



SUNSET VALLEY

Business Research Findings

03.12.21

AGENDA

- Approach & Methodology
- Research Highlights (Questions, Answers and Themes)
- Insights
- Key Findings
- Next Steps





Approach & Methodology

Approach & Methodology

We interviewed 21 different business owners or managers that run 16 businesses in Sunset Valley. The interviews were conducted between January 20, and March 10, 2021. I asked the same 10 questions of every respondent.

As might be expected, when respondents started sharing their thoughts, various **themes emerged**. This report organizes and categorizes those themes and presents the respondents own language taken directly from the interviews.

The businesses are from all 3 Shopping Centers and the businesses by the Burger Center as well as one business outside of those specific areas.

Finally, the businesses ranged from big box national brands to local businesses, to a non-profit. Most of the respondents had worked in Sunset Valley for less that 10 years, but about a quarter had worked there for more than 10 years.

GOAL OF SUNSET VALLEY BUSINESS RESEARCH

To better understand what the business community thought about the business environment in Sunset Valley and how it could be improved.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Question 1:

How would you describe the business environment in Sunset Valley?

Q1 RESPONSES:

“Generally speaking, the business environment in Sunset Valley is fair, maybe **good, but not great.**”

“**Outdated** or lack of direction. **Stop and shop old model.**”

“Business environment in Sunset Valley **feels neglected** -- like when folks left Facebook and went to Instagram.”

“The 3 Shopping Centers **lack identity.**”

Q1 RESPONSES:

“No energy between the three shopping centers (besides Home Depot and Academy). **No strong anchor** in the center.”

“**No wow factor!**”

“Sunset Valley has a reputation of being old and **not hip**— both the community and the shopping centers.”

“**No energy**, no place where you can drink and have a good time or listen to music.”

Q1 RESPONSES:

“Very few places where you can **shop and then stop** and grab a drink or eat - can't do that in Sunset Valley.”

“Sunset Valley **lacks a social media presence**; they're not doing a whole lot to make the city an attractive place for people to shop.”

“The Sunset Valley shopping cycle is **very holiday driven**—everyone comes out and shops during a holiday period. Shopping during the weekdays are people running errands, moms shop a bit more at night, and the weekends are everyone.”

Q1 RESPONSES:

“I like the fact that people can drive right up to our stores, park, shop and then head out. **Very convenient.**”

“The Shopping Centers are always filled with **recognizable businesses**. When a business leaves that space is filled very quickly.”

“The people who shop in Sunset Valley are very **tech-savvy.**”

INSIGHT

Most respondents believed the Business Environment was fair to good with considerable **room for improvement**.

Specifically, they believe that the 3 Shopping Centers do not feel connected and that there is no one providing leadership that helps SV businesses keep pace with **improving the customer experience**—especially when it comes to encouraging customers to linger and leisurely shop at multiple stores in the 3 shopping centers and the business by the Burger Center.

Theme Q1a: Identity

While answering the first question most of the respondents realized that there was a significant question about whether their customers were even aware of the name Sunset Valley

Q1a RESPONSES:

“How do you know you are in Sunset Valley? There are **no boundaries.**”

“You have **no idea** when you’re coming into Sunset Valley and when you’re leaving Sunset Valley.”

“No Business will say “I’m in Sunset Valley, come and see me,” because **no one knows where** Sunset Valley is.”

“Most **people don’t know** that they are in Sunset Valley; they think they are still in Austin.”

Q1a RESPONSES:

“**No awareness.** Nobody knows where Sunset Valley is. Advertising must be part of the plan.”

“**People don’t know** where Sunset Valley is. I always have to tell them we are near 290 and MoPac.”

“I would push back on the assumption that is part of your question that **people have even heard** of Sunset Valley of know where Sunset Valley is.”

Only 2 respondents felt like their customers knew where Sunset Valley was.

INSIGHT

It was abundantly clear that most businesses in Sunset Valley **do not believe Sunset Valley is known by name**, and therefore may have very low name recognition.

Theme Q1b: COVID-19 Impact

Not surprisingly, almost all respondents mentioned COVID-19 has affected their business and consequently the business environment in Sunset Valley

Q1b RESPONSES:

“Prior to the pandemic, we had lots of commuters going into downtown or people stopping through. **Not as much now.**”

“Would have been nice to hear more from Sunset Valley since the pandemic hit. **Very little communication** from the Sunset Valley City Government regarding the pandemic.”

“Customer **traffic numbers have dropped** since COVID-19, so it has been hard.”

“New leadership in Sunset Valley is interested in learning more about how small businesses were affected by the pandemic and how they can help. **Before that I didn't hear a thing from Sunset Valley.**”

INSIGHT

Not surprisingly **most businesses in Sunset Valley made clear they were impacted by Covid-19** over the last year; and, while they recognized that there was not much Sunset Valley could have done to change their situation, they **would have appreciated hearing from Sunset Valley** more often during the pandemic and would have liked to participate in a proactive discussion about how Sunset Valley might have been able to help them.

Question 2:

How would you improve the business environment in Sunset Valley?

Q2 RESPONSES:

“Provide leadership, **establish identity**, create synergy and differentiate.”

“Need **more local** restaurants.”

“**Shopping centers look old**, so it might deter new hip restaurants and stores.”

“Need **more unique, interesting** retail stores; **not just the standard brands** that are in every shopping center.”

Q2 RESPONSES:

“Create an **outdoor events center** where you can have live music, cook-offs, special events, and partnerships with local businesses to do events together.”

“Create a niche that could engage families, younger parents, where you can take the kids. There are **no family destinations** in Sunset Valley. Sunset Valley needs an outdoor-theatre for kids.”

“Put a stage area behind Doc’s to use for events and build a cool space out of it (things like movie nights or markets) to **make it a trendy spot.**”

“If you put in a **Trader Joe’s** in Sunset Valley, say no more. People would buy so much stuff that they don’t even need. It would be like a field trip for people.”

Q2 RESPONSES:

“Need a grocery store, something like Central Market (but there is one around the corner). Would have to be **something that will bring people in**, and grocery stores do that.”

“Most people didn’t know that the **Sprouts** store that was in our Shopping Center was one of the highest grossing Sprouts in greater Austin. Would love another store like that.”

“Make it a place where people want to shop and **not just another shopping center.**”

“**Need more communication** with all of the businesses. Very little interaction between them, or cross business pollination. Could easily do a lot more.”

Q2 RESPONSES:

“One thing Sunset Valley could do right away is **improve the internet** high speed fiber optic at the Shopping Centers.”

“We tried to do **more outdoor dining**, specifically in the parking spaces in front of our restaurant, but we were denied the right to do that. During COVID that would have helped us and would have helped our customers feel safer. My recommendation: expand outdoor dining.”

“Have a **Sunset Valley Shopping Day** with a sales tax reduction. Like back-to-School.”

Several people made this same recommendation.

INSIGHT

Most businesses don't believe that city leadership has a cohesive vision for how the SV business community can adapt and keep pace with Austin's rapidly changing metropolitan area. They are especially concerned that Sunset Valley **needs more unique, varied retail experiences** that encourage shoppers to leisurely explore several businesses in all 3 Shopping Centers, as well as additional venues that allow families to play and enjoy themselves.

Theme Q2a: Business Meetings

While answering the first two questions about the business environment in Sunset Valley, it became clear that most were not aware of your efforts to meet with small businesses on a regular basis and for the few that did know--they had some recommendations.

Q2a RESPONSES:

“**Create a Chamber of Commerce** or way for Sunset Valley businesses to meet. Open forum. Monthly luncheon.”

“**Create a round table of small biz owners** to see how the city of Sunset Valley can help customers feel safe and comfortable shopping.”

“**Make intros to other small business owners in Sunset Valley.** A business round table or a meetup with council or mayor and small business owners where ideas are exchanged.”

“They say they’re pro-small business, but there’s **not much that they’re doing to support them**, especially during the pandemic.”

Q2a RESPONSES:

“They have held a business luncheon at a big chain restaurant (not supporting a local business). **Opportunity to promote small businesses** at these meetings, but they don’t do it.”

“They attempted small business owner luncheons and only a few people showed up. **Not a ton of small business involvement** due to the corporate dominance in the area.”

“Owners in a small business are deeply involved in day-to-day operations and are open to meeting others that are doing the same. No fault of the businesses that there’s a detachment, but there’s just **no local leadership.**”

INSIGHT

It's clear that **few of the businesses in Sunset Valley are aware** of the City's efforts to organize regular Sunset Valley Business meetings that encourage the businesses to get to know one another. For those businesses that have attended, they believe the **meetings need to be more proactive, pro-business** presentations with agendas to generate ideas, and not just gather socially.

Theme Q2b: Driving Customer Traffic

**A majority also mentioned Marketing
and Advertising**

Q2b RESPONSES:

“They have held “Think Sunset Valley first, **tell the Sunset Valley story, differentiate**. Make sunset Valley Top of Mind.”

“**What is Sunset Valley’s message**, what is it’s story?”

“Sunset Valley **lacks a social media presence**; they’re not doing a whole lot to make the city an attractive place for businesses.”

“**Tell people what they can get** in Sunset Valley.”

Q2b RESPONSES:

“How are they marketing Sunset Valley? I have **never seen anything.**”

“Market in Texas Monthly or Edible Austin and **showcase your restaurants.**”

“Sunset Valley needs a **stronger social media presence**, doesn't tell you anything about the city or the businesses in the Sunset Valley.”

“Sunset Valley **doesn't have a brand.**”

“I wish Sunset Valley would ask themselves **why is Sunset Valley special?** Then answer: Because Sunset Valley is a small city in the vast ocean of Austin, and we support small businesses here.”

INSIGHT

Most of the small businesses in Sunset Valley have had to go through a marketing process to establish their name, communicate their location and differentiate what they sell/stand for.

They do not believe that the City of Sunset Valley has ever really engaged in a similar process, and as a result, **feel that the city's identity, location and competitiveness as a destination has plenty of room for improvement.**

Theme Q2c: Perception v. Reality

A majority also mentioned that they weren't sure that Sunset Valley Residents supported their business.

Q2c RESPONSES:

“I get **very few Sunset Valley residents** in my store. Most of my business is from the surrounding area.”

“I’d want the Mayor to **encourage the Sunset Valley community** to support the small businesses in their City.”

“**Sunset Valley residents are not a big part of my customer base.** I wish more would shop locally.”

“Very **few of my customers** are actually from Sunset Valley.”

Q2c RESPONSES:

“I have been doing business in Sunset Valley for more than 10 years and most of my **customers come from outside Sunset Valley.**”

“Sunset Valley **feels detached**, removed from the businesses in their community. Not sure they support the businesses as much as they should.”

“Sunset Valley **residents tend to be older** and when COVID-19 hit, they stayed home. I noticed fewer of them shopping with us.”

“Sunset Valley is a very small city. I understand that, so they **don't make up a big part of my customer base**. But they are nearby and the few that do shop my store do so more frequently.”

INSIGHT

I think this is a complicated finding. It stems from the fact that Sunset Valley is small—just under 700 residents. Even though sales to **residents may not contribute** very much to a businesses' bottom line, it is a potential mis-perception that should be corrected.

Some of these comments are a function of not knowing who is a resident; but some are also coming from a **lack of information and visibility** into what Sunset Valley plans to do to improve its presence, create a Brand, differentiate Sunset Valley from other shopping areas and attract people to shop here, or do things that help businesses here.

Theme Q2d: Demographic Shift

A few believed that Sunset Valley's shoppers were starting to change.

Q2d RESPONSES:

“**Demographics** in the Sunset Valley area are **changing**.”

“**Demographics have changed** due to Burlington Coat Factory, **more of a value shopper** is frequenting the area.”

“**Biggest problem is lost prevention**, keep the rift raft out, keep homeless out, has become a bigger problem.”

“Sunset Valley stores are **attracting a lower income shopper**, especially the mall along the 290-access road.”

INSIGHT

This is something to **keep an eye on**. Only a few people mentioned this, but it is clear it could become a more significant issue and it could affect the kinds of businesses that are interested in moving into Sunset Valley.

Question 3:

What kinds of new businesses would you like to see in Sunset Valley?

Q3 RESPONSES:

“Used to have Pier 1 and Luby’s-- would love to see **more small businesses** (locally owned and operated restaurants), local to Austin and Sunset Valley.”

“Need **more diversification** in types of stores to **draw more traffic at all times of the day**, so it can be more of a destination.”

“Breweries with a lot of **open space and outdoor space**, like the new **Easy Tiger** on South Lamar.”

“**Use the land and the space** to attract what people can do right now, where they can linger and enjoy themselves.”

Q3 RESPONSES:

“Places like **Pinthouse** or **Loro** where people might stay and hang out a little longer.”

“Sunset Valley has the shopping part down, but not the **food scene**.”

“We typically go to **ABGB** or **Loro** and the only option in Sunset Valley like that is **Doc’s**, which is good, but Sunset Valley could use more venues like that.”

“Something like **Home Slice** in the old Luby’s spot with an outdoor playground for kids or something like that.”

“The City of Sunset Valley needs those shopping center leasing agents to be **actively engaged** and bringing in the right kinds of businesses, as opposed to just filling the space.”

Q3 RESPONSES:

“Maybe something that stays **open a little later.**”

“More **local, unique businesses** like what you see on South Congress.”

While most people mentioned the need to increase local businesses in the retail mix, a few mentioned the value for continuing to have national brands.

“National chains help drive traffic. We need **more national brands** that people know and trust.”

“The quickest way to stay relevant is to have those national brands that people moving here from California, Colorado, Louisiana, Florida and other states are familiar with and shop at. We need a **good mix of trendy national brands and local businesses.**”

INSIGHT

Almost every respondent recognized the value that national chain stores bring to Shopping Centers, but most of the businesses in Sunset Valley want to see a **better mix of trendy national and local businesses.**

They especially want to see **more local restaurants that are unique** and encourage and allow families to spend more time shopping in Sunset Valley, as opposed to fast food restaurants that encourage people to drive through, pick-up food and then leave.

Theme Q3a: Competitor Concerns

A few mentioned the new development on South Lamar that has just been announced.

Q3a RESPONSES:

“I’m **concerned** about the new development off South Lamar and what will happen to Sunset Valley because of this.”

“Sunset Valley better get its act together or the new development on **South Lamar will change who shops** in Sunset Valley. Sunset Valley could lose its higher end shoppers.”

“I think the announcement that South Lamar’s Shopping Centers are going to be re-modeled—upgraded—means **Sunset Valley could become the local, hip option** if they attract more unique local businesses, not national chains, which is what South Lamar will attract.”

Q3a RESPONSES:

“I believe the new South Lamar Shopping Center will become, for all intents and purposes, **the “Domain South”** and if Sunset Valley doesn’t handle this properly, then it’s Shopping Centers will become like the Arboretum Shopping Center up north, which lost significant business to the Domain.”

“The clock is ticking and the new development on South Lamar has challenged Sunset Valley to do what it has been unwilling to do—**provide leadership** for its business community.”

“It is going to be interesting to see the **impact of the South Lamar Shopping Centers redevelopment** will have on Sunset Valley. It makes me nervous.”

INSIGHT

Now, more than at any time in the last 20 years, Sunset Valley has an **opportunity to provide leadership** for its business community and get support from more businesses because of the South Lamar challenge. Businesses in Sunset Valley—especially local businesses— are now much more likely to support the City’s efforts to improve its business environment—especially if it helps differentiate and position it well for the South Lamar challenge.

Question 4:

Are there events that you think might help improve the business environment and drive more traffic to Sunset Valley? Events like the Arts Fest? Farmers Market? Spring or Fall or Holiday events? And would you support these events?

Q4 RESPONSES:

“**Yes**, absolutely.”

Several people made a very similar kind of comment.

“More than **happy to help**.”

“Our company has some restrictions, but I’m **willing to do what I can**.”

“Sometimes in the past Sunset Valley has simply told me what they needed. I’d **prefer to be asked** how I can help.”

“Sunset Valley should **get outside help to put on events**. The ones they put on are not very well organized or thought out.”

Q4 RESPONSES:

“For two years, we were vendors at Art Fest (early on in our time at Sunset Valley) and hoped it would help expand their brand. Would love to be part of **promoting more events** like that and supporting them in any way possible.”

“I have supported a few of the events that Sunset Valley organized. My sense is that they **don't advertise them very well**, so the events had limited success. The people in Sunset valley are good people, but they need to get people who know what they are doing to run these events and **commit to doing them right.**”

Almost everyone said they would be willing to post fliers in their stores and help in anyway. A few of the national chains said that they had policies prohibiting the posting of local fliers but would try to help in any way they could.

INSIGHT

Sunset Valley businesses believe **local events could help their business** and are willing to support events so long as they are done well, and their companies don't have any corporate restrictions.

Question 5:

Have you had any interaction with the City of Sunset Valley Government? If yes, how would you describe your experience?

Q5 RESPONSES:

“The people at City Hall in Sunset Valley are **very responsive and helpful**.”
Several people made a very similar kind of comment.

“I have a good relationship with the city of Sunset Valley. Not as many fees and it doesn't take forever to get an answer about something. So **much more comfortable dealing with the city of Sunset Valley** now compared to 10 years ago.”

“The assistant to the chief of police was a strong lifeline to the city government (he just took a role as police chief in a different city). I worked with him to put on a 5K fun run.”

Q5 RESPONSES:

“Because the city government is small, it’s **easy to get to know** who you need to talk to. Can easily talk to someone in public works or the mayor in case you need to.”

“From a small business perspective, Austin is a difficult city to navigate for a small business. It’s so accessible in Sunset Valley. That’s one of the best parts about Sunset Valley. There is **opportunity to really engage in the community**—although not a lot of ways to get plugged into the community though.”

“Sunset Valley’s government is small, so what they do and what they can do has to fit within the basic framework of issues and problems that they have had to deal with over the last 20 to 30 years. Anything outside that framework is very tough for them.”

INSIGHT

For the most part, Sunset Valley businesses have had **good experiences** with the City of Sunset Valley, especially in the last decade. Some businesses that worked with City Hall before 2010 had some problems; and, for them it felt like City Hall was anti-business. Respondents believe, is no longer true.

Question 6:

How is your relationship with the Mall/Shopping Center Management?

Q6 RESPONSES:

“Mall Management is easy to work with.” *Several people made a very similar kind of comment.*

“Yes, very good. I ask them for the normal stuff.”

“The new leasing group’s office is outside of Central Texas, so I feel like **they don’t always know** what I’m talking about, but they do try to help.”

“Leasing management has changed a few times. Current leasing manager is pretty green, and they **lack the personal rapport** that the previous management team had.”

“The Management Group changed in the last few years and I haven’t gotten to know this team yet.”

Q6 RESPONSES:

“They eventually solve the problem, but it does **require staying on top of them.**”

“They were **not very helpful** in working with us to expand our outdoor dining.”

“I had an issue with parking and while they listened to me, they **didn't do anything** to solve the problem.”

“I'm **frustrated about signage**, particularly during Covid-19. Can't put a flag on the access road or anything. Can't put up signage to drive traffic to the business.”

“Our leasing company runs the big marquees and all locations on the marquees are reserved for the larger, anchor stores. They **don't have any additional marquees for the small businesses.**”

INSIGHT

Most Sunset Valley businesses felt that their Shopping Center Management firm is generally responsive and generally tries to solve their problems. But like most mall leasing agents, mall management's role is day to day problem solving, not vision-casting or improving the consumer experience. Businesses believe that city leadership **must unite the malls in a vision** and give them incentives to work cooperatively toward achieving it.

Question 7:

What do you like about working in SV?

Q7 RESPONSES:

“It is **close to where I live.**”

A majority mentioned how close Sunset Valley is to where they live.

“Easy access from almost any part of Austin. You have MoPac, 290, and 360 right nearby and I35 is also close.”

Almost all mentioned how easy the access is to the 4 major freeways in Austin.

“The Sunset Valley Shopping Center has always been **one of the better shopping areas** in Austin. I hope it stays that way.”

“I like a few of the restaurants in Sunset Valley, but I **wish they had more.**”

Q7 RESPONSES:

“The Shopping Center Management does a **good job of keeping their spaces filled**, that’s not true in the Hill Country Galleria.”

“In Sunset Valley **things move faster** (working with City Government). Love it.”

“Permitting. **Timely process**. City of Austin takes forever.”

Q7 RESPONSES:

“Sunset Valley is **easy to work with**. They are small so you can figure out who to talk to.”

“I just came from a Store at SouthPark Meadows and there is **no competition between Sunset Valley and SouthPark Meadows** (totally different demographic than the Sunset Valley demographic). SouthPark Meadows is lower income. Restaurants go in and out in SouthPark Meadows. I don't see Sunset Valley losing any shoppers to SouthPark Meadows.”

INSIGHT

Most people like working in Sunset Valley primarily because it's close to where they live, and they have easy access to the 4 major freeways in Austin. In general, they **also feel good about how accessible and easy it is** to work with the City of Sunset Valley.

Question 8:

What are your company policies regarding energy conservation and environmental sustainability, and have you had any trouble meeting Sunset Valley's environmental policies?

Q8 RESPONSES:

Almost every manager said pretty much the same thing:

Their company's policies are environmentally strong, and they weren't involved in the original buildout and were uncertain how that process went.

For local businesses, especially those who opened a store in the last decade, the experience was generally easy, and they had no trouble meeting the city's environmental standards.

*For those businesses that might be trying to do some kind of build-out or development outside the standard building process, that process has been a bit **more complicated** because of the impervious cover requirements.*

INSIGHT

Most businesses **did not find any problems** with Sunset Valley's environmental policies. The only mention of an issue was either a few buildouts that occurred more than 10 years ago, or someone who was doing a buildout that exceeded existing Sunset Valley standards.

We have no reason to believe that SV's environmental standards are too high to reach, or that current guidelines are creating barriers for new business entry.

Question 9:

For those who had not mentioned Sunset Valley's awareness levels in answering previous questions, we asked how they would describe where they think their customers believe they are shopping? Do you think your customers know where Sunset Valley is?

Q9 RESPONSES:

“People think of the shopping area as Brodie Lane.”
A majority said something very similar to this.

“Before you know it’s a town, **you just drive through it.**”

“10% know where Sunset Valley is, the other **90% have no clue.**”

“Only a **small number of people** have heard of Sunset Valley, but most of them have no idea where it is.”

Q9 RESPONSES:

“**No one knows where** Sunset Valley is besides the “tombstones”—but most people don’t even see them, and they don’t know what the markers are referring to.”

“There’s so much turnover of people living in Austin right now, that most of them have probably **never even heard of Sunset Valley.**”

“They think the shopping area by MoPac and 290, or over by Burger Stadium, or mainly ‘Shopping on Brodie lane’.”

“I tell customers “we are in South Austin in the city of Sunset Valley, and then **I have to explain where that is.**”

INSIGHT

As mentioned earlier, most businesses in Sunset Valley **do not believe Sunset Valley is well known** or has any significant name recognition.

Question 10:

Have you ever visited Sunset Valley's Farmer's Market on a Saturday morning? Have you ever talked with any of the vendors in the Farmer's Market about developing a business relationship if the business fit makes sense?

Q10 RESPONSES:

“Nobody thinks about them—the Farmer’s Market. They’re off to the side, **out of sight, not top of mind** for most of the businesses in Sunset Valley”

This quote perfectly captures how most of the business people in Sunset Valley think about the Farmer’s Market. That said, most then expressed interest in dropping by and checking it out; and a small number also expressed some interest in exploring a business relationship with the Farmer’s Market.



Key Findings

Key Findings: Business Environment

- Most businesses in Sunset Valley believe the Business Environment in Sunset Valley **is fair to good but not great.**
- They also believe there is **considerable room for the business environment to improve**, especially when it comes to the customer experience.
- Sunset Valley businesses for the most part have had **good experiences with the City of Sunset Valley**, especially in the last decade. Some businesses that worked with Sunset Valley before 2010 had some problems and for them it felt like City Hall was anti-business. That, they believe, is no longer true.
- Sunset Valley businesses also believe **events could help their business** and are willing to support them as long as they are well managed, and their companies don't have any corporate restrictions.

Key Findings: Business Environment Cont.

- A majority of the businesses in Sunset Valley were **unaware of the City's efforts** to organize regular Sunset Valley Business Meetings that encouraged the businesses to get to know one another.
- But they would be very open to **regular business meetings in the future**, if they have pro-business agenda's and are designed to be **more than just social gatherings**.
- Sunset Valley businesses believe that **improving the business environment won't happen** unless the City of Sunset Valley provides the leadership, vision, and resources to help their business community adapt and keep pace with Austin's rapidly changing metropolitan area.

Key Findings: Integration & Destination

- Most believe the Shopping Centers (including the businesses near the Burger Center) **feel disconnected**.
- They **would like to see** Sunset Valley become:
 - More of **a family destination** with shopping at more unique stores
 - Restaurants and gathering spaces that promote staying in the area for **longer periods of time**.
- That changes like these might involve **all of the shopping centers**.
- Sunset Valley is **easily accessible to the 4 major freeways in Austin**. This proximity and accessibility makes it easy for people to visit, if we successfully establish it as a destination.

Key Findings: Retail Mix

- Almost all of the businesses recognized the value that National Chain stores bring to Shopping Centers, but most of the businesses in Sunset Valley **want to see a better mix of trendy National and Local businesses.**
- They especially want to see **more local restaurants like Loro, Pinthouse, Home Slice, Easy Tiger and ABGB** that are unique and that encourage and allow families to spend more time shopping in Sunset Valley, as opposed to fast food restaurants that encourage people to simply drive through, pick-up their food, and leave.

Key Findings: Name ID/Awareness

- It is clear that most businesses in Sunset Valley **do not believe Sunset Valley is well known to their customers** customers or has any significant name recognition.
- They generally felt that the City could do more let people know **where Sunset Valley is** and identify where it begins and ends.
- They felt there was a lot of upside potential to tell the story of **what Sunset Valley is all about.**

Conclusion

Now more than at any time in the last 20 years, Sunset Valley has an **opportunity to provide leadership** for its business community and **get support from more businesses** for two very different reasons:

- The hardship COVID-19 imposed on everyone over the last year
- Two, because of the South Lamar challenge.

Businesses in Sunset Valley—especially local businesses— are now much more likely to support the City’s efforts to **improve its business environment**—especially if it helps differentiate and position it well for the Post COVID-19 rebound and the looming South Lamar challenge.



NEXT STEPS

TIMELINE

MARCH

MEETINGS:

Fri 3/19

- Creative presentation
- Brand Identity
- Sample Executions

APRIL

MEETINGS:

TBD (4/2*)

- Strategic recommendations updated
- Identify creative assets to be developed further
- Timeline for the rest of the year

**tentative meeting date*

APPENDIX

Business Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the business environment in Sunset Valley?
2. How would you improve the business environment in Sunset Valley?
3. What kinds of new businesses would you like to see in Sunset Valley?
4. Are there events that you think might help improve the business environment and drive more traffic to Sunset Valley? Events like the Arts Fest? Farmers Market? Spring or Fall or Holiday events? And would you support these events?

Business Interview Questions

5. Have you had any interaction with the City of Sunset Valley Government? If yes, how would you describe your experience?
6. How is your relationship with the Mall/Shopping Center Management?
7. What do you like about working in SV?
8. What are your company policies regarding energy conservation and environmental sustainability, and have you had any trouble meeting Sunset Valley's environmental policies?

Business Interview Questions

9. For those who had not mentioned Sunset Valley's awareness levels in answering previous questions, we asked how they would describe where they think their customers believe they are shopping? Do you think your customers know where Sunset Valley is?
10. Have you ever visited Sunset Valley's Farmer's Market on a Saturday morning? Have you ever talked with any of the vendors in the Farmer's Market about developing a business relationship if the business fit makes sense?

THANK YOU