

Newark South of Market Street Retailer Survey



Newark Downtown District

About the NDD:

The Newark Downtown District (NDD), Newark’s special improvement district (SID) of the central business area, is a privately funded 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, dedicated to enhancing cleanliness, safety, and beautification in Downtown Newark, while preserving and enriching culture, commerce, and community.

NDD works hard to enrich the quality of life for those who live, labor, and leisure in Newark by providing supplemental cleaning and quality of life services, as well as physical improvements, marketing, and event programs. These efforts make downtown Newark attractive to residents, businesses, students, tourists, and shoppers.

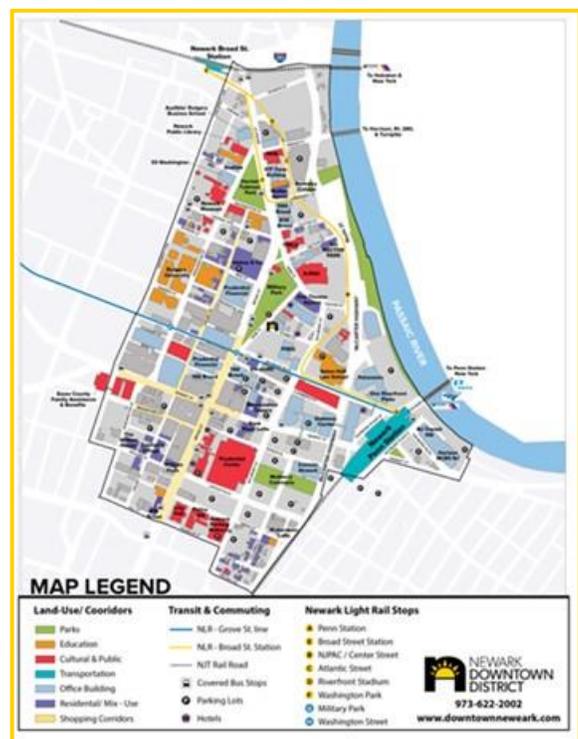
The NDD is funded through a special assessment on district commercial and residential properties and is overseen by a Board of Trustees consisting of business and property owners within the District, representatives of non-profit organizations, as well as municipal officials and staff.

The NDD defines downtown Newark as the area generally bounded by I280 to the north, the Passaic River and the New Jersey Transit and AMTRAK rail to the east, Franklin Street and Hill Street to the south, and University Avenue to the west. The adjacent map shows the specific boundaries as defined by the NDD.

About This Survey

The NDD undertook this survey in February 2022 as a snapshot of business conditions when foot traffic in the downtown was under pressure due to the pandemic resurgence driven by the omicron variant.

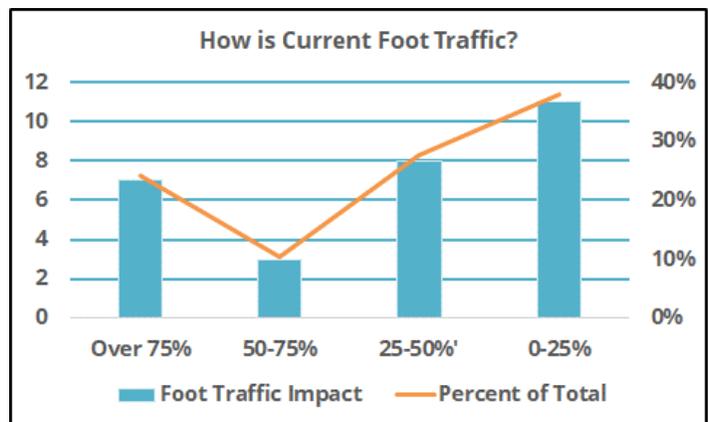
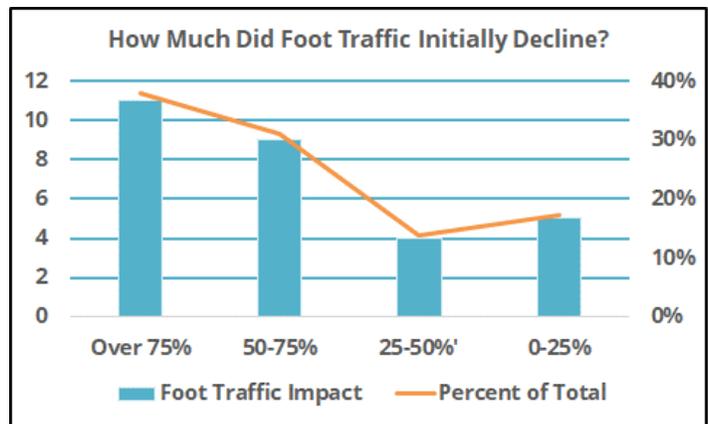
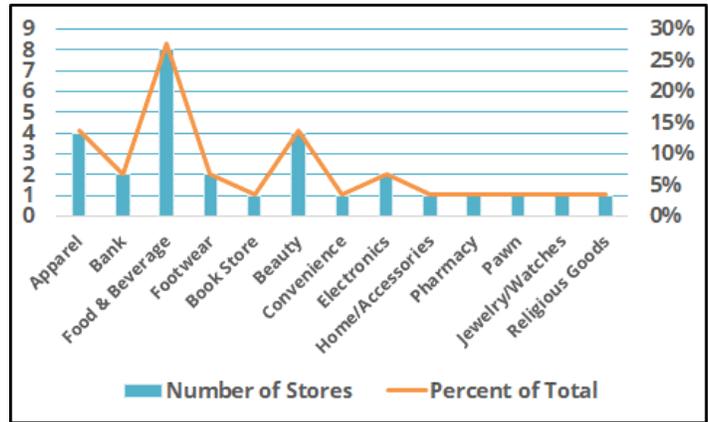
We are hopeful that employers will call office workers back in March and the spring to support increased foot traffic for the downtown’s businesses.



Executive Summary

The NDD surveyed storefront businesses in the South of Market Street (SoMa) neighborhood in downtown Newark to assess how business owners are faring given ongoing stress from limited foot traffic. This survey includes a cross-section of 29 businesses in the SoMa neighborhood (see appendix for survey participants). The survey includes the businesses on Branford Street to the north, Broad Street to the west, Hill Street to the south, and Washington Street to the east. We intend a follow-on survey to include the Halsey Street north of Market Street and Four Corners retail corridors.

The largest number of businesses in the survey are food and beverage, followed by apparel, and beauty. Unsurprisingly, 20 of the 29 retailers (69%) reported a significant decline in foot traffic of 50% or greater at the beginning of the pandemic. While foot traffic has since improved, 10 retailers (34%) reported that it remains 50% or lower than before the pandemic.



Key Takeaways

Operating Conditions Remain Very Challenging!

Since the businesses surveyed rely on foot traffic, which remains well below pre-pandemic levels, a key survey question was whether the retailers believe their business will be able to survive the next 12 months. Responses revealed 11 were uncertain and two indicated that they would not survive.

Pandemic and Rent Relief Was Very Limited

Only three businesses reported receiving pandemic relief funds. Most reported the paperwork process to receive relief was so overwhelmingly challenging that they were unable to pursue it.

Retailers in General Are Not in the Market to Lease or Vacate Space

Of the surveyed retailers, four of the 29 reported that they are in the market to lease space and the same number reported that they are looking to vacate space. Most of the retailers are not in the market for new space or to vacate space. The result indicates to us that most businesses are not particularly interested in changing addresses and are inclined to stay in their current locations.

New Development Activity is Viewed as a Positive

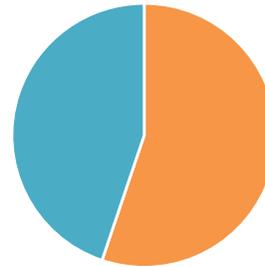
The SoMa area has seen four development and redevelopment projects completed prior to the pandemic. As a result, a question was included in the survey about the impact of development on the retailers. The majority of 19 reported no impact, while 10 reported that it has been helpful.



Survey Results

Essential retailers overall are holding their own. Certain non-essential retailers have excellent franchises and are holding their own, while current conditions remain challenging for most businesses.

Is Your Business an Essential Business?



■ Yes - 16 ■ No - 13

Businesses closed - even for some essential retailers - at the beginning of the pandemic as companies assesses operating with implementing pandemic protocols.

Did You Experience Temporary Closure?



■ Yes - 18 ■ No - 11

Of the 29 retailers in our survey, 26 are open seven days a week and making a go of it with the current conditions, while three are operating on a more limited basis. However, certain retailers open seven days a week are operating with more limited hours.

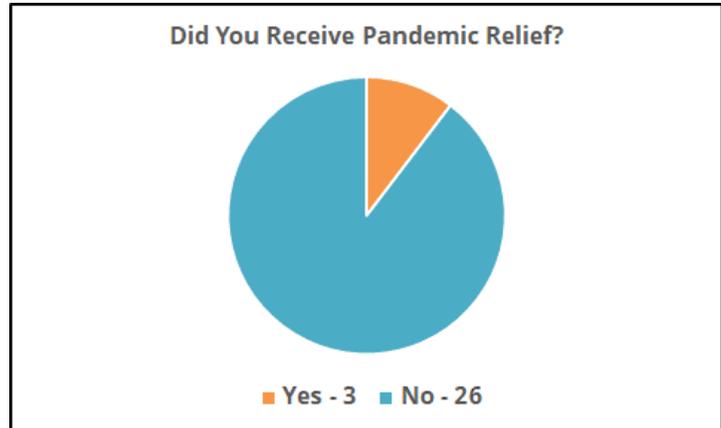
Are You Fully Operational Now?



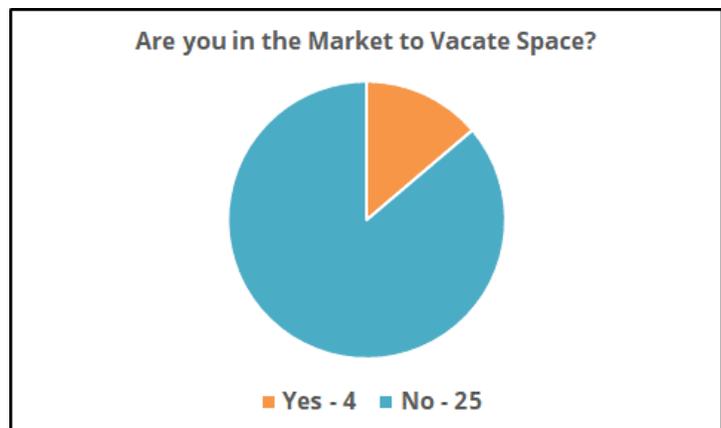
■ 7 Days ■ 3-5 Days

Survey Results (Continued)

Obtaining pandemic relief funds proved challenging for the retailers we surveyed. Business owners cited difficulty in interpreting the applications. Also, businesses not operational for 12 months did not qualify for relief.

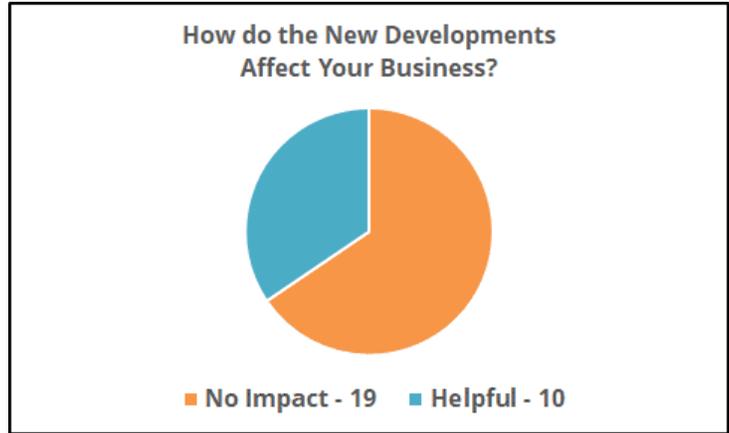


The lease and vacate questions suggest to the NDD that retailers are not particularly interested in relocating their stores and are inclined to stay in their current locations. Only certain retailers may be seeking to lease a new space, relocate, or close their store altogether.

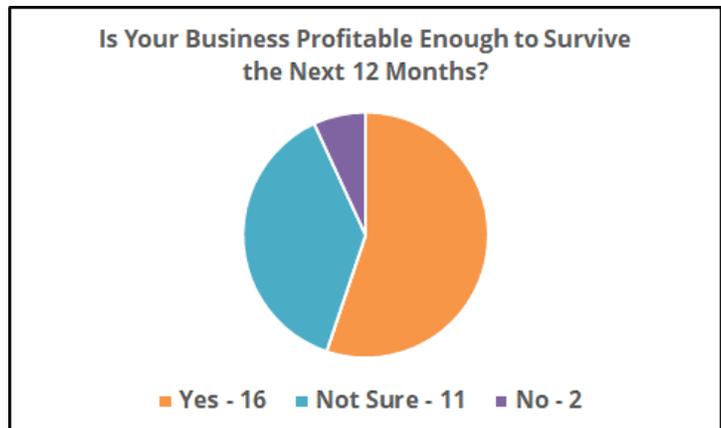


Survey Results (Continued)

The SoMa neighborhood saw a wave of development prior to the pandemic. Several additional large projects are planned. In general, the sentiment so far is that the development activity has not impacted businesses or provided additional customers.



This chart speaks for itself with retailers operating in a very uncertain climate. Businesses in the downtown rely on foot traffic provided by Newark's companies. Companies pushed back a wider return to work from after Labor Day 2021 due to the Delta variant into the new year and then again into the spring of 2022 due to the omicron variant.



Appendix: Survey Participants

Address	Business Name	Business Type
1 4 Branford Place	Downtown Caribbean Eats	Food & Beverage
2 17 Branford Place	Unique Design Menswear	Apparel
3 44 Branford Place	B&B International Market	Food & Beverage
4 44 Branford Place	Abeeba African Hair Braiding	Beauty
5 60 Branford Place	The Salon	Beauty
6 60 Branford Place	Al-Amanah Muslim Merchant	Religious Goods
7 823 Broad Street	Boost Mobile	Electronics
8 825 Broad Street	Vivi Nails	Beauty
9 827 Broad Street	Metro by T-Mobile	Electronics
10 829 Broad Street	Urban Source	Jewelry/Apparel
11 833 Broad Street	Jamaican Restaurant	Food & Beverage
12 835 Broad Street	Marco	Apparel
13 847-849 Broad Street	Magic Sneaker	Footwear
14 851 Broad Street	Hair World	Beauty
15 857 Broad Street	Wm.S. Rich & Son	Pawn Shop/Jewelry
16 861 Broad Street	Podiatry Center	Footwear
17 863-865 Broad Street	V.I.M. Clothing	Apparel
18 867 Broad Street	Source of Knowledge	Book Store
19 905 Broad Street	Columbia Bank	Bank
20 915 Broad Steet	Cornbread Newark	Food & Beverage
21 127 Halsey Street	Krauszer's Deli	Food & Beverage
22 222 Halsey Street	Provident Bank	Bank
23 228 Halsey Street	Tonnie's Minis	Food & Beverage
24 272 Washington Street	Just Fish Café	Food & Beverage
25 1 William Street	Go! Go! Curry!	Food & Beverage
26 7 William Street	The Black Home	Home Furnishing/Accessories
27 13 William Street	Newark Rx pharmacy	Pharmacy
28 12 William Street	Dollar Zone	Convenience Store
29 14 William Street	Rosina's African Fashion	Apparel

Cover Photos:

First Photo: West side of Broad Street between Branford Place and William Street

Second Photo: South side of Branford Place between Broad Street and Treat Place

Third Photo: North side of William Street between Broad Street and Treat Place

Key Takeaway Page Photo:

North side of Branford Place between Broad Street and Halsey Street