



Spring Garden Area

State of the Area Report

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Introduction

In the summer of 2018, the Spring Garden Area Business Association conducted a series of surveys to gain a better understanding of the mobility patterns of its members and the general public to and within the Spring Garden area, as well as their viewpoints, concerns, and desires for, and about the Spring Garden area. Additionally, SGABA completed a comprehensive parking study of the area to better understand the role of parking in the overall success of our members.

SGABA administered two member-only surveys, a member arrival survey and a member perception survey. The member arrival survey asked questions about the travel behaviour of employees and customers, while the member perception survey asked questions about our member thoughts and opinions of the Spring Garden area. Surveys were given to each business and over 120 of each survey were returned.

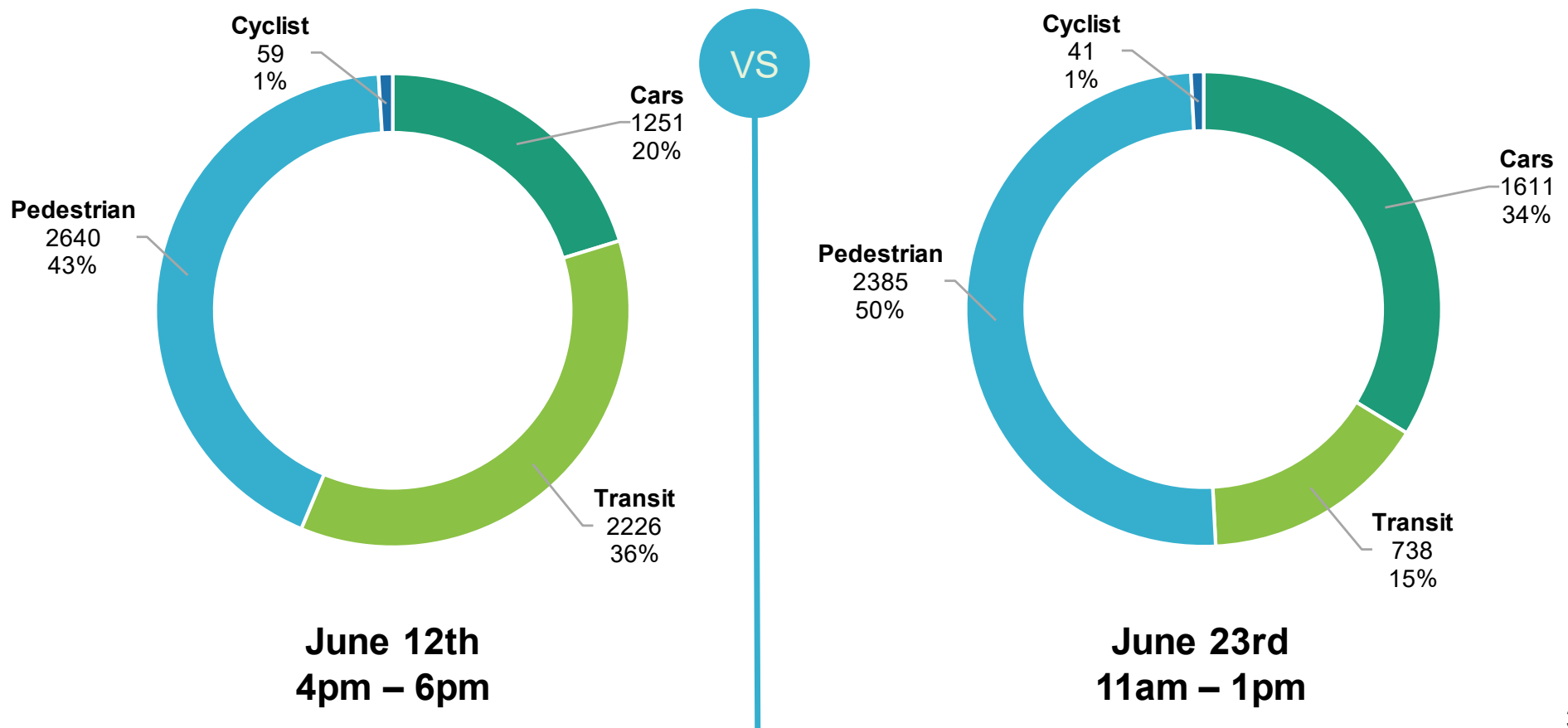
Additionally, in partnership with Halifax Regional Municipality staff, SGABA conducted an online and in-person survey to identify how people arrived to the Spring Garden Area and understand what they typically do when they get here. This survey also asked people what they like about the Spring Garden area and what they would like to see changed.

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Spring Garden Road as a Transportation Corridor

On June 12th and June 23rd, SGABA and City staff conducted screen line counts to determine the number of people that travel through a specific intersection (Birmingham St. and Spring Garden Road) by mode. Counts were done for pedestrians, people in transit vehicles, people in non-transit vehicles, and cyclists. Figure 1 shows that the primary mode of movement on Spring Garden road is as a pedestrian. There is a shift in dominant modes between the weekday peak and weekend peak. Car users take up a larger mode share on weekends than on weekdays. Transit users take up a larger mode share over car users on weekdays.

Figure 1



Imagine SGR Survey

From July to September 2018, SGABA and City staff conducted the “ImagineSGR” survey, both online and on the street. Over 1,200 surveys were completed in total. Figures 2-4 show the demographic distribution of the survey respondents vs the population of Halifax. Participants aged 25-44 were somewhat over represented in the survey results, while participants under age 15 and over 85 were under represented. Additionally, survey respondents tend to skew wealthier.

Gender Distribution

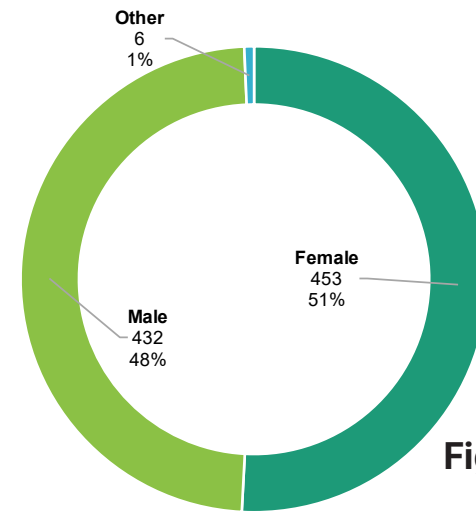


Figure 2

Age Distribution

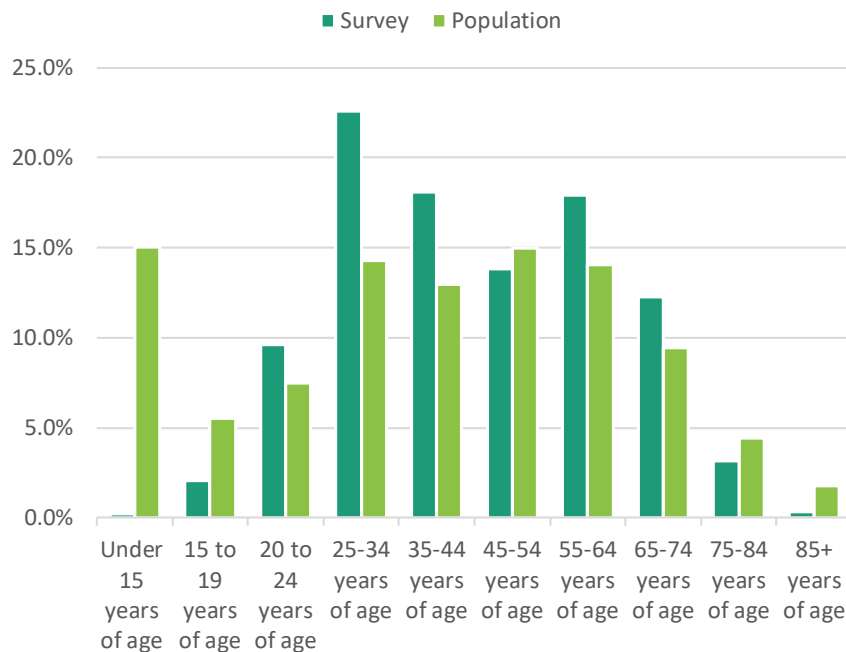


Figure 3

Population data source: Statistics Canada (2016)

Income Distribution



Figure 4

Imagine SGR Arrival Mode

“ImagineSGR” survey respondents were asked how they arrived at the Spring Garden area that day (or during their last visit for the online survey). Overall, walking was the primary arrival mode for survey respondents, followed by car and transit (Figure 5).

Further break down of the data into Customers (people who identified that they shop, dine, or use services in the area) and Employees (people who identified that they work in the area) the mode share shifts. Customers split almost evenly between walking and arriving by car, while employees predominantly take transit or walk to work (Figure 6).

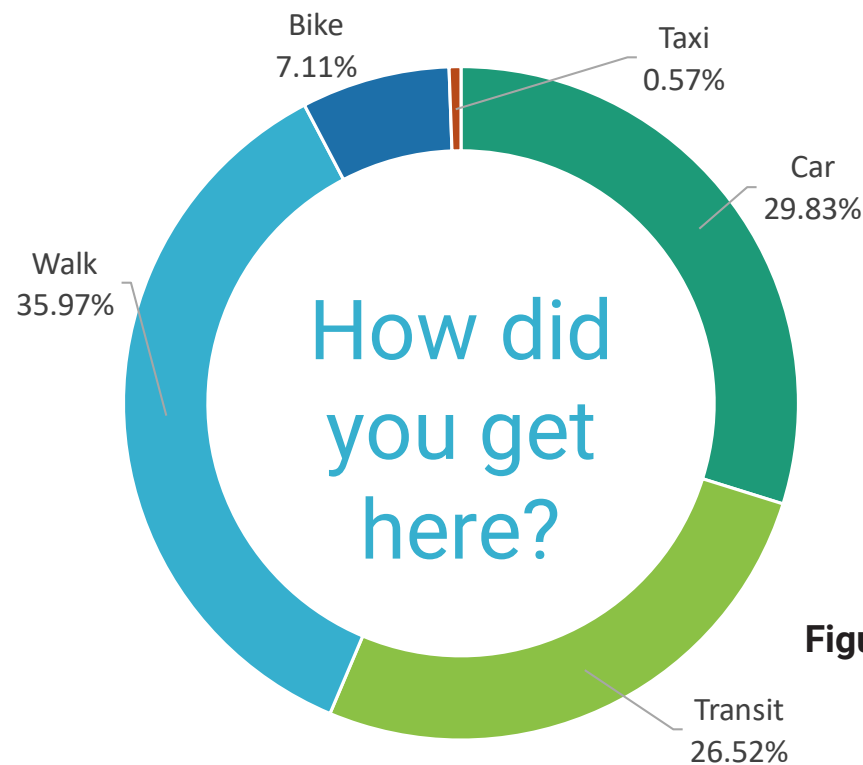


Figure 5

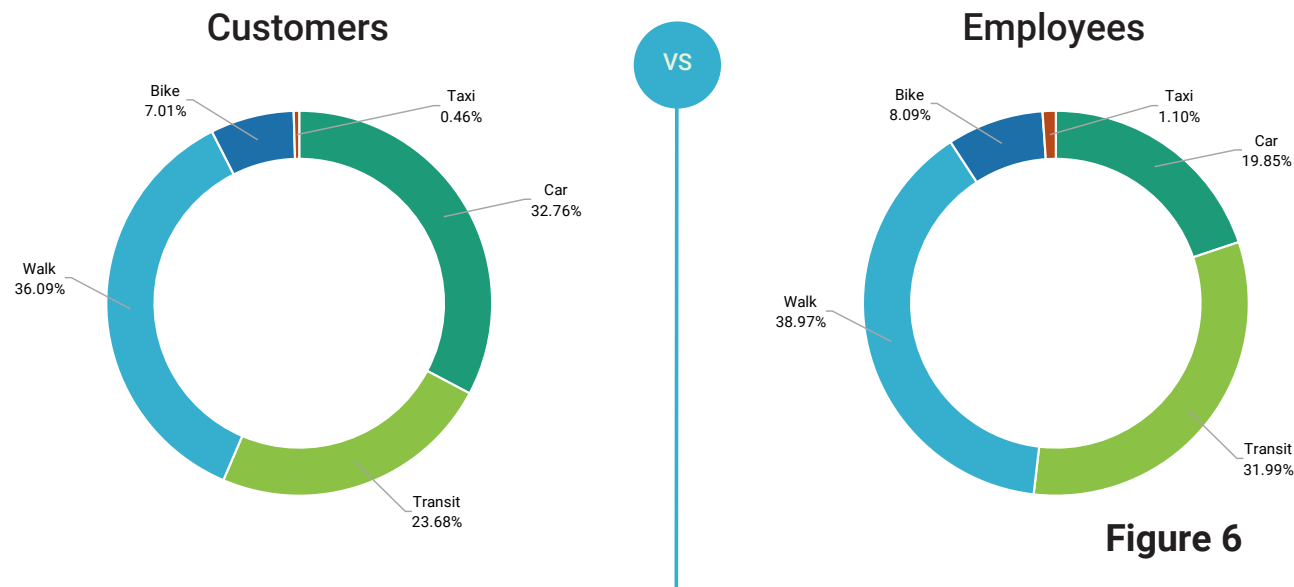
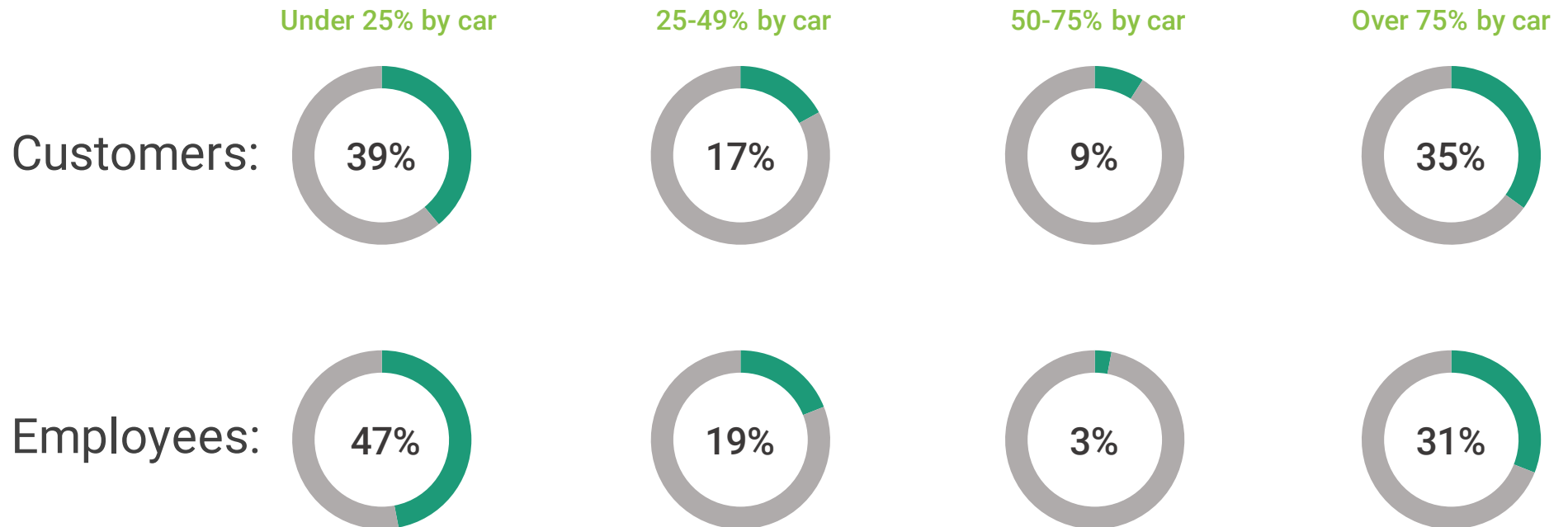


Figure 6

Member Arrival Survey

Over 120 members responded to an arrival survey distributed by SGABA staff in summer 2018. Questions were asked about how they thought their customers and employees arrived at their business, in addition to the number of customers and employees that they had. Perceived customer and employee arrival had bi-modal distributions with the majority of our members indicating that either less than 25% of their customers or employees arrived by car, or more than 75% of their customers or employees arrived by car. It is difficult to identify trends based on business type considering the small population, however, the majority of businesses who indicated that over 75% of their customers arrived by car were appointment based or sold primarily bulky items.

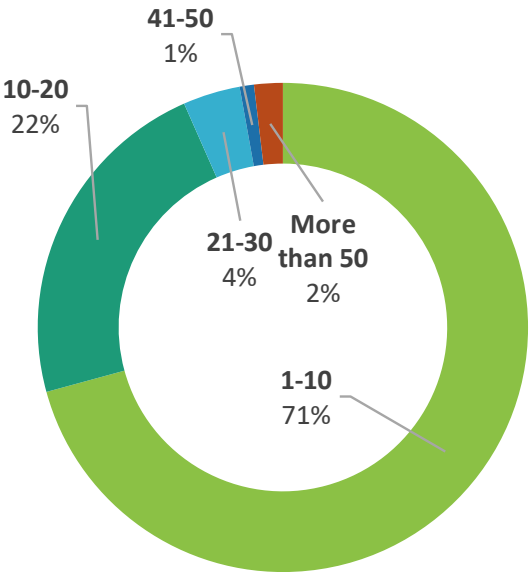
Business Perception of Car Use



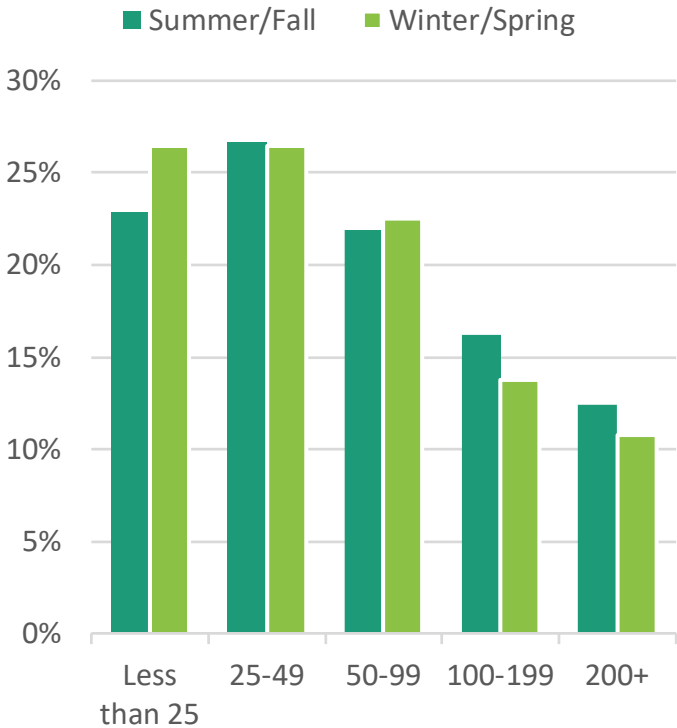
Member Arrival Survey

Generally, business in our area responded that they have more customers in the spring and summer than in winter and fall. Nearly 50% of responding members said they had between 0 and 50 customers per day on a weekday, however that changed on weekends. On weekends, the distribution of customers shifted. The number of businesses reporting “less than 25” customers increased as well as the number of businesses reporting “200+”. Subsequently, the number of businesses who reported between 25 and 199 customers decreased on weekends. This distribution shift may be due to the operating hours of many of the responding businesses, typically Monday to Friday.

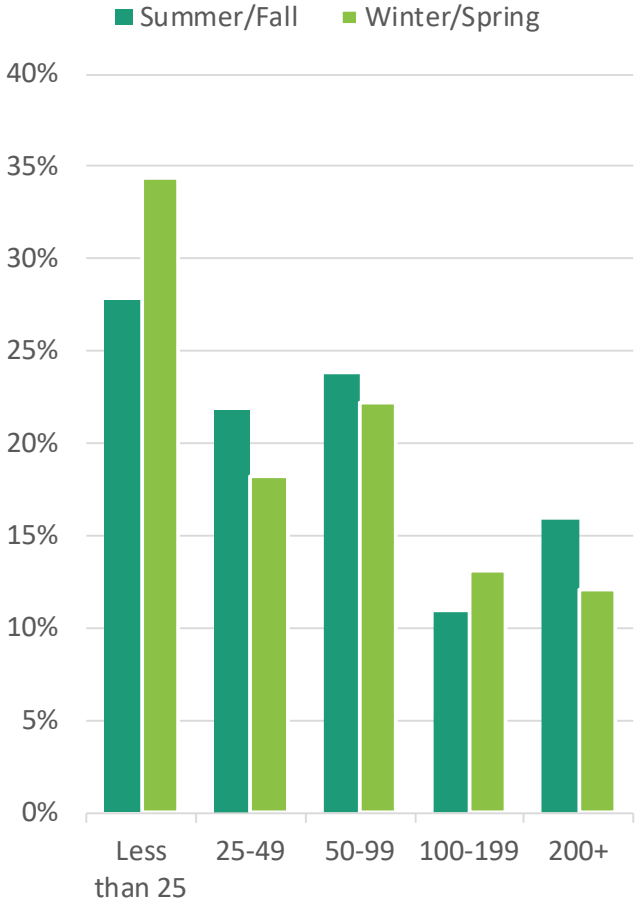
Number of Employees per business



Weekday Customer



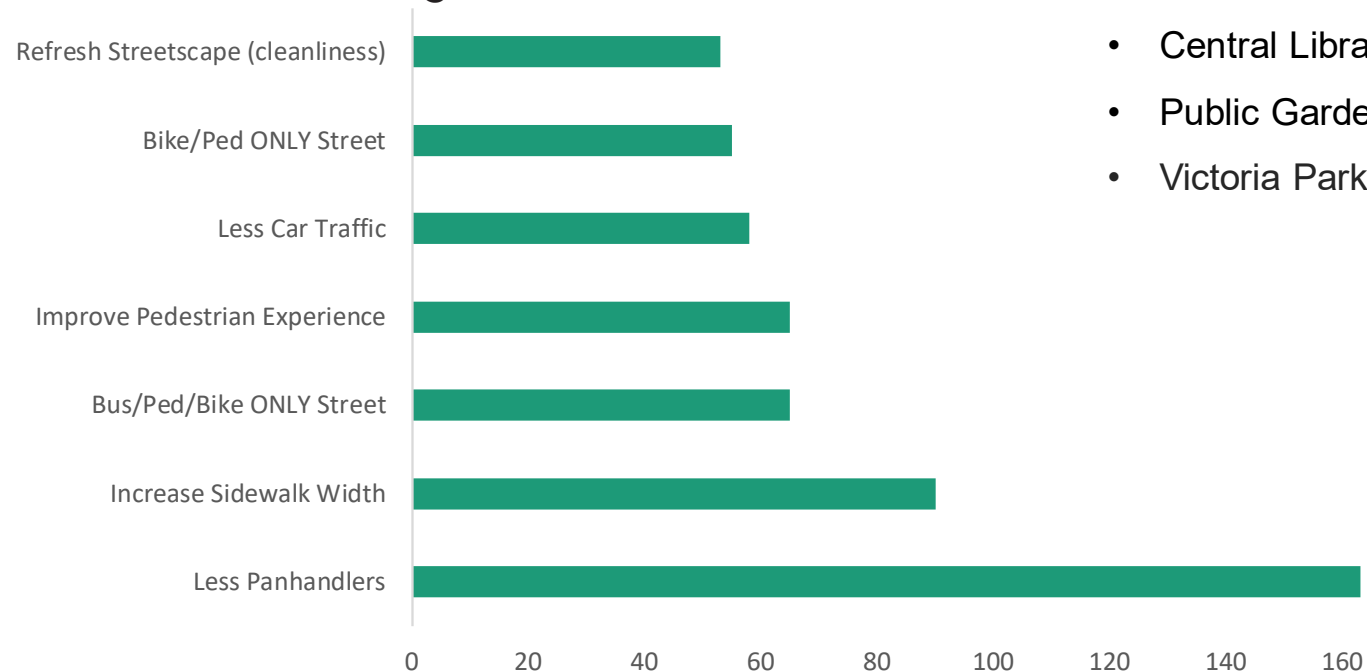
Weekend Customers



Public Perception

In the “ImagineSGR” survey, participants were asked to share what they liked about Spring Garden Road and what they would change if they could change one thing. In identifying the things that they most wanted to see changed, the survey respondents very clearly stated that they would like to see less street involved people. The most common response was “Less Panhandlers”, or a similar iteration. Parking related matters were brought up as an issue, but was not within the top seven response categories.

Most Wanted Changes



What do people like about SGR?

“The Vibe”

- The vibrancy
- People watching
- The people
- The bustle
- The busyness

Diverse Retail Mix

- Specific shops, restaurants, or services
- Diversity of shops & services

Public Amenities

- Central Library
- Public Gardens
- Victoria Park

Pedestrian Scale

- Surrounding architecture
- Height of buildings
- Walkability
- Compactness
- Clustering

Member Perception

Over 120 members also returned an area perception survey. They were asked the three questions below and their responses were organized thematically. The themes shared below represent the most commonly shared sentiments for each question.

What do you think about the SGA?

"The Vibe"

- Busy
- Friendly
- Tourist destination
- Sunny
- Pretty

Crowded

- Congested (People)
- Congested (Traffic)
- Panhandlers
- No parking

Dirty

- Unpleasant
- Noisy
- Cluttered
- Tired
- Outdated

Centrality

- Main street
- Downtown
- Urban
- Trendy

What do you wish you could do in the SGA?

Parking Related

- More parking
- Free parking
- Affordable parking

Walkability

- Pedestrian safety
- Pedestrian only
- Seating
- More patios

Street Involved

- Less street involved
- More police
- Smoke Free

Programming

- More activities
- Live entertainment
- Business to business events

What would make it easier to do business?

Parking Related

- More parking
- Free parking
- Affordable parking

Experience in the area

- Less street involved
- No smoking
- Less vehicle traffic
- Wider sidewalks

Wayfinding/Advertising

- Area advertising
- Better signage
- Better wayfinding

Safety Related

- Better lighting
- More policing