City of Portland Design Overlay Zone Assessment

Appendix D: Questionnaire Results – January 2017

Introduction

This questionnaire was part of the City of Portland's Design Overlay Zone Assessment, which will document and assess the tools and processes that carry out the d-overlay. The questionnaire was open from August 8 to September 12, 2016 and advertised through City email lists of the last five years of applicants who had projects within the d-overlay, the project website, and social networks and blogs. Overall, 313 responses were collected with at least one question answered.

The goal of the questionnaire was to engage and learn from stakeholders interested in the administration of the design overlay zone (d-overlay) as well as applicable tools (e.g., the design standards and guidelines). It is not a statistically valid survey, meaning the respondent sample is not statistically representative of the Portland population generally.

Open-ended questions are discussed in this report as a general theme (i.e. "Small projects should have a faster timeline or less scrutiny"), the number of times that theme was expressed, and some example responses that further illuminate the concept.

A PDF version of the questionnaire is included as an appendix to this report.

Summary of Results

Participants were asked to identify themselves as "neighborhood association member", "interested resident," "business owner," "architect, designer or planning professional," "developer / applicant," or "other." For the purposes of this analysis, respondents were sorted into two groups:

- **"Design Professionals"** defined as architects, designers, planners, developers, or land use applicants; and
- **"Residents & Others"** defined as neighborhood association members, business owners, interested residents, or others.

The purpose of this sorting was to provide specific sets of question to each group. Most of the questions in this report are analyzed based the group with which respondents identified.

The questionnaire had several questions for those who were not design professionals or project applicants. Through these, we learned that neighborhood meetings and websites were the most common ways that citizens hear about projects, and that more online information in a graphical and easy-to-understand format would be appreciated when providing notice of design review. There were also several questions for design professionals and project applicants only, which provided detailed responses regarding the goals and administration of the d-overlay.

Questions targeted at both groups highlighted some of the tensions between constituencies of the d-overlay:

- **Design Characteristics of a Desirable Built Environment.** Sidewalk-level detail was rated as the most important characteristic of those listed in the survey, and design of parking areas was rated as the least important. Architectural Consistency with Surrounding Buildings was rated as a much less important design characteristic by "Design Professionals" than by "Residents & Others." When asked how well the process achieves these characteristics, responses were generally lukewarm at best. "Design Quality" and "Architectural Consistency with Surrounding Buildings" were seen as the least-well achieved.
- **Administration of the d-overlay.** There were notable differences between these groups of respondents regarding the most important factors in the administration of the d-overlay. "Design Professionals" overwhelmingly chose "Flexibility of Design," "Predictability," and "Length of Time" as important factors, while "residents and Others" chose "Attention to design and quality, "Attention to Site Context," and "Transparent discussion about design" as the most important. When asked how well the process achieves these administration factors, responses were on the low side. "Design Professionals" tended to think the process provided a better opportunity for public feedback than "Residents & Others," while "Residents & Others" thought that the process provided greater flexibility than did the "Design Professionals."
- **Neighborhood Meetings.** The majority of neighborhood association members, planning professionals and developers found neighborhood meetings to discuss the review of projects to be helpful, while interested residents were almost as likely to say they were not, or that they were unsure. Open-ended responses to Question 27 show differences of opinions – that neighborhood meetings are an opportunity for consensus building and creative problem solving, that meetings are dominated by a vocal minority, and that participants feel there is little opportunity to influence the project. These responses were not clearly differentiated between the "Design Professionals" and "Residents and Others" groups; members of both groups made comments on all sides of the issue.

In addition, the questionnaire asked open-ended questions about how to improve the Design Guidelines and the Community Design Standards. The most common comment themes are included below.

- **Design Guidelines**
    - Reduce subjectivity/personal preference in the process
    - Provide an expedited and predictable timeline/streamlined process
    - Focus on big picture (scale, proportions, livability), not so many details
    - Interpretation of guidelines is not always consistent and sometimes perceived by respondents as incorrect
    - Reduce number of guidelines/simplify guidelines
- **Community Design Standards**
    - Modernize the standards
    - They stifle creativity, or are too restrictive
    - Poor quality buildings usually result from this path
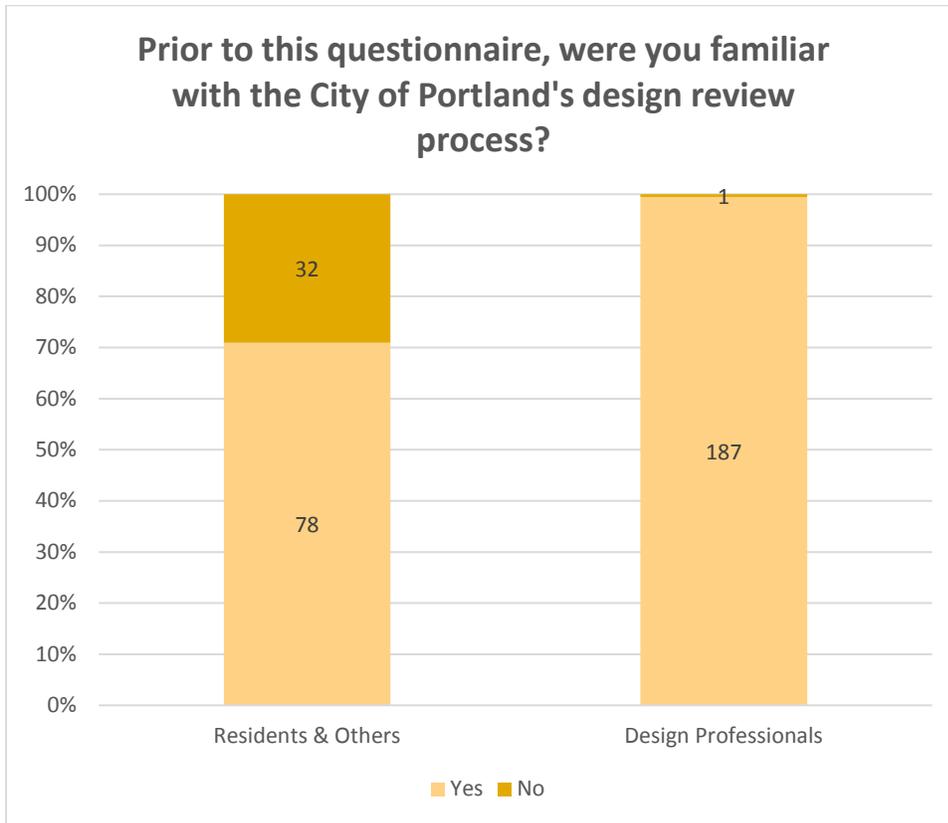   - Expedite the timeline

The remainder of this report provides a detailed analysis of the survey, in the order that the questions were presented online.

Section 1: Introductory Questions

Question 1: Familiarity with Design Review

The majority of respondents were familiar with the City's design review process. Almost all respondents unfamiliar with the process belonged to the "Residents & Others" group.

Figure 1.   Familiarity with Design Review

Prior to this questionnaire, were you familiar with the City of Portland's design review process?

Residents & Others: Yes 78, No 32
Design Professionals: Yes 187, No 1

Legend: Yes, No

Question 2: Which of the following terms best describes you?

Over 60 percent of respondents belonged to the "Design Professionals" group, with over half of all respondents identifying as architects, designers, or planning professionals. Most respondents in the "Residents & Others" group described themselves as interested residents.

Figure 2.   Respondent Grouping
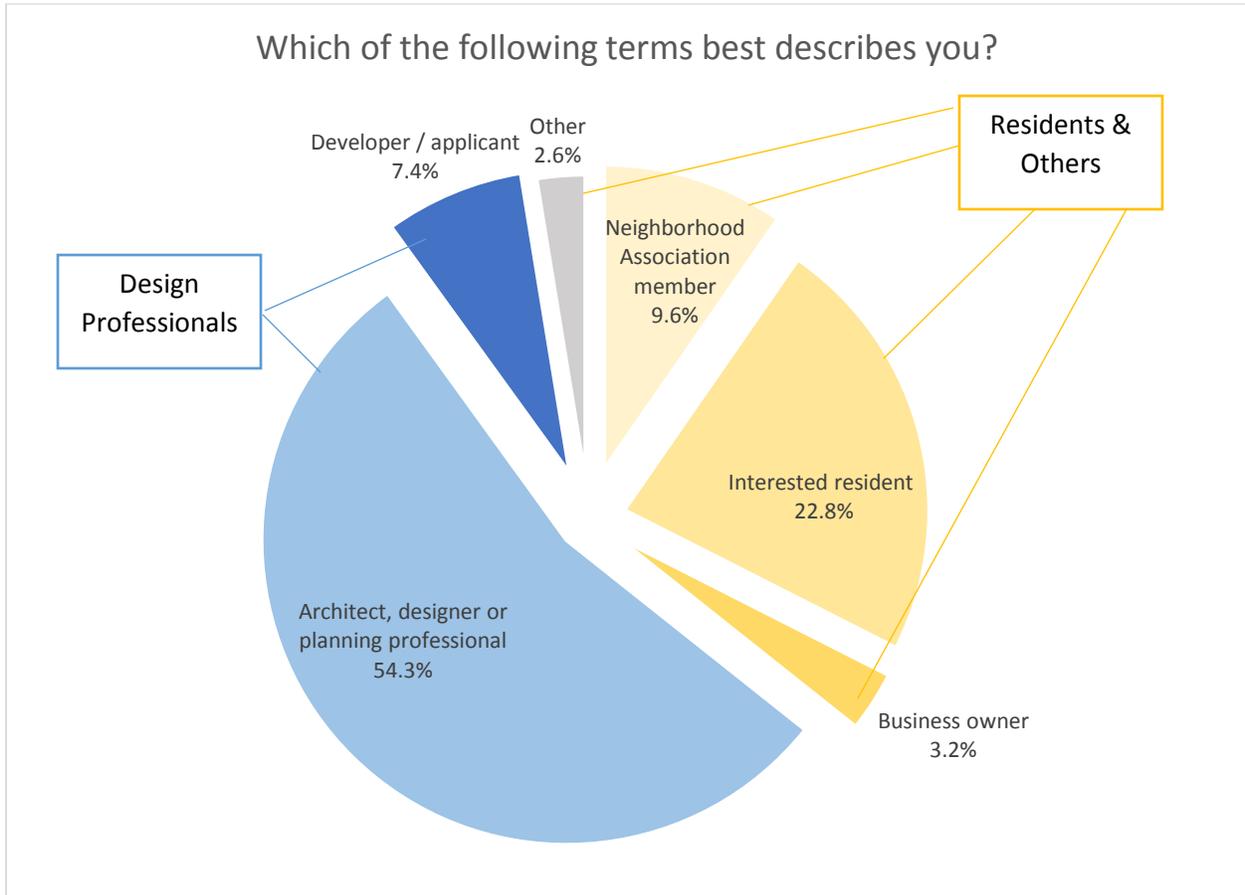
Which of the following terms best describes you?		Responses	Percent of Responses
Design Professionals	Architect, designer or planning professional	169	54.3%
	Developer / applicant	23	7.4%
Residents & Others	Neighborhood Association member	30	9.6%
	Interested resident	71	22.8%
	Business owner	10	3.2%
	Other	8	2.6%
	TOTAL	311	100.0%

Question 3: Zip Code

Respondents were asked to provide their zip code, as shown in the table below. The zip codes with the most respondents were 97214 and 97202 (inner SE Portland and Sellwood).

| Zip Code	Number of responses	Percent of Responses
97034	1	1%
97201	7	8%
97202	10	11%
97203	7	8%
97205	3	3%
97206	2	2%
97209	6	7%
97210	2	2%
97211	8	9%
97212	2	2%
97213	1	1%
97214	15	17%
97215	2	2%
97217	4	4%
97219	7	8%
97220	1	1%
97222	1	1%
97225	1	1%
97227	1	1%
97230	2	2%
97232	4	4%
97236	1	1%
97239	1	1%
97266	1	1%
Total	90	100%

Section 2: Questions for Residents & Others

The questions in this section were only answered by respondents in the "Residents & Others" group. They ask about the respondent's familiarity with the design review process, the effectiveness of design review notice, and how respondents typically hear about new development.

Questions 3 and 4 show that most respondents in this group have not directly participated in design review, and those that have participated had mostly done so by attending neighborhood meetings. A significant number of respondents have also commented in writing, discussed projects with City staff, and attended design commission meetings. Later questions address the perceived utility of neighborhood meetings more specifically.
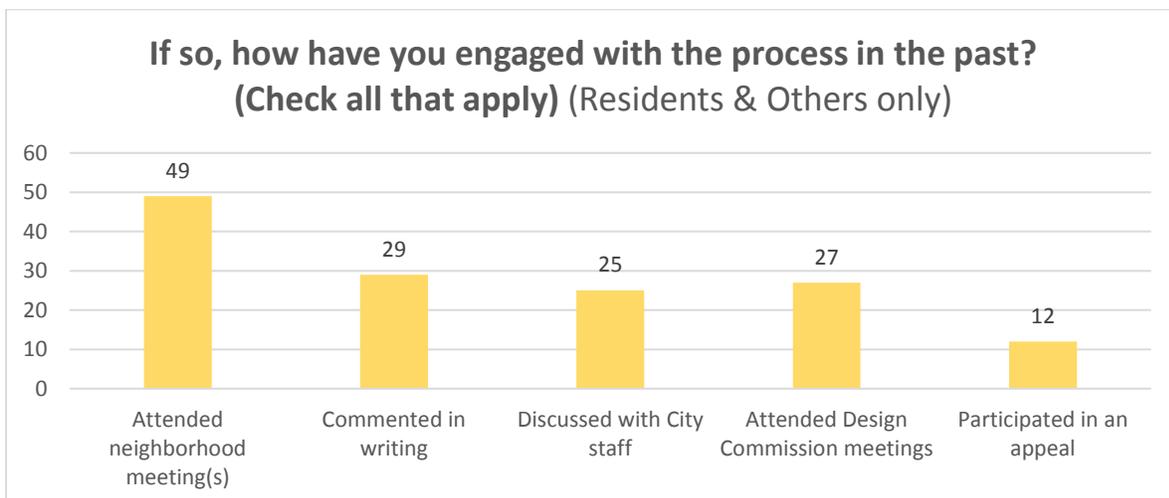
Question 4. Participation in project within Design Overlay Zone

Figure 3.   Participation in Design Overlay Review Process
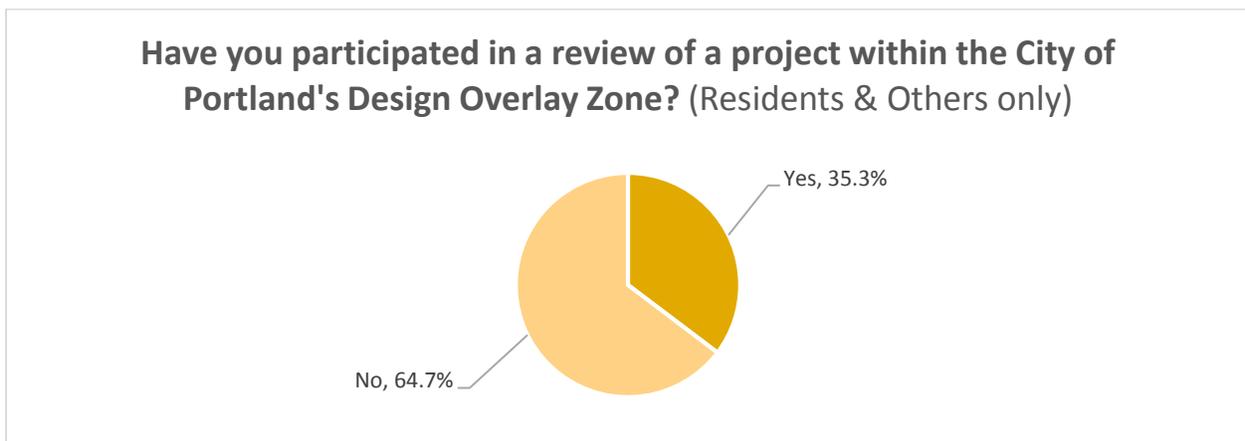
Question 5. If so, how have you engaged with the process?

Figure 4.   Manner of Participation in Design Overlay Review Process

Questions 6-8. Design Review Notices

Questions 6 through 8 addressed design review notices, with the following image provided as a reference. The majority of respondents had seen one of these notices and found them helpful (Figures 5 and 6). When asked what could be done to improve these notices (Figure 7), respondents said that they should be posted on a larger sign and that design review notices should be available via a searchable online map. Simplifying the message and providing a QR code to access relevant information online were also popular answers.
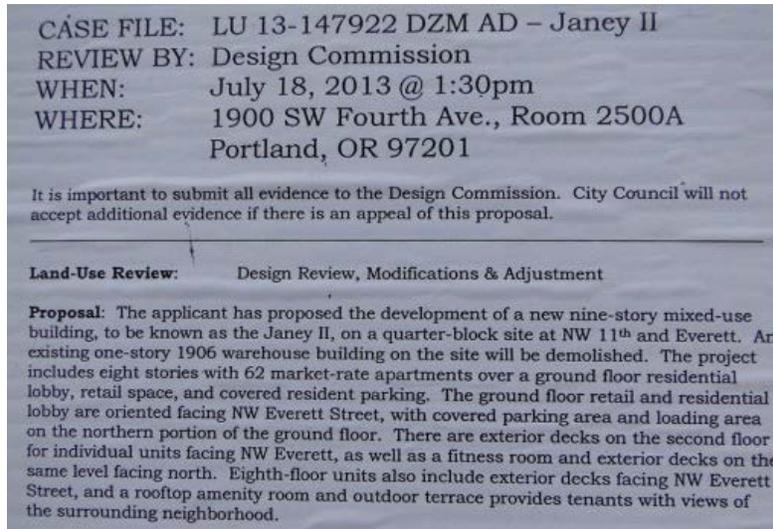

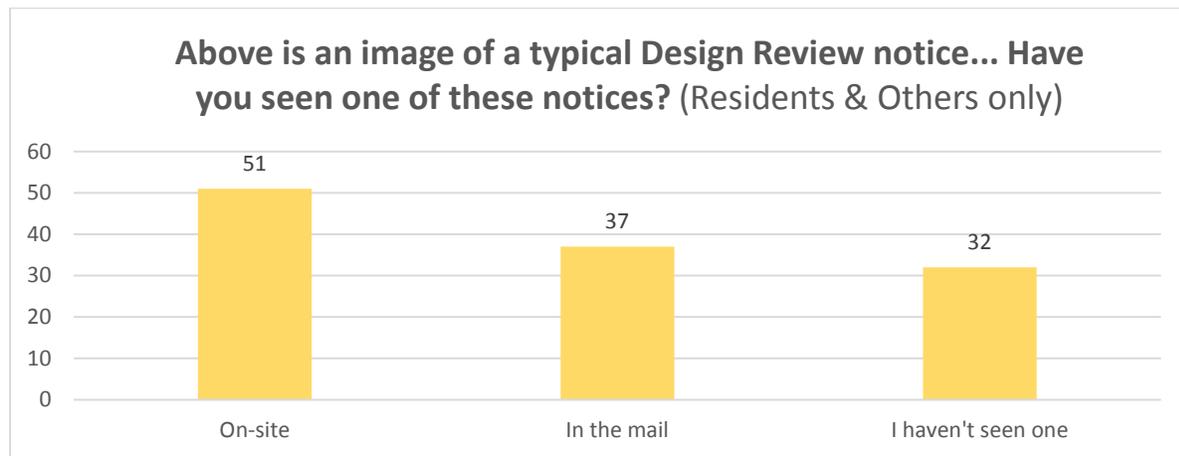Figure 5.   Design Review Notices
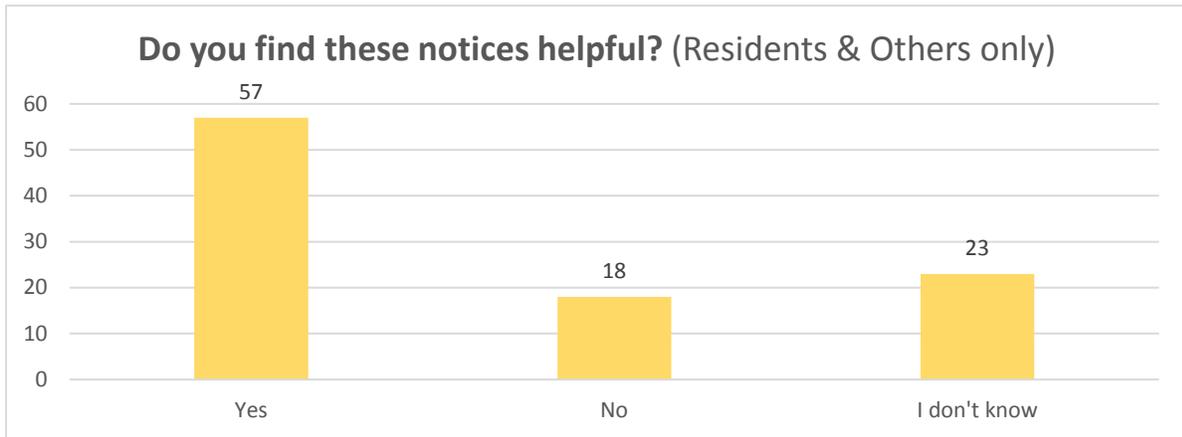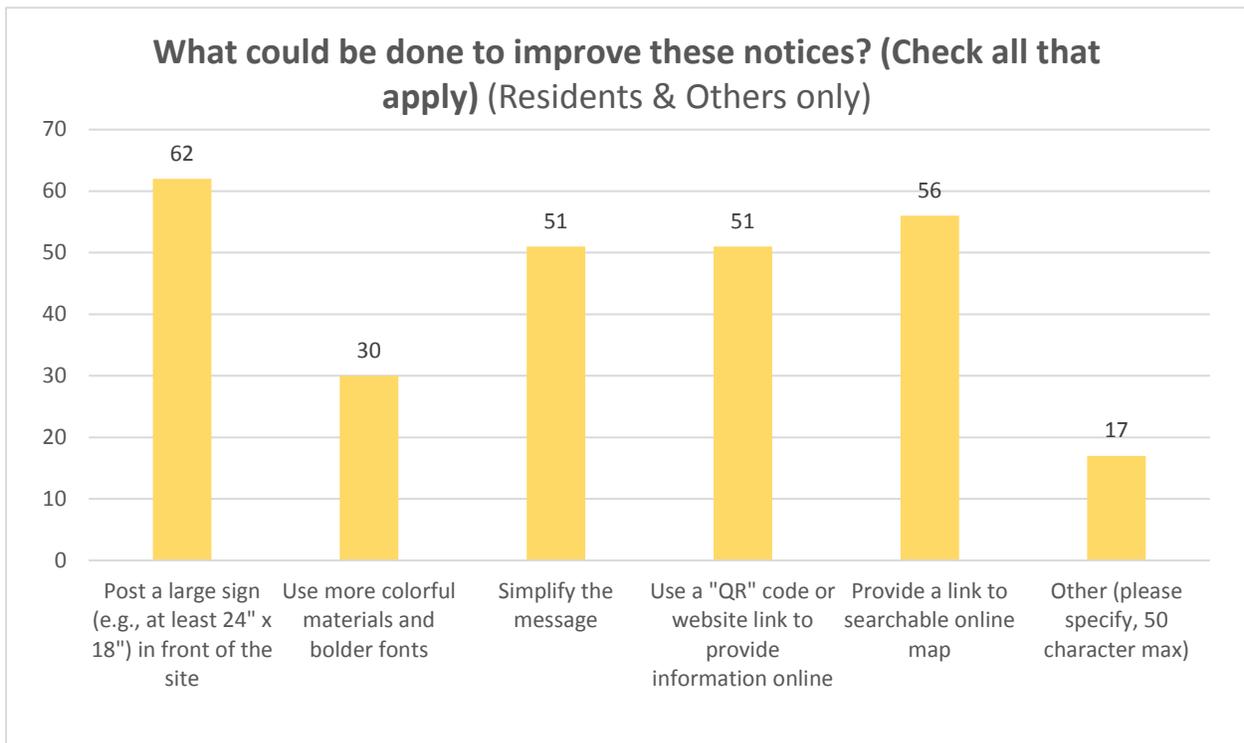
Figure 6. Utility of Design Review Notices

Do you find these notices helpful? (Residents & Others only)

Response	Count
Yes	57
No	18
I don't know	23

Figure 7. Improving Design Review Notices

What could be done to improve these notices? (Check all that apply) (Residents & Others only)

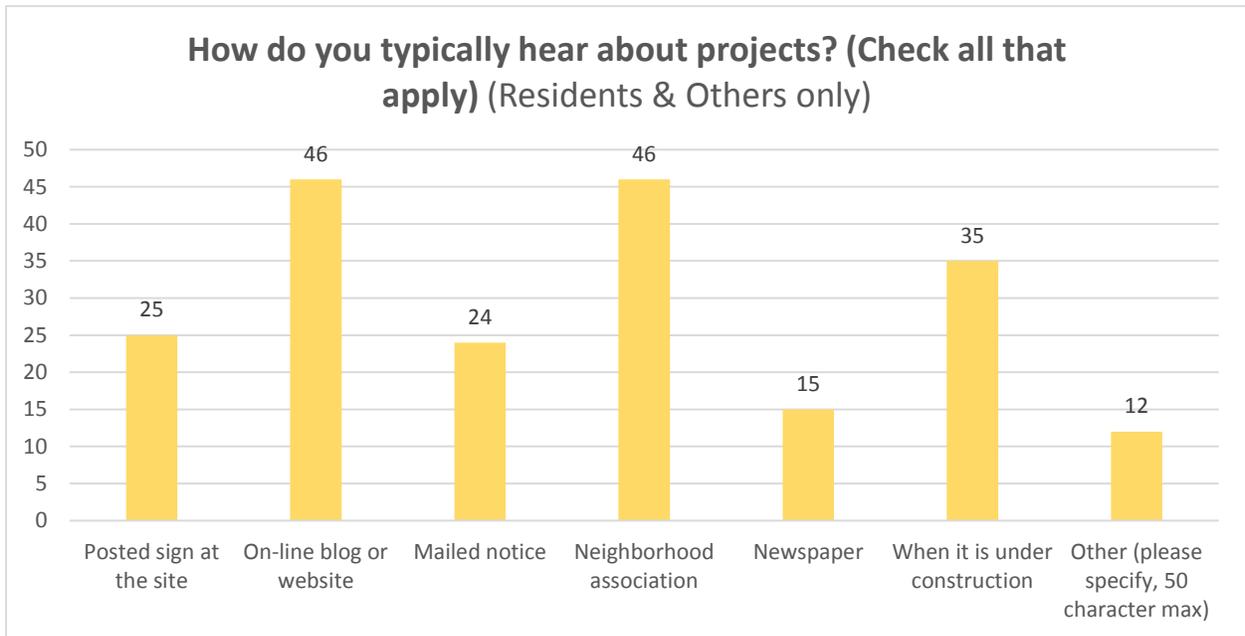| Option	Count
Post a large sign (e.g., at least 24" x 18") in front of the site	62
Use more colorful materials and bolder fonts	30
Simplify the message	51
Use a "QR" code or website link to provide information online	51
Provide a link to searchable online map	56
Other (please specify, 50 character max)	17

Open-ended responses suggested other methods such as including an image, rendering or site plan of the proposal in the posted notice; posting more material online; distributing notices via email, newspapers or Nextdoor.com; and including "DESIGN REVIEW" in large text on a notice board.

## Question 9. How do you typically hear about projects?

The most common avenues for learning about projects were at neighborhood association meetings and via an online blog or other website, followed by "When it is under construction." Open ended responses included Nextportland.com, Skyscraper Forum, neighborhood Facebook pages, BDS email notification, and direct contact from developers or owners. Several respondents also said "Too Late" or similar.

Figure 8. Hearing about Projects

Figure 8 chart: "How do you typically hear about projects? (Check all that apply) (Residents & Others only)"

- Posted sign at the site: 25
- On-line blog or website: 46
- Mailed notice: 24
- Neighborhood association: 46
- Newspaper: 15
- When it is under construction: 35
- Other (please specify, 50 character max): 12

Question 10. Is your neighborhood subject to design review?

Figure 9. Neighborhood Subject to Design Review

Figure 9 pie chart: "Is your neighborhood (or part of your neighborhood) subject to design review? (Residents & Others only)"

- Yes 59%
- No 17%
- I don't know 24%
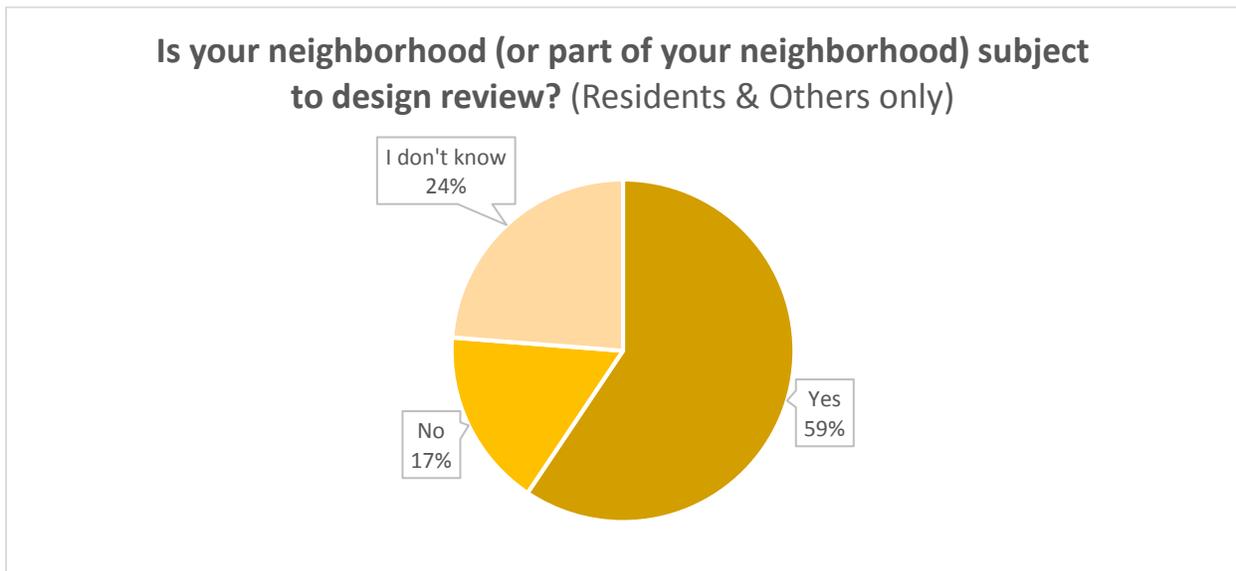
Section 3: Questions for Developers, Architects and Other Professionals

Questions in this section were provided only to respondents in the "Design Professionals" group. They were intended to get a sense of the parts of the city in which respondents typically work on projects, understand/gain insight into their interactions with the design review process, and ask open-ended questions about how to improve the Community Design Standards and the Design Guidelines/Discretionary Design Review.

Questions 11-14. Project Locations & Types

As shown in Figure 10, more "Design Professionals" worked on projects in the Central City more frequently than any other part of the city, followed by Northeast and Southeast Portland. Ninety-four percent of the "Design Professionals" group has participated in the design review process as an applicant (Figure 11) and over two-thirds (69 percent) has had a project go before the Design Review Commission (Figure 13).

Figure 10.   Project Locations
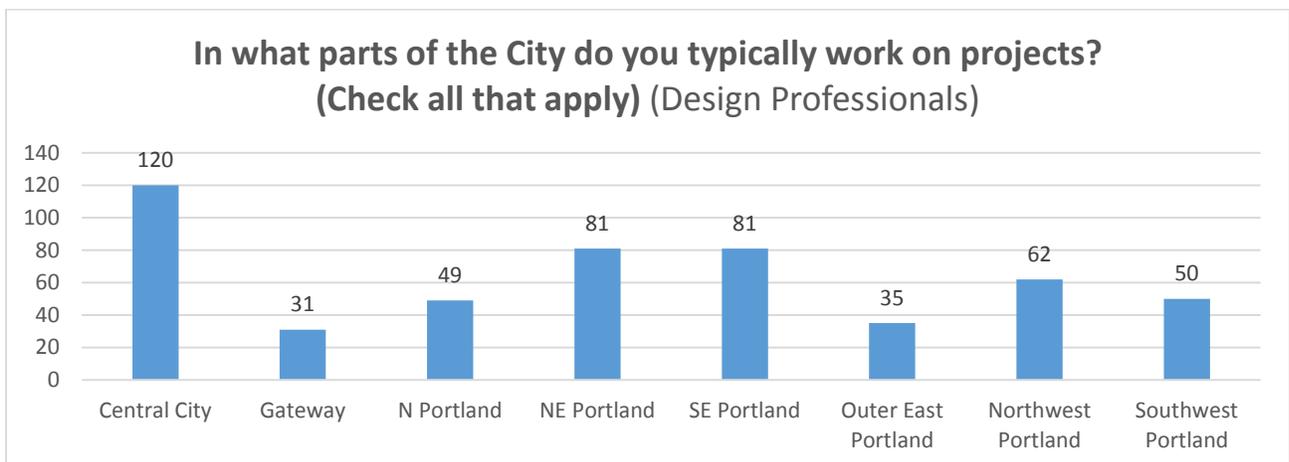

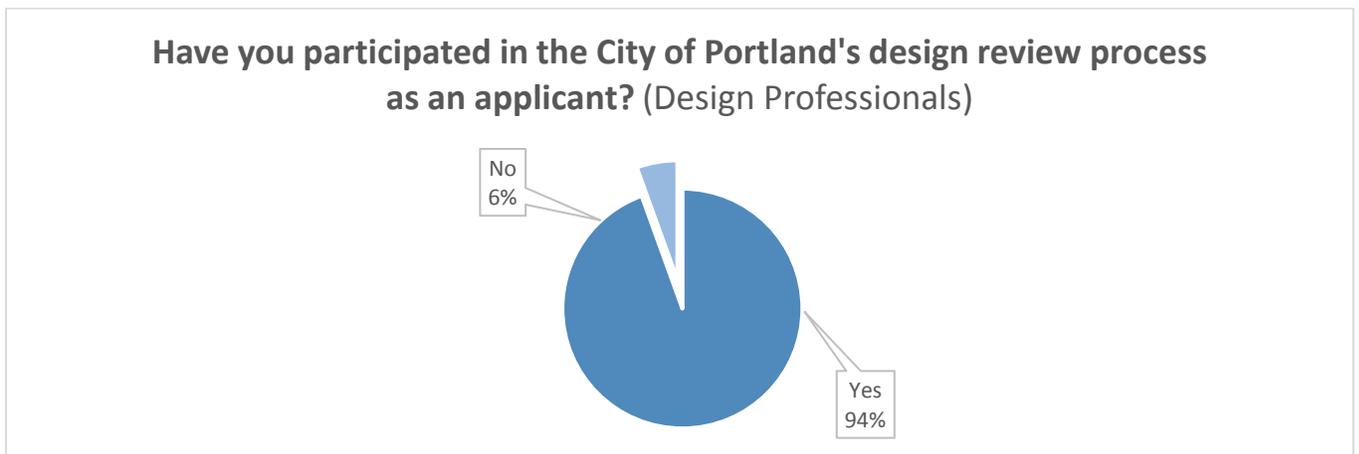Figure 11.   Participation in Design Review as an Applicant

Figure 12.   Proportion of Projects Subject to Design Review

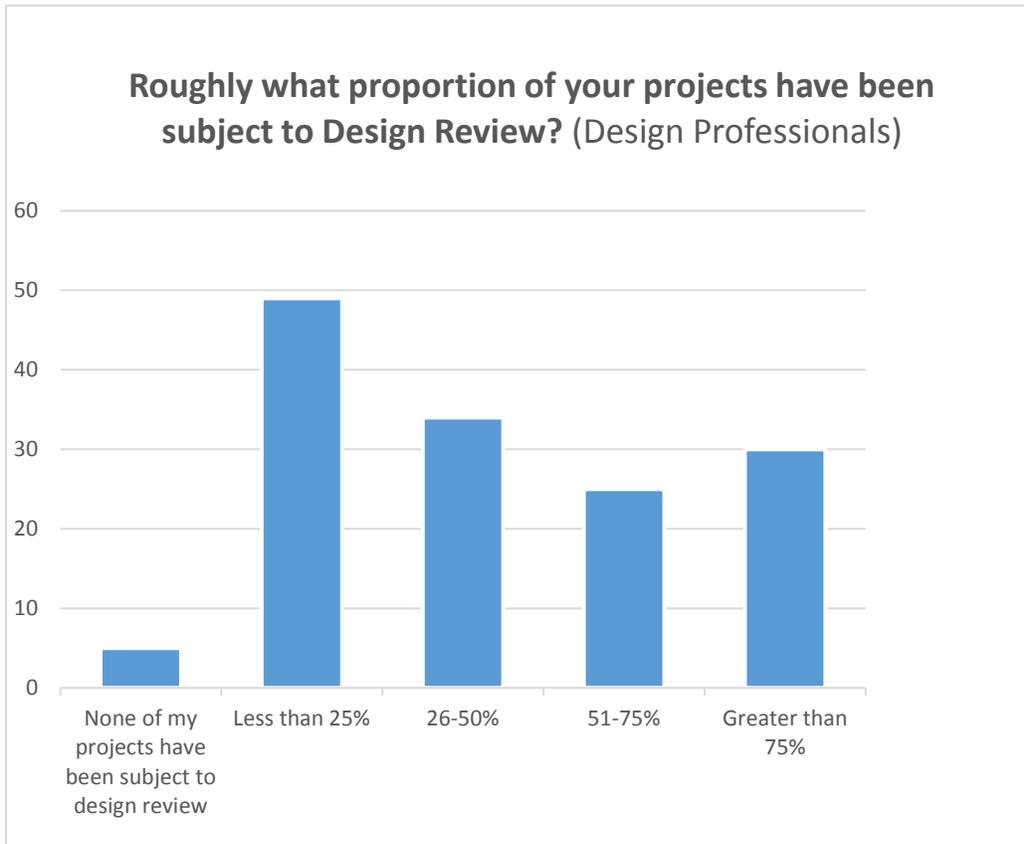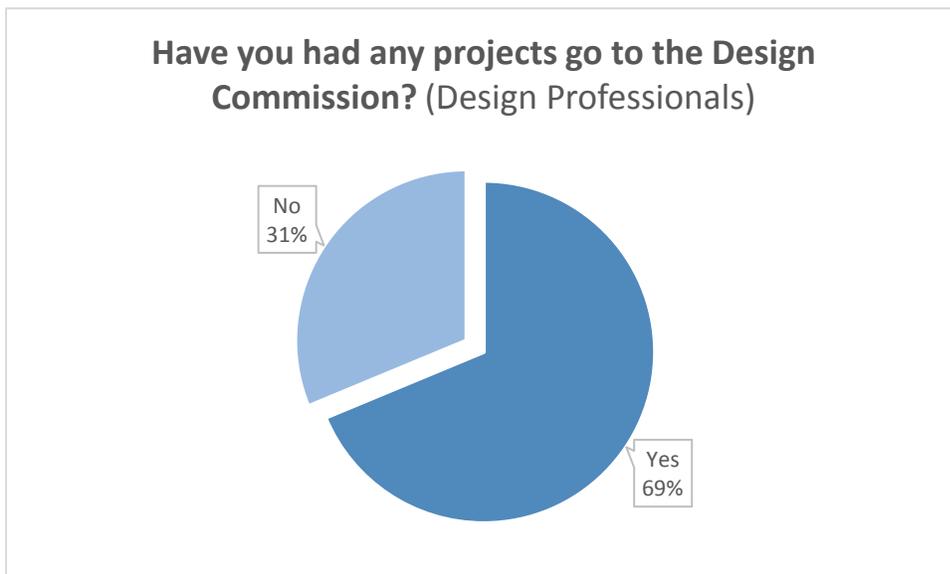**Roughly what proportion of your projects have been subject to Design Review?** (Design Professionals)

Figure 13.   Projects before Design Commission

Have you had any projects go to the Design Commission? (Design Professionals)

No 31%

Yes 69%

Question 15: What improvements to the design guidelines or discretionary design review would you suggest?

An open-ended question asked design professionals to suggest improvements to the design guidelines or discretionary design review process. Listed below are commonly-cited themes on the topics of (1) the guidelines themselves and tools to administer the guidelines, and (2) the process of design review. The table on the following pages provides a more detailed list of themes and example comments.

Overall, most responses to this question concerned the amount of subjectivity, complexity, inconsistency, unpredictability, and lengthy timelines of design review. However, many respondents did state that the overall intent of design review is good.

Comments about the Tools (e.g., Design Standards and Guidelines, application forms, etc.)

- Guidelines should focus on the big picture (scale, proportions, livability) rather than details like materials.
- Interpretation of guidelines is inconsistent
- Simplify the guidelines, reduce ambiguity of language, reduce the number of guidelines
- Too much information and too much detail is required at submittal / unclear what is required for completeness
- The guidelines are good overall
- The Commission is making policy that oversteps their role and encroaches on the zoning code (i.e. residential use on the ground floor)
- Guidelines are outdated and should be updated to reflect current goals
- Checklists, points systems, other tools and training for commissioners are needed
- Use electronic submission/ update website to clearly show process requirements
- Need more examples of what compliance looks like / interpretation.

Comments about the Design Review Process

- Make the process faster and more predictable – particularly for smaller projects
- Process should be flexible to allow minor tweaks (approvable by staff)
- Issues with personalities / tone of interaction with staff or design commission
- Disconnect in opinion/direction between staff and commission
- Cost is high
- Appoint commissioners with design or architecture experience
- Better training for staff is needed, concern about implementation at the planning counter

Responses to Question 15 – Design Review

Theme *(a comment can touch on multiple themes)*	Times expressed	Example Comments
Reduce subjectivity/personal preference	27	• The responses from planners can be too subjective in matters of aesthetics. • I have several times had issues with the City's interpretations of "coherency" in light of the vagueness of the actual design standards. • "quality" materials seems to be used by staff and the commission to mandate personal tastes
Expedited and predictable timeline/streamlined process	22	• When proposing new signage should ONLY take no more than ONE month (30 CALENDAR DAYS) to review NOT 180 DAYS (6 MTHS) • With my projects we do anything to avoid Design Review, even if it means aesthetic compromise to fit within Community Design Guidelines. Cost, time, uncertainty, and lack of control over final design are reasons to avoid Design Review. • Small, or affordable, projects should not have to go through the same review process and submittal requirements as a large project. • Minor tweaks ought to be conditional and approvable by staff to reduce overall timeline
Focus on big picture (scale, proportions, livability), not details	12	• The Commission should focus on good design, less fuss over fasteners and awnings. - Micromanaging the design should not be their role.
Interpretation of guidelines is not always consistent and sometimes incorrect	10	Design guidance often has no nexus to the criteria, code or contemporary design approaches, resulting in Portland's urban and architectural forms and spaces increasingly falling behind what's proving successful in other American cities.
Eliminate the Design Commission	4	• Design review is unconstitutional/infringes on private rights
Reduce number of guidelines, reduce ambiguity of language, simplify guidelines	9	• Simplify to top 10 things urban buildings should do well.
Issues with personality of DR commissioners or staff	9	• Our commission is not elected, therefore how is it that they should be the taste-makers of this town? • The tone needs to be more collaborative and it isn't. • In my experience the Portland design review process is by far the most dysfunctional and disrespectful that I have participated in. • Bias for/against specific firms among commission

Responses to Question 15 – Design Review

Theme *(a comment can touch on multiple themes)*	Times expressed	Example Comments
Need better training for staff/commissioners with experience	11	• appoint design professionals to the "discretionary design review" boards so the guidelines are not unreasonable/ too restrictive to current best practices for design and construction. • Create distinct yes/no checklists for items before design commission • Require design reviewers to justify their decisions based on the design guidelines, possibly with a points-based system.
Too much information and too much detail is required at submittal / unclear what is required for completeness	8	• Provide early guidance before details are finalized
Design Commission overreach - they effectively make policy that should be part of guidelines/zoning code (i.e. rejecting housing as an active use at ground level)	8	• The design commission needs to be reined in. They overstep their roles. For example, at one hearing the chair of the design commission went as far as to say he would never vote in favor of a project that includes surface parking. Therefore, he is making up his own guidelines outside of what the zoning code requires.
Checklists, points systems, other tools and training for commissioners are needed	4	• Create distinct yes/no checklists for items before design commission
The guidelines are good overall	4	
Cost is high	3	• Too costly (relative to other cities)
Disconnect between staff and commission	3	• Get us to the commission quicker, if they are going to ignore staff recommendations • The disconnect between staff and commission caused us to chase some avenues that were a waste of time. Staff was anticipating commissions response and then when we got before commission they were not concerned with the same things staff was concerned with. I think a preliminary meeting with staff and a commission member would be helpful.
Guidelines are old / need to be updated to reflect current goals.	3	• Update design guidelines to current design standards and development. Much of the DOZA feels outdated and not current with today's design, planning and development goals. • They are based on the assumption that everyone should live in a craftsman bungalow

| Theme *(a comment can touch on multiple themes)*	Times expressed	Example Comments
Need more examples of what compliance looks like / interpretation.	3	• Where there are specific design features that the City will not approve, this information should be available IN WRITING, either in the design guidelines or online.
Use electronic submission/ update website to clearly show process requirements	3	

Additional Comments/Themes regarding Design Review

Commission needs to justify requirements using guidelines	Needs more openness to accept innovative designs	Drives mediocre design
Process is opaque from outside	Changes arise during building department review or in construction - should not have to do a new Type II review for that	Reduce ambiguity of language
Need more options to bypass discretional review	Update to wireless standards needed	Hard to navigate the process/bureaucracy
Need incentives for good design	Guidelines often have several options to meet criteria, but review bodies do not accept all options	Preliminary informational meetings would be helpful
Type II design review should include face-to-face meeting with reviewers	Extend design review to more parts of the city	Planning and engineering are too siloed
Phase review process to coincide better with typical design/construction process	Materials selection limited without reason or evidence	Emphasize historic preservation/design of historic sites
Process rewards sameness rather than innovation	Standards should be varied in different parts of the city	Better time management needed at meetings
Need clearer feedback from Design Commissioners	Process is not adaptable to varying market conditions	Empower staff to make decisions and limit the number of projects that go before the commission

Question 16: Roughly what proportion of your projects have been subject to Community Design Standards?

The following questions address the Community Design Standards. Respondents had a smaller proportion of projects subject to the Standards than Design Review (see Figure 14).

Figure 14.   Proportion of projects subject to Community Design Standards
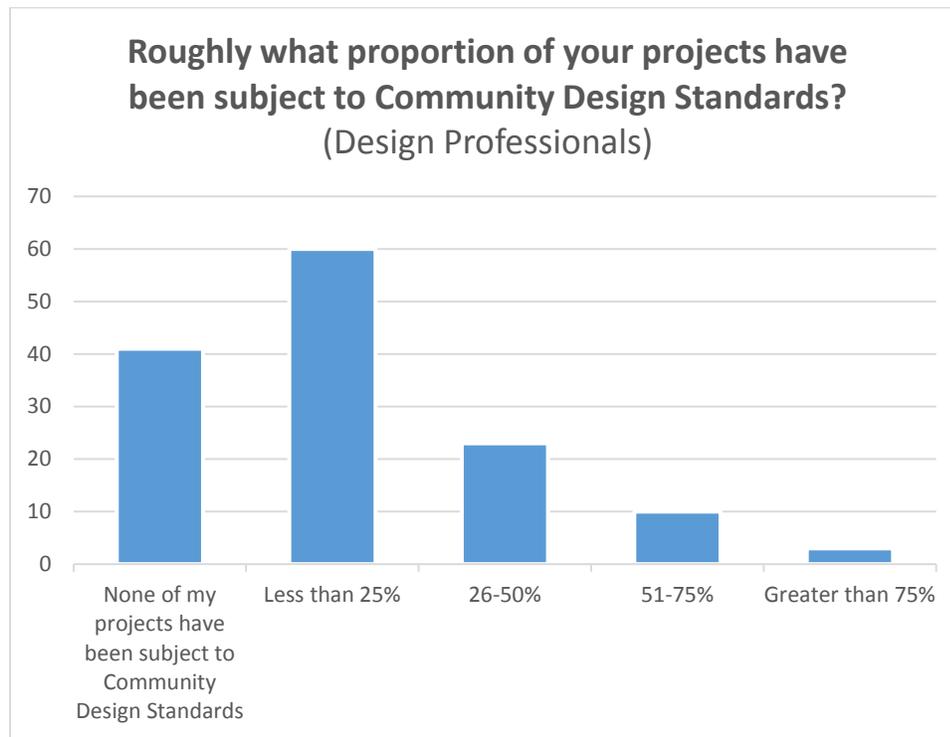
Question 17: What improvements to the Community Design Standards and its administration would you suggest?

An open-ended question asked design professionals to suggest improvements to the Community Design Standards and its administration. Listed below are commonly-cited themes on the topics of (1) the Community Design Standards and related tools, and (2) the process of administering the Community Design Standards. The tables on the following pages provide a more detailed list of themes and example comments.

Overall, most responses to this question concerned modernizing the standards and broadening them to include a wider variety of building forms, and expediting the timeline of CDS review. Several respondents said something similar to: "Poor quality buildings often result from these standards."

Comments about Community Design Standards & Related Tools

- Modernize the standards
- The standards are too restrictive and stifle creativity
- Poor quality buildings usually result from this path
- The cornice standard results in top-heavy buildings
- Restrictions on materials are extreme and arbitrary
- The standards are too subjective

Comments about the administration/process of using Community Design Standards

- Expedite the timeline
- The process is confusing, and needs staff to interpret which standards apply
- This system works fine

Responses to Question 17 – Community Design Standards

Theme *(a comment can touch on multiple themes)*	Times expressed	Example Comments
Modernize standards	14	• Update acceptable mass, materials and details with more current design and technology trends. The standards are very dated • Why does the community design standards describe a 1920's craftsman house? are we going to build that style forever in Portland? is that the only style allowed? • The cornice and distinct ground floor requirements, for instance, do not allow for crisp modern design and should be removed. • They are very outdated and geared towards historical commercial buildings.
Stifles creativity/Too restrictive	7	• The community design standards are currently so specifically and strictly written that they stifle architectural creativity. Every project that I've ever had that 'could' use the CDS we opted to go with a Design Review. • Should allow for rooftop amenities and guardrails
Poor quality usually results from this path	5	• Standards are too narrow & result in some real crap design in many cases. They might prevent the very worst design from being built but more often result in an awkward sameness & application of inappropriate materials and awkward proportions on facades. • They should be looking to require the following: nice material palette, simple massing, surface texture. New buildings are overly complicated with massing. Lastly Oriel windows and balconies need to be addressed. Balconies should be allowed to be inset without contributing to FAR and Oriel windows should not be allowed to overhang the sidewalk as much as they do now. Too many vertical stripes in massing. • There is a huge gap between the quality of project that CDS produces vs. DR and this is extremely unfortunate. The City has created a path where bad design can move through easily and good design often gets watered down because of all of the people who get to pick it apart before it gets built.
Expedite timeline	4	
Cornice standard is strange / Results in top-heavy buildings	5	• The requirement for a heavy cornice has resulted in very top heavy buildings.
Restrictions on materials are extreme, arbitrary	3	• Make Cementitious Siding Approvable
Too subjective	3	

Additional Comments/Themes on Community Design Standards

This system works fine.	Confusing / needs staff to interpret which standards apply	Inconsistent interpretation of standards
We prefer to go through Design Review	Remove them - these issues should be addressed with building code/zoning code	Needs to consider site context
Do not reflect unique characteristics of individual neighborhood centers	Make public commenters pay a significant application fee	Should be applicable in areas like Gateway on small renovations
Needs clarity of when flat roofs are permitted	Allow less restrictive window placement and shape	Clean up code (conflicting code or inconsistencies)
Applicability is too broad	Better training of staff needed	Limits nationally-recognized businesses to local standards
Consolidate overlay zones, put information in one place	Difficult to create modern design	Exempt East Portland
Emphasize historic preservation/design of historic sites	Process should be subject to public scrutiny	I value them as an alternative
Expand this process to smaller retail projects (look at Beaverton for example)		

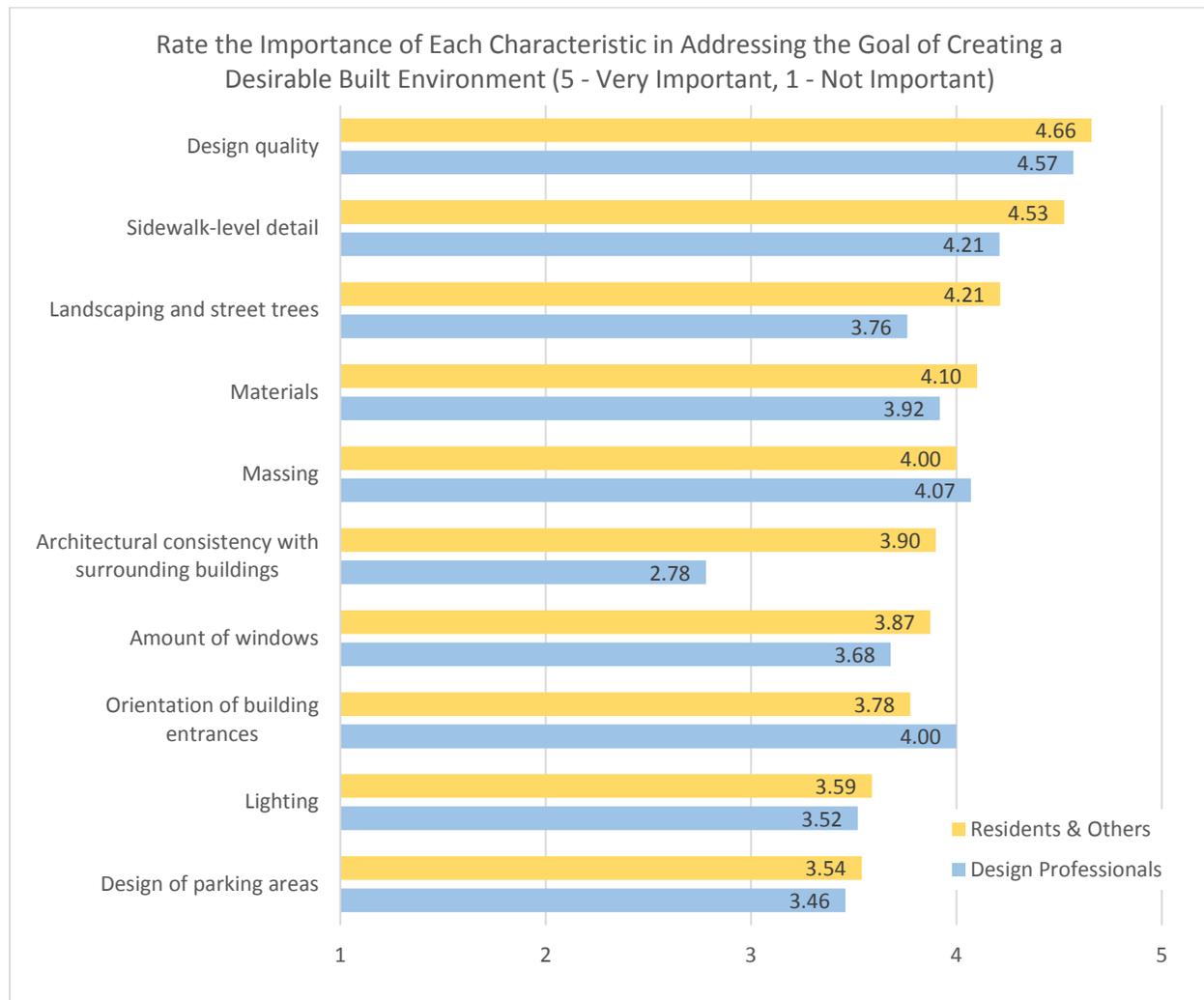# Section 4: Questions about Design (All Respondents)

This section addressed the importance of various design characteristics found in the standards and guidelines, as well as administrative priorities of design review.

Question 18. Design Characteristics

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each characteristic on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not Important" and 5 being "Very Important."

For both "Design Professionals" and "Residents & Others," design quality was rated as the most important characteristic, followed by sidewalk-level detail. Design of parking areas was rated as the least important characteristic. Architectural consistency with surrounding buildings was valued much less by the "Design Professionals" group than by the "Residents and Others" group, as was landscaping and street trees (to a lesser extent). Other results are similar between these groups.

Figure 15.   Characteristics of a Desirable Built Environment

Rate the Importance of Each Characteristic in Addressing the Goal of Creating a Desirable Built Environment (5 - Very Important, 1 - Not Important)

Characteristic	Residents & Others	Design Professionals
Design quality	4.66	4.57
Sidewalk-level detail	4.53	4.21
Landscaping and street trees	4.21	3.76
Materials	4.10	3.92
Massing	4.00	4.07
Architectural consistency with surrounding buildings	3.90	2.78
Amount of windows	3.87	3.68
Orientation of building entrances	3.78	4.00
Lighting	3.59	3.52
Design of parking areas	3.54	3.46

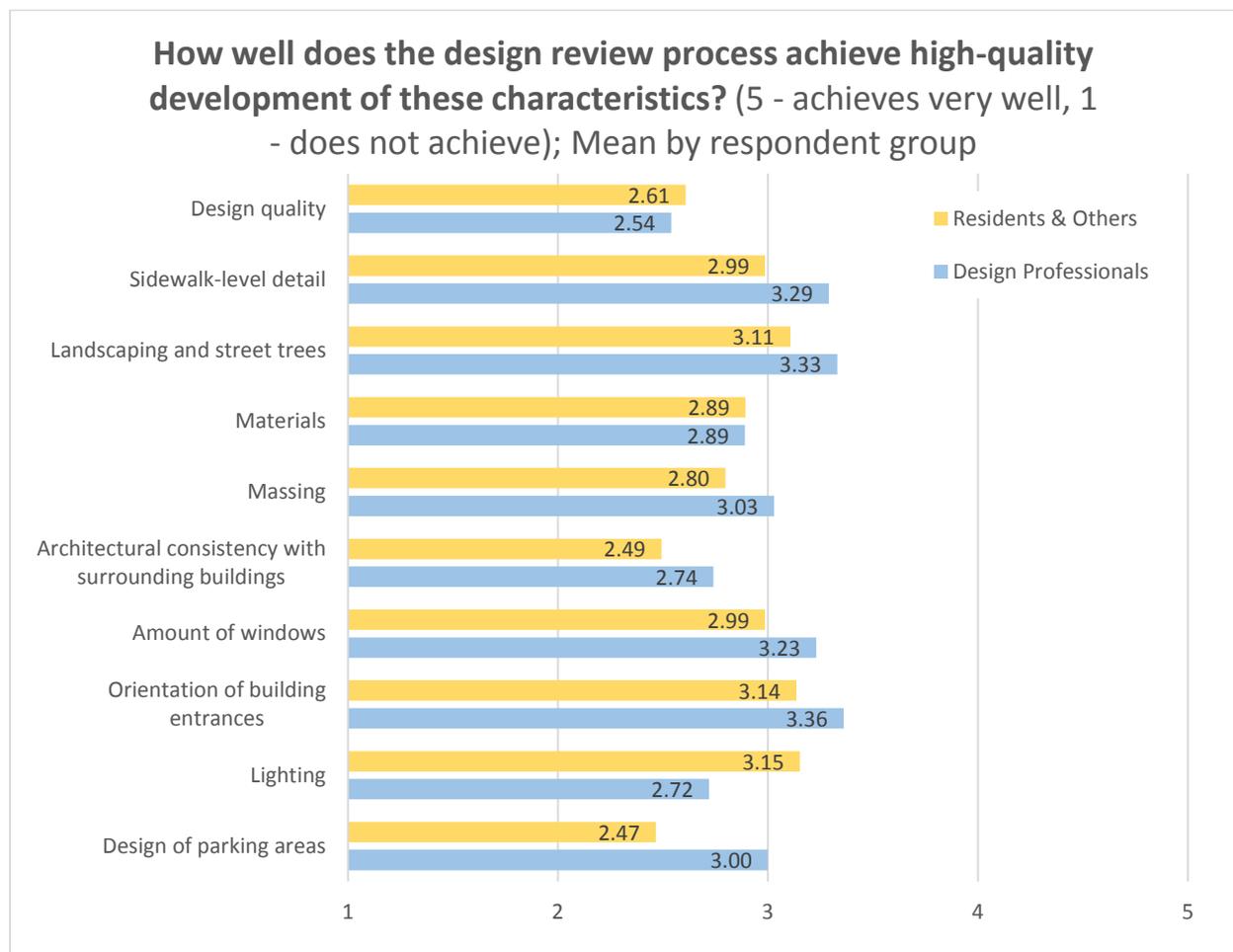We also compared the responses to this question from those who identified as homeowners and those who are renters.

- Homeowners were very likely to rate "Massing" as "5 – Very Important" (48% of homeowners), while only 27% of renters selected "5 – Very Important." This is a significant difference (p = .05).
- Renters thought "Design of parking areas" was significantly less important than homeowners, with 26% of renters rating the characteristic as "1 – Not Important" versus only 5% of homeowners.

Question 19. How well does the process achieve these characteristics?

Respondents were asked to rate how well the design review process achieves the characteristics in Question 18 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "does not achieve" and 5 being "achieves very well."

Overall, the average ratings for each category are low, with only a few averaging higher than the midpoint of 3.0. It appears that the "Design Professionals" group think objectives are achieved slightly better than the "Residents & Others" group, though most responses are similar between the groups. "Design of Parking Areas" and "Lighting" are exceptions, with sizable differences in average score.

Figure 16.   Achieving the Characteristics of a Desirable Built Environment

How well does the design review process achieve high-quality development of these characteristics? (5 - achieves very well, 1 - does not achieve); Mean by respondent group

Residents & Others

Design Professionals

Characteristic	Residents & Others	Design Professionals
Design quality	2.61	2.54
Sidewalk-level detail	2.99	3.29
Landscaping and street trees	3.11	3.33
Materials	2.89	2.89
Massing	2.80	3.03
Architectural consistency with surrounding buildings	2.49	2.74
Amount of windows	2.99	3.23
Orientation of building entrances	3.14	3.36
Lighting	3.15	2.72
Design of parking areas	2.47	3.00

Questions 18 and 19 – Importance of design attributes compared with how well they are achieved; all responses

As noted previously, for question 18 respondents were asked to rate the <u>importance</u> of each characteristic on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not Important" and 5 being "Very Important," and for question 19 <u>how well the design review process achieves</u> the characteristic on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Does Not Achieve" and 5 being "Achieves Very Well." Figures 17 through 26 provide a comparison of the responses from the two groups: "Design Professionals" and "Residents and Others." The number of respondents in each group differs; however, from these figures one can see the relative importance of the characteristic to the group as well as how well each group thinks it is being achieved. In summary:

- Architectural consistency with surrounding buildings was much more important to Residents and Others, but was also seen as less well achieved by this group.
- Both groups shared a relatively similar perspective on the importance of materials and the success of the current process in achieving the characteristic.
- Design quality was the most important characteristic to both groups of respondents, with 93% rating it at 4 or greater. It also had the widest divergence among the characteristics for both groups with only 54% of all respondents saying it was achieved at a score of 3 or greater and only 15% rated it at 4 or greater.
- Both groups shared a similar perspective on the importance of the design of parking areas and the success of the current process in achieving the characteristic.
- The amount of windows was somewhat more important to Residents and Others, but was also seen as less well achieved by this group.
- Both groups thought that massing was a very important characteristic, but a larger proportion of the Residents and Others thought that the current process does not achieve that goal.
- Both groups shared a similar perspective on both the importance of building entrance orientation and lighting; however, the Residents and Others felt these two characteristics were somewhat more successfully achieved.
- Landscaping and trees was much more important to Residents and Others, but was also seen as less well achieved by this group.
- Both groups felt that sidewalk level design was very important and shared a relatively similar perspective on the success of the current process in achieving the characteristic.

Figure 17. Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Architectural Consistency with Surrounding Buildings
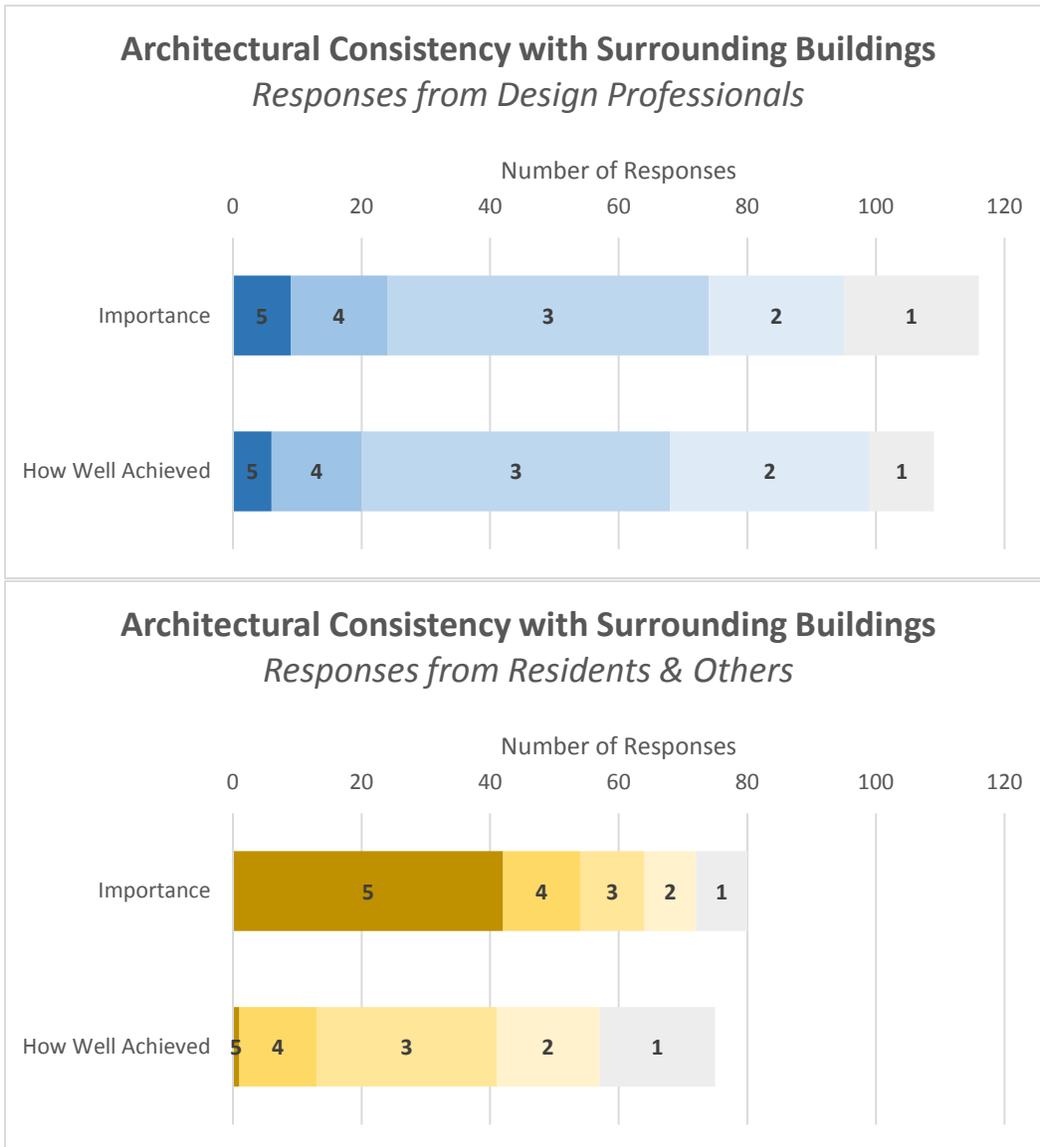

Architectural Consistency with Surrounding Buildings
Responses from Design Professionals

Architectural Consistency with Surrounding Buildings
Responses from Residents & Others

Figure 18.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Materials

Materials
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Materials
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses

Figure 19.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Design Quality

Design Quality
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Design Quality
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses
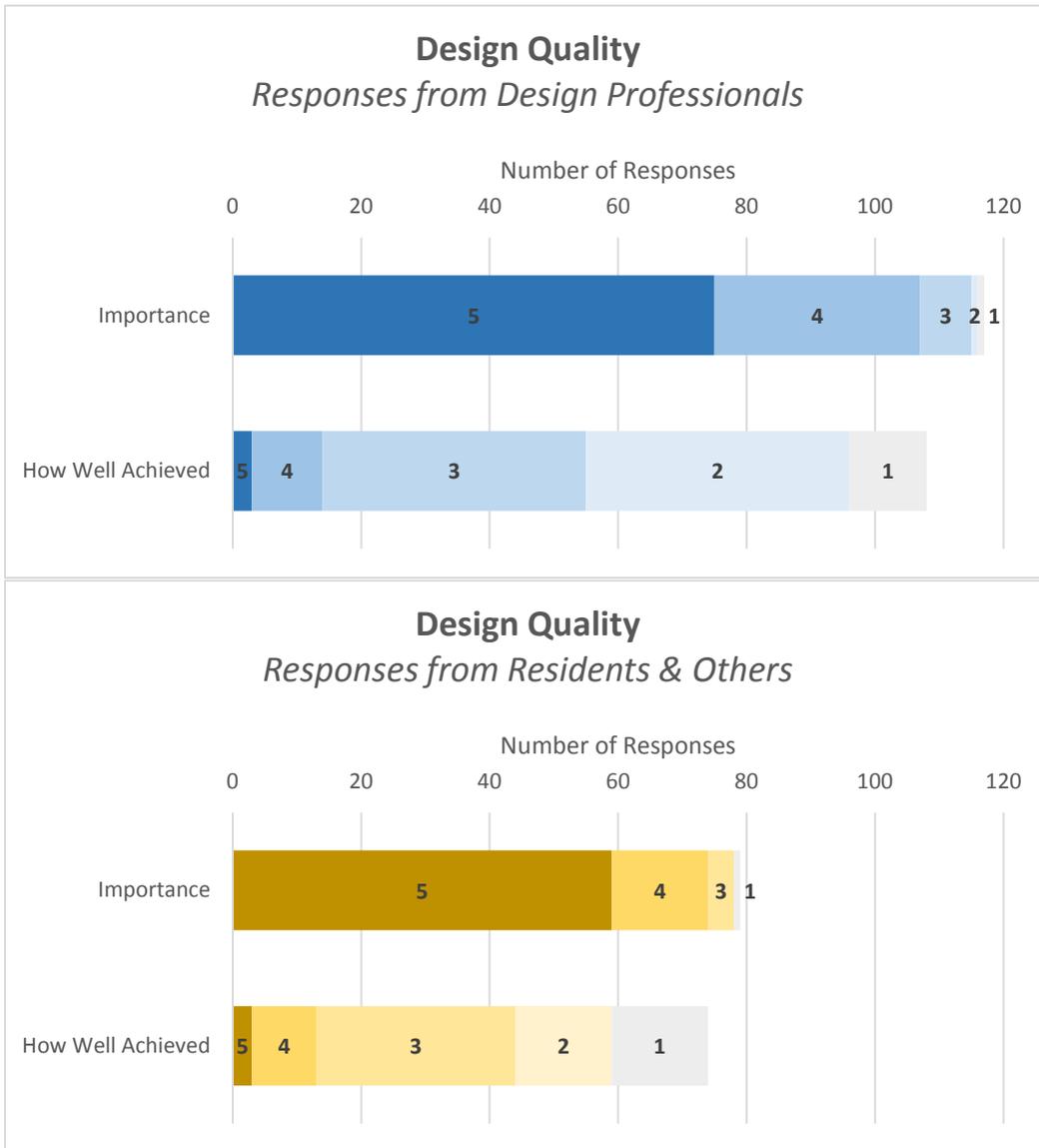
Figure 20.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Design of Parking Areas

Design of Parking Areas
Responses from Design Professionals

Design of Parking Areas
Responses from Residents & Others
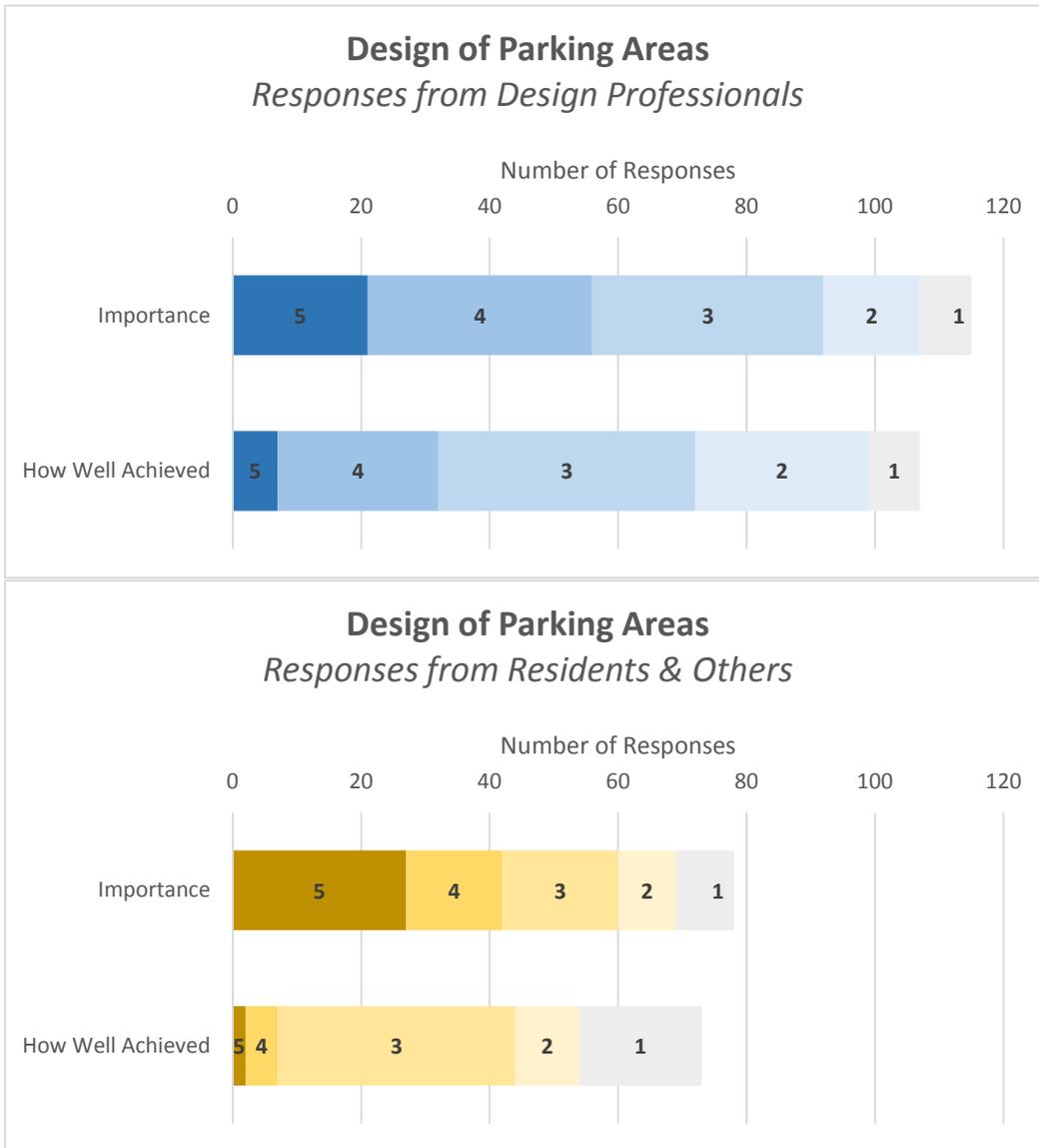
Figure 21.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Amount of Windows

Amount of Windows
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Amount of Windows
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses
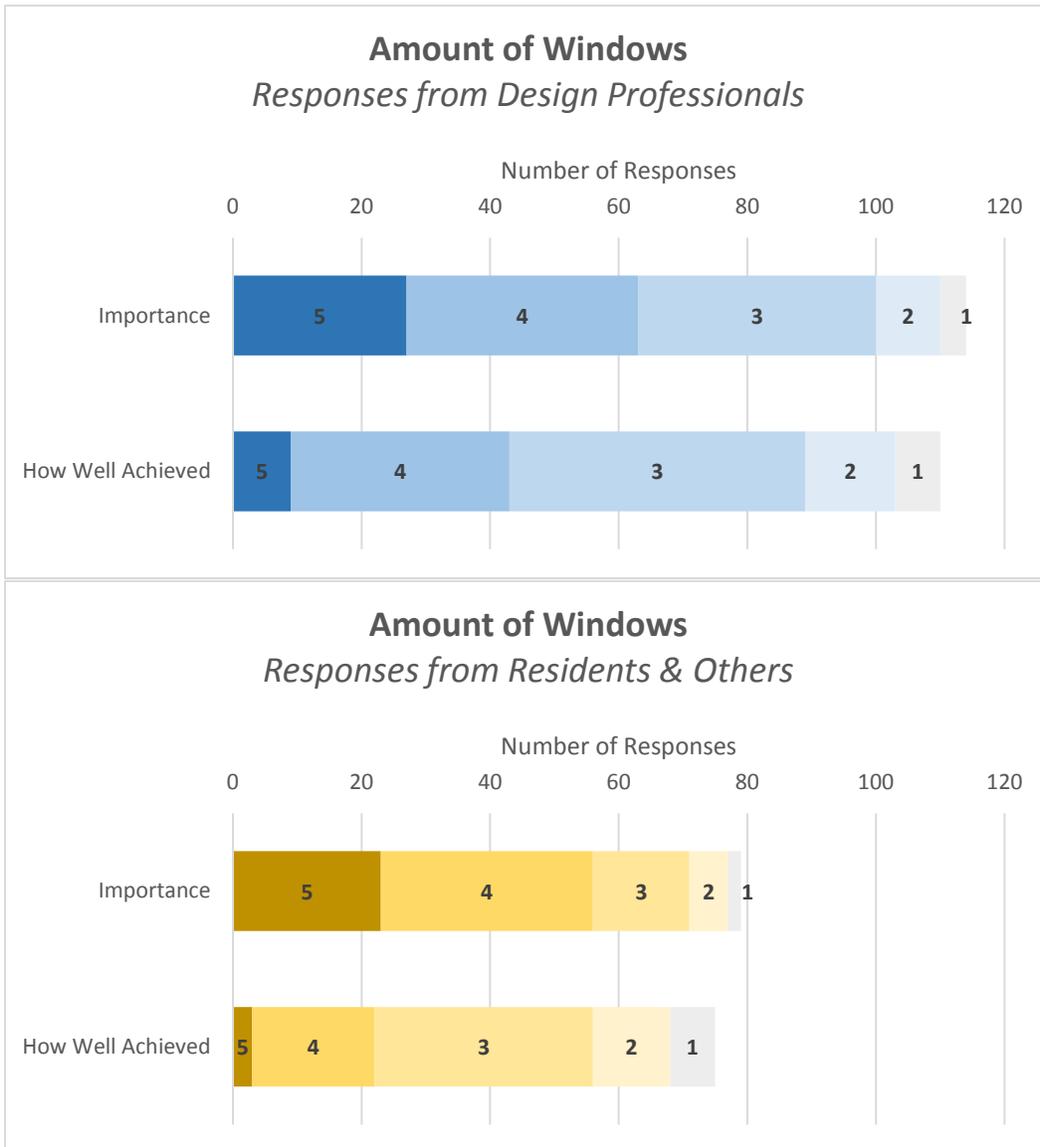
Figure 22.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Massing

Massing
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Massing
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses
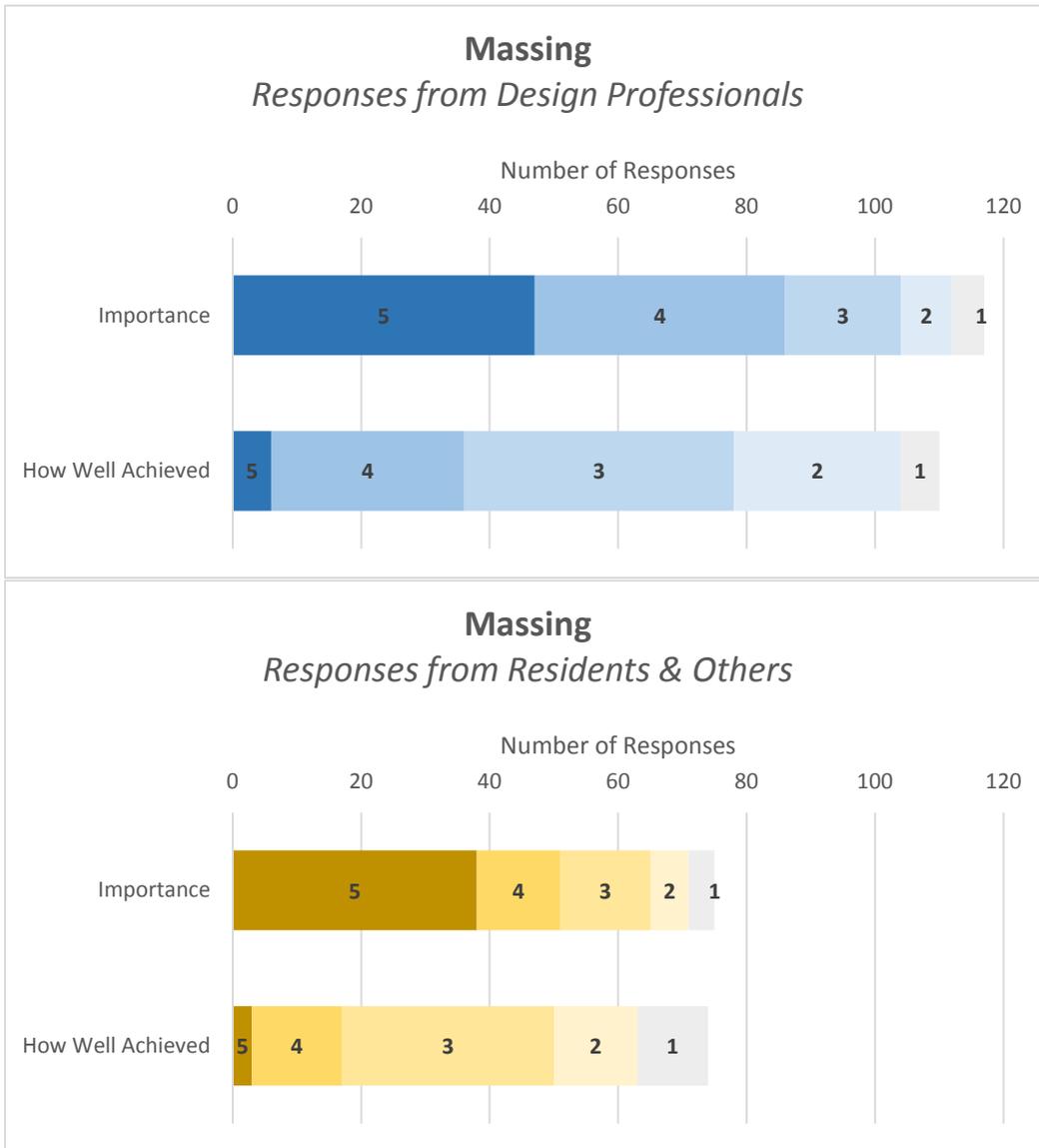
Figure 23.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Orientation of Building Entrances

Orientation of Building Entrances
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Importance	5	4	3	2	1
How Well Achieved	5	4	3	2	1

Orientation of Building Entrances
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses

Importance	5	4	3	2	1
How Well Achieved	5	4	3	2	1
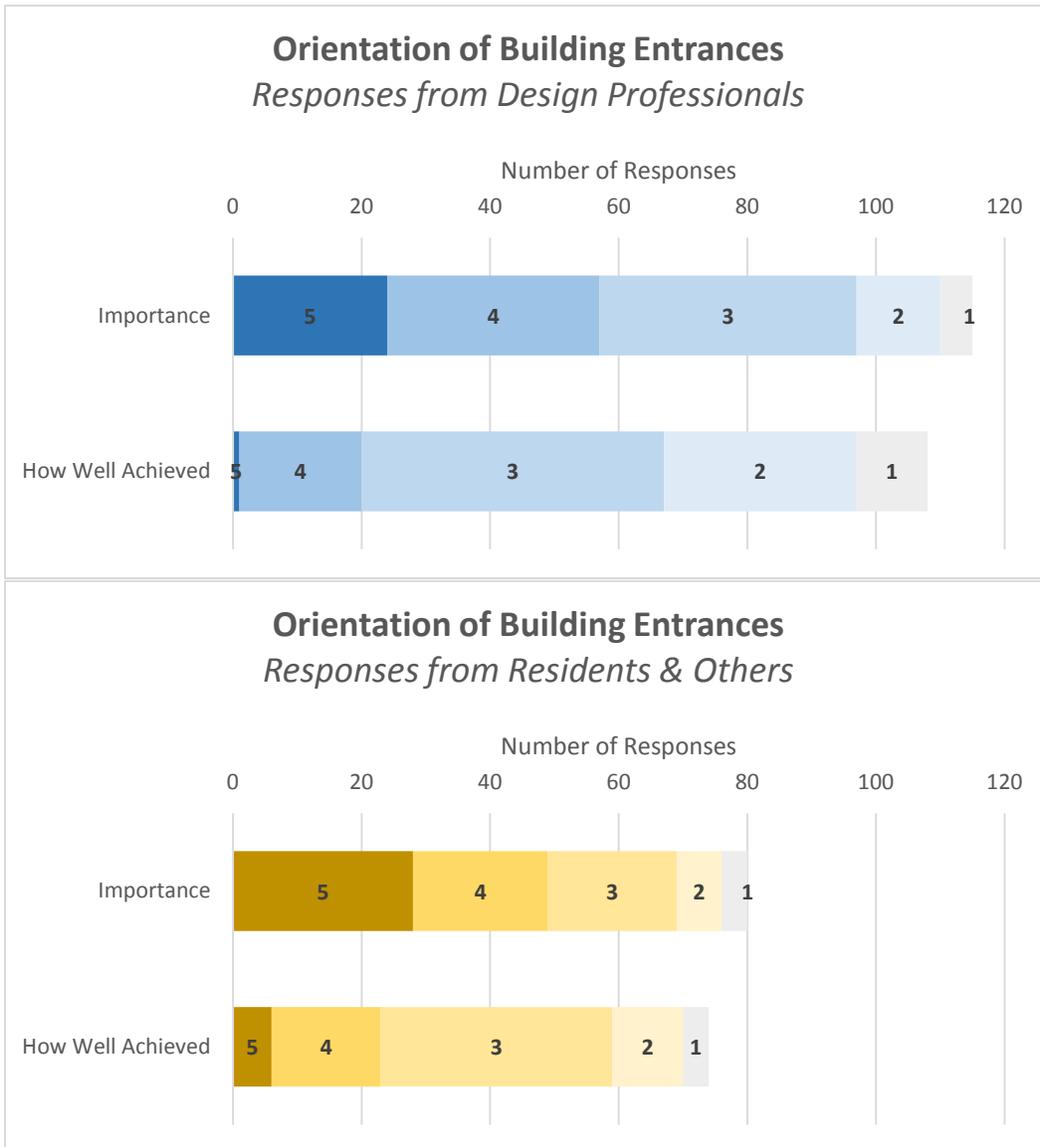
Figure 24.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Lighting

Lighting
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Importance	5	4	3	2	1
How Well Achieved	5	4	3	2	1

Lighting
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses

Importance	5	4	3	2	1
How Well Achieved	5	4	3	2	1

Figure 25.   Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Landscaping and Street Trees

Landscaping and Street Trees
Responses from Design Professionals

Landscaping and Street Trees
Responses from Residents & Others

Figure 26. Questions 18 and 19 Comparison: Sidewalk-Level Detail

Sidewalk-level Detail
Responses from Design Professionals

Number of Responses

Sidewalk-level Detail
Responses from Residents & Others

Number of Responses
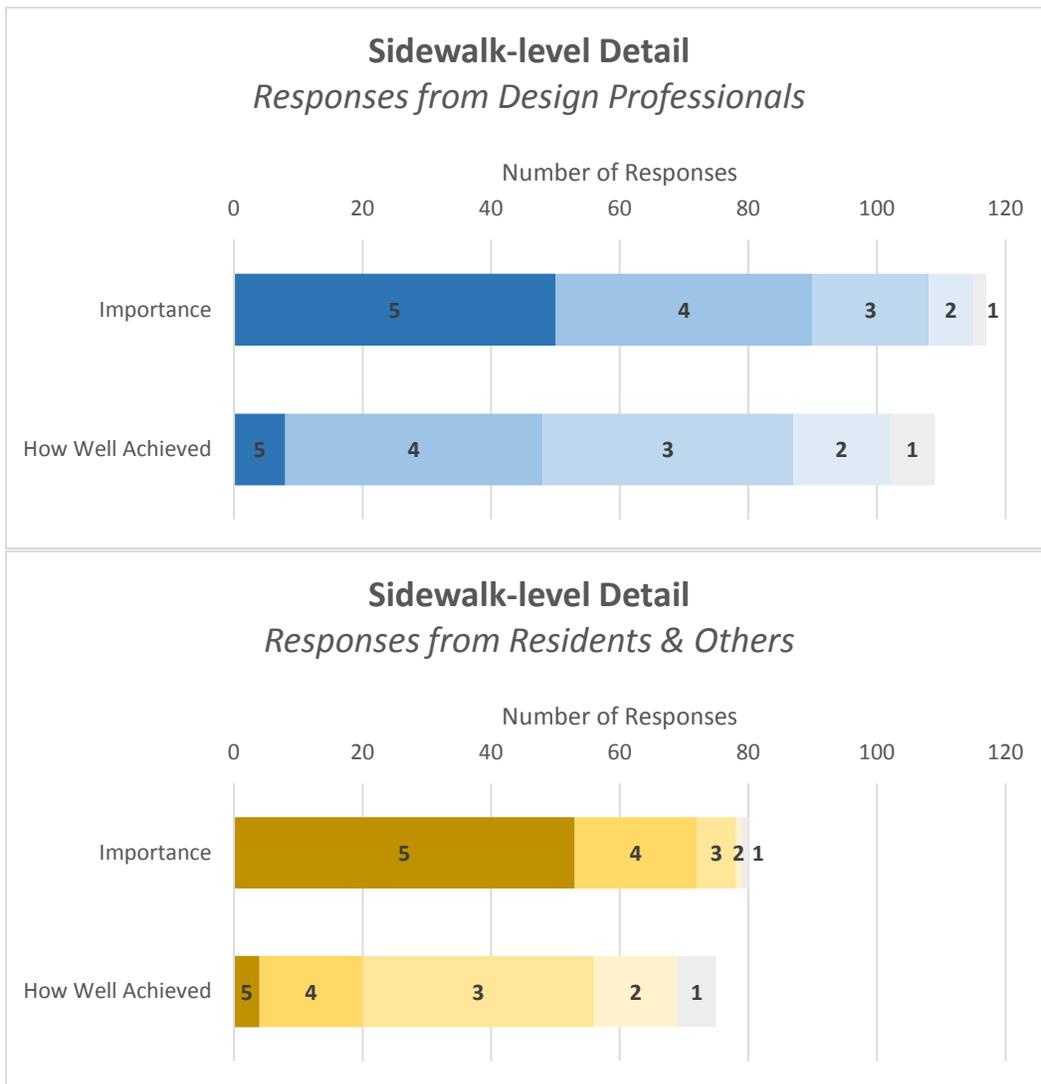
Other Important Characteristics mentioned in open responses to Questions 18 & 19:

Respondents could also provide additional characteristics they thought were important in creating a desirable built environment or an effective process. These open-ended responses included:

- Scale/consistency with neighbors
- Bike parking
- Loading/drive through businesses/parking impacts
- Diversity/novelty/expressiveness/ creativity
- Street environment / Pedestrian Experience & Safety

- Construction cost/modern practices
- Sustainability
- Displacement of current residents
- Open Space
- Commercial in mixed use
- Cost of process in time/money
- Historic value

"Residents & Others" tended to mention scale and consistency with existing uses more often than "Design Professionals," who mentioned creativity and context more often.

Question 20. Administration factors

This question asked respondents to select the three most important factors in the administration of the Design Overlay Zone (d-overlay). These responses are very different between the respondent groups. The "Design Professionals" group valued flexibility, predictability, cost, and length of time; while the "Residents & Others" group valued design attention, opportunity for public feedback, context, and transparent discussion.

Figure 27.   Important Factors in the Administration of the d-Overlay
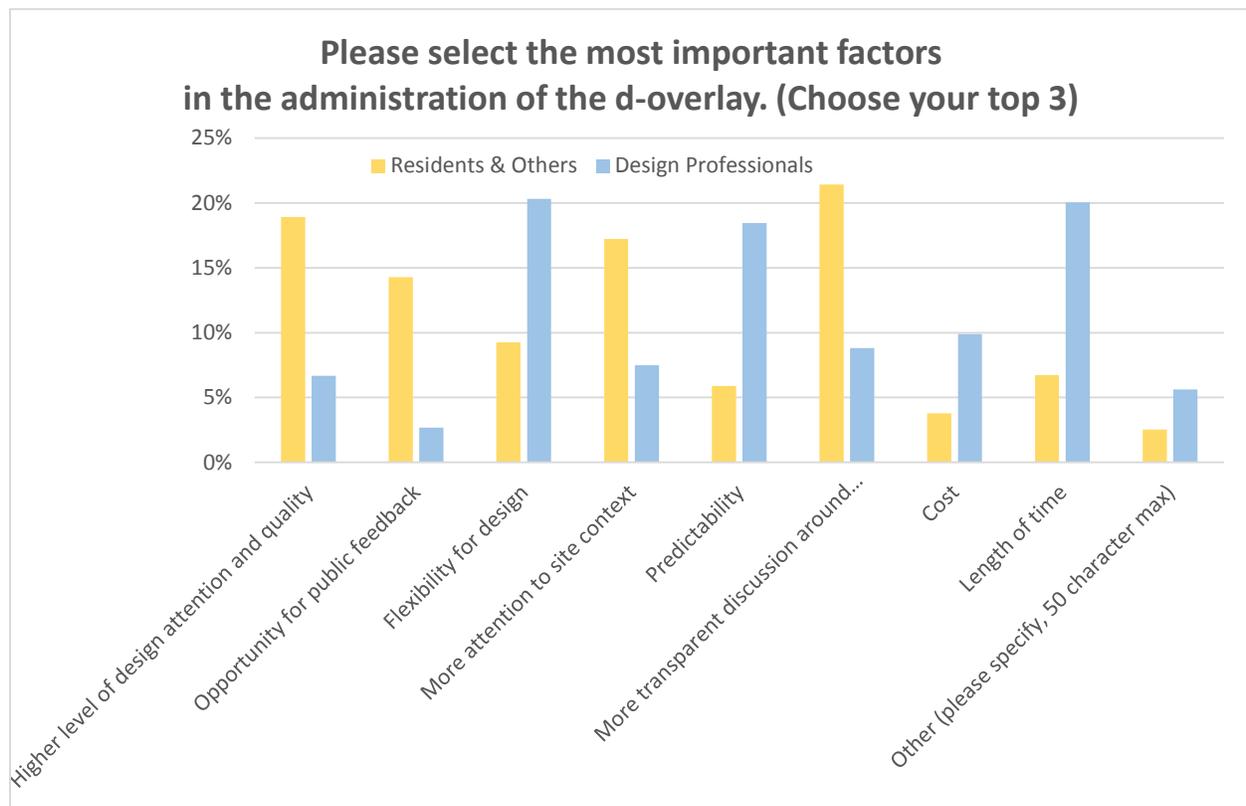
Other Important Characteristics mentioned in open responses to Question 20:

Respondents could also provide additional factors they thought were important in the administration of the d-overlay. These open-ended responses included:

- flexibility
- predictability
- cost
- less subjectivity

- consistency
- communication to public
- unnecessary delay

Question 21. Achievement of administration factors

There are only modest differences in how the "Design Professionals" group and the "Residents & Others" group perceive the success of the process. However, "Design Professionals" felt that the process provides good opportunity for public feedback, while "Residents & Others" did not feel similarly.

Inversely, Residents & Others scored cost, predictability, flexibility, and length of time fairly high, while Design Professionals scored these very low.

Figure 28.
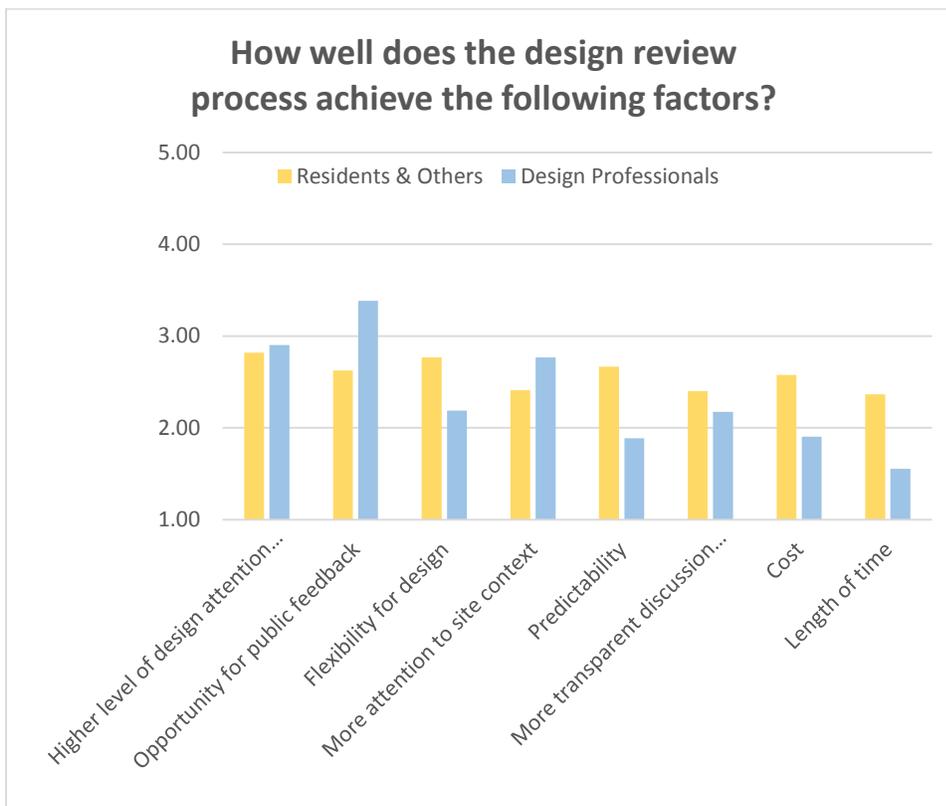
Question 22. Design Objectives

Respondents in the "Design Professionals" group differed from those in the "Residents & Others" group when asked to select the five design objectives most important to them. Notable items from Figure 29 include:

- "Residents & Others" chose "Responding to area characteristics and traditions" most often, while "Design Professionals" selected it as important fairly infrequently.
- "Residents & Others" selected "Enhance the site and building through landscape features" more frequently than "Design Professionals"

- The objective of "Promote quality and permanence in development" was ranked often by both groups, but more so by the "Design Professionals" group.
- "Signs," "role of gateways," and "stopping & viewing places" were ranked infrequently by all.

Renters were significantly less likely to select "Integrate parking in a manner that is attractive and complementary to the site and its surroundings" as an important design objective than homeowners (19% versus 38%, p= .05).

Figure 29.   Important Design Objectives

Of the design objectives listed below, which are the most important to you? (Choose your top 5)

Legend: ■ Residents & Others   ■ Design Professionals
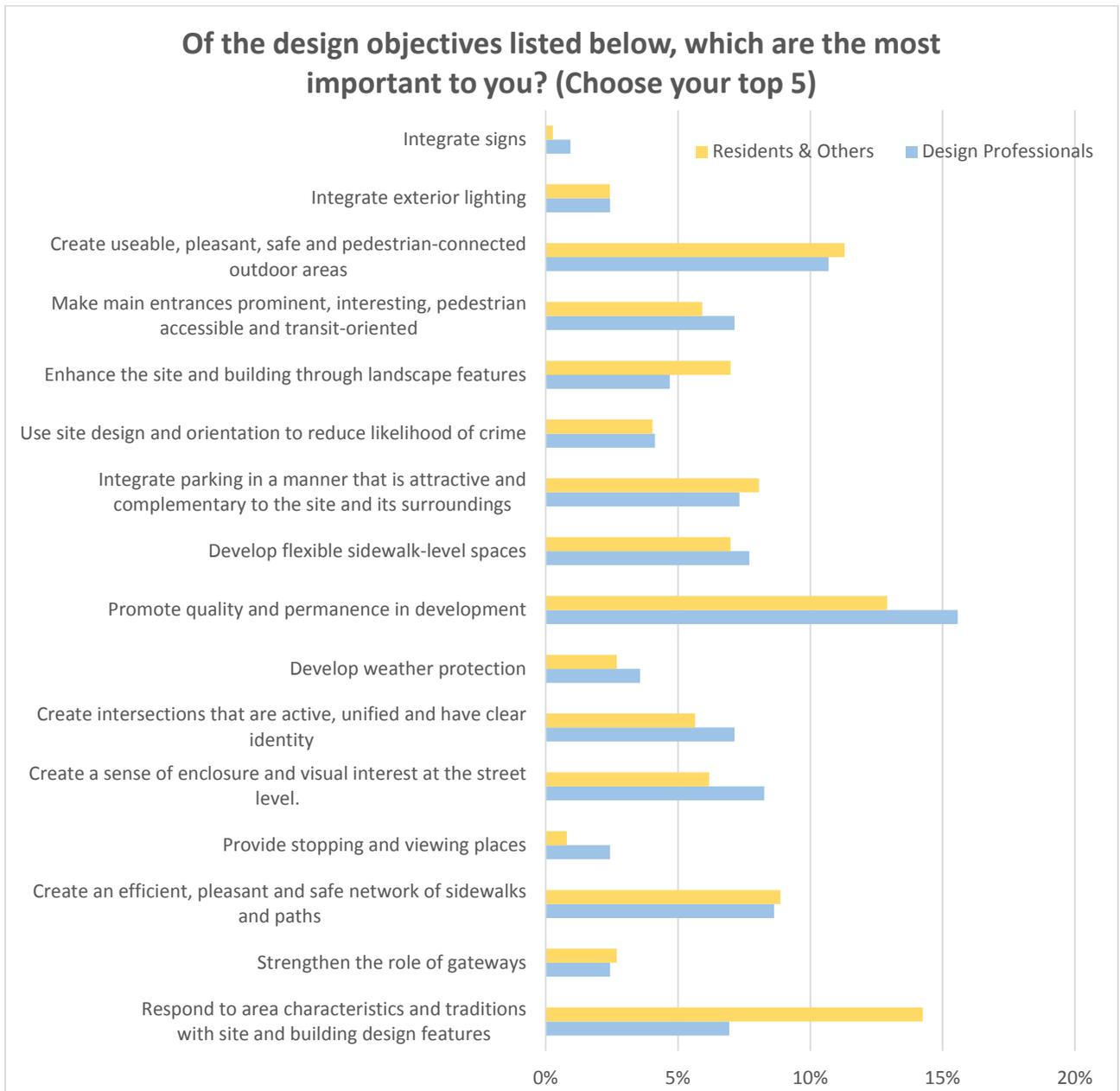
Question 23 & 24: Design Commission Meetings

These questions addressed the timing of Design Commission meetings. The current Design Commission meeting time is much more convenient for design professionals than for Residents & Others. As shown in Figure 30 and Figure 31, evening meetings would be more convenient for "Residents & Others."

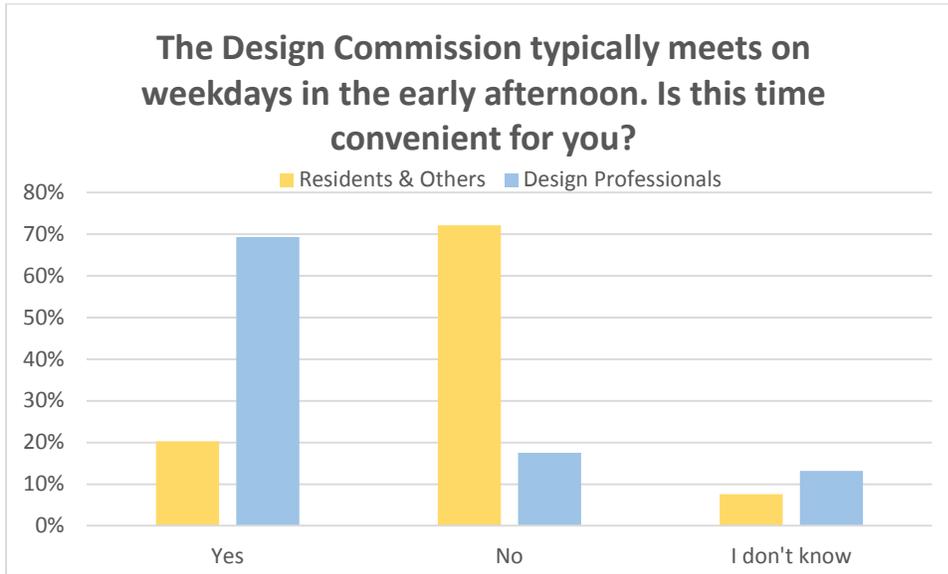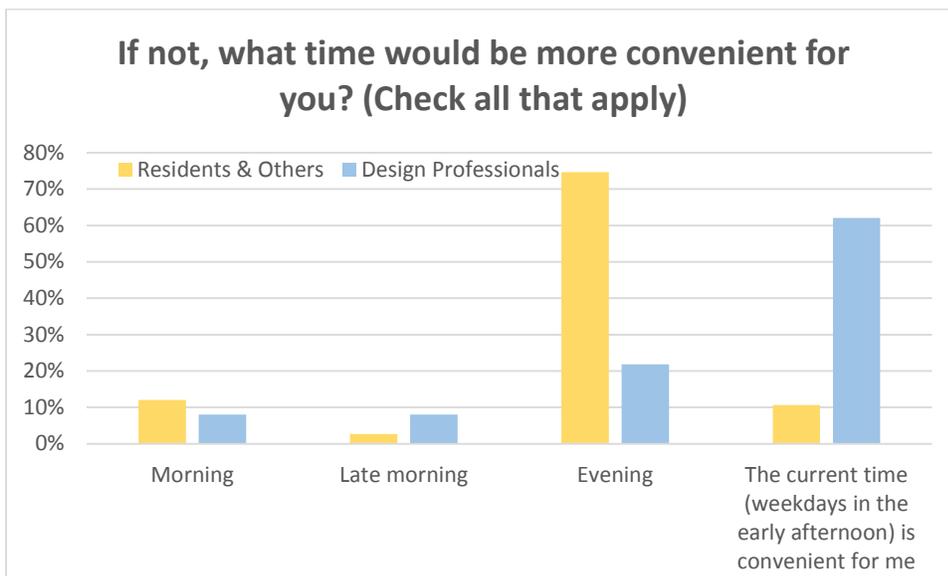Figure 30.   Convenience of Current Design Commission Meeting Time
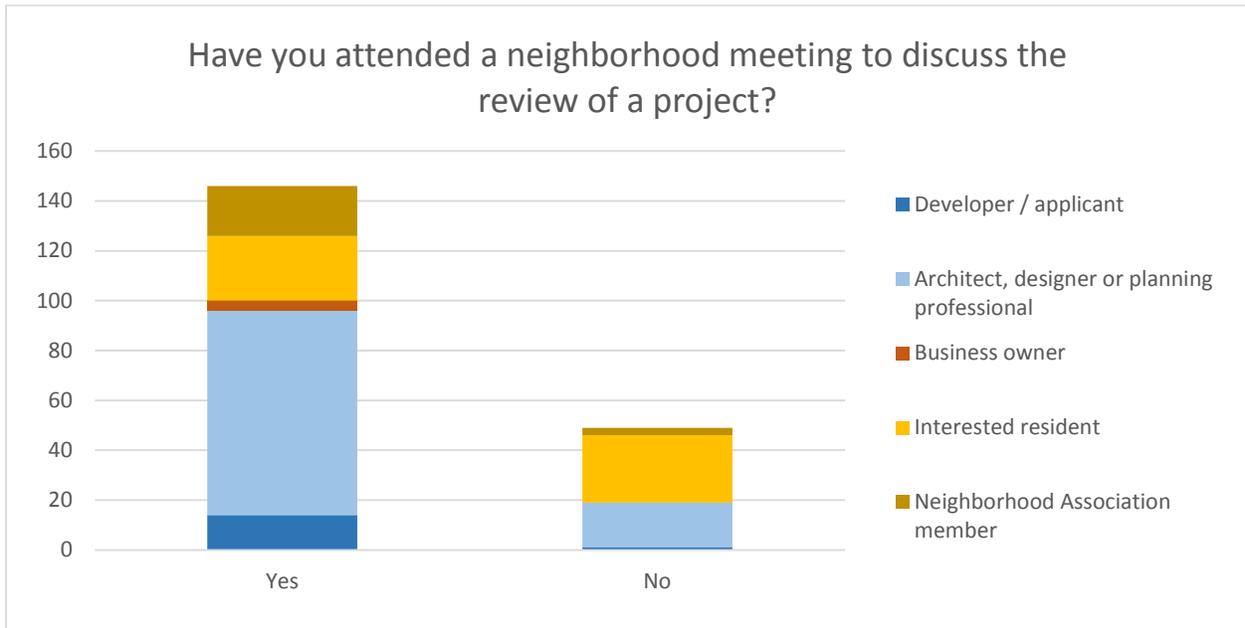

Figure 31.   More Convenient Design Commission Meeting Time

Question 25. Attendance at Neighborhood Meetings

The majority of respondents have attended a neighborhood meeting to discuss the review of a project. Of those that have not attended a neighborhood meeting, most identified as an "Interested resident."

Figure 32. Attendance at Neighborhood Meetings

Question 26. Utility of Neighborhood Meetings

The majority of respondents thought neighborhood meetings were helpful. More respondents who described themselves as "Interested Residents" did not know if they are helpful than thought they were helpful. A large proportion of those in the "Design Professionals" group found that neighborhood meetings to discuss the review of projects were helpful, as shown Figure 33 and in many of the open-ended responses to question 27. Most respondents who said they had not attended a neighborhood meeting in Question 25 responded "I don't know" to Question 26.

Renters were significantly less likely to say that neighborhood meetings are helpful (37% for renters versus 60% for homeowners, p=.05).

Figure 33.   Utility of Neighborhood meetings to Discuss the Review of Projects

Question 27: Why or why not?

Theme *(a comment can touch on multiple themes)*	Times expressed	Example Comments
Neighborhood input is useful	33	• They care and can be helpful/creative • Gives opportunity to discuss benefit and impacts • Neighbors often have insight not found in criteria • It's important to understand the perspective of a community or constituency, these meetings provide the opportunity for consensus building. • Neighborhoods have a huge stake in the character and livability of their spaces. Design review needs neighborhood feedback, and neighborhood meetings are a good place to do it. • Yes, because it gave me a chance to connect with neighbors about what they value. While they may not agree with every decision that we make about our building, it is good to understand their values so that we can try to address them when possible. Occasionally, the meetings devolve into a complaining session rather than a constructive conversation, but I have found that is not the majority of the meeting tones. • I've been able to use their feedback to convince my owners to add improvements. • It puts me at ease to know that I can connect with the owners, builders, architects, and all the parties who are involved.

Theme *(a comment can touch on multiple themes)*	Times expressed	Example Comments
Conversations are generally unhelpful. Low turnout. Non-focused discussions. Most issues pertain to the zoning, or ultimate building users, or other issues outside of design. Can be entertaining, but not productive.	22	• Neighborhood groups are often not educated about what they are looking at and may not comprehend the impact of their suggestions. They can also Rally around issues that are well beyond the influence of the design team such as city transportation policy • Very few neighborhoods are concerned about the long-term future, rather than the immediate impacts of a development. NIMBYS • usually the vocal minority out-shouts the majority, and buildings become political pawns • Very conservative. Stops innovation. • They want to control parts of the design process that are not possible. Like use of the building.
There is little opportunity to change project at that point	10	• There's little opportunity to influence anything about the direction of any new developments in Portland right now. They're just being steamrolled/railroaded through in the quest for more housing units as quickly as possible. Also I notice you didn't mention weekends as an option for meetings--why not? One of the few convenient times for people with full-time jobs. • It does not seem that recommendations or objections to design by the neighborhood are taken into consideration.

Additional Comments

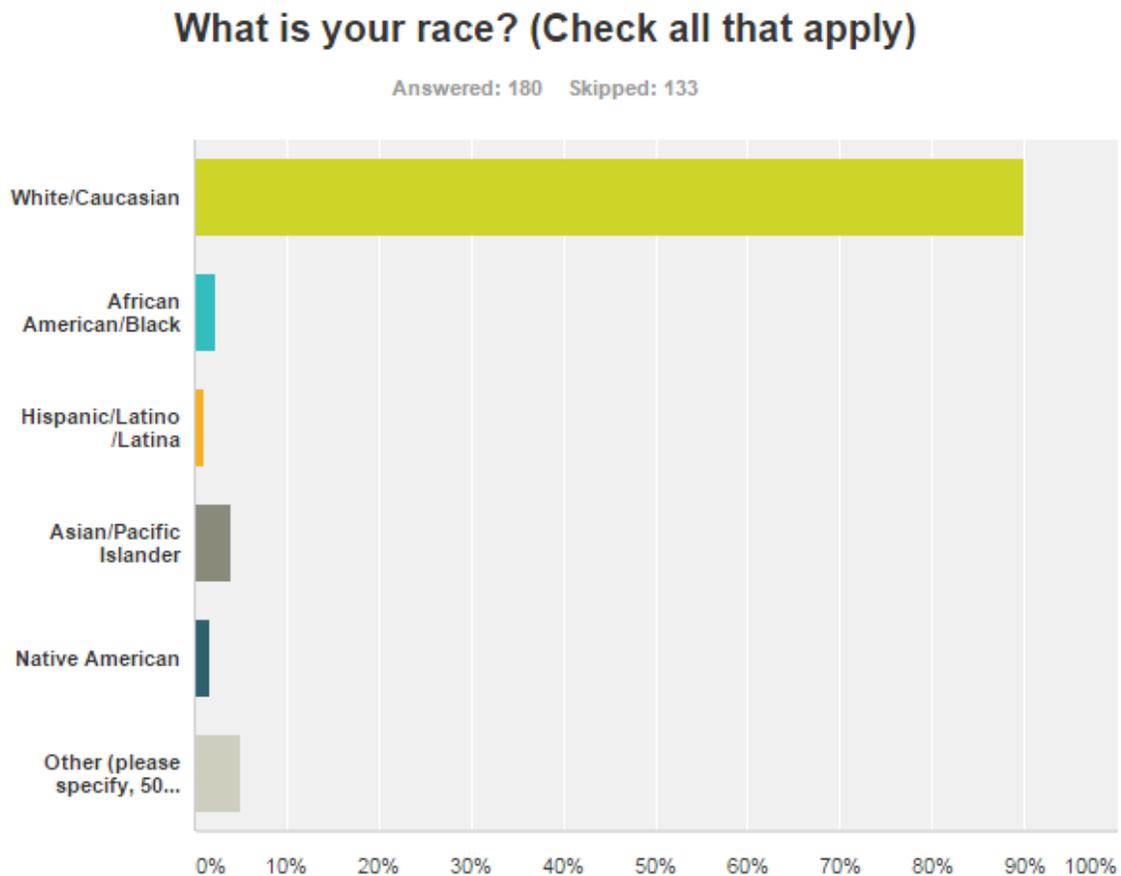|		
Not enough notice, inconvenient times, childcare is needed	Provides opportunity for detailed conversation that is lacking at design commission	Depends on the neighborhood - some are helpful and others are not
Conflicting design opinions from staff and design commission.	Enhances validity of design at commission hearings	Future residents/users of the new buildings should be given consideration as well
Helpful only if it influences outcome	Changes to the design occur after neighborhood meeting	

Section 5: Demographics

This section containing demographic questions was skipped by 133 respondents, or about 40% of the total. Of those that responded:

- They were 90% white (Figure 34)
- Over 70% were between the ages of 30 and 59 (Figure 35)
- Nearly 50% had a household income of $100,000 or more, and another 40% had a household income of $50,000 to $99,999 (Figure 36)
- Over 80% owned their own home (Figure 37)
- The median answer for household size was 2, the mean was 2.5.
- Nearly 70% did not have children under the age of 18 in the household (Figure 38).
- Those in the "Design Professionals" group were younger and had a higher household income than those in the "Residents & Others" group.
- Renters were much more likely to be younger and have a lower household income than homeowners.

Question 28. Race

Figure 34.   Race

CITY OF PORTLAND DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT
APPENDIX D - QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS (JANUARY 2017)

Answer Choices		Responses	
▼ White/Caucasian		90.00%	162
▼ African American/Black		2.22%	4
▼ Hispanic/Latino/Latina		1.11%	2
▼ Asian/Pacific Islander		3.89%	7
▼ Native American		1.67%	3
▼ Other (please specify, 50 character max)	Responses	5.00%	9
Total Respondents: 180			

Question 29. Age

Figure 35.   Age

What is your age?

Answered: 186   Skipped: 127
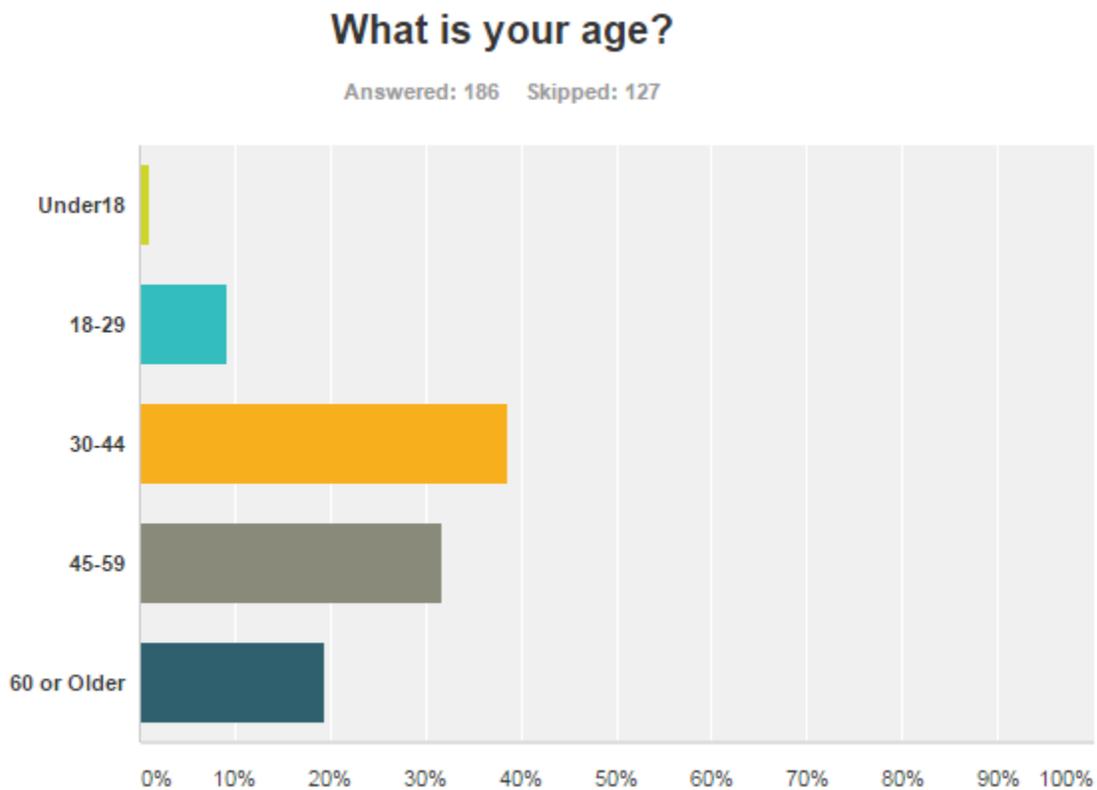
Answer Choices		Responses	
▼	Under18	1.08%	2
▼	18-29	9.14%	17
▼	30-44	38.71%	72
▼	45-59	31.72%	59
▼	60 or Older	19.35%	36
Total			186

Question 30. Income

Figure 36.   Household Income

What is your approximate annual household income?

Answered: 178   Skipped: 135
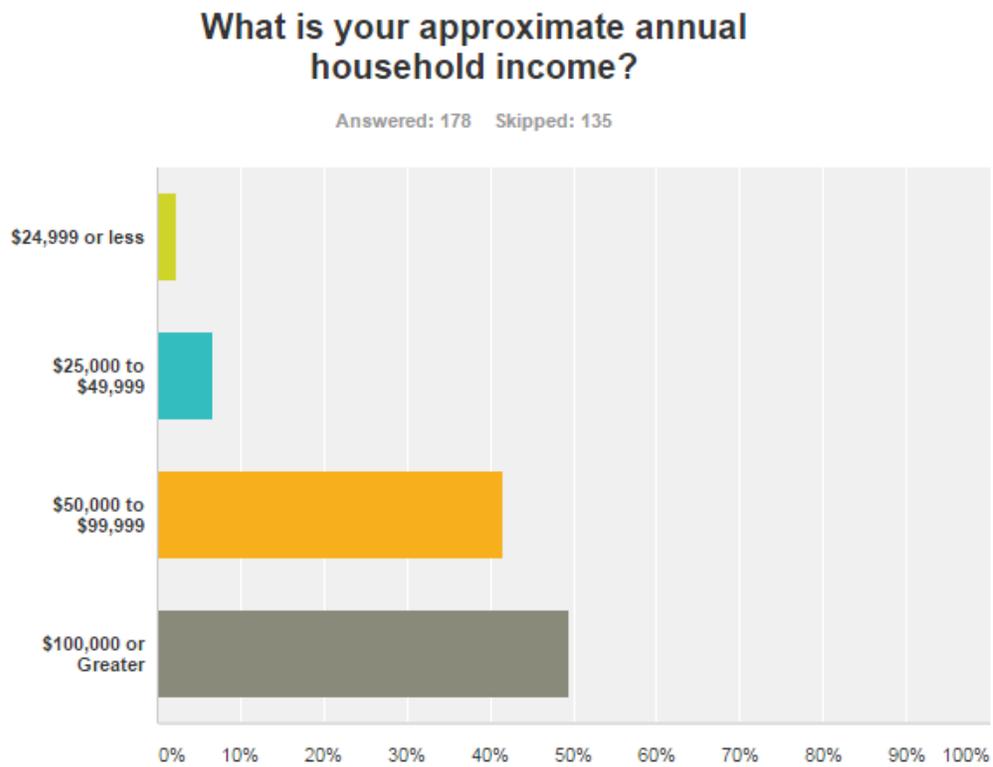
Answer Choices	Responses	
$24,999 or less	2.25%	4
$25,000 to $49,999	6.74%	12
$50,000 to $99,999	41.57%	74
$100,000 or Greater	49.44%	88
Total		178

Question 31. Home Ownership

Figure 37. Home Ownership

Do you rent or own your home?

Answered: 189 Skipped: 124
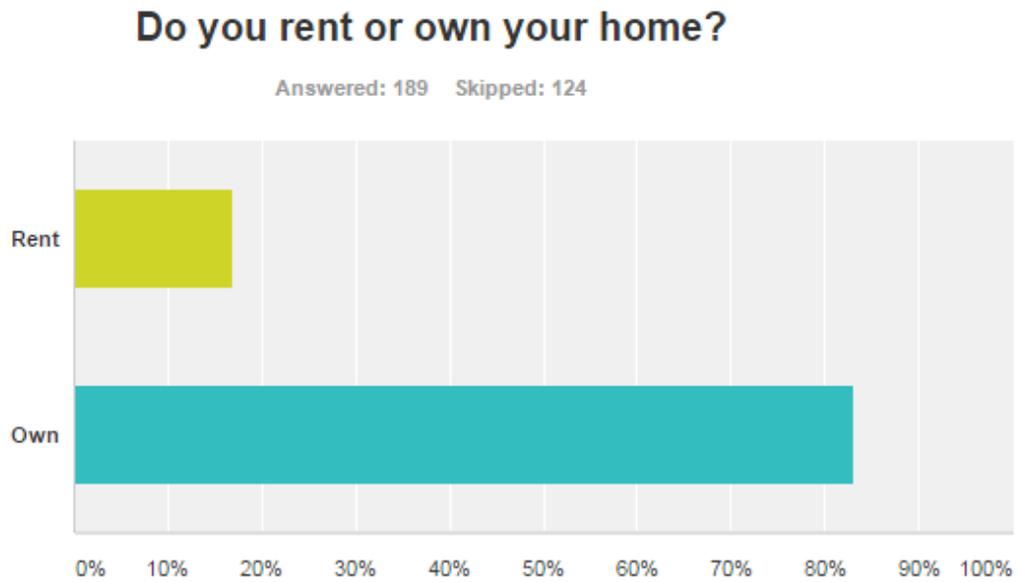
Answer Choices	Responses	
Rent	16.93%	32
Own	83.07%	157
Total		189

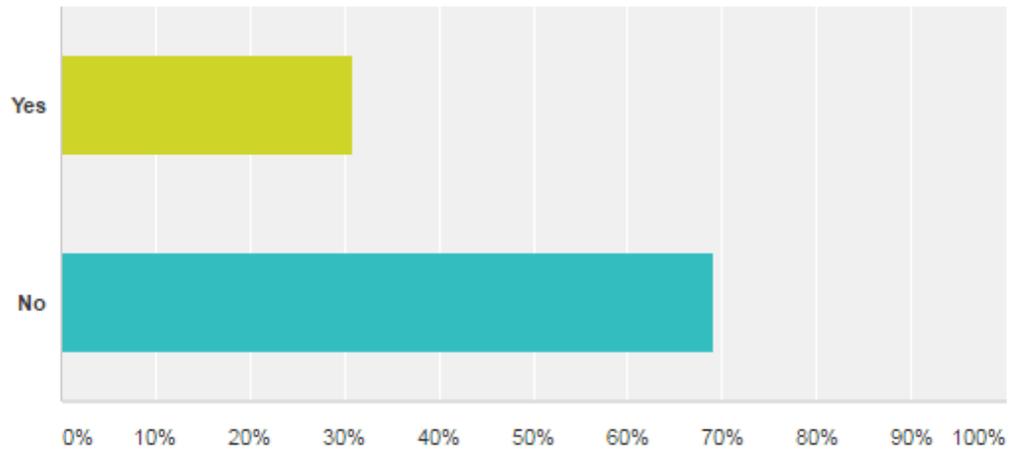## Question 32. How many people are in your household?

Mean: 2.48

Median: 2

Question 33. Individuals under 18 in Household

Figure 38.　　　　Individuals under 18 in Household

Do any individuals under the age of 18 live in your household?

Answered: 185　　Skipped: 128

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	30.81%	57
No	69.19%	128
Total		185