



City of Northville

DDA Street Closure Survey

Survey Results and Analysis

Final Report

May 6, 2022

Survey Period: April 11 – May 2, 2022
Data download on May 3, 2022

Assistance provided by Carlisle Wortman Associates

Survey Background

To help businesses and restaurants in Downtown Northville operate safely during the pandemic, the City of Northville and the Northville DDA closed portions of East Main Street and North Center Street to allow outdoor seating and retail merchandising and sales. The Special Event license that facilitates the street closures is scheduled to expire on November 1, 2022.

In 2021, the City/DDA obtained a Social District License that allows restaurants with a special social district permit to sell alcohol in designated cups that can be ordered to go and consumed within the commons area of the downtown. The following is an overview and explanation of the statistics on the survey:

- The survey was open via a weblink from April 11 to May 2, 2022.
- 4,053 individuals participated. Respondents were allowed to check multiple boxes identifying their relationship to Downtown Northville, so there is some crossover between groups. Participation amongst groups were:
 - 1481 or 37% of the respondents were City of Northville residents. 395 or 10% of the respondents were Downtown residents. The largest group of respondents were Northville Township residents, which made up 1,563 respondents accounting for 39% of the participants.
 - Downtown business owners (139) were 3% of the respondents. Of those business owners, 23 owned restaurants, 30 were retail establishments, 56 were service providers and 28 were offices. They were located on East Main Street (57), West Main Street (15), North Center Street (37), South Center Street (10) and 16 indicated “Other” as their location.
 - Downtown property owners (67) were 2% of the respondents. Their properties were located on East Main Street (18), West Main Street (10), North Center Street (11), and South Center Street (3). Nineteen property owners identified “Other” as their location.
 - Downtown business employees (141) and downtown business managers (40) were 3% and 1% of the respondents, respectively.
 - 679 respondents selected “other”, accounting for 17% of the respondents. In the responses, they identified themselves mostly as residents of nearby communities, members of the Northville school district, or former City of Northville residents or business owners.

- A General overview of the questions are as follows:
 - 80% of respondents are in favor of continuing the use of the Social District License.
 - 7% are undecided.
 - 53% of respondents are in favor of expanding the Social District.
 - 21% are undecided.
 - 74% of respondents are in favor of street closure, in one way or another.
 - Only 50 respondents out of 4,028 (1%) would like to see the street closure only on Center between Main and Dunlap.
 - 84% of respondents believe the outdoor structures should stay if the street closures continue.
- A ballot box stuffing report showed that the same IP address was used by five or more respondents in 7 instances, accounting for 75 responses overall. Since multiple family members or a multiple-family building, like Allen Terrace, may use the same IP address, those surveys were included in the analysis in this report, accounting for less than 2% of the total respondents.

The report includes a written analysis for each section of the survey with statistics from the multiple-choice questions and highlights from the open-ended questions. The raw data has been provided to the Northville DDA and is available upon request. The analysis is presented using the following guidelines:

- The data presented is from all respondents. Segmented reports of the data in horizontal bar graphs for each category of the respondents relationship to Northville has been provided to the DDA.
- Percentages are based on the responses to that individual question, not the overall sample unless noted otherwise. So, for example, if 88% report they agree, that means that 88% of the respondents answering that question agree. Note that all respondents did not answer all of the questions.
- A verbatim report of the open-ended responses to the final question of the survey has been provided to the DDA.

Social District

As mentioned in the Background Section of this report, the use of the Social District would influence the future activities in the Downtown. After sharing those restrictions, respondents were asked if the Social District should continue. The response from the overall respondents was 80% in favor of continuing the Social District, with a further 7% on the fence.

Should the City/DDA continue to utilize the Social District license and allow alcohol to be purchased from qualified license holders and consumed throughout the designated areas of downtown?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes	3,237	80%
No	511	13%
Maybe, I need more information	283	7%
Total Responses	4,031	

In addition to a question regarding the continuance of the Social District, respondents were also asked if the social district should be expanded by the City/DDA. The response was mixed, with 53% in favor of expansion, and another 21% on the fence.

Should the City/DDA expand the Social District to include more of the restaurants that are located on the edge of downtown?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes	2147	53%
No	1024	25%
Maybe, I need more information	849	21%
Total Responses	4,020	

Street Closures

To gather information on street closures, the survey asked if they should continue and when they should be closed in the future. 74%% of the respondents felt that the street closures should continue in some form. The 2,960 respondents who were in favor of the street closure, when asked when the streets should be closed, 60% of them felt the street closures should be extended continuously, unless action is taken by the City Council.

Should street closures in Downtown Northville continue?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes, on both streets	2259	56%
Yes, but only on Main Street between Center and Hutton	668	17%
Yes, but only on Center Street between Main and Dunlap	50	1%
No, the streets should reopen to vehicular traffic	1051	26%
Total Responses	4,028	

When do you think the streets should be closed to vehicular traffic?		
Responses	Count	%
Continuously, unless action is taken by City Council	1,776	60%
Seasonal Weekends only May – Labor Day	91	3%
Seasonal weekends only May – Halloween	188	6%
Seasonal from May to Labor Day	141	5%
Seasonal from May to Halloween	673	23%
Other (Please specify)	91	3%
Total Responses	2,960	

Of the 1,051 respondents who were not in favor of the street closure, when asked when the streets should be reopened, 85% felt the street closures should end immediately and the streets reopen.

Participants were then asked, if street closures were continued, should the outdoor covered structures be allowed to remain. Of the 4,000 responses, 84% answered in the affirmative.

If street closures are extended, should the outdoor covered structures be allowed to remain?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes	3,352	84%
No	648	16%
Total Responses	4,000	

Comments

The comments for the DDA vary, but some of the more common topics are as follows:

- Those Against street closure:
 - o Side Street traffic is too high
 - o Taxpayers want their streets back
 - o Outdoor seating is underutilized since reopening of restaurants
 - o Parking issues
 - o Lack of accessible parking near shops
 - o Center Street needs to reopen
 - o Streets are meant for driving
- Those For street closure:
 - o More enjoyable to come and walk
 - o People enjoy having a drink and a walk around
 - o More bike and kids friendly
- Both For and Against:
 - o Barricades need to look better aesthetically

General Observations

- Downtown business managers were the least likely to approve of the continuation of the Social District License (72%) vs others (75%-85%)
- Respondents who said they biked to get to downtown were more likely to want a street closure (89%) than their walking (79%) or driving (72%) counterparts.
- Respondents who's trips to downtown increased during COVID were 23% more likely to want the Social District to expand, 40% more likely to want the Social District License to continue, and 41% more likely to vote in favor of street closure.