

# Main Street Activation

Findings from User Survey

## Executive Summary

In early August, the City launched an on-street dining program in partnership with the Bellevue Downtown Association and Main Street restaurants and merchants. The program ran through September 27, and helped revive foot traffic and activity along the corridor during the crucial summer months.

## Key Findings

- The overwhelming majority of respondents were supportive of the on-street dining areas, and want to see them return in the future.
- Nearly all visitors took COVID-19-related public health precautions, and **91% said they felt comfortable using the on-street dining areas** from a health perspective.
- Data indicate that stakeholders **understand** and **are happy with** the tradeoff between the loss of on-street parking and the gain of a livelier on-street experience.
- Almost one-third of those who used the on-street dining areas made a purchase at a retailer during the same visit. **A typical visitor spends about \$50-\$150 per visit to Main Street.**
- Those leaving an open-ended response were overwhelmingly (72%) positive, and **many expressed a desire for the patio areas to continue into the fall and winter**, or come back as a permanent, year-round, or full-street installation.

## Usage

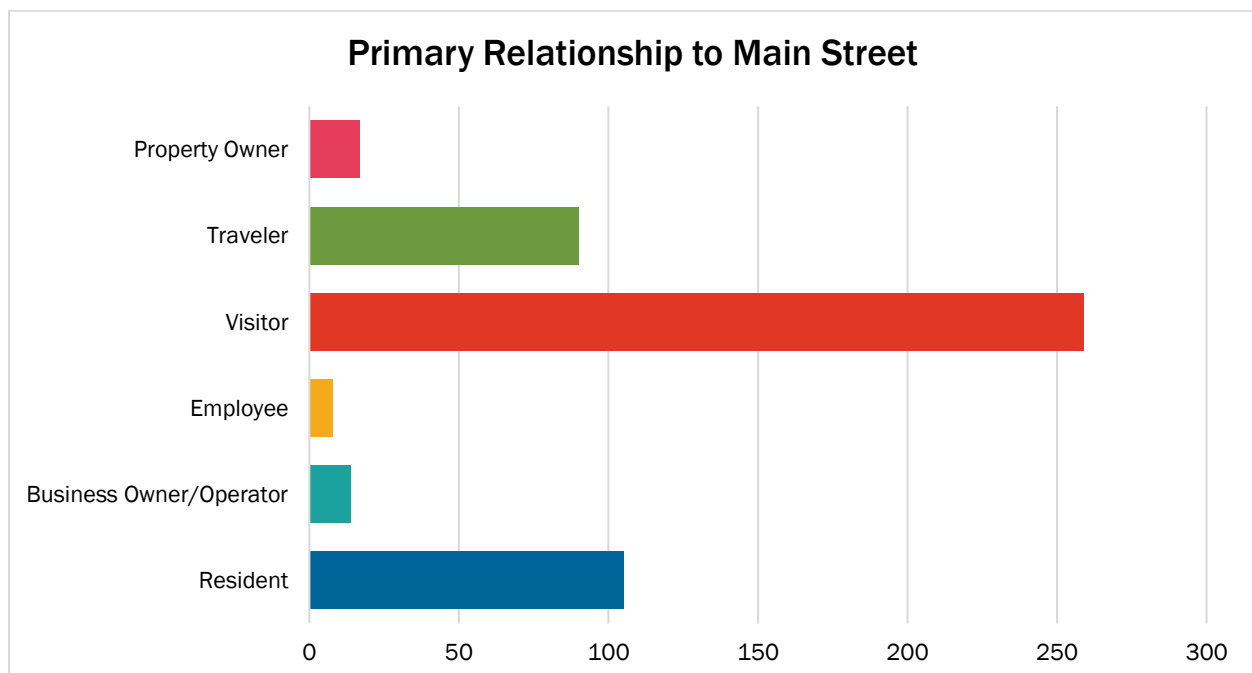
This set of questions gathered information on how people have been using Main Street during the pandemic.

In general, we find a high level of awareness and use of the patio areas, as well as evidence that restaurants and Downtown Park are the most heavily-visited destinations in the area. We also find that people generally spend at least \$50 when going out to Main Street, and more than 50% spend more than \$100. Additionally, fewer people are driving to Main Street than before the pandemic, and more are using alternative modes.

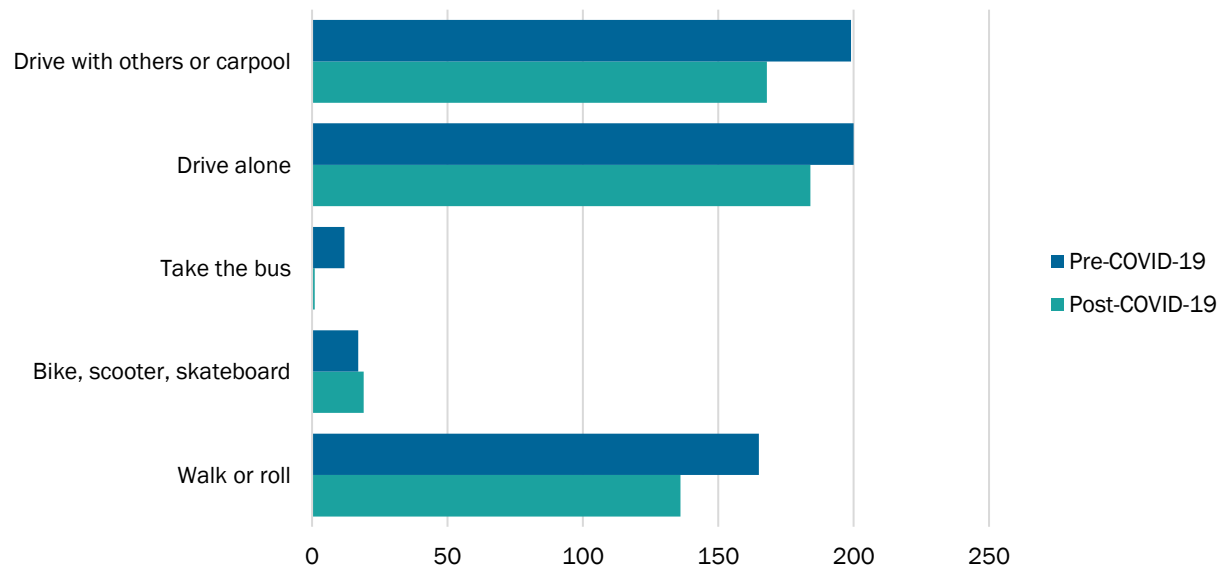
- Two-thirds of respondents said they visit Main Street for restaurants and retailers, while 27% were residents of the area. 14 business owners and 17 property owners also responded.
- 91% of respondents were at least somewhat aware of the extended patio areas, indicating that restaurants, retailers, organizations, and the City did a good job of marketing the areas.
- 54% of respondents (196 people) had used the extended patio areas at least once. These people were fed into more detailed questions on their experience.

- **50% of respondents said that they spent more than \$100 on their last visit to Main Street.** The “middle 50%” of respondents said they spent \$50 to more than \$150.
- In general, **fewer people are driving to Main Street now than before the pandemic began.** More people are biking, scootering, or skateboarding. Driving and walking remain the two most widely-used modes.
- **Restaurants and Downtown Park were the most heavily-visited destinations,** followed by the Bellevue Collection properties.

## Charts



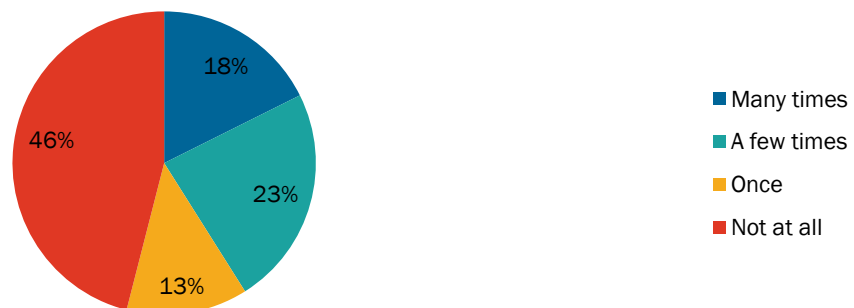
### How do you typically travel to Main Street?



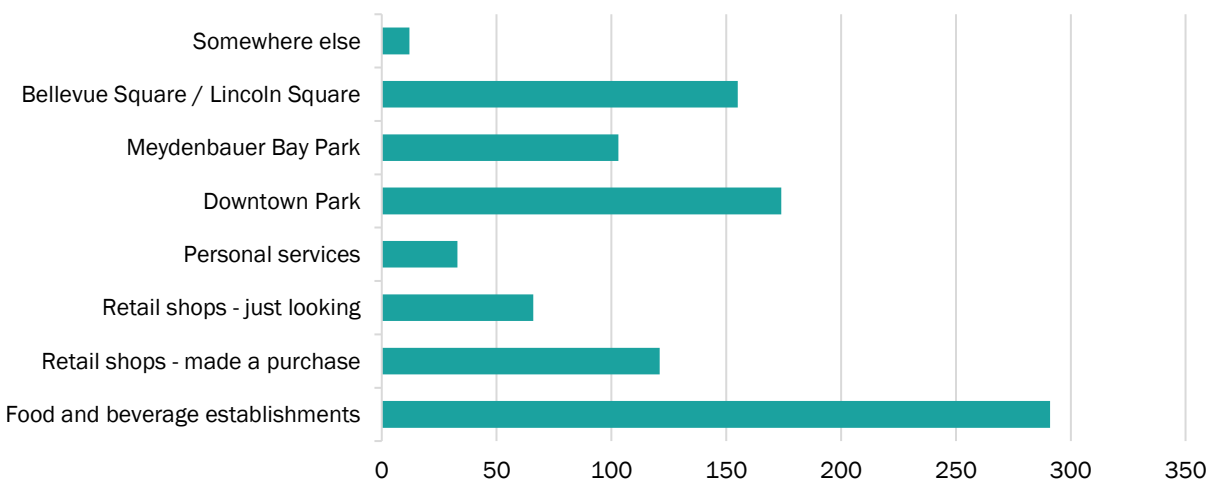
### How aware are you of the extended dining areas?



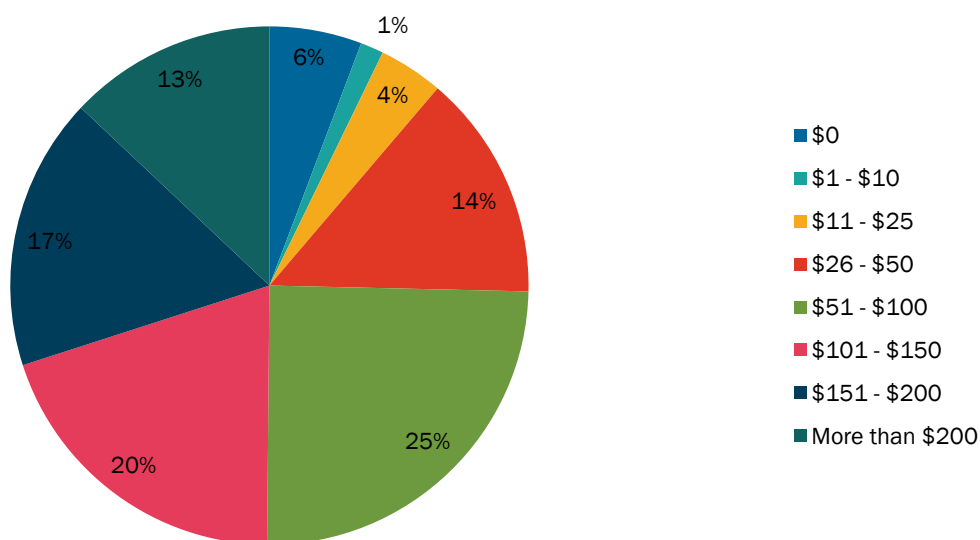
### Have you used the extended dining areas?



### Which destinations did you visit when you most recently visited Main Street?



### During your most recent visit to Main Street, how much would you say you (and your family) spent in total?



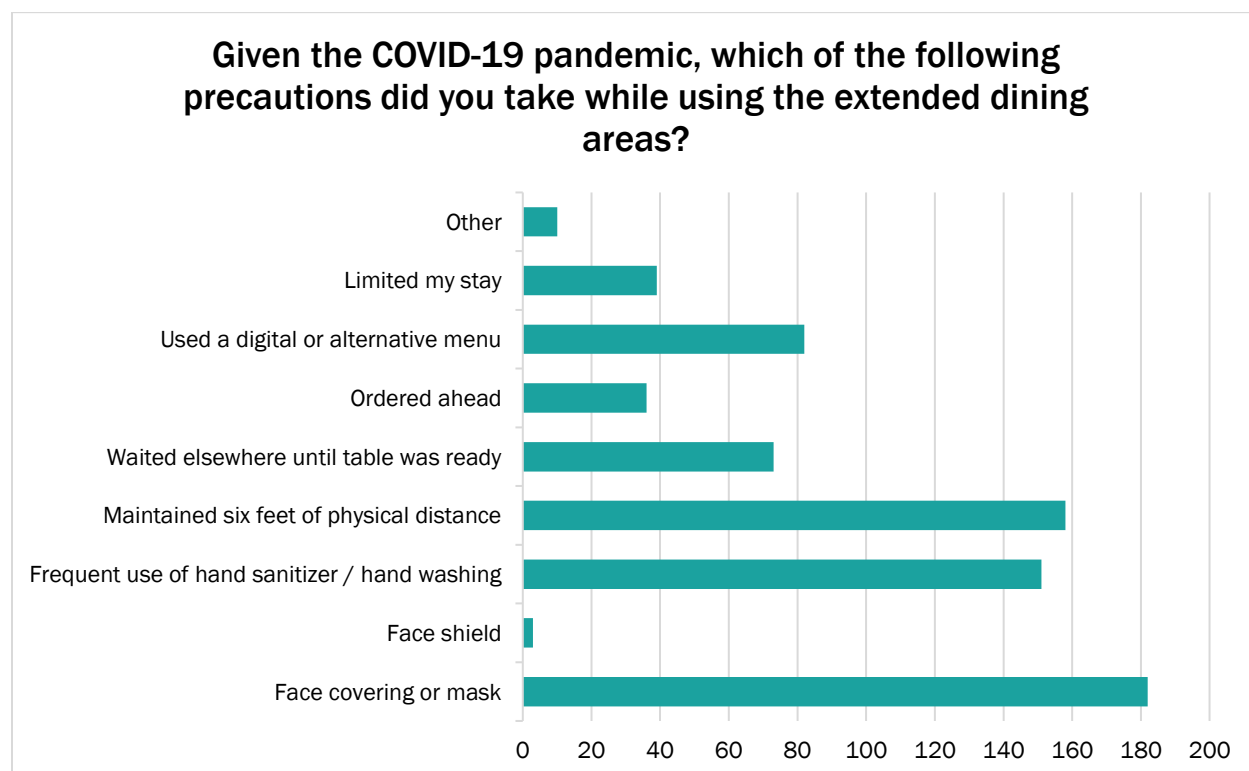
## COVID-19 Precautions and On-Street Dining Areas

This set of questions gauged how people adjusted to the COVID-19 pandemic while visiting Main Street and using on-street dining areas.

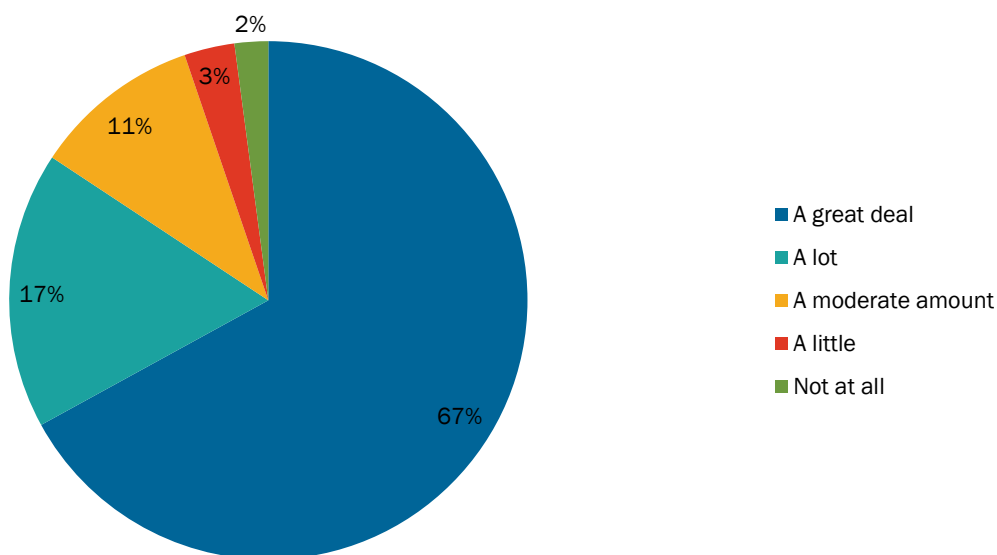
In general, we find that the overwhelming majority of visitors to Main Street exercised recommended public health precautions, such as mask-wearing and physical distance. People felt comfortable using the on-street dining areas, and 30% of visitors to the areas made a purchase at a retailer. More than 80% of respondents said they sought out on-street dining in order to stay safe in the midst of the pandemic.

- **More than 95% of visitors to Main Street wore a face mask or covering**, 80% washed their hands frequently, and 82% maintained six feet of physical distance.
- 84% of respondents said that the availability of on-street dining influenced their decision to dine out on Main Street either “a lot” or “a great deal.”
- **91% of respondents said they felt comfortable using the on-street dining areas** from a public health perspective.
- When they dined out, **34% of respondents visited another food or beverage establishment**, and **30% made a purchase at a retailer**. 40% visited Downtown Park.

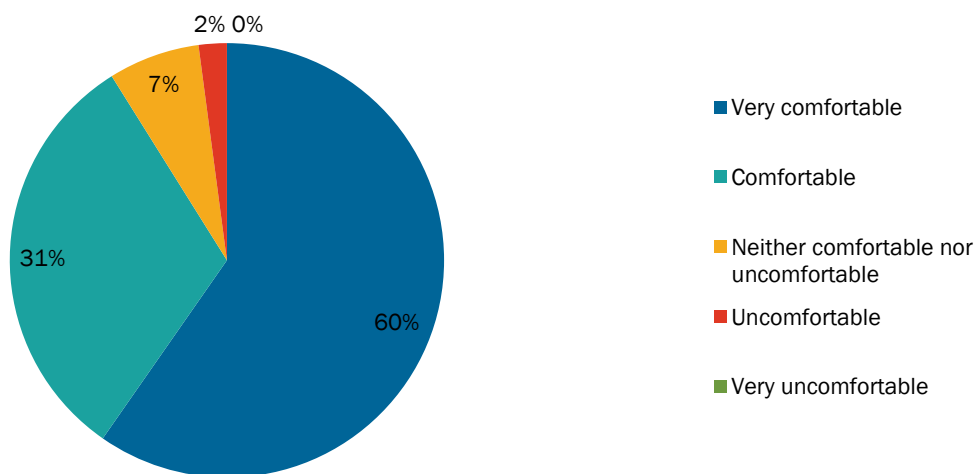
## Charts

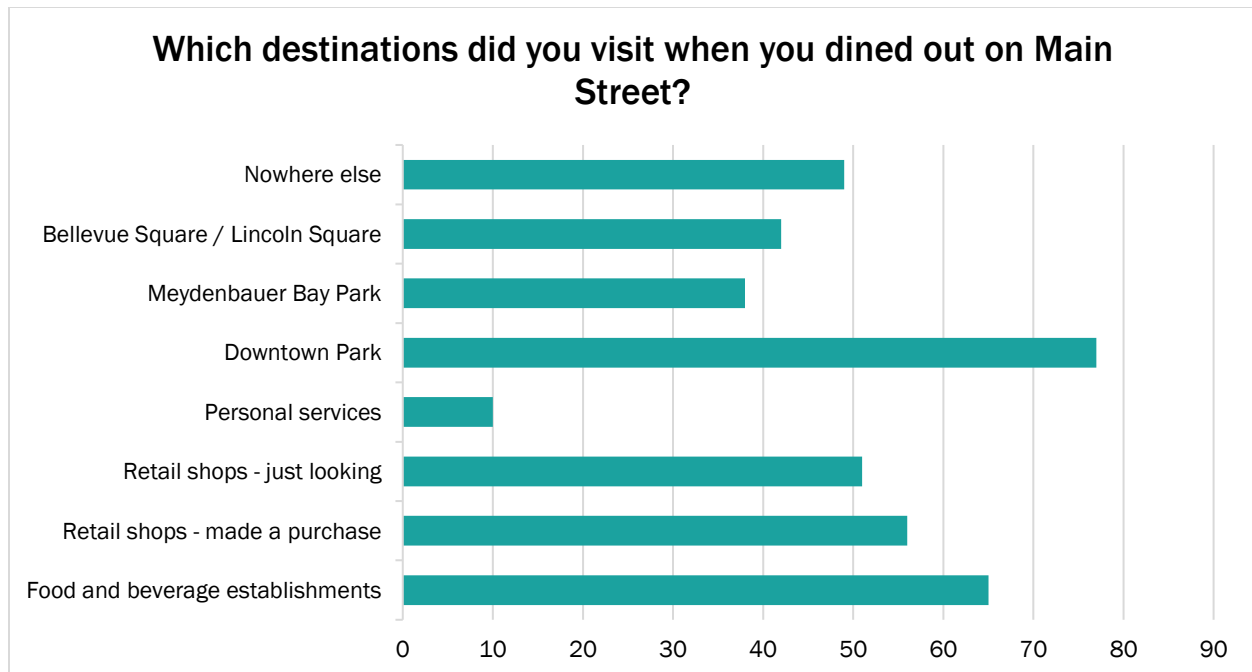


**To what degree did availability of on-street dining influence your decision to dine out on Main Street?**



**How comfortable would you say you were using the extended dining areas from a public health perspective?**





## Satisfaction

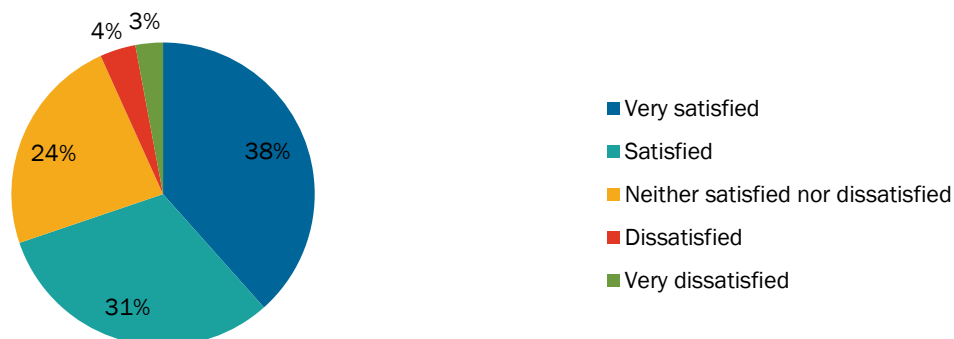
This set of questions gauged how satisfied residents, business owners, visitors, and others have been with the extended dining areas and the general experience of using Main Street.

We find that people were overwhelmingly supportive of the on-street dining areas, and want to see them return again in the future. While about 45% of those who drove to Main Street felt that parking was “difficult,” 71% of people remained satisfied with the transportation experience. **Taken together, these stats indicate that the loss of on-street parking was a very acceptable trade-off for what visitors received in return—a livelier on-street experience.**

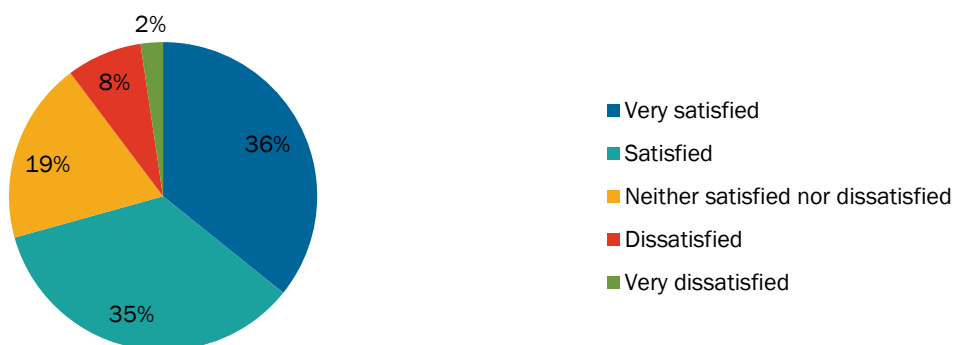
- **70% of respondents said they were satisfied with the extended dining areas.** 24% said they were indifferent, which could be correlated with individuals who said they were less aware of the areas. Just 7% were dissatisfied.
- 71% of respondents said they were satisfied with the experience of getting to and from Main Street, and **just 10% of respondents said they were dissatisfied.**
- **Among those who drove to Main Street, 55% did not have a significant issue with parking.** 45% said their parking experience was “difficult.”
- 79% of respondents said the extended patio areas made them more likely to visit Main Street in the future. **Just 6% said it made them less likely to visit.**

## Charts

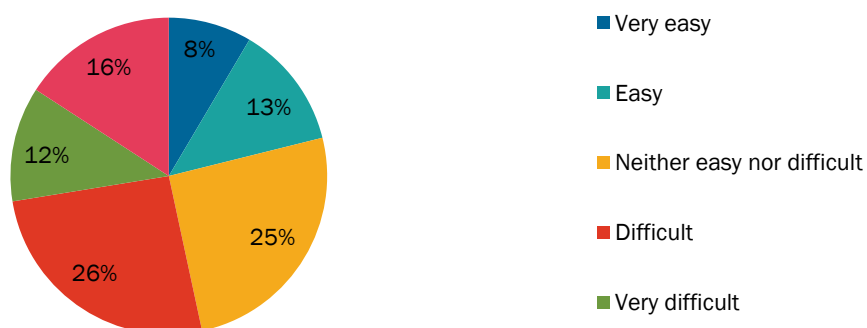
### How satisfied are you with the extended patio areas?



### How satisfied are you with the experience of getting to and from Main Street?



### If you drove to Main Street, how would you describe your parking experience?

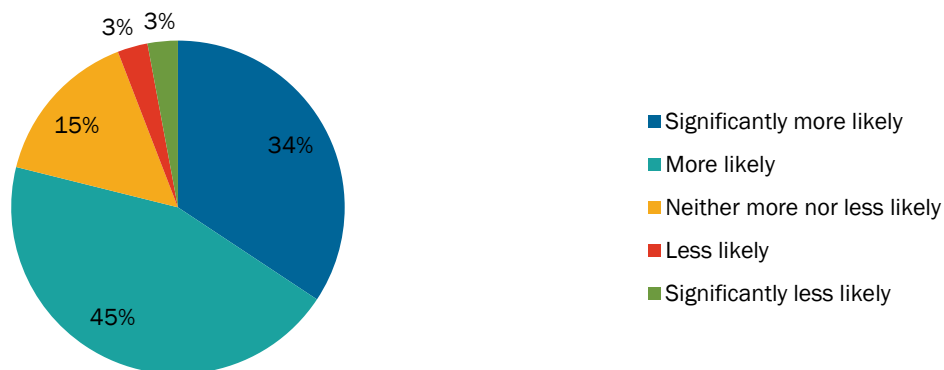




**If you drove to Main Street, how would you describe your parking experience?**



**Disregarding COVID-19, do the extended dining areas make you more or less likely to visit Main Street in the future?**



## Open-Ended Responses

The open-ended responses on this survey gave respondents an opportunity to share feedback which could not be captured in the fixed-response questions.

More than 150 people left an open-ended response, out of 395 responses. Among these:

- **71% of comments were positive** about the extended on-street dining areas.
- **25% expressed a desire for the areas to continue into the fall and winter** (with weather protection and heaters), and 10% suggested making the program permanent and either year-round or an every-summer occurrence.
- **8% of comments expressed a desire for a full closure of Main Street** and/or nearby side streets.

- **11% wanted to see additional social distancing and COVID-19 precautions**, while 8% wanted to see additional separation between diners and the sidewalk.
- **11% of free responses mentioned parking and/or access**, though many noted that they were comfortable with the trade-off of losing on-street parking, and several expressed a desire for a new parking garage.

### Exemplary Comments

Below, find a selection of exemplary and notable comments.

- Glad to help local vendors. 77 and recent health challenges make total walking difficult. Really appreciated TLatte and patio area to meet friends not requiring a full meal.
- Good idea to help restaurants and make dining more appealing during COVID, since you can't dine with people outside of your household inside an establishment currently and I'm more comfortable dining outside anyway, so patio seating is important.
- I have spent more time on Main Street since the expanded dining area.
- I think the city is doing what they can to help these struggling businesses and I appreciate a city with this type of mentality. Thank you!
- I'm not eating out during COVID-19. But even if I were, dining in the exhaust of a traffic jam isn't attractive. We should get the cars off Main St and leave it for the people.
- I'd let them happen during the summer months even after Covid 19 is gone. It's good for the small restaurants and allows more people to enjoy the nice weather when we have it. It's nicer driving down Main Street without having Traffic stop so so people could try to parallel park.
- it was awesome to be in Bellevue - Main Street was by far the most fun place to visit through out this difficult time.... good energy !
- Let the restaurants have outdoor seating throughout the winter! That is the only way my family and I will eat out until there is a covid vaccine. We want to support local businesses and we will eat outside in the cold and rain with heat lamps and tents :)
- Many cities close streets to accommodate summer dining. It offers a fun, positive and 'neighborly' social experience. I think it's all positive. The more people hear about it the more will come
- Should have done this a long time ago.
- Think it was a great idea! Would've liked to see a more streamlined / decorative partition — instead of what looked like plastic coverings (over those orange road barriers). Do understand it being temporary.
- Though I personally haven't used it, I support the creativity and ambience it created as opportunities to be able to eat outside and keep business going

- Very European and people friendly. Improve the appearance of barriers and add heat lamps. Use as much as possible in our climate. Add some protection from rain. Good for community!!!!
- Try to find a way to continue into the fall season. Heaters? Covered areas?
- We loved it. I hope it can be extended to be year round. Would love to see one lane of Main street to be one-way car traffic and 1st the other way.
- We had really hoped to visit some Main Street retailers after we finished our dinner, but most had already closed. I would encourage the “non-restaurant retailers “ to extend their hours given that this could become a destination experience. Also, I wish the street was fully closed like Issaquah did on its Front Street.
- What about making a section of Main street as pedestrian only? Or permanently creating the extended seating?
- Would be nice if the barriers between dining and the cars driving on main was more aesthetically appealing vs obv barriers. Walla walla does a good job with using planters as barriers but it’s also visually appealing. Would ideally be great to have more separation between cars and dining...shut the road down on Friday and Saturday nights entirely.
- I love seeing them and want to join. But I am alone, parking is a big issue so I haven’t done it. If parking were more available I would have.

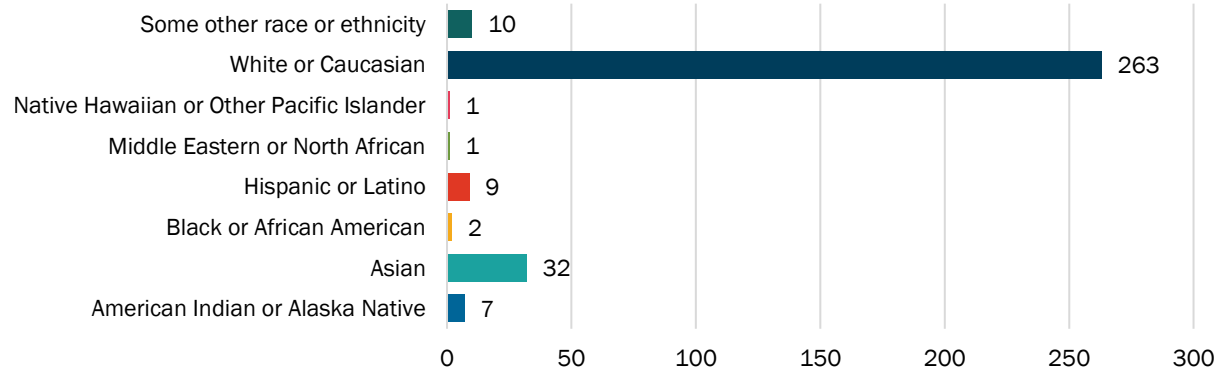
## Demographics

Respondents to this survey were whiter, older, and more affluent than Bellevue’s general population. That said, this may align with the demographics of individuals who live, work, and visit Main Street on a regular basis—the area is a “premium” destination.

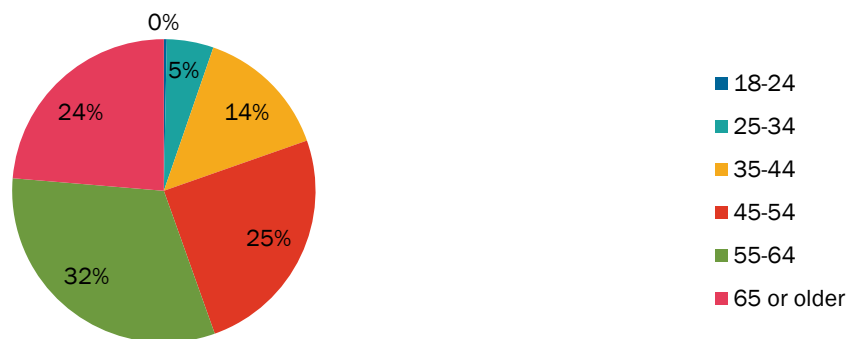
- **81% of respondents identified as white or Caucasian**, while 10% identified as Asian.
- 56% of respondents identified as older than 55, while **39% identified as belonging to Bellevue’s 35-54 “midcareer” benchmark**.
- **78% of respondents make more than \$100,000 each year**, and 57% make more than \$150,000 each year.

## Charts

### Race or Ethnicity



### Age



### Income

