

Plus 15 Implementation Study
Phase 1 - Interest Holder Survey

What We Heard Report

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Executive Summary

The Plus 15 network is a unique part of Calgary's downtown landscape. The Plus 15 implementation study is centered on assessing the current strengths and challenges of Calgary's elevated walkway network. Building on the previous 2019 network review, this study aims to better align the network with changes in Calgary's downtown, including new development trends and shifts in how people are using the network.

To support the drafting of this study, the City engaged with Plus 15 Interest holders, such as Plus 15 businesses, building owners/managers, real estate groups, community and cultural groups, civic and economic groups, and downtown developers to share their insights and feedback on the current state of the Plus 15 Network. From April 27 - May 27, 2026, the City heard from 75 interest holders, sharing 160 comments to guide the direction of the Plus 15 Network. In hearing from Plus 15 Interest holders, the following key themes emerged:

Support for the Plus 15 Network: Interest holders expressed strong support for the Plus 15 Network, with 84 percent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that a Plus 15 connection supports opportunities for their organization. The network is widely viewed as a valuable downtown asset that enhances accessibility, connectivity, and economic activity.

Tenant and Patron Attraction: Connection to the Plus 15 Network is viewed as an important factor in attracting and retaining tenants, customers, patrons, residents, and visitors. Interest holders noted that direct network access can enhance the appeal and competitiveness of downtown destinations and developments.

Safety and Security: Safety and security emerged as the most frequently identified challenge facing the network. Participants emphasized the importance of a consistent approach to security, addressing social disorder concerns, and ensuring that users, tenants, businesses, and property owners feel safe throughout the network.

Connectivity: The value of the Plus 15 Network is closely tied to its connectivity. Interest holders identified opportunities to strengthen the network through increased Downtown connectivity, increased local connectivity, reducing long-term disruptions, and creating a more continuous and resilient system.

Operating Hours and Access: Interest Holders expressed a desire for operating hours that better reflect how downtown is evolving, including evenings, weekends, and special events. At the same time, respondents highlighted the need to balance extended access with operational considerations and security requirements. Over half of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the current hours of operation are supportive of their organization's needs, and no changes are required.

Supporting Downtown Businesses: The Plus 15 Network plays an important role in supporting businesses through increased visibility, customer access, and pedestrian activity. Interest holders emphasized the importance of minimizing disruptions caused by closures and ensuring that small businesses can continue to benefit from network connectivity.

Building Operations and Investment: Building owners, operators, and managers identified the Plus 15 as an important feature for attracting and retaining tenants. Future investment decisions are influenced most strongly by considerations such as privacy and security, and capital costs, in addition to operating costs, maintenance requirements, accessibility, and the long-term direction of the network.

Supporting Future Development: Downtown developers indicated that clear long-term planning for the Plus 15 Network can help support future investment decisions. Greater certainty regarding future connections, growth areas, policies, and density bonusing requirements can encourage integration of Plus 15 connections into new developments.

Vibrancy and Activation: Interest holders supported opportunities to increase activity and vibrancy within the network through programming, public art, events, pop-ups, and other activations. These initiatives were seen as ways to attract additional users, support businesses, and create a more engaging downtown experience.

The City of Calgary thanks everyone who provided feedback on the first phase of the Plus 15 implementation study. Outcomes of this first phase of engagement will inform the Plus 15 Network Assessment over the summer. We will be returning to interest holders with a second phase of engagement in late summer / early fall of 2026 to gather more input from Calgarians on preliminary network recommendations.

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1.0 Project Overview

The Plus 15 network is a unique part of Calgary's downtown landscape. Since the construction of the first Plus 15 bridge in 1969, the Plus 15 network has grown to a system of elevated, weather-protected walkways and eighty-seven bridges that span over sixteen kilometers throughout downtown. The network connects to various destinations, increasing downtown accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.

The Plus 15 implementation study is centered on assessing the current strengths and challenges of Calgary's elevated walkway network. Building on the previous 2019 network review, this study aims to better align the network with changes in Calgary's downtown, including new development trends and shifts in how people are using the network. By examining usage, connectivity, and integration with other downtown spaces, the study will pinpoint opportunities to add new connections, address gaps in the network, and clarify how the network continues to grow and evolve to enhance accessibility and support Calgary's evolving downtown.

The previous Plus 15 network review was conducted approximately seven years ago. This was prior to the COVID pandemic and there have been significant changes to the downtown landscape, including:

- Increased remote and hybrid work;
- Reduced pedestrian foot traffic;
- Increased office vacancy rates;
- Decreased property values; and,
- A shift towards a more mixed-use downtown with expanded residential, retail, cultural, and tourism spaces.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impacts of these changes on the Plus 15 network and to make recommendations to guide future Plus 15 development.

2.0 Engagement Overview

Engagement was open from April 27 - May 27, 2026, to allow Interested parties, such as Plus 15 businesses, building owners/managers, real estate groups, community and cultural groups, civic and economic groups, and downtown developers to share their insights and feedback on the current state of the Plus 15 Network. A dedicated page for the project's engagement was included on the Engage portal (https://engage.calgary.ca/plus15) as linked to from the Plus 15 Network calgary.ca web page.

Online Survey

April 27 - May 27, 2026 (4 weeks)

75 participants

An online survey was created to provide a structured questionnaire to engage the broader downtown community to identify challenges and opportunities of the Plus 15 Network.

3.0 What We Heard

3.1 All Responses

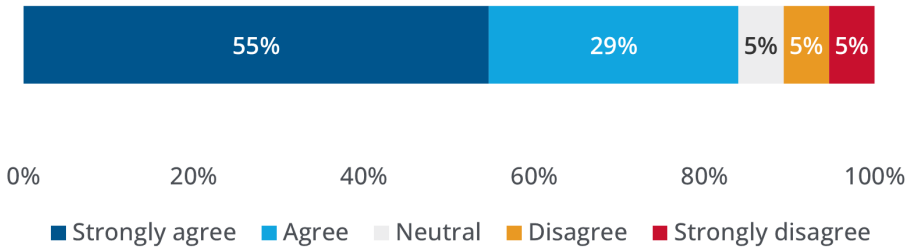
The following section shares the questions that were asked as part of the Interest Holder engagement process, paired with what was heard from participants in response to these prompts.

1. **Please select which of the following best describes your organization's role:**



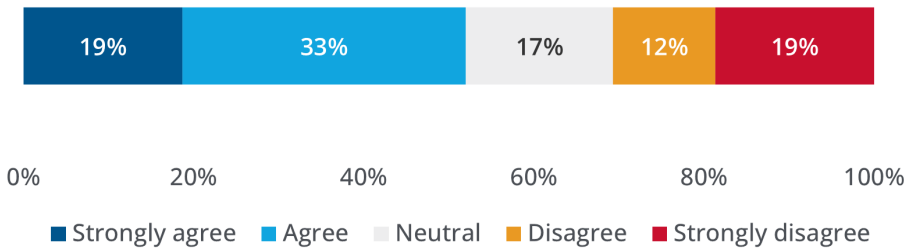
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2. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that connection to the Plus 15 Network supports opportunities for your organization?**



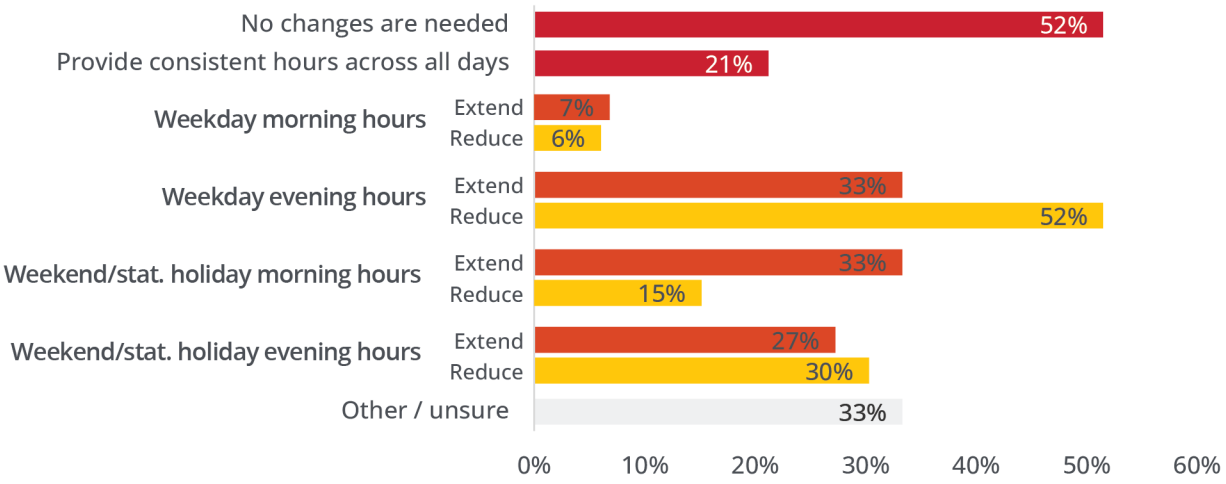
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3. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that the operating hours of the Plus 15 are supportive of your organization's needs:**



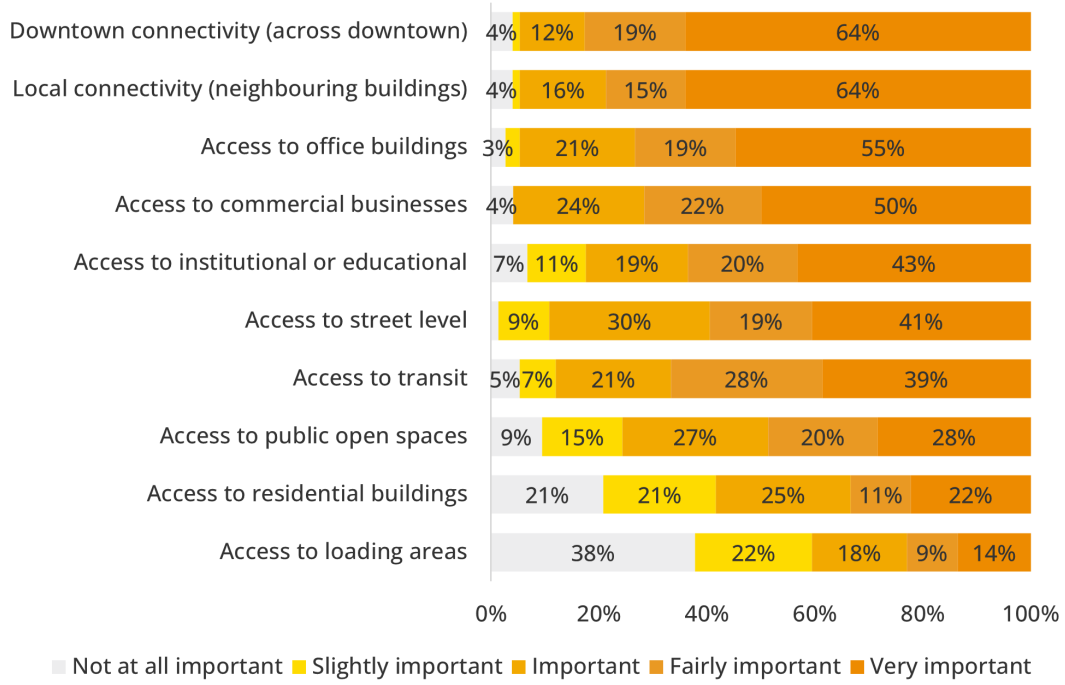
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4. If you believe the current Plus 15 operating hours could be improved, how would you prefer they be modified to better meet your organization's needs? (Select all that apply)



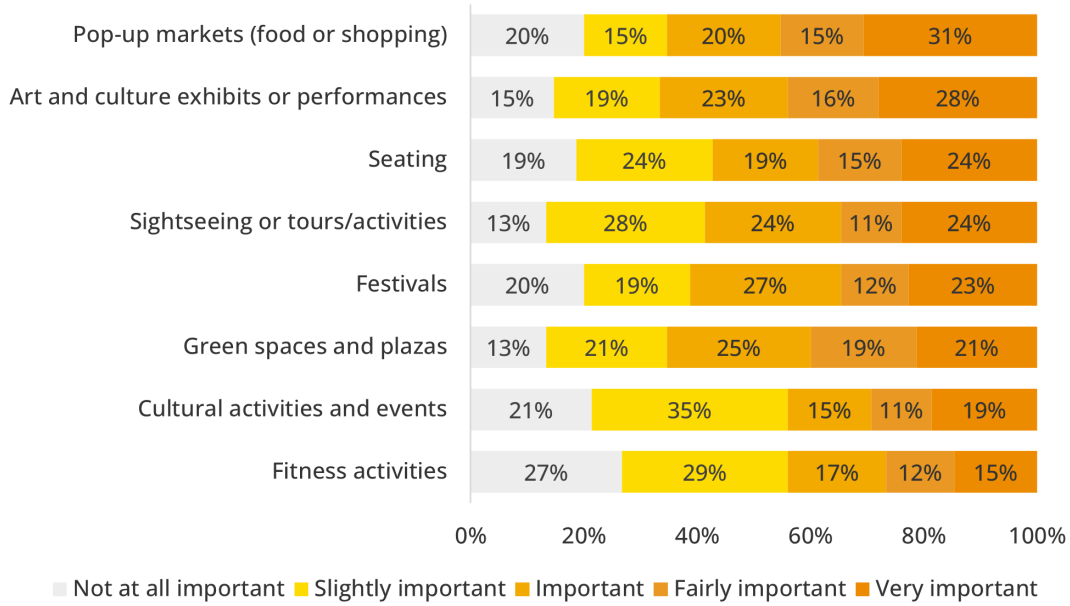
n: 73

5. Please rate the importance of the following connections within the Plus 15 network:



n: 72-75

6. **How important would the following activities and amenities within the Plus 15 network be in supporting your organization's operations and downtown vibrancy?**



n: 75

7. **What are the most significant challenges the Plus 15 Network presents for your organization or partners?**

Key Themes (# of responses)	Sample Interest Holder Comments
Safety and Security (37): Ongoing safety and security concerns within the network, including concerns for the public, tenants, and property.	*"Safety is the primary issue with early morning or later evening plus 15 use. Unhoused peoples present a safety concern throughout the day, but especially when traffic is lower."* *"Security is by far the most significant challenge. The doors to the +15 are like the front door of our building. Keeping them open for extended times after the building is closed invites nothing but bad things and is unjustifiable. The cost for additional security is significant and an unfair burden on our tenants."*
Hours of Operation (12): Extended hours of operations (weeknights and weekends), as well as consistency of hours of operation across the network.	*"The most significant challenge the Plus 15 Network poses for our organization is the issue of hours of operation. With limited parking beneath our facility, our patrons rely on the Plus 15 network to access nearby parkade facilities when attending performances, which sometimes do not end until 10 PM or later, making it hard for patrons to return to their parked cars via the Plus 15 network."* *"There are some security issues associated with the plus 15 network, especially when they are open late in the evening and on weekends and statutory holidays."*

Key Themes (# of responses)	Sample Interest Holder Comments
Network Closures (8): Longterm closures and construction which limit access to buildings and businesses.	*"Closed bridges such as the bridge to the Place 800 building the foot traffic is hindered and this impacts our small food court tenants."*
Accessibility (7): Ensuring the network is accessible to a diversity of users from the street level, and within the network.	*"While the +15 is technically open on the weekends and later in the evening we find a lot of buildings don't have escalators or easy elevator access to the +15 levels. Once you're in, it's great. Getting in can be a challenge."*
Missing Links (6): Building not being connected in to the larger Plus 15 network.	*"Gaps in network across downtown. The more connections the better."*
Wayfinding (5): Inconsistent signage, wayfinding, and mapping leading to confusion navigating the network.	*"Confusing mapping, inconsistent connections"*
Maintenance and Cleanliness (5): Ongoing maintenance, cleaning, and security to ensure the network remains welcoming and functional.	*"Ongoing maintenance and capital planning to ensure the infrastructure remains reliable, clean, secure and modern. In addition, addressing concerns related to vagrancy and overall site security is essential to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all users."*
Detracts from Street Life (2): Investment in the Plus 15 detracts from experience on the street and the public realm.	*"Hurts street life by drawing foot traffic into indoor private spaces"*
Policy and Partnerships (2): Lack of policy and partnerships with the City prevents innovative solutions within the network.	*"Partnership between building landlords and with City of Calgary"* *"Red tape preventing collaborations with our institution to provide installations, art, culture, and activation in these spaces."*

8. **What are the most significant opportunities the Plus 15 Network presents for your organization or partners?**

Key Themes (# of responses)	Sample Interest Holder Comments
Connectivity (19): Increased connectivity of buildings and businesses to the rest of the network.	*"There is also a significant opportunity to further expand and enhance the Plus 15 experience. Improving connectivity and encouraging broader public access "where appropriate" to retail spaces, offices, and businesses along the network would greatly increase its value."* *"There should be a full and continuous circuit. Bow Tower to City Hall is an examine. There is a prime opportunity to connect the Bow to the City's Andrew Davison Building."*
Tennant Attraction (10): The Plus 15 is a strong feature to supporting tenant attraction and retention.	*"+15 access is a feature that is important when leasing in downtown commercial properties."*
Vibrancy and Activation (6): Increasing vibrancy in the Plus 15 through programming, activations, events, and installations.	*"We love the idea of activating the space, even just for public awareness. As noted in "challenges", not high traffic so any incentive to drive public through the system by activating with pop ups (food, art) will be good for all that are connected to it. Not just a portal to avoid cold, rain or extreme heat to get from a venue to venue but activities that drive you through the space."*
Winter / Year Round Access (6): Indoor access to downtown during winter months is a significant benefit of the Plus 15.	*"The +15 allows temperate access to the downtown core regardless of weather."*
Residential Attraction (4): The Plus 15 is a strong feature to supporting residential development downtown.	*"Residents in the Eau Claire area often prefer to walk throughout downtown, but in the winter the sidewalks and crosswalks can be a real deterrent and often send us to our cars and stores, businesses and entertainment options outside of downtown. The +15 network is a HUGE incentive to living downtown."*
Mixed Uses (4): Integration of residential, office, and commercial uses support increased use and vibrancy.	*"Retail/amenities for tenants and public - increases retailer sales with higher traffic."*
Advertising (4): Providing exposure to businesses and attractions within the Plus 15 through advertisement.	*"Connectivity, advertising businesses within PLUS 15, driving traffic to our establishment."* *"More exposure to small businesses and cultural activities in Chinatown without adding pressure to the street-level traffic."*

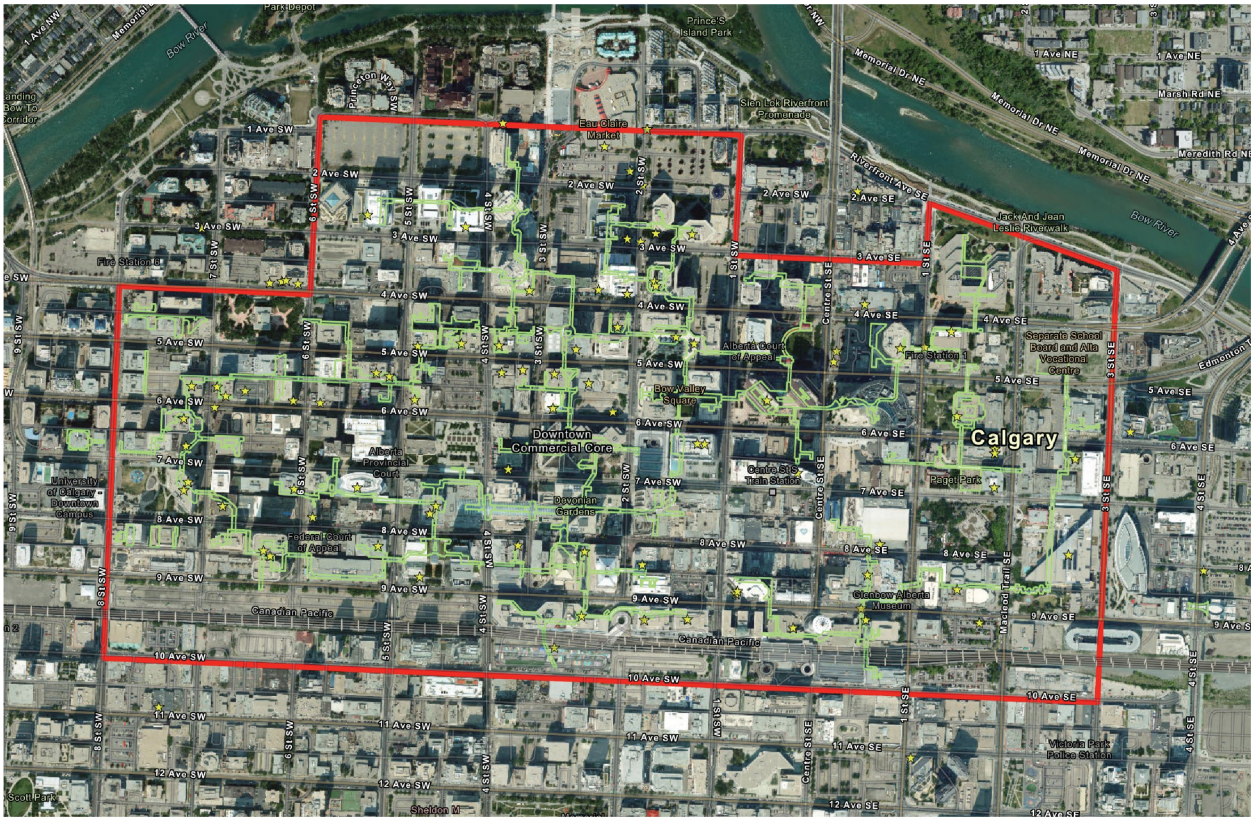
Key Themes (# of responses)	Sample Interest Holder Comments
Street Level Integration (3): Better integration between the Plus 15 and the street level through increased visibility and access.	*"The +15 network is basically separated into two parts right now, requiring people to go to street level for a few blocks and reentering the system, if a more unified system could be created with more redundancy in the routes so the entire network would be joined, i think people would be more inclined to use the system. Several closures and construction projects have fragmented the system."*
Safety and Security (3): Ensuring the Plus 15 is safe and secure for the public, tenants, and properties.	*"SAFE connectivity to work, play, reside in the downtown."*
Partnerships (2): Collaborative partnerships to work towards shared objectives of the Plus 15 network.	*"The biggest opportunity is to strengthen our community partnerships by creating an easy-to-access, welcoming, weatherproof connection with our civic partners. This connection helps our partners and patrons attend community events and work together on shared initiatives."*

9. **Do you have any final thoughts to inform the Plus 15 Implementation Study?**

Key Themes (# of responses)	Sample Interest Holder Comments
Safety and Security (11): A consistent approach to safety and security across the network is critical to the success of the network.	*"City to help or share the responsibility of securing the network."* *"Homeless issues need to be addressed and until such time more police patrols would be appreciated and not just during business hours. Between 6pm and 9pm and on weekends please."* *"Keep only the sections of the plus 15 that are frequently traveled, segments that are isolated and infrequently used become safety hazards and unnecessarily increase operating cost for businesses."*
Connectivity (7): Greater connectivity within the network, filling in missing links, and expanding outwards on the edges.	*"Need more connections and a mandate for Plus 15 sections to not be closed due to construction and residential conversation for very long periods of time. Construction should be planned in a way to keep them open with at the most very limited closures. This is a key reason why independent businesses' have a difficult time surviving in the Plus 15 network along with there not being a full circuit."* *"We need to double down on the Plus 15 and expand and extend it."*
Hours of Operation (5): Explore new or reduced hours of operation that support businesses and property owners.	*"Would favor new hours supported by traffic data, such as certain days being less busy, and also seasonal hour changes with more people using the system in the winter versus the summer."* *"Owners should have the right to lock down their buildings on weekends and after hours."*

Key Themes (# of responses)	Sample Interest Holder Comments
Support Small Businesses (4): Minimize disruptions to small businesses within the Plus 15 network, and provide supports to ensure they can continue to operate.	*"Please do things to support the small businesses in the +15 that are struggling so much"*
Vibrancy and Activation (3): Increasing vibrancy in the Plus 15 through programming, activations, events, and installations.	*"These are public spaces that should be interesting and active. Not just human circulation."* *"The commercial use of public easement space policy and associated costs should be reviewed and rental fees either reduced or removed."*
Policy (2): Collaborative policy partnerships to work towards shared objectives of the Plus 15 network.	*"The City's approach to capital review of the existing Plus 15 network needs to be more collaborative. Receiving a building condition summary requiring an immediate spend of millions of dollars is extremely challenging from a landlord perspective. We require +/- 12-16 months of lead time to properly cost, budget, and then complete work, let alone challenge/clarify the scope of the requirements."* *"The commercial use of public easement space policy and associated costs should be reviewed and rental fees either reduced or removed."*
Street Level Activation (2): Insure investment in the Plus 15 does not detract from the public realm and street level activation.	*"We need to be careful that investing in the Plus 15 does not compete or cannibalize efforts of activating our street level retail."*

10. What is the location(s) of your downtown businesses, properties/buildings, developments, or other real estate interests?

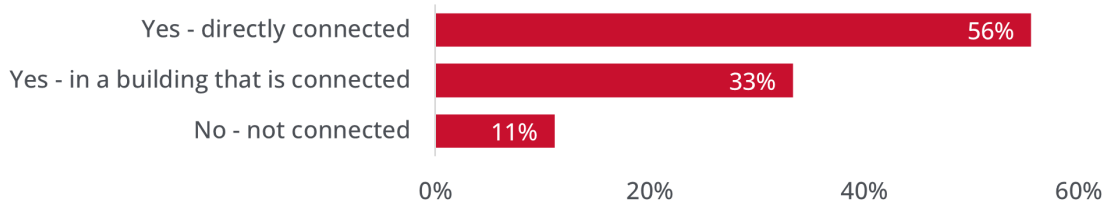


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- Location of Interest Holder businesses, properties/ buildings, developments, or other real estate interests
- Plus 15 Boundary
- Plus 15 Network

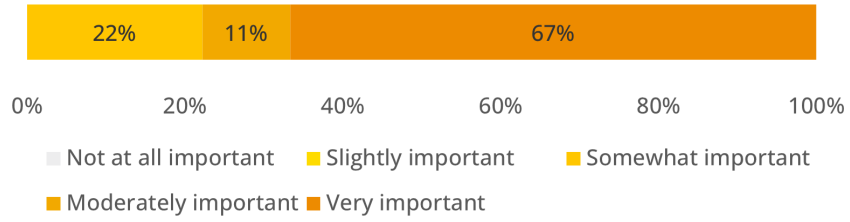
3.2 Plus 15 business

1. **Is your business connected to the Plus 15?**



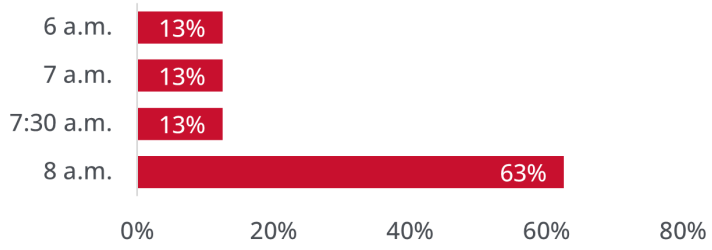
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2. **How important is a Plus 15 connection in attracting patrons or clients to your business?**



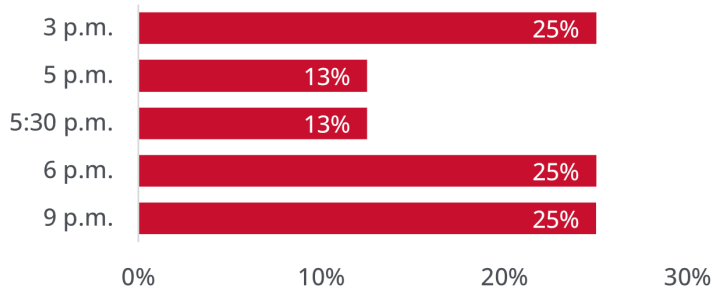
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3. **When does your business typically open on weekdays:**



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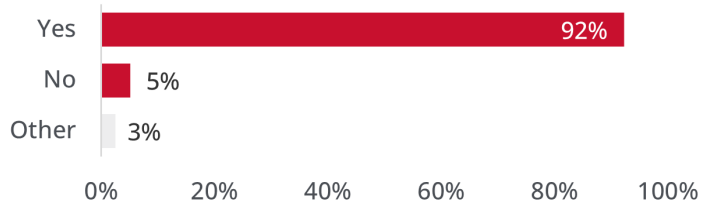
4. **When does your business typically close on weekdays:**



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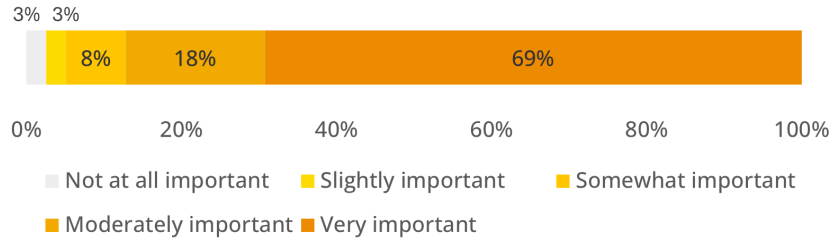
3.3 Building owner, operator or manager

1. **Is your building connected to the Plus 15 Network?**



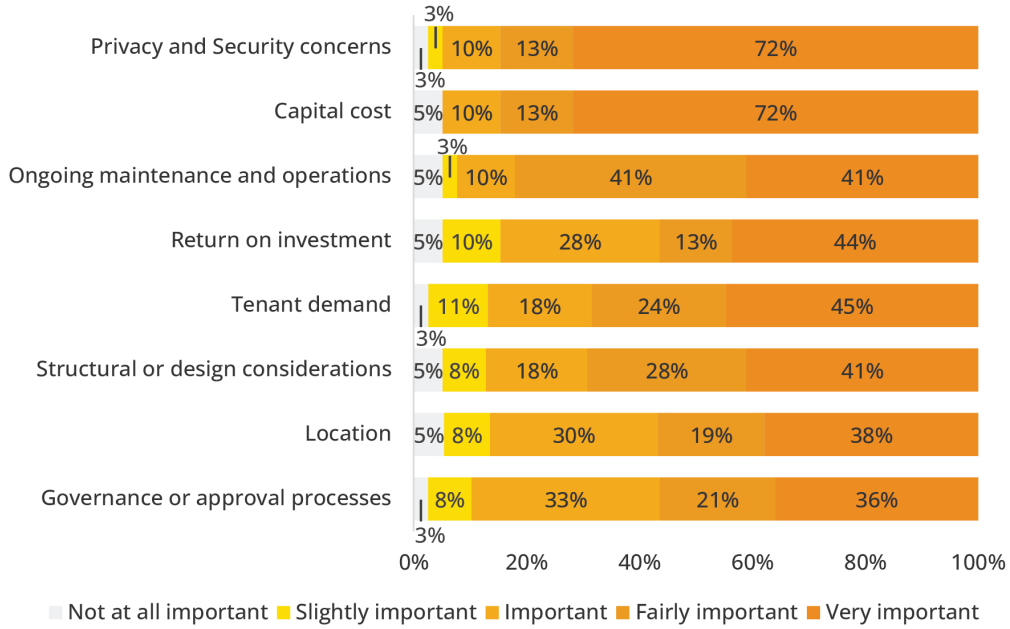
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2. **How important is connection to the Plus 15 Network in attracting or retaining tenants?**



n: 39

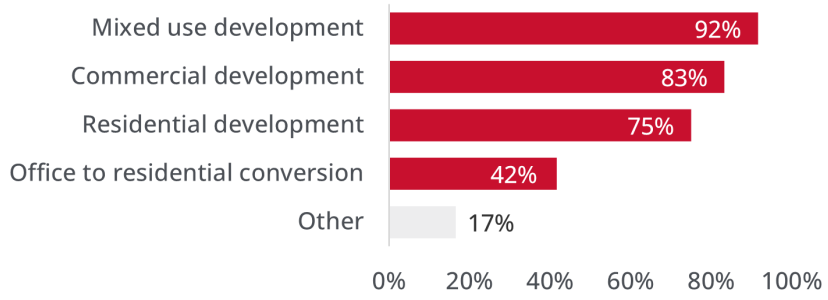
3. **How important are the following factors in influencing your decision to upgrade existing Plus 15 connections in your building (or consider adding a new connections if currently unconnected to the Plus 15)?**



n: 37-39

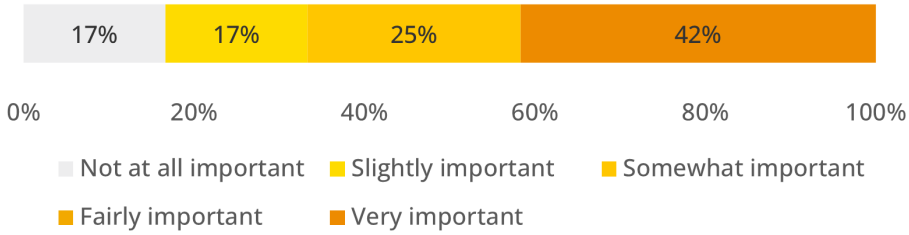
3.4 Downtown property developers and professional consultants

1. **What types of development projects are you primarily working on in Downtown Calgary?**



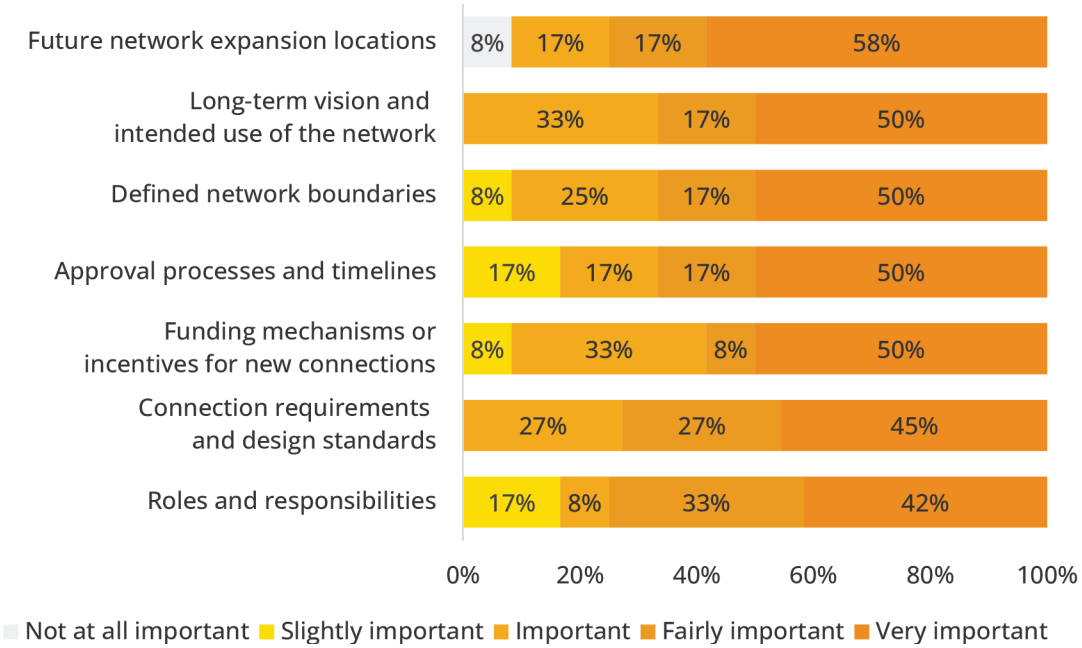
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2. **How important is connecting to the Plus 15 Network in your decision to purchase or develop a property?**



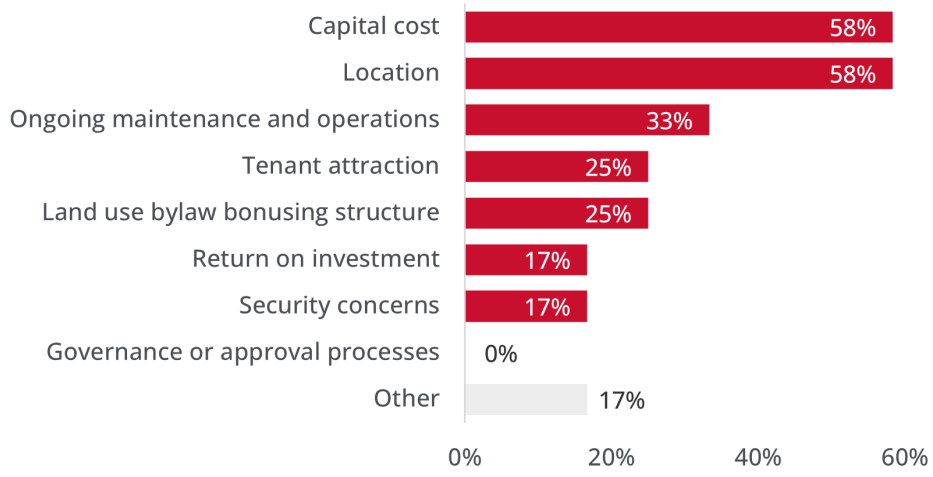
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3. How important is clarity on the following elements of a long-term Plus 15 Network plan in influencing your willingness to include Plus 15 connections in future developments?



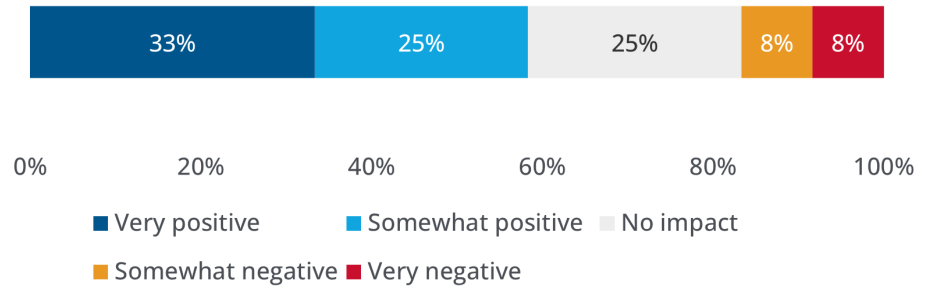
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4. What are the largest factors that influence your decision to build Plus 15 connections in a development project?



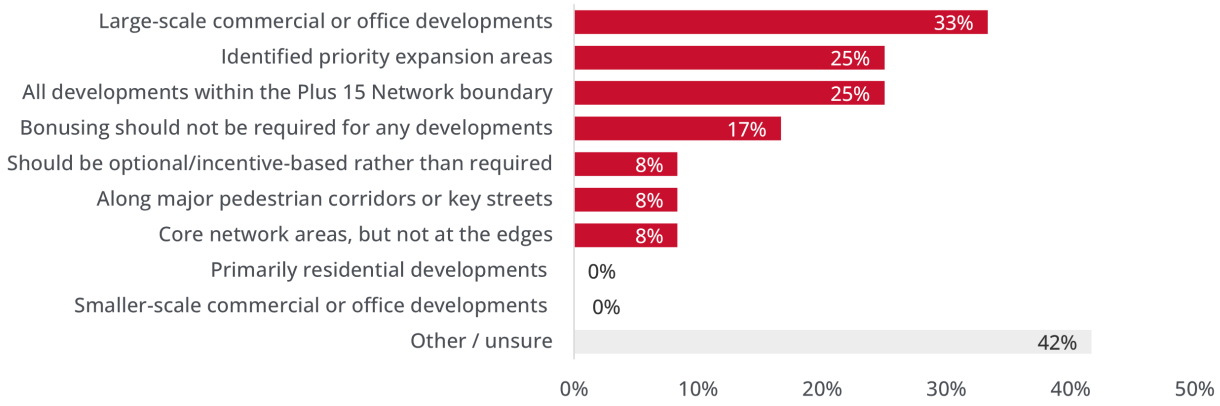
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5. **To what extent do current Plus 15 Density Bonusing requirements (e.g., connections, easement space, vertical circulation, financial contributions, and increased density) impact the financial feasibility of your future development projects?**



n: 12

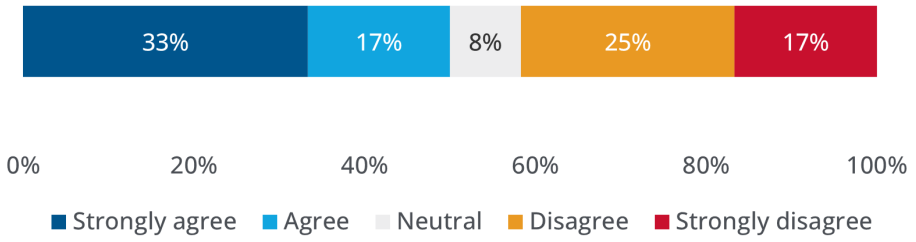
6. **In which areas or for which types of development should Plus 15 density bonusing (including provision of connections, easement space, vertical circulation, and/or financial contributions) be required?**



n: 12

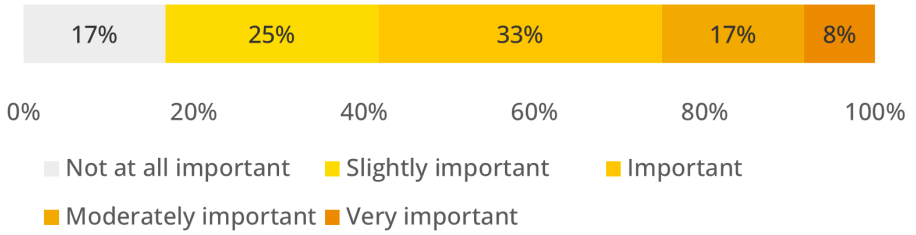
3.5 Downtown community, cultural, economic, civic, or tourism groups

1. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Plus 15 Network supports year-round access to downtown services, programs, and destinations for the communities you serve?**



n: 12

2. **How important is the Plus 15 Network in supporting the delivery of events, programming, or services (e.g., festivals, outreach, tourism activities, education, or cultural programming)?**



n: 12

4.0 Next Steps

Thanks to everyone who provided feedback on the first phase of the Plus 15 implementation study. Outcomes of this first phase of engagement will inform the Plus 15 Network Assessment over the summer. We will be returning to interest holders with a second phase of engagement in late summer / early fall of 2026 to gather more input on preliminary network recommendations. Don't forget to sign up for updates to keep up to date with the project.