



# What We Heard:

## Public Engagement Results for the Downtown West Area Redevelopment Plan

For engagement that occurred on May 12, 2016

June 9, 2016

The City of Calgary, Community Planning, Centre-West

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## Project overview

The City of Calgary is working on a new Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) for Downtown West. An ARP is a statutory policy document that guides the growth and development of existing communities. The purpose of this planning study is to develop policy to ensure development in this area supports the goals of Calgary's Municipal Development Plan and is in alignment with the Centre City Plan as well as other plans and guidelines.

In 2013, residents of Downtown West provided their insight into the future of the community in terms of improvements, development and new amenities. The second phase of engagement started again in the fall of 2015 with public engagement to build upon those initial ideas to inform policy development for the draft ARP. This public engagement session focused on specific issues such as the plan boundary, land use and density. The public feedback will be used to help inform draft policies, where appropriate.



Please note the location of the proposed CalgaryNEXT project in the West Village falls outside of the study area for this project.

## Communication techniques employed

The project team hosted an Open House for the Downtown West Area Redevelopment Plan on May 12, 2016 with the following methods of participation available:

1. An open house held on May 12, 2016 from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at the Kerby Centre, 1133 Seventh Ave. S.W. Planning and Transportation staff attended this meeting to provide details of the project, answer questions, and solicit feedback.
2. Paper copies of a survey were available at the open house and 20 copies were completed and returned.
3. An online survey was also available at [calgary.ca/downtownwestarp](http://calgary.ca/downtownwestarp) between May 12, 2016 to May 23, 2016, with 69 people completing the survey.

The project team employed a number of techniques to advertise the public engagement. These included:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Bold signs                              | Three bold signs were placed at the following locations for ten days prior to the open house (starting May 2, 2016). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eighth St. between Fourth Ave. and Ninth Ave.;</li> <li>• Eighth Ave. between Eighth St. and 11th St.; and</li> <li>• 10th St. between Fifth Ave. and Ninth Ave.</li> </ul>  |
| 2. Postcards                               | Delivered on May 3, 2016, 5434 postcards were mailed out to residents and businesses in the Downtown West study area.  |
| 3. Twitter                                 | The City of Calgary Twitter account has 166,000 followers and two tweets were posted prior to the open house. These were also promoted through the @nextcityYYC Twitter account. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, May 11, 2016<br/>Have your say on draft Downtown West Area Redevelopment Plan policies tmr night 4-7:30pm @KerbyCentre <a href="http://bit.ly/1Nm9jUx">http://bit.ly/1Nm9jUx</a> @EWoolleyWard8</li> <li>• Thursday, May 12, 2016 (morning)<br/>Open house tonight to hear your ideas on draft Downtown West Area Redevelopment Plan policies, 4-7:30pm @KerbyCentre <a href="http://bit.ly/1Nm9jUx">http://bit.ly/1Nm9jUx</a></li> </ul> |
| 4. Facebook                                | Two Facebook ad campaigns were created. One promoted the open house from May 5 to 12 and the other promoted the survey from May 12 to 19.  |
| 5. Email Blast to Email list               | A Downtown West email list was established through previous engagement and as of this engagement session had 132 subscribers. An email blast was sent to this list on May 6, 2016 with information about the open house.   |
| 6. Letter to specific landowners           | A letter was sent to 11 landowners of large parcels with development potential.  |
| 7. The Downtown West Community Association | Helped to spread the word  |
| 8. The Ward 8 Councillor's office          | Helped to spread the word  |

Input collected during this engagement is summarized below and will be used to inform the draft Downtown West Area Redevelopment Plan and report to Calgary Planning Commission and Council.



## The open house

66 people attended the open house.

The Kerby Centre foyer (1133 Seventh Ave. S.W.) provided the location for the open house. Only adults who entered through the front door and stopped to view the panels were counted as participants. People who just passed through to go into the building were not counted.

## The online and paper survey

69 surveys were filled out online and 20 paper surveys filled out at the open house

## Survey questions

The same questions were asked through both the online and paper survey. Details for each question are outlined in the next sections.

### Participants

#### **Question 1: summary of findings**

There were 87 respondents to Question 1; 67 to the online survey and 20 to the paper survey. Of those, 45 percent were property owners.

#### **Question 1: survey question**

You are a:

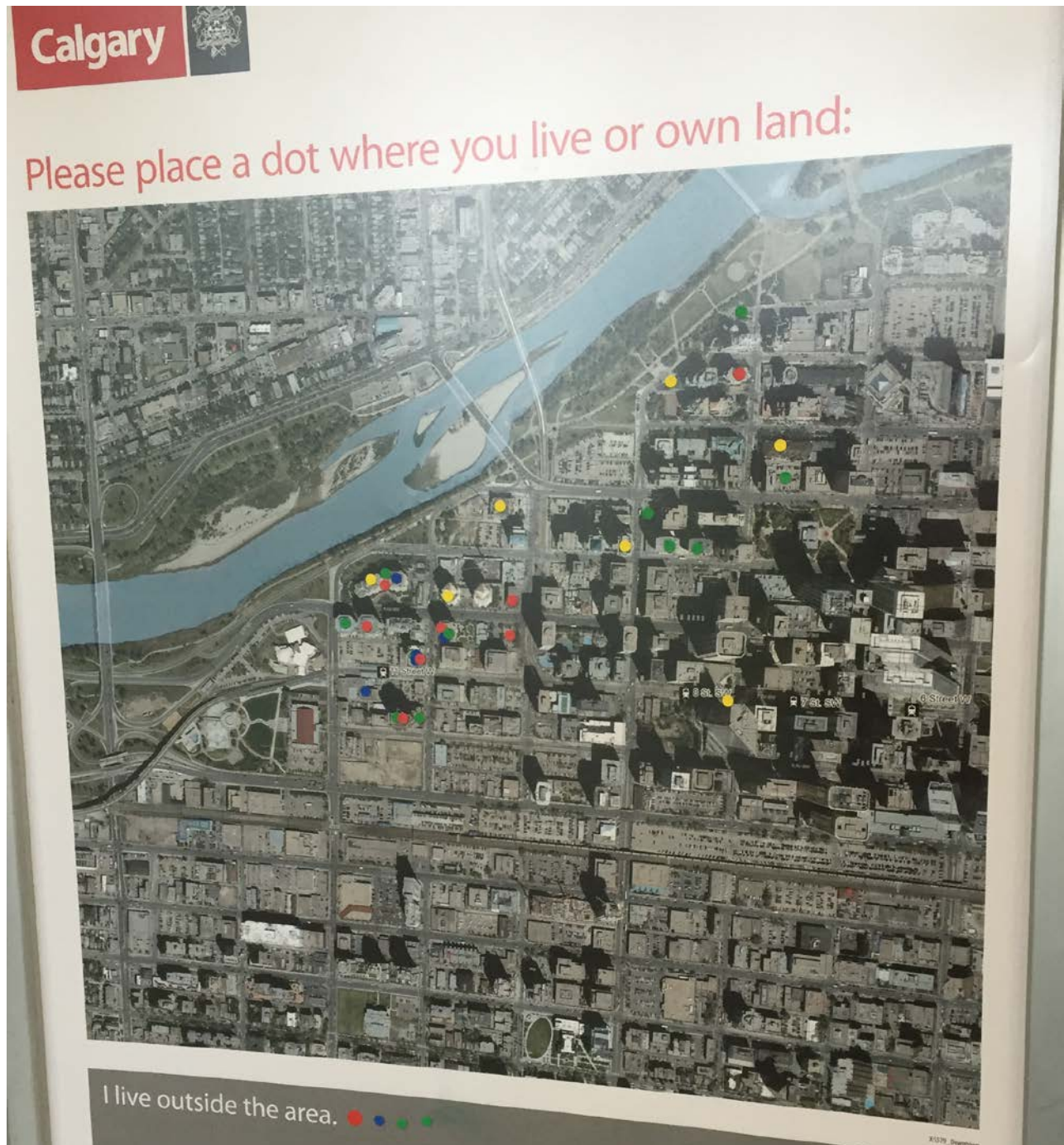
Please choose the option that BEST describes your interest in Downtown West.

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Property owner		45%	39
Renter		26%	23
Business owner		1%	1
Developer		2%	2
Visitor to the area		21%	18
Other (please specify):		5%	4
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>87</b>

**Open house map: place a dot where you live or own land**

At the open house, there was a board asking attendees to place a dot where they live or own land. The majority of respondents live between 11 St. S.W. and Ninth St. S.W.

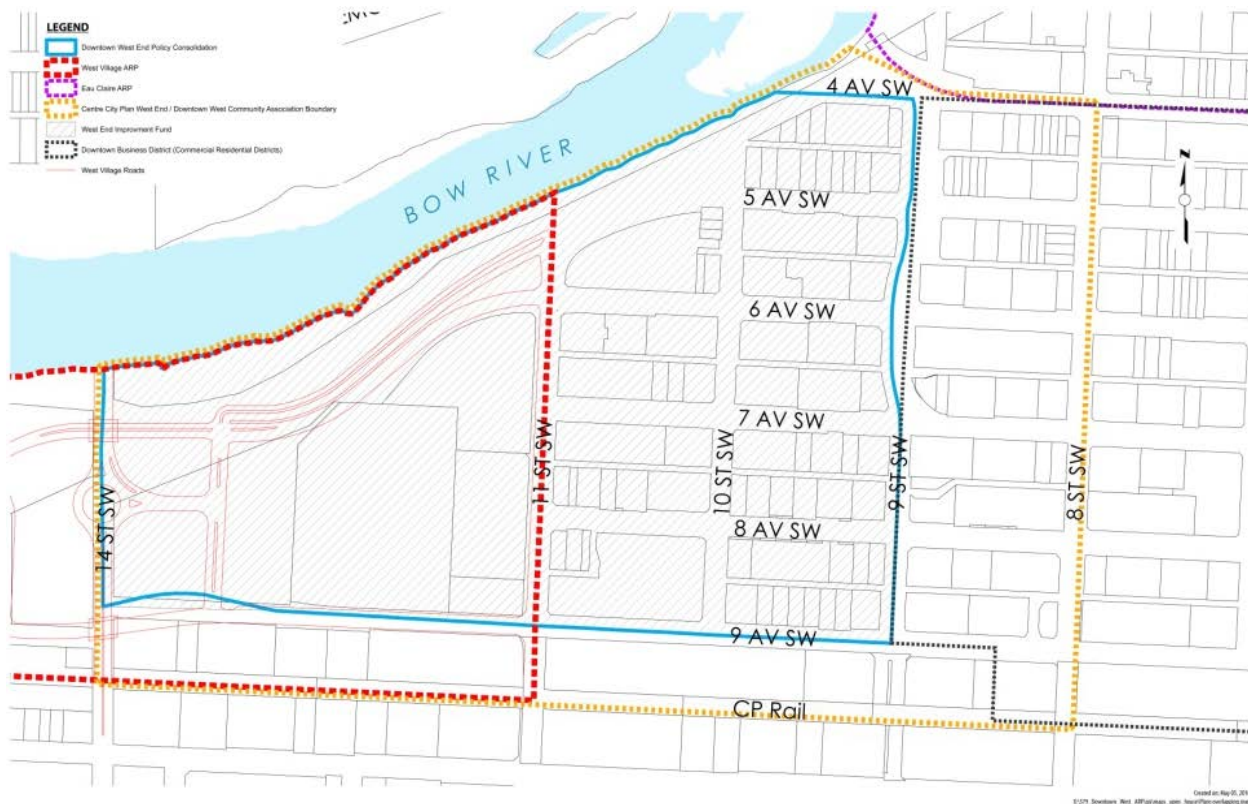
Figure 1: Please place a dot where you live or own land:



**Downtown West ARP boundary**

Currently there are several boundaries within Downtown West based on a number of documents and the Community Association. As a statutory document, policies in the Downtown West ARP will only affect parcels in the plan area so considerations for choosing the boundary may include existing statutory policy and land use districts, transitioning from the Downtown core, and identifying cohesive areas for investment and redevelopment.

The north boundary of the plan will be the Bow River and Fourth Ave. S.W. The south boundary for the plan will be the Canadian Pacific Rail line. We would like your input on the east and west boundaries.



Participants were asked for their input on the east and west boundaries, as outlined in questions two and three.



**Question 2: western boundary, summary of findings**

Roughly **48 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the west boundary should be 14th St. S.W. and **32 percent** believe it should be between 11th St. and 14th St. S.W. including the Mewata Armoury, Centennial Planetarium and part of Shaw Millennium Park.

**Question 2: survey question**

I think the West Boundary for the Downtown West ARP should be:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
11 St. S.W.		10%	9
14 St. S.W.		48%	42
Between 11 St. and 14 St. S.W. including Mewata Armoury and the Centennial Planetarium buildings, excluding Shaw Millennium Park.		5%	4
Between 11 St. and 14 St. S.W. including Mewata Armoury, the Centennial Planetarium building, and part of Shaw Millennium Park.		32%	28
Other (please specify)		5%	4
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>87</b>

Three other suggestions were identified including:

- Downtown West Community Association has oversight on Shaw Millennium Park. It discusses with Calgary Police Service and Parks on a regular basis the safety of the park;
- 14th St., re-design the skate park to update its features with other modern skateboard parks; and
- Leave as is.







**Question 3: eastern boundary, summary of findings**

Roughly **37 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the east boundary should be Eighth St. S.W. and **32 percent** believe it should be Eighth St. S.W. and include some parcels east of Eighth St. S.W.

**Question 3: survey question**

I think the east boundary for the Downtown West ARP should be:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Ninth St. S.W.		28%	24
Eighth St. S.W.		37%	32
Eighth St. S.W. and including some parcels east of Eighth St. S.W.		32%	28
Other (please specify)		3%	3
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>87</b>

Two other suggestions were identified including:

- Leave as is; and
- Fourth St. S.W.

One additional comment was made however it was unrelated to the question.

**Land use concept**

Based on the Land Use Framework, all of Downtown West is considered to be a Mixed-Use land use category. Participants were asked for their input on where they think the Hub and Transition overlays should be located.

**Mixed-use land use category**

Lively places where the most concentrated activity (working, shopping, and living) occurs. High-quality transit and cohesive community development support residential, employment, services and intensification.

**Hub overlay**

1. Active St. level, encouraging retail and service uses at-grade with residential or office above.
2. Design focuses on the pedestrian experience, including trees, wider sidewalks, and multi-modal bike lanes.

**Transition overlay**

1. Provide a buffer between different intensities of form, typically encouraging a scaling down in height, form, and massing.
2. Provide a buffer between different uses; might not have a scaling down, but often relies on one type of use with minimal impacts.
3. May have the highest density.

Participants were asked to indicate their preference in regard to locations for the hub overlay and transition overlay, as outlined in questions four and five.



**Question 4: hub overlay, summary of findings**

Roughly **27 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the hub overlay should be located primarily on 11th St. S.W. and **24 percent** believe it should be located on Eighth Ave. S.W.

**Question 4: survey question**

The Hub Overlay should be located primarily on (select only one):

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Seventh Ave. S.W.		10%	9
Eighth Ave. S.W.		23%	20
Eighth St. S.W.		17%	15
10 St. S.W.		20%	17
11 St. S.W.		26%	22
Other (please specify)		3%	3
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>86</b>

Two other suggestions were identified including:

- Fourth Ave. near 10th St. S.W. (1 comment); and
- Sixth Ave. S.W. (2 comments).

**Question 5: transition overlay, summary of findings**

Roughly **45 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the Transition Overlay should be located primarily next to the railway corridor and the Downtown core.

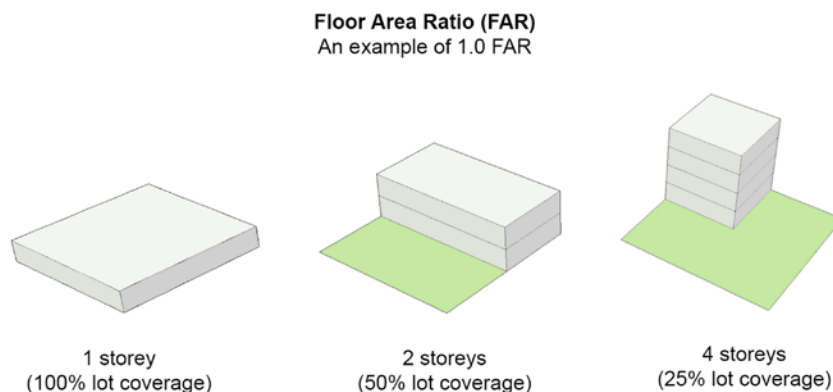
**Question 5: survey question**

The Transition Overlay should be located primarily...: (select only one):

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Next to the downtown core		20%	17
Next to the railway corridor		14%	12
Next to the railway corridor and the downtown core		45%	38
Along Ninth Ave. S.W.		20%	17
Other (please specify)		1%	1
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>85</b>

## Density

Density in Downtown West is measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which is measured by dividing the building area by the parcel area. For example, if a 700 m<sup>2</sup> site has an FAR of 1.0, the building could be one floor at 700 m<sup>2</sup> or two floors at 350 m<sup>2</sup> each, and so on as long as the total area of all floors does not exceed 700 m<sup>2</sup>.



Three density areas have been identified for Downtown West:

1. **Mixed-use** has the lowest density overall with the focus on residential uses and supports a moderate amount of commercial density. Density considerations include limiting the impacts of shadows on the riverfront.
2. **Hub** has a bit more density and accommodates a similar proportion of commercial to residential uses as **mixed-use**. This will facilitate more active uses at grade to support daytime and evening activity.
3. **Transition** has the highest density and accommodates the greatest proportion of commercial density, while accommodating larger building forms that complement the Downtown.

Most of the parcels in Downtown West currently have Direct Control (DC) Districts with varying heights and densities allowed. Most of the parcels have a base density of 7.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) with some provisions for additional density. The highest density allowed within any of these DC Districts is 12.0 FAR. Allowing additional density may make a development project financially feasible and could be exchanged for a public benefit.

### ***Question 6: density concerns, summary of findings***

The two main themes identified by residents who responded to this question include:

- No concerns with density in Downtown West (30 comments)
- Do not increase the density / less density (10 comments).



### Question 6: survey question

Participants were asked if they have any concerns with density in Downtown West (i.e. location of density, types of uses, etc) and to indicate any comments they may have. The comments were reviewed and summarized below:

Theme	# Times Theme Identified *	% of total
No concerns with density in Downtown West	30	36.6%
Do not increase the density / less density	10	12.2%
More retail, grocery stores and restaurants are needed	8	9.8%
No concerns. The denser the better	6	7.3%
Miscellaneous / Unrelated comments	5	6.1%
Concerns over increased traffic congestion with an increase in density	3	3.7%
Concerns with shadowing of areas; darkening/shadowing of currently wider -open, sunnier St.s, parks or riverfront	3	3.7%
Need more green space / The River path needs more support and funding similar to the money invested in the East Village.	2	2.4%
Density should be focused away from vehicle travel	1	1.2%
density is not the issue, but rather the integration between a development and the St. (concerns of shadowing)	1	1.2%
Area has lack of suitable zoning to allow for higher density. The setbacks required on sites suitable for tower development already make efficiency difficult.	1	1.2%
Off leash dog park is needed	1	1.2%
Concerns over services that attract homeless, IE liquor stores, clubs, bars with patios.	1	1.2%
Concerns over loss of natural daylight and views	1	1.2%
Building height should be scaled to existing buildings so you don't end up with one building significantly taller than others	1	1.2%
Concerned with height. 41/36/29 approved between 8&9 Ave/10& 11. 36 is high enough	1	1.2%
Avoid high density @ 8th & 8th. It already has too much crime	1	1.2%
DTW- has not benefited from any developments w.r.t. contributions by way of public benefits. This needs to be resolved.	1	1.2%
with density, there should be services to support the population	1	1.2%
Downtown West density should be kept at 5 Far	1	1.2%
To make DW lively like Kensington, give it the same density and types of uses as Kensington has, 2014-2016	1	1.2%
Yes. Inappropriately applied density adversely affects the neighborhood. See SDAB 2015-0143 for residents views on DP2014-6029. See also SDAB final decision conditions imposed to counter high far approved by City following a land use change put through with no consultation of one building affected. Different FAR's make sense -if a complete block is being developed. It is different to a side adjacent to existing building. Existing residents must be dealt with fairly and protected.	1	1.2%
Need more population to support more activity in community	1	1.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* **NOTE:** the number of times a specific theme was identified does not equal the total number of comments (persons commenting) as some individual comments included more than one theme.

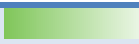






**Mixed-use density**

**Question 7: summary of findings**

Roughly **29 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the highest density allowed in the Mixed-Use land use category should be more than 8 FAR and **23 percent** believe it should be less than 5 FAR.

**Question 7: survey question**

What is the highest density that should be allowed in the Mixed-Use Land Use Category?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Less than 5 FAR		23%	20
5 FAR		9%	8
7 FAR		15%	13
8 FAR		9%	8
More than 8 FAR		29%	25
I don't understand FAR		13%	11
Other (please specify)		1%	1
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>86</b>

Two other suggestions were identified including:

- Why limit the density?- judge projects on the merit of their design; and
- Virtually all the development in DTW has high FAR with no public benefits. Lack of green space, poor sidewalks, poor river walk, lack of trees, poorly maintained City Land!

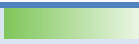






**Hub overlay density**

**Question 8: summary of findings**

Roughly **26 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the highest density allowed in the Hub Overlay should be more than 10 FAR and **23 percent** believe it should be less than 7 FAR.

**Question 8: survey question**

What is the highest density that should be allowed in the Hub Overlay?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Less than 7 FAR		23%	20
7 FAR		15%	13
8 FAR		13%	11
10 FAR		10%	9
More than 10 FAR		26%	22
I don't understand FAR		13%	11
Other (please specify)		0%	0
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>86</b>



One other suggestion was identified:

- Move bus stop at 1108 Sixth Ave. by the jewelry store to Sixth Ave. & 11th St. to agglomerate bus stops. This will allow more convenient passengers/commuter transfers from LRT to busses and vice versa.

**Transition overlay density**

**Question 9: summary of findings**

Roughly **24 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the highest density allowed in the Transition Overlay should be more than 12 FAR and **17 percent** believe it should be less than 7 FAR.

**Question 9: survey question**

What is the highest density that should be allowed in the Transition Overlay?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Less than 7 FAR		17%	15
7 FAR		8%	7
8 FAR		15%	13
10 FAR		14%	12
12 FAR		9%	8
More than 12 FAR		24%	21
I don't understand FAR		13%	11
Other (please specify)		0%	0
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>87</b>

One other suggestion was identified including:

- With significant contribution to the Downtown West Community (DTWC) with respect to benefits- parks, green space, Streetlights (designer).



**Downtown West density mix**

**Question 10: summary of findings**

Roughly **30 percent** of residents who responded to this survey question believe the Downtown West should accommodate an equal amount of residential and commercial density and **29 percent** believe Downtown West should accommodate primarily residential in the mixed-use category, but allow an equal amount of commercial density in the Transition Overlay.

**Question 10: survey question**

Should Downtown West accommodate:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
More residential than commercial density		16%	11
An equal amount of residential and commercial density		31%	21
More commercial than residential density		9%	6
Primarily residential in the Mixed Use land use category, but allow an equal amount of commercial density in the Transition overlay.		29%	20
Primarily residential in the Mixed Useland use category, but allow more commercial than residential density in the Transition overlay.		7%	5
I don't know		3%	2
Other (please specify)		4%	3
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>68</b>

Five other suggestions were identified including:

- Off-leash dog area.
- This should be market driven and not socially engineered. There is significant development in this area already, and the development of density is already entrenched.
- Residential should be maximized above St. level commercial consistently throughout.
- Less commercial for the west end.

One additional comment was made however it was unrelated to the question.

**Additional comments**

One additional question was asked on the online survey. The question and responses are outlined below.

**Question 11: survey question**

Do you have any other comments regarding the Downtown West Area Redevelopment Plan project?

Theme	# Times Theme Identified *	% of total
No comment	11	28.2%
More green/park space is needed	4	10.3%
Already too much traffic congestion / existing infrastructure is at capacity	3	7.7%
Do not want large entertainment venues in area (i.e. new arena)	3	7.7%
Dog park or off-leash area should be added	2	5.1%
More grocery stores, cafes, shopping, gyms	2	5.1%
Excited for the change! / Get it done!	2	5.1%
Extend Stephen Ave mall on eighth Ave to 11 St. S.W.	2	5.1%
Convert city parking lot on 4th Ave and 8th St into additional park space	1	2.6%
Very little parking in the area	1	2.6%
Downtown West should have Mewata Armory and old Planetarium and Millennium Park as a key to its identity	1	2.6%
Walking and living in the area should take priority over density issues. Walking through downtown west does not seem to be a priority: examples: 1. While there are no LRT trains around, walkers have to wait for a walking light to cross the track. 2. Access to the river walk from 10th St. needs to go to 11 St. or 9 St. 3. The river walk is not wide enough to accommodate bicycles and walkers.	1	2.6%
Construction concerns as the redevelopment progresses.	1	2.6%
Special restrictions should be placed on lighting. Fully shielded infrastructure lighting should be used and strict control of private light trespass should be enforced. This would include so-called 'security lighting' and signs including lighted billboards.	1	2.6%
Given the amount of funding invested in the East Village, it is time for the City to seriously act and come up with a plan immediately for the West Area. It feels like this area of downtown is completely abandoned by the City. There hasn't been any improvements made in this area. We are desperately in need of more retail and restaurants in order to bring more energy to Downtown. It is time for the City to show us that there is an official plan for Downtown West.	1	2.6%
It would be great to have a mirrored landscape/image to East village that encourages retailers to build, outdoor events, and more of an arts scene.	1	2.6%
We don't need more commercial for this area	1	2.6%
Advertise a specific demographic to move to that area. I.e "gay village", young families	1	2.6%
Miscellaneous	1	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* **NOTE:** the number of times a specific theme was identified does not equal the total number of comments (persons commenting) as some individual comments included more than one theme.