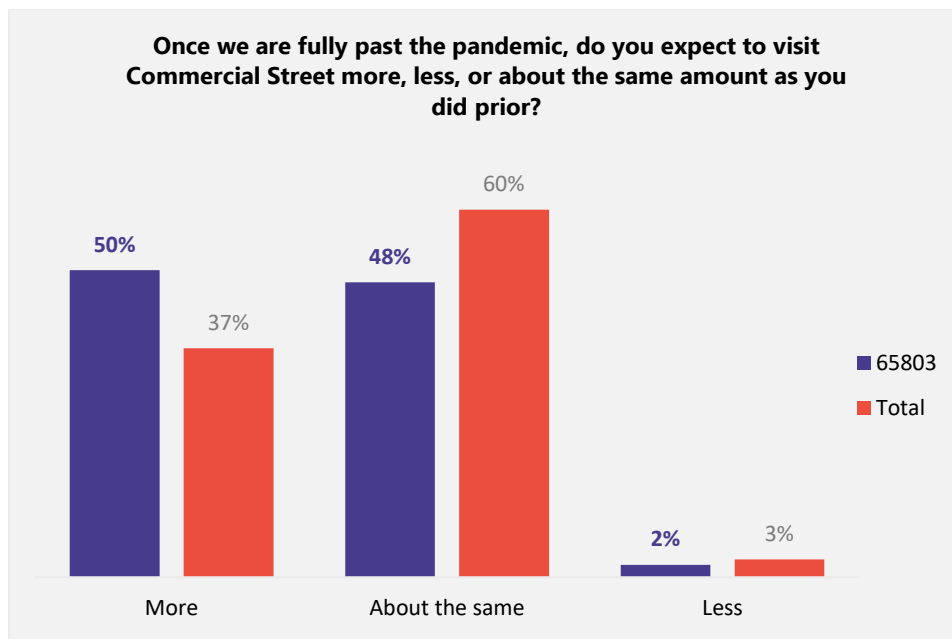
	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000+
Provide financial incentives for existing and new small businesses on Commercial Street	<b>21%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>
Open the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge	<b>21%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>25%</b>	12%
Improve cleanliness and maintenance	13%	15%	9%	<b>18%</b>
Improve connectivity and wayfinding from other parts of the city, including downtown	17%	9%	14%	14%
Make parking easier	8%	8%	12%	9%
Improve streetscaping (sidewalks, seating, crosswalks, etc.)	8%	10%	5%	6%
More outdoor uses and greenspaces (playground, dog park, etc.)	10%	7%	5%	6%
More public art	0%	3%	3%	3%
Better pedestrian lighting	2%	4%	2%	1%

## Home Zip Code

Due to it being an open-ended question type, results could not be cross-tabulated for home zip code. However, answered were filtered to separate out zip code 65803 – the zip code of Commercial Street and the greater northside of Springfield – to compare to overall survey results. The following charts illustrate results for 65803 respondents compared to total results discussed earlier in the report.

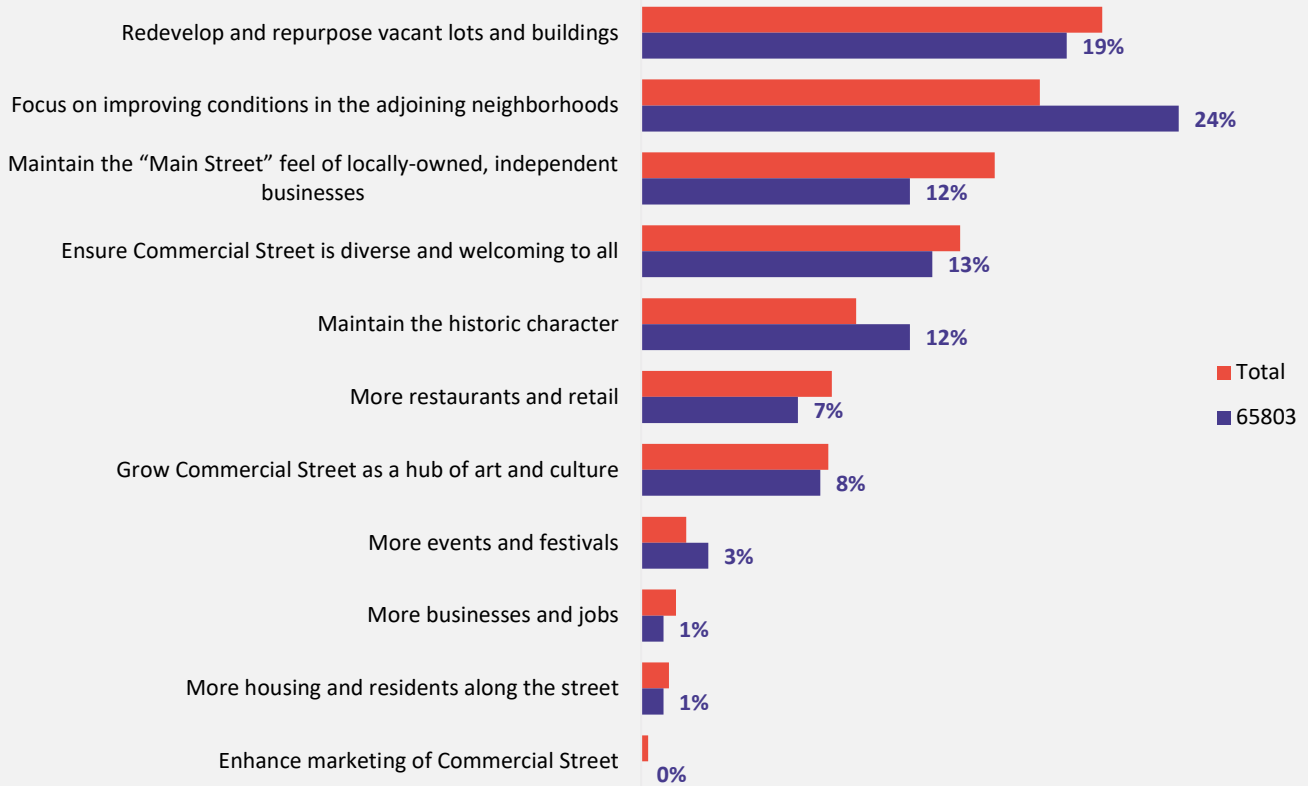
Significant differences from the 65803 results include:

- Residents of 65803 are even more likely to visit Commercial Street once we are past COVID-19 than respondents in general. Half of 65803 respondents say they are more likely to visit, while only 2% say they are less likely.
- Residents of 65803 placed greater emphasis on improving conditions in adjoining neighborhoods. This was their top priority in Q9 (chosen by 24%), as opposed to redevelop and repurpose vacant lots and buildings.
- Residents of 65803 also placed much greater emphasis on opening the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge. A third (33%) of respondents selected this when asked to choose one public improvement that is most important; 13 percentage points higher than the full results.





**Which of the following actions contributing to the experience on Commercial Street will be MOST important?**



**Which of the following public improvements will be MOST important?**

