Accessibility in Downtown Peterborough Businesses

TRENT UNIVERSITY

Trent Community Research Centre

An exploration of the attitudes and decisions of local businesses in relation to disability accessibility and inclusion

GEOG 4030 | Shannon Shillinglaw & Kathleen Walker | 2017-2018

RESEARCH GOALS

- How knowledgeable are businesses and what are their attitudes regarding accessibility legislation?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of responding to accessibility needs?
- What have business owners done to be accessible?
- What do owners perceive as an accessible business?
- What are barriers to making businesses accessible?
- How important is accessibility for businesses?

RESEARCH DESIGN

- **Literature Review** of legislation and scholarly sources
- **Exploratory Approach** of the DBIA, using a transect method of George Street and Charlotte Street (see Figure 1)
- **Stakeholder Consultation** with the Council for Persons with Disabilities to inform research design
- **Data Collection**
  - Surveyed 36 business owners
  - Interviewed 3 sectors

Figure 1: Map of DBIA

"Inclusion is important. If you do not include everyone, what is the point in being a business?"
- Research Participant

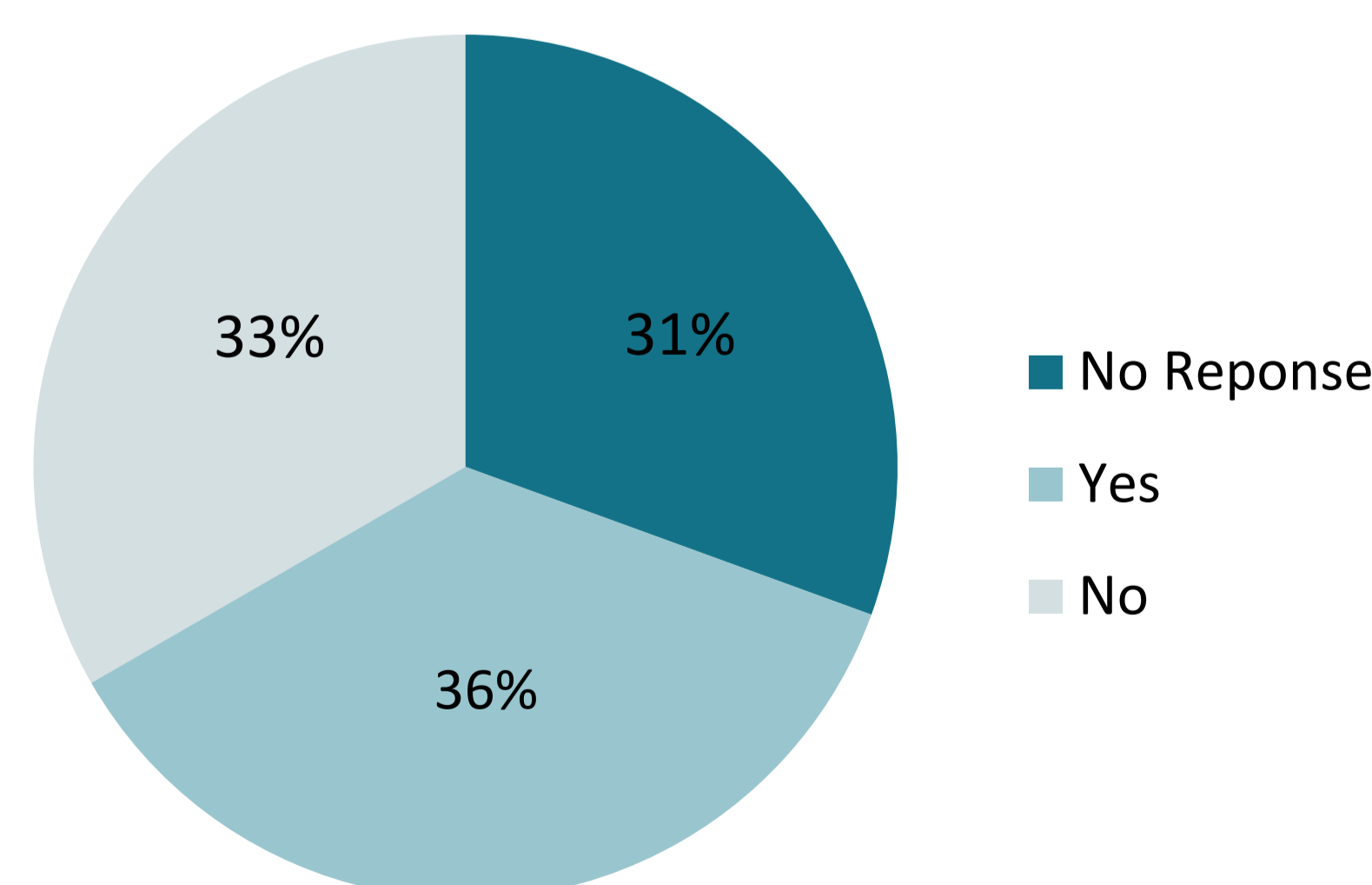Is money a barrier to making your business accessible?

- No Reponse 31%
- Yes 36%
- No 33%

Figure 2: Survey Results - Money is a barrier

THEMATIC RESULTS

- Money is a barrier for accessibility (see Figure 2)
- Lack of legislation understanding
- Only considers physical disabilities when accommodating
- Lack of awareness of how to accommodate
- Businesses have no formal training on accessibility
- Gap in the service businesses think they provide, and the service people with disabilities feel they receive

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement specific accessibility training
- Highlight businesses who are excelling in accessibility
- Provide business owners with an outline on the benefits of making their business accessible
- Provide business owners with a brief guide to making their business more accessible

BIG IDeA
Business Innovation Guide for Inclusive Design and Accessibility