

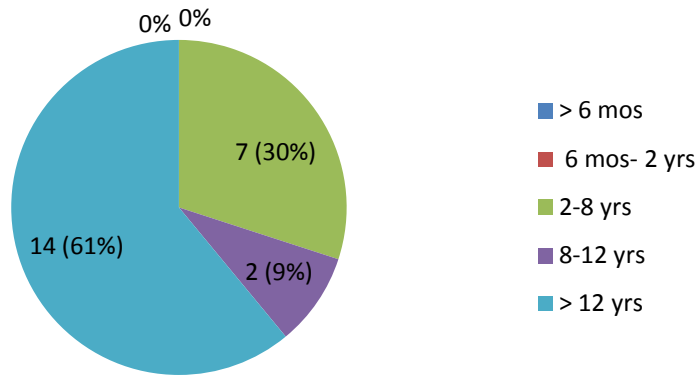
East Fulton Business District Reponses to Uptown Marketing Study

In the first quarter of 2017, Uptown collaborated with Calvin College to conduct marketing research for the district. The students surveyed Uptown business owners and area residents about their perceptions of Uptown, its greatest assets, challenges and recommendations for improvements. Over 260 area residents (Heritage Hill, Midtown, Baxter, East Hills and Eastown) and 134 business owners responded to the surveys. This report contains the survey responses from the 23 East Fulton business owners answering questions regarding their own business district. A more detailed analysis of all survey responses will be completed by early October and sent out to all Uptown businesses.

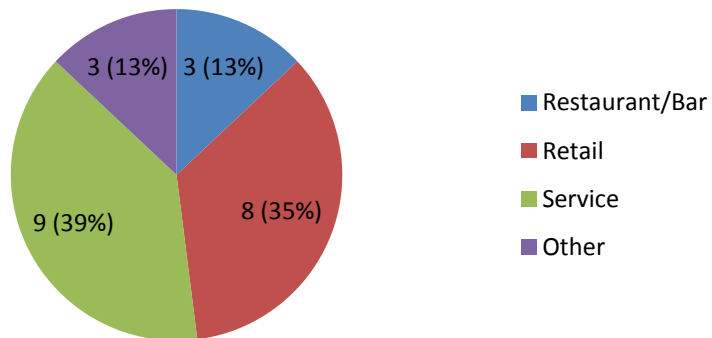
Highlights

- 23 East Fulton business owners responded to the survey.
- 73% of all respondents stated their business is performing either “*Well*” or “*Very Well*.”
- In response to “*How would you rank your involvement in the East Fulton business district,*” 32% of respondents stated they were “*Actively involved*” and 55% stated “*Nominally involved*.”
- In response to “*What’s going well in the East Fulton business district,*” the most frequent comments involved:
 - Great new businesses moving in, especially retail
 - Increased business owner engagement and camaraderie
 - Increase in foot traffic and shopping
- In response “*What needs to improve in the East Fulton business district,*” the most frequent comments involved:
 - Need to improve visual appeal of streetscape
 - Still have a few run down storefronts and a problem business

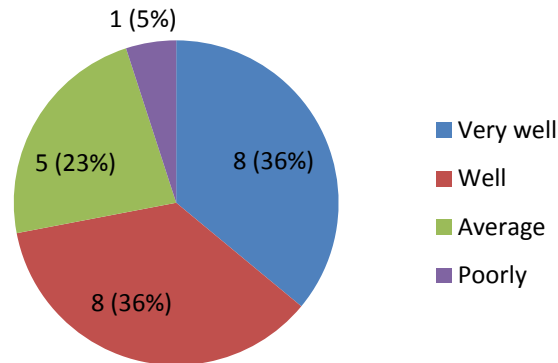
1. How long have you been in business? (23 respondents)



2. What type of business do you own? (23 respondents)



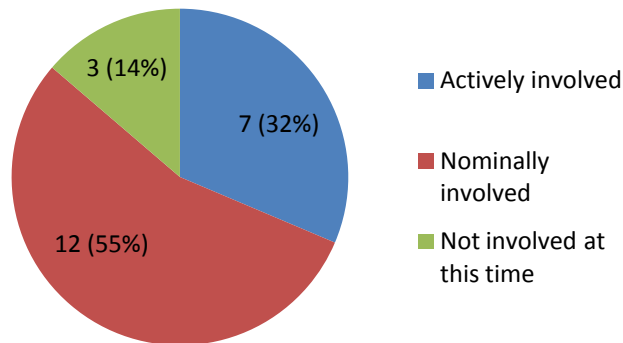
3. How would you say your business is performing? (22 respondents)



4. Where do you see your business in the next 5 years?

- Where do you see your business in the next 5 years?
- Growing
- Continued growth, up 40% over the past 3 years. Expecting a more modest growth in the next 3-5 years.
- I see the business being about the same through the next 5 years
- Hopefully our business will show significant growth. We hope that it will be profitable enough to sustain full-time income for our family. We also anticipate that we would have 1-2 employees in 5 years time.
- Doubling again in business
- I expect steady performance to slow growth over the next 5 years.
- Continually expanding into Michigan and beyond
- We are an existing business with locations in other areas, our Fulton St. location is still pending opening.
- We hope to still be here with the state of the affair is going on
- still in East Fulton but with an expanded building
- Same, maybe an additional location elsewhere.
- Increase of business of 25%+
- We are looking to expand into larger space somewhere in the immediate vicinity although very happy with where we are.
- We are glad to be a part of a neighborhood business district. We feel that it suits the needs and culture of our brand and allows us to stay in close range of our customers. We will continue to support East Fulton as we plan to grow and foster new and lasting business and personal relationships.
- Either sold or mostly internet and shows
- Able to support 2 employees or interns.
- I may be retiring in the next 5 years

5. How would you rank your involvement in the East Fulton business district? (22 respondents)



6. Comments regarding respondents' involvement in the East Fulton business district.

- Contribute by paying our dues and sometime extra but not involved with any time currently.
- My husband is the president of the East Fulton business district and we are excited about being a part of the growth in this area of Grand Rapids.
- I am a little dissociated with the business district due to my regular business commitments.
- The business district special tax assessments make it harder for me to maintain my building and grounds and the "improvements" they have performed seems to be not much for the amount of taxes they collect for such things.
- I am a board member
- Involved in Uptown Marketing Committee, also help with planning events, etc.
- The EFBA has been defunct for several years. It has recently been reinstated.
- We're looking forward to a well branded, well designated, bike, parking and walking friendly district. We're glad to help make this happen in any way we can.
- I am the Treasurer of EF - have been actively involved for 20 years
- I am the President of the East Fulton Business Association holding meetings and setting up plans for improvement in the business district. I spend time on event ideas, working on completing an East Fulton website and fostering community among business owners and residents on Fulton Street.
- I support it financially and occasionally write letters on behalf of the district. We do try to improve our space over time.

7. What's going well in the East Fulton business district?

| Theme | Comments |
|---|---|
| New businesses moving in, especially retail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More relevant retail • For me being in the area since 1994, I have enjoyed many of the improvements of the store fronts and the retail stores that have opened since then. • New building owners and new retail space • Variety of businesses • Some good businesses moving into area • New businesses are moving in. • Businesses are thriving and evolving. • New developments and businesses. Renewed energy amongst existing businesses and new energy from new businesses • Businesses have longevity in this area, and we are a diverse population along the Fulton corridor. |
| Increased business engagement and camaraderie | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejuvenating the business board • A newly active business district board. • Business Association is becoming active. • I also think that there are a lot of businesses and their owners that are very active in pursuing growth and success in this area. • Positive engagement of Uptown boards and committees. • The Shop Hop seems to do pretty well although we do not participate since we're not a retail shop. |
| Increase in foot traffic and shopping | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that the spring/summer/fall season is doing great due to the increased traffic from the Fulton Street • Improved foot traffic • Shopping and traffic is pretty good due to the antique stores, coffee and salon shops • Improving walkability • Shops seem to be improving and for the most part staying filled with businesses. |
| Improving neighborhood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety is improving • I think the neighborhood in general is on the rise. I don't think the BID has anything to do with the neighborhoods general improvement. |
| Miscellaneous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers market • Van's Pastry Shoppe |

8. What needs to improve in the East Fulton business district?

| Theme | Comments |
|---|---|
| Improve visual appeal of streetscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape planters and walkability could be connected more from end to end of the East Fulton Business District. • A more welcoming visual appealplanters • Signage • Bike racks • Flags on light posts |
| Some run down store fronts and a problem business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The liquor store on the northwest corner of Fulton and Diamond brings down the district due to their clientele and lack of investment in their building. The district would be better off if there was a change of ownership / management. • Get rid of the party store on the corner of Fulton and Diamond. Been an eye sore for years. I don't suspect this is possible though. • Liquor store • Some storefronts could use improvement. • Run down storefronts |
| Need more involvement and engagement from business owners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnected business owners. • Greater engagement of all constituencies. • More participation by businesses • Participation and buy-in from business owners in EFBA and Uptown programs/events/etc. |
| Better marketing and outreach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of district. As in something that people can associate the district with. • Better marketing of the district. • It would be great if we could somehow have more events that encourage people to come to East Fulton. • I would like to have more neighbors from Midtown, East Hills, and Fulton Heights neighborhoods walking in our doors |
| Increase parking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More parking. • Parking • Parking - Parking - Parking. Less parking tickets !!!!! |
| More area restaurants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need place to eat and drink at! • I also think that if there were a couple more restaurants in this area that foot traffic would increase and so would business in general. |
| Miscellaneous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend the collected assessments more wisely and efficiently or don't collect them in the first place. |

Discussion questions for the East Fulton Business Association

- Were you surprised or disappointed by any of the responses from the survey? If so, why?
- What are some of your key take-aways from the survey responses?
- After considering the survey feedback, are there any follow-up steps or action items that you believe may be important for individual owners and/or your business association to pursue?