



# BUSINESS WALK

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**Sept. 15, 2022**

SPARTA, MO

**SHOW ME**  
CHRISTIAN COUNTY

*SPARTA AREA*  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



# THE WALK

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In partnership with the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce, Show Me Christian County and volunteers from the Show Me Strong Business Council visited the city of Sparta on Thursday, September 15, 2022. The group visited 23 storefronts and conducted a confidential survey to assess business owners' perception of the Sparta business climate.

# THE GROUP

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The Strong Business Council is a volunteer group of business leaders from Nixa, Ozark, and the county at large. The survey group consisted of three members of the Strong Business Council, four Show Me Christian County economic development staff, and Matthew Thomas, chairman of the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce.



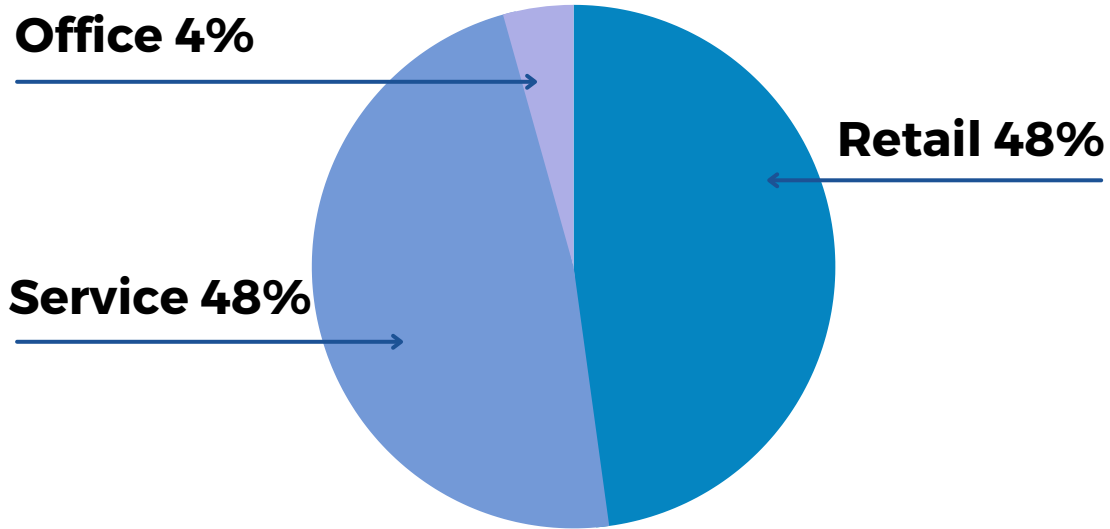
# THE SURVEY

<b>Business Walk Survey Form</b>	<b>SPARTA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE</b>	<b>SHOW ME CHRISTIAN COUNTY</b>
<b>Business Name:</b>	<b>Community: Sparta, MO</b>	
<b>Business Contact Person:</b>	<b>Walk Date:</b>	
1. How's business? (circle one) Very Bad / Bad / Okay / Good / Very Good / No Answer		
2. What do you like about doing business here?		
3. What would you say is Sparta's biggest opportunity for growth?		
4a. Business type (circle one) Retail / Service / Office / Industrial / Other _____		
4b. How long has this business been in Sparta? Years _____ Months _____		
5a. What percentage of your customers are tourists or visitors? _____		
5b. What do tourists ask about? Lodging / Dining / Attractions / Local services / n/a		
6a. How many employees do you have? Full time _____ Part time _____		
6b. Are you hiring right now? Full time positions open _____ Part time positions open _____		
7. Housing - Do your employees live in Sparta or commute from other areas? Local - Sparta residents (percentage _____) // Commuters - Live elsewhere (percentage _____)		
8. Where do you purchase most of your supplies and support services? (circle all) Local (Sparta) / Regional (11-50 mi) / State (50-100 mi) / U.S. (100+ mi) / Outside U.S.		
9. How much does your business rely on the internet? None / Little / Some / Quite a Bit / It is Essential / No Answer		
10. What else do you want the city, Chamber, county, or local business leaders to know about doing business here?		
NOTES		

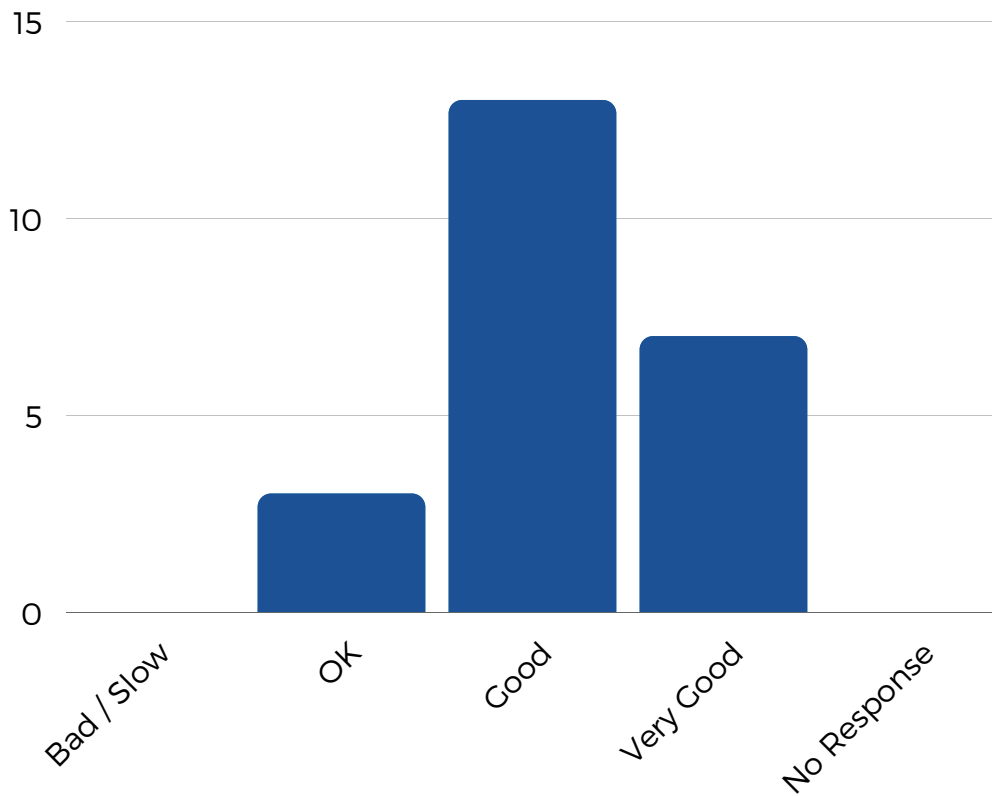


# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

Types of Businesses\* Surveyed



How's Business?

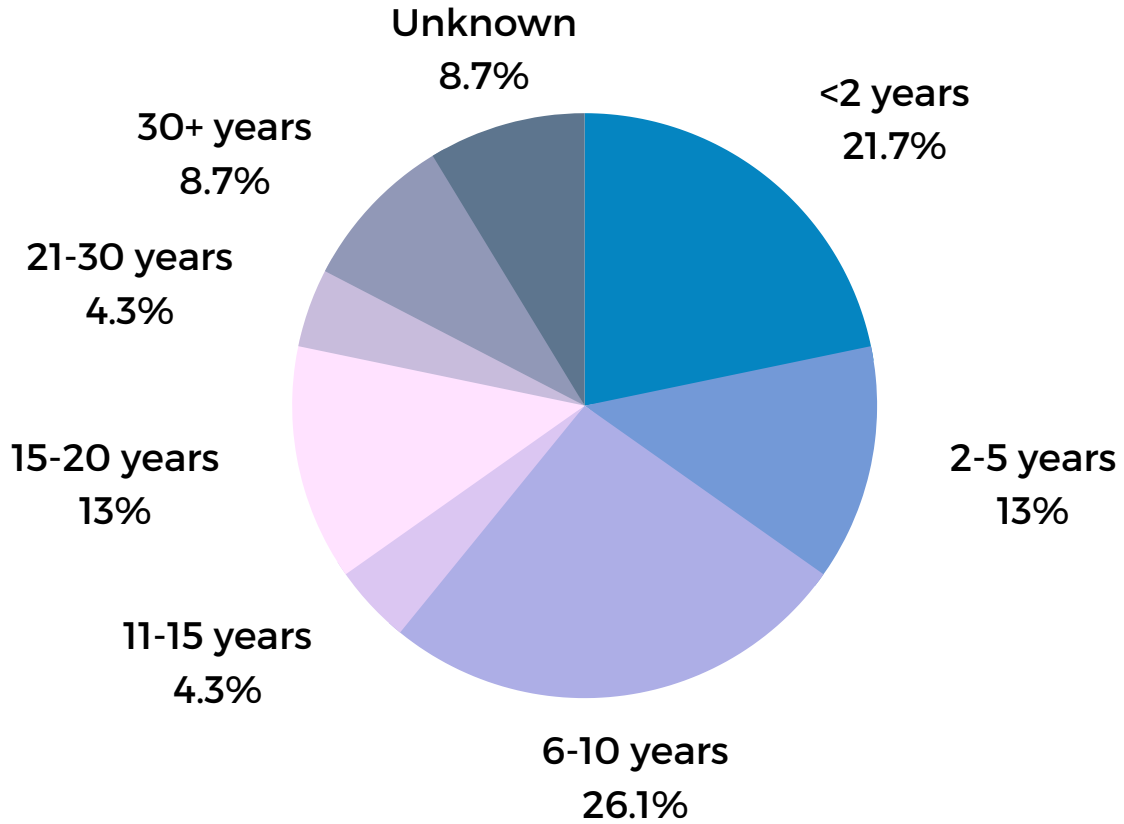


\*23 total respondents

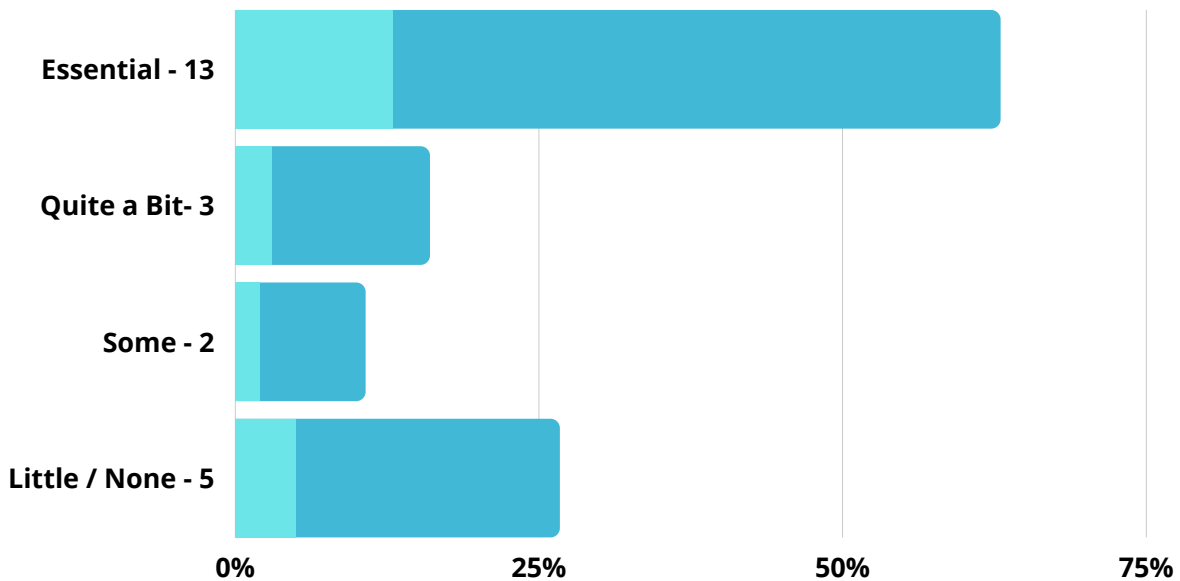


# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

## How long has this business operated in Sparta?



## Business's Reliance on Internet

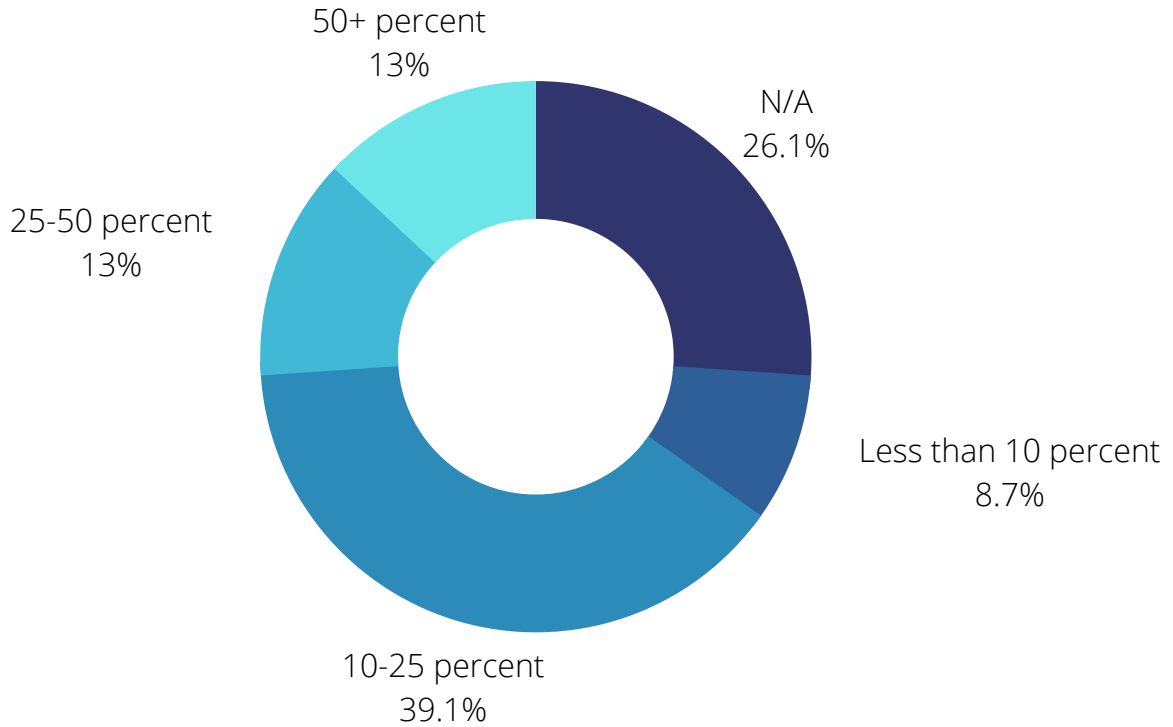


\*23 total respondents

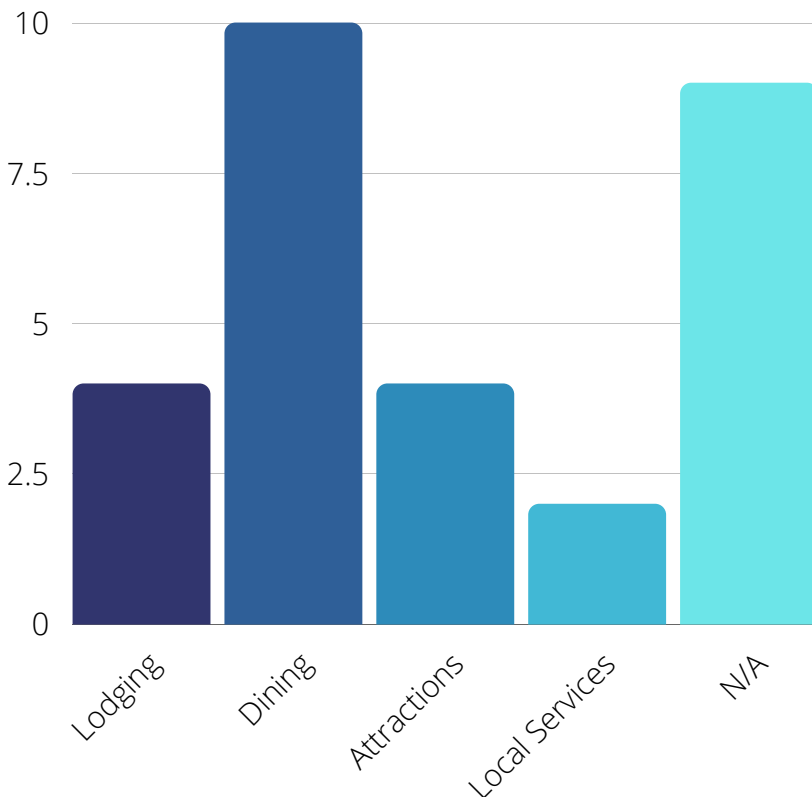


# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

## How many of your customers are tourists/visitors?



## What do tourists and visitors ask about?



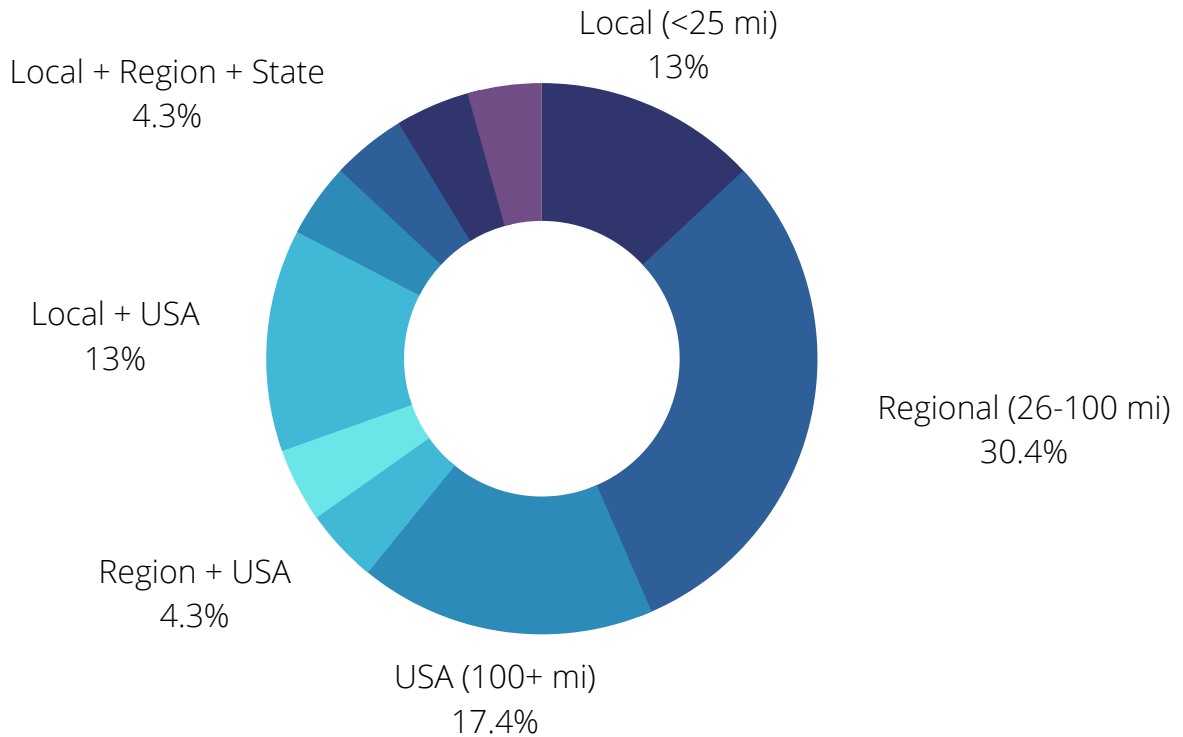
### OTHER:

- directions
- hunting permits
- worms
- caves
- fishing
- trail guides
- ATM
- liquor
- hiking
- "hometown food"
- activities for children

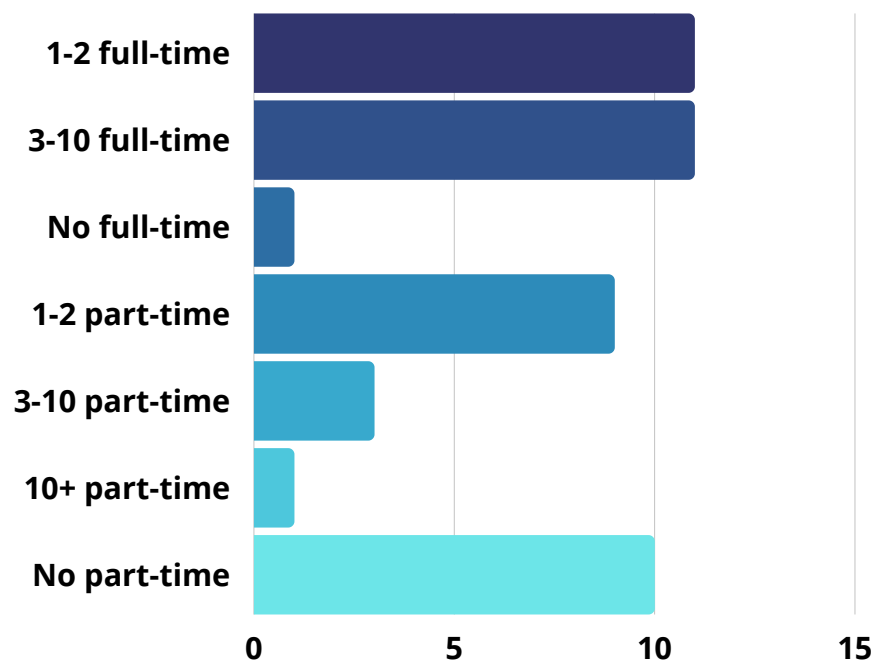


# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

## Where Do You Purchase Supplies?



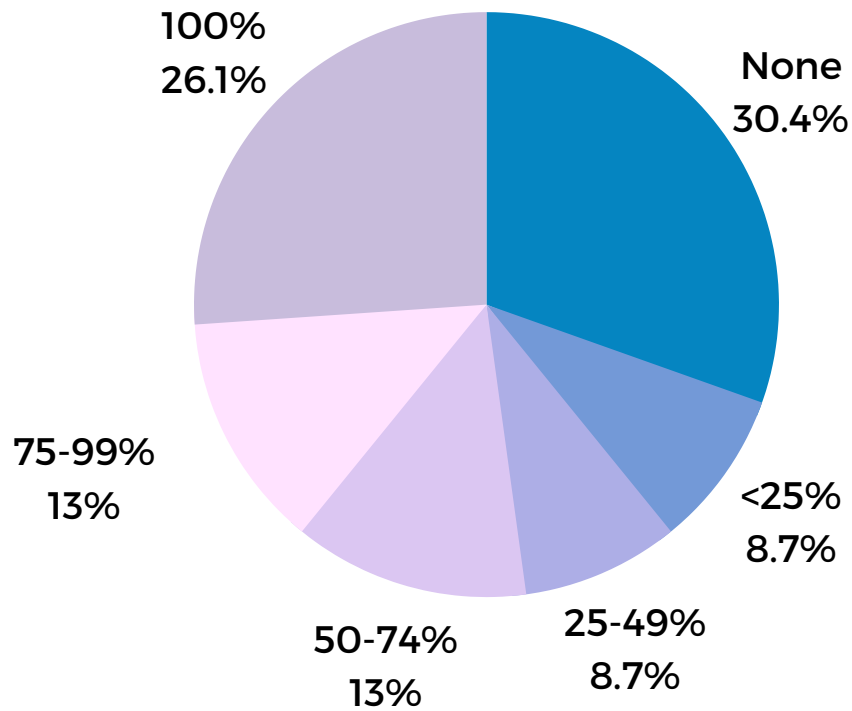
## How many full-time & part-time employees do you have?



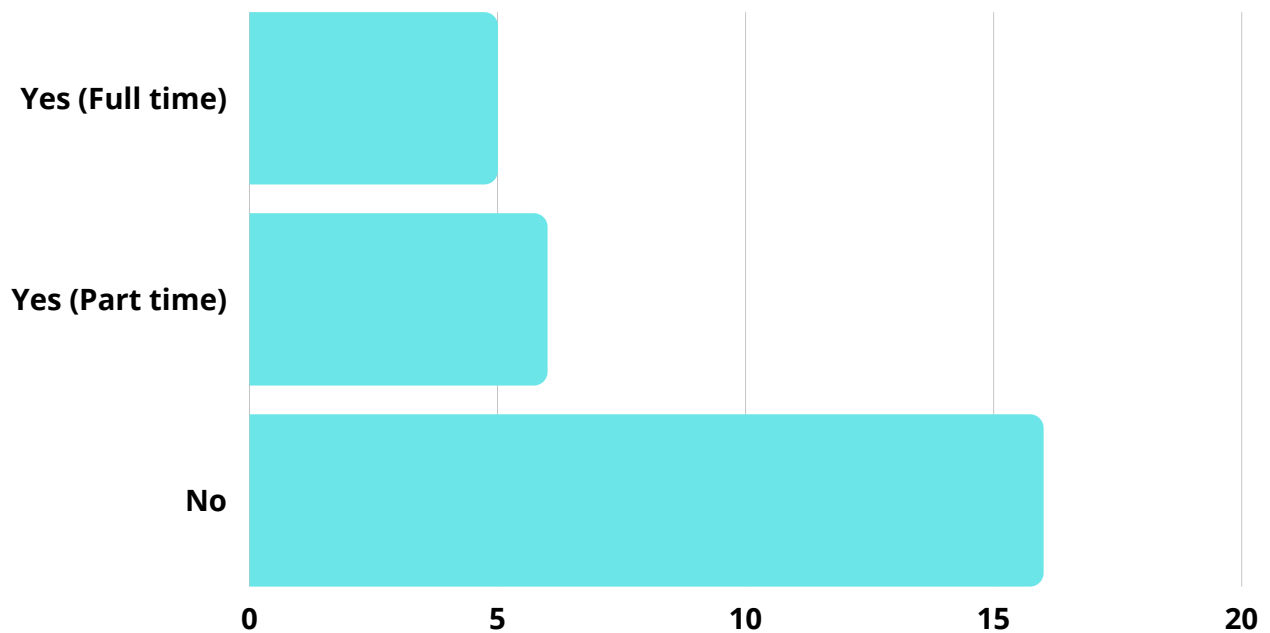


# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

**How many of your employees live in Sparta?**



**Are you hiring?**







# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

## Q: What do you like about doing business in Sparta?

- "Small town, friendly, familiar"
- "Good folks"
- "Small town feel, good customer relationships"
- "Close to home"
- "Highway traffic"
- "Customers are loyal to people and businesses they trust"
- "Feels like family"
- "People are very friendly and supportive"
- "Easy to retain customer relationships once they are there"
- "Inexpensive space"





# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

## **Q: What would you say is Sparta's biggest opportunity for growth?**

- "Restaurants! We need more food options."
- "Fixing up old businesses. Property owners taking initiative."
- "Undeveloped land"
- "Promoting Mark Twain national forest"
- "No rentals available - need places to live"
- "Build neighborhoods"
- "Something for the youth"
- "Diversity of businesses - different services than what we already have"
- "We have enough traffic to have more restaurants"

### **Common Themes:**

- Restaurants and things to do could help engage visitors and residents. Nearly every respondent mentioned "more restaurants/dining options" as a desire.
- Employers and residents are supportive of efforts to clean up, improve, and beautify the community.
- Respondents emphasized the need for targeted business development and residential growth.



# THE RESULTS - SPARTA, MO

## **Comments: Anything to add?**

- "Only one daycare, and there are no resources for special needs children."
- "We need a developer for the area."
- "Encourage more commercial interest. There are a lot of vacant buildings."
- "Need to clean up abandoned buildings and inoperable vehicles."
- "Land is affordable. I hope to see more development."
- "Would love to see more diversity in types of business."
- "City and mayor are moving in the right direction with new benches, flower pots, beautification efforts."

## **Common Themes:**

- Respondents would generally be supportive of efforts to strategically plan for and pursue both residential and commercial growth.
- The community's "look and feel" is important and can influence commercial investment.
- Multiple respondents mentioned childcare and youth-oriented services as areas for growth.



# QUESTIONS?

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