



Calgary's Urban Placemakers



An aerial photograph of a city grid, likely Denver, Colorado, showing a dense network of streets and buildings. A river, the Platte River, flows through the city. Two circular areas are highlighted in yellow: one in the lower-left quadrant and another in the lower-right quadrant, near a large stadium complex. The text "ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY" is overlaid in the center.

# ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY







## Background:

- CMLC was appointed by The City of Calgary and CSEC to serve as Development Manager for Calgary's new Event Centre.
- CMLC's first step was initiating a comprehensive public engagement process to solicit the ideas and input from Calgarians on their expectations for the visitor experience and programming in and around the facility.
- The Event Centre Engagement Strategy was presented and approved by the Event Centre Assessment Committee (ECAC) on September 5, 2019.



# Engagement Strategy Objectives:

- The engagement program goal was to form a shared and “living” vision for the project that will guide future development of the Event Centre.
- To reach this goal, the engagement team cast a wide net, which included residents, business owners, development community members, key stakeholder and partners, and the broader public in the process.
- Knowledge and insights gathered through this process will guide the planning efforts to develop ideas and strategies to address project issues and opportunities.
- Building upon the foundation of engagement completed with the Rivers District Master Plan, this scope of work took a deeper dive into the opportunities attached to the Event Centre.

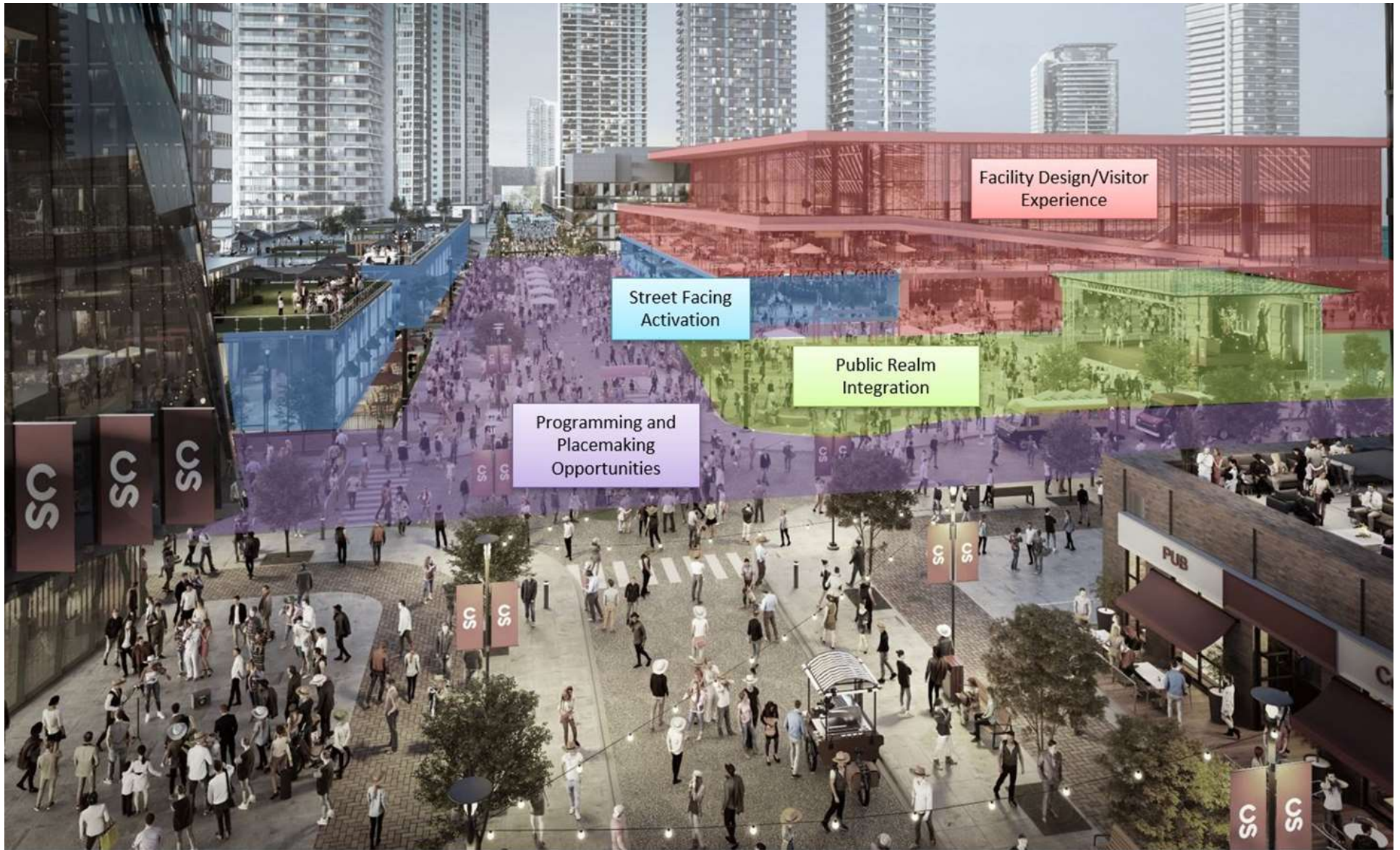


# Successfully Engage with Calgarians:

- Create a neutral project environment with a transparent approach to help ensure all stakeholders, including partner stakeholders and organizations, receive the best possible recommendations and advice.
- Create several methods of input and collaboration with stakeholders from all interested groups (e.g. tourism, arts and culture, City of Calgary, community residents, CSEC and Calgary Stampede) to solicit broad and diverse views and ideas.
- Provide citizens across the city with opportunities to participate in the consultation process through in-person and online engagement channels.
- Define the product development needs of the future Event Centre in terms of architectural principles, public amenities, programming, retail and other commercial space.







# FOCUS AREAS



# CMLC Responsibility

## Developing a framework for success

- Planning and execution of public engagement program that utilizes public response and feedback to guide the successful project delivery on behalf of project partners.
- Leverage public feedback to inform the future detailed design development and integration of the facility into the district.
- Develop a framework that will guide programming opportunities around the facility for sustainable public participation and activation and help shape delivery of ongoing placemaking programs.
- Review and analysis of engagement findings and reporting to project partners and 'what we heard' reporting.



# Fundamental Principles: Event Centre

*As identified in the Project Framework Agreement, the Event Centre will be designed and constructed:*

- To **optimize facility revenues** for all events
- As a state-of-the-art, **multi-purpose** facility with design features, functional components and specifications that are comparable to those consistently found in comparable Event Centres
- Foster a **sense of community** complimentary to the Rivers District neighbourhood
- Provide for a **sustainable** business model
- Be **“fan-centric”** with a view to exceeding fan expectations in all areas of the guest experience
- Be **“right-sized”** for the Calgary market
- Incorporate appropriate **technologies** and design elements to the advantage of CSEC’s teams
- Be environmentally responsible and designed to be **operationally efficient** in all aspects
- Be a **gathering place** for all Calgarians that includes: concerts, assemblies, festivals, professional and amateur sports, linked to an outdoor gathering space
- Be **viable** and **sustainable** while contributing as part of a comprehensive master plan vision
- Be a **catalyst** to attract further vibrancy and investment in a mixed-use neighbourhood
- Create a facility that provides a **competitive** advantage for Calgary Teams
- Provide for a **sustainable business model** with a view to optimizing profitability through revenue optimization and cost minimization.







# ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM







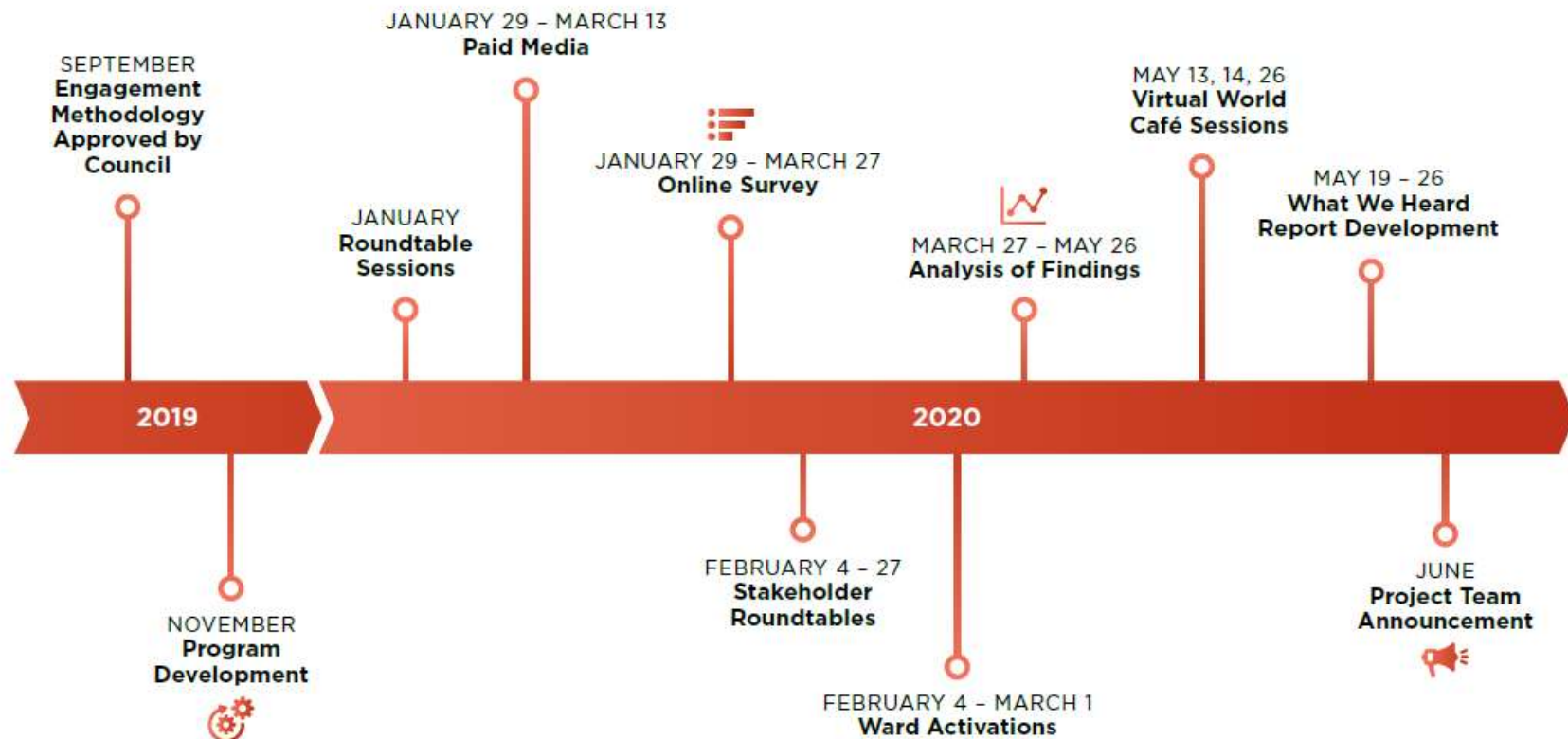
# Approach & Methodology

The engagement process lasted from January 29 to March 27, 2020, and included:

- Roundtable discussions with project and community stakeholders
- Online public survey
- Public engagement events in each of Calgary's municipal wards
- Awareness Campaign







# ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE





# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 4 round table discussions representing 22 local community organizations
  - Civic Partners
  - Community Partners
  - East Victoria Park Landowners
  - Two World Café event sessions were originally scheduled for mid-March but were postponed and hosted in May due to COVID-19







# STAKEHOLDERS

- 17th Avenue BIA
- Arriva Commercial Board
- Arriva Condo Board
- Beltline Neighbourhood Association (BNA)
- Calgary Arts Development (CADA)
- Calgary Downtown Association (CDA)
- Calgary Economic Development (CED)
- Calgary Police Service
- Calgary Stampede
- East Village Neighbourhood Association
- East Victoria Park landowners
- Erlton Community Association
- Ramsay Neighbourhood Association
- Tourism Calgary
- Victoria Park BIA
- Hockey Calgary
- Calgary Public Library
- Karen Ball and Associates
- Platform Innovation Centre
- Calgary Booster Club
- Big Art
- Studio Bell, Home of the National Music Centre



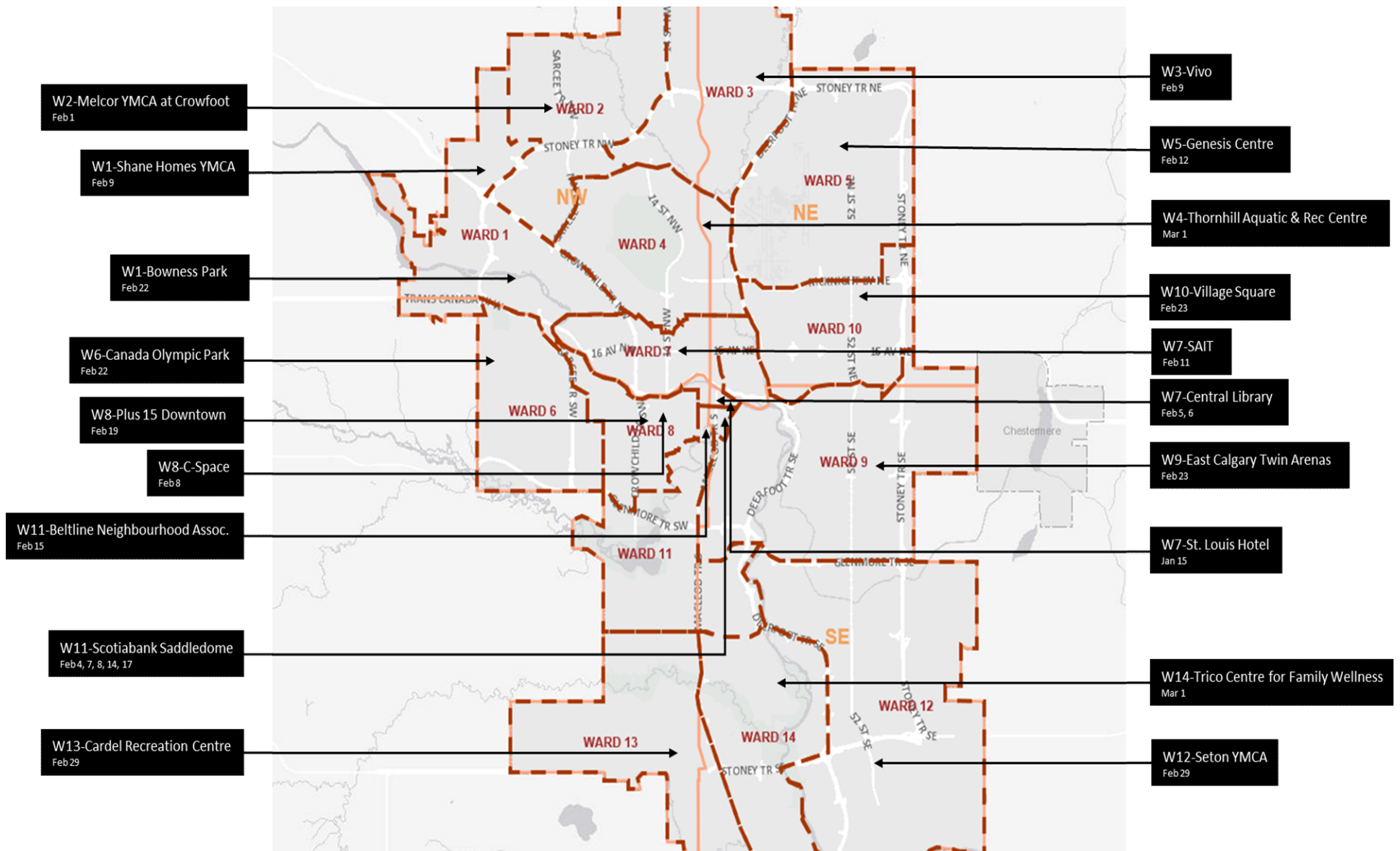


# ONLINE SURVEY

- CMLC released a survey designed to offer Calgarians an opportunity to share their aspirations for the Event Centre
- Ran from January 29 to March 27, 2020.







# WARD EVENTS





# AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

An omnichannel approach was used to reach a large, diverse population of Calgarians. The following channels were used to support the promotion of the survey.

- **Owned Channels:** CMLC social media, website, newsletter
- **Paid Channels:** Digital and Print placements
- **Partner Channels:** Calgary Flames in-arena banner and signage during regular-season games; City of Calgary social and digital channels
- **Earned Channels:** Media Release distribution, media announcement at program onset.

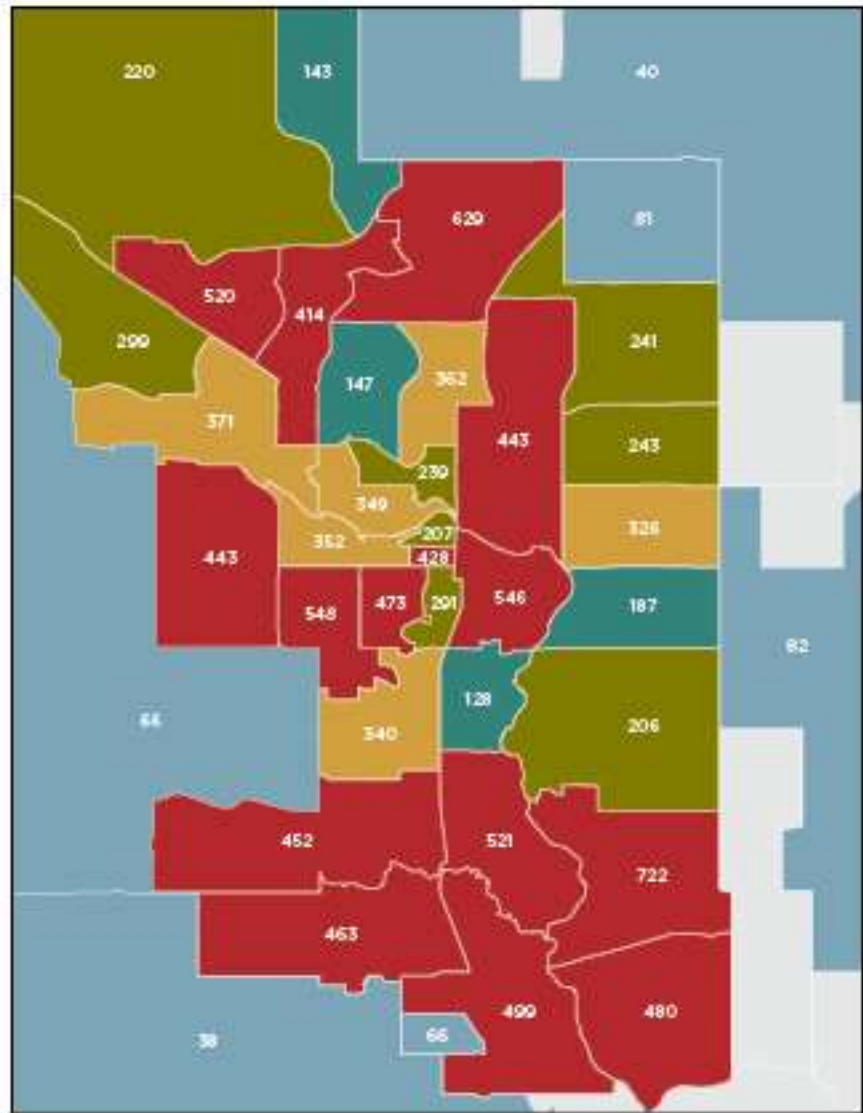
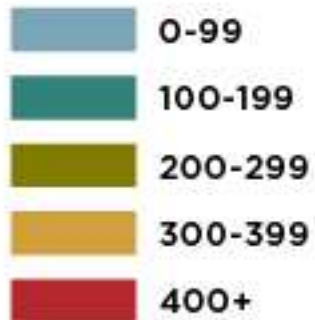




# RESULTS & FINDINGS



TOTAL CALGARY SURVEYS = 12,863  
TOTAL SURVEYS = 14,549



# Postal FSA Responses





# Engagement Metrics



# PRIDE

Many see the Event Centre as an opportunity to revitalize east Victoria Park and the surrounding neighbourhoods, catalyze growth, and give Calgary a world-class facility befitting the city's global stature.



# VARIETY

By and large, people want the space to offer variety, excitement and opportunities to consistently attract locals and tourists to Calgary and east Victoria Park year-round... on top of the more obvious benefits of being able to host major concerts and sporting events.





# CONNECTION

The Event Centre is an opportunity for Calgarians to connect with each other, with friends and family, with business associates, and with the community at large.





# SURVEY AND STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS



# Discovery: Meaning of Place

**Major events** • A new Event Centre means, first and foremost, an opportunity for Calgary to host high-calibre concerts, sporting events and other events in a modern facility.

**Connections** • Opportunities to connect with friends, family and the community inside and outside the Event Centre are highly valued.

**Civic pride** • The connection between the Event Centre and pride of place is strong. As development unfolds, we must prioritize the design aesthetics of the facility and strengthen the connections to Calgary's Culture & Entertainment District, local businesses, artists and community groups.

**Economic stimulus** • The Event Centre offers significant opportunities to stimulate tourism and economic growth in the region. Calgarians have high expectations in this regard.

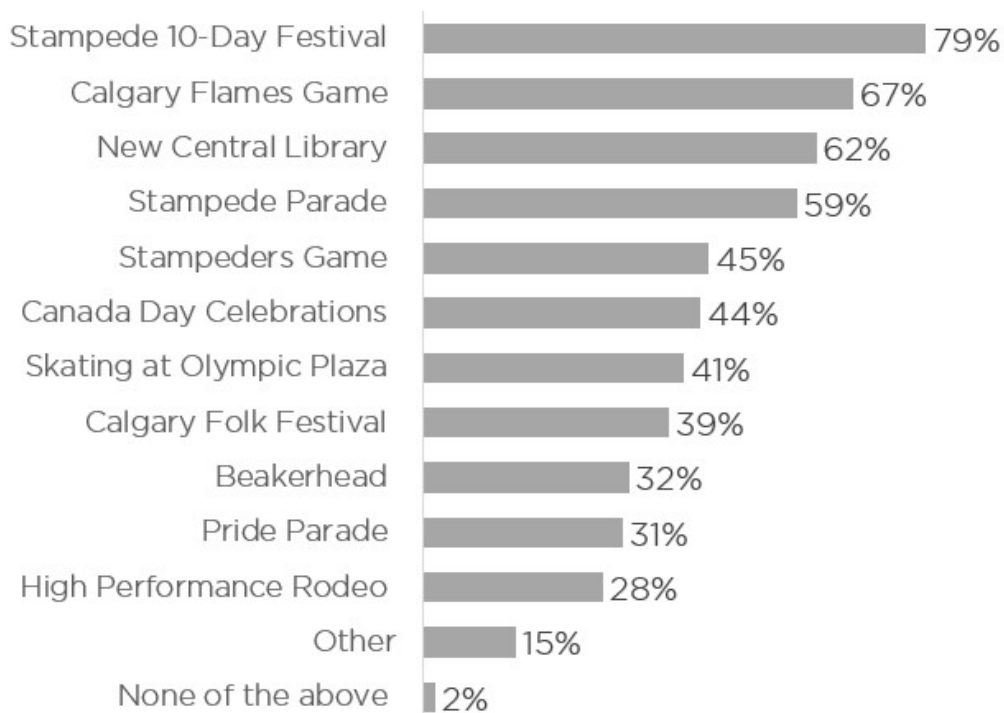
**Negativism** • Not everyone surveyed is in favour of the project, making it even more important to maintain clear and open communication before, during and after development.





# Pride of Iconic Experiences

Q3. "Which of these iconic Calgary experiences, if any, make you proud of Calgary?"



## Other notable mentions:

- Calgary Comic & Entertainment Expo
- Calgary Roughnecks Games
- Calgary Hitmen Games
- Calgary Zoo
- Calgary Philharmonic
- Glenbow Museum
- Heritage Park
- Lilac Festival
- National Music Centre
- Sled Island
- Spruce Meadows
- Studio Bell
- Winsport



# Sense of Pride

Q4. "Why might those kinds of iconic experiences give you a sense of pride in Calgary?"

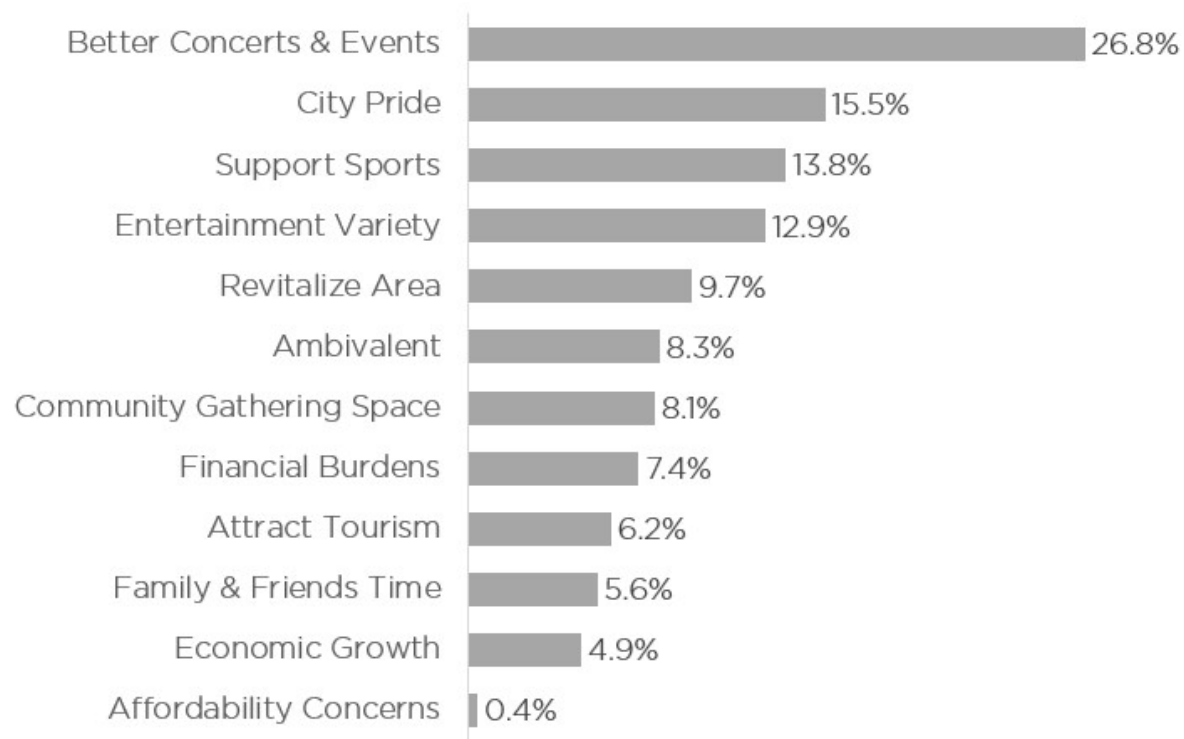
Statement	Total
Culture and entertainment make Calgary a great place to live	77%
Reminds me to get out and enjoy life	68%
Helps me show off Calgary to out-of-town guests	67%
Connects me with other Calgarians	52%
Shows that Calgarians can accomplish great things together	50%
Honours Calgary's diverse cultural heritage	45%
Other	4%
None of the above	3%





# Experiential Meaning

Q20. "What will it mean to have the new Event Centre in Calgary?"



# SURVEY: Current Context



# Current Context: Overview

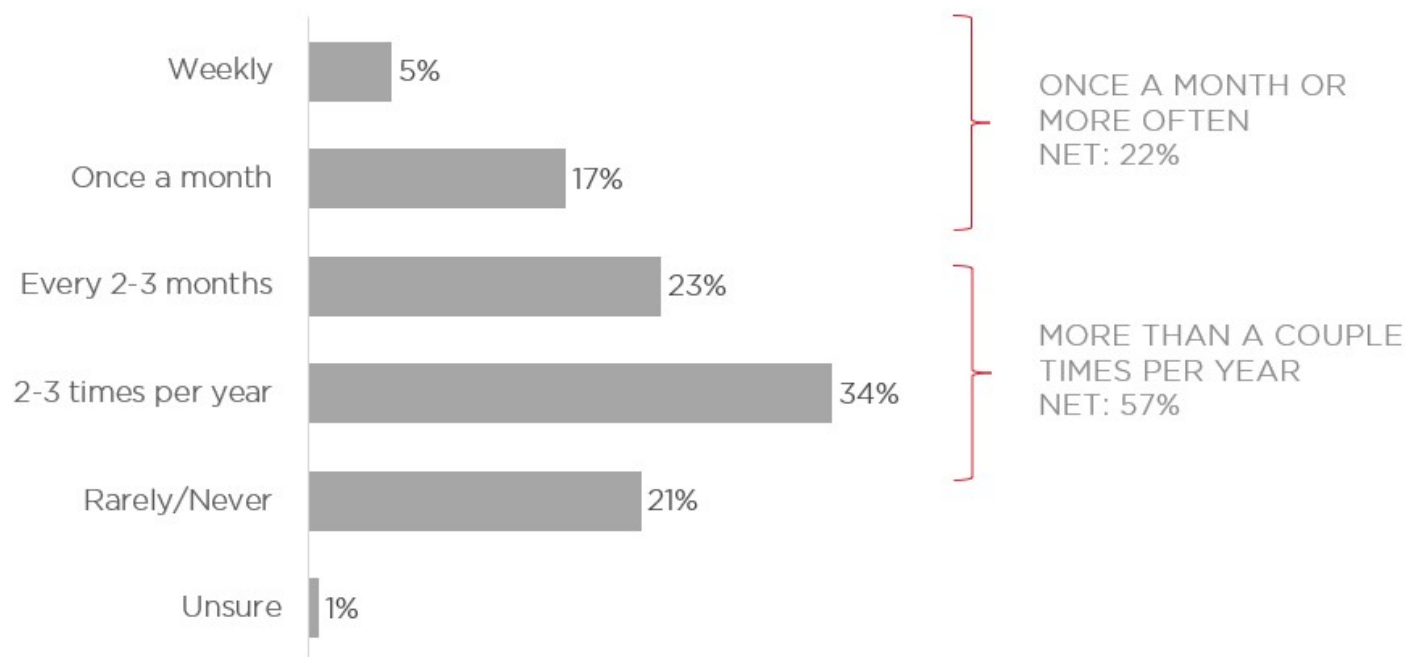
- High ticket prices have been a barrier for some citizens. Include lower-cost events and activities to draw visitors in greater numbers and diversity than major ticketed events.
- Parking challenges have been a notable barrier in the past. The new facility should incorporate ease of parking and convenient transit access.
- Public safety perceptions around the Saddledome have been an issue. The new Event Centre needs to improve the public's perception and feeling of security through design considerations and the presence of enforcement.





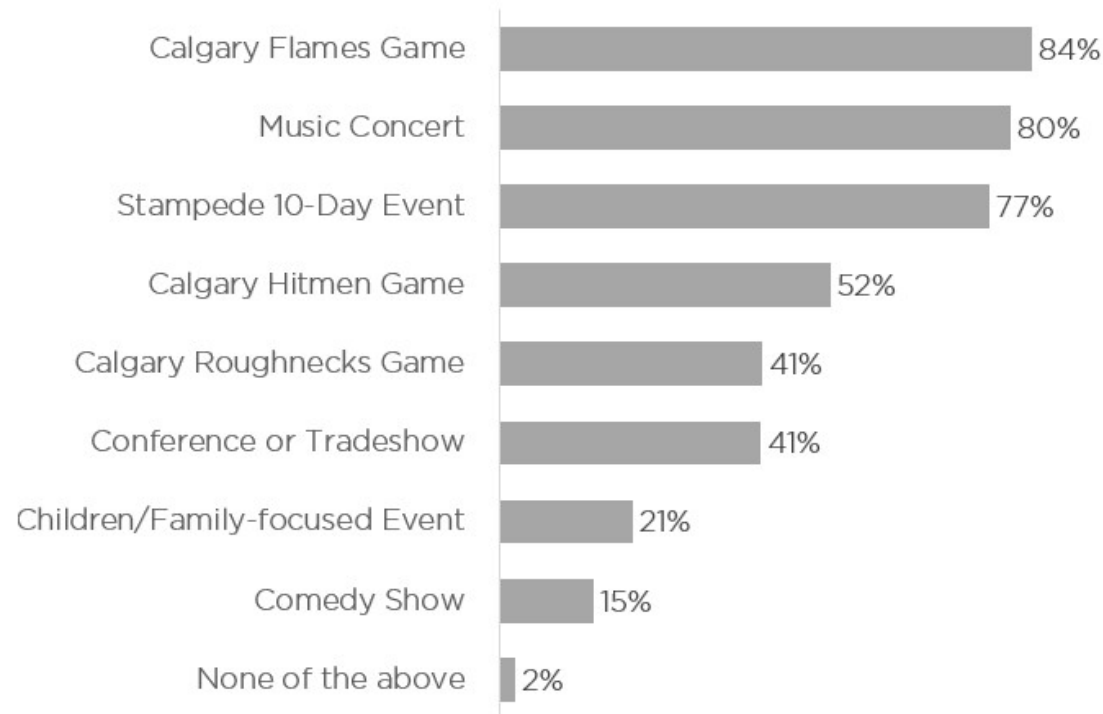
# Current Context: Frequency of Visitations

Q11. "How often do you attend events at the Saddledome?"



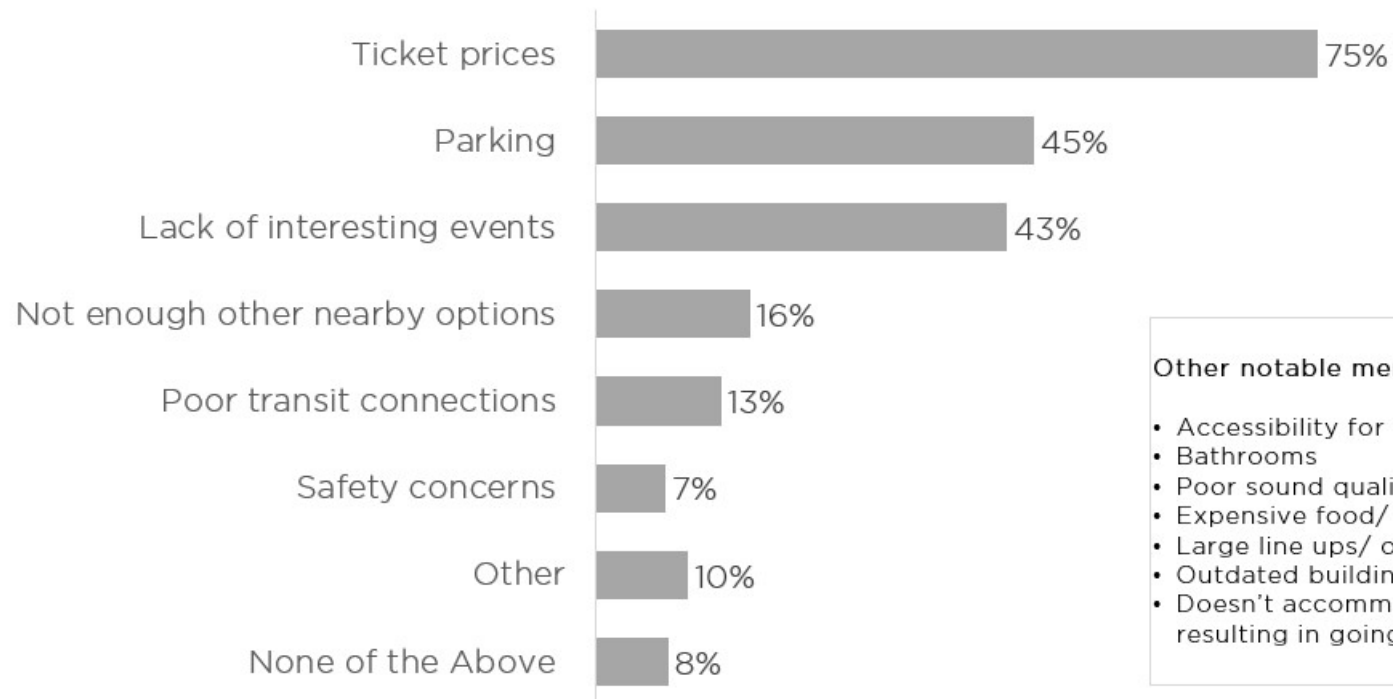
# Current Context: Event Attendance

Q12. "Which of the following events have you attended at the Saddledome, if any?"



# Current Context: Barriers & Constraints

Q13. "Which of the following barriers, if any, might have prevented you from visiting the Saddledome?"



## Other notable mentions:

- Accessibility for limited mobility individuals
- Bathrooms
- Poor sound quality (ie. bad acoustics)
- Expensive food/ drink options
- Large line ups/ overcrowded
- Outdated building
- Doesn't accommodate certain shows, resulting in going to Edmonton



# SURVEY: Interior Experience



# Interior Features: Overview

- The facility's seating should offer good sightlines, be 'close to the action', offer upgrade options and enable social interactions.
- Retail should include branded merchandise as well as local and curated offerings.
- Food service choices should include sit-down options for before and after events.
- The facility should support both large- and smaller-scale events to maximize visitor appeal.
- The facility should reflect and showcase natural features in the vicinity (such as the Elbow River).



# Interior Features: Overview

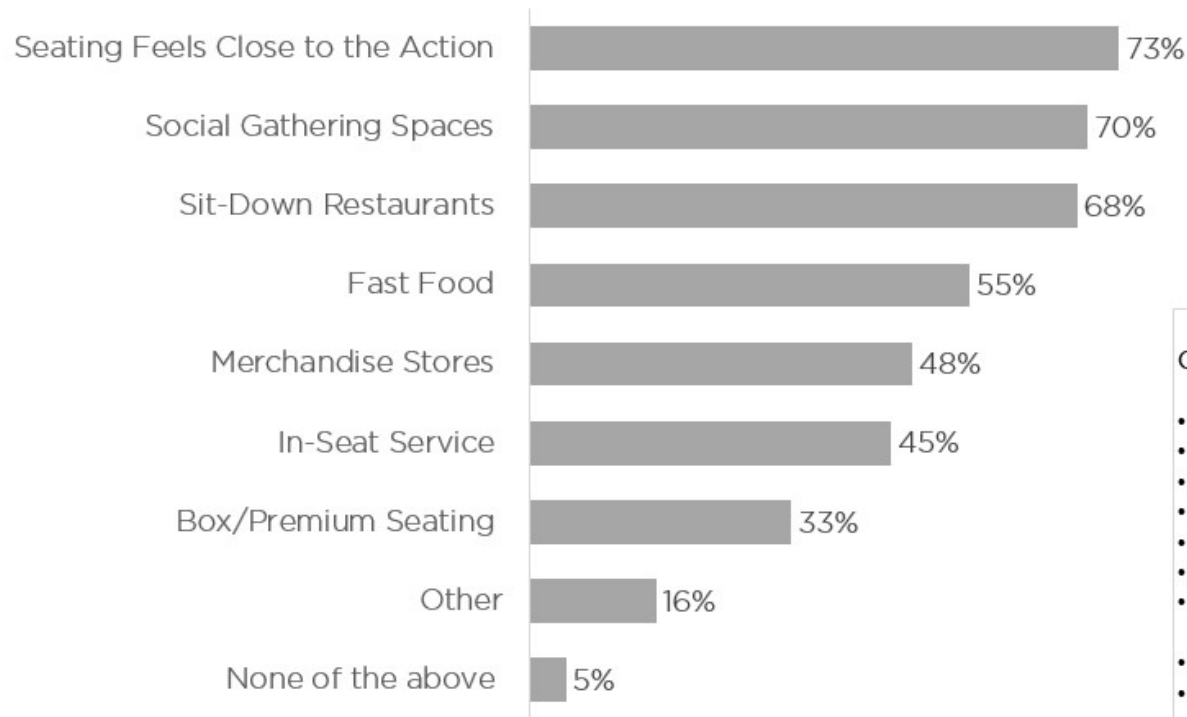
- While concerts and sports are the biggest draws, other events—for example, comedy, educational, family, dance, western, Indigenous and e-Sports events—should be offered to reduce facility ‘dark times’.
- Seek opportunities to support long-running, longer-term events while recognizing the need to also run higher-revenue-generating events.
- Consider coordinating—formally or informally—Event Centre content with offerings from other entertainment venues in the city.





# Interior Experience

Q14. "Which features, if any, would you like to see inside the new Event Centre facility?"



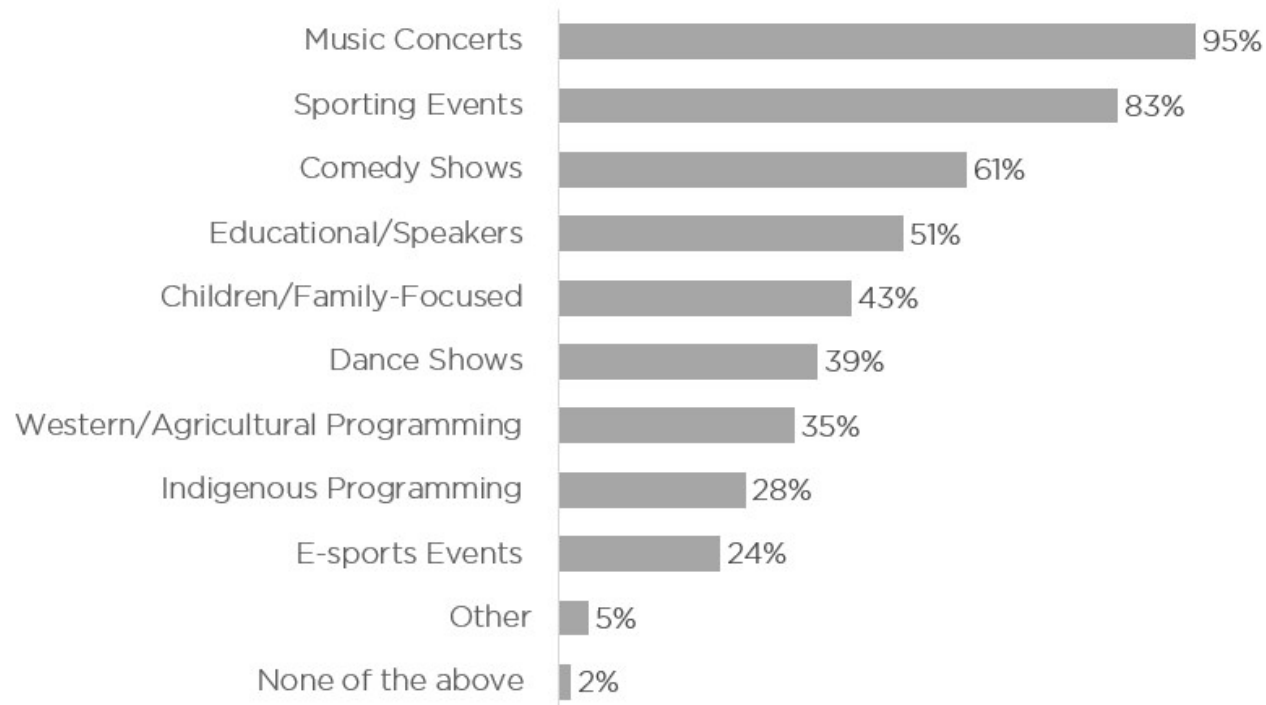
## Other notable mentions:

- Adequate washrooms
- Affordable pricing (ie. drinks, food, etc.)
- More food/ drink options (ie. healthy)
- Larger event size to accommodate artists
- Better sound quality
- Comfortable, spacious seating
- More family oriented (ie. games, washrooms)
- Local beer and food options
- Open, wide concourses
- Updated interior design



# Types of Events

Q15. "What kind of culture and entertainment programming would you like to see inside the new Event Centre facility?"



# Survey: Exterior Experience





# Exterior Programming: Overview

- The area outside the Event Centre offers substantial opportunities to attract visitors with affordable, all-ages events such as festivals, concerts and community activations.
- Outdoor retail and food & beverage offerings should be flexible and modular to support demand for novelty, variety and local content.
- When planning for longer-term retail and food & beverage offerings, consider how these can serve surrounding residential communities and enhance existing tourism offerings at the city, regional and provincial levels.



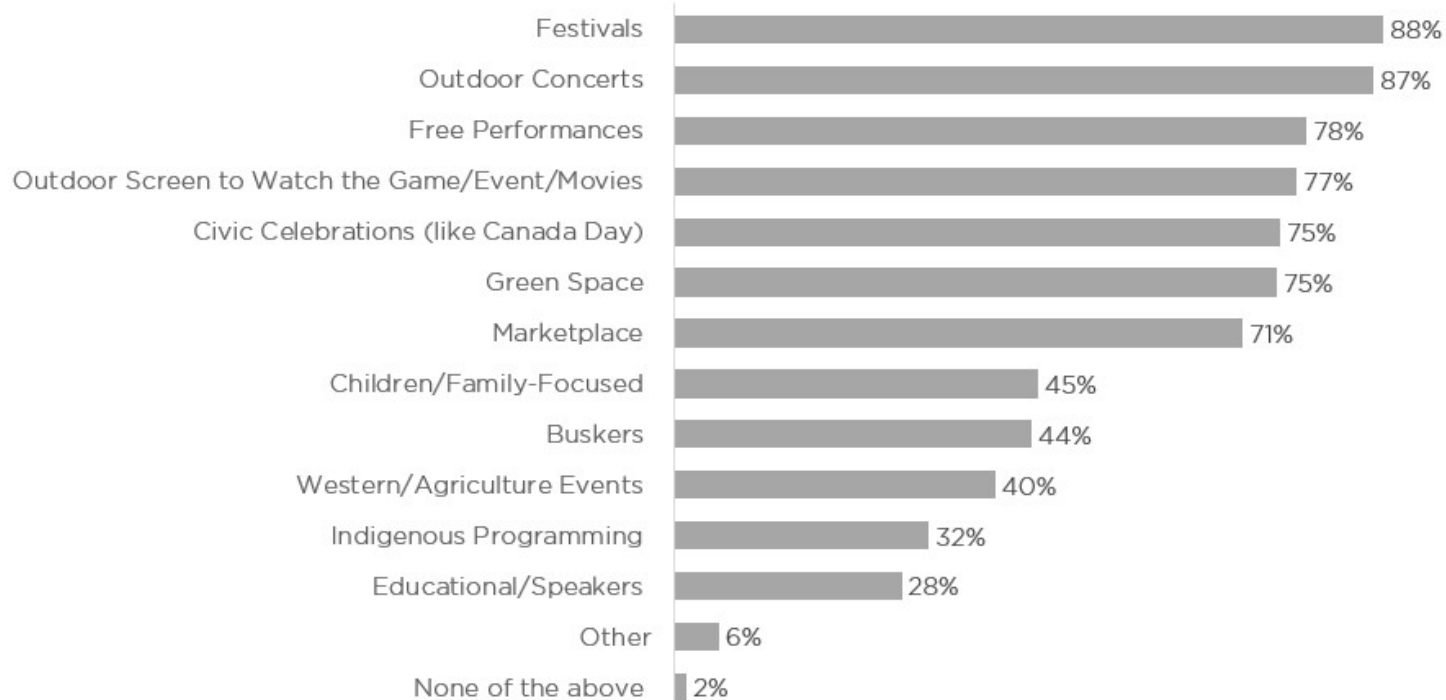
# Exterior Built Environment: Overview

- Survey respondents expect the built environment outside the Event Centre to include attractive and accessible spaces and amenities that facilitate social interaction—even when no events are taking place.
- The built environment should be modular, multi-use, and inviting so visitors are attracted to and linger in the space.
- The built environment should work year-round and facilitate winter programming and activation.
- The Elbow River is currently underutilized as a nearby public amenity and should be considered in designing the Event Centre's built environment.



# Exterior Public Space: Programming

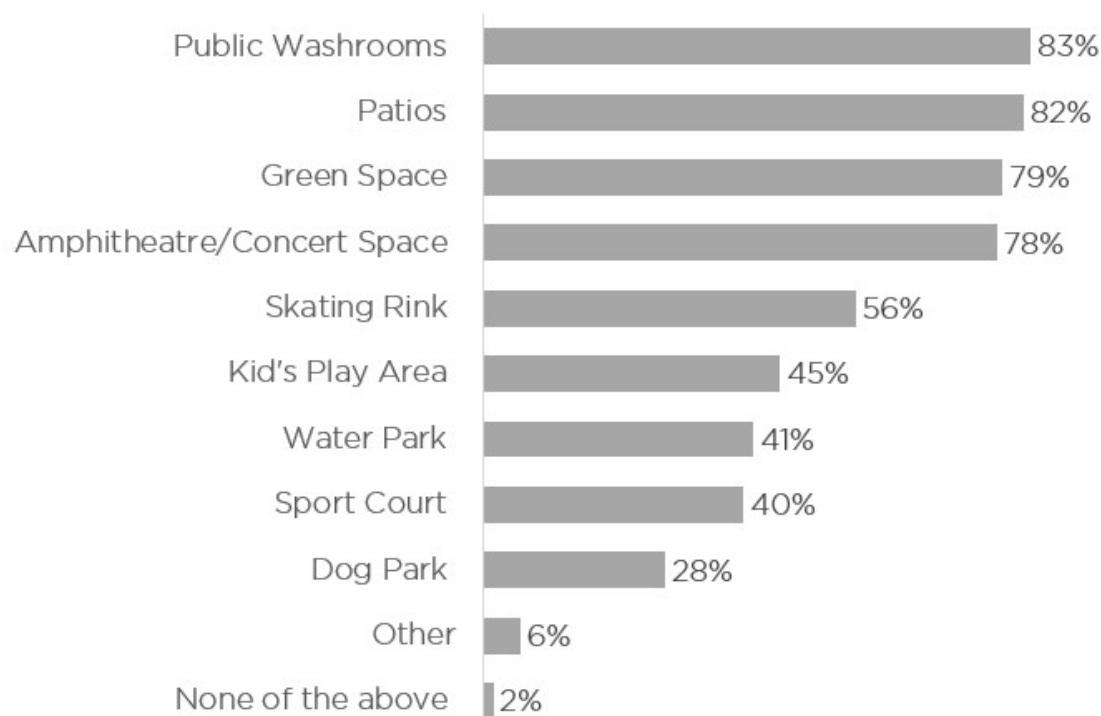
Q16. "What kind of culture and entertainment programming would you like to have in the community space, outside the new Event Centre facility?"





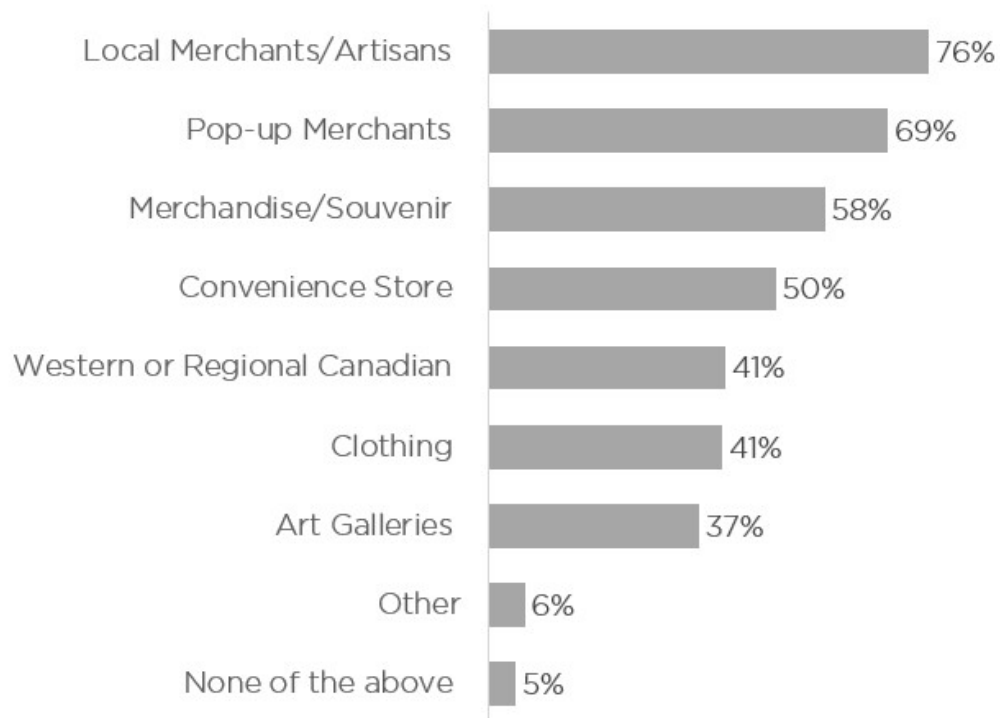
# Exterior Public Space: Built Environment

Q17. "What kind of structures would you like to have in the community space, outside the new Event Centre facility?"



# Exterior Amenities & Services

Q18. "What type of retail would you like to see on the street level connected or adjacent to the facility?"



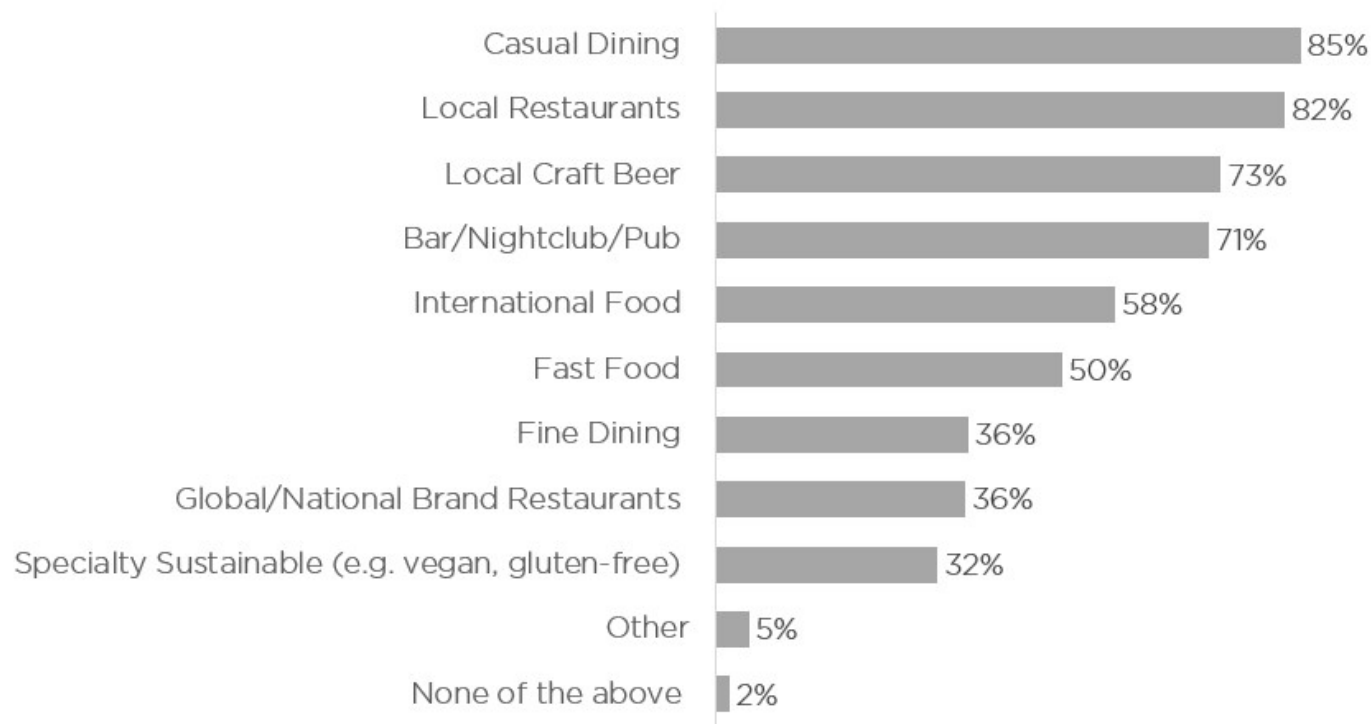
## Other notable mentions:

- Bars, pubs and restaurants
- Coffee shops/ cafes
- Farmer's market
- Beer gardens/ brewery's
- Liquor stores



# Amenities & Services: Food & Beverage

Q19. "What kind of food and beverage options would you like, either inside the facility or outside in the community space?"





# Additional Considerations:

## **Safety & Access:**

- Design considerations such as accessibility, lighting and sightlines must prioritize public safety and access for first responders.
- Recognize that ongoing residential development in the area will support the need for a safe, welcoming environment.
- Facility operators must work with neighbourhood social agencies (e.g. Alpha House) to ensure vulnerable populations are considered.

## **Community Integration:**

- The design and activation of the Event Centre should consider other district facilities and surrounding communities to encourage visitors to explore the greater area.
- Capitalize on the Event Centre's prime location at the crossroads of East Village, Music Mile, StudioBell, Stephen Avenue and 17th Avenue SW.
- Coordinate with local artists, pop-up merchants and community associations to support connections and enhance walkability throughout the area.
- Connect with relevant service providers to address concerns around bylaw enforcement and to help mitigate construction impacts not just of the Event Centre but also of the BMO Centre expansion, future Green Line, 17th Avenue extension and nearby residential projects.



A person is running on a paved path that curves along a body of water. The sky is filled with large, white clouds. The path is bordered by a low wall of concrete blocks and a rocky shoreline. The overall scene is captured in a monochromatic, teal-toned style.

# Outcomes and Next Steps



# Review of Primary Themes:

- ✓ Supporting Civic Pride: Opportunity to create a place of gathering, meaning and connection.
- ✓ Diversity of Programming: inside and outside the facility
- ✓ Range of Retail Opportunities: inside the facility and vibrant Festival Street
- ✓ Design aesthetic of the facility that integrates with the community around it
- ✓ Integration into the District and facilitating stronger connections
- ✓ Safety and access to balance both daily needs and large-scale event activations
- ✓ Residential and community connectivity





# Integration and Validation

To ensure we are evaluating how these findings may evolve over the lifespan of the project and due to major impacts like COVID-19, CMLC will continue to consult and research how to best integrate user expectations and community planning to support both the Event Centre and long-term planning for the success of the overall district.

## Retail Planning and Strategy:

CMLC has initiated a retail planning study to consider the impacts of COVID on retail development, market impacts and market trends and to support the best retail strategy to activate the Festival Street and consider how public findings can be realized.

## Public Safety & Security:

CMLC is conducting a study with safety consultant to examine the master plan in context of planned development, intensity of uses (20,000+ ppl for every game), needs of the community to address potential risks and develop plans to mitigate safety and crime concerns.

## Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement:

As part of CMLC's delivery of the project, additional user group interviews will be conducted in coordination with the design team to help understand and address impacts of COVID-19 will have on the building operations and functionality.



# Integration and Validation

## Programming and Activation:

CMLC will work with community and civic partners moving forward to address how programming approach and management can be supported when the facility is complete and how these activations can be supported.

## COVID Implications:

Specialty consultant(s) will be involved to help assess and respond to the implications of COVID over the life span of the project and to support the planning of community activations.

## Communications:

The full engagement report posted on CMLC and C&E District website. Ongoing project communications coordinated by CMLC with support from project partners.

## Community Space Planning:

While the community space “Festival Street” is not yet in design, the engagement findings data will be integrated and additional consultation initiated when design process commences.





QUESTIONS?

