

DESTINATION

**Think!**

**Calgary DNA Analysis**

# Collaboration

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DESTINATION

**Think!**

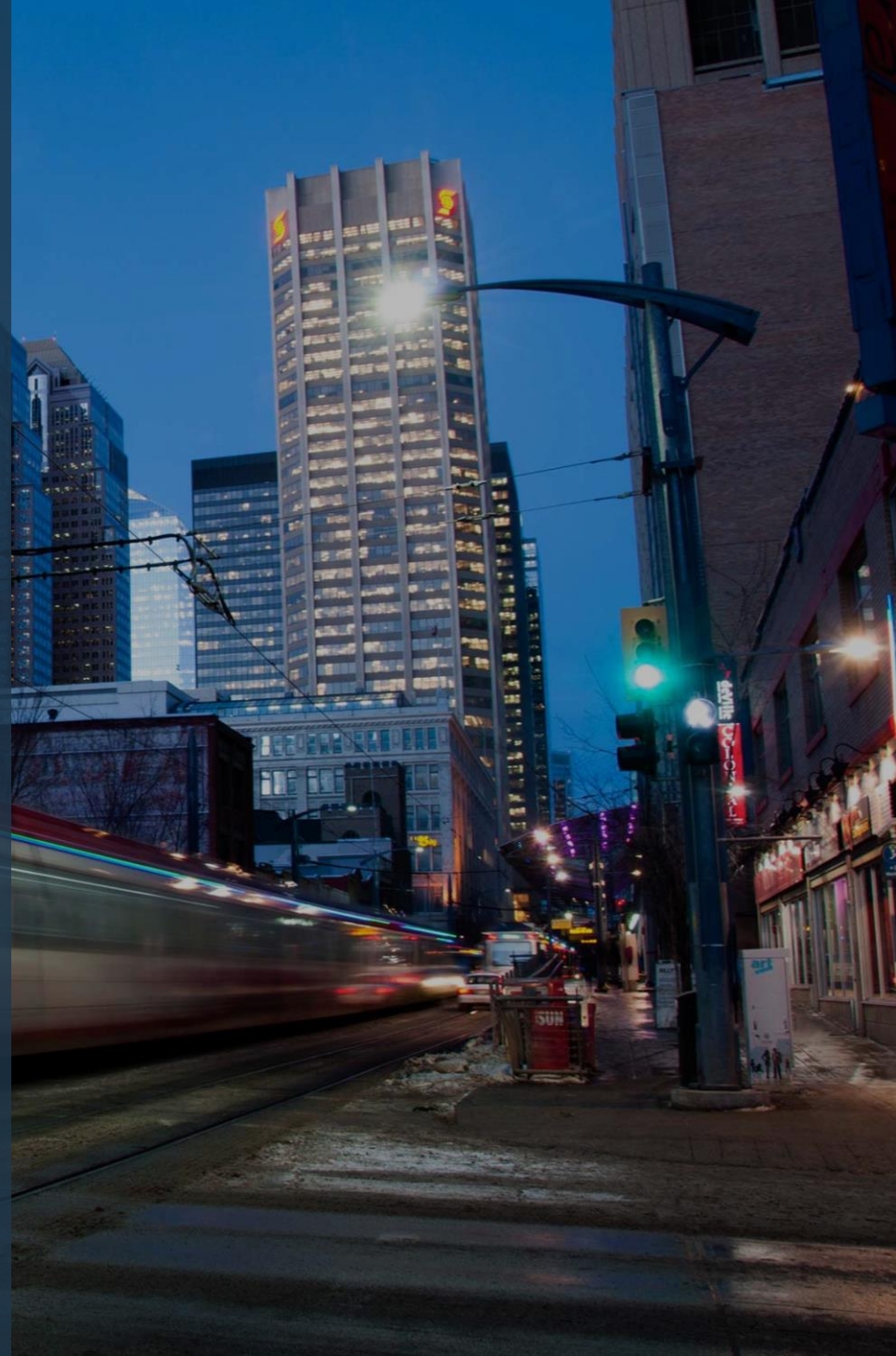
tourism  
**calgary**

nekhst  
consulting

**Stone —  
Olafson**

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# Introduction – Brand



HONG  
KONG



TOKYO



México

I ♥ NY

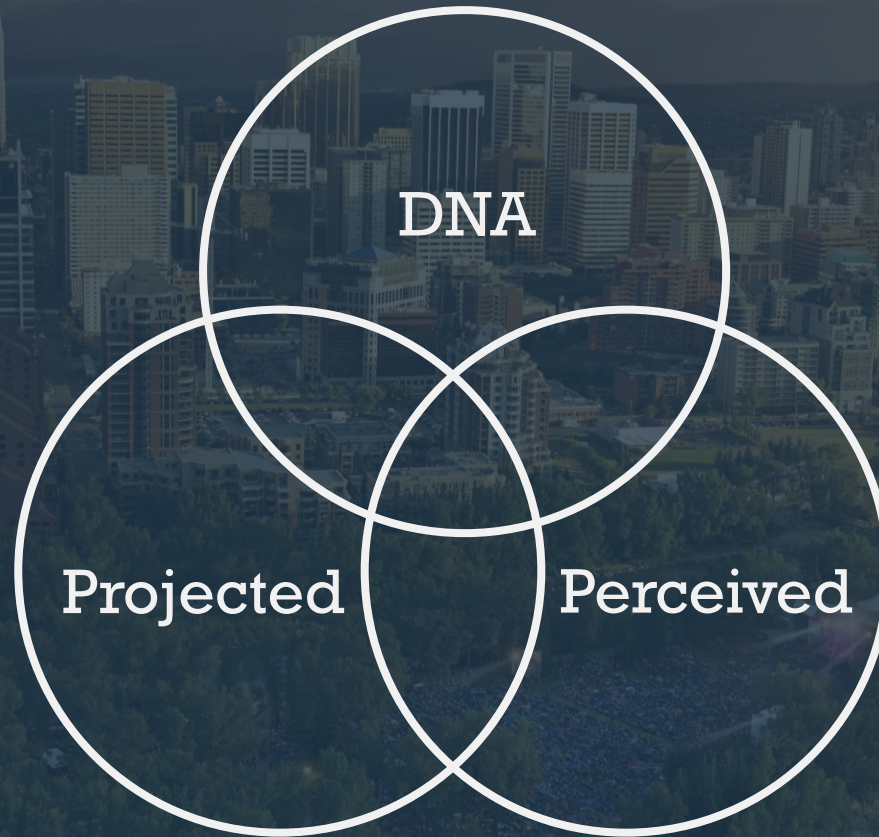




# What is a brand?

$$B = \sum Pe + Ec + Ic$$

# Introduction – DNA





# What is DNA?

**1**

---

The core identity  
of your place.

**2**

---

The sense  
of place.

**3**

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The epicenter of  
all experiences  
and stories that  
your place  
generates.

# DNA process



Place DNA



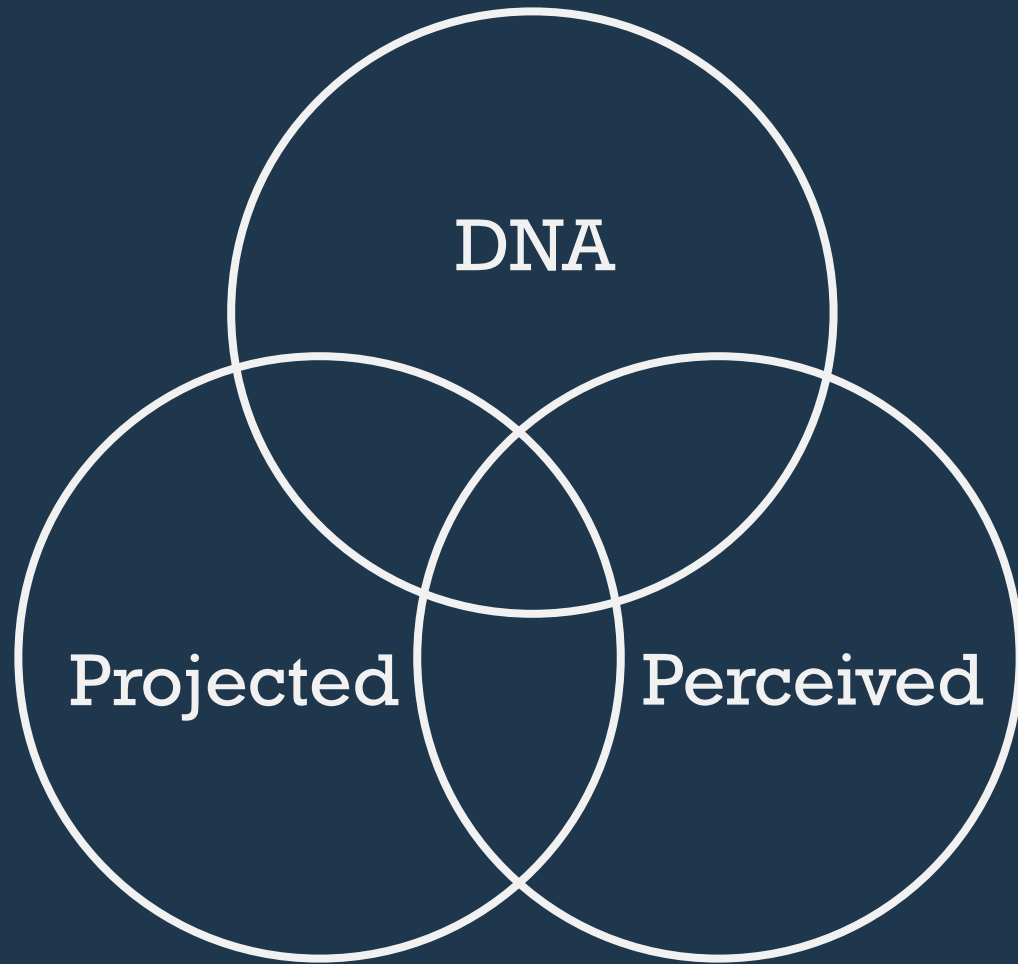
Projected DNA



Perceived DNA



Gap analysis

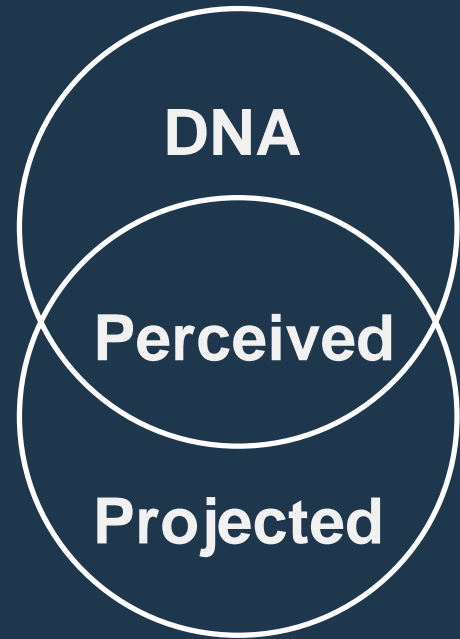
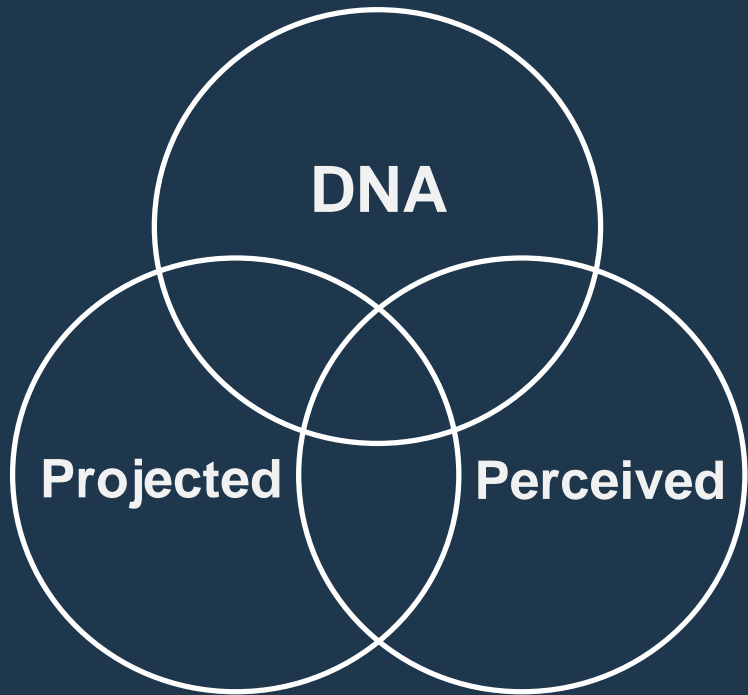


DNA

Projected

Perceived

# The more alignment, the stronger your reputation



# Why DNA?



What kind of experience will be projected towards potential visitors?



## **The perils of ignoring your DNA:**

- 1) Non-validation of your work (loss of authenticity).
- 2) The truth of your marketing (loss of credibility).

# DNA impacts development

- By optimizing the customer journey.
- Developing remarkable experiences.
- Filling gaps in your product offerings.
- Animation.

# DNA impacts communication

- By improving your positioning.
- Allowing for audience segmentation.
- Sets up storytelling.
- Allows for tailor-made promotion.

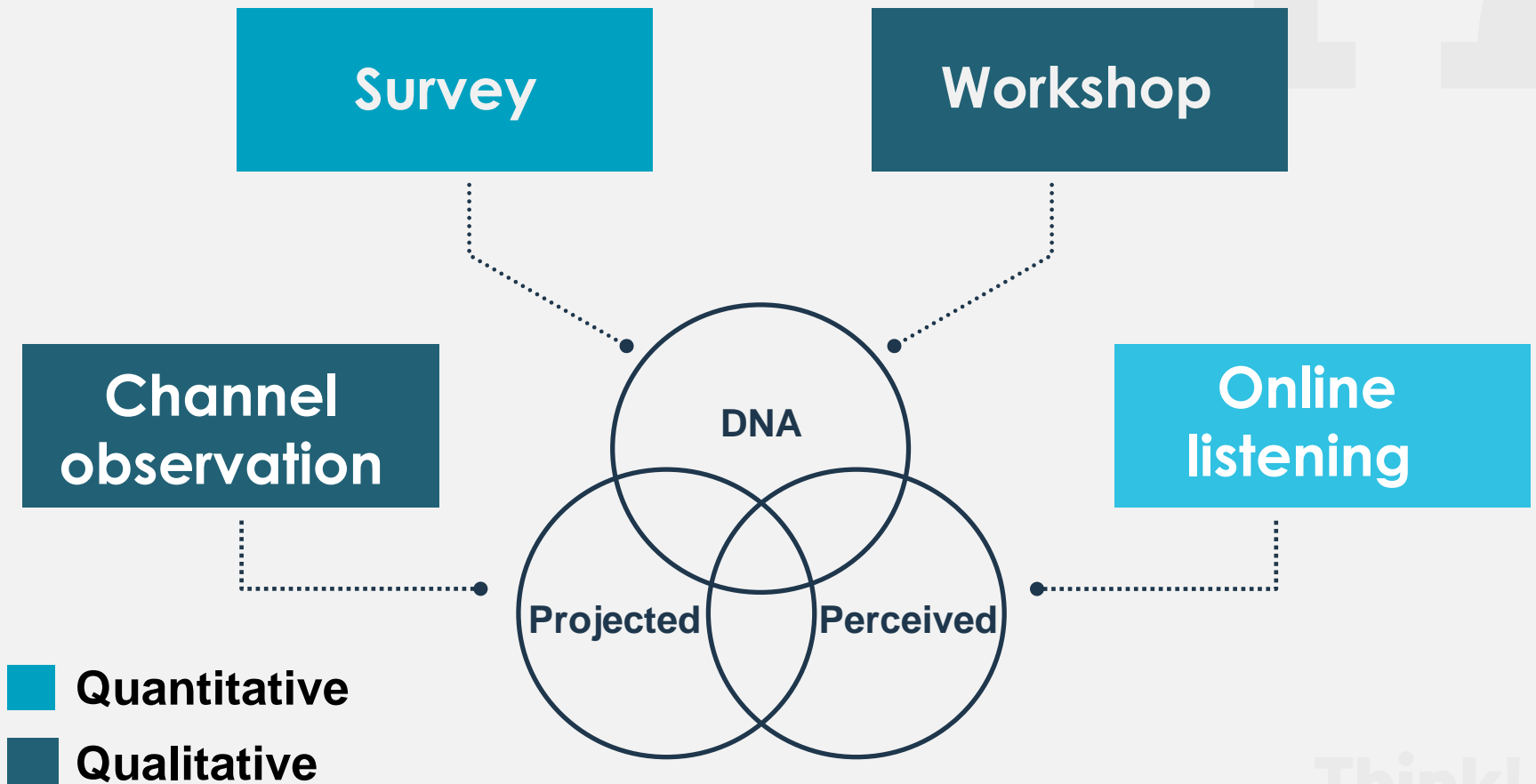
# Destination marketing





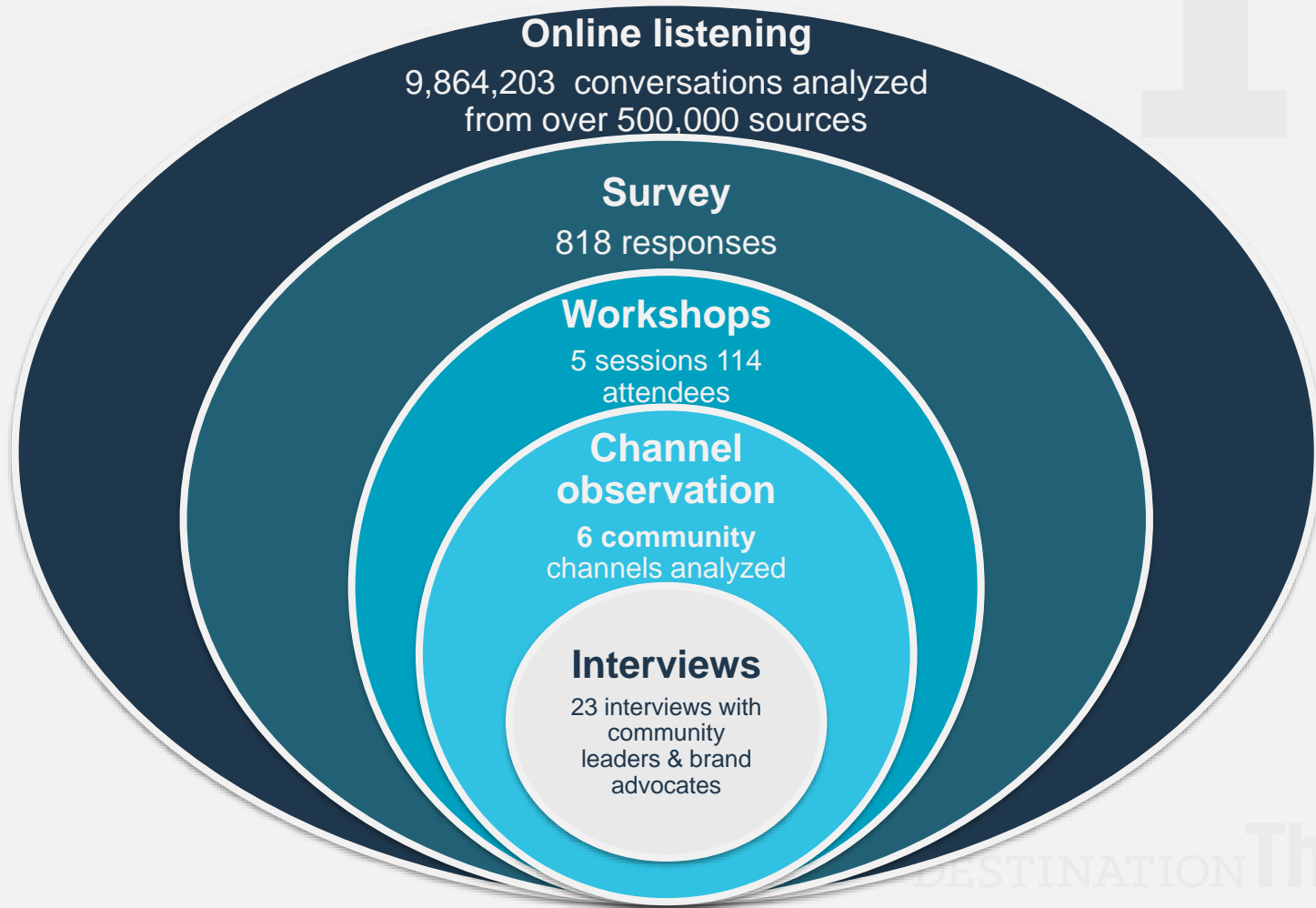
# DNA research process

17

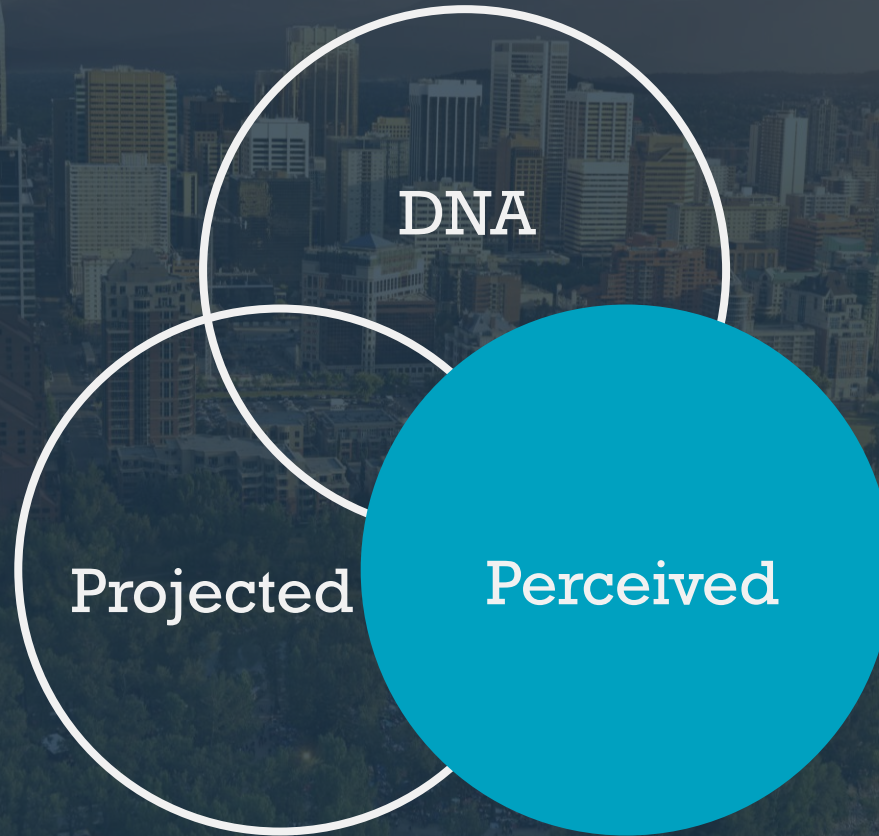


# DNA research data

18



# Perceived



# Digital listening

The focus of this research is delivering insights into the perceptions and drivers of Calgary's reputation through the eyes of those who do not live in Calgary.

**Soraya**  
@SoulFya

So apparently this happened last night in The Most Tolerant Country Ever in Life™  
#Canada #Calgary



11:55 AM - 4 Dec 2015

109 Retweets 37 Likes

10 109 37

**World View**  
@worldview604

Calgary has such a strong, genuine and welcoming community. One of the best 🇨🇦 [twitter.com/expirehc/statu...](https://twitter.com/expirehc/status...)

3:00 PM - 9 Oct 2016

7

**ErinPostle**  
@erinpostle

Thank you Calgary for the hospitality!!! Amazing people, amazing energy and a wonderful day!!! [fb.me/6UpsR2k1](https://fb.me/6UpsR2k1)

4:48 PM - 30 Jan 2016

**Cody**  
@mindfloss420

Sorry @Uber that #calgary is so backwards and in the pocket of the cab unions #yyc isn't very progressive as they claim to be #corruption

9:16 AM - 23 Feb 2016

**jonwirtzmusic**



83 likes 0 comments

My favorite part of tour is getting to meet new people from all walks of life, and (apologies for the cheesiness) sharing the love. People who put up and/or feed bands probably have no idea how much they're helping touring bands--not just financially, but giving them a "home" for a night. HUGE thank you and shout out to Jackie and Dale, for going way beyond all that. They couldn't have been friendlier or more hospitable. Such a great night playing a house concert that they hosted, and props to a funky crowd as well.

# How?

## Social and digital listening

This project leveraged the digital data analysis framework of Crimson Hexagon to scan, monitor and analyze **9,864,203** online conversations from across the world (excluding all posts that originated in Calgary) over a 24 month period (July 31, 2015 – July 31, 2017).

The analysis used a custom keyword search strategy which focused on conversations around Calgary's online reputation.

## Sources

Over **500,000** different sources were included in the analysis, including online media sites, forums, reviews and social media networks (including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr and YouTube).

# Metrics

**Sentiment score** is a benchmarking metric that allows us to take into account the ratio of positive to negative brand sentiment within conversation streams. The score is on a scale from [ -100 to +100 ].

**Annual growth trend** plots the sentiment score over a two year period, we are able to calculate a growth trend line using a "least squares" line of best fit. This allows us to track the performance of a conversation stream over time.

**Canadian city average** leverages the asset + attribute metrics outlined in this report. We calculated the average sentiment score across all conversation streams for Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Calgary to give us the *Canadian city average* to compare and contrast to.

# **Audience overview**

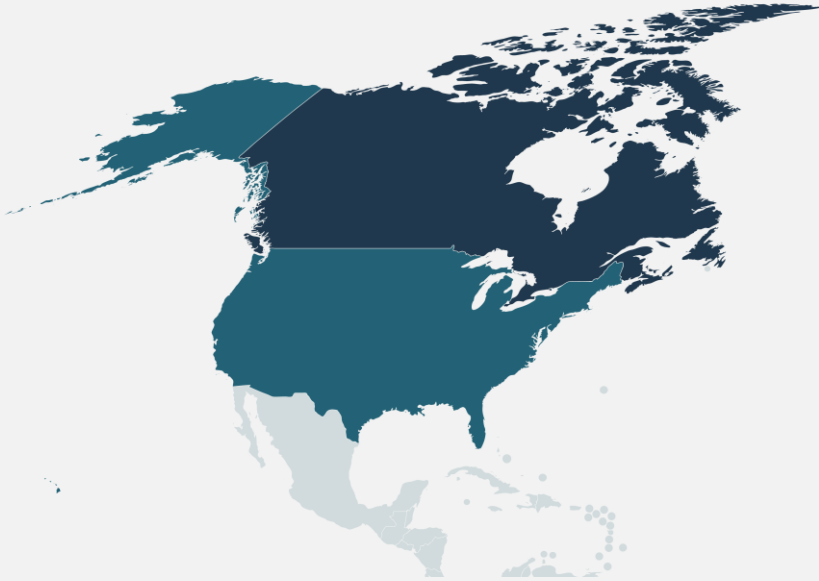
(who we listened to)

# Geographic distribution

We analyzed the user data from **1,785,377** unique online users to better understand *who* is driving online conversations around Calgary.

Geographically they are distributed as follows:

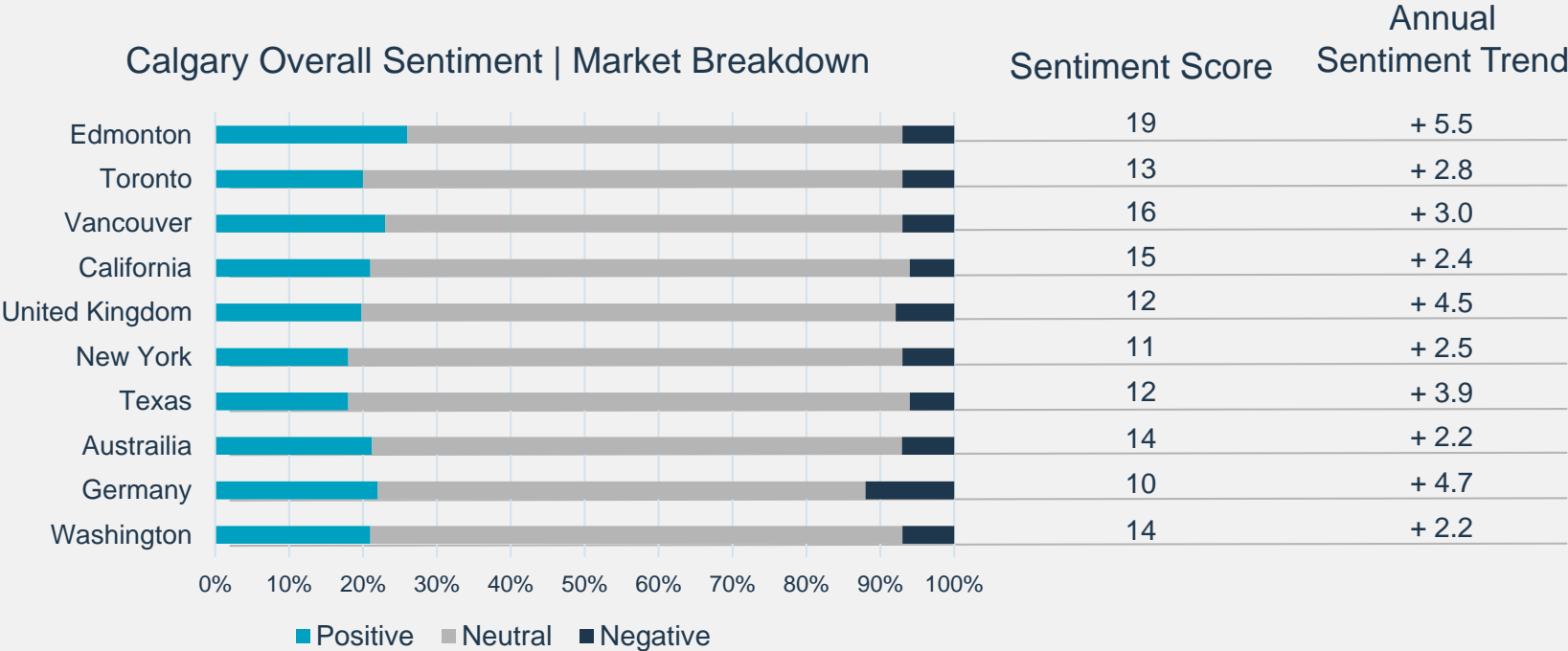
Edmonton	12.2%
Toronto	7.9%
Vancouver	4.3%
California	3.6%
United Kingdom	3.3%
New York	2.0%
Texas	1.7%
Australia	1.3%
Germany	0.3%
Washington (state)	0.3%





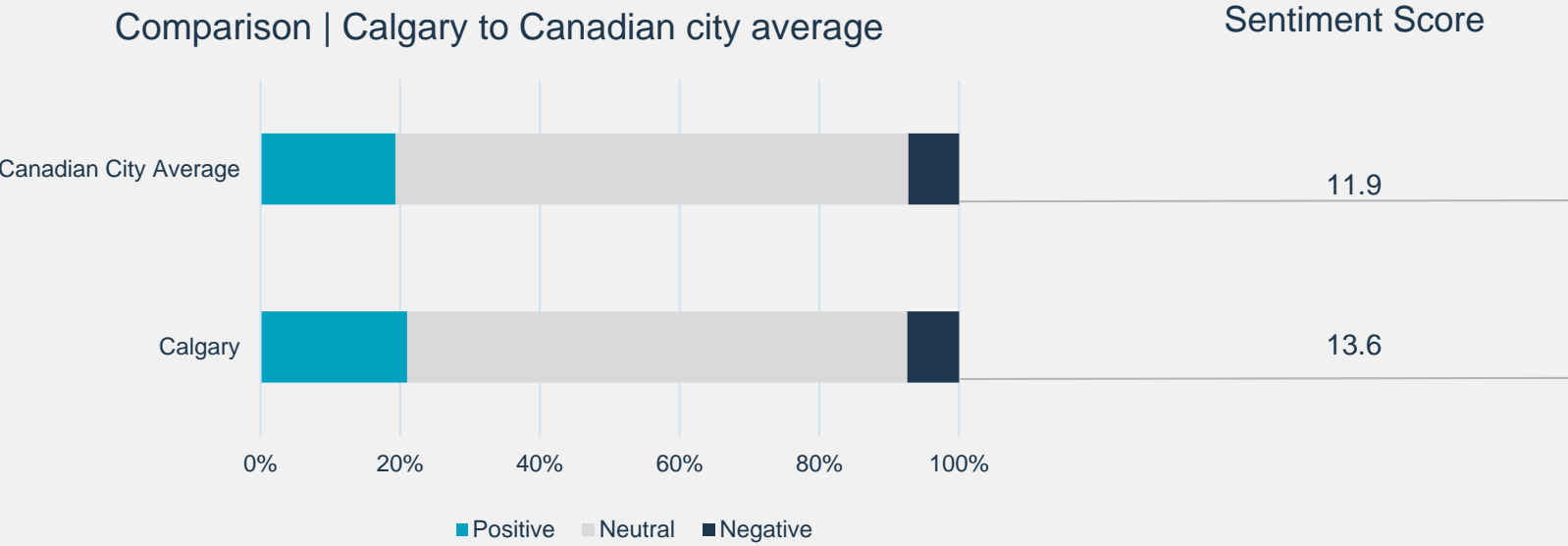
# Sentiment breakdown

Overall sentiment towards Calgary broken out by market to gain insight into overall perceptions across all markets.



# Sentiment breakdown

Calgary overall sentiment compared to the *Canadian city average*.



# **Destination assets**

(core assets driving Calgary's online brand reputation)

# Section overview

In this section, we focus on discovering what aspects of Calgary visitors feel are **share-worthy**. These **share-worthy** moments within the destination gives us insight to what people see as unique, special or distinct to the place they are in.

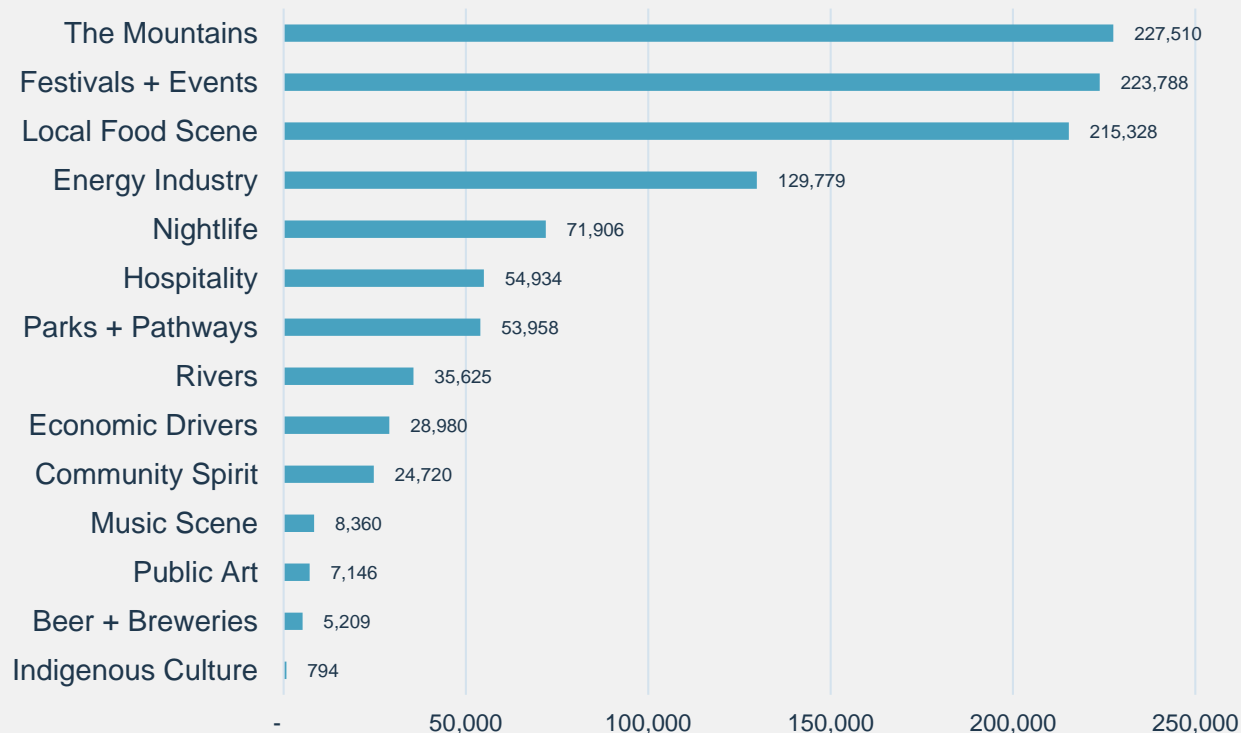
Using a keyword analysis we pulled the most mentioned assets in Calgary that are driving their **online brand reputation**.



# Asset breakdown

To better understand the drivers of Calgary's online brand reputation, we segmented the conversation streams into **14** categories representing the variety of well known assets the city has to offer.

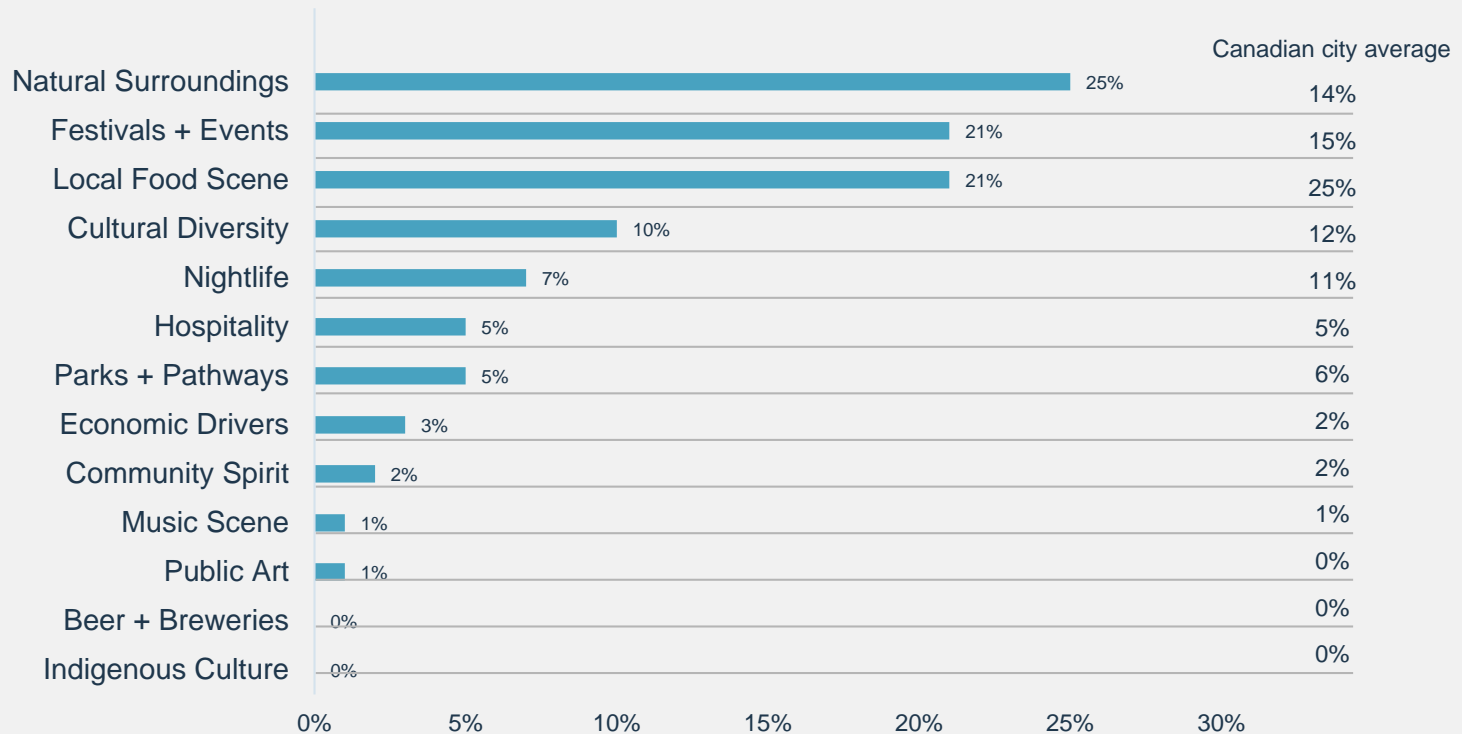
## Destination Assets | Volume of Conversation



# Asset breakdown – share of conversation

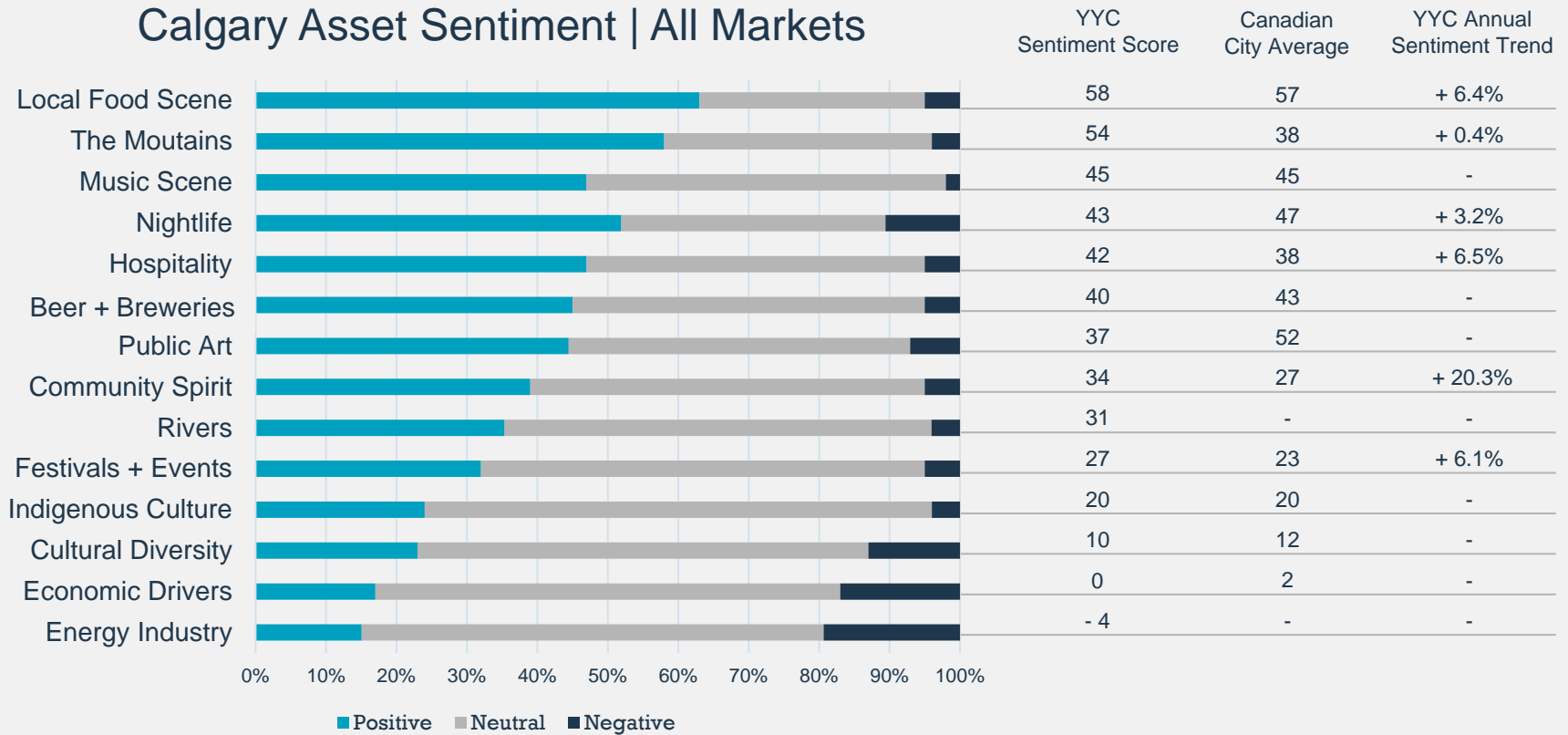
To gain context of the performance of Calgary's brand assets relative to other cities, we compared and contrasted the share of conversation to that of the *Canadian city average*.

## Destination Assets | % of Brand Conversation



# Asset sentiment

## Calgary Asset Sentiment | All Markets



# Competitive asset strengths

- Access to **natural surroundings** (Rocky Mountains) are a significant driver of conversation volume and positive sentiment. Vancouver is the only other city in this analysis to receive conversation volume and sentiment in this vein. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge for the DNA.
- Calgary's **hospitality** is in line with the *Canadian city average* from a volume perspective. However, the sentiment score from this asset ranks well above the average and is on a positive two year trend line of +6.5%.
- **Community spirit** saw a fairly significant upward trend over the last two years (+20%) and is well ahead of the *Canadian city average*, indicating that this is an important part of how others perceive Calgary.



# Competitive asset challenges

- The **energy industry** is the fourth largest driver of online conversations around Calgary and the largest driver of negative sentiment. It will be an ongoing challenge for the DNA.
- Low **nightlife, food scene, public art, and music scene** scores illustrate that Calgary's overall urban culture is not currently perceived as a competitive strength for the destination. It is an indicator of the destinations overall vibrancy and energy.

# **Destination attributes**

(the core descriptors used to describe Calgary)

# Section overview

In this section, we focus not on the conversation people are having about Calgary, but **how they are describing it**. These descriptors provide us with insight into how visitors perceive the personality of Calgary.

Using keyword analysis we pulled the most mentioned adjectives used to describe Calgary.



# Attribute pairings

All online conversations in regards to Calgary were sorted and categorized across nine distinct attribute pairings. Each attribute set allows us to gain insight into the overall perception of Calgary's brand position.

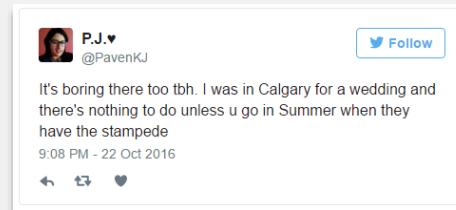
## Vibrant

Lively

Fun

Exciting

Loud



## Quiet

Quiet

Slow

Relaxing

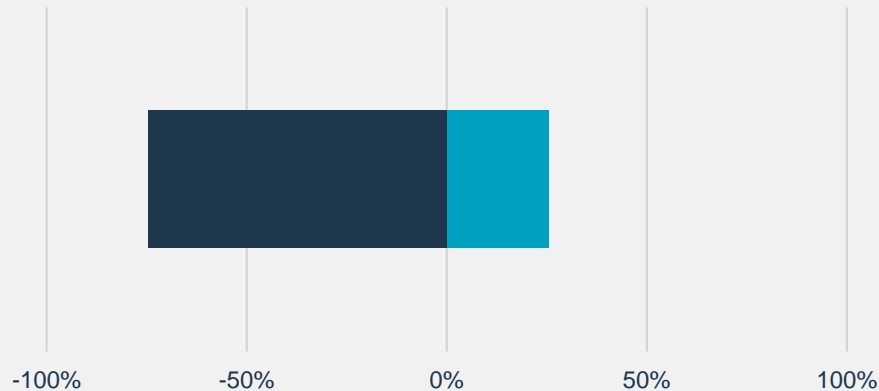
Boring

# Attribute pairings

All online conversations in regards to Calgary were sorted and categorized across nine distinct attribute pairings. Each attribute set allows us to gain insight into the overall perception of Calgary's brand position.

## Vibrant

Lively  
Fun  
Exciting  
Loud



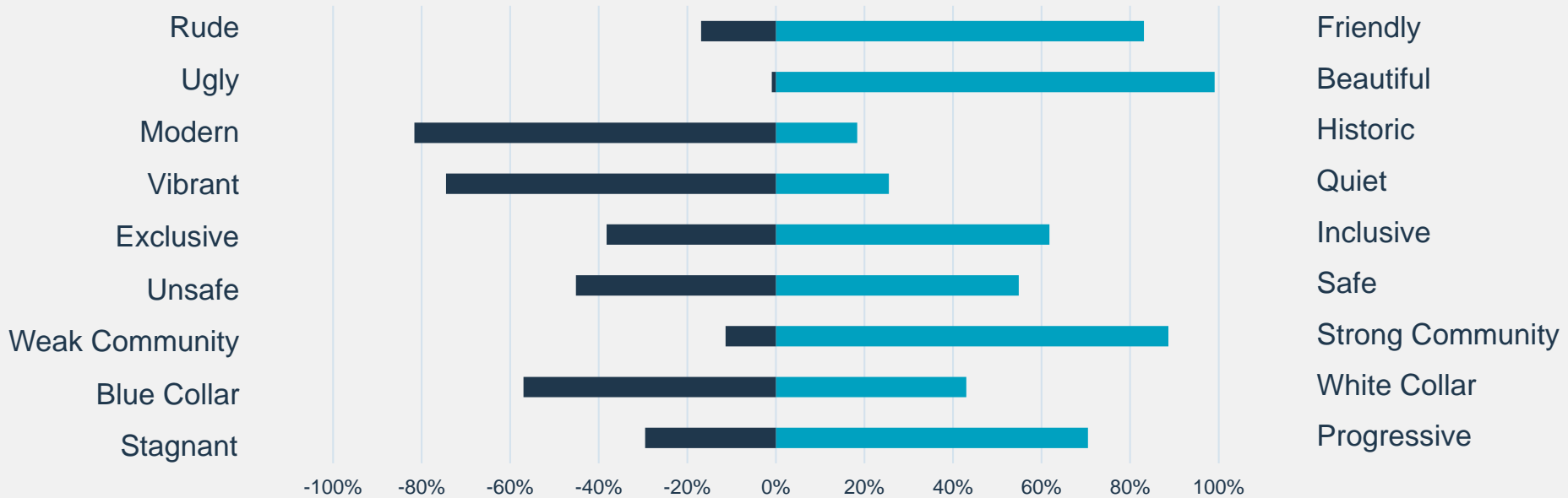
## Quiet

Quiet  
Slow  
Relaxing  
Boring

# Attribute pairings

Calgary's overall attribute scores.

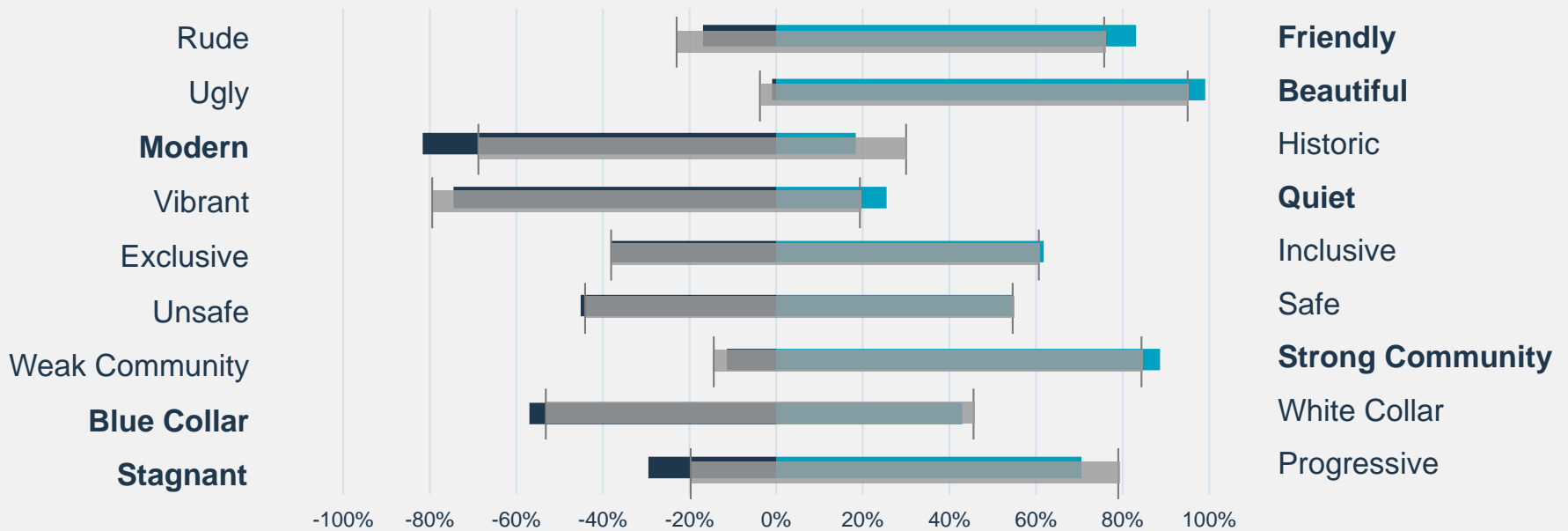
## Overall Attribute Association | Calgary



# Attribute pairings

Canadian city average compared to Calgary attribute scores

Overall Attribute Association | Calgary



# Relative brand attributes

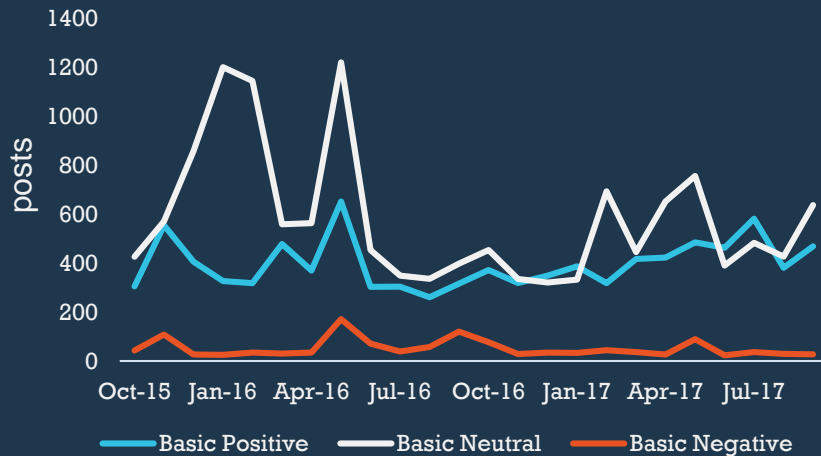
- Calgary's unique brand of **friendliness/hospitality** ranks ahead of the *Canadian city average* and is a strong indicator of Calgary's warm, welcoming nature.
- **Strong community spirit** saw a fairly significant upward trend over the last two years (+20%) and is well ahead of the *Canadian city average*, indicating that this is an important part of how others perceive Calgary.
- Lower ranking **vibrancy** and **progressive** scores somewhat contradict the *energy* of the Calgary brand and present a challenge.
- The above average **beautiful** scores are strongly connected to Calgary's access to its natural surroundings (mountains, sky, river).



# **Other considerations**

(further exploration into Calgary's perceived image)

# Community spirit



Calgary's **community spirit** is a current brand strength and an attribute that ranks above the *Canadian city average*.

While there were a few events in 2016 that caused significant spikes in overall sentiment around Calgary's community spirit (Fort McMurray Fire, Syrian refugees), the overall sentiment in 2017 remained consistently on the rise.

# Access to the Rockies



The top driver of conversation and positive sentiment amongst our external audience is **Calgary's access to the Rocky Mountains.**

Access to the natural landscape outside of the city acts as both an opportunity and a challenge for the brand reputation.

With 22% of online brand conversation being dedicated to an asset that is 100km outside of the city, it will be important for Calgary to transition some of this attention to assets within the city itself.

# Western hospitality



Calgary ranks in the top two cities in Canada for its friendliness and hospitality.

While **western hospitality** is how we like to brand it, it is not a term commonly used and only appears 59 times out of the 54,934 posts around hospitality.

# The white hat



The **white hat** appears in 966 online conversations (out of 9,963,916) over the two year period we analyzed.

Interestingly, the conversations it did appear in, were predominately prompted by a **White Hat Ceremony**.

The top associations with the white hat are: Ceremony, Honorary, Welcome, Treatment, @FLYYC, Tourism, Stampede.

# Energy

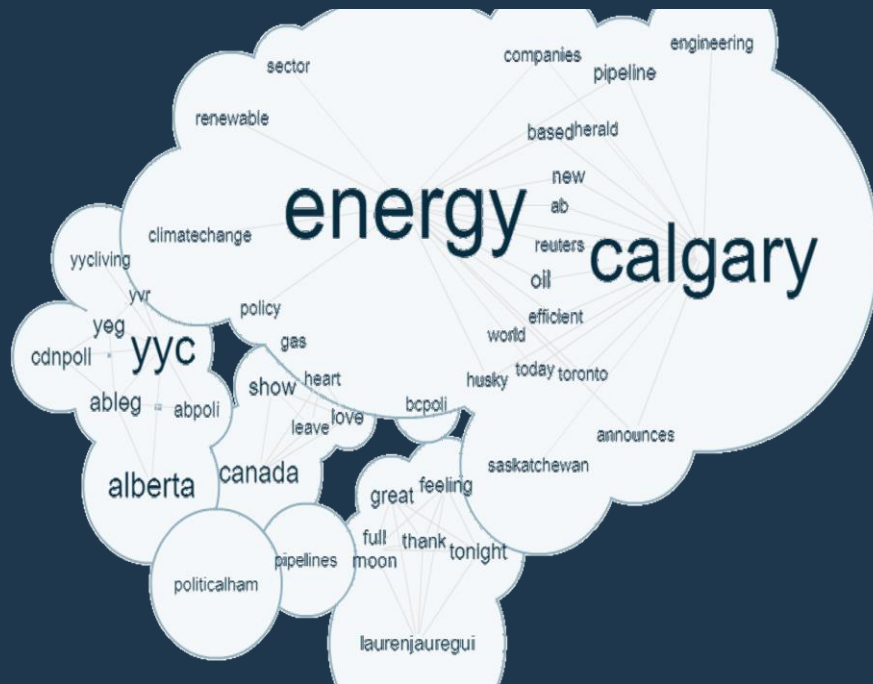
en·er·gy /'enərjē/ *noun*

1. Power derived from the utilization of physical or chemical resources.
2. Strength and vitality required for sustained physical or mental activity.

Synonyms: vitality, liveliness, animated, vitality, enthusiasm, vigor.

The word **energy** can take on many meanings. As energy is an important part of the Calgary brand, we wanted to specifically analyze the most common associations with energy and Calgary.

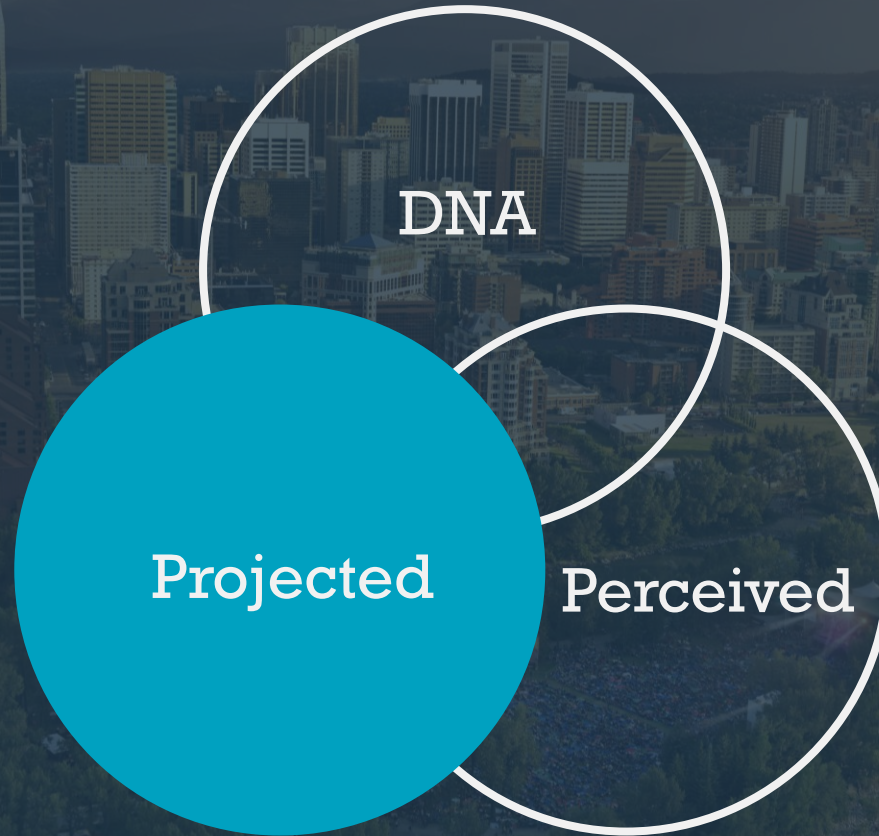
# Energy



When we isolate all mentions of **energy** across online conversations around Calgary, we can see that the most common association is with that of: *pipelines, oil, gas, bitumen, climate change, renewable, engineering and politics.*

The **energy industry** is the fourth largest driver of online conversations around Calgary and the largest driver of negative sentiment.

# Projected





# How?

We completed an assessment of channels used by professional communicators in Calgary. The analysis focused on assets and drivers that pop up in conversations around Calgary's reputation.

# Learnings

- The current brand is not being used:
  - #bepartoftheenergy - 76
  - #yycenergy – 10,294
  - #capturecalgary – 172,727
- Images are of a good quality:
  - Authentic,
  - Working with (local) photographers and professional videographers.
- Key partners do not use storytelling about the city to create extra value.
  - Currently only the City and Tourism Calgary see this value.
- ‘Cross selling’ is not integrated.
  - Tourism Calgary and the City do it by nature, others do not.

# Learnings

- Calgary as a whole does not capitalize enough on some unique parts of its DNA such as community spirit or festivals, which gives a shattered impression of the city.
- Most of the channels are taking a broadcast approach, which is worrying.
- Today, more than ever, it is important to have conversations with visitors and people you are hosting in your destination.

# Projected – Calgary is about...

Announcements

Airplanes

Animal

Architecture

Bikes

Cycling

Dogs

Events

Food

Mountains

Outdoors

Parks

Performers

Public Transport

Refreshment

Rides

Rivers

Sunset

Weather

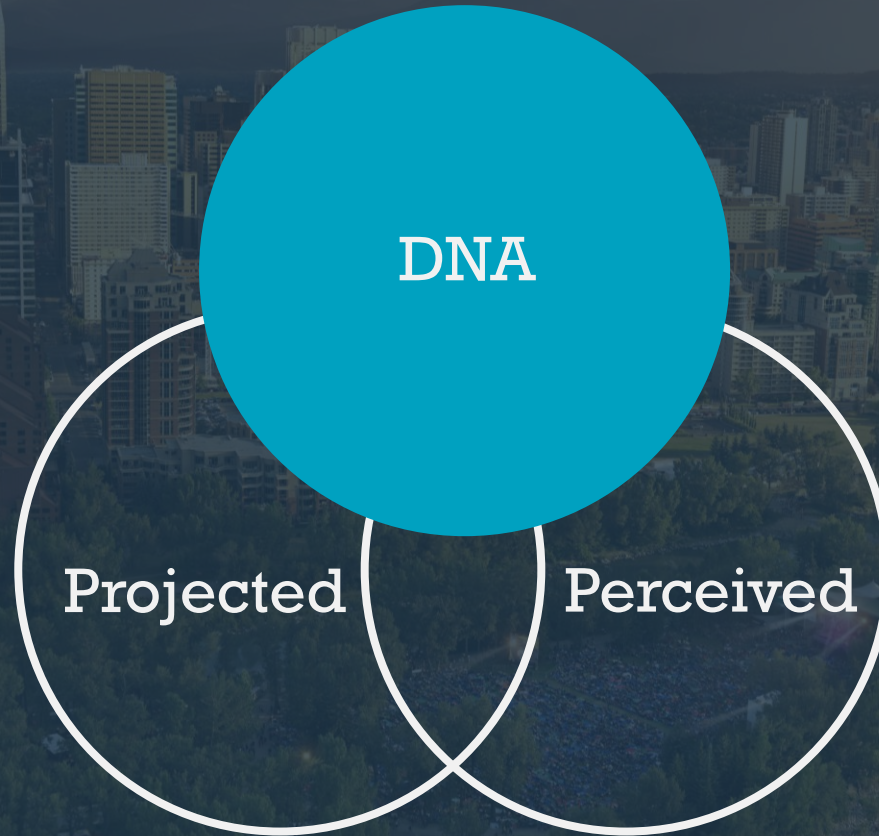
# **Not projected – Calgary is about**

Community Spirit (see DNA)

Energy (see current brand)

Diversity & urban vibrancy (see DNA)

# DNA



# What?

The focus of the DNA research is on delivering insights into the perceptions of Calgary's reputation through the eyes of those who **live in** Calgary.

*How do Calgarians experience Calgary?*

# **DNA – Survey : Overview**



# Survey

Residents of Calgary were asked for their opinions on Calgary through an online survey, (live from June 29 – July 19, 2017).

In total, 818 Calgarians responded to the survey. The quota of 200 respondents for each quadrant of the city was met:

200 NE

207 NW

200 SE

211 SW

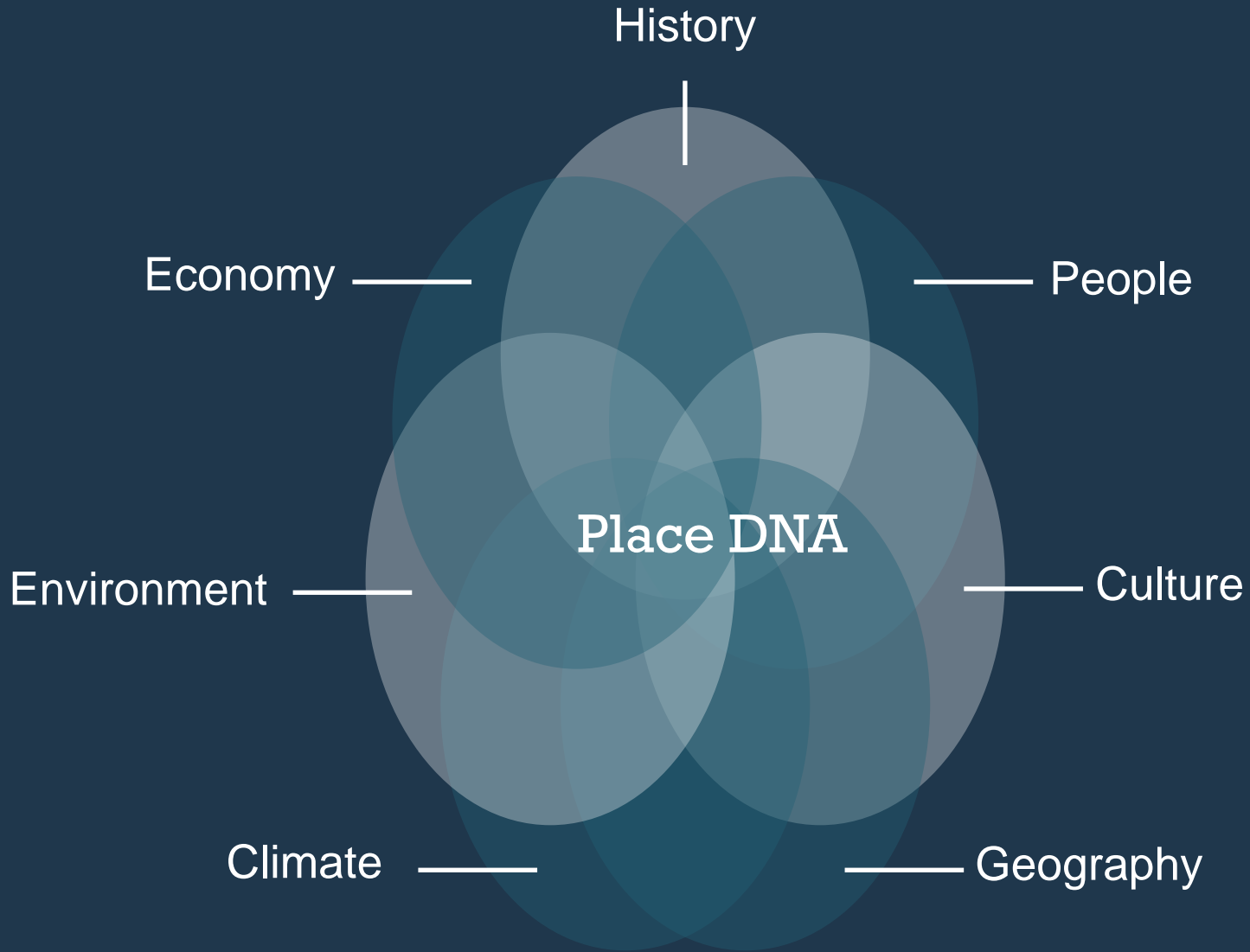
187 Inner-City Neighbourhoods

625 Not Inner-City

The data has been weighted to population statistics for the City of Calgary according to gender, age and quadrant of the city.

# **DNA – Survey : Assets**

What is Calgary for Calgarians?



# Place DNA elements



## Environment

The impact of all living species, climate, weather, and natural resources on a place.



## Infrastructure

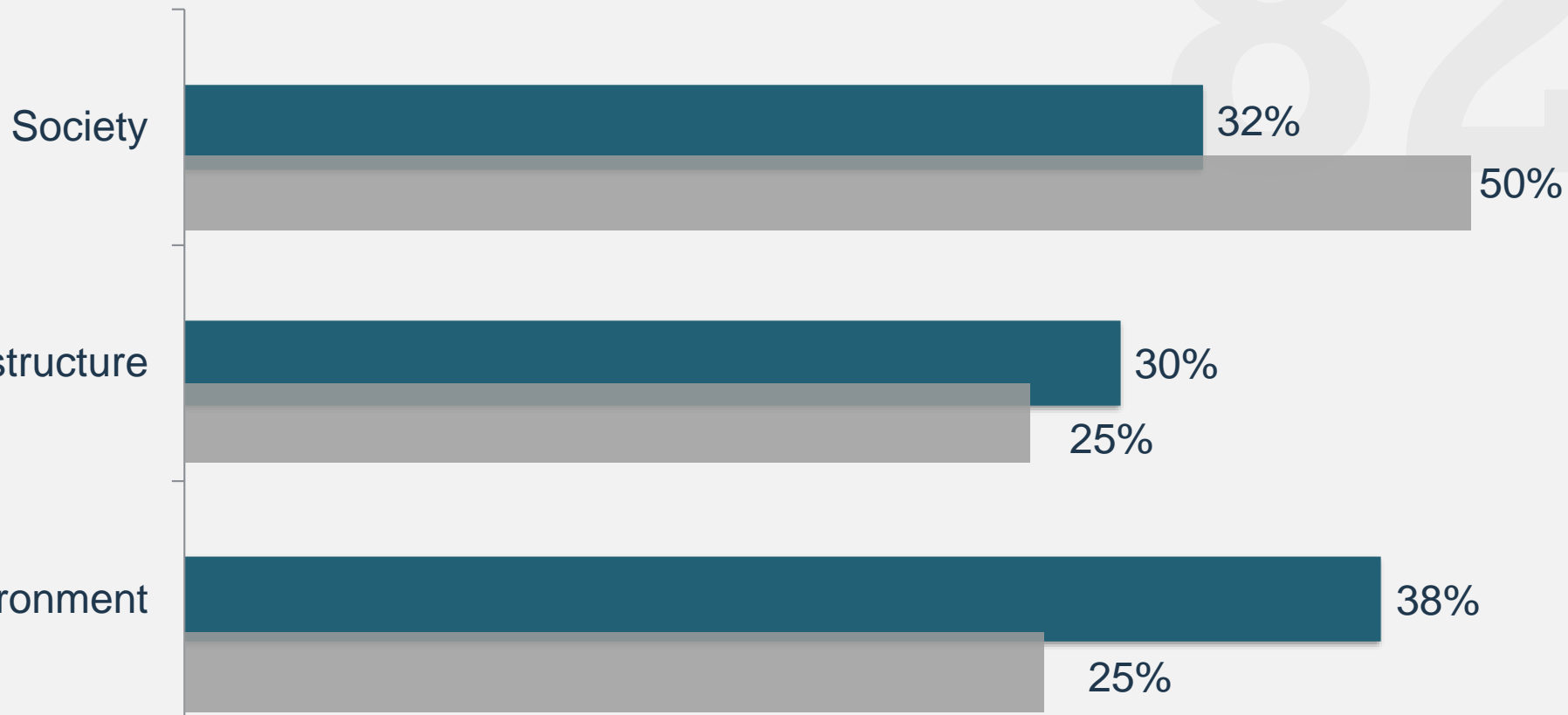
The impact of physical structures and facilities built by humans on a place.



## Society

The impact of people's values, history, norms and behaviours on a place.

# Place DNA elements



■ DNA elements % - Calgary

■ DNA elements % - other cities

# What makes Calgary, Calgary?

% contributes to making Calgary the city that it is



## Significant Differences

Mountains: 90% Overall  
94%↑ Not Inner-City  
96%↑ Age 55+

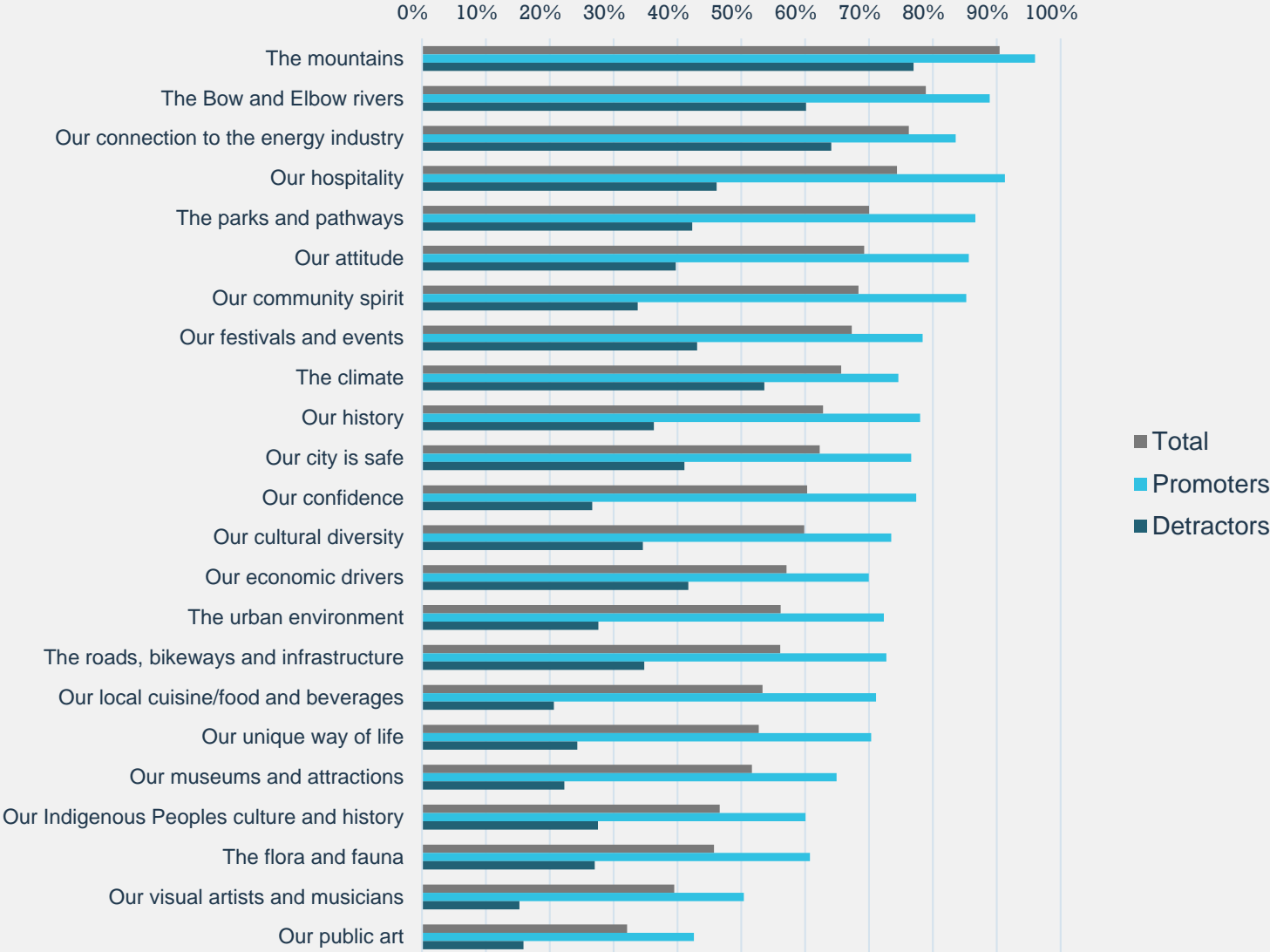
Hospitality: 74% Overall  
85%↑ Age 55+

Community:  
Spirit 68% Overall  
78%↑ Age 55+

Public Art: 32% Overall  
39%↑ Female

# What makes Calgary, Calgary?

% contributes to making Calgary the city that it is



# Promoter vs. Detractor

Promoters live up to their name, advocating that all of these characteristics contribute to making Calgary the city that it is.

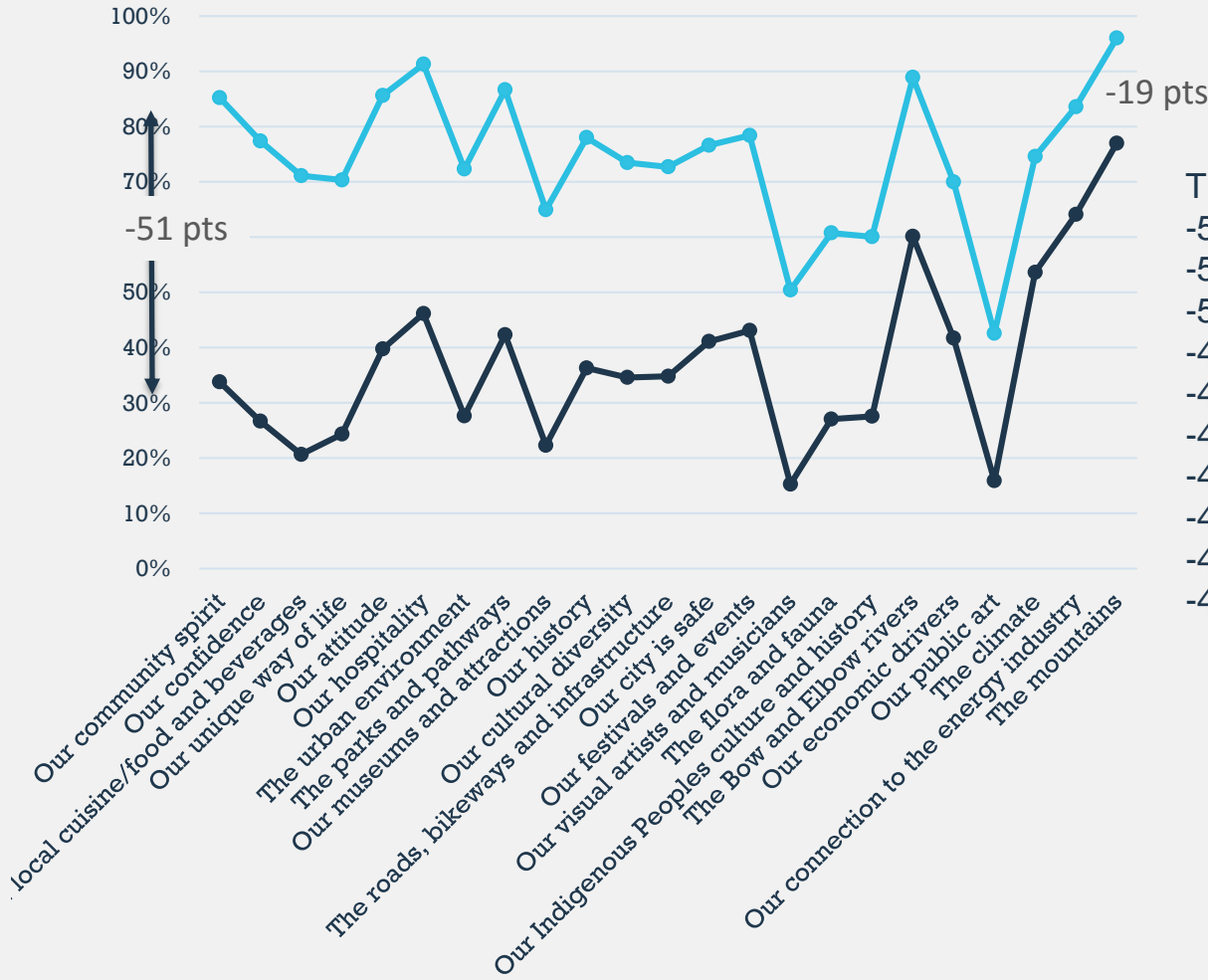
Detractors and promoters align on 4 of the top 5 attributes, however, detractors include *the climate* in their top 5.



# What makes Calgary, Calgary?

% contributes to making Calgary the city that it is

## Gap between Promoters and Detractors



- The largest gaps are for:
- 51 pts Our community spirit;
  - 51 pts Our confidence;
  - 50 pts Our local cuisine;
  - 46 pts Our unique way of life;
  - 46 pts Our attitude;
  - 45 pts Our hospitality;
  - 45 pts The urban environment;
  - 44 pts The parks and pathways;
  - 43 pts Our museums and attractions;
  - 42 pts Our history.

Highest gap ←

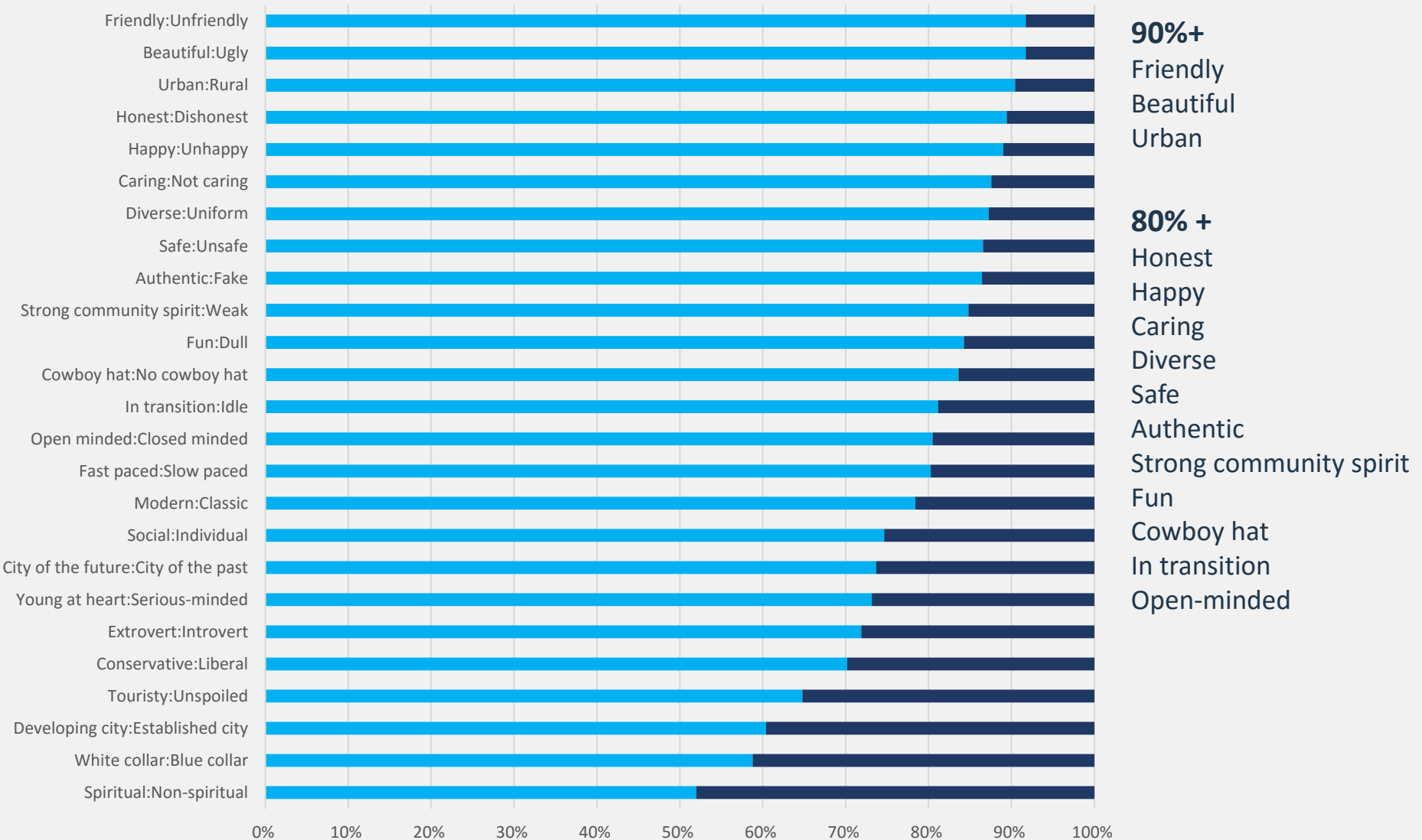
→ Lowest gap

# **DNA – Survey : Attributes**

How is Calgary for Calgarians?

# Attributes that best describe Calgary

% selecting attribute in each pair word



**90%+**

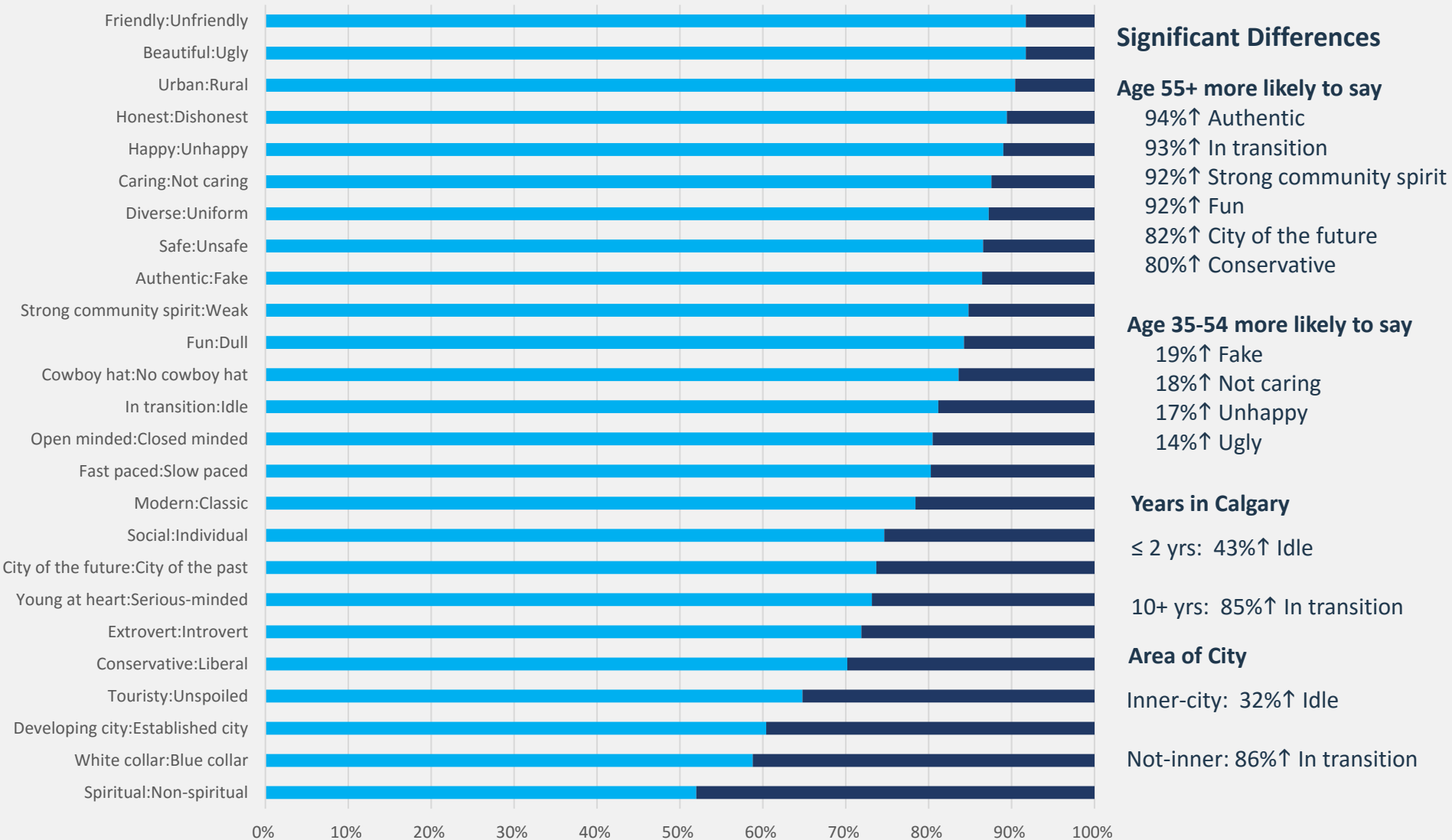
Friendly  
Beautiful  
Urban

**80% +**

Honest  
Happy  
Caring  
Diverse  
Safe  
Authentic  
Strong community spirit  
Fun  
Cowboy hat  
In transition  
Open-minded

# Attributes that best describe Calgary

% selecting attribute in each pair word



## Significant Differences

### Age 55+ more likely to say

- 94%↑ Authentic
- 93%↑ In transition
- 92%↑ Strong community spirit
- 92%↑ Fun
- 82%↑ City of the future
- 80%↑ Conservative

### Age 35-54 more likely to say

- 19%↑ Fake
- 18%↑ Not caring
- 17%↑ Unhappy
- 14%↑ Ugly

### Years in Calgary

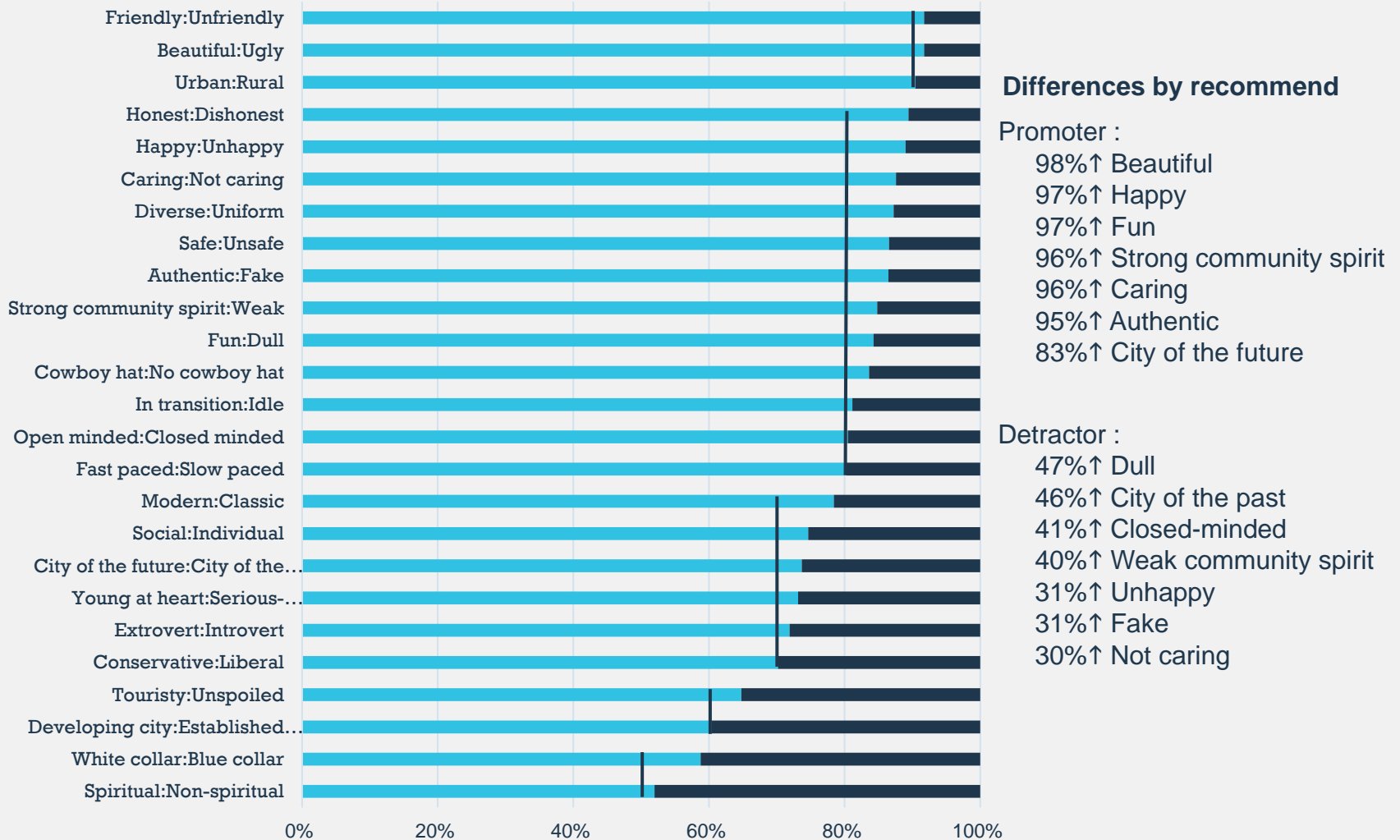
- ≤ 2 yrs: 43%↑ Idle
- 10+ yrs: 85%↑ In transition

### Area of City

- Inner-city: 32%↑ Idle
- Not-inner: 86%↑ In transition

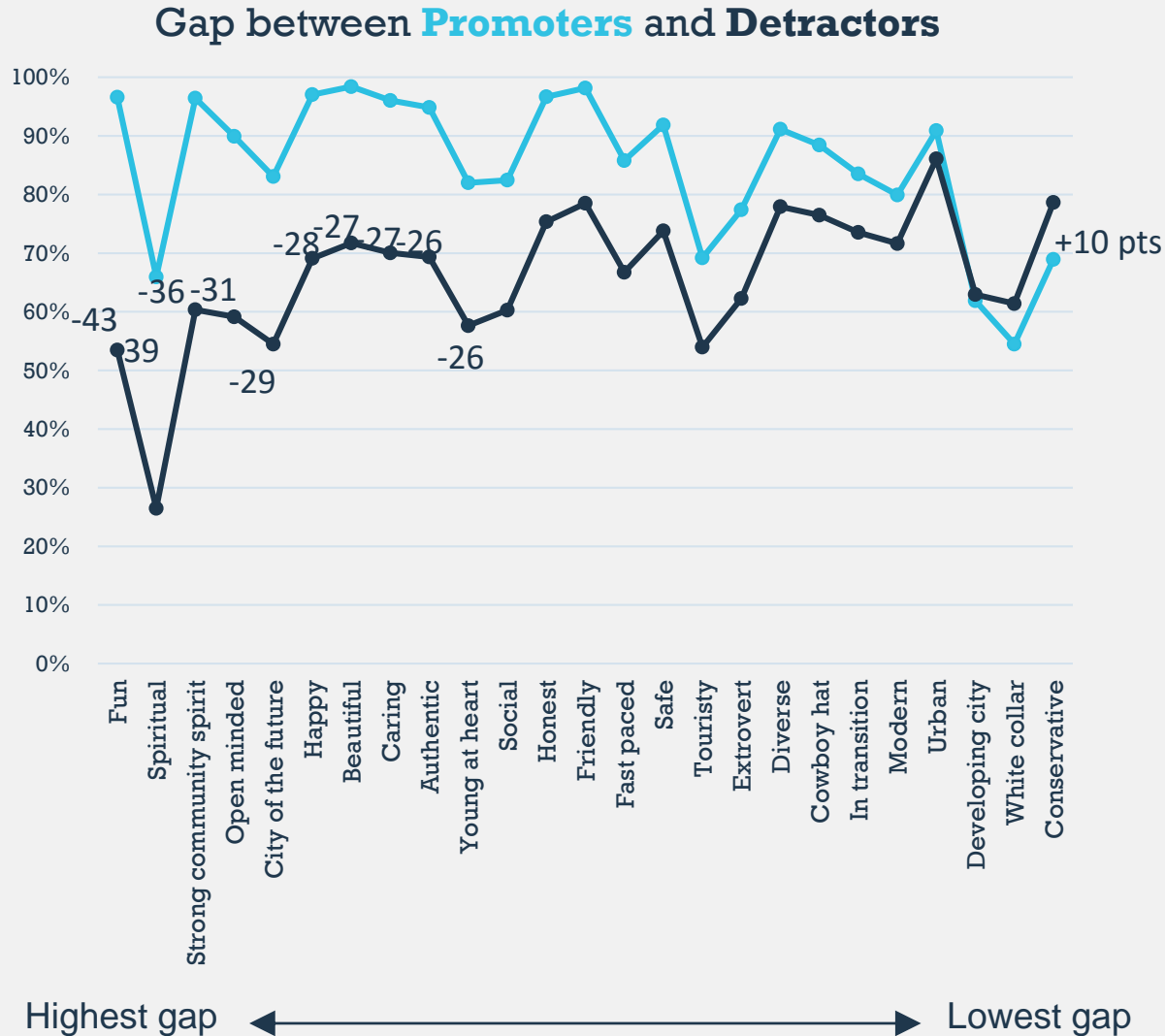
# Attributes that best describe Calgary

% selecting attribute in each pair word



# Attributes that best describe Calgary

% selecting attribute in each pair word



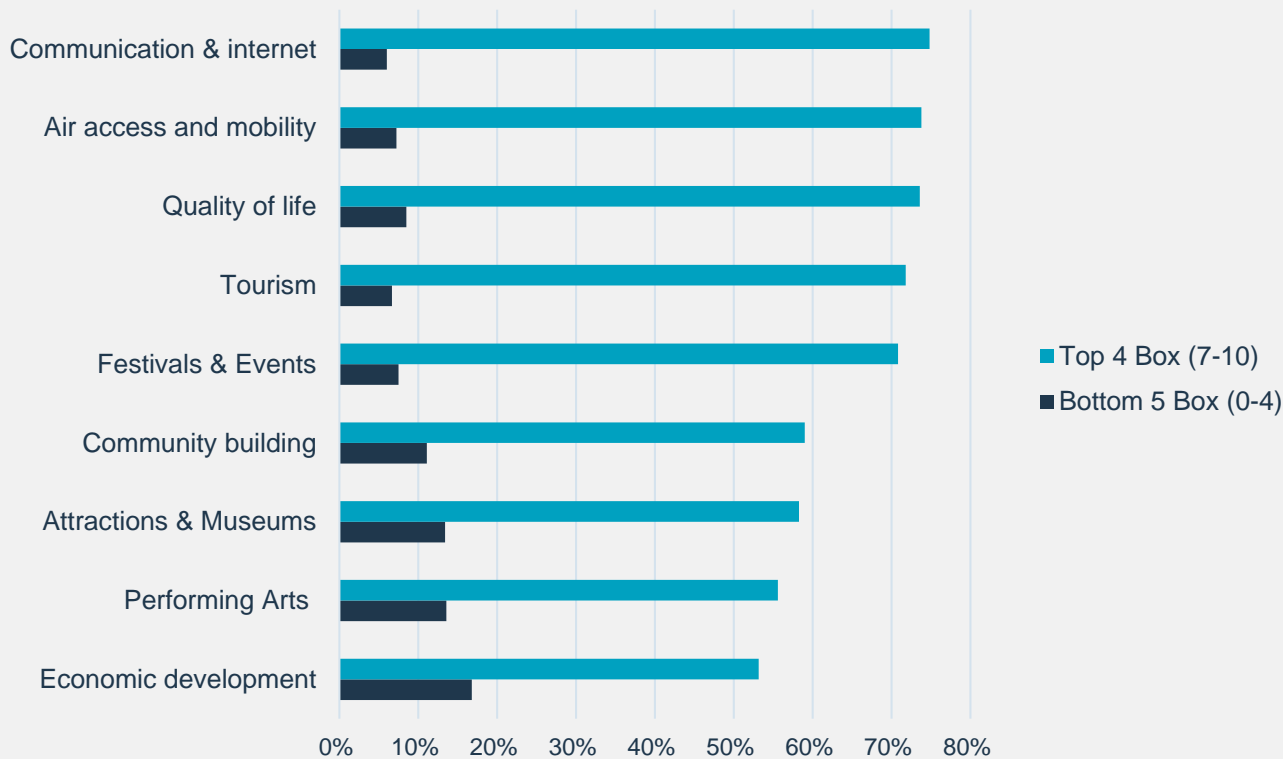
# **DNA – Survey : Place performance**

How is Calgary performing?

# Rating Calgary's performance

How is Calgary performing as a city on each of the following aspects?

% based on a scale of 0 is "poor" and 10 is "great"



Fewer than six in ten Calgarians feel Calgary is performing well on:

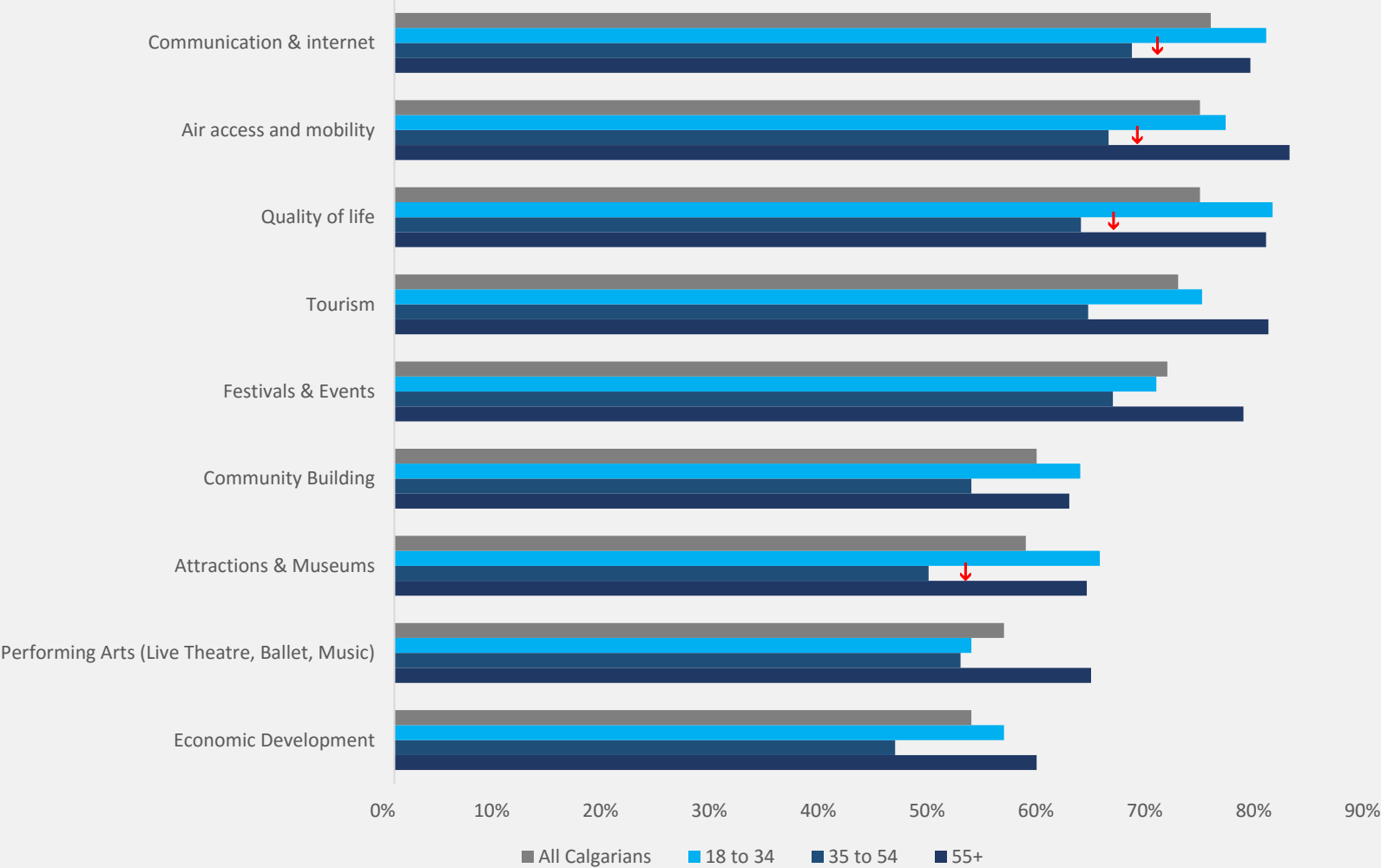
- Community building;
- Attractions & museums;
- Performing arts;
- Economic development.



# Rating Calgary's performance by age of respondent

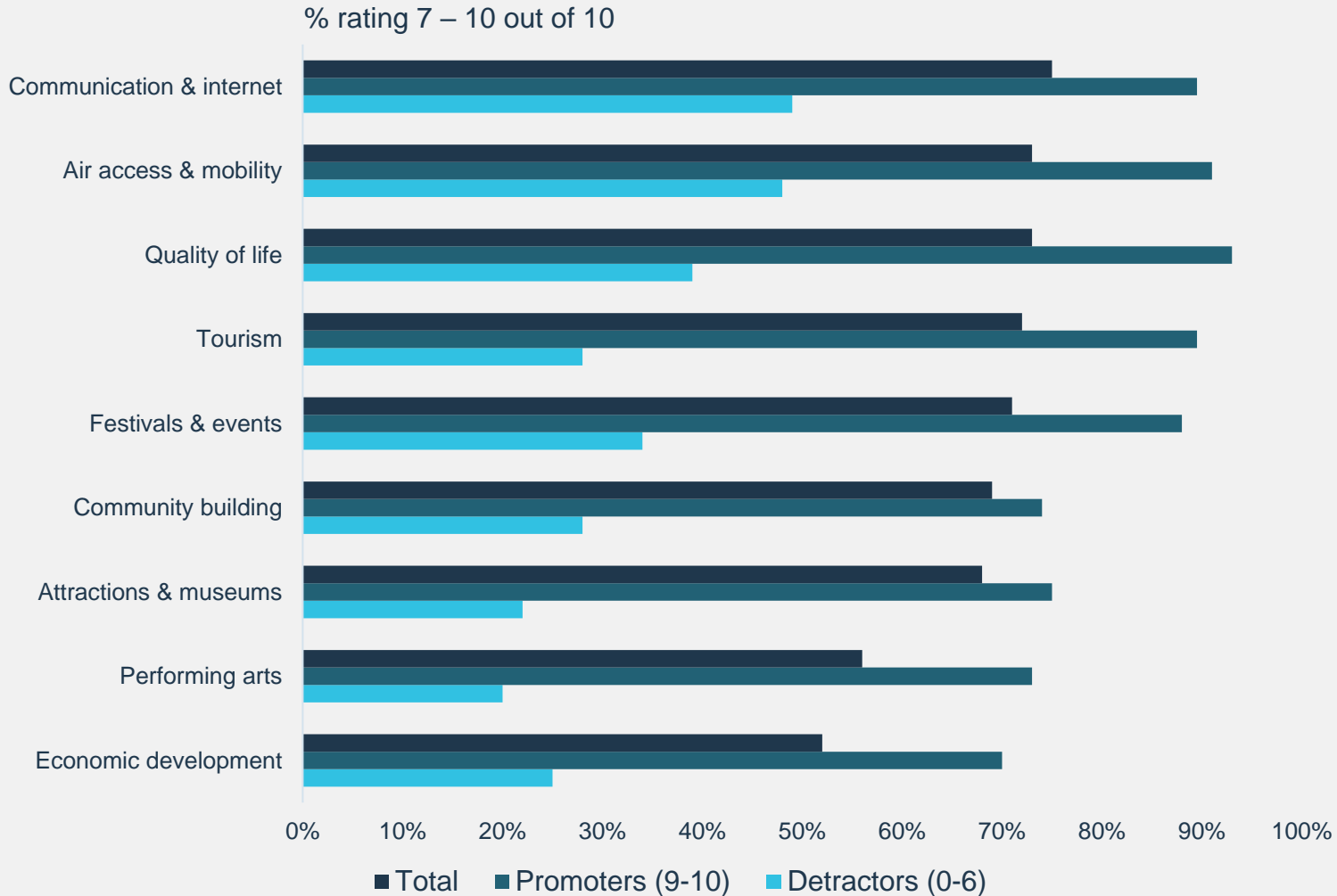
## How is Calgary performing as a city on each of the following aspects?

% rating 7-10 out of 10, where 10 is "great"



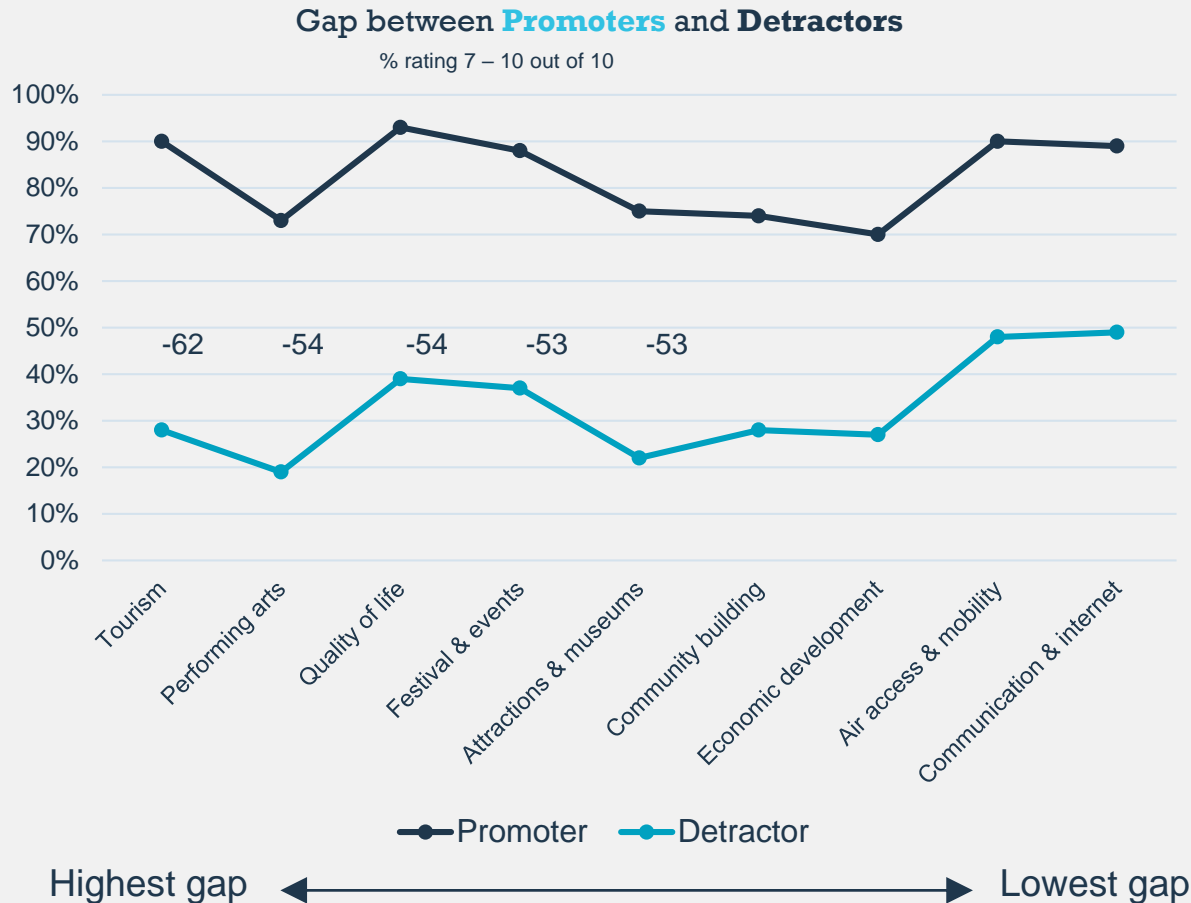
# Rating Calgary's performance by promoter vs. detractors

How is Calgary performing as a city on each of the following aspects?



# Rating Calgary's performance

How is Calgary performing as a city on each of the following aspects?



Promoters are significantly more likely to rate Calgary's performance higher than detractors on all aspects.

The largest gaps are for:  
-62 pts Tourism;  
-54 pts Quality of life;  
-54 pts Performing arts;  
-53 pts Festivals/events;  
-53 pts Attractions/museums;  
-47 pts Community building.

# **DNA – Survey: Place personality**

Who is Calgary?

# 5 types of place personality



**Agreeable (Dublin)**



**Neurotic (Hong Kong)**



**Extravert (Amsterdam)**



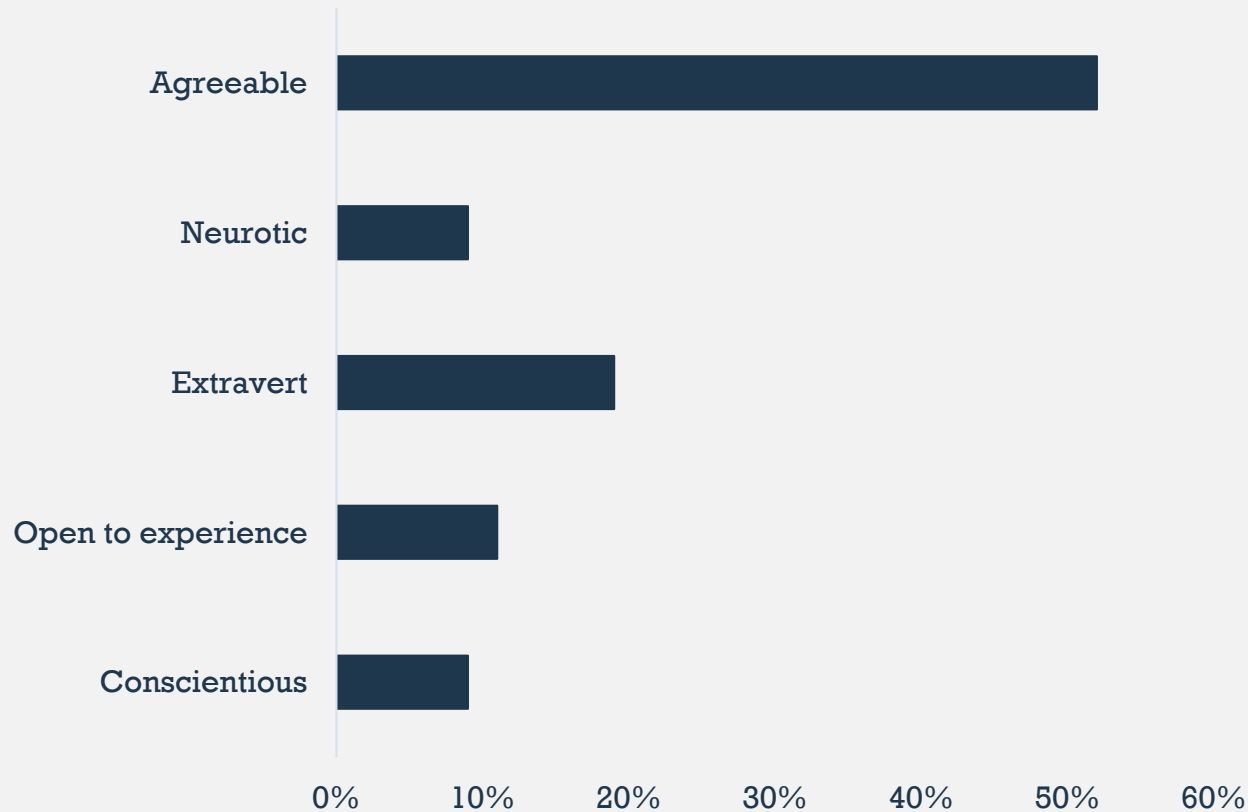
**Open to experience (Montreal)**



**Conscientious (Vancouver)**

# Personality type of Calgary

According to Calgarians



# Dominant personality of Calgary

“ Most people in Calgary value getting along with others. They are generally considerate, kind, generous, trusting and trustworthy, helpful, and willing to compromise their interests with others.

Calgarians also have a rather optimistic view of human nature. ”

# Agreeable as dominant trait

- Considerate
- Kind
- Trustworthy
- Helpful
- Willing to compromise
- Weak transformational skills
- Strong transactional skills

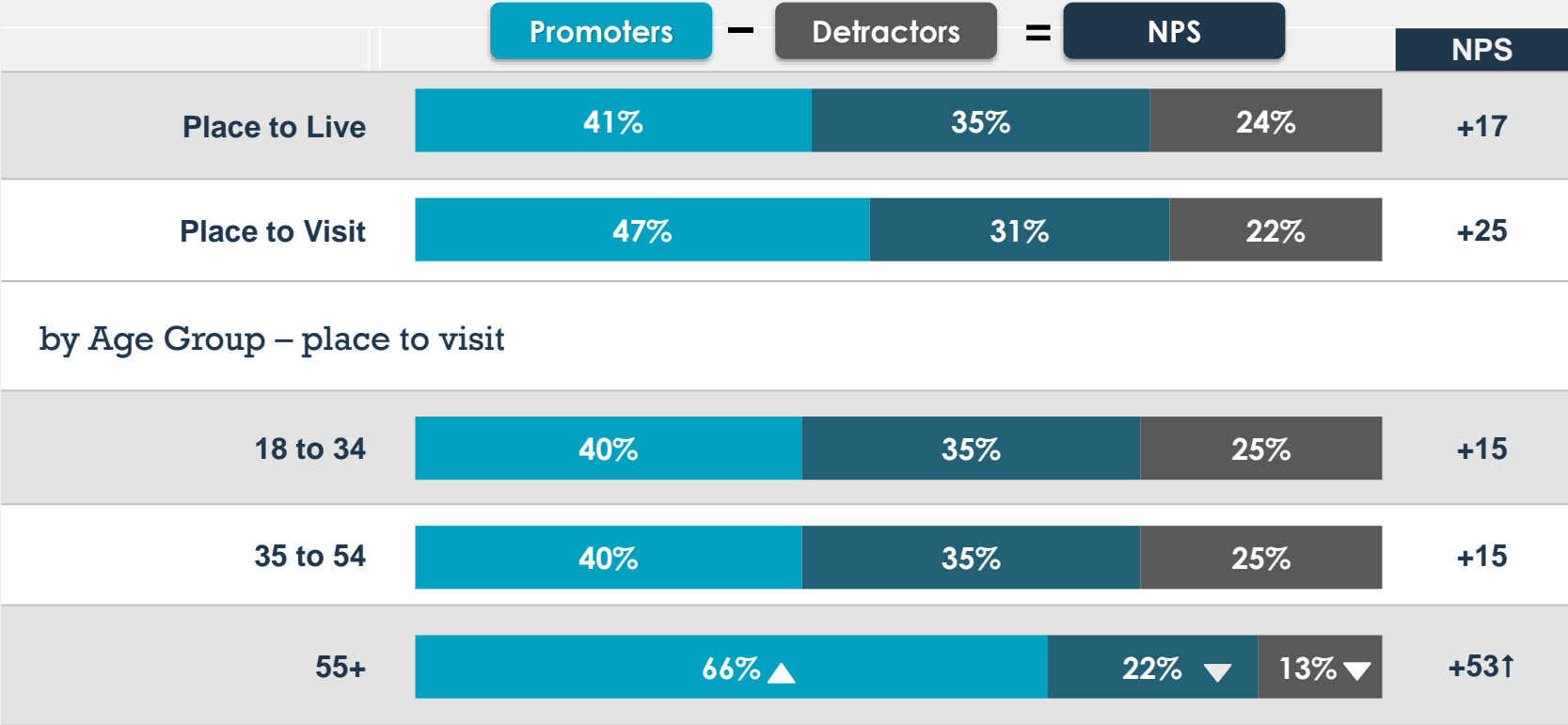


# DNA – Survey : Satisfaction

How satisfied are Calgarians about Calgary?

# Likelihood to recommend

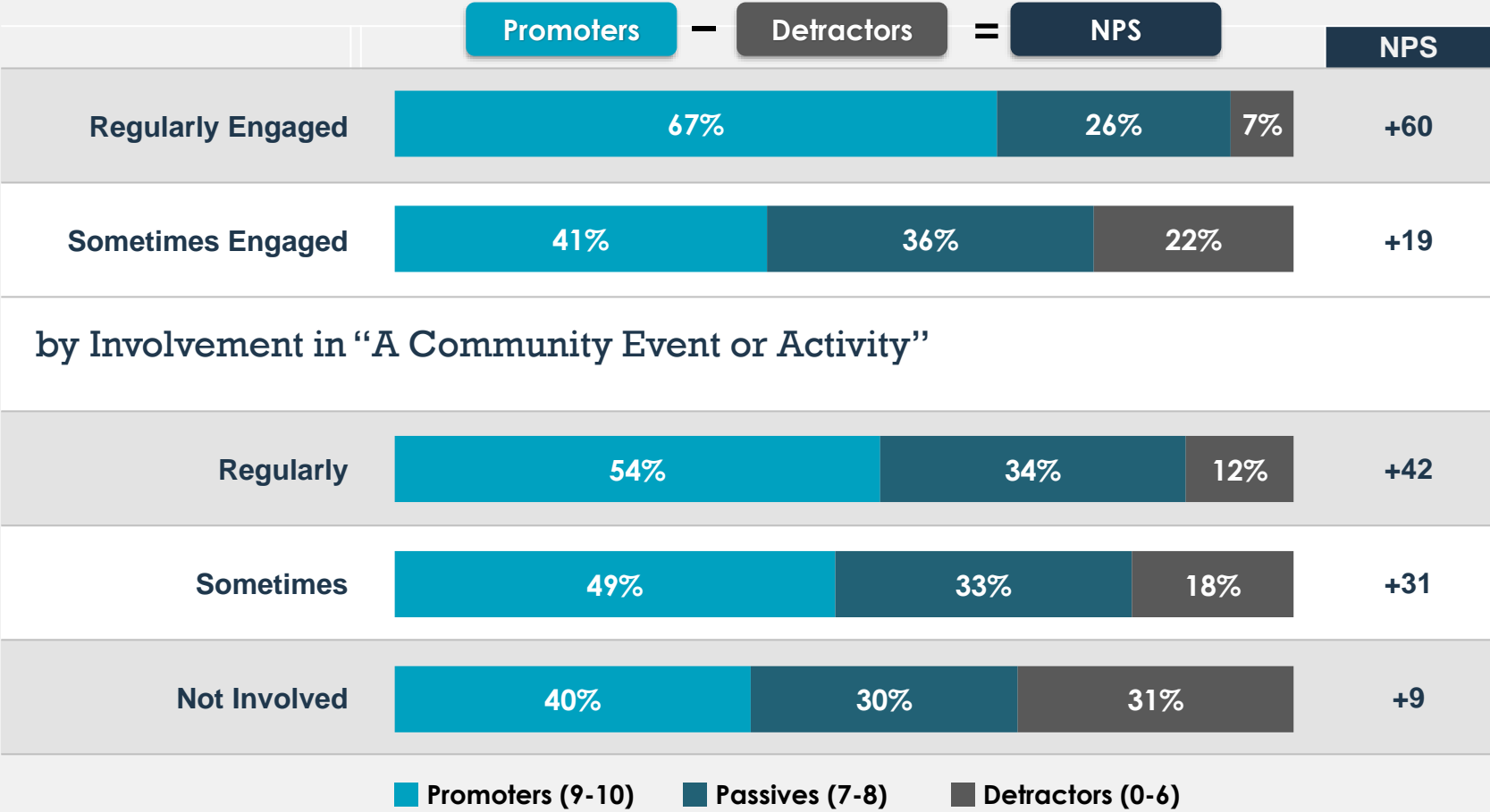
How likely is it that you would recommend Calgary to a friend, relative or colleague as a place to live? Or as a place to visit?



■ Promoters (9-10)   ■ Passives (7-8)   ■ Detractors (0-6)

# Likelihood to recommend

How likely is it that you would recommend Calgary to a friend, relative or colleague as a place to live? Or as a place to visit?



# DNA – Survey : The citizen's voice

What Calgarians say about Calgary

# What would people miss?



*“A city of the future! Even though Calgary is an established city on the world stage, I truly believe we haven't seen it at it's finest. A lot of people are starting to say it will become the silicon valley of the North, and I like to think that we're seeing bits and pieces of it becoming true recently. Still a way to go though!”*

*“Mountains. The mountain view.  
The view of the mountains.”*

*“The best city in the country.”*

*“Love of country, nature, the real  
Cowtown, they forced to hand  
over all our money in TRANSFER  
PAYMENTS TO THE EASTERN  
PART OF THE COUNTRY. THEY  
COULD NOT HAVE ANY LIFE  
WITHOUT OURS!”*

*“Canada would miss out on the oil  
produced by all the oil companies in  
Calgary. Canada would miss Calgary's  
wish for all people to be equal,  
women's rights were defined in  
Calgary, the first woman elected in the  
British empire was in Calgary.”*

*“Spirit of community and  
cooperation in helping one's  
neighbor (especially seen in  
winter time). Care and  
protection of the environment.  
Openness to new ideas and has a  
sense of humor about itself.”*

*“Canada would miss a city that  
opens their arms to newcomers or  
people who are suffering from low  
economical difficulties. Canada  
would miss all the creations of art  
and medical breakthroughs They  
would also miss all the intellectual  
aura of a great city.”*

*“It would miss an urban center  
close to Banff National Park.  
That's about all this city has to  
offer. It lacks a strong core and  
really any clear sense of identity  
apart from the ridiculous  
Stampede.”*



*“It feels good. We get around the city a lot and, for a large city, it feels good to be here. There are people of many ethnic origins to interact with and this, more than anything else has helped Calgary to mature as a cosmopolitan city.”*

*“Living in Calgary feels like living in a city with unlimited possibilities - culture, outdoor living, cuisine, arts, sports and community”*

*“It is an honor and a blessing to live in a unpretentious culture, where families can access recreation and explore nature regardless of their economic situation. I feel pride in knowing that there is opportunity for everyone to live without boundaries.”*

*“It is marvelous to live in Calgary, as it is high up in elevation and has the most outstanding view to everywhere.”*

*“I love this city. It is vibrant and diverse. It's easy to move around and experience the vibrancy and diversity.”*

*“Fake Cowboys every July!”*

*“The city is transforming quite rapidly even today, mostly for the worse and in limited respects for the better. The city lacks culture, and the built form (I'm talking to YOU suburbia) looks generic ... for the most part.”*

*“Calgary has been a great place to raise our young children through to adulthood. The city is safe and the schools have done well for us.”*



# How is Calgary changing?



*“As the world changes the way it gets its energy, Calgary has to change along with that, moving away slightly from oil and gas, towards other economic drivers.”*

*“Calgary is growing and finally that includes growing up instead of always out (the inner city communities are becoming denser). There is more ethnic diversity and not just isolated in certain parts of the city. There is way more art and culture than there used to be (partly a good thing and partly a waste of money...). of all the foodie restaurants).”*

*“Calgary is becoming busier - more people, more traffic, more violence. It is becoming more diversified in terms of culture and employment. We are not just an oil and gas town anymore.”*

*“The city is beginning to realize that it can no longer rely on oil/gas as its major industry. There's a lot of diversification (especially in alternative energy sources and technology). The city has more head offices than most Canadian (or American) cities, that brings in a lot of progress in a number of areas, while helping diversify the city's population and creating a more international outlook.”*

*“Too many people have moved in from eastern Canada affecting our conservative values.”*

*“More openness and exposure to other cultures.”*

*“Too fast with not enough consideration for culture or nature. All about money, money, money, and how to make the most money with the least care of anything else.”*

*“It's becoming more dynamic, the food scene is fantastic, the Skyline is expanding, more diverse people living here.”*

# DNA – Workshops

# Workshops

A workshop was held for members of the Tourism Calgary, Calgary Economic Development and Meetings + Conventions teams on July 17<sup>th</sup> as a pilot. Residents of Calgary were asked to attend one of the four workshops on August 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

In total **81** Calgarians and **33** team members participated. Participants were divided into random groups to work on topics such as elevator pitch, brand personality, product experiences and positioning.

# **DNA – Workshops : Positioning**

# Positioning from the outside

Calgary is....

- “Yihaa-land”
- “Cowboyland”
- “The white hatters”
- “White collar world”
- “The not so wild west”
- “Oily Blackmouth”

# Positioning from the inside

Calgary is....

- “Opportunity City”
- “New Frontier Zone”
- “Mountain Adventure Land”
- “Off the beaten path”
- “Rodeo Roller Coaster”
- “The on switch”

# What would we miss....

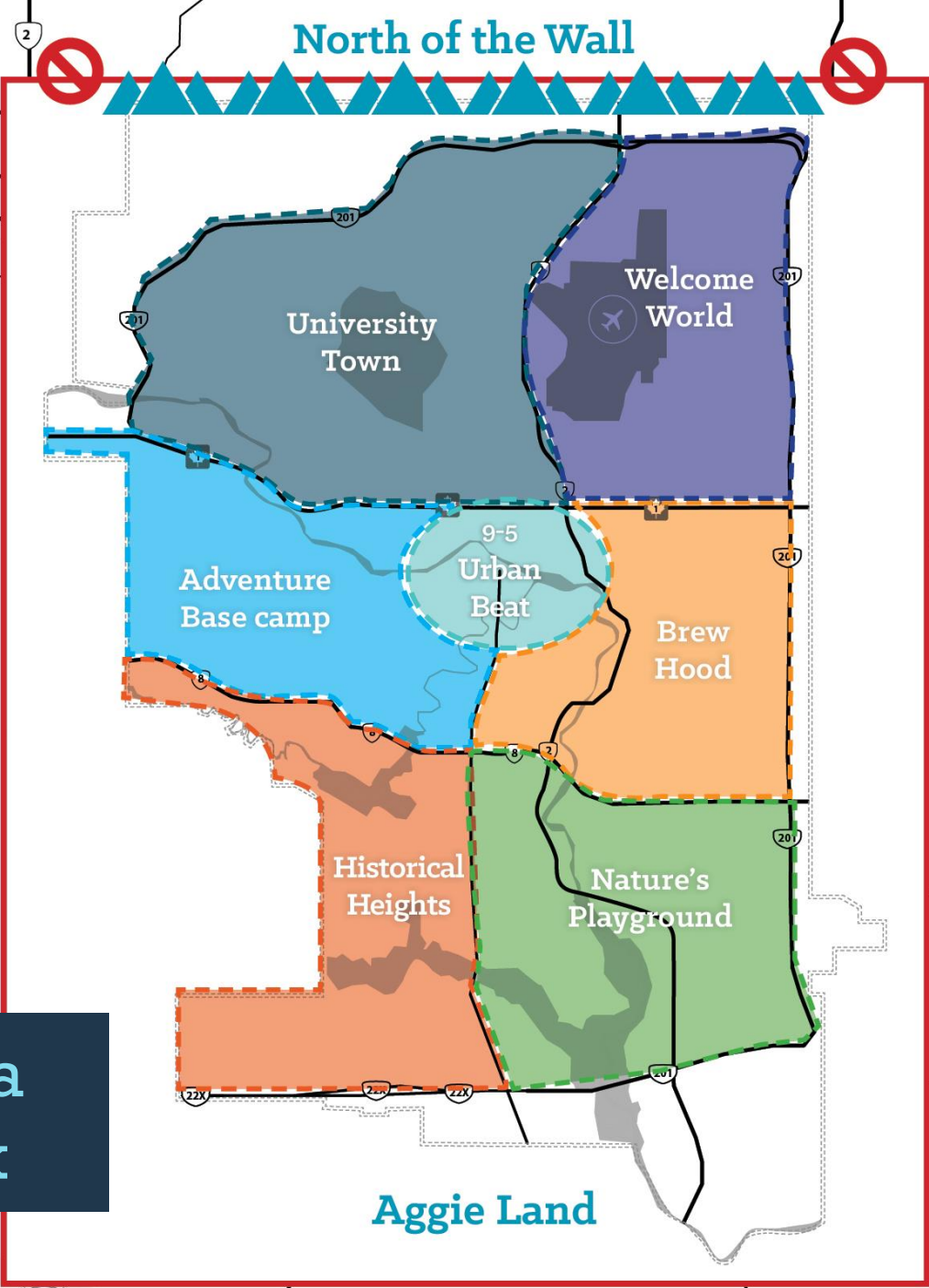
- “A genuine warmth of deeply caring for family, locals and visitors.”
- “People come for the entrepreneurial spirit but stay for the community spirit.”
- “A city that is always eager to rally behind a cause.”
- “The things that come from here and the things that might have come from here.
- “Free pancake breakfast.”



# What would we miss....

“We are not *on the way* but we are *the way*. The way to beautiful mountains and lakes, the way to great education, starting a family, making connections, building a business and living a life where you can tell the story where you came from and where you are going to.”

# North of the Wall



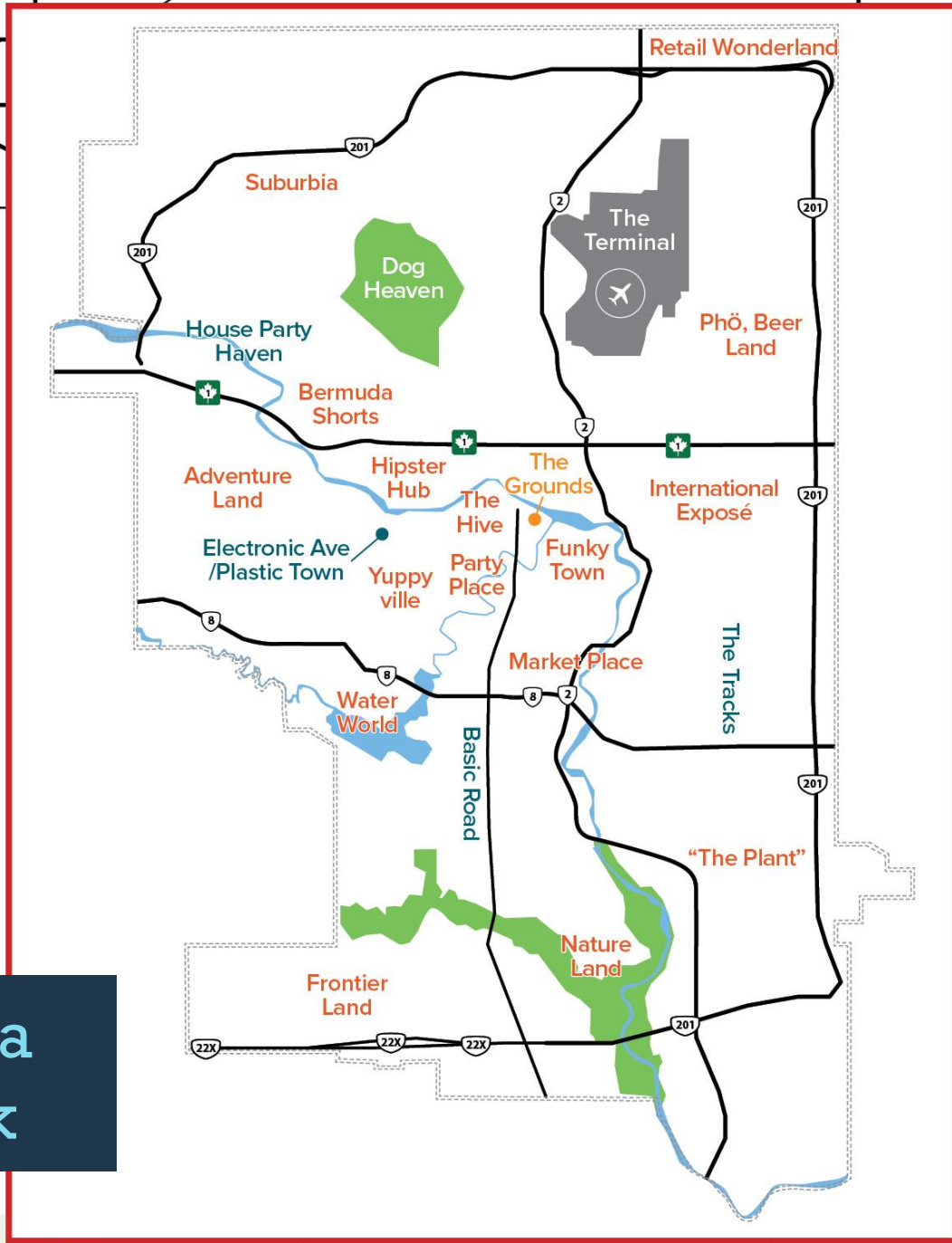
Adventure Land

Prairie Pride

Aggie Land

Calgary as a theme park

# Calgary as a theme park



# **DNA – Interviews : The citizen's voice**

What leading people in Calgary think about Calgary

# Process

- We conducted 23 interviews with community leaders.
- The interviews were qualitative and semi-structured.
- Interviewees were informed that their responses would remain anonymous and they would not be quoted in the final report.



# Model of Schermerhorn

4 Elements of observable culture during the interviews.

**1** Rituals

**3** Stories

**2** Heroes

**4** Symbols

7 Organizational Cultures



**From**  
(as is)

Focus on results  
Focus on fear



**To**  
(to be)

Focus on results  
Focus on people



# Findings

No common definition  
of branding.

“Not everyone  
uses our logo.”



No knowledge of  
current branding or not  
satisfied with current  
branding.

“Sorry, I don’t know  
the current branding.”

The better  
mousetrap fallacy.

“But we have....  
– having great  
assets is not  
enough if the  
world does not  
know about it.”

Market Myopia and  
hard segmentation  
thinking.

“We have to target  
the Chinese market.”

“We need to become  
a tech hub.”

The Black &  
Decker paradox.

“I think we really need to do this, because I am convinced there is a market for it. - not starting from your own DNA and your own strengths.”

Result vs. effect

“Heads in beds and  
bums in seats.  
- Tourism”

“ We need to  
promote ourselves  
as a start up hub.  
- Economy”

Intrinsic beats  
extrinsic.

“I’ve lived here almost  
30 years, and this is  
the best place on  
the planet.”

“Everybody loves  
the white hat.”

## Entrepreneurial vs. innovative

“This is the place to  
get things done.”

“This is not the place  
to dream big.”

# Calgary: Qualitative interviews

“Never waste a good crisis. There is momentum: changing demographics & changing culture.”

“Culture, food, art, social programs: a nice to have or a need to have?”

“We need to change from broadcasting who we are to a conversation about who we are.”

“Calgary is a welcoming city but is that the same as a visitor-centric city.”

“Can do spirit. Calgary is entrepreneurial but does that mean the same as innovative?”



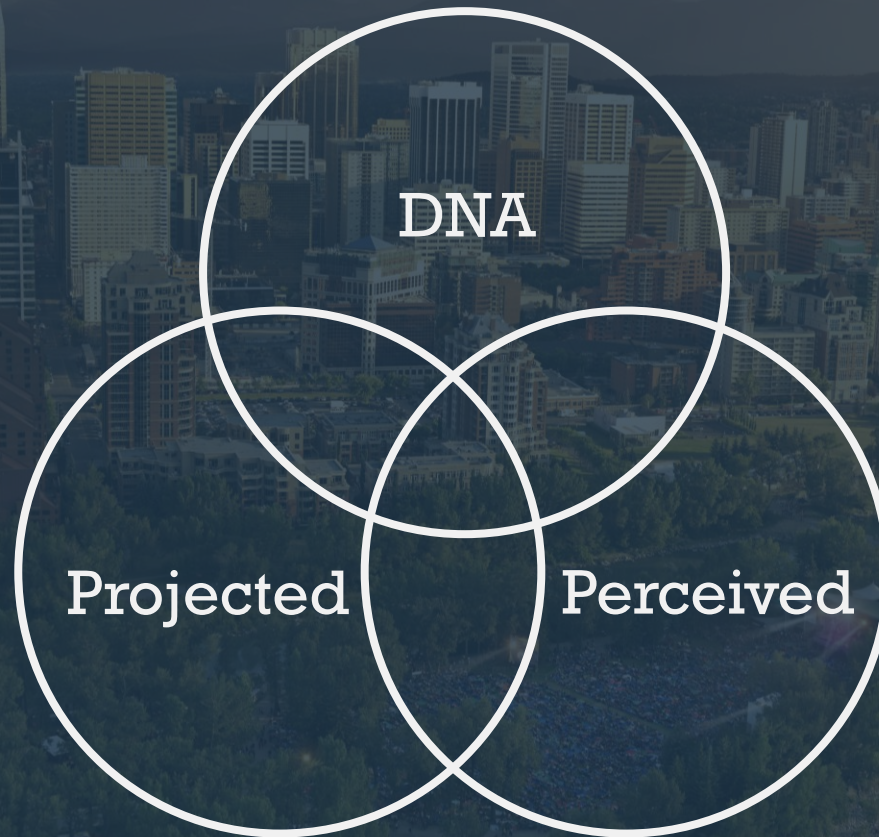
# 3 questions have been raised

**1** **Unity:** one city one dream?

**2** **Community:** does our volunteerism make us unique?

**3** **Recognition:** are we more than oil and gas?

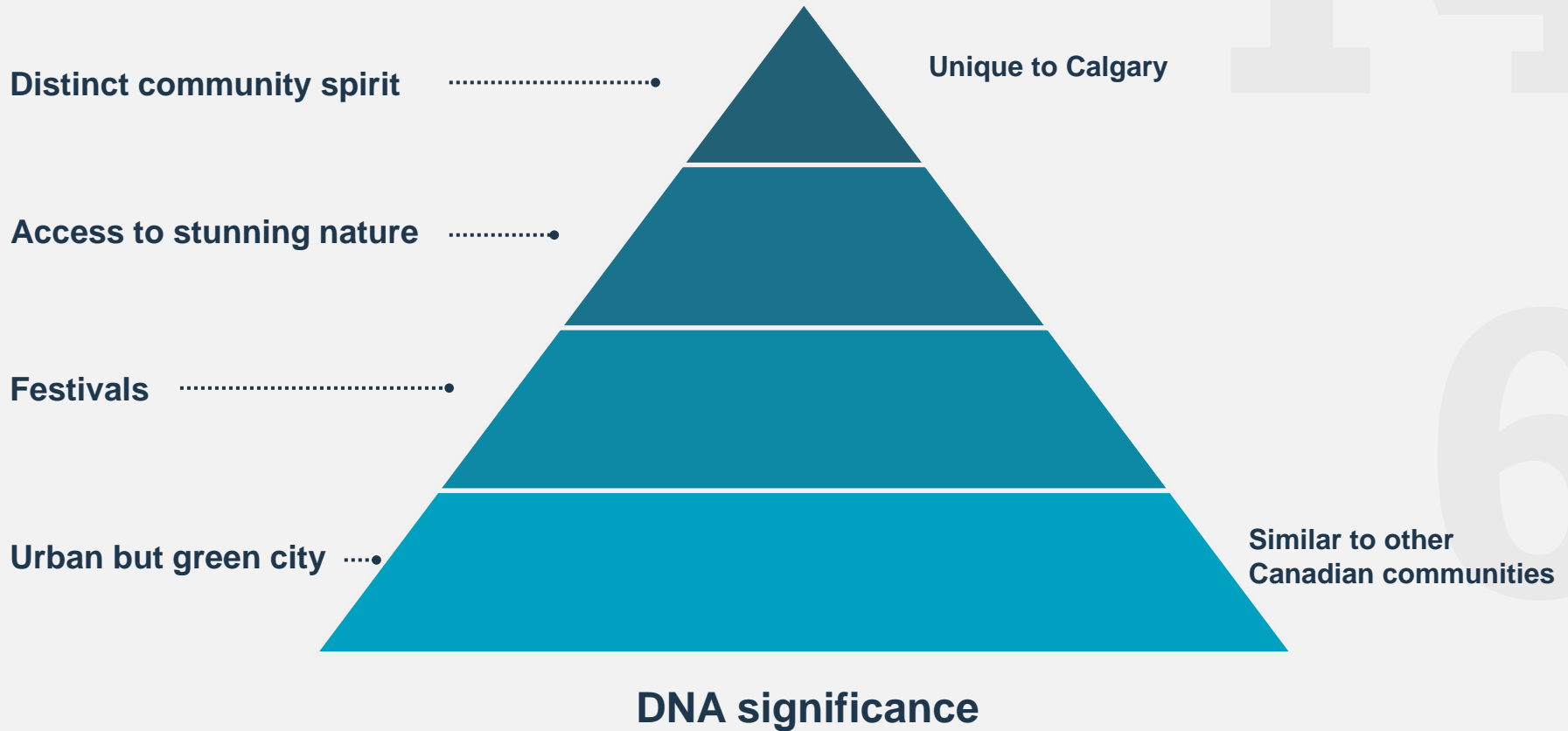
# Gap analysis



# Calgary assets and attributes

<b>Environment</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Society</b>
<p><b>Mountain high</b> <b>River deep</b> Beautiful Urban/Rural</p>	<p><b>Festivals</b> <b>Calgary Stampede</b> <b>Industry</b> Calgary Zoo Spruce Meadows</p>	<p><b>Hospitality</b> <b>Community spirit</b> <b>Diversifying</b> Attitude Honest Friendly Caring The flood</p>

# DNA: Hierarchy



# What makes Calgary, Calgary?



# GAP 1: The unprojected spirit

Calgarians see themselves differently to others when they talk about community spirit. They speak to the symbol of the white hat and the willingness to help each other. **(DNA)**

Calgary's community spirit is a current brand strength and an attribute that ranks above the *Canadian city average*. **(PER)**

This is not coming across in the way that Calgary and its partners are projecting the brand. **(PRO)**

# **GAP 2: Cities are like people**

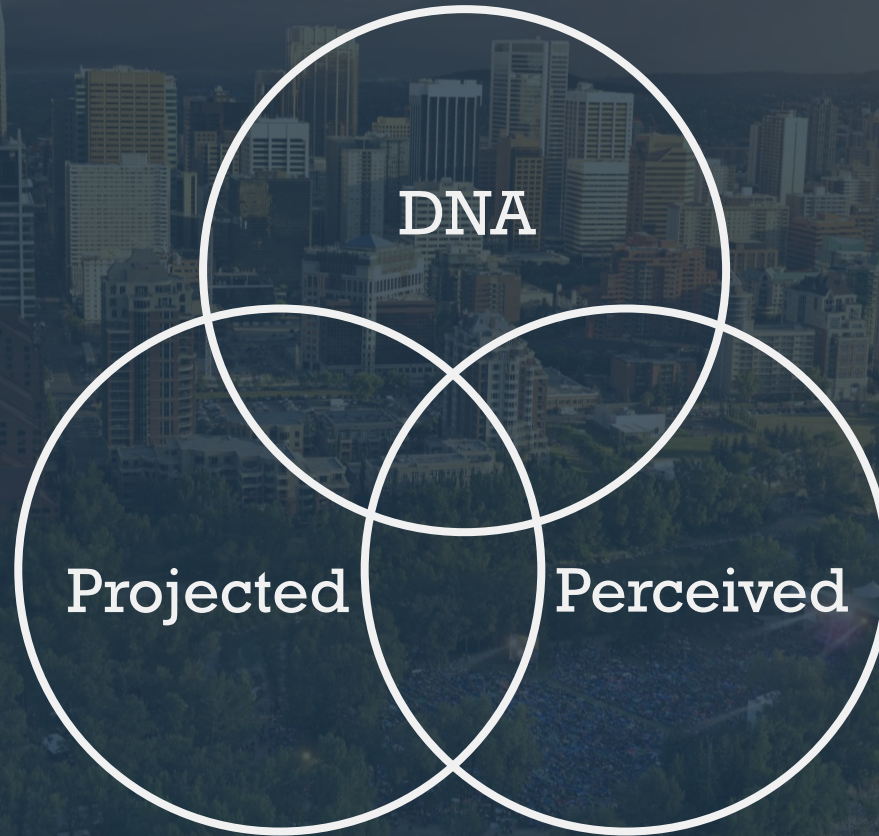
Cities are like people. They show their varying personalities to the world. Calgary is not doing this (yet).

Calgarians see their city as agreeable but also as unfinished. A growing number of residents (new and old) would like to see their place perceived as vibrant. **(DNA)**

This vibrancy is not communicated in a coherent way by Calgary itself. **(PRO)**

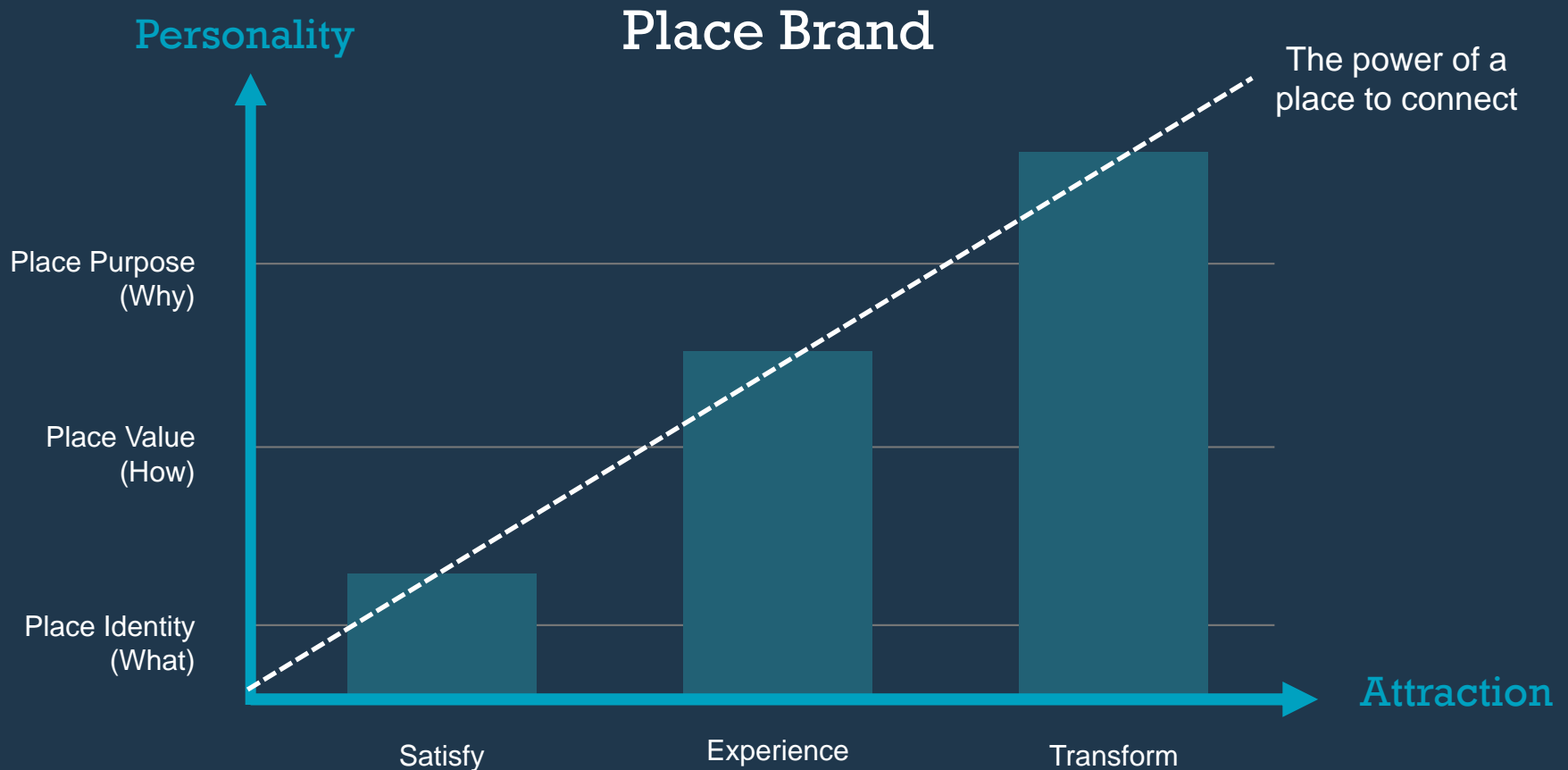
Vibrancy is a characteristic of Calgary that should contribute to the overall energy of the city. Attributes linked to it fall below that of the *Canadian city average* from 2-6 points. **(PER)**

# Brand evolution





# Place brand evolution



# Place brand evolution

## What

Calgary is working hard on its identity. The focus of its communication is about what it has to offer and what kind of service it delivers.

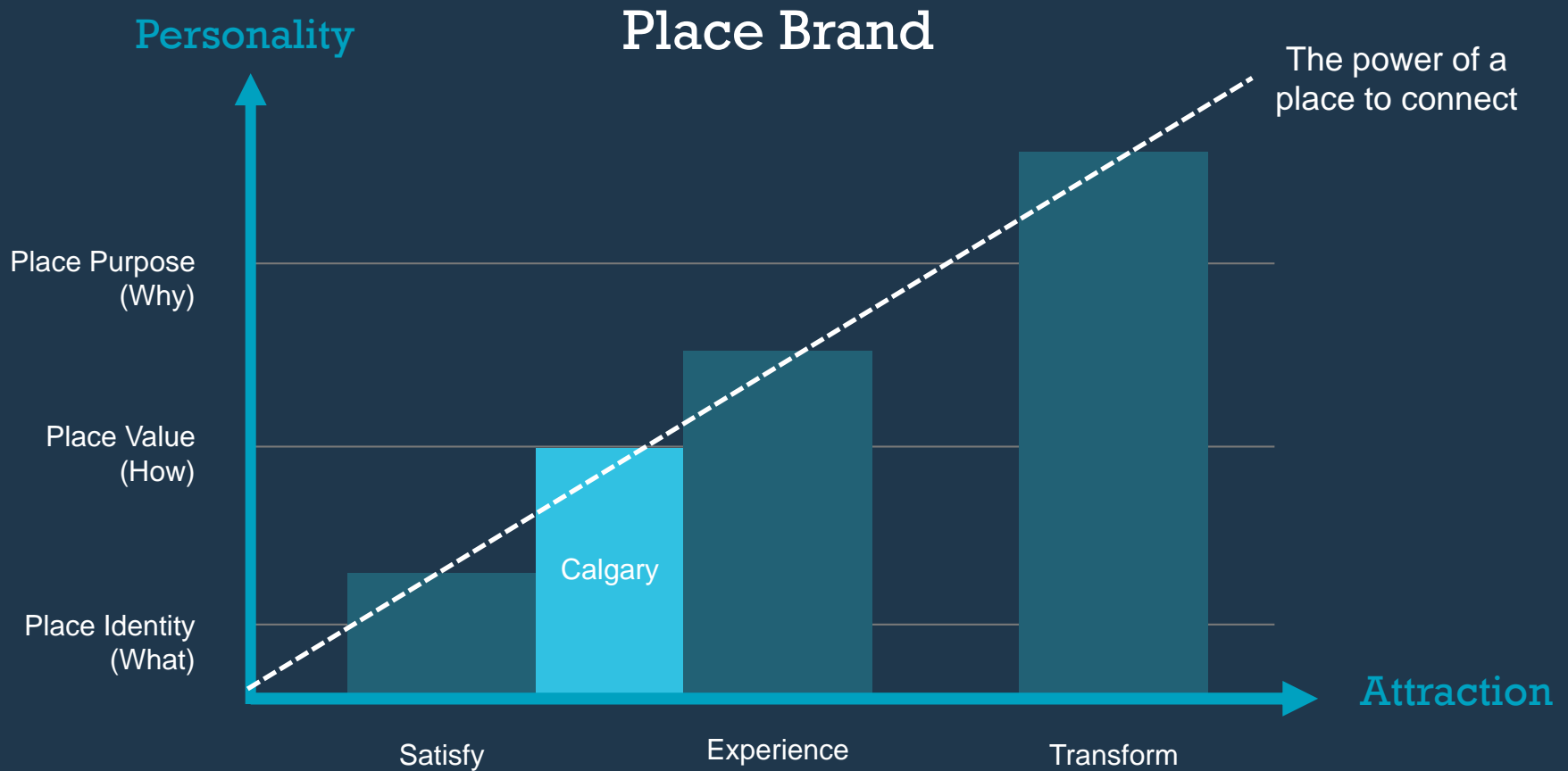
## How

Calgary is not communicating experiences that create value to attract new residents, visitors, companies and students. The reason for that is a lack of coordination and choices.

## Why

Calgary does not communicate a brand purpose. People are looking for meaningful changes in their life. And the question “how it can impact my life” is not currently being answered by Calgary.

# Place brand evolution



# Place brand evolution

Calgary is an agreeable place with a high quality of life. Calgary is in the early stage of its lifecycle which indicates that the brand is still weak.

Calgary is an upcoming city. Upcoming cities are characterized by the extremely dynamic way they create value for visitors and residents. When a city successfully communicates the choices they have made as a destination and develop unique experiences that are aligned, it firmly distinguishes itself from competitors and other places.

The recent success stories of Seattle, Austin, Berlin or Tel Aviv teach us that successful cities use their own citizens to become successful in communication. All these places start from their own strengths, not from their proximity to other attractive places.

# Place brand evolution

Building reputation is hard work. It is a coordinated and integrated long-term process that aligns development and communication and that unites locals, visitors and businesses.

The research has shown two things:

1. Everyone (inside and outside) agrees on the fact that Calgary has a distinct community spirit and attitude to offer the world.
2. Most local people and organisations seem to ignore this when they have to communicate to the outside world.

# Place brand evolution

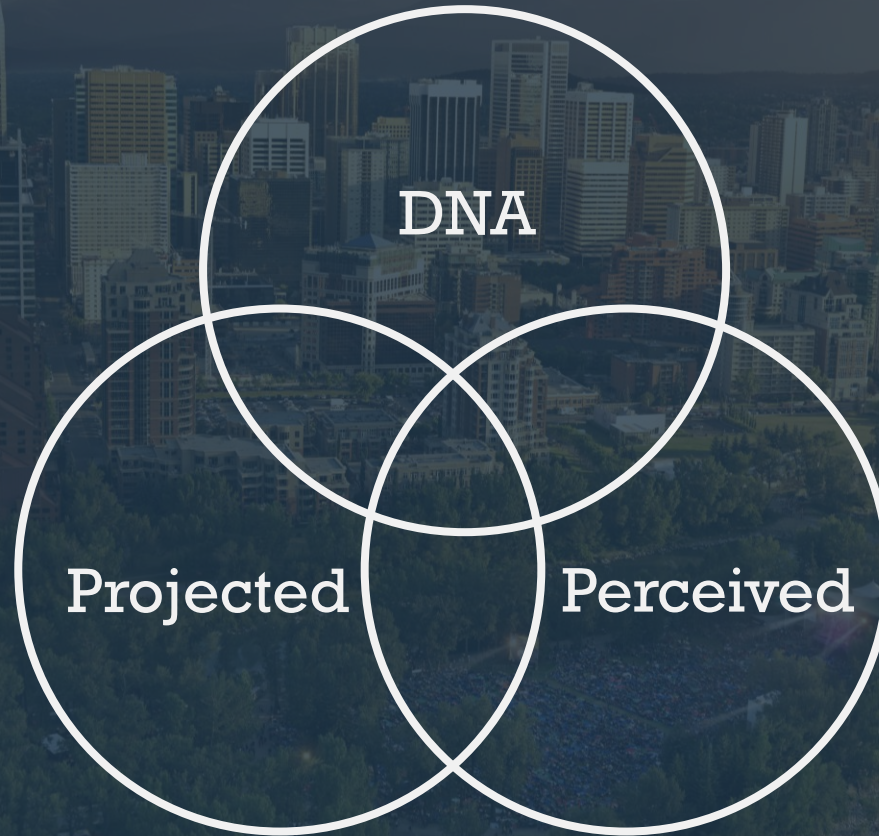
Most stakeholders still think that external factors will grow the brand. It is '*silver bullet thinking.*'

Rather than saying '*The Olympics will put us on the map again*' the attitude of an evolving brand should be '*We will put the Olympics on the map again.*' Calgary, with its volunteerism and community spirit, can reconnect the Olympic movement with its core value.

Expecting too much from big events or change that comes from external factors will slow down or even stop sustainable reputation growth.

Brand evolution is not the same as a brand revolution. The main challenge for Calgary is to change this way of thinking.

# Recommendations



**Mind the gap, please.**





# Closing the gap

## Part 1



# How?

- Citizens should become the core of your communication:
  - Start with one strong symbolic action about Calgary and its community spirit that will be spoken about.
  - Build local engagement from the bottom-up.
  - Use visiting friends and relatives as a driver for conversation.
  - Foster local initiatives that symbolize the community spirit and hospitality.

# How?



# How?



Austin



Portland



Cleveland



Lesvos

THE SWEDISH NUMBER

+46 771 793 336

The first country in the world with its own phone number.  
Get connected to a random Swede and talk about anything.

THE SWEDISH NUMBER IS NOW CLOSED.

Thanks everyone who called Sweden.  
In total the world spoke to random Swedes for over a year.  
Scroll down to see more statistics from the 79 days it was open.

Sweden



Iceland

# Closing the gap

## Part 2

DNA

Vibrancy

Projected

Perceived



# How?

Fill gaps in your place experience. For example:

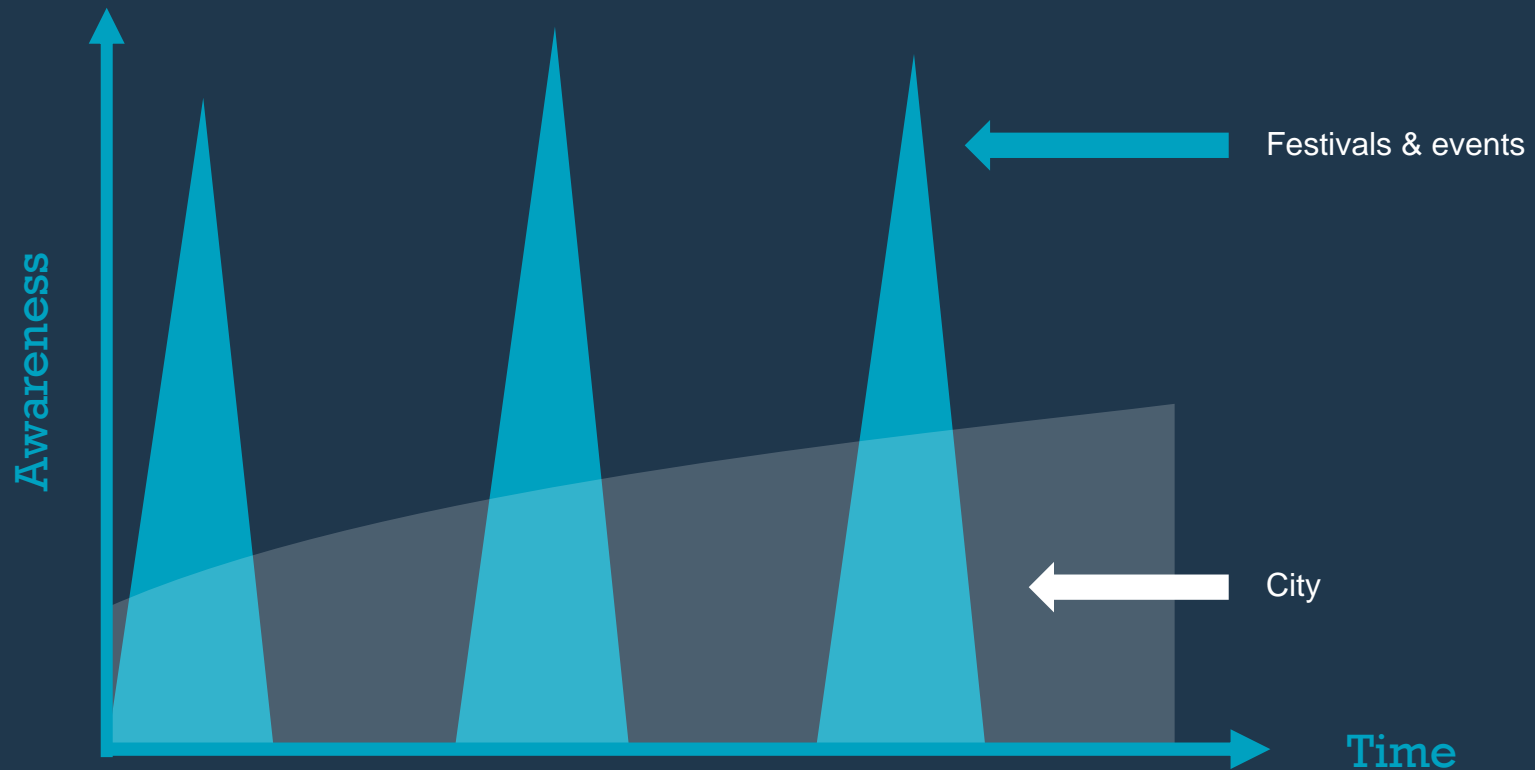
- Having a marvellous music centre is more impactful when a thriving music scene exists;
- Having a world-class art gallery as a stand alone without a dedicated focus on stimulating art locally;
- Optimize the customer journey of young travellers as they are a vital part for word-of-mouth reputation
- A welcoming and hosting city should become top of mind for the meeting industry.

# How?

Fill gaps in your place communication. For example:

- Telling the story of urban vibrancy must become a vital part of your storytelling;
- Reach out to passion groups and chose meaningful (DNA-aligned) niches that reinforce the urban character of Calgary. Think about communities such as geek culture (from comic book lovers to film location hunters and street art buffs), fishing, outdoor sports, craft beer scene, organic foodies, and more;
- Focus on the characters of different neighbourhoods
- Calgary is a diversifying city but the world does not know about it (yet).

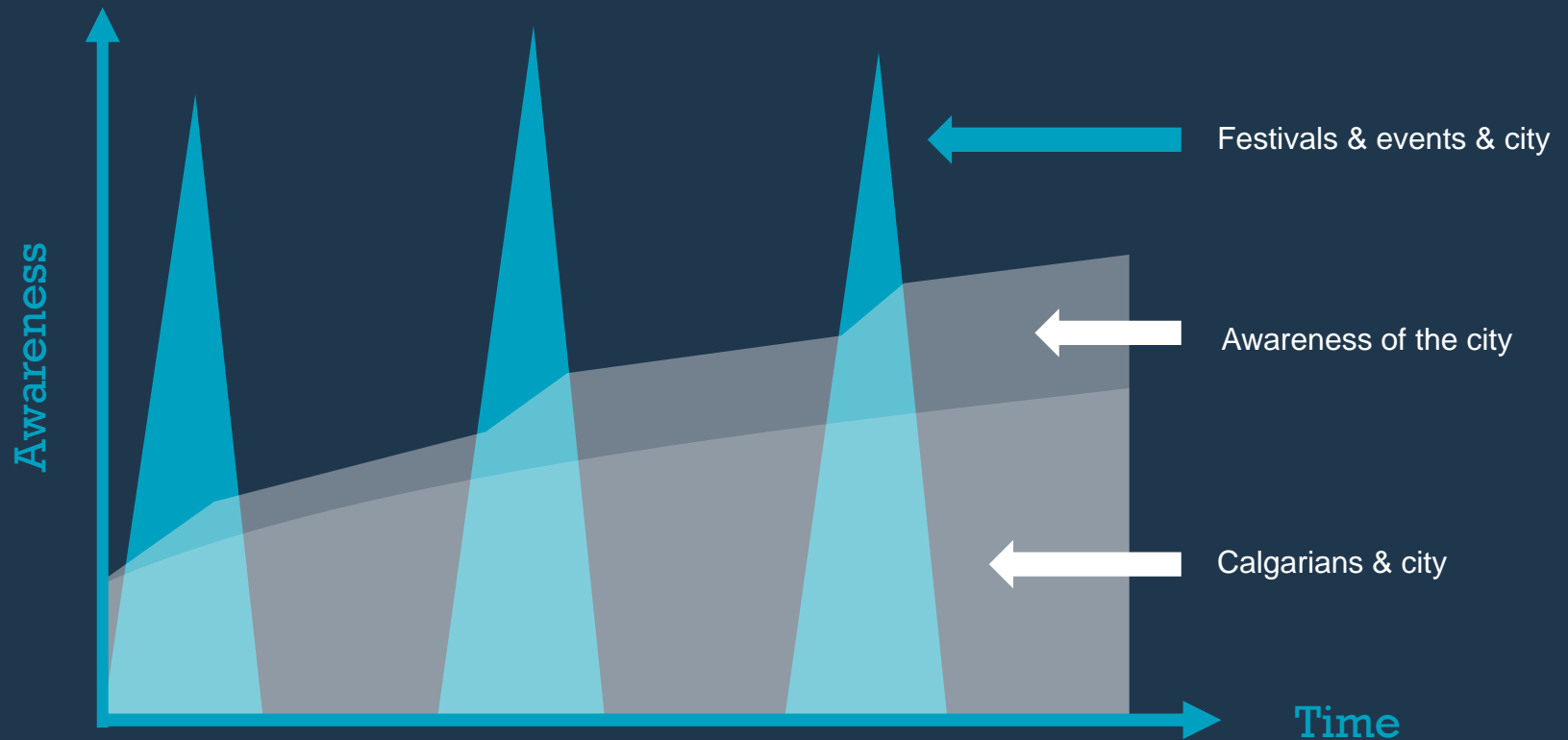
# How: current situation



Different stakeholders communicate differently.  
Calgarians are not a substantial part of Calgary's communication.



# How: future situation



The more aligned and integrated you communicate as a city the more you will benefit from your biggest assets, which are: community spirit, mountains, festivals, vibrancy, etc.

By coordinating your urban communication, you will grow your awareness.

# Learnings



**Listening:** Change the long-term direction of your communication.



**Brand management:** Coordinate your experiences and communication city-wide.



**Urban:** Be recommended as a vibrant city and not as a gateway.



**Community spirit:** Align your communication with your DNA.

# Next steps

- create alignment
  - share the research and findings
  - solicit feedback & update our process
- broaden the mandate of the current Brand Committee
  - build off Destination Thinks! research
  - develop Calgary's brand story and tools as a collective
  - collaborate on an aligned communications strategy
- commit to executing, sharing and measuring Tourism Calgary's work as we further integrate the brand into our programming
  - Destination Strategy | Business Plan | Marketing Strategy