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2011 Central business service district constituent survey

Intown Manchester

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November 1, 2011

CBSD Advisory Board
C/O Sam Maranto
Planning and Community Development
City of Manchester
One City Hall Plaza
Manchester, NH 03101

Dear Sam and Members of the CBSD Advisory Board,

Enclosed is the analysis of the 2011 CBSD constituent survey, which was conducted by Intown Manchester in October 2011.

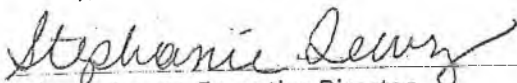
Approximately 450 surveys, return self addressed envelopes included, were mailed to property owners and business owners in the Central Business District in late September. We received 59 responses, representing a return rate of 13%.

The Intown Manchester Board of Trustees will review the results of this survey at the November 16 meeting, and we invite you to attend this meeting and take part in the discussion.

The meeting will be held on **Wednesday, Nov. 16 at 4 PM at PSNH.**

We look forward to this review and hearing your comments and suggestions on ways we can improve service to the downtown community.

Sincerely,


Stephanie Lewry, Executive Director



2011 Central Business Service District Survey

Prior to renewing its contract, the City of Manchester asked that Intown Manchester conduct a survey of business and property owners within the CBSD to determine if the services being done were appreciated; to determine if the services were being performed adequately, according to what each one values; and to determine if other services were needed.

Survey Construction and Delivery:

A review of the CBSD survey conducted in 2010 suggested that the most valuable feedback would come in the form of a written response from CBSD constituents - those who pay (or pay through their rent) the CBSD sur-tax (property owners and their tenants).

A draft survey was created by Intown Manchester, and it received scrutiny by the Intown Manchester Board of Trustees, the Planning Department, and the CBSD Advisory Board. We divided the survey into 4 short sections with a goal that the entire survey would take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. Section 1 asked for basic information about the person completing the survey; then we asked about the constituents' awareness of Intown Manchester and its responsibilities. The remaining two sections focused on impressions of downtown and a prioritization of services according to each respondent's own set of values. We also asked for comments.

Both property owners and a selection of their tenants would receive the survey in the mail. We mailed 450 "5 Minute Surveys", and included a return self addressed envelope. We received 59 written replies by the deadline of October 14, or about 13 % rate of response. This was exactly the same percentage of responses that we received last year.

Tabulating Survey Results:

Out of 59 returned surveys, 34 surveys (58%) were from owners and 25 surveys (42%) were from tenants. When reviewing the analysis, it is important to remember that the returns represent only 13% of the CBSD constituents.

While everyone wants a profitable business in a clean, safe and attractive environment, it is also important to recognize the differences in services needed in each of the four neighborhoods in the CBSD. For example, parking issues, in particular, are different in each of the four areas. Concerns for high pedestrian traffic are most important in the Central District, while others see snow removal or weeds on Canal Street and the RR crossings as high priorities. Approximately half of the responses (33) represented the Central district; the remaining three neighborhoods, North of Bridge (NOB), the Millyard, and South Elm District (SED) were represented nearly equally - 7 or 8 from each. This is very consistent with survey results from 2010.

Highlights of CBSD Survey 2011

Who responded? 34 - owners of property (58% of responders)
25 - tenants, (42% of responders)

Residential zip code 37% 03101(Downtown), 26% 03110 (Bedford), 23% 03104 (North),
14% other (mostly in surrounding communities)

Business location 55% Central Number of employees – 35% had less than 5 employees
11% SED 18% had 6-15 employees
15% Millyard 20% had more than 16 employees
13% NOB
6% NA

Awareness of Intown – 71% are very familiar with roles and responsibilities of Intown, 25% are somewhat familiar.
This means that virtually everyone who filled out the survey had some knowledge of Intown Manchester and its responsibilities

Impressions of Downtown-What responders value

- 79% believe street banners & flowers welcome visitors.
- 71% agree that downtown is clean and feels safe.
- 69% feel litter removal and outdoor maintenance is satisfactory.
- 66% feel downtown is a positive reflection of the City of Manchester, and
- 64% agree that Manchester is a good place to do business.
- 61% think we need more street events and outdoor festivals
- 56% think downtown is attractive
- 52% feel the signage for parking and way finding is adequate
- 52% feel Maintenance services are satisfactory (several comments on the need for more service to side streets, including snow removal)
- 10% would be interested in a higher level of service and would be willing to pay for it. 30% would consider it with certain conditions. 32% would not be interested in higher level of service, if they had to pay more.

Suggestions for Improvement – see attached sheet. Below are commonly offered suggestions

- Reduce Pan handlers
- Side streets - Better lighting, snow removal, more service
- Want more festivals and outdoor events to attract visitors
- Parking –not enough, too rigorous enforcement
- Better signage for visitors to find parking and amenities

*Code regulating colour c
Side of S. Street
State or City?
Hold Meet w/
Stakeholders
Loving*

Rank services - Top 10 - where to spend limited resources:

1. More festivals
2. Snow clearing and removal
3. Recycling
4. Parking signage – garages, lots
5. Canal Street weeds – medians and RR tracks
6. Perception of Safety-lighting, ambassadors, no panhandlers
7. Way Finding signage
8. Pressure wash sidewalks
9. Visitor Information
10. Improve holiday decor

*talk w/
MCOO*

*ask MHT - m
to study what festivals
would be best fit for MHT*

Note: Survey questions may not be filled out completely, so numbers may not match up in each category.

1	I am a...	1a	For tenants Owner/Manager of the Business	Employee
	Building Owner	Tenant		
	34	25	19	6

2 Residential Zip Code	03101	03102	03103	03104	03106	03110	Other
	16	1	4	10	1	11	11

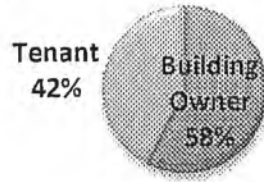
3 How long has your business been located in downtown?	Less than 5 years	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-50	51-80	More than 81
	9	12	5	5	8	3	7	4

4 Number of Employees	less than 5	6 - 15	16 - 80	more than 80
	21	11	9	5

5 Business Located in:	Millyard	Central	NOB	SED
	9	33	8	7

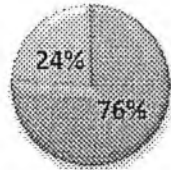
6 Are you familiar w/ Intown	Yes	No	Somewhat
Would you like to schedule a visit?	39	2	14
E-news	4	43	
Newsletter	32	14	1
Occasional Mailings	47	5	1
	45	3	3

I am a...

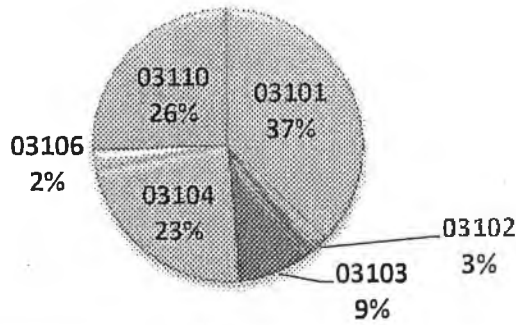


Tenants breakdown

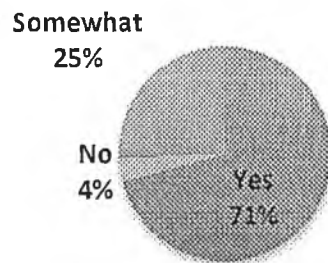
Owner/Manager of the Business Employee

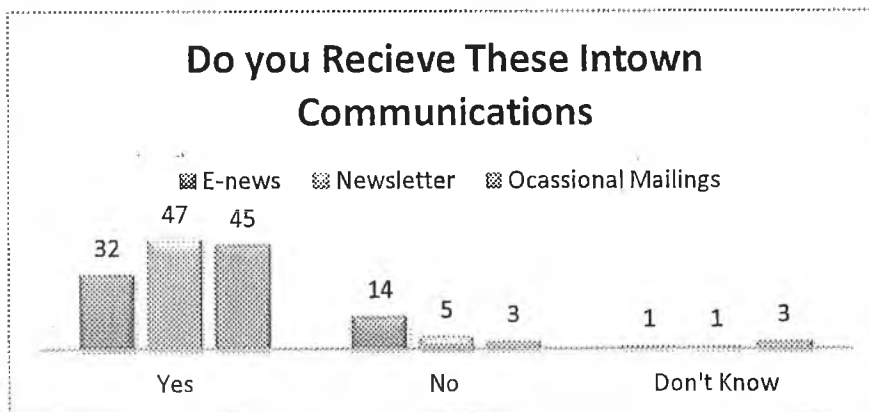
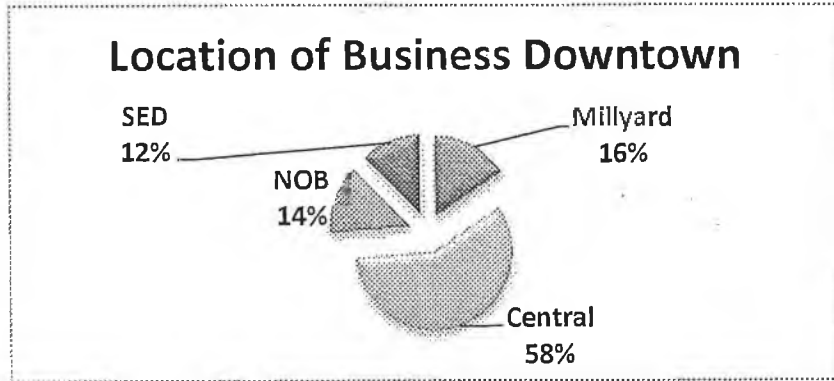
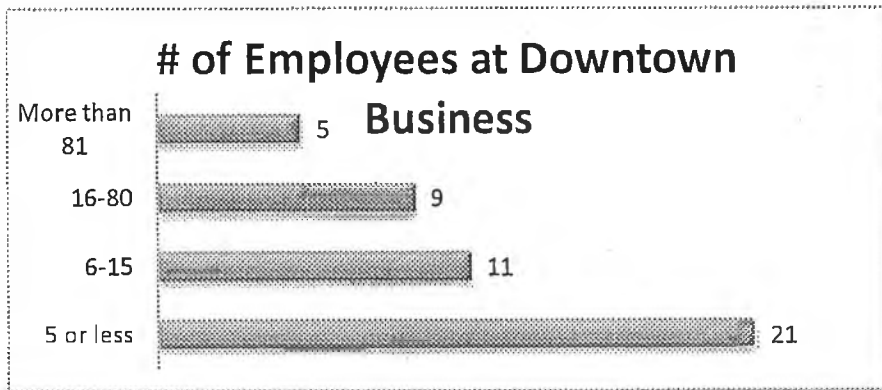
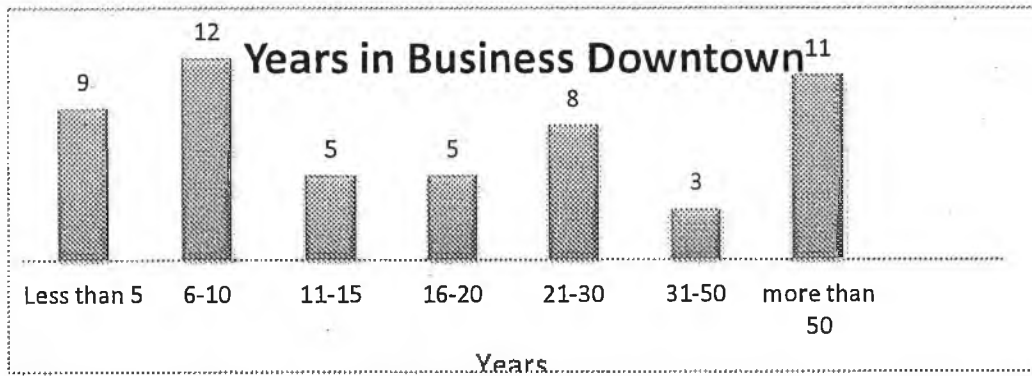


My Residential Zip Code is

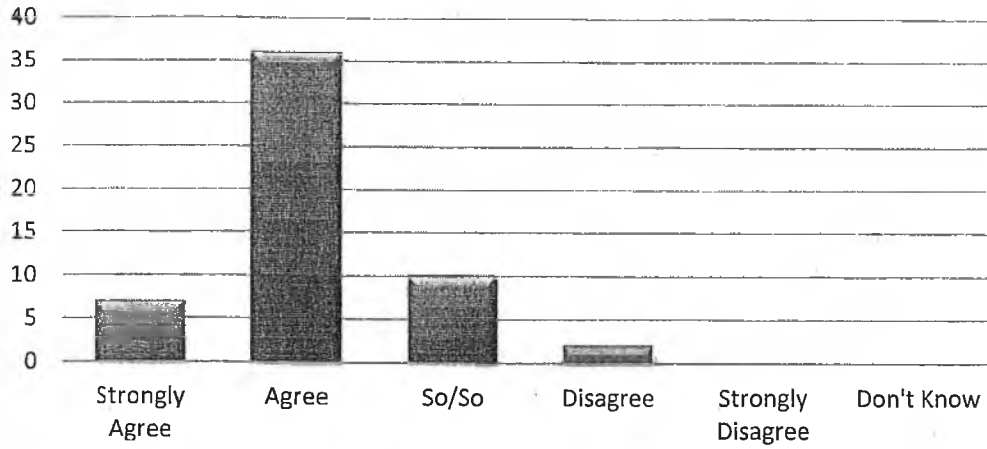


Are you Familiar with Intown and its responsibilities

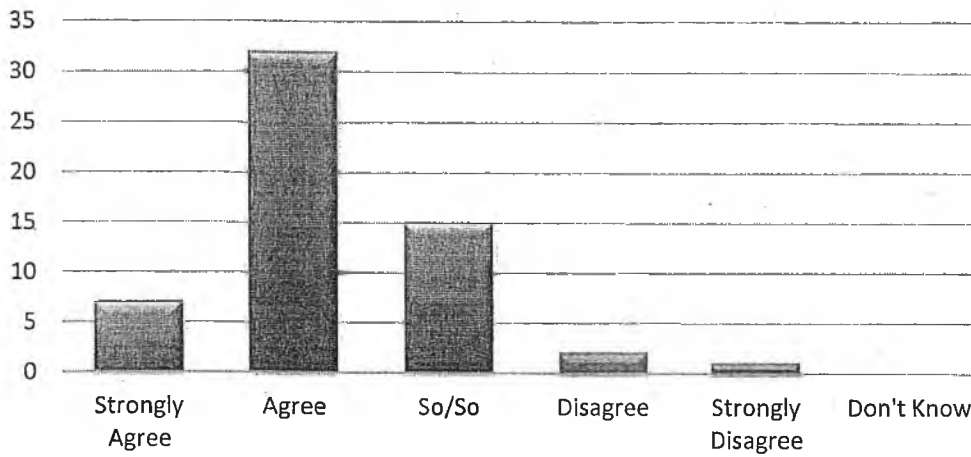




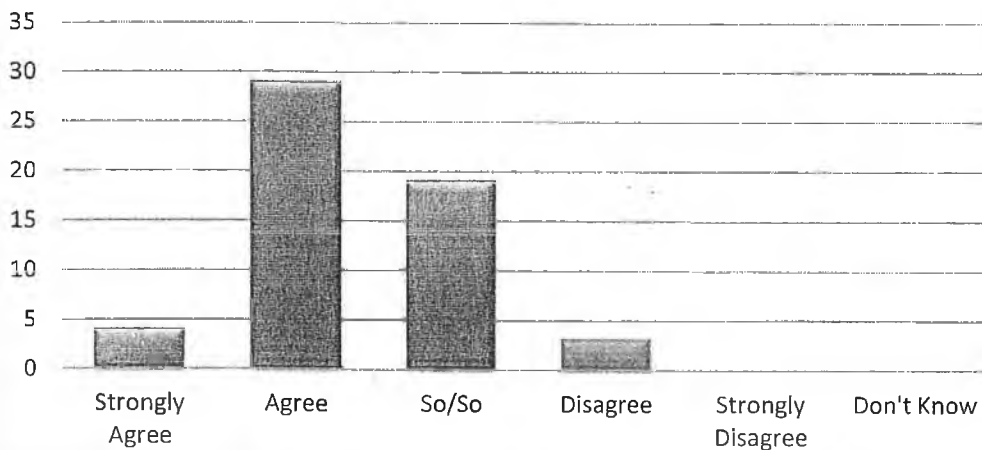
Downtown has a clean appearance



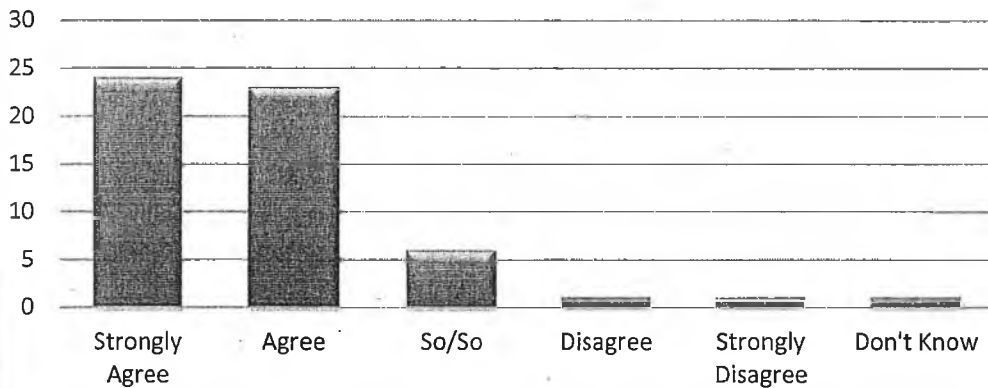
Downtown generally feels safe



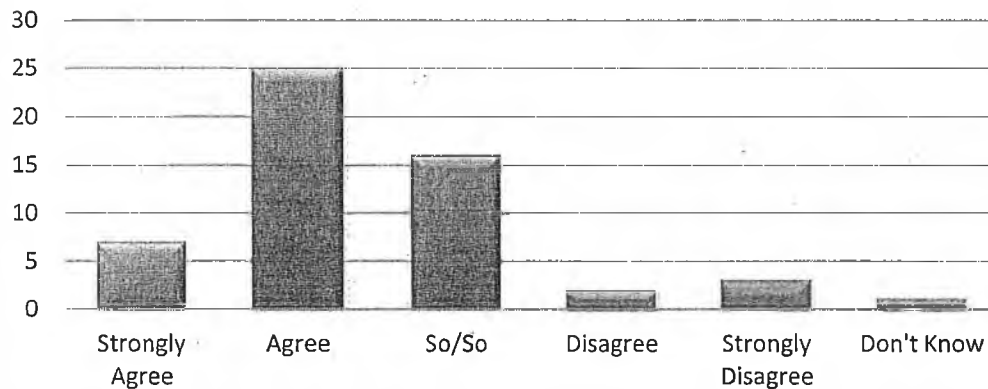
Downtown Manchester is attractive



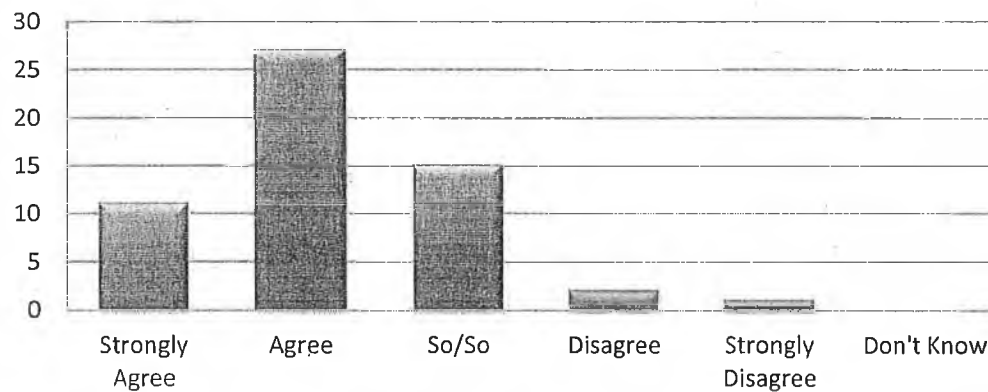
Street Banners and flowers provide a warm welcome to visitors



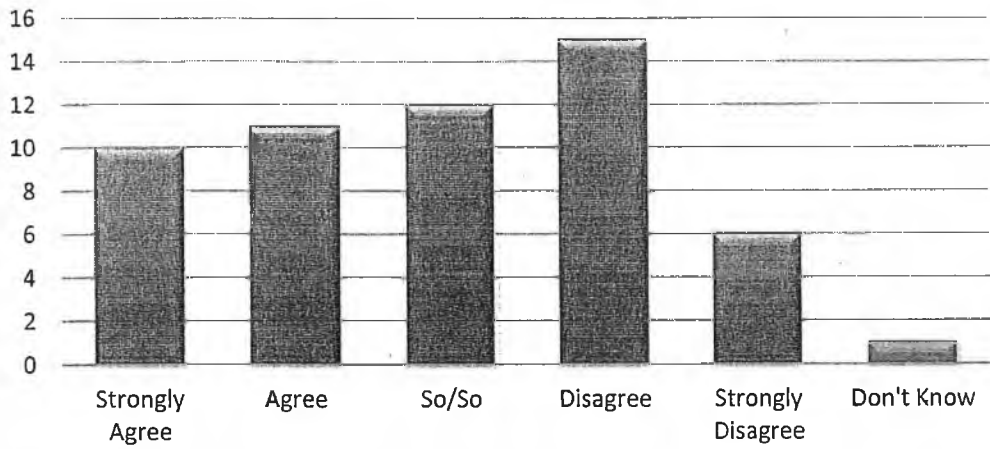
Signs for Parking and Way-finding are clear and adequate



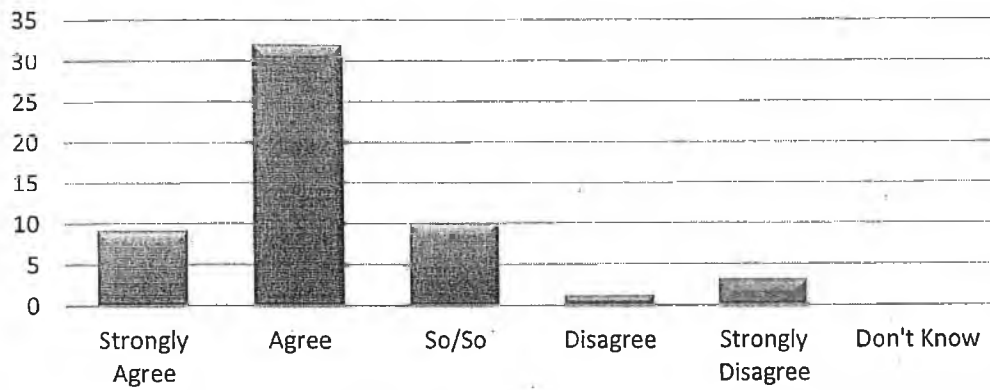
Downtown is a good place to do business



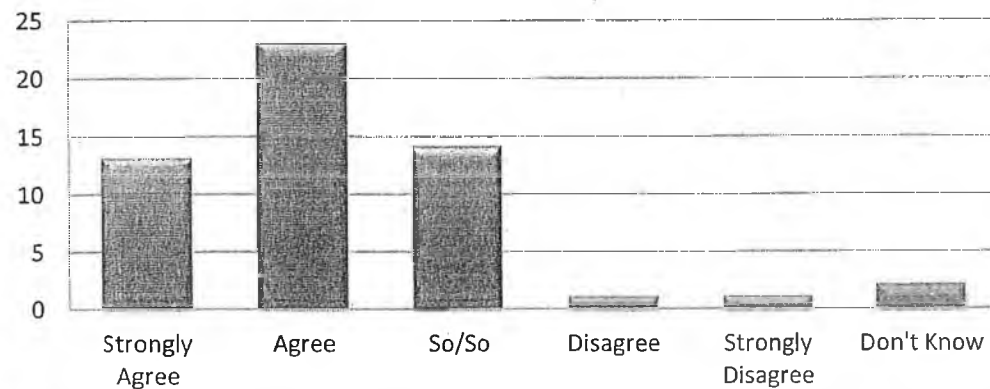
Living downtown interests me



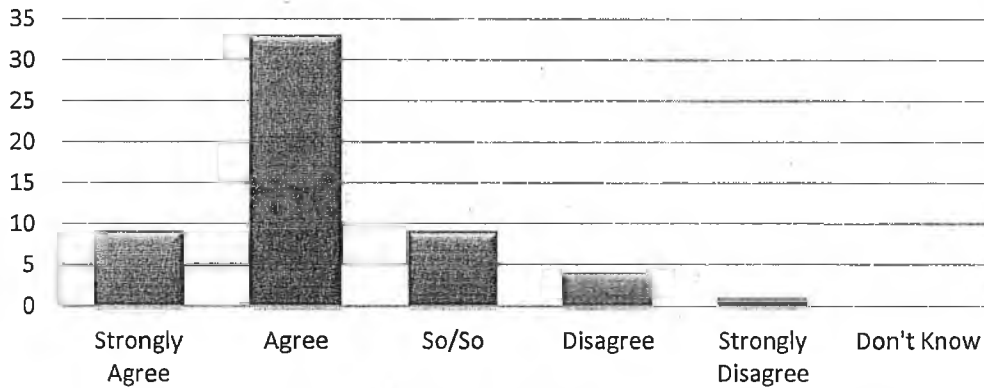
Downtown is a positive reflection on the City of Manchester



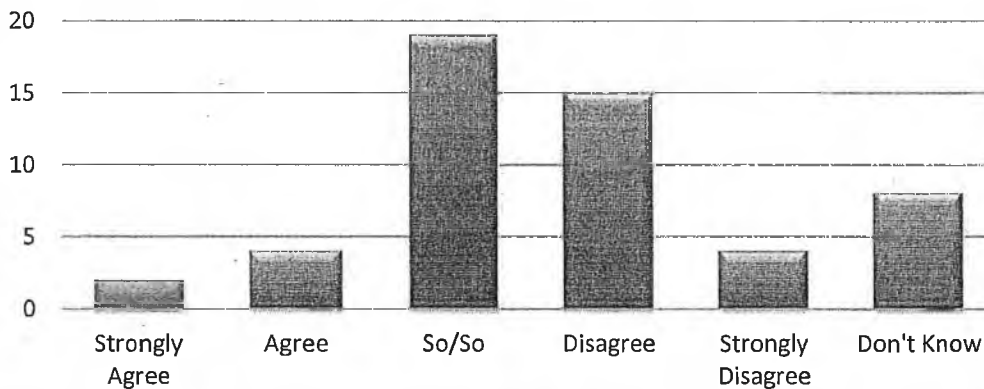
We should have more street events, festivals and outdoor concerts



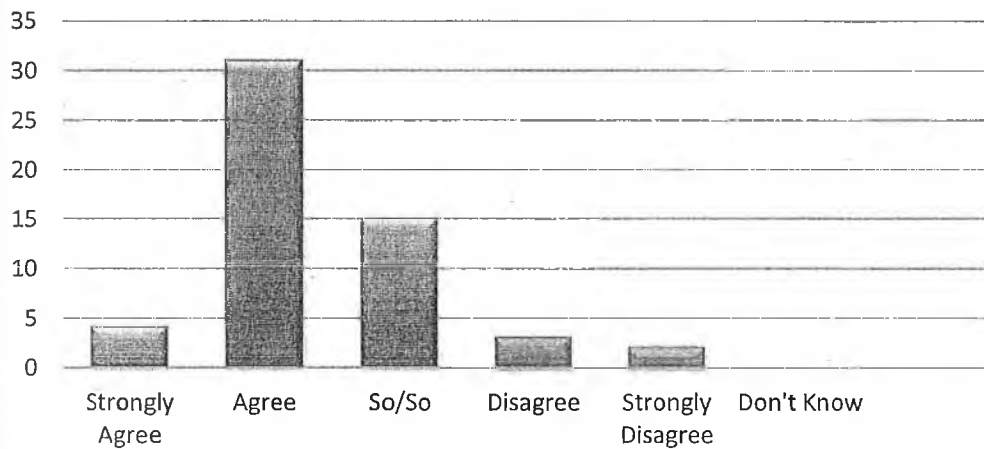
Litter removal and outdoor maintenance is generally satisfactory



I would like to see a higher level of service and I am willing to pay for it



Maintenance services are adequate



	A
1	I love the events that make Manchester fun. Music, festivals, etc. it brings a focus to downtown. You are doing great work, keep it up!
2	For litter clean-up, enlist residents.
3	More flowers along Elm & Canal. More affordable housing units and better parking facilities
4	More of a variety of shops
5	Sick of beggars asking for money. The Brady Sullivan landscaping was a great change
6	More retail
7	Parking continues to be an issue. Bike racks at parks and plaza. Downtown needs more people that want to be downtown- I think making businesses easier to start up downtown; incentives, tax breaks, get companies and businesses into vacant spaces; loosen the red tape.
8	Expansion of downtown facilities such as Market Basket and Gaslight are the next improvements linking Verizon, Riversedge, and Delta Park.
9	Better lighting on side streets, group snow removal cost
10	Less parking tickets, longer free parking particularly in the early evening
11	More events downtown, lets people know more about downtown restaurants
12	Proactive approach to vacancies. Develop a plan for downtown buildings and help shape that plan with property owners. Include tenants, building aesthetics, etc. By having a plan the downtown has a chance of taking a desirable look and feel.
13	In S.E.D. the only interest at this time is sidewalk snow removal. It's not available outside of Central, this is the only thing that interests us.
14	Banners are not visible enough, lack of color. Holiday décor- put lights over the street like the old days
15	I have to pick up trash around my office building every morning. The safeness at night can be a little sketchy. There are a lot of street events, but they are a good source to draw people in. Extend cleaning efforts to South Elm, I feel that S.E. is neglected and quite frankly very dirty. I think there should be stronger fines for littering that are enforced. It astonishes me how many people I see throwing their trash on the ground. Enforcing it would provide a source of income for the city.
16	Snow clearing and removal is highly important on Middle St. and Canal sidewalks. Have street sweepers (highway dept.) clean the side streets, such as Market, Stark, Middle, W. Merrimack and back streets. I constantly see the machine go up and down Canal and never on the side streets. Make the side streets have no parking for 1 hour on a set day so this can be done.
17	Have twinkle lights on trees downtown, not just Hanover (XO would pay for theirs). Need more retail, clothing, boutiques, and fountains. Facelifts on all ugly buildings, even just some paint. Get rid of all the homeless- ridiculous. Parking should be free, after 5pm. Snow removal is a high priority after midnight, not during business hours
18	Too many festivals now – they are destroying our businesses and kills the weekends
19	The more events the merrier, love the street banners, thank you for all you do. Merrimack St needs more maintaining. Manchester (downtown) is now viewed as swanky but also sketchy. We need to make people feel safe by reducing the amount of panhandlers.
20	It is nice to see nightly activity in the downtown area for residents and visitors. It is too bad the public are disrespectful of our own properties and litter on sidewalks, doorways and streets from attending events, festivals and concerts and I go around picking up after them. This is the only part I dislike with all the added activity downtown. Snow removal for the sidewalks are a total embarrassment and negligent for our visitors. Even to reach meters or kiosk placement. The city must be more diligent in keeping the area cleared. This past year has been a total zero with that department. An owner such as myself can clean my area salt + sand + then haul! The city ruins whatever I could do to make it safe for anyone walking the sidewalks. Remove the trash from the streets. Merrimack, Pleasant, Middle, Market, Mechanic, etc all a high priority with snow removal. I appreciate the people who work on this (medians) and acknowledge me appreciation to them when I am driving nearby. There have been numerous improvements to the
21	Likes outdoor seating at restaurants
22	Snow removal for Canal and Commercial Streets. Need more flowers by Mill girl statute. Better place to live esp. w/ 2 grocery stores coming. Millyard should encourage a sandwich shop to move in, Café 324 is missed. Confused about your role in the millyard.
23	Put bike racks at the plaza.
24	Central downtown is attractive- either end is lacking. NOB could use more maintenance; sidewalks, flowers, planters, xmas decorations. We have plenty of restaurants, need more shops / boutiques.
25	No banners South of Granite St. Parking drives away customers. Services are not evenly distributed in the CBSD. Snow clearing and removal should be done between 1am-8am to reduce impact. More focus on aesthetics throughout CBSD. Less focus on parking revenue by the city. More free parking to help businesses compete with S. Willow and the malls.
26	Canal St. needs more lighting, running path & routes, more events!
27	There may be nothing that can be done about this but eliminating those soliciting money from passerby would be a positive development.
28	Alleys are a problem to the clean appearance. Parking issues: end parking fees at 5pm. Less aggressive parking meter enforcement- detrimental to our customer base. Less bars; more retail shops.
29	Snow clearing for sidewalks- city is responsible, not Intown Manchester
30	Less vigilant meter maids! Needs downtown movie theatre & diverse retail shops
31	More visitor information online. For recycling, new combo containers
32	Too much motorcycle noise
33	Improve Snow clearing on Elm St., Continue holiday décor and public recycling program to South Elm.
34	Simplify design graphics for banners. Have more events - shut down Elm St. Improve snow clearing so there is access from parking to sidewalks.
35	Keep flowers as is. Expand maintenance during the summer only for bar hours. The parking department should address signage and way finding signs. Never make bike lanes - no room now in streets. Elm Street needs to remove those jet outs. Get rid of the curves on Elm St so the street is straight so 2 lanes run the whole length.

A	
	Downtown clean appearance has come a long way. More police would help the safety appearance. Intown does a fantastic job with maintenance.
36	Lowell St needs better snow removal. Less panhandlers.
37	Put bike racks each 3 or 4 blocks from Granite to Bridge
38	Graffiti abatement is listed in your maintenance- wonder if there is a way to crack down on scratching of windows/tagging- I know this is a problem on Hanover St.
39	There are way too many signs downtown. Chamber should get more maps/brochures. Encourage businesses to put out flowers. Have maintenance sweep sidewalks. Combine parking signs with existing signs.
40	More events, the better - you do a great job! As long as trash clean up is done this really brings the community together. Noise in downtown is okay, I get complaints from housing and west side. Clear sidewalks of snow for businesses and downtown residents. Saw bike racks in Boston and bikes to rent locked up not sure this will work here. For bike lanes, good idea but not sure if there's room. Flowers look good now and homeless may ruin them, it's expensive to keep up. Safety on Elm is okay but its scary at night walking around other side streets. It would be great to have more parking downtown, businesses are short on parking and visitors and shoppers get upset. City talking about a pumpkin festival and chili for next year. They receive some requests to open a movie theatre downtown. This might compliment the restaurants.
41	Snow clearing on sidewalks. Repair sidewalks. More retail and events to draw weekend crowds and summertime activities.
42	It would be nice to have tags on the trees at Veterans Park to identify what kind they are. It would be an educational way of encourage children to observe and take care of beautiful trees. Manchester has been designated a Tree City. More snow clearing on Hanover & Chestnut. About 14 yrs ago the CBSD area extended to Union Street. I would not mind raising the tax so that out sidewalks on Hanover to Union could be maintained.
43	Downtown is safe except for panhandlers. Signs for parking are at a shortage. Downtown appears to be more recreational than business. I would pay a high level of service only if it can produce more businesses. Bicycler should feel safe and elcome to shop and eat, may reduce traffic. Decor should look like a winter wonderland. Encourage a "discount mall", people drive for miles to get to one. Eateries are good, but not enough. Shop, eat, and play is important, but not condusive to seniro activity- no parking.
44	We have sign pollution in Manchester. Current number of events are adequate. Blowing the liter to street is not a removal program. Would like current services done right. Parking -- please combine signs, no more sign posts. Bury the electric utility boxes on every corner -- talk to city planning to get rid of them. Involvement of more businesses in the future plans.
45	I have no seen the benefit of Intown. Festivals and events should not be at the inconvenience of tax payers. I already pay too much to raise it higher.
46	Reduce the noise of motorcycles. Old granite has vegetation, rarely cleaned of papers, etc. Old Granite sidewalks are hazard in winter- bar customers litter area every night bars are open.