



Engage!
St. John's

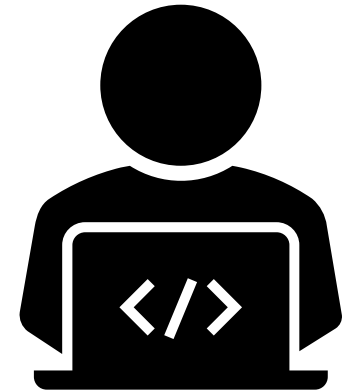
Report of results from the online
BUSINESS survey
on Sidewalk Snow Clearing

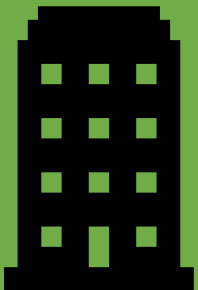
2020

ST. JOHN'S

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

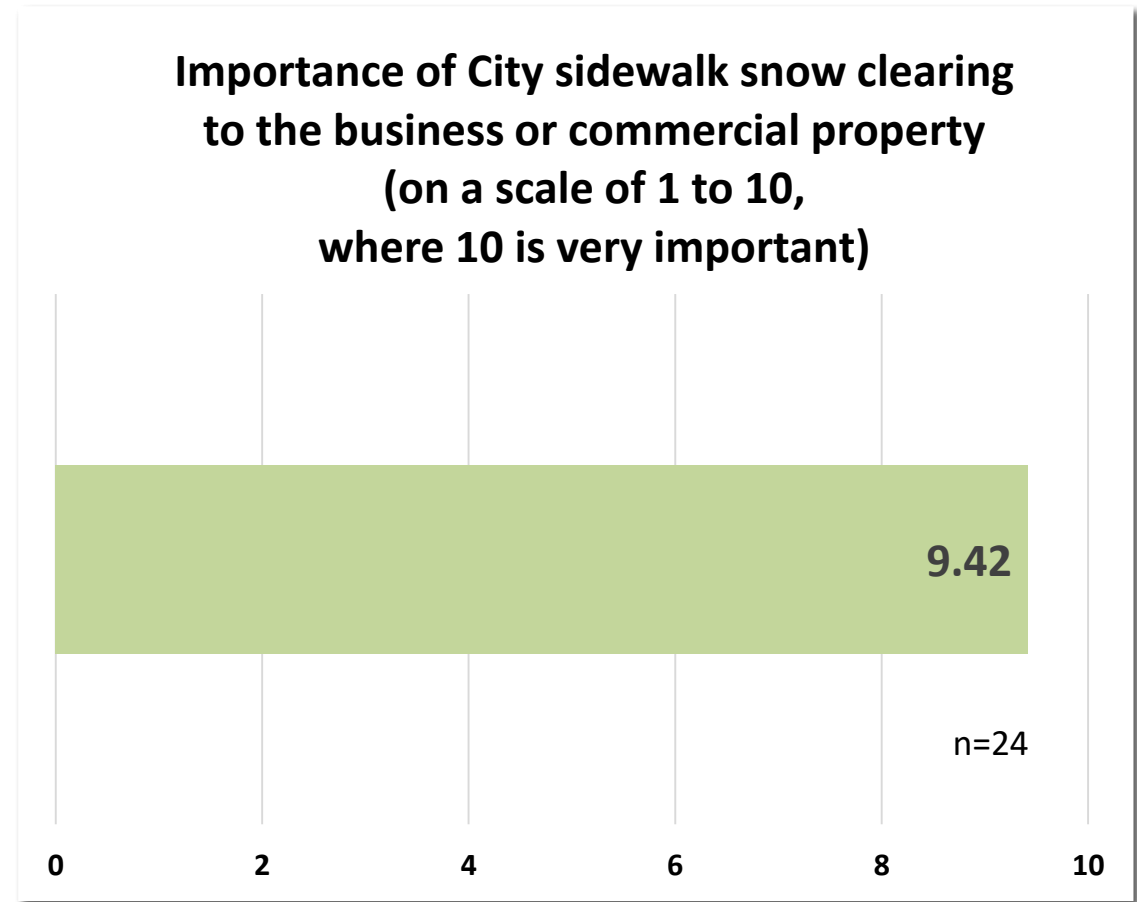
- Online survey
- Responses collected between May 27 and June 19, 2020
- 18 questions
- Average time to complete the survey: 7 minutes
- 24 responses





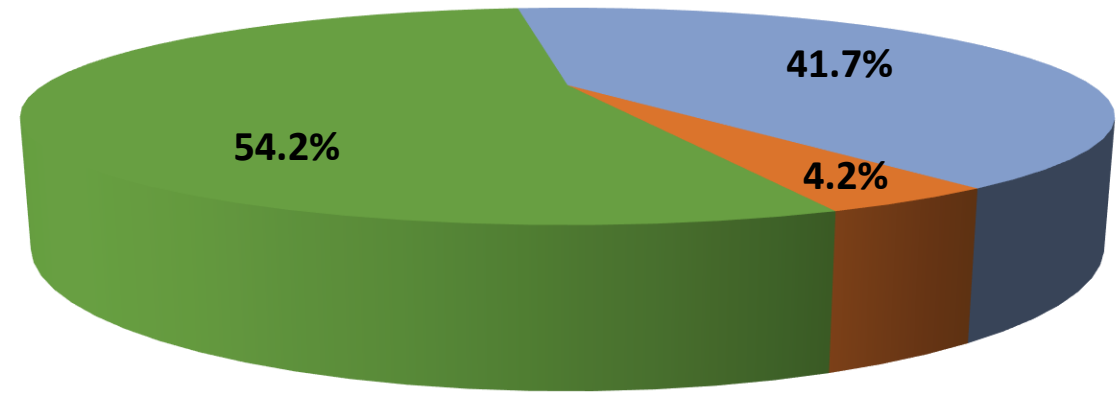
Sidewalks and business in winter

- There is a public sidewalk near or leading to all the businesses/commercial properties surveyed.
- 78% of businesses surveyed arrange for their own sidewalk snow clearing (this is likely reflective of the large number of respondents whose businesses or commercial properties are located in the downtown along Water or Duckworth streets).
- Respondents rated the importance of City sidewalk snow clearing as a 9.42 on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is very important.



- Fifty-four percent of businesses surveyed indicated they were familiar with the priority system used by the City to clear sidewalks in winter, while 42% indicated they knew there was a system but they were not aware of the details.
- Eighty-three percent of respondents indicated their business/commercial property was located on an existing City sidewalk snow clearing route.

Awareness of sidewalk snow clearing priority system

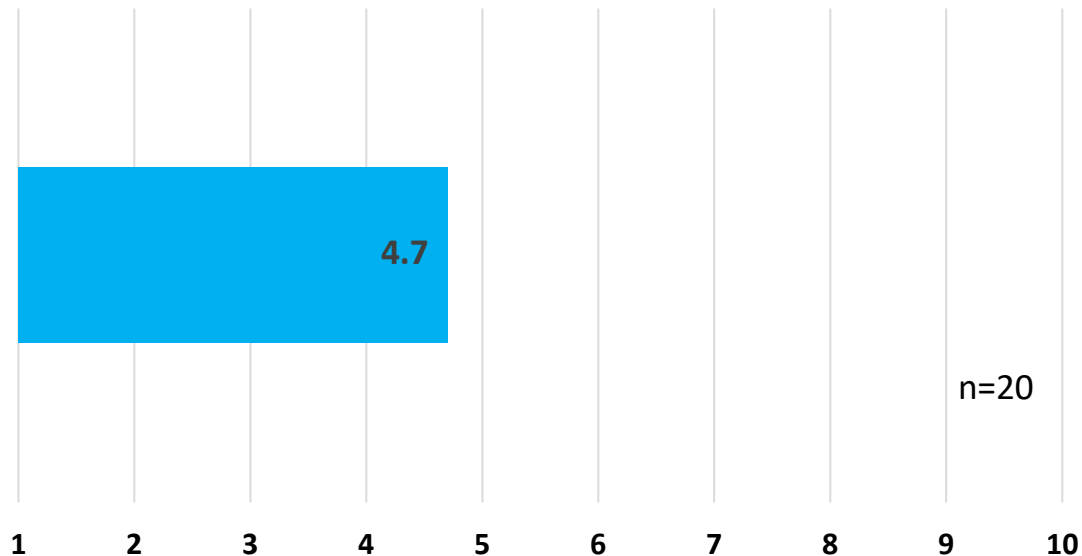


- Familiar with the priority levels
- Know there is a system, but not aware of the details
- Not aware there is a system

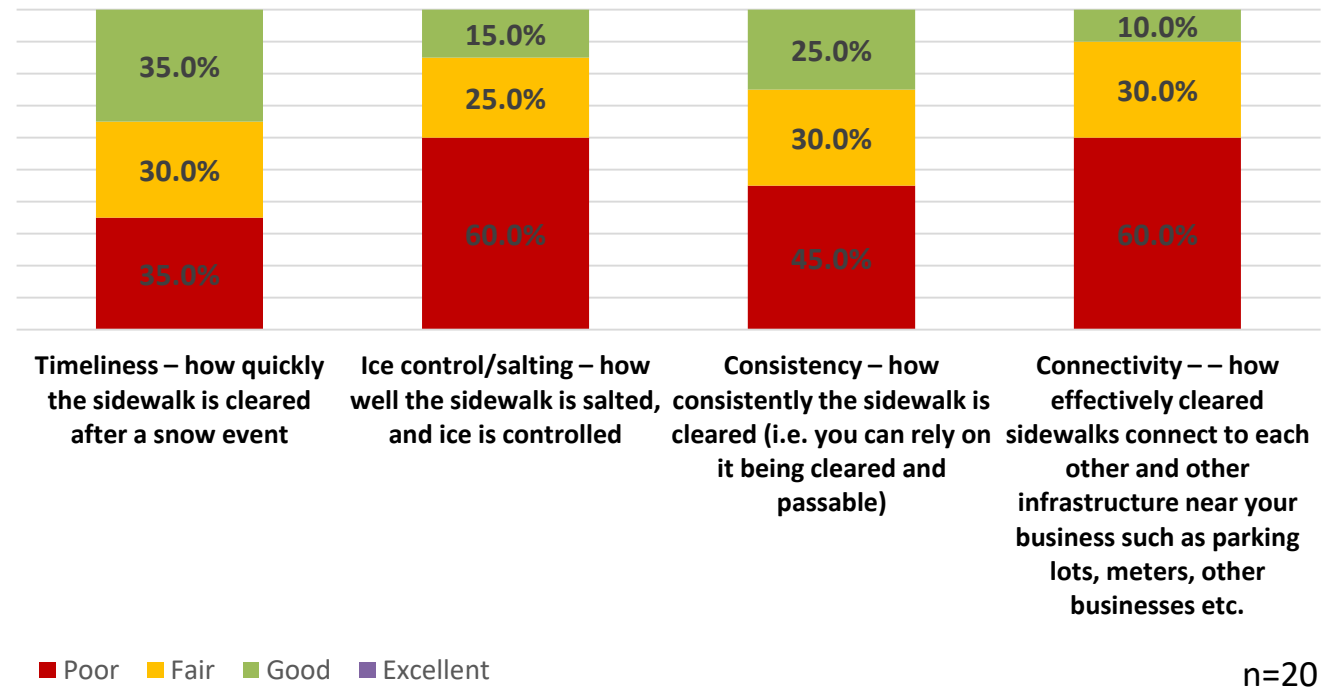
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- Some respondents expressed specific concerns about snow clearing including: safety concerns related to ice buildup on sidewalks, the timeliness of clearing on main streets in the downtown, the inconsistency with which businesses clear sidewalks in the downtown and whether this was enforced, concerns about vacant properties in the downtown and the lack of sidewalk clearing that results, concerns about access to stairs, and concerns about street plows pushing snow onto cleared sidewalks. In addition, access to sidewalks in the downtown was cited as problematic when cuts were not made in snowbanks to allow pedestrian access at various points along a block and to provide access to crosswalks.

Respondents' rating of the overall condition of city sidewalks in winter near their business or commercial property (on a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is excellent)



Respondents' rating on the quality of various aspects of the current priority sidewalk snow clearing system



When asked what, if any, challenges or concerns they had regarding the current City sidewalk snow clearing program near their business or commercial property, respondents cited the following:

- There is limited space to put snow in the downtown.
- Bates Hill is a challenge - often cleared of snow with one pass, however, it is a two-way street (with multiple businesses and a bus stop).
- Businesses are inconsistent in snow clearing sidewalks. Suggest City do it, especially in the downtown, and charge.
- Taxis need access to bars and restaurants in the downtown area during snow removal. Special attention should be paid to when snow removal is being done, i.e., avoid weekend nights, avoid nights before stat holidays, avoid west of the Court House until after 5:00 am.
- Snow removal should happen immediately after a significant snowfall on Water & Duckworth. Not just pushed back but removed.
- Parking meter access is problematic. Drivers must walk over snowbanks to access meters. Bus riders must do the same.
- Snow removal can sometimes create challenges when snow is pushed and builds up a level of snow and ice on the sidewalk.
- The priority system is inconsistent on Duckworth Street - parts are clear to the sidewalk and salted, while other portions (across from the Marriott) can be dangerous.
- Ice control is an issue. (3)
- It is difficult for customers to access the business/property from the street because of snow piles. (3)
- Stairs on McMurdo's Lane are frequently used in winter by employees and customers, including those who park in Metro Park. Uncleared stairs restricts access, is a safety concern, and a deterrent to people coming to the downtown.

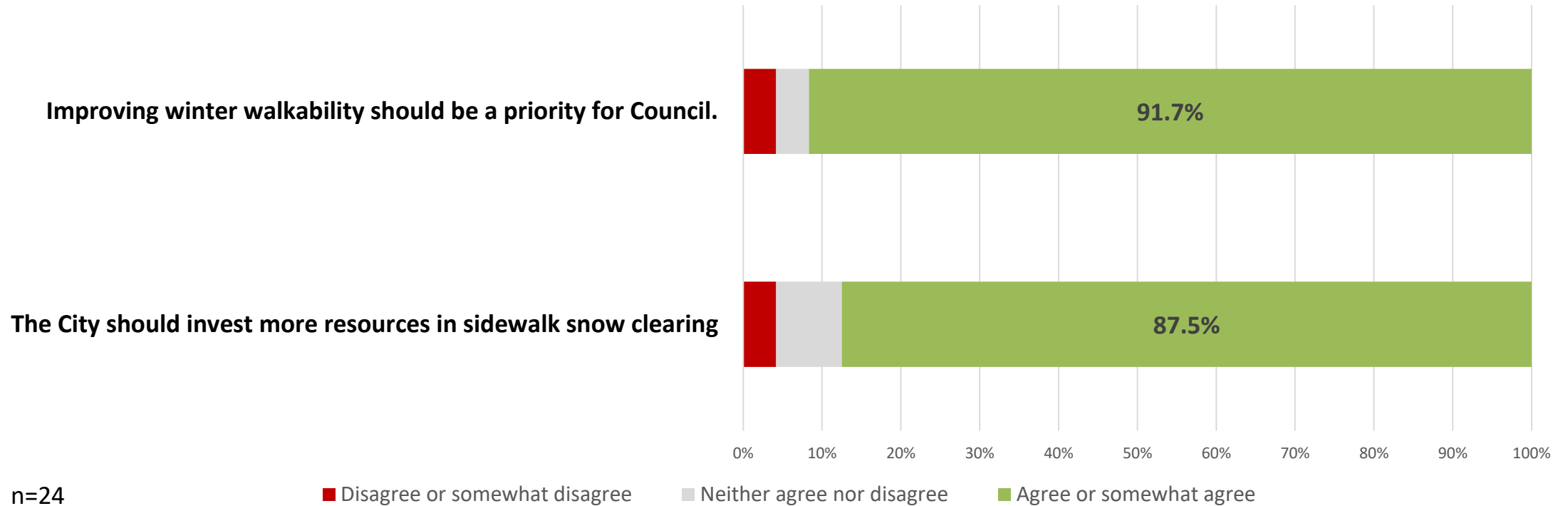
Note: numbers in brackets indicate multiple responses

When asked if there was one thing the City could do to improve the sidewalk snow clearing near their businesses, respondents cited:

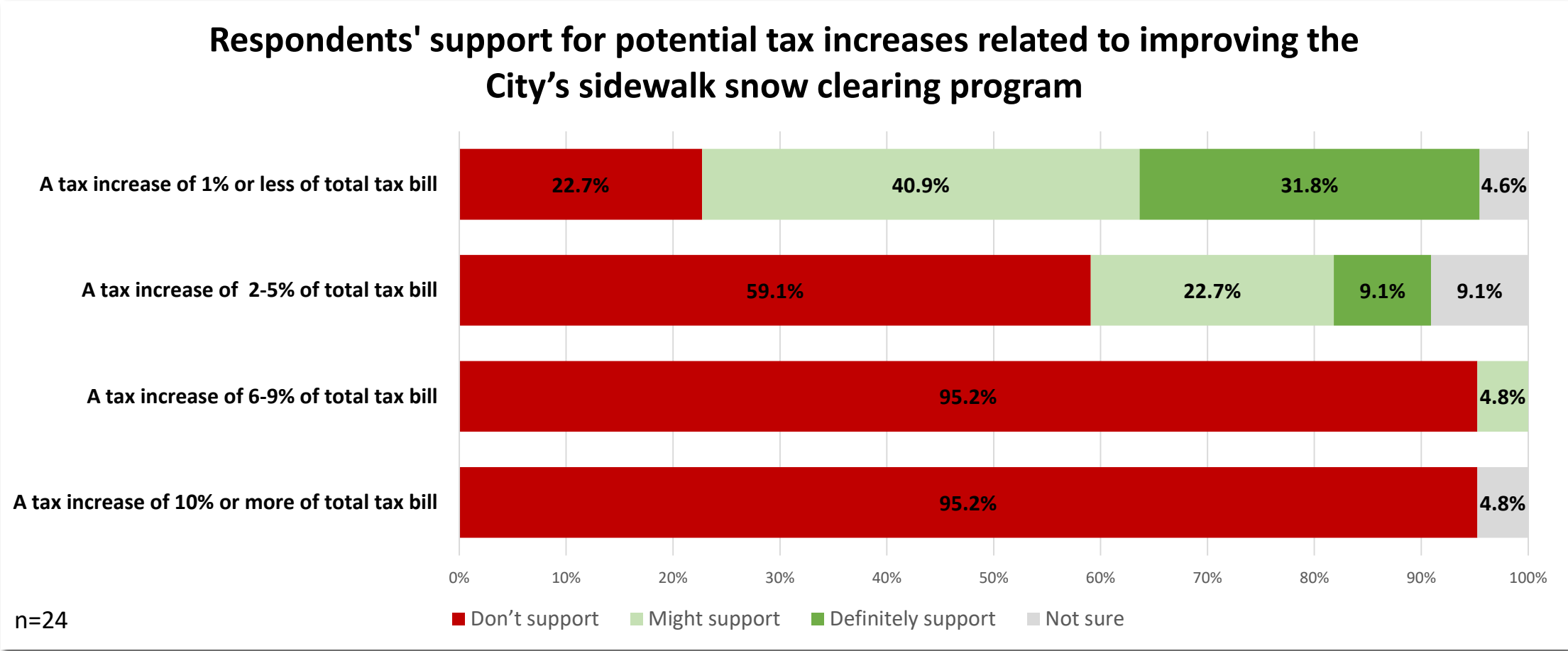
- Bates Hill should be a one-way street. Remove the snow, rather than piling it up in front of businesses or at the end of the street.
- Timely clearing and removal of snow and ice control (3). Also, explore the cost of the City doing it and charging businesses.
- Make more cuts through snowbanks on Water/Duckworth/George instead of just at the corners, to allow access to the street at various points along the block. If not, property owners should also make cuts. Keep the cuts free of slush.
- Snow removal needs to happen within 24 hours after a significant snowfall. If Duckworth & Water became one way, there would be more room for moving vehicles to navigate parked vehicles.
- Since the downtown has a parking ban the snow should be removed instead of plowing on the sidewalks.
- Everyone should be responsible for clearing in front of their areas. This includes vacant buildings.
- Need consistency on Duckworth Street. Section (near Marriott) often feels neglected and does not connect well with the rest of the commercial areas, making it less desirable to venture down.
- Clear McMurdo's Lane.
- The sidewalk plow should not plow the sidewalk before the road plow clears the street.
- Create a long-term policy of moving poles and posts so that a more efficient method of cleaning sidewalks can be employed.
- Enforce businesses to clear to the curb. Take away the drift along the curb in a timely fashion.
- Clear sidewalks down to the pavement. A general problem with sidewalk clearing is the snow that is left behind is subject to freeze and thaw conditions and ultimately becomes ice.

- Surveyed businesses were very supportive of Council making winter walkability a priority (91.7% agree or somewhat agree) and of the City investing more resources in sidewalk snow clearing to provide a more consistent service (87.5% agree or somewhat agree).

Respondents' level of agreement on Council priorities and investment related to sidewalk snow clearing



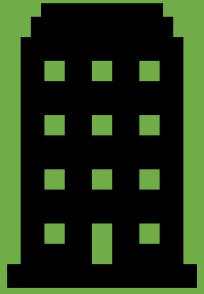
- Support for potential tax increases related to improving sidewalk snow clearing declined as the amount of tax increased.



Other comments:

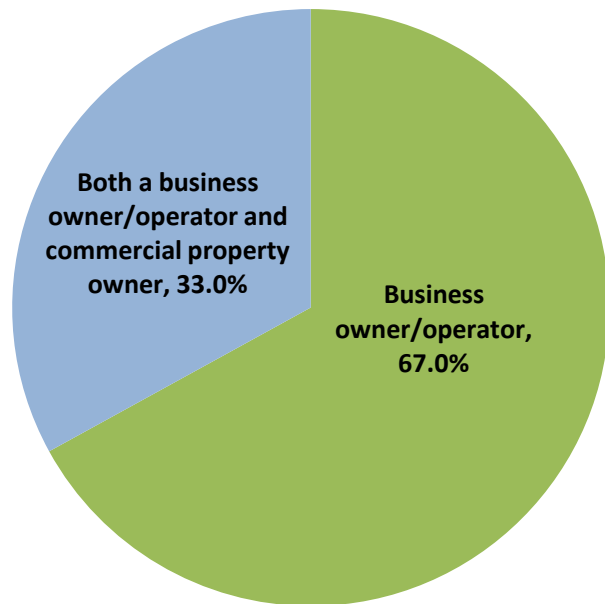
- Re-organize priorities for spending and look for efficiencies rather than raising taxes. (2)
- Kenmount Road, past Pippy Place, is not on the priority map. This part of the city has developed so much in the past 20 years with hotels, restaurants. Hotel guests can't walk next door to a restaurant in winter because sidewalks are not walkable.
- Need more after hours plowing and salting of the streets and more push back at intersections.
- Downtown should be more welcoming during winter. Make Duckworth & Water one way. Allow parking on both sides in one direction during the day.
- We pay a lot in property taxes, and commercial rents are quite high given our current economic situation. Sidewalk clearing (and snow clearing generally) needs to be a bigger priority because the city isn't safe in the winter.
- The city did a good job managing the response to Snowmagedon and we understand that was an outlying event. What is needed is a regular, consistent response to the ongoing snow and ice control requirements in a typical winter
- Given our weather, snow clearing in this City is definitely problematic. Over the past 10 years I have witnessed improvements. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to engage.
- This needs to be fixed. I live & work in the downtown core and can't believe how poorly the snow clearing has been. However I do want to acknowledge the great job the city did after Snowmageddon, just prior to the lifting of the SOE, in the downtown core. Not only was the snow from that storm removed but also the snowfall that fell earlier in the year that had never been dealt with up to that point.

Note: numbers in brackets indicate multiple responses



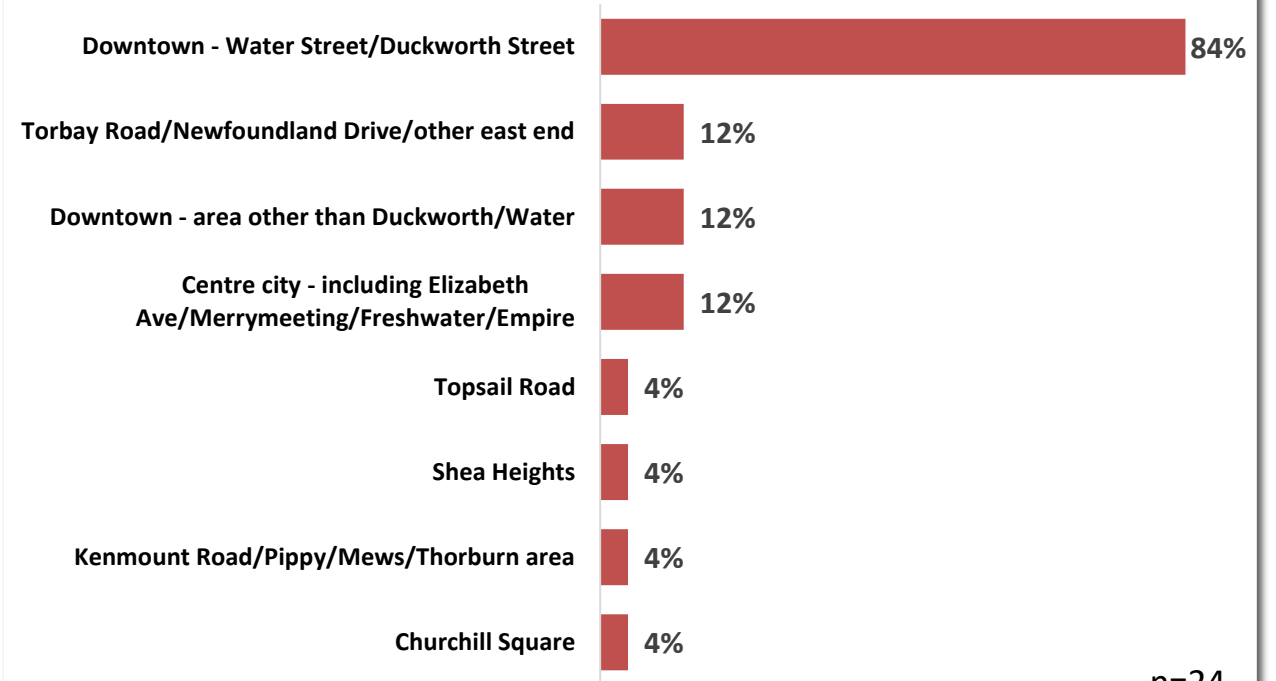
Profile of Respondents

Type of Business Ownership



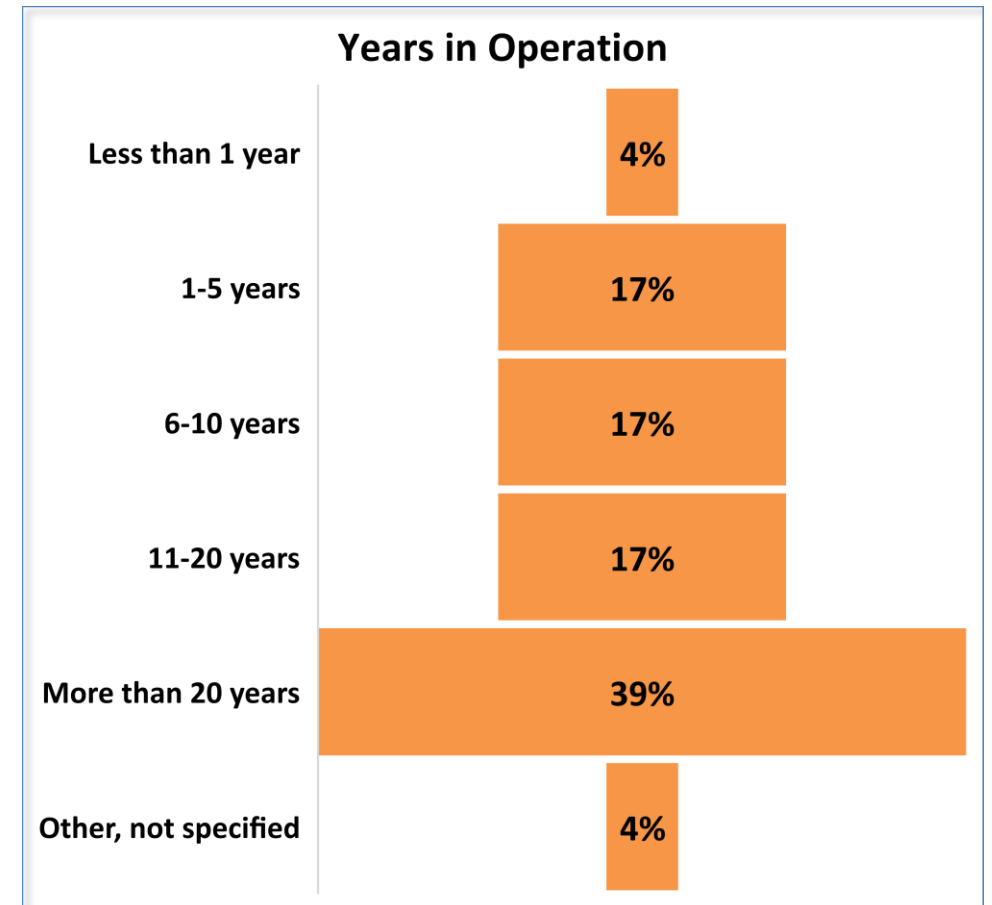
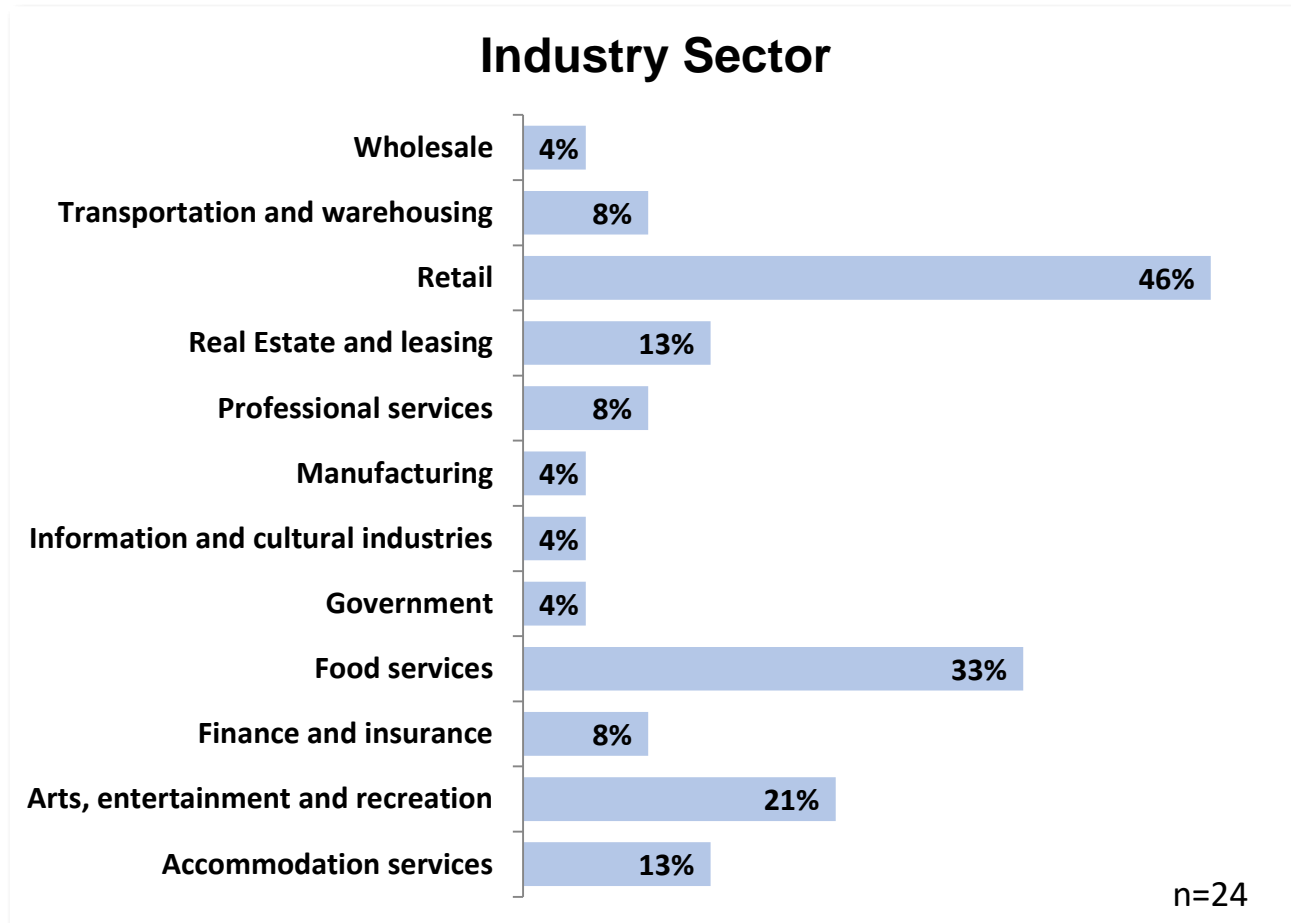
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Business Location



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Note: Percentages do not add to 100 as some respondents had more than one business/commercial property location



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