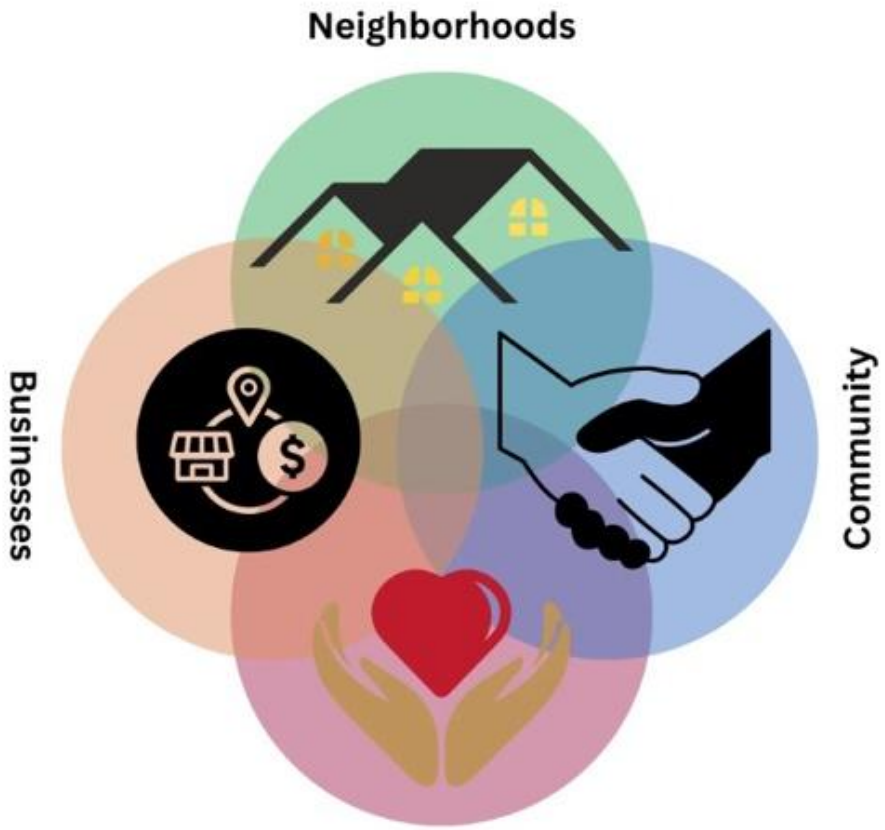
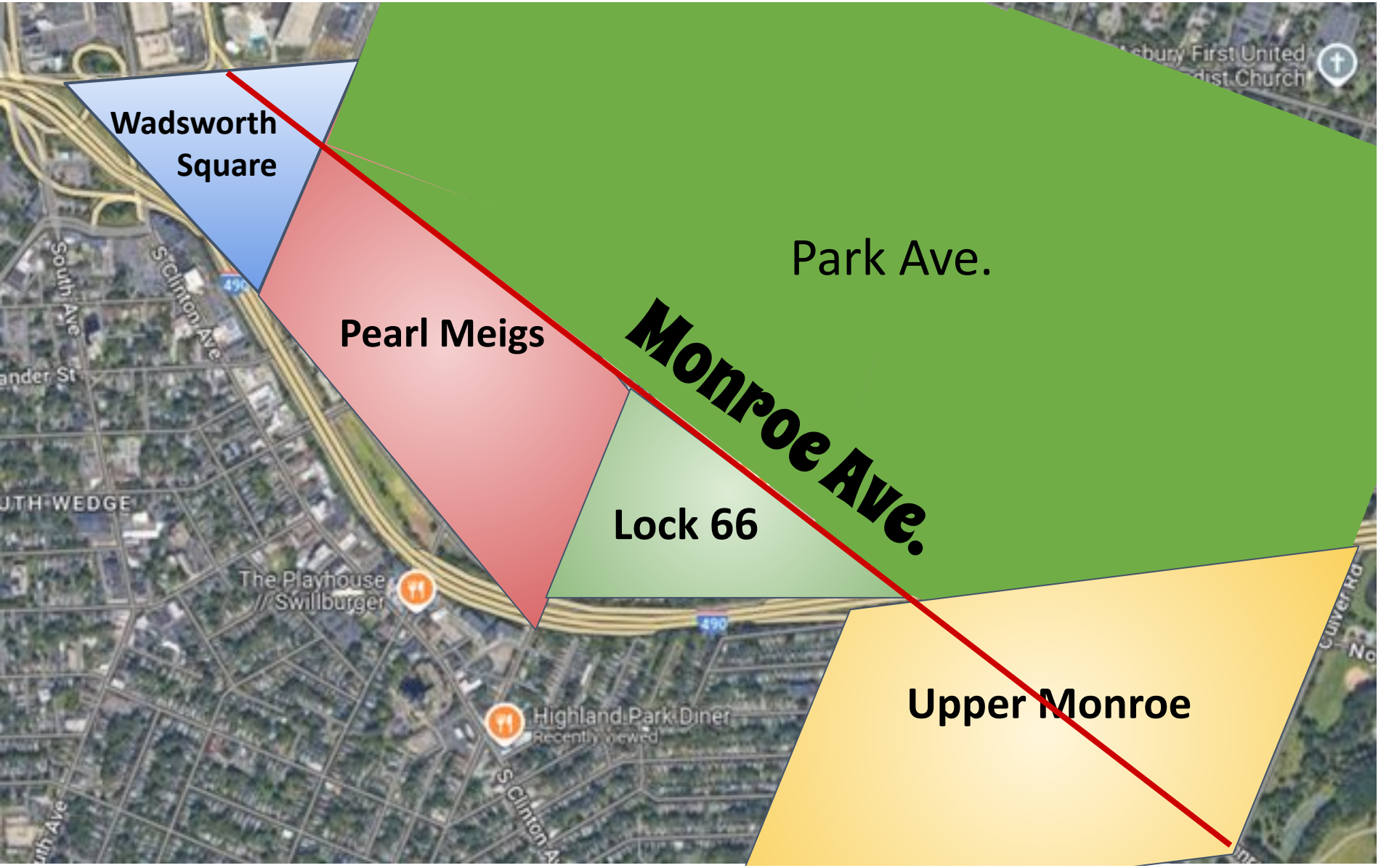
Monroe Avenue Community Input Survey

M.A.R.C.



Access the Survey Here

Monroe Ave. & surrounding neighborhoods

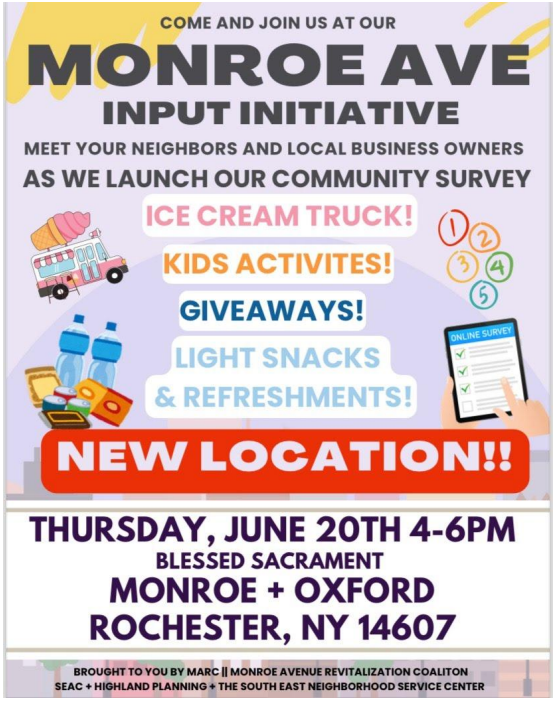


Overview

The recently formed Monroe Avenue Revitalization Coalition (MARC) launched its first major effort to engage residents, visitors, businesses and the community at large to understand the needs and hoped-for future of Monroe Avenue.

This community-based survey, developed and managed by MARC, was launched at the Monroe Avenue Community Input Launch Party on June 20, 2024. The survey remained open until August 31, 2024.

The survey received 1,038 responses !!!



<u>Next Steps:</u>

- Host a community meeting late in October 2024 to report on the results of the survey and engage the community in a discussion about the future of Monroe Avenue.
- Use the information to develop plans for Monroe Avenue as well as apply for grants to support those plans.

Questions Asked

The feedback contained in this report aggregates the responses collected in the online survey.

The open-ended questions, Q2 and Q3, allowed respondents to provide feedback in their own words. They could type whatever they desired. Responses were bucketed into themes. A few select verbatims are also shown to provide a ”flavor” of what was communicated.

The final question (Q11) is related to the gift card drawing, and this data will not be shown in the report.

Question #	Question type	Question wording
Q1	5pt Agreement scale for 18 statements (Grid)	Please respond to the following statements:
Q2	Open-end	If you could improve one thing on Monroe Avenue, what would it be?
Q3	Open-end	In your own words, describe what you love about Monroe Avenue.
Q4	Single-select	What is your age?
Q5	Single-select plus Other Specify	What is your race?
Q6	Single-select	What is your gender?
Q7	Single-select	What is your education?
Q8	Single-select	What is your household income?
Q9	Multi-select	Do you rent, own or work within 1/2 mile of Monroe Avenue?
Q10	Text Entry	What is your home postal code?
Q11	Text Entry	If you want to be entered into a drawing to win a gift card for completion of this survey, please share your email.

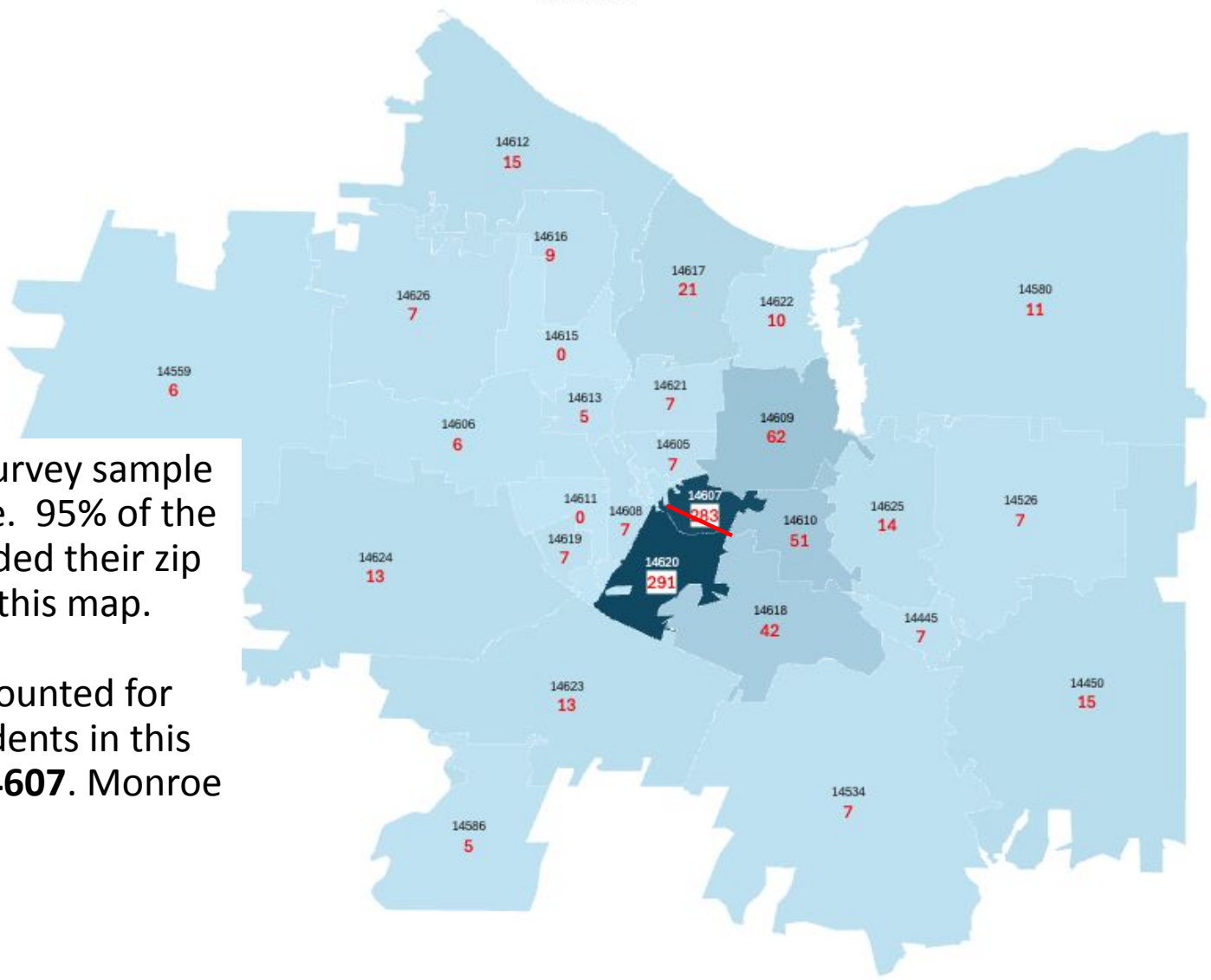
We Are All Winners Here!!

But some people actually won something! Congrats to the 21 people who won gift cards to:

Sample Demographics

- The sample consisted of 1,038 adults, primarily those over age 30, primarily the majority were female.
- Participants primarily identified as White.
- Most respondents are college educated.
- A wide range of household incomes are included. About half of those who shared their income level earned $80K or more.
- Most of the sample rented, owned, or worked within ½ mile of Monroe Ave.

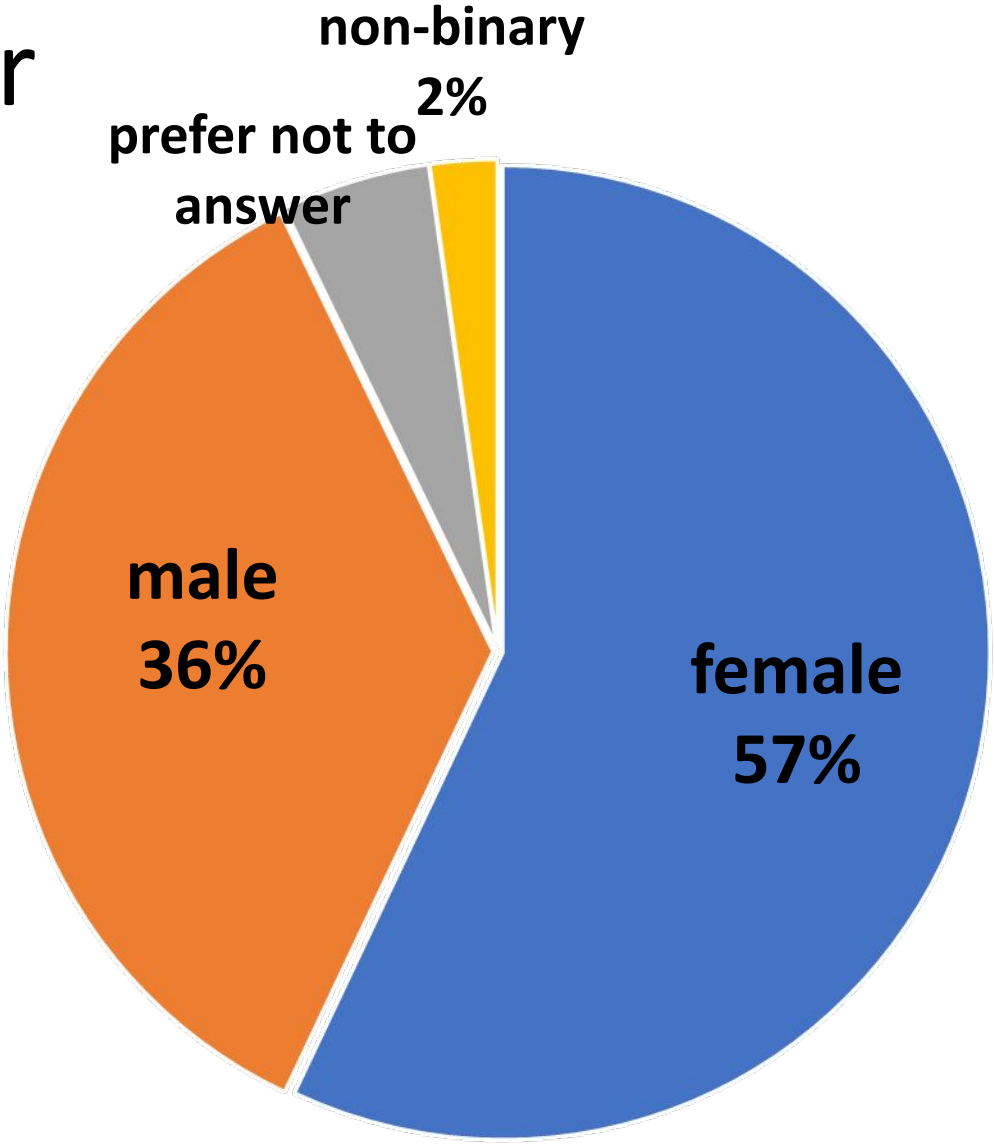
Sample counts by zip code



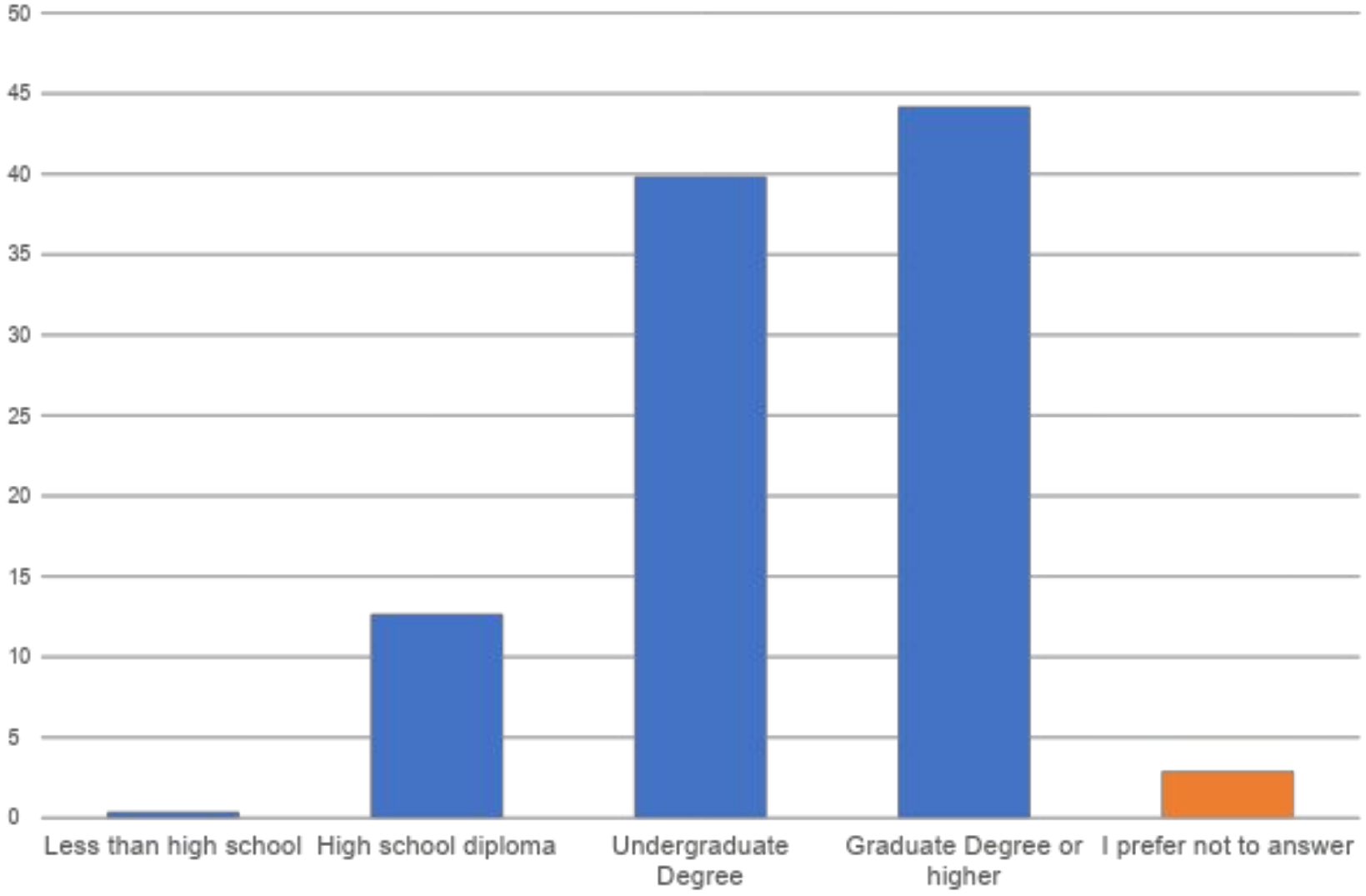
This map shows survey sample counts by zip code. 95% of the sample that provided their zip code is shown on this map.

Two zip codes accounted for 58% of all respondents in this survey: **14620**, **14607**. Monroe Ave. is in **red.**

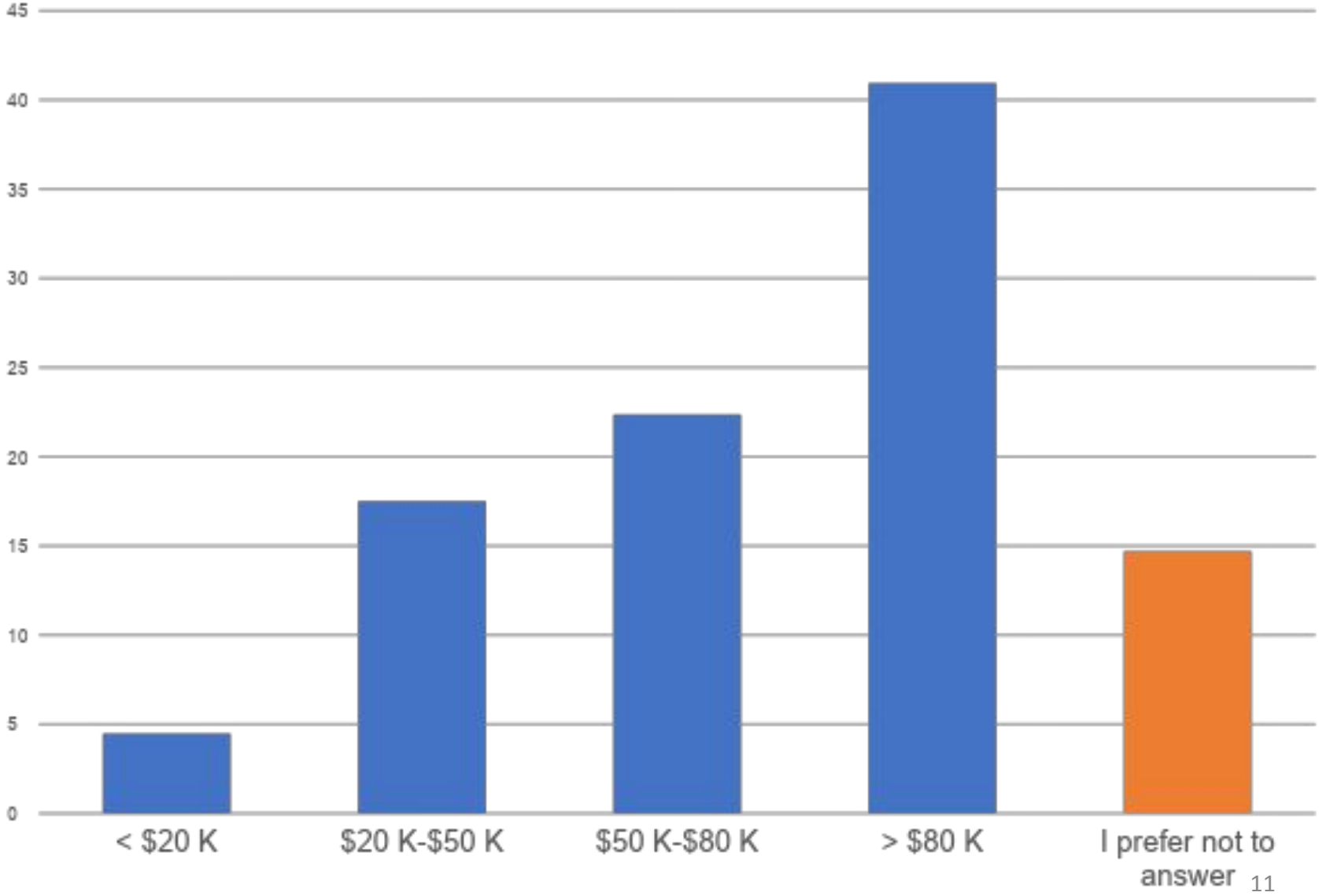
Gender



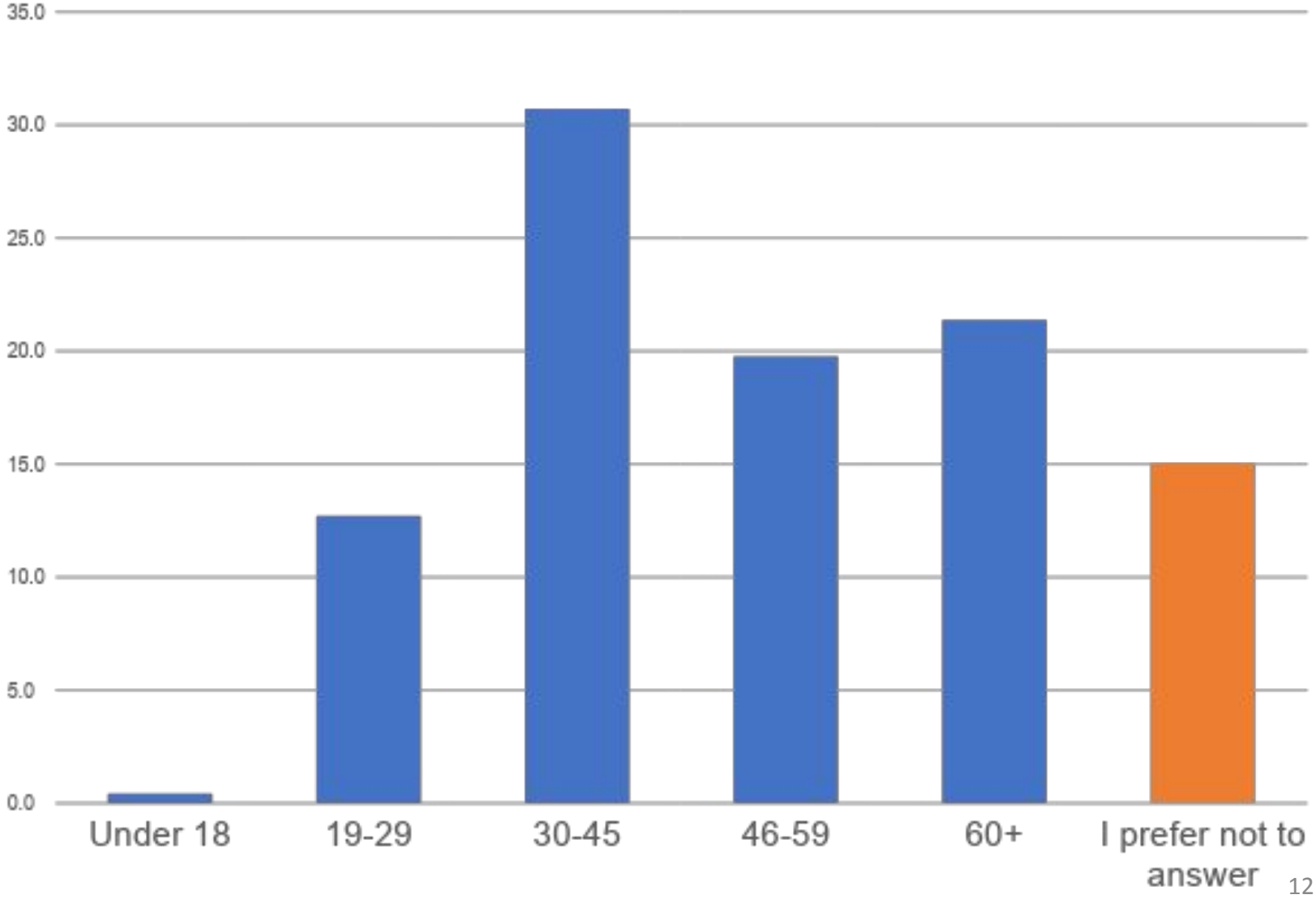
Education Level



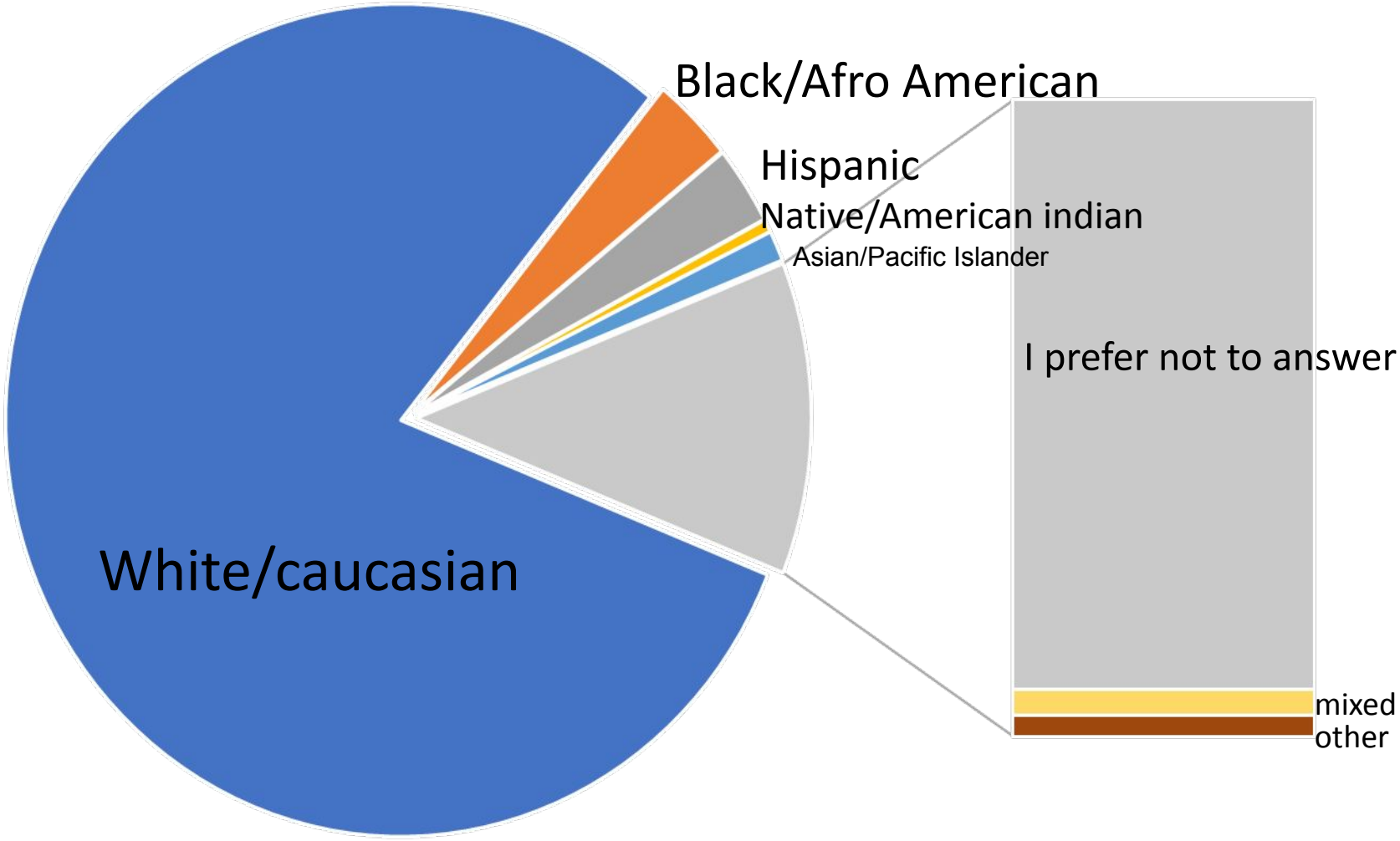
Household Income



Age


35.0
30.0
25.0
20.0
15.0
10.0
5.0
0.0
Under 18
19-29
30-45
46-59
60+
I prefer not to answer

Ethnicity


Black/Afro American
Hispanic
Native/American indian
Asian/Pacific Islander
White/caucasian
I prefer not to answer
mixed
other

Survey Responses

Statement Agreement about Monroe Ave

Survey participants are most likely to agree that Monroe Ave has a variety of eateries, retail businesses and services, and provides opportunities to establish locally-owned businesses. At the same time, they believe that Monroe Ave has too many empty storefronts.

More than half consider the residential neighborhoods adjacent to Monroe Ave attractive.

Agreement on the other statements about Monroe Ave are low. Thus, respondents do not think it is vibrant. They indicate that municipal services like trash, snow removal, road maintenance and safety are not adequate. Roads are not well maintained, while lighting and parking are not sufficient.

It is not considered safe for pedestrians, availability of healthy food at fair prices is low, public spaces and parks are not adequate, buildings are not kept in good repair, and bike infrastructure is lacking.

Monroe Ave is not considered family friendly, nor is it considered safe, and suffers from the presence of litter and debris.

question	% agree	
Monroe Ave. has a variety of eateries, more than fast food.	73	positives
Monroe Ave. has a variety of retail businesses and services.	71	
Monroe Ave. has opportunities to establish locally-owned businesses.	68	
The residential neighborhoods adjacent to Monroe Avenue are attractive.	59	
Monroe Avenue is vibrant.	37	
Monroe Ave. has too many empty store fronts.	66	
Monroe Avenue has adequate municipal services like trash and snow removal, street maintenance and public safety.	30	
Monroe Avenue has well maintained public roads.	29	
Monroe Avenue has adequate lighting.	28	
Monroe Avenue has adequate parking.	27	
Monroe Avenue is safe for pedestrians.	23	
Monroe Avenue has adequate places to buy healthy food at fair prices.	21	
Monroe Avenue has adequate public spaces and parks.	17	
The buildings are in good repair.	16	
Monroe Avenue has adequate bike infrastructure.	16	
Monroe Avenue is family friendly.	16	
Monroe Avenue is safe.	15	
Monroe Avenue is clear of litter and debris.	7	negatives

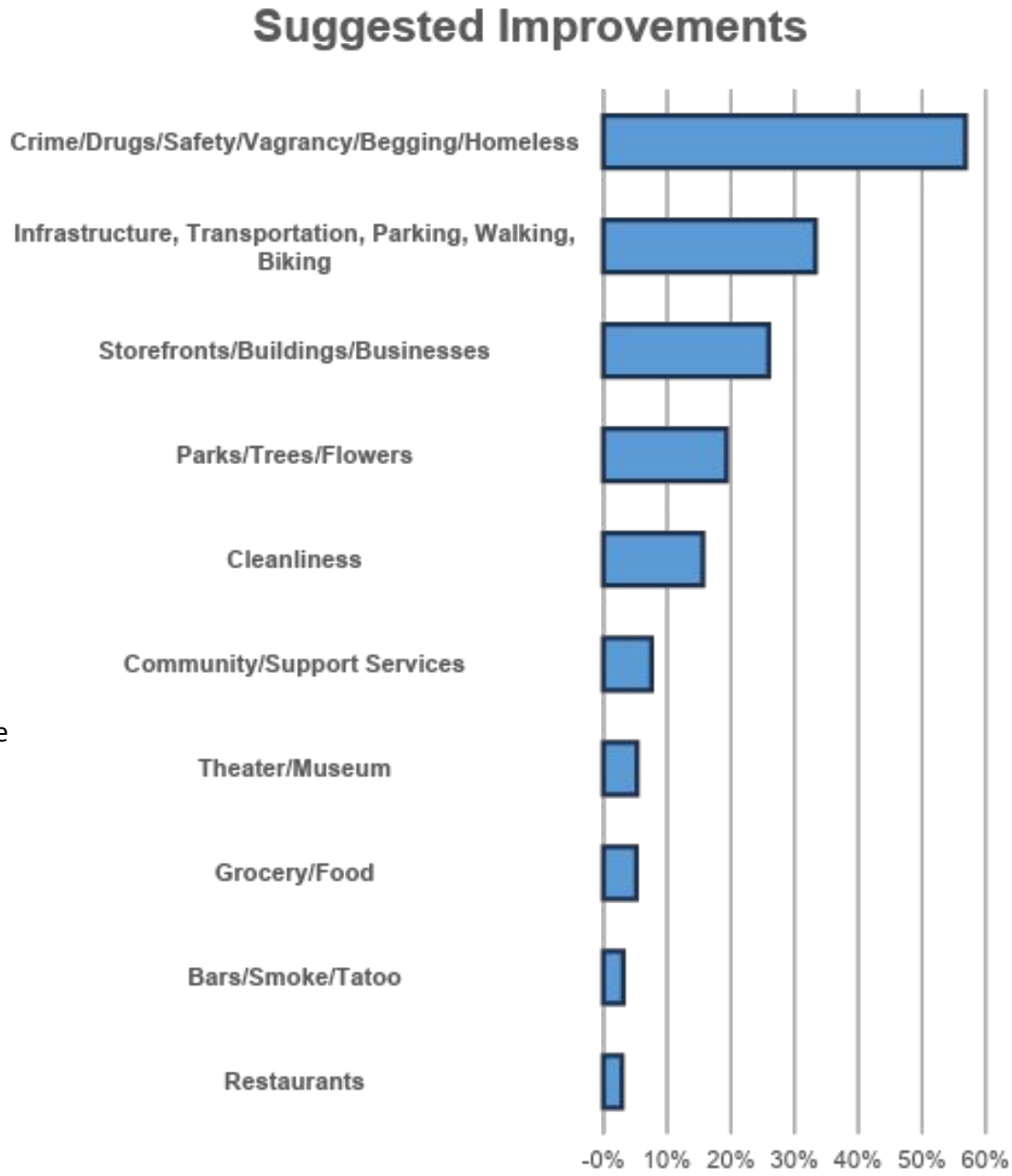
If you could improve one thing on Monroe Avenue, what would it be?

Over half of respondents mentioned safety issues related to drugs, homelessness, vagrancy, begging, and crime. Figuring out a way to allow residents and visitors to feel safe without them having to worry for their safety, or whether they will be harassed by vagrants, drug users and the homeless, is a top priority.

The second most common improvements focused upon roads, intersections, parking, crosswalks, sidewalks and bike lanes. People want a downtown with easily accessible and safe parking, as well as being pedestrian and bike friendly.

The third most often mentioned improvement focused on the look and feel of the storefronts and businesses. Reduce empty store fronts, spruce up the buildings and facades, and attract businesses beyond smoke shops, bars and tattoo parlors. More places with good quality food, both grocery stores and restaurants. Many people specifically mentioned revitalizing or demolishing the old theatre.

Other improvements relate to the look, feel and cleanliness of the downtown environment – remove trash, litter and broken glass; add more trees, parks and flowers.



A Sampling Of Verbatim Responses For *Suggested Improvements To Monroe Ave*

More pedestrian traffic. It just seems empty when I go there. Sometimes the people I do see are begging or screaming. They have a right to be there too, it just deters me from visiting as much as I used to. I am from The Village Green and Paul's Grocery days so I really miss that.

Better stores. Clean up homelessness (direct result of empty storefronts), don't think you need 4 smoke shops. Get rid of the old theater or do something with it - it's the biggest eye sore on the street. I walk Monroe Ave during my lunch every day.

A Sampling Of Verbatim Responses For *Suggested Improvements To Monroe Ave*

Provide resources/outreach for the unhoused population. Open the theater back up or do something with the building.

One thing I would improve about Monroe Avenue is the safety. Some areas of Monroe Avenue are vibrant, welcoming, and make me feel comfortable, while just a block away some areas are scary to be in. I would love to see an improvement on public safety, and more police enforcement in this area.

A Sampling Of Verbatim Responses For *Suggested Improvements To Monroe Ave*

A small grocery store (an alternative to Nick's or cvs) would make the area much more attractive. Also, some street trees in the area around Goodman would make it a more pleasant place to walk and shop.

The sense of pride and love that people have for the Ave. The fun, eclectic businesses that are pretty much unlike anything else in Rochester… Oh and NENO'S TACOS!!!!

More locally owned businesses rented at affordable prices so they can stay. More healthy food options. More greenery/planters. More upkeep on properties.

Our Survey Shows Several Broad Areas Needing Attention:

Security / Public Safety

Economic / Business Development

Environment & Green Space

Healthy Neighborhoods may be considered a goal or strategy of all 3 above.

Possible Funding Opportunities

We now can examine a variety of ways to fund our goals.

- ESL
- RACF
- Reconnect Rochester
- City and State grants
  - Housing/Community Renewal
    - NYS Main Street Grant
- General fundraising/donations

Next Meeting

December 2, 2024 Location TBD
Sign up to volunteer and/or attend.

Next Exciting Event!

Shop Small Saturday on Monroe on Nov 30th! Come hang out with residents of the neighborhoods, the SEAC crew, and shop great deals at all the wonderful businesses on the avenue!

THANKS TO…

All of you!

Special Thanks to

Senator Brouk, Assemblymember Bronson, Mayor Evans, Councilmember Lupien and all their staff.

A HUGE thanks to Erica Hernandez, Director of the Neighborhood Service Centers.

We Want to Hear from You!

1. What resonates for you? What doesn't?
2. Do you see something in the data that wasn't mentioned?
3. What ideas or suggestions do you have to facilitate public safety, economic development, and environmental improvements along the Monroe Avenue corridor?

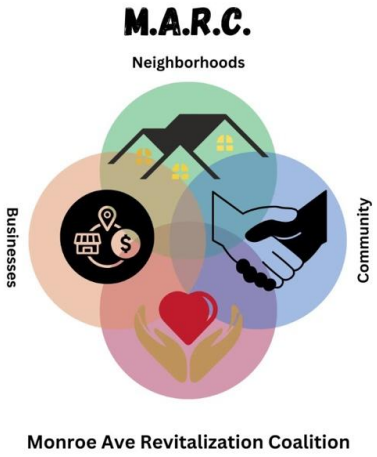
Appendices

MARC IS

HIGHLAND PLANNING

LOCK 66
Where Diversity Meets History

MAMA
MONROE AVE MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION


M.A.R.C.
Neighborhoods
Businesses
Community
Monroe Ave Revitalization Coalition

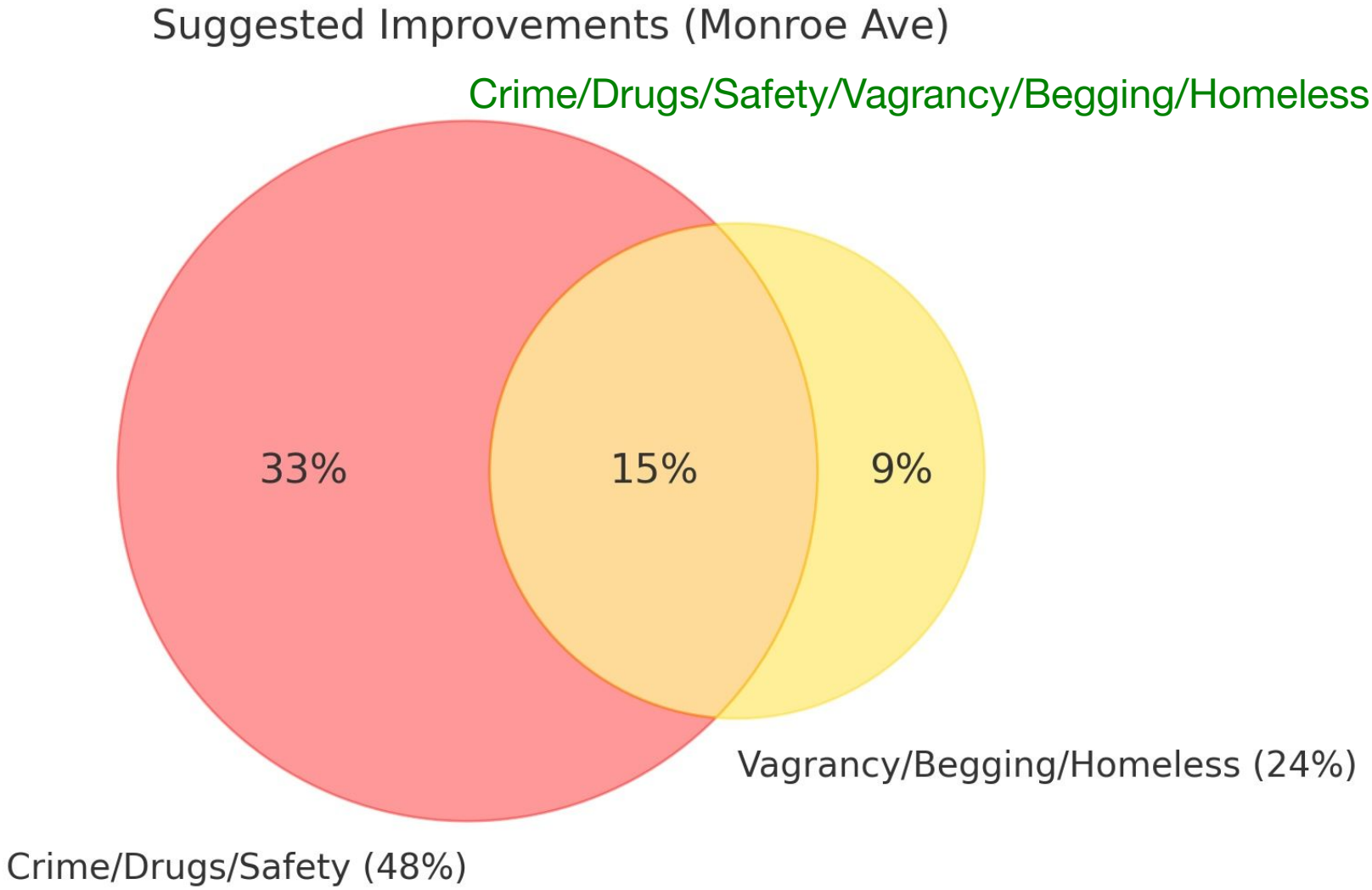
PARK MEIGS
EST.
1960
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SEAC
South East
Area Coalition

UPPER MONROE
NEIGHBORHOOD

W

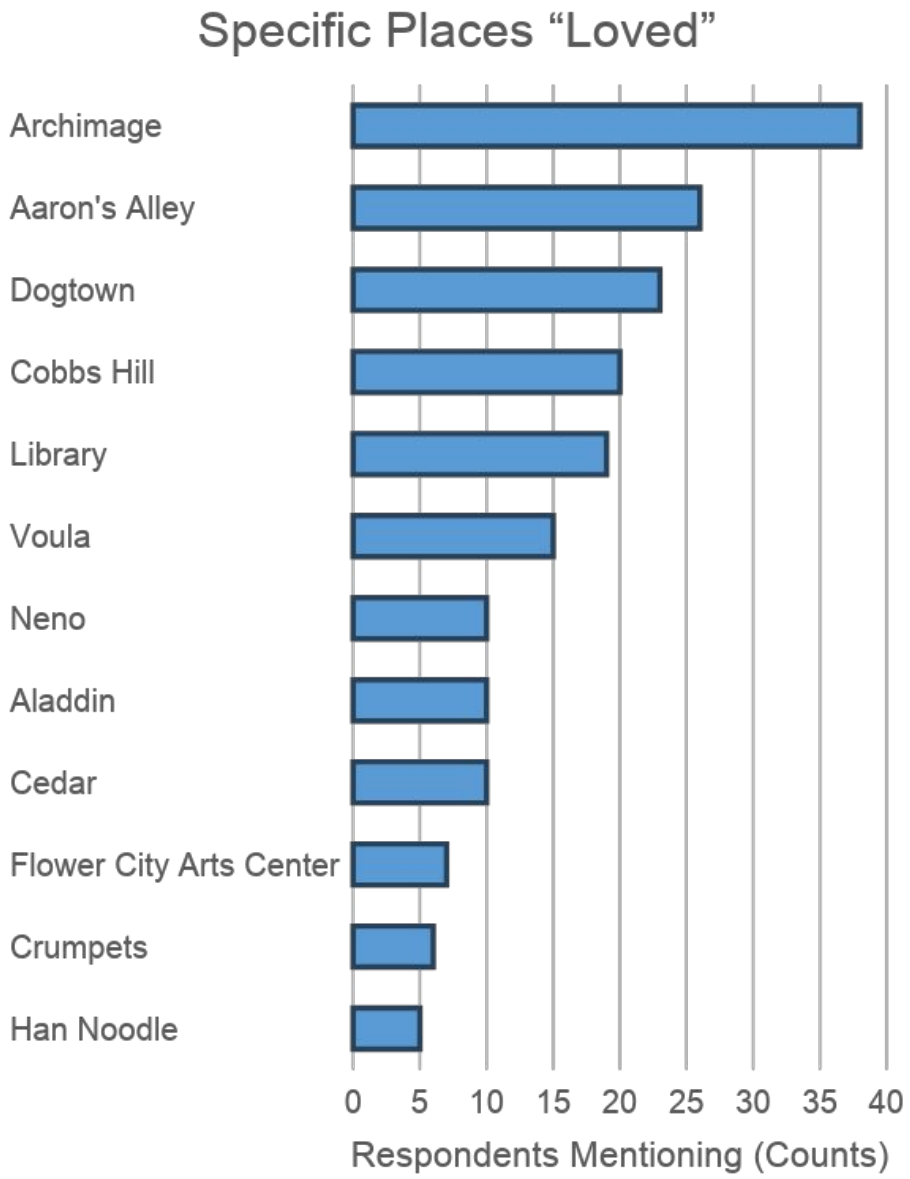
Due to the high overlap of responses, and because respondents often mentioned them together, these two themes have been aggregated.



Specific Names/Places Mentioned

This chart shows the absolute “counts” of mentions of specific names or places. Only names and places mentioned by five or more people are shown.

As a reference, the total sample for this survey included 1038 people. Thus, 1% of the sample is about 10 people. The most commonly mentioned specific place, Archimage, is mentioned by 38 people, which is approximately 4% of the total number of people completing the survey.



A Sampling Of Verbatim Responses For Suggested Improvements To Monroe Ave (2)

Fill the empty storefronts with something / anything! There are so many and not only are they an eyesore but they tend to be a little unsafe since no one is coming or going

Force the sale of zombie properties like the old theater next to Walgreens. Implement rent control/fair rent practices, hold local landlords to a higher standard and enforce regulations and standards.

Make Monroe Avenue feel safer for everyone. As a young woman, there were many times where I walked along Monroe Avenue and did not feel safe or comfortable as I would walking down Park, East or University Ave.

Make it safer to walk down the street without people harassing you for money. Do something about the people sleeping on the streets and bus stops and in front of buildings

I would love a proper grocer. I always say proper grocers and a gym are the only thing missing from a walking distance for me that I would use regularly.

Revitalize some of the buildings that are in disrepair. Specifically, the old movie theatre.

Clean up the litter and the people that loiter especially near the Monroe and Meigs area.

If it could be updated to look like Park Avenue, I think more people would be attracted to it. There is also a lot of drug sales so if there was more police presence, I think that may decrease. I don't feel safe walking on Monroe Avenue during the daytime anymore.

Street parking with safer auto, bicycle and human traffic flow. Being in my 50's now, it's no longer safe for me to bolt across the Ave like I did when I was 15. Clean up the Avenue by offering a trash cans, glass and bottle bins for recycling at every block! Power wash the sidewalks and store fronts. Add a few benches.

Traffic calming measures and increased pedestrian infrastructure which would lead to a more active vibrant and economically successful area

Bring more interesting shop and eateries in, get rid of some of the rifraf bars that bring fighting and bad behavior to the area.

Clean up trash; have more garbage cans. Make businesses clean in front of their places

Love Monroe Ave but parking is awful and it has become increasingly unsafe. Restore the old buildings!

I can imagine Monroe Avenue with angle parking on one side and a protected two-bike lane on the other, and greenery on the sidewalks or lampposts.

Less homelessness, more fresh, healthy, fair priced food

Better stores. Clean up homelessness (direct result of empty storefronts), don't think you need 4 smoke shops. Get rid of the old theater or do something with it - it's the biggest eye store on the street. I walk Monroe ave during my lunch every day

Safety! Monroe Avenue is not safe. In particular the area from Goodman to Alexander. This needs to be of number one concern. No one will eat, shop, or live where they don't feel safe.

Something needs to be done to get the homeless off the streets. Monroe ave is over run with drug addicts, mentally ill individuals and pan handlers. Help needs to be provided to those in need and those breaking the law need to be arrested and relocated. I would never bring my children to this area until this major issue had been resolved.

More pedestrian traffic. It just seems empty when I go there. Sometimes the people I do see are begging or screaming. They have a right to be there too, it just deters me from visiting as much as I used to. I am from The Village Green and Paul's Grocery days so I really miss that.

Bring back a sense of community and belonging. Local goods and services; public places and eateries; creativity-adjacent to neighborhood of the arts and park Ave; more family friendly cultural opportunities!

Better stores. Clean up homelessness (direct result of empty storefronts), don't think you need 4 smoke shops. Get rid of the old theater or do something with it - it's the biggest eye store on the street. I walk Monroe ave during my lunch every day

Find a way to address the significant social problems of the unhoused, open sex workers, and the number of people walking around strung out on drugs. I am very frequently on Monroe. The most problematic section is between 490 to Strong. Monroe ave has a lot of strengths and potential.

Improve pedestrian infrastructure. Raised cross walks, daylighting intersections, pedestrian priority traffic lights, more shade and bus stop shelters.

More focus on pedestrians and slowing traffic to make a more welcoming street. Make it feel a bit less sketch, add trees, curb bump outs, public art, make the street a place people feel safe, comfortable, and a place they want to be and spend time.

One thing I would improve about Monroe Avenue is the safety. Some areas of Monroe Avenue are vibrant, welcoming, and make me feel comfortable, while just a block away some areas are scary to be in. I would love to see an improvement on public safety, and more police enforcement in this area.

Monroe Avenue seems to have pockets of nice. However, unlike the nearby park Avenue, I wouldn't think to walk down it. There are just areas that don't feel safe and feel dirty or worn down. So, I guess I would improve its vibrancy.

Fill the empty storefronts. Get rid of the stigma that Monroe is lesser than park ave because of the diversity it offers. Provide even more resources for those struggling in the area. Widen bike lanes

Restaurants to walk to that have outdoor seating, preferably dog friendly.

Make it more family friendly with parks, ice cream, and/or interactive art.

A small grocery store (an alternative to Nick's or cvs) would make the area much more attractive. Also, some street trees in the area around Goodman would make it a more pleasant place to walk and shop.

More locally owned businesses rented at affordable prices so they can stay. More healthy food options. More greenery/planters. More upkeep on properties. Hobby shops. PLEASE do something about Show World. Would love a music venue there. Places to post posters and announcements. More free little libraries. A small grocery store with healthy food, produce, at reasonable prices.

We need far more trees and greenery.

Plant more trees on both sides of Monroe Ave all the way from Cobbs hill to strong museum of play to create a miles long green canopied avenue.

Clear out loitering and improve safety for neighbors, businesses and walkers on Monroe, particularly around Meigs St. and near Monroe High School! There should be a No-Drug/No Loitering Zone around Schools!

Provide resources/outreach for the unhoused population. Open the theater back up or do something with the building.

A Sampling Of Verbatim Responses For Love of Monroe Ave

Aaron's Alley, Archimage, Aladdins, Dog town, Slabs, local business bringing culture and positivity to the community

Beautiful historical buildings with some of the oldest shops like Elab, Aladdins, Archamage!!!

The sense of pride and love that people have for the Ave. The fun, eclectic businesses that are pretty much unlike anything else in Rochester. NENO'S TACOS!!!!

Variety of stuff, stores, and interesting places esp Flower City Arts Center where I attend art openings on First Fridays and classes

It has such an eclectic mix of local storefronts, organizations, services, etc. occupying such a cool mix of repurposed older buildings, being where it is It could be a real artery of commerce and and community. I think would be great to explore if the area felt safer and was made to be friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists, not just F-150 drivers from Victor speeding to get on/off 490

It's like a mini stretch of the things that make city living great. Big beautiful houses and then a "main st" type setup with businesses and restaurants. Archimage, Aarons alley, Aladdin's, and Han Noodle bar are highlights.

Variety of businesses, people and restaurants,

variety of small businesses and diverse population

The shops and eclectic people

Community and walk ability in certain parts

I love that it has a variety of good restaurants, and the historical buildings. It feels like it could be a great thriving neighborhood that's great to spend time in and feel connected to the community.

The community, but unfortunately, the past 5 years, it's been riddled with crime

Has some old school city vibes with diverse mix of people and shops/restaurants.

The many cultures. There are people from all different backgrounds, there are really great restaurants, and the people who own and operate the businesses are typically very friendly and welcoming.

I like the restaurants and shops that have been there for ages.

I love all of the restaurants, the Bug Jar, Voula's, strangebird, Cedar, Sea, Dog Town, Neno's. But I would not walk down Monroe to window shop. I barely like to park my car on the street in recent years.

I love the variety of restaurants, shops, library and green space at Cobbs hill.

It is unique, diverse, and NOT overrun with chain restaurants and retailers

I think it has a lot of potential, there are some really good local businesses but the safety is a real issue. If it were safer I think Monroe would really thrive

The vibe, the atmosphere, the stores, and how there's so much to do

Eclectic and diverse area!