



2025 Business Friendly Construction Policy

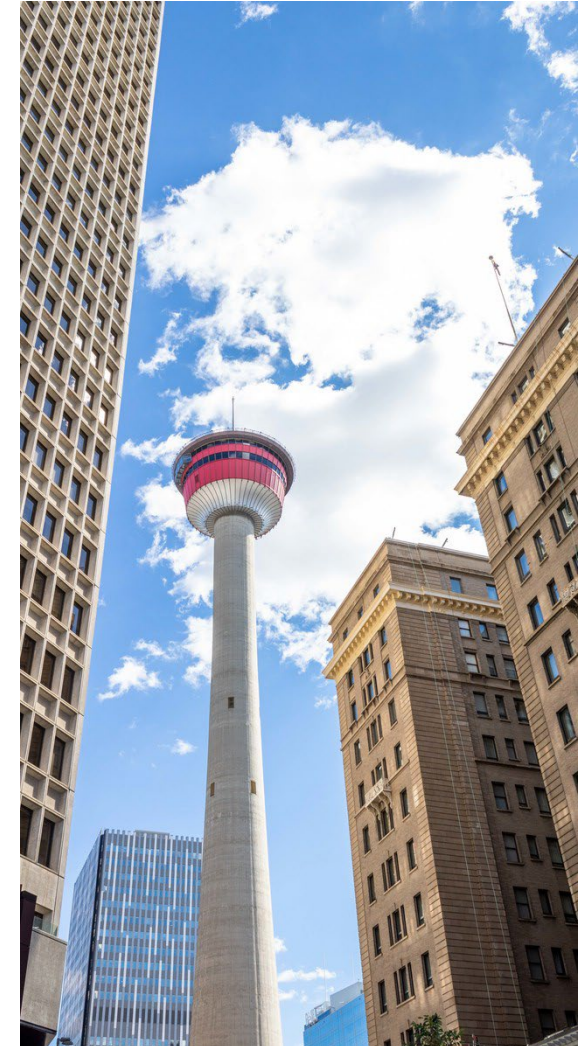
Final report

May 2025

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Background

As The City of Calgary continues to invest in infrastructure and amenities for all Calgarians, The City is advancing business-friendly approaches and working to enhance the way businesses and customers experience City-led construction. In recent years, The City has been piloting and testing a variety of business-friendly approaches aimed at mitigating potential challenges from construction and supporting businesses leading up to and during planned City-led construction.

At the direction of City Council, work is underway to establish a business-friendly construction policy that will clarify The City's approach to mitigating potential challenges from construction and improving how businesses and their customers experience City-led construction.

As part of this broader project, The City wished to better understand the experiences and perspectives of businesses in relation to City-led construction projects. To support this initiative, a survey was conducted with Calgary businesses to get feedback on their experiences and perceptions of construction, the information and communication shared by The City for City-led construction projects, and potential challenges that businesses may experience during City-led construction.

Methodology

An online survey was conducted by the Corporate Research Team (CRT) on behalf of Infrastructure Services. The survey was in field from March 6, 2025 to April 3, 2025. The average time to complete the survey was 10 minutes.

Participants were recruited in two ways. First, a unique survey link was distributed to all members of CRT's Business Panel requesting their participation in the survey. Second, an additional survey was fielded through an open link that was added to the Business-Friendly Construction Policy website requesting visitors complete the survey. This link was also promoted by The City's employees to Business Improvement Areas (BIA) Executive Directors, members of the Business Advisory Committee, through a variety of email newsletters, postcards were provided to businesses in project areas at the discretion of business liaisons, posters promoting the survey were placed in the Calgary Public Library, sandwich boards at the Municipal Building near the Planning Services Centre and social media posts on Facebook and LinkedIn.

In total, 91 members of the Business Panel completed the survey and 133 completed the open link survey. Of those who completed the open link survey, 73 were business owners and 60 were customers.

The following findings are not considered statistically representative of all Calgary businesses. The work is exploratory, and the results should be regarded as directional and should not be projected to the larger population.

Some charts and tables do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Some findings have undergone significance testing. Slides that contain findings with significant differences will be noted.



Key findings

Key findings

Around one-half (53%) of businesses who completed the survey currently have or have had City-led construction occurring at or near their business within the past three years, while two-fifths (41%) of businesses have not had City-led construction occurring at or near their business.

A minority (37%) of businesses who had City-led construction projects occurring at or near their business were satisfied with the support they received from The City.

- Business respondents who were dissatisfied with the support received from The City indicated that The City should work towards finishing construction projects faster (30%) and reducing traffic disruptions (21%) in areas undergoing construction as ways to support businesses during City-led construction.

Businesses indicated that providing wayfinding through signage and detours, as well as offering temporary parking solutions were considered the most helpful mitigation strategies.

- Common additional suggestions provided by businesses were to reduce construction delays (16%) and provide effective communication (16%) to businesses.
- About one-half (49%) of survey respondents indicated that The City offering a one-time grant pilot of \$5,000 would be effective in helping the business adapt their business operations or implement strategies to encourage patronage during construction. While half of businesses indicated that a one-time grant of \$5,000 would be effective, 60% of business respondents indicated that they would use the \$5,000 grant for business operation costs and debt.

Key findings (continued)

Thirty-eight per cent of business respondents had interactions with City staff during construction.

- Around one-half of business respondents who had interactions with City staff were satisfied with their interactions with City staff before (53%) and during (52%) construction. A further one-half (52%) were satisfied with the responsiveness of City staff when construction issues arose.

Around one-half (45%) of business respondents were satisfied with the overall communication provided by The City about construction projects. Additionally, one-half (45%) of businesses indicated that they received information in time to prepare their business for construction.

- A minority of business respondents were satisfied with the information provided by The City on potential challenges to expect from construction (37%).
- Over one-half (57%) of businesses found the information provided by The City to be ineffective in preparing them for construction.

The vast majority of business respondents' preferred information channel for construction project updates is through email (87%).

- About one-half (51%) of business respondents would prefer to receive updates about construction projects directly from City staff.
- In contrast, customers would prefer to receive updates via The City's website (70%) or through social media (63%).

Key findings (continued)

For around three-quarters (77%) of customers, construction occurring in the area was likely to influence their decision to visit a business.

- Common reasons given by customers for visiting areas with construction include to attend appointment-based services (72%) or that the business provided a unique product or service (54%).
- Common reasons that customers provided for not visiting areas that have construction included typical construction disturbances (88%) and traffic congestion (76%).



Detailed findings



Customer results

Likelihood of visiting business in areas with construction

Arounds three-quarters (77%) of customers who completed the survey indicated that construction occurring in the area would likely influence their decision to visit the business.



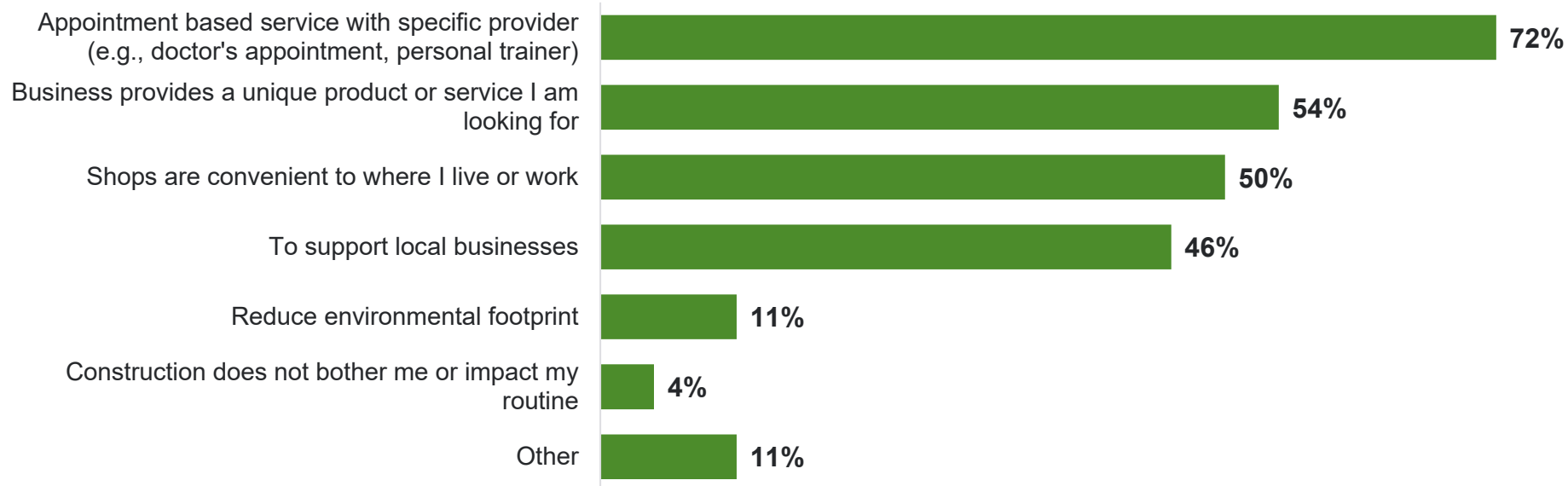
Q. When an area is experiencing construction, how likely is this to influence your decision to visit a business in the area?
Base: Valid responses (n=60)

Multiple responses allowed

Caution: Small sample size

Motivations to visit businesses in areas with construction

Around seven-in-ten (72%) customers who completed the survey indicated that they continue to visit businesses in areas that have construction for appointment based services like doctor's appointments. Additionally, around one-half (54%) continue to visit businesses that provide a unique product or service.



Q. What are your main motivations for continuing to go to a business in an area with construction? (Select all that apply)

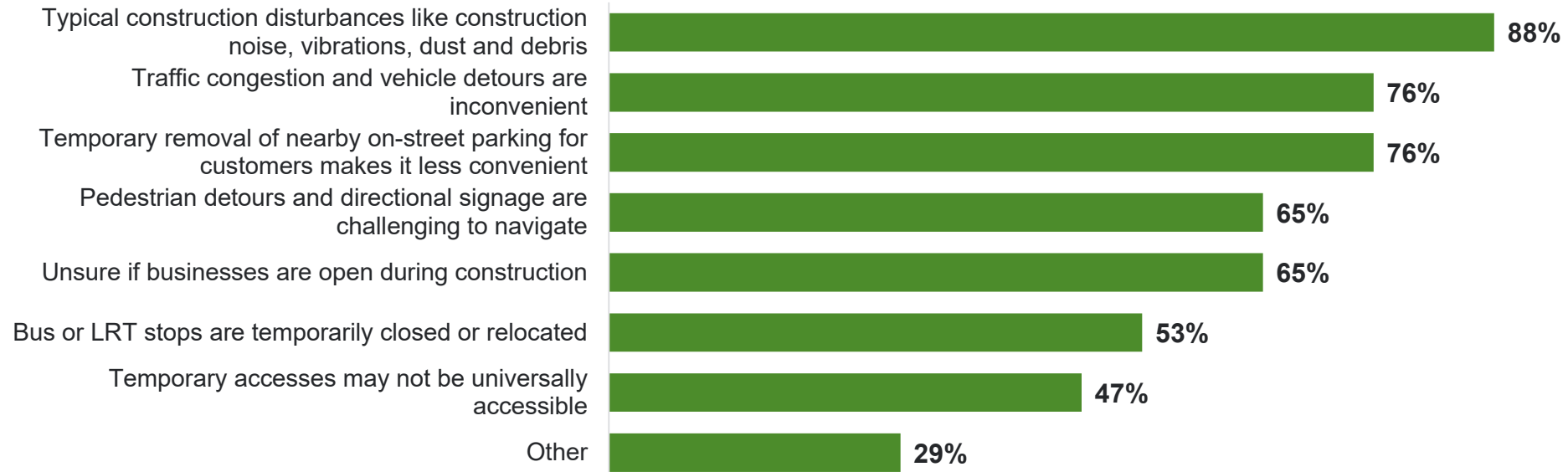
Base: Valid respondents (n=46)

Multiple responses allowed

Caution: Small sample size

Reasons for not visiting businesses in areas with construction

The majority (88%) of customers who stated they were unlikely to visit businesses in areas with construction indicated that it is because of typical disturbances of construction like noise, vibrations, dust and debris (88%). Furthermore, concerns around accessing the site by vehicle were mentioned by around three-quarters of respondents which included traffic congestion (76%) and temporary removal of nearby parking (76%).



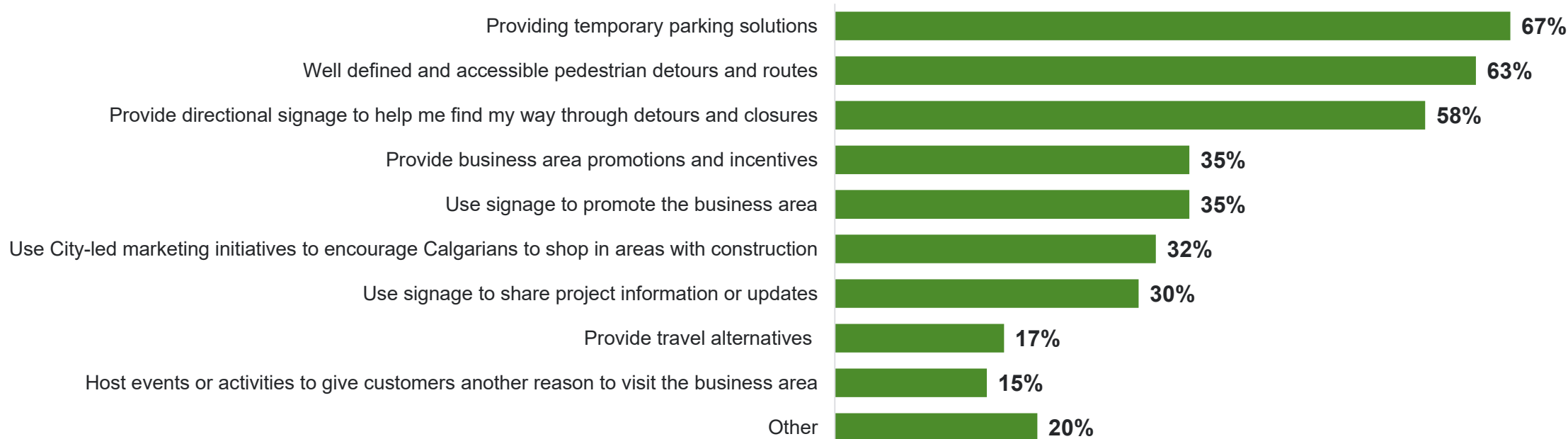
Q. What discourages you from going to a business in areas with construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=17)

Multiple responses allowed

Caution: Small sample size

Ways to encourage patronage during construction

Two-thirds (67%) of customers who completed the survey commented that providing temporary parking solutions could encourage customers to visit businesses in areas with construction. Further, more than three-fifths (63%) of customers also suggested well defined and accessible pedestrian detours.



Q. What could be done to help encourage you to go to businesses in areas with construction? (Select all that apply)

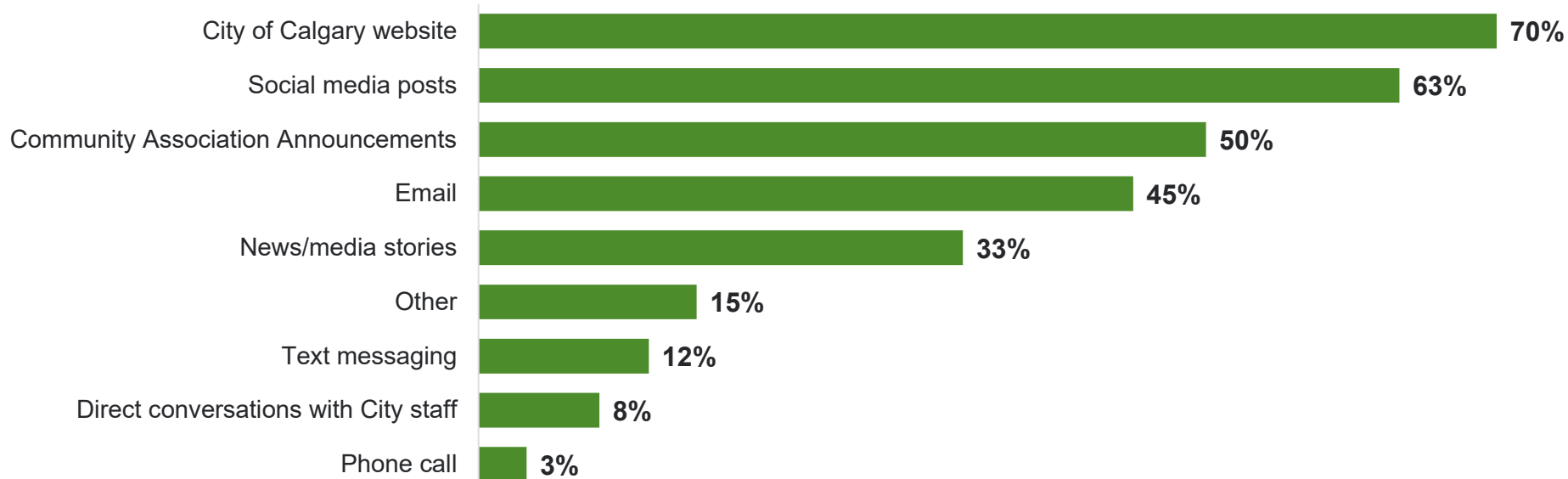
Base: Valid respondents (n=60)

Multiple responses allowed

Caution: Small sample size

Communication about City-led construction to customers

Seven-in-ten (70%) customers who completed the survey indicated they would prefer to receive information about City-led construction through the City of Calgary website and nearly two-thirds (63%) would like to hear about construction through social media posts.



Q. What are your preferred ways to receive information about City-led construction projects in your community? (select all that apply)
Base: Valid respondents (n=60)

Multiple responses allowed

Caution: Small sample size



Business results

Occurrence of City-led construction

Around one-half (53%) of businesses who completed the survey are currently experiencing or have experienced City-led construction near their business within the past three years. Two-fifths (41%) of businesses who completed the survey have not experienced City-led construction at or near their business.

City-led construction is currently happening or was completed within the past 3 years at or near my business

53%

City-led construction has not occurred at or near my business

41%

City-led construction has been completed for more than 3 years at or near my business

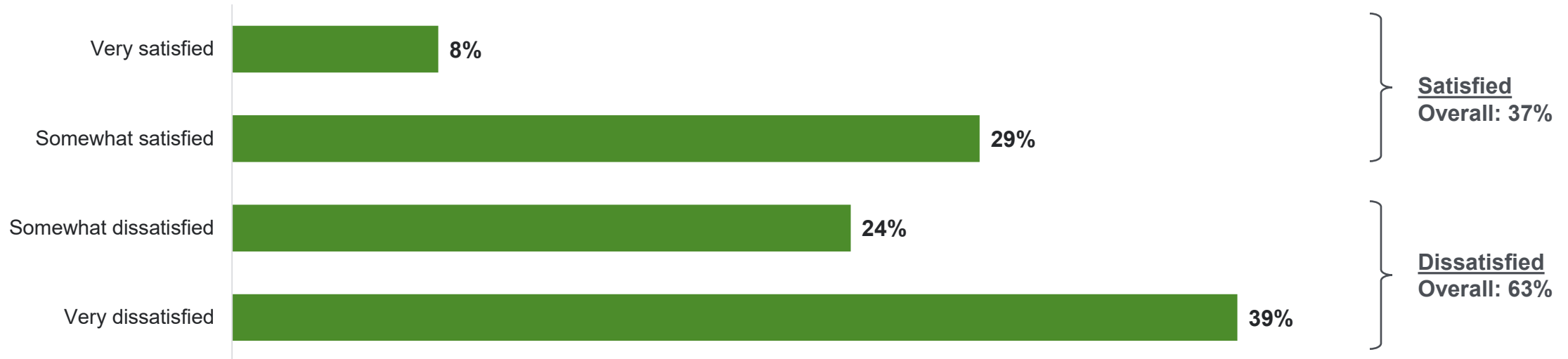
6%

Q. Has your business experienced City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

Satisfaction with City support during construction

A minority (37%) of survey respondents were satisfied with the support they received from The City of Calgary during construction. In contrast, a majority (63%) of survey respondents who have experienced City-led construction were dissatisfied with City support during construction.

Satisfaction with support

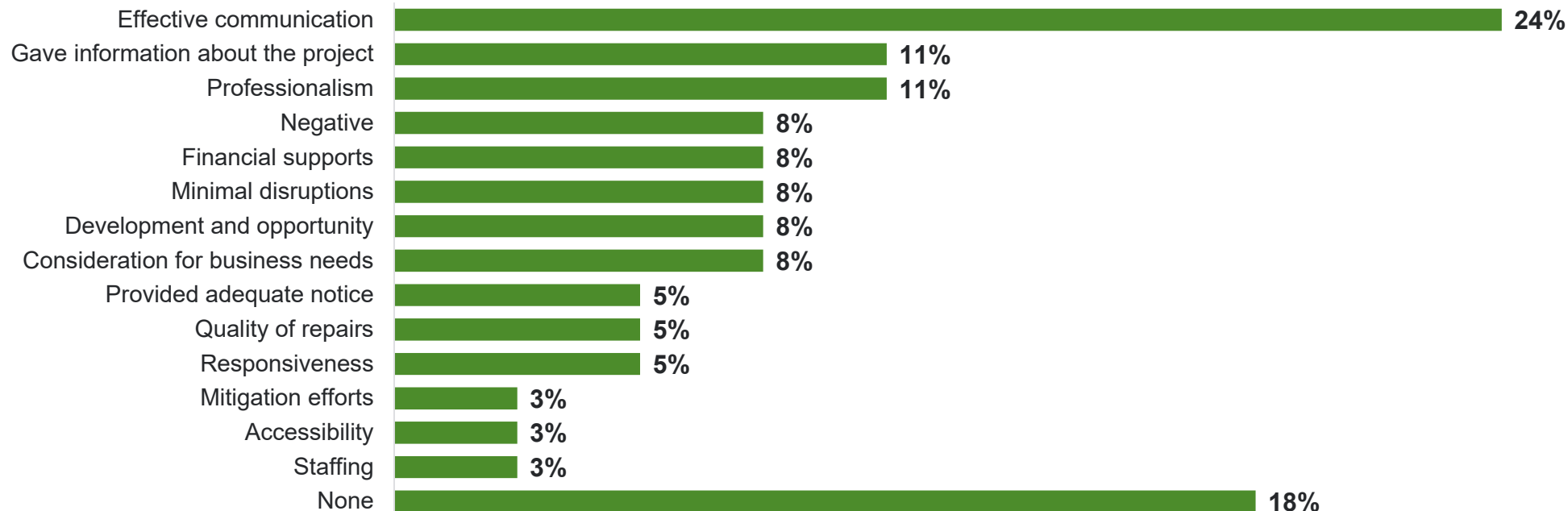


Q. Overall, how satisfied are you with the support you got from The City of Calgary during the construction project?

Base: Valid respondents (n=97)

Key aspects of support from The City that led to satisfaction

Businesses who were satisfied with the support from The City during a construction project indicated that they were most satisfied with the effectiveness of the communication (24%) received from The City.



Q. What aspects of support from The City were you most satisfied with?

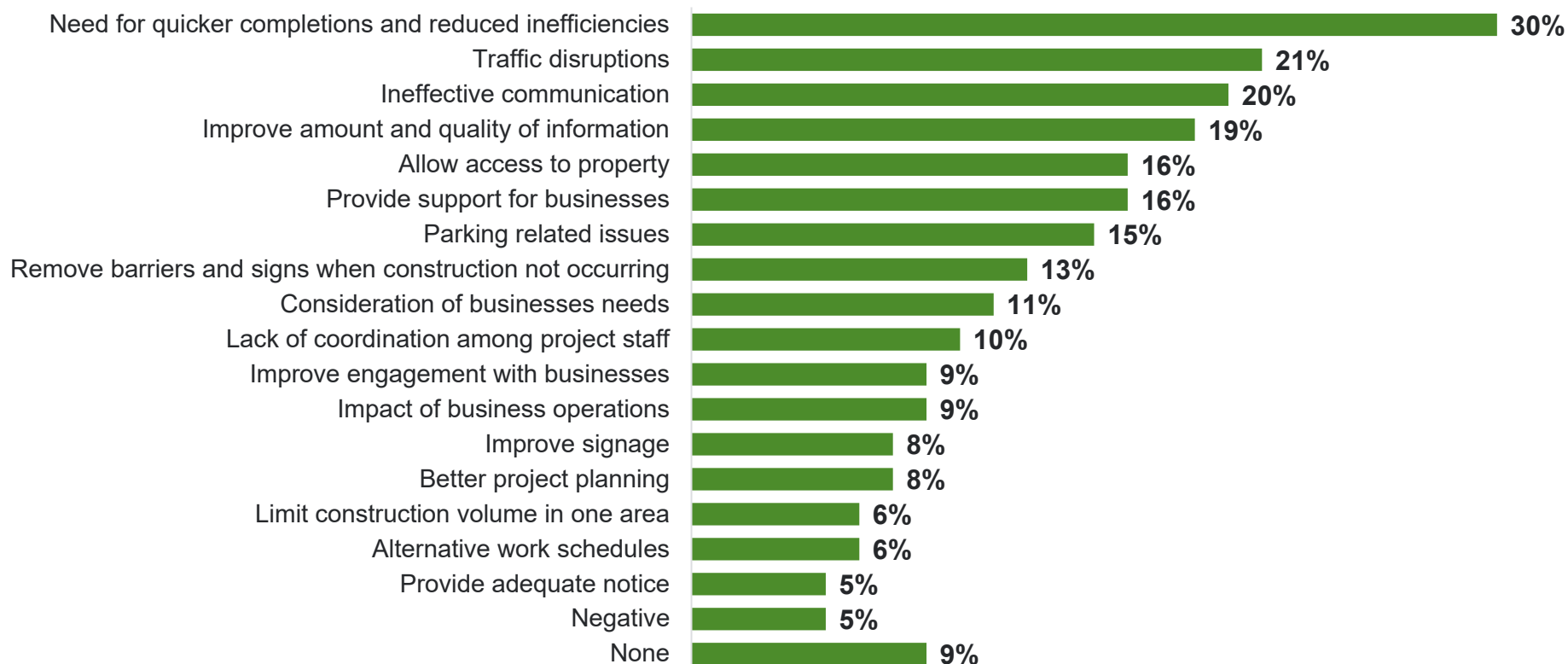
Base: Those who were satisfied with the support from The City of Calgary (n=38)

Open-ended question

Caution: Small sample size

Areas The City can improve to support businesses

Businesses that were dissatisfied with City support during construction indicated a need for projects to be completed quicker (30%), a need to reduce traffic disruptions and road closures (21%) and that communication (20%) and information provided by The City could be improved (19%).

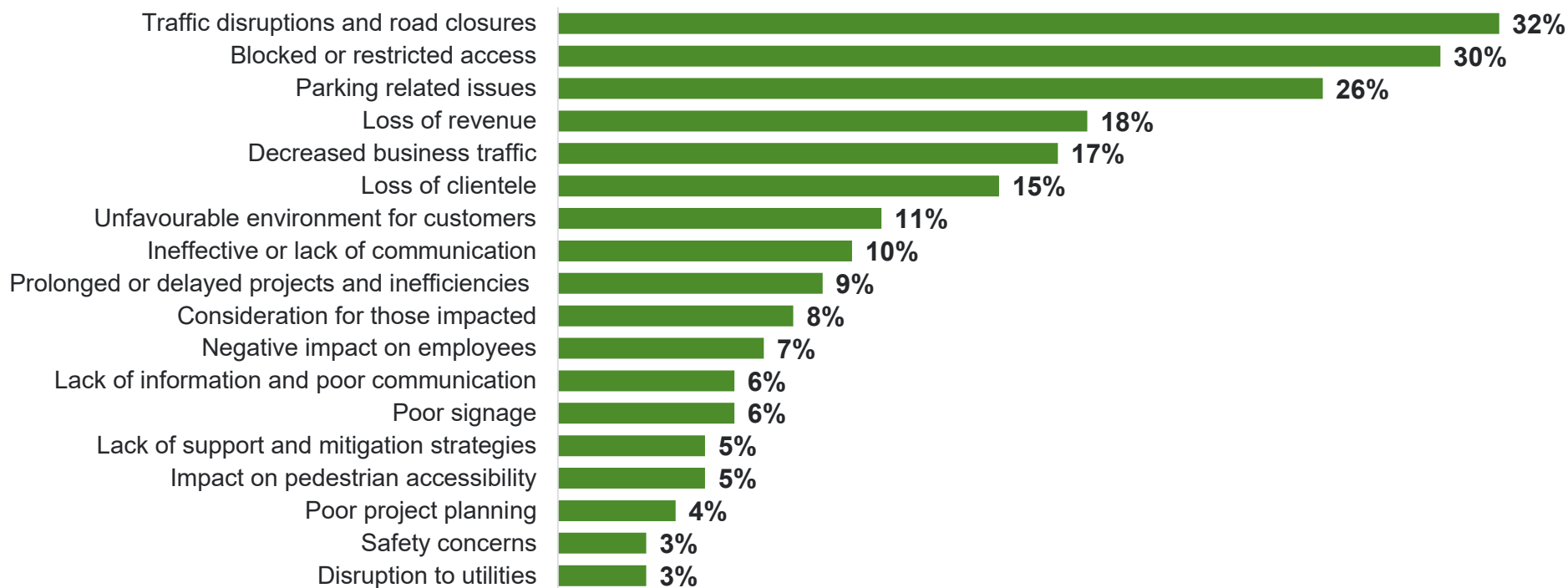


Q. What aspects of support from The City could be improved?
Base: Valid respondents (n=80)

Open-ended question

Greatest challenges experienced during City-led construction

Businesses who completed the survey indicated that the greatest challenge during City-led construction was traffic disruption and road closures (32%). This was followed closely by having access to their business blocked or restricted (30%).



Q. What would you say are the greatest challenges your business experienced during City-led construction?

Base: Valid respondents (n=98)

Mentions less <3% not shown

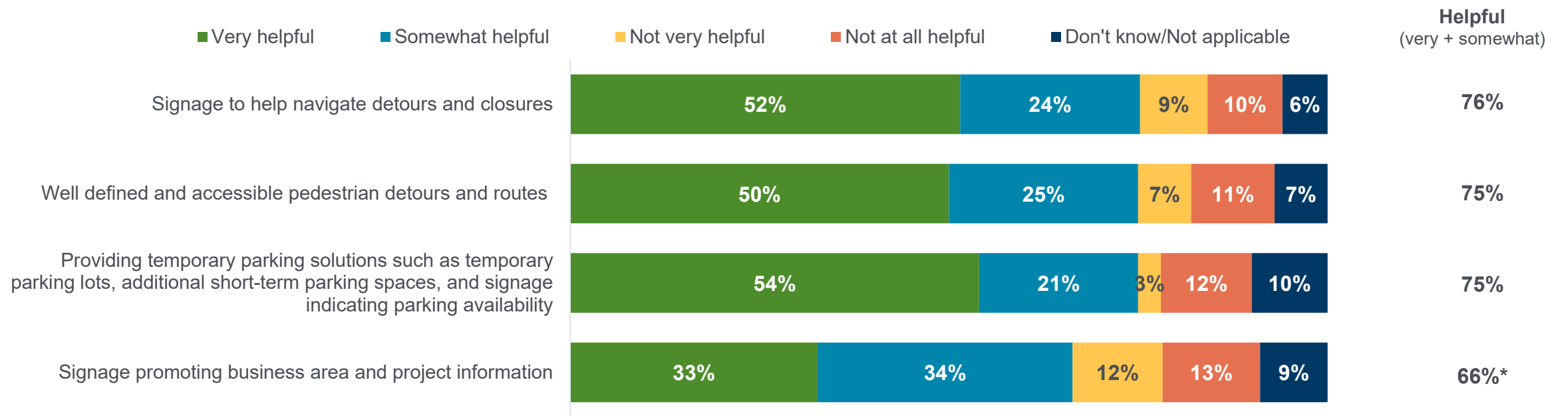
Open-ended question



Mitigation strategies

Helpfulness of mitigation strategies during City-led construction

Three-quarters of survey respondents indicated that they would find signage to help navigate detours and closures (76%), well defined and accessible pedestrian detours and routes (75%) and temporary parking solutions (75%) helpful mitigation strategies during construction.

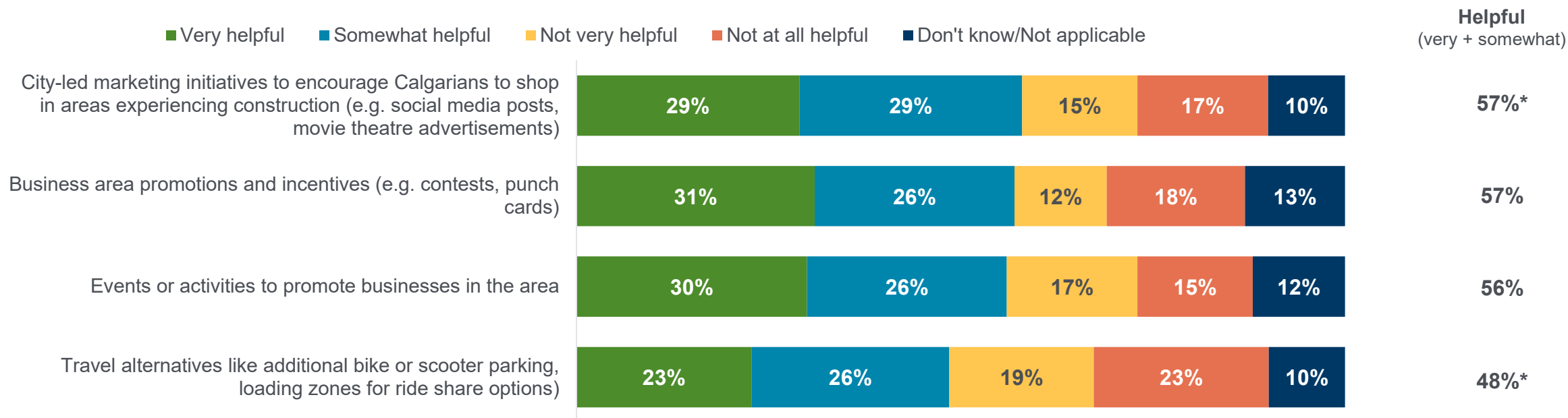


Q. How helpful would the following mitigation strategies and supports be for your business during City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

*Rounding

Helpfulness of mitigation strategies during City-led construction (continued)

More than one-half of survey respondents indicated that promotional activities targeted at bringing customers to areas undergoing City-led construction would be helpful. Helpful strategies included City-led marketing initiatives to support areas experiencing construction (57%), business area promotions and incentives (57%), and events or activities to promote businesses in area (56%).

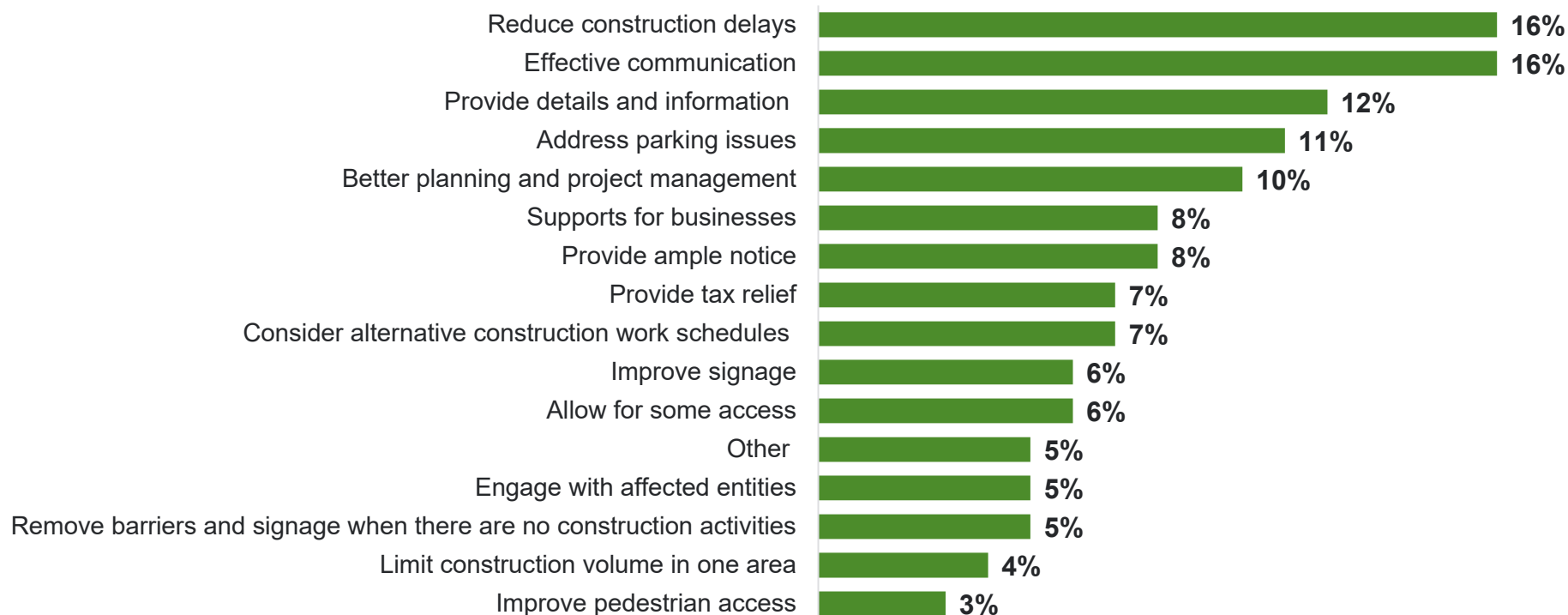


Q. How helpful would the following mitigation strategies and supports be for your business during City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

*Rounding

Additional ways The City can help businesses during construction

The most commonly cited way that The City could support businesses to maintain operations and improve customer experience during construction was to reduce construction delays (16%), effective communication with the businesses (16%) and provide more information and details (12%).



Q. How else could The City support businesses to maintain operations and improve customer experience during construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=165)

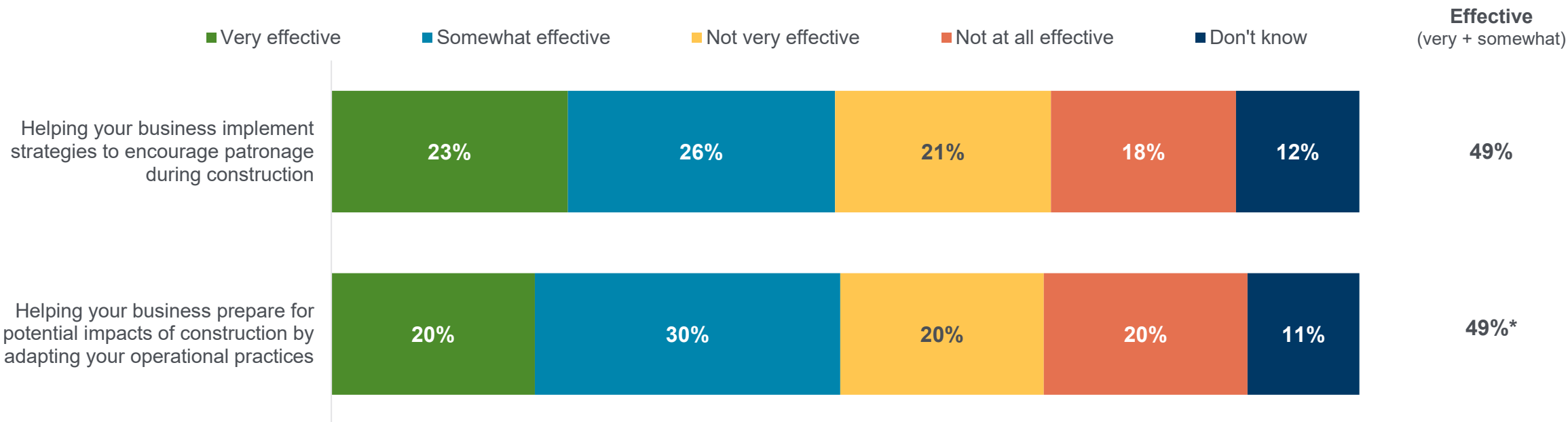
Mentions less <3% not shown

Open-ended question

Evaluating the effectiveness of a \$5,000 grant

The City does not compensate businesses for impacts from construction. In 2024, The City piloted a Main Streets Business Support Grant in Marda Loop and Bridgeland that provided eligible businesses with a \$5,000 grant. The objective of the grant was to (1) help prepare for construction by adapting operational practices and (2) implement strategies to encourage patronage during the construction.

One-half (49%) of survey respondents indicated that a \$5,000 grant would be effective in assisting their business in preparing for the potential impacts of construction through adapting operational practices or implementing strategies to encourage patronage during construction.

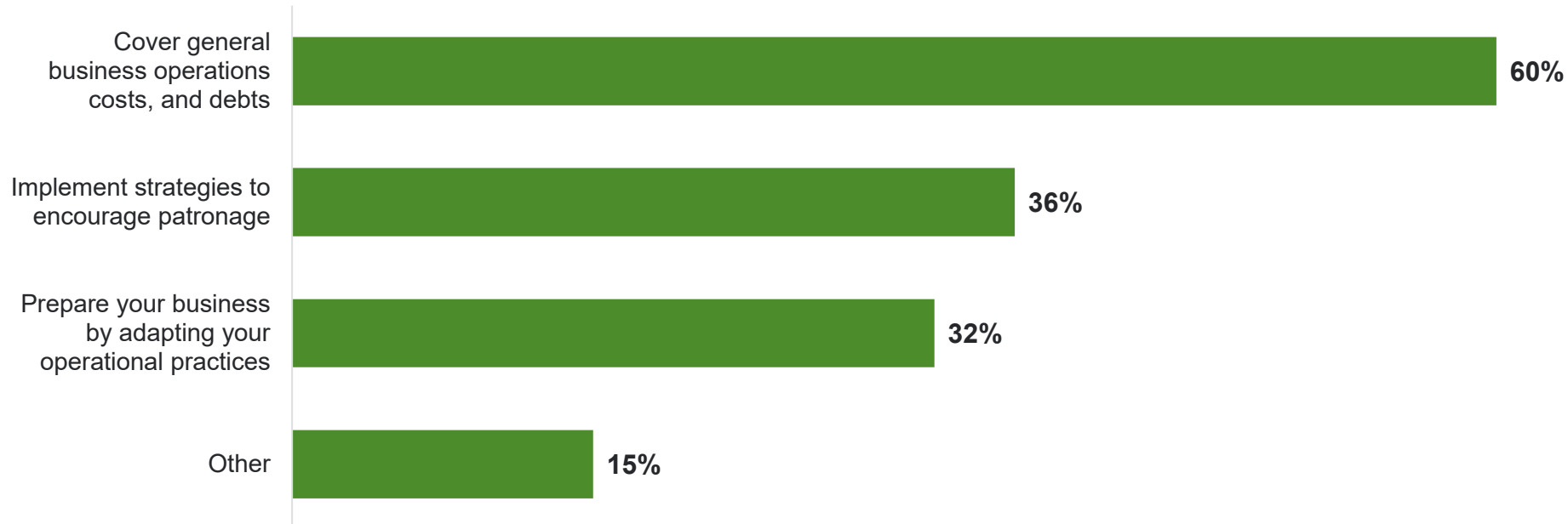


Q. How effective do you feel a \$5,000 grant would be at achieving the stated objectives:
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

*Rounding

Potential uses for a \$5,000 City grant

Three-fifths (60%) of survey respondents indicated that they would use a \$5,000 grant to cover general costs such as business operations or debts. Around one-third (36%) of survey respondents indicated that they would potentially use the grant for implementing strategies to encourage patronage.



Q. If the City were to offer a \$5,000 grant in the future, how would you use the funds?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

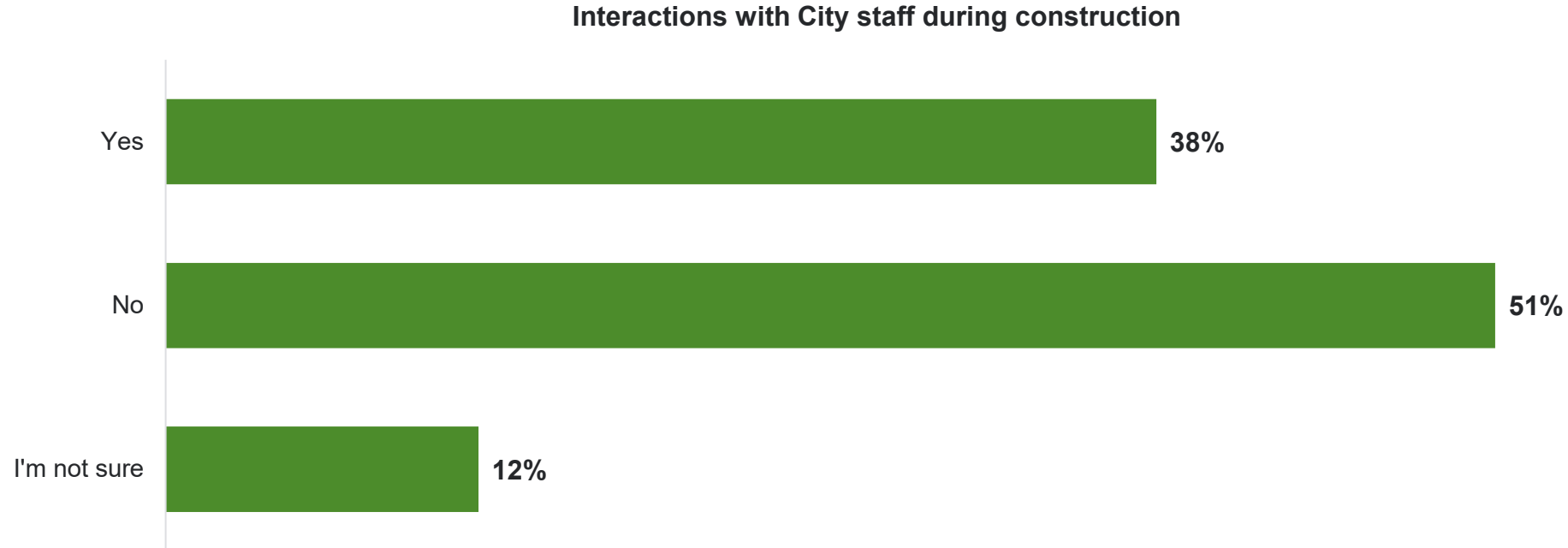
Multiple responses allowed



Interactions with City staff

Interactions with City staff during construction

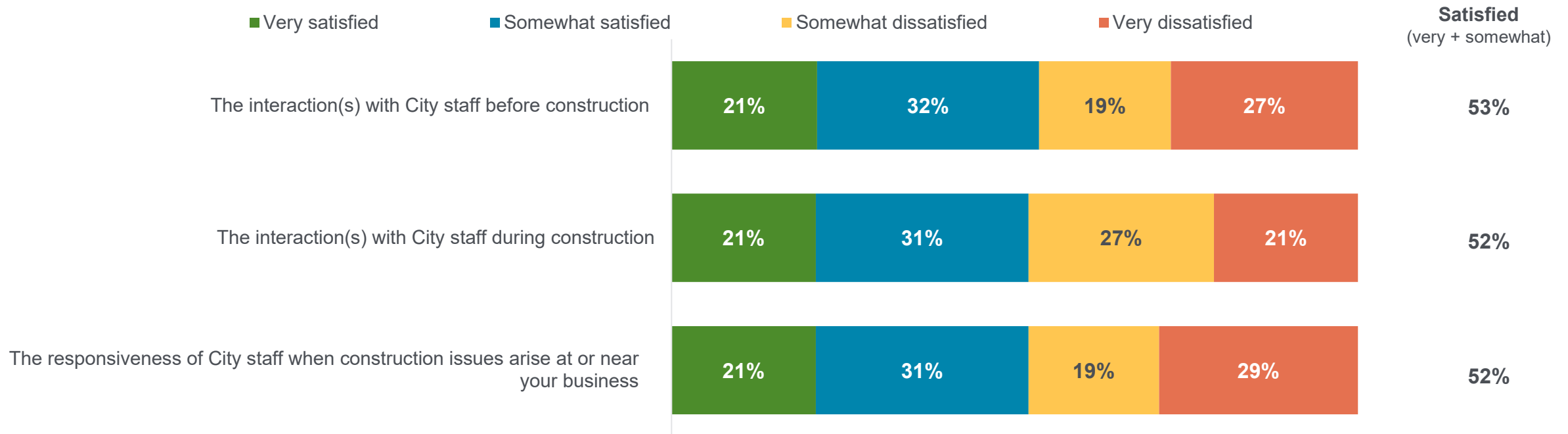
A minority (38%) of business respondents have had interactions with City staff during construction.



Q. Has your business ever interacted with a City of Calgary staff member during construction?
Base: Those who experienced City-led construction (n=164)

Satisfaction with City staff

Around one-half of survey respondents who have interacted with City staff were satisfied with their interactions before construction (53%), during construction (52%) and with how responsiveness City staff was when construction issues would arise. Of note, three-in-ten (29%) respondents who interacted with City staff during construction were 'very' dissatisfied with how responsive staff was when construction issues arise.



Q. How satisfied are you with the following:

Base: Those who experienced City-led construction and ever interacted with a City of Calgary staff member during construction (n=62)

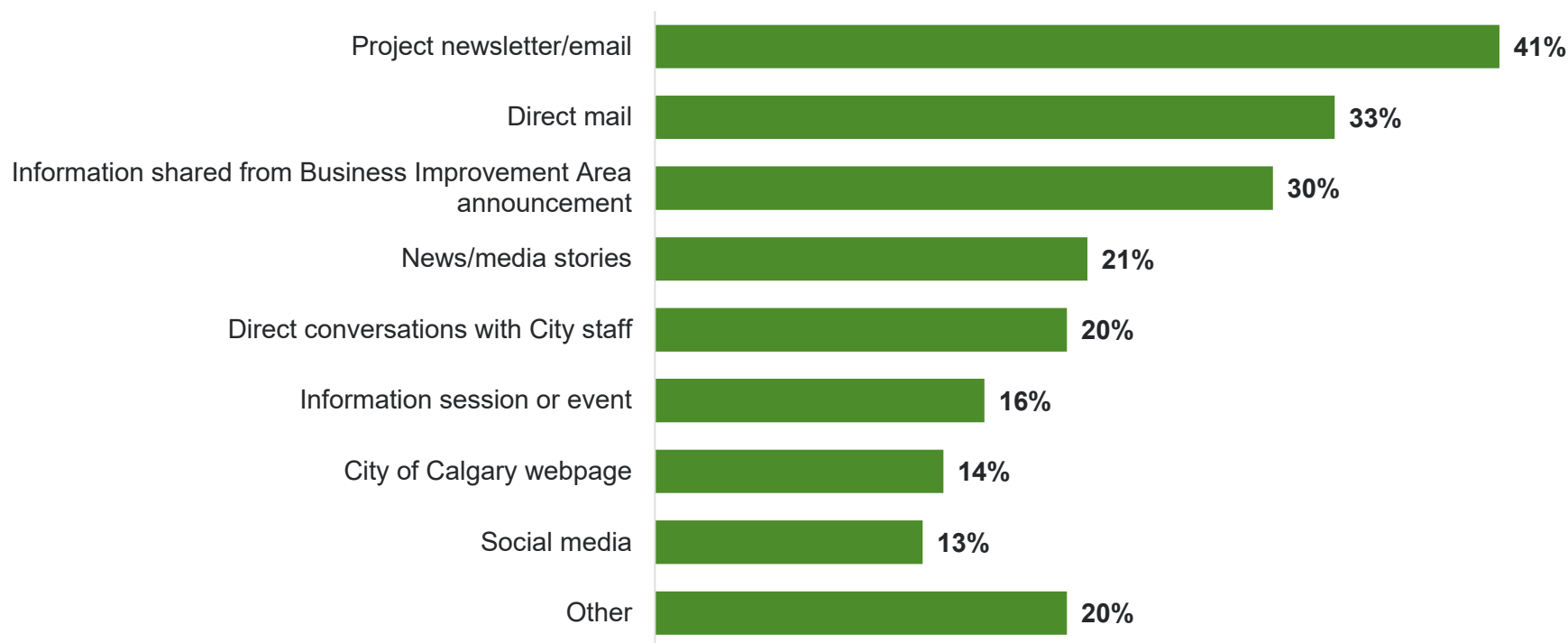
Caution: Small sample size



Communication of construction and mitigation strategies

Information channels for City-led construction

Businesses who completed the survey most commonly received information from The City through project newsletters/emails (41%). This was followed by other information channels such as direct mail (33%) and information that was shared by the Business Improvement Areas (BIA) (30%).

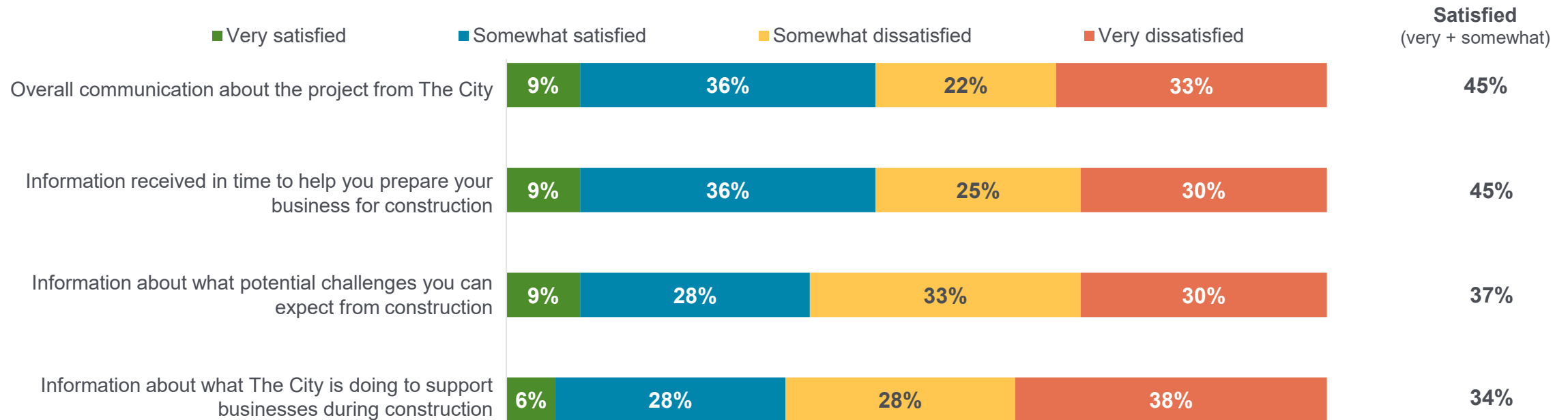


Q. Thinking about your most recent experience of City-led construction in your area, how did you receive information from The City?
Base: Those who experienced City-led construction (n=97)

Multiple responses allowed

Satisfaction with City communication during the construction project

Around one-half (45%) of survey respondents were satisfied with the overall communication provided by The City during construction projects and that the information provided was received in a timely manner to assist the business in preparing for construction. A minority of survey respondents were satisfied with the information provided by The City on potential challenges to expect from construction (37%). Of note, more businesses who experienced City-led construction were 'very dissatisfied' (38%) with the information about what The City is doing to support businesses during construction than satisfied (34%).



Q. Overall, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of information and communication you received from The City leading up to and during the construction?

Base: Those who experienced City-led construction (n=97)

*Rounding

Effectiveness of information in preparing for construction

A sizeable minority (43%) of businesses who completed the survey found the information they received effectively prepared them for the impacts of construction; however, more than half (57%) of business who completed the survey did not find the information provided by The City allowed them to effectively prepare for the impacts of construction.

■ Overall

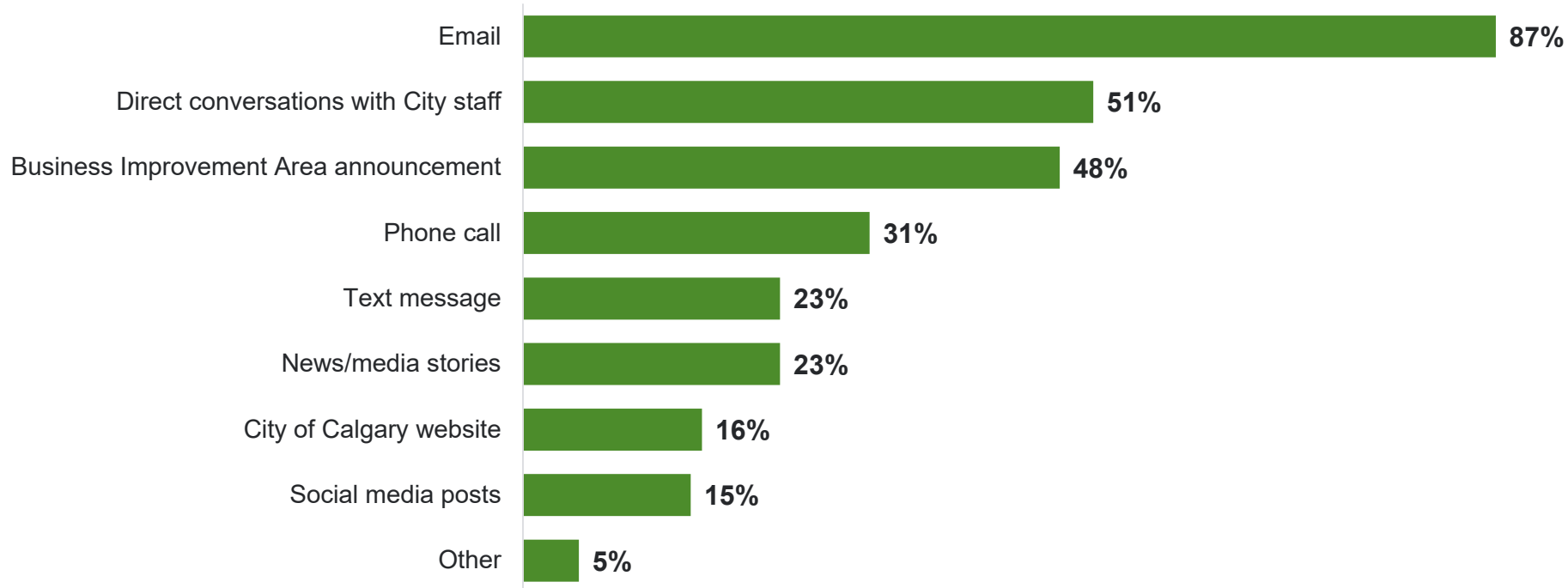


Q. Based on the information you received, how effectively were you able to prepare for the impacts of construction?
Base: Those who experienced City-led construction (n=164)

*Rounding

Preferred information channels for City-led construction projects for businesses

The vast majority (87%) of business respondents indicated they would prefer to receive information via email.



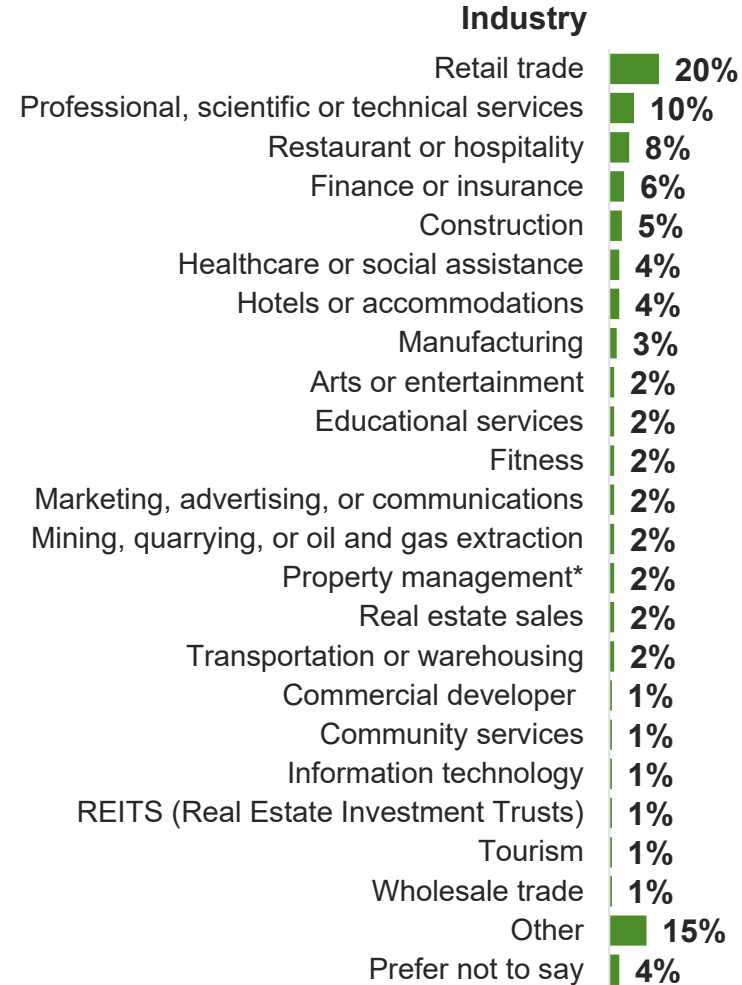
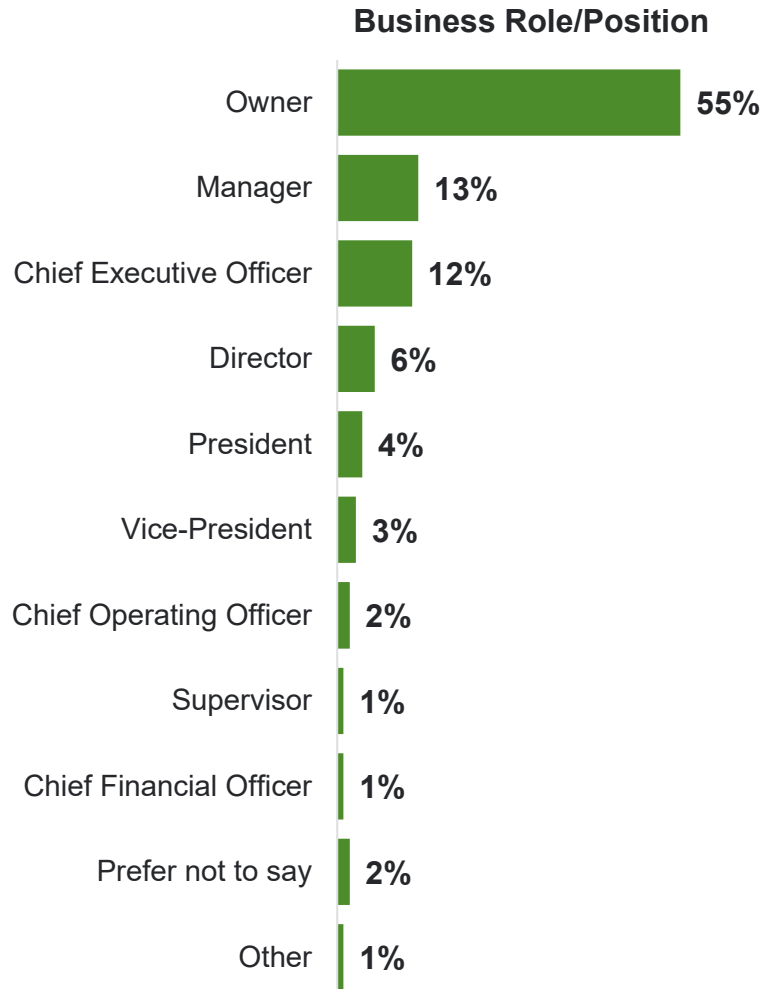
Q. What are your preferred ways to receive information about City-led construction projects in your business or community?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

Multiple responses allowed



Business respondent firmographics

Firmographics



*Including commercial, retail, industrial real estate rentals & leasing

Base: Respondents that are businesses (n=164)

Firmographics (continued)

Number of employees	
1-5	38%
6-10	20%
11-25	16%
26-50	11%
51-100	7%
101-150	1%
151-200	1%
201-499	2%
500-999	1%
1000 or more	1%
Don't know	1%
Prefer not to say	2%

Place of operation	
I lease my business space	64%
I own the property that my business operates out of	27%
I do not have a store or physical site	4%
I operate an online business only	1%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say	2%

Years in operation	
Less than 1 year	1%
1 to 2 years	2%
3 to 5 years	12%
6 to 10 years	18%
11 to 20 years	20%
More than 20 years	46%
Don't know	1%
Prefer not to say	1%

Business location in Calgary	
Downtown	31%
Southwest	20%
Southeast	21%
Northeast	15%
Northwest	10%
Prefer not to say	3%

BIA Membership	
Yes	40%
No	32%
Don't know	25%
Prefer not to say	3%

Base: Respondents that are businesses (n=164)



Appendix A

Experiences with construction

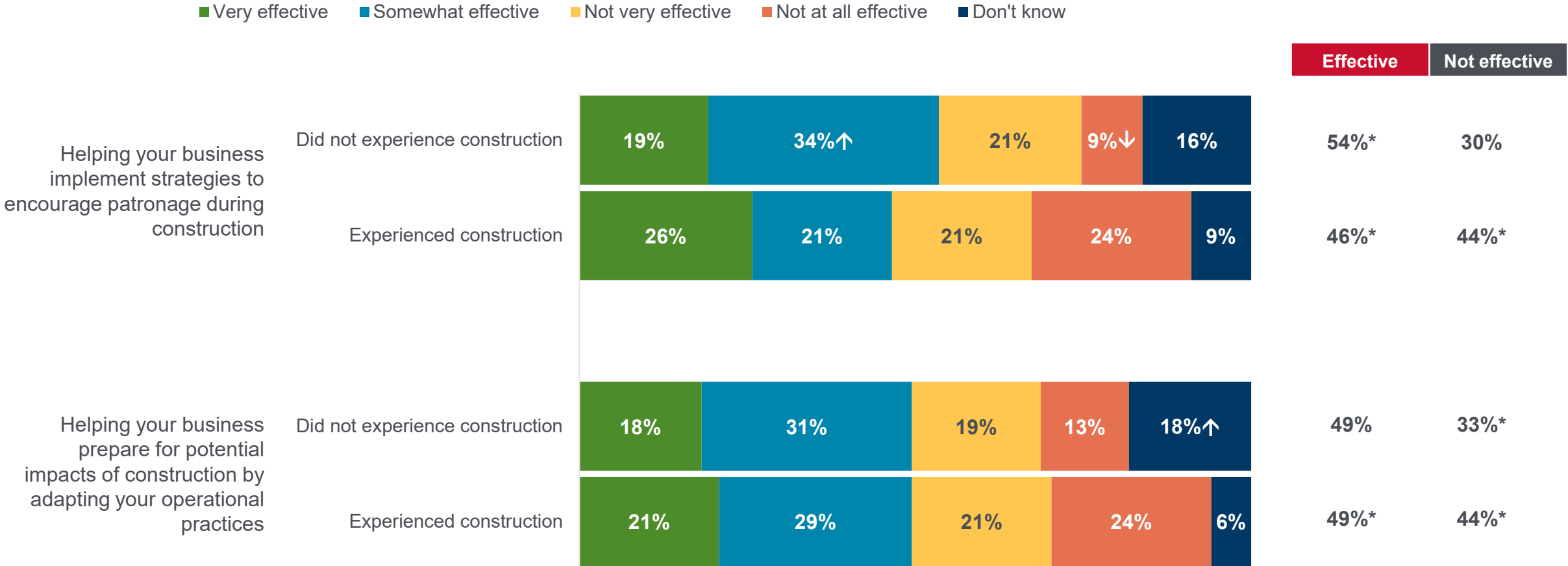
Potential uses for a \$5,000 City grant: Experienced construction vs. not



Q. If The City were to offer a \$5,000 grant in the future, how would you use the funds? Select all that apply.
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

Multiple responses allowed

Evaluating the effectiveness of a \$5,000 grant: Experienced construction vs. not



Q. How effective do you feel a \$5,000 grant would be at achieving the stated objectives:
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

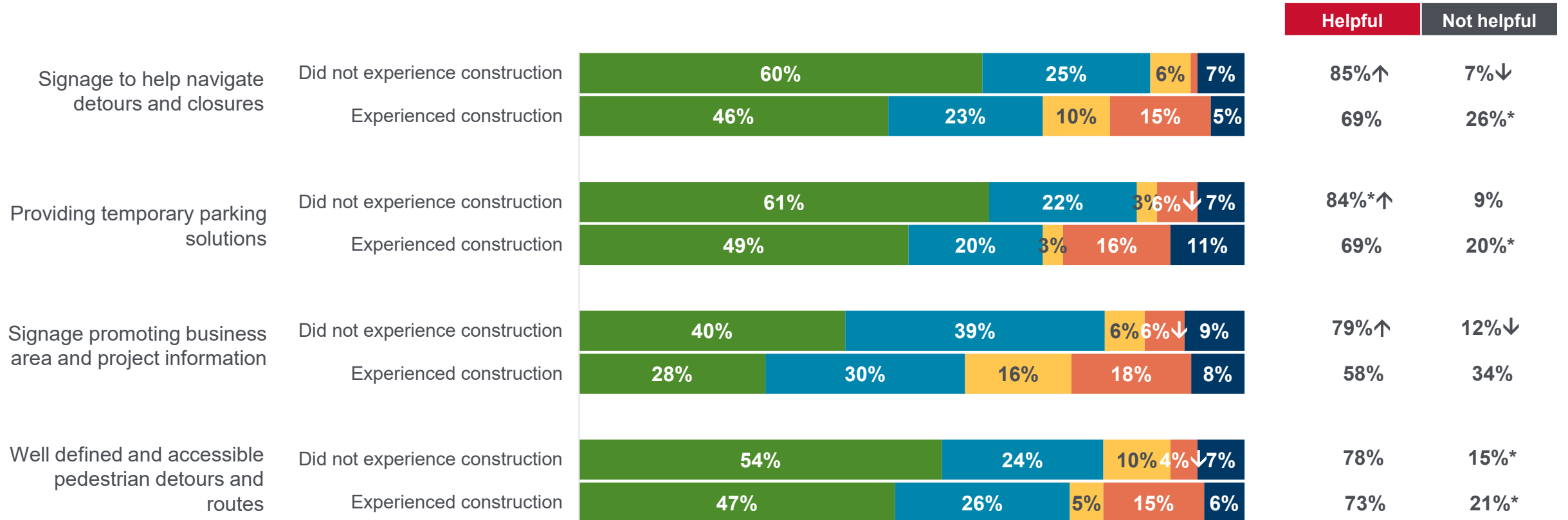
↑Statistically higher than group

↓Statistically lower than group

*Rounding

Mitigation strategies

■ Very helpful
 ■ Somewhat helpful
 ■ Not very helpful
 ■ Not at all helpful
 ■ Don't know/Not applicable



Q. How helpful would the following mitigation strategies and supports be for your business during City-led construction?

Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

ISC: Confidential

Business Friendly Construction Policy

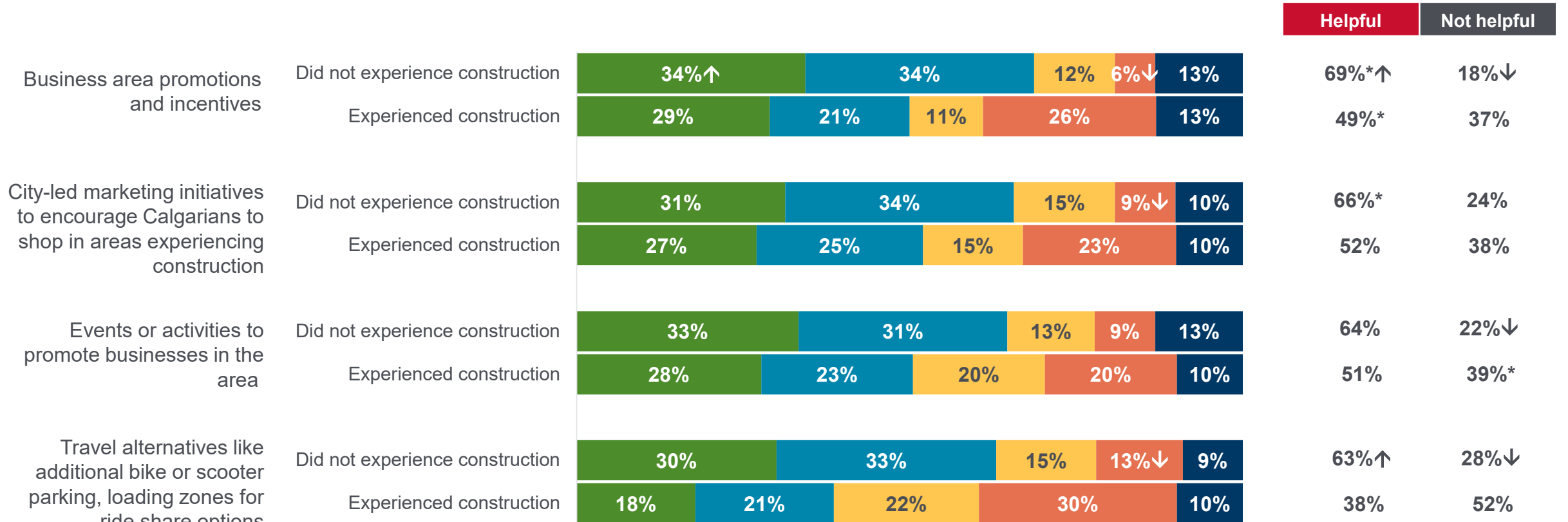
Data labels <3% not shown

↑Statistically higher than group
 ↓Statistically lower than group

*Rounding

Mitigation strategies (continued)

■ Very helpful ■ Somewhat helpful ■ Not very helpful ■ Not at all helpful ■ Don't know/Not applicable

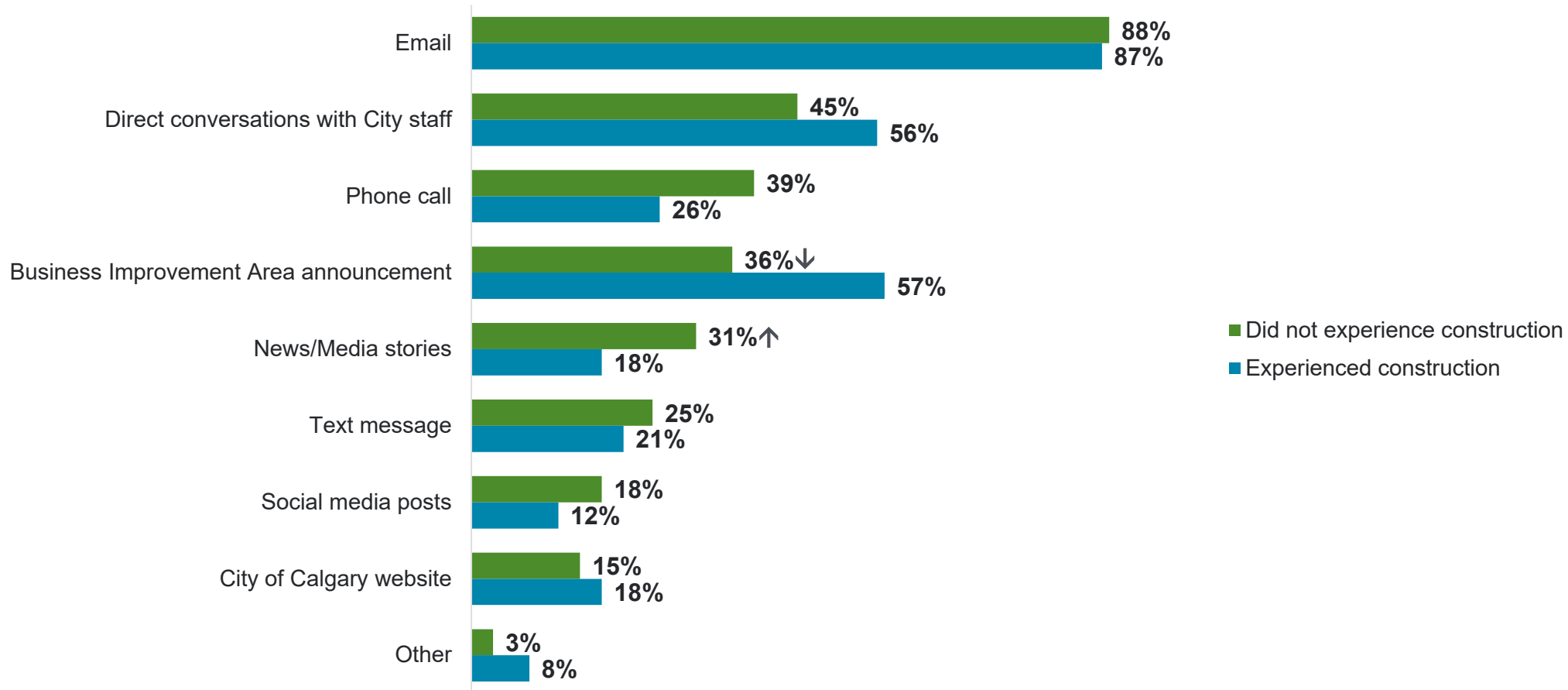


Q. How helpful would the following mitigation strategies and supports be for your business during City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

↑Statistically higher than group
↓Statistically lower than group

*Rounding

Preferred ways of receiving information



Q. What are your preferred ways to receive information about City-led construction projects in your business or community?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

↑ Statistically higher than group
↓ Statistically lower than group

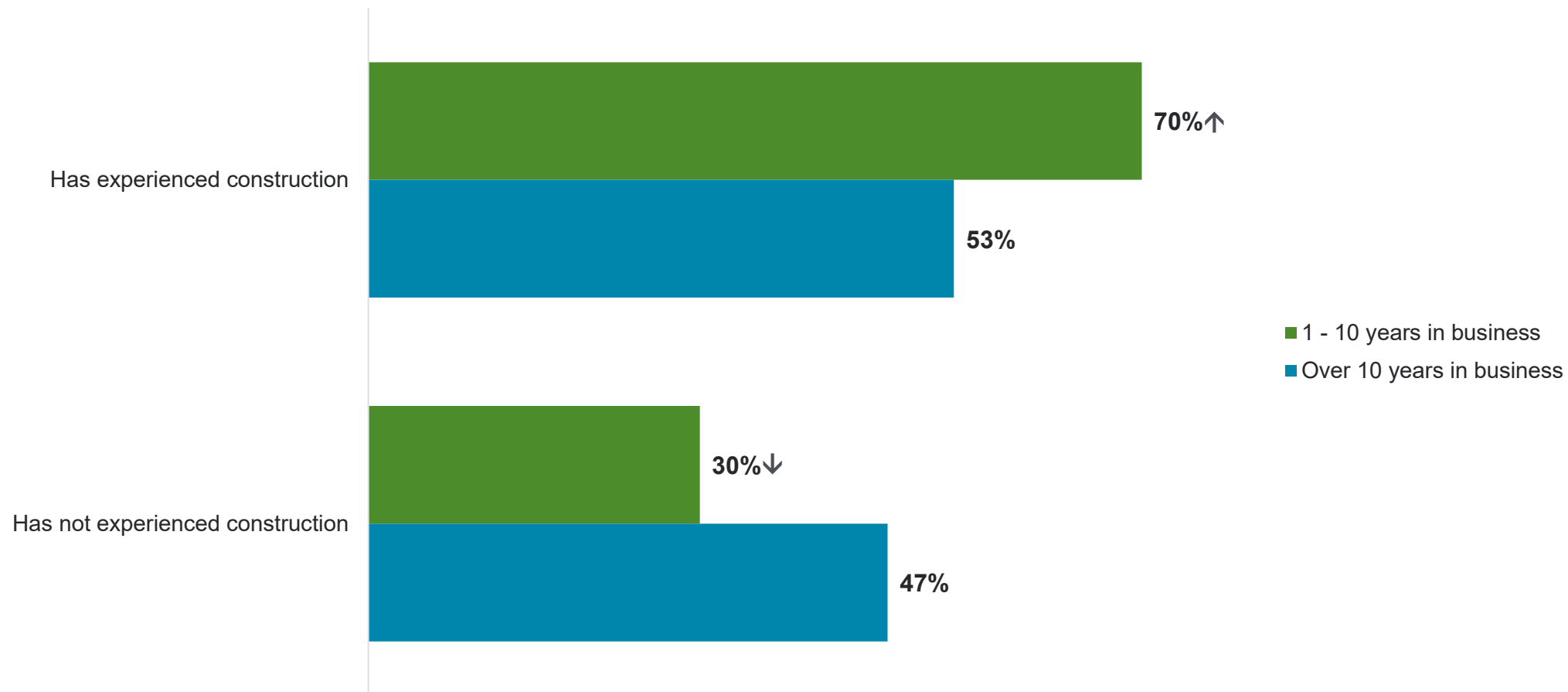
Multiple responses allowed



Appendix B

Business tenures

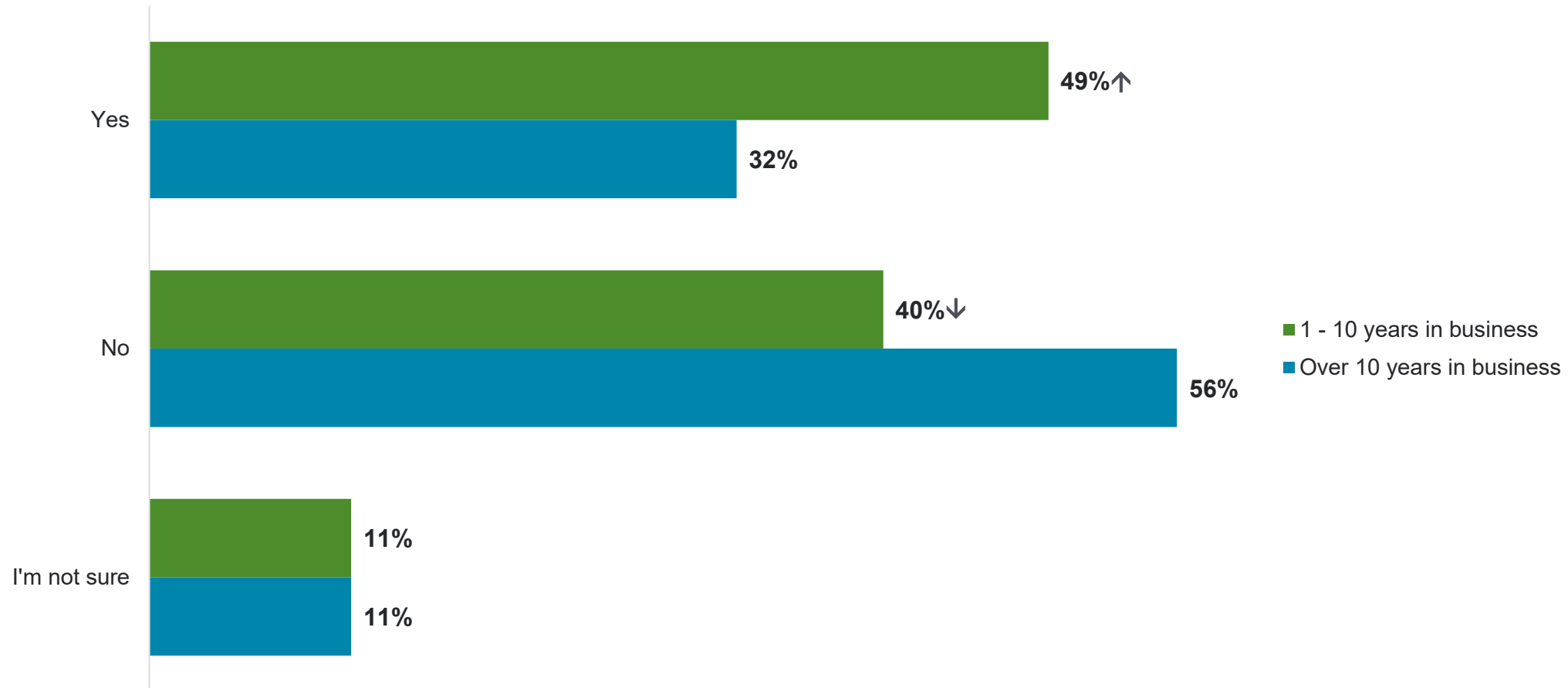
Experience with City-led construction



Q. 7. Has your business experienced City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=161)

↑ Statistically higher than group
↓ Statistically lower than group

Interaction with City staff

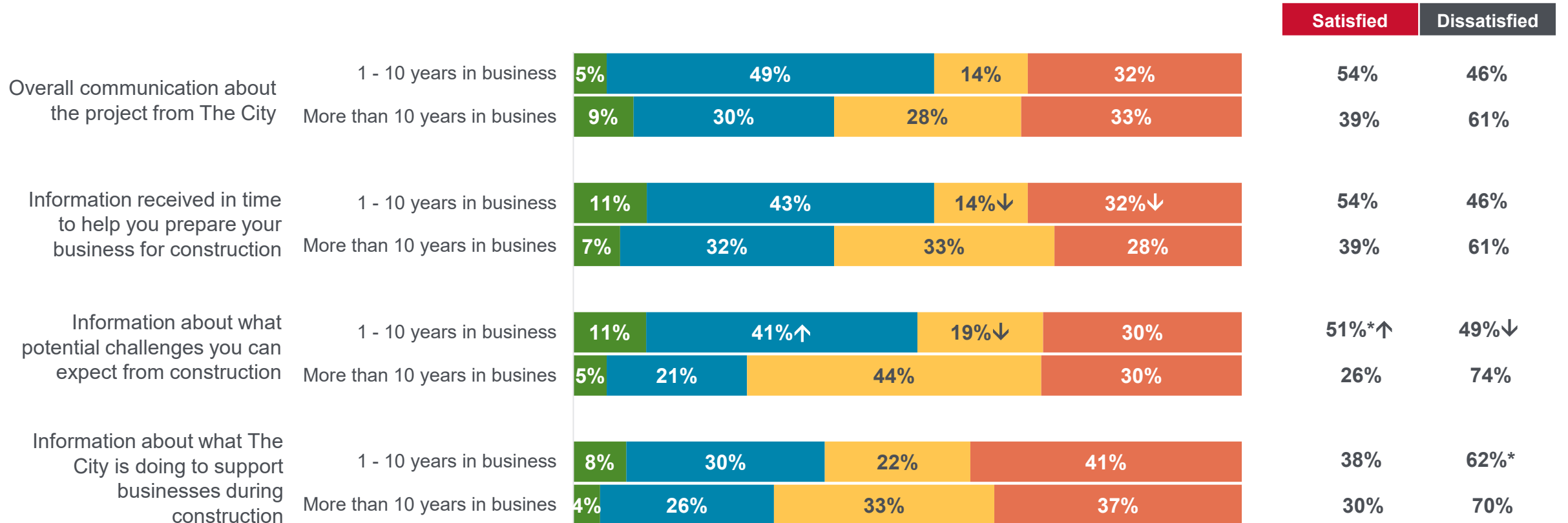


Q. Has your business ever interacted with a City of Calgary staff member during construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=161)

↑ Statistically higher than group
↓ Statistically lower than group

Communication and information from The City

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Somewhat satisfied
 ■ Somewhat dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied



Q. Overall, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of information and communication you received from The City leading up to and during the construction

Base: Valid respondents (n=94)

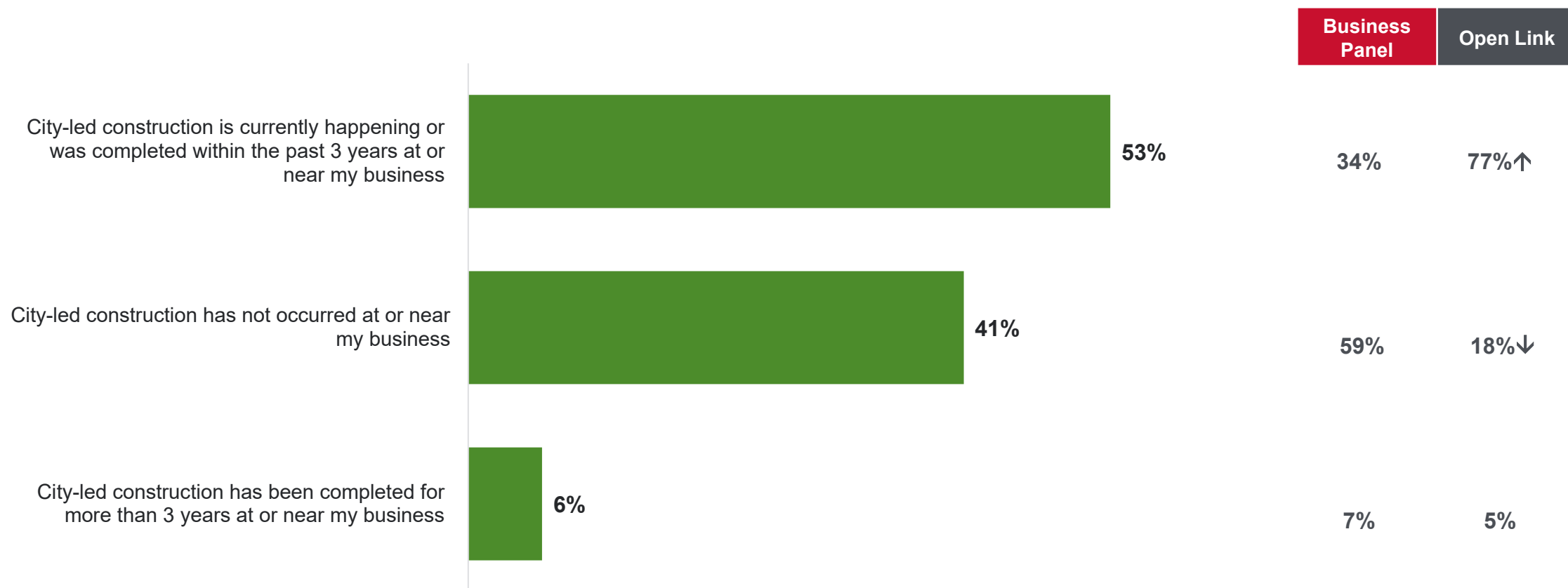
↑ Statistically higher than group
 ↓ Statistically lower than group

*Rounding



Appendix C – Business panel vs. open link

Occurrence of City-led construction



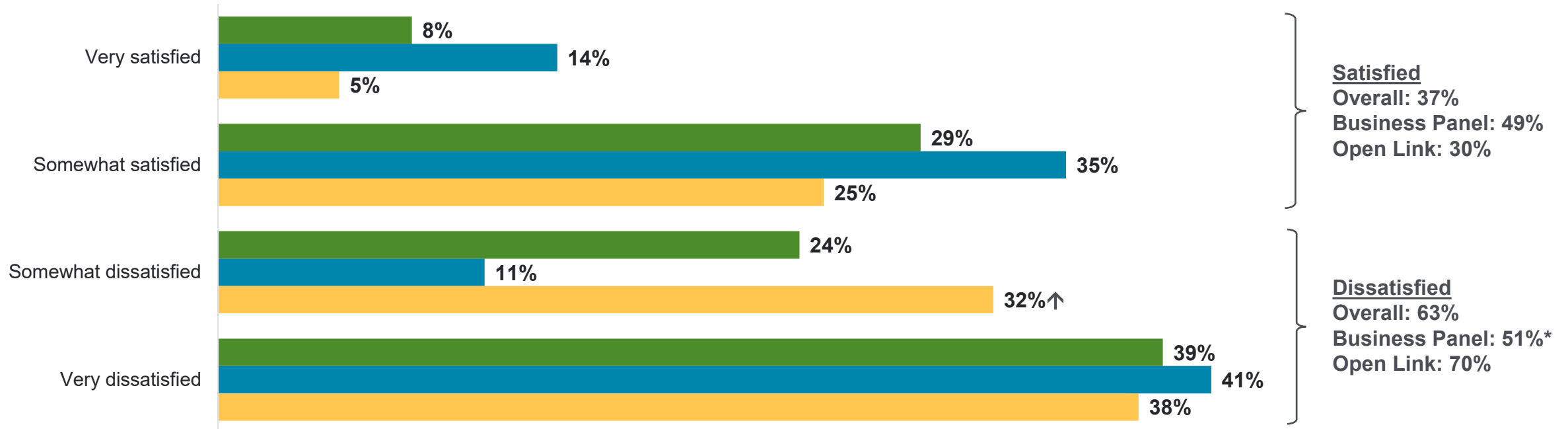
Q. Has your business experienced City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

↑Statistically higher than Business Panel
↓Statistically lower than Business Panel

Satisfaction with City support during construction

Satisfaction with support

■ Overall ■ Business Panel ■ Open Link

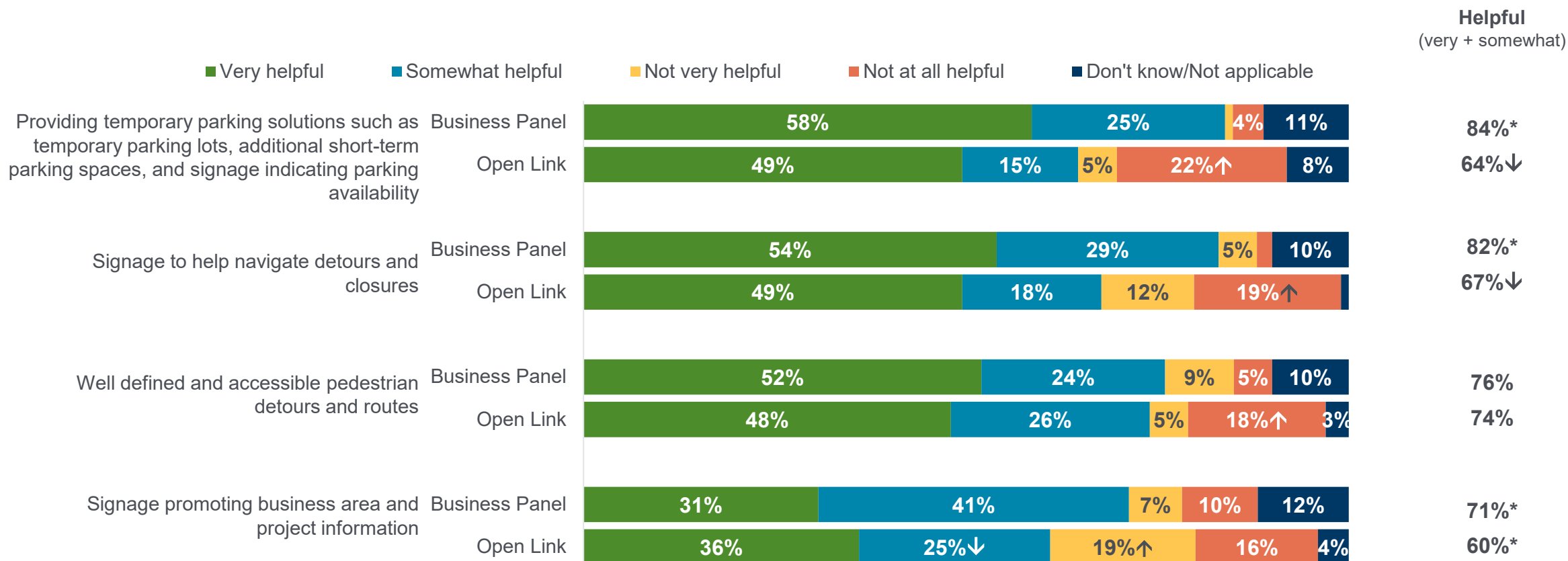


*Rounding

Q. Overall, how satisfied are you with the support you got from The City of Calgary during the construction project?
Base: Valid respondents (n=97)

↑ Statistically higher than Business Panel
↓ Statistically lower than Business Panel

Helpfulness of mitigation strategies during City-led construction: By sample



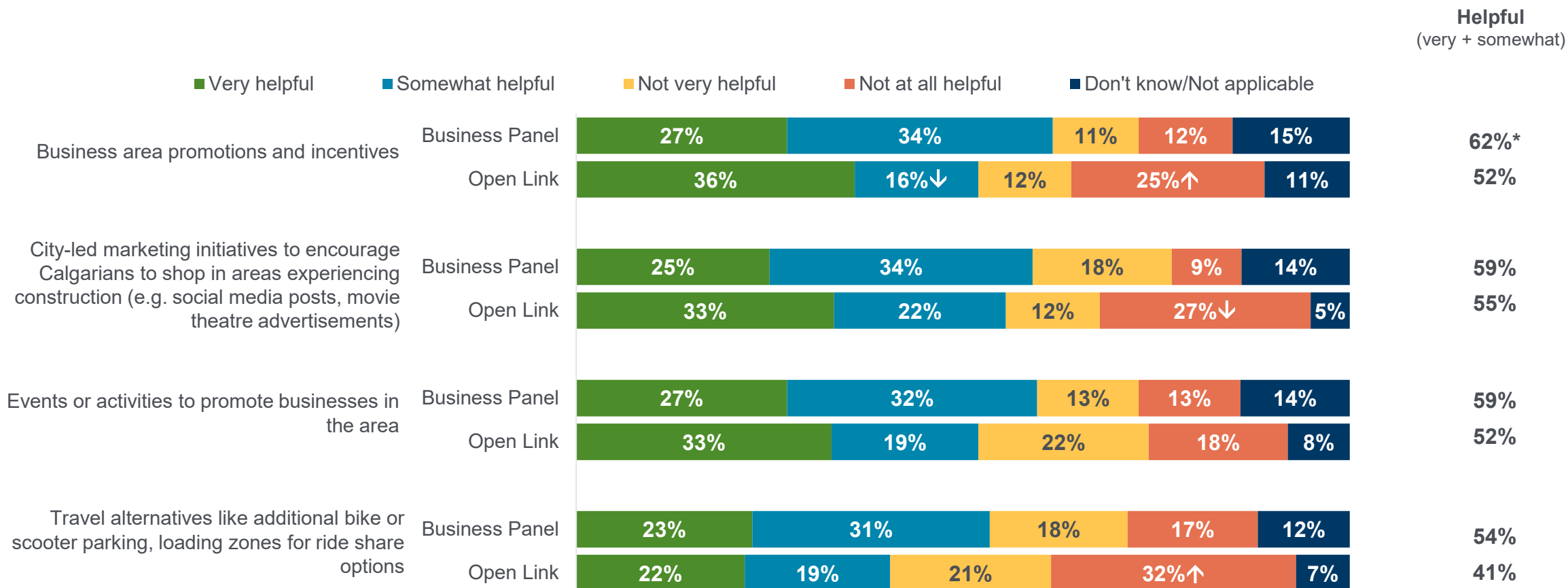
Q. How helpful would the following mitigation strategies and supports be for your business during City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

↑ Statistically higher than Business Panel
↓ Statistically lower than Business Panel

Data labels <3% not shown

*Rounding

Helpfulness of mitigation strategies during City-led construction: By sample (continued)



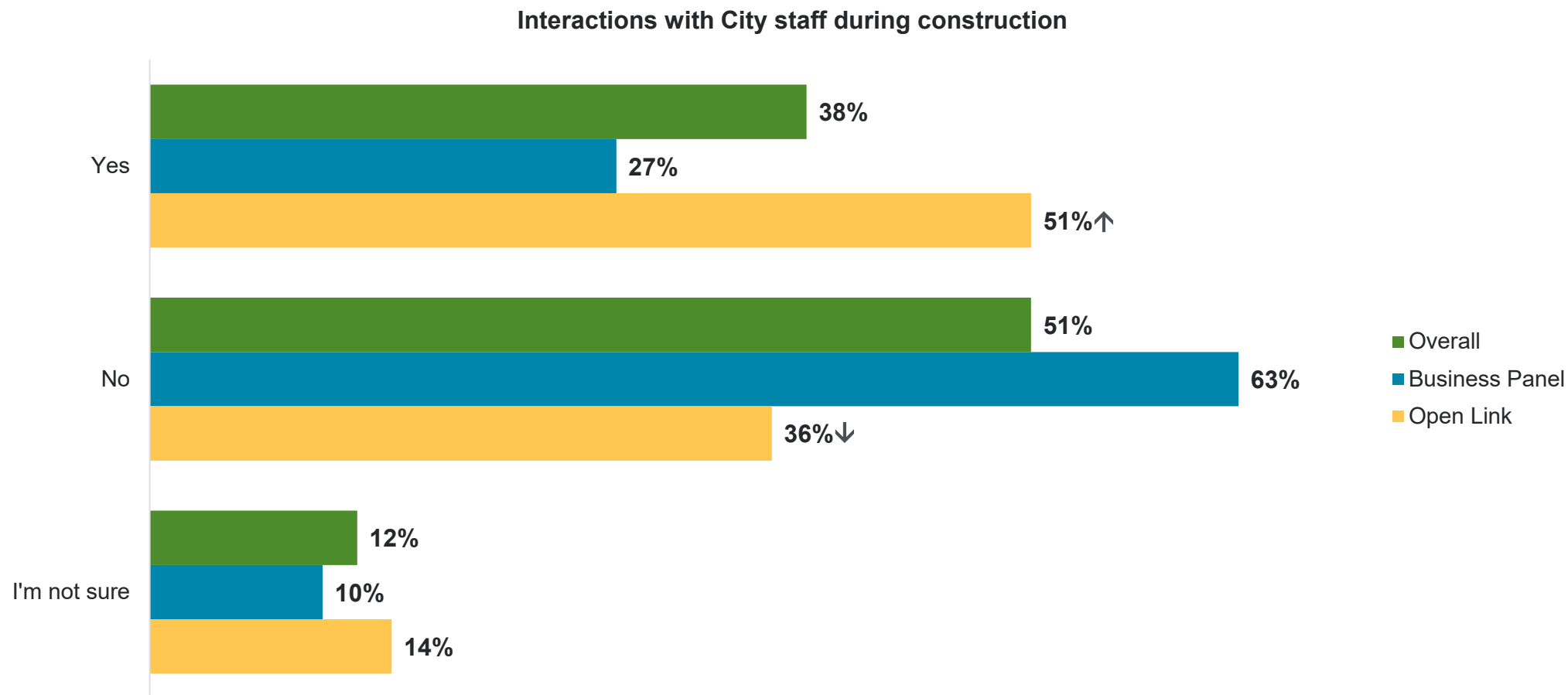
Q. How helpful would the following mitigation strategies and supports be for your business during City-led construction?
Base: Valid respondents (n=164)

↑ Statistically higher than Business Panel
↓ Statistically lower than Business Panel

Data labels <3% not shown

*Rounding

Interactions with City staff during construction

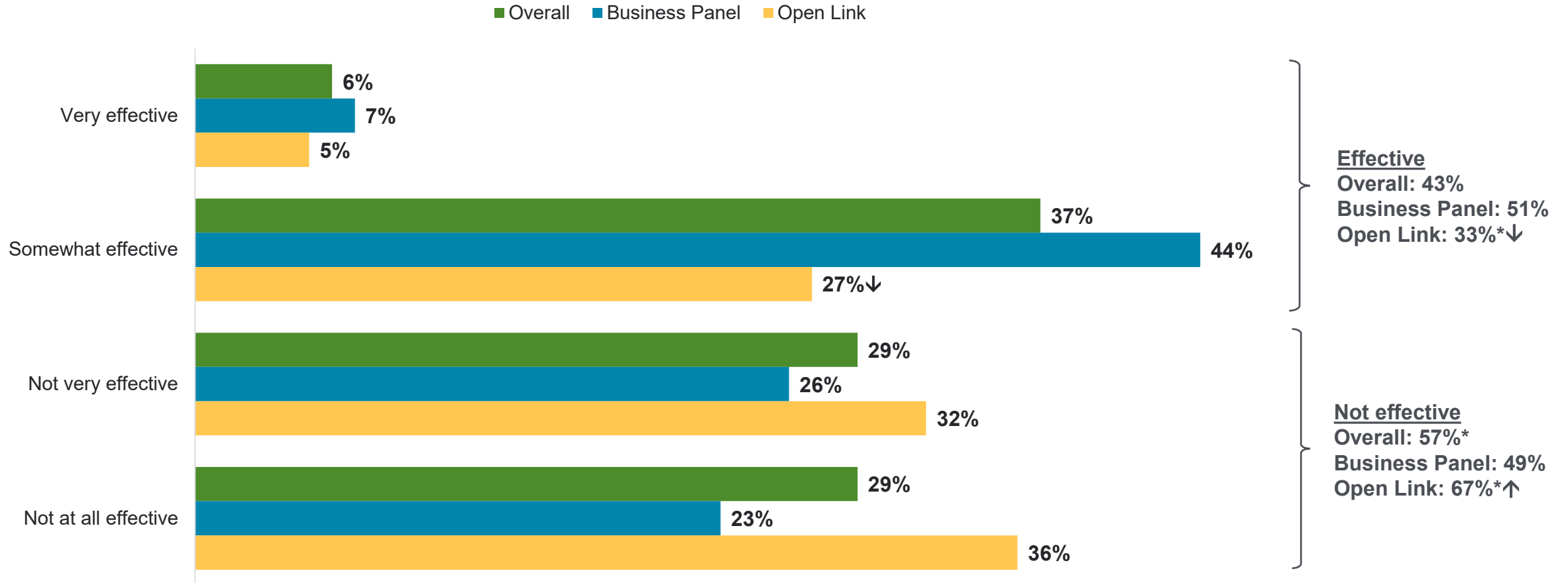


Q. Has your business ever interacted with a City of Calgary staff member during construction?

Base: Those who experienced City-led construction (n=164)

↑ Statistically higher than Business Panel
↓ Statistically lower than Business Panel

Effectiveness of information in preparing for construction



*Rounding

Q. Based on the information you received, how effectively were you able to prepare for the impacts of construction?
 Base: Those who experienced City-led construction (n=164)

↑ Statistically higher than Business Panel
 ↓ Statistically lower than Business Panel



Contact

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 The City of Calgary
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