

Agenda Item: 4.a

Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

MEMORANDUM

To: Jennifer K. Bramley City Manager

Date: 2023-07-25

From: Nicole Delfino

Subject: 2023 Business Survey Results

Presenter(s): Nicole Delfino, Assistant to the City Manager & Anne Wittine, Research Data Services

Recommend: Review Business Survey Responses

Epic Goal(s): 5. Enhance community relationship strategies that strengthen inclusiveness, respect, transparency and collaborative engagement.

Boards & Committees: N/A

Budget Impact: \$10,000

Past Action: 2020 Business Survey

Next Action: Respond to survey results, drill down with spot surveys if necessary & prepare for 2025 Business Survey

Attachments: [A. Presentation Business Survey Results 2023.pdf](#), [B. Dunedin 2023 RDS Business Opinion Report.pdf](#), [C. Dunedin Business Opinion Survey 2023 Open Ended Verbatims.pdf](#), [D. 2020 Business Survey Report FINAL.pdf](#),

Background: In 2017 the City conducted several Visioning exercises with residents, culminating in the 2017 Visioning report. In an effort to continue that community dialogue, in 2019 the City conducted a Citizen Survey, executed by the consultant group Research Data Services, Inc. (RDS), located in

Tampa, Florida. Following the initial citizen survey, in 2020, the City conducted a Business Survey with the same firm.

The study was developed to gather business owners' opinions and overall satisfaction, and to provide input to the City's Business Plan and budgeting process. The final survey results were presented at the June 2, 2020 Commission Workshop.

The results of that survey showed that overall, 94.9% of Dunedin business owners and managers rate the City of Dunedin as a good or excellent place to operate a business, and 97.4% indicated Dunedin is a good or excellent place to work. Additionally, 91.4% (94.2% pre-COVID and 89.1% post-COVID) are satisfied with the level of services received from the City. Significantly, only 5.1% rate Dunedin as a below average or poor place to operate a business. In June 2020, the following categories were identified as items that should be addressed either through action or increased communication:

1. Affordable housing
2. Zoning/permitting/building red tape
3. Downtown vs. outside Downtown
4. Balance of development
5. Traffic/Parking
6. Regular communication

A Business Survey Action Plan report followed the 2020 Survey to outline how each of the priority items will be addressed. RDS was further engaged with a Business Owner Focus Group to address the downtown vs. outside downtown sentiment. The following bulleted items were discussed at the focus group, with the main take away being a concern over special events:

- Best thing about operating a business in Dunedin (community)
- How have things changed over the past couple of years (downtown development)
- Special events (plan for all businesses re: parking, visibility/accessibility, traffic)
- Permitting (unsolicited positive feedback)
- The future (positive)

Due to the long-lasting impacts of COVID-19, there was a delay to holding the regularly scheduled bi-annual Business Survey in 2022. The survey was pushed out by one year to 2023 and timing was modified to the survey period to follow the end of peak season to allow for business response. The 2023 Business Survey was initiated on May 9, 2023 and ended on July 7, 2023. The survey closely duplicated the survey questions found in 2020.

To encourage participation, a multi-pronged approach was taken to reach participants through an email campaign hosted by RDS, a direct email campaign by City Staff, posting the survey on the City website and social media as well as sharing the survey instrument through the Chamber of Commerce meetings and newsletter. The results of the survey are attached in the form of a summary report including open-ended verbatim comments. The

presentation of the Business Survey attached is an overview and comparison of sentiment from business owners between 2020 and 2023 and details level of satisfaction in various areas as well as areas of concern and/or suggest improvement areas.