

BUSINESS WALK

COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT SERIES



SEPTEMBER 8, 2016 - POST EVENT REPORT

NORTHSIDE - MADISON

*EDC Handout - 1/18/17
Leysin # 45132*

The City of Madison Office of Business Resources and Madison Gas and Electric partnered with the Northside Planning Council, Northside Economic Development Coalition, Northside Business Association, Northside News and the Madison Region Economic Partnership to present the first Northside Business Walk on September 8, 2016. A Business Walk is an economic development initiative that, in a short amount of time, allows local leaders to get the pulse of how a business community is doing. The premise behind each walk is to “locate the successes and obstacles the local business community is facing and then track that information and provide assistance.” In total 47 business and civic leaders visited 146 businesses in three hours.

The conversation with these 146 businesses focused around five basic questions:

- How's Business?
- What do you like about business on the Northside?
- What can be done to improve business on the Northside?
- Will your business be affected by the closing of Oscar Mayer? If so, how?
- Would your company like to be followed up with after the Business Walk?

SUMMARY RESULTS

The results show that the Northside community business climate has great potential, but also some struggles. Overall, when asked how business is, 84 percent cited that business was at least steady/fair if not good/great. When asked what they liked about doing business on the Northside four things stood out: 1) customers/community, 2) location, 3) diversity, and 4) transportation options. The Northside, like many other communities right now,

is coming out of the recession and trying to find its voice. While many businesses are finding success, some businesses are just trying to stay in business and find a new path. When business and civic leaders asked what needed to be done to improve doing business in this area, the most frequent responses were: 1) more development, 2) construction/roads and 3) safety/crime. Although numerous businesses discussed challenges they face, very few said they were planning to leave the Northside or were considering closing down. When asked about the closing of Oscar Mayer, 22 percent said they would be affected, while 52 percent said they would not, and 26 percent said maybe or unknown. The remainder of this report will provide additional detail on the responses to each question as well as the steps the City of Madison, Madison Gas and Electric and supporting partners are taking to further improve the local business climate on the Northside of Madison.

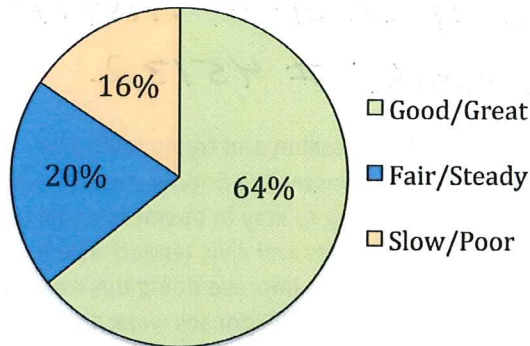
QUESTION 1: HOW IS BUSINESS?

In response to the question “How is business?”, the business respondents provided a variety of answers from “things could not be better” to “slight decrease in sales due to drop in customers” to “I have been very slow lately.” Sixty four percent of businesses stated that business was **good/great** indicating that they are succeeding due to various reasons: strong partnerships with other businesses, loyal customers, limited competition, and good location. Twenty percent of businesses that are **steady or fair** mentioned that they have been okay for a few years, are rebuilding their client bases, or they were “doing alright, happy to be stable”. Some businesses interviewed (16 percent) mentioned that business has been **slow/poor** due to road construction, added bike lanes which diverts traffic,

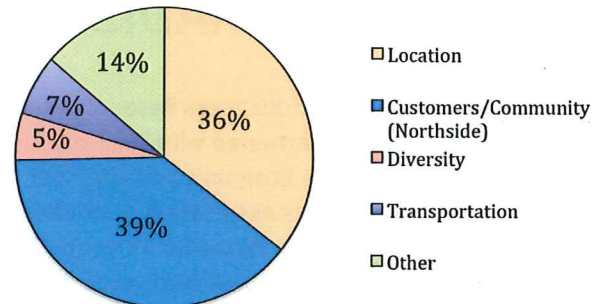
the overall economy, seasonal work, weather, signage restrictions, Oscar Mayer closing, and/or clientele aging. Despite some of the setbacks, businesses overwhelmingly stated they want to stay in this community and stay in business.

- Parks department
- Affordable housing and rent
- Good city services
- Close to Madison College (labor)
- Good relationship with Northside Police

How is business?



What do you like about doing business on the Northside?



QUESTION 2: WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT DOING BUSINESS ON THE NORTHSIDE?

The **community/clients** was mentioned by 39 percent of respondents as the main reason for doing business on the Northside. Many described the Northside as having friendly residents/clients and being community focused. Many grew up on the Northside and have lived here their whole life. Respondents have built very strong ties and view the Northside as a long-term investment in their future and their children's future. They described their clients as "amazing" and "loyal".

Location (36 percent) was another positive factor of doing business on the Northside. Having access to the airport and being close to downtown make doing business easy and the commute minimal, which allows many individuals to both work and live on the Northside. Multiple **transportation** options (7 percent) and **diversity** of the community (5 percent) were also highlighted. The businesses feel that the Northside residents understand that if Northside businesses succeed, the community as a whole benefits.

In addition, some respondents provided several "other" reasons (14 percent) for liking the Northside, including:

- Room for growth (expansion)

QUESTION 3: WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE BUSINESS ON THE NORTHSIDE?

Restaurants, hotels and other development (32 percent) were at the top of the list of what needs to be done to improve the Northside. Several people mentioned the need to add new restaurants in the area with a variety of price ranges and food selections. Many suggested building a hotel close to the airport would be convenient for the entire city. Development of major box stores for those with limited transportation or other businesses unique to the Northside would help drive traffic to the community overall.

Construction/Roads (16 percent) was another area where many improvements were suggested. Returning Sherman Avenue to two lanes of traffic in each direction instead of the new dedicated bike lanes was mentioned by several businesses. Infrastructure improvements to address the lack of parking, roads flooding, dangerous traffic light patterns and traffic back ups were all mentioned by multiple businesses. The third highest response for areas of improvement centered around both **Crime and Safety** (11 percent). Businesses want the homeless problem to be addressed, as well as plans to reduce or eliminate stealing (shoplifting), business break-ins, and drug dealing in the parking lots. Businesses are

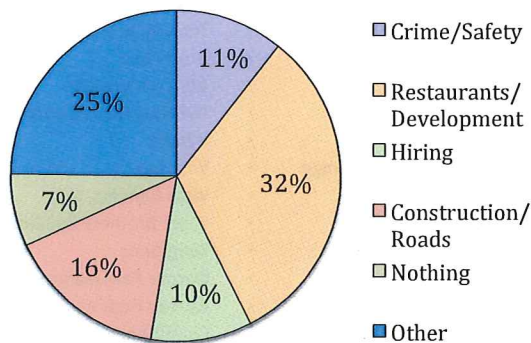
looking for reforms for drug abusers and more training for law enforcement on how to handle drug cases. Many customers and clients are currently told to avoid certain areas at certain times due to crime. The last area for improvement focused on **hiring** (10 percent). High turnover and lack of a qualified workforce to fill positions is a problem for multiple companies.

In addition, some respondents provided several **“other”** improvements and changes (25 percent) needed on the Northside, including:

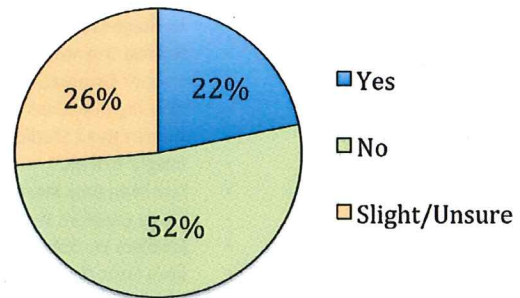
- Lowering high property taxes, utilities costs, and business taxes
- Providing faster high speed internet
- Removing barriers to getting permits/approvals
- Improving access to capital
- Developing a marketing campaign for the Northside of Madison
- Increasing property values

Twenty two percent said that the closing of Oscar Mayer would affect their business. Reasons include the loss of a big sponsor for their company, loss of customers, such as lunch patrons or in the case of the medical related businesses, the loss of patients. Many of the food banks will also feel the effects (less meat will be donated). Twenty six percent felt that they were unsure or may see a slight change in business. Many businesses are still waiting to see what the impact will be for the community as a whole and are unclear what the long term effects will be once they close. Many view Oscar Mayer closing as a hardship but also an opportunity for growth for their community. Respondents offered a variety of suggestions to the City for the space.

What can be done to improve business on the Northside?



Will your business be affected by the closing of Oscar Mayer?



QUESTION 4: WILL YOUR BUSINESS BE AFFECTED BY THE CLOSING OF OSCAR MAYER? IF SO, HOW?

While many of the businesses expressed sadness in seeing Oscar Mayer leave the area, 52 percent of respondents said that the closing of Oscar Mayer would not affect their business. Several businesses thought they might even see a short term rise in business. Many cited that if this closing had happened several years ago, it would have had a much larger affect, but since the purchase by Kraft they have not relied on Oscar Mayer as much.

FOLLOW UP

When the business walk was completed, forty companies requested and received direct follow up. The City of Madison Office of Business Resources coordinated the City’s response to a number of municipal issues brought up by business owners. The Engineering Department, Madison Police, Community Development and Economic Development Departments were connected to the businesses owners and ongoing follow-up is occurring. The Northside Economic Development Coalition and the Northside Business Association look forward to collaborating with the City of Madison and other economic development partners on Northside projects for the next one to two years and using the report to guide these efforts.

PRESENTED BY



THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES

- 608 Sports Bar & Restaurant
- 7 Day Spa
- Advance Auto Parts
- Aging and Disability Resource Center
- Ale Asylum
- Altered States Alterations
- American Family Insurance Jennifer Haack Agency
- American Structures General, Inc.
- AnchorBank
- Anytime Fitness
- Apex Property Management, Inc.
- Associated Bank
- Attention to Detail
- Avis Budget Rental
- Badger Diversified Metals
- Benvenuto's Italian Grill
- Berntsen Brass & Aluminum Foundry
- Big Top Baseball
- Birwood Property Management
- BMO Harris Bank
- BP Station
- Broadway Tire & Auto
- Burkhalter Travel & Cruise Shoppe
- Capitol Petro Station (3)
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
- Citgo (2)
- CRV
- Culver's
- Custom Shop
- Custom-shop.net
- D&S Bait, Tackle & Archery, LLC
- Decker Supply Co Inc
- Dow Chiropractic & Acupuncture
- Dryden Terrace Apartments
- DuWayne's Salon
- Edward Jones
- Enrique's Market
- Excellence in Dentistry
- Executive Management Inc.
- Falbo Bros Pizzeria
- Family Dollar
- Fox Water Softener, Inc.
- Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation
- Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.
- Habanero's Mexican Grill
- Harry's Liquor
- Heel and Sole Connection
- Heritage Credit Union
- Hmoob Oriental Market
- Hooper Corporation
- Housing Initiatives
- Human Head Studios
- Insight BTR Inc
- Jacobson Bros Meats & Deli
- Jessie Crawford Recovery Center
- Jewelers Workshop
- Jim's Meat Market
- Jung Garden Centers
- Kathy's Auto Service & Repair, Inc.
- Kerry Americas
- KinderCare Learning Center
- Klinke Cleaners
- Knabe Tool Works, Inc.
- Lakeland University - Madison Center
- Lazy Bones Laundry & Storage
- Locker Room Sports Bar & Grill
- Madison Bindery
- Madison Chiropractic
- Madison Pantry
- Madison Sign Lettering
- Magna Publications
- Manna Café & Bakery
- McDonalds
- McKinney Dental
- Mike's Barber Shop
- Murphy & Presentin
- Nalco Company
- New Orleans Take Out
- Noah's Ark Pet Center
- North Side Liquor
- North / Eastside Senior Coalition
- Northport Laundry
- Northshore Rentals LLC
- Northside Animal Hospital
- Old National Bank
- Omnipress
- Orthodontic Specialists
- Payment Service Network, Inc.
- PDQ Food Stores, Inc.
- Pewter and Resin Casting Services
- Pizza Hut
- PL\$
- Prime Cut
- Reynolds Transfer and Storage
- RJ Auto Sales and Services
- Rose Custom and Collision
- Sally K's Salon
- Serrv
- Shad Wenzlaff Piano Studio
- Sherman Plaza Hair Styling & Barbers
- Silver Leaf Interiors
- Slices Bar and Grill
- Smartie Pants Early Learning Center
- Smoky Jons #1 BBQ
- Spa Woof Dog Spa and Kennel
- Sparkle Auto Body
- St. Paul Lutheran Church
- State Farm - Cheng Vang
- State of Wisconsin - Department of Workforce Development
- State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections
- Subway
- Tandem Press
- Team 13
- The Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin
- The Rees Group, Inc.
- The Rifken Group, Ltd
- The River Food Pantry
- The UPS Store
- Tobacco Outlet
- Total Administrative Services Corporation (TASC)
- Trendsetters - Diane Maurer
- Trendsetters - Donna Andrews
- Trendsetters - Kay Smith
- True Value Hardware
- Union Cab
- UW Credit Union
- UW Health Northeast Center
- V Nails
- Villa Tap
- Vista Benefits, Inc.
- Vogel Brothers Building Co
- Walgreens
- Warner Park Management
- Warren Heating & Air Conditioning
- Weaver Auto Parts
- Webcrafters Inc
- Westmont Law Offices S.C.
- Wiggies Bar & Grill
- Willy Street Co-op - North
- Wisconsin Department of Corrections
- Wong's Acupuncture
- Woodland Industries Inc

SUPPORTED BY

