



City of Evans
2015 Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR)
Program Report



December 2015



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2015 City of Evans Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program Executive Summary

The City of Evans recognizes the need to proactively assist existing businesses to help them survive and grow. It understands the fact that up to 80% of new jobs and growth in a community are created from existing businesses. Because much of Evan's economic prosperity depends on its current business' capacity to thrive and expand, the City conducted its first Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program survey and analysis. This project took the pulse of businesses in the City during late 2015. Evans received feedback from 79 businesses through in-person interviews and on-line surveys. These 79 businesses represent a 40% survey response rate. This is a fair and equitable sampling giving the survey statistical significance.

The information and feedback collected through the BEAR project focused on assessing current business issues; increasing awareness and support of the City plans and policies; refining existing business support program and helping to guide City future programs. Ultimately, the BEAR project is a direct outreach effort of relationship building; informed communication and proactive policy development helping address businesses' needs and concerns that are under the City's control.

Key Findings of Evans' 2015 Business Expansion and Retention Survey are:

- Businesses overall are healthy and pleased with the business climate of Evans.
- While some businesses endured hardships through the recent recession, a vast majority (82%) are maintaining or increasing their employment and/or facilities in 2016.
- The business community believes general services in the City are strong including customer service, schools, fire and police services and recreational facilities.
- Community advantages highlighted were proximity to local markets and customers; and transportation access.
- Some of the disadvantages are in the areas that are not under the City's control. These include healthcare costs, labor quality and productivity and lack of specialized and technical skills.
- However, one disadvantage uncovered in the process was effective communication and doing business with the City.
- In addition, those who have had experienced with the development review process rank it very low. Businesses urged streamlining and clarification of plans and policies
- Sixty eight percent (68%) of businesses expressed appreciation of the BEAR program and direct outreach for their input.
- Awareness of the City's major plans is generally low at an average of 40%. There is higher awareness of the Riverside Park Plan at 53%, South Platte River Restoration Plan at 49% and Highway 85 Plan at 45%.
- An average of 53% of businesses support City major plans. Support is highest for the Riverside Park Plan at 63% and South Platte Restoration Plan at 60%.
- There is strong awareness of some the City's business assistance programs such as the Shop in Evans campaign, business-to-business events and the Business Showcase at an average awareness of 68%. Other business assistance programs rank lower in awareness at an average rating of 33%.
- There is high awareness of the City's strategic business partners including the Evans Chamber of Commerce (83%), Small Business Development Center (58%) and US Small Business Administration (55%).
- A considerable majority expressed a desire to be better aware and educated on City plans, programs and strategic partners
- Business indicated interest in additional City business assistance programs such as commercial equipment and façade improvement grants.
- Eighty eight percent (88%) of businesses want to be communicated with through email, the City's website and printed material.

A strategic plan with goals and strategies for addressing these key findings is located at the end of this report.

Bu\$ine\$\$ Retention and Expan\$ion

Introduction to the Evans Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program

Eighty percent (80%) of a community's business growth results from expansions of existing local businesses rather than the attraction of new ones. Evans strives to look for ways to provide a better business environment for its premium local employers. In 2015, the City conducted its first business expansion and retention program survey and analysis project. Evans City Council requested the project be implemented to measure the pulse of its business community.

Through the Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) project, Evans is demonstrating its understanding that supporting existing businesses is critical. The findings of the 2015 BEAR project and report provide the City with business expert "in the trenches" feedback. It also helps the City and business leaders work together to proactively address barriers local businesses face as they try to survive and grow. Ultimately, the program becomes a highly effective means in creating awareness of the needs, aspirations and activities of both parties. By doing so, both Evans and businesses gain a competitive advantage through better service to their customers.

BEAR Objectives

Objectives of the BEAR survey project contained priority outcomes to be reported to Evans City Council for educational purposes and potential future actions. These objectives are:

1. Demonstrate support for local businesses and to further establish meaningful relationships
2. Identify the local business community's health
3. Assess awareness of City major plans, business assistance programs and strategic business partners
4. Assess support of City major plans
5. Identify additional City programs that help address local business needs
6. Identify immediate business issues
7. Identify best ways to communicate with the business community
8. Develop goals and strategies to best support existing businesses

BEAR Program Leadership Team

Credibility of the BEAR Leadership Team and their rapport with the business community is critical. Thus, the BEAR Leadership Team was comprised of individuals with experience in business retention and expansion. In addition, business leaders and staff who have established relationships with the business community participated.

- Michael Masciola, MM Solution, consultant
- Sheryl Trent, Evans Director of Economic Development
- Evans Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Jessie Pacheco, Evans Finance Department
- Patricia Lentell (Zietz), Evans Administrative Specialist

Research Report Development

The centerpiece of program was in-person interviews and online surveys. A target was set that a minimum of 30 in-person interviews would be conducted with 167 businesses surveyed online via Survey Monkey. The project aimed to survey a broad cross section of the business community using the City of Evans business license database.

The BEAR survey was conducted by MM Solution. Results were entered into a data spreadsheet file, tabulated and analyzed. A summary of the findings and recommendations was presented to the Office of Economic Development and Evans City Council.

Confidentiality

Due to the nature of the survey questions, confidentiality was strongly emphasized throughout the project. All surveys and data were only reviewed by MM Solution. The results in this report are in an aggregate form with no comments or responses that reveal the respondent's identity.

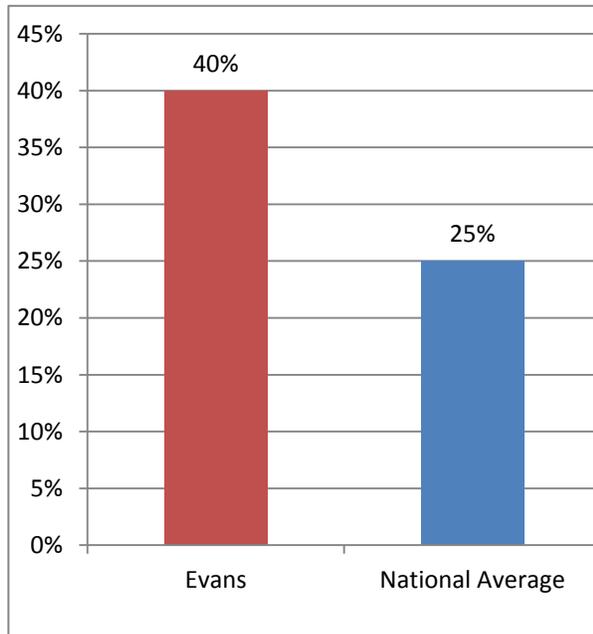
Survey Respondents and Response Rate

Generally speaking, it's preferable to get a response rate of 20-25% for surveys of large pools of respondents such as the Evans business community. Figure 1 shows Evans' BEAR survey project obtained 79 responses or a 40% response rate. This provided a large,

fair and equitable sampling giving the project statistical significance.

This high response rate was achieved by developing a comprehensive inventory of Evans' 197 businesses. The survey was designed to be completed with 5-7 minutes.

Figure 1
Response Rates



Red Flag Issue Identification

Red Flag issues were identified for 3 respondents. Red Flag issues are ones in which companies need immediate assistance. These businesses were referred to the Economic Development Office who passed the items on to the appropriate parties.





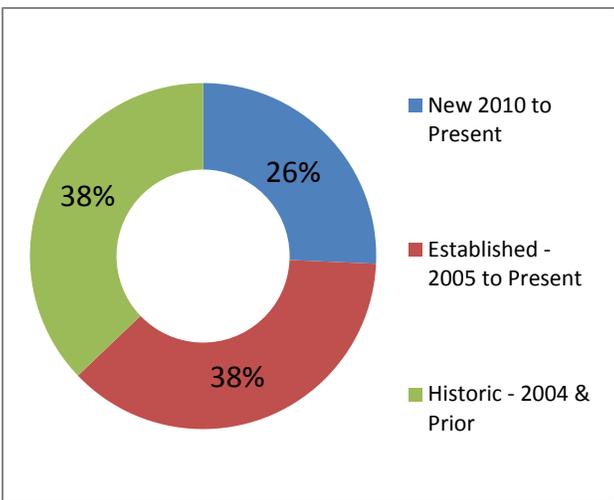
Evans BEAR Survey Results and Analysis

The core project survey was broad based with over 70 possible responses to fact finding questions. A wide spectrum of businesses by age, employment size, industry and location completed the survey. This allowed the gathering of a significant amount of value-added data.

Distribution of Businesses by Year Established

Businesses have an average of 11.09 years of establishment in Evans. Figure 2 shows 38% are "Established" companies founded between 1983 and 2001. Another third are long-standing "Historic" businesses established prior to 1982. The remaining 26% are "New" companies founded after 2010.

**Figure 2
Businesses by Year Established**

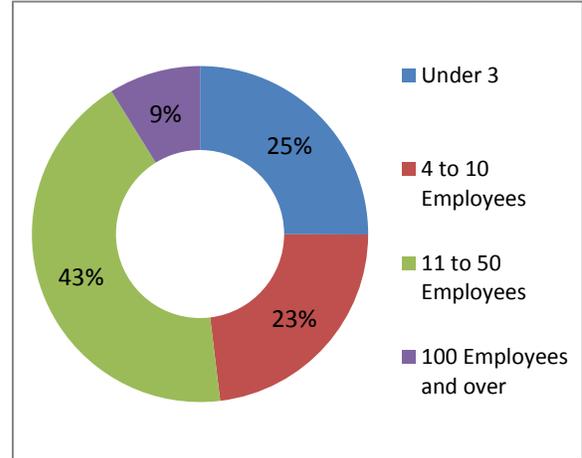


Distribution of Businesses Number of Employees

Measured by employment, the data shows Evans businesses have an average of 19.08 employees. A majority (66%) of the businesses have between 4 and 50 employees.

Figure 3 shows 43% of businesses have 11 to 50 employees. Twenty five percent (25%) of the businesses employ 3 or fewer workers with the remaining 25% having 4 to 10 employees.

**Figure 3
Businesses by Number of Employees**

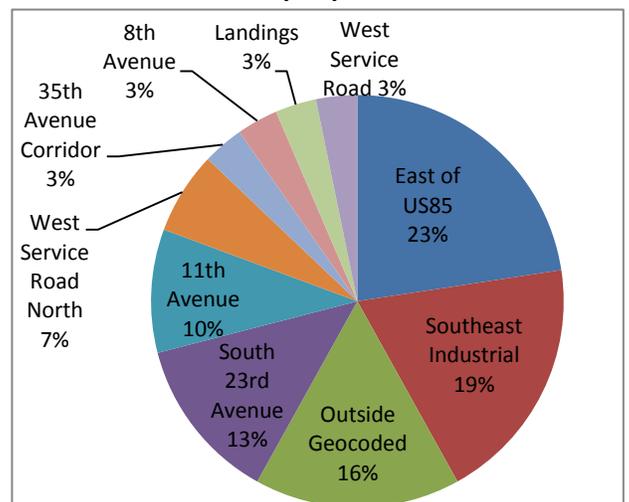


Distribution of Businesses by Location

Businesses responded to the survey from 10 key locations in the City. These are the East of US 85 Corridor, Southeast Industrial area, Outside Geocoded areas, South 23rd Avenue, 11th Avenue Corridor, West Service Road North, 35th Avenue Corridor, 8th Avenue, The Landings area and West Service Road South.

Figure 4 shows the largest percentage of respondents was from the East of US 85 Corridor at 23%. Nineteen percent (19%) of businesses were in Southeast Industrial area followed by 16% in Outside Geocoded areas.

**Figure 4
Businesses by City Location**

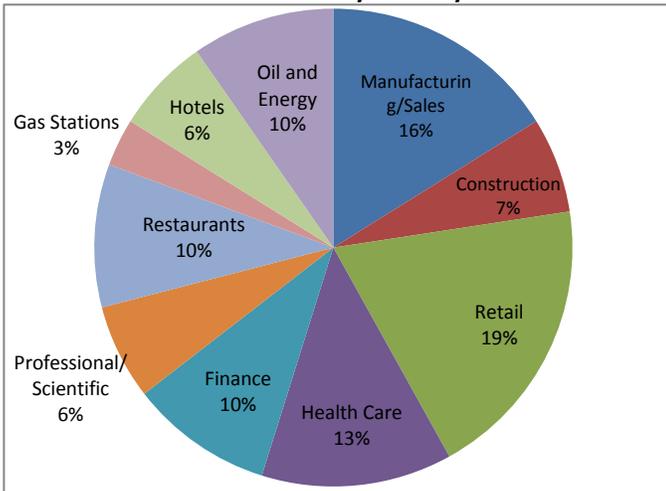


Distribution of Businesses by Industry

Figure 5 shows a cross section of 10 industries responded to the survey. These industries are Manufacturing/Sales, Construction, Retail, Healthcare, Finance, Professional/Scientific, Restaurants, Gas Stations, Hotels and Oil and Energy.

The largest percentage of respondents came from the retail industry at 19%. Sixteen percent (16%) of businesses were in the manufacturing/sales industry and 13% were in healthcare. Additional industries included oil and gas at 10% and finance at 10%.

**Figure 5
Businesses by Industry**

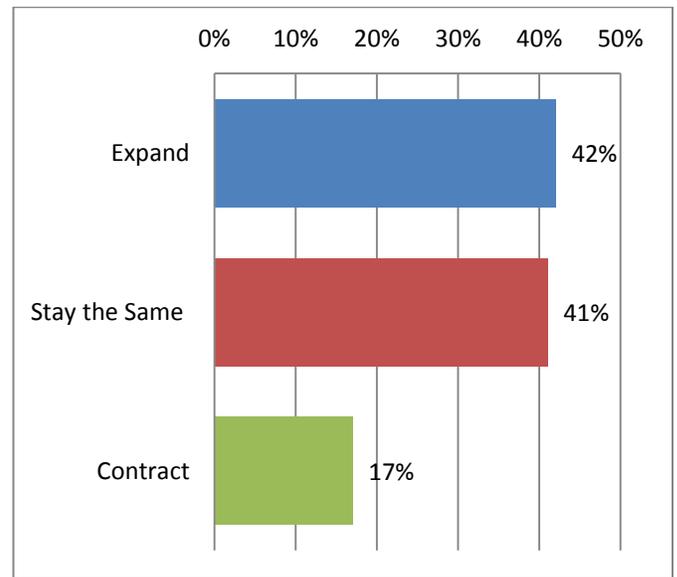


Distribution of Businesses – Plans to Expand, Stay the Same or Contract

Evans’ business community is healthy. As Figure 6 indicates, 83% of businesses plan to expand or stay the same over the next year. 42% of these businesses plan to modernize or expand their present buildings, equipment and or employees. The additional 41% of businesses advised that they were stable and plan to keep their operations the same.

Over the next year, 7 businesses reported positive reasons for reducing employee numbers and/or operations, citing increases in efficiency.

**Figure 6
Plans to Expand, Stay the Same & Contract**



National and Local Business Climate Factors

The top positive factors impacting Evans businesses are the general economic environment (62%), Evans’ strategic location (57%) and proximity to customers (61%). Transportation access and general city services represent the other factors that businesses cited as positive for their future.

The most-frequently mentioned challenge for local businesses was the cost of healthcare at 83%. This has been a significant cost over many years. Several indicated they now help employees get individual health insurance by contributing to premium costs instead of providing company insurance.

Another significant challenge identified is labor availability and quality, particularly in the trade industries. An average of 70% pointed to the need for more technical, entry level and soft skilled (customer service, good work ethic and willingness to work) workers in area.

Figure 7 summarizes these top 5 strengths and weaknesses Evans businesses face at both the national and local level.

Figure 7
Top Evans Strengths and Weaknesses

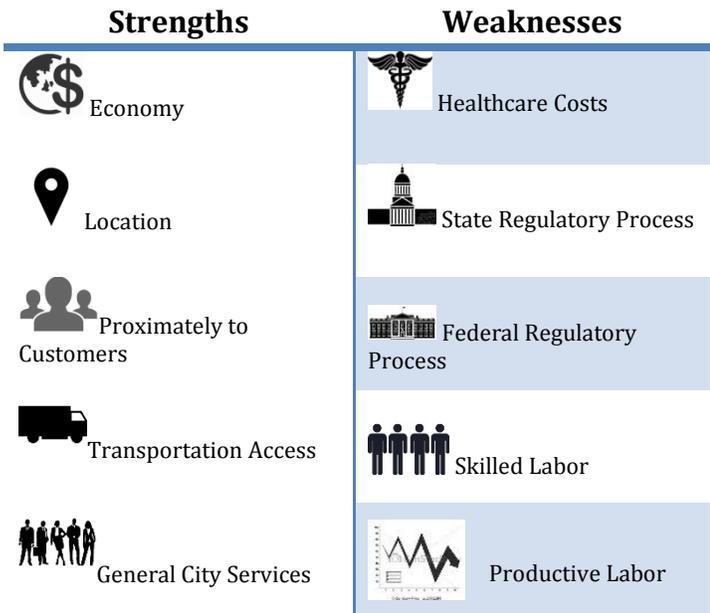
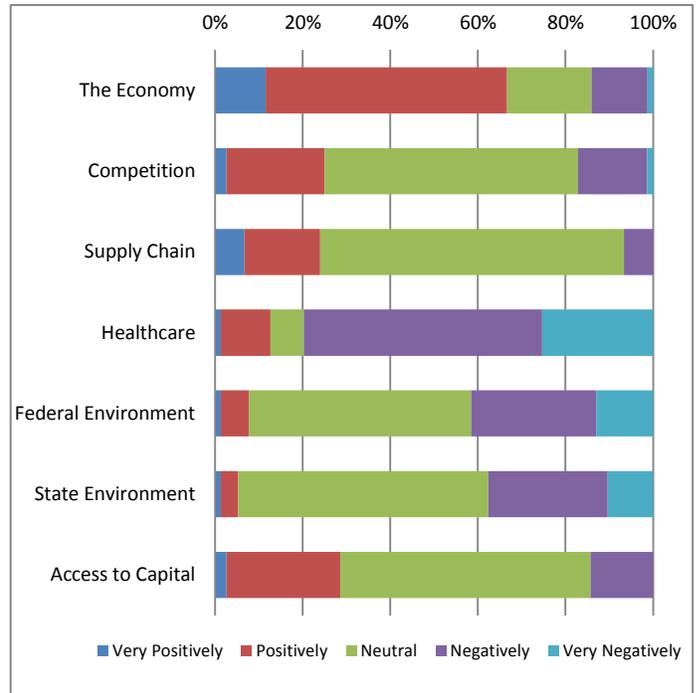


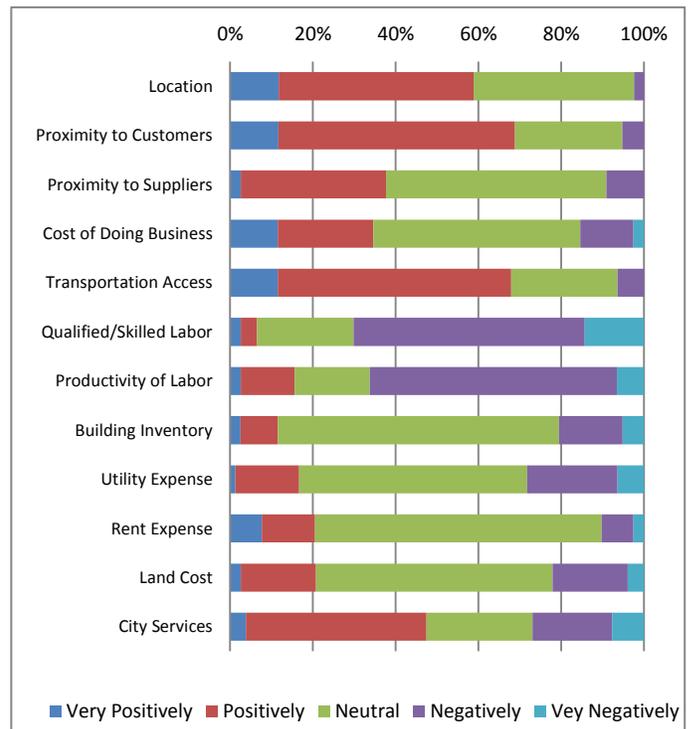
Figure 8
National Business Factors



Figures 8 and 9 show these and additional national and local business climate factors identified in the survey process. These include competition, available building inventory, access to capital, supply chain, cost of doing business, utility expense, rent expense land cost and cost of business materials

In following the bar charts, the left two sections of the bars indicate a positive response while the two right sections of the bars indicate a negative response. The green sections of the bars indicate neutral or unaware responses.

Figure 9
Local Business Factors



Additional Comments:

- "I have good access to capital so I can expand"
- "Evans is the least expensive place in area to rent and own"
- "Developed a business strategy; Long time employees work together--a great team."
- "Yes, we are encouraged in the show of creativity in cutting costs to create efficiencies"
- "I have 10 competitors in the area. It can be tough"

Additional Comments:

- “My supplier is from Germany. So local supply chain is not a factor”.
- “Higher gas prices are effecting customers behavior and spending.”
- “The oil & gas industry is taking all the good employees”
- “Healthcare costs are almost impossible to keep up with”

Communication & Development Review Process



It must be noted that although there was no specific survey question regarding experience with direct communication with City Hall, this issue was a constant concern by businesses. They relate to general communication and conducting business with Evans such as working within City’s plan polices and development review process.

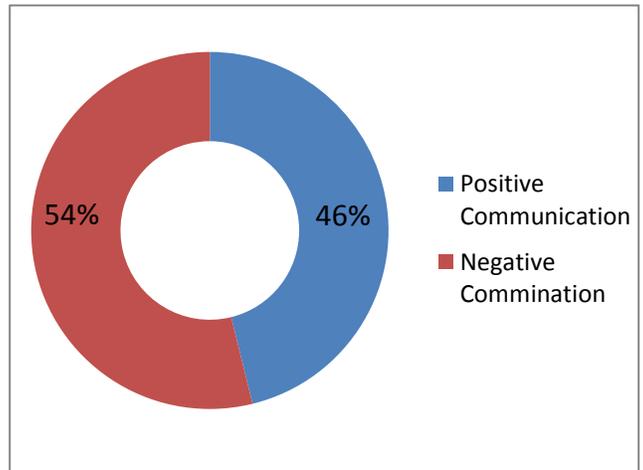
General City Communication Ratings

26 or 33% of the 79 businesses surveyed had direct communication/contact with the City. Figure 10 shows of the 26, there is an approximate 50/50 split between positive and negative experience. A vast majority of all respondents wanted more communication and being further educated. The results point to the need for key outreach efforts to increase and improve communication, build awareness, develop relationships and facilitate collaboration bridging the communications gap and creating support for the City and the businesses they serve.

Additional Comments:

- “Good spot for business. City is good to deal with.”
- “Evans has been very good to us. We appreciate their patronage”
- “City is short staffed. I get little or no response”
- “It is the sentiment of all businesses that there is no communication”

**Figure 10
Business Communication with the City**



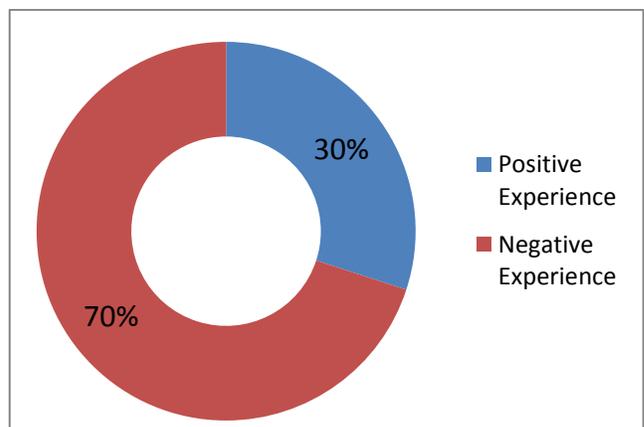
General Plan Communication and Development Review/Permitting

10 of the 26 businesses had direct experience with the permitting/development review process. Of these 10, there was a 30%/70% split between positive and negative experience.

The issues covered topics such as understanding and working within City’s plans and polices process, responsiveness, ability of staff to be more flexible and have a more business friendly approach.

Figure 11 shows there are strong indications that there is room for improvement in the areas of outbound communication for the development review and approval processes and clarity of City plans and procedures.

**Figure 11
Development Review Experience with the City**



- **Additional Comments:**
- “Development review was very smooth. No problems”
- “The approval process for business is too long”
- “City has to be much better at approvals...never pick up phone or call back”
- “There is no clear process for approval. Codes need to be flexible and understanding of business”
- “No one understands or explains the rules.”

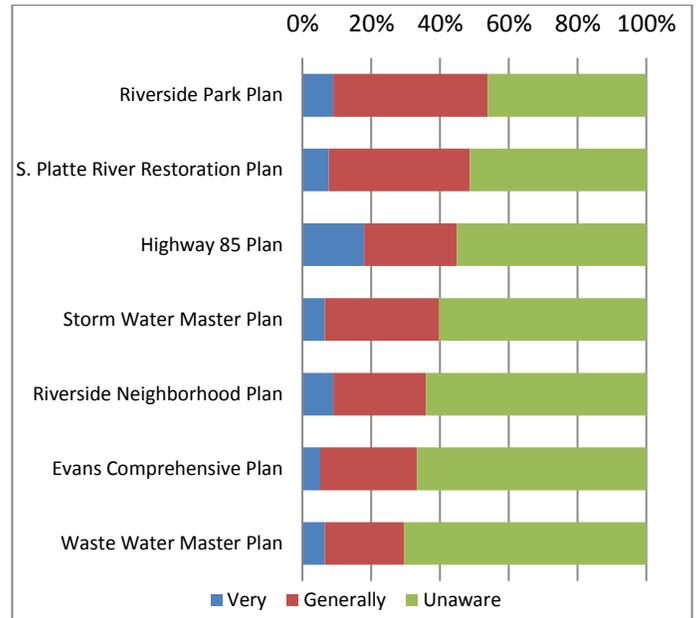
Awareness of City Major Policies and Plans



The results of the BEAR survey shows awareness of City major plans is an average of 41%. The City has done good job of creating awareness around some plans. The Riverside Park Plan enjoys an awareness rating of 53% while the South Platte River Restoration Plan and Highway 85 Plan have awareness ratings of 49% and 45% respectively. There is lower awareness for Evans Water Treatment Plan and Evans Comprehensive plans at 33% and 29% respectively. The results of businesses’ awareness ratings on individual City plans are shown in Figure 12.

Given 59% on average of businesses are unaware of City major plans, there is an opportunity to proactively educate the business community about these City’s efforts. A vast majority (73%) of respondents were interested in getting more information and being further educated.

**Figure 12
Awareness of Major City Plans**



Support of City Major Policies and Plans

An average of 53% of businesses of those businesses aware support all City major plans. Support for the Riverside Park Plan is 63%, South Platte Restoration Plan is 60% and 57% for the Riverside Neighborhood Plan. Others support the Waste Water Treatment Master Plan and Storm Water Master Plan at an average of 53%

Figure 12 show that even though the Highway 85 Plan has 38% support from businesses, it also has negative support at 30%. The same is true for the Riverside Neighborhood Plan and Water Treatment Master Plan at approximate negative ratings of 17%.

As previously indicated, a high percentage (59%) of businesses are unaware of City major plans. Additional support of these efforts could be achieved by providing additional education to the business community.

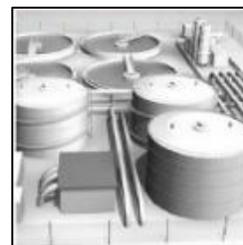
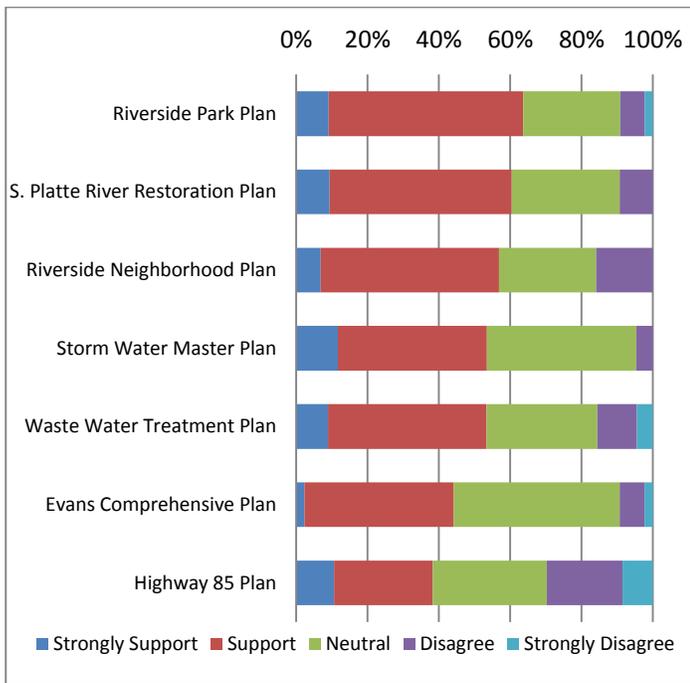


Figure 13
Support of Major City Plans



Additional Comments:

- "I think the Hwy 85 plan is a good idea. It needs to be worked on"
- "I support flood improvement plans. I'd like them to move faster on them"
- "The standards of the plans are very difficult for me to in improve my building"
- "Good luck with your 85 plans. You're going to run good businesses right out of town"

Awareness of City Business Assistance Programs

Businesses were asked about their awareness of the City's business assistance programs. These included Sale, Real Property and Personal Property Tax Rebates, Reduction in Development Costs, Job Creation Incentives, the Enterprise Zone, City Owned Land Partnership, Shop in Evans campaign, Business-to-Business events and the Business Showcase.

Awareness of the Shop in Evans campaign is high at 72% as is the business-to-business events at 68% and the business showcase at 68%.

Conversely, knowledge of other business assistance programs is very low. Although many programs may not be applicable to individual businesses, an average

of 77% were unaware of the remaining City assistance programs. A majority of respondents were interested in getting more information on these programs. The table in Figure 13 illustrates the findings.

Figure 13
Awareness of City Business Assistance Programs

Evans Business Assistance Programs	Very	Generally	Unaware
Personal Property Tax Rebate	2.56%	24.36%	73.08%
Real Property Tax Rebates	3.85%	23.08%	73.08%
Rebate on Sales Tax Generation	1.28%	21.79%	76.92%
Reduction in Development Costs	1.28%	14.10%	84.62%
Assistance Creating Development Ready Sites	0.00%	15.38%	84.62%
Job Creation Incentives	3.85%	17.95%	78.21%
Enterprise Zone	7.69%	24.36%	67.95%
City Owned Land Partnerships	5.13%	20.51%	74.36%
Shop in Evans	21.79%	46.15%	32.05%
Connection with Economic Development Department	14.10%	21.79%	64.10%
Business 2 Business Event (Spring)	15.38%	52.56%	32.05%
Business Showcase (Fall)	15.38%	57.69%	26.92%

Additional Comments:

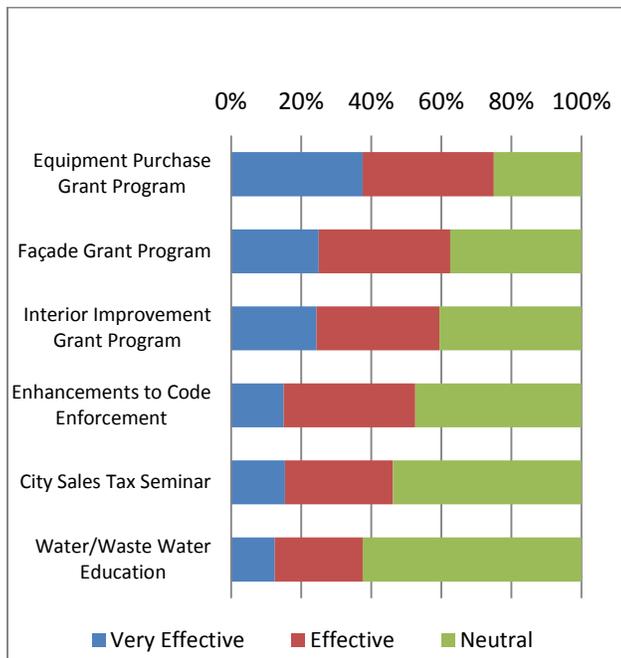
- "The Shop Local and business-to-business events are great"
- Business-to-business events are excellent for networking"
- "I'd like to know more about incentives for creating jobs. We expect to expand staff considerably over the next many years"

Business Ideas for How the City Can Further Assist Existing Businesses

Businesses were invited to share ideas about additional programs that could assist their operations. Seventy three percent (73%) indicated an Equipment Purchase Grant Program and 65% indicated a Commercial Façade Grant Program should be investigated. The same is true for an Interior Improvement Grant program at 59%.

Sixty eight (68%) said the BEAR program should continue for their input and to further build relationships with the City. Another suggestion was creating increased opportunities for local businesses to bid on City projects requiring their expertise.

Figure 14
Suggestions Business Assistance Programs



Additional Comments:

- “Grants to help me improve the appearance of the business would be very helpful”
- “I won’t look to the City for its programs if they are full of paperwork. I need to run my business and the time it will take won’t be worth it to the profitability of my business”

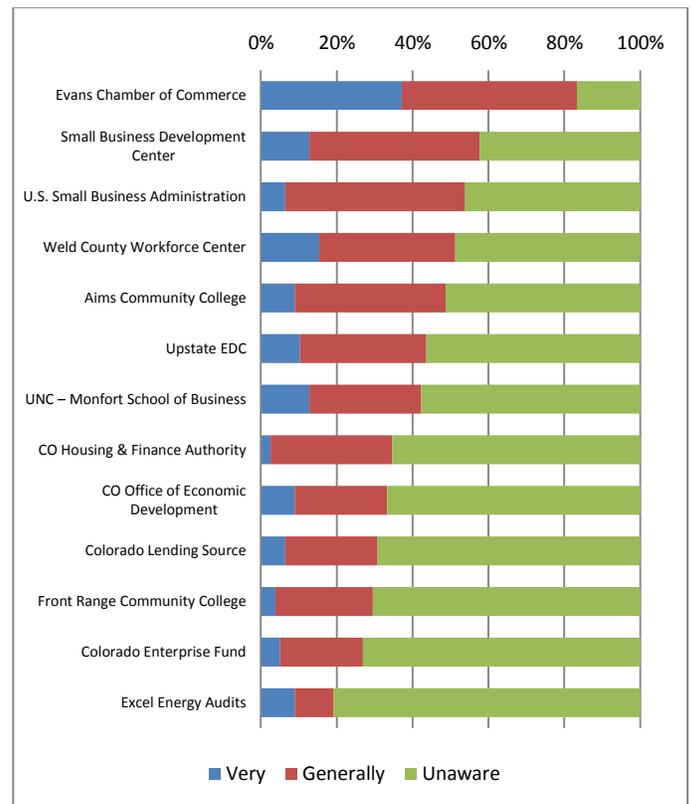
Awareness of City’s Strategic Partner Business Assistance Programs

There is a strong awareness around the Evans Chamber of Commerce (83%) followed by the Small Business Development Center (58%), US Small Business Administration (55%) the Weld County Workforce Center (54%).

Businesses were asked about awareness of 9 other City strategic partners and their programs. These partners include Aims Community College, Upstate Economic Development Corporation, University of Northern Colorado – Monfort School of Business, and the Colorado Housing & Finance Authority. An average of 34% of businesses were aware of these business assistance partners. Xcel Energy Audits had the lowest awareness at 18%. Figure 16 shows how well these individual partners are known.

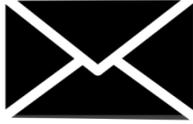
These findings shows there are opportunities to further develop and formalize alliances with partners. Additional collaboration will benefit the City, partners and local businesses by more fully addressing business issues and help minimize duplication of services.

Figure 15
Awareness of City’s Strategic Partners



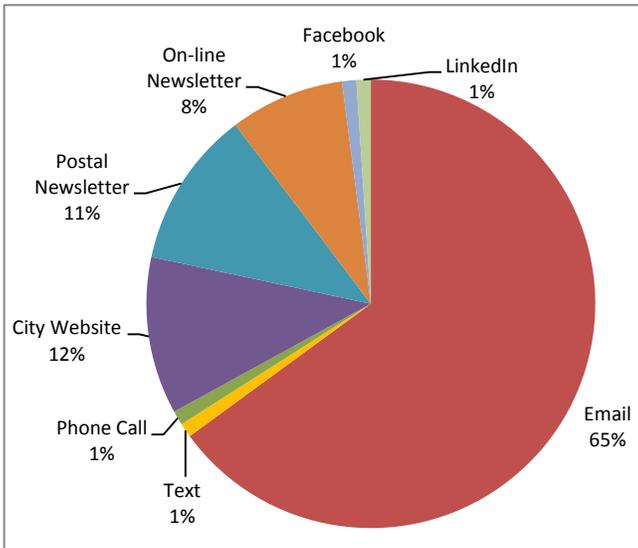
Preferred Means of Communication with the City

The report clearly shows Evans' businesses are not early adopters of new communication technology. They indicated overwhelmingly they prefer email (65%), website (12%) and traditional postal newsletter (11%) media as the best way to communicate with them.



The large desire for email is good news. A benefit of e-mailing remains a significantly more effective way to communicate to audiences than other social media. Email is used 40 times more than Facebook and Twitter combined. That's because 91% of all US consumers still use e-mail daily.

Figure 16
Preferred Means of Communication



Additional Comments:

- *"I like the newsletters and email"*
- *"Appreciate the visit; I learned more about what is going on in the City"*

Evans 2015 Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program Recommended Strategic Plan Elements

There are numerous suggested strategic plan elements below to help address the data and findings of this report. They are certainly not all inclusive but serve as a jumping off point to further the BEAR program and create stronger relationships and assistance to the Evan's business community

It must be noted that it is clearly recognized there are only so many hours in the day and ultimately the City may not have the "bandwidth" to act on all goals and strategies. These items can be implemented over time or perhaps sooner if funds are available to hire additional help to move Council priority items forward.

Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program

Goal 1. Continue and formalize BEAR Program

- Strategy A. Fund the BEAR survey and report program on an annual basis
- Strategy B. Set formal schedule for BEAR awareness efforts, survey introduction, launch dates, follow-up reminders and City Council and strategic partner updates.
- Strategy C. Use current survey document with modifications to include additional questions about a businesses' profile information and whether they had direct contact with the City and what the experience was like.
- Strategy D. Obtain customer relations management (CRM) software for efficient program management.
- Strategy E. Secure local business leader contact information through the use of an intern or similar.
- Strategy F. Capture key business data in CRM for efficient tracking and identification of business trends over time.
- Strategy G. Set a goal of 35% to 45% response rate across industries and locations to provide a large, fair and equitable sampling giving the survey statistical significance.
- Strategy H. Use a BEAR or similar practitioner to ensure a keen understanding of business impact issues and business support programs. Not knowing what factors impact business; how programs can be accessed; and ultimate payout can damage future credibility with the businesses.
- Strategy I. Develop print and other media of all City and strategic partner business assistance programs AND services to be used during the BEAR survey process and partner's outreach efforts.
- Strategy J. Ensure confidentiality throughout the survey process.
- Strategy K. Identify processes to quickly and efficiently address uncovered "Red Flag" business issues.
- Strategy L. Follow up all survey responses with a "thank you" and once BEAR report is completed and/or formalized, directly send report to those who participated to show their voices have been heard.
- Strategy M. Utilize BEAR report findings for Council's future policy making decisions.

Business Communication and Awareness Strategic Plan

Goal 1. Further develop business communication plan goals, strategies, objectives and action items.

- Strategy A. With help from Evans' Communications Officer, formalize strategic business plan to fulfill identified communication needs of local businesses.
- Strategy B. Focus overall messaging on the City's recognition of existing businesses' value.
- Strategy C. For BEAR program, communicate the City's understanding of the value of "going straight to the customer" for their expert input and cooperation.

Goal 2. Build internal support and utilize relationships throughout Evans' organization to create awareness

- Strategy A. If applicable, enhance awareness of staff by creating employee newsletter written by departments about City plans, projects, partners, successes and activities. This newsletter can be posted on the City's website and the link sent to all City Council members and employees via email.
- Strategy B. Educate and provide staff with City plans and program facts sheets and in other media forms.

- Strategy C. Distribute materials to those departments having contact with local businesses including, but not limited to, the Finance Office, Community Development, Code Enforcement, Customer Service, Police and Fire Office and internal support teams who buy products/services from local businesses.
- Strategy D. Include City Council and top City officials in visits “putting a face to the Evans business community” and to create awareness and education of City business initiatives firsthand.
- Strategy E. Put information about City information contacts and links on back of applicable City representative’s business cards when handed out to the local business community.
- Strategy F. Set response and resolution time requirements and monitoring mechanism for when staff receives and resolved business inquires.
- Strategy G. Through preferred means of communication, educate businesses on the City’s continued emphasis/reinforcement of proactive communication, awareness, problem-solving, responsiveness and interdepartmental coordination.
- Strategy H. Develop City guest speaker program and calendar for staff for further educate a broad septum of businesses of City plans and activities.

Goal 3. Harness the breadth of resources, business visits, knowledge, leadership, and skills of strategic partners through alliances that support each other’s communication and awareness goals.

- Strategy A. Host strategic partner meetings to discuss services, roles, referrals and timeline goals for educating businesses and addressing issues.
- Strategy B. Identify roles and minimize duplication of services. Create and share with businesses community a matrix of specific strategic partner responsibilities and services.
- Strategy C. Create/utilize partner directory and fact sheets to be used during BEAR visit program and strategic partner communication efforts.
- Strategy D. Exploit existing business-to-business relationships of the Evans Economic Development Advisory Committee to encourage businesses to participate in BEAR program.
- Strategy E. Leverage and educate realtor/broker, banking, insurance and other local professional’s relationships so they can provide additional value-added education and services their clients.

Goal 4. Outreach to the business community the way they prefer.

- Strategy A. Continue commercial e-newsletter and postal newsletter on scheduled basis and continue to make information available through archiving and linking to the City’s website.
- Strategy B. To increase probability of materials being read, segment media content to be more suited to business interests such as City updates followed by value-added information such as local and national economic trends.
- Strategy C. Where applicable, update and redesign website where City plans, assistance programs and strategic partner information can be more easily accessed.
- Strategy D. Approaches such as creating a Wikipedia page can be employed for better communication for those surfing the web.

City Major Plans, Development Review Approval and Communications Plan

Goal 1. Proactively streamline development review and communication process.

- Strategy A. Modify the BEAR survey document to specifically include a question regarding whether the business has had direct contact with the City planning/development staff and what the experience was like.
- Strategy B. Compare processes of competing areas in order to ensure the City is competitive and a recognized as a leader in supporting local businesses.
- Strategy C. Whatever the findings, significantly reduce time for development approvals.
- Strategy D. To further enhance service delivery, create strategic communications plan to include City plan information, modified flow charts and other materials focused on clarity, predictability, responsiveness, transparency and removal of inconsistencies.
- Strategy E. Set and enforce formal benchmarks for response times, approvals and customer satisfaction ratings.
- Strategy F. Strive to further involve businesses more directly in writing City plans, policies and codes, so that impacts to the business community are considered in advance.

- Strategy G. Advise businesses submitting development requests that complete, high-quality plans must be submitted so City staff can best serve them. Before implementing this strategy, the definitions of complete and high quality must be clearly defined and communicated to all parties.
- Strategy H. Annually hold forums with developers who have submitted plans within the last year for feedback and education on City plans and policies. Reinforce to businesses that comments made during the forum will be taken as instructive and no backlash will occur.
- Strategy I. Send short feedback/comment forms to all who had experience in the past year and for those who cannot attend.
- Strategy J. Potentially introduce an education and business outreach program such as “Better Development Means Better Business” website tips and resources to help businesses better understand and adjust current and future development plans
- Strategy K. Create development review and City plan PowerPoint to be presented on a scheduled basis to local builders’ associations and other applicable audiences.

Assess the ability to provide more impactful business programs

- Goal 1. Further assess additional business assistance programs that are both value-added to the City and existing businesses
 - Strategy A. Continue highly valued Shop Local campaign and business-to-business and recognition events
 - Strategy B. Conduct seminars on City procurement process to create increased awareness by businesses on how to apply for projects requiring their expertise.
 - Strategy C. Investigate business suggested Commercial Façade Grant and Equipment Purchase Grant Programs and initiatives.
 - Strategy D. Through programs, encourage local spending by providing a higher grant match based on the fact the business is using an Evans existing business
 - Strategy E. Assist, where realistic, with workforce development needs. Investigate use of Aims Community College’s free career and technical education (CTE) programs helping students entering the workforce and additional technical and soft skill programs among the universities and community colleges.

Show commitment to follow through on communication and input from businesses

- Goal 1. Many outreach participants stated that the City's commitment to become more business-friendly will be demonstrated through actions. They emphasized the importance of following through on the recommendations from the business community, and showing a commitment to the changes from the “top down” through leadership by the City Manager and the City Council. They also encouraged the City to move quickly to implement improvements so that the momentum and interest gained from the outreach to the business community will grow.