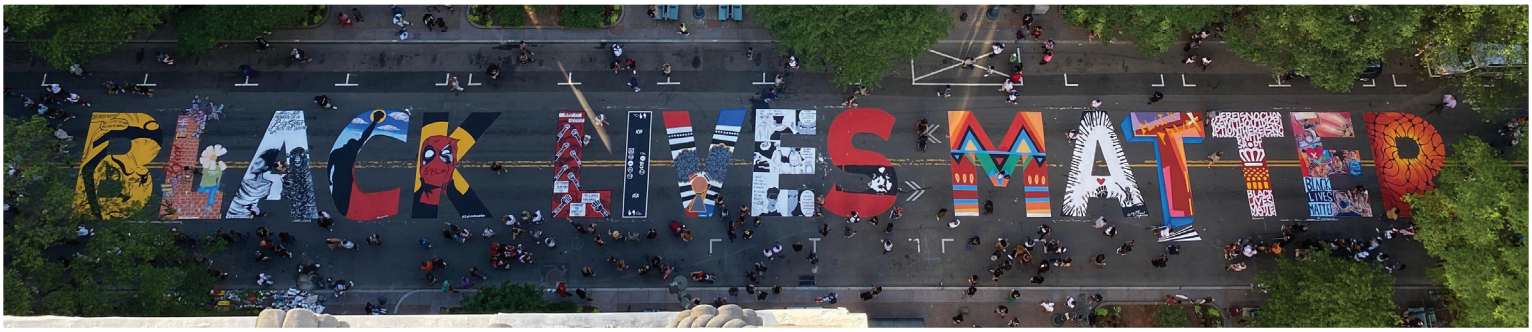
TRYON STREET PILOT PLAZA

PILOT PHASE FINAL REPORT



Photography courtesy of Lee Flythe and drone photo by Charlotte Star Room

OCTOBER 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Black Lives Matter mural was installed on South Tryon Street between 3rd Street and 4th Street in Uptown Charlotte on June 9, 2020. Shortly after the installation, people began visiting the site to view the mural and take photos, frequently walking into the street to do so. In order to support viewing the mural and to make the area safer for visitors, the street was closed to vehicular traffic on June 12, 2020.

The closure of South Tryon Street to support the Black Lives Matter mural presented a unique opportunity to create and evaluate a distinctive public space in Uptown. In order to evaluate the impact of the plaza, a data collection process was established to understand several qualitative and quantitative components of the street closure. The intent of this data collection process is to understand the impacts of the mural installation and street closure related to issues identified by the public as well as other data that will help analyze pedestrian behavior and patterns associated with the extended street closure along Tryon Street.

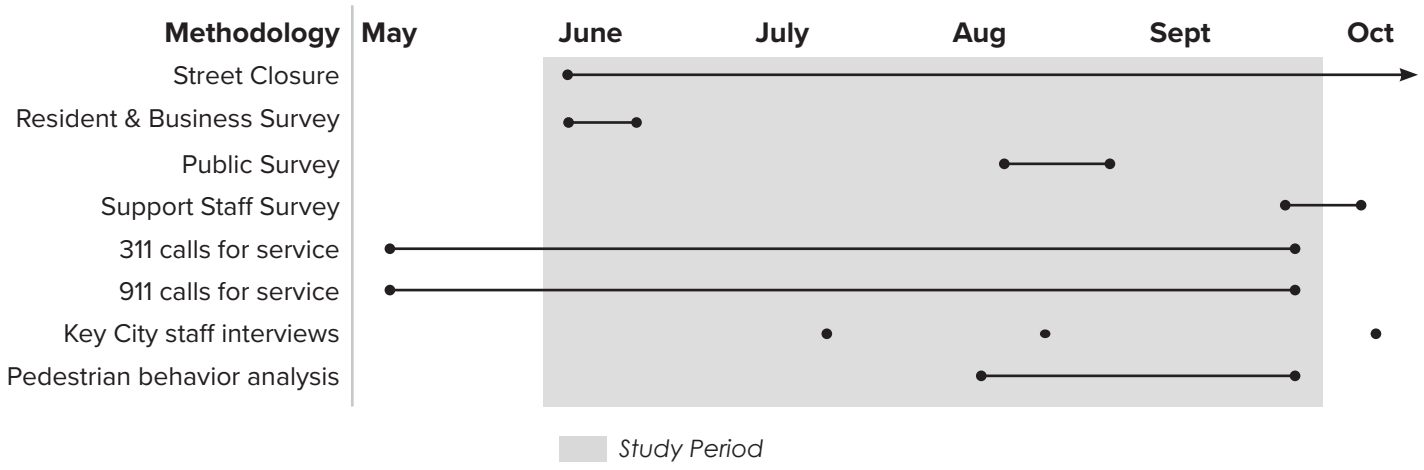
The collection process included both qualitative and quantitative measures to better understand the impact of the block closure, new interventions, programming, and other changes to the Pilot Plaza on city services over time:

- Resident & Business Survey
- Public Survey
- 311 calls for service
- 911 calls for service
- Pedestrian behavior review and analysis
- Interviews with key City staff
- Support Staff Survey
- Photos, videos, etc.

PROJECT GOALS

1. **Create a safe, positive, and welcoming experience for all visitors, residents and businesses.**
2. **Address safety, sanitation, and functionality of the plaza.**
3. **Prioritize programing and interventions that promote public safety and social distancing in an inclusive environment.**
4. **Identify opportunities to support the functions and viability of the businesses located on the plaza block.**
5. **Test innovative best practices for public space design, management, and programming.**
6. **Develop a plan to ensure a lasting impact of the mural.**

PHASE 1 DATA COLLECTION TIMELINE



While the Black Lives Matter mural was an exciting opportunity to test assumptions around public space for the City of Charlotte, the conditions of 2020 did not allow for realistic learnings. The management of public space is complex and industry best practices confirms that programming, enhanced maintenance, and specialized management is imperative to the success of public spaces. Because of Covid-19 lock downs, the inability to program the Black Lives Matter plaza, and its location Uptown where supporting resources are already in place, there were limited learnings to understand public spaces better.

Black Lives Matter Plaza and the partnership with Charlotte Center City Partners (CCCP) did allow the City of Charlotte to test a public private partnership around public space. The majority of active, urban public spaces are successful because of partners, usually as sponsors and placekeepers. CCCP's Ambassadors constantly on site in the plaza provided a sense of security to visitors and eyes on the space to report any issues that arose. Without a Public Space Program at the City of Charlotte to provide these services, relationships with and funding through third parties for the management of urban space is imperative.

Enhanced maintenance in public spaces are key to their success. Because the Black Lives Matter Plaza is located on Tryon Street, specialized solid waste management was already in place. The City of Charlotte has a team that focuses on the Tryon Street mall tending to the public right of way and city-owned property. This team was able to ensures solid waste collection and landscape management was maintained with increased visitors to the site. This demonstrates the importance of enhanced maintenance in public spaces and this solution is needed for other public spaces across the City.

Case studies from across the country demonstrate the value of public spaces adjacent to businesses, retail, and restaurants. An enhanced public realm and public investment attracts customers and supports commercial activity. Unfortunately because of the virus and social distancing requirements, as well as, state health regulations the Black Lives Matter Mural and Pilot Plaza can not accurately determine the value of larger public spaces around Tryon Street. With the ability to program the space in future phases of the project, the City of Charlotte can better demonstrate and test the value of a community space and its positive impact on adjacent businesses.

Understanding this context when reviewing data collection results for the Pilot Plaza will help the CIty of Charlotte understand the value of the resources already in place to support a plaza on Tryon Street, as well as the need for further study so the learnings can more accurately reflect the value of public space.

AS MORE CITIES TAKE THE PLUNGE TO CONVERT STREETS TO PLAZAS, THEY OFTEN FIND THAT THE STREET CONVERSIONS SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES, FOSTER NEIGHBORHOOD INTERACTION, ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, ENCOURAGE NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION, AND REIMAGINE THE POTENTIAL OF CITY STREETS.

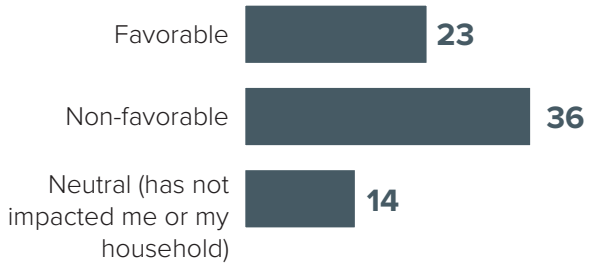
Source: Charlotte Center City Partners

RESIDENT & BUSINESS SURVEY

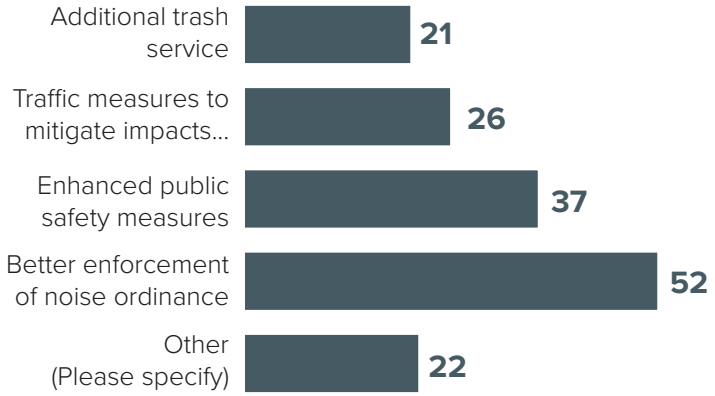
In June 2020, shortly after the installation of the Black Lives Matter Mural, Charlotte Center City Partners conducted a survey of residents and businesses on the 200 block of South Tryon Street to better understand their opinions, thoughts, and concerns. Selected responses shown below are intended to represent the most frequent comments received.

RESIDENT SURVEY

Q1. How would you describe the overall experience in the area since the mural was complete?



Q2. Is there anything we can do to enhance the environment around the mural?



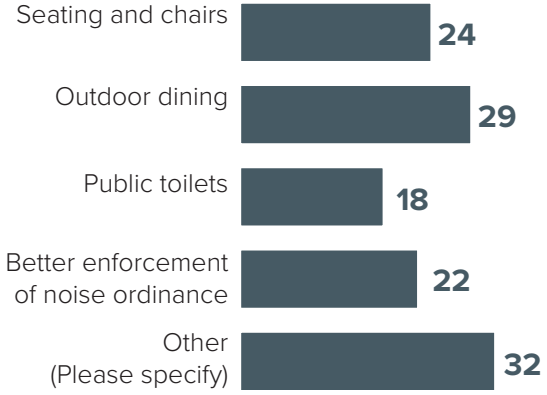
Selected Responses:

- Masks for people to wear so they're not spreading germs
- Use it as a street.
- More formal seating would also help keep people at appropriate distances. Some markers or signage to remind people of the need to stay safe would be helpful.

Q2 Selected Responses (continued):

- ALL of the above! It's a beautiful addition to uptown and I love the idea of it being an area to socialize.
- More authorities monitoring the area
- Return 200 block to it's original condition before the mural.
- Accommodations? No, remove it so that normal traffic patters can resume. ITS A ROAD!
- Remove the homeless and panhandlers from the area. I'm tired of smelling urine
- None - the mural needs to be recreated in another location without residents that would be impacted.
- I support the cause but please move the mural to a street without residential.
- No skateboarding or bicycle tricks allowed around mural. Motorcycles go in there as well.
- SAFETY FOR WALKING TRAFFIC, NO LOITERING
- Let traffic occur during congested times
- Keep the skateboarders and bicycles from yelling up through 11pm in that area
- Take the barriers down and let traffic back on the road. This is ridiculous.
- Potted plants/flowers would be nice. We would like music but with a caveat of noise levels - we live on the second floor
- Additionally safety measures and enforcement of the noise ordinance
- Public bathrooms for morons that feel it's ok to urinate wherever they please.
- None - move it somewhere else
- Please no music or entertainment. The windows in the residences are not sound proof. We get enough noise from the street.
- So far it appears that everything is just fine, there is relatively little to not littering the street is basically kept clean and silent (for the most part) protesters and the curious are doing a respectful job.
- All of the above just make the noise issues worse. There's no need to make this a constant festival atmosphere.
- Close all of Tryon and copy 16th Street in Denver.
- Open the street!

Q3. What types of amenities/accommodations would you like to see in the area to either mitigate any negative impacts or enhance the area for your business?



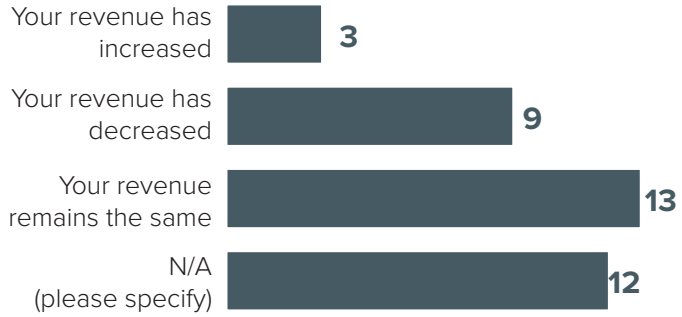
Q4. Please feel free to share any comments or concerns that may have not been captured in the previous questions.

Selected Responses:

- Traffic getting to and from my home is inconvenient, a lot of people gathering in one area and not wearing masks feels unsafe, it's bringing a lot of people and germs at a time that large gatherings are not safe.
- It is the beginning and ending point of many "protests" which means it does not feel safe. Nor are they "peaceful". Bull horns and yelling is absolutely not acceptable. It is no longer a place one can live and we will be leaving as soon as possible. Charlotte is no longer the friendly and welcoming place we have always loved.
- Thank you
- I am glad to see we are acknowledging the social injustice that racism has caused, particularly in this city.
- LOVE THE MURAL. THANK YOU FOR LOVING THE CITY.
- What happened to the artwork on the plywood used to temporary board up the windows? I hope it was kept and will be displayed somewhere.
- I encourage the environment created by the morale. Only issue I have for the city to help with is the excessive noise not necessarily caused by the pedestrians visiting, but the motorbikes parking/stopping/driving around the corners so late (they cause disturbance to my babies sleep especially after hours).
- how about removing the mural or making one that states ALL lives matter?
- The noise and traffic is very disruptive to living at 230 South Tryon Condo building.
- Thank you for the survey. Please understand while there are many residents of S. Tryon who are supportive of the concept of the mural and recognize the need for public displays of support for all members of our community, we strongly feel that the mural should have never been sited on a residential block. Impacted residents need the leadership of the City to work quickly to plan for a new mural in a different non-residential block and to remove the mural in the 200 block of S. Tryon as well as the traffic barricades that are impacting local businesses.
- Whoever is closing streets for construction, utility work, marches, etc needs to remember that Tryon is always closed and most of the nearby parking has been made unavailable. So, you must consider that sometimes we have no way to get home when several areas/streets are all closed at the same time. If more than one entity is closing streets, they should all be working together. We were told to park far away and walk. First, we probably wouldn't have been able to find parking with all the spots now restricted, and Second, our car would have probably been towed if forced to use one of those spots. Residents do still need to be able to come and go by car without undue inconvenience
- This is a beautiful piece of public art that Marion Properties of Charlotte, owner of the ground floor retail spaces at 230 S Tryon, is proud to see in our community! Let's do what we can to preserve and protect this new landmark, as well as make it convenient for as many people as possible to enjoy!!! Kudos to the young people who gave this exciting new gift to the City of Charlotte.
- Overall I love the positivity of the mural. However there is significant more noise at many hours of the day that makes it more tough to work from home, which everyone is doing at this time, and it has increased my dogs stress level due to loud noises that she's not used to.
- It is amazing to see people walking around it's a beautiful way to inspire to help with all this pain ... such a way to recognize black lives matter Thanks
- OURS IS A RESIDENTIAL LOCATION AND AS SUCH PUBLIC SHOULD BE AWARE OF ALL OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD AS WOULD APPLY IN ANY OTHER
- The mural and all of the tourists/participants have been great!! Gets a little wild sometimes, but that's OK Continue to police and remove individuals setting up residence in the bus stops
- Remove the mural; it's served its purpose. Open the roads back up. People will not have a Instagram reason to come to uptown, they should stay away from the area and stop causing trouble and keeping people up all night with fireworks, yelling and allow businesses to feel safer without the extra external visitors to the city. Enforce restrictions on motorcycles and noise overall. Keep the homeless away from the buildings and stop them from urinating and setting fires in the breezeway.
- It was great to see how people from all walks came together making the mural and to see the mural. It made people more aware.

BUSINESS SURVEY

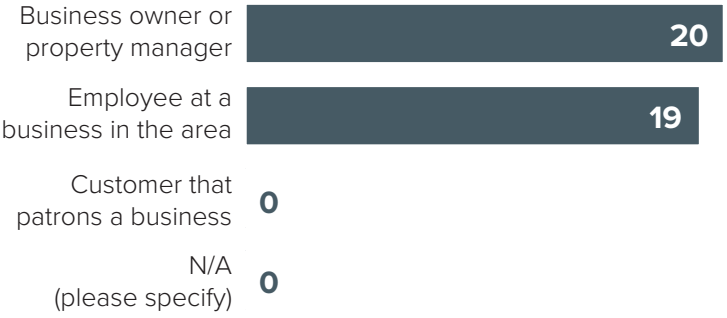
Q1. Since the mural was complete how would describe your business's revenue? (For business owners and managers only)



Selected Responses:

- Our revenue is not based upon foot traffic since we are an office building.
- Law office. We don't get off the street customers and the mural has not impacted our revenue.
- We temporarily closed our espresso cart because of the coronavirus shut down. We actually decided to start it back up again after the Black Lives Matter mural was made because there are more people around our area to see the Mural.

Q2. How would you describe your relationship to the impacted area?



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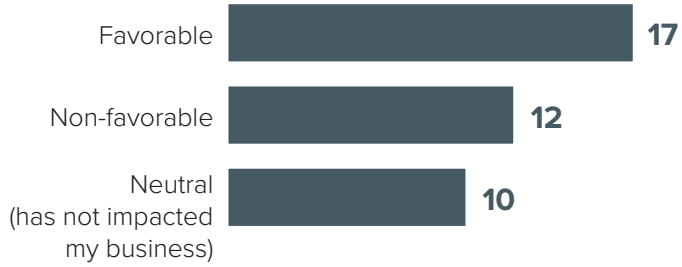
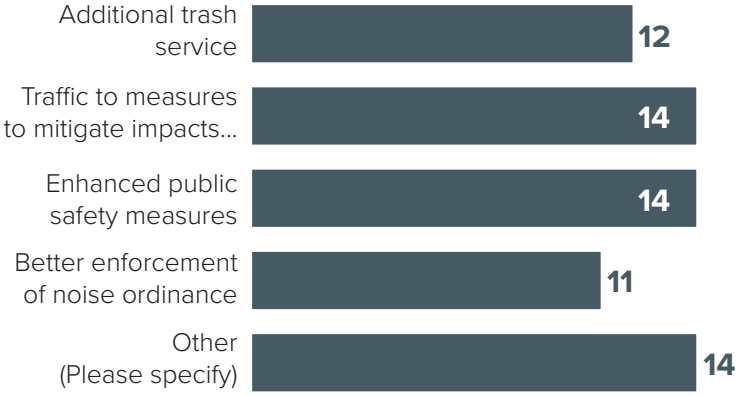
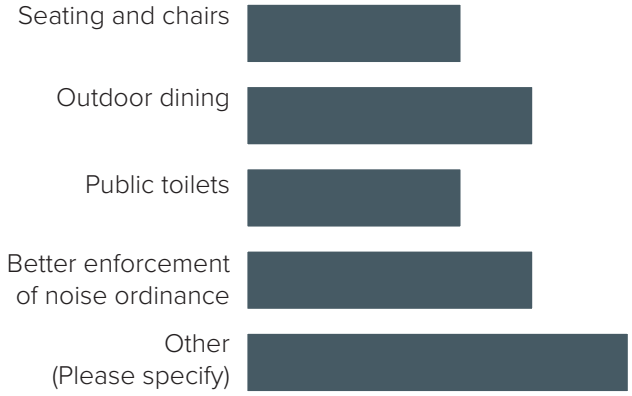


Q4. Is there anything we can do to enhance the environment around the mural?



Q5. What types of amenities/accommodations would you like to see in the area to either mitigate any negative impacts or enhance the area for your business?



Q6. Please feel free to share any comments or concerns that may have not been captured in the previous questions.

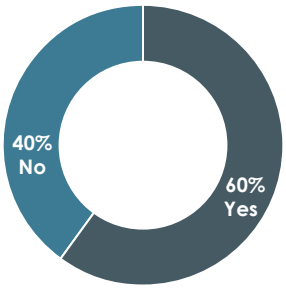
Selected Responses:

- I would enjoy a speakers panel or “meet & greet” event with artists
- There is a general overall belief that there is still racial tension uptown. I think you need to get the news to report correctly and stop negative fear reporting. People are very hesitant about coming uptown for anything these days because the news is inaccurate. It is hurting businesses uptown.
- I’m actually surprised that the city decided to approve this on the main north/south road through the city. I’m all for doing something like this but feel it should have been approved for another location. Once the COVID-19 is behind us and uptown businesses welcome their employees back this will be a traffic nightmare having South Tryon closed at this location.
- I love the mural and it would be a shame if it no longer existed.
- Love the mural! Don’t mind the street being closed! The road closure has been wonderful -- easy to walk across the street and the road noise has been non-existent from my office now. Keep it closed!
- Our tenants just have noticed and are moving out after six years
- I feel Tryon Street between Stonewall and 5th should be permanently turned into a pedestrian zone. It would be great to have street art, shops and outdoor dining in this area. Car traffic can use College and Church St. It would greatly enhance the attractiveness of Uptown Charlotte.
- We love the way this mural and the artwork changed the tone and mood in uptown. We fully support this project, it’s message, and hope the City of Charlotte and Charlotte Center City Partners continue to explore and execute on similar projects in the future.
- Delivery people cannot get to us. Customers can not pull in front of the store anymore. Loud noises outside at all hours of the day. Random people coming in asking if we have bathrooms for them. Random people coming into store asking to take photos from our windows.
- Our business does 90% of revenue on Saturdays. The activities and noises coming from the street has almost stopped all business for us due to the constant activity on the streets.
- My tenants of over five years have given me notice they are moving out due to this mural and the lack of city support to remove it. Since the mural was done there has been little CMPD presence. People flood the street and do what they want with no consideration to the local residents/business.
- Since this started I personally have made less money. This isn’t our normal clientele and our regulars won’t come here until this is over.
- My concern is for the safety of our customers and our staff. Before the city closed the street we rarely had problems. Now it is literally every weekend. Sunday I unfortunately feared for the safety of my staff and customers and needed police assistance. But by the time he got there the man had dispersed. This was not the first time dealing with unruly people in the crowd.
- This has negatively impacted us. Our normal clientele will not come out until the streets are reopened and things go back to normal. The people that come out are extremely disrespectful to myself and my employees in both the ways they speak and act. People disregard the no public restrooms sign as well as come in just to get water. If we say no to either we get yelled at. It has overall negatively impacted all of our relationships with work.
- I think in general the Miral is very positive and everyone seems to enjoy it. I think it was a great idea and I love to see the city embracing good ideas.
- We need to be able to ensure that we still have access to bring in equipment (such as a lift) to do repairs and maint. to the front of our building as warranted.

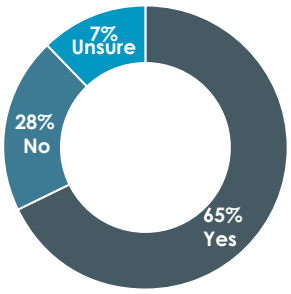
ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

This survey was developed to better understand the general public's opinion about the pilot plaza. The survey was open from August 12—30, and it was promoted via social media, including the City of Charlotte's and Planning Design & Development Department's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Nextdoor accounts. In total, 2,443 people participated in the survey, with 6,777 comments on the open ended questions.

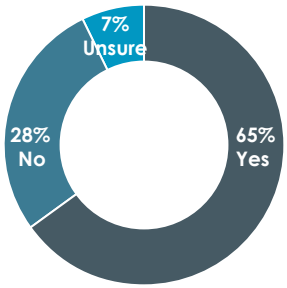
Q1. The City of Charlotte is testing a pedestrian plaza on South Tryon Street between Third and Fourth Streets. Have you been to visit this location since the installation of the on-street mural?



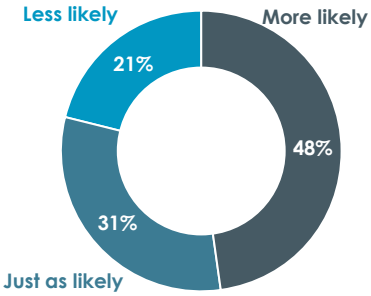
Q2. Does public art make you feel more or less welcome uptown?



Q3. Do you think using Tryon Street in Uptown as public space for pedestrians is important for Charlotte?

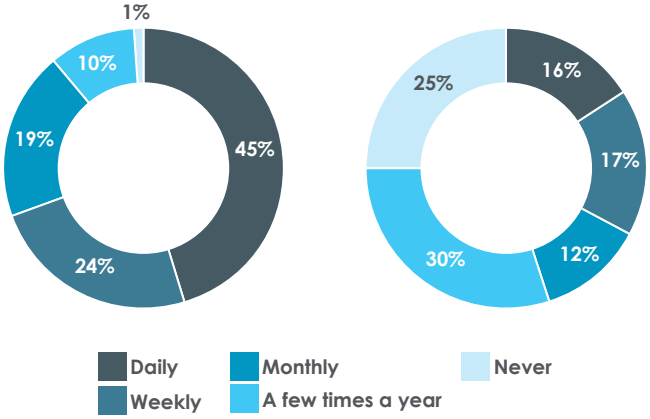


Q5. Does the pilot pedestrian plaza make you more or less likely to regularly visit Uptown?



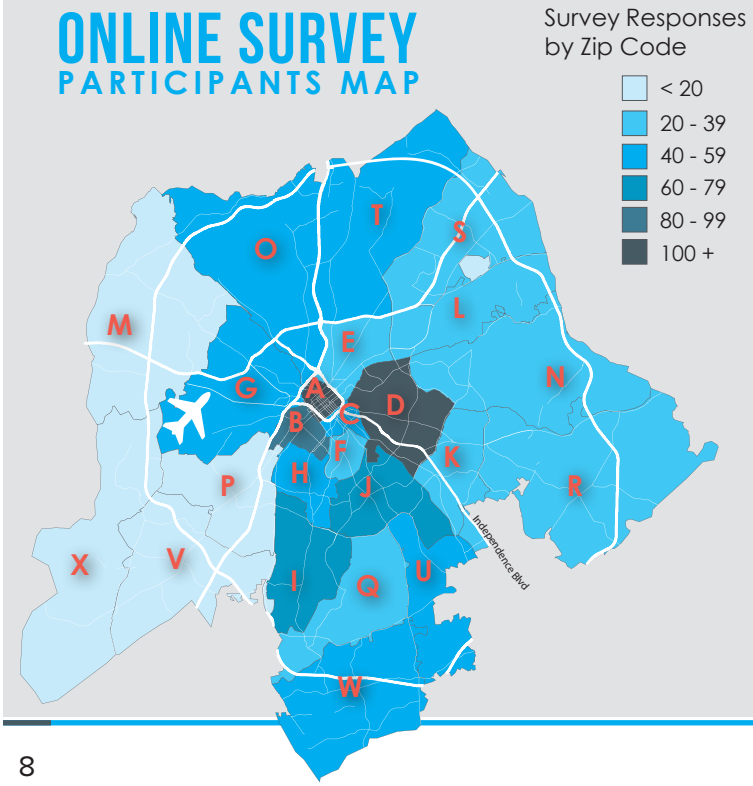
Q6. Prior to the State of North Carolina Stay at Home Order (March 2020), how often did you go into Uptown?

Q7. Since to the State of North Carolina Stay at Home Order (March 2020), how often did you go into Uptown?



Q4. What is your ZIP Code?

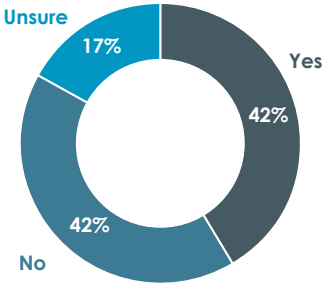
ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS MAP



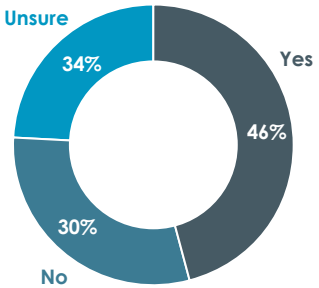
	ZIP	Total	%
A	28202	201	15%
B	28203	91	7%
C	28204	41	3%
D	28205	160	12%
E	28206	33	2%
F	28207	21	2%
G	28208	50	4%
H	28209	59	4%
I	28210	70	5%
J	28211	66	5%
K	28212	24	2%
L	28213	21	2%

	ZIP	Total	%
M	28214	16	1%
N	28215	21	2%
O	28216	46	3%
P	28217	15	1%
Q	28226	34	3%
R	28227	23	2%
S	28262	22	2%
T	28269	54	4%
U	28270	44	3%
V	28273	18	1%
W	28277	52	4%
X	28278	19	1%
	Other	145	9%
	Grand Total	**1,347**	

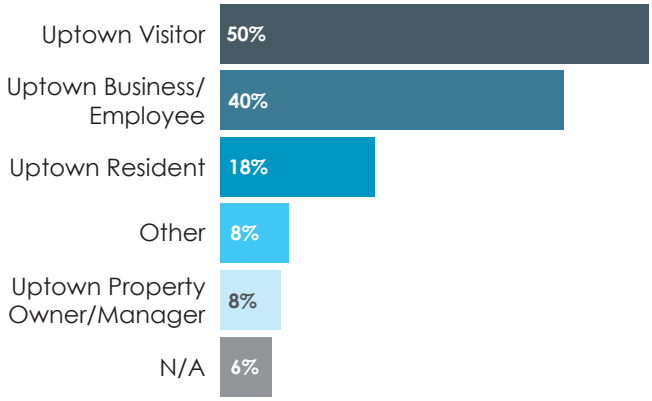
Q8. Do you plan to visit the Tryon Street mural and pedestrian plaza that the city is testing?



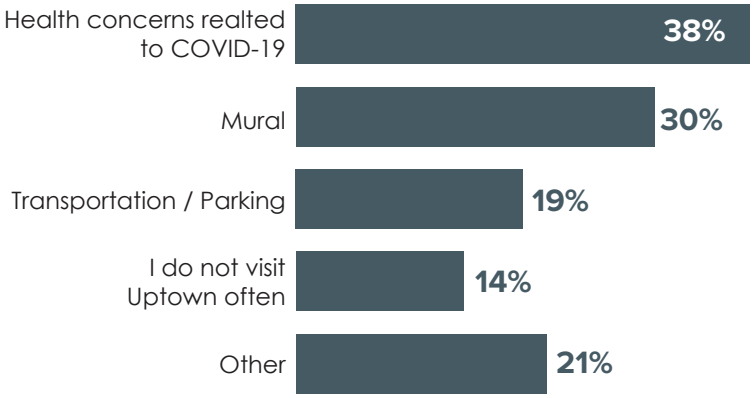
Q8a. If you answered "Yes" to [Q8], will you visit any Uptown businesses while there?



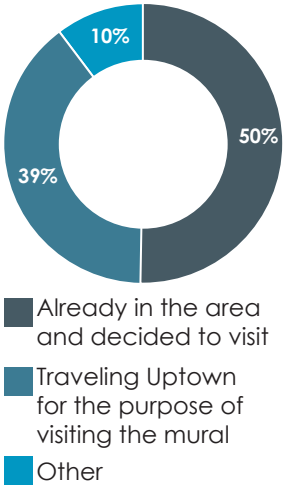
Q9. Do you identify with any of the following?



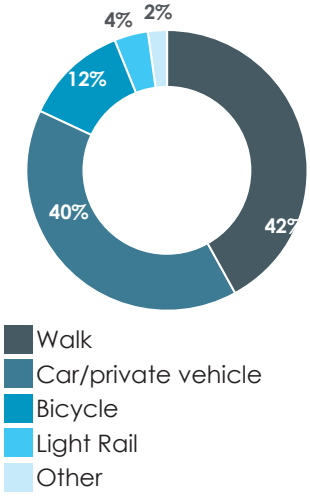
Q8b. If you answered "No" to the [Q8], why? (select multiple)



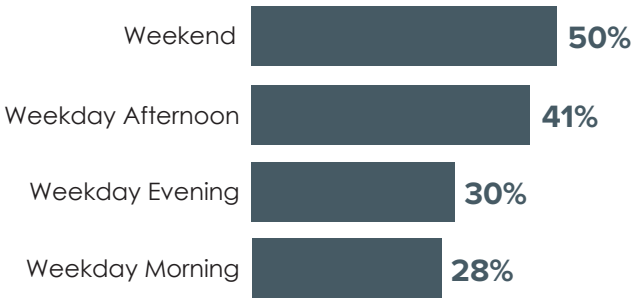
Q9. What was your main reason for visiting the Tryon Street pedestrian plaza?



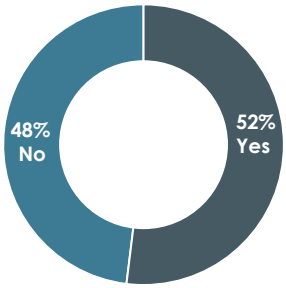
Q10. While traveling to the Tryon Street pedestrian plaza, which was your primary mode of transportation?



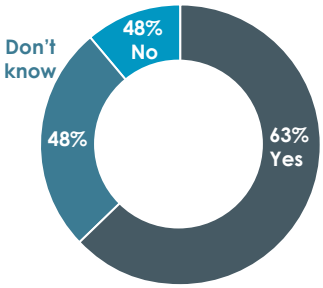
Q11. What time (or times) did you come to the Tryon Street pedestrian plaza? (select multiple)



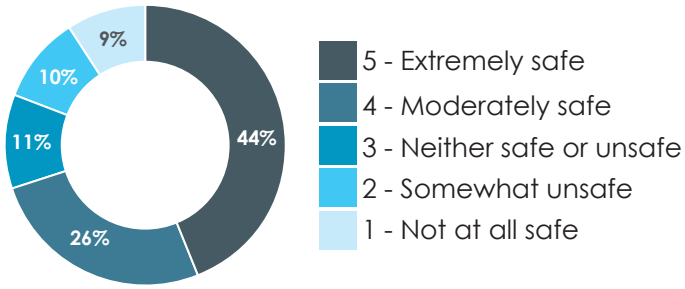
Q12. Did you visit any businesses when you were uptown?



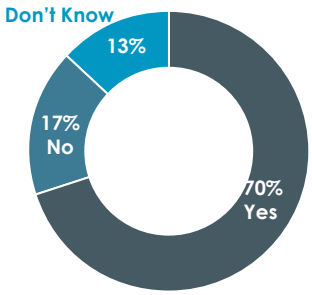
Q13. If more Uptown businesses – businesses that were or are currently closed because of COVID-19 – had been open during your visit to the pedestrian plaza, would you have visited those businesses?



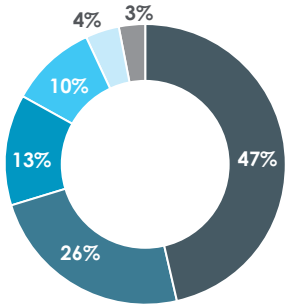
Q14. On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "extremely safe" and 1 being "not at all safe," how safe fo you feel on South Tryon Street since the installation of the mural and the pedestrian plaza?



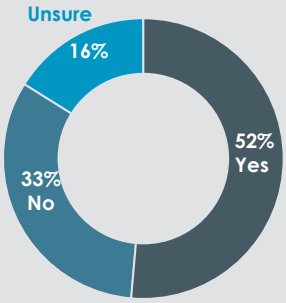
Q15. Do you plan to visit the Tryon Street pedestrian plaza again?



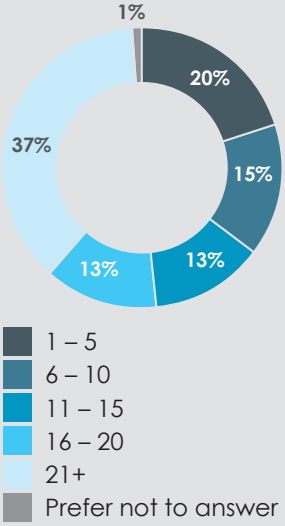
Q16. How often would you like to see a portion of Tryon Street closed to traffic to create a pedestrian plaza?



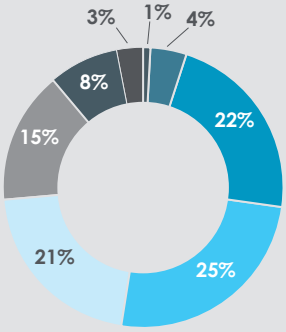
Q17. Would you like to see additional blocks of Tryon Street considered for pedestrian plazas?



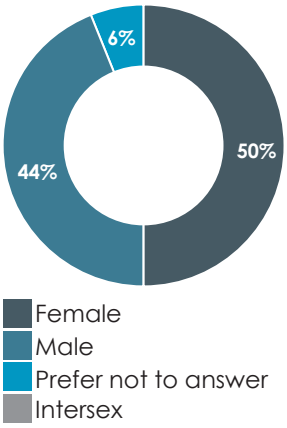
Q18. How many years have you lived in Charlotte?



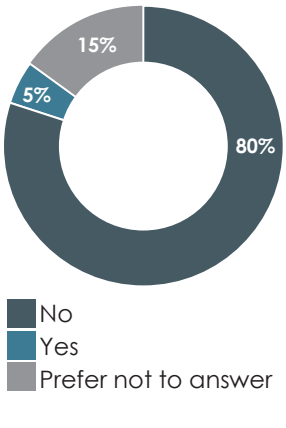
Q19. What is your age?



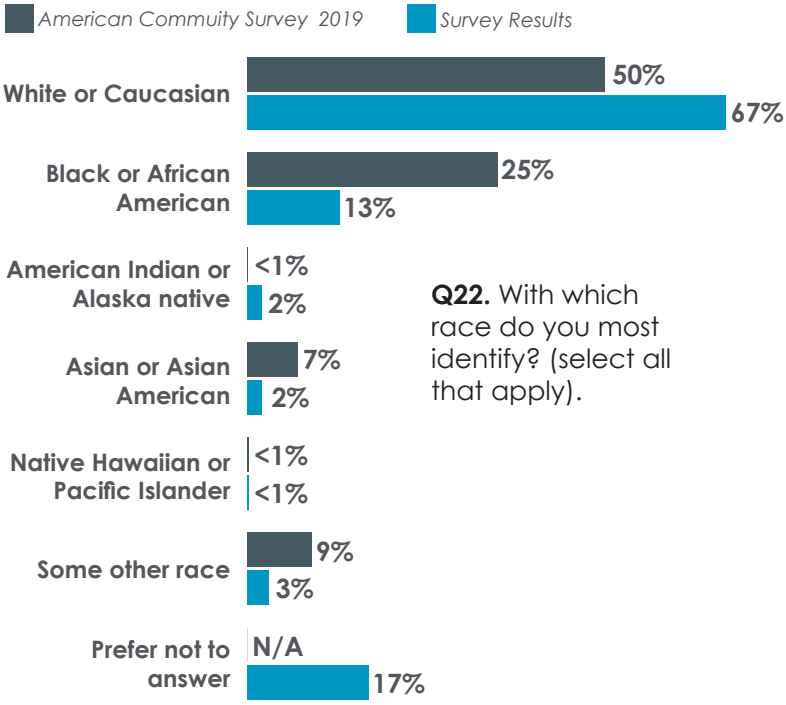
Q20. What is your sex?



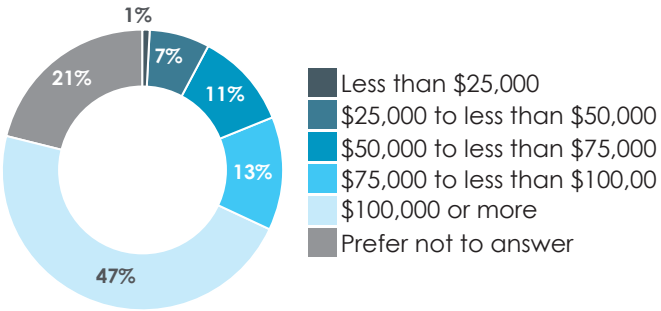
Q21. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin or descent?



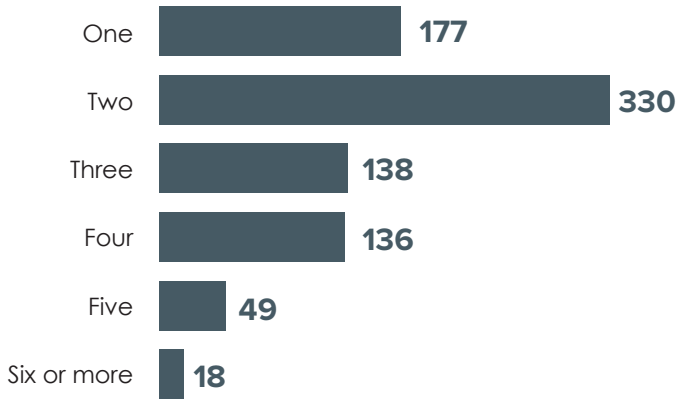
Q22. With which race do you most identify? (select all that apply).



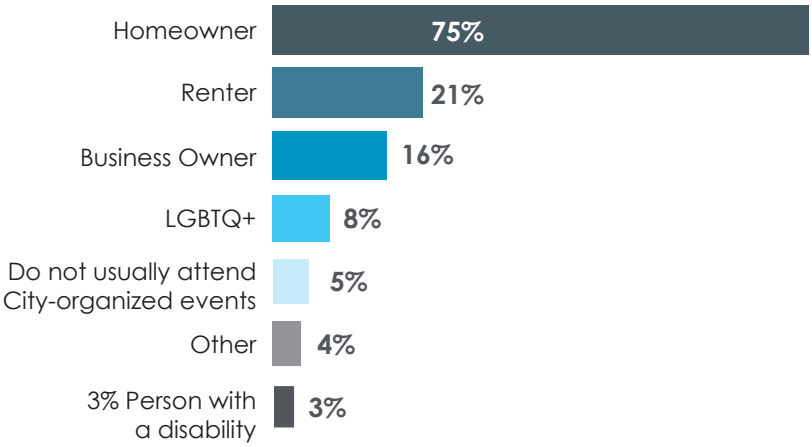
Q23. Last year (2019) what was your total family income from all source, before taxes?



Q24. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?



Q25. In addition to what you have responded to above, do you identify as any of the following? (select all that apply)



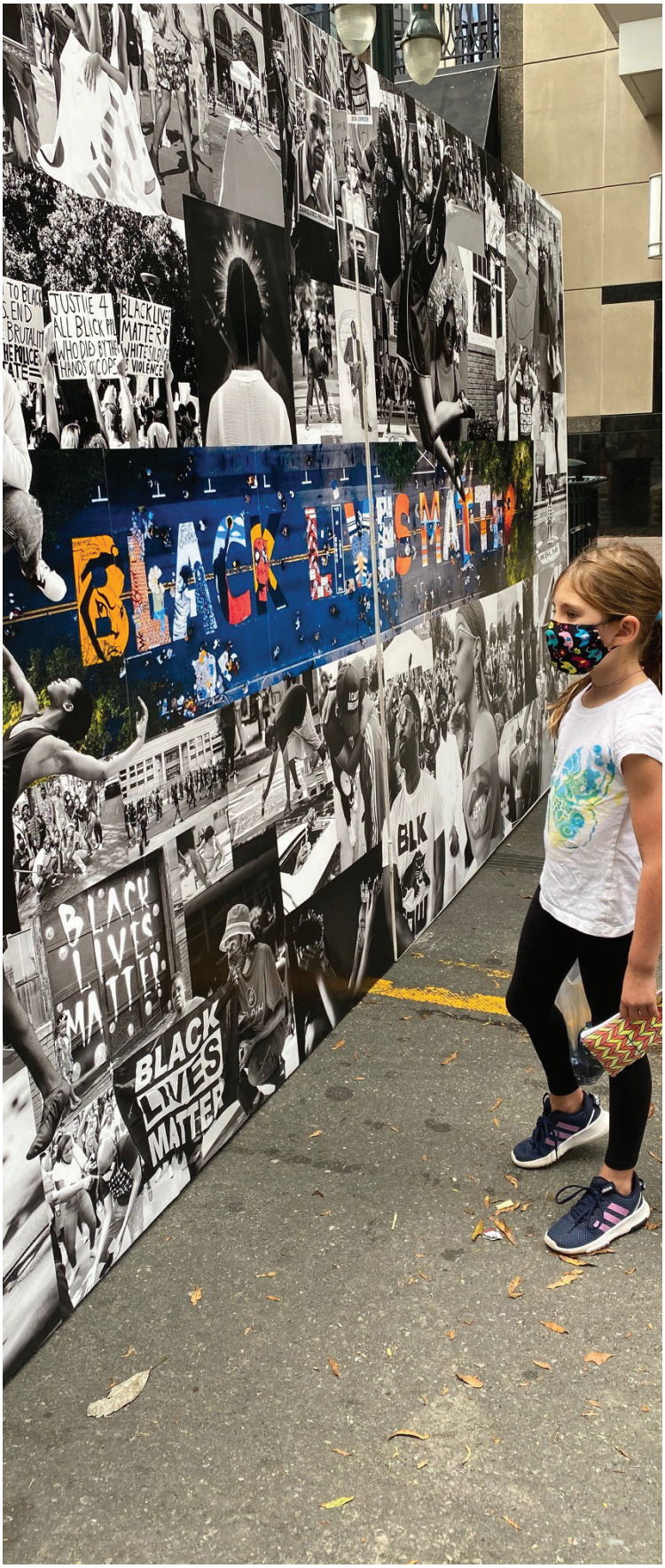
Data by Group: The below is the survey data stratified by group. This information is critical in future efforts.

	% OF SURVEY RESPONSES	% WHO VISITED MURAL	% WHO THINK USING TRYON STREET IN UPTOWN AS PUBLIC SPACE FOR PEDESTRIANS IS IMPORTANT FOR CHARLOTTE (YES)	% WHO LIKE TO SEE ADDITIONAL BLOCKS OF TRYON STREET IN UPTOWN CONSIDERED FOR PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS (YES)
RESIDENTS	18%	84%	57%	46%
BUSINESS/EMPLOYEES	40%	68%	60%	48%
VISITORS	50%	58%	76%	55%
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT/ OWNER	8%	75%	38%	38%
OTHER	8%	71%	90%	58%

KEY TAKEAWAYS

PERSPECTIVES

- Residents were the most likely to have visited the mural, but not as sure of additional blocks of Tryon Street closed for this type of use permanently.
- Property owners/managers, while making up a small percentage of surveys, were less in favor of additional blocks of Tryon Street closure. This data point elevates the importance of engagement with this group in future work.
- Visitors were more likely to be in favor of a more walkable Tryon Street than employees, residents, and owners.
- Those groups (residents and property owners) with the highest probability of having visited the mural also have the lowest percentages in regards to future projects.
- A good portion of respondents marked unsure for questions that related to block closures and plazas/public space on Tryon Street. As part of a future study, this issue will be of specific focus.



IMPACTS TO CITY SERVICES

311

In order to measure the impact to City services, calls to services o the 200 block of South Tryon Street were analyzed for the May to September time period in both 2019 and 2020. These time periods allow for a comparison of 2020 prior to the street closure and to 2019, prior to COVID-19 pandemic closings.

In Charlotte, 311 is the primary way residents can contact the City for questions or requests for service. No significant call patterns were identified from these data.

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2019	0	0	2	2	1
2020	0	1	2	2	1

CMPD

People are able to contact 911 for a variety of purposes. The data represents the total number of calls for service logged by 911 operators, and are not indicative of specific types of emergencies or crimes. For the May through September time frame, in 2019 the most frequent call for service was for “larceny from vehicle” while in 2020 it was for “disturbance.”

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2019	17	21	21	27	29
2020	6	25	34	40	37

CDOT

- Parking spaces on the 200 block of South Tryon Street were closed for the duration of the pilot study.
- Delivery trucks were allowed space at the end of each block to unload.
- Traffic volumes in Uptown are significantly lower than normal due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While traffic impacts due to the block closure are minimal today, additional data collection and analysis should be completed to understand the impacts during a pre-Covid peak traffic condition.

SOLID WASTE SERVICES

- Minimal impacts to routine trash pickup service.
- No significant impacts to Tryon Street Mall services

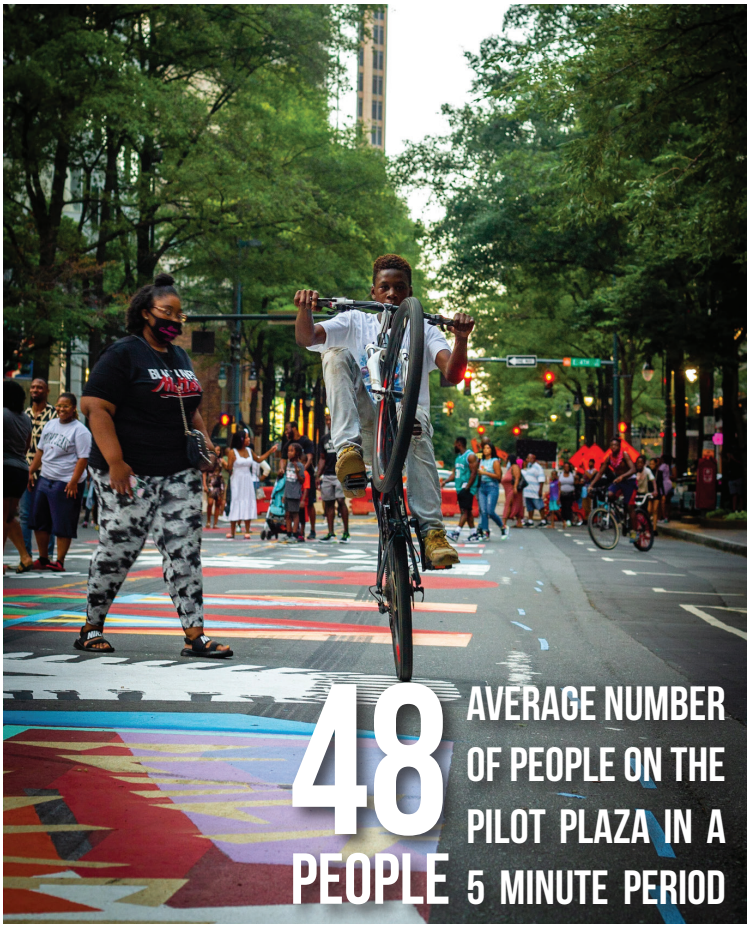
PEDESTRIAN BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

A critical component of the pilot project is to study how pedestrians behave while on the site. Where do they prefer to walk, sit, run, take photos, etc.? Do they linger in certain areas? How does weather impact the site?

The site was observed for 5-minute periods at 2:00pm, 4:00pm, 6:00pm, and 8:00pm each day from August 6 to September 30, 2020. This study logged 171 total observation periods tracking weather, temperature, number of unique pedestrians, as well as general movement paths through the site and other noteworthy behavior. A CDOT traffic camera at 4th & Tryon was used to observe pedestrian behavior for the duration of the closure.

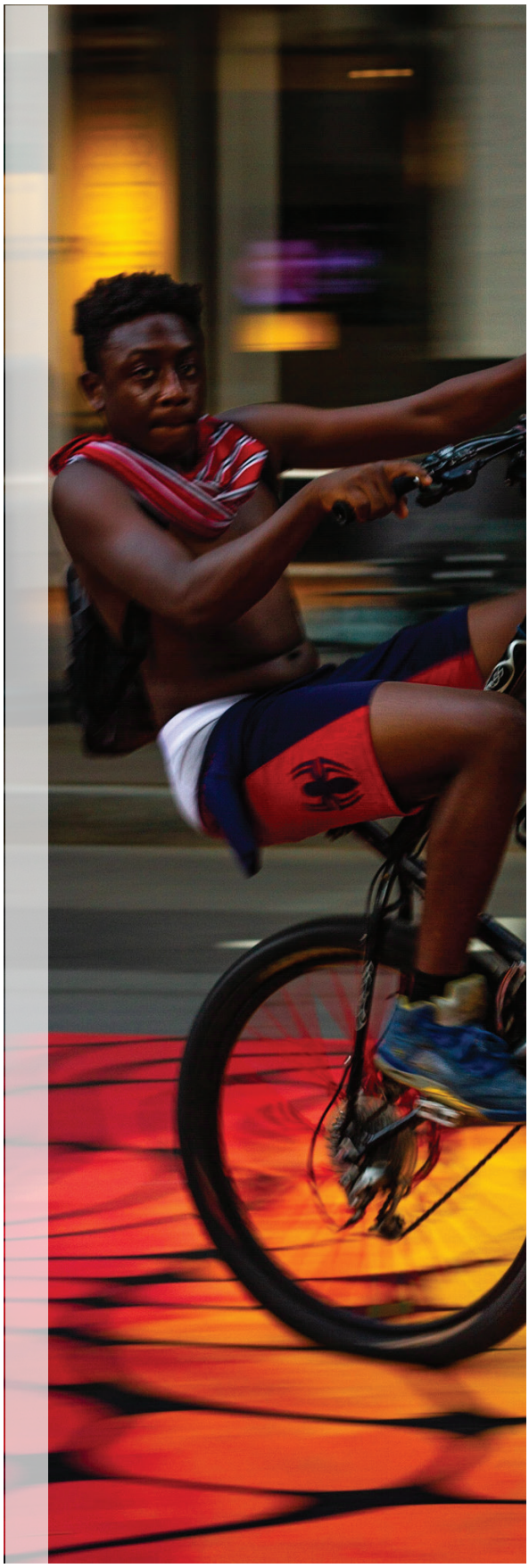
Key Observations

- The busiest periods were Friday evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays, averaging between 60 and 100 people in the 5 minute observation window.
- At least five periods had more people than could be counted, with over 150+ people observed one Saturday evening.
- The lowest pedestrian traffic was observed at 2:00 and 4:00 pm on weekdays.
- 151 observation periods (89%) were either sunny, partly cloudy, or cloudy.
- People lingering for extended periods of time appeared to be with friends or family.
- Pedestrians traveling alone tended to walk on the sidewalks or just use the road space as a shortcut rather than lingering in the pilot plaza.
- People on bicycles and scooters took advantage of the open street to get off of the sidewalks.
- A large group of kids on bikes frequently rode through the site on weekend nights and some weekdays earlier in the observation period when it was warmer.
- Street art and performers drew a wide variety of spectators.



ACTIVITY & WEATHER

	Total Observation Periods	Percent of Observation Periods	Average # of Pedestrians
Cloudy	25	15%	43.5
Cloudy/Dark	10	6%	68.9
Partly Cloudy	69	40%	51.6
Rain	6	4%	12.6
Sunny	58	24%	46.3
No Data	3	2%	n/a
	171	**100%**	



OBSERVATIONS BY DAY OF WEEK

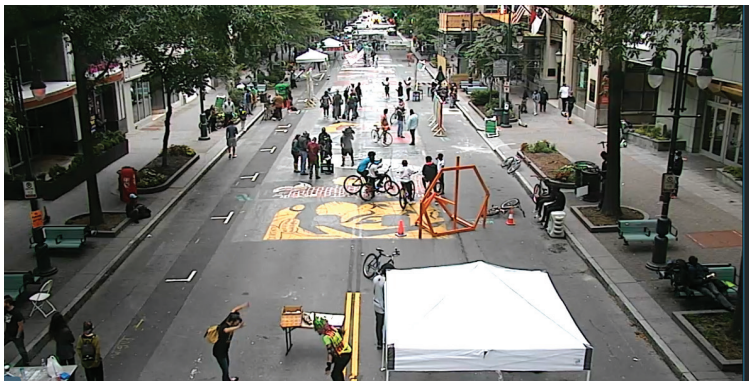
	Obser-vations	Total Peds	Avg. Peds	High	Low
Mon	**20**	**706**	**35.3**	**93**	**4**
2:00-2:05 pm	5	176	35.2	43	23
4:00-4:05 pm	5	145	29.0	38	10
6:00-6:05 pm	5	165	33.0	48	4
8:00-8:05 pm	5	220	44.0	93	23
Tue	**20**	**752**	**39.6**	**69**	**18**
2:00-2:05 pm	5	150	37.5	51	29
4:00-4:05 pm	5	140	28.0	38	18
6:00-6:05 pm	5	205	41.0	48	33
8:00-8:05 pm	5	257	51.4	69	27
Wed	**19**	**618**	**34.3**	**74**	**8**
2:00-2:05 pm	4	168	42.0	51	35
4:00-4:05 pm	5	105	26.3	36	8
6:00-6:05 pm	5	189	37.8	74	17
8:00-8:05 pm	5	156	31.2	46	13
Thu	**16**	**580**	**36.3**	**57**	**21**
2:00-2:05 pm	4	141	35.3	47	30
4:00-4:05 pm	4	121	30.3	33	28
6:00-6:05 pm	4	132	33.0	42	21
8:00-8:05 pm	4	186	46.5	57	34
Fri	**32**	**1,299**	**41.9**	**92**	**15**
2:00-2:05 pm	8	231	33.0	44	22
4:00-4:05 pm	8	295	36.9	48	15
6:00-6:05 pm	8	284	35.5	46	28
8:00-8:05 pm	8	489	61.1	92	27
Sat	**32**	**1,716**	**74.6**	**150**	**8**
2:00-2:05 pm	8	430	61.4	85	8
4:00-4:05 pm	8	347	57.8	84	26
6:00-6:05 pm	8	428	85.6	111	65
8:00-8:05 pm	8	511	102.2	150	59
Sun	**32**	**1,940**	**62.6**	**107**	**16**
2:00-2:05 pm	8	549	68.6	107	41
4:00-4:05 pm	8	559	69.9	96	52
6:00-6:05 pm	8	457	65.3	83	41
8:00-8:05 pm	8	375	46.9	95	16
	171	**7,611**	**48.2**	**150**	**4**

WORKSHEET OBSERVATIONS (WITH SAMPLE DATA)

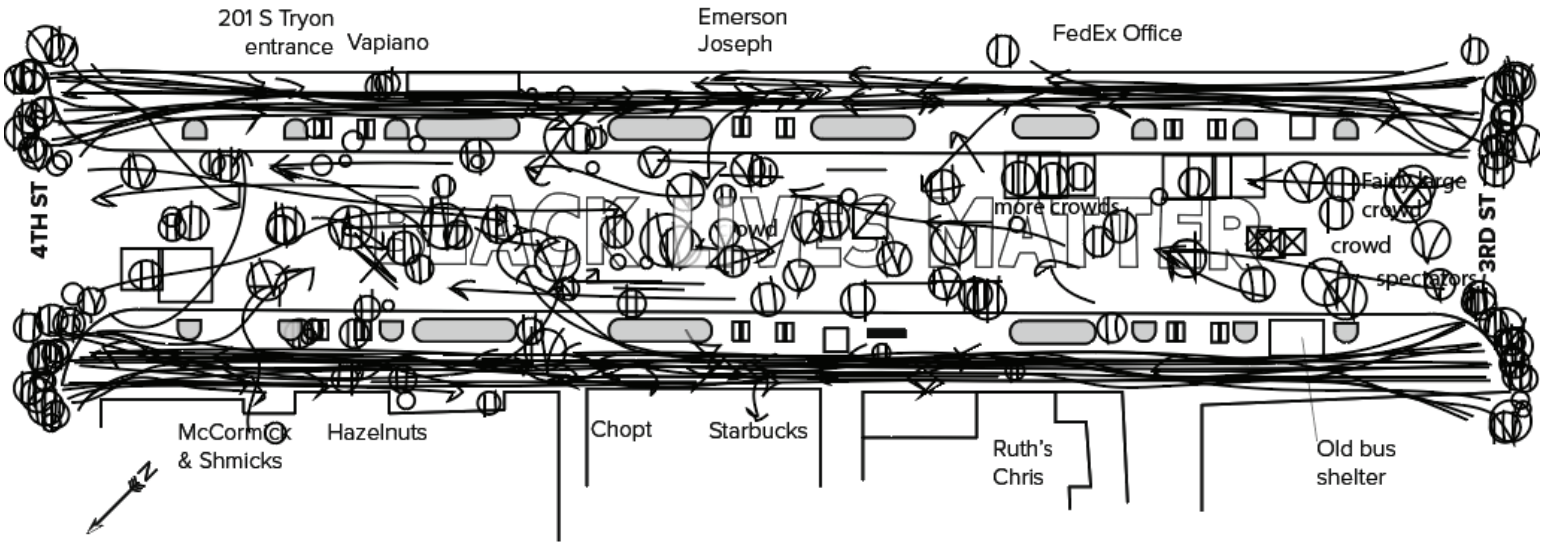
Traffic camera observations were used to log pedestrian activity using a worksheet show in the Appendix of this report. The perspective from this camera provided an opportunity to collect data regardless of weather, and removed the need to be on site for each individual observation period. In total, the 171 observation periods provided a substantial and consistent set of data from which spatial patterns were collected.

The data shown below illustrate the level of detail available for each day. Screenshots from traffic camera footage were captured, and movement and activity data is compiled to illustrate spatial patterns. Large crowds of people can be seen on the site, gathering in groups, talking and taking photos. Individual people and bicyclists can be see all across the site, and traveling along the sidewalks:

- Their spatial patterns are represented below, with the data from each of the four observation periods on September 26th combined.
- Circles indicate groups observed within each 5-minute period, with Roman numerals indicating number of people in each group.
- Arrows represent motion of individuals and groups within the 5-minute period, beginning at the start of movement and ending where they stop, or where period ended.



Screenshots from 4th & Tryon Traffic Camera
Courtesy: Charlotte Department of Transportation

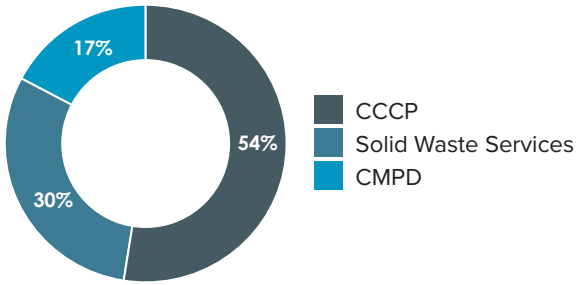


Combined pedestrian study worksheet observations (2:00-2:05pm, 4:00-4:05pm, 6:00-6:05pm, and 8:00-8:05pm, for September 26, 2020.

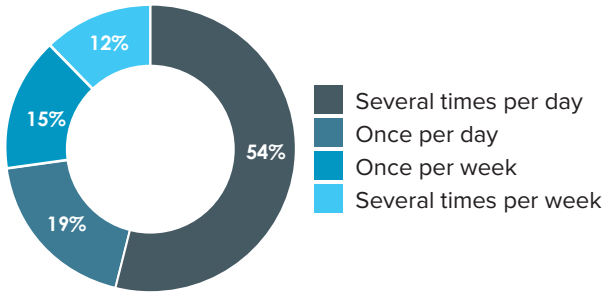
SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

Often behind the scenes, there are several groups of workers who play a critical role in make the plaza safe and attractive. CMPD officers, Tryon Street Mall workers in the City's Solid Waste Services Department, and Ambassadors who work for Charlotte Center City Parters (CCCP) each interact with the site and its visitors every day. The following survey results illustrate their dedication and commitment to making Uptown a special place for everyone. In total there were 32 participants in this survey.

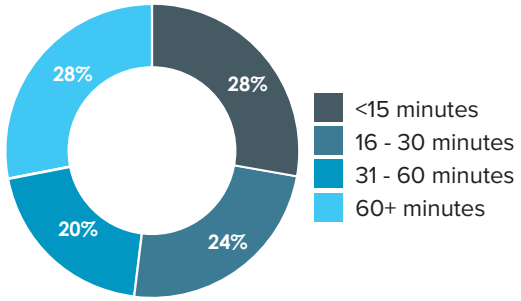
Q1. Who is your employer or which organization do you represent?



Q2. How often did you visit the site?



Q3. How long were you typically on site?



Q4. Please describe your role and why you visited the site. (Selected responses)

- My goal I felt was to engage the people who came to view to share my experience and thoughts on the beautiful mural which I understand and take pictures for families and just be a bright face to the public.
- It's a part of my job to patrol the site
- Making downtown a better place to come to
- I supervise a crew from solid waste that litter picks trash and keeps the garbage cans emptied around the site daily
- I worked as a uniformed police Officer at this site for approx 4, 4 hour shifts during normal business hours during the month of August.
- I am there are the request of the business owners and the citizens who live at the apartments which have been blocked off by the mural. The citizens and business owners have stated there is an increase in aggressive panhandling and a decrease in business. Citizens who live in the area have stated there has been an increase in aggressive panhandling and destruction of property. I am there to interact with the business owners and employees, interact with the citizens who are visiting the mural, and ensure the safety of everyone in the area.

Q5. What went well related to your job? (Selected responses)

- The Charlotte community came together in celebration and to help spread awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement; kids families, visitors, too.
- Everything does amazing because the people really appreciate us for all the help we provide the people of uptown.
- Not much just engaging with the community.
- Being able to maintain such a nice landmark.
- When inside the work site there are little to no problems keeping the cans and litter maintained
- Visitors to the site really enjoyed taking photos and being able to spend time at the site without having to worry about vehicular traffic.
- I loved interacting with numerous individuals at the mural. I love to talk to them regarding their feelings about certain social issues that are going on and enlighten them about our job.

Q5. What resources (staff, time, supplies, etc.) would enable you to do your job better / more efficiently / more successfully as it relates to this site? (Selected responses)

- All staff members at one time making positive connections with the community.
- When there are protests or large gatherings at the plaza we need more law enforcement present.
- Due to the changing events on a daily basis in the media, having (2) officers working each shift for officer safety is recommended. Limiting the access to the site with the Jersey barricades helped from how they were placed in the beginning.

Q6. What were your most common interactions with visitors to the site? (Selected responses)

- Positive and informational. People had questions regarding the mural, although many people and families had photographs taken to remember this moment.
- Taking pictures with the community and talking history with people
- They wanted pictures taken and just conversation really because everyone has something important to say.
- Taking photos for visitors.
- Talk with people.
- Helping visitors take photos.
- The visitors mention how beautiful and well kept the area is.
- The visitors are great. they usually ask if we can use theor phones and take pictures of them with the paintings and we are happy to do so.
- A lot of visitors asking questions about the site and how long its going to be there.
- I would often take photo for families and groups and speak about current events related to Charlotte.
- Open dialogue about the on going situation between officers and the citizens of Charlotte and the interactions of where visitors are from and the officers in their area.
- Occasional friendly interactions with the "wheelie boys" and other visiting civilians whom had questions about the mural.

Q7. Describe one (or more) interaction with visitors to the site that was noteworthy. (Selected responses)

- Talked with a family who drove an hour to visit the mural when they saw the mural and were almost brought to tears.
- Well there was a time where I was talking to the artist and he was just telling me the true meaning behind his mural and to him is was so much more.
- An artist spoke to me about how I feel about being a black man in America.
- A young lady taking graduation pictures in front of the BLM mural
- Entire families being proud, feeling as if they have something in uptown that they can relate to that's theirs.
- A older couple gazing and crying
- Theres been so many.....a lot of older African Americans who never imagined something like this being painted or even allowed … one lady said its sad thinking that it is even needed why does the world need such a reminder for something that shouldn't even be a problem anymore.. but its still a very special site and she said she was blessed to be able to see it in her lifetime.
- I along with another officer were talking to a group of children ranging from 3 to about 15. We were discussing their feelings about police and their personal interactions with them. The kids then asked us if they could race us to see who was faster. It was a great community engagement which may or may not have changed their prospective on officers.

ENTIRE FAMILIES BEING PROUD, FEELING AS IF THEY HAVE SOMETHING IN UPTOWN THAT THEY CAN RELATE TO THAT'S THEIRS.

LESSONS LEARNED

PROGRAMMING

When the City of Charlotte invests in public space it can be millions of dollars of investment. In order to leverage that investment, working with vendors, organizations, etc. is imperative to create an active and healthy public realm. When a space is unused it can become an unloved or unsafe place, which not only wastes investment but is more detrimental to community. Programming is also a tool that can celebrate history and culture of neighborhoods.

MAINTENANCE

Successful public spaces are complex and have multiple elements often times including moveable furniture, shade structures, water features, and enhanced landscaping. These require a higher level of maintenance and must be tended to on a daily basis. This requires additional funding and maintenance staff. An under-maintained public space is more detrimental to its surroundings than it not existing at all.

MANAGEMENT

Urban plazas, pocket parks, squares, courtyards, and other urban public spaces require a complex management system. The City of Charlotte needs staff with public space expertise to identify and work with non-profit and public sector partners, secure sponsorship, and co-create governance with community leaders. This is a necessary step as we create more urban public spaces.

NEXT STEPS

The Black Lives Matter Plaza and the closing of S. Tryon Street has advanced the City of Charlotte's commitment to creating active, safe, and sustainable public spaces. This project has revealed clear next steps for public spaces and the resources needed to support them.

Black Lives Matter Plaza

- Open up S. Tryon to car traffic. If events are to happen there in the future by outside organizations an application for an event permit will be required.
- Allow mural to fade over time and incorporate opportunities with artists into future projects
- Further study and engagement around improving the quality of the pedestrian experience on Tryon Street, which will inform the 2040 Charlotte Center City Vision Plan
- Form a steering committee in the short term to write the scope of a future public space study for Tryon Street. Launch project after the adoption of the 2040 Charlotte Center City Vision Plan

City of Charlotte Public Space + Arts Support

- Create a new permitting process for the programming of plazas by the City of Charlotte or non-profit groups committed to programming city-owned public space.
- Further study of pilot plazas in Uptown, specifically ones that are welcoming to all
- Continue building a program to support the programming, maintenance, and funding of public spaces city-wide
- Provide new opportunities for activist art in Uptown, including Polk Park and Levine Avenue of the Arts

Meaningful Dialogue + Purpose

- Create and fund public spaces/places in Uptown and in surrounding neighborhoods that allow for the creative community to support meaningful impact and conversation around relevant social justice issues.
- Continue collaboration with local creative collaboration

CITY OF
CHARLOTTE