

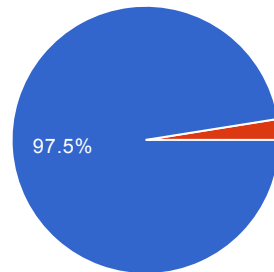
Support Arlington Center Survey

323 responses as of June 27, 2016

Summary

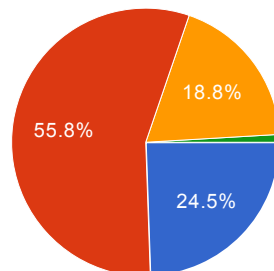
Your opinion matters

Are you an Arlington Resident/do you work in Arlington?



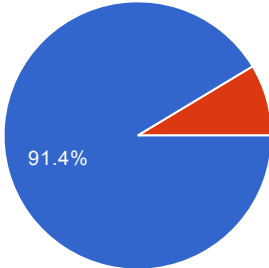
Yes	311	97.5%
No	8	2.5%

How often do you visit Arlington Center?



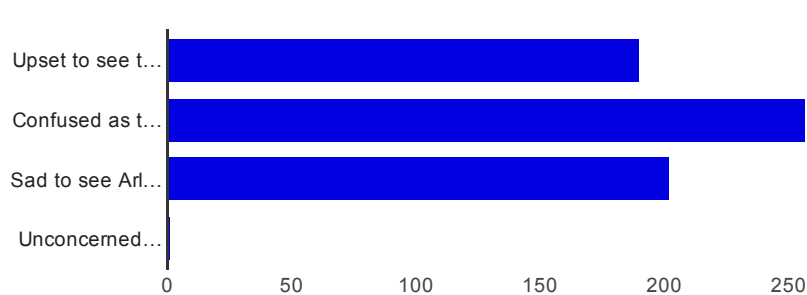
1-5 times a day	78	24.5%
1-5 times a week	178	55.8%
1-5 times a month	60	18.8%
Never	3	0.9%

Would you like to see aesthetic improvements in the Center, such as improved lighting, more green space, etc.



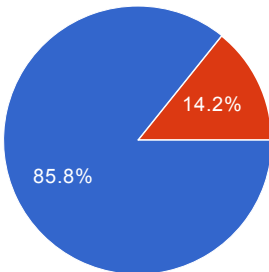
Yes	286	91.4%
No	27	8.6%

By July 2016, there will be 15 empty storefronts in Arlington Center, including CVS which has been at their Broadway location for 40 years. How do these empty storefronts make you feel about the future of Arlington Center? Check all that apply.



Upset to see these storefronts empty with no movement or progress	190	60.1%
Confused as to why they are empty, and what the owners and the town are doing to fill the spaces	257	81.3%
Sad to see Arlington struggling with so many storefront vacancies	202	63.9%
Unconcerned by the empty storefronts	1	0.3%

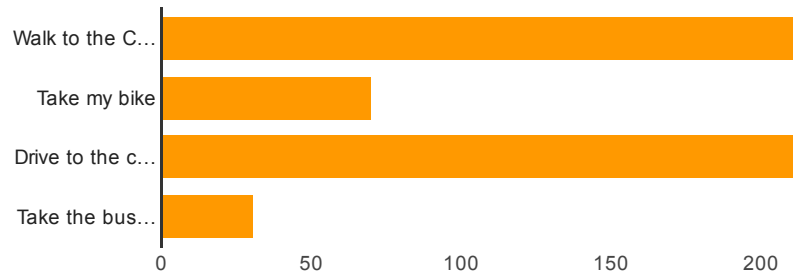
Would you like to see “pop up” window displays of advertisements for Arlington local businesses, cultural offerings, or art work in empty storefronts, during this transitional time?



Yes	265	85.8%
No	44	14.2%

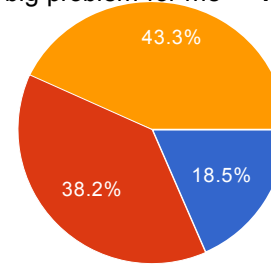
How do you typically get to Arlington Center? Check all that apply.

Walk to the Center from my home or business	211	66.1%
Take my bike	70	21.9%
Drive to the center	213	66.8%
Take the bus or the subway	31	9.7%

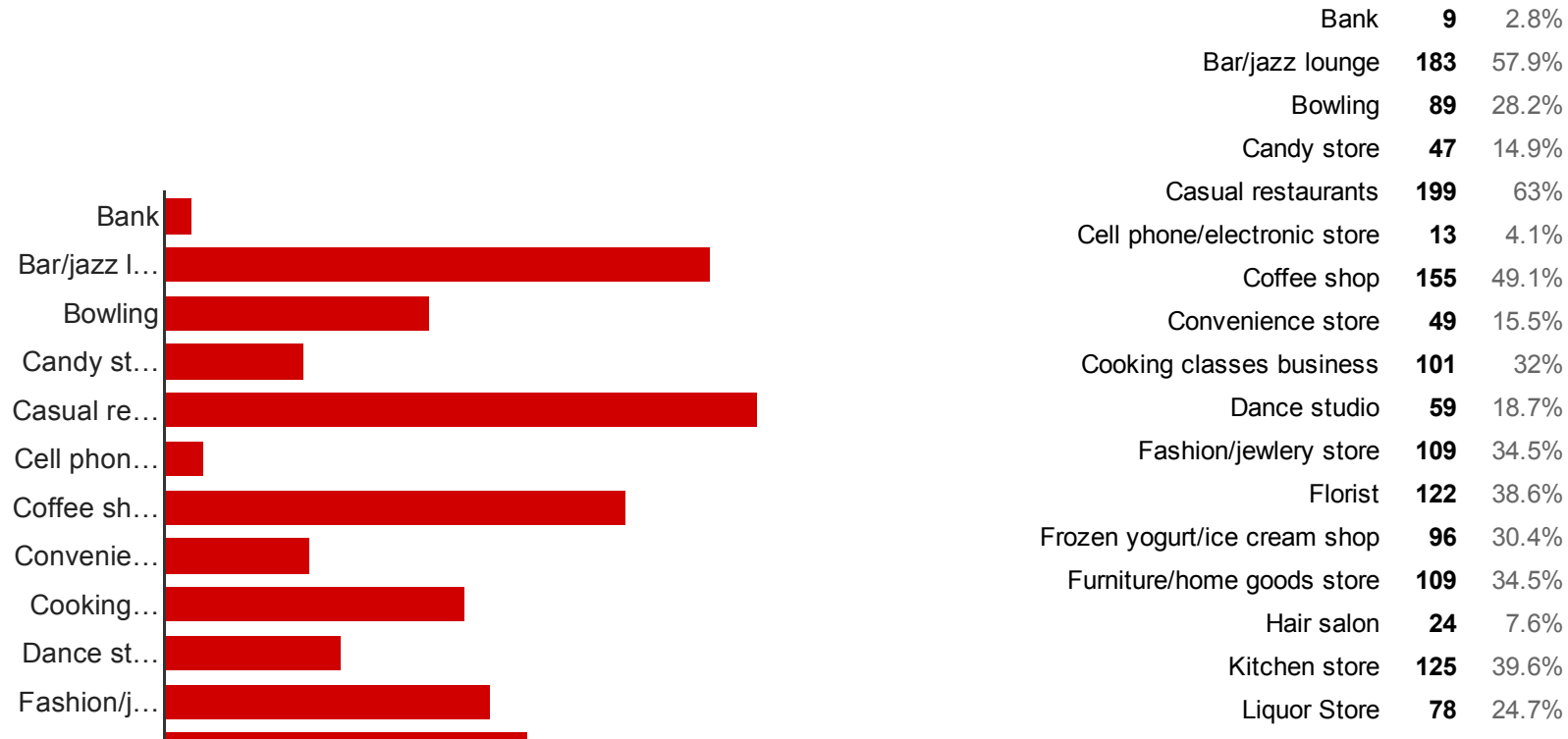


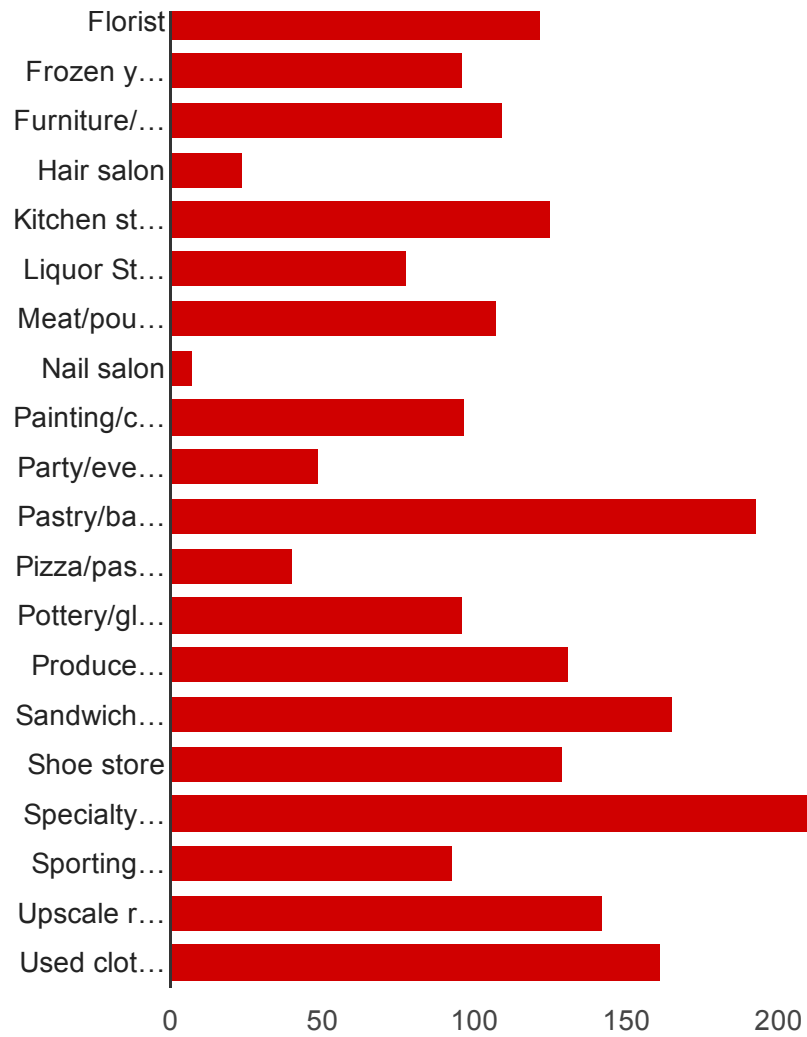
Are you challenged with parking in Arlington Center?

Yes	58	18.5%
No	120	38.2%
I usually find parking eventually, so it is not a big problem for me	136	43.3%



What types of new business would you like to see in Arlington Center? Check all that apply.





Meat/poultry store	107	33.9%
Nail salon	7	2.2%
Painting/craft activity shop	97	30.7%
Party/event rental space	49	15.5%
Pastry/bakery shop	193	61.1%
Pizza/pasta shop	40	12.7%
Pottery/glass business	96	30.4%
Produce store	131	41.5%
Sandwich shop	165	52.2%
Shoe store	129	40.8%
Specialty food store	210	66.5%
Sporting goods store	93	29.4%
Upscale restaurants	142	44.9%
Used clothing store for men/women/kids	161	50.9%

Comment Section

Respondents were also able to provide comments. In general, the comments reflected a real love for the Center contrasted with concern for certain aspects of its current look and situation. Many respondents expressed their desire to see Arlington thrive, their love for the walkability and the range of shops and restaurants, and made it clear they either moved here or stay here for those reasons, particularly the local nature of the businesses.

Some comments included words like “vibrant and successful” even as expressing concern that that vibrancy and success were being lost.

Many comments referred to the growing number of empty storefronts with distress, using words like: “an embarrassment and an eyesore,” “depressing,” “grim,” “lacking vibrancy,” and “potentially ruining Arlington Center.”

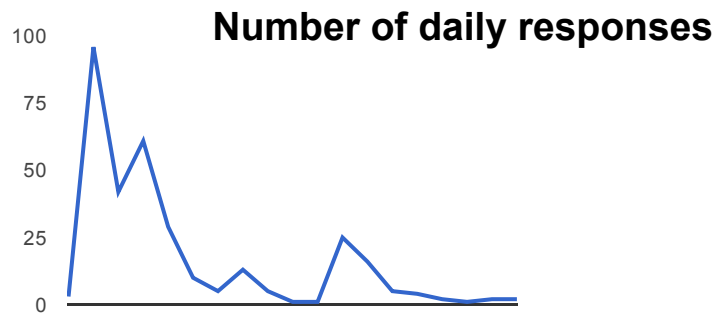
Residents, business owners, and someone who says they represent businesses all made very detailed comments about the storefront situation. We have not shared those publicly because some have enough identifying information that we don’t want to get them into conflict with the landlords.

Respondents wanted transparency and action from the Town about the problem and what could be done about it.

Several said that particular landlords were “greedy” and “difficult to deal with.”

Several asked what recourse there might be for incentives and/or censure to get landlords to fill the spaces/ not lose existing businesses rumored to be leaving.

One person said, “It is not acceptable for a single individual to have such an effect on the quality of life for Arlington residents. This is a civic issue.”



Summary

The survey indicates that Arlington residents highly value the diversity –both in type and affordability - of restaurants and shops, the “local” quality of businesses, the walkability and livability of our center, and the range of experience we currently offer for everyone from singles to families to retirees. They want more of it – more restaurants, more local businesses, more experiences (from concerts to places to congregate to places for children to play and learn) and don’t want to lose what we have.

They are mostly not interested in more corporate chains, in anonymous businesses like banks, or in more of a market that is saturated (salons). They are noticing and quite concerned about landlords’ behavior that is detracting from the ability of our Center to thrive.

It seems that there will be strong support for the Town’s initiative in improving the streetscape, and it would be good to promote that effort even more strongly. It also seems that it would be good if the Town could publicize its concern about the loss of businesses and its interest in preserving those that have recently invested here – such as Madrona Tree and Common Ground – two very popular restaurants.