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GREATER BLOOMINGTON BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT SURVEY

Final Report

Bloomington Economic Development Corporation
City of Bloomington
Cook Group
Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce
Monroe County Commissioner's Office

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Greater Bloomington Business Environment Survey is a joint effort by the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation, the City of Bloomington, and Monroe County. The Survey was distributed through email, word of mouth, fax, and in-person to businesses in the City of Bloomington and Monroe County. A total of 137 business owners and/or primary decision makers (respondents) provided their feedback between April and May of 2018.
- The majority of respondents are satisfied with the success of their business (90%) and are committed to operating in the Greater Bloomington area for the next 5 years (91%). Although committed and successful, 35% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the local business environment.
- Respondents were most satisfied with the local economy and the Bloomington community, such as small businesses and the downtown atmosphere. These factors were rated highest for having a positive impact on the success of their businesses, as well as their desire to remain committed to operating in the Bloomington area.
- 49.5% indicated policies such as public transportation and walking/biking paths had a positive impact on the success of their business.
- Respondents expressed concerns related to public safety, graffiti, vandalism, road construction, those experiencing homelessness, and limited downtown parking as deterring employees and customers from their businesses. Respondents were least satisfied with some local government policies, regulations, and processes. More than half (56%) indicated certain local government policies are negatively impacting the success of their businesses, and 45% consider the local government difficult to work with. Some respondents expressed the concern that the government does not understand business practices and is disconnected from the realities of operating a business in the Greater Bloomington area.
- Respondents indicated the availability and affordability of commercial/office space (34%) and the ability to attract and retain qualified employees (34%) are also having a negative impact on their business success.
- Respondents expressed gratitude for the opportunity to provide feedback about their needs and concerns, and they are eager to participate in future discussions and decision making about these important topics.

INTRODUCTION

The research aims of this project are to better understand the business climate in the City of Bloomington and Monroe County, from the perspectives of local business leaders, and to identify factors that are impacting the growth and success of their businesses. The findings from this study will be used to identify opportunities to improve the Greater Bloomington business environment and increase satisfaction among business leaders. This study is intended to serve as a baseline measure and will have a follow-up study in 1-2 years to measure the effectiveness of actions taken by the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC), the City of Bloomington, and Monroe County, and the business community to address the feedback received.

METHODOLOGY

Recruitment and Procedures

To qualify for the study, participants had to identify as either being an owner or primary decision maker of a business within the Greater Bloomington area. The Greater Bloomington area includes any area within Monroe County. For research purposes, respondents needed to identify the location of their business as being in the downtown district, within the city of Bloomington but not downtown, or outside the city limits but within Monroe County. The downtown district can be seen in *Figure 1*.

An invitation letter requesting participation in this voluntary study was sent during April 2018 via email from the Chamber to both member and non-member contacts within their database, consisting of ~800 businesses and ~2,500 individuals. The Chamber was identified as having the most comprehensive list of businesses; however, some gaps include very small businesses, start-ups, and some retailers. Participants were provided an anonymous link to an online survey to provide their feedback. There was one reminder email sent to the contact list one week later.

The research team also requested participation by sending faxes to local businesses. A total of 1,200 faxes were sent; 571 were received.

Additionally, the research team attended the Chamber's Primetime Business event in April 2018 that 93 community businesses attended. During this event, information cards were distributed containing a link and QR code to access the survey. Additionally, surveys were completed onsite using iPads.

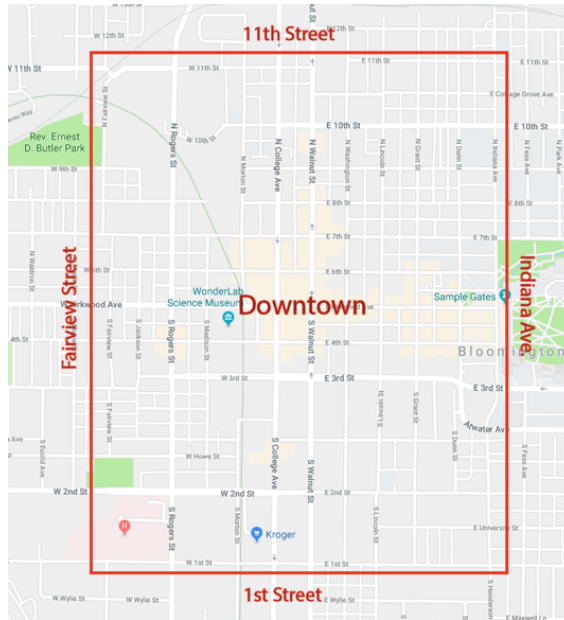


Figure 1. Downtown Bloomington District.

Online Survey

To ensure the survey instrument was designed to meet the study objectives, the Cook Medical research team performed nine in-depth interviews with business leaders and decision makers in Bloomington. In addition, the team reviewed questionnaires designed for a similar purpose from other cities in the United States. The instrument went through a review process, which included all participating sponsors and the research team.

To maintain anonymity while still being able to group and analyze similar types of businesses, respondents were asked to provide general information about their business using categories to select from. Classification information includes location of their business, number of employees, length of time the business has been in operation, type of business (for-profit or non-profit), and sector/industry.

Qualified participants were asked a series of questions relating to their general outlook on the business environment relating to satisfaction, commitment & advocacy, and perceived level of success. Subsequent questions focused on factors positively and negatively impacting the success of their business.

Respondents were asked open-ended questions following each factor. This provided respondents the opportunity to describe how the factor impacted the success of their business. Those respondents who indicated a factor as having a negative impact were then asked to provide more detail, as well as suggestions for improvement. For respondents who selected either the local government policies and/or the ability to attract or retain qualified employees as having a negative impact on their business, additional questions were asked to further understand the primary issues.

The last question was open-ended, asking participants for suggestions.

RESULTS

Respondent Sample

A total of 137 business owners or primary decision makers provided their feedback. 92 respondents fully completed the survey.

Among the respondents, 64% identified as business owners and 49% identified as primary decision makers. Respondents identified their business being located either downtown (37%), within the City of Bloomington but not downtown (45%), and outside of the city but within Monroe County (18%). The majority (90%) of the respondents indicated their business was for-profit.

About half (46%) of the respondents reported being in operation for more than 20 years, and the average among respondents was 15 years. In terms of business size, a third (33%) of the respondents indicated that they have fewer than 5 employees (both full-time and part-time), more than three-quarters (77%) of respondents indicated having under 20 employees. Most respondents identified their business sector/industry being either retail trade (23%), finance & insurance (16%), real estate (15%), restaurant/food services (5%), manufacturing (5%), healthcare & social assistance (5%), construction (4%), arts & entertainment & recreation (4%), or wholesale trade (3%).

Close to 70% of respondents indicated that they work primarily with the Bloomington government, while 30% work primarily with the Monroe County government. The second section of the survey focuses on business leaders' interaction with local government. Respondents were asked to select the government entity that they work with primarily. Over half (51%) of the respondents indicated rarely or never being in contact with their respective government entity. 25% of the respondents indicated being in frequent contact.

Attitudinal Measures Towards Success & the Business Environment

Overall, respondents are satisfied with the success of their business (90%) and are committed to operating over the next 5 years within Bloomington/Monroe County (91%). However, a smaller portion of the respondents (48%) indicated being satisfied with the local business environment. Similarly, less than half (49%) of respondents would recommend starting a business in Bloomington/Monroe County to a friend (*Figure 2*).



Figure 2. Attitudinal measures towards success and the business environment.

Factors Impacting Business Success

Overall, respondents identified that the local economy (69%), other businesses in the area (59%), and public transportation & walking/biking paths (58%) positively impact the success of businesses in the Bloomington/Monroe County area.

The standout factor is that 57% of respondents indicated local government policies were having a negative impact on business success. Other factors indicated by more than 30% of the respondents as negatively impacting businesses included availability/affordability of office-retail-commercial space (35%) and the ability to attract and retain qualified employees (35%). Additional areas expressed as negatively impacting business success include zoning, the effects on the community from those experiencing homelessness, and certain government policies and processes.

Factors where the sentiment is less distinguishable include parking/ease of access and the local environment/atmosphere.

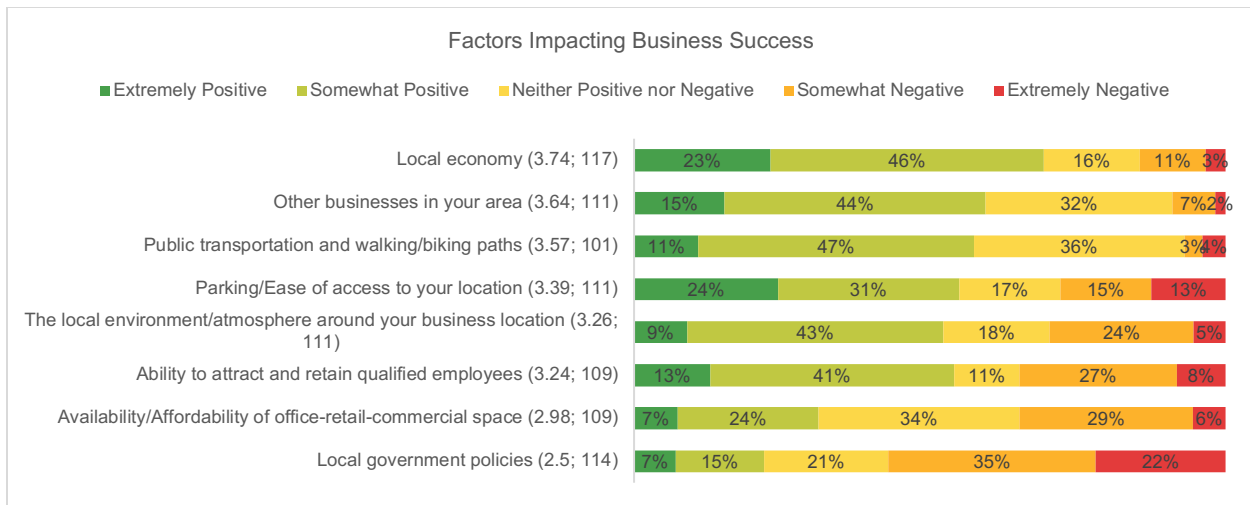


Figure 3. Perceptual ratings for factors that may impact the success of businesses.

To follow up on specific government-related issues, respondents were asked an additional set of questions focusing on a variety of local government policies and processes (Figure 4). A sizeable portion of respondents had negative sentiment regarding local government policies and processes. More specifically, respondents viewed land use/zoning regulations (52%), process-related issues dealing with the local government (46%), processes for handling loitering, panhandling, and vagrancy (40%), fees/costs of regulations (39%), and local taxes (38%) as negatively impacting local businesses.

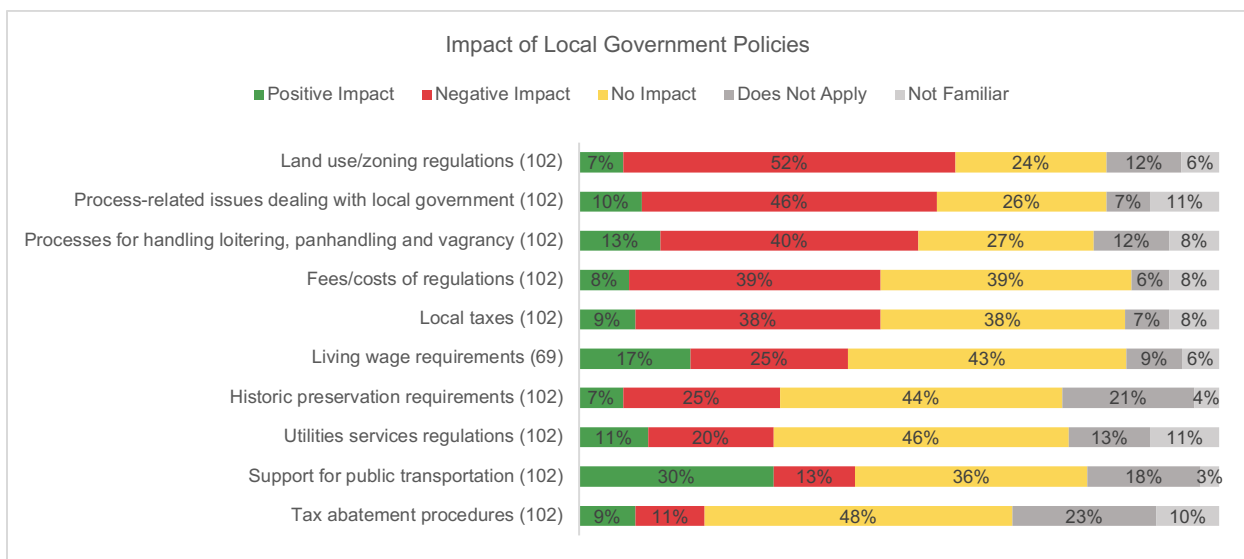


Figure 4. Impact of Local Government Policies on Business Environment.

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on their experiences working with the City of Bloomington or Monroe County governments regarding the ease of working with them, consistency of communication, and clarity regarding local government policies. As shown

in *Figure 5*, respondents were more likely to have less favorable to neutral attitudes towards the issues versus favorable ones. Only around a quarter of respondents agreed that working with the local government is an easy process, that communication is consistent, and that the policies are clear and easy to understand.

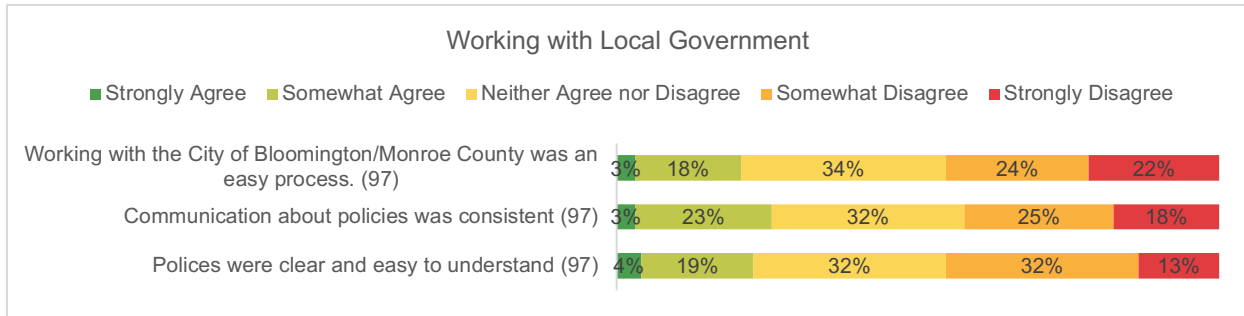


Figure 5. Experience Working with Government Entities.

The next set of questions pertained to the Greater Bloomington area’s employee pool. Over a third (37%) of respondents indicated having no current difficulties attracting and retaining qualified employees (*Figure 6*). Among respondents, the top two employee types being difficult to attract and retain included sales and related (22%) and office and administrative support (20%). Between 7-14% of respondents identified business, financial, legal and other professional services, installation, maintenance, and repair services, construction, cleaning, extraction, farming, management and production occupation employees being difficult to attract and retain. 5% of the respondents indicated that “other” employee types that are difficult to attract and retain include social workers and employees with trade skills.

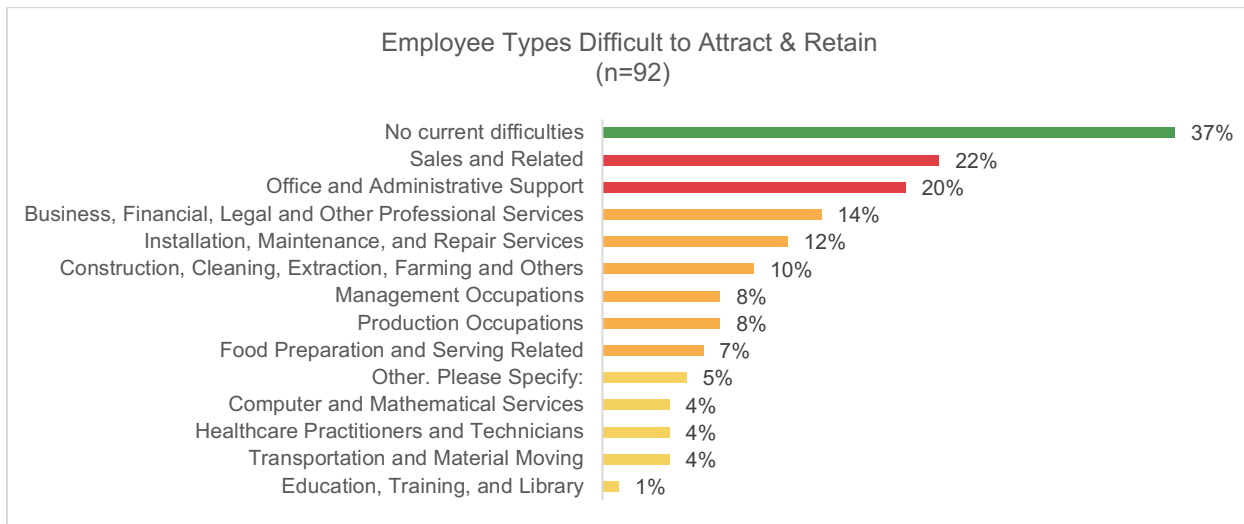


Figure 6. Employee Types Difficult to Attract & Retain.

Close to half (45%) of respondents indicated having no current difficulties attracting and retaining qualified employees with specific education levels (*Figure 7*). The top two employee education levels being difficult to attract and retain among respondents included some college or certification (38%) and high school diploma/GED (22%).

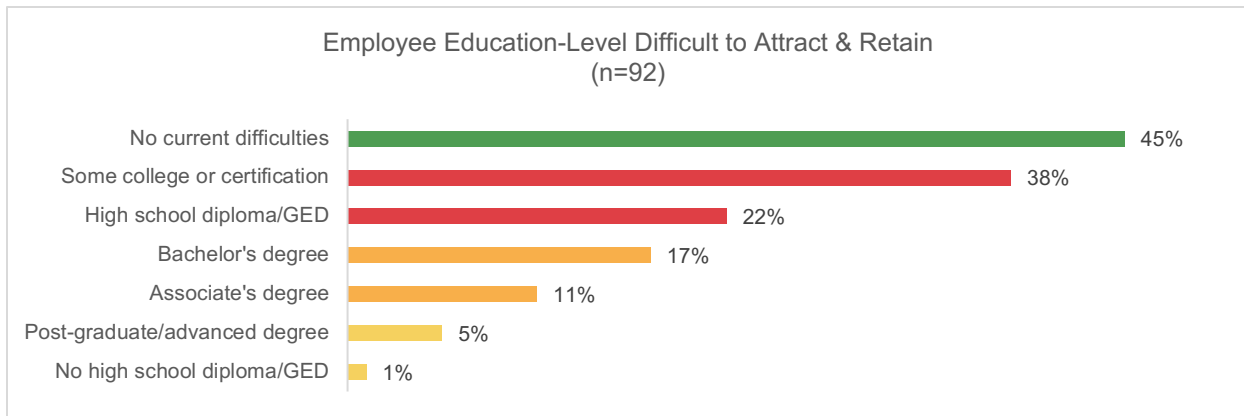


Figure 7. Employee Education-Level Difficult to Attract & Retain.

Close to half (47%) of respondents expressed that attracting qualified employees locally is challenging (*Figure 8*). Challenges include meeting salary expectations (32%), retaining qualified employees (26%), availability of affordable housing (23%), willingness to work shifts (22%), and having competitive healthcare/benefits (22%). Only about a quarter (27%) of respondents have no current challenges.

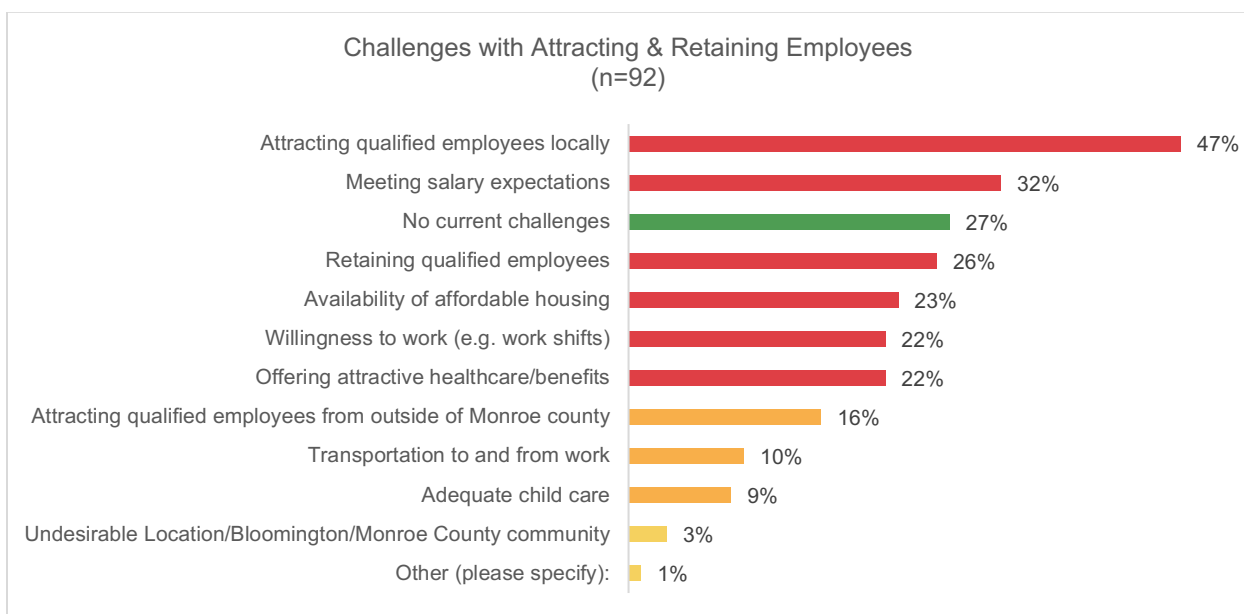


Figure 8. Challenges with attracting & retaining qualified employees.

Respondents who indicated that “availability of affordable housing” was a challenge to attracting and retaining qualified employees were asked a follow-up question to determine a price point (*Figure 9*). The housing types that are considered in shortage are at the lower price range. The majority of respondents (52-71%) indicated that housing with a rent of \$1,000 a month or less and price-to-own of \$200,000 or less were in shortage in the Greater Bloomington area.

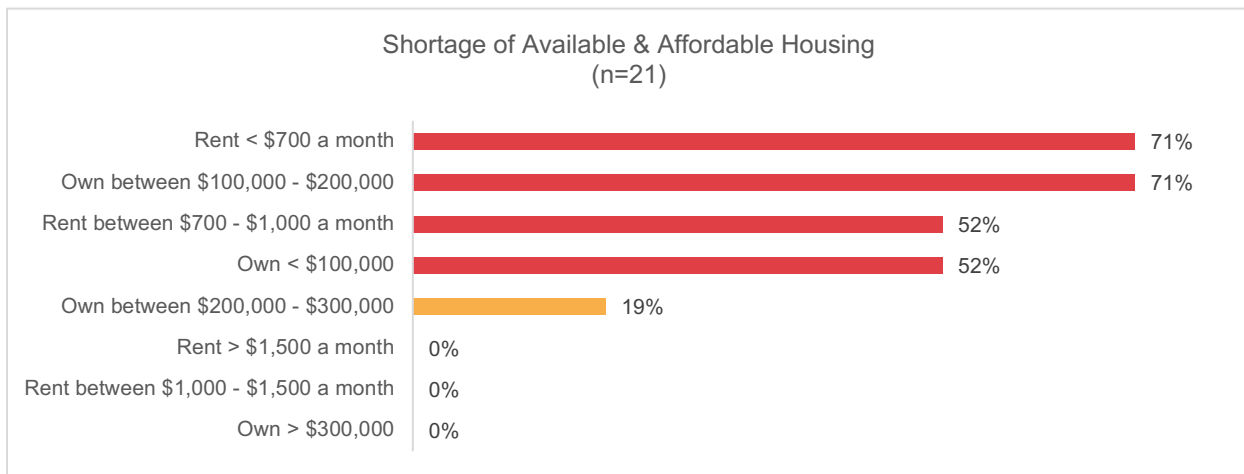


Figure 9. Shortage of Available & Affordable Housing.

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

FACTORS POSITIVELY IMPACTING BUSINESS SUCCESS

Local Economy & Other Businesses in the Area

Business leaders expressed that the local economy contributes positively to the success of local businesses. One respondent mentioned that a “thriving town will bring more people, more jobs, and more money into our economy. It is imperative that we keep it strong for all of us to succeed.” Another respondent said, “Due to IU, Cook and Crane our local economy continues to be positive.”

“I think mostly our economy stays afloat due to the university. We are luckier than most cities in this regard. Our economy does not seem to suffer as much when there are downturns in the economy elsewhere.”

Regarding area business, respondents mentioned that having a mixture of local businesses is important to their success. One respondent said, “Any business that attracts traffic flow can potentially be good for my business.” Another respondent said, “The success of the other businesses in Bloomington and surrounding areas help with the success of our company.”

“The less small business we have, the less appealing this city is for future businesses. We are different because we are a hub for small businesses. You feel it in our streets. I think we all have a vested interest in making sure we maintain that personality.”

“Surrounding businesses make the downtown area a fun and lively environment.”

Overall, the sentiment among respondents is that Bloomington is a wonderful community with a unique personality. While Indiana University provides world-class education and economic stability within the Greater Bloomington area, some business leaders are concerned that there is too much focus on I.U. while not emphasizing the needs of smaller businesses. For example, one respondent said,

“I am concerned about the large wealth gap in our area. I fear too much focus is being placed on IU-related "startup" type businesses at the expense of the larger citizenry of non-IU folks who live here in Monroe County. Those people who grew up here and have family here are most likely to remain, not students who just graduated. Not everyone has or needs an advanced degree, nor wants to be involved in tech. I am concerned about the loss of blue-collar job opportunities that pay a sustainable wage to those folks. We need to look for ways to attract businesses that will fill this void.”

Public Transportation & Walking/Biking Paths

In general, respondents feel that local government policies surrounding the local transportation system and connectivity has a positive impact on business success. Respondents have a favorable view towards the public transportation options available, including the bus system and the local biking/walking trails. Suggestions for improvements focus on increased connectivity between downtown and other areas (such as the west side of town), adding Sunday bus routes, and improving overall safety with walking/biking paths. Some respondents feel that the bike paths and trails benefit only a small group of people and are overdone, and that money could be better spent on roads, sidewalks, and utilities.

“I love that Bloomington has a love for the ecosystem. However, the bike paths are somewhat confusing for drivers as they crisscross and actually are quite dangerous in my opinion.”

“The biggest change I've seen is the presumed safety on the biking/walking paths. In particular the southern end of the B-line trail. With homeless living in the woods around there, it feels unsafe to walk/run/bike by yourself on those paths. I'm hoping the changes occurring will help alleviate some of that fear but it is a concern.”

“Focus on spending infrastructures funding on roads, utilities and other projects - not just paths. Develop transportation plan for roads and streets for the city and county”

FACTORS MODERATELY IMPACTING BUSINESS SUCCESS

Parking/Ease of Access to Business Location & Atmosphere

Parking stands out as one of the major challenges that impacts some local businesses, especially in the downtown area. One respondent said that “the lack of parking for my patrons at our downtown location caused me to move to the outskirts of town.” For others, primarily those not located downtown, they have adequate space for employee and patron parking.

“In general, downtown parking is a big and growing issue, as new permits for multi-family housing and commercial locations continue to be issued with inadequate parking available.”

“Parking for business owner and their employees is atrocious. I wish we could get some kind of deal for the meters.”

“We have a parking lot, so parking is not an issue. If we didn't my answer would have been different.”

Some respondents indicated that the meter system is not the most effective way of managing parking. One respondent described, “Downtown parking is very inconvenient. Nobody likes the parking meters and they should at least let you clock in and out rather than guess how much time you need. The technology was readily available when the city purchased the antiquated equipment it has.” Similarly, another respondent expressed the frustration working with the meter even with the newly launched app.

“The meters have negatively impacted the businesses downtown on both the consumer and business side. My business is not located downtown, but as a consumer I spend much less time downtown as the idea of ‘strolling through downtown’ is no longer an option. Even when using the parking app there is a constant feeling that the meter is running while you are patronizing restaurants and businesses, therefore spending less time and money in the vicinity.”

“Our building has a dedicated private parking lot, but space is often used by non-patrons avoiding parking meters and pay garages. In general, downtown parking is a big and growing issue as new permits for multi-family housing and commercial locations continue to be issued with inadequate parking available.”

Despite the frustration with parking, one respondent said that the “downtown area will always struggle to have enough parking, but please don't put the needs of parking over

the walkability of our downtown. A downtown full of parking lots doesn't attract anyone.” Another respondent said, “There are too many student apartments in the area north of the square that adversely impacts the small businesses in the area, due to vandalism, littering and general uncivil behavior during episodes of public drunkenness.”

FACTORS NEGATIVELY IMPACTING BUSINESS SUCCESS

Interaction with Local Government Entities

Business leaders are looking for a more balanced and open attitude towards business owners. Several respondents expressed concerns that the local government does not fully understand the needs of local businesses and is not cultivating an environment that fosters growth and the ability to succeed. Therefore, the businesses’ needs are not prioritized, and business leaders feel that they “don’t have a seat at the table” and are without a voice. In short, as one respondent commented, “we live in an extremely liberal area where the opinion of the local business man or the public as a whole do not matter.”

Some respondents indicated that larger businesses and organizations receive "preferential" and "special" treatment and that the Greater Bloomington environment is not supportive for small or developing businesses. One respondent said that “elected officials say they want small businesses, but the policies they put in place can only be implemented/afforded by larger companies, landscaping, limited parking, etc.” Some respondents expressed that local government policies and rules do not encourage businesses to succeed, being referred to as “anti-business” and “anti-growth.” One respondent said this:

“I would just ask that restrictions would allow a little more flexibility to businesses starting up or moving to a different location. The timeline to build or renovate is way too long and I feel that we as a community often come up on the losing end when companies are looking at multiple locations to expand toward.”

Many respondents expressed frustration working with the local government, mentioning that it can be “too restrictive” and “overbearing.” One respondent said, “Every time you deal with the city, it is like pulling teeth.” The challenges range from a variety of issues from calls not being returned and delayed responses and actions, to overall negative experiences relating to attitudes among government employees.

“Working with the local government is extremely difficult. There seems to be no continuity working with different departments. It's hard to get anybody to call you back.”

Local Government Policies: Zoning

Overall, respondents feel that local policies and regulations are too strict for the growth of local businesses, to the extent that these policies encourage businesses to leave the county to be able to operate. Zoning and land use were at the top of these concerns.

Respondents suggested that the government should “create zoning and ordinances that are practical, promote growth, easy to plan around and a process that businesses can navigate that has clear benchmarks.” One respondent went on to describe it like this:

“City and County need to review their building restrictions and anti-business stance.”

“The county land plan is a real problem. We are in the land sales business and the County Plan continues to be a negative for our sellers.”

“I operate a service industry business. And as such, I'm classified as a "general contractor." This means my zoning requirements are the same as a company that builds apartment complexes and parking garages. So, if I want to grow in the county I'm currently required to purchase "industrial" land that has the same zoning requirements as companies that operate their land on an incredibly intensive use compared to our use of the land. The county's definitions place any service industry in this same classification and seem to be extremely detrimental to the small business platform.”

Another respondent suggests that there is an opportunity to improve communication and consistency between the local government and businesses regarding land use. Respondents are looking for regulations that are practical.

“Regulate your people [local government] in planning/zoning/utilities. They have too much control over people's livelihoods. Too many times I've talked to someone who has been or is being bullied by planning. Trying to enforce rules that don't apply. In general, it seems like it just depends on what mood someone is in when you go to get something done with the county. This is not good for anyone. They get paid to help, not hinder. Bloomington could have a lot more businesses if they would do a better job working with people.”

“Consider having a ‘Business Advocate’ program that helps local businesses through the process of designing and building facilities. The Advocate would need to know the ins and outs of both City and County planning requirements, zoning, how and when to file for variances, perks and advantages of sustainable building options, etc.”

Local Government Policies: Panhandling and Homelessness

Respondents expressed that loitering, panhandling, and vagrancy within the Greater Bloomington area is negatively impacting businesses and the community as a whole. Some feel that the government is not doing a sufficient job to address these issues with the attention that it deserves. Other respondents take it a step further to say that the local government enables a culture of homelessness, and that “Bloomington is too attractive to homeless,” and that “the City seems to turn its head on this problem.” One respondent said this:

“Being located near Seminary Park we are constantly battling homeless, drug issues, foul language, fights, overdose issues and many other homeless people hanging around our office. This issue needs attention fast and a move of the Shalom needs to happen. The city must get a handle on the Homeless in this town ASAP! The issue of homelessness is oftentimes associated with trash, litter, graffiti, homeless, drug users and all negatively affect the area around [their] business.”

Some respondents expressed that loitering, panhandling, and vagrancy increases a sense of danger within the community and among their employees and patrons. One respondent feels that the city needs “more policing of vagrants and those experiencing homelessness in the downtown district to keep it safe for families.” Other respondents mentioned experiencing direct business costs related to vagrancy. Others are concerned about the indirect cost associated with homelessness within the community, which makes the business environment less appealing, and “can be a detraction to visitors” as well as other community members. One respondent said, “I have employees who are afraid to be in our building alone so we may have to look at moving to an outlying area.”

Local Government Policies: Transportation & Road Construction

In addition to the discussion on parking, public transportation, and trails and paths, the road construction has had a serious impact on the local businesses and is “out of control.” One respondent pleaded, “Please finish a road construction project before you begin more. Having every major road under construction close to the West Side makes it nearly impossible to commute anywhere. How does it make sense to have to detour off a detour to get anywhere? People are driving extra miles because everything is torn up and nothing is getting finished.” It seems to the respondents that the construction work is lacking in coordination and is seriously impacting their productivity. They suggested that “the city and county... work together on managing construction and traffic.”

Local Government Policies: Signage

While signage was not a topic specifically assessed in the questionnaire, some respondents provided their feedback on this area. Some respondents feel that local government sign regulations are overly restrictive and unclear. One respondent said this:

“I find local government policies and ordinances on signage to be overly restrictive. Navigating them and getting approvals recently took us several weeks as a result.”

Availability/Affordability of Office-Retail-Commercial Space

The Greater Bloomington area experiences high demand for residential and commercial space. One respondent said, “Bloomington will grow in spite of itself, but the cost (of housing, in particular, my business) will be much higher than the regional and statewide average due to restrictive regulatory policy.” Some respondents indicated that it is difficult for them to find available and affordable space. Interestingly, some respondents

expressed concerns over the multitude of empty commercial spaces downtown, which highlights that the shortage of affordable space may be the greater issue at hand.

“Lower rental considerations for retail businesses. If you are not a bar or a business that caters to IU students it's extremely hard to meet the high rental demands. Too many retail businesses in the downtown fountain district cannot make it.”

Ability to Attract and Retain Qualified Employees

Over a third of respondents expressed concerns about attracting and retaining qualified employees within the Greater Bloomington area. The most cited difficult employee groups to attract and retain are for entry-level jobs and jobs that require trade skills.

“It's hard to find skilled labor for our metal fabrication shop. We are willing to train unskilled worker, but even those folks lack "soft skills" (showing up for work every day, passing drug tests, etc.)”

“Bloomington doesn't have much industry, so there aren't a lot of people willing to work for a living.”

Business leaders attribute the shortage to the lack of appeal and encouragement for young people to enter vocational training. One respondent shared, “With the lack of any focus on the trades it makes finding employees a challenge.” Many hoped that schools would encourage students to pursue such a career.

“Need middle school and high school guidance counselors' continued support for trade and certificate training at schools like Ivy Tech instead of the constant emphasis on 4-year degree programs. (Franklin Initiative Rocks!)”

“Workforce issues are difficult to address. Even if you offer the training (IU, Ivy Tech, Trade Schools, etc.), those don't address the issue of soft skills, which have more to do about a person's character as a human being. That has to be address at a very young age. So maybe focusing in providing for families in poverty, schools/education, drug prevention, etc. Also, given the current trend of traditional college education becoming more irrelevant, focus children in school toward careers in labor trades, tech trades, and other skilled trades, that don't necessarily require a college/university degree.”

“The city/county should be less focused on keeping Kelley School graduates and tech graduates here, and more focused on attracting companies with long-term potential to provide a broad range of jobs (skill-wise and pay-wise) for the citizens who want to continue to make Monroe County home. And when talking about retaining IU graduates, don't forget that it is not only people who major in business who have valuable skills as employees--the arts and sciences produce people who can think critically and "outside the box.”

The housing demand in Bloomington has been a long-standing problem and may impact the ability for employees to work and live within the area. One respondent described, “All the housing any more is apartments, apartments and more apartments. Young people starting their lives and families do not have many affordable opportunities, so it is hard to find good employees for us small business owners who cannot afford rich benefits.” Being able to provide competitive salary is a major challenge for business leaders because of the local living cost.

“Encourage residential developments outside of the downtown area to increase supply, then extend/improve public transit and pedestrian/biking connectivity. May require cooperation and collaboration with the county.”

“Not my business, but the County must loosen restrictions on building homes. There are not enough homes priced for first time home owners. For business that want expand there isn’t any place for them to build an affordable home.”

“It is very hard to relocate people to Bloomington. Often aren't happy and don't stay. Local candidate pool is very small.”

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to better understand the Greater Bloomington business environment through measuring attitudes and perceptions of the local business climate. Overall, respondents are generally satisfied with the current success of their business and are significantly committed to be operating within the next 5 years. Despite success and commitment, respondents are less satisfied with the business environment and only half are likely to recommend starting a business in the Greater Bloomington area. Respondents were most likely to cite local government policies, regulations, and processes as challenges. Business leaders and owners want to make sure that the business environment in the Greater Bloomington area is supportive and encourages growth by removing obstacles and any excessive constraints that exist. Another prevalent challenge among local businesses is the ability to attract and retain qualified employees. Part of this is due to the insufficient availability of lower-cost residences within the Bloomington area. Other opportunities for the local government to improve the business environment include improving parking availability and addressing the rising cost of housing and commercial space. Fostering an environment that encourages business growth and affordable living will also promote a community with less poverty, drug use, and crime.

APPENDIX

QUOTES FROM OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Note: Respondents were provided an opportunity to share impressions and perceptions based on their experience of doing business in Bloomington and Monroe County. Not all respondents elected to provide feedback to open-ended questions. While these comments reflect attitudes and perceptions of certain business leaders, they are not weighted or sorted according to the size or type of business the respondent represents, and should be used with caution when generalizing to the Greater Bloomington business community.

How positively or negatively do the following factors currently impact the growth and success of your business?

Parking/Ease of access to your location

- There is almost zero parking by our place
- growth of business is limited due to allowed size of parking lot by city during construction.
- We currently have a large parking lot, so parking is not an issue for us.
- We have great parking at our location. One of our major issues is that people park in our lot and go other places. This is because the City/County keep letting apartments/hotels get built w/o sufficient parking.
- Parking meters could be improved. As well as our parking policy. Waiting on the proposal from the parking commission to whom the Mayor conveniently hamstrung by removing two members prior to the report.
- We have a parking lot, so parking is not issue. If we didn't my answer would have been different
- Parking meters really limit how long customers will shop in my store, and the lack of parking is a huge issue for my staff, myself and my customers.
- We work all over town and have trouble getting around mostly because of all the curbs and dividers that are getting more and more frequent. I feel there is never any thought given to any vehicle larger than a compact car traveling around town.
- We have our own parking lot
- Parking sufficient
- the city is trying to kill the brick & mortar stores with paid parking, civic events that block access to businesses
- Our building has a dedicated private parking lot, but space is often used by non-patrons avoiding parking meters and pay garages. In general downtown parking is a big and growing issue, as new permits for multi-family housing and commercial locations continue to be issued with inadequate parking available.
- Avoid downtown or cross city destinations
- Parking downtown is fine. Meters are fine- its just like any other city.

- Downtown parking is very inconvenient. Nobody likes the parking meters and they should at least let you clock in and out rather than guess how much time you need. The technology was readily available when the city purchased the antiquated equipment it has.
- Unable to expand business do to lack of available large buildings with ample parking. Street level fee parking is not conducive to our industry
- Luckily for us we have our own parking lot, if not the location would be negatively impacted.
- We have our own, large parking lot.
- Appreciate the ability to locate a parking spot easily with the meters keeping people moving, and County government taking steps to provide parking for their employees
- The lack of parking for my patrons at our downtown location caused me to move to the outskirts of town
- The city needs to communicate clearly w/business owners when planning to close streets & alleys/sidewalks
- Horrible. Parking garages are closed at times when open spaces are available.
- We are supplied parking from CFC so we are good. Also free parking for clients for 2-hours with no meters.
- Not being downtown helps with parking
- This is a MAJOR issue for us. We are non-profit, and people do NOT want to deal with the hassle of finding and paying for parking when they are volunteering for the betterment of this community. The Graduate Hotel will make parking challenges greater.
- I have ample parking and road front property with entrance to my lot
- Parking is terrible. We are located near Buffalo Wild Wings and anytime there are big sporting events to watch - our parking disappears. If you leave your spot during peak periods, when you return, you will have to find parking elsewhere and walk - this is unsettling since we pay quite a sum of money to rent office space.
- Parking is a problem in Bloomington. Lack of parking and parking meters are a negative for downtown business in my opinion.
- All major East/West roads are under construction and limit ease of access to our location. It adds countless minutes to our day as well trying to navigate to other sections of town.
- getting harder and harder to work and park downtown. Also, with IU goal of wanting to add another 10-12,000 students that means traffic and costs associated with that will increase.
- My location is outside of downtown and thankfully we have plenty of free parking for customers.
- City has failed to adequately address long term parking needs of the downtown.
- Important for Employees
- we have free parking
- Current construction of I-69 and multiple closures or lane reductions of streets on the south and west side of town has had a negative impact.
- Parking seems to be considered a disease by elected officials in town. They don't want people to be able to park, but everyone walking and biking is unrealistic.

- The meters have negatively impacted the businesses downtown on both the consumer and business side. My business is not located downtown but, as a consumer, I spend much less time downtown as the idea of "strolling through downtown" is no longer an option. Even when using the parking app, there is a constant feeling that the "meter is running" while you are patronizing restaurants and businesses therefore spending less time and money in the vicinity.
- We have our own parking lot
- The lack of parking spaces and separately the price of parking limits attendance
- Local transportation construction projects have not been well coordinated and travel from east to west in the City is severely impaired
- At this time we have off street parking so it does not impact us.
- Downtown parking issues present difficulties for our clients.
- Parking is the most often cited barrier to coming to the [business name]
- We do have a few "free" spaces so that is wonderful for downtown!
- I avoid going downtown because in sales it is difficult to know how much time to put on a meter.
- No impact
- Downtown areas will always struggle to have enough parking, but please don't put the needs of parking over the walkability of our downtown. A downtown full of parking lots doesn't attract anyone.
- Need more downtown garages. Service tags for businesses operating downtown.

Availability/Affordability of office-retail-commercial space

- We own our current building, so this does not impact us currently
- We have a hard time making a profit paying what the downtown rental rate.
- We need warehouse space for our work, there is very little available in town.
- We own our building
- to expensive
- Some properties exist, but parking is often inadequate.
- okay
- It is fine. Although the property taxes are pretty steep at 25% of my rent.
- Non-existent in the location/size/parking availability our office needs
- We own the building
- Survival of the fittest
- We pay \$2,100.00 for 1400 square feet. Pricing is decent for downtown Bloomington.
- All the new developments with residential over retail is diluting the shopping districts
- I own my property
- What is affordable is unacceptable or in poor condition and often everything available has poor parking arrangements.
- I feel we have too much commercial space in Bloomington.
- Somewhat limited.
- Lots of open commercial space due to city demands.

- Its not horrible compared to Indy prices, but its still a huge part of our budget
- On one hand, forcing developers to incorporate retail space in mixed-use projects without market needs continues to create a glut os space and drive down overall rates. On the other hand, unpredictable and restrictive zoning drives up the cost of projects. This places tremendous pressure on the economic viability of projects forcing the developers to look elsewhere (other communities) to invest.
- Little supply to choose from - affects pricing
- our location is affordable but if we had to move it would be a disaster.
- It's really expensive to rent space in this town.
- Without affordable rental space, we are seeing a shift in the types of businesses that are opening (and staying open) in our downtown area. It is great to have variety and diversity in the choices but when the "little guys" get pushed out because landlords are raising rents, it hurts us all. As a business, I market for those small businesses and the more they struggle to pay the overhead the less they have to spend on getting more exposure for their business.
- Downtown rent is too high
- City's Growth Policies have made downtown office and retail space available but unaffordable.
- Very important. Without quality affordable office space our profit would be effected. We need quality safe space for the benefit of out clients.
- While we are currently in an affordable space, availability of appropriate and affordable rental professional rental space is limited in the downtown area.
- Affordability downtown is not that great.
- "Need to allow medical areas by current hospital to rezone so they may enter into the market for office Retail. We'd like to purchase"
- Office space is too expensive in the city of Bloomington
- Limited inventory drives rental rates and sale prices often out of reach
- There have been some buildings sitting vacant that need a lot of work. The old hobby-toy store, and I guess something is in Princess Theater but there's a broken window. I don't know if there's a way for the city to help fund or incentivise landlords to update and get spaces filled. Sometimes the grant process is daunting as a business owner who isn't from the non-profit/grant writing background
- Not enough large office space, dated buildings, to restricted on height and density, need less small commercial space.

Other businesses in your area

- If more businesses were encouraged to open downtown, it would help everybody
- need more and renewed businesses for fresh appearance
- Does not affect us
- I deal with a large number of small businesses in town. There is a great connection between all of us.
- Doesn't matter
- Good
- Lots of homeless from Shalom Center in area

- Maintain noise ordinance, enforce sidewalk trash removal, maintain lighting
- No impact
- Any business that attracts traffic flow can potentially be good for my business.
- Positive here
- I think the development community will express similar comments.
- The less small business we have, the less appealing this city is for future businesses. We are different because we are a hub for small businesses. You feel it in our streets. I think we all have a vested interest in making sure we maintain that personality.
- We are just a couple of blocks south of the Shalom Center. At times we experience issues with the homeless/drug abusers/mental health clients.
- The success of the other businesses in Bloomington and surrounding areas help with the success of our company.
- Surrounding businesses make the downtown area a fun and lively environment. student apartments have an impact on available parking, noise and trash though
- So wonderful and supportive!
- We have had a couple of businesses relocate and have some empty spaces that need filled.
- There are a few other businesses in our area, which create a better area for our clients to see when they visit our office.
- No impact
- We have a lot of great businesses, but many boutique spaces are being replaced with restaurants, which is not sustainable and over time people won't come downtown because the shops will be gone. I'm not sure how to address this, but check out the growth of the restaurants in the last 30 years and compare to brick and mortar retailers and think about why that is
- With lack of larger office space and new facilities the downtown isn't able to see expansive growth

Local government policies

- It seems as if on occasion there is a tendency to promote and create a "nanny state," at the expense of the middle class citizen and the successful business community.
- Parking restrictions, signage restrictions, anti-biz attitude
- Does not really affect us
- The Mayor continues to enact policy decisions without ordinances or public discussion. Strong arming members of the business community or future members to his whim reeks of a banana republic.
- As stated above, I work with a lot of small businesses in town. Every single one of them has major troubles dealing with city/county. This delays them and generally cost them money. This trickles down to us being delayed or losing jobs due to lack of funds on their end.
- Too restrictive and overbearing
- government does not care about local businesses---the just want taxes

- I find local government policies and ordinances on signage to be overly restrictive. Navigating them and getting approvals recently took us several weeks as a result.
- "extremely anti business and anti growth; over the top liberal; ignores any business related access to transportation, growth, tax base"
- policies with business street signs and business flags is ridiculous. Local government also are the ones accepting of homeless people from other cities- 40 homeless people a day walk by my shop.
- Restricting national chains and franchises is short-sighted. Those businesses create as many if not more jobs than local business.
- I've cleared the hurdle, so whatever policies they have to make opening a business difficult are behind me. My main problem with local govt is that they don't buy local. They run up our costs (brick buildings, fancy facades and high rent) and then they go to Walmart, outside the City limits, to buy supplies. And no, it isn't just about office supplies. It's about everything they purchase.
- Seem to be very restrictive for signage, no parking for retail business downtown with all the residential growth. Too much retail space being added that can't be filled
- Too many restrictions with zoning, signage, green space and parking to attract more business to relocate or open new facilities here.
- Preferential treatments to IU related connections
- They do not promote growth. Many policies need to go.
- Bloomington makes it very difficult for businesses. Even the permit and CO process. Spaces will be per plan, but the fire inspector will add requirements after the building is finished.
- I don't always agree with our governments approach to small business's. Specifically policy and ordinances that prevent business owners from expanding and adding new jobs etc.
- Over done
- The county land plan has had and will continue to have a major negative impact on our ability to sell land in Monroe County.
- It seems like there is so much red tape that goes into doing anything involved with a business. Time is wasted on our end and City/County employees can surely streamline their processes as well. Re fill out an entire 4 page application just to renew a parking permit.
- Can be too restrictive.
- Local policies affect the ability for our members to be successful.
- They get it
- More social (which is not bad) but not business minded. Most people making decisions are tied to the university or have not worked in the private sector.
- Very unpredictable processes. Unwilling to pursue major expansions due to the cost, time and additional stipulations/contributions that will be required.
- We need some diversity in city government. It is 100% Democrats...if it were the other way around there would be daily diversity protests on the square.
- Arbitrary, unpredictable and lacking transparency. Local government unabashedly spends TIF and other little cal tax revenues generated by the private sector, but fails to publicly recognize the negative impact of their policies.

- Planning and building regulations seem to favor the construction of downtown condos and apartments while placing undue burden on building design requirements for small to medium businesses.
- The zoning department are not professional at all
- Working with the local government is extremely difficult. There seems to be no continuity working with different departments. It's hard to get anybody to call you back.
- Policies restrict growth, add to cost of doing business. both of which drive up the cost to the consumer.
- Unpredictability. Everything gets kicked to a committee. Elected officials say they want small business, but the policies they put in place can only be implemented/afforded by larger companies, landscaping, limited parking, etc.
- Too much student housing downtown. Where is the support for business/retail?
- General attitude of government leaders that they are suspicious of business instead of trying to partner with business and they want to extract concessions from business instead of working with business leaders
- We live in an extremely liberal area where the opinion of the local business man or the public as a whole do not matter. I care more about the success of the local businesses than I do about decor or cosmetic appearance.
- To the extent that the city and county cannot manage to cooperate with each other on construction projects and traffic management, our business and our office morale is negatively affected. It has become way too cumbersome recently for our clients and employees to get from home to our office given the size of our town.
- These policies sometimes inhibit our ability to draw attention to our businesses. Downtown we can put up one sign that is relatively small compared to our building size. Yet [business] can put up a gaudy display of signage all over a building that is only a mile and a half away.
- I would like to see an effort to clean up the graffiti and now I see a people panhandling everywhere, it does not look good.
- City of Bloomington policies are too regulated and hinder growth for small business.
- Inconsistent policies, expensive and lengthy processes
- overall, the local government here has been helpful and supportive and I have not had any issues
- Overreaching policies, period. Inconsistent policies and obvious lack of transparency as result of inconsistent policies.

Local economy

- Thank goodness, the local economy is strong
- Aging population helps our business
- It's great.
- We often service IU, local govt, Cook, etc. So when those organizations are doing well, that helps us.
- The city is wise to invest in and publicly support arts and cultural enhancement, as it significantly impacts overall quality of life and business environment.

- Only some sectors doing well ; others are ignored is not politically favorable
- Private sector economy is fine. Irregardless, it is what it is and there is nothing anyone on this survey can do to change that. We should recognize that the government takes 35% of the wealth and therefore the main impact local government can have is giving us our money back locally. I recently quoted a job for the City. I got a snarky reply to my quote that they had gotten a better deal (out of town, but they didn't get that point). They saved \$200. I paid \$300 in property taxes that day alone. The focus of the transaction was not the sole cause of that property tax bill; like most business people, I have my iron in many fires to make ends meet. But my property tax bill paid for the job they sent to an out-of-town vendor. I know the city doesn't care, but that is not sustainable. When enough local businesses fail and the tax base begins to collapse, the City, too will fail financially.
- Unable to pay competitive wages to keep up with cost of living in the area. Most employees drive over an hour to work here.
- Local economy seems to be down, not sure what can help that locally
- Preference seems to be for restaurants, hotels, bar businesses, plus fancy housing
- Very good right now. Since the election spending is up and people are willing to finally replace aging systems.
- It's strong at this time
- great!
- Due to IU, Cook and Crane our local economy continues to be positive.
- Many in the local economy can't afford our services due to low paying jobs.
- If the local economy is good and prospering, then our business is good. If not, then it will negatively impact our ability to do business.
- Need more family housing
- IU, Cook Group, and IU Health doing well. Not sure about others.
- IU is a stabilizing force.
- The local economy is more stable than others due to the college, but the city government is very difficult to deal with.
- We spend too much time patting ourselves on our backs rather than actually tackling our issues. As one who travels a lot, I wonder if many in our community actually care or are curious how other communities work to improve their local economy.
- we do well when the economy is up and thank goodness it is now.
- Need more workers, need affordable housing for this.
- Because of IU the economy is steady and vibrant. Bloomington will grow in spite of itself, but the cost (of housing in particular, my business) will be much higher than the regional and state wide average due to restrictive regulatory policy.
- If you're business isn't college students and you are downtown on kirkwood. It's pretty tough. Even downtown has vacant spaces and struggling business.
- A thriving town will bring more people, more jobs and more money into our economy. It is imperative that we keep it strong for all of us to succeed.
- It's not terrible, but again, if the economy is good, why do we have so many homeless?
- Success of the local economy is important to our company.
- Need more ways to make services accessible to low-income families.

- Thriving because the University is immune to slowdowns
- While the local economy overall appears healthy, I am concerned about the large wealth gap in our area. I fear too much focus is being placed on IU-related "startup" type businesses at the expense of the larger citizenry of non-IU folks who live here in Monroe County. Those people who grew up here and have family here are most likely to remain, not students who just graduated. Not everyone has or needs an advanced degree, nor wants to be involved in tech. I am concerned about the loss of blue collar job opportunities that pay a sustainable wage to those folks. We need to look for ways to attract businesses that will fill this void. With I-69, we have a huge opportunity for growth.
- It's OK. I think mostly our economy stays afloat due to the university. We are luckier than most cities in this regard. Our economy does not seem to suffer as much when there are downturns in the economy elsewhere.
- Currently it is good
- Currently good market conditions
- Wages are driven down by the endless cycle of student labor. I think the city should consider raising wages in their part time positions to the livable wage they set, or consider merging part time positions into full time positions where possible
- Expensive place to live and work. Local governmental policy and mindset further exacerbates conditions.

Public transportation and walking/biking paths

- not a factor for us
- We are located near the bus station.
- B-Line and other trails are excellent.
- Over kill Focus on spending infrastructures funding on roads, utilities and other projects - not just paths. Developed transportation plan for roads and streets for the city and county
- Absolutely no effect whatsoever. That is recreational use from a tiny minority of people. If you need evidence, look at the parking areas reserved for City Hall -- it is growing by leaps and bounds.
- Getting better all the time, need to connect city bus schedule to go deeper into surrounding county locations
- No impact to our business
- Need better biking connectivity to the eastside. More distinct bike lanes downtown.
- A shuttle-bus loop between public parking lots and along Kirkwood would be very welcomed 7 days a week.
- Maybe too much focus on this. More focus on small business growth would be nice.
- Great!
- Good but B Line having some issues to even walk.
- This is good and getting better. Thank you for the vision and hard work on the Parks & Rec.
- We do a good job in this area.
- These are important community amenities.

- The public transportation is great. The biggest change I've seen is the presumed safety on the biking/walking paths. In particular the southern end of the B-line trail. With homeless living in the woods around there, it feels unsafe to walk/run/bike by yourself on those paths. I'm hoping the changes occurring will help alleviate some of that fear but it is a concern.
- Need expanded hours for bus service for 2nd & 3rd shift employees. Also Sunday routes
- We are close to the trail and there is a bus stop near us.
- Streets and sidewalks are neglected. Basic duty of local government is to make streets and sidewalks safe and passable and we have potholes as big as moon craters and sidewalks that are impassable.
- Not important
- These are nice amenities and one of the things I enjoy about the community. It doesn't really affect our business per se, but more of this is nice and improves quality of life.
- Availability of public transportation across B'ton is extremely important to our success.
- Don't get me started. I love that Bloomington has a love for the ecosystem. However, the bike paths are somewhat confusing for drivers as they criss-cross and actually are quite dangerous in my opinion. Public transportation is great in Bloomington.
- we do a good job in this venue
- Bike and ped system is good, public bus transport is limited particularly on the west side.
- More bike lanes. How great would it be to have more green bike lanes around town? Painted bike lanes slow traffic, which gives drivers more time to see downtown businesses, less accidents, and a more Bloomington way of life. How could we fund this? What if the Little 500 or IU sponsored 500 miles of green bike lanes? That'd get us on the national news for sure, in addition to reducing the parking stress. I personally would bike to work every day if there were green bike lanes between where I live and work.
- Good existing conditions. Need improvement to east and west connectivity.

Ability to attract and retain qualified employees

- tough to get 21+ year olds to stay in Bloomington, not a lot of opportunity for them
- When looking it is difficult to find qualified, experienced people
- Finding labor to meet our staffing needs remains our most pressing need.
- Bloomington doesn't have much industry, so there aren't a lot of people willing to work for a living.
- Hard to find skilled labor for our metal fabrication shop. We are willing to train unskilled worker, but even those folks lack "soft skills" (showing up for work every day, passing drug tests, etc.)
- Not doing enough to encourage high school students to go in the trades.
- It's a tight labor market at the moment, but this is cyclical.

- Poor
- I'm a bit higher up the food chain on employee qualifications, but I'd note KFC has to lock their lobby because nobody comes to work; McDonalds has single employees doing two jobs. Yet every corner has a panhandler who refuses to work -- because they have food, a place to sleep, a phone, and enough cash from panhandling for whatever else they think they need in life. You may not think the salary at Walmart or McDonalds is attractive, but it was always a starter job and still should be.
- Unable to pay the appropriate salary to retain/attract qualified employees
- The constraints on building in and around Bloomington has contributed to increased housing expense for our employees
- We have attracted and retain several very good employees but the housing situation here is a big deterrent overall. We need more small single-family homes on the edges of the city.
- Has worked well for us over 38 years of business.
- Very important that we are able to keep the staff we have and keep them happy.
- Young professionals are discouraged by housing price and supply. Unskilled jobs are plentiful with few applicants. The culture and amenities of the city are attractive.
- This is a problem in most parts of the country. I believe in most cases it's a millennial issue.
- Horrible experience. No self pride. No discipline. No commitment
- Most people cannot afford to work and live in Bloomington due to rental and housing costs and we live in one of highest taxed counties in the state.
- Difficult to find reliable, skilled employees.
- It is difficult to attract and keep younger professionals. They do not want to party with the students, and there is not enough of a young professional after work life for them. HYPE is awesome, but we need more for them and more of them.
- Difficult. Need better efforts to train and attract employees, but need to address some chronic community issues: low pay and high housing costs.
- Very hard to relocate people to Bloomington. Often aren't happy and don't stay. Local candidate pool is very small.
- With the lack of any focus on the trades it makes finding employees a challenge.
- Need middle school and high school guidance counselors continued support for trade and certificate training at schools like Ivy Tech instead of the constant emphasis on 4 year degree programs. (Franklin Initiative Rocks!)
- Too many businesses competing for workers, need affordable housing
- Poor labor pool in our business.
- I don't have employees.
- We have a specialized trade that cannot support a high salary. Tough to find the right person.
- The Bloomington area is very popular as a place to live which attracts good employees. that does have an impact on housing prices though.
- Until Ivy Tech opened up their new massage therapist program, we have been struggling to find qualified massage therapists. We are hopeful that we will be able to attract some new students but also find some experienced MTs to sustain and grow our business.

- There are few places for entry level employees to live in the City or County so they move elsewhere. Once they move, they don't come back.
- We need factories and jobs that supply non-degree jobs. The city and county push those away and make it difficult for manufacturing jobs to come here.
- This is quite a problem. All the housing any more is apartments, apartments and more apartments. Young people starting their lives and families do not have many affordable opportunities, so it is hard to find good employees for us small business owners who cannot afford rich benefits.
- it is good
- Has not been a problem for my business. Overall its important for a healthy business climate.
- I've been lucky to find and build an amazing team, but my background was in HR, training, and hiring so I was at an advantage.
- Lack of skilled labor

The local environment/atmosphere around your business location

- There are too many student apartments in the area north of the square that adversely impact the small businesses in the area, due to vandalism, littering and general uncivil behavior during episodes of public drunkenness. All of which seems to be treated with indifference by policymakers and public officials.
- lot's of homeless people walking around our business, sleeping in grass and hanging on the B-Line trail.
- I'm in a industrial park, so we all get along fine.
- We love being downtown.
- Poor
- Trash, litter, graffiti, homeless, drug users all negatively affect the area around my business.
- Too much graffiti in the area and unable to stop it.
- I am located near switchyard park and have serious concerns about our homeless situation escalating with the park. I would love for Monroe County to NOT be so attractive for the homeless. It could really get out of hand with a larger more wooded area and could be a serious deterrent to us being able to sustain business.
- Better since the cameras are in People's Park & managers/ owner/s have allowed police to enforce the law
- Showers building is a positive space. Very few problems.
- The environment is getting better, in terms of the types of business that attract our clientele.
- Great!
- Being located near Seminary Park we are constantly battling homeless, drug issues, foul language, fights, over dose issues and many other homeless people hanging around our office. This issue needs attention fast and a move of the Shalom needs to happen. The city must get a handle on the Homeless in this town ASAP!
- Too many homeless and crime
- ok

- Fortunately we aren't on one of the thoroughfares that is experiencing road work.
- Home based.
- Again, we're near the Shalom Center. I think that tells you enough.
- A welcoming Diversity/Inclusion atmosphere is important to our company.
- The number of student apartments has an impact on available parking, noise and trash. The homeless population can be a detraction to visitors as well.
- Good
- The downtown business atmosphere is vibrant and we are pleased with it.
- Perception of an unsafe city are particularly problematic. The City would do well to enlist advocates and tell/show a story that highlights the energy and warmth of our downtown.
- This is a mixed bag. We have some businesses beside us and across from us. However, our parking lot looks terrible because gangs are allowed to paint all over the building next door and this is very offensive to some of our clients. This is not the "pretty" kind of graffiti. It's the type that looks like gang signatures.
- large number of homeless
- No impact
- I feel like some of the shops in town seem a little stagnant, and it'd be great to revitalize and get more new shops in town, or even a signage campaign around town promoting our shopping district
- Limited as result of lack of ability for companies to expand.

Other (please specify):

- I've said enough.
- Too many homeless people coming in from other areas outside of Monroe County. We need to take care of our own peoples first. Plus this gives our city a bad name, a lot of crime is coming into our city etc.
- Current zoning restrictions seem to encourage businesses to leave the county to operate.
- City building codes being used in the county in an industrial park is ridiculous and hampers businesses from wanting to locate in the county.
- Another chronic issue downtown is the regular traffic snarls and limitations (and accompanying pedestrian danger) caused by multiple large delivery trucks double parking for extended periods. It is not unusual for two trucks to double park on opposite sides of the street (esp Walnut) at the same time, resulting in 3 lanes of traffic being funneled to 1 middle lane. I know deliveries have to be made but wonder if there's some technical or communication solution that could result in more effective staggering of those deliveries somehow, or restricting them to certain off-peak traffic hours.
- My landlord is Olympus- they are solely responsible making my decision to close my shop at the end of the lease so I don't have to deal with them anymore. I will focus more on selling online and travel- I won't have enough money to pick up everything and start all over in another spot by a different landlord.

- Road construction is a considerable burden. Our clients are often late or do not come at all because there is no easy access from the highway or surface streets. Every route takes multiple detours and increased traffic flow. This has made a HUGE NEGATIVE impact for both employees and our clients.
- The sewer drainage @ the intersection of Dunn & E. Kirkwood continues to be poor. Pedestrians beware when it rains. was terrible for many local businesses, including ours. That intersection continues to flood.
- Overall Bloomington is a good city for a business, with exception of some policy and ordinances that apparently are enforced by other than small business owners.
- Homeless: What is being done about the homeless. I no longer feel safe!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The downtown has been overrun by homeless people. Let's get help for those who truly need help and get them off the street. For those who CHOOSE to be homeless because they are lazy...ship them off or force them to work. Help them where we can to move on or move up...or get help. We need a plan to fix this!
- General lack of respect for private property rights afforded to vagrants in our Community with little support from local police. The City seems to turn its head on this problem.
- Having grown up in this town and been in busy here for over 35 years, it is sad to see how much police activity goes on in our community. Sirens pass our business multiple times on a daily basis.
- Being a for-profit, it is very difficult to find funding, grants, etcetera, even though we provide philanthropic and human services.
- I believe the choice to locate the IU Health campus on the east side was a big mistake for the city. I-69 has opened the chance for huge growth, and the west side has huge potential to accommodate additional housing at all levels. Locating the hospital in the already-congested east side makes it hard to get to for patients and less attractive for other health related /health industry businesses that might have located near it. The city should have looked at places like Fort Wayne where the health care industry is booming and where large hospital campuses have flourished in the past 15 years along I-69, attracting great growth in other industries like hospitality and food industry. Big mistake, but that die is cast.
- Parking is definitely a turn-off for many downtown. The cost of rent downtown is not great either. All in all, I wouldn't want to be anywhere else, but I'm trying to let you know some things that could be improved to help small businesses.
- Future zoning practices must change in a effort to focus on real commercial and employment needs. Let the market be the driver instead of government trying to drive the market.

In regards to areas that negatively impact your business, do you have any suggestions for how to improve?

- Build more parking structures, loosen parking restrictions, begin an ad-campaign touting Bloomington is open for business! Can't spell Bloomington without BOOMING, and biz is BOOMING in Bloomington!
- Fewer rules and regulations

- When the new hotel on Kirkwood is finished, I expect parking in that area to be horrendous. I feel for the businesses in that area. The 4th street garage is always full during the day. The City needs another parking garage, preferably at the old Post Office site.
- Create ordinances/laws for new policies that will be enforced. Build consensus rather than governing by fiat.
- Being realistic on zoning requirements. I operate a service industry business. And as such, I'm classified as a "general contractor". This means my zoning requirements are the same as a company that builds apartment complexes and parking garages. So if I want to grow in the county I'm currently required to purchase "industrial" land that has the same zoning requirements as companies that operate their land on an incredibly intensive use compared to our use of the land. The county's definitions place any service industry in this same classification and seem to be extremely detrimental to the small business platform.
- Leave more room for turning in streets. Regulate your people in planning/zoning/utilities. They have too much control over people's livelihoods. Too many times I've talked to someone who has been or is being bullied by planning. Trying to enforce rules that don't apply. In general it seems like it just depends on what mood someone is in when you go to get something done with the county. This is not good for anyone. They get paid to help, not hinder. Bloomington could have a lot more businesses if they would do a better job working with people.
- workforce issues are difficult to address. Even if you offer the training (IU, Ivy Tech, Trade Schools, etc), those don't address the issue of soft skills, which have more to do about a person's character as a human being. That has to be addressed
- This past Sunday the city cut off all access to my business with the 200 year celebration on Kirkwood Ave. We normally would do \$600 in business but only did \$53.32 because customers could not access our business. The \$23 in profit would pay the utilities for this day. The city believes that parties on Kirkwood are more important than businesses that pay taxes.
- Get a grip on the codes you are trying to enforce in industrial parks in the county. Some of what is being required in an area that is light industrial does not make any sense.
- Include all residents, business residents included; Change attitude; Change liberal over the top agenda by few people in power; "Unigov" for Monroe County/City of Bloomington
- Eliminate or at least update the parking meters. I am not aware of a downtown business that wants the meters.
- The City and County should both pass ordinances REQUIRING them to buy local unless there is a large cost savings. Possible metrics:
 - If outside home jurisdiction, must save at least 15% on purchases of \$1000 or less. Price must include ALL costs, including shipping, and if a city employee or vehicle are going to visit the vendors location to either order and/or pick up the purchase, add that to the cost. I'm sure there are employees who would love a drive to Evansville, but the cost for gas/mileage and an entire day of labor is a real cost and should be reflected in the decision.

- If outside the home jurisdiction, must save at least 10% on purchases of \$5000 or less. See above.
- If outside the home jurisdiction, must save at least 5% of purchases of \$100,000 or less. You get the idea. Bottom line: don't drive our costs up with local regulations/requirements and then send our tax dollars to people who don't live under the same burden.
- Please finish a road construction project before you begin more. Having every major through put road under construction close to the West Side makes it nearly impossible to commute anywhere. How does it make sense to have to detour off a detour to get anywhere? People are driving extra miles because everything is torn up and nothing is getting finished.
- Clean up the trash, actively and quickly remove graffiti. Stop encouraging homeless and drug users into the area.
- Get a handle on the homeless and drug problem in Bloomington. City and County need to review their building restrictions and anti business stance.
- Stream line planning and zoning and reduce the burdens
- I would just ask that restrictions would allow a little more flexibility to businesses starting up or moving to a different location. The timeline to build or renovate is way too long and I feel that we as a community often come up on the losing end when companies are looking at multiple locations to expand toward. Thank you to Cook and the city of Bloomington for allowing us to give our feedback.
- Elect a mayor that understands business and does not have a private agenda. More policing of vagrants and homeless in the downtown district to keep it safe for families. More policing of the b-line trail. Remove building height ordinance.
- Extend bike trail system to other areas; Have all relevant departments sign off on building plans prior to approval. If developer or business builds to plans there should be not additional requirements; Encourage residential developments outside of the downtown area to increase supply, then extend/improve public transit and pedestrian/biking connectivity. May require cooperation and collaboration with the county.
- Have more flexible policy's and ordinances, so business owners can afford to expand. Which increases our workforce and creates more convenience for our community.
- Probably should not have allowed a very popular restaurant to build in a spot where there is not enough parking to begin with. Subway in that location does not help as well, although it's nice to have it there.
- City council rep will not return calls
- Please move the Shalom to a remote area in the County on a county property (maybe create a county farm) Allow the homeless a place to raise food and get the food kitchen out of downtown. The county land plan is a real problem. We are in the land sales business and the County Plan continues to be a negative for our sellers. We need LESS land control from city minded people who have little to -0- land ownership experience. When I say land ownership, I do not mean 1 acre.
- Have a consultant look at all processes in City and County Government. There seems to be a lot of redundancy and inefficiency.

- Parking for business owner and their employees is atrocious. I wish we could get some kind of deal for the meters.
- Bloomington is too attractive to homeless. They need to be moved to outskirts of city or out of city. City leaders need to encourage business not run it away. City way too liberal
- Don't feel much will improve without an administration change or significant public pressure for transparency... even then...
- Panhandlers in business areas are a nuisance.
- I would beg the city to be more helpful to people looking to build and rehab commercial space in town. If someone wants to build a beautiful new building, help them... if someone wants to rehab and old building and make it nice again, help them. I want see more beautiful spaces and less old run down buildings that have no useful life or purpose, but have been deemed historic. Take a picture of the place to memorialize it, put the picture in the historical center, and tear the trash down.
- Extend public transportation beyond the city limits. Do a better job of policing contractors doing I69 work so they aren't constantly interrupting access.
- Better planning / looking at the big picture on how road construction may impact cross town traffic.
- Create a website / phone app for Monroe County that is updated constantly (like a weather app) to let people know which roads are closed or have reduced lanes. I would bet this already exists and could just be tailored to each new city that contracts for their own custom version.
- Consider having a ""Business Advocate"" program that helps local businesses through the process of designing and building facilities. The Advocate would need to know the ins and outs of both City and County planning requirements, zoning, how and when to file for variances, perks and advantages of sustainable building options, etc.
- Lower rental considerations for retail businesses. If you are not a bar or a business that caters to IU students it's extremely hard to meet the high rental demands. Too many retail businesses in the downtown fountain district cannot make it.
- The road construction is out of control, they need to focus and finish one project real fast then move onto the next one.
- Yes, but they are not feasible due to the political climate, which is unlikely to change.
- Total land use for zoning policies. Zoning decisions should include the value of inherent natural resources. ie trees, dirt, limestone (Both dimensional, and aggregate), then reclamation, and development. Unique parcels deserve unique purposes.
- Have the local government focus deeply on improving the lifestyle elements of our community. Help existing businesses grow their business by removing barriers to expand. Remove red tape at planning, CBU, etc.
- Mayor Hamilton needs to abandon his push to annex vast areas currently outside Bloomington's city limits. Undue restrictions on businesses such as signage and parking restrictions need to be eliminated.
- Find solutions to the homeless/drug users/mental health patients. They are just roaming the streets. Our bank told us that for homeless people to find housing they

must meet at the Shalom Center to apply for housing, and that many people refuse to go there. If this is true, try changing that requirement. I have employees who are afraid to be in our building alone so we may have to look at moving to an outlying area.

- Provide ways, incentives, and support for new, local businesses who want to provide services to low-income families but can't financially afford to do so.
- City should take some of the millions from the parking meters and use it to improve basic infrastructure e.g. patch the potholes and fix the sidewalks. Now that I-69 is a reality, they should leverage the benefits of the new highway and work to make the areas around the interchanges attractive and welcoming to visitors
- The city and county should work together on managing construction and traffic. The city/county should be less focused on keeping Kelley School graduates and tech graduates here, and more focused on attracting companies with long-term potential to provide a broad range of jobs (skill-wise and pay-wise) for the citizens who want to continue to make Monroe County home. And when talking about retaining IU graduates, don't forget that it is not only people who major in business who have valuable skills as employees--the arts and sciences produce people who can think critically and "outside the box."
- Paint the buildings with the graffiti that is an eyesore and arrest those who deface the property. STOP building apartments EVERYWHERE. Thank you!
- Try and convince people to clean up-paint over graffiti and keep their properties looking nice. Make panhandling illegal as since it is ok it is a means to buy the very items that keep the homeless down.
- Local government needs to be business friendly which it is not
- We need a moderate balance in city government. The business community has a strong voice, but not a seat at the table.
- Imagine a B-Line trail along Kirkwood... Leading people from the sample gates and connecting to the current b-line trail. Or even replacing the parking on one side of the road with a really wide multi-use path and green bike lane? It would turn the Mayor's 'String of Pearls' into a robust, connected, walkable, vibrant downtown.
- Create zoning and ordinances that are practical, promote growth, easy to plan around and a process that businesses can navigate that has clear benchmarks.

Do you have any additional comments on how government policies - both of the City of Bloomington and of Monroe County - are positively or negatively impacting your business? Do you have suggestions for improvements?

- The need to listen to residents/businesses involved with decisions made concerning their property/business
- only by electing people with business experience will the conditions improve--
- Land use policies and enforcement are detrimental to our economy.
- Imagine being in our shoes -- where the consumer has a choice and can vote with their feet.
- Every time you deal with the city it is like pulling teeth

- Better transparency on boards & commission members, & limited terms.
- Better planning of roadworks so not to shut down entire sections of the town for an extended period of time. Move the shalom center out of downtown area.
- Neither government body treats the citizen/taxpayer as a customer. I consider both business prevention units primarily concerned with those who contribute nothing and take everything. I am a chump to be fleeced.
- I was going to expand my business and upgrade my property, which would have meant a few more good paying jobs with benefits, more attractive property. I understand the need for policy and ordinance in a community, but it truly is not a cookie cutter scenario that works for all, because of some of these, we had to cancel our project, due to an increase of cost by approximately 200%. So if I expand, it will likely be outside of Monroe County.
- Government and processes could be streamlined to save the taxpayer time and money.
- Better transparency. Get roads fixed to where traffic can flow.
- Create a clear and predictable process for development.
- County and city staff personnel easy to work with... the policies that prevent the availability and affordability of land/lots (e.g., splitting land into lots, extension of utilities) impede growth. Government needs to decide where they want growth to be an develop infrastructure in those areas.
- We need to fix the homeless problem. I do not feel safe. I do not have time right now to come up with a solution, but would like to see our paid public officials propose a solution. Please work better with local builders who are trying to make the community a better place to live and work.
- Our biggest problem with the City occurred during the construction of our facility several years ago. We are currently under a new City administration and we are hoping for more clear and committed policies going forward so as to make some of the issues we had during construction no longer a factor for other businesses.
- The staff tries to do what they can but the decision makers are controlled by anti-growth factions or no growth factions
- I am actually not sure of the vagrancy and panhandling regulations, so that is my fault that I have not read them and I will do so. I do know that there are vagrant people sitting across from our building lately and screaming at the top of their lungs for hours.
- We are not aware of many things regarding the county, there really is no communication with the County.
- See prior answer...the key is in selecting good candidates for elected positions.

In closing, do you have any suggestions for programs or actions that could assist your business?

- Being eclectic is nothing to brag about. A strong economy is critical, and Monroe County needs to focus on small business and its work force. As a community we need less reliance on IU, Cook and IU Health.

- Reduce vagrant population. \$1500 in direct costs so far YTD from vagrancy issues. It also keeps decent people and vulnerable (elderly, for example) individuals from wanting to come to the area. Have you walked the block around the library lately? Give it a try.
- Modify government consumption habits. Put the funds pulled out of the local economy back into the local economy. Example: 10% - 25% of rents go to the county in the form of tax dollars. That's an insane amount of money given our huge base of renters. What is left after their salary and benefits should be spent **LOCALLY**, not sent off to other jurisdictions for either **PRODUCTS** or **SERVICES**.
- We use local Workforce One, Indeed online, social media and newspaper to attract employees with no luck, not sure what can help
- Not by business, but the County must loosen restrictions on building homes. There is not enough homes priced for first time home owners. For business that want expand there isn't any place for them to build an affordable home.
- Continue to promote programs that attract more buying from local business.
- Provide a Downtown business recycling service. We see so much waste going into the landfill from some nearby places (We haul our own, at least 2x per week to gov't site and are almost a 0% waste, Local business.)
- Enforce cleaning of certain downtown sidewalks on consistent basis (bars & restaurants)
- Beware of tendency toward nepotism in local government hiring.
- More donuts at events.
- No special treatment, no support, no abatements, no help. Simply stay the hell out of my way and I will take care of myself and my customers just fine.
- I would recommend, at least on a case by case, looking at a business that wants to better themselves and making exceptions an easier process.
- Development of owner occupied downtown housing (e.g., condos). Streamlined processes for construction of housing in county zones deemed good for workforce housing.
- Establish a Housing Trust Fund with a dedicated source of revenue
- The cost of healthcare and the local options available are a huge burden on small business owners. If a cooperative program could be created whereby local businesses could pool their employees to qualify for group insurance, the cost saving might allow for more businesses to offer health insurance to their employees.
- Need less restrictive land use and zoning policy. Need a smoother more predictable development approval process.
- Strong emphasis on vocational training in local schools.
- Appreciate having this survey and communication is so important.
- Loosen the restrictions that allow manufacturing jobs to come to our area. This is never going to be another Seattle.
- Could Bloomington residents make their own self-funded health insurance plan? I know it sounds crazy, but I think it is one way to look at making health insurance affordable for everyone. Companies could bid on providing the stop-gap piece of the self-funded plan. Just a thought!
- Graffiti is making the city look trashy and does not promote business

- Zoning clarification
- Incentives for renting to non-students. As a business owner, when looking for an apartment, they would ask if I was a student and when I said no, they stopped returning calls. I think that renting to students is easy, because they don't know the market, money is coming from their parents, and they don't know their rights. Many of the homes I looked into renting were in disrepair.

Survey Invitation

Dear Business Leader,

The City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Bloomington Economic Development Corporation, Cook Group, and the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce want to better understand the business climate in the city of Bloomington and Monroe County and identify the factors that impact the growth and success of your business. We invite you, a business leader in the area, to share your thoughts on this topic by completing the survey below. Your voluntary feedback will provide beneficial information to better engage and support local business.

We want to ensure that we receive feedback from all businesses in the community. Therefore, your participation is extremely valuable. To ensure we receive open and honest feedback, the results will be anonymous. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey. The feedback will be shared with both the above-mentioned entities and the general public.

The survey will close on Wednesday, April 25, at 5:00 pm (EST). If you have any question or need technical support, contact the Business Research Department of Cook Medical, at survey@cookmedical.com.

Follow the link to survey:

[Greater Bloomington Business Environment Survey](#)

Or copy the URL to take the survey: <https://goo.gl/95tsWN>

Thank you in advance for participating.

John Hamilton
Mayor of
Bloomington

Lynn Coyne
President,
BEDC

Pete Yonkman
President,
Cook Group

Anne Bono
Interim President
and CEO,
Greater
Bloomington
Chamber of
Commerce

Amanda Barge
President,
Monroe County
Commissioner's
Office

Survey Instrument

Thank you for your time and participation in this survey. We invite the owners and primary decision makers of the businesses located in the city of Bloomington/Monroe County to provide feedback, which will help identify opportunities and areas of improvement regarding the growth and success of businesses in the area.

If you are not the owner or primary decision maker of your business, you may forward this email with the survey link to people in those positions in your organization. Again, to ensure we receive open and honest feedback, the results will be **anonymous**.

If you have any questions or need technical support, contact the Business Research Department of Cook Medical by emailing survey@cookmedical.com.

To start, where is the **primary location** of your business? "Downtown" is defined as follows:

- Downtown Bloomington
- City of Bloomington (not downtown)
- Outside of the City of Bloomington, but within Monroe County
- Outside Monroe County

Which of the following best describes **your current role** in your business? Please select *all* that apply.

- I am an owner of the business
- I make major decisions on behalf of the business
- None of the above

Overall, how **satisfied or dissatisfied** are you with the **business environment** in Bloomington/Monroe County?

- Extremely Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Extremely Dissatisfied

If asked, **how likely** are you to **recommend starting a business** in Bloomington/Monroe County to a friend or colleague?

- Extremely Likely
- Somewhat Likely
- Neither Likely nor Unlikely
- Somewhat Unlikely
- Extremely Unlikely

How committed is your business **to continuing its operations** in Bloomington/Monroe County over the next 5 years?

- Extremely Committed
- Somewhat Committed
- Neither Committed nor Uncommitted
- Somewhat Uncommitted
- Extremely Uncommitted

How **satisfied or dissatisfied** are you with the current **level of success** of your business?

- Extremely Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Extremely Dissatisfied

In this next section, we will focus on factors that impact the growth and success of your business.

How **positively or negatively** do the following factors currently impact the growth and success of your business?

	Extremely Positive	Somewhat Positive	Neither Positive nor Negative	Somewhat Negative	Extremely Negative	Does Not Apply
Parking/Ease of access to your location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability/Affordability of office-retail-commercial space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other businesses in your area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local economy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public transportation and walking/biking paths	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to attract and retain qualified employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The local environment/atmosphere around your business location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide any **comments** you might have regarding **your response** to the previous question on factors that impact the growth and success of your business.

In regards to areas that **negatively** impact your business, do you have any **suggestions** for how to improve?

Next, we would like to understand how, if at all, **government policies** impact the growth and success of your business. Which governing body do you **primarily** work with?

- The City of Bloomington
- Monroe County

Please respond to the following questions based on your experience working with **[selected governing body]**.

What **type(s) of government policies, processes and services** are currently **positively or negatively impacting** your business?

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Does Not Apply	Not Familiar
Land use/zoning regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilities services regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tax abatement procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historic preservation requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Processes for handling loitering, panhandling and vagrancy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support for public transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Process-related issues dealing with local government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fees/costs of regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Living wage requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How **often** have you been in **contact** with [selected governing body] in regards to a question or issue with **an operation of your business, utility or land use** in the last 12 months?

- Very Frequently
- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

How much do you **agree or disagree** with the following statements regarding **government policies** with [selected governing body] in regards to a question or issue with **an operation of your business, utility or land use**?

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Polices were clear and easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication about policies was consistent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with the City of Bloomington/Monroe County was an easy process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any additional comments on how **government policies - both of the City of Bloomington and of Monroe County** - are positively or negatively impacting your business? Do you have suggestions for **improvements**?

Next, we would like to understand your experiences with attracting and retaining qualified employees.

Which of the following **employee groups**, if any, are you having **difficulty attracting and/or retaining** qualified employees? (Select all that apply)

- Office and Administrative Support
- Food Preparation and Serving Related
- Sales and Related
- Production Occupations
- Education, Training, and Library
- Transportation and Material Moving
- Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians
- Management Occupations
- Construction, Cleaning, Extraction, Farming and Others
- Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Services
- Business, Financial, Legal and Other Professional Services
- Computer and Mathematical Services
- Other. Please Specify: _____
- No current difficulties

Which of the following **qualifications of employees**, if any, are you having **difficulty attracting and/or retaining** qualified employees? (Select all that apply)

- No high school diploma/GED
- High school diploma/GED
- Some college or certification
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Post-graduate/advanced degree
- No current difficulties

Which of the following **challenges**, if any, are you having with **attracting and/or retaining qualified employees** in Bloomington/Monroe County for your business? (Select all that apply)

- Attracting qualified employees locally
- Attracting qualified employees from outside of Monroe county
- Retaining qualified employees
- Meeting salary expectations
- Offering attractive healthcare/benefits
- Availability of affordable housing
- Transportation to and from work
- Willingness to work (e.g. work shifts)
- Undesirable Location/Bloomington/Monroe County community
- Adequate child care
- Other (please specify):
- No current challenges

What price range(s) do you currently see a **shortage** of for **available and affordable housing** that **directly impacts** retaining and attracting employees for your business? (Select all that apply)

- Own < \$100,000
- Own between \$100,000 - \$200,000
- Own between \$200,000 - \$300,000
- Own > \$300,000
- Rent < \$700 a month
- Rent between \$700 - \$1,000 a month
- Rent between \$1,000 - \$1,500 a month
- Rent > \$1,500 a month

In closing, do you have any **suggestions** for **programs or actions** that could assist your business?

The last set of questions are for classification purposes. Your response will remain anonymous.

How long has your business in Bloomington/Monroe County been in operation?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21 years or more

What is the number of current **employees** in your business (including full-time and part-time)?

- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10-19
- 20-49
- 50-99
- 100+

What is your **business type**?

- For-Profit
- Not-for-Profit

What **sector or industry** listed below would best describe your business?

- Administrative Support
- Agriculture
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Construction
- Educational Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Health and Fitness
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Information Technology, Software Development
- Life Sciences
- Manufacturing
- Media
- Mining
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- Restaurant/Food Services
- Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Utilities
- Wholesale Trade
- Other _____

Thank you for providing your feedback. Your time is greatly appreciated. Please click "Next" to submit your results.