

South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission

Humanities Survey: An Analysis

At the request of the commission and as part of a grant awarded by the Michigan Humanities Council, a survey was developed to assess community priorities and perspectives about the humanities and arts in South Lyon, and responses were collected from June 1 through July 31, 2016. This report presents and interprets the results.

Summary of Results

A total of 339 people responded to this survey, including thirty downtown business owners who were canvassed face to face. About 40% of these respondents live in the City of South Lyon and another 20% live in Lyon Township. These respondents broadly match the city demographics with the exception that more women than men responded.

The survey shows that the vast majority attend humanities, cultural and arts events, with more than a quarter of them traveling over a hundred miles to do so. The most frequently mentioned kinds of events are those involving live music, cinema, craft exhibitions or festivals, and parks or gardens. They do this largely because they enjoy this kind of event, to see a specific performer or event, and because of the social aspects of these events.

Overall, more than 60% of respondents feel that South Lyon either has no or only has a few interesting things for people like themselves to do, and more than 80% of all respondents say they would attend events more often if they were offered. Respondents most often hoped to see events involving music, theater, film and visual arts offered, but also felt that festivals and community events, youth programs, and art in public places and public art were the things that were most deserving of priority in terms of support. Respondents strongly felt it was important for the area to have such offerings, and very few felt too much money was being spent on them.

Those who took the survey said that the biggest barriers to their participation are, first, the overall lack of events in the city, and next, not being aware of the events actually offered. Respondents indicated a strong desire for electronic information about such events, with websites and community calendars, Facebook and Twitter and email invitations drawing the highest support.

By and large people felt events should target all age groups, with business owners feeling strongly they should target adults.

Downtown South Lyon business owners indicated higher overall levels of dissatisfaction with humanities, cultural and arts offerings in the city, even though they also were less likely to attend themselves, citing conflicts with work rather than lack of awareness. This should likely be viewed within

the lens of economic development, in that these owners are very interested in things that will bring people to their businesses and feel these kinds of events are helpful in that regard. These owners were also more likely than other respondents to feel that not enough money was being spent on such events, while also admitting that they don't necessarily know how much is spent.

Methodology and Caveats

The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey, a popular commercial platform, using its "Select" level, which allows surveys of unlimited length and a more complex structure and display than its free option. Due to the short time frame for development and implementation, this survey was created without the use of focus groups or a question testing process, which is often done to assure proper understanding and framing of the questions. One of the potential side-effects of this can be leaving out options that respondents might like to see or might otherwise frequently mention. Another can be having language within questions that people interpret in different ways than the question writers expect.

A big challenge for this effort was that there really are not many ready examples of prior humanities surveys that address general population perspectives and try to assess community interests and desires, as most tend to be audience satisfaction surveys or surveys regarding humanities that are given after events. Thus, the intent of these other surveys is very different. As a result, other community satisfaction surveys and surveys of interests in other areas (arts, leisure activities, etc.) were used as models.

It is important to note that this was not a survey that used probability sampling, which randomly samples a population using demographic characteristics. That approach is used in order to assure confidence that the results accurately represent the opinions of the overall population, and to provide an estimated margin of error by limiting the chance of bias. This is a much more expensive and comprehensive process than the method used for this survey, and the resources were simply not available for this approach.

This survey has instead used a convenience sample, typical of many web surveys, which means essentially looking at whoever responds and filtering based on demographic responses. Thus, it cannot be scientifically assured that the results represent the views of the entire population. Convenience samples can be biased by including a disproportionate percentage of people for or against a given issue or perspective, a problem that plagues many political polls and online magazine or newspaper surveys, and it is quite possible that is the case here as well.

However, great care was taken in the development of the survey to keep the questions and response options as unbiased as possible in order to capture the true sentiment of any given respondent. Many of these questions were adapted from other community surveys done across the nation on other topics and for different purposes, so their structure should be sound.

In addition, if one were to presume that the only respondents were people very much in favor of humanities programming (which, based on the results, is clearly not the case) then this survey still provides a roadmap to the desires of the target audience for the South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission, and the size of the population responding represents a far larger group than typically participate in most South Lyon humanities activities

As noted below, however, the collection of data directly from thirty downtown business owners did indeed likely present opinions representative of that group, as it represents a high percentage of that specific population and is most likely a majority opinion.

As is typical of many online surveys, there were people who only responded to the first screen of questions, which for this survey were demographic in nature. People were also not required to answer any given question in order to continue, and some chose to skip some. As a result, some questions have fewer responses than the total number of respondents. Response percentages have generally been calculated based on those who actually did respond to a given question.

Results

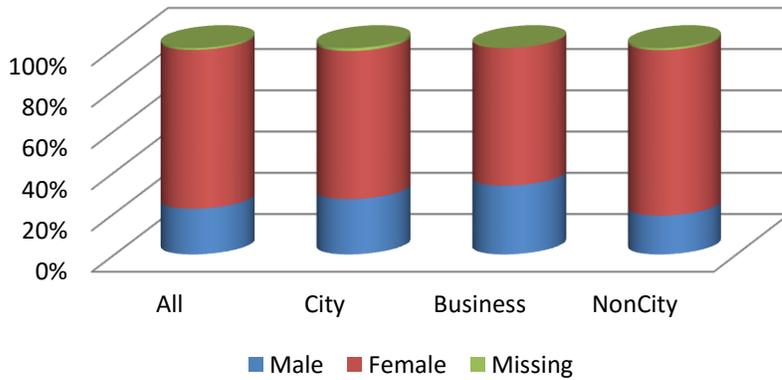
Demographics

A total of 306 people took the survey online. Three more people took it on paper and their results were added to the pool. In addition, at the suggestion of the consultant hired as part of the Michigan Humanities Council grant, paper surveys were taken around to and collected from 30 downtown South Lyon businesses in order to separately assess their support and attitudes. Given that this represents a majority of the businesses downtown, this pool of respondents provides not only a statistically significant sampling, but also helps lend credence to the overall study results, given how often the perspectives of this group match the overall pool of respondents.

Of the total 339 respondents, 137 people, or 40.4%, indicated they were from the City of South Lyon proper. The 59.6% from outside of the city proper reside in a variety of places, with about 20% of all participants saying they were from Lyon Township and the remaining 40% were fairly equally divided between elsewhere in Oakland, Washtenaw and Livingston Counties, and somewhere else.

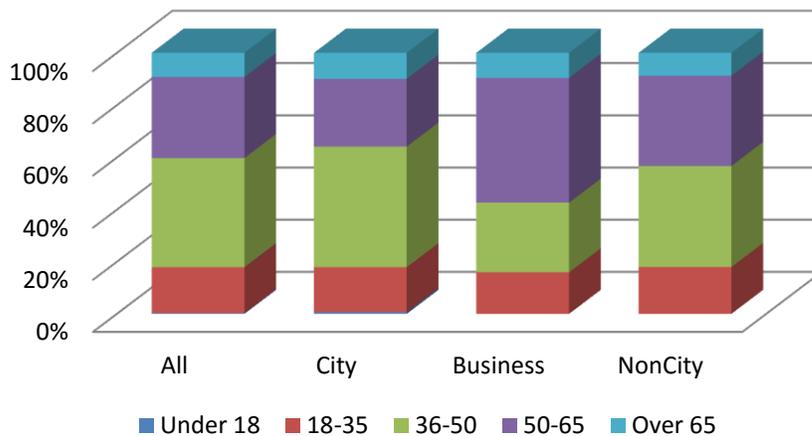
More women than men completed the survey, with respondents being 77.7% female. This was particularly true outside of the city, with 81% of respondents being female, versus 72.7% in the city, and 66.67% of downtown business owners.

Respondents by Gender

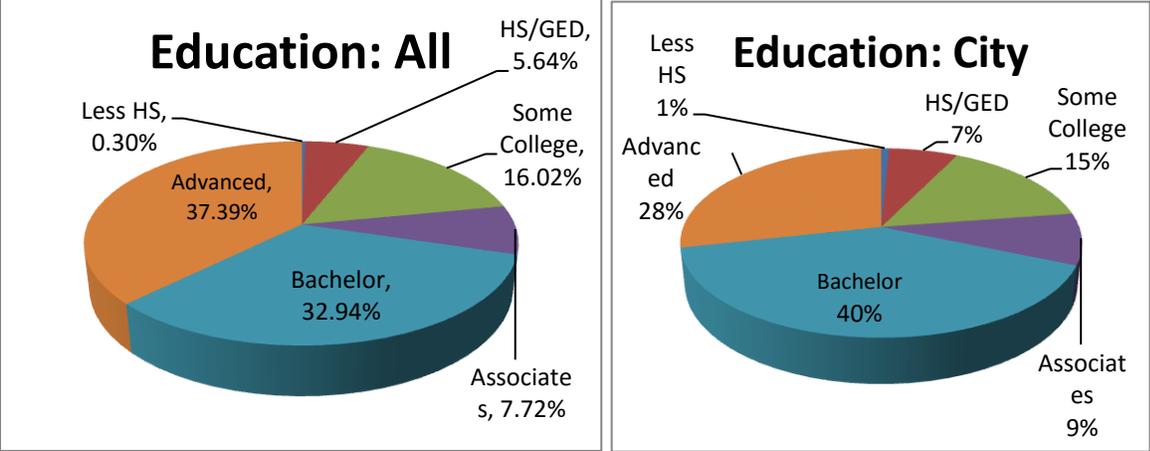


Respondents were fairly well distributed by age, overall, and all but one was over eighteen. Retirees were somewhat underrepresented, likely a reflection that this was principally an online survey, but there were still a reasonable percentage who participated; about 11% of city respondents were over 65, compared to the 2010 Census estimate that 14.1% of the city's population (about 19% of adults) are 65 and older. The 2000 Census estimated that about a third of city households contain children, and about a quarter contain retirees. There are similar patterns for other adult age groups, with the largest population grouping in the 35-50 year old age group, which matches the city's median population age as estimated by the Census bureau and other demographics estimators, such as Onboard Informatics, which pegs the median for the city at 40 years of age.

Age of Respondents



Respondents were overall quite well educated, which again matches the overall demographics for the area. About 70% of respondents overall, and 68% in the city have either a bachelor's or advanced



degree, and when adding in associates degree the total with degrees for both city and overall respondents jumps to about three-quarters of respondents.

As could be expected from the overall demographics of both the city and the area, respondents reported they were overwhelmingly White/Caucasian, with 95% of overall respondents falling into that category and over 98% of city respondents. The percentage was lower among business owners, with 10% describing themselves as being multiracial and the rest White/Caucasian.

Respondents were also generally relatively affluent, which again follows the overall demographics of the area, given that there are considered to be more white collar than blue collar workers here, and the median income follows that. The Kaiser Family Foundation 2014 report estimates the median income in Michigan as \$52,005, and the Census bureau estimates the median income in South Lyon to be \$55,889. For this survey, 48.7 City respondents reported income of \$100,000 or greater, compared with 50.7% of overall respondents. It should be noted that questions about income typically suffer higher than usual rates of refusal and missing data, and that is also the case here, with 18% of respondents overall and 15% of city respondents declining to provide this data.

Humanities and Arts responses

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their humanities, arts, and cultural experiences, their likes, dislikes, priorities, and beliefs. The following discussion will look at each of these areas and describe the results. One thing to note before the discussion is that there is remarkable consistency in these responses when looking at the different categories of overall responses, responses from City of South Lyon residents, downtown businesses, and respondents from outside of the City of South Lyon. There are certainly differences and variations, but in broad strokes there is a clear pattern in that higher response percentages consistently appear across demographics for most questions.

General questions on participation

*Which of the following events/places have you visited, participated, or attended in the last 12 months?
(Check all that apply)*

In all categories, respondents reported most participation with music, cinema, festivals, and parks or gardens. In each of these categories, more than half of the respondents reported having participation in the past year. Museum experiences were also over 57% for all categories except for downtown business owners. These owners, by the way, have a lower rate of participation across each category, and are also far more likely to report that work is a barrier to their participation, so, especially when combined with the owners' overall high support for the humanities and arts, it is likely there is a conflict between museum hours of operation, event scheduling, and their own business hours.

Events/Places visited in the past 12 months

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Dance	23.34%	19.35%	16.67%	26.22%
Live Music	70.03%	69.35%	60.00%	70.12%
Cinema	65.16%	71.77%	56.67%	59.76%
Theatre	48.43%	49.19%	30.00%	47.56%
Museum	57.49%	57.26%	30.00%	57.32%
Craft/Festival	64.46%	62.90%	56.67%	65.24%
Books/Writing	28.22%	29.84%	6.67%	26.83%
Park/Garden	67.60%	69.35%	60.00%	65.85%
Discussions	21.60%	25.81%	10.00%	18.29%
None	3.83%	4.84%	6.67%	3.05%

As the table above shows, only a very small percentage of respondents report having no humanities or arts experience in the past year. This may be because people with interest were driven to complete the survey, or because people who were actively urged to complete the survey are already either participants or were visiting an event or business in the downtown area, but if one uses that perspective to question how representative of the overall population these respondents might be, one needs at the very least to consider their sentiments and experiences as those of the likely target audience for events and activities in South Lyon. And given the overall level of income reported on this survey, this also indicates that these respondents are inclined to spend money in a community that provides options in which they would like to participate. The non-participants were slightly higher in the city and among business owners, but business owners were much more likely to cite work obligations as a barrier.

What were your reasons for going/participating in these events? (Check all that apply)

	All	City	Business	NonCity
To see performer or event	62.72%	57.26%	46.67%	66.46%
Enjoy type of event	86.06%	86.29%	76.67%	85.37%
To learn more	31.71%	29.03%	10.00%	33.54%
Special occasion	29.62%	25.00%	13.33%	32.93%
Social event	57.49%	51.61%	46.67%	61.59%
Invited to go	37.98%	37.90%	43.33%	37.80%
Recommended	29.27%	25.00%	26.67%	32.32%
Accompanied child(ren)	35.54%	33.06%	23.33%	37.20%
Performed	11.50%	10.48%	6.67%	12.20%
Other	2.79%	3.23%	0.00%	2.44%

As might be expected, the overwhelming majority of people who attended these events said they did so because they enjoyed this kind of thing, across all categories. Respondents also said they went either to see a particular performer or event or because they considered it a social occasion. These responses may provide the Cultural Arts Commission with a sense of how to attract people to events in the future by appealing to the aspects people value most. Virtually all of the “other” selections came from the small percentage of people who indicated they didn’t attend any events in the prior year, and most comments were indications of lack of interest.

What is the furthest distance (in miles) that you traveled to visit, participate, or attend a humanities, arts or cultural event in the last 12 months?

Respondents were clearly willing to travel to get to the programming they want, with the median for the farthest distance travelled in the last year being fifty miles overall, and forty for business owners. More than a quarter reported travelling over a hundred miles (city residents were less likely to do this, with only 19.3% reporting this) and around 9% said they travelled over 500 miles to go to an event. Multiple respondents reported going to New York, but Paris, Texas, Denver and Florida were also mentioned.

South Lyon offerings and priorities

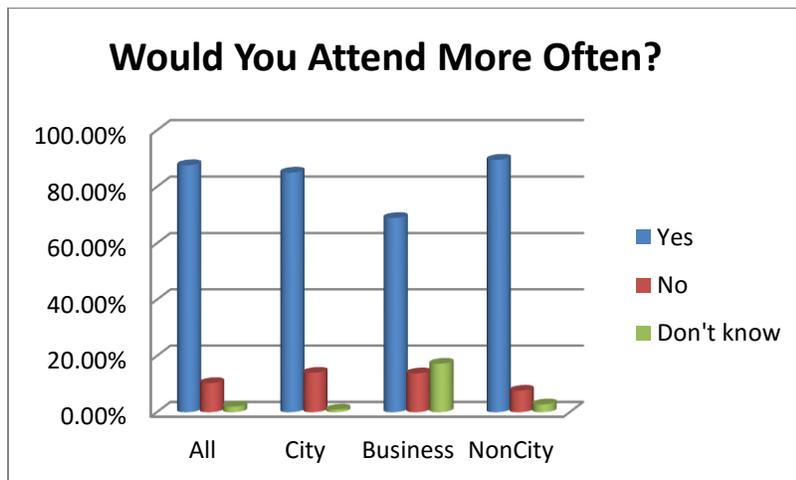
Respondents were asked a series of questions about humanities and arts programming in the City of South Lyon, and their own participation and priorities.

Generally speaking, would you say South Lyon has a lot of interesting things for residents like you to do, some interesting things, only a few interesting things, or no interesting things for residents like you to do?

	All	City	Business	NonCity
A lot	3.17%	4.10%	3.57%	2.47%
Some	32.39%	31.15%	21.43%	33.33%
Only a few	52.11%	51.64%	64.29%	52.47%
No interesting things	8.10%	11.48%	3.57%	5.56%
Refuse/Don't Know	4.23%	1.64%	7.14%	6.17%

Responses to this question were striking in a couple of different ways. First, only a very few respondents felt the city had a lot of interesting things to do. More than half the respondents in all categories, and over 60% both overall and of city residents felt the city had either only a few or no interesting things to do. Business owners, perhaps thinking about what might bring people to them, had the most dour outlook here with more than two-thirds responding this way, but city residents overall were more negative than those from outside the city.

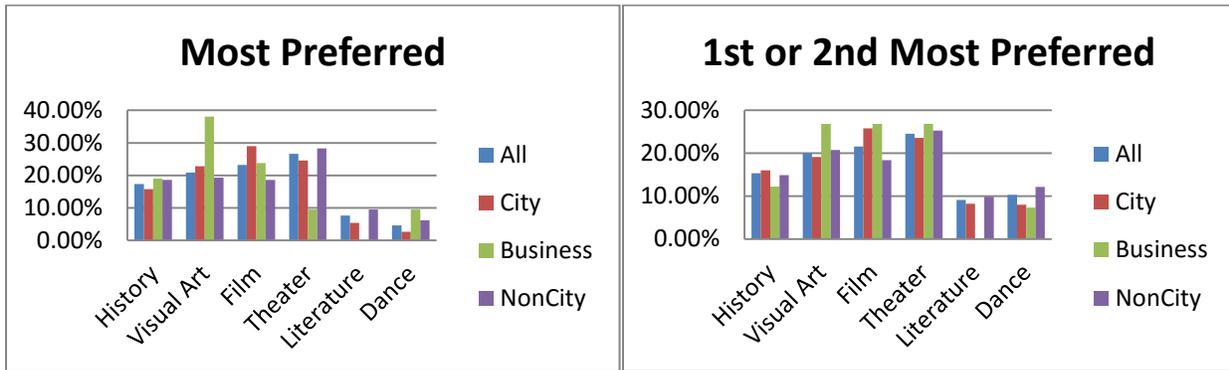
If you could attend, visit, or participate in humanities, arts, and cultural events in South Lyon more often, would you?



When combined with the previous question, this provides a clear indication that there is a strong desire for more humanities, arts and cultural options within the City of South Lyon. Despite the lower response about potential participation from downtown businesses, their higher rate of disapproval of the current situation, with more than two-thirds of them saying there are only a few or no interesting things to do, demonstrates that they feel more programming will benefit them, likely through their businesses. The Cultural Arts Commission should consider this a very strong mandate.

*Please rate the following in order of which humanities, arts, and cultural programming you would **most** like to see in South Lyon. (1= most desired; 6 = least desired.)*

This sequence of questions asked respondents to rank the kind of programming they would most like to see in South Lyon. As noted in the caveats, this question has a clear flaw, in that during revisions Music was accidentally dropped at a choice category. Given the strong response to Music as an activity people did in the past twelve months, it is needs to be considered as likely being one of the top responses that would have appeared here.



A look at the overall responses is interesting, in that overall the strongest preference, when looking either at what most respondents chose as their top priority or as one of their top two priorities, was theater, which ranked down the list of events respondents reported attending in the past year. The exception to this choice was from South Lyon business owners, who strongly preferred visual arts, and had theater well down the list in terms of their top choice. When looking only at the top two choices, however, theater again rose to the top. But this is still an interesting response, and it might mean that there would be an audience for both theatrical events and lectures or discussions about them. And, again, music should also be considered to be part of these top categories as well.

Film and visual art also ranked quite high overall across the board, with these three categories comprising over two thirds of the six chosen as either the top category or one of the top two.

From the perspective of the South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission, these results should provide a lot of grist for the mill in terms of thinking about priorities for the development of programming in the area. Music, theater, film and visual arts all appear to have strong followings. Within the city history scored next highest, and given that there are resources in South Lyon this should also be considered.

The following tables list the breakdowns by programming area in terms of how respondents ranked their priorities in terms of what they would *most* like to see in South Lyon.

History	All	City	Business	NonCity
1	23.08%	18.95%	20.00%	27.00%
2	17.44%	18.95%	5.00%	16.00%
3	19.49%	17.89%	20.00%	21.00%
4	22.56%	14.74%	20.00%	30.00%
5	18.46%	24.21%	20.00%	13.00%
6	25.64%	20.00%	15.00%	31.00%

Visual Art		All	City	Business	NonCity
1		27.27%	26.53%	40.00%	28.00%
2		24.75%	17.35%	15.00%	32.00%
3		26.26%	22.45%	10.00%	30.00%
4		20.20%	18.37%	30.00%	22.00%
5		21.72%	21.43%	5.00%	22.00%
6		6.06%	8.16%	0.00%	4.00%

Film		All	City	Business	NonCity
1		31.25%	34.74%	25.00%	27.84%
2		26.56%	26.32%	30.00%	26.80%
3		25.52%	18.95%	25.00%	31.96%
4		20.31%	16.84%	15.00%	23.71%
5		16.67%	16.84%	0.00%	16.49%
6		6.77%	1.05%	5.00%	12.37%

Theater		All	City	Business	NonCity
1		34.16%	28.57%	10.00%	39.42%
2		28.22%	25.51%	45.00%	30.77%
3		23.76%	23.47%	20.00%	24.04%
4		20.30%	21.43%	15.00%	19.23%
5		11.88%	12.24%	10.00%	11.54%
6		7.43%	3.06%	0.00%	11.54%

Literature/ Writing		All	City	Business	NonCity
1		9.22%	6.06%	0.00%	12.15%
2		11.17%	11.11%	0.00%	11.21%
3		17.96%	17.17%	10.53%	18.69%
4		19.90%	20.20%	5.26%	19.63%
5		31.07%	23.23%	26.32%	38.32%
6		35.92%	36.36%	57.89%	35.51%

Dance		All	City	Business	NonCity
1		9.22%	6.06%	0.00%	12.15%
2		11.17%	11.11%	0.00%	11.21%
3		17.96%	17.17%	10.53%	18.69%
4		19.90%	20.20%	5.26%	19.63%
5		31.07%	23.23%	26.32%	38.32%
6		35.92%	36.36%	57.89%	35.51%

What are the reasons that prevent you from attending/participating in these types of events in South Lyon as often as you would like? (Check all that apply)

The next question asked respondents to indicate what they felt were the barriers to them participating in event in South Lyon as often as they would like. Again, these responses were remarkably consistent across the board in terms of demographics.

The single biggest barrier, according the respondents, is that there is simply not enough for them to do. This echoes the earlier question about the level of overall offerings in the city, where few respondents felt there was a lot to do.

Significantly, the second highest barrier was that respondents felt that they were unaware of events in the area. This should be noted by the South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission, as it implies that one of its key roles could be one of facilitating or coordinating the process of helping publicize events, either by acting as a clearinghouse itself or by working with other organizations to help improve outreach overall.

The next largest barriers were seen as coming from the pressures of work or time and family obligations. While there’s not necessarily much the SLCAC can do to change those barriers, it might consider how best to work around such issues when scheduling events, perhaps by looking to weekend or evening programming or thinking about how to provide support or activities targeting families with children.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Not Enough	65.51%	66.94%	70.00%	64.02%
Time/Family	36.59%	31.45%	36.67%	40.24%
Expensive	6.97%	5.65%	0.00%	7.93%
Income	6.97%	6.45%	0.00%	7.32%
Transportation	1.74%	1.61%	0.00%	1.83%
Alone	6.62%	6.45%	0.00%	6.71%
Uncomfortable	3.48%	2.42%	0.00%	4.27%
Health	2.79%	3.23%	3.33%	2.44%
Work	26.13%	26.61%	46.67%	25.61%
Inconvenient	17.77%	20.97%	6.67%	15.24%
Location	6.62%	4.03%	6.67%	8.54%
Unaware	49.48%	50.81%	23.33%	48.17%
No Interest	8.71%	13.71%	0.00%	4.88%
Other	4.53%	6.45%	0.00%	3.05%

Thinking about the South Lyon local area, which of the statements best describes the availability of facilities and activities for humanities, arts, and cultural events, such as theaters, museums, concerts and exhibition spaces?

The next question asked respondents to think about the overall availability of places for activities in the area. Again, they were asked to categorize the area in general terms, and again the overall viewpoint was that there are not enough available options, with only a small percentage feeling that all or many of the needed options are available. This is a small community, so these results are not surprising, but this might be an arena where the commission could also take a facilitating or coordinating role.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
All Available	4.35%	8.40%	0.00%	1.27%
Many Available	5.80%	4.20%	0.00%	7.01%
Some Available	21.38%	26.05%	34.62%	17.83%
Not Enough Available	45.65%	39.50%	50.00%	50.32%
Not here, but accessible elsewhere	14.13%	13.45%	3.85%	14.65%
Not accessible	0.72%	1.68%	0.00%	0.00%
Don't know	7.97%	6.72%	11.54%	8.92%

How important is it to have humanities, arts, and cultural events in South Lyon that target each of the following groups?

Respondents were next asked to give their opinion about how important it was to have events that targeted specific respondent groups by age. Unsurprisingly, there was again a large preponderance of those who said it was either extremely important or important that each of the six groups be targeted. Overall, there was fairly little variation, as over 80% of respondents felt each of five of the six categories should have attention, with only the preschool group having fewer than 70% respond that it was important or extremely important. City residents tended to respond at slightly lower levels, and businesses varied more by group, with 89% of the latter feeling adults should get the highest focus. Again, this is probably not surprising, since business owners likely see a connection between such events and foot traffic for their venues.

Preschool	All	City	Business	NonCity
Extremely	36.10%	26.67%	37.04%	43.31%
Important	33.57%	31.67%	33.33%	35.03%
Moderately	15.52%	20.00%	14.81%	12.10%
Somewhat	9.03%	12.50%	11.11%	6.37%
Not Very	5.78%	9.17%	3.70%	3.18%

Elementary School	All	City	Business	NonCity
Extremely Important	47.10%	35.00%	51.85%	56.41%
Moderately Somewhat	33.33%	37.50%	29.63%	30.13%
Not Very	11.59%	17.50%	7.41%	7.05%
	3.99%	4.17%	11.11%	3.85%
	3.99%	5.83%	0.00%	2.56%

Middle School	All	City	Business	NonCity
Extremely Important	48.56%	37.50%	59.26%	56.96%
Moderately Somewhat	33.09%	37.50%	25.93%	29.75%
Not Very	11.51%	14.17%	7.41%	9.49%
	3.24%	5.00%	7.41%	1.90%
	3.60%	5.83%	0.00%	1.90%

High School	All	City	Business	NonCity
Extremely Important	50.72%	45.76%	55.56%	54.43%
Moderately Somewhat	35.87%	38.14%	33.33%	34.18%
Not Very	6.52%	5.93%	7.41%	6.96%
	3.26%	4.24%	3.70%	2.53%
	3.62%	5.93%	0.00%	1.90%

Adults	All	City	Business	NonCity
Extremely Important	42.65%	38.84%	44.44%	45.57%
Moderately Somewhat	39.43%	39.67%	44.44%	39.24%
Not Very	9.68%	9.09%	7.41%	10.13%
	5.02%	5.79%	3.70%	4.43%
	3.23%	6.61%	0.00%	0.63%

Seniors	All	City	Business	NonCity
Extremely Important	43.53%	38.33%	40.74%	47.47%
Moderately Somewhat	37.05%	38.33%	29.63%	36.08%
Not Very	11.15%	10.00%	25.93%	12.03%
	3.96%	6.67%	3.70%	1.90%
	4.32%	6.67%	0.00%	2.53%

What are the best ways to inform you of upcoming events that may be of interest to you? (Check all that apply)

One of the key specific takeaways from this survey for the South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission, in addition to the overall sense of support from respondents, is that by and large this is an audience that prefers electronic communication about events. The vast majority of people indicated they prefer to find out about events via website, Facebook/Twitter or an email distribution list. Fliers and community newspapers were also areas of strong support, with a much lower emphasis on “traditional” media. The good news about this for the commission is that these by and large are relatively low-cost avenues of communication.

Again, given that this was primarily a web survey, it is possible that community members who are not so active online might have a different perspective, but with the exception of very strong support for flier and posters business owners by and large held the same opinions.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Newspaper	38.68%	37.10%	36.67%	39.63%
Radio	14.63%	10.48%	16.67%	17.68%
TV	15.33%	12.90%	10.00%	17.07%
Fliers/Posters	51.57%	52.42%	66.67%	50.61%
Community news	48.08%	51.61%	36.67%	45.12%
Billboards	41.11%	41.13%	46.67%	40.85%
Church Bulletins	14.98%	12.10%	10.00%	17.07%
Invite/Mail	25.09%	28.23%	26.67%	22.56%
Email list	54.01%	45.97%	50.00%	59.76%
Website/Calendar	65.51%	66.13%	66.67%	64.63%
Facebook/Twitter	65.85%	70.16%	43.33%	62.20%
Text Message	19.16%	17.74%	10.00%	20.12%
Other	1.74%	4.03%	0.00%	0.00%

It is important to have humanities, arts, and cultural offerings in South Lyon.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Strongly Agree	63.84%	58.62%	56.00%	67.74%
Agree	25.83%	25.86%	36.00%	25.81%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4.80%	6.03%	8.00%	3.87%
Disagree	1.85%	3.45%	0.00%	0.65%
Strongly Disagree	3.69%	6.03%	0.00%	1.94%

Finally, there were several questions about how respondents value the humanities, arts, and culture in general and in the area, ending with a key question about how resources ought to be prioritized.

The results of the general questions followed the trends in the rest of the survey – of note is the fact that over 90% of respondents in all categories either strongly agreed or agreed that value the community would lose something valuable without such activities. Questions about the amount of money spent on these activities, both within the community and in the country as a whole, also showed a majority felt that the about spent was either too low or much too low, with business owners again saying more strongly that the amount spent in South Lyon was too low.

One thing to notice, and this is again something the commission might consider publicizing more widely, is that a large percentage of people, and a large number of business owners, don't know how much money is actually being spent, either here or in the country as a whole.

As might be expected, those who did not attend any events in the past year were more likely to disagree that the area would lose something of value, and also felt too much money, both locally and nationally, was being spent.

If my area lost its humanities, arts, and cultural activities, the people living here would lose something of value.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Strongly Agree	60.25%	58.62%	56.00%	67.74%
Agree	33.20%	25.86%	36.00%	25.81%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.41%	6.03%	8.00%	3.87%
Disagree	2.46%	3.45%	0.00%	0.65%
Strongly Disagree	3.69%	6.03%	0.00%	1.94%

Do you think the amount of money and resources spent on humanities, arts, and cultural events/activities within the South Lyon area are too high, about right, or too low?

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Much too high	3.37%	6.09%	0.00%	1.32%
Too high	1.87%	4.35%	0.00%	0.00%
About Right	11.24%	13.04%	8.00%	9.87%
Too Low	36.33%	28.70%	40.00%	42.11%
Much Low	17.98%	16.52%	16.00%	19.08%
Don't Know	29.21%	31.30%	36.00%	27.63%

Thinking about the country as a whole, do you think the amount of money and resources spent on humanities, arts, and cultural events/activities in this country are too high, about right, or too low?

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Much Too High	4.10%	6.96%	0.00%	1.96%
Too High	2.61%	4.35%	4.00%	1.31%
About Right	18.66%	17.39%	8.00%	19.61%
Too Low	44.78%	38.26%	40.00%	49.67%
Much Too Low	12.69%	13.04%	12.00%	12.42%
Don't Know	17.16%	20.00%	36.00%	15.03%

Which of the following activities should be priorities for receiving support in South Lyon? Check all that apply.

The last of the truly key questions for helping the South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission assess community attitudes and desires asked respondents to note which activities should be prioritized for support.

While there was support for many options, three areas in particular rose to the top: support for festivals and community events, support for youth programs, and support for art in public places and public art.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Art in Public Places/Public art	56.10%	52.42%	66.67%	58.54%
Festivals/Community Events	73.17%	72.58%	70.00%	73.17%
Performing Arts Organizations	44.60%	37.90%	26.67%	49.39%
Museums	33.10%	26.61%	33.33%	37.80%
Youth Programs	64.46%	59.68%	50.00%	67.68%
Lectures and Seminars	28.57%	25.00%	33.33%	31.10%
Arts Education	35.89%	28.23%	33.33%	41.46%
Promoting/Marketing	35.19%	28.23%	33.33%	40.24%
Support for individual artists	25.78%	16.94%	30.00%	32.32%
Support for arts or cultural orgs	38.33%	29.03%	16.67%	45.12%
Provide Space for lectures, etc.	41.46%	33.87%	36.67%	46.95%
Walking Tours	31.71%	28.23%	46.67%	34.15%

I would be willing to volunteer for humanities, arts, and cultural events in South Lyon.

Finally, respondents were asked about whether they would be willing to volunteer. A fair number overall indicated a willingness to do so, most significantly city residents, who said so at a 40% rate, but what is also significant was the large percentage of people saying they didn't know. This may indicate willingness but lack of knowledge about exactly what this would entail. Still, this says there is a potential pool of volunteers available to be tapped, especially if it's made clear how people would participate and the level of commitment that would be required.

	All	City	Business	NonCity
Strongly Agree	9.75%	10.91%	5.00%	5.73%
Agree	27.08%	29.09%	25.00%	16.41%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	21.66%	19.09%	25.00%	14.89%
Disagree	8.30%	10.00%	20.00%	4.58%
Strongly Disagree	6.50%	10.00%	0.00%	2.67%
Don't Know	26.71%	20.91%	25.00%	55.73%

Conclusions

The South Lyon Cultural Arts Commission should take from this survey that in general there is support within the community for its activities, but that there is overall a sense that the area currently does not have the needed level of events or resources. It should consider whether it is likely to receive the necessary level of financial and volunteer support needed to become a major provider of events or whether it could better serve as a facilitating body, working to tie other organizations together and becoming a conduit for information and expertise, to try to stimulate other groups into providing the kind of programming desired by the community.

In formulating this survey, a large number of potential questions needed to be excluded in order to keep the instrument to a reasonable length. These could obviously form the basis of a follow-up survey, or a survey based in probability sampling could also be undertaken, presuming the resources were available. That survey might find lower overall levels of support in the area for these activities by ensuring the inclusion of those without a predisposition to take such a survey, but that may not at all be the case, given that overall the demographics of this survey's respondents were reasonably close. Regardless, even if this survey measures only likely consumers of such offerings it still provides a good reading of their attitudes, and given that those respondents form a likely audience, this survey still offers solid information for how to structure events to reach an optimal number of participants. That, with the fact that it contains responses from the majority of downtown business owners, gives high credence to these survey results.

Joseph Matuzak
329 Lyon Blvd.
South Lyon, MI 48178
joe@matuzak.com
(248)437-5206