

## Summary of Portage Township Community Center Interest Survey

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### Overview

This Portage Township Trustee Office commissioned a survey to gauge local public interest in the development of a Community Center on the riverfront in Downtown South Bend. This document includes a summary of local citizens’ reported responses on the following items:

- Overall support for the community center
- Any factors associated with community center support or opposition
- Anticipated use of the center if built
- Potential unmet need based on renting event space

We identified:

- The majority of respondents support the development of the community center with 60.9% indicating at least somewhat supporting the concept and 76.6% anticipated using the community center at least a few times per year.
- Greater promotion of visiting downtown South Bend was associated with greater support for the community center project and one of the top perceived benefits of the project was the continued improvement of downtown South Bend. The types of events respondents were most interested in attending were those related to the arts or community building.

- A tiered rental fee was very important for supporters, but non-supporters expressed that the cost was very unimportant. Cost to taxpayers was also the top concern among respondents.
- Having previously rented event space was not statistically associated with greater support of the project.

Taken together, these findings indicate that among supporters ***the perceived investment and benefit to the downtown community is worth any potential costs. For these respondents, the center could be an opportunity to create more community and connect with the arts.***

Among non-supporters, **opposition** to the project is not offset by reduced rental fees **and driven more by other factors**. Most non-supporters were concerned about the use of taxes for this project when there appear to be more pressing needs in the area (based on comments). Though a few of those most opposed did indicate they would still attend art or musical performance events.

## Support for, Potential Use, and Perceived Benefits of the Community Center

In this section, we include summary figures of the overall support and anticipated use of the Community Center. Support for the center is high, with 60.9% of survey takers supporting the project.

- Approximately 14.5% of respondents were strongly opposed to this idea (Figure 1).
- Many respondents indicated that they would rent a community center at least once per year (Figure 2).
- Only a majority (79.1%) among those who were strongly opposed indicated they would never use this facility (Figure 3).
- Even those who reported being somewhat opposed to the project still anticipated potentially using it at least once per year.

Having a tiered fee structure is an important consideration for this project across all levels of support though among those who are strongly opposed, this is an unimportant condition for pursuing the project (Figure 4).

- Figure 5. includes the summaries of those who were certain they would pay a rental fee.
- Across all levels of support, there was little endorsement of paying a fee and even among the strongest supporters, less than 50% stated they would pay.
- Most respondents indicated that it would depend on the fee.
- (This question did have high non-response. Interpretations of frequencies, especially among the strongly opposed should be caveated (See Table 6. in the accompanying spreadsheet *Portage Township Community Center Survey Results*, hereby called “Results”).
- Concerns about cost and support do not appear to be driven by differences in economic status based on frequencies of income across levels of support (Table 3., Results).

Figure 1. Support for the Community Center

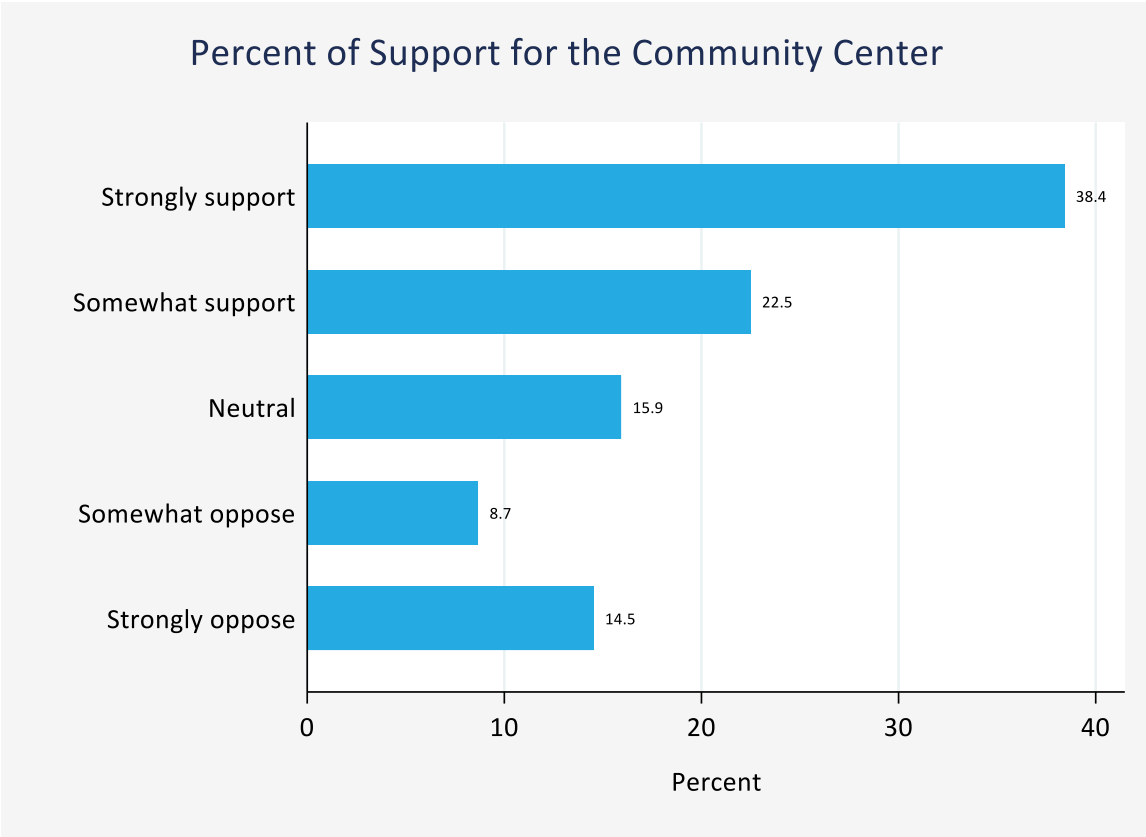


Figure 2. Anticipated Use of the Community Center

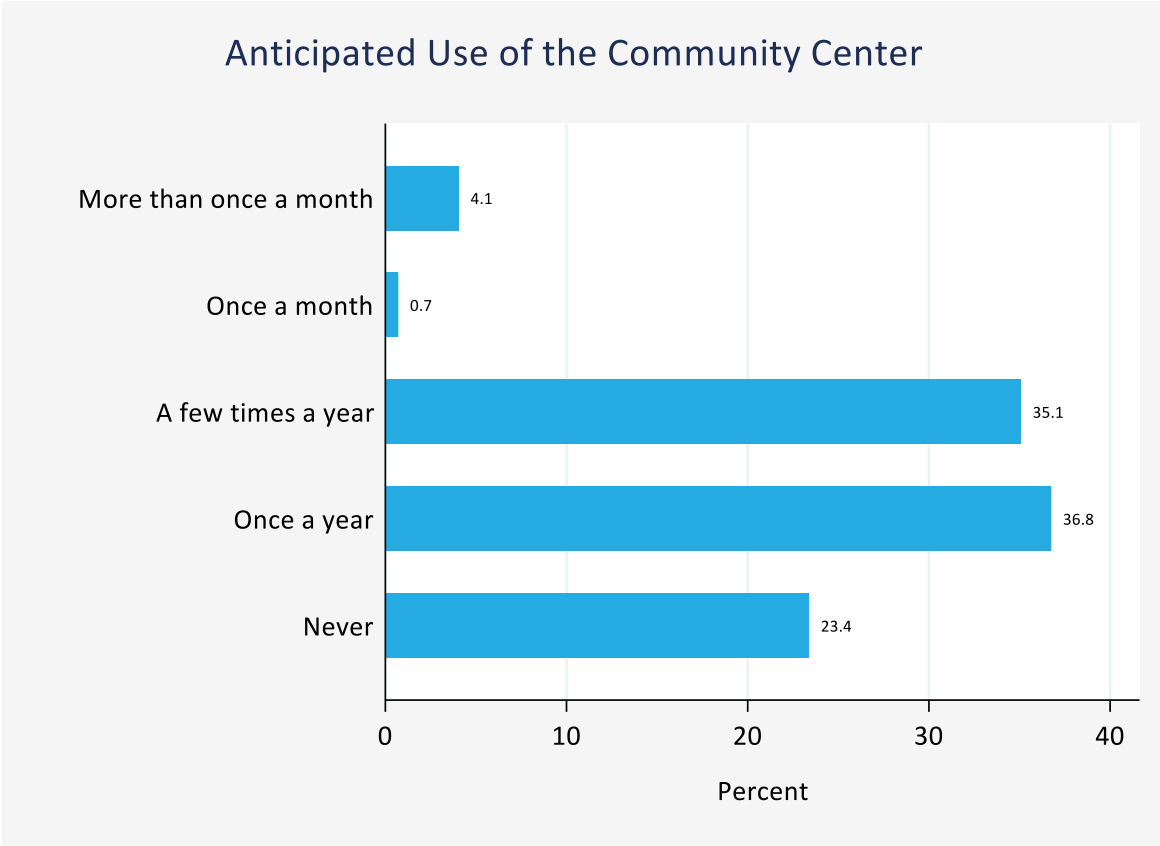


Figure 3. Anticipate Use by Levels of Support

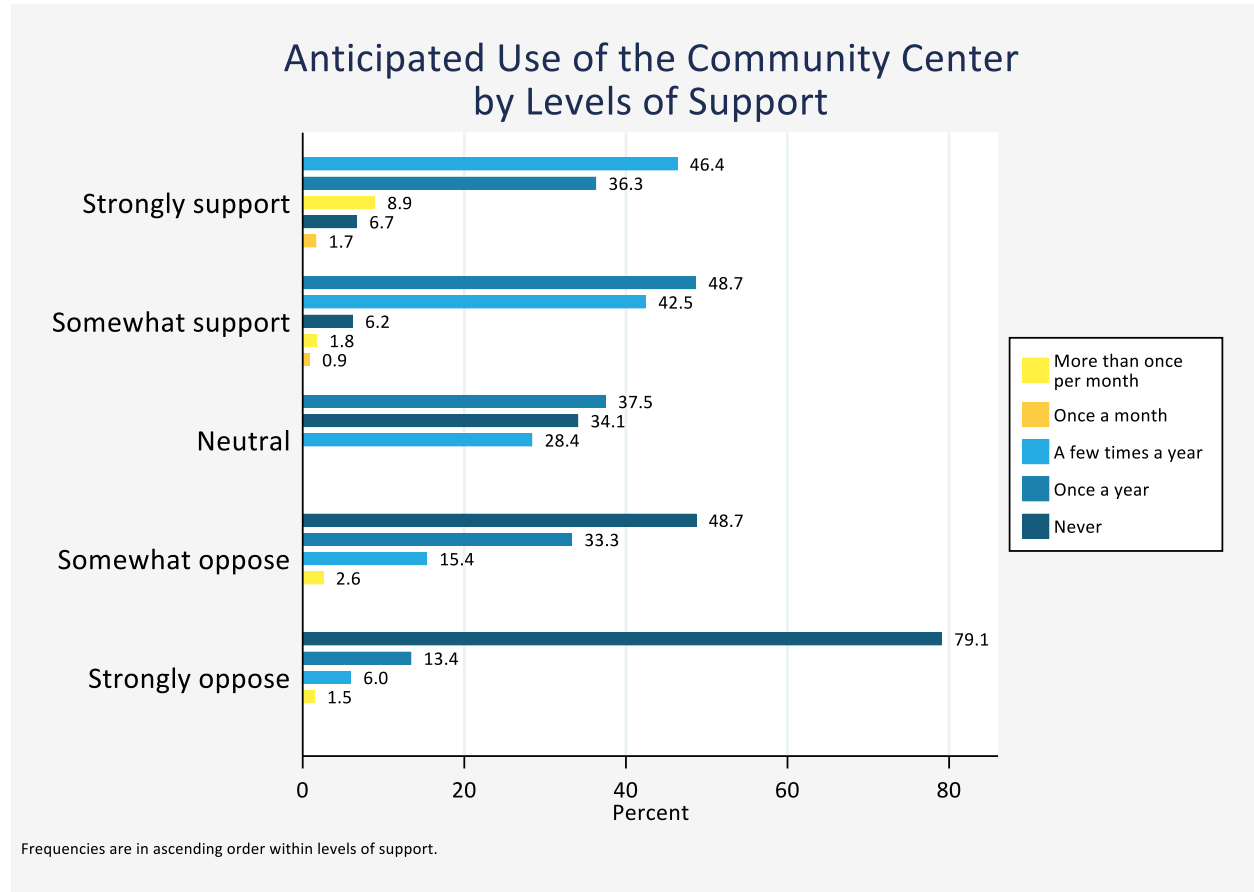


Figure 4. Tiered Fee Structure by Levels of Support

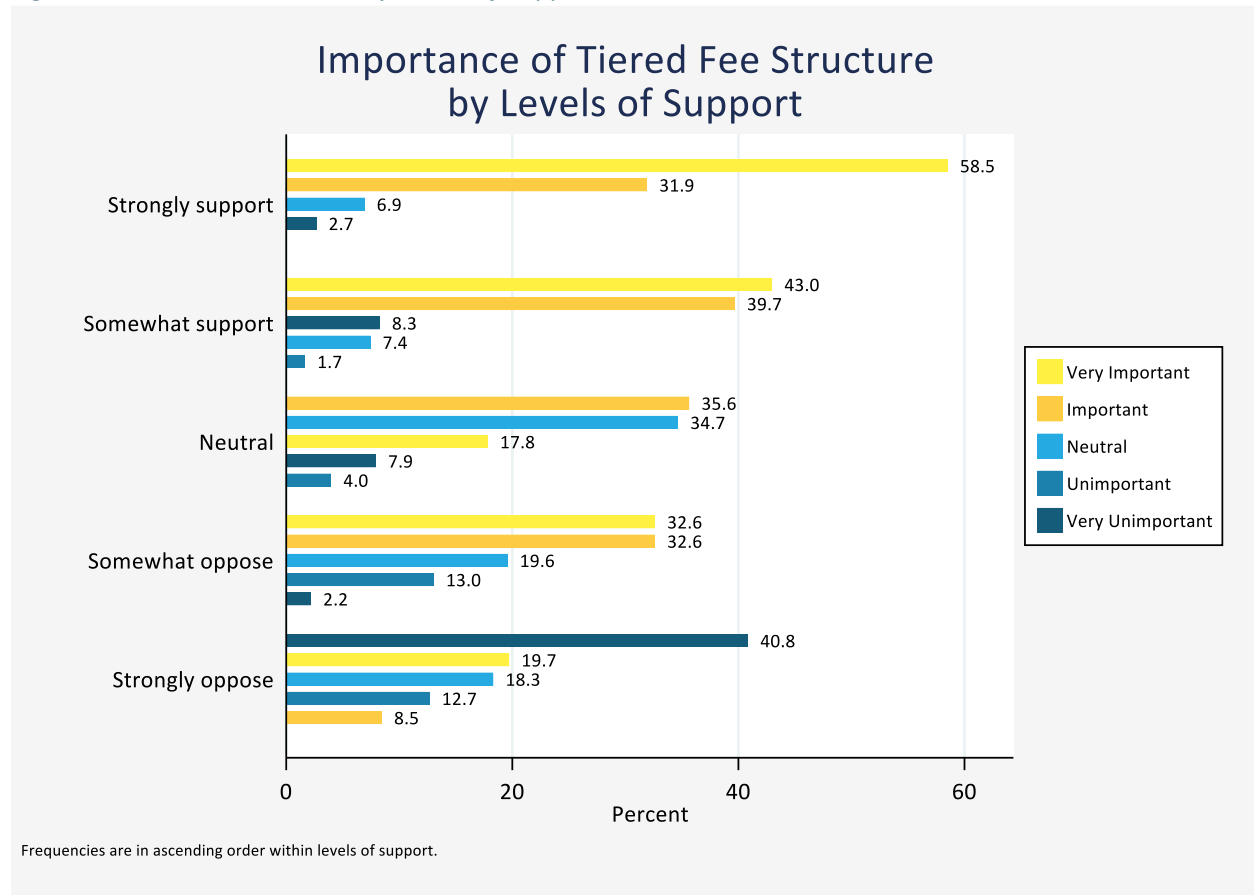


Figure 5. Fees by Levels of Support

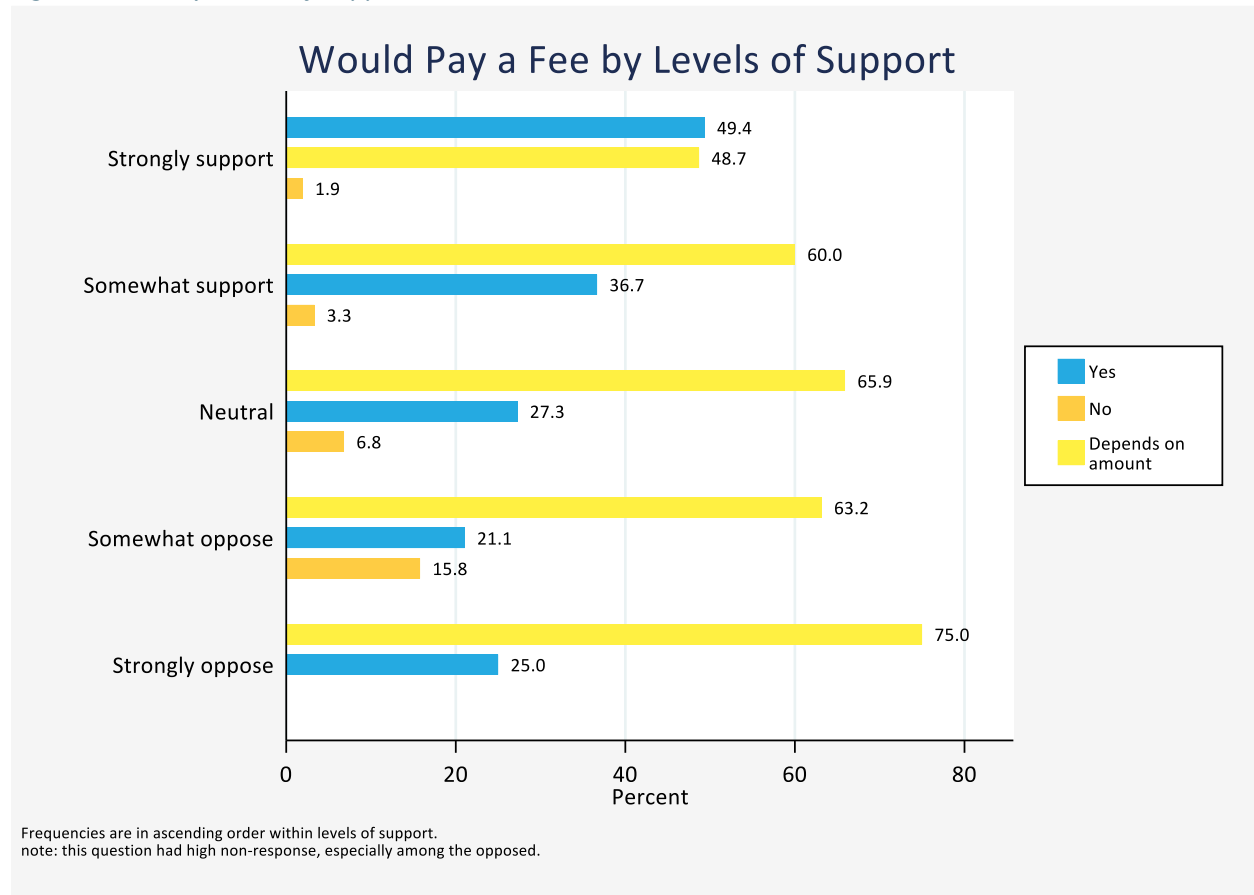


Figure 6. Potential Benefits of a New Community Center

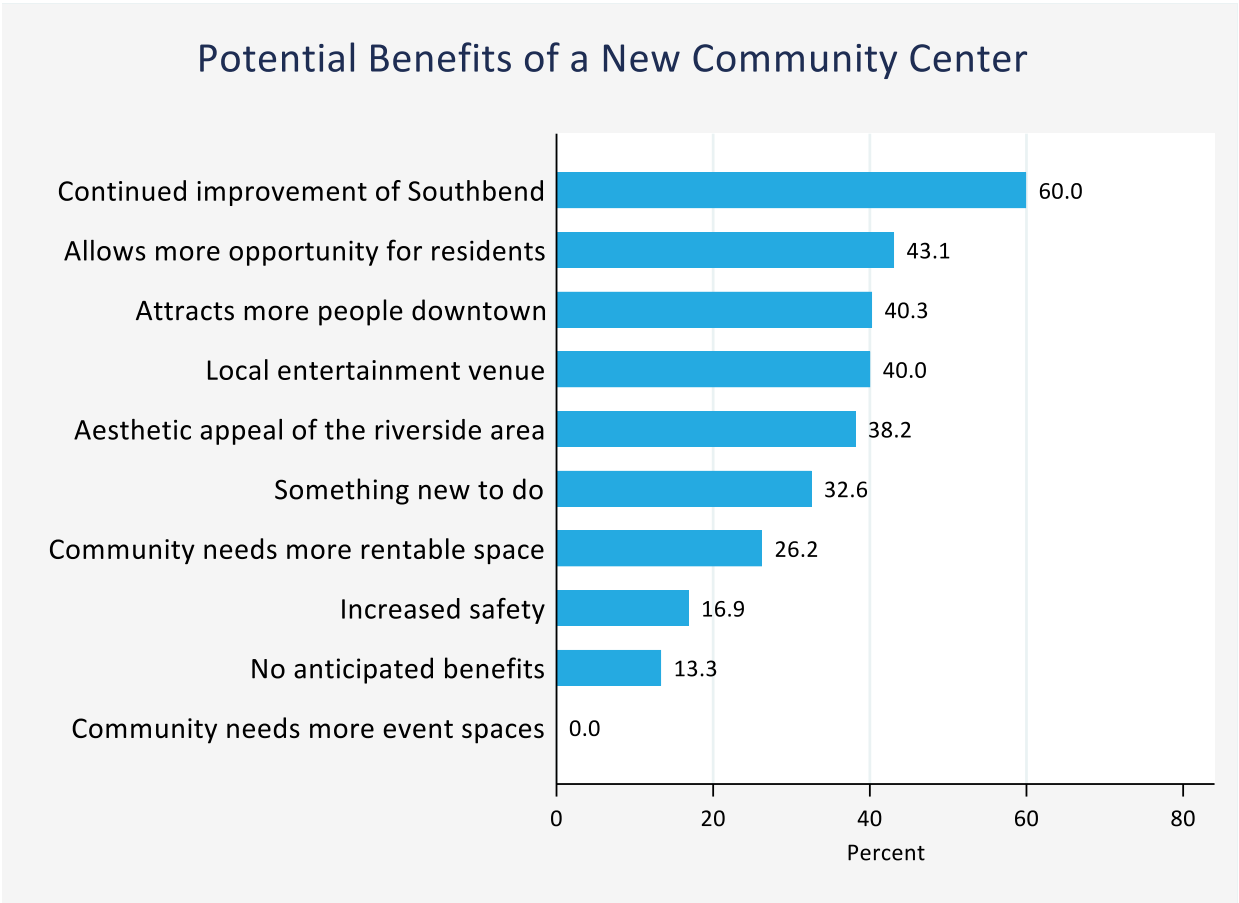
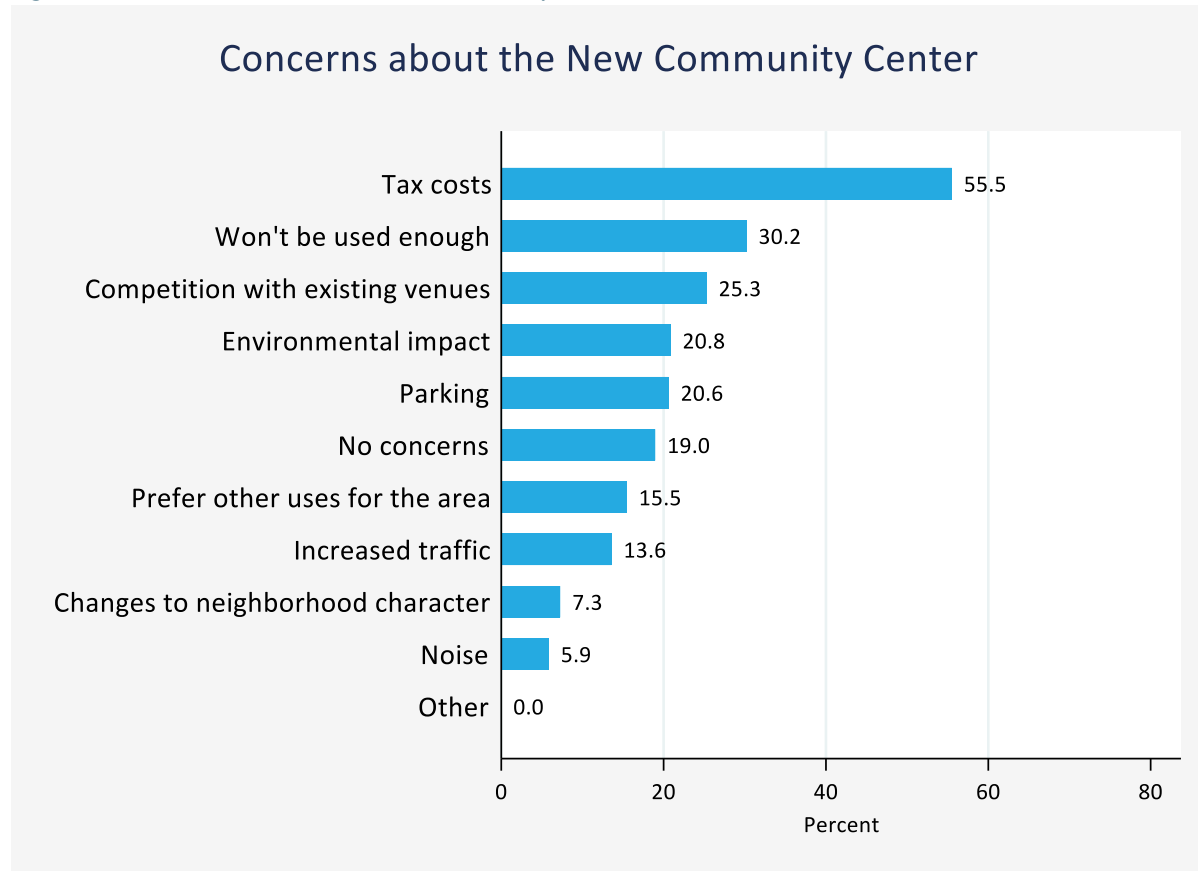




Figure 7. Concerns about the New Community Center



# Downtown Promotion and Event Interest

Figure 8. Promotion of Downtown by Support

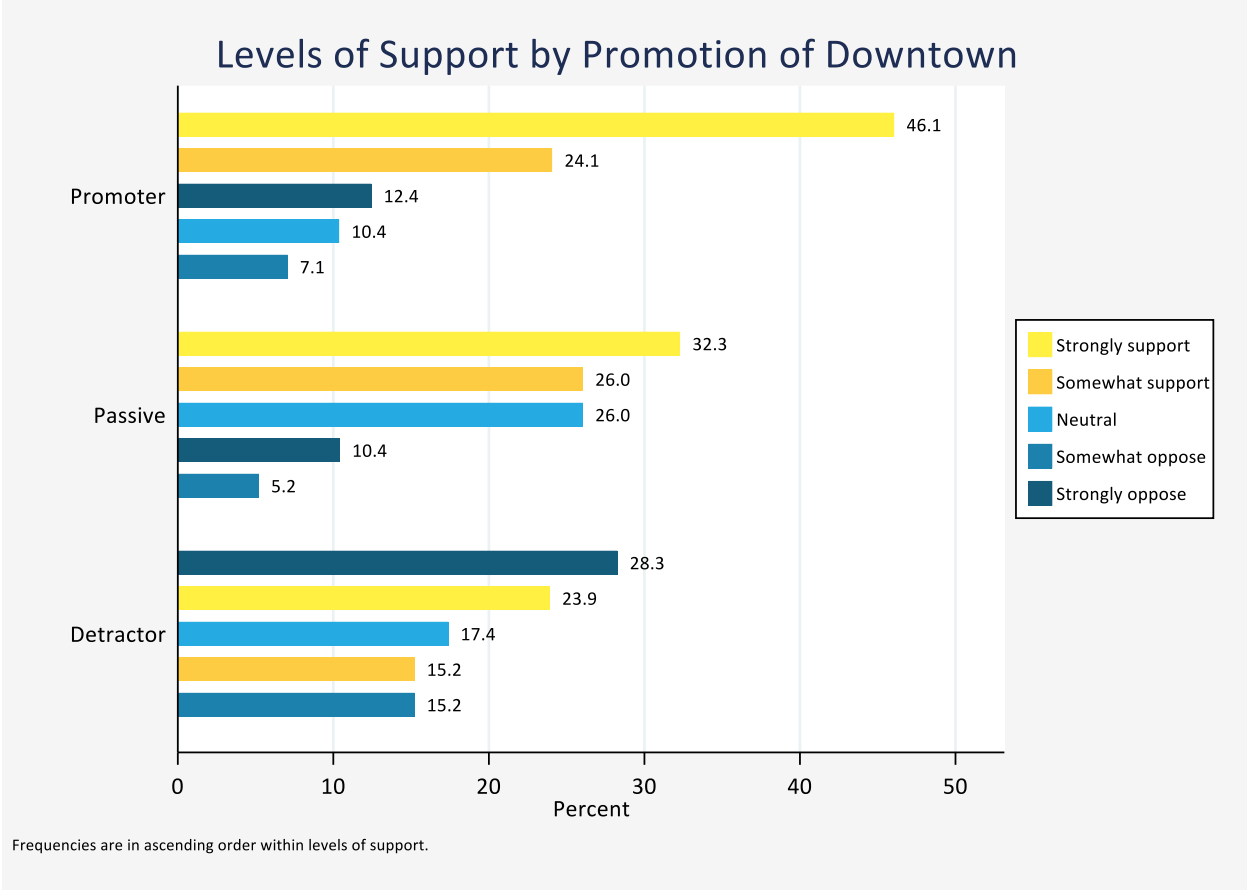


Figure 9. Events of Interest Among All Respondents

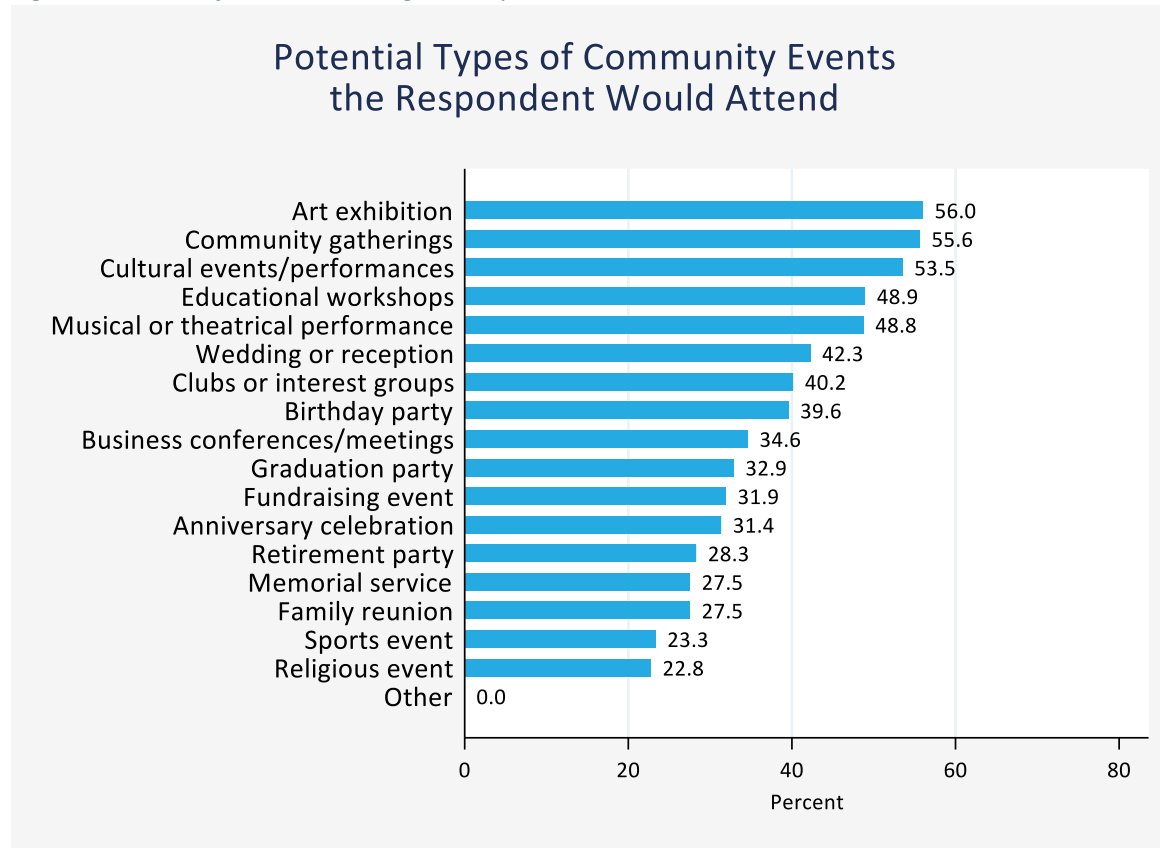


Figure 10. Events of Interest Among Supporters

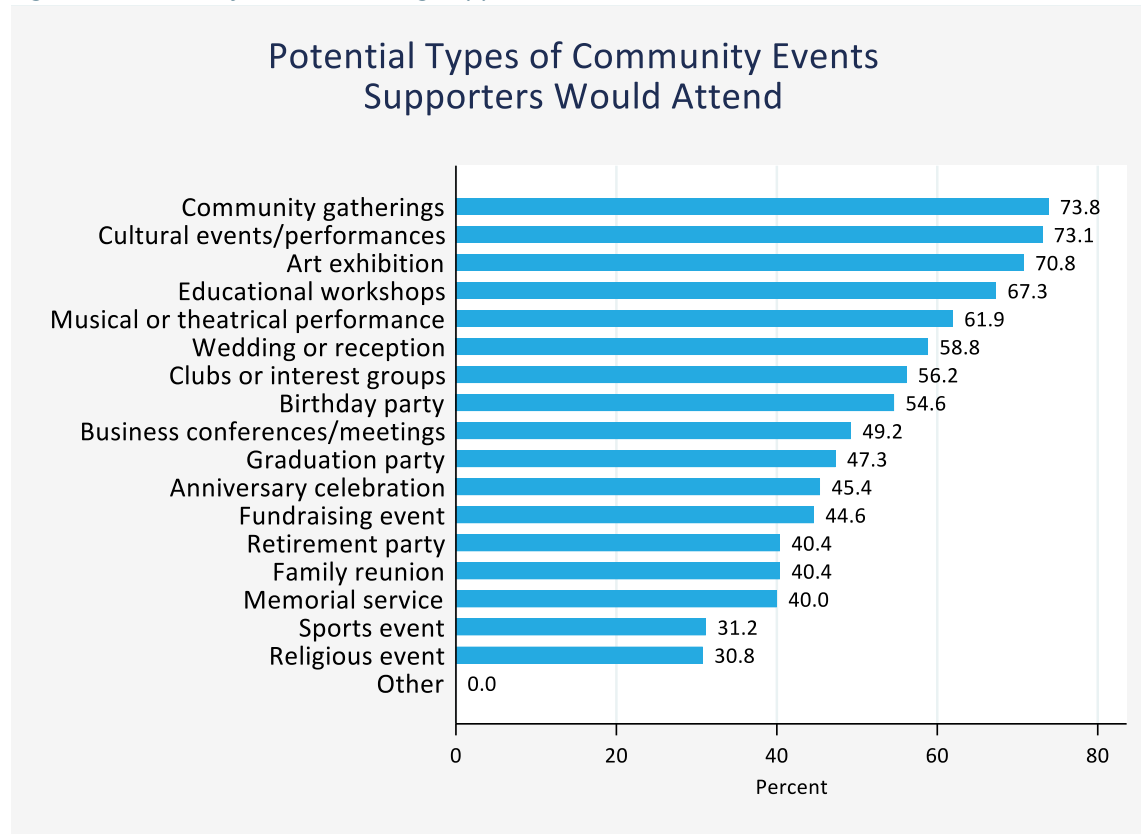


Figure 11. Events of Interest Among Non-Supporters

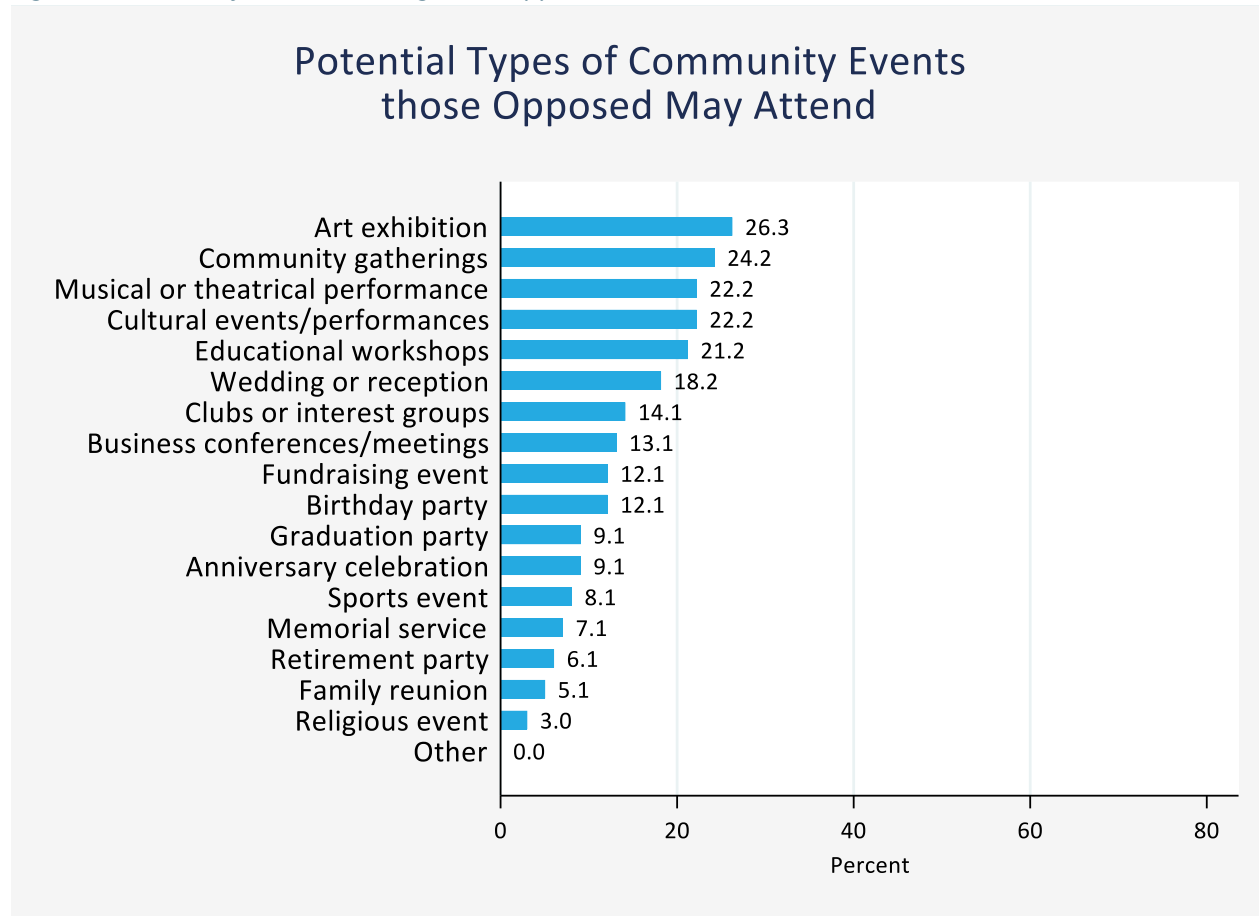


Figure 12. Ever Rented Event Space by Levels of Support

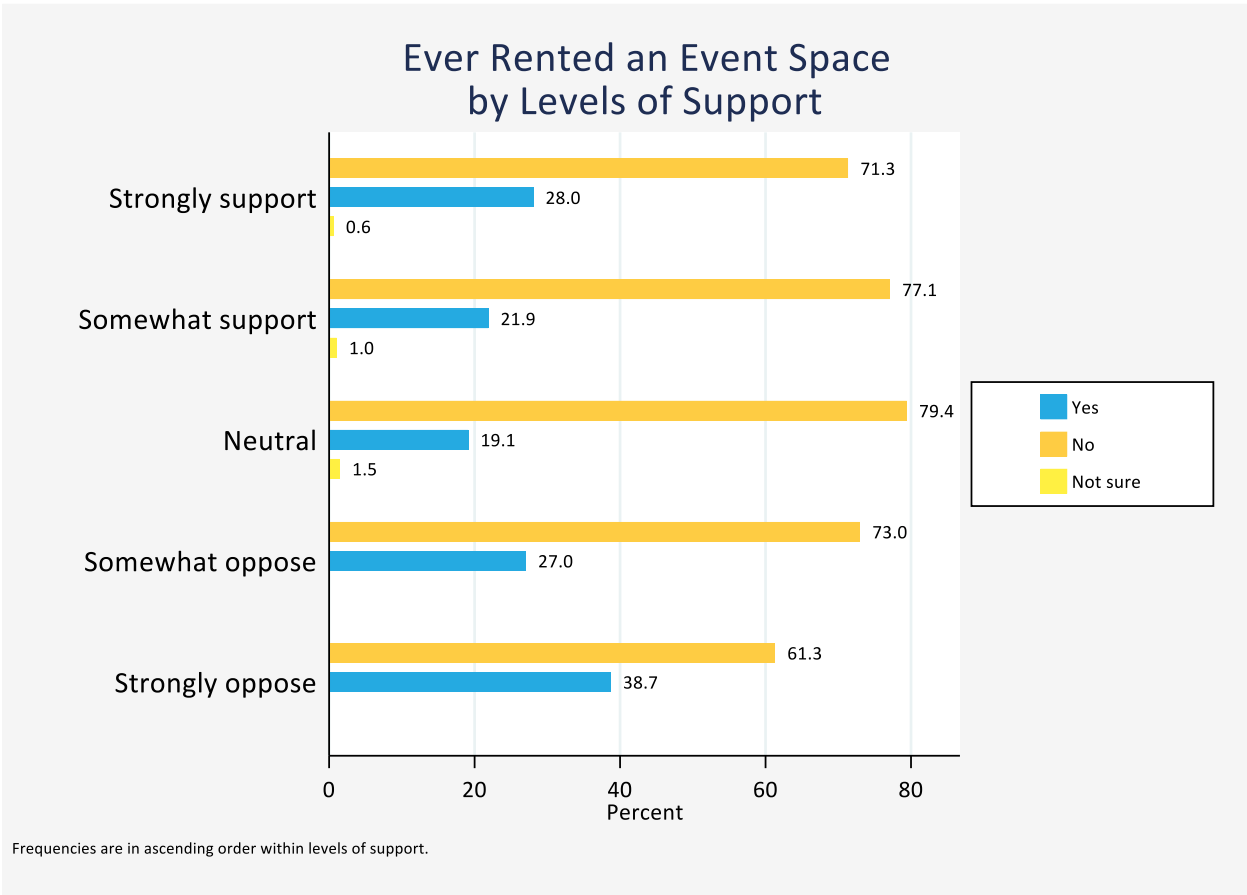


Figure 13. Rented Event Space in the Past Year by Support

