THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF SAN FRANCISCO'S PARKLETS:

DIVISADERO CLUSTER

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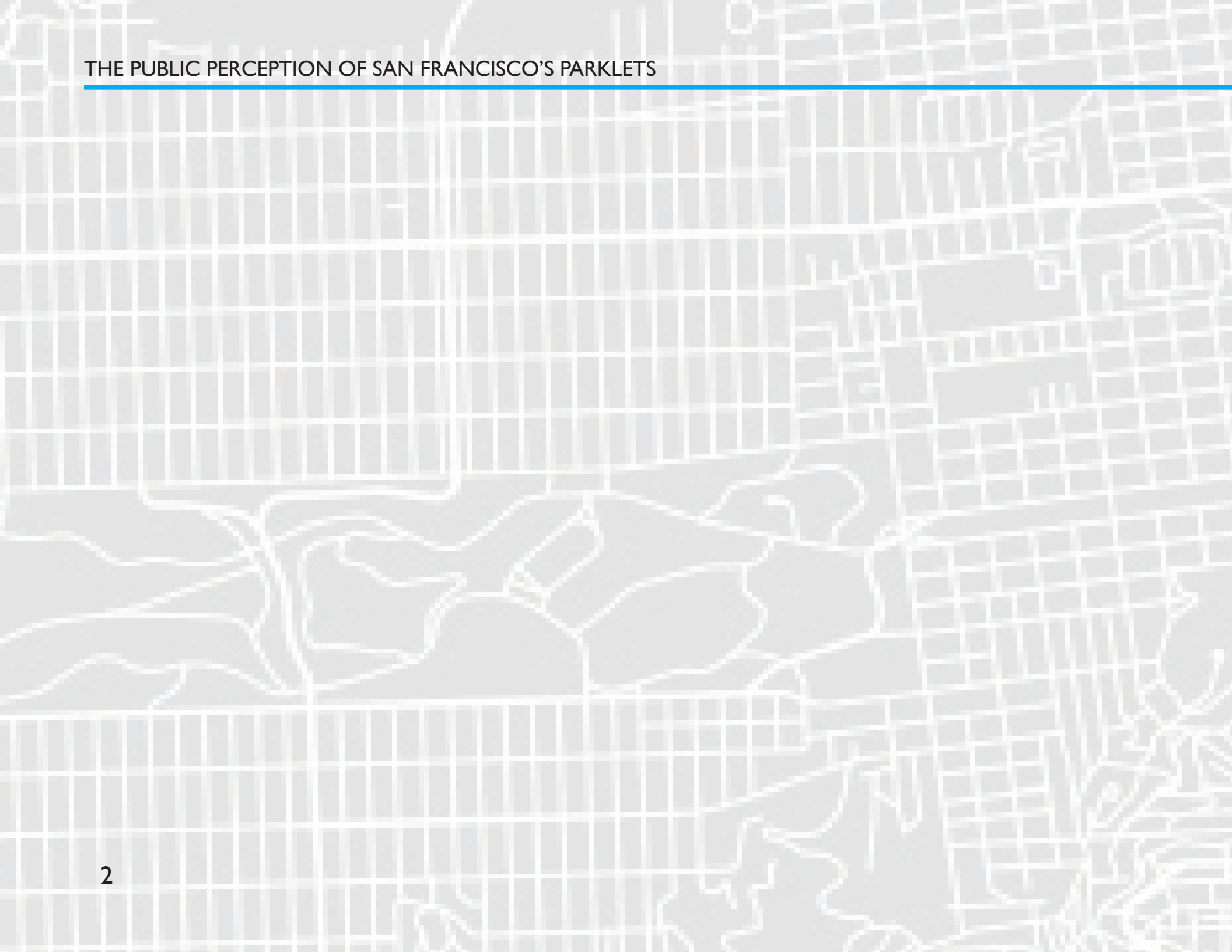

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N
DIVISADERO
STEINER
FILLMORE
WEBSTER
ELLIS
GOLDEN GATE
TURK
FULTON
MCALLISTER
Cafe Abir
The Mill
HAYES
GROVE
Mojo Bike Shop
OAK
FELL
BAKER
LYON
MASONIC
HAIGHT
ASHBURY
0 mi
1 mi
3 mi

Mojo Bicycle Shop - Installed March, 2010
639 Divisadero Street

N
DIVISADERO
STEINER
FILLMORE
WEBSTER
ELLIS
GOLDEN GATE
TURK
FULTON
MCALLISTER
Cafe Abir
The Mill
HAYES
GROVE
Mojo Bike Shop
OAK
FELL
BAKER
LYON
MASONIC
HAIGHT
ASHBURY
0 mi
1 mi
3 mi

The Mill - Completed April, 2014
736 Divisadero Street

N
DIVISADERO
STEINER
FILLMORE
WEBSTER
ELLIS
GOLDEN GATE
MCALLISTER
FULTON
HAYES
OAK
TURK
GROVE
FELL
HAIGHT
ASHBURY
MASONIC
LYON
BAKER
Cafe Abir
The Mill
Mojo Bike Shop
0 mi
1 mi
3 mi

Cafe Abir - Installed June, 2011
1300 Fulton St.

Prelude

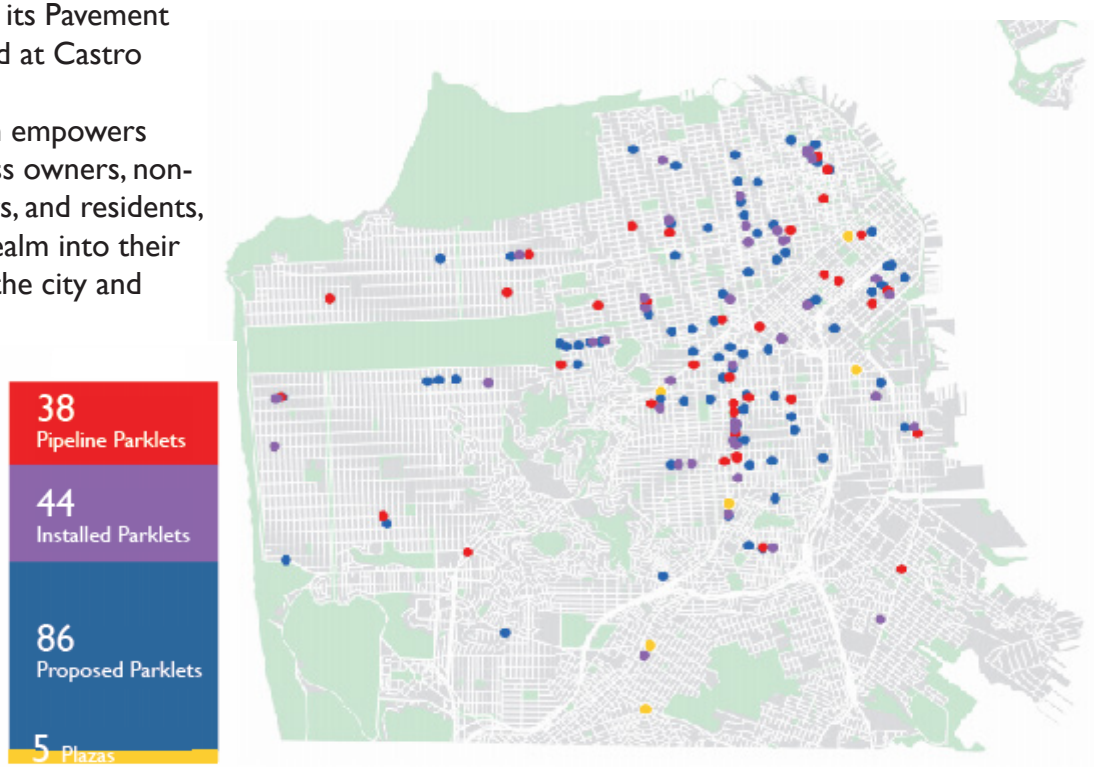
A parklet is an extension of the sidewalk into the public right of way. Parklets can take many forms - typically a parklet is a platform that extends the sidewalk and provides amenities like seats, tables, bike racks, and landscaping. The intention of parklets it to reclaim streets by converting parking spaces into recreational spaces for everyone to enjoy.

History

The term "parklet" was first used in San Francisco to decribe the conversion of an parking space into a mini-park. Rebar, a design and art studio, created the first parklet in 2005 by converting a single metered parking space into a temporary park in downtown San Francisco.[1] This sparked the initiation of international Park(ing) Day where organizations around the world transform parking spaces into urban parks for a day. The success of Park(ing) Day inspired Rebar to experiment with more permanent parklet installation in San Francisco. Today, cities across the globe have installed parklets as a way to reclaim the public right of way.

The City of San Francisco incorporated parklets as part of its Pavement to Parks program in 2009. The initial pilot plaza was located at Castro Commons, the triangular intersection of 17th, Market, and Castro streets. San Francisco's Pavement to Parks Program empowers Community Benefit Districts (CBDs), ground floor business owners, non-profit, community organizations, and front property owners, and residents, to take the development and beautification of the public realm into their own hands. Today, there are more than 48 parklets across the city and several in Oakland and Berkeley.

*Source: http://innovation.luskin.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/parklettoolkit.pdf



The Mission of San Francisco's Parklet Program

Reimagine the Potential of City Streets

Parklets allow for public space improvement and energize the public realm. They help address the desire and need for increased public open space and wider sidewalks.

Encourage Non-Motorized Transportation

Parklets encourage walking by providing pedestrian amenities like street furniture, landscaping, and public art. Parklets often provide bicycle parking and thus increase the visibility of bicycling in San Francisco.

Encourage Pedestrian Activity

Parklets provide pocket spaces for pedestrians to sit and relax, while also improving walkability.

Foster Neighborhood Interaction

Parklets provide a public place for neighbors to meet and get to know one another. In some cases, neighbors have participated in the design, financing, and construction of parklets.

Support Local Businesses

Parklets attract attention to businesses and provide additional seating that can be used by cafe customers and others. A parklet also beautifies the street and creates a neighborhood destination.

San Francisco Ordinance

Public Works Code Article 16, Section 810 governs the installation of sidewalk landscaping. This Department of Public Works (DPW) Order provides detailed implementation guidelines for the approval and installation of temporary sidewalk extensions (Parklets) consistent with the sidewalk landscaping program.

STUDY DESIGN

Hypothesis

After creating neighborhood profiles of four clusters of parklets throughout the city of San Francisco, we decided along with the members of the second parklet study group to comparatively examine the clusters on Polk St. and Divisadero St. As a unit, we felt strongly about the connection between socioeconomic neighborhood composition and the use of parklets. Building on this initial observation, we developed our hypothesis:

Perception primarily differs based on neighborhood socioeconomic composition.
Divisadero Cluster: *Parklets will generally be perceived as public.*

To test this hypothesis, we established our research question:

Are parklets perceived as public spaces or reserved for patrons?

Definitions

To enable both parklet teams to conduct integrous studies, we decided to define terms that may shape the use of the space. These terms were:

Parklet (n.) - *Public open space created by repurposing part of the street (typically an on-street parking space).*
Patron (n.) - *A customer paying a business or operation for an item or service.*
Perception (n.) - *A way of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something; a mental impression.*
Public (adj.) - *Open to or shared by all the people of an area or community.*
Socioeconomic Composition (n.) - *The common social and economic characteristics of a group of people, specifically in relation to income, education, and occupation.*

Independent Variables

Parklet Design: *1) Size (1-2 parking spaces), 2) Tables with movable seating, 3) Adjacent to restaurant/cafe*
Major Corridor: *1) Main neighborhood thoroughfare, 2) Two-way traffic, 3) Bus routes*
Cluster: *1) Close proximity, 2) Three parklets, 3) Neighborhood awareness*

Dependent Variables

Median Income 2012: ~ $68,000 - $78,0003

Assumptions

An individual's perception of whether a parklet is public or private is influenced by both its design characteristics and the sponsoring business associted with it.

The socioeconomic composition of the neighborhood in which a parklet is loacted affects the degree to which it is pereived as public or private; areas with higher average median incomes are more likely to perceive a parklet as public. The Divisadero parklets are located in census tracts 158.02 and 164.

Limitations

Short time frame, one season

Relatively small sample sizes for observations and surveys (just under 100 surveys collected)

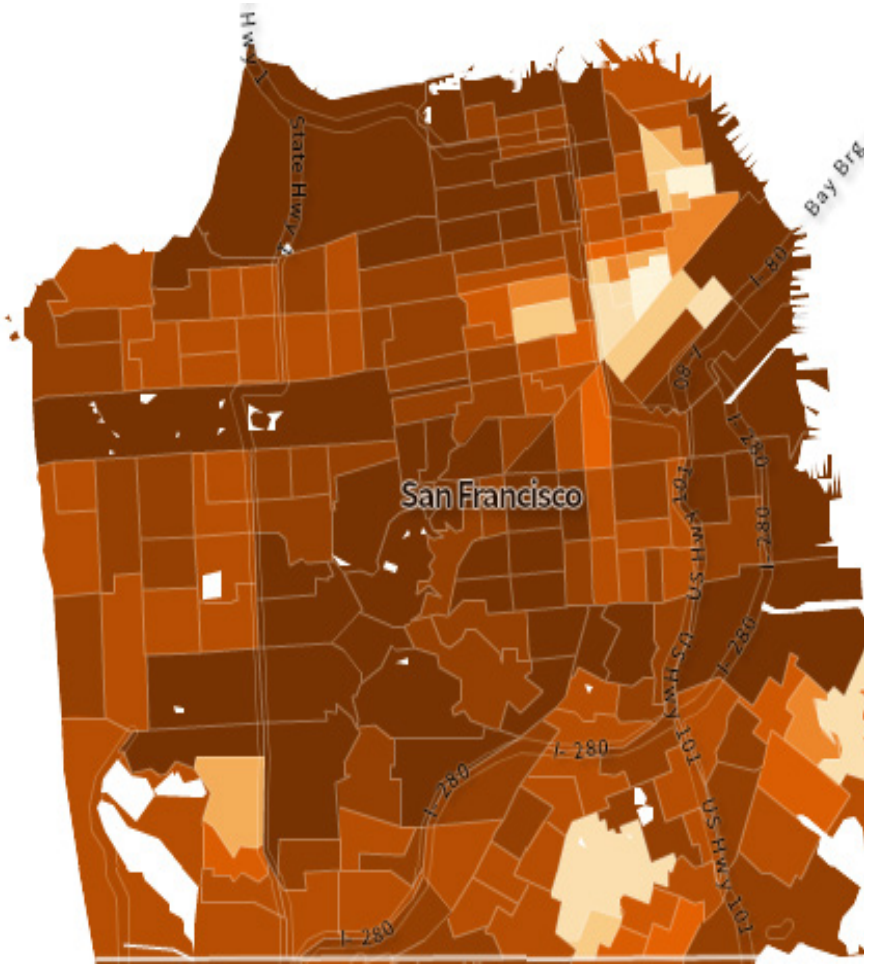
Limited scope in terms of geogprahy and scale; only compared six parklets in two different neighborhoods

Samples taken in 10 minute windows, ideally would be longer

Census Tracts & Median Income Composition

Tract 158.02
Median Houshold Income: $74,219

Tract 164
Median Houshold Income: $76,911



- <$15,000
- $15,000 to $20,000
- $20,000 to $25,000
- $25,000 to $30,000
- $30,000 to $35,000
- $35,000 to $40,000
- $40,000 to $45,000
- $45,000 to $50,000
- $50,000 to $75,000
- $75,000 to $100,000
- >$100,000

San Francisco County
Median Household Income:
$73,802

***Social Explorer: 2008-2012 ACS 5 year estimate**

METHODOLOGY

Methodology Explained

Compare two groups of parklets in socioeconomically different neighborhoods. Both parklet teams decided to collect data for both Weekday Periods (Monday and Wednesday: 10am - 2pm and 6pm - 9pm) and Weekend Periods (10am - 2pm). These periods were chosen because both teams felt that they would best represent the use of the parklet and provide a sizable population to observe.

To begin collecting data to enable our understanding of the perception of the study parklets, we decided to utilize four main tools:

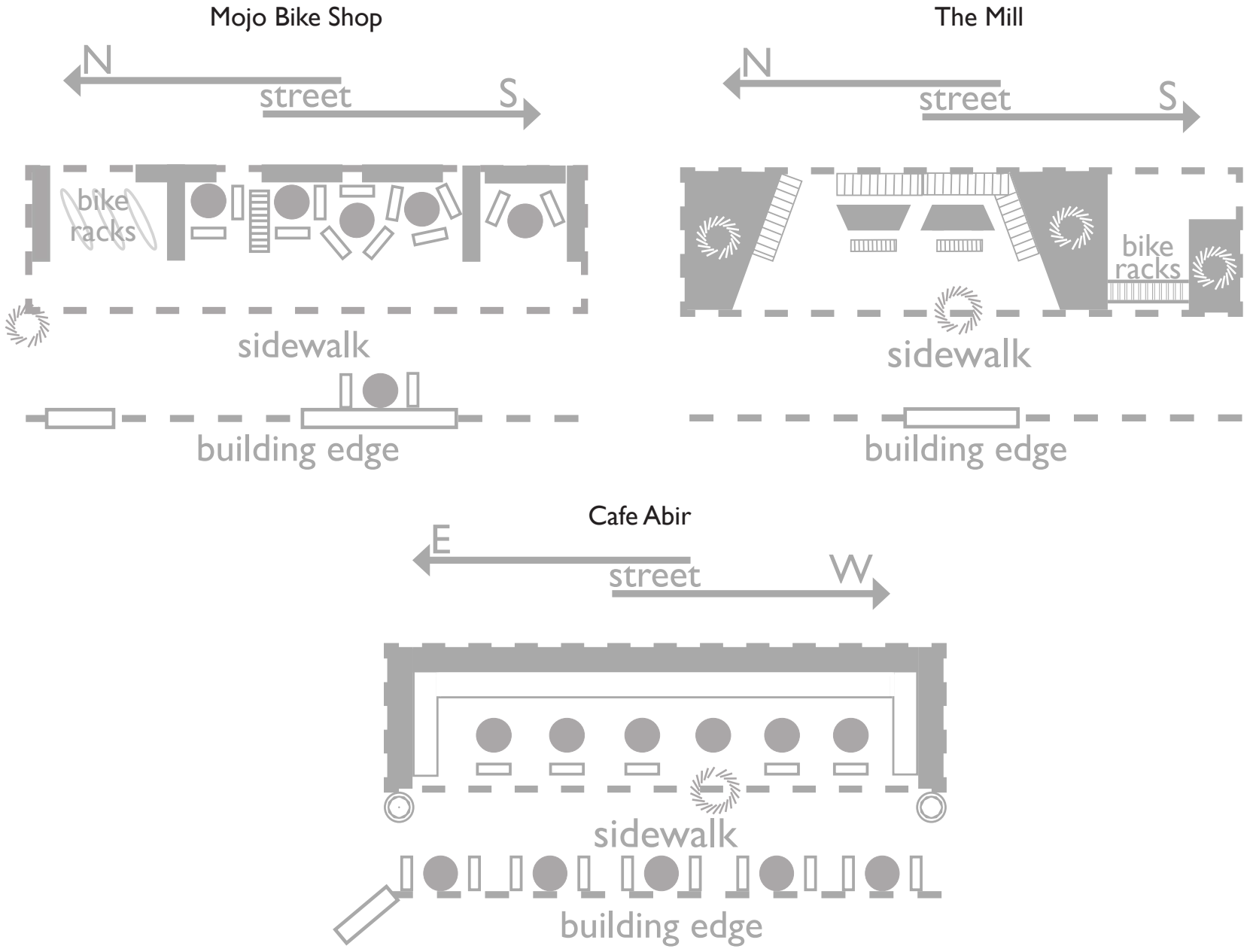
1) Street surveys
   - Designed in conjunction with the Polk St. Study Team, two surveys were developed to illustrate the understanding of perception within the target areas. These surveys were divided into two groups: Users and Passersby.
   - The surveys were collected for the periods noted above.
   - Further discussion is noted under the section labeled Qualitative Analysis.

2) Traffic and User Counts
   - The traffic and user counts were also conducted with tools developed in conjunction with the Polk St. Study Team.
   - The counts were also collected for the time periods noted above.
   - Further discussion is noted under the section labeled Quantitative Analysis.

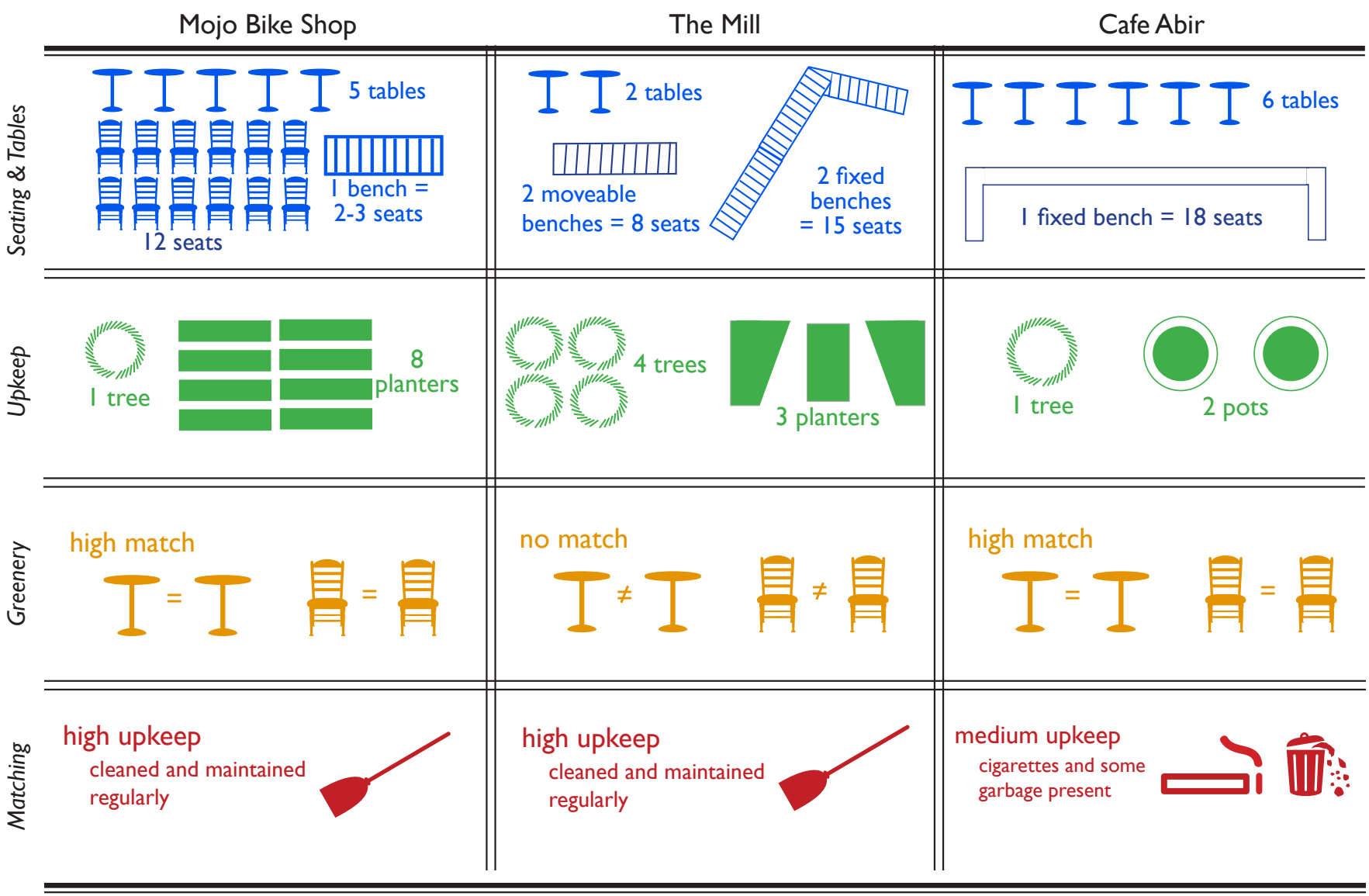
3) Observations
   - Building on the initial observations from a prior visit to the three parklets within the Divisadero Cluster, more detailed observations were performed keeping track of the uniformity between the parklets and their host businesses as well as upkeep.
   - The observations also measured access to sunlight within the middle of each parklet.
   - The observations were performed in conjunction with traffic and user counts during the time periods listed above.
   - Further discussion of each element that was observed is noted under the section labeled Observational Research.

4) Long-interviews with managers of businesses that sponsor parklets
   - Lastly, long interviews were conducted with managers of each of the businesses that host a parklet.
   - These interviews were gathered to contribute to the varied persepctive of the users of the parklet.
   - Further discussion is noted under the section labeled Qualitative Analysis.

Observational Research - Parklet Arrangement

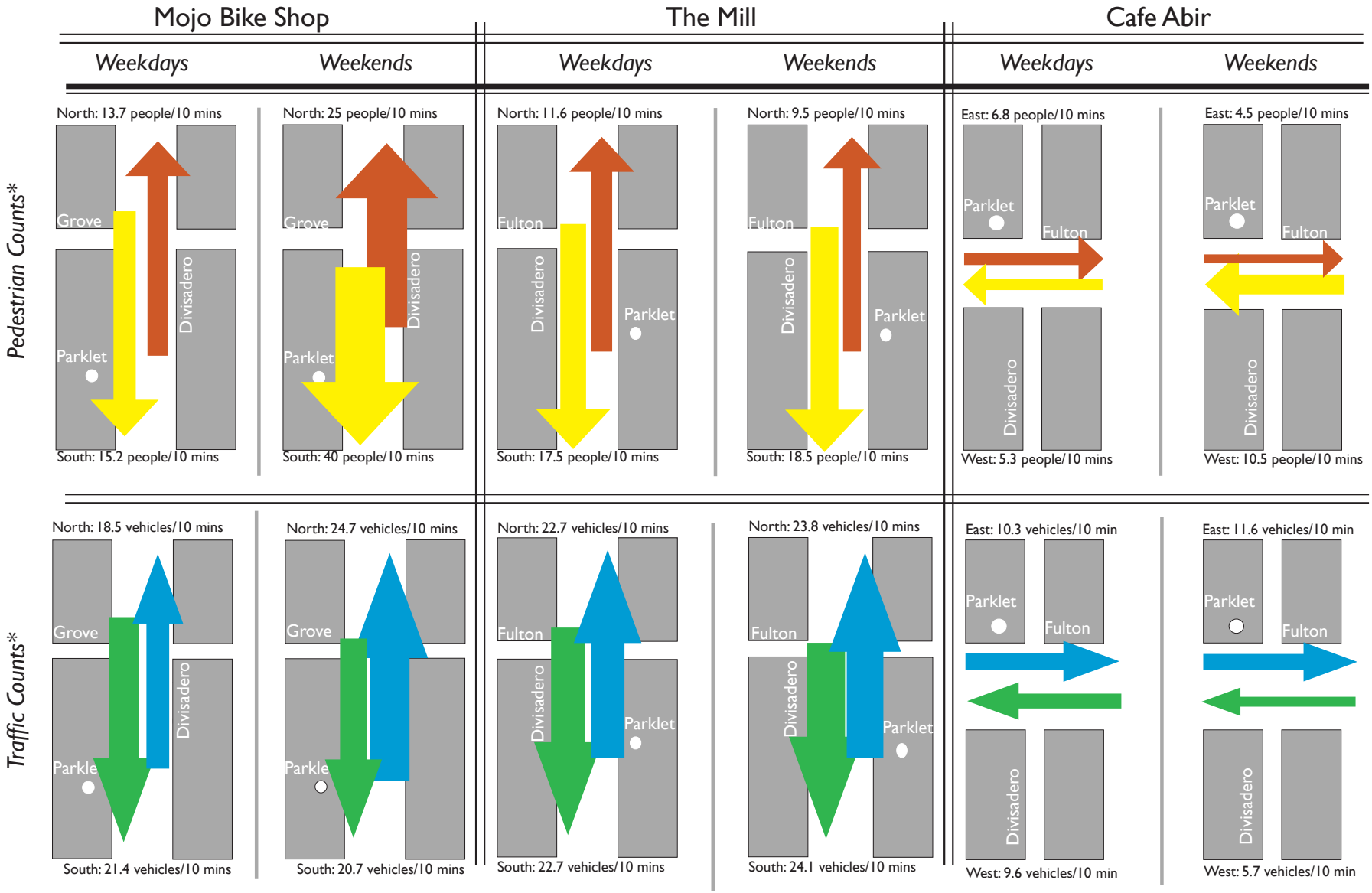


Observational Research Continued...



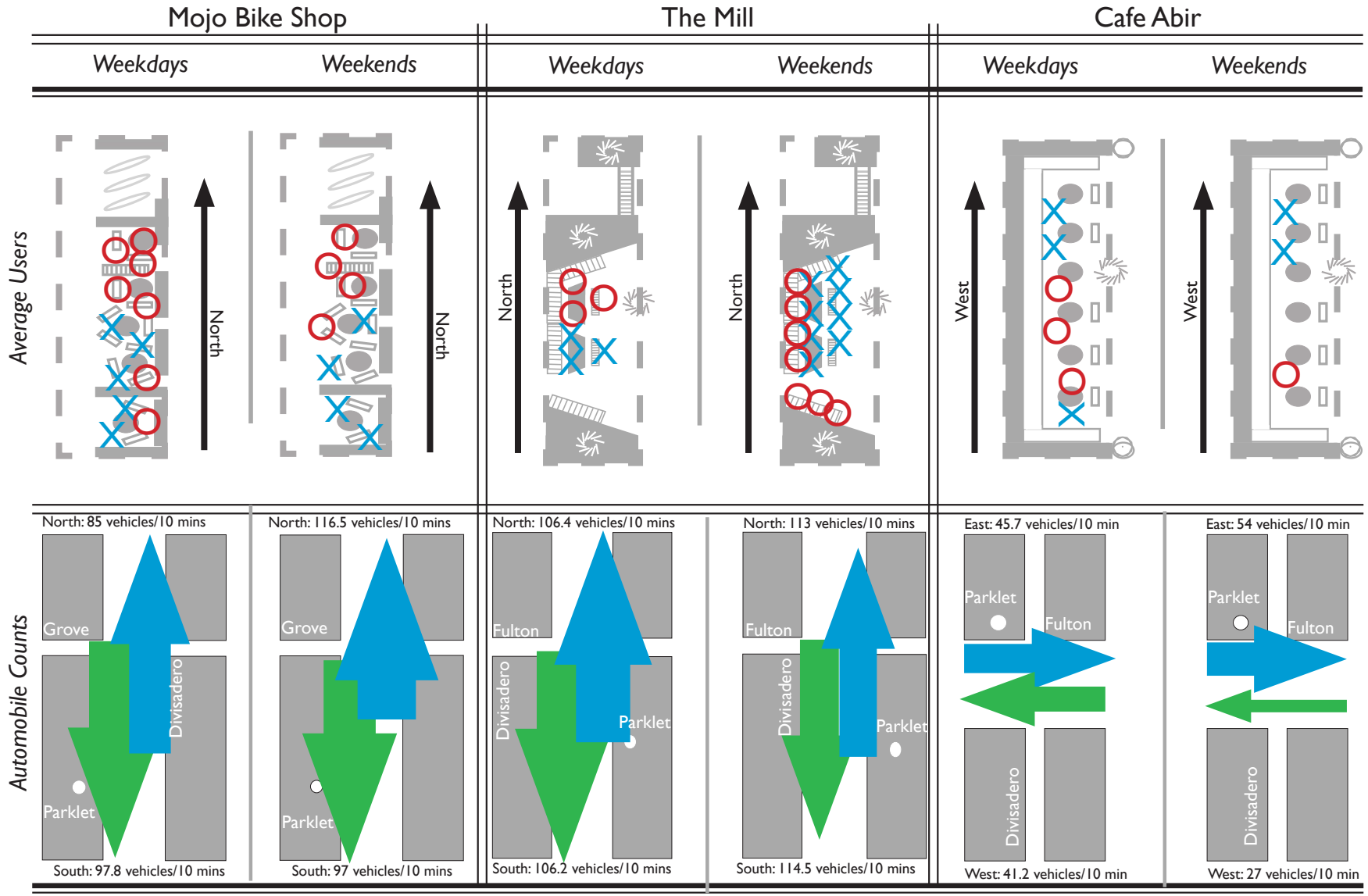
QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Traffic and Pedestrian Counts



*Traffic and Pedestrian Counts are averaged from several counts for both the weekday and weekends. The numbers displayed show an overall average of all vehicles observed as well as pedestrians.

Average Users Population and Parking Occupancy



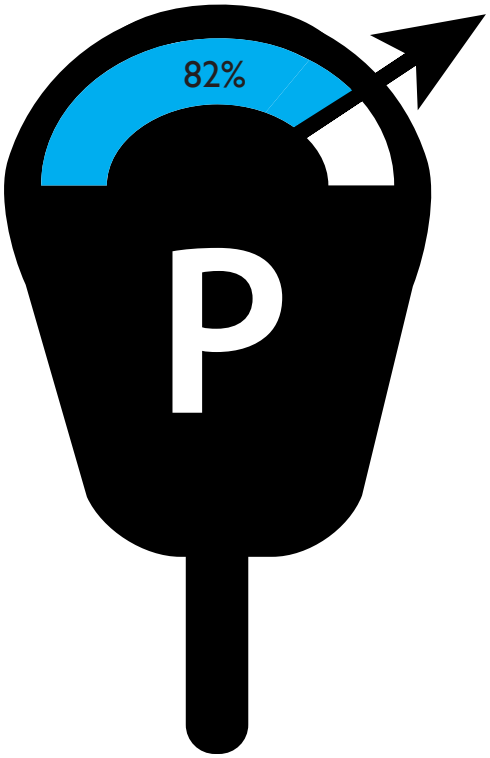
Parking Spot Occupancy on Blocks with Parklets

Mojo Bike Shop

An average of 72% of parking spots were observed to be occupied on the block of Divisadero Street containing the parklet sponsored by Mojo Bike Shop.

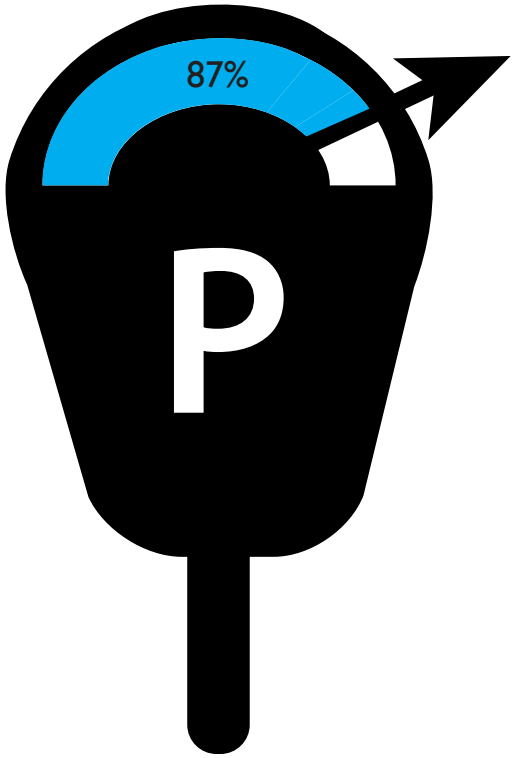
The Mill

An average of 82% of parking spots were observed to be occupied on the block of Divisadero Street containing the parklet sponsored by The Mill.



Cafe Abir

An average of 87% of parking spots were observed to be occupied on the block of Fulton Street containing the parklet sponsored by Cafe Abir.

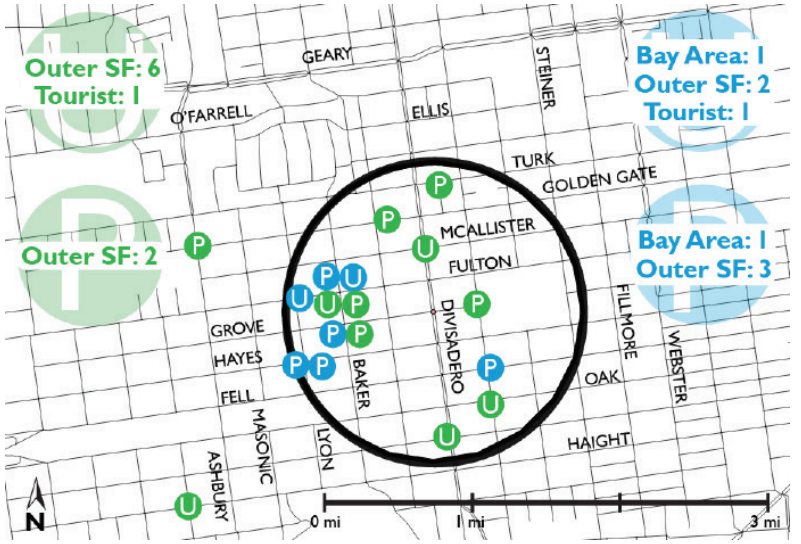


QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

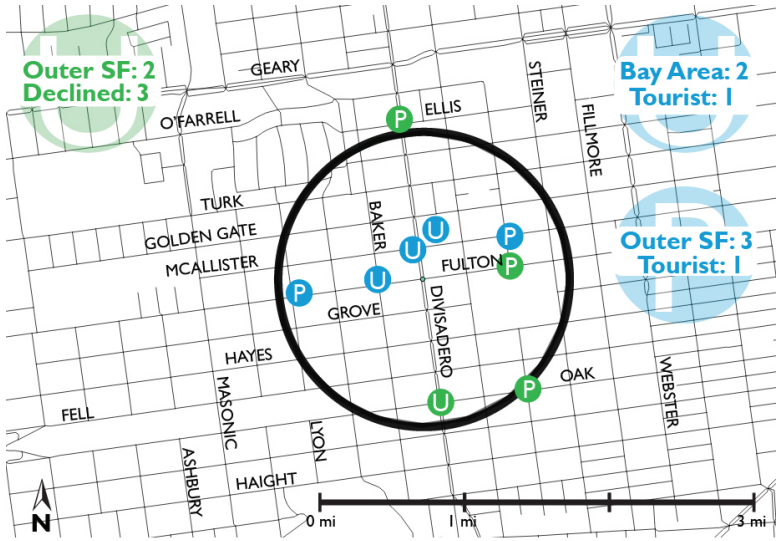
Catchment Area

Mojo Bike Shop

The Mill



Cafe Abir



Weekday Users

Weekday Passersby

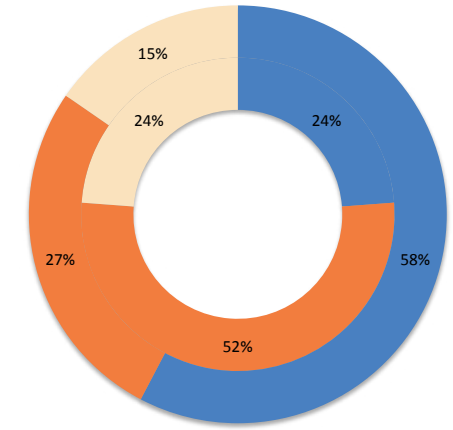
Weekend Users

Weekend Passersby

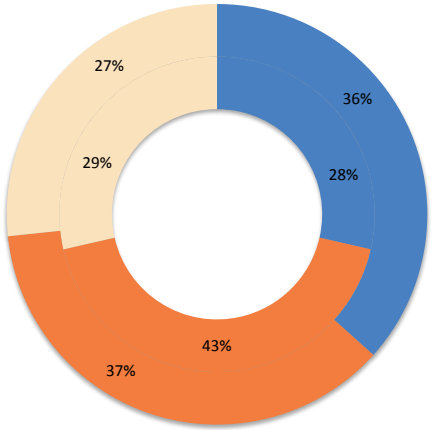
Responses further outside immediate study area

Percent Locals V. Non-Locals

Locals

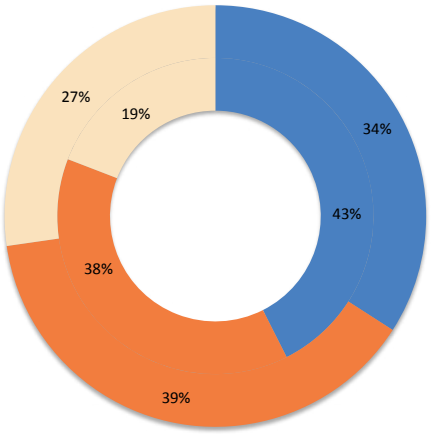


Non-Locals

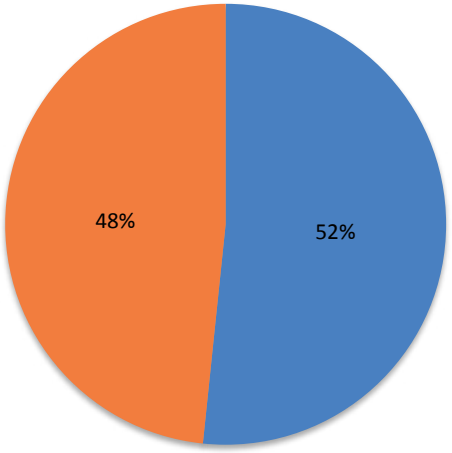


Mojo Bike Shop The Mill Cafe Abir Inner-Ring: All Passersby Outer-Ring: All Users

Total Local v. Non-Local by Parklets



Total Local v. Non-Local - All Parklets



Mojo Bike Shop The Mill Cafe Abir Inner-Ring: Total Local Outer-Ring: Total Non Local

Yes No

Use of Other Parklets

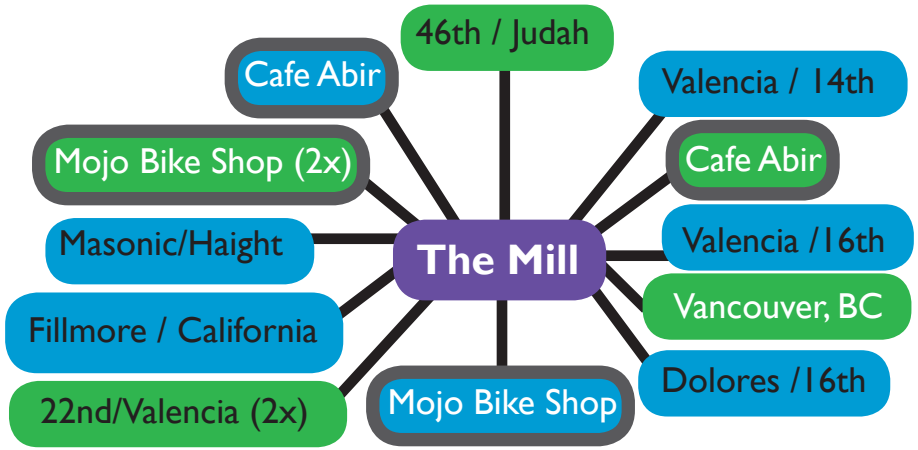
Text Weekday responses within Outer San Francisco

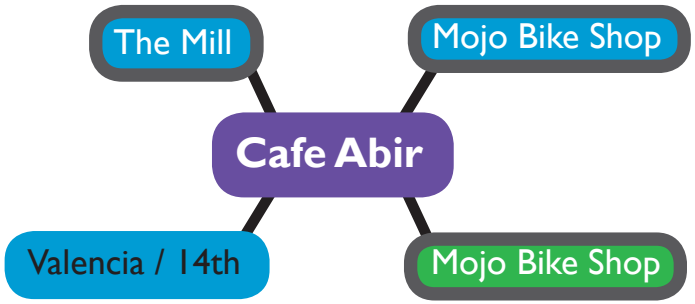
Text Weekday responses naming study area

Text Weekend responses within Outer San Francisco

Text Weekend responses naming study area

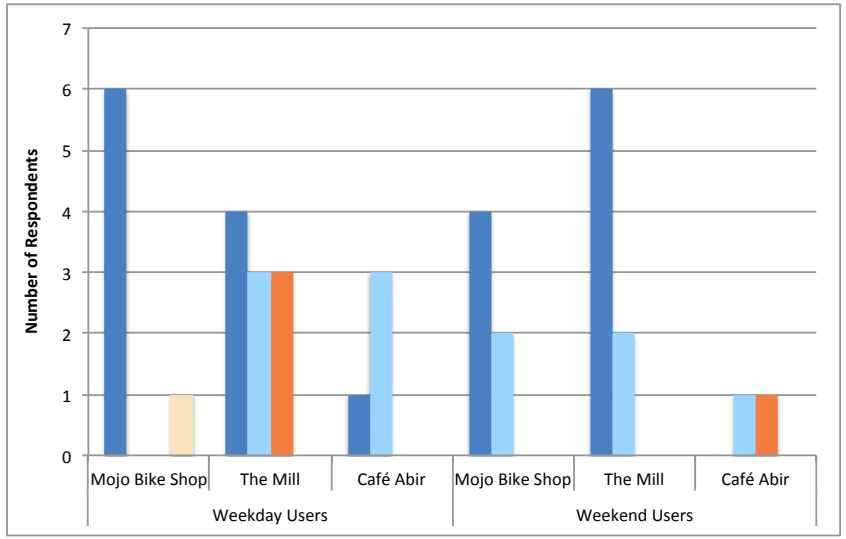
Text Weekday and Weekend responses outside Outer San Francisco



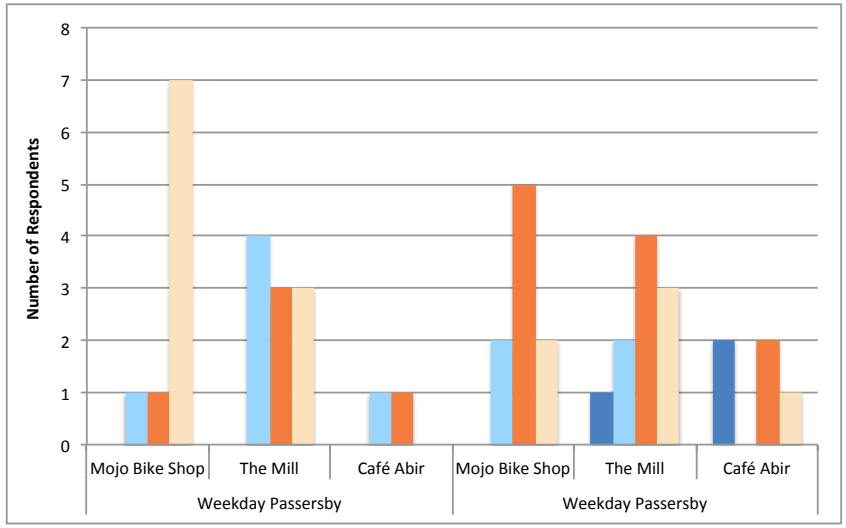


Frequency of Visits

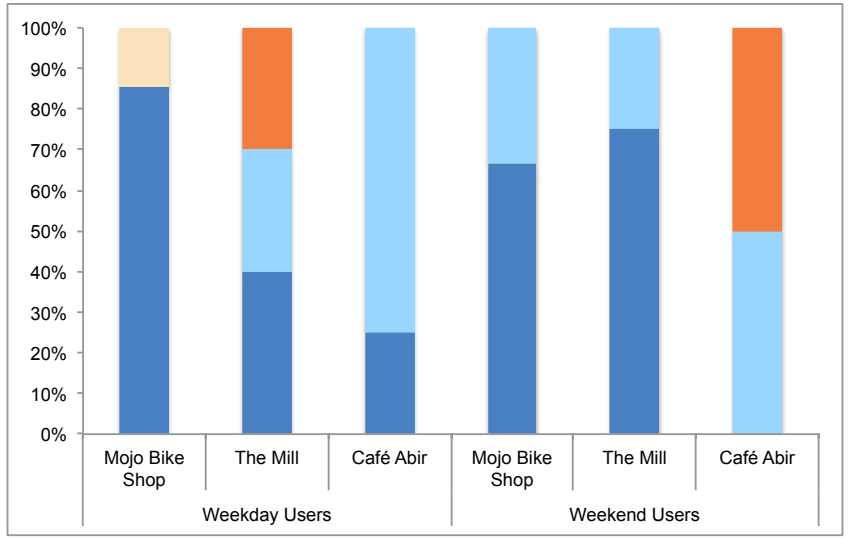
Users



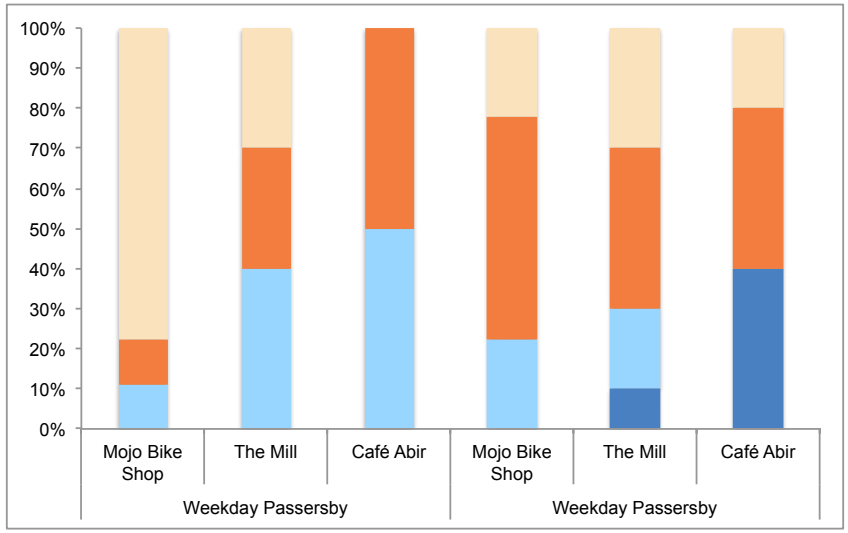
Passersby



Users



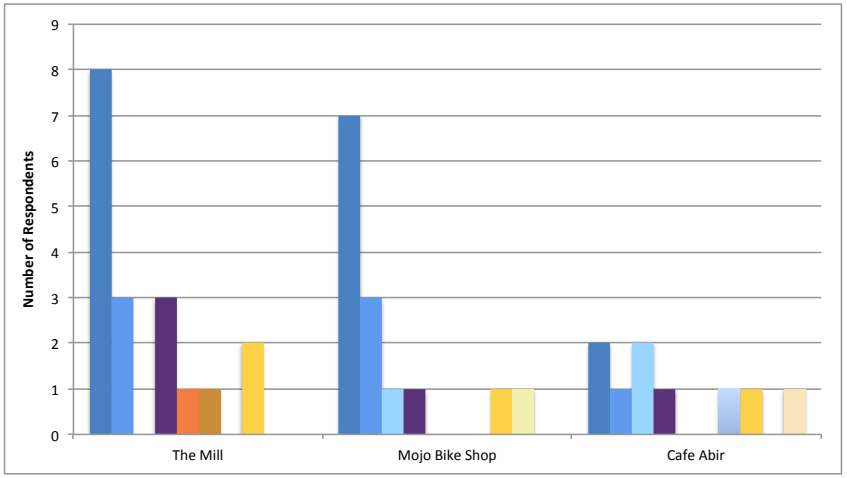
Passersby



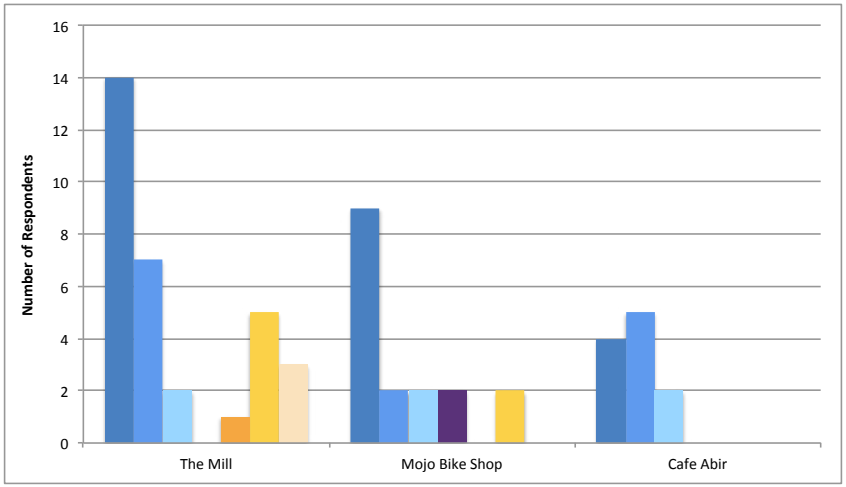
Rarely
2-3 Times A Week
Daily
2-3 Times A Month

User Activity Frequency

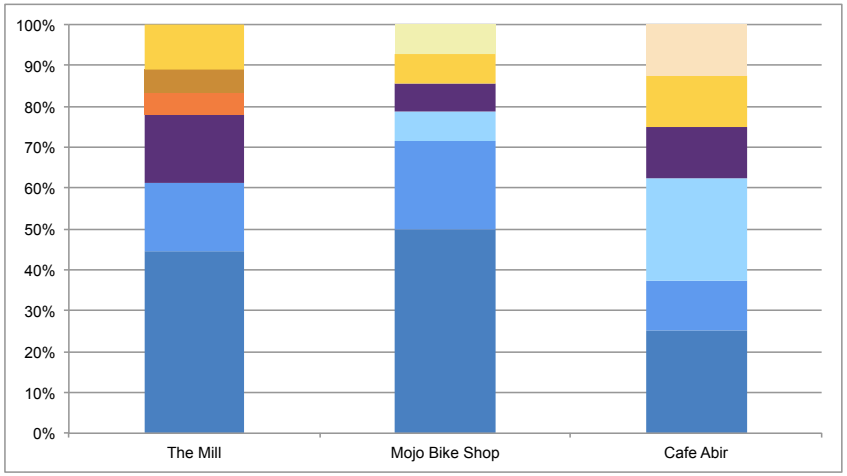
Weekdays



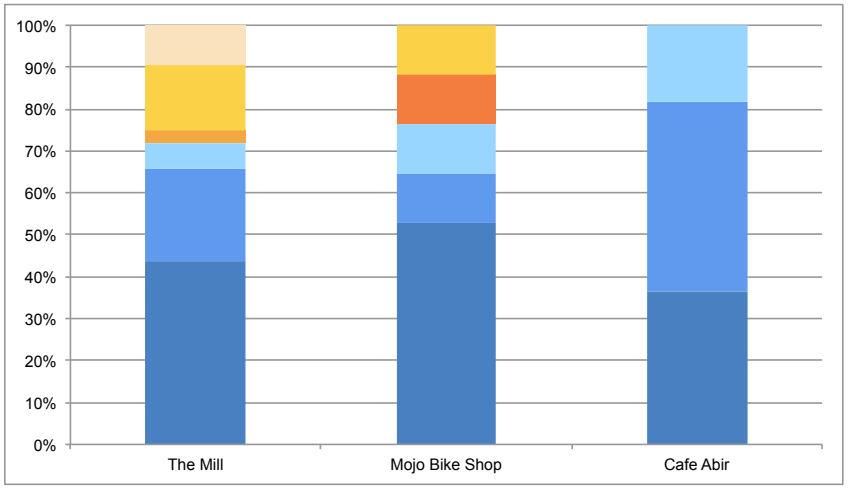
Weekends



Weekdays



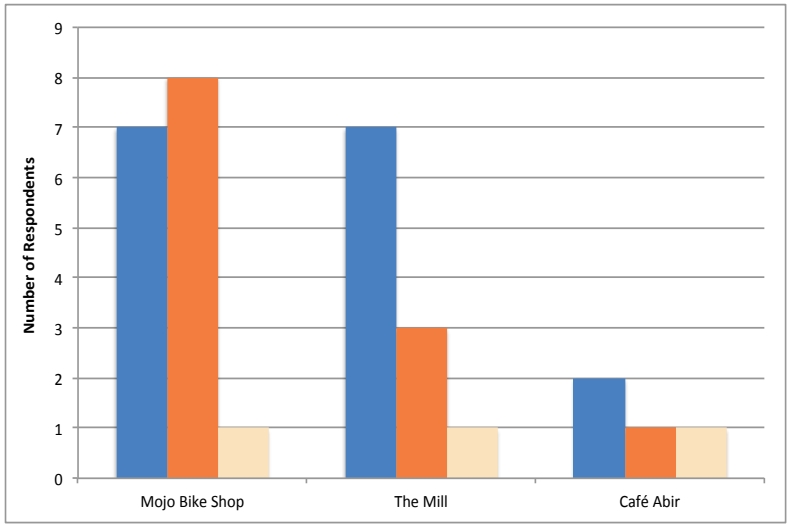
Weekends



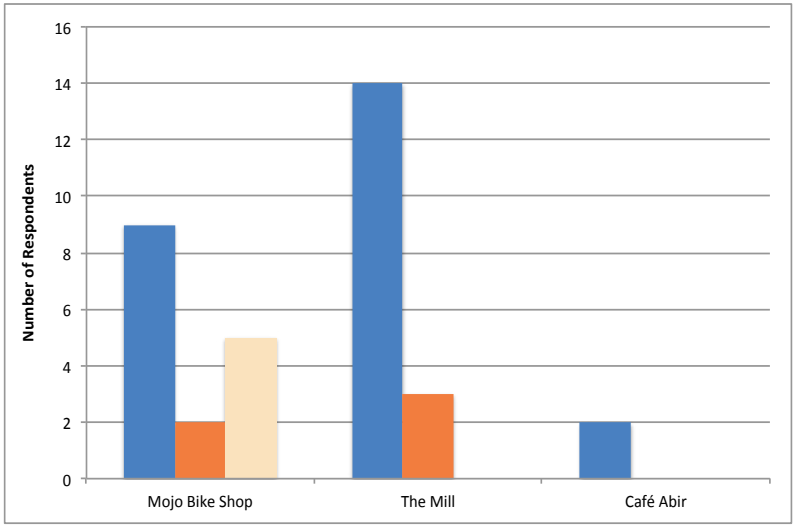
Pet
Playing (i.e. with kids)
Reading
Eating/Drinking
Sitting
Business/Commerce
Other
Electronic Device
People-Watching
Conversation

Inclination to Purchase an Item

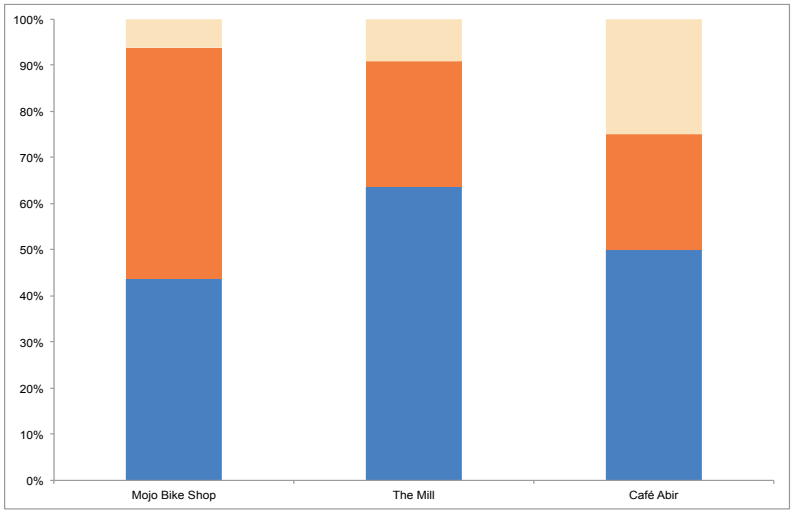
Weekdays



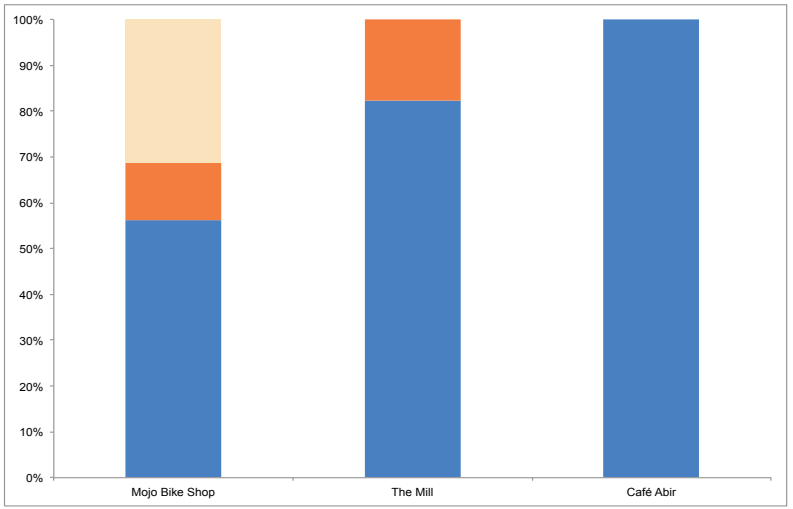
Weekends



Weekdays



Weekends



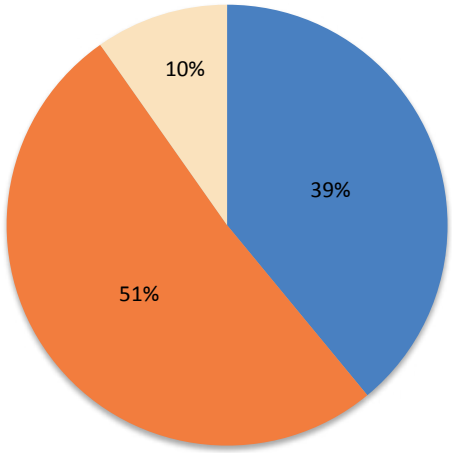
Users

Passersby (Visited Before)

Passersby (Never Visited)

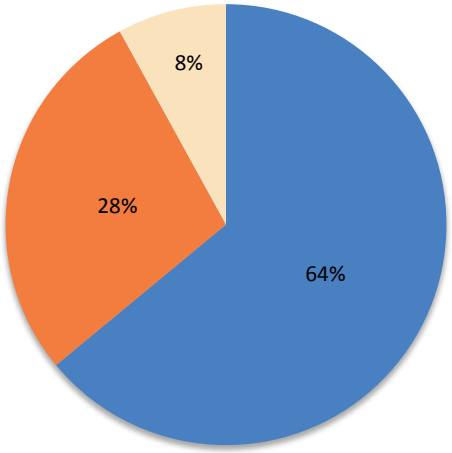
Inclination to Purchase an Item Continued...

Users (Weekdays + Weekends)

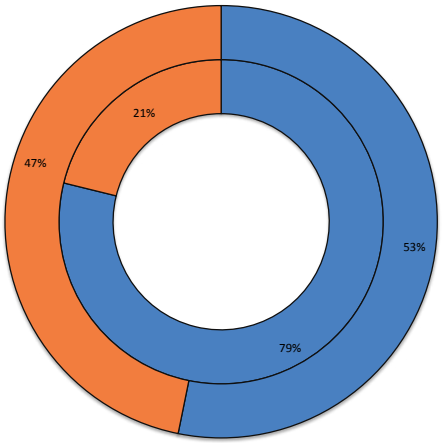


Mojo Bike Shop The Mill Cafe Abir

Passersby (Weekdays + Weekends)



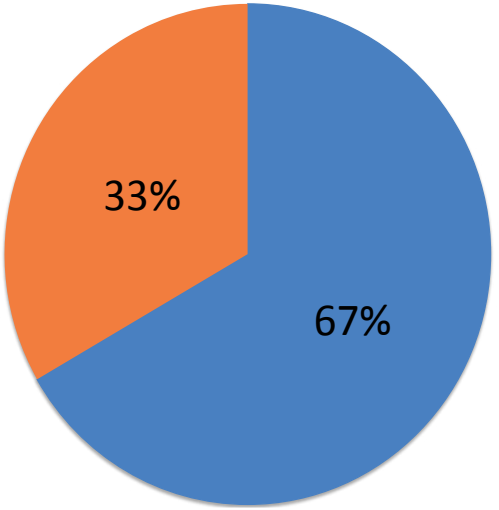
All Users V. All Passersby



Yes No

Inner-Ring: All Users
Outer-Ring: All Passersby

Total Responses

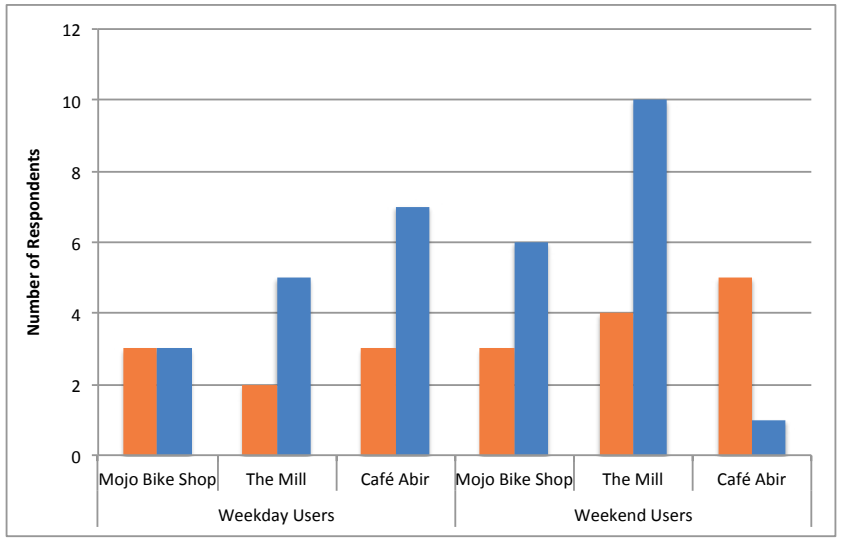


Yes No

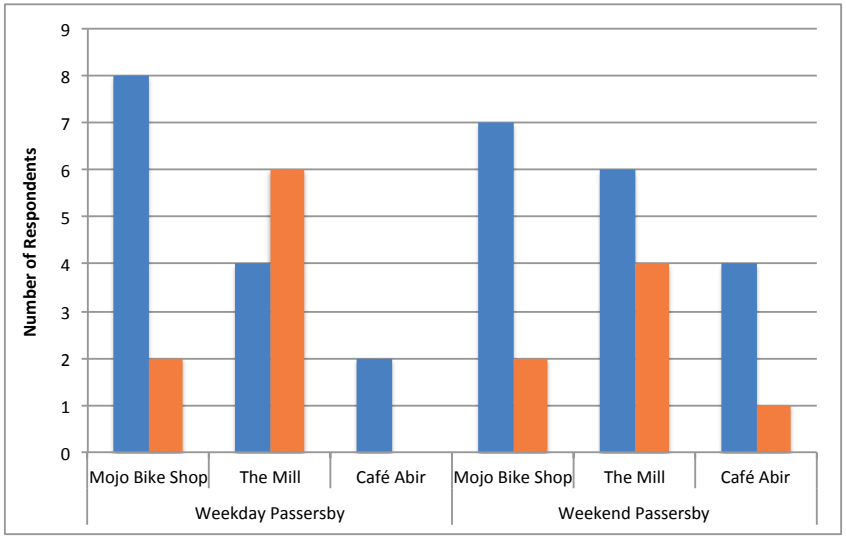
Males V. Females

Males
Females

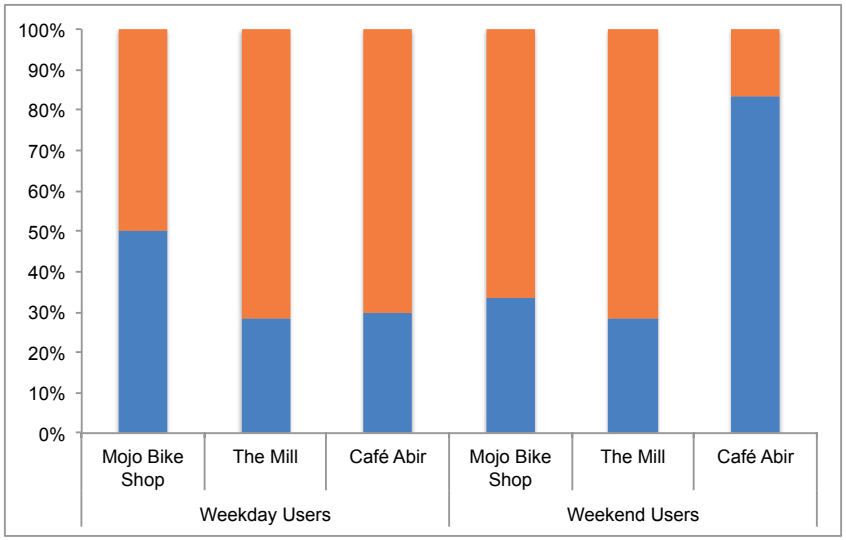
Users



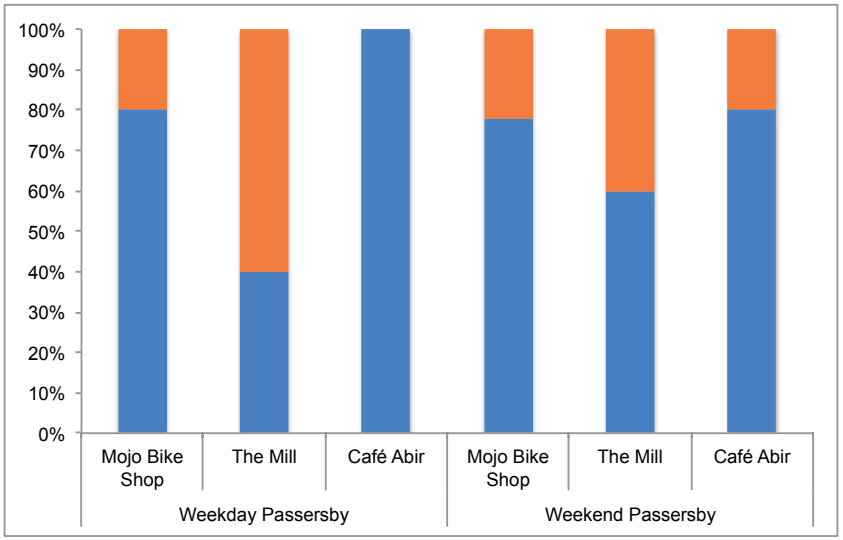
Passersby



Users

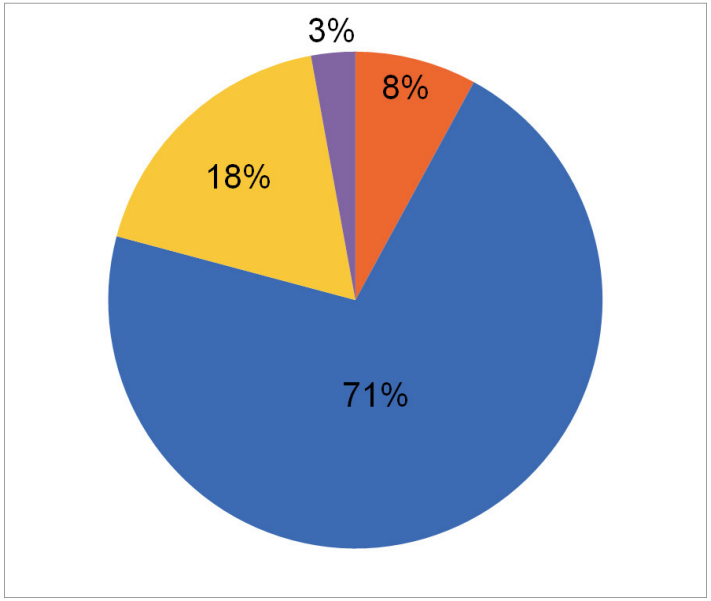


Passersby

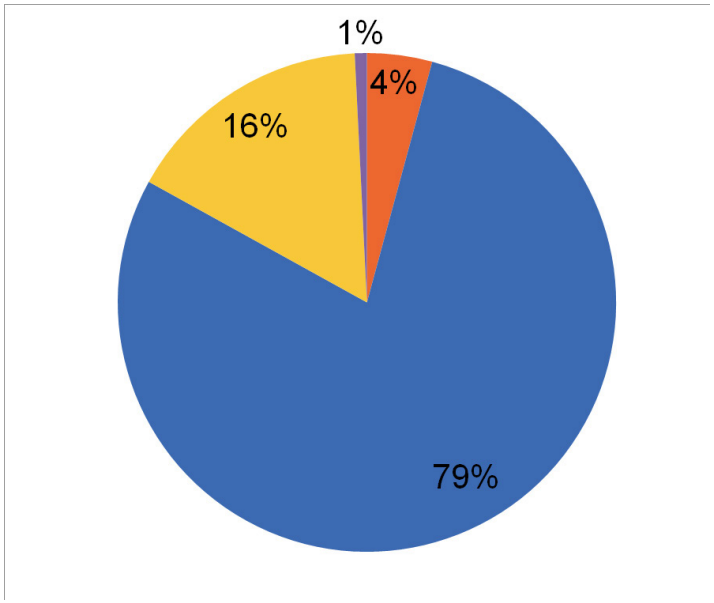


Age Groups

Users



Passersby



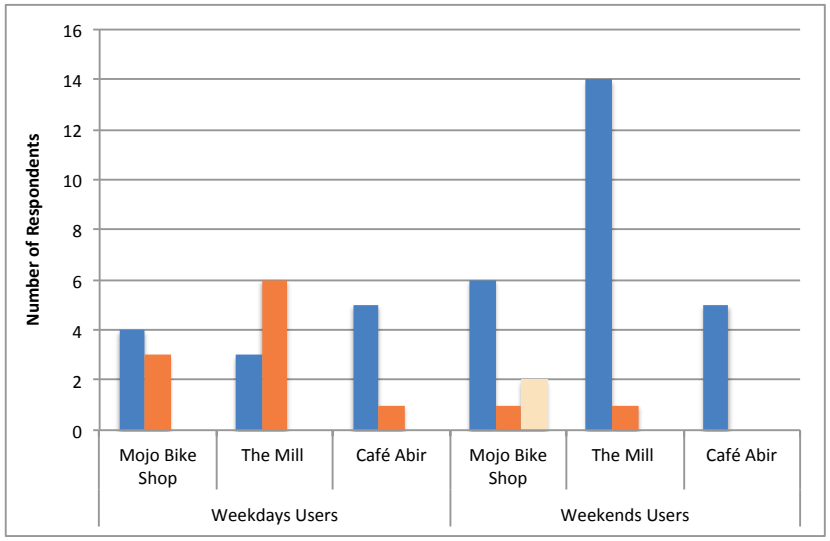
0-14
20-39
40-64
65+

Notable Characteristics

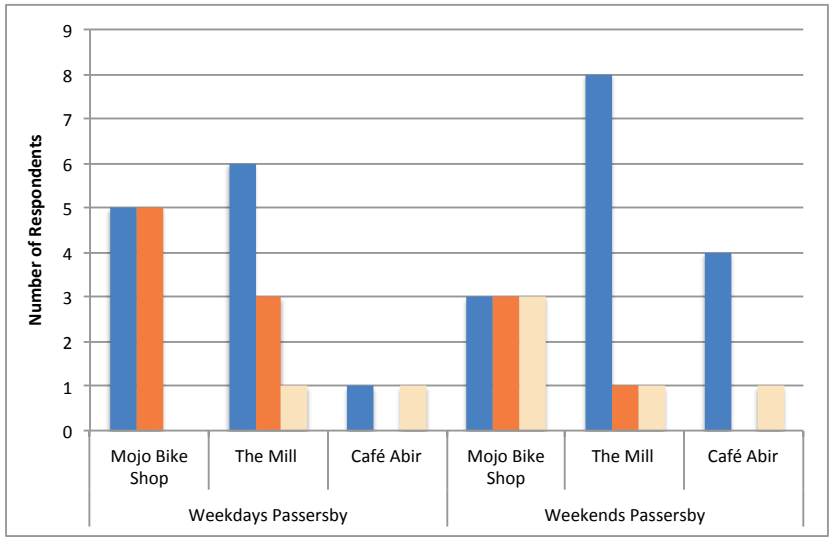
- Participant Used Term Parklet: 10 people (Not a primary survey question)
- First Timers: 4 people (Not a primary survey question)

Perception of Publicness

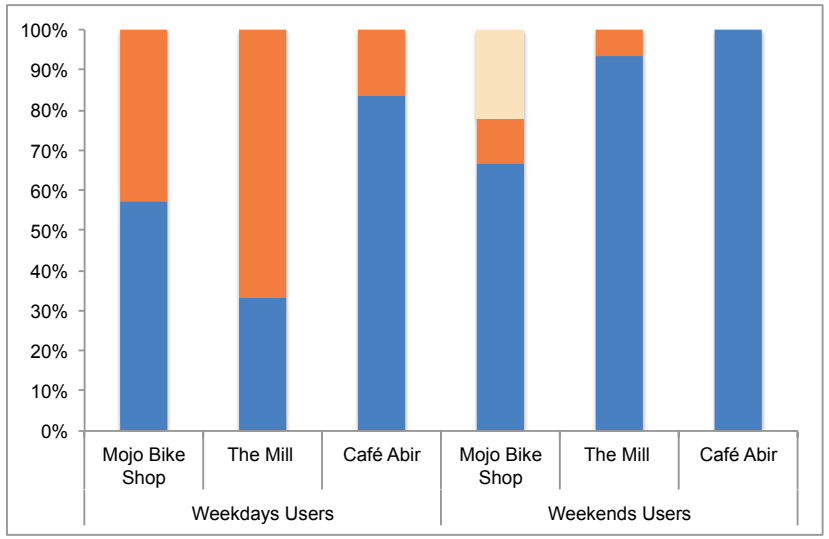
Users



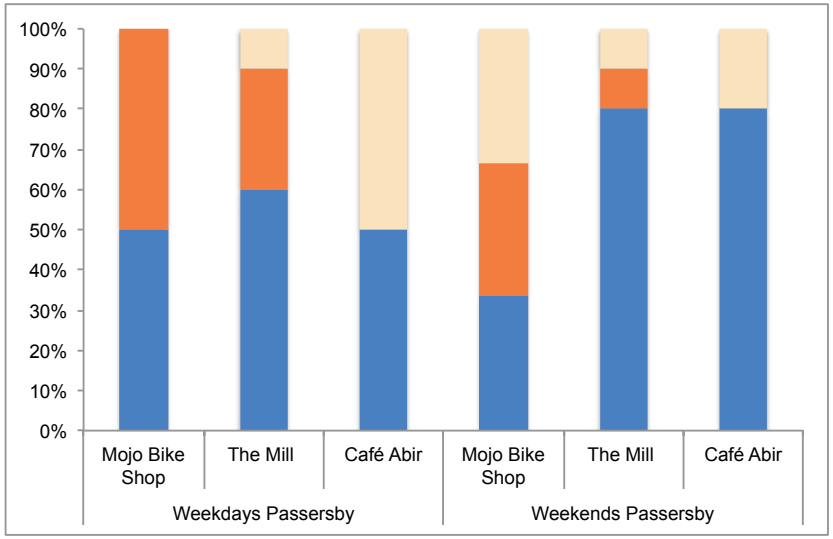
Passersby

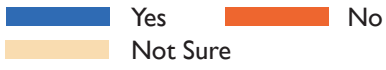


Users



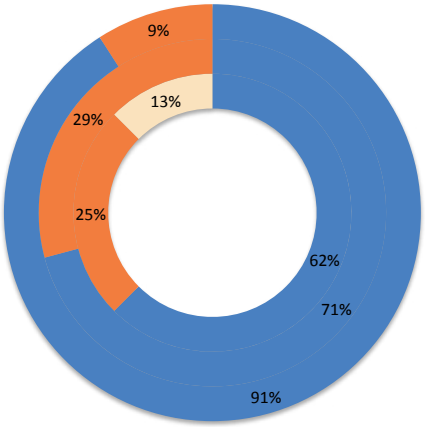
Passersby



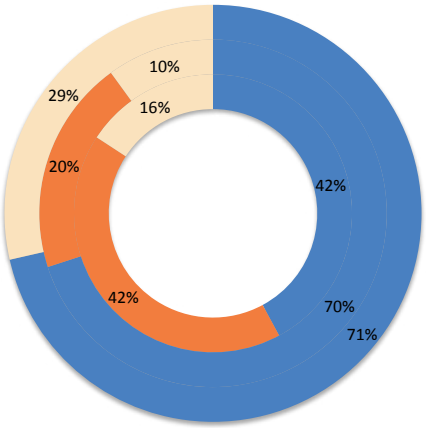


Perception of Publicness Continued...

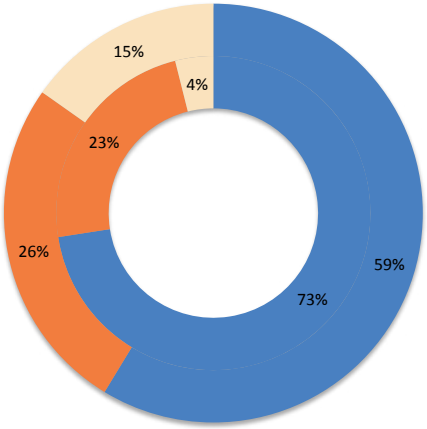
Total Users by Parklets

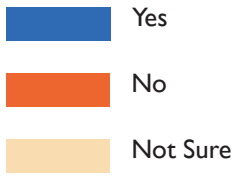


Total Passersbys by Parklets



Total Users vs. Total passersbys - Parklets Combined

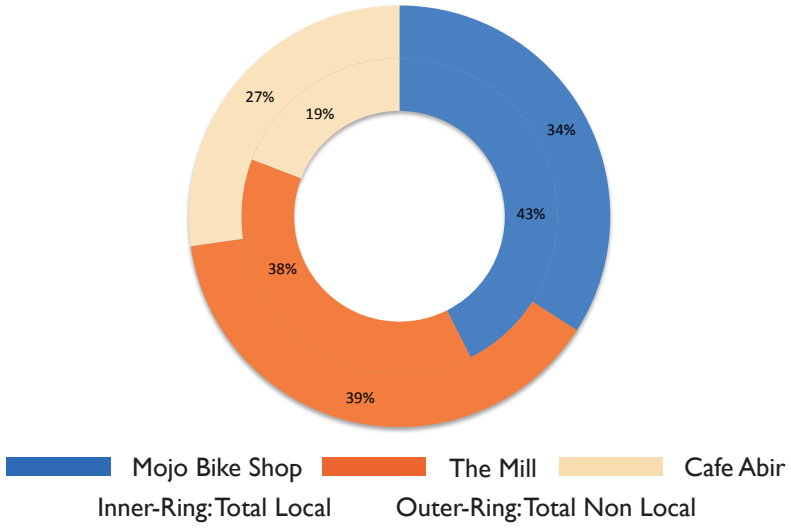




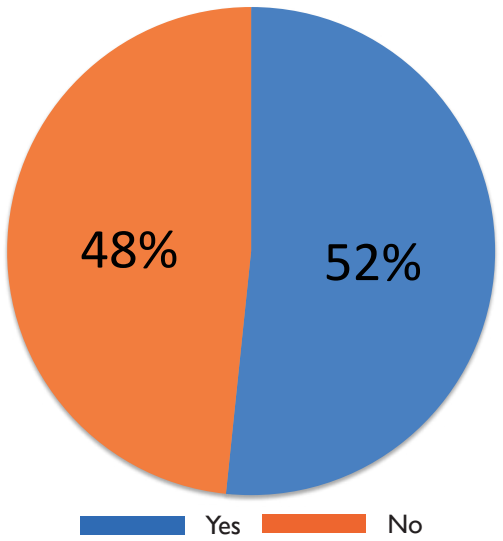
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Percent Local V. Non Local - Comparisons between Polk and Divisadero.

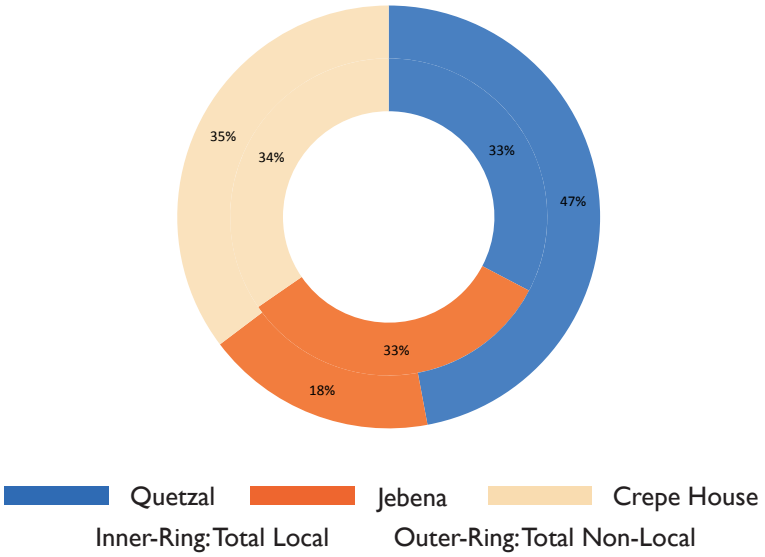
Divisadero -- Total Local v. Non-Local by Parklets



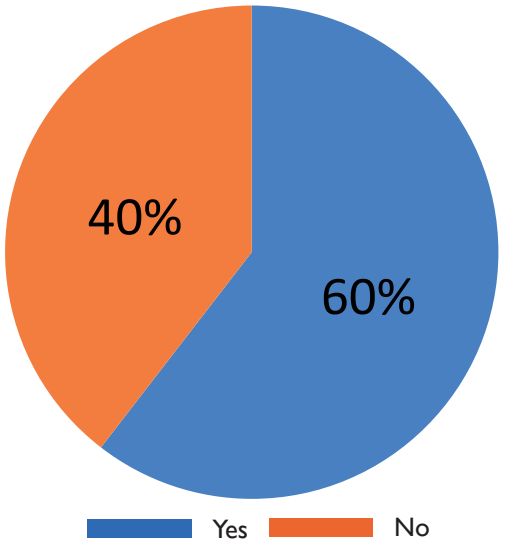
Divisadero -- Total Local v. Non-Local - All Parklets



Polk -- Total Local v. Non-Local by Parklets

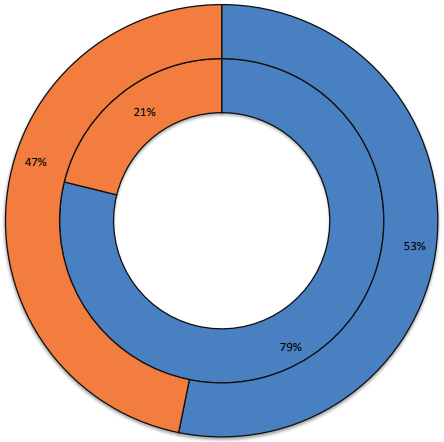


Polk -- Total Local v. Non-Local - All Parklets

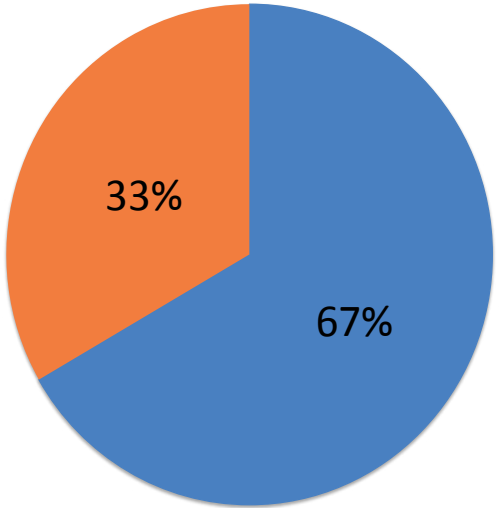


Inclination to Purchase - Comparisons between Polk and Divisadero.

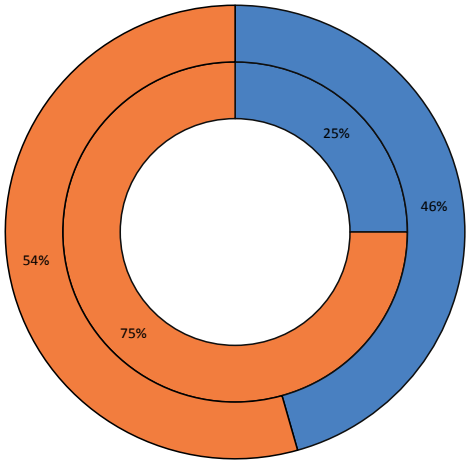
Divisadero -- All Users V. All Passersby



Divisadero --Total Responses

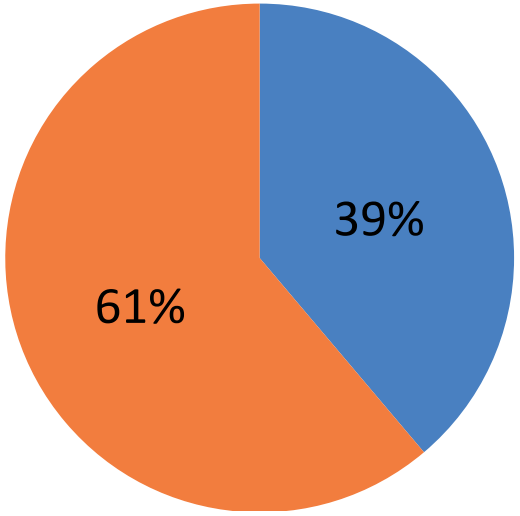


Polk-- All Users V. All Passersby



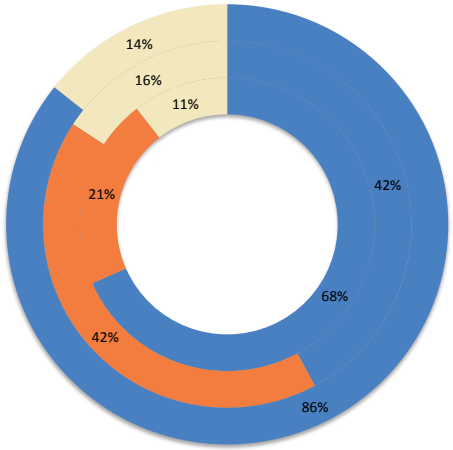
Inner-Ring: All Users Outer-Ring: All Passersby

Polk --Total Responses

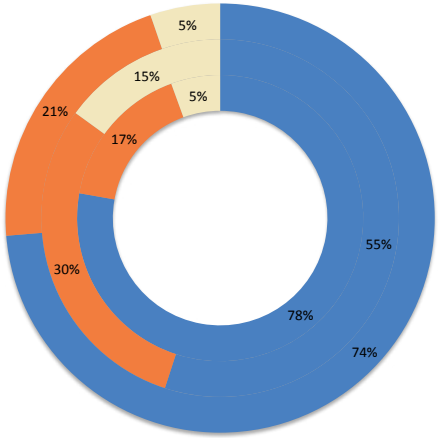


Is this a public space? - Comparisons between Polk and Divisadero.

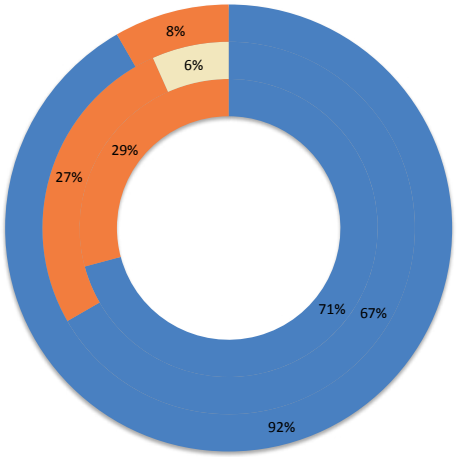
Divisadero -- Passersby Only by Parklets



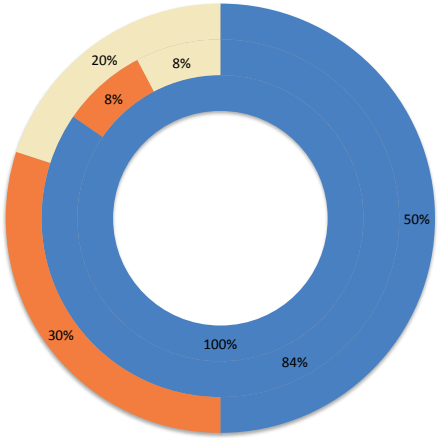
Polk -- Passersby Only by Parklets



Divisadero -- Users Only by Parklets



Polk -- Users Only by Parklets

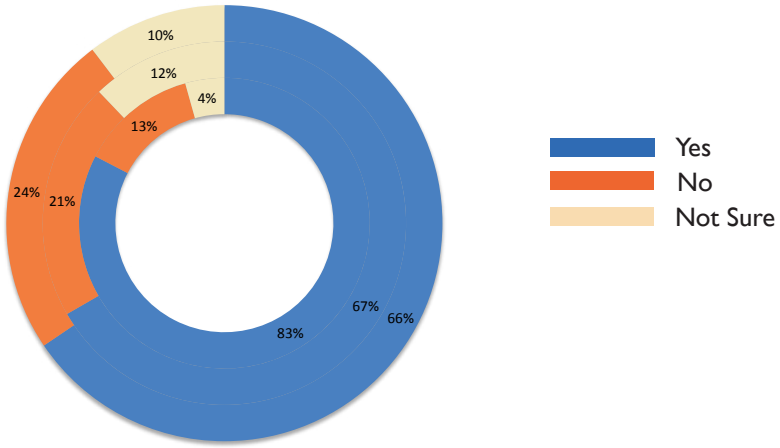


Inner-Ring:The Mill Middle-Ring: Mojo Bike Shop Outer-Ring: Cafe Abir

Inner-Ring: Jebena Middle-Ring: Quetzal Outer-Ring: Crepe House

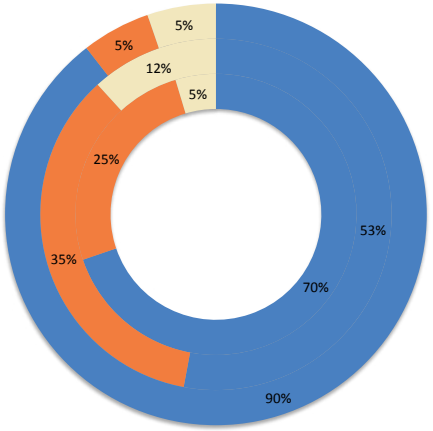
Is this a public space? - Comparisons between Polk and Divisadero.

Divisadero -- Users + Passersby by Parklets



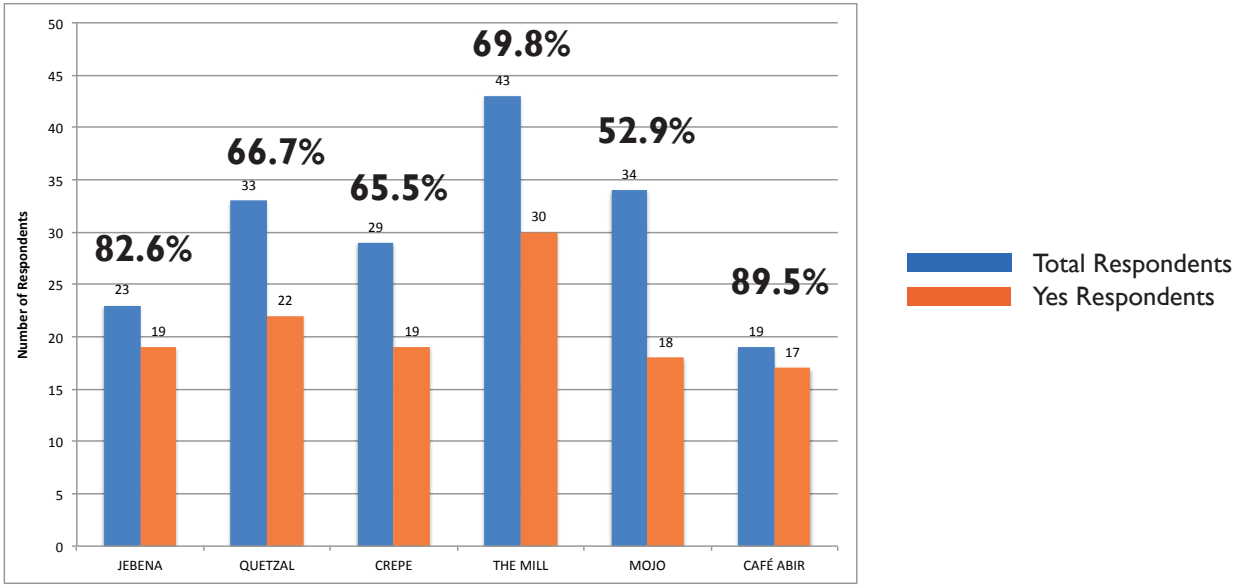
Inner-Ring: The Mill Middle-Ring: Mojo Bike Shop Outer-Ring: Cafe Abir

Polk -- Users + Passersby by Parklets



Inner-Ring: Jebena Middle-Ring: Quetzal Outer-Ring: Crepe House

Share of Total 'Yes' Responses to Population Surveyed



CONCLUSIONS

Findings Explained

• Majority of parklet users and potential users either live within a 1-mile walking radius or immediately outside of this distance.

• Though some parklets within a cluster may not be used frequently, residents within the Divisadero neighborhood are aware of the options available.

• Though a large proportion of the users who were surveyed mentioned that they rarely visit the parklets, it is visible that there is a larger proportion of passersby who use the right-of-ways adjacent to the parklets.

• Both the passersby population and the users population had a strong inclination to purchase an item when visiting/utilizing the parklets. This is further indicated in the large proportion of users who indicated that their primary activity was "Eating and Drinking".

• Across all three parklets and over the weekdays and weekends, both the passersby population and users population were aware of the public nature of parklets. On the other hand, a noticeable proportion of passersby surveyed were unsure about whether the parklets belonged to the cafes or were public.

Hypothesis Evaluation

We initially hypothesized that there would be a difference in perception of publicness of parklets based on the socioeconomic composition of the neighborhood in which the parklet is located. However, we did not find a substantial difference in perception of publicness of a parkletin the Divisadero Street cluster (higher median income) as compared to the Polk Street cluster (lower median income).

Future Research

- Compare different types of establishments (eateries vs. non-eateries)
- Compare parklets that are similarly situated on a main road
- Compare parklets that have highly consistent designs to parklets with inconsistent designs (to the sponsor organization)
- Map parklets and sponsor type
- Ask business sponsors and neighboring businesses about the impact of the parklet on business

Recommendations and Implications

Future Parklets

- Make signage visible (see Mojo Bike Shop and Cafe Abir for example of poorly placed public parklet sign)
- Improve publicity and awareness around parklets (many people didn't know what they were)
- Situate parklets within clusters to provide options within neighborhoods.
- Pedestrian-Friendly maps placed within parklets of adjacent parklets nearby to increase awareness.

APPENDICES

Calculations of Comparison Tests between Parklet Neighborhoods

PASSERBYS ONLY | (4) Is this a public space?

Parklets - Polk

	JEBENA	QUETZAL	CREPE	SUM		Test Signfigance
Yes	14	11	14	39	68%	p-hat 0.65
No	3	6	4	13	23%	z-score 0.88
Not Sure	1	3	1	5	9%	
		TOTAL RESPONSES	57			

Parklets - Divisadero

	THE MILL	MOJO	CAFÉ ABIR	SUM	
Yes	13	8	6	27	60%
No	4	8	0	12	27%
Not Sure	2	3	1	6	13%
		TOTAL RESPONSES	45		

USERS ONLY | (7) Is this a public space?

Parklets - Polk

	JEBENA	QUETZAL	CREPE	SUM		Test Signfigance
Yes	5	11	5	21	75%	p-hat 0.75
No	0	1	3	4	14%	z-score 0.08
Not Sure	0	1	2	3	11%	
		TOTAL RESPONSES	28			

Parklets - Divisadero

	THE MILL	MOJO	CAFÉ ABIR	SUM	
Yes	17	10	11	38	75%
No	7	4	1	12	24%
Not Sure	0	1	0	1	2%
		TOTAL RESPONSES	51		

Calculations of Comparison Tests between Parklet Neighborhoods

COMBINED USERS AND PASSERBYS | (7) Is this a public space?

Parklets - Polk

	JEBENA	QUETZAL	CREPE	SUM	
Yes	19	22	19	60	71%
No	3	7	7	17	20%
Not Sure	1	4	3	8	9%
TOTAL	23	33	29		
	82.6%	66.7%	65.5%		

TOTAL RESPONSES 85

Test Signfigance
p-hat 0.69
z-score 0.42

*Results are insignficant

Parklets - Divisadero

	THE MILL	MOJO	CAFÉ ABIR	SUM	
Yes	30	18	17	65	68%
No	11	12	1	24	25%
Not Sure	2	4	1	7	7%
TOTAL	43	34	19		
	69.8%	52.9%	89.5%		

TOTAL RESPONSES 96

Overall

Yes	125
Yes %	69.1%
Total Responses	181

Café Abir vs. Total

p-hat	0.71
Z-score	1.87