2016 Downtown Pittsburgh Resident Survey
Executive Summary

Summary & Findings

The PDP commissioned a Downtown Resident Survey in the winter of 2016 similar to a series of surveys beginning in 2008. The survey provides insight into how residents view their Downtown neighborhood, their preferences and insights. This information has been used to shape the programs and services of the PDP and others to support the growth and satisfaction of Downtown residents. The survey focused on four primary areas of data collection:

- Resident demographics and characteristics
- Overall satisfaction levels with Downtown living and neighborhood amenities
- Spending habits and shopping and dining trends
- Transportation modes utilized and desired

The survey launched on January 6, 2016 and closed January 27, 2016. Over 750 residents responded, representing 56 different residential buildings. Of the respondents, 67% were from the Golden Triangle, 7% from Uptown, 9% from the Strip District, and 18% from the North Shore.

Demographics

- 92% of respondents were under the age of 40, with the largest portion of the population less than 30 years old (29%) and the 30-39 age range a close second representing 23%.
- The majority of respondents identified as Caucasian (87%) and Female (60%), with the majority of households being 1 or 2 people, 43% and 50%, respectively, and primarily single people (39.4%) or married (36.6%).
- Household incomes encompassed a wide range, but the majority of respondents had an income of $100k or more (52%). while the $76k to$100k range was 19% and the $51k to $75k was 11%.
- 93% of respondents were in one or two person households and 39% represent a single population
- 70% work in the boundaries of Greater Downtown.

Downtown Living

- 36% of respondents cite the proximity to work or school as the primary reason for living Downtown. Other top reason include “City living”, convenience, walkability, and the regionally centralized location.
- The majority of respondents previously lived in Allegheny County (59.3%) with 21.9% coming from another state. Of those from Allegheny County, most moved to Downtown from elsewhere in the City of Pittsburgh (59%) with the southern suburbs supplying 16% of respondents and 12% coming from northern suburbs.
- Shadyside was the top other neighborhood considered when moving into Downtown (18%) followed by South Side (9%), Lawrenceville (8%) and the North Side (7%). Downtown was the only choice for 16% of respondents.
- While the majority of respondents (68%) selected an eight or nine on the satisfaction scale (where nine is the highest), the overall average satisfaction score for living Downtown dropped from eight in 2012, to seven in 2016.
- The overall satisfaction with their building or property Downtown dropped from an average score in 2012 of 7.7 to 7.3 in 2016.
- Respondents were very interested in more frequent farmers markets (55%), concerts and music events (53%), block parties (51%), festivals (51%), and movie showings (49%).
- Homelessness and panhandling were echoed throughout the survey as a recurring concern and 22% of respondents consider it a major concern, with 67% of the other respondents considering it an issue in general.

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Retail and Spending Trends

- Respondents are dining out 31% more than they did in 2012
- On average, respondents spend over $314 per month on food and beverages at Downtown establishments, $122 per month on Downtown services and retailers, $90 per month on Downtown sporting events, and over $80 a month on Downtown entertainment. However, overall spending decreased by 14% from $708 to $607 per month.
- While many respondents cited the convenience of Market Street Grocery, when asked to list three types of desired retailers, 75% of respondents selected a full-service grocery store as the most needed retailer, compared to 33% in 2012.
- The second most-requested retail type was the discount retail/mass merchant, with Target being the overwhelming majority vote (65%) for the specific brand. Additionally, more than 45% of respondents cited the need for a first-run movie theater.

Transportation Modes

- In 2016, 44% of respondents listed walking as their primary mode of transportation to work while 35% use a personal vehicle, 18% use public transportation, and 3% bike.
- Over 60% of respondents have a leased parking space, the majority (51%) for only one space.
- Nearly 40% of respondents indicate that they utilize Greater Downtown bike lanes, 41% would like the see the network of lanes expanded; an additional 32% may be interested depending on location.
- In addition, 64% of respondents do use the free bus and light rail system, 44% of total respondents only using light rail. The primary reason for using the free light rail system to the North Shore is to attend sporting (55%) and entertainment (49%) events.
- When asked about all forms of transportation on a general basis, respondents' top modes were walking (97%), personal vehicle (81%), Uber/ Lyft (67%), the "T" or Light Rail system (65%), and biking (45%).

Conclusion

The findings share many similarities with the previous surveys, particularly the desire for more shopping opportunities with grocers and department store-style retail for a grocery store Downtown, but also shed light on some of the shifting demographics and opinions of Downtown residents, particularly an increase in residents with higher income levels, an increase in multiple member households, and shorter tenures in residences.

Overall, residents seem to be content with the Downtown neighborhood and show an interest in continuing to make the neighborhood a better place to live. Residents frequently mention how much they enjoy the events, activities, entertainment, and dining that Downtown has to offer. The convenience of living in a centrally located, walkable neighborhood also factors heavily into the satisfaction of the residents.

The results of the 2016 Greater Downtown Resident Survey inform and influence planning and program development for the Greater Downtown corridor of Pittsburgh. With nearly 15,000 people living in Greater Downtown, incorporating their needs into the development of Greater Downtown is an important piece to developing a dynamic urban core.

The full report can be found at DowntownPittsburgh.com/Research.