

# PACIFIC GROVE BUSINESS WALK 2018

## Economic Development Commission



The City of Pacific Grove’s Economic Development Commission conducted a “Business Walk” on Thursday, May 17, 2018. Along with the Commissioners, the group included local business owners, residents and city and chamber officials. These volunteers visited businesses in Pacific Grove’s five business districts – Downtown, Foresthill, American Tin Cannery, Sunset Avenue, and Central Avenue to learn more about our local businesses and how we can help them strengthen and promote their business. The volunteers visited over 100 businesses in the city and were successful in interviewing 95 of them, and we received 24 responses via online survey.

Visits by Industry	2018	2016	2015
<i>Retail</i>	45%	44%	44%
<i>Food &amp; Beverage</i>	22%	21%	21%
<i>Industrial</i>	5%	7%	7%
<i>Office</i>	6%	5%	4%
<i>Other*</i>	22%	23%	24%

(\*dry cleaners, salons, pet grooming, etc)

Visits by Business Districts	2018	2016	2015
<i>Downtown</i>	48%	58%	53%
<i>Foresthill</i>	33%	12%	12%
<i>American Tin Cannery</i>	10%	16%	18%
<i>Sunset Avenue</i>	5%	9%	11%
<i>Central Avenue</i>	4%	5%	6%

**The conversations focused on three basic questions: (1) “How is Business?” (2) “What do you like about doing business in Pacific Grove?” and (3) “What can the City do to help you succeed?”**

### Question 1: How is Business?

When asked how their business was doing currently, forty-three percent (43%) responded that their business was good/increasing, compared to 47% in 2016 and 54% in 2015. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the businesses interviewed stated that their business is fair/steady, but could be better, compared to 34% in 2016 and 31% in 2015. Finally, 20% stated that their business was slow/poor, compared to 19% in 2016 and 15% in 2015.



### How is Business, by District:

	Downtown			Foresthill			ATC			Sunset			Central		
	2018	2016	2015	2018	2016	2015	2018	2016	2015	2018	2016	2015	2018	2016	2015
<b>G/I</b>	46%	43%	55%	39%	63%	56%	17%	29%	25%	83%	62%	71%	50%	57%	67%
<b>F/S</b>	34%	39%	36%	45%	37%	31%	42%	24%	35%	0%	30%	15%	50%	14%	25%
<b>S/P</b>	20%	18%	9%	16%	0%	13%	42%	47%	40%	17%	8%	14%	0%	29%	8%

\*G/I = Good/Increasing; F/S = Fair/Steady; S/P = Slow/Poor

## Question 2: What do you like about doing business in Pacific Grove?

41% of businesses reported that “Clientele” was the most important factor to having their business in PG, noting loyal customers. The next highest reason (35%) for working or owning a business in Pacific Grove, was the location – “Pacific Grove is beautiful!”

## Question 3: What can the city do to improve business in Pacific Grove?

Since our first Business Walk in 2015, this is the first time that we have heard several concerns about the lack of affordable housing in PG, contributing to a difficulty in hiring and/or keeping qualified employees.

Several businesses suggested more events, live music and outdoor dining to draw more people to PG.

Once again, one of the most common request from all business districts was for more advertising and marketing of Pacific Grove to increase foot traffic and visitors. Many businesses noted that many of their customers are non-residents of PG. Signage and parking/traffic are also areas that need improvement in Pacific Grove. And we are still hearing requests for a vibrant night life in Pacific Grove.

### Additional comments:

- The lack of affordable housing makes it impossible to retain qualified employees. Business Owners and Managers can not afford to live in Pacific Grove!
- Good Old Days is great/not good for downtown businesses.
- We need a better mix of retail downtown – no more real estate offices!
- Longer parking in downtown; parking for employees.
- Beautify/clean the city, more flowers along sidewalks, wider sidewalks and more lighting all along Lighthouse and side streets/parking lots.
- Empty storefronts need displays, not paper covering the windows.
- Need street lamps on Sunset/crosswalk at Asilomar and Sunset.
- Unfortunately we are becoming known as a town of thrift stores and consignment collectives...offering mostly pre-owned goods. Rents are rising and the rent of cubicles is the only way many shop owners can afford it, so that’s what we’re attracting. This is one of the reasons locals don’t shop downtown.
- The quality of the stores needs to be greatly improved. There are far too many thrift stores. I think Pacific Grove would have a much greater draw with visitors if more interesting business could convinced to open store fronts in PG. Is there anyone at the city working on bringing in new, quality businesses?
- More support for retailers—contrary to popular belief it does not dribble down from support of lodging and restaurants! Great need to find a way to get more locals shopping in town—consistently.
- Our business is down about 20% from last year, I believe due to Holman building construction?? We love it here and will stay at this location as long as possible
- We need more night life to bring in an assortment of clientele, maybe a wine tasting room, a brewery and nice boutiques instead of physical therapy and thrift stores.
- I really appreciate the measures of slowing down traffic in the last few years. I feel like Pacific Grove is developing in a way that is attracting newer families to the area which is a great thing.
- We appreciate the EDC's reaching out and supporting the small business community of Pacific Grove.

