



2019 Village of Allouez Business Walk Report

Prepared by: Village of Allouez Economic Development Committee
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January 3, 2020

Business Walk Purpose

The Village of Allouez, in partnership with the Village Economic Development Committee, conducted our inaugural Business Walk event in 2019, as a way to connect with businesses and to learn first-hand about the business climate in the village. Volunteers were sent out to visit businesses and gather input regarding how to better support local businesses. The information gathered is to be used to help prioritize economic development initiatives and guide business assistance.

Summary of Survey Questions and Responses

Turnout and participation for the inaugural Village of Allouez Business Walk was incredible, with 36 businesses visited in the month of October. Businesses were happy to provide input and seemed to share similar sentiment of appreciation for the effort.

Survey questions were selected by the Economic Development Committee and staff to gauge general business climate in the village. Responses were read first and then categorized for the summary purposes of this report.

What makes your business successful and unique?

A variety of business sectors were interviewed during this event, all with something different that makes the business unique. Many of these related to the type of product or service provided and many took pride on things like consistency, personalization, moral compass, specialization or customized service, and keeping things simple. It is certain that these unique factors contribute to the success of Allouez businesses.

The part of the question which asked what makes the business successful fielded more common responses. The three reoccurring responses were location, longevity, and success of surrounding businesses. The location of the business was mentioned in almost all responses as a reason for success – access to the highway, proximity to an area destination, or central location within the greater Green Bay area. Six of the businesses touted being in their location for over 20 years, with two of these being more than 40 years in service at the current location.

What are the biggest challenges for your business?

Challenges, like businesses, come in all shapes and sizes. There were a variety of challenges listed in the survey responses. Some responses were more macro related – e.g. staffing, increasing costs, finding new business, and competition. Other challenges identified were more specialized and localized, like snow removal, road construction or access, signage, landlord issues, or problems with adjacent businesses. Visibility and lack of activity on the corridor were also localized comments, but more general in nature. The village may not be able to solve all of these challenges, but can meet with business owners to help identify solutions that may alleviate, if not eliminate, the challenges.

What type of support do you need or expect from the village?

Constructive criticism and affirmation are usually things that help build on success. Businesses were asked what they expect from the village to see what we are currently doing that does work or does not work. Nearly 50 percent of the responses said that village was meeting expectations and did not provide additional comment. Better or more communication was the most common response among those that did provide additional comment. Creating a destination to attract people to the area was also a more common response. Other comments were more specific, such as pedestrian access to the Fox River Trail, turn arrows or other traffic control measures, and improved snow removal in a particular location.

What best describes your business in the next five years?

The question was asked to describe business plans for the next five years; i.e. does the business intend to grow, merge or consolidate, close, retire, or sell. If the business intends to grow, the respondent was asked in which way. All responses indicated that they plan on growing their business over the next five years. One respondent did indicate that they would consider selling with growth. Figure 1 shows the different areas in which businesses plan to grow over the next five years, with sales being the predominant answer at 64 percent.

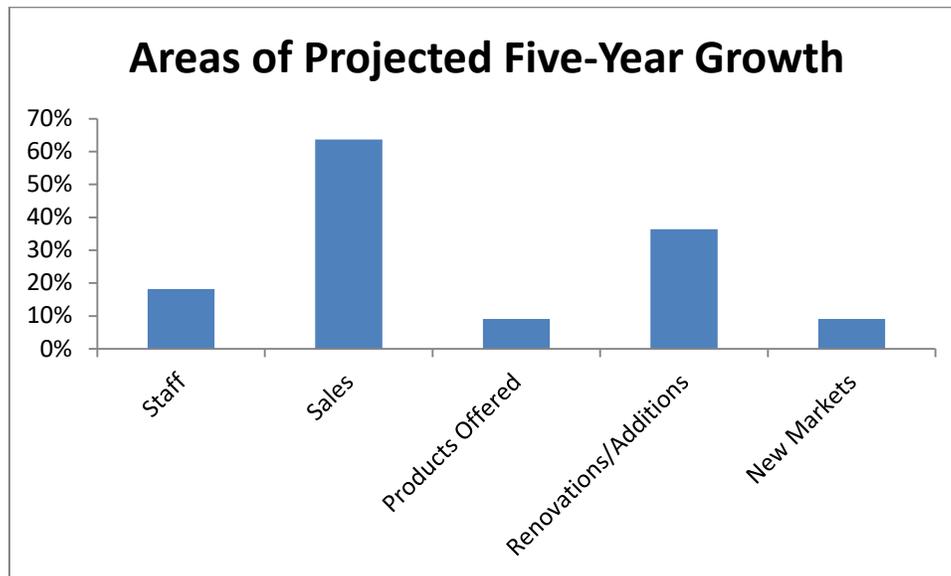


Figure 1: Areas of projected growth according to 2019 Village of Allouez Business Walk Survey.

Space was not provided on the survey for further explanation to this question, however, notes from the surveyors indicated that a limitation to growth maybe issues with landlords, issues with existing buildings, broader market conditions, or labor shortages.

Why did you choose to locate in Allouez?

Many things go into the selection of a location for a business. Not surprisingly, the item that businesses listed as making them successful earlier in the survey was a reoccurring reason for choosing to locate in Allouez – location, location, location. Other reasons included safe community, business friendly environment, ease of access for customers, filling a localized niche or market gap, or seizing a building space opportunity.

How do you find out what is going on in Allouez and the greater Green Bay area?

The question was asked on how the business finds out about what is going on in their community. Only 11 of the 36 businesses visited provided a response for this question. Reasoning for the small number of responses to this question may be that the question was at the end of the survey and was not asked due to time constraints or possible lack of flow relative to other questions. Nonetheless, of the answers provided, social media and word of mouth (family and friends) were the largest two responses, with 73 percent and 82 percent of the respondents citing this as a main source of information respectively. The next highest answer provided was the Green Bay Press Gazette, with 45 percent. Figure 2 shows the different sources businesses use to obtain information. Future questions might look to see if answers change across industries and sectors (e.g. office work versus service industry) for the Village of Allouez to most efficiently disseminate information to the correct parties.

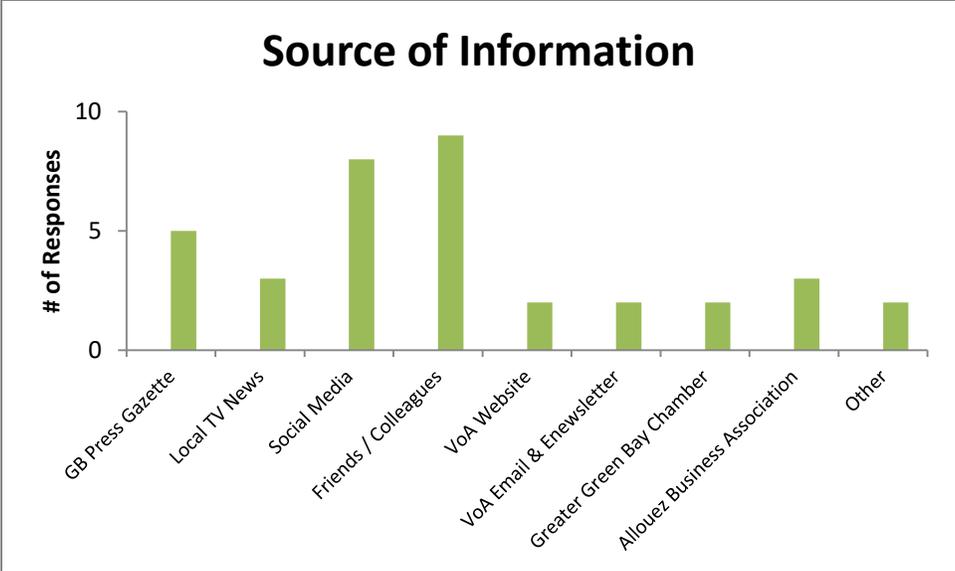


Figure 2: The different sources businesses use to obtain information according to the 2019 Village of Allouez Business Walk Survey.

Next Steps

The most important element of a business walk is the opportunity to follow-up with individual businesses regarding specific challenges, and to identify strategies or initiatives that will be undertaken as a result of the information learned during the survey. About 20 percent of the businesses visited requested an individual follow-up with them to address their specific issues or to share the results of the survey. Staff plans to reach out to these businesses and continue the dialogue. The Economic Development Committee plans to continue the event in future years to continue to improve dialogue between the Village of Allouez and the businesses that locate within the borders.

Appendix

Business Survey 2019



Walker Names:						Walk Date:			
Business Name:						Business Contact Person:			
1	Tell me about your business. What makes you successful? What do you believe makes you unique?								
2	What are the biggest challenges you face?								
3	What type of support do you need or expect from the village?								
4	Which of these best describes your business in the next 5 years?	<input type="checkbox"/> Growth in (circle all that apply):							
		Staff	Sales	Products Offered	Square Footage	New Markets			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Merging or Consolidating							
		<input type="checkbox"/> Closing, Retiring, or Selling							
								<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
5	Why did you choose to locate in Allouez? Is this your "main" location?								
6	How do you find out what is going on in Allouez and the greater Green Bay area?	Rate on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 = daily / 3 = weekly / 1 = never							
		Green Bay Press Gazette	Local TV News	Social Media	Friends / Colleagues	Village of Allouez Website	Village of Allouez e-mail/e-newsletter	Greater Green Bay Chamber	Allouez Business Association
7	Would you like someone to follow up with you after the walk?	Yes				No			
		E-mail and other preferred contact information (business card?):							
Notes:									
For Any Questions Contact: Trevor Fuller Village of Allouez Planning and Zoning Administrator Phone: 920-448-2800 Email: trevor@villageofallouez.com									