

BUSINESS WALK

COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT SERIES



OCTOBER 10, 2018 - POST EVENT REPORT

EAST MADISON

The City of Madison partnered with Madison Gas and Electric to present the first East Madison Business Walk on October 10, 2018. The Monona East Side Business Alliance and Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin supported the Business Walk as well. 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 understand the successes and obstacles the local business community faces, track that information, and provide aid if needed.

In total, 41 business and civic leaders visited 210 businesses in three hours. Of those 210 businesses, 59 businesses requested and received follow up assistance.

The conversation with these 210 businesses focused on four basic questions:

- How's business?
- What do you like about doing business in your area?
- What can be done to improve doing business in your area?
- Would your company like to be followed up with a specific question after the Business Walk?

SUMMARY RESULTS

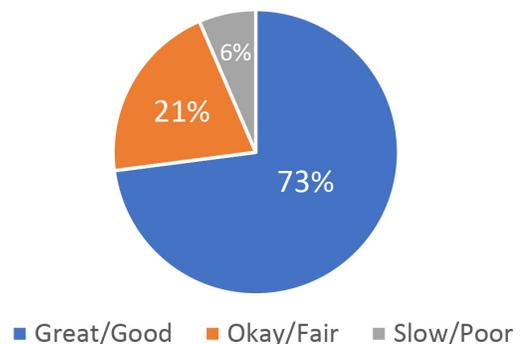
The East Madison Business Walk included: Cottage Grove Road, Atwood Avenue, Milwaukee Street, Monona Drive (Madison), and Williamson Street. Overall results show that the East Side of the Madison business community is doing well, and 73 percent of businesses visited describe their business as doing "good/great." When asked what they like about doing business in their area, two factors stood out: community/customers and location. Although most businesses are steady and/or succeeding, businesses still suggested areas for improvement such as parking/traffic and safety/homelessness concerns. It was rare to talk to a business who said they are doing so bad they have to close down or lay off staff.

The remainder of this report will provide additional detail on the responses to each question and the steps the City of Madison and supporting partners are taking to further improve the local business climate on the East Side of Madison.

QUESTION 1: HOW'S BUSINESS?

In response to the question "How's business?" the business respondents provided a range of answers from "we are well established, doing really well" to "okay, but could be better" to "business is down."

How's Business?

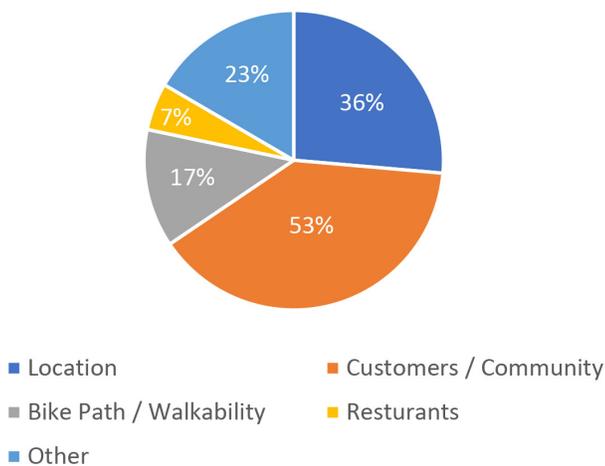


Seventy three percent of businesses stated that business was **good/great** indicating that they are succeeding due to various reasons: clients, good management, the growing economy, international and national supply chain options, and being in a good location. The 21 percent of businesses that are **okay/fair** mentioned that they have been "doing okay but not great", citing fluctuation due to seasonal business and changes in their industry. Six percent of businesses interviewed mentioned that business has been **slow/poor** due to lack of funding around the state, traffic in the area, slowing industry trends, more customers buying online, and lack of willingness to adapt to change. Despite some of the setbacks, businesses overwhelmingly stated they plan to stay in this area and stay in business.

QUESTION 2: WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT DOING BUSINESS IN YOUR AREA?

This question was open ended and respondents were able to provide multiple answers, the most common response was **customers and community** (53 percent). Many respondents feel that the community has really embraced the businesses in the area. Customers shop local and are “loyal.” Many described their community as “tight knit,” “open-minded,” “funky,” and “friendly.” Several businesses are thankful because they benefit from repeat customers who are willing to pay a little more versus shopping online.

What do you like about doing business in your area?



Thirty six percent of businesses said **location** was a key factor, mentioning they are proud to be on the East Side of Madison. Many live and work on the East Side so it is easy for them to get to work. They are close to the interstate, downtown Madison, other transportation options, and bike paths. Being in a central location allows for them to be easily found and/or distribute their product from.

Bike path/walkability (17 percent) and **restaurants** (7 percent) were also mentioned. Businesses on Williamson and Atwood overwhelmingly mentioned the fact that the bike paths are an asset to their businesses. The bike paths make businesses feel they are part of the community and easily accessible. Good food, healthy food options, and high-quality restaurants are also a value-add for the East Side community.

Some respondents (23 percent) provided several “**other**” reasons for liking the area including:

- Local art/musicians

- Festivals in the area/green space
- Diverse population
- Development happening in the area
- Events/volunteer opportunities in the area
- Easy access to UW for new grads (staff) and interns
- Lower rent than downtown, grandfathered in to low rates

QUESTION 3: WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE BUSINESS IN YOUR AREA?

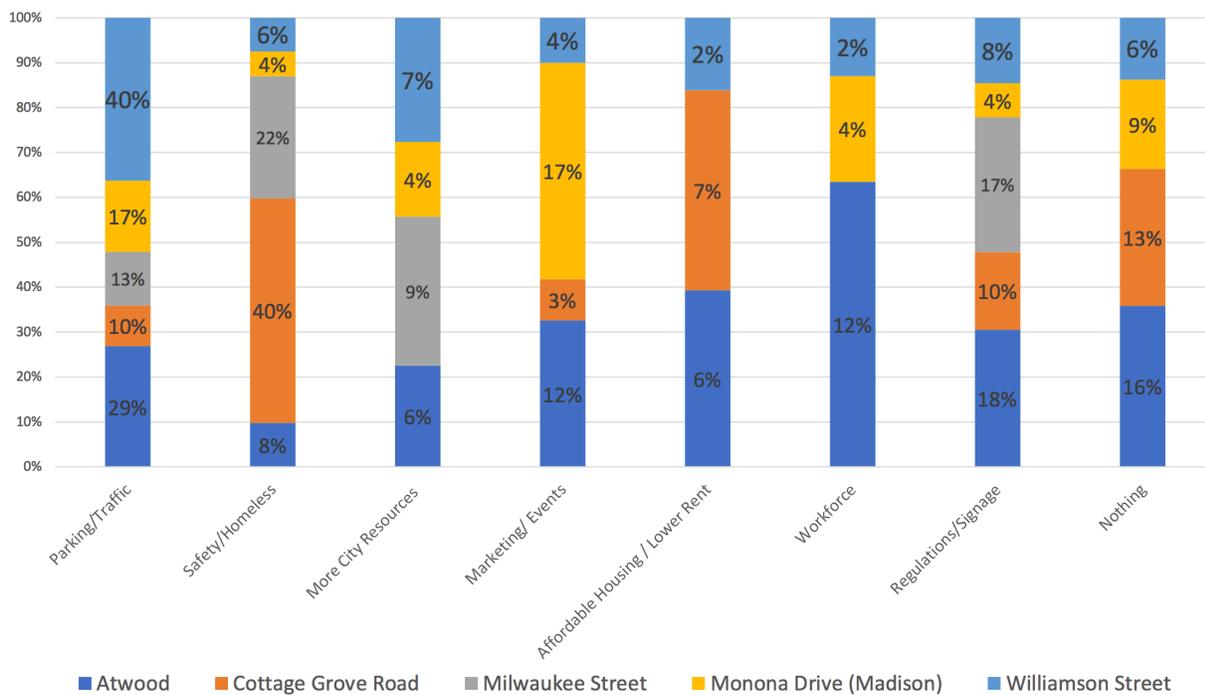
This question was open ended and respondents were able to provide multiple answers. The graph is broken up by area for a more detailed understanding of specific needs to be addressed in each area visited. The statistics below address the concerns overall. Thirty-four percent cited that **parking/traffic** was their biggest problem on the East Side. Overflow traffic was cited due to flooding, construction, and bad roads. Many requested that the roads be fixed and more parking for customers and staff be made available. Many believe that traffic patterns need to be addressed and additional turn lights need to be introduced in specific areas. People view it as a major safety concern for pedestrians and bikers.

The second highest response was **safety/homelessness** (16 percent). People addressed everything from lack of speed enforcement which is harmful to bikers and pedestrians, to shoplifting, to the increase in gun violence in the past few years. A few mentioned a string of bank robberies and management feeling the need to close their store early due to the “mischief” after hours. People are also concerned about the increase in the homeless population in the area specifically on Milwaukee Street and Cottage Grove Road.

Signage/regulations (14 percent) is a concern for businesses. Lack of visibility from the street and city regulations preventing businesses from promoting themselves is a concern. Respondents also addressed the various regulations regarding expansions and business improvements people want to make. Businesses say they want to be more creative in the ways that they promote and run their business, but are unable to do so.

Marketing/events was cited by 8 percent of businesses, a few would like more awareness about local events (festivals), access to be a part of local events, and the ability to create more marketing opportunities for their business during the events. An increase in **city resources** (7 percent) is needed for three specific populations including homeless, youth, and the mentally ill. Easier and cheaper access to programs and opportunities for people who need help in their community

What can be done to improve business in your area?



is warranted. **Workforce** was mentioned by 5 percent of the businesses. Finding good, qualified people is hard. People are graduating from UW but then leave the area for other states. A need for **affordable housing and lower rent** was also focused on (4 percent). Neighbors have had to leave due to rent rates and the inability to afford housing in the area. Eleven percent of businesses stated that **nothing** needed improvements, noting that they were not facing any major challenges.

In addition, some respondents provided several “other” (23 percent) changes needed in the area including:

- Lack of accessibility in the area – paratransit
- Concerns about the type of development (housing versus businesses)
- Telecommunication and infrastructure improvements
- Lack of land to expand in the area
- More new business construction projects needed

EAST MADISON SCHOOL VISITS

During this Business Walk the City of Madison also partnered with the Madison Metropolitan School District. During the walk volunteers met with five different schools in the area:

Lowell Elementary School, La Follette High School, Elvehjem Elementary School, Marquette Elementary School, and East High School. The questions were based around community and business engagement with schools and municipal issues the City of Madison could address. On that day a principal or school staff member was asked a number of questions, below is a summary of their responses.

- **Safety Fixes:** Lighting suggestions, fixing dangerous crosswalks for kids who walk to school, city trees that are dying around the school, parking and traffic problems during drop off and pick up times.
- **Homelessness:** Resources and relationships to help address children who are homeless in their community, providing social and emotional support options in the city for at risk children.
- **Business Engagement:** Students want to form relationships with businesses. What as a city can we do to support this? What does the business community need from the schools to help? Schools want to be in the room to discuss workforce.
- **Connections:** Many want to build a communication bridge between the school staff and government officials in their community. Learning about what “government” is working on and also talk about what the schools are working on.

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Monona East Side Business Alliance
and Workforce Development Board
of South Central Wisconsin

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES

- A New Leaf Flowers & Gifts
- A Woman's Touch
- Access to Independence, INC
- Ace Hardware Center
- Aids Resource Center of Wi
- Alimentari
- America Votes
- American Family Insurance
- Anaala Salon & Spa
- Asian House
- Associated Bank
- Atwood Barber Shop
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- Batch Bakehouse
- Bethesda Thrift Shop
- Birrenkott Appliance Inc
- Block Systems Cleaners Inc
- BMO Harris Bank
- Bowers Family Chiropractic
- Boyden Financial, Inc.
- BP Stop-N-Go (2)
- Bunky's Catering
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- Café Coda
- Cafe Domestique
- Cargo Coffee
- Central Storage & Warehouse Co
- Cha Cha Beauty & Barber
- Chez Vous Catering
- Common Wealth Development Inc
- Community Care Veterinary Clinic
- Conner Dipersio
- Cost Cutters
- Cottage Café
- Country Antiques Refinishing
- Country Clips
- Coz Skaife
- Crema Café
- Cresa
- CrossFit Recursive (2)
- D.B.'s Service Center
- Daisy Cafe & Cupcakery
- Dental Health Associates
- Diane's Draperies
- Dream Lanes
- DuBois Auto Clinic
- East Madison Baptist Church
- East Madison Monona Coalition of the Aging
- ECO Skin Therapy
- El Poblano Mexican Restaurant
- Eldorado Grill
- Elie's Family Restaurant
- Endless Knot
- Epic Games
- Exhaust Pros Muffler Shop
- FairShare CSA Coalition
- FIRE Light Group
- Fired Up Pottery & Glass
- Four Lakes Veterinary Clinic
- Franklin Energy Services Inc
- Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier
- Gayfeather Fabrics
- GiGi's Playhouse Madison
- Glass Nickel Pizza
- GoodFellas Barber & Lounge
- Groundswell Conservancy
- Hå Long Bay Restaurant
- Happy Bambino
- Harley's Liquor & Bait
- Harley's Wine & Spirits
- Harmony Vet Acupuncture & Spine Care
- HC Cabinets & Design Center LLC
- Heartland Credit Union
- Hoey Apothecary
- Home & Office Upholstery, Inc.
- Howe Brothers Plumbing LLC
- Huston Design
- IBC Bookkeeping Solutions
- Insight Counseling & Wellness
- Integrated Art Group
- IPM Institute of North America
- Jacket Racket Screen Printing
- Jamerica Restaurant
- Janssen Shoe and Leather Repair
- Java Cat Coffee
- Jenifer Street Market
- Karmenta Center
- Kiya L Genthe
- Klinke Cleaners
- Knupp & Watson
- Kwik Trip
- Lake Edge Seafood Company
- Lakeside Press
- Lauer Realty Group
- Lazy Jane's Cafe and Bakery
- Legal Action of Wisconsin
- Lynch Auto Body, Inc
- M&M Real Estate Investments, Inc.
- Machinery Row Bicycles
- MadCat Pet Supplies
- Madison Auto Detail
- Madison Community Acupuncture
- Madison Craft & Gift Shops
- Madison Public Library
- Madison Sourdough
- Manhattan Hair Designs LLC,
- Martin Glass Company
- McCormick Lumber & Cabinetry, Inc.
- McDonalds DP&K
- Megan's Custom Framing
- Meineke Car Care Center
- Mennenga Tax & Financial Service
- Metta Acupuncture LLC
- Mickey's Tavern
- Mindful Motion Physical Therapy, LLC
- Monona Bakery & Eatery
- Monona Bank - Atwood
- Monty's Blue Plate Diner
- Moren Investments, LLC
- Mother Fool's Coffeehouse
- Mullein Moon Midwifery
- New Moon Wellness
- Nomadic Grill + Home
- NRG Automotive Repair
- Nutcrack
- Old National Bank
- Outland Design LLC
- People Ready
- PerBlue
- Planet Propaganda
- Play Haven Atlas, LLC
- Player's Sports Bar
- Poke Poke
- QPS Employment Group
- Rebecca Lynn Studio
- Red Caboose Child Care Center, Inc
- Red Sage Health
- Revolution Cycles
- Richard's Beauty Salon
- Rick's Olde Gold
- Rocco's Liquor Store
- Rocky Rococo's
- Rufus DuMonde Pet Salon
- Ryan Hair Designs
- Safe Communities Madison-Dane County
- Saints Madison Juice Co.
- Samurai
- SARA Investment Real Estate
- Sardine
- Schwa Tailor Shop
- Screen Door Studio
- Seversin's Service Center
- Society of St Vincent de Paul
- SolEscape Healing Arts
- Solidarity Realty
- SSM Health - Atwood
- Stalzy's Deli
- Star Liquor
- Stark Company Realtors
- State Farm - Vanessa Gandolfo
- State Farm - Tyler Peterson
- Stone Fence
- Stop & Go
- StoryBridge Studio
- Struck & Irwin Fence
- Stuff-N-Store
- Synergos Counseling - East
- T-Mobile
- Talbot Studio and Gallery
- TAPIT/new works
- Taqueria 3 Amigos
- Tellurian
- The Cargo Bike Shop
- The Madison Greenhouse Store
- The Old Clock Shop Clock Repair
- The Petinary
- The Roman Candle
- The Studio
- The Victory Madison, LLC
- TheoryThree Interactive LLC
- THORPS Haircuts & Color
- Tinnen Family Chiropractic
- Truesdell Animal Care Hospital & Clinic
- Underdog Pet Rescue of Wisconsin
- Underground Butcher
- Underground Food Collective
- United Way of Dane County
- Verdanterra, LLC
- Viet Hoa Market
- Villard & Associates CPA
- Warren Family Dental
- Wayne's Automotive
- Weary Traveler Freehouse
- Westfield Comics
- WholeTrees Structures
- Willalby's Café
- Willy Street Co-op
- Willy Street Gas Station
- Wisconsin Automotive
- Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Working Draft Beer
- Yellow Dog Productions
- Zip N Stitch Alterations