

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO URBAN REGENERATION  
AND REVITALIZATION PROGRAMME  
(TT-L1056 and TT-L1057)**

***RENOVATION OF EASTSIDE PLAZA IN PORT OF SPAIN***

**CONSULTATION REPORT**

**Eco Report No. 21/2019**

**December 12, 2019**

SUBMITTED BY

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Authorization and Layout of Report .....	1
1.2	Objectives.....	2
1.3	Background .....	2
1.4	Proposed Renovation.....	2
1.4.1	Need for the Renovation .....	2
1.4.2	Objectives of the Renovation .....	4
1.4.3	Proposed Works .....	4
<b>2</b>	<b>CENSUS OF TENANTS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Personal Information .....	5
2.1.1	Male / Female Distribution .....	5
2.1.2	Educational Status .....	5
2.1.3	Age Distribution .....	6
2.2	Business Information.....	6
2.2.1	Main Types of Business.....	6
2.2.2	Years in Business .....	7
2.2.3	Employment and Wages .....	8
2.2.4	Products .....	9
2.2.5	Rent .....	9
2.2.6	Services.....	10
2.2.7	Facilities.....	11
2.2.8	Revenues .....	13
<b>3</b>	<b>MEETING WITH TENANTS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1	Guidance Questions.....	16
3.2	Responses .....	17
3.2.1	General Impression of Upgrade Project .....	17
3.2.2	Most Critical Items for Upgrade .....	17
3.2.3	Inconvenience during Renovation .....	19

3.2.4	Relocation during Construction.....	20
3.2.5	Safety and Security .....	20
3.2.6	Difficulties for Women, Men and Families .....	21
3.2.7	Difficulties for the Elderly, the Young and the Disabled .....	22
3.2.8	Relationship with Surrounding Businesses .....	22
3.3	Other Comments .....	22
<b>4</b>	<b>MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1	Environmental Management Authority .....	24
4.2	Port of Spain City Corporation - Building Inspectors .....	24
4.3	South East Port of Spain Secondary School (SEPOSSS) .....	25
<b>5</b>	<b>MEETINGS WITH A SAMPLE OF NEIGHBOURS .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>28</b>
6.1	Findings .....	28
6.2	Further Consultation.....	28

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TENANTS

APPENDIX B: MEETING WITH TENANTS

APPENDIX C: NOTES OF MEETINGS

APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NEIGHBOURING BUSINESSES

## LIST OF TABLES

No.	TITLE	PAGE
2-1	GENDER DISTRIBUTION	5
2-2	HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION	5
2-3	AGE DISTRIBUTION	6
2-4	BUSINESS TYPES BY MAIN CATEGORY	7
2-5	YEARS IN BUSINESS	7
2-6	MONTHLY SPENDING ON MAIN PRODUCTS PURCHASED FOR BUSINESS	9
2-7	MONTHLY RENT	10
2-8	SERVICES ACCESSIBLE IN UNIT	10
2-9	COMMON SERVICES NEEDING IMPROVEMENT	10
2-10	OTHER SERVICES NEEDING IMPROVEMENT	11
2-11	SPENDING PATTERNS	13
2-12	AVERAGE WEEKLY REVENUE FROM BUSINESS	14
3-1	NECESSITY FOR THE UPGRADE	17
3-2	MOST CRITICAL ITEMS FOR UPGRADE	18
3-3	INCONVENIENCE DURING UPGRADE	19
3-4	RELOCATION DURING UPGRADE	20
3-5	SAFETY AND SECURITY	21
3-6	DIFFICULTIES FOR WOMEN, MEN AND FAMILY GROUPS	21
3-7	DIFFICULTIES FOR THE ELDERLY, THE YOUNG AND THE DISABLED	22
3-8	RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING BUSINESSES	22

## LIST OF FIGURES

No.	TITLE	PAGE
1-1	LOCATION MAP	3
1-2	VICINITY OF EASTSIDE PLAZA	3
2-1	HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION	5
2-2	AGE DISTRIBUTION	6
2-3	MAIN TYPES OF BUSINESSES	6
2-4	YEARS IN BUSINESS AT EASTSIDE PLAZA	7
2-5	BUSINESS - MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME	8
2-6	SOURCE OF PRODUCTS	9
2-7	SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT FACILITY OCCUPIED	11
2-8	ASPECTS OF EASTSIDE PLAZA	12
2-9	MOST CRITICAL IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO UNITS	12
2-10	MOST CRITICAL COMMON SERVICES REQUIRED AT EASTSIDE PLAZA	13
2-11	AVERAGE WEEKLY REVENUE FROM BUSINESS	14
2-12	PERIODS OF HIGHEST SALES	15
2-13	PERIODS OF LOWEST SALES	15
2-14	MEAN SALES IN BEST PERIOD OF PATRONAGE	15
5-1	BUSINESSES IN THE PROJECT VICINITY	27

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## **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO URBAN REGENERATION AND REVITALIZATION PROGRAMME (TT-L1056 and TT-L1057)**

### ***RENOVATION OF EASTSIDE PLAZA IN PORT OF SPAIN***

### **CONSULTATION REPORT**

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

##### **1.1 Authorization and Layout of Report**

This Consultation Report for the proposed upgrade of Eastside Plaza has been prepared in part-satisfaction of a Contract dated June 10, 2019 (TT-T1086), between the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Ecoengineering Consultants Limited (Ecoengineering). It is intended to document the engagement of key stakeholders on this project, as part of the preparation of the Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA). Following this introductory chapter, information is presented on the different forms of engagement that were used on this assignment: a Census of Vendors/Tenants, a Meeting with Vendors/Tenants, questionnaire survey of neighbouring businesses and meetings with government agencies and institutions.

On this assignment, different consultation approaches were taken:

- i. The Census of Vendors/Tenants was intended to obtain information from specific users of the plaza, such as their reliance on this form of employment, nature of their operations, etc.
- ii. The Meeting with Vendors/Tenants was intended to obtain more general information and opinions on the proposed renovation. It was agreed with the IDB at the proposal stage that a meeting with Vendors and Tenants would provide more meaningful information for these environmental studies than a public meeting.
- iii. The questionnaire of Neighbouring Businesses was intended to obtain specific information on neighbours of the mall and how they might be affected by the proposed renovation.

## 1.2 Objectives

The prime objectives of this stakeholder engagement exercise were threefold:

- i. Inform Stakeholders about the proposed Renovation of Eastside Plaza,
- ii. Obtain Specific Information for use in the ESA, and
- iii. Receive from the stakeholders their opinions and concerns related to this project.

## 1.3 Background

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has requested a loan from the IDB with four main activities:

1. **Urban Upgrading** based on the regularization of squatter settlements;
2. **Affordable Housing Subsidies** to reduce qualitative and quantitative housing deficits;
3. **Urban Regeneration and Revitalization** to improve the functionality of public space; and
4. **Strengthening of Stakeholder Capacities** in the Housing and Urban Development sectors.

One of the sample projects under Component 3 is the upgrade of Eastside Plaza, which is located in the city of Port of Spain, on the site of the old Eastern Market (see Figure 1-1). This is in the block bounded between George Street, Queen Janelle Commissioning Street, Charlotte Street and Prince Street (see Figure 1-2).

## 1.4 Proposed Renovation

### 1.4.1 *Need for the Renovation*

Eastside Plaza is a colonial-era building which was originally built circa 1926. The roof structure consists of metal trusses which are relatively uncommon in Port of Spain, and so may be considered of historical importance. Despite its age, a structural inspection has revealed that the members of the steel frame (beams and columns) appear to be in good condition with no signs of yielding or corrosion. However, the building has not undergone extensive renovation in or since 1991, so tenants are experiencing the following problems:

- < Leaking Roof,
- < Fluctuations in Electricity Supply,
- < Inoperable Air Conditioning System, and
- < Unreliable Mechanical Services.



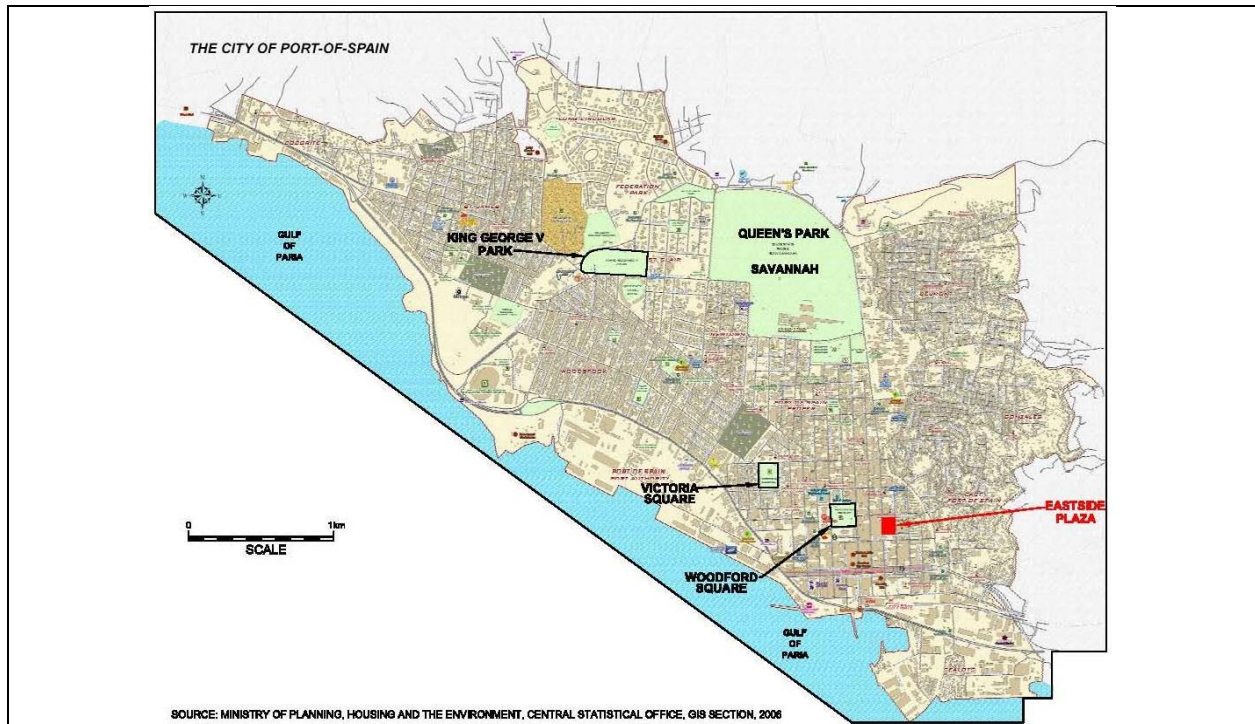


FIGURE 1-1: LOCATION MAP



FIGURE 1-2: VICINITY OF EASTSIDE PLAZA

In addition to these necessary repairs, the building lacks certain amenities which are normal in a modern building. For example, while there is a wheel chair ramp up from the sidewalk to the ground floor, there is no convenient access to the upper floor for handicapped persons. Similarly, there are no service elevators. Also, the external and internal facades do not convey the image of a typical tourist attraction and the layout of the booths does not encourage free circulation (movement of persons) within facility.

#### **1.4.2 Objectives of the Renovation**

The objectives of the proposed upgrade will be to:

- < enhance the environment for entrepreneurial activities,
- < contribute to business expansion, and
- < encourage clientele growth and increase revenue generation.

The upgrade will also seek to preserve the historical significance of the building, including its architecture.

#### **1.4.3 Proposed Works**

This section describes the works which are anticipated for this project, inclusive of likely construction tasks. These descriptions are presented under the following headings:

- < Roof Works, consisting largely of the replacement of galvanized sheeting and guttering, with minor repairs to the structural steel frames where required.
- < Upper Floor Works – remodelling the upper floor by removal of certain booths, relocation of others, and the creation of a food court and possibly a performance space.
- < Ground Floor Works – remodelling the ground floor to accommodate services and the elevators, to increase the number of booths, to improve the efficiency of circulation for customers and to eliminate wasted space.
- < Elevators - installation of two service elevators and possibly a passenger elevator to make the upper floor accessible to persons with disabilities.
- < Services - with the upgrade of electricity supply, plumbing, air conditioning, smoke detectors and fire alarms, and security.
- < Finishes and Signage - including painting, decorative surfacing, installation of signs, etc. include painting, decorative surfacing, installation of signs, etc..



## 2 CENSUS OF TENANTS

This consultation activity consisted of interviews with the Tenants at Eastside Plaza using a structured questionnaire (see Appendix A). A list of Tenants was provided to the Ecoengineering team by the management of Eastside Plaza, which included contact information. Of a total of 153 tenants, 139 agreed to be interviewed; representing 91%. This chapter summarizes the responses received.

### 2.1 Personal Information

The following information pertains to the tenants who were interviewed.

#### 2.1.1 Male / Female Distribution

The sex distribution among tenants who were interviewed is shown in Table 2-1. This shows that women are heavily represented among the tenants, and an underlying segment in the labour market and in their participation in the economic activity at the Plaza.

**TABLE 2-1: GENDER DISTRIBUTION**

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Female	106	76%
Male	33	24%

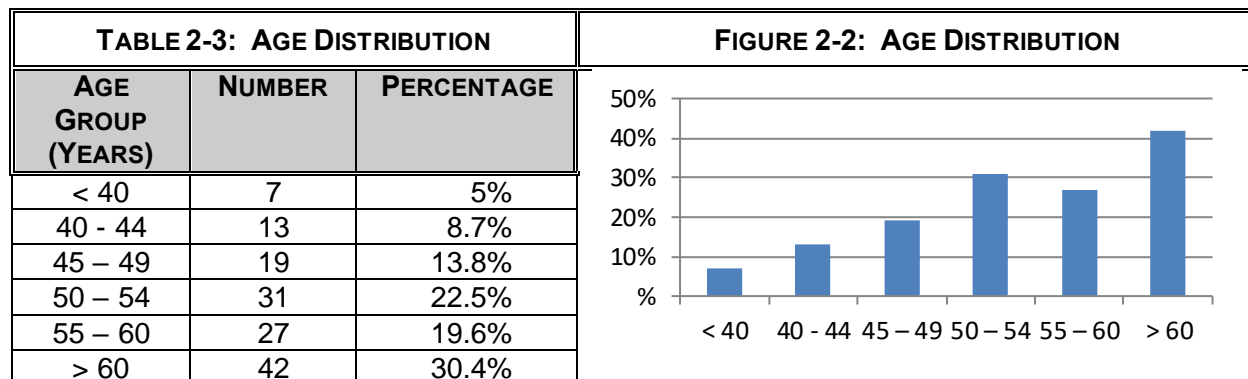
#### 2.1.2 Educational Status

Each interviewee was asked to indicate their highest level of education, and the results are shown in Table 2-2 and Figure 2-1. Almost 70% of the tenants who were interviewed had either a secondary education or vocational/technical training. This level of education, and particularly of vocational/technical training, appears to bode well for the success of these entrepreneurs.

TABLE 2-2: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			FIGURE 2-1: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION	
LEVEL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE		
Primary	18	12.9%		
Secondary	48	34.5%		
Vocational / Technical	47	33.8%		
University	17	12.2%		
Other	2	1.4%		
Not Stated	7	5%		

### 2.1.3 Age Distribution

Age distribution among the tenants who were interviewed is shown in Table 2-3 and Figure 2-2. Almost three-quarters of the tenants who were interviewed are older than 50 years, and about 30% are older than 60 years. In contrast, only 5% are under 40. This may be due to the fact that most of the tenancy has been long term so that young entrepreneurs have not had ready access to this facility. In other words, initially or in earlier years, the tenants were young when the Plaza was established, however, once full occupancy was achieved, it ceased being able to cater to young entrepreneurs.

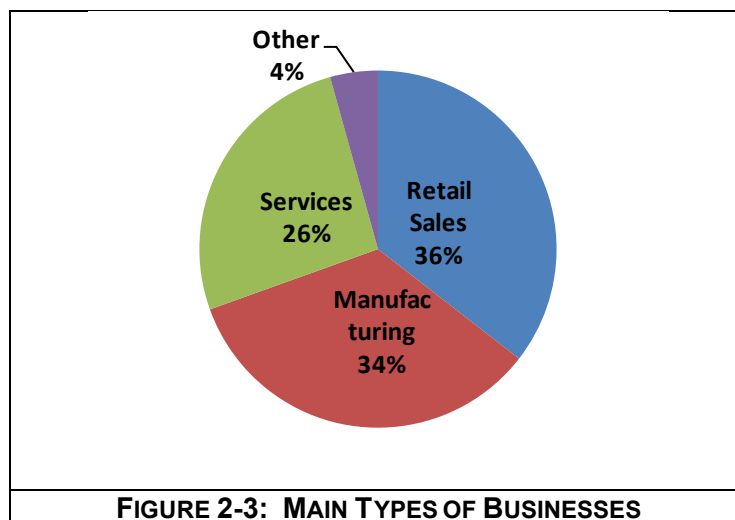


## 2.2 Business Information

### 2.2.1 Main Types of Business

The main categories of business conducted by the Tenants (see Figure 2-3) are:

- < Retail Sales (49 tenants or 35.3%),
- < Manufacturing (47 tenants or 33.8%),
- < Services (36 tenants or 26%) and
- < Other (6 tenants or 4.3%).



Among the four main business categories, specific businesses are listed in Table 2-4.

**TABLE 2-4: BUSINESS TYPES BY MAIN CATEGORY**

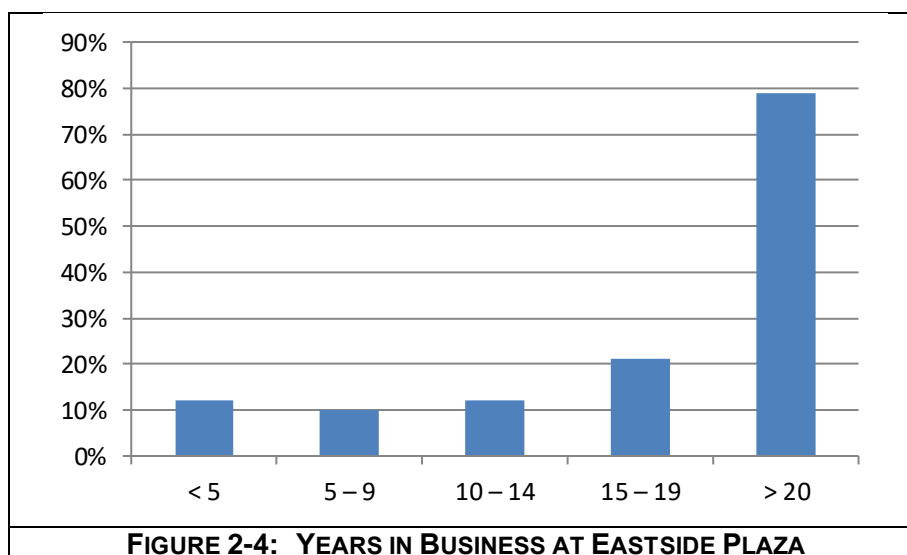
RETAIL SALES	MANUFACTURING	SERVICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Variety Store (39%),</li> <li>&lt; Clothing and Accessories (37%), and</li> <li>&lt; Other (24%).<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Seamstress / Tailor (56%),</li> <li>&lt; Garment Construction (22%), and</li> <li>&lt; Other (24%).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Barber Shop / Beauty Salon (50%),</li> <li>&lt; Seamstress / Designer (15%) and</li> <li>&lt; Other (34%).</li> </ul>

### 2.2.2 Years in Business

Tenants were asked to indicate their total years in business and their years in business at Eastside Plaza (see Table 2-5 and Figure 2-4).

**TABLE 2-5: YEARS IN BUSINESS**

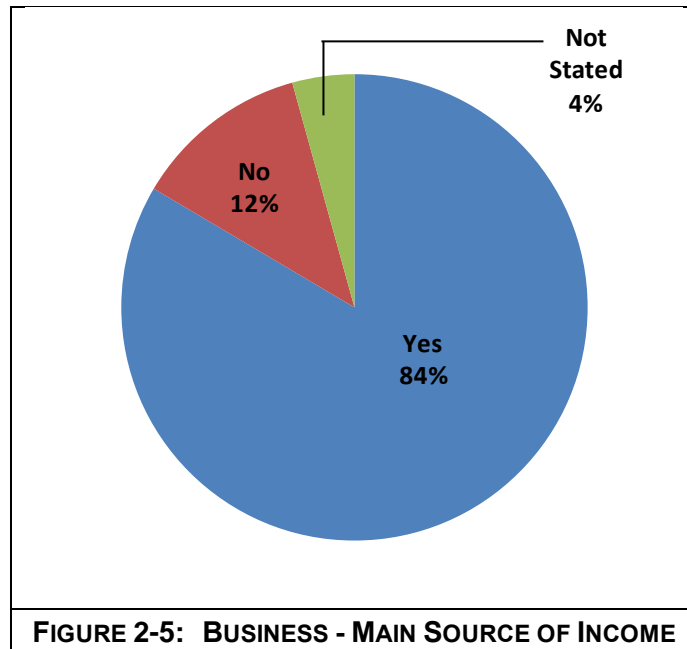
AGE CATEGORY (YEARS)	TOTAL YEARS IN BUSINESS		YEARS IN BUSINESS AT EASTSIDE PLAZA	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
< 5	4	3	12	9
5 – 9	3	2	10	7
10 – 14	10	7	12	9
15 – 19	16	11	21	15
> 20	106	76	79	57



<sup>1</sup> Under the category "Other" was a number of areas with only one observation, or too few to generate any meaningful information, except that it was a miscellaneous group.

A significant majority of the businesses report operations at Eastside Plaza of more than 20 years. This suggests that this facility is not operating as a business incubator, where businesses would start up, reach a stage of financial security, and then move on to other premises making room for new start-up businesses. The management of Eastside Plaza has expressed the view that the lease charges at the Plaza are so low as to actively discourage businesses from seeking other premises as they mature.

In addition, tenants were asked if their business was their main source of income. Results shown in Figure 2-5 indicate that this is the case for more than 2/5 of tenants interviewed.



### 2.2.3 *Employment and Wages*

The following responses were received concerning employment at these tenant businesses (not including the lease-holders themselves):

- ▶ 85% of businesses employ no full time personnel,
- ▶ Only 24 persons are employed full time,
- ▶ 94% of businesses employ no one part time, and
- ▶ Only 17 persons are employed part time.

These statistics indicate that the vast majority of these businesses provide work primarily for their tenants, but are not significant employers of others.

Average monthly wages ranged between TT\$2,057 (part time persons) and TT\$3,225 (full time persons). Monthly wages were above the official National Minimum Wage of \$17.50 per hour or approximately \$2,800 per month.

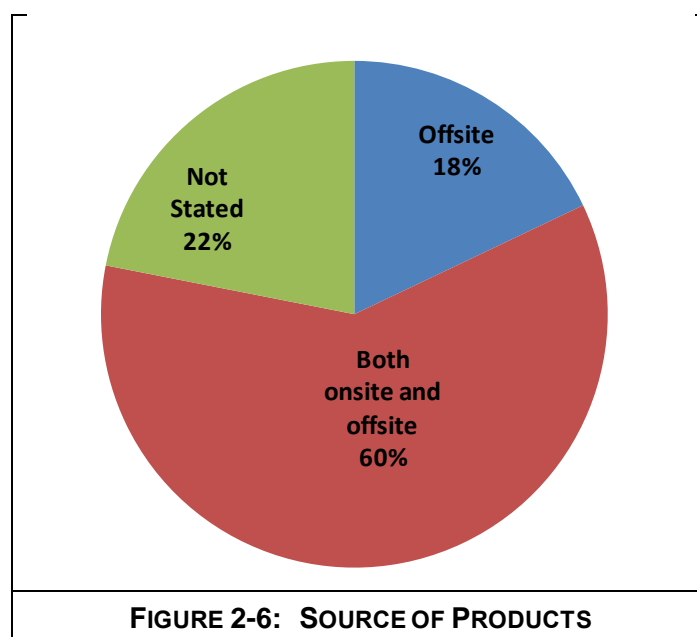
## 2.2.4 Products

Tenants were asked to indicate how much is spent monthly on the main products that they purchase for their business (see Table 2-6). Only 61 tenants provided this information.

**TABLE 2-6: MONTHLY SPENDING ON MAIN PRODUCTS PURCHASED FOR BUSINESS**

NATURE OF BUSINESS	AVERAGE PER TENANT (TT\$)	TOTAL PER BUSINESS TYPE (TT\$)
Retail Sales	2,771.47	94,230.00
Manufacturing	1,488.46	19,350.00
Services	2,447.50	24,475.00
Training	1,800.00	1,800.00
Food and Beverages	4,716.67	14,150.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,524.67</b>	<b>154,005.00</b>

Ninety percent (90%) of tenants interviewed indicated that they source products from multiple suppliers. These include both onsite and offsite suppliers (see Figure 2-6).



Interviewed tenants indicated that there was no main source for their products.

## 2.2.5 Rent

Tenants from the various business categories were asked how much rent they pay monthly for the booth they occupy. Results in Table 2-7 indicate that the mean rent varies from a minimum of TT\$498.00 (food and beverages businesses) to a high of TT\$823.00 (training businesses). Both retail sales and manufacturing businesses paid a minimum rent of TT\$172.00, while retail sales businesses also paid a maximum of TT\$1,614.00.

**TABLE 2-7: MONTHLY RENT**

NATURE OF BUSINESS	MEAN (TT\$)	MINIMUM (TT\$)	MAXIMUM (TT\$)
Retail Sales	524.00	172.00	1,614.00
Manufacturing	584.00	172.00	1,200.00
Services	760.00	290.00	1,350.00
Training	823.00	700.00	945.00
Food and Beverages	498.00	258.00	720.00

### 2.2.6 Services

Information on services accessible to tenants in their individual units is provided in Table 2-8. While electricity is accessible to all booths (100%), just over one quarter (27%) of tenants indicated that they have air conditioning and less than one quarter (21%) have a water supply. Only one percent of interviewed tenants indicated that they had access to waste disposal services.

**TABLE 2-8: SERVICES ACCESSIBLE IN UNIT**

SERVICES	PERCENTAGE (%)
Electricity	100
Air Conditioning	27
Water	21
Waste Disposal	1

In addition, tenants provided information on common and other services in need of Improvement. Responses by tenants (see Tables 2-9 and 2-10) indicated that toilet facilities needed the most improvement (74% and 58%) followed by security (63%). Other services in need of improvements include waste disposal, internet services, property maintenance, and promoting Eastside Plaza.

**TABLE 2-9: COMMON SERVICES NEEDING IMPROVEMENT**

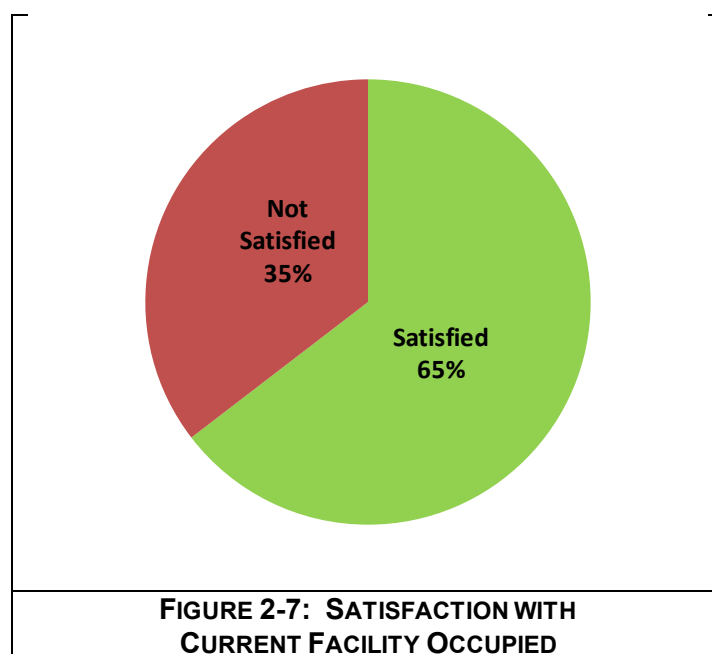
COMMON SERVICES IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT	PERCENTAGE (%)
Toilet Facilities	74
Security	63
Waste Disposal	30
Internet	27

**TABLE 2-10: OTHER SERVICES NEEDING IMPROVEMENT**

OTHER SERVICES NEEDED	PERCENTAGE (%)
Air Conditioning	58
Available ATM	16
Property Maintenance	16
Promoting Eastside Plaza	16
Internet Services	14
Better Security	9
Food Court	7

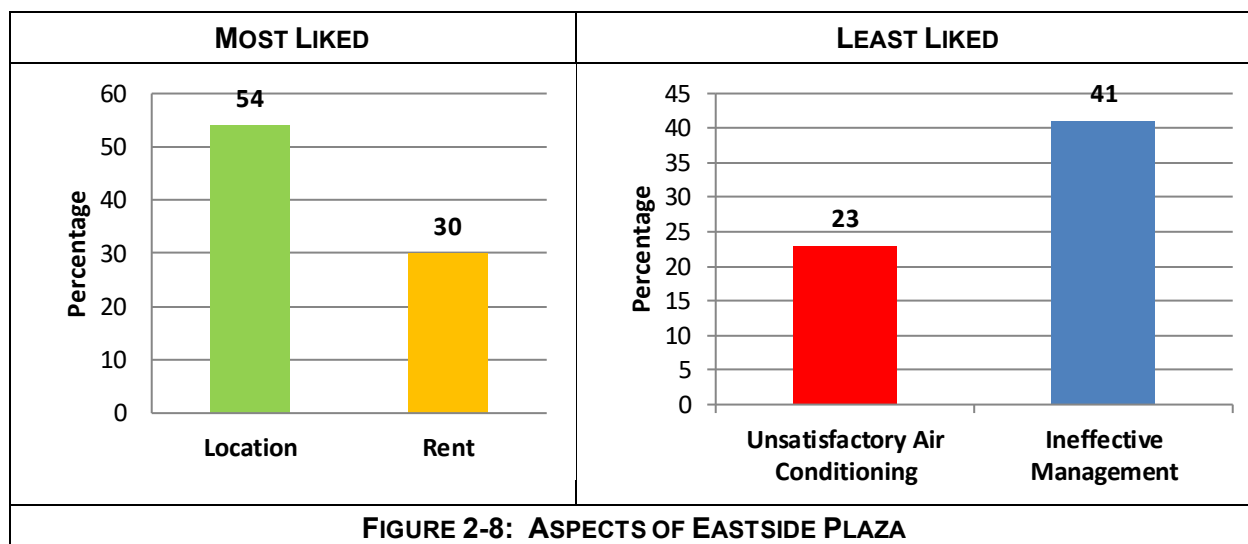
### 2.2.7 Facilities

Tenants were asked about their satisfaction with the current facility that they occupy within Eastside Plaza and what aspects they liked and disliked about the Plaza. As seen in Figure 2-7, almost two thirds of the tenants who responded were satisfied with their facility within the Plaza. This level of satisfaction is quite high, given the problems listed in Section 2.2.6. However, as will be seen below, the location of the facility and the relatively low rents would likely be the main contributors to this.

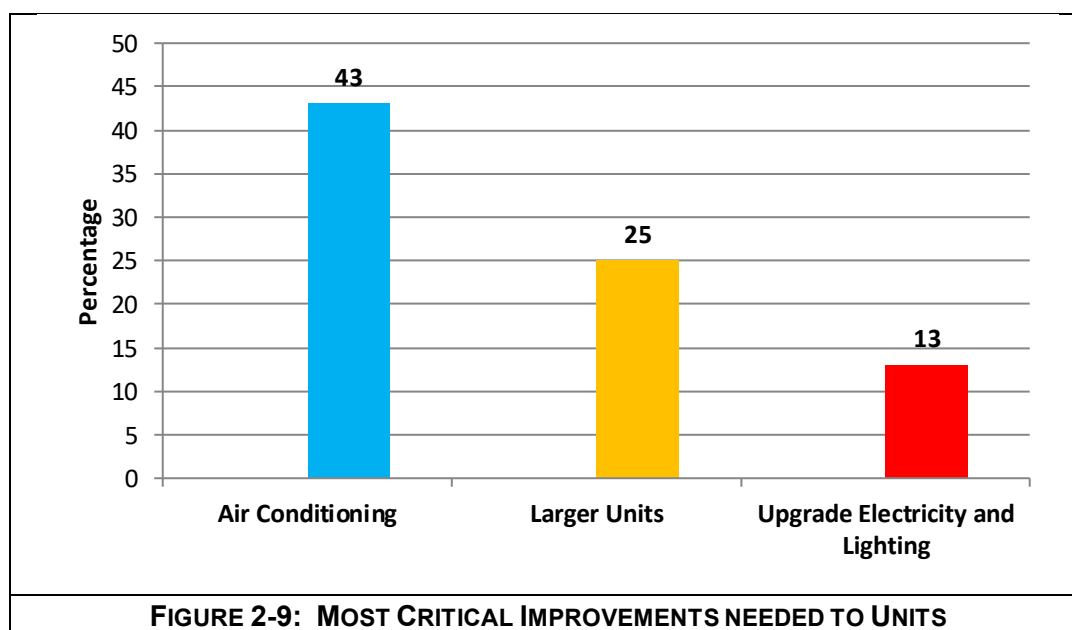


When asked what was the most liked aspects of their facility, 54% of tenants indicated the location while 30% stated the rent (see Figure 2-8). However, ineffective management (41%) and poor air conditioning (23%) were the least liked aspects.

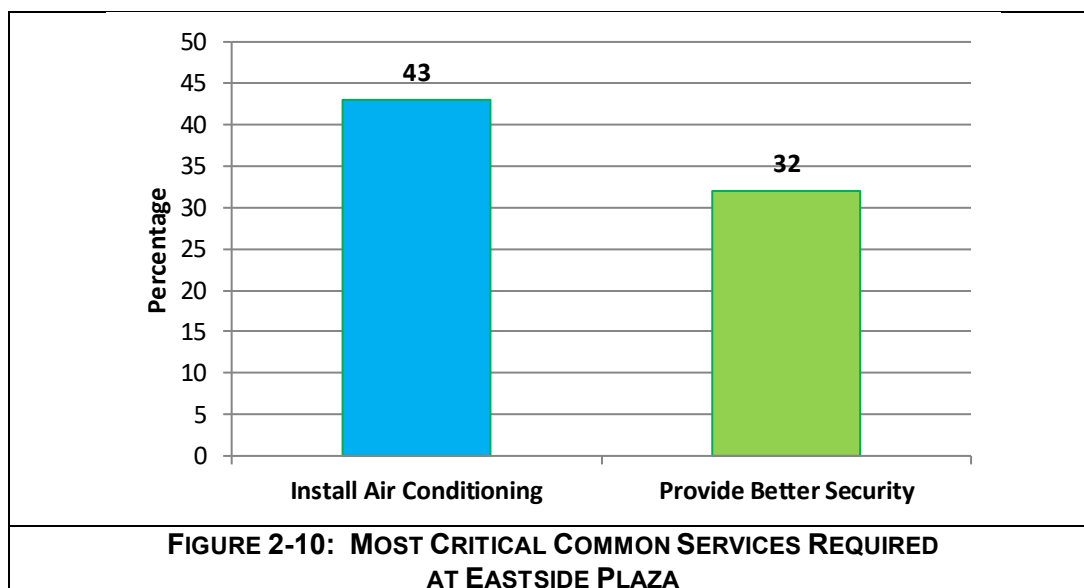




Tenants were asked to state the three (3) most critical improvements they required at their current units and the two (2) most critical common services required at Eastside Plaza.



As seen in Figures 2-9 and 2-10, air conditioning was stated as both the most critical improvement needed in the units (43%) and the most critical common service required in Eastside Plaza (43%). This is recognized by the management of the Plaza, and provision of central air conditioning is a part of this upgrade project. A total of 25% of tenants indicated that they would like larger units while 32% stated that better security was needed to be provided by the Plaza.



### 2.2.8 Revenues

Tenants were asked to provide information on their main customers and the estimated average sale per customer (see Table 2-11). The numbers in this table represent the average customer base per tenant, rather than a weekly or monthly number of sales. Therefore, these numbers and average sales cannot be used to calculate income patterns.

**TABLE 2-11: SPENDING PATTERNS**

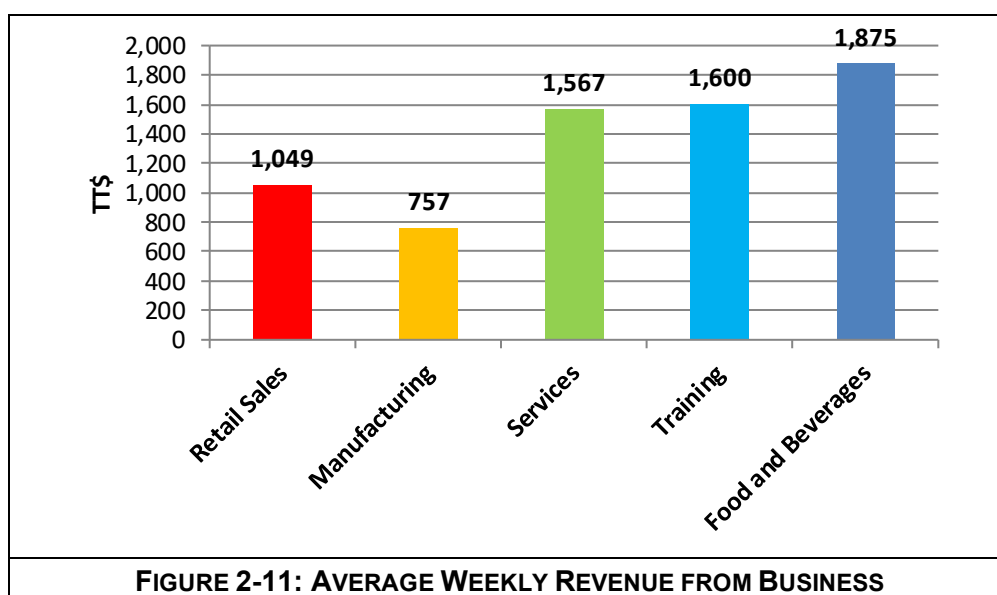
NATURE OF BUSINESS	CUSTOMERS PURCHASING PRODUCTS		CUSTOMERS REQUIRING SERVICES	
	NO. OF CUSTOMERS	AVERAGE SALES PER CUSTOMERS (TT\$)	NO. OF CUSTOMERS	AVERAGE SALES PER CUSTOMERS (TT\$)
Retail Sales	1,468	164.50	130	120.00
Creative/ Manufacturing	525	189.12	1,045	186.25
Services	425	226.00	1,172	274.60
Training	40	40.00	60	200.00
Food and Beverages	225	50.00	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,683</b>	<b>172.00</b>	<b>2,407</b>	<b>231.00</b>

As noted in Table 2-11, Retail Sales had the greatest number of customers purchasing products (1,468) while Training had the least (40). Services received the highest average sales per customer (TT\$ 226.00) and Training the least (TT\$ 40.00). A total of 1,172 customers required Services type business, with an average sale per customer of TT\$ 274.60.

Tenants also provided information on their average weekly revenue: 118 persons answered this question and 21 did not. Information provided in both Table 2-12 and Figure 2-11 indicates that Food and Beverage businesses received the greatest revenue per week (TT\$ 1,875) with Manufacturing the least (TT\$ 757).

**TABLE 2-12: AVERAGE WEEKLY REVENUE FROM BUSINESS**

NATURE OF BUSINESS	TT\$
Retail Sales	1,049
Manufacturing	757
Services	1,567
Training	1,600
Food and Beverages	1,875



**FIGURE 2-11: AVERAGE WEEKLY REVENUE FROM BUSINESS**

Tenants provided information on periods of highest and lowest sales (see Figures 2-12 and 2-13) as well as the average sales during their best period of patronage (see Figure 2-14). As observed in Figure 2-12, the highest period of sales experienced by tenants is the fourth quarter of the year which coincides with the Diwali and Christmas seasons, followed by the third quarter when the school year starts. However, tenants also indicated that the third quarter is their lowest period of sales, followed by the first quarter of the year.

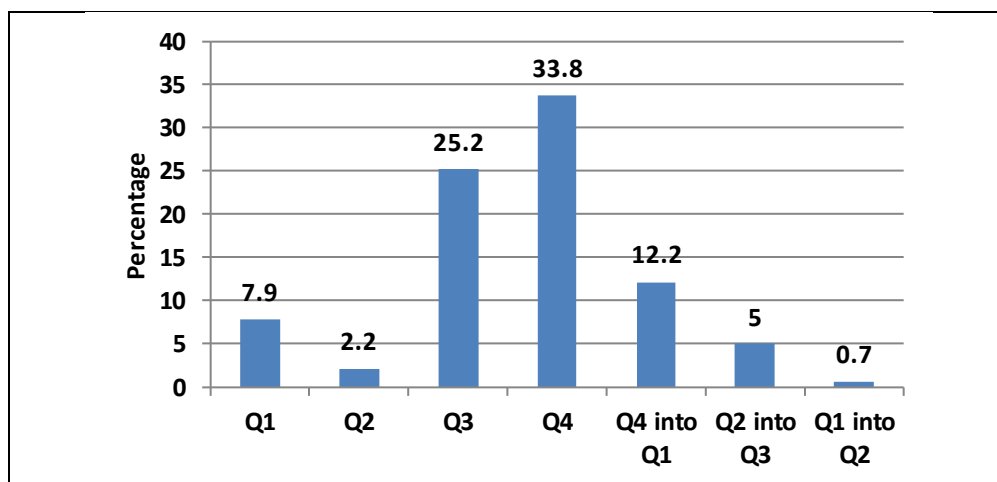


FIGURE 2-12: PERIODS OF HIGHEST SALES

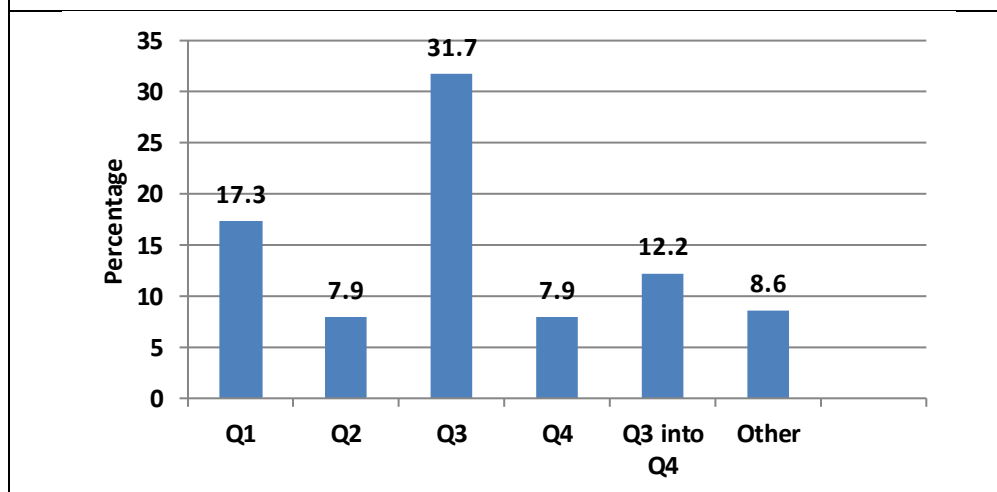


FIGURE 2-13: PERIODS OF LOWEST SALES

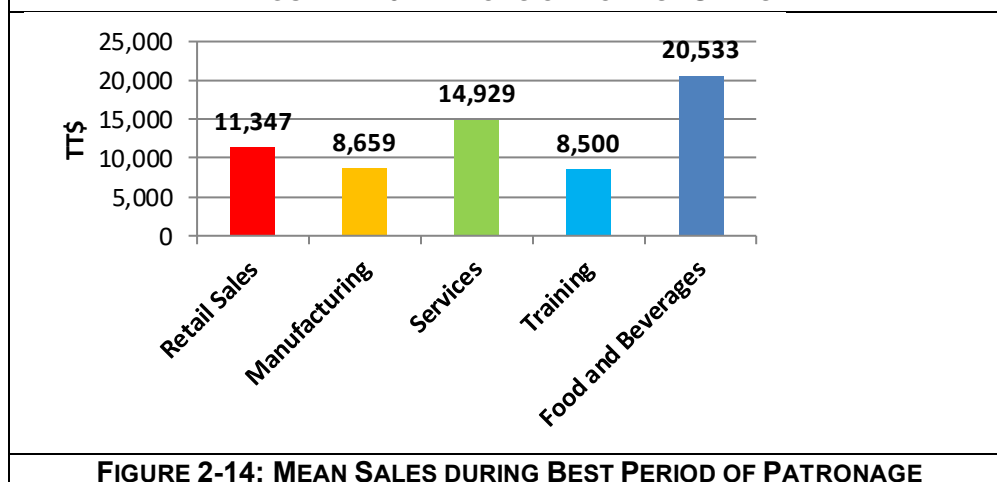


FIGURE 2-14: MEAN SALES DURING BEST PERIOD OF PATRONAGE

### 3 MEETING WITH TENANTS

On September 4, 2019, a general meeting was held with the tenants of Eastside Plaza. The objective of this consultation exercise was to inform the tenants about the proposed renovation to the Plaza, seek information for use in this Stakeholder Consultation Report, and obtain their views on the proposed upgrade and how they may be affected. A copy of the Presentation is included in Appendix B.

A total of 80 tenants attended the meeting which was held in the open space on the second floor of the Eastside Plaza (see Appendix B). The meeting began with Words of Welcome and an Introduction of the ESA Team, followed by information on the Current Status of the project, the Need for the Project, and the Proposed Works. The tenants were then split up into seven focus groups of approximately 10-12 persons per group, each group having a Moderator / Note-Taker.

#### 3.1 Guidance Questions

Each group was given five guidance questions to discuss, of which four were the same for all seven groups:

1. What is your general impression of the upgrade project?  
Do you consider it necessary?
2. What do you consider to be the items that require the most critical upgrading or repair?  
Please provide the type of upgrade or repair that you consider necessary in each case.
3. Do you expect any inconvenience during the renovation work?  
What would you suggest be done to lessen this inconvenience?
4. If it is necessary to ask some tenants to temporarily vacate the premises to facilitate construction, what measures would you suggest to minimize hardship to those tenants?

The other guidance questions discussed by different groups were as follows:

5. Are safety and security a challenge at this mall?  
Please suggest ways that this can be improved during construction and then at the renovated mall.
6. Do any of the following groups experience particular difficulties as tenants or customers at this mall?
  - Women,
  - Men,
  - Family Groups.Please explain the types of difficulties experienced.

7. Do any of the following groups experience particular difficulties as tenants or customers at this mall?
- Persons with disabilities,
  - Elderly Persons,
  - Young Persons
- Please explain the types of difficulties experienced.
8. What is your relationship with other surrounding businesses?  
If there are problems, please explain.  
Can the mall benefit from the large number of customers visiting other businesses on Charlotte and George Street in particular?

### 3.2 Responses

The following tables include the answers to each guidance question and indicates the number of groups that provided each response.

#### 3.2.1 General Impression of Upgrade Project

As shown in Table 3-1, there is general support for the upgrade.

**TABLE 3-1: NECESSITY FOR THE UPGRADE**

1	WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL IMPRESSION OF THE UPGRADE PROJECT? DO YOU CONSIDER IT NECESSARY?	NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE
1	Upgrade is necessary	7
2	Tenants unclear about the upgrade project, need more information on the proposed design [some tenants have spent a lot of money on their booths (i.e.: electrical upgrades, installed individual air conditions)]	2
3	Tenants feel that their concerns are not acknowledged	1
4	"Here we go again," planning and discussions come and go	1
5	Tenants do not think the benefits outweigh the costs	
6	Tenants expect the rent to raise following the renovation/ upgrade. Some tenants may not afford a higher rent	1
7	Tenants feel that better maintenance is required	1

#### 3.2.2 Most Critical Items for Upgrade

The five critical items listed by the most groups (see Table 3-2) are the need for central air conditioning, unreliable electricity supply, need for better security, the leaking roof and the need for improved access for people with disabilities. These items are all being addressed in the design of the upgrade.

**TABLE 3-2: MOST CRITICAL ITEMS FOR UPGRADE**

<b>2</b>	<b>WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE ITEMS THAT REQUIRE THE MOST CRITICAL UPGRADING OR REPAIR? PLEASE PROVIDE THE TYPE OF UPGRADE OR REPAIR THAT YOU CONSIDER NECESSARY IN EACH CASE.</b>	<b>NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE</b>
1	Central air conditioning	7
2	Electrical supply needs to be more reliable (tenants experience fluctuations)	6
3	Security: suggestions include functional security cameras covering more areas of the Plaza, security guards to see monitors, more security patrols, armed guards, emergency/panic button in booths)	6
4	Leaking Roof (but want the historical type roof structure to be maintained – heritage building)	5
5	Proper access for the handicapped and elderly to the second floor as presently there are only stairs (escalator and ramp preferred over elevator)	5
6	Upgrading of washrooms (including plumbing, toilet seats, shower facilities for females, separate washrooms for tenants and a pay system for the public)	4
7	Improved External Appearance (upgrade façades, brighter signs)	4
8	Food Court to attract customers (including a franchise like KFC).	3
9	Car Park is needed, possibly at a close-by location with a preferential rate. However, the Panyard should not be removed	2
10	Ensure entrances are clear from street vendors (particularly in the event of an emergency situation)	2
11	Need for a loading and off-loading area with reserved space (to protect tenants from bandits that prey on them when goods are being loaded or off-loaded)	2
12	Better security required for the George Street entrance (suggestions include closing this entrance)	2
13	Replacement of floors and doors [suggestions included a revolving door to enhance security (snatch and run)]	2
14	Painting the inside of the Plaza (suggestions include a Caribbean colour scheme)	2
15	Water storage tanks be installed due to water shortages which have a major effect on certain businesses.	2
16	Better communication needed between management and tenants. There is a lack of cooperation from management's staff	1
17	Maintenance (not enough staff to maintain the Eastside Plaza)	1
18	Separate lunch room for tenants	1
19	Dedicated space for a nursery and where children can do homework or relax after school hours while they wait for their parents to finish work	1
20	Some type of pest control (cats, pigeons, insects)	1
21	Provide an Information Desk	1
22	Multiple walk through corridors to expose more booths; presently only one main walk through corridor	1
23	Billboard to advertise the products sold at the Eastside Plaza	1
24	ATM machine and provide internet service (Wi-Fi)	1



### 3.2.3 *Inconvenience during Renovation*

As shown in Table 3-3, all groups expect some level of inconvenience during the upgrade works. The majority of the groups suggested that this could be addressed by undertaking construction activities at night and on Sundays.

**TABLE 3-3: INCONVENIENCE DURING UPGRADE**

3	DO YOU EXPECT ANY INCONVENIENCE DURING THE RENOVATION WORK? WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST BE DONE TO LESSEN THIS INCONVENIENCE?	NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE
1	Tenants expect inconvenience (similar to the last renovations undertaken at the Plaza)	7
2	Minimize inconvenience during renovation by undertaking works between the hours of 6 pm and 6 am, and on Sundays (but not on Saturdays since this is a prime business day mainly for hairdressers)	6
3	No general closure (not even for 6 months), just vacate temporarily	3
4	Undertake works in phases	3
5	Willing to relocate within Plaza	3
6	Willing to relocate outside of Plaza, but they require sufficient notice. Suggestions included Drag Brothers Mall and New City Mall.	3
7	Compensation	3
8	Additional booths/ kiosks	2
9	Assist with or adjust rents temporarily	2
10	Provide communication to public to protect the tenants/ clientele relationship	1
11	Lack of management cooperation and communication (need to stick to period of disruption, provide updates and communication in the event of disruptions going over time)	1
12	Extend opening hours of Plaza (mainly for hairdressers)	1
13	Provide temporary storage for tenants	1
14	Tenants expect heat due to no air conditioning	1
15	Undertake electrical works at set times (or even one floor level at a time) to mitigate the impacts on the tenants	1
16	Guarantee a space of a booth/ kiosk during construction works	1
17	Sharing of booths	1
18	Concerns about moving their inventory and the items that they have added to their booths (cupboards, AC, etc.)	1
19	Antique structure to be retained	1
20	Tenants expect construction noise and dust	1
21	Obstructed entrance	1
22	If government changes, what happens to project	1
23	Move similar group of tenants at a time (i.e.: hairdressers)	1
24	As security is an issue, tenants should be responsible for their goods (transport of their cupboards, etc.). The Eastside Plaza and the developers should not be responsible for them.	1

### 3.2.4 *Relocation during Construction*

Just over half the groups indicated a willingness to relocate within the plaza (see Table 3-4). Just under a half the groups would be willing to relocate to another building in Port of Spain. A similar number indicated that they expect compensation.

**TABLE 3-4: RELOCATION DURING UPGRADE**

4	IF IT IS NECESSARY TO ASK SOME TENANTS TO TEMPORARILY VACATE THE PREMISES TO FACILITATE CONSTRUCTION, WHAT MEASURES WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO MINIMIZE HARDSHIP TO THOSE TENANTS?	NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE
1	Tenants are willing to relocate within the Plaza (but ensure water supply is maintained)	4
2	Some tenants are willing to temporarily relocate to another building [suggestions included 43 Independence Square (Drag Brothers Mall) or New City Mall]	3
3	Suggestions included undertaking work in phases so booths can remain operating even if in a different location of the Plaza	3
4	Tenants expect compensation	3
5	Downsize to kiosks/ tents within Plaza	2
6	Bonafide tenants (those that are registered as owning a booth number) should be allowed to return	2
	Will new booths be the same size as existing ones?	1
7	Communication is critical	1
8	Will they be going back to the same location?	1
9	Tenants expect loss of customers during the renovation works	1
10	Tenants request that the Plaza provide temporary storage for items	1
11	Some tenants were willing to have Plaza shut down for 1 month but not at peak season (i.e.: Carnival, Christmas, etc.)	1
12	Guarantee a booth availability	1
13	Will tenants have to pay the same rent if relocated?	1
14	What about a financial subsidy?	1
15	Build new roof over existing roof. Do not get rid of old metal in roof.	1
16	In new design make sure all booths get front view	1
17	Group services	1
18	Do not break down whole facades	1

### 3.2.5 *Safety and Security*

Only two groups were assigned this question (see Table 3-5), and both indicated a need for increased security during construction, increased surveillance and patrols, and a greater number of guards.

**TABLE 3-5: SAFETY AND SECURITY**

<b>5</b>	<b>ARE SAFETY AND SECURITY A CHALLENGE AT THIS MALL? PLEASE SUGGEST WAYS THAT THIS CAN BE IMPROVED DURING CONSTRUCTION AND THEN AT THE RENOVATED MALL.</b>	<b>NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE</b>
1	Increase security during the construction phase (mainly secure property of tenants). Have workers sign in and out of work site.	2
2	Surveillance - Increase working cameras as well as increase the number of these. This surveillance system should be attached to a security firm, as opposed to have untrained security view it	2
3	Increase patrols by security to all areas of the Plaza	2
4	The ratio between tenants and security guards needs to be improved. Presently only have one (1) armed guard. Tenants would like to have an increase in the number of guards with firearm.	2
5	Greater presence and relationship between city police and the Plaza	1
6	Existing entrance doors make entry into the mall easy for thieves and undesirables. Type of entrance doors should be changed	1

### **3.2.6 Difficulties for Women, Men and Families**

Two groups were assigned these questions (see Table 3-6), and they listed difficulties with safety, toilet facilities and lack of family facilities (changing rooms for infant and seating for family groups).

**TABLE 3-6: DIFFICULTIES FOR WOMEN, MEN AND FAMILY GROUPS**

<b>6</b>	<b>DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS EXPERIENCE PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES AS TENANTS OR CUSTOMERS AT THIS MALL?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WOMEN,</li> <li>• MEN,</li> <li>• FAMILY GROUPS.</li> </ul> <b>PLEASE EXPLAIN THE TYPES OF DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED.</b>	<b>NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE</b>
1	Both men and women have safety concerns (especially women upstairs)	1
2	Both men and women have concerns about the toilet facilities (water problems) – need improvements	1
3	Women stated that at times they are forced to use the male washrooms	1
4	Women would like separate washrooms for tenants and the public washrooms	1
5	Women stated that there are no areas accommodating for those tenants who have children/ babies (especially washroom facilities)	1
6	Family groups need a general areas for seating	1
7	A system is needed to allow smoother access to family members of tenants before and after business hours	1

### 3.2.7 *Difficulties for the Elderly, the Young and the Disabled*

Two groups were assigned this question, and both listed the lack of parking facilities and the lack of access for persons with disabilities to the upper floor. Other difficulties that were listed related to toilet facilities and safety railings, etc.

**TABLE 3-7: DIFFICULTIES FOR THE ELDERLY, THE YOUNG AND THE DISABLED**

7	DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS EXPERIENCE PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES AS TENANTS OR CUSTOMERS AT THIS MALL? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES,</li> <li>ELDERLY PERSONS,</li> <li>YOUNG PERSONS</li> </ul> PLEASE EXPLAIN THE TYPES OF DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED.	NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE
1	There is no parking available for the elderly and handicapped	2
2	Upstairs cannot be accessed by the handicapped and old. The elderly and handicapped find it difficult to walk up the stairs	2
3	Toilets do not have facilities for the handicapped	1
4	There are no safety railings, floors are slippery and mats are insecure	1
5	The elderly and handicapped find that the distance to the toilets is too much for them.	1

### 3.2.8 *Relationship with Surrounding Businesses*

Only one group was assigned this question. They saw surrounding businesses as a source of customers, but felt that street vendors need to be removed (see Table 3-8).

**TABLE 3-8: RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING BUSINESSES**

8	WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER SURROUNDING BUSINESSES? IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS, PLEASE EXPLAIN. CAN THE MALL BENEFIT FROM THE LARGE NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS VISITING OTHER BUSINESSES ON CHARLOTTE AND GEORGE STREET IN PARTICULAR?	NO. OF GROUPS GIVING RESPONSE
1	There are Clients in the surrounding businesses (these include workers and residents)	1
2	Need to move street vendors as there are parking problems during off-loading – loading of goods.	1

### 3.3 **Other Comments**

In addition to the responses to the structured questions above, the groups took the opportunity to make additional comments, as follows:

1. Need for better marketing to reduce the stigma presently associated with the Plaza.
2. Issues related to insurance for tenants need to be resolved.

3. Consideration must be given to increasing opening hours.
4. Street side parking should be allowed between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
5. Seamstresses would like to have a central cutting table.
6. Equal attention should be paid to ground and top floors, since the top floor appears neglected.
7. It may be better to group tenants by activity (for example, all seamstresses in one location).
8. Need to reduce wasting of space.
9. Tenants would like online advertising.
10. There is need for a floor manager to aid with communication.
11. Management is absent on weekends, therefore issues remain until the next week. This is a problem.
12. There are non-Eastside Plaza tenants operating in the Plaza, which should be prevented.

## 4 MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

Meetings were held with the following agencies and institution:

- < Environmental Management Authority,
- < Port of Spain City Corporation, and
- < South East Port of Spain Secondary School

The objectives of these meetings were to inform the agencies and institution about this project, to obtain information on regulatory approvals and to receive general opinions and concerns related to the project. Specifics of each meeting are presented in a separate sub-section below. Notes of each of the meetings can be found in Appendix C.

### 4.1 Environmental Management Authority

A meeting was held with staff of the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) at their offices on August 14, 2019. Following a brief presentation of the proposed renovation to the Eastside Plaza, interpretation of particular Designated Activities under the CEC Rules relevant to the project was discussed.

The EMA agreed that the Plaza would be considered as a single facility, and therefore the water use criterion of 9 cubic meters of water use per day (Designated Activity 43) would apply to the sum of all kitchen facilities within the Plaza (considered as a single facility) and not to each individual kitchen. Additionally, Designated Activity 10 may also be applicable if 500 per day or more persons including staff would be using the upgraded Plaza.

The EMA advised to ensure that an adequate water supply, electricity supply and sewerage capacity was available to serve the upgraded Plaza.

### 4.2 Port of Spain City Corporation - Building Inspectors

A meeting was held with the Port of Spain City Corporation (POSCC) Building Inspectors at their offices on August 22 2019. Following a brief presentation of the proposed renovation to the Eastside Plaza, the approval process within the POSCC was discussed as well as existing traffic patterns and street vending in the area.

The Building Inspectors indicated that an application with a conceptual design/ layout of the proposed renovations to the Eastside Plaza will need to be submitted to the POSCC Engineering and Health Departments, simultaneously with the applications to TCPD and the EMA. However, approvals from the POSCC will only be granted after the project has been approved by the EMA, TCPD, Fire Department and WASA.

Traffic on Charlotte and George Street complies with the patterns for the rest of the city, with peak traffic between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. Peak traffic along Charlotte and George Streets occurs between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, as in the rest of the City. Traffic is more intense on Charlotte

Street than George Street. Official vending is allowed on Charlotte Street from Duke Street to Independence Square North on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Along George Street, there are official and unofficial vending areas. Therefore, it was suggested that goods be off-loaded on George Street, and this could occur during evening and weekends when there is less traffic (both vehicular and pedestrian).

The Building Inspectors main concerns related to the construction phase of this project and included the following:

- < Ensure that final approval is received prior to the start of construction;
- < Ensure compliance with approved construction plans as the site will be visited by the POSCC Building Inspector;
- < Ensure public safety is adhered to per OSHA as there is a lot of foot traffic in the project area; and
- < Ensure construction standards and good-practices (i.e.: maintaining clear drains during construction phase) are observed.

#### **4.3 South East Port of Spain Secondary School (SEPOSSS)**

A meeting was held with the South East Port of Spain Secondary School (SEPOSSS) Principal, Acting Vice-Principal and Maintenance staff on September 05, 2019. After a brief presentation of the proposed renovation to the Eastside Plaza, the relationship between the Eastside Plaza and the school was discussed, as well as expected impacts from construction activities on the school.

Students may buy food after school at the Plaza, as they are not allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours. Photocopying services at the Plaza may be used at times. For the Emancipation celebrations held at the Plaza, school children have been asked to model clothes made by the tenants of the Plaza. The idea of a central food court is welcomed, as teachers would not have far to go and buy food.

The main concerns that the principal had during renovation works include:

- Traffic disruptions: If construction equipment/ materials are brought into the Plaza from George Street, staff and parents may be inconvenienced as they drive up this road, take a right onto Prince Street and then drive down Nelson Street to the school's entrance. An alternative option may be to drive up Duncan Street then take a right onto Prince Street, a left onto Piccadilly Street, then a left onto Duke Street, and then come down Nelson Street. SEPOSSS suggested that construction equipment/ materials should be brought in on weekends or during night hours with police presence (very important).
- Noise: although the school is not impacted by noise on a regular basis, there is concern if jack-hammering activities take place. SEPOSSS suggest than noisy activities be conducted outside of school hours or during the weekends.



- Dust: There may be an issue with dust from the construction activities on the western side of the school. Dust screens could be installed either on school windows or at the Eastside Plaza. If placed over the school windows on the western side, it would be necessary to ensure that they do not restrict the air flow into the classrooms.

## 5 MEETINGS WITH A SAMPLE OF NEIGHBOURS

Figure 5-1 shows the types of businesses that operate in close proximity to the Plaza. A limited number of these businesses were interviewed, using a structured questionnaire (see Appendix D):

- All in One (No. 16 – a variety store),
- Petal's Clothing and Accessories Store (No. 28 – a clothing store),
- Balrams (No. 35 – a grocery) and
- Singh's Meat Mouth (No. 41 – a meat and dry foods store).

These businesses have been in operation for at least ten years. Outside of specific time periods (Christmas and August school vacation), the businesses all indicated that business activity booms during the end of month periods.

The utilities offered by the capital (Port of Spain City Corporation) received excellent reviews. However, police service, on average, was rated 'fair'. Common among the businesses was their lack of knowledge about the Eastside Plaza project, but they all agreed that such improvements would benefit their own businesses.

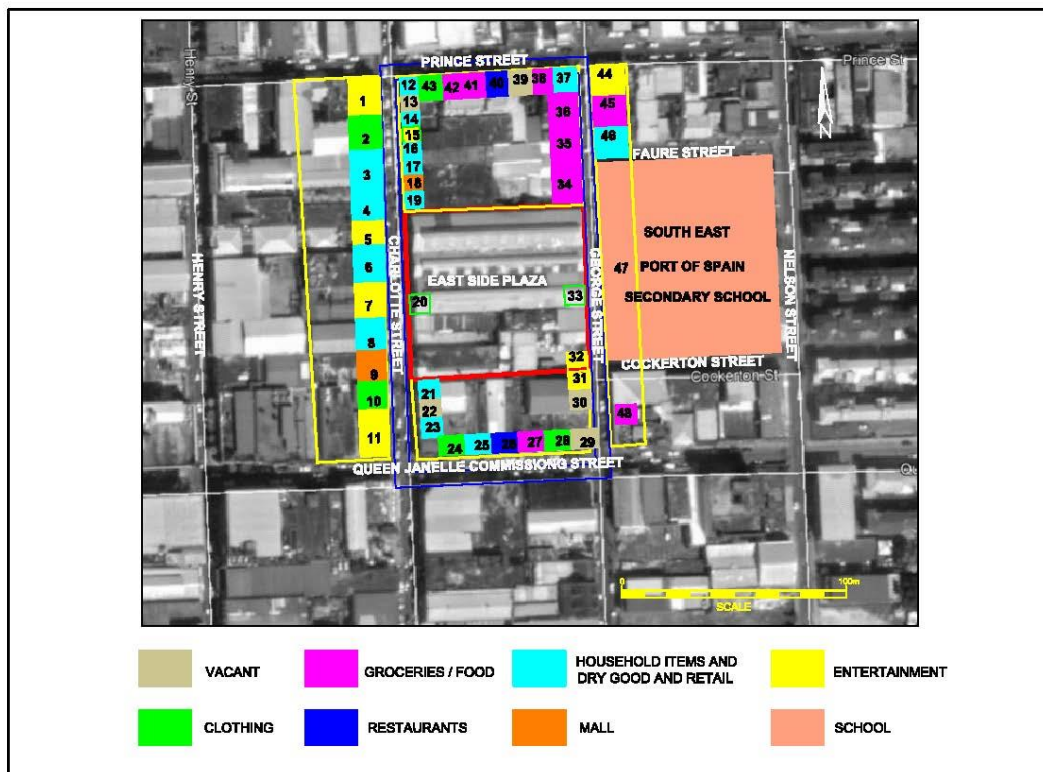


FIGURE 5-1: BUSINESSES IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

As stated in Chapter 1 of this Consultation Report, objectives of this stakeholder engagement exercise were threefold:

- i. Inform Stakeholders about the proposed Renovation of Eastside Plaza,
- ii. Obtain Specific Information for use in the ESA, and
- iii. Receive from the stakeholders their opinions and concerns related to this project.

### 6.1 Findings

Overall, Eastside Plaza tenants agreed that the proposed renovations to the Plaza were necessary, and were willing to make adjustments during the renovation works. Tenants proposed that construction be undertaken in phases so as not to have to vacate their spaces all at the same time. In addition, tenants suggested that kiosks be provided as a temporary measure or sharing of booths. Further, they believed that they should be provided with a 'stipend' in the event that they have to discontinue operating and for the period in which they may have to do so.

Most critical items that tenants indicated needed upgrade included the air conditioning system, electrical system, security, access for handicapped persons to the second floor, toilets and the leaking roof but want the historical type roof structure to be maintained (heritage building). These items are all being addressed in the design of the upgrade.

Meetings were held with the EMA, POS City Corporation and South East Port of Spain Secondary School. A major concern raised during these meetings included traffic impacts during the construction phase. It was suggested that offloading/ loading of equipment/ materials be conducted during the evenings and weekends when there is less traffic (both vehicular and pedestrian). This has been addressed in the Traffic management Plan included in the ESMP. Additionally, it was recommended that all required permits be obtained prior to the start of construction and ensure that construction standards and good-practices are observed.

### 6.2 Further Consultation

All of the parties who were consulted expressed the expectation that this round of consultations would only be the start of the process, with further consultation taking place as the project progresses. The Tenants/Vendors were particularly happy to have been included in the consultation process to date, but expect to be included further as the design continues, as the contracts for the project are let, and as the renovation work is implemented. Such on-going consultation would be in harmony with both the expectations of the Environmental Management Authority and the IDB.