

# STREET ACTIVITY BASELINE STUDY UPDATE 2013



# Executive Summary

## BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The 2013 Street Activity Baseline Study Update is a follow-up to the 2011 Street Activity Baseline study.

The objectives of this study are to examine the following:

- Changes in perceptions since the 2011 study regarding safety and street activity in Saskatoon and the three Business Improvement Districts (BIDs): Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale
- Awareness levels and perceived impact of the Community Support Program (CSP)

In order to meet these objectives, Insightrix Research employed several research methodologies including the following:

- An online street activity and CSP perceptions study with Saskatoon residents
- Intercept interviews with the general public and businesses (owners, supervisors, and managers) in the three BIDs
- A focus group with residents of the Lighthouse Supported Living facility
- An online bulletin board with service providers
- In-depth interviews with the CSP Officers

Specific details on each of these can be found in the Methodology section of this report.

## PERCEPTION-BASED STUDY

As with the 2011 study, it is important to note that this is a perception-based study meaning that each of the groups examined provided answers based on their own perceptions rather than established facts. Perceptions are important to know as they form the basis of residents' beliefs regarding safety and the impact of the CSP in Saskatoon. Additionally, gaps between perception and

reality can be identified in order for communication campaigns to be optimized accordingly.

## **KEY THEMES**

The following are the key themes that emerged from the research.

### **Program's Positive Impact**

Overall, there is a definite feeling that negative street activity is declining in Saskatoon. Some of this is attributed to the CSP but many, businesses in particular, feel that it is too early to tell as the program has only been in existence for one year.

### **Addressing the Root Cause**

Although the levels of street activity are seen as changing for the better, many stress that addressing the root causes of the activity is still of key importance. In Saskatoon, the most pressing issues are perceived to be poverty, housing, and addictions.

### **Program Awareness and Familiarity need to Increase**

Unaided awareness of the CSP and what it does is low, especially among the general public.

In the online study of Saskatoon residents, only 4% knew the program by name without being prompted. Once given the name of the program, 35% of residents say they have heard of it. When provided with a description of the program, this increases to 41%.

Since awareness increases once a name and description is provided, there is a need to improve communication about the program objectives and accomplishments.

## Differences among Areas

Each of the three BIDs has a unique feel and identity, as well as different types and levels of street activity. As such, any programs seeking to address street activity in each area should be tailored appropriately.

**Downtown:** Seen as the hub of the city, with a good selection of restaurants and shopping, Downtown is a heavy traffic area. As such, it is an ideal place for panhandlers to situate themselves. As with previous years, this is not seen as more than just “annoying.” Loitering and “sketchy” people continue to be a concern, but it is generally agreed that this has declined over the past few years. The closure of the McDonald’s and Olympia restaurants is seen as being a key reason, although it is unclear if those who used to congregate around the restaurants are gone or have simply moved further down 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. CSP Officers say that they engage in a mix of bylaw enforcement and community outreach in the Downtown area.

**Broadway:** When asked about street activity in the area, people and businesses in the area are far more likely to talk about the wide variety of festivals than the various negative types of street activity. There is some panhandling in the area, but of more concern is street activity related to festivals and bars (noise, intoxicated people, garbage, etc.). Buskers are seen as part of the feel and atmosphere of the area and as providing entertainment. CSP Officers note that their primary role in this area is bylaw enforcement.

**Riversdale:** Many noted that the area is becoming more vibrant and more of a destination area than it has been in the recent past. However, the area is still associated with many of the more negative and more serious street activities. Drug use, prostitution, and crime are activities that come up in many interviews. CSP Officers say that community outreach is their main focus here. Those who live and work in the area often note, however, that the area has a worse reputation than it deserves.

## Recognizability

Although a few among the general public, businesses, and service providers have questioned the effectiveness and recognizability of having the CSP Officers wear uniforms, program officers note that while, at first glance the uniforms may be confusing, they are actually well-known among those with whom they interact most often. Officers say that those who need to know who they are know them almost immediately.

## Conclusions from the Perceptions Study with Saskatoon Residents

The following are conclusions drawn specifically from the online perceptions study done with residents of Saskatoon.

- Overall, people continue to feel safe in Saskatoon.
  - Of the three specific areas examined, Broadway is perceived as being the safest, followed by the Downtown area and Riversdale.
  
- Few Saskatoon residents (4%) know the CSP by name. Once given the name, awareness of the program increases to 35%. After being given a description, this increases to 41%.
  - Despite this level of awareness, familiarity with the program (i.e., knowing what the program is designed to do) among those aware of it is low.
  - While it is not necessary for the public to be aware of all details of the program, it will be beneficial to share success stories in order to help educate Saskatoon residents about the purpose and accomplishments of the program in order to increase support.
  
- Despite its short existence and limited staff, the CSP is beginning to have a positive impact on safety perceptions.
  - Some Saskatoon residents believe that the program is making the BIDs safer (between 25% and 31%, depending on the area) and is effective at addressing the less serious of street activities (between 25% and 34%, depending on the activity).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Indications are that the CSP is having a positive impact in each of the three BIDs, although impact levels are difficult to assess as the program has only been running for one year.

Recommendations moving forward include the following:

- **Continue the Community Support Program.**
  - Although the program has been running for only one year, those who are familiar with the program believe it is having an impact. Those who are unfamiliar with the program believe it is a good idea.
- **Increase staffing levels.**
  - Five people do not seem to be enough to run the program effectively given the large area of operations.
- **Continue to clarify and communicate the program objectives and purpose to all three groups identified in the Community Support Program mandate: the public, business owners, and vulnerable persons.**
  - Awareness and familiarity with the program, especially among the public, could be higher.
  - It may be of benefit to give the program a catchier, more memorable name or acronym.
- **Use this study as a benchmark to track future progress.**
  - Since the program has only been in existence for one year, this study establishes a perception benchmark. It is recommended that the program be tracked and in two years, another study be conducted to examine any changes in public perception and gauge the impact of the program in the areas of operation (Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale).

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# INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY



# Introduction

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In 2011, the City of Saskatoon commissioned a research project aimed at measuring and understanding street activities in Saskatoon and, more specifically, in the three Saskatoon Business Improvement Districts (BIDs): Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale.

To spearhead this, the Street Activity Steering Committee was established, and it included members from the three BIDs, the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition, the Saskatoon Police Service, and civic staff.

In July 2012, based on results from this study, the City of Saskatoon established the Community Support Program (CSP). CSP Officers address issues related to street activity in the three BIDs by engaging with the public, businesses, and vulnerable persons.

In 2013, this follow-up study was commissioned to examine

- Changes in perceptions since the 2011 study regarding safety and street activity in Saskatoon and the three BIDs: Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale
  
- Awareness levels and perceived impact of the CSP

This report details the results of the 2013 study.

# Methodology

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In order to meet the research objectives, a number of key stakeholders were identified who would need to be consulted. These included the residents of Saskatoon, members of the general public, and businesses in the BIDs, service providers, vulnerable persons, and the CSP Officers.

A detailed methodology is provided below for each research method.

## **ONLINE PERCEPTIONS SURVEY OF SASKATOON RESIDENTS**

An online survey of Saskatoon residents was conducted in order to obtain public perceptions and opinions of safety and street activity in the three BIDs, as well as the city as a whole. Additionally, questions were asked to determine perceptions, opinions and awareness of the CSP.

Data were collected between June 13<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 using Inshtrix's online SaskWatch Research™ panel, which consists of over 14,000 Saskatchewan residents.

In total, 636 respondents completed the study. Quotas were set by age, gender, postal code, and Aboriginal ancestry. As such, results can be considered representative and extrapolated to the population of the city as a whole.

## **INTERCEPT INTERVIEWS**

Trained Inshtrix interviewers conducted intercept interviews with businesses (owners, supervisors, and managers) and the general public in the three BIDs: Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale. When possible, vulnerable persons in the area were also interviewed. Efforts were made to interview a wide variety of Saskatoon residents.

In total 182 interviews were conducted: 65 with owners, supervisors, and managers at businesses in each BID (22 Downtown, 22 in Broadway, 21 in Riversdale) and 117 with the general public (35 Downtown, 43 in Broadway, 39 in Riversdale). Interviews were conducted between August 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

## **FOCUS GROUP WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS**

To obtain the perspective of Saskatoon residents considered as vulnerable, a focus group session was held at the Saskatoon Lighthouse Supported Living Shelter.

Insightrix worked with the Lighthouse to ensure that the group contained a mix of different people and experiences. Participants included a mix of ages, genders, and races. Additionally, the group included people who had been at the Lighthouse for various lengths of time, ranging from four days up to nineteen years. All participants were familiar with the CSP.

The focus group was held on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 with seven residents of the Lighthouse.

## **BULLETIN BOARD WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Service providers (those who work with the vulnerable persons of Saskatoon) were invited to an online bulletin board where they were presented with a series of questions and asked to provide their perspectives.

A total of 38 service providers were invited to participate, with 23 agreeing to participate. Reminders were sent periodically to maximize participation. In total, 11 people (29%) signed in to the bulletin board and provided their feedback. The bulletin board was open to service providers from July 15<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

## **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM OFFICERS**

Finally, all five CSP Officers were interviewed via telephone by Insightrix researchers. Interviews took place August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

# SASKATOON RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS



# Saskatoon Residents' Perceptions

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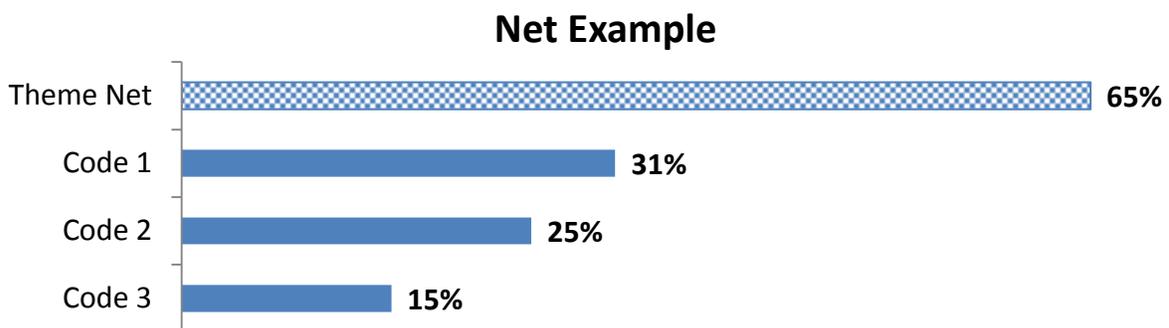
In order to examine the perceptions of Saskatoon residents regarding safety and street activity in the city as well as in the three BIDs, Inshtrix conducted an online study. Examining perceptions of residents is important because they are what people believe to be true, regardless of whether they are or not and form the basis for their beliefs regarding the city and its neighbourhoods.

The study also examined awareness and perceptions of the CSP that was introduced in July of 2012.

Data were collected between June 13<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 using Inshtrix's SaskWatch Research™ panel, which consists of over 14,000 Saskatchewan residents. In total, 636 respondents completed the study. Quotas were set by age, gender, postal code, and Aboriginal ancestry. As such, results can be considered representative and extrapolated to the population of the city as a whole.

## Notes on Reporting

- Each question includes a base description (n=#) which details the number of respondents who answered each question.
- Statistically significant differences are highlighted where applicable. For this report, an alpha value of less than 0.05 is considered statistically significant. This means there is less than a 5% chance that the results would have occurred by chance (i.e., the results would be the same 19 times out of 20). Statistically significant differences are noted using “▲” and “▼.”
- Where appropriate, results have been compared across the different waves of the study.
- All figures are rounded to no decimal places. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%.
- A selection of comments is provided for applicable open-ended questions. These comments are included to help provide context to the provided top answers and are not meant to be a complete list.
- Similar themes and codes are organized into net themes based on overarching commonalities in the content of responses (i.e., positive or negative mentions). Net responses include individual, coded themes in order to illustrate the overarching themes that emerge from open-ended questions. Nets are coded in a different pattern, and all codes underneath this color are included in the net. The percentages of individual codes may not add up to the net total as multiple responses may be possible.



# KEY FINDINGS

## Perceptions of Safety

- Consistent with the 2011 results, most Saskatoon residents (89%) feel safe in the city in general.
- Broadway is seen as being the safest of the three areas examined, both during the day and at night.
  - This is consistent with 2011, with the exception of the increase in feeling safe in Riversdale at night (14% up to 20%).
  - Business owners in general are more likely than non-business owners to feel unsafe in Riversdale during the day (43% vs. 29%).

Feel safe	Day		Night	
	2011	2013	2011	2013
Downtown	91%	88%	44%	42%
Broadway	93%	93%	60%	60%
Riversdale	57%	61%	14%	20%

- Saskatoon residents have a wide range of views regarding what is considered the safest area in the city.
  - The perceived least safe areas in the city are Riversdale (22%), Pleasant Hill (10%) and Downtown (8%)
- Most commonly, residents of Saskatoon have witnessed or encountered the following:
  - Panhandling (88%)
  - Groups of young people (87%)
    - This has declined slightly since 2011 (91%)
  - Loitering (82%)

- While residents believe that the following have a negative impact on public safety, the table below shows how proportions have declined for almost all activities since 2011:

Negative impact on safety:	2011	2013	Difference
<b>Busking</b>	8%	8%	0%
<b>Groups of young people</b>	16%	14%	-2%
<b>Loitering</b>	38%	30%	-8%
<b>Panhandling</b>	52%	38%	-14%
<b>Prostitution</b>	75%	68%	-7%
<b>Public drunkenness</b>	67%	63%	-4%
<b>Drug trafficking</b>	90%	88%	-2%
<b>Street fights</b>	91%	86%	-5%

- In each BID, street activity is most commonly seen
  - Downtown – Mostly around 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street
  - Riversdale – Mostly around 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street
  - Broadway – Mostly at the corners of Broadway and 11<sup>th</sup> Street, and Broadway and Main Street
- Compared with 2011, fewer residents believe that panhandling (49% down to 41%) and street fights (36% down to 30%) have been increasing over the past three years.

## Community Support Program

- Unaided (no name or description given), 4% of Saskatoon residents refer to the CSP when asked what comes to mind regarding methods or programs currently used to address street activity.
  - When given the name, 35% say they have heard of the program. Once provided with a description of the program, this number increases to 41%.
  - When asked for a description, those who say they have heard of the program have a more or less correct idea, but they lack specificity.
    - Top answers include
      - Helping communities (31%)
      - Special police/community workers (22%)
      - Monitor street activity (17%)
- Most of those aware of the CSP program (93%) are aware that a CSP Officer is different from a Police Officer.

- Those who are aware of the program most commonly say they do not recall seeing one of the officers (49%). The remainder recall seeing CSP Officers in the following areas:
  - Downtown (42%)
  - Riversdale area (20%)
  - Broadway (15%)
- A minimum of 25% of Saskatoon residents who are aware of the program believe the presence of the CSP Officers has increased safety in each area:
  - Downtown (31%)
  - Broadway (25%)
  - Riversdale (25%)
- Currently, about one-third (30%) believe the program overall is effective in addressing issues related to Street Activity.
  - Those who do not say it is because they have not seen or heard of a difference (29%) or believe there is still a problem to be addressed (18%).
- One-quarter (25%) or more of Saskatoon residents who have heard of the program believe that it has been effective in addressing street activity including the following:
  - Panhandling (34%)
  - Busking (30%)
  - Loitering (27%)
  - Groups of young people (27%)
  - Street fights (26%)
  - Public drunkenness (25%)
- Fewer residents feel that the program is effective at addressing the more serious street activities such as prostitution (16%) or drug trafficking (16%).

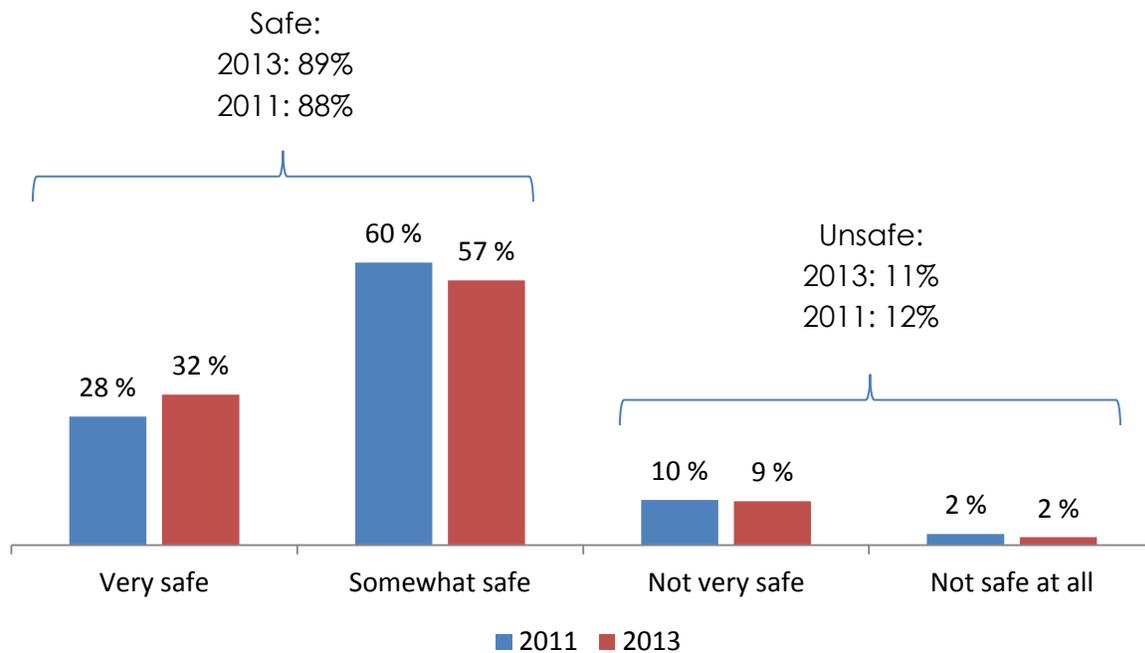
## Addressing the Issue

- With the exception of increased fines and jail time, more than three-quarters of Saskatoon residents believe all the actions/supports examined would be effective in reducing negative street activity in Saskatoon, with the top two being
  - Increased mental health supports (85%)
  - Increased policing (85%)

## TOP-OF-MIND IMPRESSIONS

### Safety – Walking and Cycling

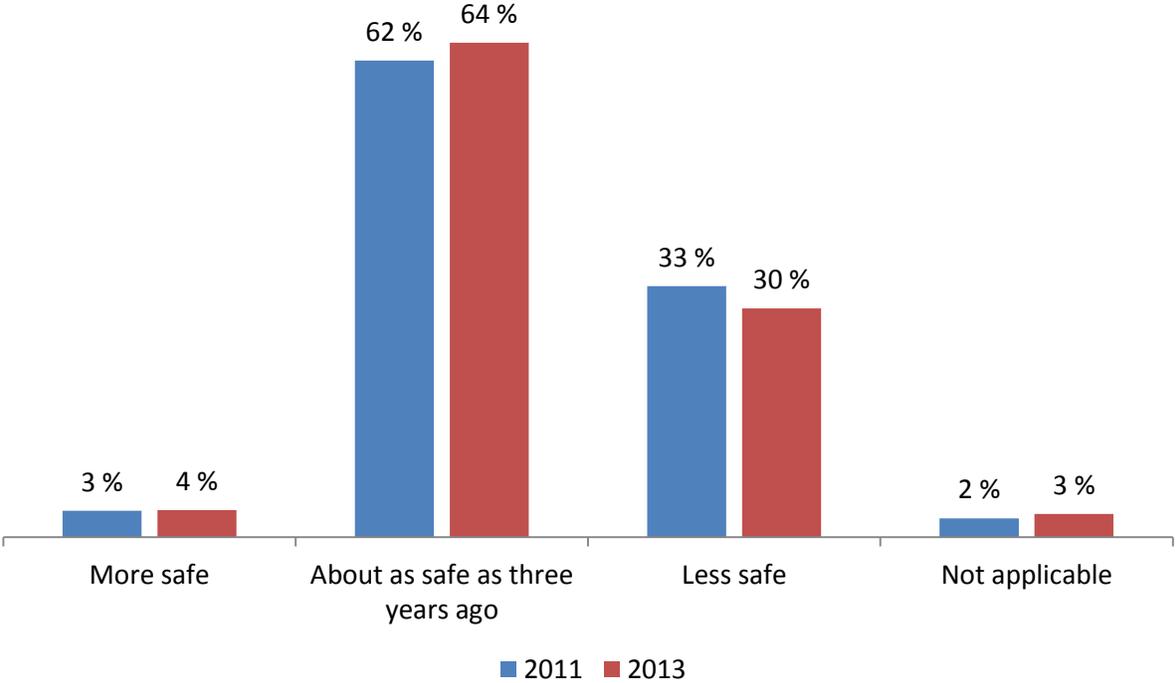
As with the 2011 study, the vast majority of Saskatoon residents (89%) feel safe. Note however, that the proportion of those who currently feel very safe (32%) has increased slightly since 2011 (28%).



Q6. This study is about your impressions of street activity and public safety in Saskatoon. First of all, overall how safe do you feel walking or cycling in public areas (i.e. streets, parks, outside of businesses) in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

# Safety – Compared to Three Years ago

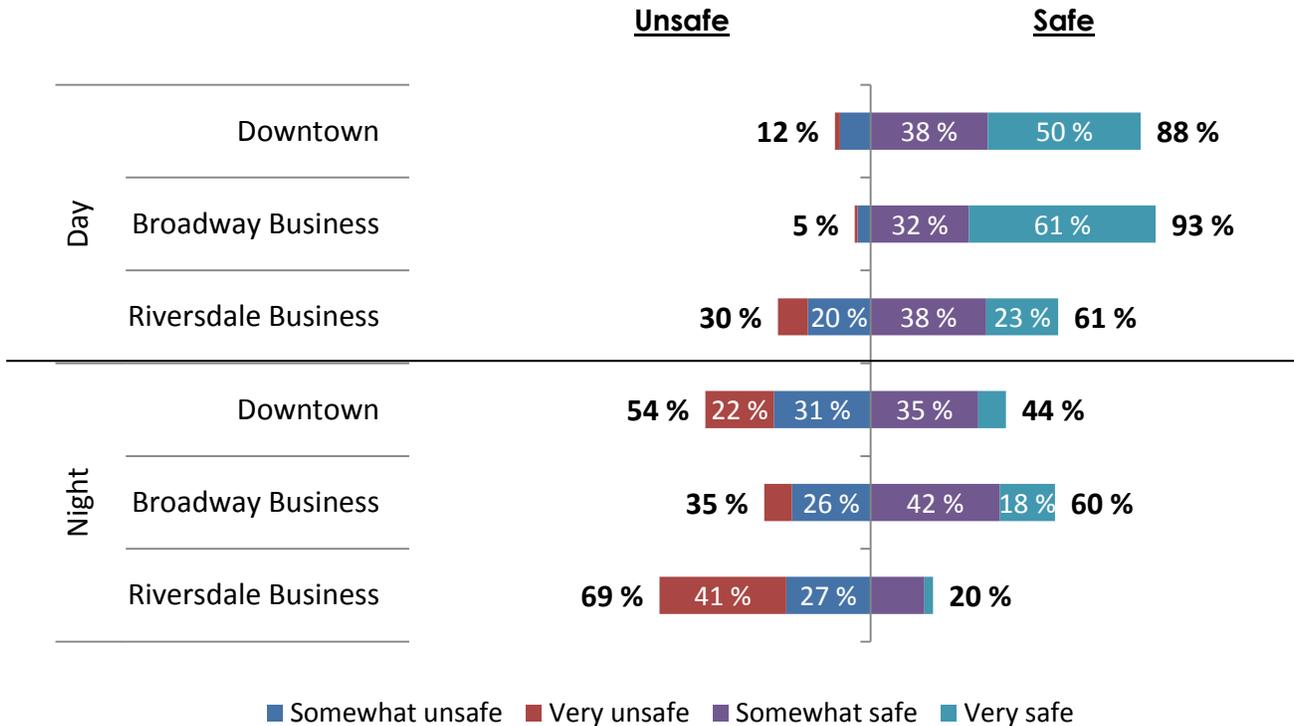
Perceptions of safety in Saskatoon over the past three years have remained more or less constant across both waves of the study, with two-thirds of Saskatoon residents indicating they feel about as safe now as then (64% in 2013 and 62% in 2011).



Q7. Do you feel more or less safe than you did three years ago in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

## Safety – Area and Time Specific

Day or night, Saskatoon residents feel safest in the Broadway (Day: 93%, Night: 60%) and Downtown (Day: 88%, Night: 44%) areas. During the day, almost two-thirds of residents feel safe in Riversdale (61%) while one-fifth feel safe in Riversdale at night (20%).



Overall, results have remained more or less the same as 2011. Of note is the increase (7 p.p.) in residents who say Riversdale is safe at night.

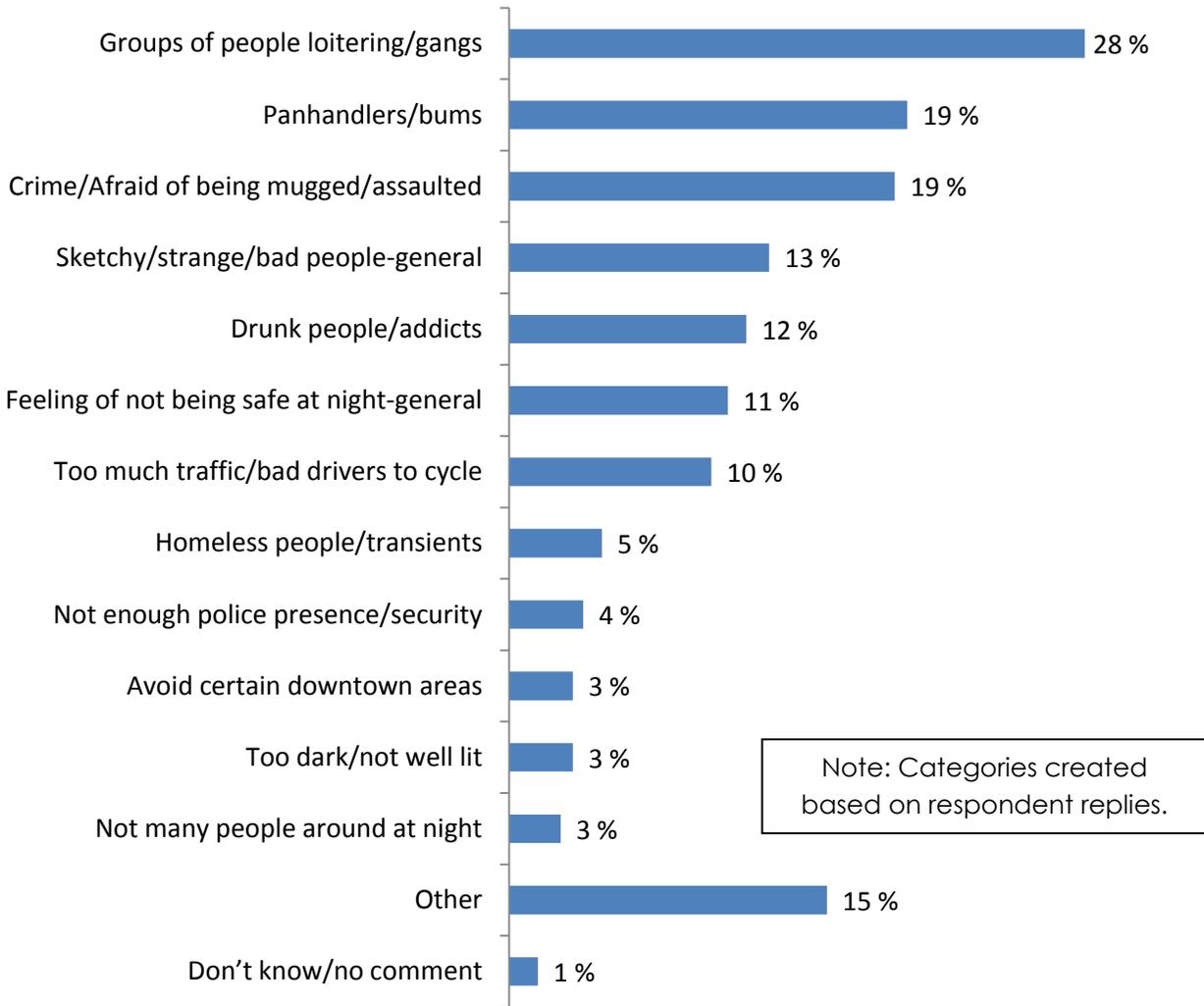
Daytime	% Very or somewhat safe			% Very or somewhat unsafe		
	2011	2013	Difference	2011	2013	Difference
Downtown	91%	88%	-4 p.p.	8%▼	12%▲	4 p.p.
Broadway business	93%	93%	-1 p.p.	4%	5%	1 p.p.
Riversdale business	57%	61%	4 p.p.	34%	30%	-3 p.p.
Night	% Very or somewhat safe			% Very or somewhat unsafe		
	2011	2013	Difference	2011	2013	Difference
Downtown	42%	44%	2 p.p.	56%	54%	-3 p.p.
Broadway business	60%	60%	0 p.p.	34%	35%	0 p.p.
Riversdale business	14%▼	20%▲	7 p.p.	75%▲	69%▼	-7 p.p.

Additionally, business owners in general (43%) are more likely than non-business owners (29%) to say they feel unsafe in the Riversdale area during the day.

Q8. How safe do you feel walking or cycling in each of the following areas of the city and situations? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of statistical significance as noted by "▼" and "▲."

## Reasons for Feeling Unsafe Downtown

Common reasons for feeling unsafe in the Downtown area include groups of people loitering (28%), panhandlers (19%), and a general fear of being mugged or assaulted (19%).



*Business owners in general (43%) are more likely than non-business owners (27%) to say they feel unsafe due to groups of people loitering.*

Q9. Why do you NOT feel safe walking or cycling in [insert response from Q8]? Base: Those who feel "somewhat" or "very unsafe" walking or cycling Downtown, n=358.

## Reasons Given for Feeling Unsafe Downtown – Selected Comments

The people that loiter and are just hanging around gives the perception that trouble is being stirred up.

Some areas of downtown (such as 22nd and 2nd) have loiterers who harass you as you walk by, which is often a very uncomfortable situation.

Because of the type of people who hang around downtown, and hearing of random acts of violence to people in the downtown area in the past.

The type of people that loiter downtown and media reports.

Every time I am downtown with or without someone else I always get approached by un-reputable people asking for money, and they always look like they are strung out on drugs or drunk.

There are lots of homeless people and beggars.

Very shady people walking around and sometimes being approached or harassed for money.

Occasionally there are stories of gang activity; the shooting at a bar recently, for example. Downtown Saskatoon attracts many gangs and low to no income people.

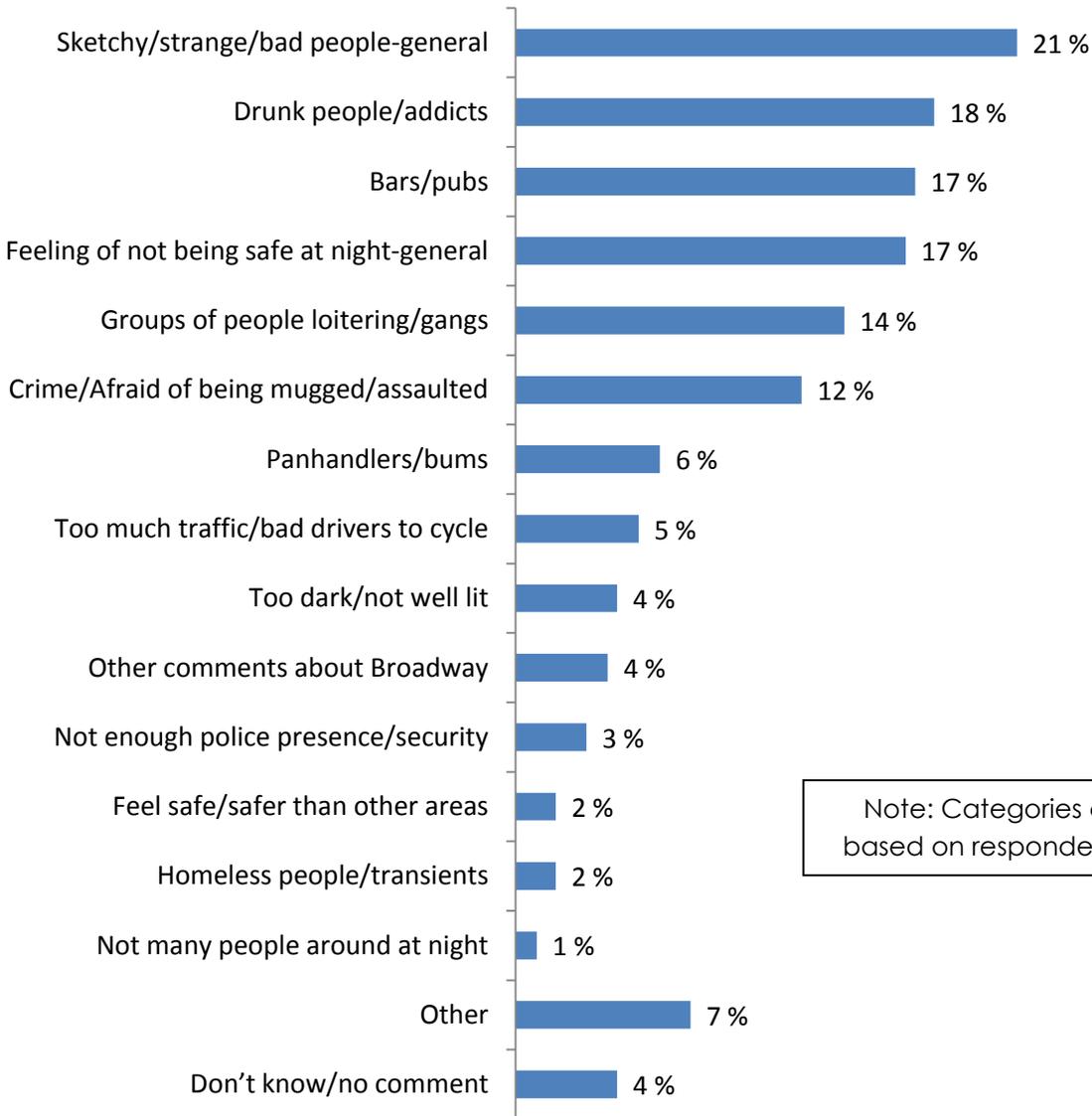
Afraid of being mugged or having my purse grabbed.

Note: Comments were selected to expand on top answers given in the preceding graph.

Q9. Why do you NOT feel safe walking or cycling in [insert response from Q8]? Base: Those who feel "somewhat" or "very unsafe" walking or cycling Downtown, n=358.

## Reasons for Feeling Unsafe in Broadway

Most commonly, Saskatoon residents who feel unsafe in the Broadway area cite unpleasant people in general (21%) and people who are drunk or addicts (18%) as their main reasons.



Note: Categories created based on respondent replies.

Q9. Why do you not feel safe walking or cycling in [insert response from Q8]? Base: Those who feel "somewhat" or "very unsafe" walking or cycling on Broadway, n=231.

## Reasons Given for Feeling Unsafe in Broadway – Selected Comments

It's a different clientele in this area. The people are more non conformists and their actions are not always predictable. I am not really afraid but I am cautious.

Weird people out at all hours, and who knows if they are just weird or are actually going to rob/assault /start fights, etc.

The youth from the high school have made unsavory suggestions to me and my son.

The type of sketchy people hanging around with no particular reason to be there.

Too many shady characters.

Too many drunken people leaving pubs and bars at night.

Alcohol fueled crazies that exist due to the number of bars in the area.

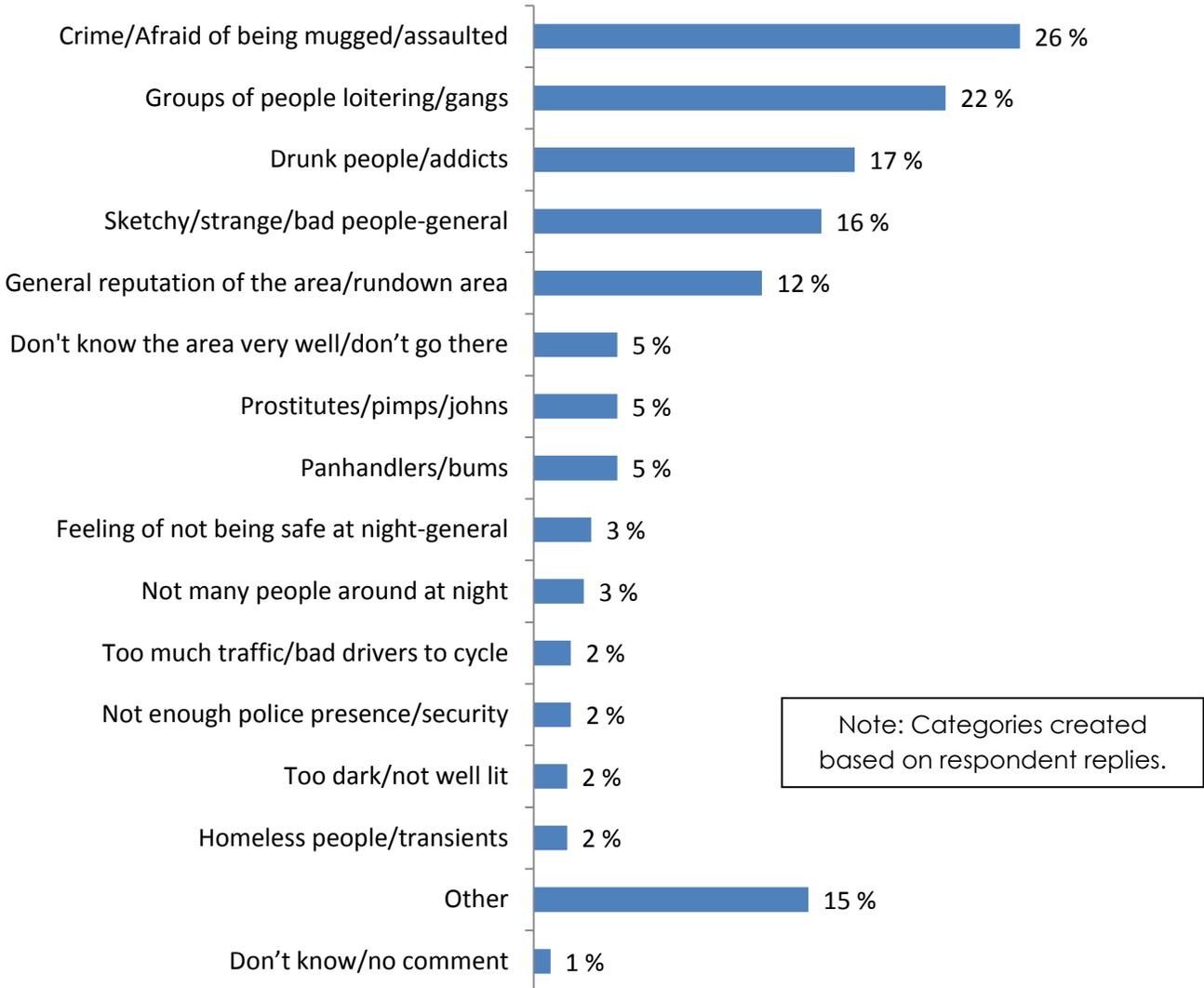
I feel safe during day but again sometimes hassled by people exiting bars or smoking outside of bars, lots of kids hanging out (both white and aboriginal) on Broadway and Main Street who are very belligerent and intimidating.

Note: Comments were selected to expand on the top answers given in the preceding graph.

Q9. Why do you not feel safe walking or cycling in [insert response from Q8]? Base: Those who feel "somewhat" or "very unsafe" walking or cycling on Broadway, n=231.

## Reasons for Feeling Unsafe in Riversdale

The main reasons Saskatoon residents say they feel unsafe in Riversdale are a general fear of being mugged or assaulted (26%) and groups of people loitering (22%).



Those aged 18-34 are more likely (22%) than those aged 34-54 (12%) or those aged 54 and over (5%) to say they feel unsafe in Riversdale due to the general reputation of the area.

Men (28%) are more likely than women (17%) to say they feel unsafe in the area due to groups of people loitering.

Q9. Why do you not feel safe walking or cycling in [insert response from Q8]? Base: Those who feel "somewhat" or "very unsafe" walking or cycling in Riversdale, n=446.

## Reasons Given for Feeling Unsafe in Riversdale – Selected Comments

Run down area. Rough looking neighborhood. Type of people who live near the area. Lots of crime in the area that you hear about on the news.

Riversdale is known for having a lot more gang activity and drug dealing. More needles are found sitting in the most random places. Break-ins and theft are common in this area of town.

Drugs and alcohol affect many people who are on the streets. There is often news of attacks using knives. I don't think I would be attacked but I could be hurt just by being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Riversdale is one of the oldest areas in the city and although they are really trying to clean it up the reputation has not been good. I know of families that have had their homes broken into, fires set to garbage cans, people stabbed, shot and the number of old houses that are hideouts for drug dealers.

The Riversdale area has never really felt safe to me. A lot of it is low income and aboriginal families and unfortunately they meet the stereotype with the amount of crime there is in that area.

Higher crime rate than other areas of the city. Home to poorer citizens who are more prone to gang or crime activity.

Just think that whole area is unsafe, gang rumors, not worth the risk at all.

Too many people that look drunk/gang related.

Note: Comments were selected to expand on the top answers given in the preceding graph.

Q9. Why do you not feel safe walking or cycling in [insert response from Q8]? Base: Those who feel "somewhat" or "very unsafe" walking or cycling in Riversdale, n=446.

## Perceived Safest Areas

As with previous results, when asked to complete the sentence, “The safest area in Saskatoon is \_\_\_\_\_,” residents of Saskatoon have a wide variety of opinions. The top two include Silverwood and Lawson Heights (6%) and Willowgrove (6%).

	2011	2013	Difference
<b>Specific neighbourhoods</b>			
Silverwood/Lawson Heights	4%	6%	2 p.p.
Willowgrove	4%	6%	1 p.p.
Stonebridge	4%	5%	1 p.p.
Briarwood area	4%	5%	1 p.p.
University (Hospital) area	5%	4%	-1 p.p.
Lakeridge/Lakeview	2%	3%	1 p.p.
Broadway area	2%	3%	1 p.p.
Downtown	2%	3%	0 p.p.
Nutana area	1%	2%	1 p.p.
River Heights	1%	2%	1 p.p.
College Park	1%	2%	1 p.p.
Erindale	1%	2%	0 p.p.
Montgomery Place	1%	2%	1 p.p.
Wildwood	1%	1%	0 p.p.
Dundonald	1%	1%	-1 p.p.
Hampton Village	1%	1%	0 p.p.
Silverspring	1%	0%	-1 p.p.
Other specific neighbourhoods	7%	15%	8 p.p.
<b>General area mentions</b>			
East side - general	18%	11%	-7 p.p.
Outer edge of the city/suburbs/new areas	7%	6%	-1 p.p.
Familiar areas/own home - general	12%	6%	-6 p.p.
All over/anywhere	4%	3%	-1 p.p.
North end	4%	2%	-2 p.p.
Eighth Street	1%	2%	1 p.p.
Fourth Avenue/Police Station	2%	2%	-1 p.p.
Other General areas	7%	10%	4 p.p.
<b>Other</b>			
Daytime	2%	2%	0 p.p.
Other general	4%	1%	-3 p.p.
Don't know/no comment	14%	8%	-6 p.p.
None	5%	3%	-2 p.p.

Q10. Next we'd like to understand how you feel about public spaces in Saskatoon. Please finish the following sentences: The safest area in Saskatoon is \_\_\_\_\_. Base: All respondents, n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points.

## Perceived Least Safe Areas

When asked “The least safe area in Saskatoon is \_\_\_\_\_,” residents are more specific. Most commonly, areas cited as least safe include Riversdale (22%), Pleasant Hill (10%), and Downtown (8%). This is more or less consistent with results from 2011.

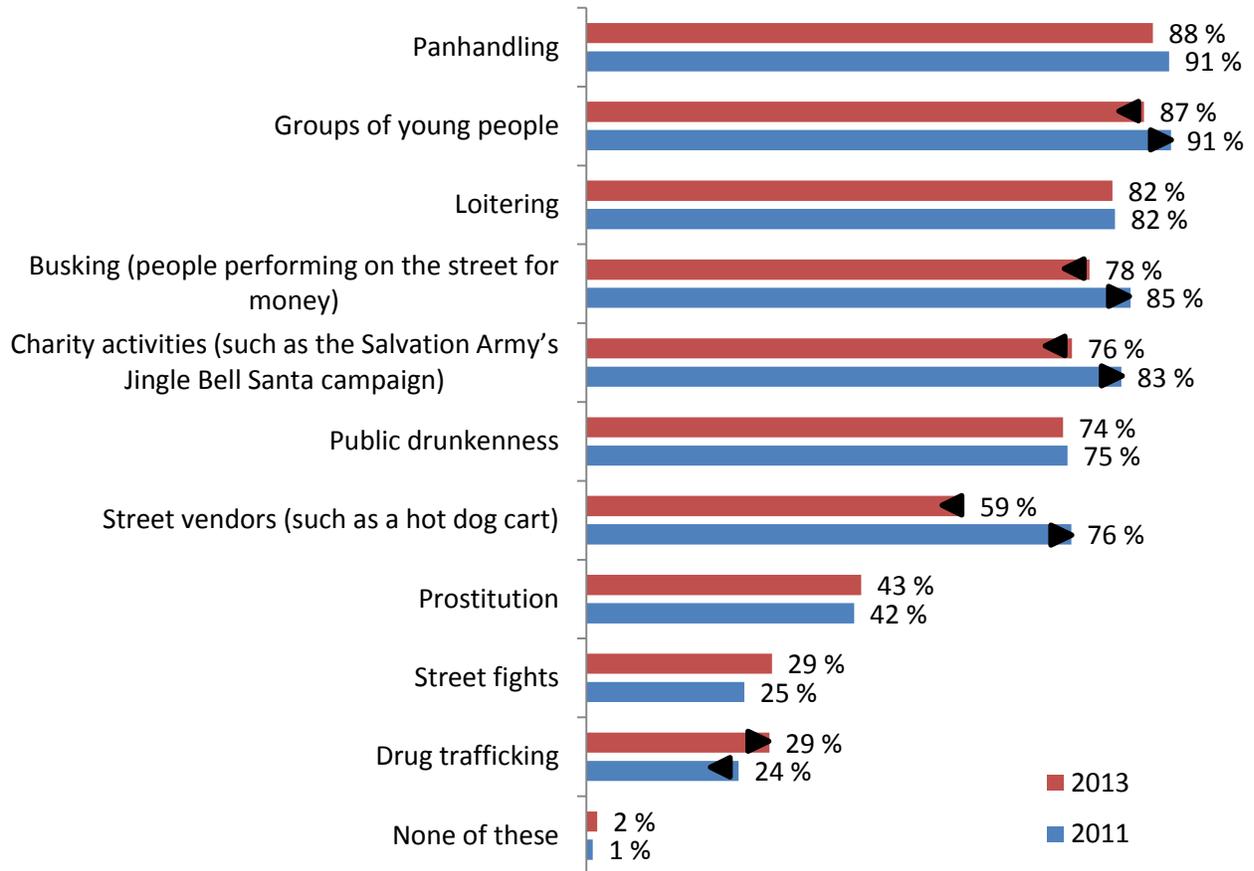
	2011	2013	Difference
<b>Specific neighbourhoods</b>			
Riversdale	24%	22%	-2 p.p.
Pleasant Hill	8%	10%	2 p.p.
Downtown/City centre	7%	8%	1 p.p.
Core neighbourhoods/Inner city	2%	2%	0 p.p.
Confederation Park	3%	2%	-1 p.p.
Meadowgreen	1%	2%	0 p.p.
Caswell Hill	1%	1%	0 p.p.
Mayfair	1%	1%	0 p.p.
Fairhaven	1%	0%	-1 p.p.
Other specific neighbourhoods	5%	4%	-1 p.p.
<b>General area mentions</b>			
20th Street	21%	15%	-5 p.p.
'Alphabet' avenues - general	10%	12%	3 p.p.
West side - general	13%	10%	-4 p.p.
22nd Street	10%	7%	-3 p.p.
Riverbank/Meewasin	1%	2%	1 p.p.
Everywhere/anywhere	3%	2%	-1 p.p.
33rd Street	3%	1%	-1 p.p.
Idylwyld	4%	1%	-3 p.p.
Ave H	2%	1%	-1 p.p.
Ave P	2%	1%	-2 p.p.
Other general area mentions	15%	14%	-1 p.p.
<b>Other</b>			
St. Paul's Hospital	3%	3%	0 p.p.
At night	6%	4%	-2 p.p.
Other general	5%	5%	-1 p.p.
Don't know/no comment	6%	4%	-1 p.p.

Q10. Next we'd like to understand how you feel about public spaces in Saskatoon. Please finish the following sentences: The least safe area in Saskatoon is \_\_\_\_\_. Base: All respondents, n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points.

## Street Activity Prevalence

About three-quarters or more of Saskatoon residents have seen most of the listed street activities. Interestingly, the proportion who have seen most activities has declined since 2011. Of note, the proportion saying they have seen groups of young people has declined (from 91% to 87%), while the incidence of seeing drug trafficking activity has increased (from 24% to 29%).

### Proportion who have seen each activity



Those of Aboriginal ancestry are more likely than those who are not to say they have witnessed drug trafficking (45% vs. 26%) and prostitution (73% vs. 39%).

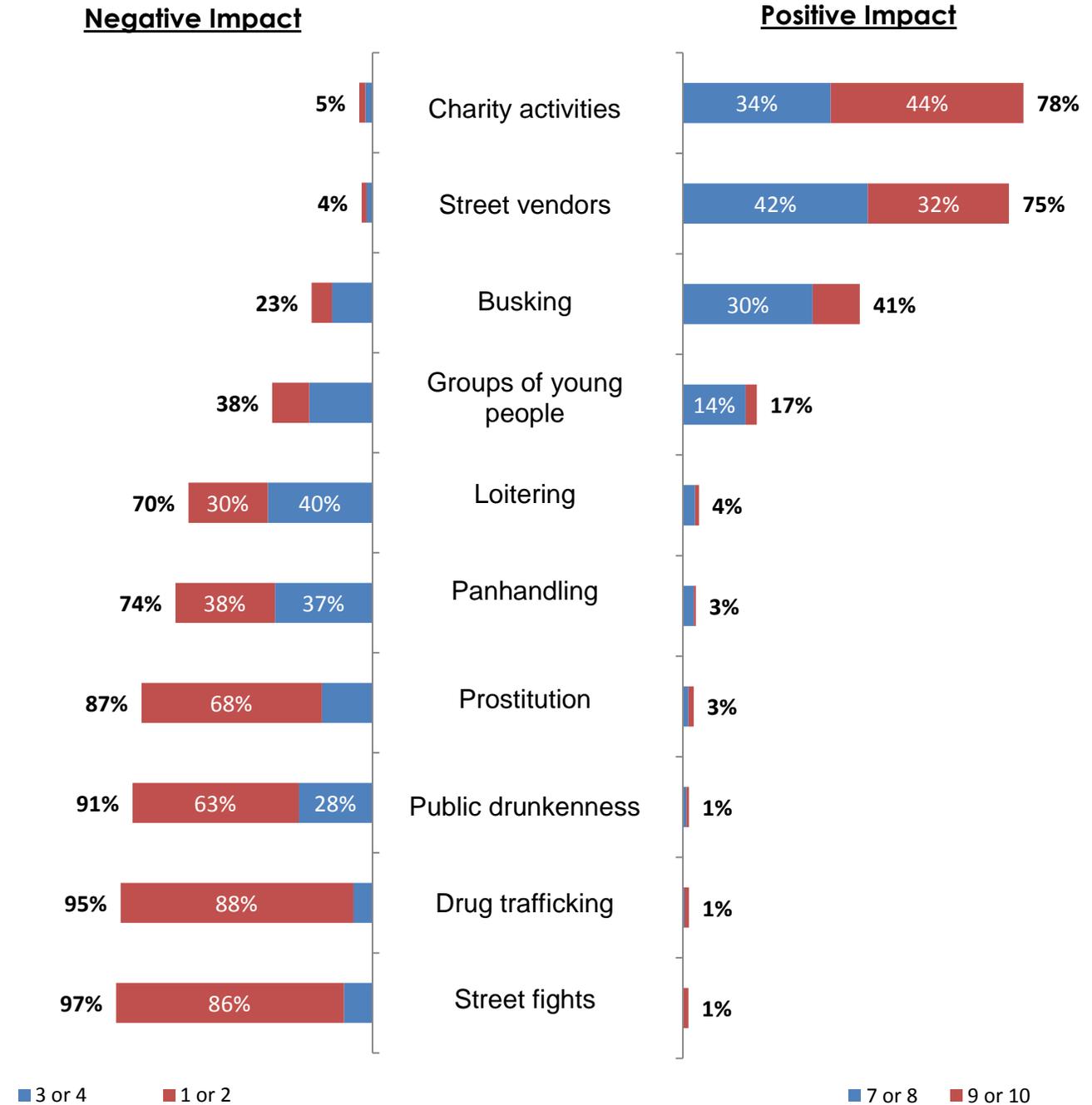
Business owners in general are more likely than non-business owners to say they have witnessed drug trafficking (45% vs. 27%) and public drunkenness (89% vs. 73%).

Those working in the Downtown area are the most likely to have seen panhandling (92% vs. 69% on Broadway and 83% in Riversdale), while those working in the Riversdale area are the most likely to say they have seen prostitution (83% vs. 45% Downtown and 44% on Broadway).

Q11. Which of the following activities have you witnessed or encountered in public areas in Saskatoon, such as on streets, in parks, or outside of businesses, within the past 12 months? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of statistical significance as noted by "▼" and "▲"

## Street Activity Impact on Public Safety

Charity activities (78%) and street vendors (75%) are seen as having the most positive impact on public safety in Saskatoon. Seven in ten or more say that loitering (70%), panhandling (74%), prostitution (87%), public drunkenness (91%), drug trafficking (95%), and street fights (97%) have a negative impact.



Q12. How much of a positive or negative impact does each of the following have on public safety in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, n=636. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%.

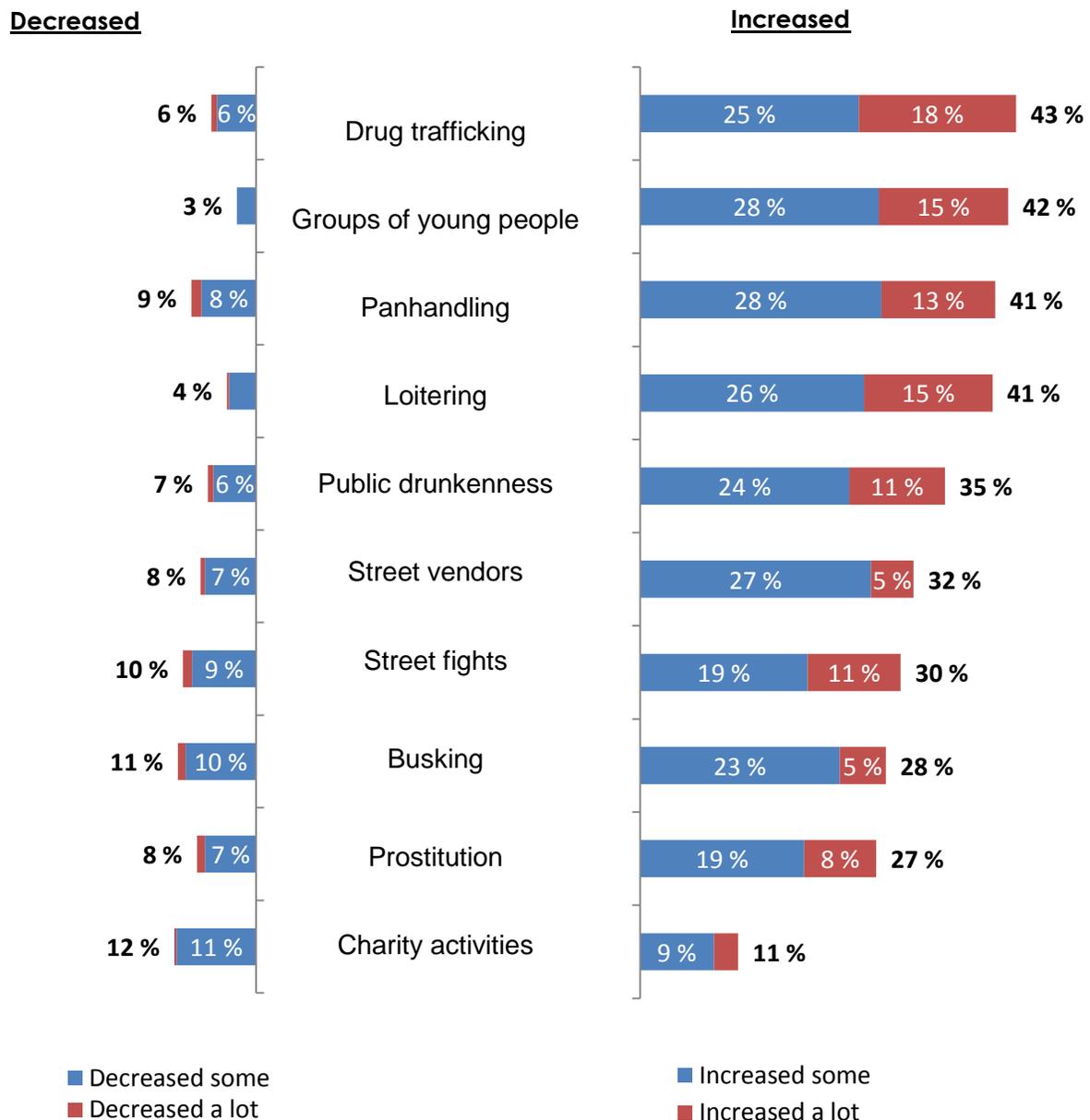
The proportion of residents who say that most street activities have a negative effect has declined since 2011.

	Very positive (9 or 10)			Very negative (1 or 2)		
	2011	2013	Difference	2011	2013	Difference
<b>Charity activities</b>	53%▲	44%▼	-9 p.p.	2%	2%	0 p.p.
<b>Street vendors</b>	29%	32%	3 p.p.	2%	2%	0 p.p.
<b>Busking</b>	10%	11%	1 p.p.	8%	8%	0 p.p.
<b>Groups of young people</b>	3%	3%	0 p.p.	16%	14%	-2 p.p.
<b>Loitering</b>	1%	1%	0 p.p.	38%▲	30%▼	-8 p.p.
<b>Panhandling</b>	1%	1%	0 p.p.	52%▲	38%▼	-14 p.p.
<b>Prostitution</b>	1%	1%	0 p.p.	75%▲	68%▼	-7 p.p.
<b>Public drunkenness</b>	1%	1%	0 p.p.	67%	63%	-4 p.p.
<b>Drug trafficking</b>	1%	1%	0 p.p.	90%	88%	-2 p.p.
<b>Street fights</b>	1%	1%	0 p.p.	91%▲	86%▼	-5 p.p.

Q12. How much of a positive or negative impact does each of the following have on public safety in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points. Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of statistical significance as noted by "▼" and "▲."

## Street Activity Change

Four in ten Saskatoon residents believe that drug trafficking (43%), groups of young people (42%), panhandling (41%), and loitering (41%) have increased as compared to three years ago. Note that the proportion of residents reporting seeing most negative street activities has declined since 2011 (see table on following page).



Q13. Do you feel each of these activities has increased, decreased, or remained about the same, compared to three years ago?  
 Base: All respondents, n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%.

As compared with results from 2011, Saskatoon residents are less likely to say that panhandling and street fights have increased over the past three years.

	Increased			Decreased		
	2011	2013	Difference	2011	2013	Difference
<b>Drug trafficking</b>	46 %	43 %	-3 p.p	4 %	6 %	2 p.p
<b>Groups of young people</b>	42 %	42 %	0 p.p	3 %	3 %	0 p.p
<b>Panhandling</b>	49 %▲	41 %▼	-8 p.p	6 %	9 %	3 p.p
<b>Loitering</b>	42 %	41 %	-1 p.p	3 %	4 %	1 p.p
<b>Public drunkenness</b>	36 %	35 %	-1 p.p	6 %	7 %	1 p.p
<b>Street vendors</b>	20 %▼	32 %▲	12 p.p	11 %	8 %	-3 p.p
<b>Street fights</b>	36 %▲	30 %▼	-6 p.p	7 %	10 %	3 p.p
<b>Busking</b>	27 %	28 %	1 p.p	12 %	11 %	-1 p.p
<b>Prostitution</b>	30 %	27 %	-3 p.p	6 %	8 %	2 p.p
<b>Charity activities</b>	13 %	11 %	-2 p.p	12 %	12 %	0 p.p

Q13. Do you feel each of these activities has increased, decreased, or remained about the same, compared to three years ago?  
 Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%. See “Notes on Reporting” for a definition of statistical significance as noted by “▼” and “▲.”

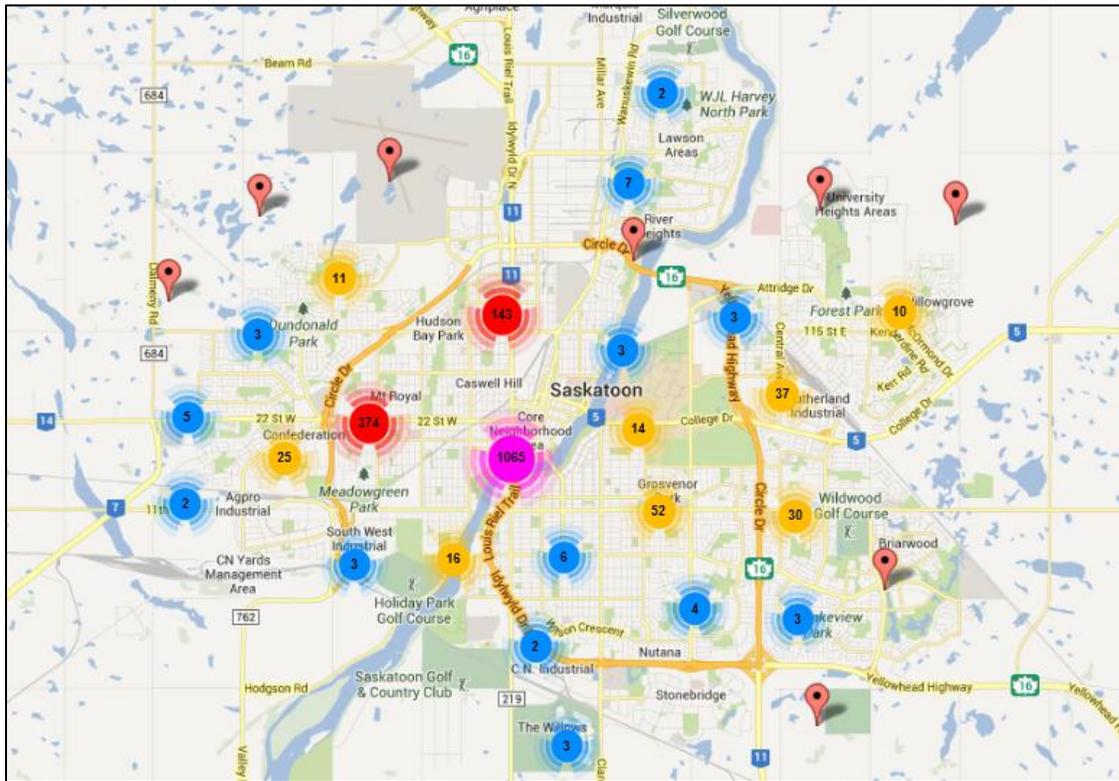
## Street Activity Experience Locations

Using a Google Map tool, respondents were able to zoom down to street level to indicate where they had seen or experienced what they perceived to be negative street activity.

The maps below illustrate the frequency that an area was selected. The number displayed on the map represents the number of times the area was selected by respondents. In total, the 636 survey respondents noted 1,834 incidences of activity.

### High Level

A high-level view of Saskatoon shows that the majority of negative street activity is witnessed or experienced in the busy Downtown area.

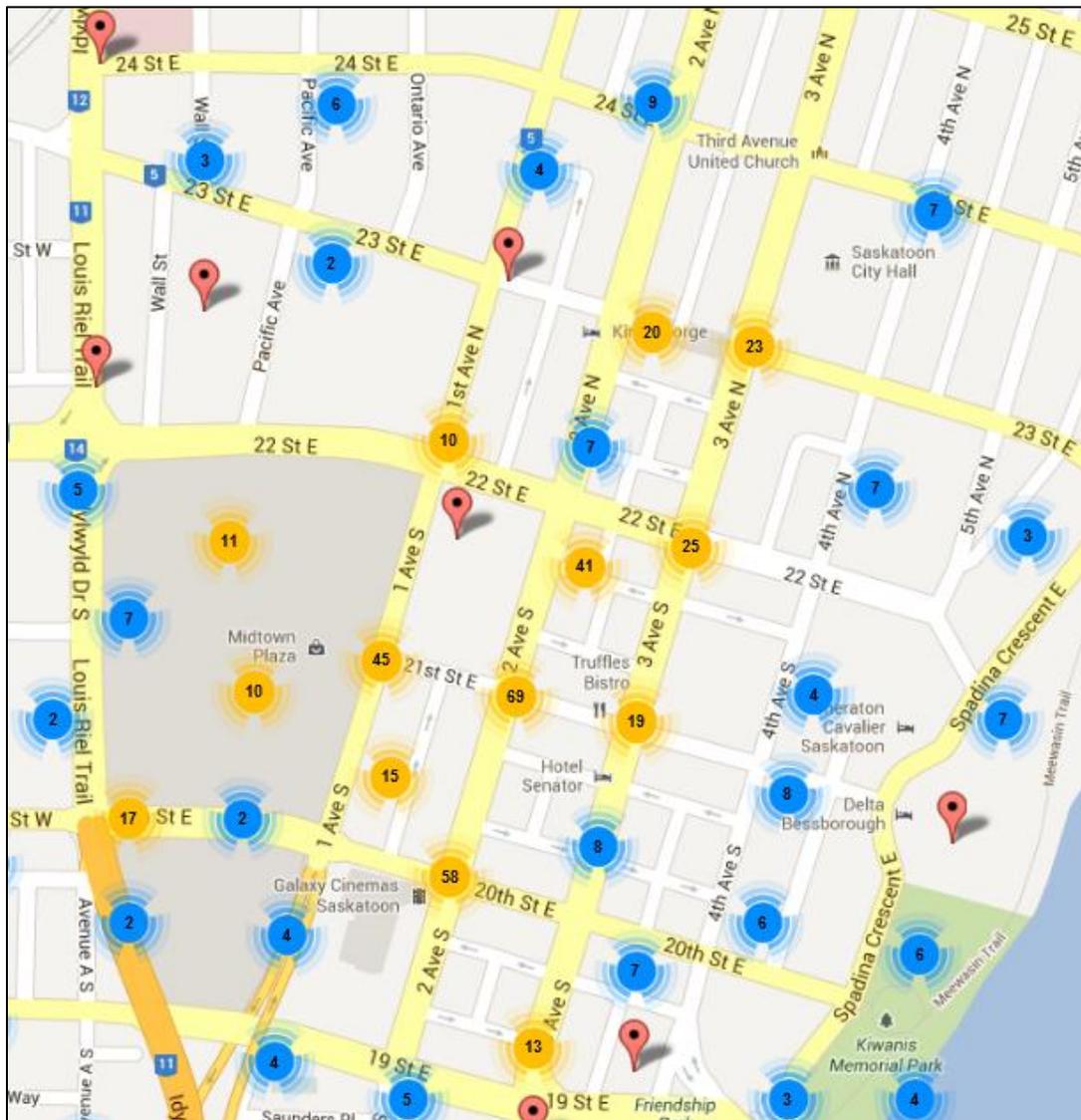


Q14. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered negative street activity in the past 12 months (such as public drunkenness, prostitution, drug trafficking, etc.)

## Downtown

While negative street activity is seen or witnessed throughout the Downtown area, it is most concentrated in the Downtown core, around 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street.

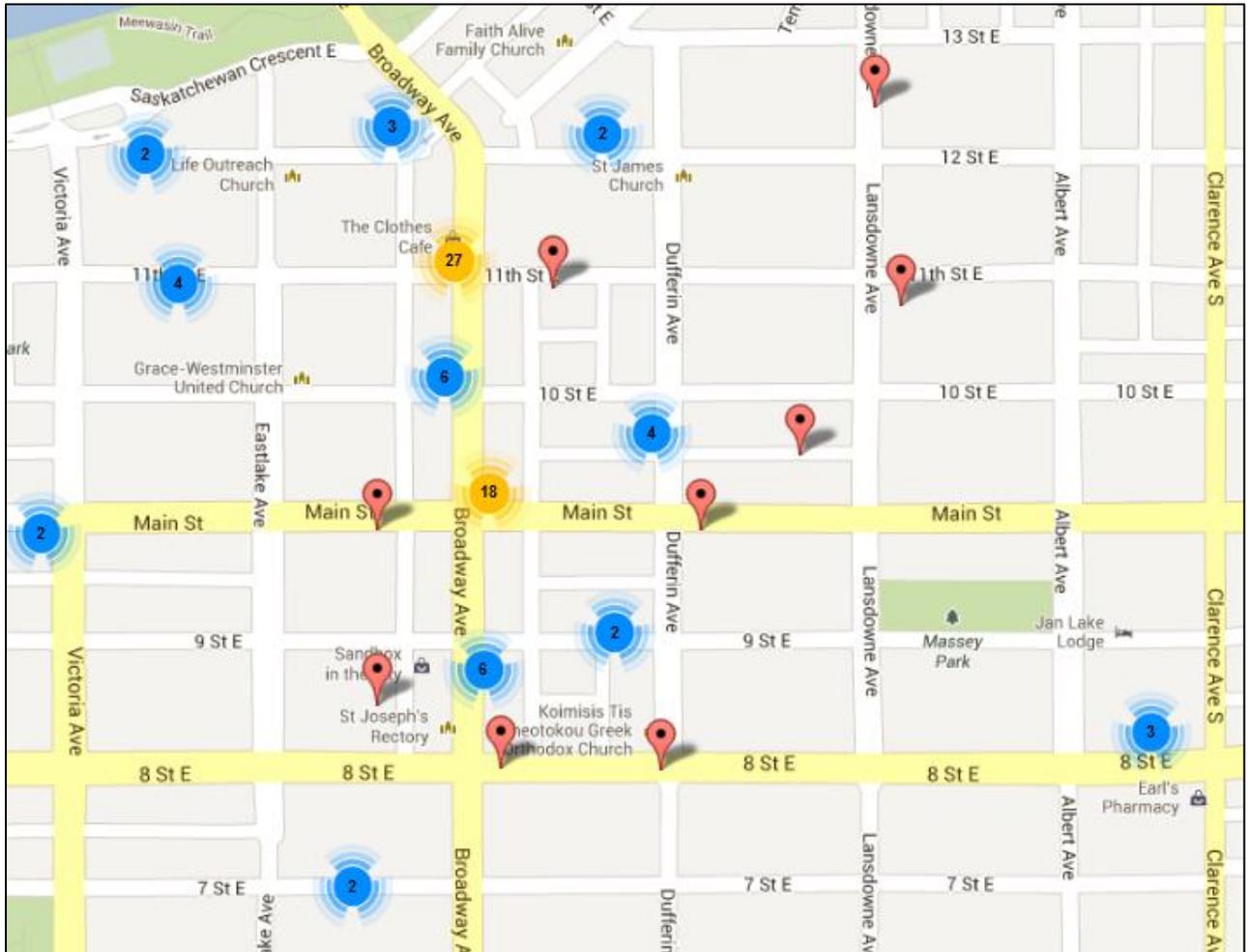
Compared with results from 2011, street activity seems to be slightly more concentrated in these areas and somewhat less concentrated in other areas of Downtown (see the appendix at end of this section).



Q14. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered negative street activity in the past 12 months (such as public drunkenness, prostitution, drug trafficking, etc.)

## Broadway

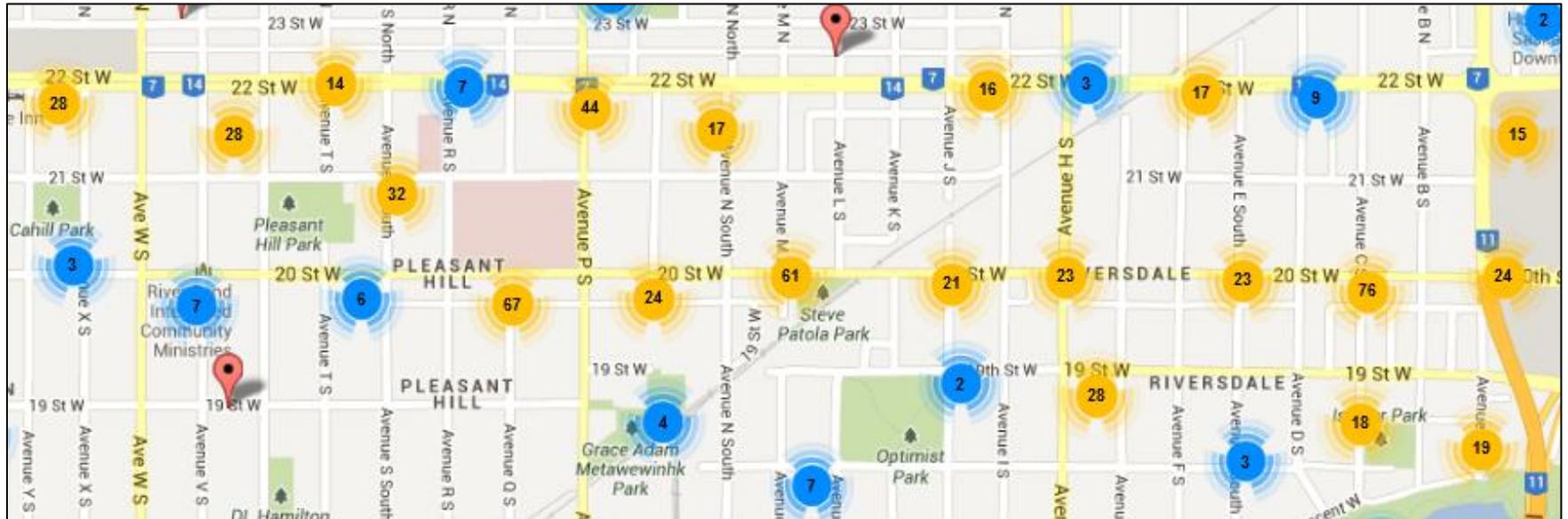
Most negative street activity is seen or experienced at the corners of Broadway and 11<sup>th</sup> Street, and Broadway and Main Street. Overall, street activity in this area appears to have declined slightly as compared to 2011 (see the appendix at end of this section).



Q14. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered negative street activity in the past 12 months (such as public drunkenness, prostitution, drug trafficking, etc.)

## Riversdale

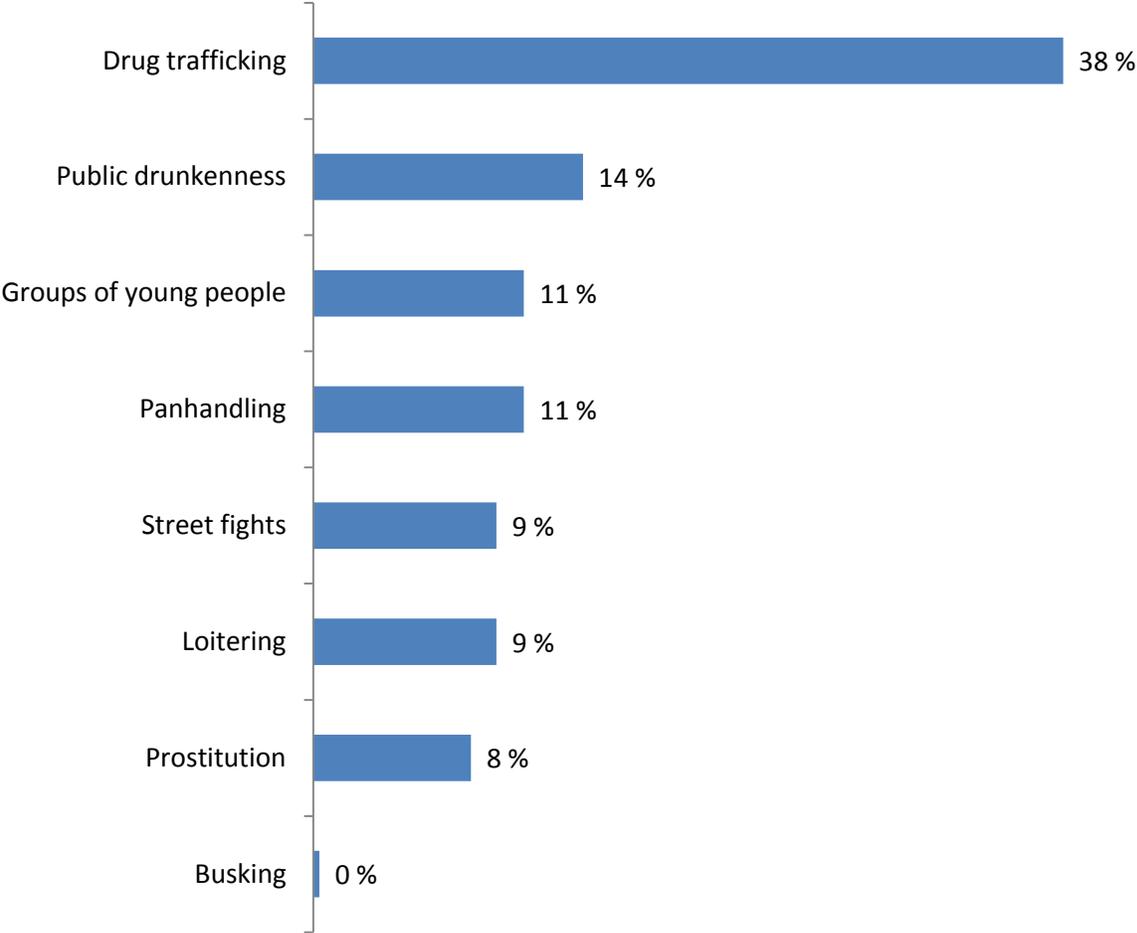
In the Riversdale area, negative street activity is most commonly seen on and around 20<sup>th</sup> Street and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. This is more or less consistent with results from 2011 (see the appendix at end of this section).



Q14. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered negative street activity in the past 12 months (such as public drunkenness, prostitution, drug trafficking, etc.)

# Biggest Issue Related to Street Activity

Saskatoon residents believe that drug trafficking (38%) is the biggest issue related to street activity.

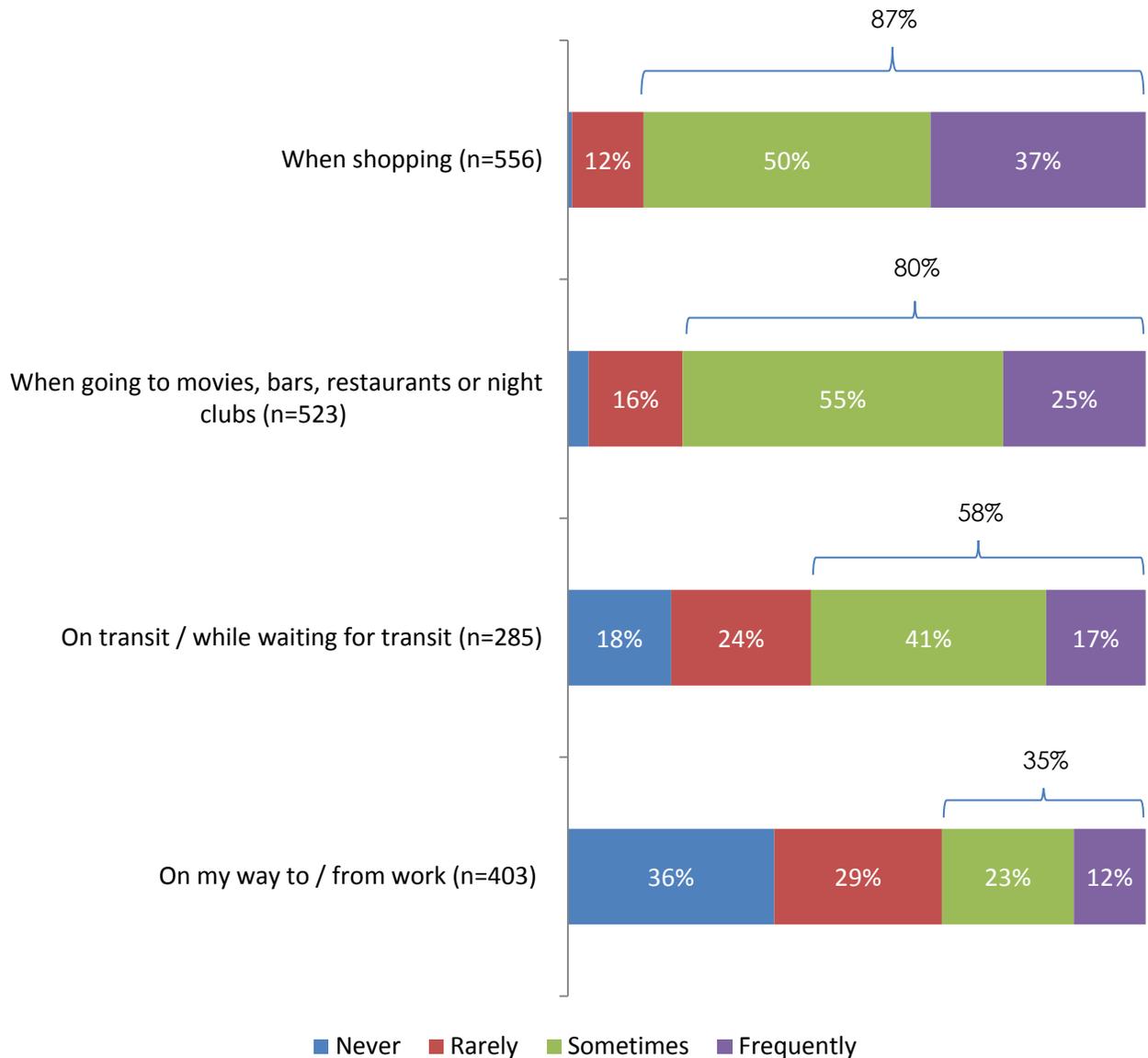


Q15. Which of the following do you believe is the biggest issue related to street activity in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, n=636.

# PANHANDLING

## Frequency of Encounters

Panhandlers are most commonly encountered when respondents are shopping (87%) or going out to movies, bars, restaurants or night clubs (80%).



Q16. How frequently do you witness or encounter panhandlers in Saskatoon in each of the following situations? Base: Those who have witnessed panhandling in public areas in Saskatoon excluding "not applicable" responses, n=285-556.

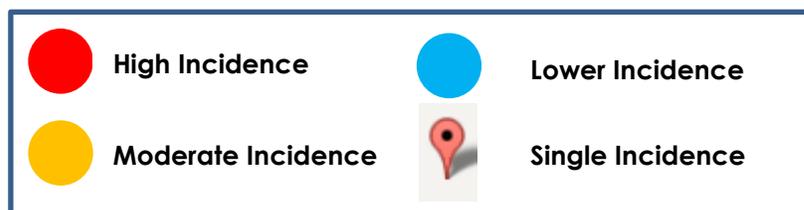
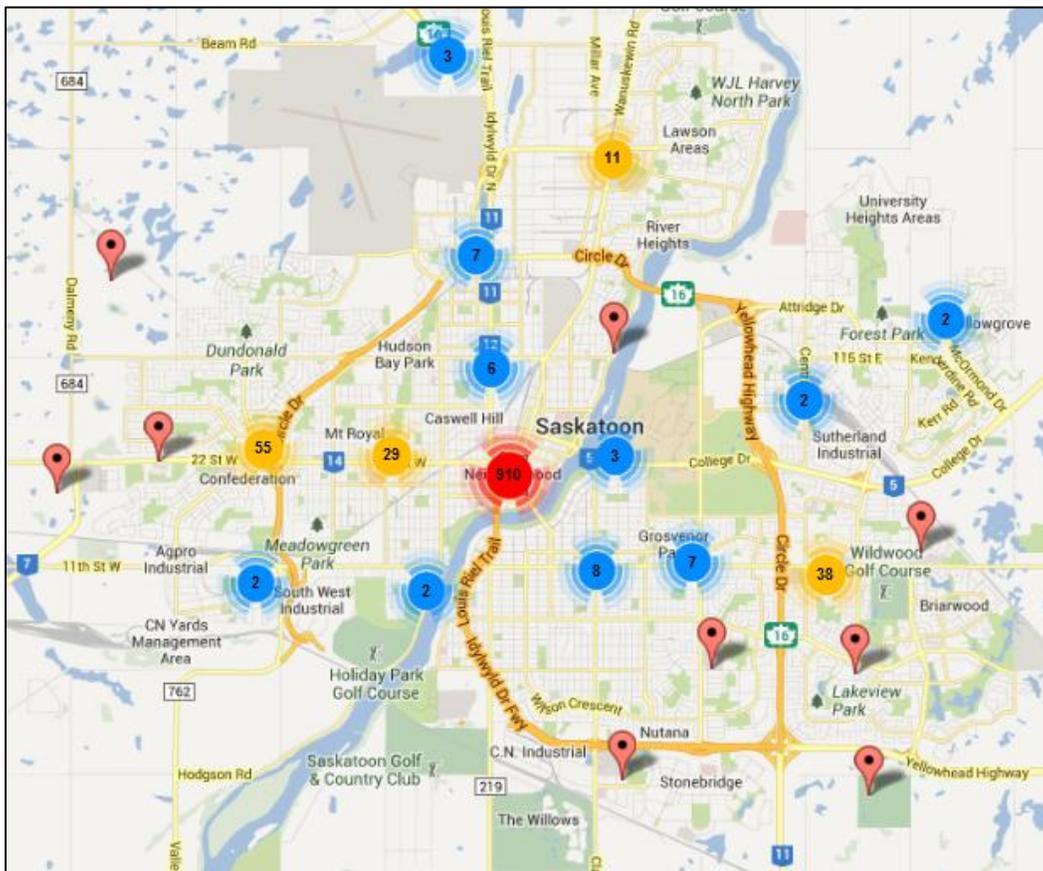
## Panhandling Experience Locations

Using a Google Map tool, respondents were able to zoom down to street level to indicate where they had seen or experienced what they perceived to be panhandling.

The maps below illustrate the frequency that an area was selected. The number displayed on the map represents the number of times the area was selected by respondents. In total, the 636 survey respondents noted 1,095 incidences of panhandling.

### High Level

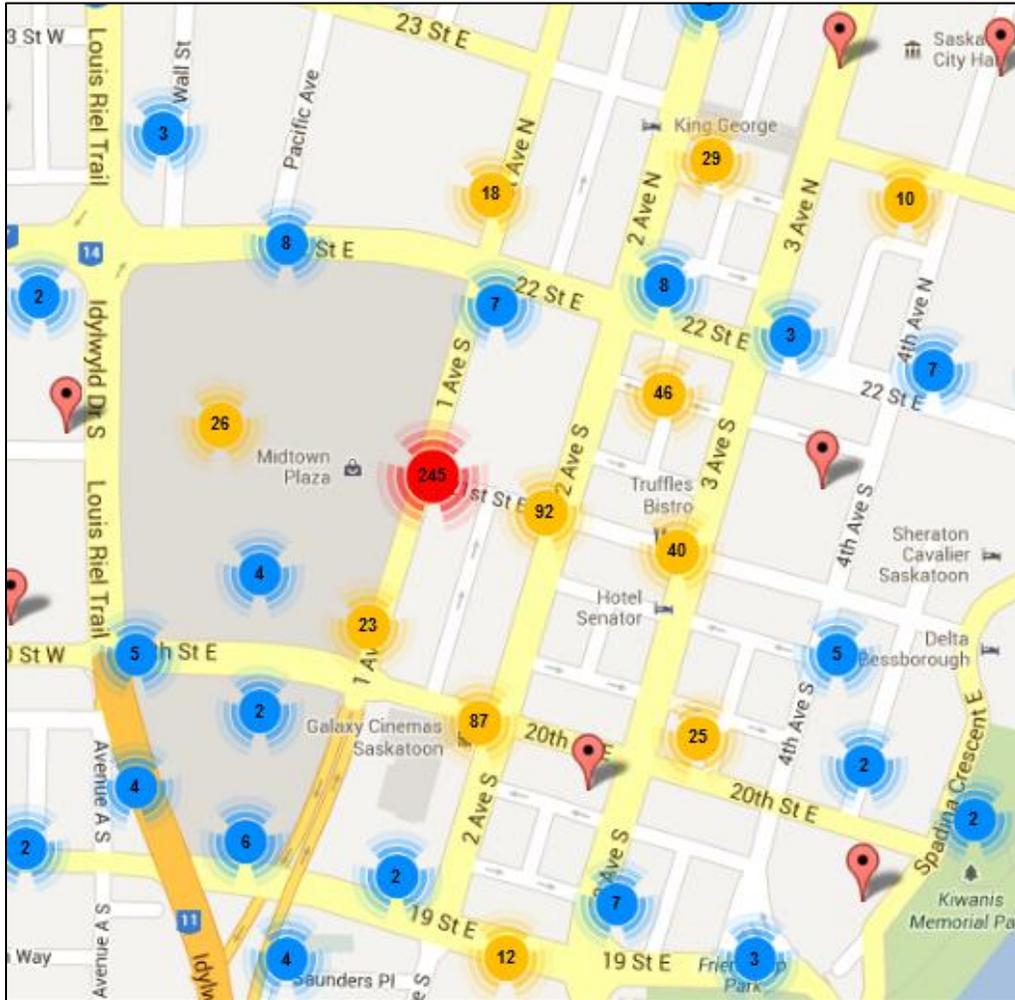
Although panhandling is reported in other areas of the city, it is mostly concentrated in the busy Downtown area.



Q17. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered panhandling within the past 12 months.

## Downtown

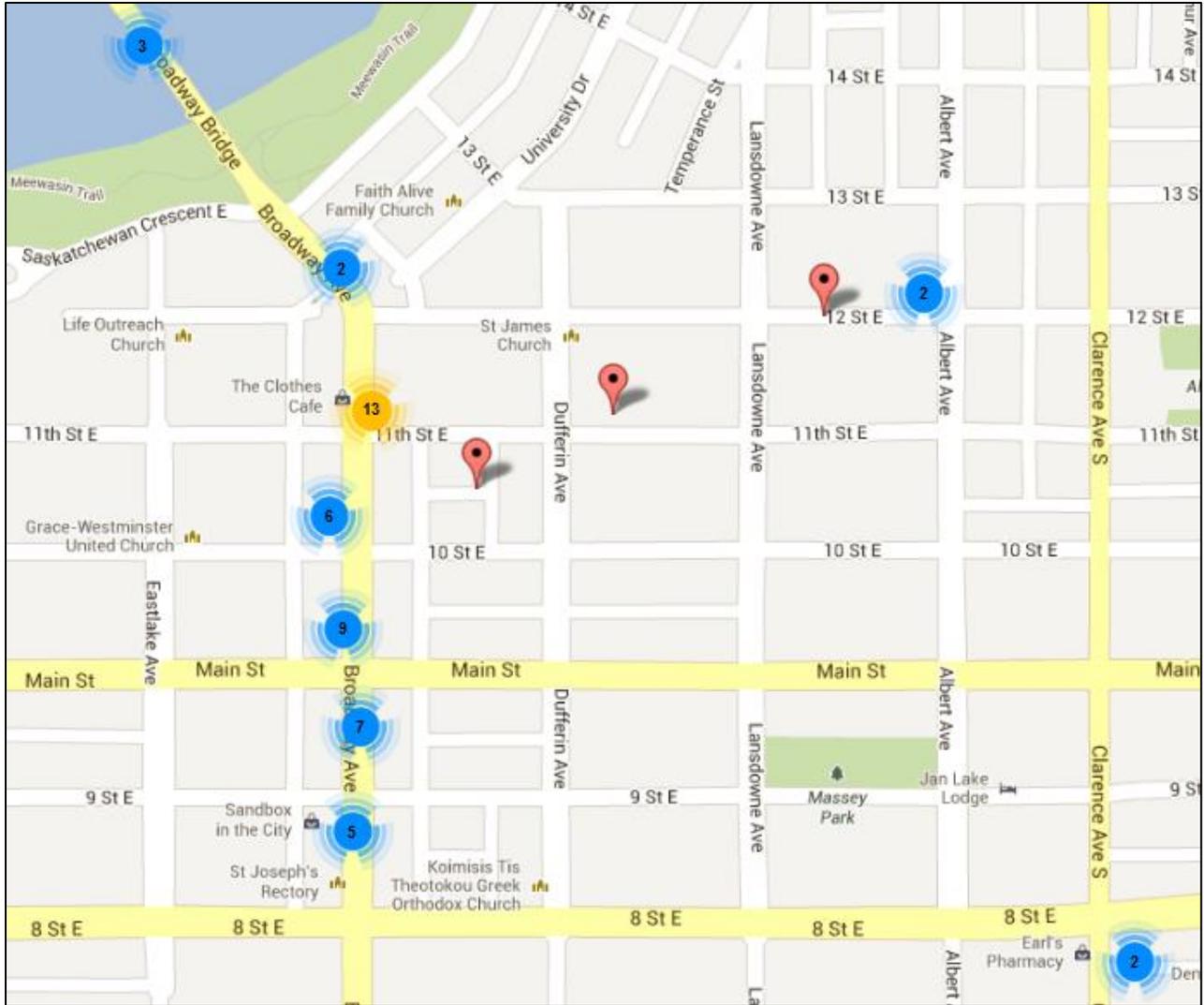
The majority of panhandling seen or experienced Downtown is on 21<sup>st</sup> Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.



Q17. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered panhandling within the past 12 months.

**Broadway**

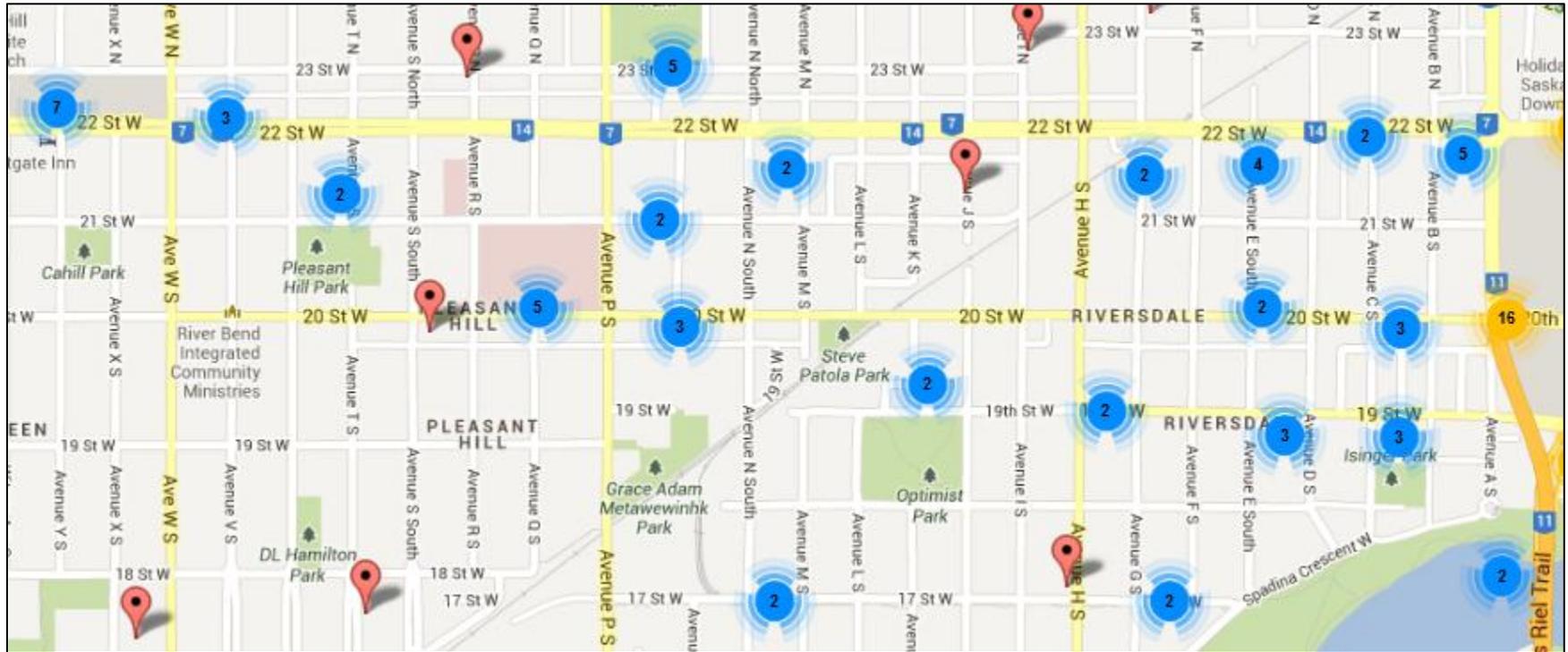
Some panhandling is seen and experienced in the Broadway area, primarily on Broadway Avenue itself, from the bridge to 8<sup>th</sup> Street.



Q17. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered panhandling within the past 12 months.

**Riversdale**

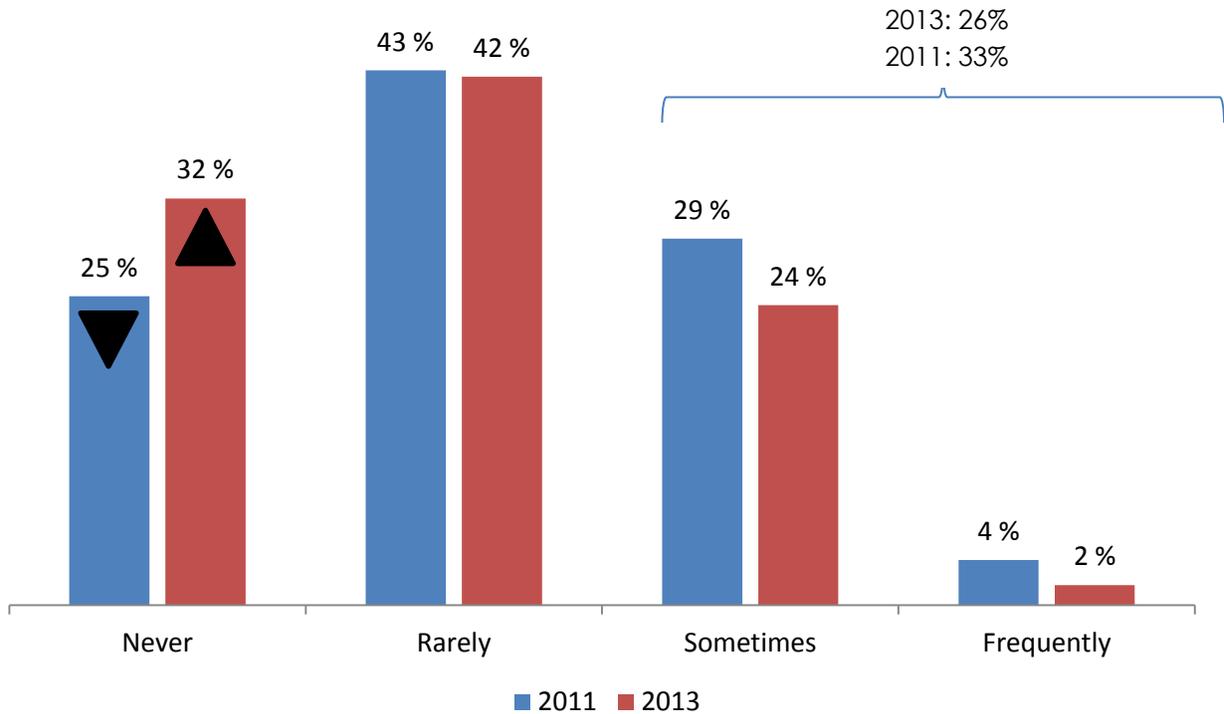
Panhandling is primarily seen or experienced in Riversdale in and around 19<sup>th</sup> Street, 20<sup>th</sup> Street, and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.



Q17. Please indicate on the map where you have witnessed or encountered panhandling within the past 12 months.

## Aggressive Panhandlers

Saskatoon residents are less likely than they were in 2011 to say that they have seen a panhandler acting aggressively (the proportion who have never seen a panhandler act aggressively increased from 25% up to 32%).

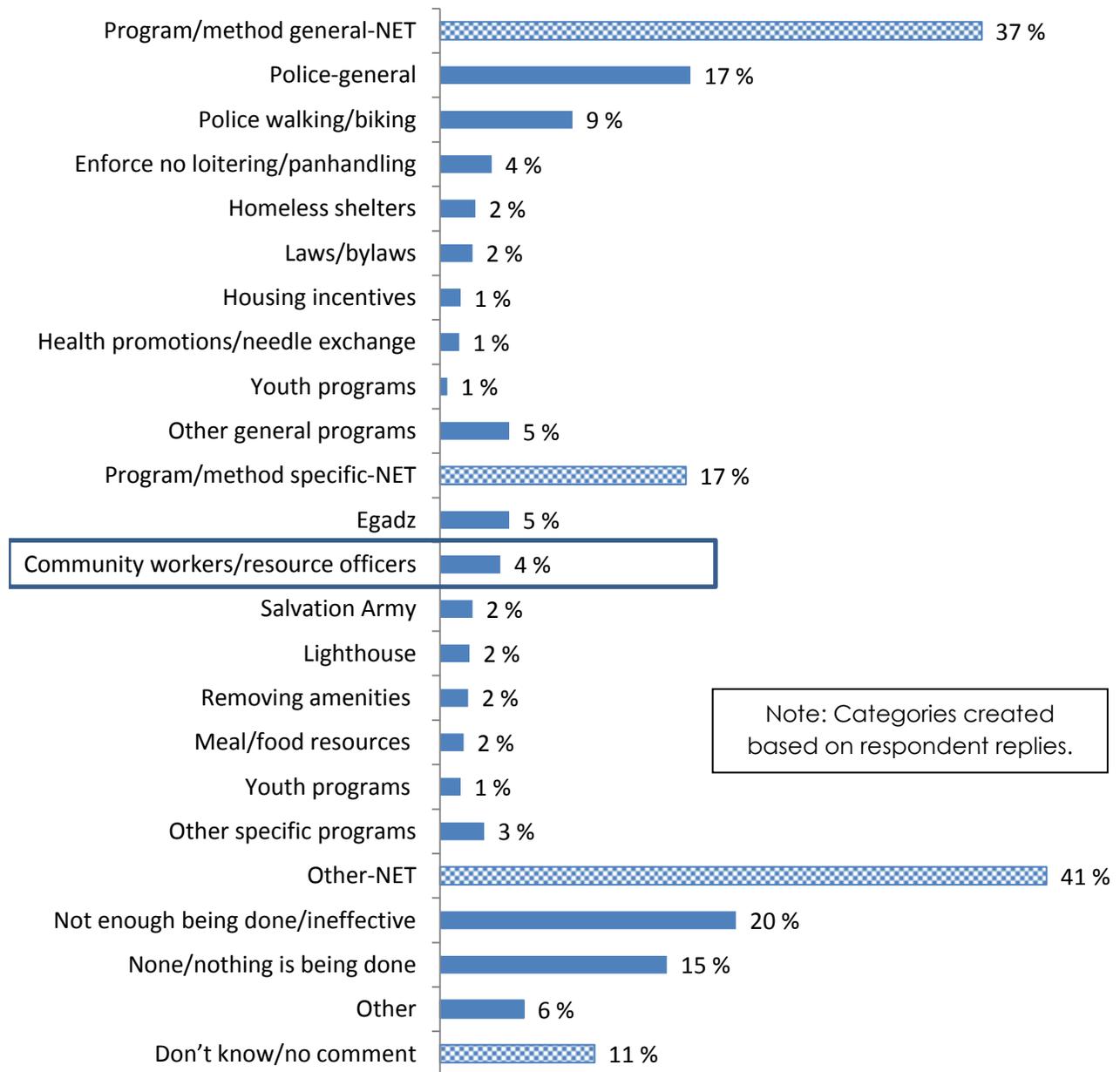


Q18. How often have you witnessed or encountered a panhandler acting aggressively? Base: Those who have witnessed panhandling in public areas in Saskatoon, 2011 n=561, 2013 n=561. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of statistical significance as noted by "▼" and "▲."

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

## Unaided Recall

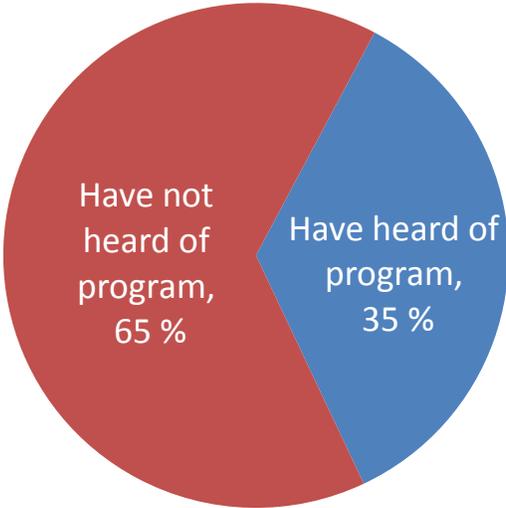
When asked what first comes to mind when thinking about programs or methods currently used to address issues related to street activity, Saskatoon residents most commonly mention the police (17%). Community workers and resource officers are mentioned by 4%, with a small proportion of those referencing the CSP directly.



Q19.What first comes to mind when thinking about methods or programs that are currently used to address issues related to street activity in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, n=636. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of NETS.

# Claimed Recall

When asked specifically if they had heard of the City of Saskatoon CSP, one-third of Saskatoon residents (35%) say that they have.

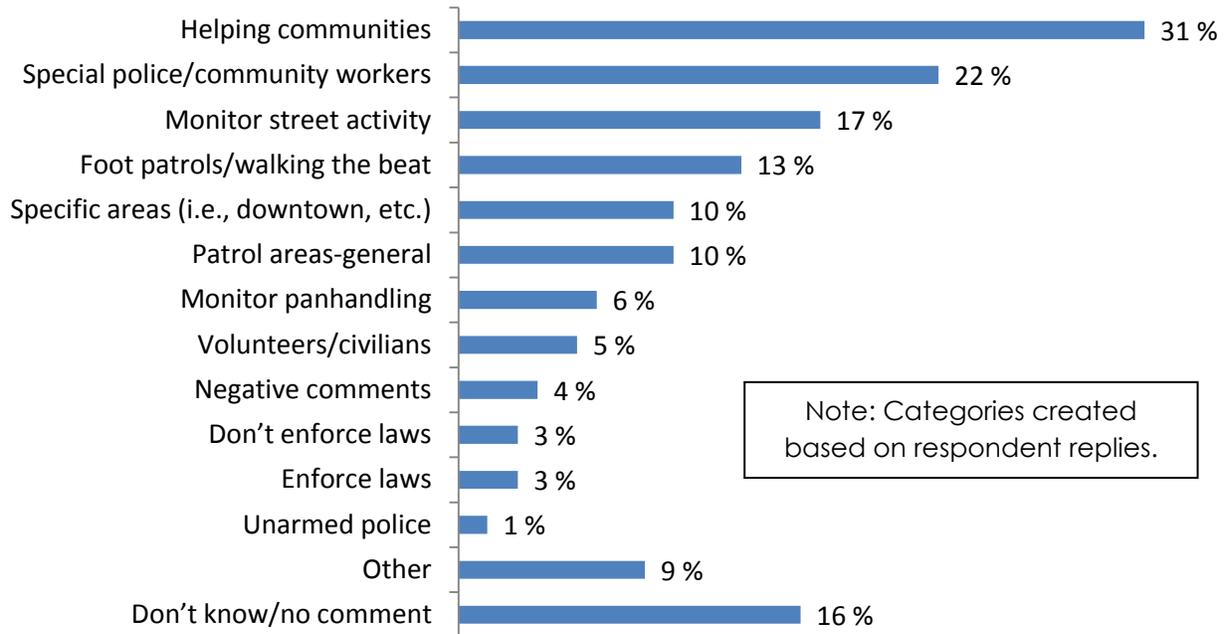


*Those aged 55 and over are the most likely to say they have heard of the CSP (51% vs. 34% aged 35-54 and 25% aged 18-34)*

Q20. Have you heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program (CSP) or Community Support Officers? Base: All respondents, n=636.

## Proven Recall

When those who indicated they had heard of the CSP were asked to describe it, the most common descriptions are generally correct. These include helping communities in general (31%), a team of special police and/or community workers (22%), and a program to monitor street activity (17%).



Program that assists people who live on the street, have mental illness or need support.

Workers that patrol areas such as downtown and offer assistance or resources for people who may be drug users or homeless, etc.

It helps street people and reduces problems in public areas, for example by providing emergency accommodation.

People who walk around and get to know the streets and the people on them and try to offer help.

Note: Comments were selected to expand on the top answers given in the preceding graph.

Q21. To the best of your knowledge, what is the Community Support Program (CSP)? Base: Those who have heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program (CSP) or Community Support Officers, n=224.

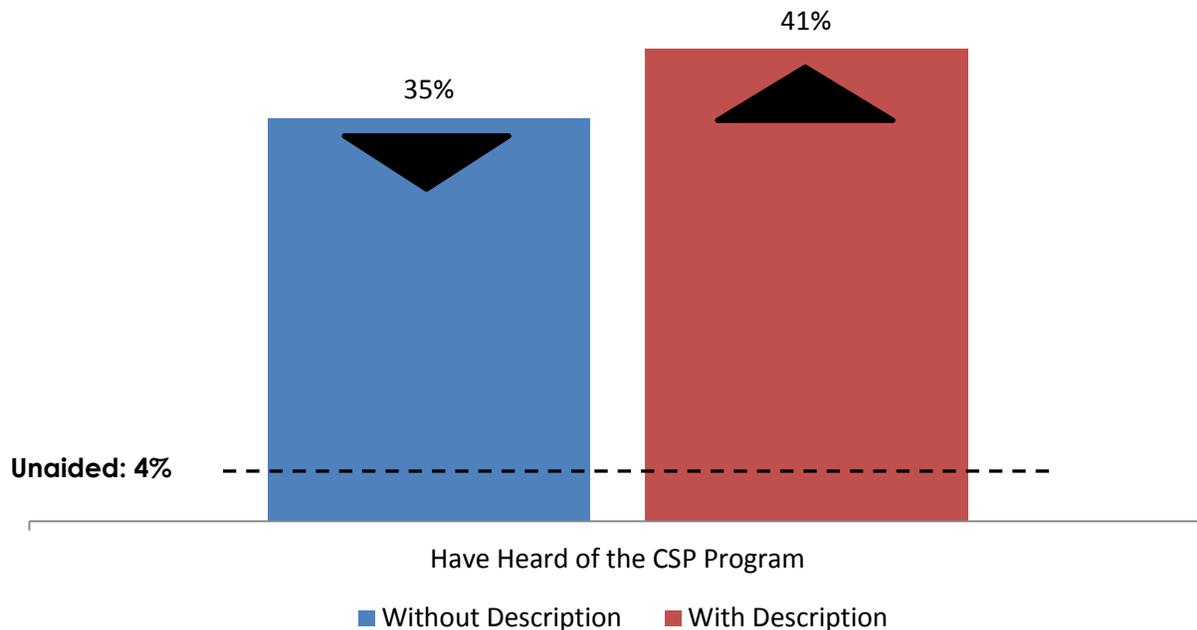
## Prompted Recall

At this point in the questionnaire, respondents were given the following description and then asked if, having heard the description, they had heard of the CSP:

*In July of 2012, the City of Saskatoon established a Community Support Program (CSP) aimed at addressing street activity in the Broadway, Downtown and the Riversdale Business Improvement Districts. This program includes and engages:*

- **The Public** through a highly visible presence that reassures and responds to the public in the Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale Business Improvement Districts.
- **Business Owners** through foot patrols that liaise with local businesses to identify issues and collaborate to generate solutions.
- **Vulnerable Persons** by connecting community members in need to the appropriate service providers or other supports.

With the description, the proportion of residents who have heard of the program increased from 35% to 41%.

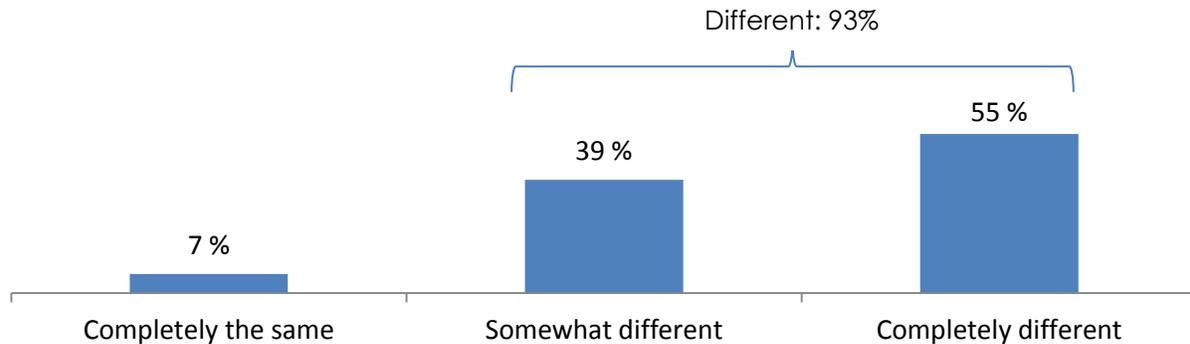


*Those aged 55 and over remain the most likely to say they have heard of the CSP Program (55% vs. 41% aged 35-54 and 32% aged 18-24).*

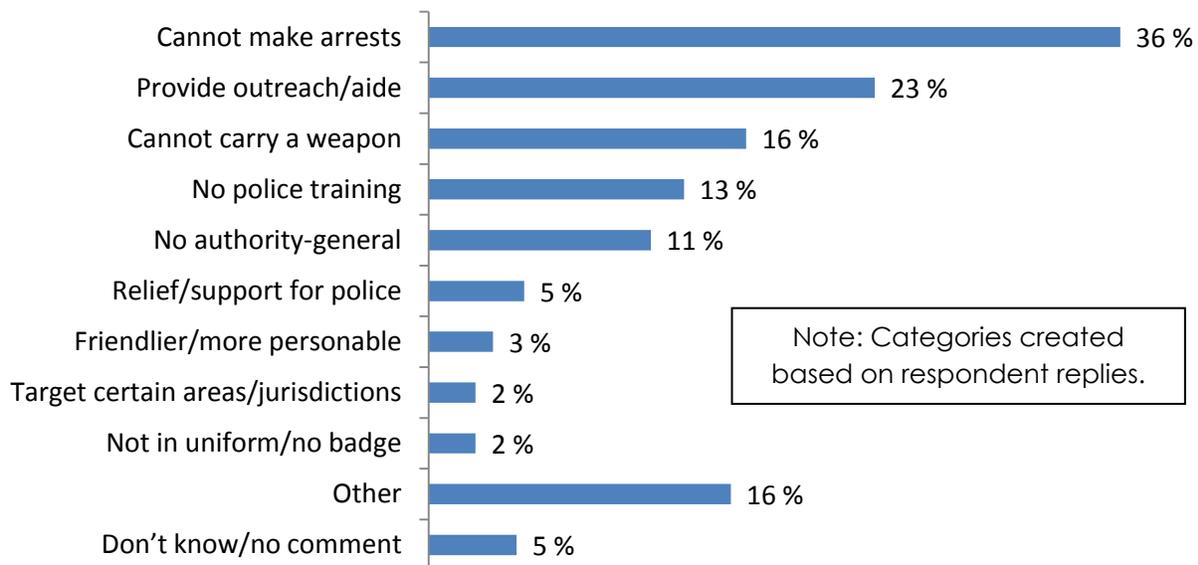
Q22. Now that you have heard this description, have you heard of this program? Base: All respondents, n=636. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of statistical significance as noted by "▼" and "▲."

## Comparison to Police Officers

The majority (93%) of Saskatoon residents who have heard of the program are aware that CSP Officers are different from Police Officers.



The top three things that residents believe make Police Officers and CSP Officers different are that CSP Officers cannot make arrests (36%), they provide outreach and aide (23%), and they cannot carry a weapon (16%).

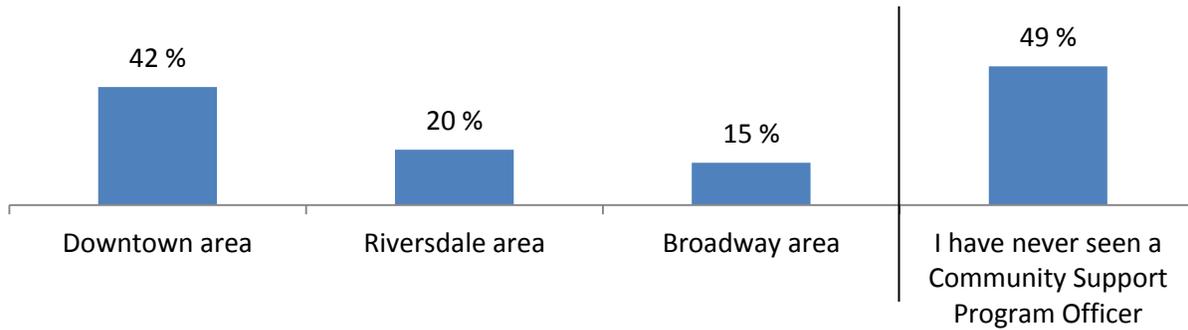


Q23. Community Support Program Officers and City of Saskatoon Police Officers are... Base: Those who have heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program or Community Support Officers, n=262.

Q24. To the best of your knowledge, what makes a Community Support Program Officer different from a City of Saskatoon Police Officer? Base: Those who have heard of the program (prompted recall) and do not believe that Community Support Officers and City of Saskatoon Police Officers are completely the same, n=245. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%.

## Locations Seen

Most commonly, Saskatoon residents who say they have heard of the CSP have seen the officers in the Downtown area (42%). Another one-fifth have seen the officers in the Riversdale area (20%), while 15% say they have seen them in the Broadway area. About one-half (49%) of those who have heard of the program say they have never seen an officer.



Those of Aboriginal ancestry are more likely to have seen CSP Officers in all three locations (Broadway 36% vs. 13%, Downtown 64% vs. 40%, Riversdale 41% vs. 18%); while those of non-Aboriginal ancestry are more likely to say they have never seen a support officer (51% vs. 27%).

Have Seen CSP Officers in...	Work Downtown		Work in Broadway		Work in Riversdale		Work Elsewhere	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	N %	Count	N %
Broadway area	7	15%	3	60%	0	0%	29	14%
Downtown area	29	63%	5	100%	2	50%	73	35%
Riversdale area	9	20%	1	20%	0	0%	41	20%
Never seen	15	33%	0	0%	2	50%	111	54%

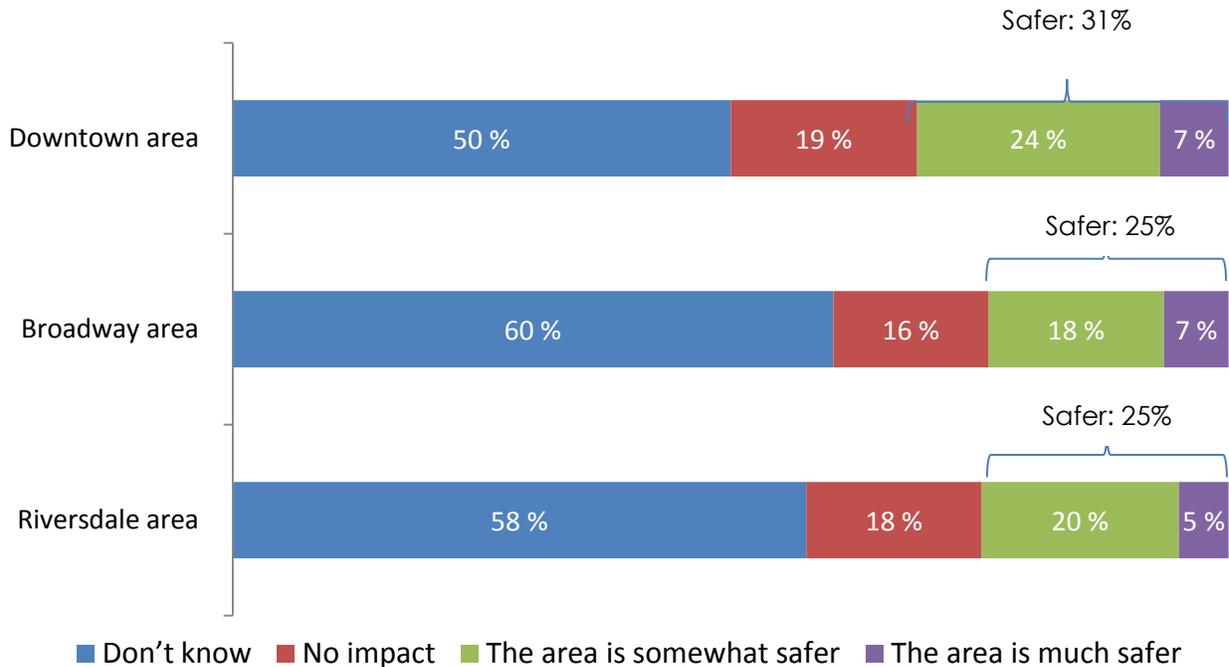
Note that the following pictures were provided to respondents to help clarify what the CSP Officers look like:



Q25. Have you seen the Community Support Program Officers in any of the following locations? (Select all that apply) Base: Those who have heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program or Community Support Officers, n=262.

## Perceived Program Impact

About one-third of Saskatoon residents (31%) who have heard of the program believe that the presence of the CSP Officers has made Downtown safer, while one-quarter (25%) believe their presence has made the Broadway and Riversdale areas safer. Most commonly however, Saskatoon residents are unsure how the presence of the officers has impacted safety.



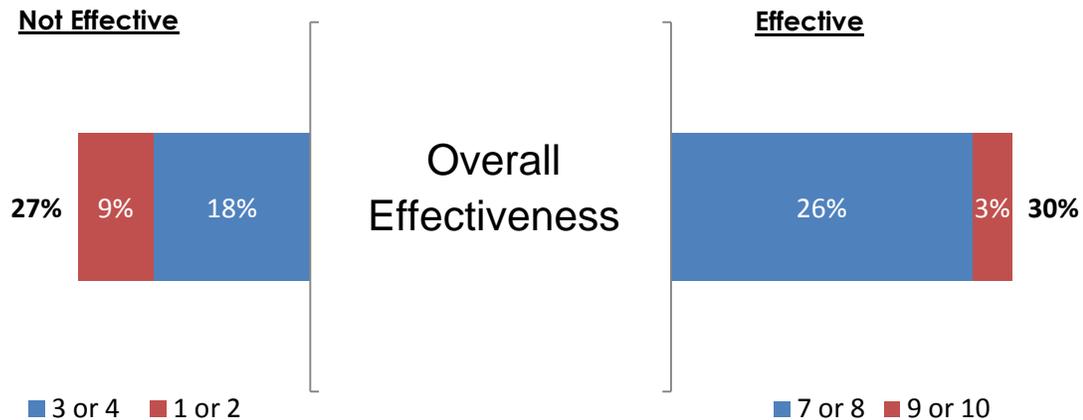
Of those who work in each area, those who work Downtown are the most likely to say that program has made the area safer.

Perceived impact on safety among those who work in each area	Believe area is safer	Total working in each area	%
Downtown	17	46	37%
Broadway	2	5	40%
Riversdale	0	4	0%

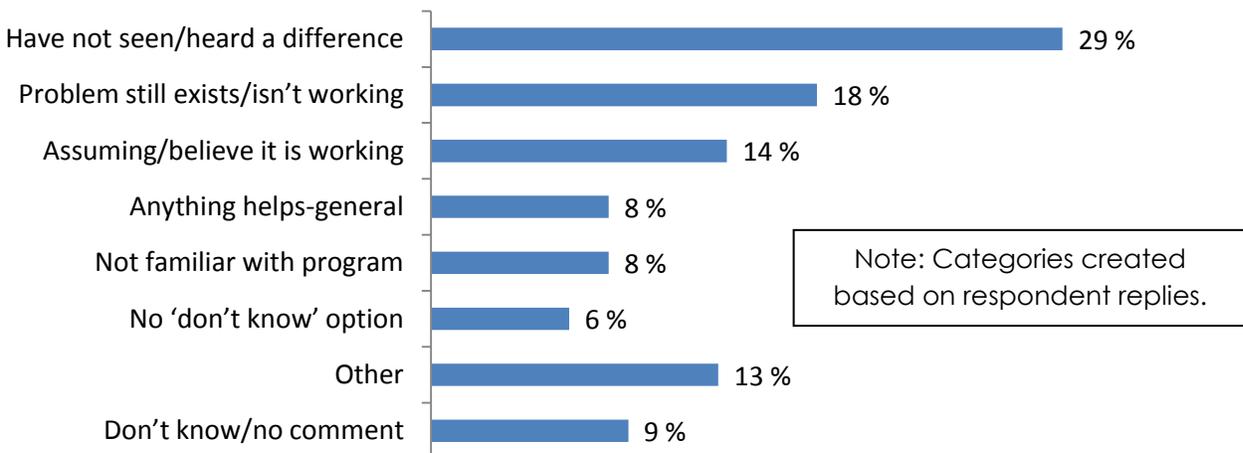
Q26. How do you believe the presence of the Community Support Program Officers has impacted safety in the... Base: Those who have heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program or Community Support Officers, n=262.

## Perceived Overall Effectiveness

Almost one-third of Saskatoon residents (30%) who have heard of the CSP believe that the program is effective.



Those who rated the overall effectiveness of the program as an eight or lower were then asked why they gave the rating. Most commonly, the reasons for rating the overall effectiveness of the CSP as an eight or lower include having not seen or heard of the program making a difference (29%) or believing there is still a problem (18%).

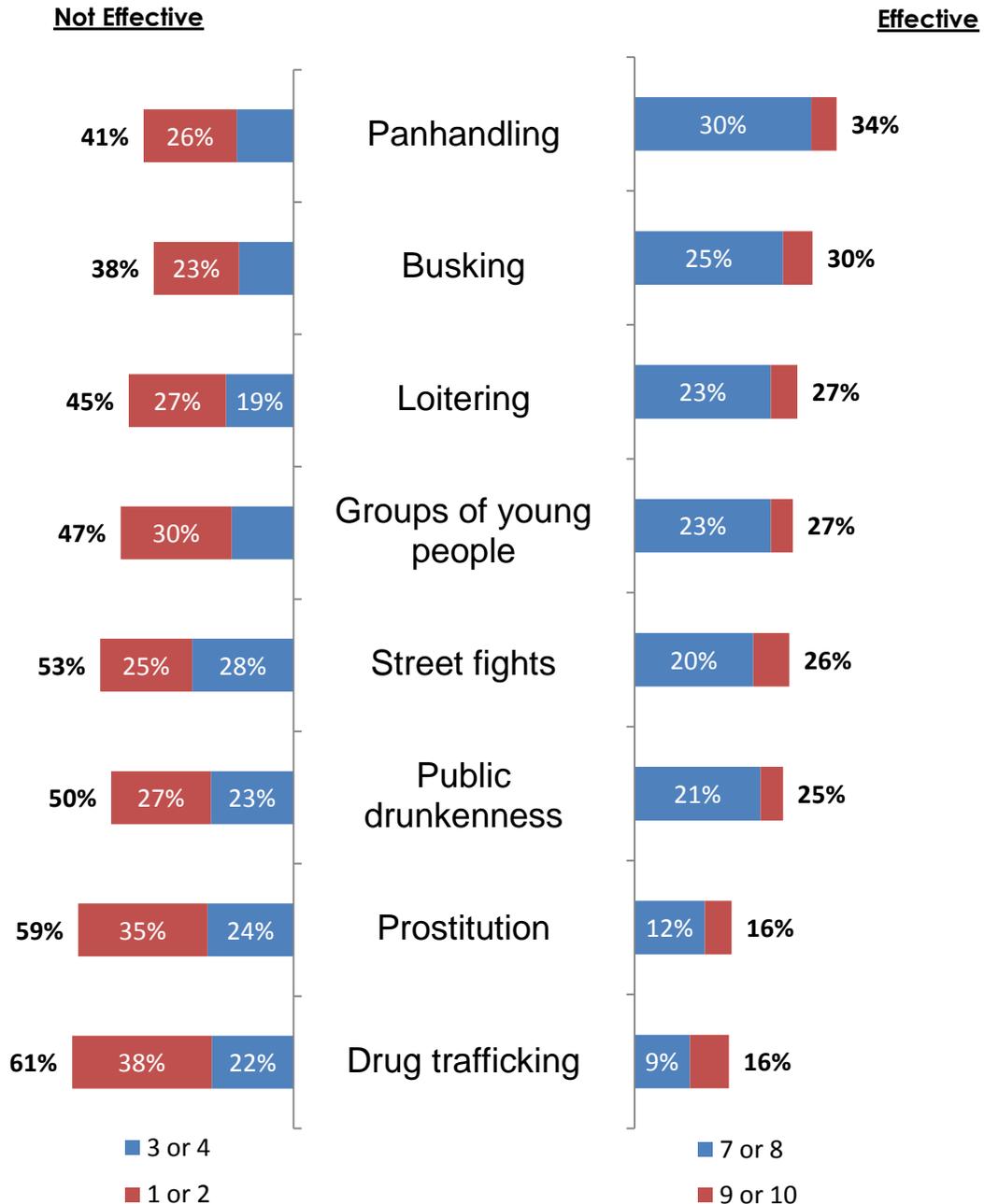


Q27. On a scale from one to ten, where one is 'not at all effective' and ten is 'extremely effective, how would you rate the overall effectiveness of the Community Support Program in addressing issues related to street activity in Saskatoon? Base: Those who have heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program or Community Support Officers, n=262. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%.

Q28. Why did you rate the overall effectiveness of the Community Support Program as a \_\_\_\_\_? Base: Those who rated the overall effectiveness of the Community Support Program less than 8, n=222.

## Perceived Effectiveness – Specific Issues

One-quarter or more of Saskatoon residents who have heard of the CSP believe that it has been effective in addressing panhandling (34%), busking (30%), loitering (27%), groups of young people (27%), street fights (26%), and public drunkenness (25%).

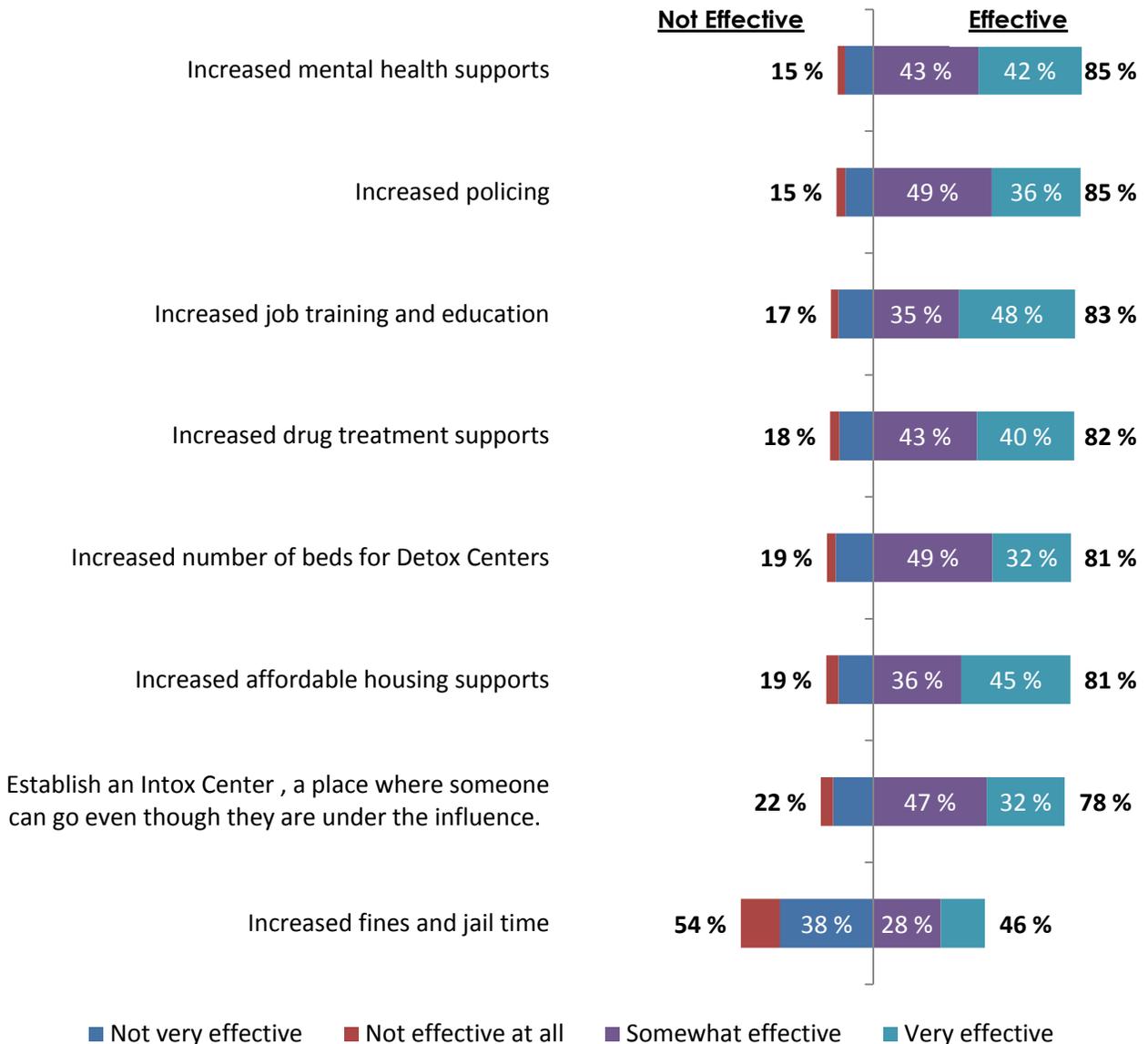


Q29. Using the same scale, how effective do you believe the Community Support Program has been at specifically addressing the following issues in Saskatoon? Base: Those who have heard of the City of Saskatoon Community Support Program or Community Support Officers excluding "don't know" responses, n=107-141. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%.

## ADDRESSING THE ISSUE

### Perceived Effectiveness of Actions & Programs

With the exception of increased fines and jail times, more than three-quarters of Saskatoon residents believe all the actions and supports measured would be effective in reducing the impact of negative street activity in Saskatoon, with the top two actions/programs being increased mental health supports (85%) and increased policing (85%).



Q30. How effective do you think the following actions/programs would be in reducing the impact of negative street activity in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, n=636. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%.

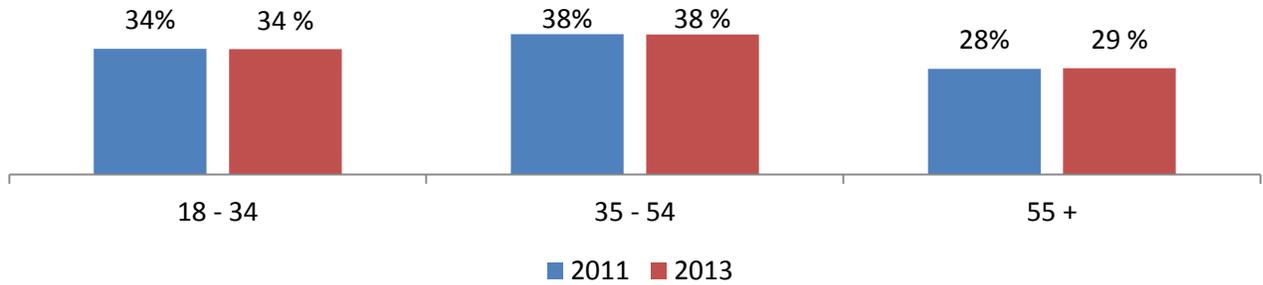
Results for most actions and programs have remained more or less consistent with those from 2011. Of interest, the perceived effectiveness of increased policing and increased fines and jail time has strengthened.

	% Effective			% Not Effective		
	2011	2013	Difference	2011	2013	Difference
Increased mental health supports	84%	85 %	1 p.p	16%	15 %	-1 p.p
Increased policing	77%▼	85 %▲	8 p.p	23%▲	15 %▼	-8 p.p
Increased job training and education	87%▲	83 %▼	-5 p.p	13%▼	17 %▲	4 p.p
Increased drug treatment supports	86%	82 %	-4 p.p	14%	18 %	4 p.p
Increased beds for Detox Centers	81%	81 %	0 p.p	19%	19 %	0 p.p
Increased affordable housing supports	83%	81 %	-2 p.p	17%	19 %	2 p.p
Establish an Intox Center	79%	78 %	-1 p.p	21%	22 %	1 p.p
Increased fines and jail time	34%▼	46 %▲	12 p.p	66%▲	54 %▼	-12 p.p

Q30. How effective do you think the following actions/programs would be in reducing the impact of negative street activity in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636. P.P. = Percentage Points. All figures are rounded to no decimal places, so percentages may not sum to 100%. See "Notes on Reporting" for a definition of statistical significance as noted by "▼" and "▲."

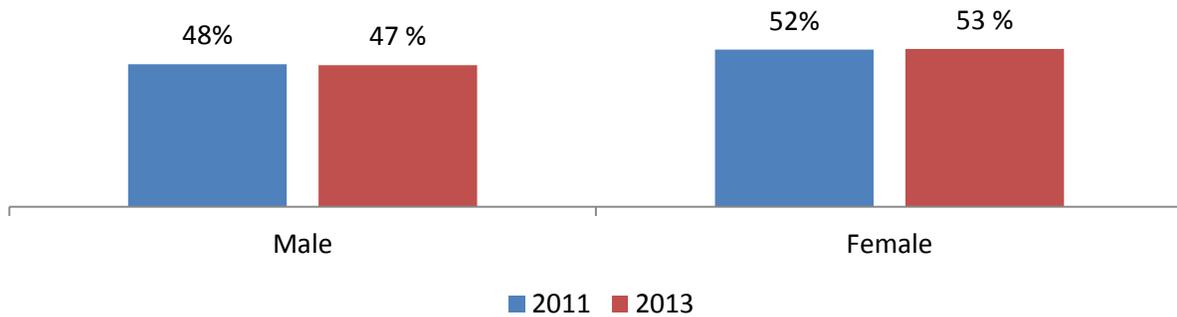
## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Age Range



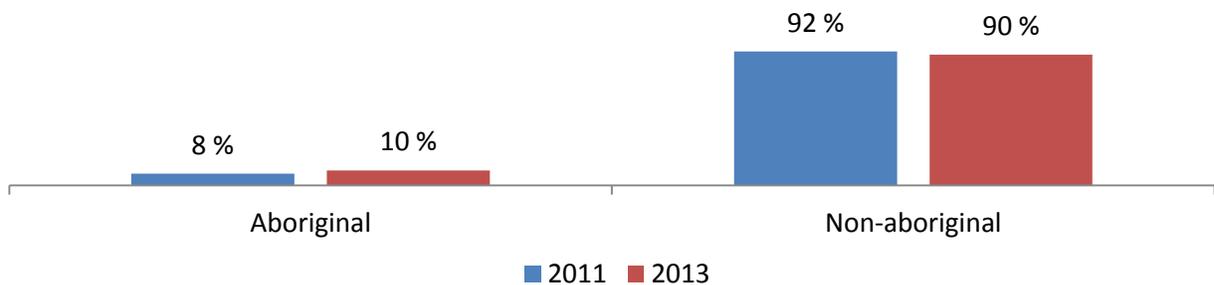
Q1. In what year were you born? Base: All respondents excluding "prefer not to say", 2011 n=590, 2013 n=602.

### Gender



Q2. Please indicate your gender. Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

### Aboriginal Ancestry



Q5. Do you consider yourself to be of Aboriginal ancestry? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

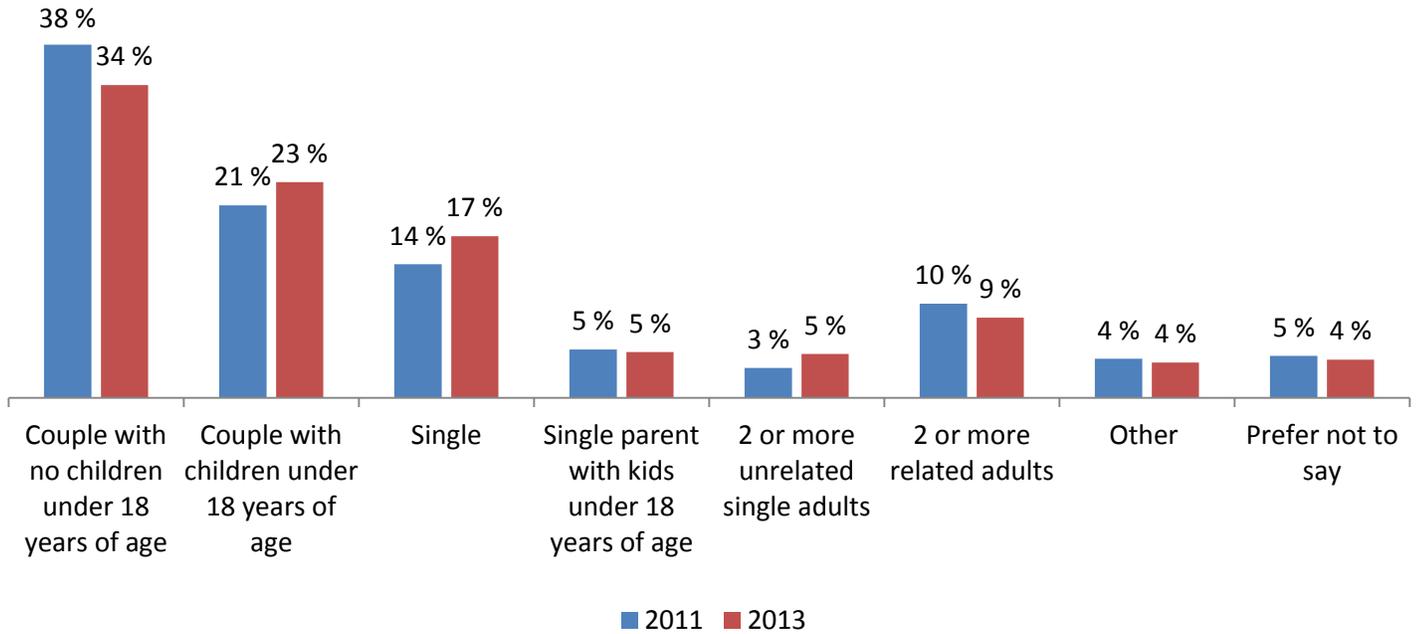
## Neighbourhood

<b>East Side</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Nutana	27	4 %
Lakeview	20	3 %
Wildwood	20	3 %
Sutherland	19	3 %
Forest Grove	18	3 %
College Park	17	3 %
Eastview	15	2 %
Stonebridge	13	2 %
Erindale	12	2 %
Holliston	12	2 %
Adelaide Churchill	11	2 %
Lakeridge	11	2 %
Nutana Park	11	2 %
Briarwood	10	2 %
College Park East	10	2 %
Avalon	9	1 %
Buena Vista	9	1 %
Lakewood S.C.	9	1 %
Haultain	8	1 %
Silverspring	8	1 %
Varsity View	8	1 %
Willowgrove	8	1 %
Grosvenor Park	7	1 %
Arbor Creek	5	1 %
Brevoort Park	5	1 %
Greystone Heights	5	1 %
Evergreen	4	1 %
University of Saskatchewan Management Area	3	1 %
Exhibition	2	<1%
Queen Elizabeth	2	<1%
University Heights S.C.	2	<1%
Rosewood	2	<1%
Nutana S.C.	1	<1%
The Willows	1	<1%
University Heights Development Area	1	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	

<b>West Side</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Silverwood Heights	33	5 %
Lawson Heights	22	4 %
City Park	17	3 %
Confederation Park	17	3 %
Fairhaven	17	3 %
River Heights	16	3 %
Caswell Hill	15	2 %
Mount Royal	15	2 %
Westview	13	2 %
Dundonald	12	2 %
Pacific Heights	12	2 %
Parkridge	12	2 %
Hampton Village	11	2 %
Westmount	11	2 %
Central Business District	10	2 %
Massey Place	9	1 %
Holiday Park	8	1 %
Exhibition	7	1 %
Montgomery Place	6	1 %
Pleasant Hill	6	1 %
Blairmore Development Area	5	1 %
Hudson Bay Park	5	1 %
King George	5	1 %
Riversdale	5	1 %
Mayfair	4	1 %
Meadowgreen	4	1 %
Buena Vista	3	1 %
Kelsey Woodlawn	2	<1%
Lawson Heights S.C.	2	<1%
Nutana	2	<1%
Richmond Heights	2	<1%
Blairmore S.C.	1	<1%
Marquis Industrial	1	<1%
North Park	1	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>311</b>	

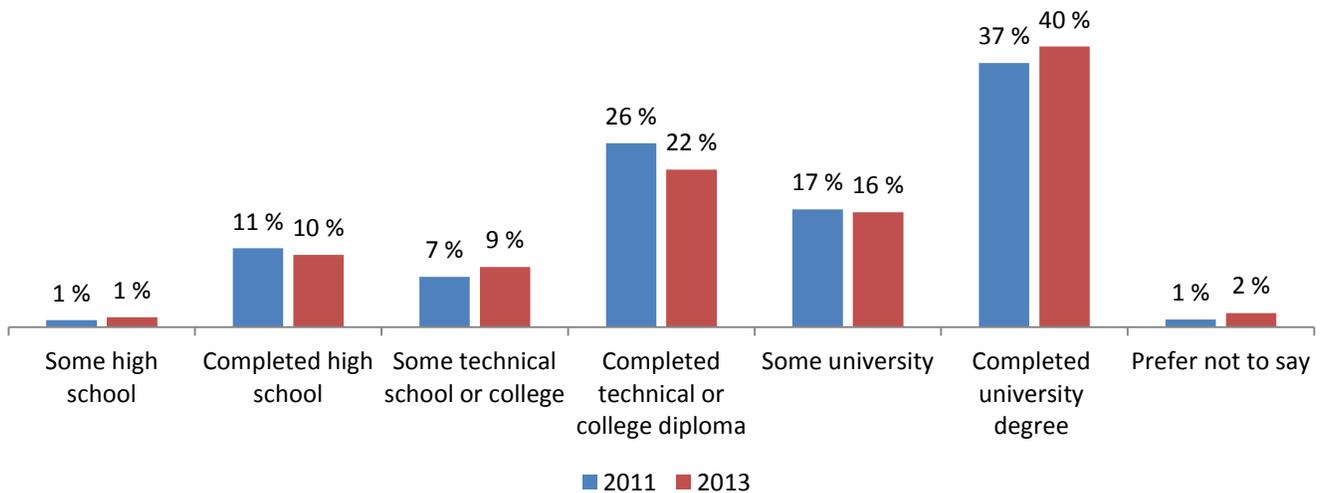
Q31. What specific neighborhood do you live in? Base: All respondents, n=636.

## Household



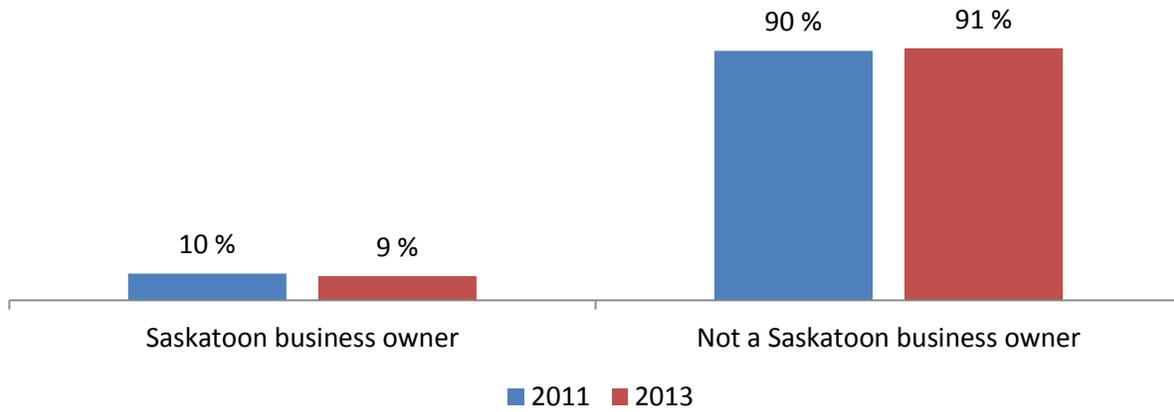
Q32. Which of the following best describes your household? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

## Education



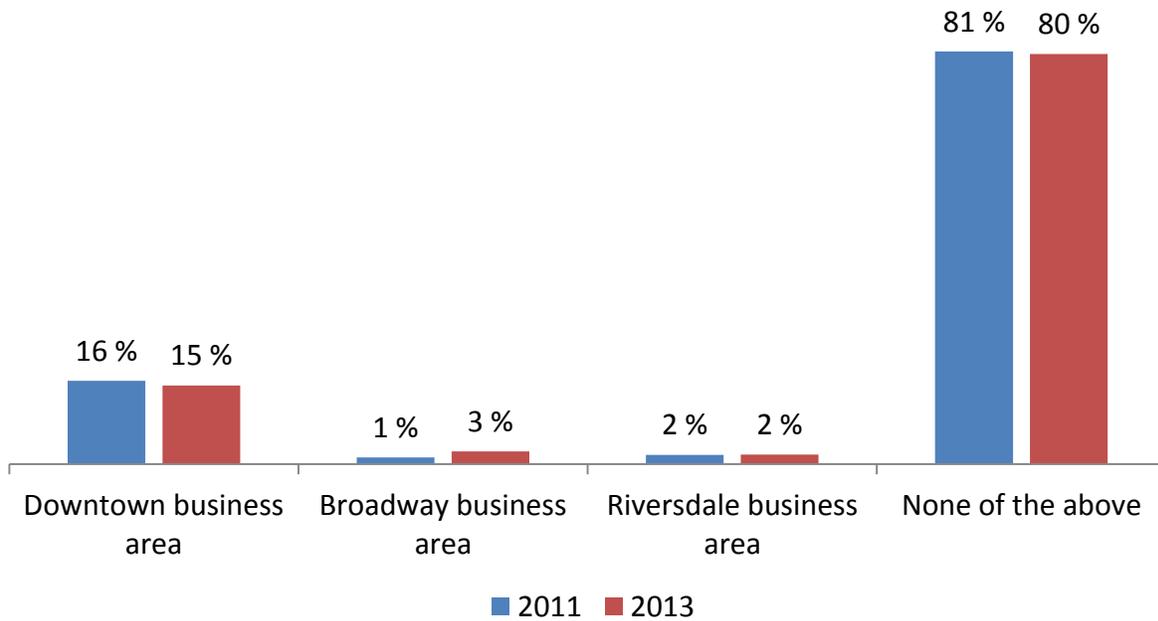
Q33. What is the highest level of education you have completed? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

### Business Ownership



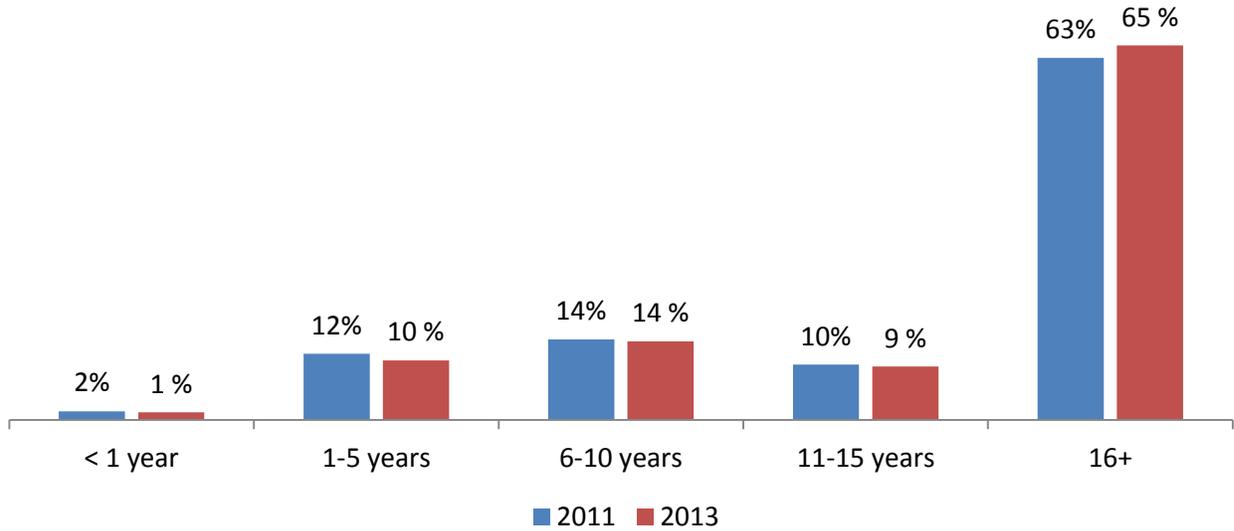
Q34. Do you own a business in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

### Work Location



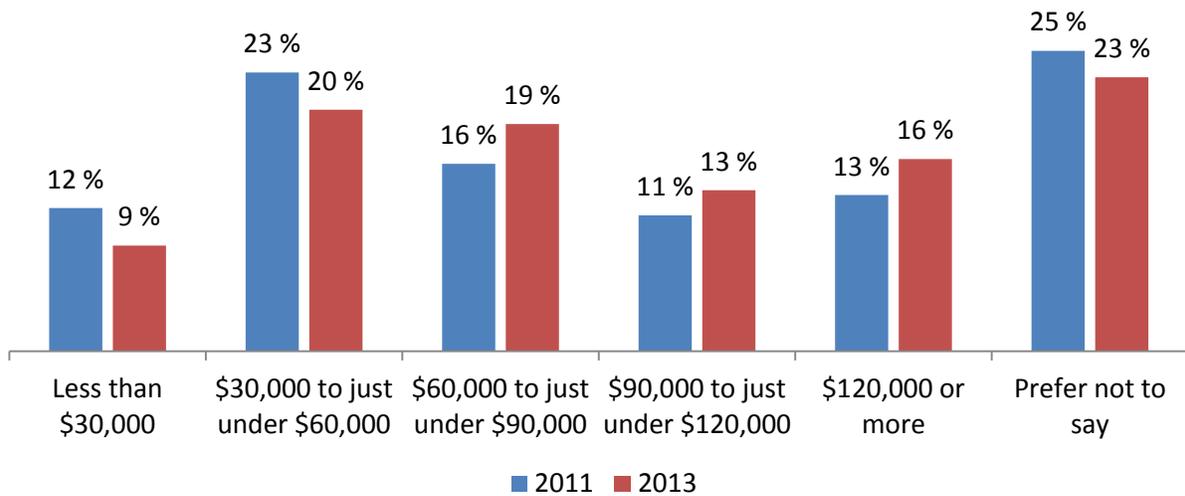
Q35. Do you work in any of the following areas? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

### Length Lived in Saskatoon



Q36. How long have you lived in Saskatoon? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

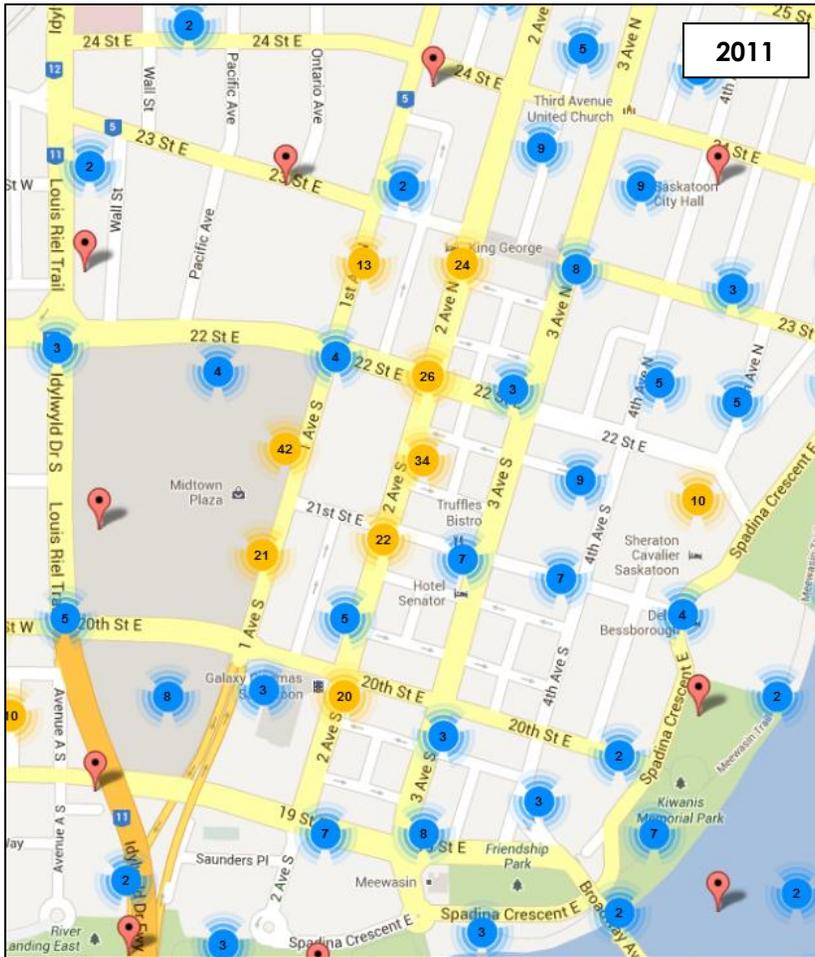
### Household Income



Q37. Into which range does your annual household income fall? Base: All respondents, 2011 n=621, 2013 n=636.

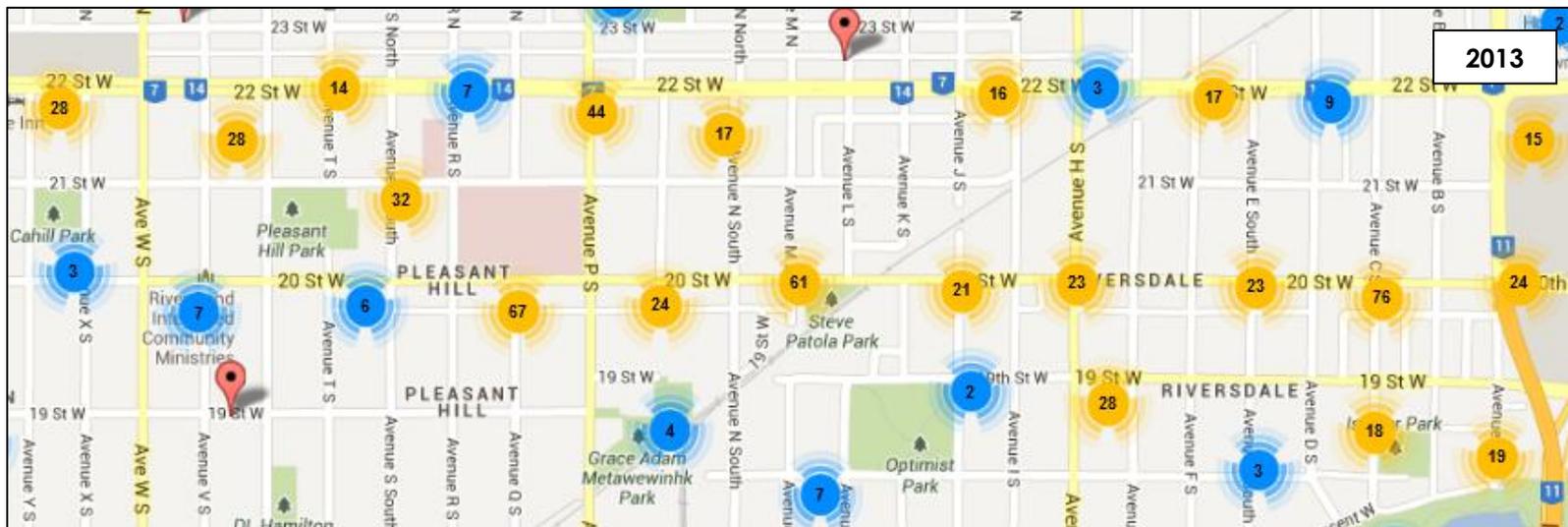
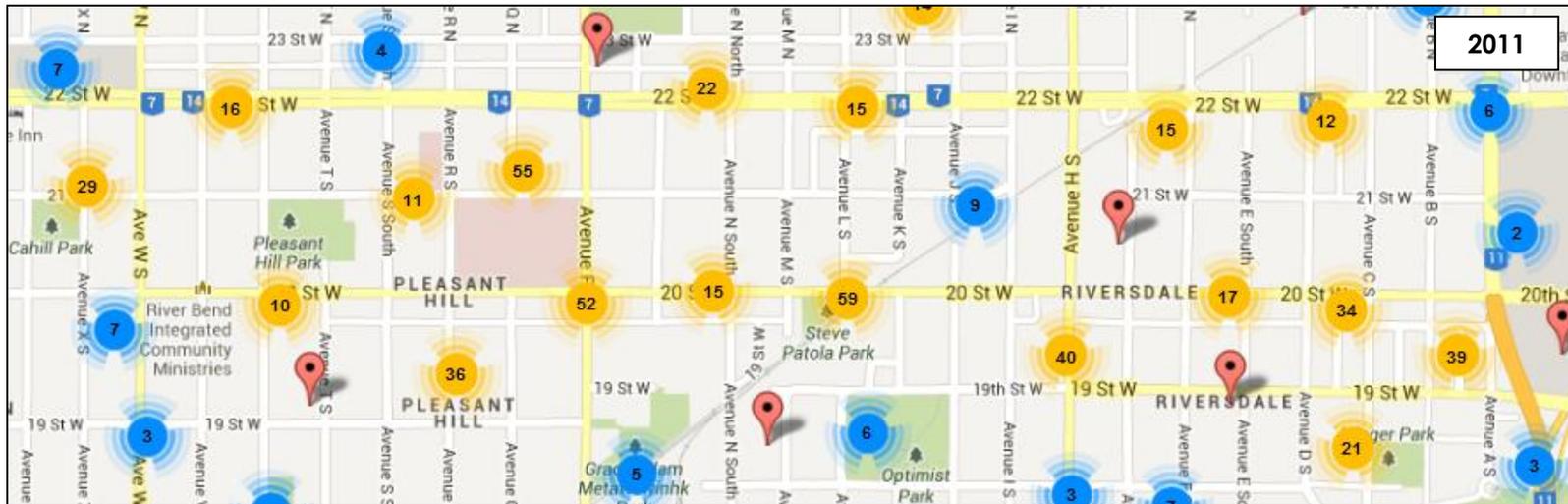
## **Appendix: Street Activity Location Comparison by Year**

## Street Activity - Downtown





**Street Activity - Riversdale**



# INTERCEPT INTERVIEWS



# General Public Intercepts

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In order to examine the general public’s perceptions of the area, the street activity they had witnessed, and awareness levels and views of the CSP, Insightrix interviewers conducted intercept interviews with the general public in each of the three BIDs.

## Downtown

For the most part, Downtown Saskatoon is seen as a nice, clean place with lots of good options for shopping and eating. Some noted issues include traffic and parking, with some specifically mentioning fights, loitering, and panhandling.

Street activity in the area is primarily seen as having decreased as compared to the previous two years, with some commenting that the closure of the McDonald’s and Olympia restaurants has had a large impact on reducing activity in the area. There are some comments about fights and activity in other places on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, with the possibility being raised of the negative activity that used to be around the restaurants having simply moved down the street.

Panhandling is still seen as being prevalent in the area, but it is generally not considered as a barrier to where people would go or shop in the area. At worst, people interviewed referred to panhandlers as “annoying” and “creepy.”

Among those interviewed, awareness of the CSP by name was low and remained low even after interviewers described the program and showed a picture. Even those who had seen the CSP Officers around tended to be unsure of exactly what they did and whether or not they had any impact. Most people liked the idea of the program, believing it to be beneficial to both vulnerable persons on the street, as well as to businesses in the area.

### Area Likes – Verbatim Comments

Busses are good, lots of banks nearby. The city is clean and the people are friendly.
It’s a beautiful city.
It’s nice, a main part of the city.
I like the little shops. They’re different from fifteen years ago.

I live close by.
I like walking in the area. I don't shop much, but I come here to eat and drink.
I like the benches.
Easy to walk around. Good selection of business for shopping and food.
I like the restaurants and shopping. The diversity is nice.
Diversity and culture.
I like all the festivals. It's a positive influence and brings people downtown.
All the new bars and restaurants. The sidewalk sale.
I like the architecture and the access to the river.
Cleaner than Regina, friendly people.
It's a good pace to come and shop.
It's relatively safe.
Shopping.
Lots to see and do.
Nice and clean and well taken care of.
It's the epicentre of Saskatoon.

### **Area Dislikes – Verbatim Comments**

No parking.
This area is too busy. The roads aren't good and there is a lack of public washrooms.
Drugs and alcohol cause problems.
It bothers me when people have hats out asking for money. I don't have much.
Lots of fights on 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue between 21 <sup>st</sup> Street and 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street. I stay away from downtown because it's a rough area.
Parking.
Problems with people fighting and arguing on 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue between 21 <sup>st</sup> Street and 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street.
Heavy traffic on 2 <sup>nd</sup> .
All the kids downtown. I tell people to avoid this area.
Panhandling and the ignorance that comes with it. People looking down on others.
I was assaulted in broad daylight.
Dangerous people.
Feels congested, poor parking, poor transit system.
The roads are awful.
Poor transit and parking.
I wouldn't recommend coming down at night due to safety issues.

## Street Activity Seen – Verbatim Comments

Not much in the past few years.
Lots of panhandlers make it look rundown.
Busking is at least earning some money.
They are always by the mall. Someone asked for change and when I said I didn't have any. He called me a liar. I showed him and he apologized. I give them respect.
Lots of musicians.
All over the place. Hasn't changed over the past few years. You see the odd drunk.
A lot of people on the streets have addictions. If I have spare change I will help them.
The panhandlers are ok.
A lot of people ask for change. I'll give it if I have it.
It's an infinitely better place than it was five years ago. You used to always get accosted. I think many people still think it's a bad area even though that isn't true anymore.
Better now. People used to avoid the area because of the crowds around McDonald's and the Olympia.
Quite a bit of panhandling, but its better now that McDonald's has closed. The evening is dangerous.
Has improved over the past few years. Less people living on the street.
There are some panhandlers and homeless people, but they don't bother me. I prefer buskers because they perform a service.
I don't care for the beggars and panhandlers, but I appreciate the buskers. Panhandling was worse two years ago.
Makes me uncomfortable when they are too aggressive.
Buskers are less intrusive. They give you a product for the money you give them.
Street activity doesn't influence me.
I see it by the mall a lot, but it doesn't influence where I go. Panhandlers used to be more aggressive. Buskers are at least providing music, not just begging.
People loitering. It never looks good. You're automatically suspicious.
The downtown association wants to get rid of all panhandlers, which I don't agree with.
Sometimes influences where I go.
Lots of amenities and a nice atmosphere.
I see lots of panhandlers, but it doesn't influence me. Poverty is an issue and it's becoming more prevalent.
Panhandling is worse than busking.
There are panhandlers on every corner. I lost \$7 just coming here.

Panhandlers are a bit creepy and annoying. It tends to test your patience. I'm glad McDonald's closed. It's slowly getting better.

### Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments

They should hand out gift cards.

Have them at night and where people might need them, by bus malls or hospitals.

I've seen them, but I'm not sure what they do.

They talk to people with problems.

It's a good idea. Helps businesses deal with street activity.

I think it's a great idea. Provides help for the people who need it and cleans up the area.

I like the idea of supporting people who need it. I suspect it would have a positive impact.

Anything you can do to help people in need is a good thing.

I don't know much about it, other than they try to help those that are panhandling. I don't know about the impact. I keep seeing the same people asking for money.

I think it would be a positive thing.

I think they've had an impact, but I'm not sure.

I think they could spend less time on jaywalking and more time on reaching out to the people who are panhandling. I haven't seen an impact.

I've heard of it, but I don't know what it does.

I question the effectiveness because they're wearing uniforms and people who need the services stay away from uniforms.

I'm not sure of the impact. This interview is the first I've ever heard of them.

I have heard of them. They are an association that support people, but I don't know much more than that.

I haven't seen them here, but I've seen them in Riversdale where I live. I'm not sure what they do.

I'm familiar with the program. I've seen them in the bus terminal and on 2<sup>nd</sup> avenue. They've helped clean that up.

I've seen them downtown, but I don't know what they do.

I saw them helping someone during the winter.

### Broadway

The Broadway area is seen as being a vibrant place with a unique atmosphere. People enjoy the feel of the area, as well as the shopping and festivals.

Dislikes include issues with parking and traffic, as well as some issues related to the bars and festivals, such as noise, garbage, intoxicated people, and the occasional street fight.

The area is perceived as having a low amount of panhandling but a comparatively high number of buskers who are, for the most part, appreciated and seen as being a part of the atmosphere and character. A common thought is that busking is fun entertainment, but panhandling is just begging without providing a service.

Like in the responses regarding Downtown, awareness of the CSP is very low. Some people have seen the officers in the area but are not sure what they do. Once interviewers provide a description of the program, support is high, as most think the idea of the program is good. Some suspect that the program must be having an impact, as it would account for them having seen fewer panhandlers in the area than in the past few years.

**Area Likes – Verbatim Comments**

Wide variety of people, stores and activities.
Lots of people.
A lot of character and friendly people.
Trendy.
I like all the stores and the atmosphere. The Fringe is fun.
Shopping. I like all the trees as well. Not a lot of crime.
The trendy shops.
Broadway is unique and different from the rest of the city.
I love the Fringe.
I like the eccentricity of the area, the sidewalk sales and the street performers.
Pedestrian friendly, shops unique to the area.
Awesome people everywhere.
Close to everything. This is the best area in the city for working and my daily commute.
Lots of activity. Festivals, patios, music. Nice area to shop and work in.
Friendly atmosphere, nice place to grab a drink.
Fringe festival and the diversity of the neighbourhood.
Lots of interaction on the street. People are smiling and happy.
Peaceful and handy for shopping. A nice area with few safety concerns.
I like the history of the area.
I've lived here for 12 years. I wouldn't still be here if I didn't love it.

You get a variety of people. It's kind of funky.

You always see people you know.

I feel safe here.

### **Area Dislikes – Verbatim Comments**

Bar noise after hours.

Drunk people at night.

My biggest problem is parking.

Parking is an issue.

When they shut down the Victoria bridge, traffic got more congested.

Parking is limited.

Panhandlers.

People drive too fast through here.

The buildings need some upgrades and renovations.

Parking.

Too many potholes.

Skateboarders.

Increased traffic since Victoria bridge closed.

Traffic is too heavy in this area.

Drunk people.

Night time sucks; Drugs, fights, brawls.

The traffic doesn't pay attention to the pedestrians.

Dirty in the morning. I don't like being woken up by drunks.

### **Street Activity Seen – Verbatim Comments**

I've seen buskers, but nobody panhandling.

Seems to be more homeless people than before. The area is ok in the day, but not so much at night.

I love all the buskers.

I've seen a few homeless people but not panhandling. Busking adds culture, while panhandling takes it away.

I see buskers and panhandlers occasionally. It would affect where I went if there were more of them. Busking is entertainment, panhandling is just begging.

Haven't seen much, but we're from Vancouver, so we're used to it. I would say panhandling is a turn off to businesses.

Panhandlers don't influence us, but it reflects poorly. It used to be worse, though and it's not terrible now. We appreciate the people playing for money; they aren't in your face like panhandlers.

I've seen panhandlers on Broadway, but they don't bother me.
Buskers and panhandlers are in every city.
Panhandlers are cheap, good entertainment.
You don't see many panhandlers here.
Buskers contribute to the area.
I've noticed fewer beggars over the past few years.
Panhandling near bars, some busking. I think busking is positive for the area, but panhandling is bad. Haven't seen as many panhandlers as I did in the past.
Loitering is annoying, but not really serious.
There are far fewer panhandlers in the area now. I used to get accosted all the time.
Rarely see things here. More activity downtown.
Buskers are fun. Panhandlers aren't fun.
I see buskers near Broadway and 10 <sup>th</sup> Street. Busking is a way of earning money.
You see a few things here and there, but not like Downtown.
I mostly see things around Broadway and Main street.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

I haven't seen them here, but I have seen them in Riversdale.
I like the sound of it, but I haven't heard of it before.
Now that I've seen the picture I realize I've heard of them. It's good that they are helping people.
I've seen them, but only in passing. I don't know much about it.
I know of it, but I don't know much.
I've seen them, but am not familiar with the program.
We have something similar in Vancouver, but I haven't seen them here.
I've seen them, but have never talked to them.
I've seen them, but I have no idea if they've had an impact or not.
The program makes people feel safe, but I'm not sure of the actual impact.
Yes, I've seen them around. It's good because it gives help to people while protecting business interests. I think it's had an impact, because I've seen far less panhandling.
I haven't heard of it, but it might explain why I've seen fewer panhandlers around.
I think it has an impact as it deters panhandling.
I've seen them. I wasn't sure what they were. Sounds like a good idea. Gives people help and access to services while helping businesses and minimizing police presence.

I'm sure they are good value because it deters people from doing bad activities. Just their presence is a good service.
I saw them yesterday. It seems like a good idea.
I love it. I've talked to them and think it will be a big help, keep it going.
I've seen them around, but I'm not sure what they do.
I saw them in Riversdale. I think it's a really good idea.
I see them sometimes. Don't know what they do.
I think they are great for emergencies. They make you feel safe.

**Riversdale**

As with Downtown and Broadway, Riversdale is seen as having a unique atmosphere. The area is seen as being a good place to shop, with a growing coffee shop and restaurant industry. Diversity and culture are also seen as being strengths of the area with some indicating the area has a community feel. People also like how the area is growing and being renovated.

More serious street activity is noted in Riversdale as compared to the other BIDs. Reference is made to drugs, gangs, and prostitution, with some saying that the area is especially dangerous at night. Panhandling is commonly seen, but it is not generally noted as a big problem.

Riversdale residents tend to feel that the area gets a bad name but does not deserve it. One non-resident's comment, "I'm not from here but I know what's going on. I don't need to see it", seems to emphasize this point.

Again, awareness of the CSP among the general public is low in this area, but people generally like the idea of the program. There is some reference made to the area being better than it has been in the past due to the presence of the CSP Officers and that the officers have been well-received.

**Area Likes – Verbatim Comments**

Convenient shopping.
I like this area, as well as most of Riversdale.
Amenities are good, hospitals are close by.
I know the area.
The area is starting to look good. They're fixing it up.
Friendship Inn, church

I have lots of friends here.
Large variety of shops.
Lots of services available for free. Know everyone by name.
Food. Friendship Inn. Parks.
The stores, the cafes, and the theatre are good.
There is a lot of diversity and art activity.
Farmers market.
The area has a very friendly feel to it. I think it has developed well and has a cultural feel to it.
Strong food culture. Store fronts are starting to clean up and the area is becoming a better place.
I like the renewed feel of the area. Very cultural mix of people and businesses.
At one point in time it wasn't the place to come, but now it's better.
I would tell people it's not as bad as it's made out to be.
I know everyone and everyone likes me.
The swimming pool and the people.
I like the coffee shops and restaurants, and that it's close to downtown. The winter festival was fun.
The markets and the riverbank.
I love the community atmosphere. Good access to the river. The farmers market and the parks.
Nice views, nice old buildings.

### **Area Dislikes – Verbatim Comments**

Noise and fighting.
People doing drugs.
Don't like this area. Lots of fighting and drug dealers. Don't like to bring the kids.
I don't like hookers. A lot of people on drugs. All the perverts out there. It makes it a bad area.
Not enough malls, too much racism.
Very frightening at times. A lot of vandalism and scary people.
Kids wandering around late at night.
Too many gang members and kids hanging around late at night.
Crime, pollution, murders. People are hostile.
Drugs. Starving families that don't have proper homes.
Not well taken care of.
Drugs. The violence. Cops either don't come or they overreact.
Lots of booze around.
Rough area, too many drugs. People selling stolen stuff.

Dislike parking in the area in the evening.
Rowdy people.
Still run down in parts and needs more work.
A bit busy with the traffic.
Drugs and needles.
Panhandling and busking make the area look pretty bad because people think all panhandlers are drug addicts or drunks.
Rude people who try to act tough and want to fight.
I don't like the working girls out walking. I give them condoms to help them out.
Panhandlers.
It has a bad crowd. You never know when you're going to get jumped. Police should drive around more.
Druggies and needles.
I don't like being here late at night. It's dangerous.
19 <sup>th</sup> is a bit unsafe, traffic moves too fast.

### **Street Activity Seen – Verbatim Comments**

I see panhandlers almost every other day. Usually around Avenue H and F, and around the liquor store.
A lot of violence, stabbings and fighting. I see panhandlers sometimes. Doesn't influence where I go because I live here.
Panhandlers all over the place, same as always.
Fights.
Gang activities. It's not good for families.
Many panhandlers everywhere. I've seen dirty needles around.
This is 20 <sup>th</sup> street. This is where the working girls are. Also drug dealing. It makes it look bad. I saw a lady panhandling with two kids. It's not right.
I have seen panhandlers by the liquor store, but it doesn't influence where I go.
People having sex on a mattress on the street, injecting drugs on the street, panhandling.
You see drunk guys all the time.
You see panhandlers by the liquor store. It makes a difference where I go.
All you see are negative people.
I live in the area and it's not as bad as you think.
It's more downtown. Less here than two years ago.
People sitting, mingling, shouting, spitting, sleeping. It has negative impressions, which makes it a place you don't want to go.
Things are changing for the better but illegal activities need to be addressed.
I've seen some panhandling. It makes me uncomfortable, but wouldn't deter me from coming to the area.

I think there are drug deals that happen, but I haven't seen any.
The area has revitalized in the past two years. It's friendlier and cleaner.
No, you saw them two years ago.
I see them all over, but they don't bother me.
Violence, drug activity, girls working across the street, getting jumped.
Johns picking up dates. Sometimes they think I'm a working girl.
I won't go for walks because of everything I see around here.
I'm not from here, but I know what's going on. I don't need to see it.
I see panhandlers by the liquor store. They should move it.
It's a nicer place than two years ago. I've noticed a couple patios in the past year. More people having coffee on benches.
Mostly around the liquor store.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

I've heard of it, but don't know about the impact.
I saw them earlier today. They have a van.
Pretty familiar. I have talked to the one girl in the picture.
I've seen them downtown. It has an impact in that it intimidates the panhandlers.
I'm familiar with them. I've seen them on 20 <sup>th</sup> . I think they help people.
It's good. They keep the streets quiet when they're walking around. They've had an impact. Not sure about drug dealers, but the hookers have quieted down.
They seem intimidated by the general public and act like they don't care. Seem underequipped and lack knowledge for the type of work they do. They've had no impact at all.
I like them, they're good to people. Not sure if they've had an impact.
They hardly come around here.
It's a good program, but they are small and just walk around. Can't do anything.
Sounds like a good idea. I think it would have a positive impact.
I've seen them around. It probably has a positive impact because it would deter illegal street activity.
Seems like a good idea.
Yes, I think it helps to supervise the area and help people in need. It tends to be a street where homeless people in need gather.
It's a good idea, but where are they when I need them? I don't think they've had an impact.
I've seen them walking. They are like security guards. They said hi to me and asked how I was doing.

Yes, it's a great program. It helps people and businesses and is less threatening to those in need. I find the cops are too aggressive in this city.

# Business Intercepts

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Along with the general public intercept interviews, Insightrix interviewers also spoke to businesses in each of the three BIDs to gather impressions of street activity, its impact on the business, and awareness of the CSP.

## Downtown

Businesses Downtown were very positive in regards to the various sidewalk sales and festivals held there. Some mention issues related to road closures; however, businesses find the activities create a sense of community in the area and bring in more customers. Negative street activity is mostly limited to loitering and panhandling.

The closure of the McDonald's and Olympia restaurants on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue has had a big impact with some businesses saying that activity has dropped significantly. Others say that, while it may have dropped at that corner specifically, it has likely dispersed to other places in the downtown area.

Panhandling is an issue in the area, with customers sometimes mentioning to business that they are uncomfortable or afraid. Some businesses believe that panhandling has decreased over the last few years.

Awareness of the CSP is much higher among businesses than the general public. Some businesses even mentioned the program to the interviewers before being asked about it. Many have seen the officers, some have met them, and some have had an occasion to call them with an issue. There is some skepticism, however, regarding the officers' authority or ability to deal with problems encountered on the street.

Overall, businesses in the Downtown area believe the program is valuable but are not sure of the impact yet. One mentioned that, since the program began, he has not had any problems with panhandling. Another said he had not seen an impact yet but noted that the program was only a year old and it was too early to tell.

### **Street Activity in Area – Verbatim Comments**

Sidewalk sales are good.
Busking and loitering are negative. The sidewalk sales are good.
Street festivals and sidewalk sales. Have also seen busking, panhandling, public drunkenness, and public drug use.
A couple people just hanging around.
A lot of panhandling. Sidewalk sales are nice.
Sidewalk sales and busking.
Stealing and drinking.
Quite a bit of loitering, drug deals in the parking lot. Panhandlers. Since McDonalds closed there is less loitering.
A bit of loitering and panhandlers.
Busking and panhandlers.
Panhandling.
Sidewalk sale and cruise weekend make sales go up. No loitering or negative problems.
People asking for cigarettes at the bus stop outside.
Sales and festivals are good. Aggressive skateboarding causes problems for pedestrians. A couple of buskers around, but they're not very good.
Loitering and panhandlers. Events like sidewalk sales and festivals improve business and encourage a sense of community.
Sidewalk sales, parades, Taste of Saskatchewan, Jazzfest, create traffic and buzz.
Yelling, screaming, ambulance and police. All of those are frequent.

### **Impact of Street Activity on Business – Verbatim Comments**

Panhandling doesn't really affect us. Haven't really seen any changes over the past few years. Some people don't want come downtown later so we close earlier.
They came in and asked for a bit of change. Got a bit upset, but left. Customers don't really comment on it. Had to call police for drunk and violent people.
Some customers don't like coming downtown because of the panhandlers. Sometimes customers say downtown is overcrowded and dirty.
Panhandlers don't bother us. Things have been about the same over the past few years.
It scares the customers. People are sometimes unwilling to come in. We report things to the police about twice a month.
It's not quite as prevalent as it was in past years. Customers say they don't like the panhandling. We've seen drug dealing on the bench in front of the store.
We report things to the police about once or twice a week. Problem tends to

be gone by the time police arrive. Since McDonald's has closed, people have moved over here in groups.

At night, people don't want to use our ATM.

It deters customers if they are in the entryway.

Sometime we have to kick people out.

It keeps people away. They get pushy and scare customers.

Panhandlers make people nervous when they are around our door.

Last year we had issues with people coming in and asking to clean the windows.

We used to get panhandlers when the King George and Olympia were open, but it's changed since then. I think it was more of an issue at night.

In the past people complained about panhandlers, but none have this summer. It's definitely better than in the past two years. I don't know where they've gone, but they're not here.

I notice nobody loiters around the McDonalds anymore, but they seem to have moved further down 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. They make me uncomfortable and I cross the street to avoid them.

Nobody can get into the shop to do business.

Someone came in and stole our toilet paper once. We've also had a couple of bikes stolen.

Business has improved 50% since McDonalds closed. McDonald's was the problem. I was assaulted twice, but less than 10% of panhandlers are a problem.

Panhandling discourages customers from coming in. It's increased in our area.

People feel uncomfortable with that kind of activity.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

They're doing a great job. They're friendly and talk to panhandlers, which is good because it can get a bit scary. They have cleaned up downtown.

I think it's great. Makes employment opportunities and takes away stress from the police. It makes Saskatoon safer. It would be nice to know how to reach them.

I've seen them, but I don't know what they do.

Panhandlers aren't scared of the support program. They have no authority. They just talk and can't do anything.

It's a very good program. They are very competent. It hasn't had an impact on my business yet, but keep up the good work.

It would be great to have people here to be secure. Police don't come soon enough.

We've reported things to the Community Support Officers. They have a prompt response. You notice their presence, it's great. It has helped with the loitering,

they know repeat offenders.
They would be who we first call if we had a problem.
It's not very effective. It doesn't address the problems. They're nice. I don't think it's had much impact. Maybe less loitering.
I like it. Their presence deters shoplifters and panhandlers. It keeps riff raff out of the store and helps the police deal with minor issues. I'd like to see it become permanent and be around more in the summer.
It's a great program. It's made some difference, them being out there.
Haven't heard of it, but it's definitely a good idea. We'd also like to note that we've had no issues with the Lighthouse being across the street.
Since the Community Support Officers started, I haven't noticed any problems with panhandling.
It absolutely has had an impact. I love the program. Doesn't use up police resources for annoyances. The officers have the authority and social service skills to deal with these things.
I haven't used it, but I feel comfortable that it's available.
It's a good idea, but I don't know who they are.
No, but it's a good idea. Especially in the evenings when it's sketchier. I hope we see them around.
It's too early to tell, it's only been a year. It's a good idea, but it's going to take time to see how effective it is. Communication is going to be key to its success. They came in and told me about their philosophy and approach.
Have they been here and given the best advice they can based on the resources they have? Yes. Have they had an impact on our business? Not really. I admire and am thankful for the program, but the direction has to have a stronger focus before there will be any visible effort.
I don't think they are taken very seriously. It's nice to have around, but their role hasn't been clearly defined and I note no change with our issues. They are nice enough, but their authority is limited and often mocked.
I've had to call the Community Support Program about a panhandler who was then arrested. He was firing a cap gun at everyone. The officers are good, but I wish they would come faster when we call.
Yes, I see them walking by. I like it. It seems that things happen a little less when they are around. I've never met them.

## Broadway

When asked about the kinds of street activity seen or experienced in the area, businesses in the Broadway area are much more likely to mention the various festivals that occur in the area than negative street activity. Some indicate that there are some negatives associated with the festivals (intoxication, noise, and garbage) but for the most part feel they add to the atmosphere and identity of the area.

Businesses note that panhandling is not very prevalent in the area, but customers occasionally mention it and say that it is intimidating. A few businesses indicate that panhandling has increased over the years while some also noted that there are more homeless people present compared to previous years.

As with Downtown, businesses in the Broadway area are more likely than the public to be aware of the CSP. However, familiarity regarding program details is lower. Once given a description, most feel that the program is a good idea. The general belief is that, if the program has not already had an impact on the area, it likely will have an effect in the future.

### Street Activity in Area – Verbatim Comments

Used to have kids walking in the street and the back alley.
Festivals, fringe, street sales. Many homeless people, often drunk.
Fringe, street sales, buskers, homeless people, loitering, drunken antics.
Art festivals, fringe, street sales.
Street fairs, fringe, buskers, loitering
Art festival, fringe
Some drunk people.
Fringe, bar hoppers, lots of bar people, coffee shop goers.
Busking, loitering, festivals. Slower in the winter. Parking is an issue with festivals.
Kids hanging around after school.
Mostly buskers.
Parking.
Buskers. A lot of loitering.
Fringe, street fair, art encounter, busking, always kids loitering unless it's raining or too cold, panhandlers.
Sometime busking, begging, people doing paintings.
Street festivals, sidewalk sales, busking.
Seems to be more homeless people around.
Fringe, concerts at the theater.

Gets busy when the theater lets out.

### **Impact of Street Activity on Business – Verbatim Comments**

Doesn't really affect our business.

Homeless people often drunk and in the store, but it's not really a big deal. They have a cup of water and leave.

Homeless and drunk people come into the store and make people uncomfortable. Seems to be more homeless people around.

Not really. I've seen them around Broadway and 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Seems like we have fewer young people sleeping on the riverbank lately.

They're mostly around Broadway and 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Not so bad, just annoying.

Most of them know not to hang around out front. Sometimes there are drunk, rude people.

Customers like the buskers hanging around outside playing music. We've had kids doing drugs in the bathroom every now and again.

Parking is an issue with the fringe.

Sometimes people sit in front of the building.

Panhandlers deter customers. It's gotten worse over the past few years.

The panhandling doesn't seem to deter customers. They seem to move around a lot.

Cops drop in once a month or so, but we haven't had any problems.

People wander into the business when they see people performing outside. I've seen panhandlers on the corner by Broadway and 11<sup>th</sup> Street.

Panhandlers bug clients and sit on the plants. We report them about once a week.

Sometimes people come in and ask for free samples. It intimidates customers.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

I've seen them here, but more often Downtown and in Riversdale.

Don't know what they do outside of chat with homeless people. Do they have any authority?

I've heard of the program, but I don't know what they do.

I'm not sure it is the best. It seems like a large expense that could be invested elsewhere.

I've only heard them yelling at bikes to get off the sidewalk. Never met them. The program is good to have, maybe focus more on hood rats than bicycle people.

They look like cops too much. There is a stigma with that. They should hand out gift cards or coupons. They only have a small amount of authority. Not sure of

the impact.
I think I've seen them.
I don't know anything about them. It would be nice to meet them.
I've seen them downtown. It's a good idea, but I've never dealt with them.
They were polite, introduced themselves and gave us contact info. Asked if we had any concerns. They've been able to move panhandlers away from my store front.
Seems like a good idea.
I've met them. It's a good idea. We would contact them if we had problems, which happen fairly rarely.
It's a good idea. I like it because they work with people rather than threaten them. I also like that they don't carry weapons.
I like them. It has improved the community. It's good to know there are people we can call. Hasn't had an impact yet, but it probably will. It stops suspicious activities on the street.

## Riversdale

Businesses in the Riversdale area have witnessed a wide range of street activity. Some of these activities are comparatively less serious, such as panhandling and loitering, and some are more serious, such as drug use and dealing and prostitution. Despite this, a good portion feels that the area has been improving over the past few years. Mention is made of a change in area demographics, with more families and business-minded individuals moving in, as well as a decrease in the number of prostitutes in the area. Others say that the closure of the Barry and Albany hotels in previous years had a large impact on the area.

Businesses do not believe that street activity has a strong impact on their customers. Some customers mention they are uncomfortable with some of the activities they see, but businesses either ignore the activity or take care of it themselves by asking those involved in the activities to leave. One business person noted, "Activity does not really have an effect. If they need to come in, they come in."

As in the other two BIDs, awareness of the CSP among businesses in Riversdale is higher than among the general public. Similarly, knowledge of program details is weak. There are still some who have not met or seen the officers, but they indicate that they believe the program will be beneficial and look forward to meeting the officers.

### Street Activity in Area – Verbatim Comments

People walking by. I haven't seen good activities. Seen drug dealing and people fighting.
People biking, drug deals, fighting, bumming smokes, begging for money, hookers.
Prostitution and drug dealing are frequent.
People loitering, hookers.
Hookers and drugs.
Drugs, needles, foot traffic.
People asking for money.
A bit of loitering, but not much. If they extended the sidewalk sales out to my area, that would be nice.
Loitering and selling of drugs, prostitution, stolen goods. Intoxicated people daily.
I've had a couple people asking for money out front. Street festivals are nice.
I don't see a lot. Some people going through the garbage.
Drunk people.
Drug use.
Loitering.
Once in a while I get asked for money in the alleys by my business. The Barry Hotel closure changed everything.
Years back we had problems with drug dealing, but it's been fine for years. It's gotten far better in the last two.
Mostly good. Lots of families.
It's terrible. The cops don't do anything. We've had windows broken. It's gone to hell on 20 <sup>th</sup> street.

### Impact of Street Activity on Business – Verbatim Comments

Activity doesn't really have an effect. If people have to come in, they come in.
We get a lot of people who scam us or shoplift. Occasionally have customers who say they are scared of them.
It makes perceptions negative. Customers seldom mention. Odd that no one notices the hookers and drugs. Things have gotten a lot better. I've been here 16 years and I see a continual trend of improvement. I think it will continue to improve.
There are less hookers than a couple years ago. Things have gotten slightly better. There were no hookers when they had the police station on Avenue H ten years ago.
Most people just ignore things.
Have to clean vomit off the steps. Garbage and bottles around. Drugs were

more of an issue when we were on 20 <sup>th</sup> , but this new location is better.
Customers don't like people asking them for money. They say they are afraid to use our ATM at night. We have to call the police on occasion.
Occasionally an issue. We jump on it pretty quick.
It deters people from coming in. I do get the odd customer who complains about safety issues. I have to hire security and it affects my payroll.
We've been here three years and I've never seen any issues. Other business owners I've talked to say that since the Barry and Albany have closed down, the area has improved a lot.
Things are much better here. There's been a shift in people. More families and more business oriented people. Things are really good. This is a really good neighbourhood.
Sometimes drunk people come in and fall asleep on the chairs. We wake them up and send them out.
Panhandlers come in here. They interrupt when I'm talking to customers. I just ask them to leave.
Customers always mention the needles they see outside.
Sometimes people come in to try to steal things. People on drugs outside intimidate the customers.
Customers are constantly commenting on the things they see outside. I'm scared to come to work alone.
Panhandlers are here on a regular basis. They will approach and harass our customers. Customers are afraid and frustrated.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

I've heard people talking about the program. They support needy people in the community, I guess.
I think it's an ok program. I haven't met any. I would say it's had an impact on Saskatoon, but not on my business specifically.
It's a good thing. I've met them. I'm unsure of the impact, though.
Maybe I have met them. It probably has an impact. If someone's watching, people will move.
They're pretty good. They pick up needles and walk around. I met one lady and thought she was pretty good.
It's nice to have the officers in the area. I think people are aware there are people looking after our streets. I haven't noticed an impact.
This is the first I've heard of it.
I'm not familiar with them. I like the idea because they can act as a liaison with the community.
Seems like it would be a good program. I think they maybe came in and said hi once.

Today I saw one of the officers and they approached an individual. They seemed to know him. I think they have a good grasp of what's going on in the neighbourhood.

I've seen them downtown, but I don't think I've seen them over here. I think it has an impact.

I've never seen them here, but it would be nice if they made the rounds.

I think it's a good idea, but I haven't met the officers. I would think there would be an impact.

It's a good idea if they can move away the riff raff from in front of the business. It's probably had an impact, but I can't be sure, I've never seen them around my business.

I've seen them. They tend to work along 20<sup>th</sup> street for the most part. It would be good to let them be known a bit more. I've never met them.

I've seen them downtown, but not in this area. I don't know what they do.

We were introduced to them last year. It's the most useless crap. I thought it would be different, but they don't do anything.

I think they've reduced crime a lot in the area. They're very active.

I have not seen any officers and I don't remember ever being contacted and being made aware of this program.

# VULNERABLE PERSONS



# Vulnerable Persons

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In order to obtain a complete picture of street activity in Saskatoon, as well as the perspective of those who most commonly interact with the CSP Officers, it was important that those whom the program was designed to address were also consulted.

This was accomplished in two ways: through a focus group held at the Lighthouse Supported Living Shelter in Saskatoon and by interviewing vulnerable persons on the street when possible during the general public intercept interviews in the three BIDs.

## FOCUS GROUP

Insightrix worked with the Lighthouse to organize a focus group with residents and to ensure that the group contained a mix of different people and experiences. Participants included a mix of ages, genders and races. Additionally, the group included people who had been at the Lighthouse for various lengths of time, ranging from four days up to nineteen years.

Engagement was high and the people invited to participate in the group were very vocal and willing to share many details of their lives and experiences on the streets in Saskatoon. Held in the common kitchen area of the Lighthouse, the focus group conversation was interesting and lively enough that a number of additional residents pulled up chairs nearby in order to watch and listen to the proceedings themselves.

The group started with a general discussion of likes and dislikes about Saskatoon, followed by a series of more specific topics including the following:

- Feelings of safety in Saskatoon
- The “how” and “why” of panhandling in Saskatoon, as well as possible solutions
- Awareness and perceptions of the CSP

## Saskatoon – General Likes and Dislikes

### Likes

Those participating in the focus group indicated that they liked Saskatoon very much and spoke highly of the city and its residents. One participant of the group, who was in town from Ontario, said that he believed the people and police were nicer than back home.

#### *Verbatim Comments*

The people are really nice.
It's beautiful.
The people are friendly.
It's nice.
It has good Aboriginal and homeless programs, better than it did fifteen years ago.
The police don't bother you in the downtown core. They are more helpful and friendly than in Regina or Ontario. I've even seen officers give change to panhandlers and buskers. That reflects very positively on the city.
There are lots of activities here. That's nice.

### Dislikes

When asked what they disliked about Saskatoon, participants primarily discussed things that had an impact on their specific situation, such as having to subsist on a fixed or limited income, jobs for people with limited skills or disabilities, and affordable housing.

#### *Verbatim Comments*

The welfare system.
All the traffic. It's hard to get out of town.
No bus service for people on a fixed income. There should be a shuttle service, either free or for a donation, which has pre-set stops. That would be beneficial.
There aren't enough job opportunities for people with mental illness.
Housing is an issue.
Need more affordable housing.

## Safety in the City

For the most part, residents of the Lighthouse feel safe in Saskatoon. Mention was made of the downtown core being very safe, especially as compared with other cities in Canada. This feeling of safety is specific to the daytime, as participants indicated that being on the streets at night was far less safe and that a lot of gangs were out and about at this time.

Another point noted is that those living in poverty in Saskatoon function almost as a community unto itself and people watch out for and help one another when possible.

The least safe areas of Saskatoon were identified by Lighthouse residents as the west side of the city and 20<sup>th</sup> Street in particular.

### *Verbatim Comments*

The Lighthouse is a safe place.
We're in a good neighbourhood here at the Lighthouse.
For a downtown, yeah, this is very safe. You would think people with issues would be more vengeful, but they are not. People, especially those living in poverty, are more communal. We're safer amongst ourselves. Everyone watches out for one another.
When you don't have a place to stay and are on the street, you might have an issue, but that's rare.
If you abuse you could get into trouble, but if you're not drinking you should be ok.
I don't feel safe on the west side.
20 <sup>th</sup> street is the least safe place.
Yeah, 20 <sup>th</sup> street is unsafe between about 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.
Around here, there are a lot of gangs out at night.

## Panhandling in Saskatoon

### Reasons and Experiences

Participants had all panhandled in the past and most said they would continue to do so in the future.

The main reasons for doing so included buying food and paying for shelter, but participants were also quite open in admitting that feeding addictions was also a key reason for panhandling.

#### *Verbatim Comments*

I do it when I'm broke, to get a hamburger or a coffee.
It's especially important in the winter when the shelters are full. I do it just enough to get a room.
Some of us have addictions, but nine times out of ten it's done for food and shelter, just to live.
Addictions.
Some businesses accept us, but 60-75% will ask you to leave or move. Others don't mind.
Most people treat us well.
Sometimes people give us food, sometimes a church will invite us in for food.
Sometimes I get \$20.
I sometimes get \$100.
In Toronto I made over \$360 in three hours. Enough for a hotel room and a couple of meals.
I look after my stomach first and then money goes toward habits.

### Panhandling Negatives

Even though participants said that Saskatoon is a nice place to panhandle and residents are mostly kind to them, they have had some negative experiences and do not particularly enjoy having to panhandle.

#### *Verbatim Comments*

The weather is a big issue.
I don't like being told to get a job.
Some people will curse at you and call you a bum. They don't know you on a

personal level; they just look at you as an inconvenience. We're people too.  
You can't panhandle in the rain.  
All the waiting is hard.  
It's not very nice in the winter.  
Pride is an issue. Sometimes it's hard to ask. It's like society wants to put you in a box and leave us there.  
Asking is hard.  
Sometimes I feel threatened by the odd stranger.  
People feel intimidated by us. We are stuck on the street. We don't have the facilities to always shower and shave every day.

## **Solutions**

All participants agreed that there is no easy answer and that root causes need to be addressed. The suggested solutions mostly focused on addressing the issues of poverty and homelessness, the two key reasons that were identified as making panhandling a necessity, as well as addressing addictions.

### *Verbatim Comments*

Groups like AA help. They help get you off your addiction.  
We need a better resource referral system. Maybe give the CSP's the ability to give out food certificates to McDonalds or something.  
Maybe get us into different activities, such as swimming or tennis.  
Employment referrals would help.  
Maybe some kind of night program. Rent a church and work with police to have a movie night with snacks. What's a movie cost to rent? It would get 50 people off the street for cheap, and if they can't get into a shelter, maybe they could at least get off the street for a while.  
I'm on a waiting list to get in school, but it's going to take two years.  
The Lighthouse offers great programs for us, like cooking. If you can cook, you can feed yourself. Some people have never cooked before. Then we could get experience at the Lighthouse then go work in a restaurant. It would be something to put on a resume.  
Life skills programs are helpful.  
They should have an idea box at the Lighthouse.

## Community Support Program and Officers

While few knew the CSP by name, most were familiar with the officers and once shown a picture of the officers in uniform, said they see them quite regularly. Some referred to officers by name.

*Notably, no one had a single negative thing to say about the program or the officers and the only improvement suggested was to have more officers on the street interacting with those needing help.*

### Verbatim Comments

They talk to me every so often on the street and ask how I'm doing.
The program is good because they care about people.
They help the homeless.
Those guys will help you out.
We have something similar in Ontario. It seems to be working well here.
They help out people who are homeless, help them find a place to stay.
It's a good thing for the city. They care about people.
I'd like it to continue.
The city should continue with the program.
They need more officers on the streets.
We need more officers downtown. That's where we are. That's where you want to concentrate.

## VULNERABLE PERSONS INTERCEPT INTERVIEWS

In addition to the focus group, interviewers conducted intercept interviews with vulnerable persons in each BID when possible.

### Downtown

Vulnerable persons interviewed in the downtown area were less familiar with the CSP. Two had not heard of it, one said he had seen them around, and one was unhappy with them due to them catching him breaking a bylaw.

### **Likes – Verbatim Comments**

Don't know yet. I just moved here.

It's a nice area. I like the bars. I would tell people it's a good place to relax and enjoy.

People talking and laughing.

2<sup>nd</sup> avenue, city hall, people watching.

### **Dislikes – Verbatim Comments**

It's boring here.

Some people tell me to get a job, but I have a disability and can't work. Most people don't like me being here. I sleep at the Lighthouse.

People who litter when there are lots of garbage cans around. I don't like people who react to Indians negatively.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

Haven't seen or heard of them.

Don't know.

I didn't know the name, but I've seen them. I like how they help people.

I don't like them. They arrested me for pissing in an alley because there are no public washrooms on the street.

### **Broadway**

The two vulnerable persons interviewed in the Broadway area were split in their opinions of the CSP, with one believing the program is positive, and one saying that he knew of the program, but preferred to keep himself separate from the officers.

### **Likes – Verbatim Comments**

It's an established area. Historically very interesting.

People don't bother me.

### **Dislikes – Verbatim Comments**

People have trouble parking here.

Not enough empty containers around for recycling.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

I think it's a positive move.

They do their own thing and I do mine. I panhandle on Broadway but live on the west side.

### **Riversdale**

Most vulnerable persons interviewed in the Riversdale area are familiar with the program and officers. Only one out of the five interviewed said they were unaware. Of the remaining people interviewed, most were complimentary of the program, saying they like how the officers help them to find shelter and to limit the negative activities on the street.

### **Likes – Verbatim Comments**

It's a nice area, lots of people around.

During the day, the people are nice and there's free food. Mostly people are nice to me.

I like the people.

I like the coffee shop.

The parks and the people in general.

### **Dislikes – Verbatim Comments**

It's a tough life, people get drunk.

I hate that there's no safety on 20<sup>th</sup> street at night. It's very dangerous if you're alone.

I don't like all the drunk people.

### **Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

I've heard of it, but I don't really use it. They've said hello to me.

They are friendly. They help us out with words of kindness, or hook you up with a

place for shelter or food. I think it's a good program. Nice people. There should be more around at night.

I'm not familiar with it.

It's good. They walk by and help me out. I think it's made a difference.

I've seen a couple of them. I saw them this morning. They were nice. They deal with drug dealings and keep the drugs down.

# SERVICE PROVIDERS



# Service Providers

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In order to obtain the perspective of those agencies and organizations that provide services to Saskatoon's vulnerable persons, an online bulletin board was set up that the providers could access it at their convenience to provide their input on a series of questions.

A list of service providers that the CSP interacts with was provided to Inshtrix. Of the 38 names provided, 23 service providers agreed to participate. With e-mail reminders being sent, 11 (29%) providers logged in to the bulletin board and provided their feedback.

## **Street Activity**

Service providers note many different kinds of street activity within the city, but they tend to focus on the root causes of the activities rather than the activities themselves. Homelessness, poverty, and gangs are all cited as being key issues in Saskatoon that lead to the various forms of negative street activity.

Providers have seen a rise in poverty and homelessness in the city, attributing it to the recent city growth. There is a feeling that the city is lagging behind other cities in providing services to those who need them most and that more coordination between the various providers is needed in order to be able to provide effective help. It is noted that currently providers are "tripping over each other" to try to help out the same individual in need. Funding and resources are seen as the main obstacle in providing assistance. Lack of suitable housing and shelters is a specific concern.

Ending negative street activity in Saskatoon is seen as being impossible. Providers feel it can be reduced but never eliminated. Understanding and addressing the root causes will have the most impact.

## **Community Support Program**

All participating service providers have heard of the program, and many have had direct contact in the form of training and information sessions, as well as through assisting clients.

While the program is seen as having potential, service providers feel that more time is required for it to have a lasting and noticeable impact in the city. Additionally, there is some concern, once again, that services overlap between some providers and the CSP and more coordination and communication is needed.

Participant verbatim responses to posted questions are provided below.

### **Street Activity & Impact on Organization – Verbatim Comments**

*When you think of street activity in Saskatoon, what kinds of things come immediately to mind, and how do they impact your organization?*

People who are accessing services and some who are looking to alleviate boredom by being out and about.

Mentally ill and /or substance using persons; apparently homeless; impoverished; cognitively disabled; unattended primary health care issues; traumatized; "lost"; struggling: "stuck" or immobilized; hungry; cold; unhappy; alone. We are impacted when their situations become untenable either to them directly or to observers in the community who request assistance for them. We can assist on an emergency basis but cannot provide sustained contact that promotes and encourages sustained change efforts.

Homelessness, sex trade, violence, child abuse, mental health issues - depression, suicide, anger. Increases the need for our outreach, domestic violence and community counselling services.

I think of panhandling, drug dealing, and prostitution as social issues. A couple of our clients have been known to panhandle in the downtown area. As for impact, there is no direct impact to our organization other than we have had to drive around downtown to locate our few clients who are panhandling in order to have contact with them.

Immediately we think of drug and gang activity. Violence and crime. These types of activity have a direct impact on our organization in a negative way.

When I think of street activity I think of people living on the streets who do not have a home. This impacts our work for it is hard for someone to put their health care as a priority when their basic needs are not being met.

Homelessness, illegal activity, gangs They impact our organization as these groups are who our organization is aiming to work within our city.

Street Activity in Saskatoon brings to mind number one issues of poverty. I see that most of the "issues" related to street activity are symptoms of the poverty that affect many of the people associated with street activity at our location. The vast majority of the time street activity will simply be benign pedestrian traffic, but there is enough prostitution, public intoxication, and random violent

acts that probably do not occur in most other locations, it is this small majority of activities that seem to pigeon-hole this area in a negative light. One of the biggest impacts for our organization is the presence of sex-trade workers in front of our building. We do not wish to simply move the locations that the worker's solicit, but would like to see the presence of John's and the sex-trade workers decrease through more positive programming and availability of street level workers who would be dedicated to solving the underlying issues that sex-trade workers face. The few negative activities that do occur impact our organization in a way that shapes our mission and vision. It is almost exclusively because of these behaviors that we strive to create a safe place for youth to come to. We are dedicated to showing that there is an alternative to life on the street, and that it doesn't mean youth have to leave the area either. We are dedicated to providing positive alternatives to drama that accompanies the survival mentality of the "street".

### **Panhandling – Verbatim Comments**

*What about panhandling? How does that impact your organization?*

Our locations are rarely confronted by direct pan handling. However, we do see individuals attempting to "borrow" cigarettes etc. from workers and clients.

Not much if at all. We know some people for whom it is merely a source of income to support usually drug or other habits.

Panhandling as an activity does not directly affect our organization. Those who are panhandling are often homeless or dealing with other negative situations. Their need for counselling and mental health services impacts our organization.

We provide services to individuals who are living in poverty. Panhandling has been an activity that some of our clients have participated in as a means to generate additional money to buy cigarettes, etc. In addition to the money, they also do it as a form of social outlet. As for the impact on our organization, the Staff continually explores with the clients the reasons for panhandling and work with them around money management. In addition to this, the Staff is assessing our clients' mental illness status to determine if they are appropriately conducting themselves in public. Since panhandling is not against the law, we cannot prevent someone from doing this.

Panhandling is a deterrent to street appeal and has a negative impression on outside influences.

Where we are located we rarely see any panhandling.

It illustrates an issue in the community that we hope the programs/services we fund help decrease the need for people to panhandle.

No issues with panhandling.

## Changes and Trends – Verbatim Comments

*Over the past two years, have you noticed any changes or trends in Saskatoon, specifically in terms of the people who are using your services?*

No. appears to be the same.

Our overall service count is up. I am unaware of trend changes.

Our outreach counselling sessions have increased. We are providing more services through our domestic violence unit.

The demographics of people applying for services are the same. However, the requests for our services are increasing as reflecting in our waiting list increasing. This is representative of the growth in our city and more people locating in Saskatoon which means there are more people needing mental health and addiction services.

Housing has become harder to find. There is a rise in HIV and IV drugs. Recently we have seen a return to alcohol substance abuse.

Over the last few years we have seen an increase of families utilizing our organization. We have seen more people living in poverty than ever before.

More teens using IV drugs.

As a community we know that there is more demand for services in the social sector. Since we are not an end user service provider, this is based on the demand on many organizations that we work with/fund.

Not really. Continue to serve the same demographic.

I would also agree that there is more visible poverty now than I have ever seen before, at our organization it also seems to be the norm for young families. We really seem to punish people who have children, they seem to have it really hard as not only are they trying to survive themselves, but they are face the overwhelming fear of not being able to provide for their children on-top of it all.

## Biggest Concern – Verbatim Comments

*In your opinion, what is the most important/serious concern facing your organization? Has this changed in the past two years?*

Loitering or congregating in front of doorways with no intent to use the services. No it has not changed.

Trying to stay abreast of the multiple changes in the city and developing relevant responses. Trying to manage the associated sets of expectations from multiple directions. There is a developing culture with changing expectations of non-profit organizations with unfunded infrastructure maintenance and development. Develop capacity to respond to the population growth and to the new populations. It has changed over the past two years (or so I feel) and it

continues.

Operational funding to allow continued programming and provision of services to those in need. No it has not changed.

In our strategic planning discussion, the most pressing concern for our organization is the ability for it to access resources to expand all of its services especially long-term affordable supportive housing units.

Impact of living in poverty is still one of the biggest concerns facing our organization.

Our issues are: lack of affordable housing, funding, grant availability, increase of drug and alcohol use, social services and child welfare programming.

Housing and homelessness and the support services that go with keeping people housed have become an increased focus over the past 2 years.

Funding continues to be a challenge. We also seem to be always in a reactionary role that is reacting to issues of homelessness and addictions rather than being able to focus on being pro-active. Homelessness is definitely still a serious issue with our participants.

### **Saskatoon Compared to Other Cities – Verbatim Comments**

*From your perspective, how does Saskatoon compare to other cities in terms of the support we are able to provide to people who need it? Are we better? Lagging behind? Missing vital services? Why do you say that?*

We have service agencies that are tripping over each other to serve the same people with the same type of services. Saskatoon needs a better coordinated approach.

I do not have enough information to make a comparative comment. We are missing affordable housing stock. If we had that many of the other social issues would lessen. No one can manage adequately if they do not have safe housing. We all need a safe place to put our head down that we call home. "Street" people are no different in these needs. This safe housing must be operationalized in a housing continuum recognizing different sets of housing needs. We are trying but have some way to go.

Based on what I hear from other communities, we are offering similar services to them. All communities are challenged to address the demands and find creative ways to resource the services.

Saskatoon is lagging behind compared to some cities. I have heard about the success of the housing first program in Calgary and how housing first has housed the most vulnerable in several communities. I also hear about the harm reduction programs offered in Vancouver such as a safe needle injection site and how the site is being recognized globally for the impact on the community and the positive results. It feels like harm reduction and service work are both

words that have negative connotations in the community I work in.

Compared to other cities Saskatoon has many services, however lacking in housing and shelters. One detox center with a few beds does not meet the needs of our increasing population. The inner city services are slowly working together however overlapping is an issue. Services need to grow with the increase in poverty.

On par with many others. I think it really depends who you compare yourself to and many have different approaches which makes comparison at time difficult.

I'm not too informed about practices in other cities; I do think that more supported living environments for youth would be a great place to start.

### **Contact with Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

*This next section of questions deals with the recently instituted Community Support Program. This program was instituted in July of 2012 and is aimed at addressing street activity in the Broadway, Downtown, and Riversdale Business Improvement Districts. This program includes and engages:*

- *The Public through a highly visible presence that reassures and responds to the public in the Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale Business Improvement Districts.*
- *Business Owners through foot patrols that liaise with local businesses to identify issues and collaborate to generate solutions.*
- *Vulnerable Persons by connecting community members in need to the appropriate service providers or other supports.*

*Are you familiar with this program? Has your organization had any contact with members of this program? In what capacity, and how often are you in contact with them?*

We are familiar. We have some contact with the Community Support Officers: we contributed to some of the training. I have no data about the frequency of our contact.

Yes I am familiar with the program. At the start-up of the program, I gave a presentation to the team about our services. I am also aware that they have had direct contact with our clients who have been panhandling.

I have heard of the program but our organization has not had any direct contact with any members of the program. We had someone in today who is not allowed in most places in the community and homeless and could use the support of the community support program.

Yes, we have had a very positive relationship with this organization, we work

very close together. We are in contact weekly as we work with the same population.

Yes familiar and yes there is contact with members. At the exact capacity and how often I cannot comment on due to my role in our organization.

Yes have had contact with them, I think it is very unfortunate that they are required to wear uniforms, as this is one the quickest ways to create a separation between them and the vulnerable people they to be connecting with. I feel like the community support workers have their hearts in the right place, but are probably quite limited in their ability to connect with street level issues. I have heard youth say that they have been given tickets for skateboarding and bicycling by the community support workers, whether true or not, the fact that that this is out there, being talked about by youth, makes the program appear to be just another authority figure for youth to try to avoid.

### **Thoughts on Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

*For those who have had contact with the Community Support Program, what are your general thoughts on the program?*

They are doing a good job but will need time to have lasting impact. They add a street dimension supplying information and assistance to everyone. This should translate into being understood as an approachable well informed group whose work is preventive as well as proactive. Everyone that I've met is remarkably personable and approachable. I think of them as "catching more bees with honey" in their "on the street" activities.

My thoughts are that the program is meeting its objective and the Staff is liaising with appropriate agencies that can support individuals who are panhandling beyond the scope of the CSP staff roles. Before it started, I did not think that the panhandling issue was a major one in the City as I do not work in the downtown core. So I think this program offers a good balance to convey a sense of safety and comfort for shoppers and staff in the downtown yet letting individuals who have various life challenges still be on the street panhandling. Considering that I work in the area of mental health and with some individuals who show some very overt symptoms, I need to advocate for community acceptance so they are not ridiculed or stigmatized when in the public.

The service is similar to many services in the city and seems to overlap what is already being done. The foot patrol seems to be needed.

I think the project could be helpful in uniting the community to work together better. It may help bring representatives from groups together who may not normally work together on building a stronger community particularly in helping build better supports including housing for many of our community who are the most vulnerable these days.

I think that there is so much potential for the community support program to liaise the various needs of vulnerable people and the organizations that are already in existence. Again though, the priority should be in building relationships and I imagine that is pretty difficult when you are wearing a uniform that appears a step-down from the police.

### **Community Support Program Impact – Verbatim Comments**

*Do you believe that the program has had an impact on street activity in the Broadway, Downtown, and Riversdale areas? Has this impact been positive or negative? (Please be specific about which of the three areas you are referring to.)*

I believe, as I said in my previous comment, that the full impact will require more time to be fully delivered and better valued. I refer primarily to the Downtown and Riversdale areas. I think there is already some positive impact.

I have to say that I am very seldom in these areas to visibly see the difference. However, I think that they are making a difference because they are having contact with people involved in street activity. Based on this first level of contact, they can engage and refer someone to services that they may not have or they can call for police intervention if some criminal activity may be taking place. Any kind of engagement can result in future positive outcomes for everyone involved.

Not enough time has passed to see the impact.

I would like to believe that there has been positive impact but have no data to support this.

### **Client Familiarity with Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

*What, if anything, do the people who use your services say about the Community Support Program? Do they know about it? Are they familiar with the officers? Do they like or dislike it?*

I have little information.

So far I have not received much feedback from people who are using our services.

As our guests are all from the core neighbourhood they have all been in touch with this service, however I have never heard them speak of the service.

No comment as no information to share.

Our participants generally view the program as a type of law enforcement. I

have spoken to many youth who feel that they are to be avoided lest they be singled out for bylaw violations, have their name checked for warrants, etc. Whether this is true or not the perception exists out there already and it will take some major effort to change this perception.

### **Changes to Community Support Program – Verbatim Comments**

*If you could change anything about the Community Support Program, what would you change and why?*

Do not have adequate information to provide an informed critique.

At this time, I cannot think of any suggested changes.

More awareness about what they do and how they do it.

Again no comment as no information to share.

I would remove the uniform; it reminds too many people of institutional authority.

### **Collaboration among Service Providers – Verbatim Comments**

*Are there ways to improve collaboration among the different service providers?*

The only suggestion that I have would be around interagency meeting to discuss street activity and how people can be involved.

Yes, services are overlapping and organizations need to communicate. Advocate meetings do exist however very few attend.

Continue supporting collaborative tables. The SRIC, Safe Streets, Plan to End Homelessness and make it attractive for end user groups to work together.

Always, lack of collaboration occurs because of time constraints, really I feel too busy maintaining programs I have sometimes to be keeping up with who is doing what.

### **Street Activity Solutions – Verbatim Comments**

*Is there more that Saskatoon can be doing to address negative street activity?  
What else do you think should be done?*

No we will never completely rid ourselves of negative street activity any more than we will get rid of bad drivers. And those bad drivers are a much larger group! But we are not bothered much by them because they are us. Street people do not text or talk on their cell phones when they drive. I'm saying that a

lot of street people are lost souls. Developments that encourage engagement, like the CSP program is a wonderful beginning to positively revaluing these characters. And for those that are reckless, bullying and dangerous we have other more formal tools. Think police.

In the ideal world yes but in reality, I think there will always be a level of negative street activity. It falls to how the community plans to manage it. As for how I would go about eliminating it, I don't have an answer to it. What we do today, may not work tomorrow. So my answer is do what you can today but be prepared to adapt policies/programs to the new reality of tomorrow.

No, that is like trying to say we can end poverty. As much as every one of us would like to see a world with no poverty, crime or "negative" street activity it will never happen. What we can continue to do is our best to help support people. We can work together and try to help people who long for help. I want to say that our organization is doing the best we can do, but that is the same with every organization, we can only go as far as our money and mission statement will take us.

I think it can be decreased but eliminated might be impossible. Understanding why these people are performing negative street activity is a good start as again it is the root causes of issues that need to be addressed. These solutions might take long periods of time to truly see the impact.

Negative street activity actually seems to be a minor issue for our organization. Of more concern is the rampant addiction and mental health issues that lead to negative street activity. If we can move to treating the causes instead of putting Band-Aids on the symptoms I am convinced we would see a dramatic drop in negative activity. If we really want to make a change we need to start looking at safe-injection zones and harm reduction models, safe housing alternatives and more safe spaces for community members to meet and use for free, not always attached to programs and projects, but just places to be.

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM OFFICER INTERVIEWS



# Community Support Program Officers

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Insightrix researchers also interviewed CSP Officers, as they have a unique perspective on the program and on street activity in the three BIDs they patrol.

All five officers currently employed as part of the CSP were interviewed.

## **Most Satisfactory Aspect of the Program**

Officers are most satisfied with the relationships and interactions the program allows them to have with people on the street. Helping others, and by extension making the streets safer, is a highly motivating factor.

There is also a level of pride in what the program has been able to accomplish since it was started in July of 2012. As a pilot program with a broad scope, the CSP had challenging goals but officers say they feel the goals are being met. One officer noted that they used to have to approach people, but it is now just as common for people to approach them.

## **Least Satisfactory Aspect of the Program**

Most officers noted that staffing levels are an issue, saying that it is very difficult to cover Downtown, Broadway, and Riversdale effectively and that they cannot be in all places at one time. This has a mental and physical impact on staff, as officers find it very difficult to take time off with so few other officers available to cover for them.

## **Street Activity Encountered**

Most commonly, officers say they encounter intoxicated people and those individuals who frequent the streets when on patrol in the three BIDs. This is more common in the Downtown and Riversdale areas, with officers saying activity in Broadway is lower due to it being a smaller area and that some of the people they commonly encounter have not been around lately.

Beyond encountering intoxicated people, officers also noted that they have encountered a wide variety of different types of street activity, and that each

area tended to have a certain focus; Broadway is mostly bylaw enforcement, Riversdale is mostly community outreach, while Downtown tends to be a mix of the two.

### **Vulnerable Persons**

New people are encountered fairly often while officers are on the streets of Saskatoon, but officers say that they know so many people now that it is almost like everyone is a “regular.” Officers also noted that many people know them by name and often chat with them.

Most people react well to the officers, but can get upset if intervention is required in a way they do not like, such as being asked to pour out alcohol.

It was also mentioned that the uniform can be somewhat of a barrier between the officers and those they are trying to help, with many initially assuming that they are police. Once educated as to the difference, people tend to be more receptive.

### **Service Providers**

The CSP requires interaction with many different service providers across Saskatoon. Most are familiar with the program, but officers say there is still room for improvement in this area. More information and training sessions would be helpful. Additionally, a greater number of key points of contact with service providers is required as currently, there are still agencies and organizations that do not have relationships with the CSP.

### **Businesses**

When the program was started, officers went to businesses in the three BIDs to introduce themselves, as well as to hand out business cards and informational pamphlets. As such, officers say that most businesses know them and are fairly familiar with the CSP. Officers say there is still room for improvement here, as there are still businesses they have not had a chance to introduce themselves to due to staff turnover and new businesses opening up. Having a small team, a large area to cover, and attending to people on the streets has made this a challenging process.

Businesses that are familiar with the program respond well to the presence of the officers saying it is good that they are around, that they have made a difference, and that it is nice to have someone to call for issues that may not require police. Familiarity with the program is higher in the areas that are attended to more frequently and lower in areas with less activity.

Calls are made by businesses to the program about two or three times a week, with some stores in some areas calling more frequently than others. While officers are not able to respond to calls received outside the programs hours of operation, they say they do try to follow up every time.

### **General Public**

For the most part, members of the general public react well to the presence of the officers and are often curious about the program, stopping the officers to ask them questions, or simply to thank them for the job they do. Many people also stop the officers to chat and to ask for directions.

When the CPS Officers enforce bylaws, people are understandably less happy to see the officers, and at times the authority of the officers to hand out tickets has been questioned.

### **Perceived Changes in Saskatoon since the Program Started**

Officers say they have noticed many changes since the program started, including the closure of the Downtown McDonald's having a noticeable impact on street activity in the area. Overall, changes are attributed to a combination of the CSP, the Saskatoon Police, and the time of the year.

It is also noted that it is now more common for officers to interact with groups of two or three, while in the past they would often encounter much larger groups. More and more people are also starting to recognize the uniform, and officers say that is having an effect as well.

Officers also say that more members of the general public are starting to comment to them favourably about the program's effectiveness.