

Public Visioning Survey

In February of 2022, City staff solicited public input on the Lookout Drive/South Central College Area through a community survey posted on the City website. Notifications were distributed through social media outlets as well as the Mankato Free Press newspaper. In total, there were 146 responses to the survey. The following outlines answers to the survey questions.

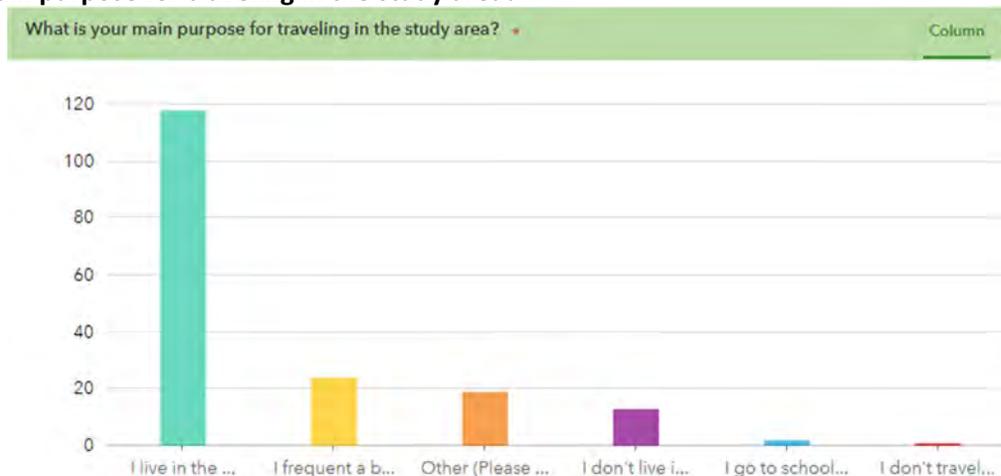
1. On average, how often do you travel in the study area?

79% of respondents travel in the study area daily. 12% travel in the study area 1-3 times per week, 6% 1-3 times per month, 3% less than once a month, and one respondent never travels in the study area.



2. What is your main purpose for traveling in the study area?

81% of respondents live in the study area. 17% frequent a business within the study area. 13% responded with "Other"; of these, the responses varied from "my kids attend school in the study area" to "visiting family who live in the study area" and "exercise/walking". 9% of respondents work in the area, although they do not live there. 1% attend South Central College. One respondent never travels in the study area.



3. Which businesses (if any) do you frequent in the study area?

Casey's General Store was the most common response on Lookout Drive, and Kwik Trip was the most common response overall. Many respondents noted that they visit multiple businesses along Commerce Drive, especially Walgreen's, MGM, Big Dog, and Dollar Tree.

4. In one word or short sentence, how would you describe the study area NORTH of Highway 14 today?

The overwhelming majority of responses included the word "industrial." Other notable frequent responses were "boring," "underutilized," "open," and "empty." A few respondents used this space to note that they feel many people speed when they drive north of Highway 14 on Lookout Drive, which makes the roads feel unsafe.

5. In the next 10 years (2031), what word or short sentence would you hope describes the study area NORTH of Highway 14?

Many respondents highlighted the demand for a grocery store and other amenities in the study area north of Highway 14. Several addressed the need for Safe Routes to School for Dakota Meadows students. Quite a few used the words "vibrant," "diverse," and "inviting." There were mentions of making the area safer for pedestrians and bikers. A small contingent of respondents wants no change to the area.

6. In one word or short sentence, how would you describe the study area SOUTH of Highway 14 today?

Many respondents used the word "residential" to describe the study area south of Highway 14. There were several allusions to this area as being "outdated" and "needing an update." Several respondents used terms like "busy" and "high traffic."

7. In the next 10 years (2031), what word or short sentence would you hope describes the study area SOUTH of Highway 14?

Responses were varied. A large number of respondents want the area to be "safe," "inviting," "friendly," and "vibrant." Many also spoke about wanting to keep the area "wooded," "green," and "natural"; but another contingent discussed wanting "amenities," "retail," and "new restaurants." There were some mentions of making the area "pedestrian/bike friendly."

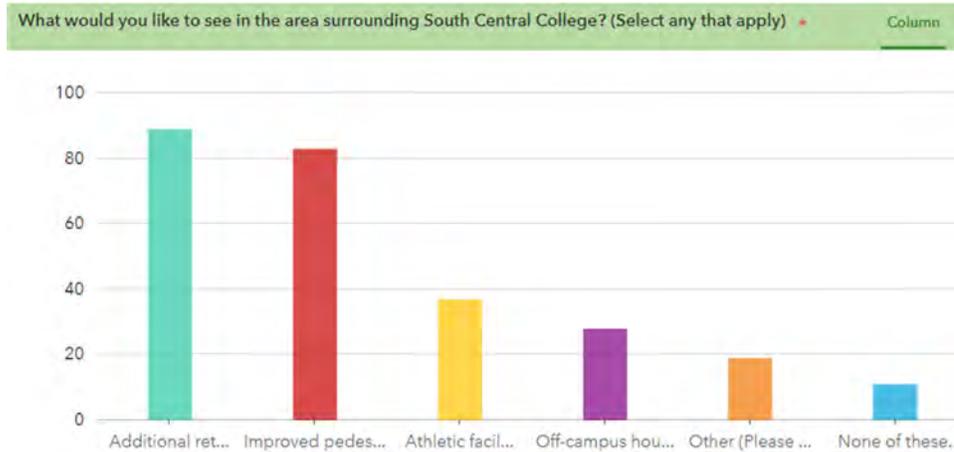
8. Lookout Drive Area Improvement Ranking

The top-ranked choice in this section of the survey was “Attract neighborhood-serving retail and amenities (grocery store, coffee shop, etc.). This was followed closely by the second-place choice, “Make Lookout Drive walkable/bikeable with dedicated lanes/trails.” The third-place ranking was “Provide more outdoor greenspace.” Fourth and fifth place were very even, with “Provide better public transit” narrowly edging out “Encourage more arts and culture, including public art.” The least popular choice was “Add more affordable, higher-density housing options.”



9. What would you like to see in the area surrounding South Central College? (Select any that apply)

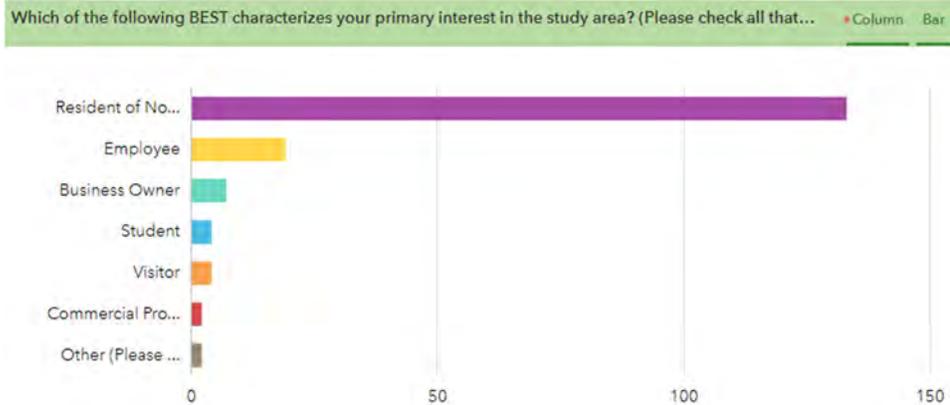
89 respondents want to see additional retail amenities for students and residents. 83 would like improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities in and around campus. 37 wish SCC had athletic facilities. 28 would like to see off-campus housing for students and



workers. 11 people wanted none of these things. There were 19 respondents who selected “Other.” Several of these respondents stated that they enjoy the wooded area on/near SCC campus and would like that area to remain wooded. There were also mentions of expanding the farmer’s market area and/or making it covered so that it can be used year-round.

10. Which of the following BEST characterizes your primary interest in the study area?

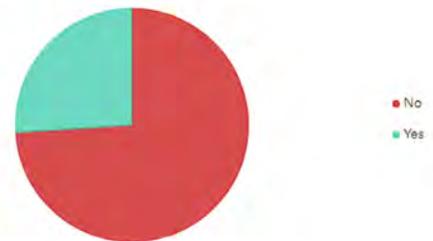
92% of respondents were residents of North Mankato. 13% were employed in the study area. 5% were business owners in the study area. 3% were students at SCC. Another 3% were visiting the area. 1% were commercial property owners. Of the two respondents who chose "Other," one attended church in the study area. The other was a former business owner whose business used to be in the study area.



11. Do you currently own, or have plans to own, an Electric Vehicle (EV) in the next 5 years?

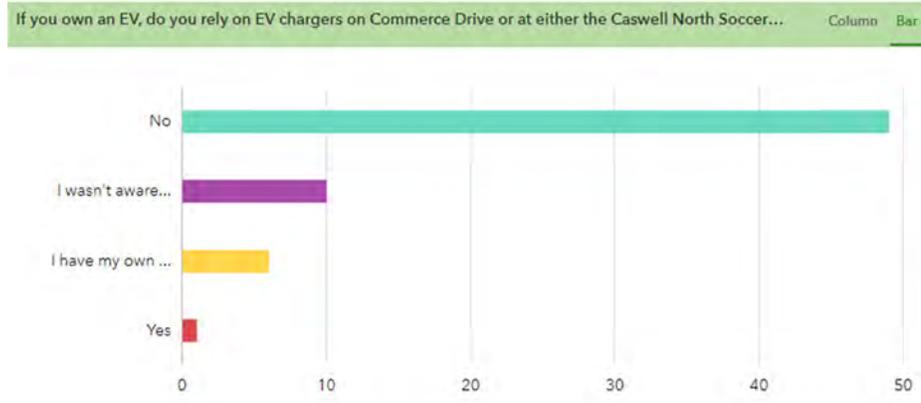
72% of respondents have no plans to own an EV in the next 5 years. 26% either own or plan to own in the next 5 years. 3 respondents skipped the question.

Do you currently own, or have plans to own, an Electric Vehicle (EV) in the next 5 years?



12. If you own an EV, do you rely on EV chargers on Commerce Drive or at either the Caswell North Soccer Complex or Caswell Park?

Of the 64 people who responded to this question, 49 of them do not rely on EV chargers at the places mentioned. 10 people were not aware these EV chargers existed. 6 people own their own chargers and don't need public EV chargers. Only one respondent uses the EV chargers at the places mentioned.

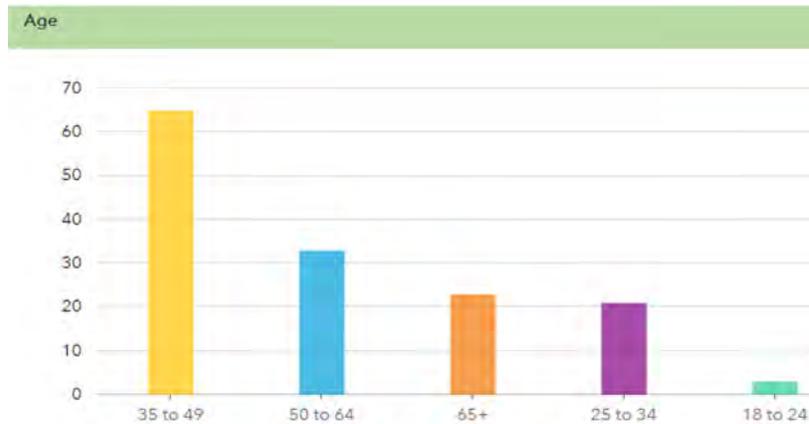


13. Please provide the zip code for your primary residence.

Nearly all respondents were from the 56003 (North Mankato) zip code. There were 6 respondents from 56001 (Mankato) and one respondent each from 56024 (Eagle Lake), 56074 (Nicollet), and 56093 (Waseca).

14. Age

45% of respondents were between the ages of 35 and 49. 23% were 50 to 64. 16% were 65+ years old. 15% were 25 to 34. 2% were 18 to 24.



15. Gender

50% of respondents identified as Female. 45% identified as male. 5% preferred not to answer.



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16. Race

90% of respondents were White. 8% preferred not to answer. 1% were American Indian or Alaska Native. 1% chose "Other," but provided no additional information.

17. Annual Household Income

37% of respondents reported their household income between \$100,000 and \$199,999. 32% reported \$50,000 to \$99,999. 11% preferred not to answer. 9% reported making more than \$200,000. 8% reported \$25,000 to \$49,999. 1% reported making \$24,999 or less.

Disclaimer:
The comments provided below are location-based citizen responses received through the Lookout Drive Visioning Survey. These comments are not prescribed study recommendations, rather, citizen views/perceptions of what should exist in the study area. This input was considered while formulating study recommendations.

Consider a year round ice arena in this location. Suggested benefits include:
• Increased revenue for the City
• Meeting local demand for more ice
• Providing a place to gather and host events
• Continuing the City's trend of providing parks and leisure amenities

Intersection Comments:
• Consider a Roundabout here
Location Comments:
• Consider retail amenities serving recent housing developments (i.e. convenience store, grocery store such as Aldi, restaurant, etc.)

Parking for FUN.com during busy times conflicts with local traffic causing safety and driver visibility concerns on Carlson Dr.

Intersection Comments:
• Consider a Roundabout here
Location Comments:
• Consider public art and seating areas/benches/shade structures to encourage walking and biking in this area.

Consider extending Ringhofer Dr to school property and down to Howard Drive to provide parking for sporting events and relief for peak time traffic congestion.

Consider a pick-up/drop off loop onsite to remove vehicles from Howard Drive

Consider an ice rink, pool, and/or gym here.

Consider this lot for future business/retail such as a grocery store or restaurant.

One participant supports a pedestrian bridge and one participant does not.

Consider a roundabout here.

Intersection Comments:
• Consider pedestrian crossing of Lookout here. Maybe a bridge.
Location Comments:
• Retail development including convenience businesses, Trader Joe's, restaurant, etc.
• Add walking paths among the trees like Bluff Park
• Dog park
• Farmers park for year round farmer's market.
• Community gathering space

Lower speed limit and improve pedestrian crossings along Lookout Drive.

Consider:
• Public art and seating node here
• Traffic Signal
• Raised pedestrian crossing (similar to Commerce Drive)

Consider a roundabout here for traffic calming near the school.

Consider adding a pedestrian crossing with flashers.

Consider:
• Finishing trail/pedestrian amenities down the hill
• Limiting truck traffic due to noise from J-breaking

Consider:
• A roundabout here
• A ped/bike bridge across the river connecting to Sibley Park area

Consider:
• Retail amenities (i.e. coffee shop, ice cream shop, strip mall, etc.)
• Public park/playground
General:
• No apartments here

Consider:
• Enhanced lighting at the scenic overlook to deter suspicious activities
• Placing fruit trees or a flower garden in this area

