
APPENDIX 6

RISE FOR ARCHITECTURE PUBLIC SURVEY ANALYSIS

METHODOLOGY

Following the Angus Reid opinion poll, Rise for Architecture developed an in-depth thirteen question survey, which was circulated through a variety of social media channels. Additionally, Rise for Architecture steering committee members sent the survey links to the profession's governing bodies, and their personal networks. The survey link was also included in an April 14, 2022, Canadian Architect Magazine article.

Over 1,110 individuals responded to the survey and provided an extensive collection of detailed comments (8,032 comments). The survey was available in both French and English.

Of the 13 questions, 10 focused on questions related to the built environment, with 3 relating to the specific characteristics of the individual answering the survey. In analyzing the data, together the steering committee reviewed the comments. Further analysis was then undertaken and comments were selected based on their representation of a significant number of similar comments.

SURVEY OVERVIEW

Almost **65% of respondents were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the decision-making processes that shape their communities**. 45% of the comments linked respondents' immense frustration regarding the power bestowed on developers and high levels of discontentment with political structures (politicians and city hall staff) [Question 1 results]. Additionally, respondents indicated that **engagement processes feel like "box-checking" or "protocol"** and that their voices, when raised, are not heard. Therefore, it is not surprising that when asked what would help respondents get involved in shaping their communities, the number one response was that they could feel confident that their opinions would make a difference (73%) [Question 3 results]. **Regarding the people who design and plan communities, half (50%) of respondents were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their performance**, while 35% were satisfied or very satisfied [Question 2 results]. Based on respondents' dissatisfaction with who and how decisions are made, as well as their desires to be heard, **there is a significant opportunity to reconsider the practices used to shape Canadian communities**.

When it comes to what inspires respondents, they overwhelmingly shared that **they are inspired by natural settings such as greenspaces, waterfronts, and public parks** within their communities [Question 7 results]. As well, they most liked buildings that were connected to these natural contexts [Question 5 results]. In regards to building preferences, **respondents focused on the interesting character and materials of older, well-maintained "heritage" buildings**. When considering what they would change about the buildings around them, their core focus was on streetscapes with a **diversity of building design** (newer buildings with visual interest mixed with cared for older buildings) [Question 6 results].

Beyond being inspired by nature and heritage buildings, respondents emphasized the **inspirational qualities of spaces that incorporate art and culture**, such as art galleries, museums, libraries, public art/murals, artist spaces, churches, outdoor concert spaces, and cultural buildings [Question 7 results]. Yet, only half of respondents see their own culture reflected in their community's buildings, parks, and public spaces [Question 1 results]. Additionally, there was an ongoing concern regarding the building's scale, context, functions [Question 6 results], as well as, issues regarding derelict buildings [Question 8 results]. Respondents also shared their concerns about the **negative impacts of cars, traffic, and parking lots**, on the shape of their communities [Question 8 results].

When asked to rate the importance of issues faced by their communities, respondents equally focused on the **importance of the climate crisis, environmental stewardship, and affordability** [Question 9 result]. Thematically throughout the survey, respondents made clear that a broader focus needs to be taken in regards to shaping their communities. Their concerns about the challenges facing their communities are focused far beyond a single building, and instead expand to a focus on the **interconnections between places, people, prosperity and the potential of communities**.

Importantly, **three quarters (76%) of respondents support the need for better policies** to guide the planning and design of our communities, including the development of an architecture policy for Canada with greater clarity and accountability for positive social and environmental outcomes [Question 10 results]. **Collectively the public polling and survey confirmed the need for change and serves as a wake-up call for the profession, its institutions, and governments**.

QUESTION 1

Do you see your culture reflected in your community's buildings, parks and public spaces?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1089 Responses

857 Comments

COMMENT ANALYSIS

In their comments, participants reflected on the culture(s) that they connect with, and how those are or are not reflected in the spaces and places around them.

Many participants who chose no as their answer, reflected on whether or not their culture should be reflected in the places and spaces around them. Many of the comments indicated that spaces around them are void of any culture, and terms like "boring", and "generic" appear frequently. Additionally, many comments focused on the importance of green space as a cultural resource or value.

For those participants who responded yes, there is a frequent reflection on being "white" or "settler" or "Canadian" and how what they see around them does feel representative of their culture. Yet, there is also a thematic desire to see the places they live become more representative of other cultures that occupy those spaces.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES



PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

ANSWER CHOICE - NO

- I am not interested in seeing more of my English/Irish culture reflected but the multiculturalism of Canada reflected.
- I come from a variety of "cultures" so I couldn't choose just one. I wouldn't say that our community's buildings, parks and public spaces collectively follow a single culture, maybe a combination of various cultures but the majority of the development is fairly generic with no real personality.
- 'My culture' values green spaces: our community has the lowest parkland/per capita in the city; trees are NOT prioritized & the city's tree canopy has been savaged in the past several decades.
- I see culture as beliefs as well as traditions, I don't see sustainable design and incorporation of natural landscapes supporting ecology and biodiversity in parks and public spaces, and buildings which are contributing negatively to those principles.

ANSWER CHOICE - YES

- I'm a white male, so my "cultural" group dominates community landscapes, however I also recognize that there is greater cultural diversity in more current projects and I really appreciate that "others" are having a voice in creating the communities they live in.
 - The architecture in my province reflects the colonial aspect of the province. As someone descended from European (German and Scottish), this is prevalent in the architecture (historically and culturally). Very glad to see diversification coming to recognize other cultures -- indigenous, African Canadian, etc.
 - We have lots of old buildings in our city and community efforts support the preservation of the character of the city, parks, etc. The community has a strong voice in how parks and public spaces are developed and they reflect the community's vision (Mostly).
 - I live in a mixed, working class neighbourhood that has a long history in my City. The homes/buildings, green spaces, parks and businesses reflect the community that has grown over time.
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QUESTION 2

Are you satisfied with how decisions that shape the places and buildings in your community are made? When it comes to who gets a say, whose ideas are listened to and so forth, are you...

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1089 Responses
837 Comments

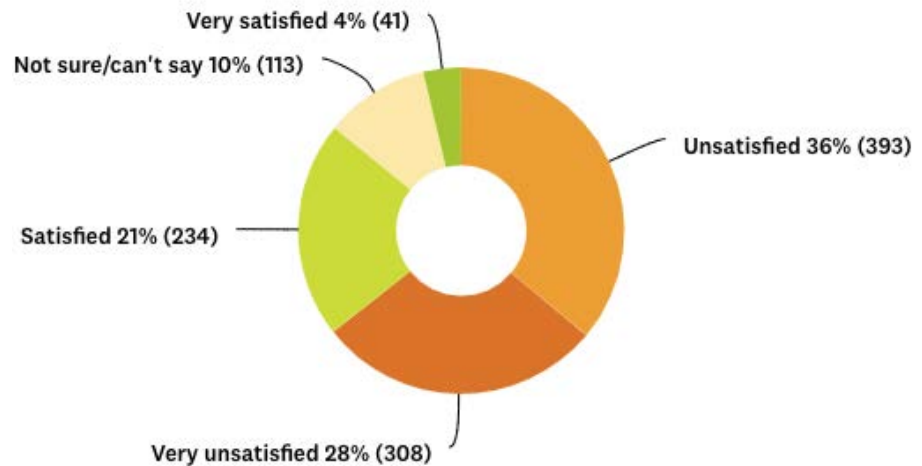
RESPONSE ANALYSIS

64% of participants are unsatisfied or very unsatisfied compared with 25% who are satisfied or very satisfied with how their communities are shaped.

COMMENT ANALYSIS

54% of the comments focus on issues of political offices (such as elected officials, and city staff) and the power given to developers. As well, within the comments, there is a theme regarding the dynamics between public engagement and decision making (42% of comments reference this). Overall, the majority of the comments focus on the interplay between power, politics, people, and processes in the shaping of place.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES



PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

ANSWER CHOICE - (VERY) SATISFIED - 175 COMMENTS

- The couple of open house consultations I've been to have seemed to be quite open to feedback from the public. However, other times, I feel like the design and considerations have already been thought about the open house is just a formality.
- It's a mix of experiences. Public projects have consultation and shaping by ideas from participants. Planning approvals are highly regulated and have less opportunity for shaping once an application is filed.

ANSWER CHOICE - (VERY) DISSATISFIED - 535 COMMENTS

- A complicated question. The City has improved its consultation processes but the ultimate decisions are made by elected officials who are beholden to the development industry. So consultation is often just "show".
 - Politics drives decision making, and it is often self-serving and short sighted. I feel that many voices that matter are not heard, or sought out, and/or can't engage with the decision making structures.
 - I think that many of the choices are not thoughtful and unfortunately are driven by the squeaky wheel or those people who use the system to their own advantage.
 - At the end of the day I think that developers are able to push forward their profit-driven projects and do the minimum possible to achieve the community requirements. Social and environmental issues need to be considered as equally important to financial.
 - Very developer driven, community 'engagement' is rubber stamping largely, not quality meaningful engagement with a community to understand their needs and reality.
 - City staff have too much say and the government can steer a project away from forward thinking.
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QUESTION 3

What would help you get involved in shaping your community? (Check all that apply.)

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1088 Responses
222 "Other" Comments

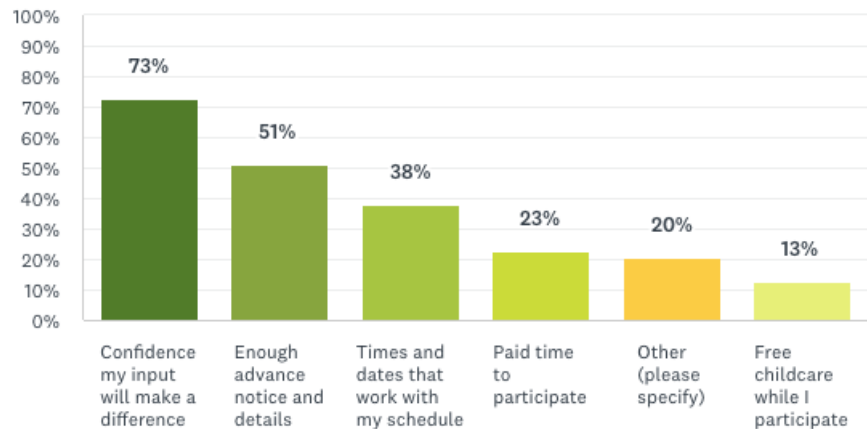
RESPONSE ANALYSIS

20% of participants chose the "other" response, which allowed them to provide a comment. A major theme within these comments involves creating a more inclusive framework for engagement, where more voice can be heard, rather than the "loudest" voice.

Participants often commented about the need for a variety of structures, such as safe spaces, and communication channels to be implemented. "Fair", "accessible", and "transparent" are words commonly used in participants' comments. Additionally, participants shared about the importance of creating accountability and transparency mechanisms.

Over 10% of the comments were participants sharing that they are already involved.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES



PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

ANSWER CHOICE - OTHER

- Ensuring that there are many different channels for informing me and others about opportunities to shape my community. One public notice on the web is not enough.
 - Ensuring a safer space to contribute my experience. Opportunities for those from marginalized communities to actually be heard.
 - Some way to aggregate opinion and still incorporate outlier viewpoints. When that "flare issue" comes up and suddenly 200 people show up at city hall to voice their opinion. It's a positive turnout but even if we win, I don't want to listen to hours of people saying basically the same thing. Petitions that can also take in qualitative responses are part of the solution.
 - An external consultant to hold the government accountable and to ensure transparency and equity throughout a comprehensive modern design process.
 - A truly reliable, articulate, intelligent and sensitive planning reference framework clearly endorsed by the community and not just interest groups.
 - Actually, my single voice should not be heard. But my ideas melded with others using larger group facilitation expertise is important. What the city consultation is not. It is "heat reflection" ...control of voice because they don't know how to work with larger groups to co create community and to develop an aesthetic that is pleasing to the senses and good for the earth's health and our own.
 - Participating in decision-shaping is a time-consuming and resource-intensive process. Those whose voices are missing are most unlikely to participate in them due to economic, resources, obligations and societal constraints.
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QUESTION 4

Are you satisfied with the way the people who design and plan your community are performing? Think about design and planning professionals. Are you...

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1088 Responses

743 Comments

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

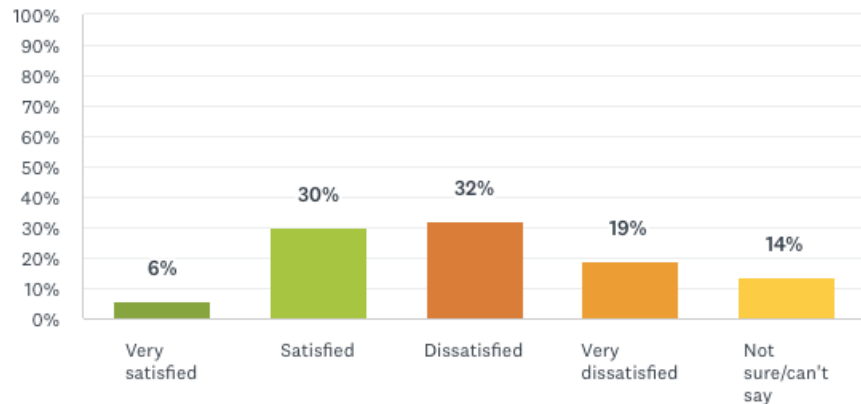
When the results are combined, over half of participants (51%) are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Similarly, when the results are combined for those who are satisfied or very satisfied, 36% of respondents fall into this category.

COMMENT ANALYSIS

The comments thematically focused on dissatisfaction with political structures (like city politicians), the power afforded to particular groups (developers), and the misalignment between the desires of communities and those who design them.

A large number of comments focused on the lack of long term planning or the lack of execution of long term plans.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES



PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

ANSWER CHOICE - (VERY) SATISFIED - 203 COMMENTS

- Generally satisfied, but there are also some big pieces that need to be addressed to see social and environmental features embedded into planning, design, delivery, and maintenance.
- They do what they can given the broader political and capital constraints within our societies.
- I work with many architects and many of Ontario's best but many make the design about them and not the clients needs or wants.
- There are many competent and even brilliant people executing the planning and design of our environment based on outmoded and detrimental goals set by their clients.
- I believe local professionals draw on experiences outside of the local area, which may positively affect local design. There may be problems locally with people who have problems accepting "foreign" influences.
- I like the buildings that demonstrate our cultures, warmth, intelligence and passion. But they are the exception, not the norm.

ANSWER CHOICE - (VERY) DISSATISFIED - 455 COMMENTS

- Little account seems to be taken of environmental, aesthetic or community issues.
- The city gives exceptions to the building regulations to anyone who asks for one.
- Heritage and environment, and cycling and rapid transit, are all bottom of the list - city is too car-centric and gets easily fooled by "density" of skyscrapers.
- Designs are not innovative or compliant with pressing needs of climate action, pandemic resilience, or family orientation.
- It seems planning is done to satisfy easily achievable political goals rather than more difficult social or community goals.
- Progress is very slow, public input is routinely ignored.
- Too much of the same old thinking, not enough innovation.

QUESTION 5

What do you like about the buildings around you?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1036 Responses

COMMENT ANALYSIS

A large portion of comments focused on older, well-maintained, "heritage" buildings. Respondents focused on the ways that these buildings have interesting character, materials, and tell a story.

Additionally, a significant number of comments focused on the context that surrounds buildings, and the ways in which the fabric of the built environment works together.

As well, a large collection of comments were straightforward in stating that they liked "nothing" or "not much" about the buildings around them.

QUESTION 6

What would you like to change about the buildings around you?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1035 Responses

COMMENT ANALYSIS

In reviewing the comments, there are several key themes that

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

THEME - CHARACTER

- Enjoy the heritage architecture of the older buildings. Modern architectural design features of newer buildings is also appealing. Each should compliment the other.
- Heritage, old mixed with new. The best ones are the ones that serve the community the most (libraries). Design that matters and allows people to take full advantage of what is being offered.
- I love the built heritage in our city, and wish more was actively done to conserve the important buildings. More adaptive reuse, and buildings that are taken down need to be deconstructed and not demolished. Also need to have strong evidence that rehabilitation is not possible when a building is asked for removal.
- The buildings in my neighbourhood are mostly old Eaton's catalogue houses that have been updated over the last 100 years. There are some post-war bungalows mixed in, and some newer infills. The houses are close to each other, and boulevards are tree lined.

THEME - CONTEXT

- The inclusion of green spaces around new-build apartment buildings and dedicated safe spaces for young families (ie. outside play/patio areas accessible only from within the building).
- Diversity of style (mostly due to varying ages -- new buildings are often similar; but perhaps this was always true). Diversity of uses (mixed residential types, mix of commercial, office, residential). Increasingly walkable.
- I appreciate a lot of the heritage or older buildings that have been maintained and new buildings that have appealing character and a good connection with their surroundings and landscape.
- I feel that the more variety in an area, the more pleasant it is to exist/walk around, and provides more mental landmarks for children and aging adults to navigate.

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

THEME - DESIGN DIVERSITY

- More colour, broader material palettes, more landscaping, more public space, more expression and diversity of form.
- Make new buildings both more varied and more responsive to their local context, climate, and culture.
- New buildings that with strong characters, not just a match box; low to mid-rise buildings to increase urban density; need accessible public spaces and pedestrian walkways with characters too ; a walkable downtown and communities, community gardens, less big box businesses; affordable housing for all.
- More variety for a greater variety of people.

THEME - BUILDING MAINTENANCE

- More care, greater investment in design (demonstration that space
-

stand out: design diversity, building maintenance, engaging streetscapes (trees, bikes, less cars), mixed-use or public buildings, and that there would be more of a focus on accessibility and sustainability in the creation of buildings.

Respondents are interested in having new buildings be more diverse in their design style, while also having older buildings cared for, maintained, or updated sustainably.

When considering what they would change about the buildings around them, a core focus was on streetscapes with a diversity of building design (newer buildings with visual interest mixed with cared for older buildings), and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. There was an ongoing theme around the importance of positioning parking lots, so that there was more space for people to engage with the streetscape.

QUESTION 7

Which spaces in your community inspire you?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1029 Responses

COMMENT ANALYSIS

The spaces that inspire respondents the most are greenspaces, such as public parks, waterfronts and natural settings. 63% (492) of the comments are focused on the

and design matter!) more connection to place, site, culture. Greater focus on sustainability and addressing climate change.

- It would be nice if developers and landlords didn't sit on properties and let them fall into disrepair while they wait to capitalize on the land. Caring for existing structures helps keep communities safe and walkable, and would go a long way in improving quality of life in the city.
- Higher quality with focus on more resilience, connection to outdoors and spaces around them.
- I would like to see buildings foster regeneration of our environment and its resources rather than its depletion.

THEME - ENGAGING STREETSAPES

- Bring the buildings to the street and put the parking in the back - create streetscapes for pedestrians and cyclists. Plant more trees. Use local materials. Put the buildings closer together. Put retail on the ground floor of buildings and residential or business space above.
- More inviting public space, buffer areas which engage the public realm more to form more comfortable spaces.
- No parking attached to the front of buildings. Better choice of materials, use more colours instead of the grey, white, black, beige. Landscaping should be plants instead of stones, desert, or astroturf. We need to take inspiration from existing buildings or design some NEW avant-garde architecture, and we need to be buildings more missing middle apartments and mixed-use buildings.
- Better engagement with pedestrians at the ground level, focus on the perspective of someone walking, better performance, use higher quality materials.
- New buildings must understand that the spaces made around ...outside ...between ... are the most important .

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

THEME - GREENSPACES

- Great parks and natural spaces, growing urban areas with a distinct character and point of view.
 - Waterfront green spaces , eco-engineered spaces (rainfall gardens, purpose built wetlands).
 - I love the naturalized parks with bike trails that run through them. It always feels so peaceful and refreshing cycling along these trails.
 - Mixed use, vibrant spaces that embrace people of all walks of life and backgrounds. Spaces that speak to our higher, spiritual nature and connect us to people and nature.
 - Green, open for active transportation, places with public art, car free areas, parks, playgrounds, places that include everyone.
 - The parks host community activities (reading hours, music , markets), pedestrian streets bring back security, less stress (with no cars) and a sense of wandering in your own city.
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importance of nature as the most inspiring spaces within their communities.

The second most inspiring spaces are those that include art or culture, such as art galleries, museums, libraries, public art/murals, artist spaces, churches, outdoor concert spaces, and cultural buildings.

QUESTION 8

Which spaces in your community concern you?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1033 Responses

COMMENT ANALYSIS

The number one concern was derelict buildings, especially heritage buildings.

The second biggest concern was with scale and the context that buildings are placed in.

The third biggest concern was cars, traffic, and parking lots with almost 20% (18.8%) of comments focused on the negative impact of these three things on the city.

There is also a concern about unkept parks, homelessness, and public substance misuse.

THEME - ARTS AND CULTURE

- I like public spaces that provide an experience and allow you to interact with plants, art, and buildings.
- Pedestrian and bike-friendly heritage districts with large green spaces and cultural amenities: the public parks, the public library, the art museums and galleries, the independent art-house cinema, the affordable restaurants (which are disappearing), the downtown shopping mall (recently put up for sale).
- The buildings that have a story, and that continue to tell the story. The places that inspire the arts and artisans to showcase their talents. The street is closed in the summer to allow for expanded outdoor dining and live street music.

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

THEME - DERELICT BUILDINGS

- Poorly maintained properties and areas of the community, including road & sidewalk maintenance, lighting, etc.
- Abandoned houses and empty lots.
- Unkempt buildings, poorly lit entrances and walkways, lack of parks, lack of fountains, lack of benches, lack of trees, lack of segregated cycling routes, lack of indoor pools for winter fitness, no cohesiveness of neighbourhood design.

THEME - SCALE AND CONTEXT

- The spaces in my community which concern me are the old buildings which are being demolished by neglect instead of being preserved. The vacant land in my community is a threat as developers can buy them and erect ugly monstrosities which do not contribute to a sense of place. We need development to succeed but it must be done in a beautiful, respectful, traditional design, local vernacular, quality way.
- Ugly, cookie-cutter new houses/condos that pave over green space to make ugly garages. Lack of affordable housing for low income people. Expanding highways into neighbourhoods. Unsafe routes for cyclists, pedestrians.
- Huge developments on very narrow one way streets with small front yard setbacks.

THEME - CARS, TRAFFIC, AND PARKING

- Parking, surface parking, street parking, parking minimums, all massive wastes of space and sources of hazard.
 - Loud, heavy traffic with noise and particle pollution. Tall buildings that press up right against the sidewalk, which look over people on the street - no room for public space or streetscape experience.
 - Overly large highway-like roads throughout the city, sprawling and unwalkable suburbs, vast parking lots, failing transit systems and spaces that serve as homeless makeshift homes for unhoused people rather than supporting public transit operations, streets covered with litter, areas of big-box stores.
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QUESTION 9

Canadian communities are facing several important issues. Please review the list and rank those that you think are most important to address now.

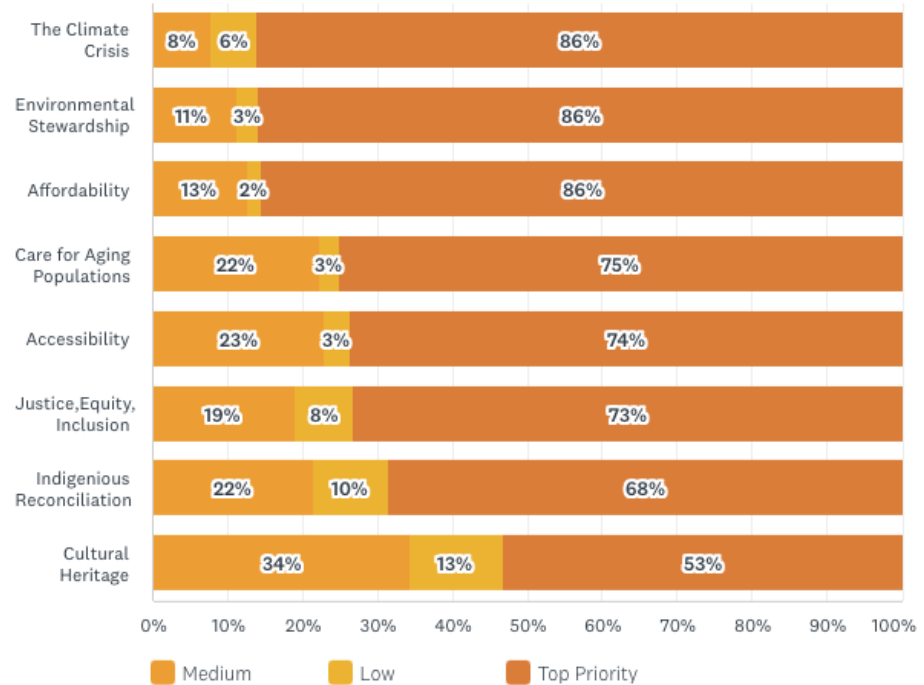
RESPONSE SUMMARY

1086 Responses

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

The top three issues were tied for most important, with the second three almost equally tied.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES



QUESTION 10

Do you support the need for better policies to guide the planning and design of our communities, including the benefits of an architecture policy for Canada?

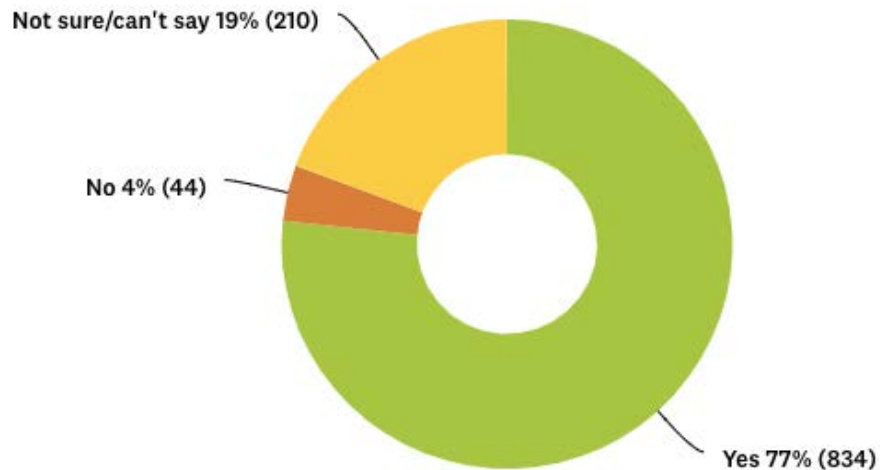
RESPONSE SUMMARY

1088 Responses
644 Comments

COMMENT ANALYSIS

A significant number of comments focused on the importance of a policy for smaller communities, and for a policy to be enforceable or have measurable outcomes.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES



PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

- The way we plan and design our buildings and communities impacts all aspects of our lives and is a key to solving many of the key challenges we face in an integrated way.
- So many communities do not have any knowledge or experience in design or how design can better a community and people's lives. A national architectural policy would be a first step for many of these communities in helping better their building environment and improving the lives of their members.
- Without a policy, there is no consistent way to address the planning and design of our communities.

QUESTION 11

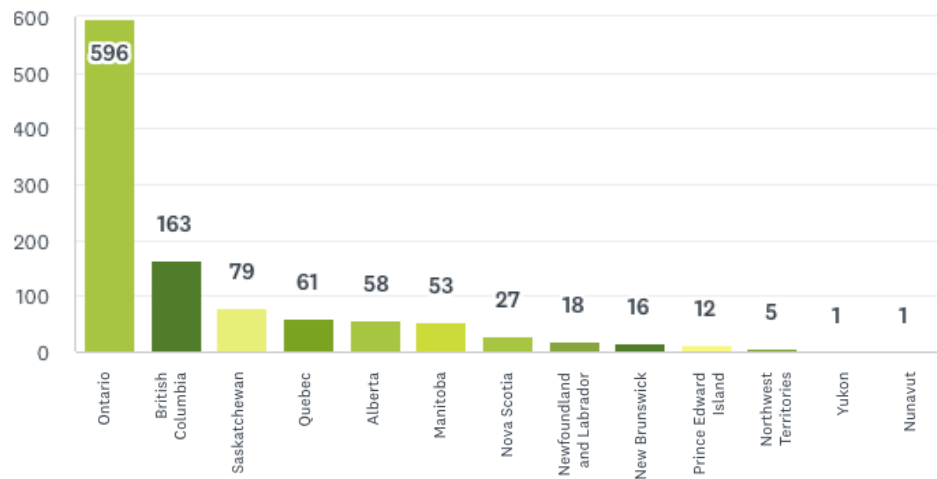
Where do you live?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1089 Responses

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

Over 50% of respondents were from Ontario, with 15% from British Columbia and 6% from Quebec. Combined the Prairie provinces represent 17%, with the Maritimes representing 7%, and 1% from the Northern Territories.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

QUESTION 12

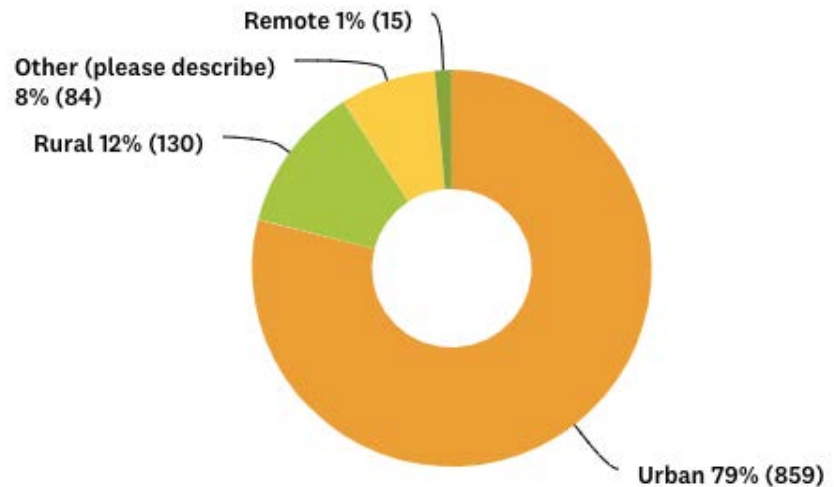
How would you describe where you live?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

1088 Responses

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

The majority of those who chose "other" indicated that they lived in suburban areas or in small cities, which was not offered as a survey response option.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

QUESTION 13

Are you connected to the architectural profession?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

913 Responses
317 Comments

COMMENT ANALYSIS

About 100 responses were from practicing or retired architects.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES