

# 2021



## ANNUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT



## Monroe, Washington

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Message from the Mayor _____	3
Economic Development in Monroe _____	4
Comprehensive Plan _____	4
Economic Development Strategy _____	5
Tourism and Outdoor Recreation as Part of the BRRE Strategy _____	7
Economic Development Advisory Board _____	8
Economic Development Partners _____	9
Monroe by the Numbers _____	10
Demographics _____	11
Business License Activity _____	14
Housing Starts _____	14
Employment Data _____	15
Sales Tax Collections _____	18
COVID-19 Relief Funds _____	19
2021 Monroe Business Survey _____	21
Highlights _____	21
What's Ahead _____	22

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



We have been through a challenging couple of years. The impact of the Pandemic on our lives, both personal and professional, cannot be understated. From the initial shutdown of many businesses to the closures of the schools, it seems we've been adapting to new ways of working and living every couple of months. Many Monroe businesses, particularly small retail, and the hospitality sector, have been hit hard during the pandemic. And even though \$14,000,000.00 came flowing into Monroe's businesses as Federal, State, County and City grants, it didn't make some businesses whole. It's important as we look at the state of the economy in Monroe and plan our path forward, that we bring along those most impacted by the pandemic and work toward a recovery that supports everyone and leaves none behind.

It is with that responsibility in mind that we present the 2021 Economic Development Annual Report. In it we will assess the economic health of our community through an analysis of several indicators; population, incomes, unemployment, housing starts, tax collections and other data, to provide a snapshot of the last year. The report will also outline the ways in which our Comprehensive Plan will include Economic Development Strategies aimed at keeping Monroe's economy strong and ensure it continues to be a place people want to live and work. Finally, we'll look at the results of the 2021 Business Survey and hear what the business owners themselves have to say about the last year.

As a whole, Monroe has come out of 2021 a community better prepared to meet the challenges of the future and in a good position to move forward into 2022. By coordinating with our Economic Development partners at the county, regional and state levels, we have much to work on in the coming year. Monroe is moving forward into recovery, reshaping the local economy to build back a more sustainable, equitable and prosperous business community.

Yours in Service,

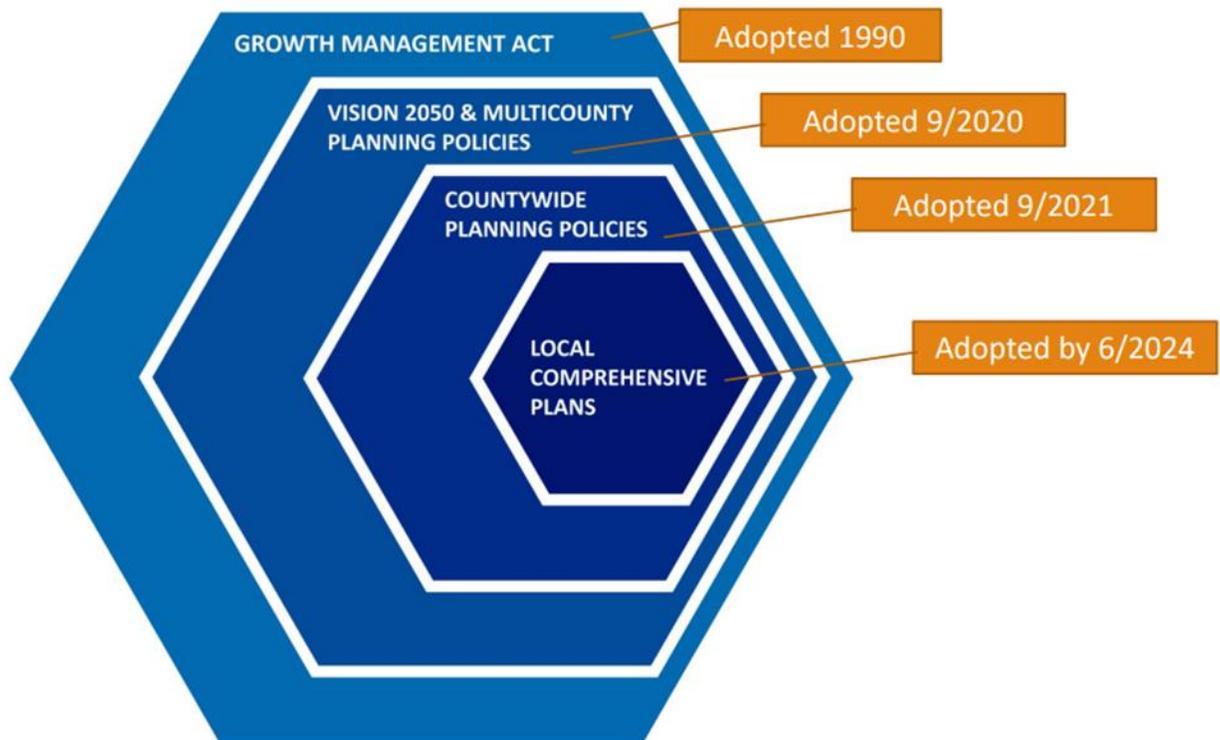
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Geoffrey Thomas". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Mayor Geoffrey Thomas**

# Economic Development in Monroe

## Comprehensive Plan

Monroe's Economic Development efforts are part of The Comprehensive Plan, which is the centerpiece of local planning. Like a business plan, the Comprehensive Plan provides a 20-year framework for how our community will grow. Economic Development, as a component of the Comprehensive Plan, is a process of deliberate intervention in the normal economic growth to make our local economy easier to enter and more attractive to do business. It is a concerted effort on the part of our city to influence the direction of private sector investment toward opportunities that can lead to sustained economic growth and supports the values of our community.



## Economic Development Strategy

Monroe’s economic goals and fortunes are inexorably linked with those of the communities around Monroe who share its transportation network, its natural resources, and its regional workforce. The economic development strategy must look at the region, assess Monroe’s own strengths and weaknesses, inventory our assets and be developed with an understanding of the economic landscape in which we find ourselves.

As the new Comprehensive Plan is developed, much will be carried over from the last one completed in 2015. Monroe still needs to collect and provide accurate demographic information to the business community, it will continue to focus on maintaining its position as a regional retail hub and it will support the continued development of the historic downtown into a destination for both residents and visitors.

### 2015 GOALS AND POLICIES

- ✓ Demographic information
- ✓ Employment sector opportunities
  - Health Care and Manufacturing
- ✓ Commercial areas and sectors
- ✓ Historic Downtown Monroe
- ✓ Economic Development Strategy
  - Develop a thriving downtown w/vibrant Main Street Character
  - Great place to start and grow a business
  - Outdoor adventure destination
  - Maintain US 2 regional retail center
- ✓ Be walkable, accessible, and interconnected

### 2024 GOALS AND POLICIES

- ✓ Demographic information
- ✓ Employment sector opportunities
- ✓ Commercial areas and sectors
  - Identify local “centers” including historic downtown and North Kelsey.
  - Connect housing and retail centers
  - Promote employment growth in centers
- ✓ Develop Economic Development Strategy Consistent with PSRC Vision 2050
  - Expand access to opportunities
  - Prevent displacement of existing businesses that may result from redevelopment
  - Promote environmental and socially responsible businesses
  - Support and empower contributions of diverse communities.

Development of the new economic development strategy will additionally incorporate the goals of the new regional plans. Their focus on preventing displacement of existing businesses, promoting environmentally responsible activities, and supporting a diverse business community are intended to ensure that those most affected by the pandemic are included in recovery and that recovery is consistent with our regional aspirations for a strong economy that does not adversely impact the environment.

### Identify Themes for Economic Development

- Review themes from 2015
- Develop a thriving downtown w/vibrant Main Street Character
- Great place to start and grow a business
- Outdoor adventure destination
- Maintain US 2 regional retail center
- Be walkable, accessible, and interconnected

### Draft Economic Development Goals and Policies

- Identify and designate future centers (N. Kelsey/ Downtown Commercial)
- Develop goals and policies consistent with MPP and CPP
- Identify and enhance industry clusters
- Foster a positive business climate and diversify employment
- Expand access to opportunities and remove barriers
- Support environmental and socially responsible business practices

One important part of the new economic development strategy will be its Business Recruitment, Retention and Expansion (BRRE) component. The BRRE plan is being developed with an understanding of Monroe's assets, what it can sustain and what the community needs and wants. The Economic Advisory Board commissioned two reports: a Regional Demand Analysis, and a Lodging Study. The Regional Demand Analysis assessed what our community offers businesses in the form of market demand; How many people live and come into Monroe, how much money they spend, how often they travel through Monroe and other critical information businesses need to assess Monroe's viability as a business location. The Lodging Study tells us even more by looking at visitors specifically, what events and attractions generate overnight stays and what locations within Monroe are best suited to a new lodging facility. Both reports will inform the development of a new BRRE program intended to build up Monroe as a "Outdoor Adventure Destination" that will support many sectors of Monroe's economy.

## Tourism and Outdoor Recreation as Part of the BRRE Strategy

Development of a Business Recruitment Strategy is based on what a community has to offer and what makes it stand out amongst its competitors. Monroe, with its location on the Snohomish and Skykomish rivers, access to the Cascades and its investments in its parks and recreation facilities, is attractive to businesses that target the outdoor recreation market. In addition to its location, Monroe has the commercial space that can accommodate not only retail but hospitality as well. We will look across industry sectors to find those companies that serve this market segment; retailers of outdoor equipment, service providers of adventure packages and tours, restaurants and other hospitality establishments and new lodging options to keep these travelers in Monroe.

One of the most valuable partnerships in this effort will be that of our internal partner, the Monroe Parks and Recreation Department. If highlighting your assets is one of the keys to recruiting businesses, we have fewer assets as outstanding as our miles of riverfront, parks, and recreation facilities. The 2022 PROS Plan guides the City's future investment in parks, facilities, trails, programs, and events—so that Monroe can be a community that residents, as well as visitors, want to enjoy.

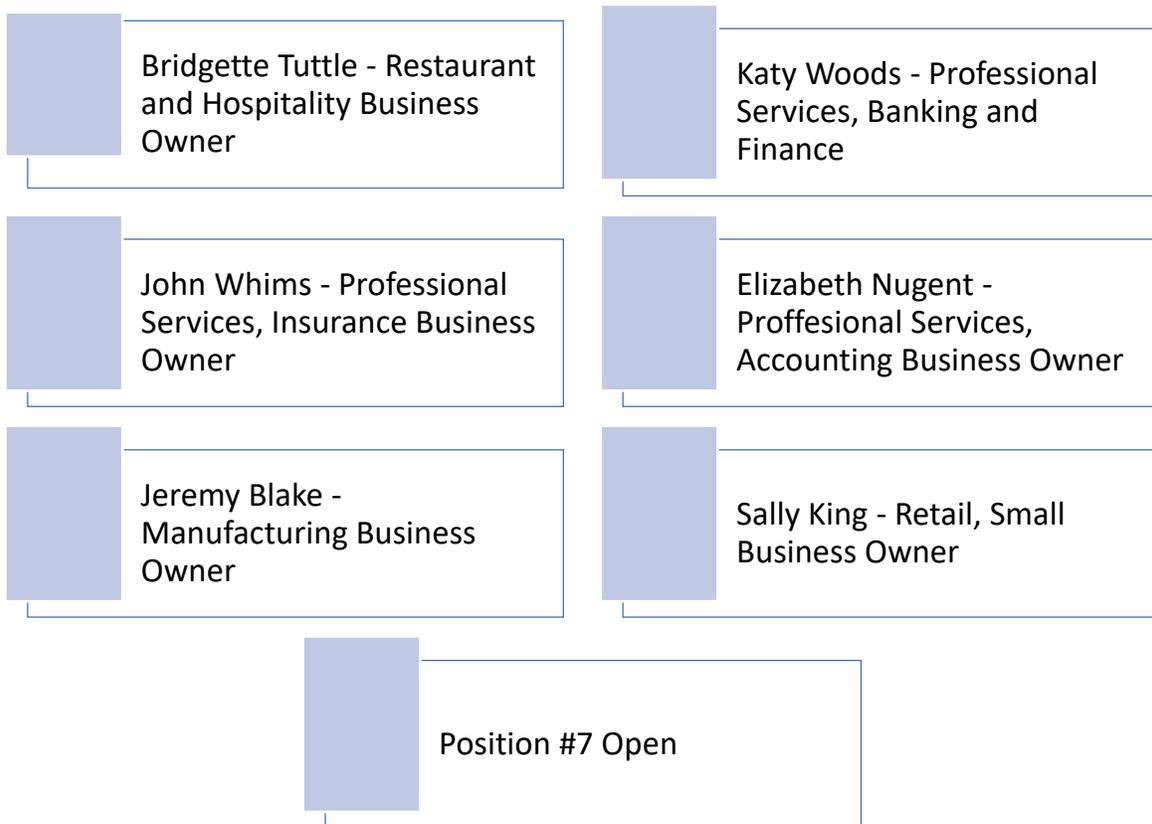


Lake Tye All Weather Field

## Economic Development Advisory Board

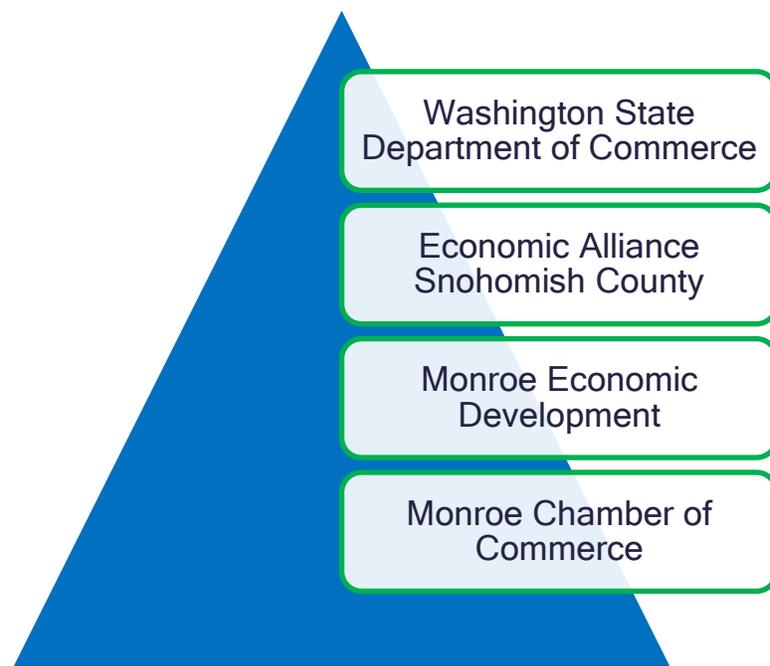
The purpose of EDAB is to provide a forum for the coordination of information among entities identified as having economic development roles; recommending priorities and establishing a means to monitor progress on goals; and providing such other advice and guidance with furthering Monroe's economic development strategy.

The EDAB consists of 7 voting members, representing a cross section of the business community with a balance of business type, location, and size. The initial terms of appointment are staggered, and the Mayor and City Administrator will serve as ex-officio members. The board meets on a monthly basis, at a reoccurring day and time, as established by Board action.



## Economic Development Partners

Monroe works together with other members of the larger, regional community on a broad range of topics; Transportation, workforce and the environment are just some of issues it works on collaboratively with its neighbors. Monroe's partners range from local business groups like the Monroe Chamber and other nearby communities such as Snohomish, Sultan, Startup and Goldbar represented in the Sky Valley Chamber, to the county's economic development agency, Economic Alliance of Snohomish County (EASC) and the Washington State Department of Commerce. They also include partners in Workforce Training like Everett Community College.



In times of hardship, partnerships are strength, and the pandemic highlighted the importance of our partnerships as an unprecedented amount of capital was injected into the economy by the federal government and was distributed through existing economic development channels such as the Washington State Department of Commerce and the EASC. By working with these partners Monroe businesses were able to get the information necessary to access these funds and channeled over \$14,000,000 of aid into Monroe.

Continued coordination with our partners will provide many opportunities as we work together to address the critical issues such as mitigating traffic impacts on US 2 and State Rt 522, providing the right training for the workforce of tomorrow through the Everett Community College and lobbying our state leaders for needed resources.

# MONROE BY THE NUMBERS

Statistical analysis is a snapshot of activity in any given time. By understanding our current position, we know where we are and can chart where we want to go. Our current snapshot indicates a community that did experience some pain during the pandemic but is in a strong position to move forward.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- The number of business licenses with a Monroe endorsement continues to grow
- New housing starts held strong and continue to grow
- Sales Tax collections did not take a huge hit during Pandemic and remain on target
- \$14,000,000 was injected into the local economy through direct grants and loans that were forgiven.

Monroe can be proud of its performance in these challenging years. Overall, the business community held on. And while many businesses were permanently shuttered by the pandemic, others had the capacity to adapt and, in some cases, prosper.



Blooms for sale at the Monroe Farmer's Market

## Demographics

The City of Monroe, like many cities in the Puget Sound region, had been in a period of growth since coming out of the 2008 recession. That growth was interrupted by the pandemic and the negative impacts related to it. Whether we return to previous growth levels or find a new normal is still unclear as we continue to come out from under restrictions and begin to operate normally. But what the statistics show is that Monroe is a city experiencing moderate post-pandemic growth and very low unemployment.

Population: 15,504

(16 years and older)



Workforce Participation:

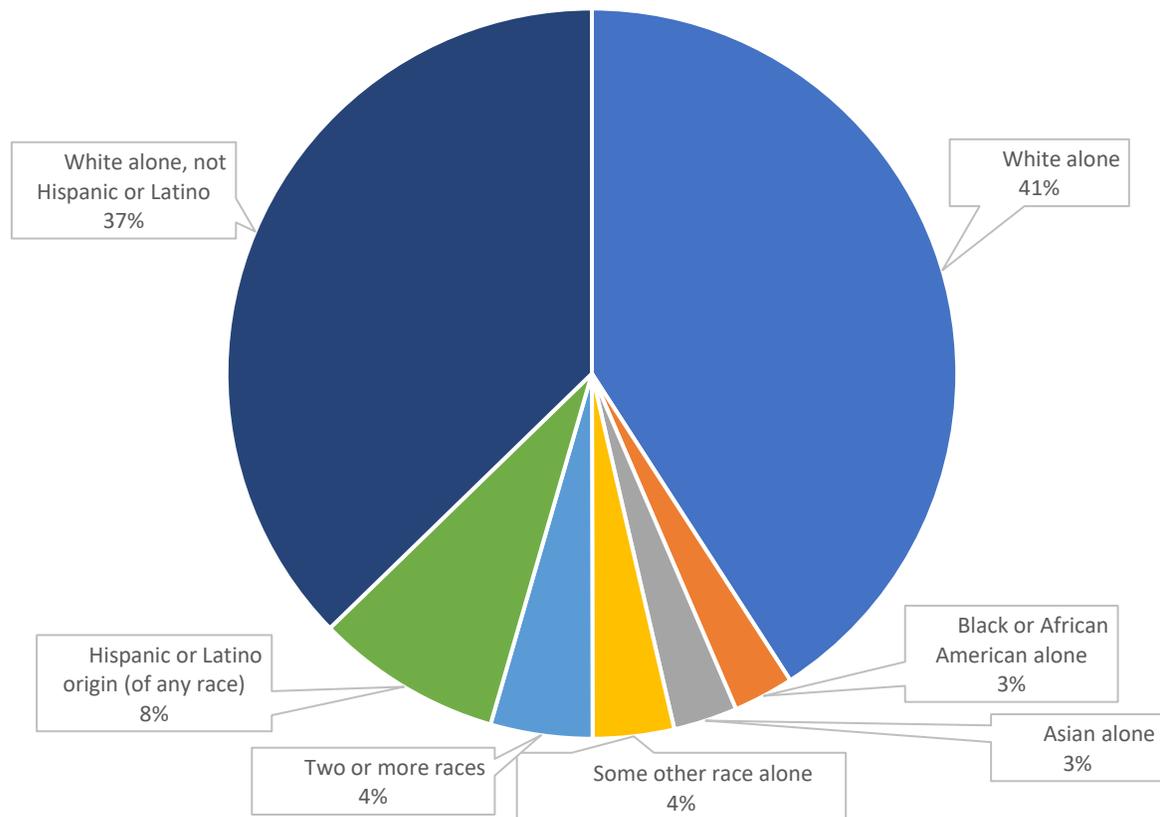
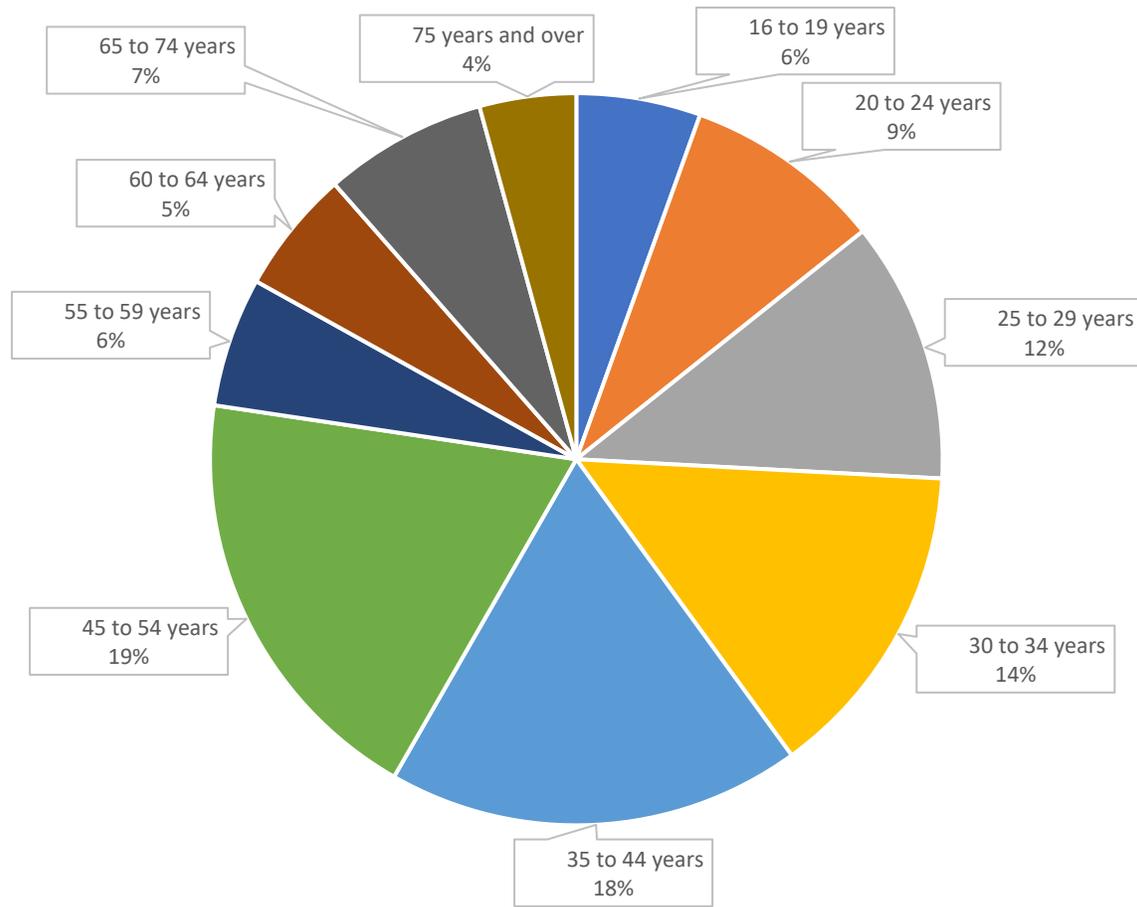
57.30%

Unemployment Rate: 3.9%

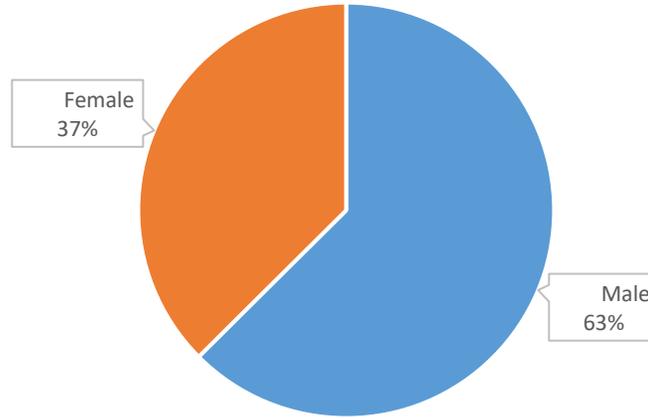


Source: USCensus Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Population Breakdown by Age & Ethnicity



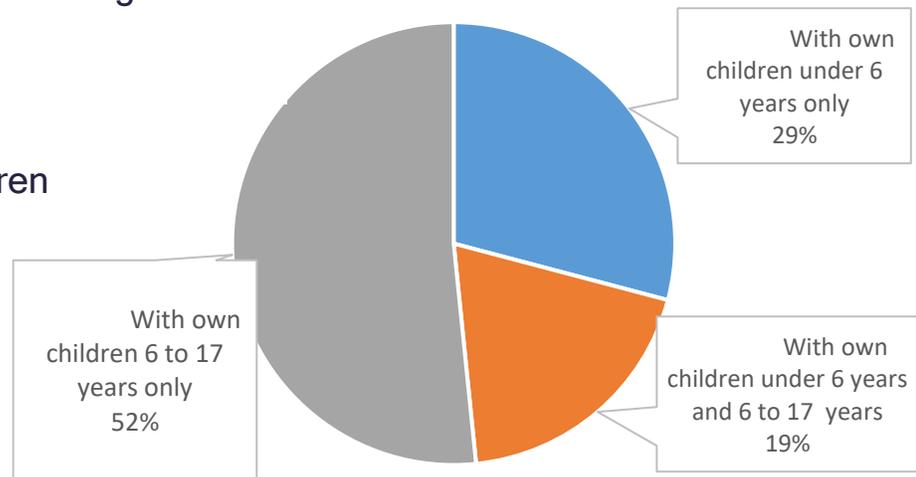
### Population Breakdown by Sex



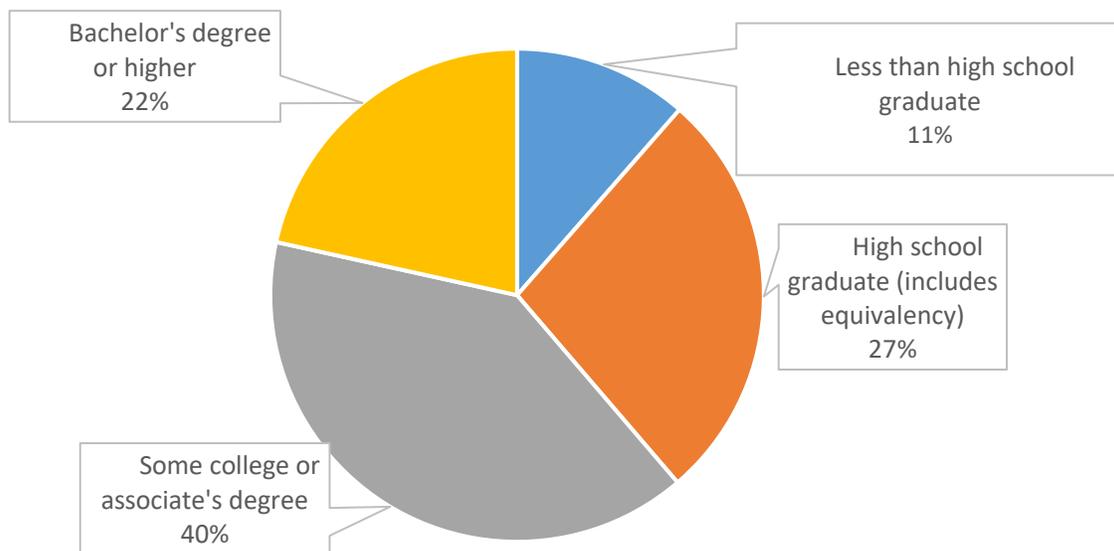
### No. of Families with Children Under the Age of 16:

2,013

### Composition of Families with Children

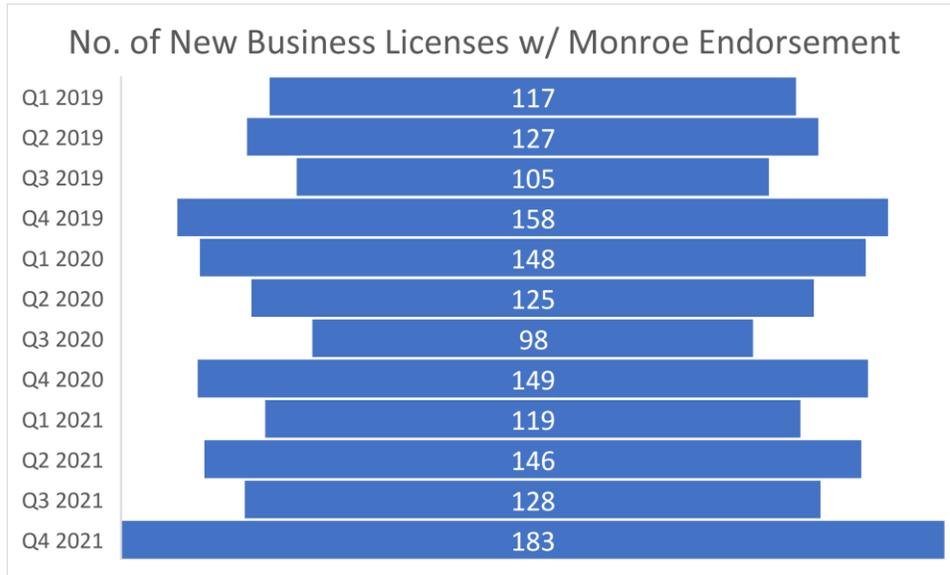


### Educational Attainment

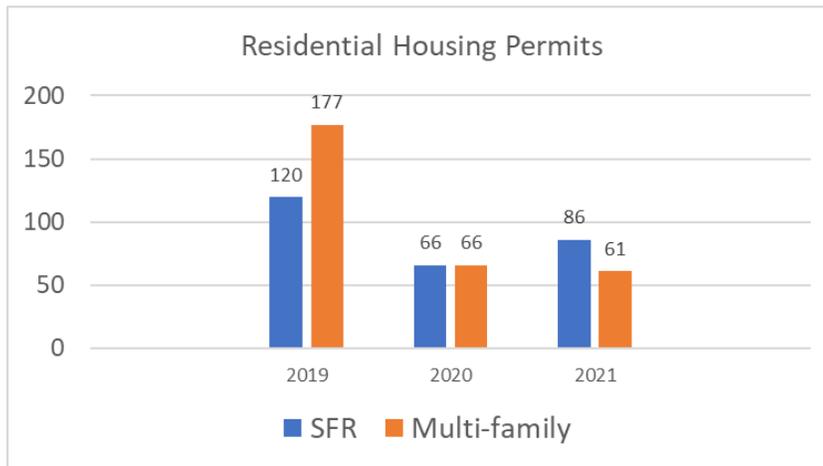


## Business License Activity

This graph shows the number of businesses that obtained a Monroe endorsement allowing them to sell goods and services into Monroe. This is not a quantitative assessment showing the number of new businesses locating in Monroe, but an analysis of the flow of goods and services into Monroe and the subsequent sales tax collections.



## Housing Starts



Residential Housing permits, an indicator of future economic development activity, took an initial hit during the early days of the pandemic when construction crews were unable to work. Despite that, it remained a strong engine for Monroe’s economic growth. The number of single-family residential (SFR) housing permits fell by 45% from 2019 to 2020. As construction crews came back to work later in 2020, 2021 saw an increase of 30% in single family permits.

Multi-family permits fell by nearly 63% from 2019 to 2020 and decreased again another 7.5% from 2020 to 2021. These decreases do not indicate an economic downturn, but rather

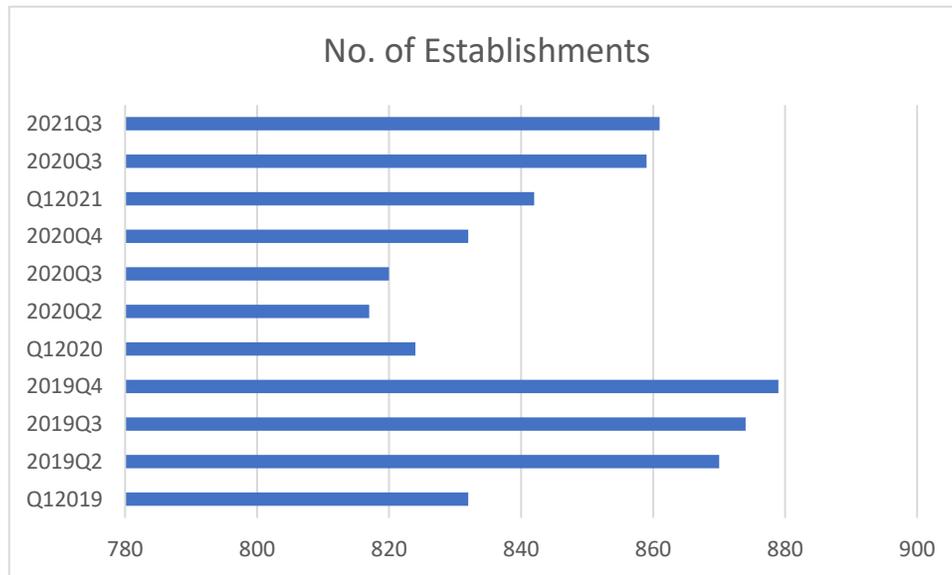
shows an above average number of multi-unit permits in 2019 including River’s Edge. As a comparison, in the 10 years prior (2012 to 2021 excluding 2019) 2014 was the highest number of multi-family permits with 47 followed by 2017 with 24. So even the pandemic years showed above average multi-family residential construction activity.

### Employment Data

The following employment data is collected and provided by the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD.) The data covers all employers in Monroe that have at least one employee. The most recent data available reflects the period through Q3 2021. Data points include the number of employers, the number of employees, total payroll amounts and the number of claims for unemployment insurance.

#### Number of Covered Establishments

The number of businesses with at least one employee began to fall in the first quarter of 2020 as pandemic related restrictions took effect. The decline continued into the second quarter but regained momentum in the third quarter and has continued to increase up through the third quarter of 2021. Although not at 2019 levels, the increases are on track to reach pre-pandemic parity early 2023.

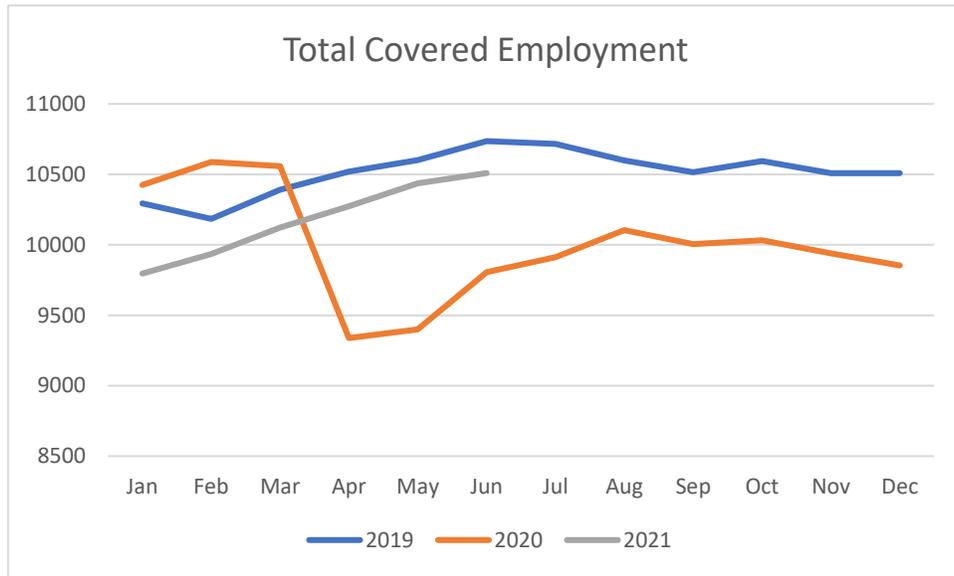


Q12019	2019Q2	2019Q3	2019Q4	Q12020	2020Q2	2020Q3	2020Q4	Q12021	2020Q3	2021Q3
832	870	874	879	824	817	820	832	842	859	861

#### Total Covered Employment

Total covered employment is the measure of all employees currently on payroll in Monroe. With 2019 as the baseline, the drop off began in March of 2020 coinciding with the state ordered shut-down. Unemployment remained at all-time highs through March and April but hiring began an uptick in May of that year and continued through July. A seasonal dip in

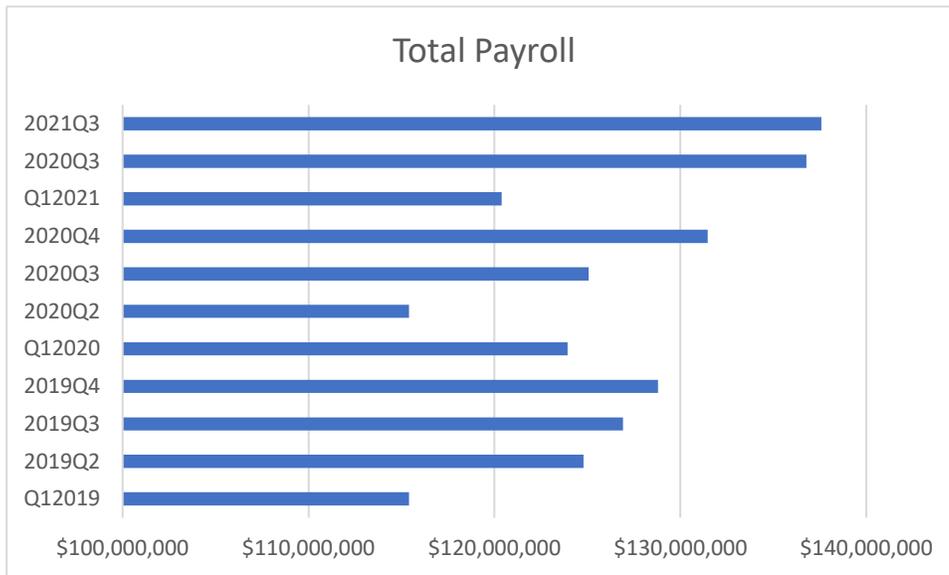
Summer was followed by a consistent surge in hiring that is on track to meet and possibly exceed pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022.



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	<b>10295</b>	<b>10184</b>	<b>10391</b>	<b>10520</b>	<b>10601</b>	<b>10736</b>	<b>10716</b>	<b>10598</b>	<b>10516</b>	<b>10595</b>	<b>10508</b>	<b>10509</b>
2020	<b>10426</b>	<b>10588</b>	<b>10559</b>	<b>9338</b>	<b>9400</b>	<b>9806</b>	<b>9912</b>	<b>10104</b>	<b>10006</b>	<b>10033</b>	<b>9939</b>	<b>9854</b>
2021	<b>9796</b>	<b>9934</b>	<b>10122</b>	<b>10273</b>	<b>10437</b>	<b>10509</b>						

### Total Payroll

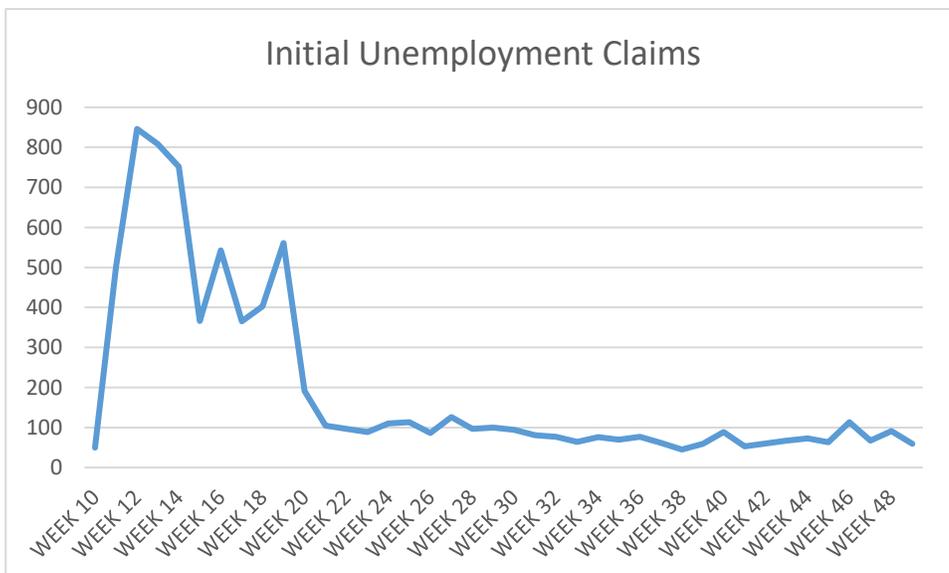
Payroll followed a similar course as Total Establishments when it took an initial hit in the first and second quarters of 2020 but rebounded in the third quarter. It has continued to increase except for the first quarter of 2021. That quarter did not correlate with a decrease in the number of businesses so the cause would need to be further investigated to determine the factors behind the decrease. Overall payroll has rebounded in 2022 as businesses reopened and began re-hiring. Significant wage increases in 2021 have added to the payroll rise.



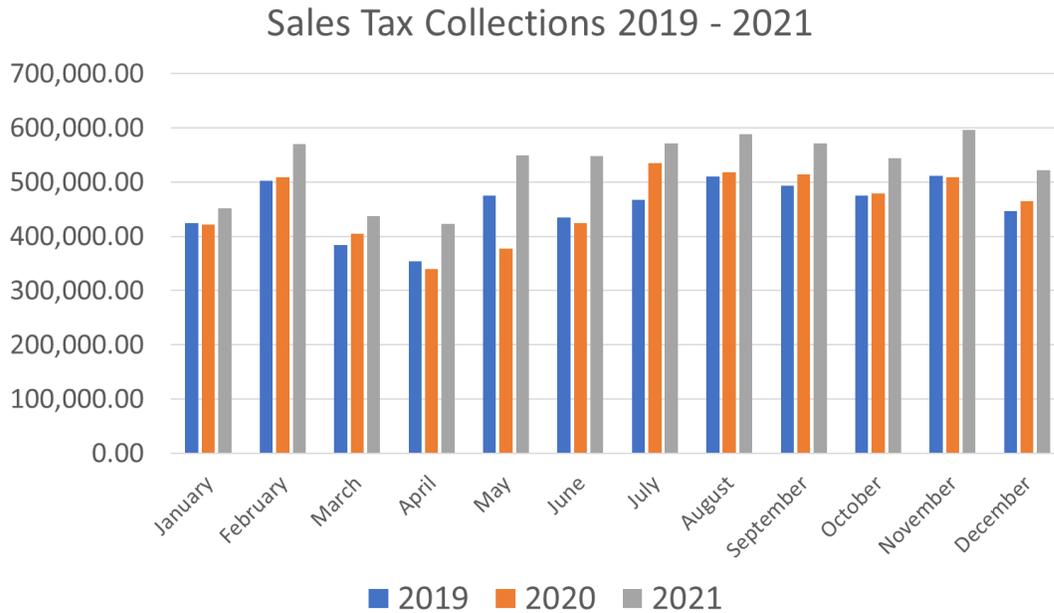
Q12019	2019Q2	2019Q3	2019Q4	Q12020	2020Q2	2020Q3	2020Q4	Q12021	2020Q3	2021Q3
\$115,408,822	\$124,781,444	\$126,917,200	\$128,788,940	\$123,931,102	\$115,402,241	\$125,058,635	\$131,473,033	\$120,390,830	\$136,771,837	\$137,589,402

### Initial Unemployment Claims

The Washington State Employment Security Department experienced an unprecedented number of claims for the years 2020 and 2021. So much so the agency is still having difficulty with the reporting for these two years. Available data is only for previous year, 2021, and only covers Week 10 (March 8 to March 14) to Week 49 (December 6 to December 12.) Given the availability of data, a complete picture is hard to come by, but even with the limited parameters the data shows that first time unemployment claims are returning to normal and, for many regions of the state including Monroe, are now below normal levels.



## Sales Tax Collections



Although Monroe's businesses took a hit during the pandemic, some taking a big hit, overall, Monroe's tax collections remained strong during the two-year period of 2019 to 2021.

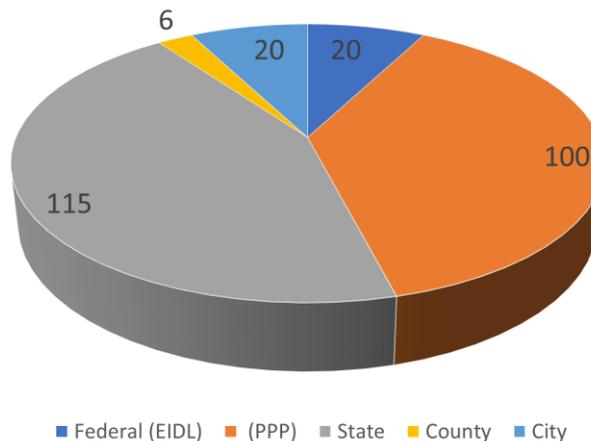
This fact can be attributed to our community leadership's sound fiscal stewardship prior to the pandemic placing Monroe in a strong position to weather the downturn. Another factor was Monroe's role as a regional retail hub for the entire Skykomish Valley's basic consumer needs (groceries, home improvement, et al.) which remained available to the public even in the early days of the pandemic. Monroe's balance sheet is in a strong position to move forward into the post-pandemic recovery.

*Source: Monroe Finance Department*

## COVID-19 Relief Funds

The end of 2020 and throughout 2021 Monroe businesses applied for and received over \$14 million in grants or loans that were forgiven. This cash infusion was intended to keep the workforce in place, offset losses from the temporary absence of customers during the lockdown, and pay for operating expenses like utilities, rent and overhead. It may never be known how many businesses we would have lost had this aid not been available, but what is known is the impact of \$14 million into the local economy helped many businesses stay afloat.

No. of Companies/Organizations Receiving COVID-19 Relief Funds



261 Monroe Businesses and Organizations received financial assistance during the pandemic. All loans originating through the SBA were identified as “Forgiven” except for three where the loan status was “Undisclosed.”

Regarding State funds received through the WA Dept. of Commerce,

- ✓ Approximately 50% of those entities were in the hospitality sector (such as restaurants and hotels)
- ✓ Approximately 10% in the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector.

The state was able to collect demographic data for 80% of these awardees:

- ✓ 34% were awarded to minority-owned business
- ✓ 37% to women owned businesses
- ✓ 8% to veteran owned businesses.

*Sources:*

*SBA PPP Loan Information - Propublica; <https://projects.propublica.org/coronavirus/bailouts/search?q=98272>*

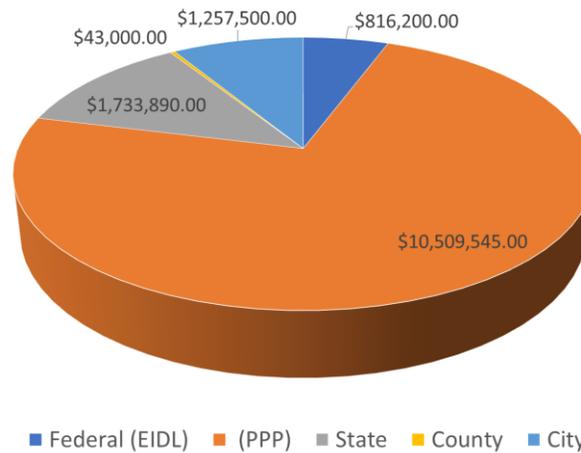
*EIDL Info: Skip; <https://helloskip.com/eidl-data>*

*State Grants Information: Washington State Department of Commerce*

*County Grant Information; Economic Alliance Snohomish County*

*City Grant Information: Internal Documents*

Dollar Amount Received by Monroe Businesses and Organizations in COVID-19 Relief - \$14,360,135.00

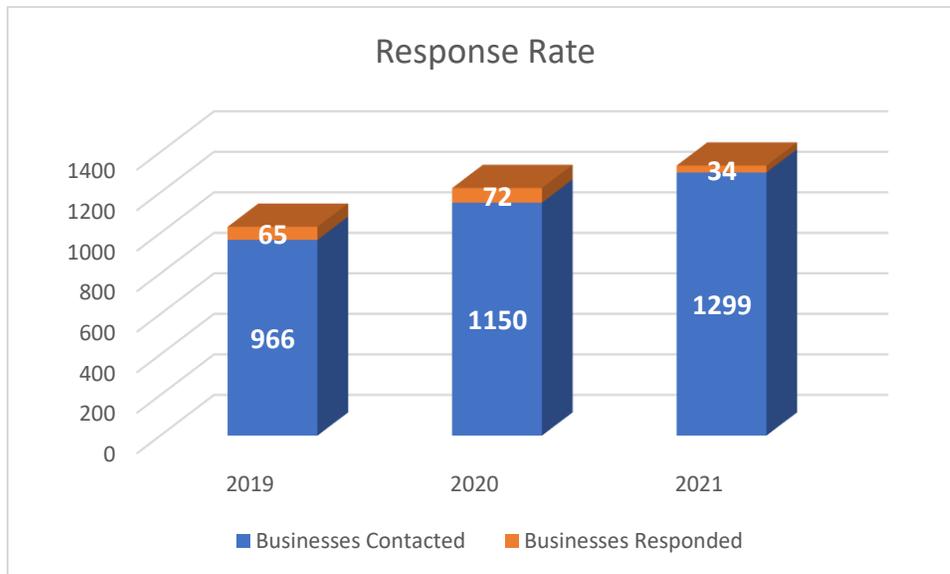


The “Forgiven” PPP and EIDL loans from the SBA resulted in a net inflow of \$11,325,745.00 into the community, over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all pandemic relief. The remaining \$3,034,390 in grants came from Wa State, Snohomish County and the City of Monroe resulting in \$14,360,135.00 net inflow to Monroe.

# 2021 MONROE BUSINESS SURVEY

## Highlights

- Survey Participation continues to decline. Only 2.6% of the total businesses contacted responded.



- The makeup of the industry sectors continues to show Personal/Professional Services and Restaurant/Retails sectors make up the majority of businesses in Monroe
- Half of the respondents indicated they intended to expand in 2022.
- The major issue facing businesses is labor shortages, particularly finding qualified candidates, followed by increasing prices
- Most businesses chose Monroe because they are residents and or want to work close to where they live.
- The outlook for the future; 45% said hard to tell, 50% said good to excellent and only 5% said the future for their business did not look good.
- When asked what the city's economic development priorities should be, the majority indicated alleviating transportation/congestion problems on Hwy 2 and Hwy 522 followed by helping businesses most affected by the pandemic.

Full Results of the Survey Can be found in the appendix of this report.

# WHAT'S AHEAD

Having weathered the pandemic, recovery and progress is the task ahead. Recovery means attempting to make Monroe's businesses whole and mitigate the negative impacts of the previous three years. We need to ensure the recovery is broadly based and that what we build will be strong enough to withstand the next crisis and reflects and serves the values of the community.



The Economic Development team will do this by working with its partners, stakeholders, and others to develop the new Economic Development Strategy focusing on managing growth, attracting businesses that would benefit from locating in Monroe, and ensuring our existing businesses have the workforce, tools and knowledge to succeed in the post pandemic economy.

We invite the business community to participate in this journey. The input from Monroe businesses is essential to achieving the goal of a strong and prosperous economy. By participating in the annual business survey or becoming actively involved in the Economic Development Advisory Board, businesses can impact the policies and programs the city's leadership develops to create a robust and resilient economy.

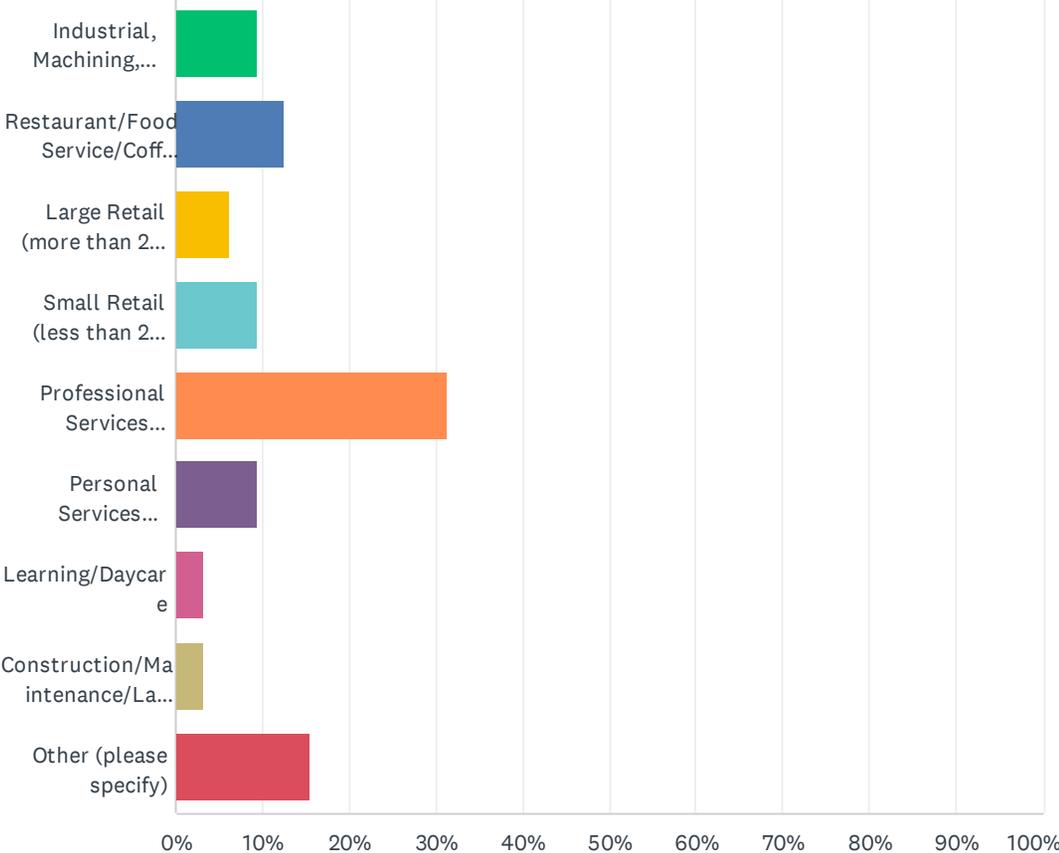
Here's to a great 2022!

# APPENDIX

## SURVEY RESULTS

### Q5 What business sector are you in?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 1

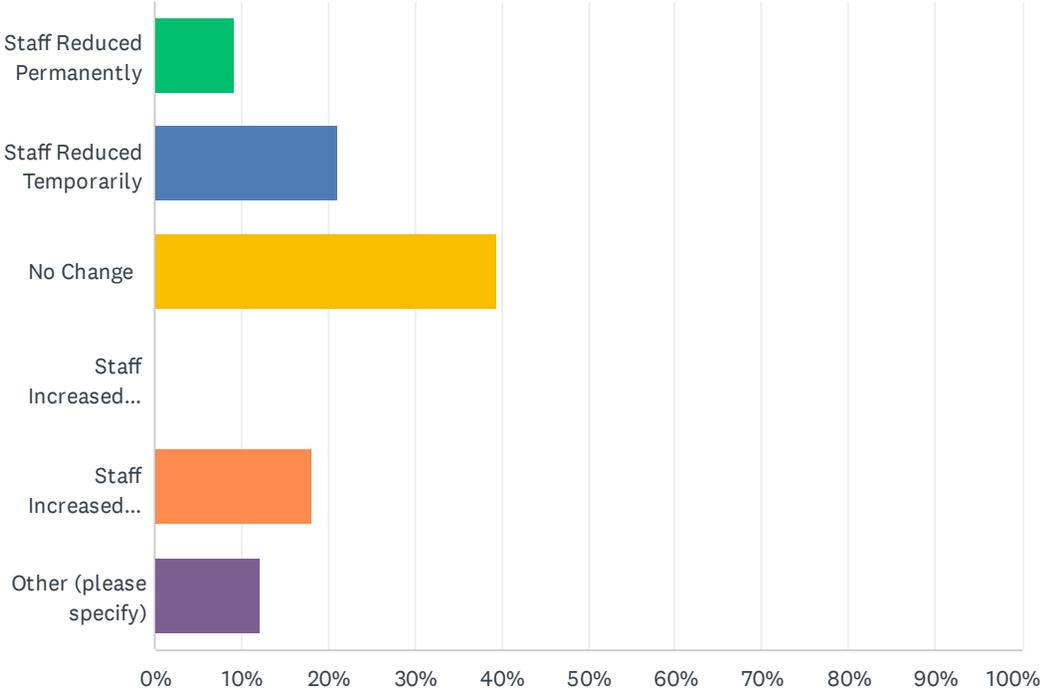


2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Industrial, Machining, Manufacturing, Warehousing, Distribution	9.38%	3
Restaurant/Food Service/Coffee Shops	12.50%	4
Large Retail (more than 20 employees)	6.25%	2
Small Retail (less than 20 employees)	9.38%	3
Professional Services (Accounting, Legal, Medical, Dental, Architecture, Engineering, Consulting)	31.25%	10
Personal Services (Salons, Gyms, Wellness, Tattoo)	9.38%	3
Learning/Daycare	3.13%	1
Construction/Maintenance/Landscaping	3.13%	1
Other (please specify)	15.63%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>32</b>

### Q6 What has been the biggest change to your workforce in the last two years?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 0

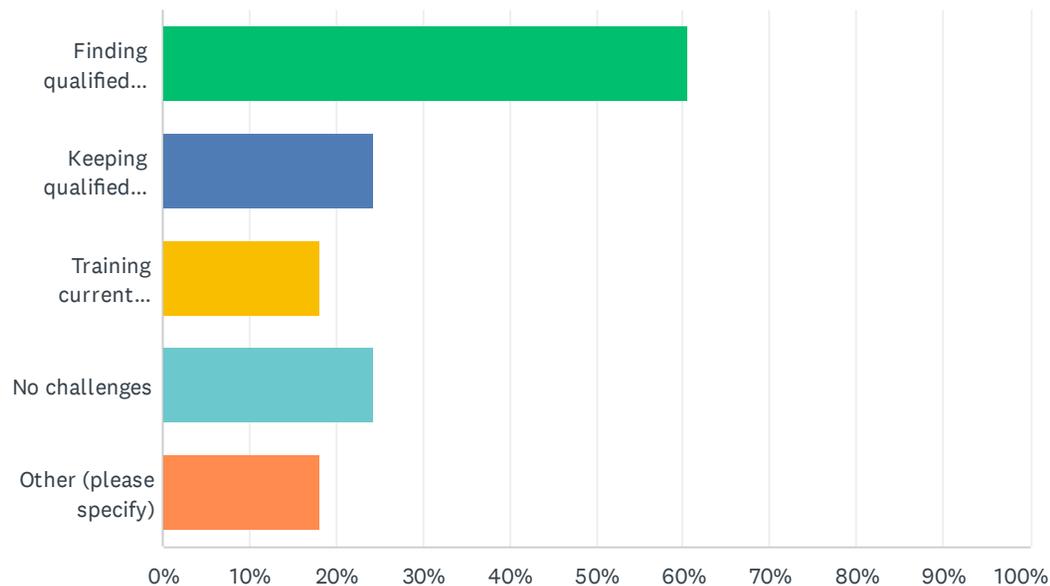


2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Staff Reduced Permanently	9.09%	3
Staff Reduced Temporarily	21.21%	7
No Change	39.39%	13
Staff Increased Temporarily	0.00%	0
Staff Increased Permanently	18.18%	6
Other (please specify)	12.12%	4
TOTAL		33

### Q7 What is your biggest challenge regarding workforce? Check all that apply.

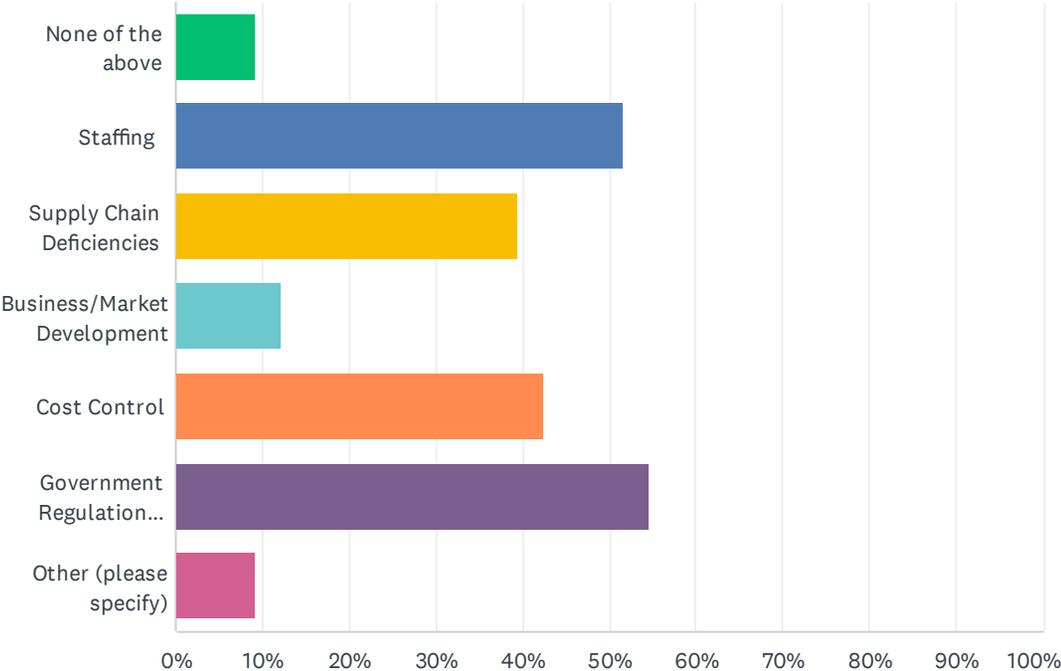
Answered: 33 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Finding qualified candidates	60.61%	20
Keeping qualified employees	24.24%	8
Training current employees	18.18%	6
No challenges	24.24%	8
Other (please specify)	18.18%	6
Total Respondents: 33		

### Q8 What are your challenges specific to your industry? Check all that apply.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 0

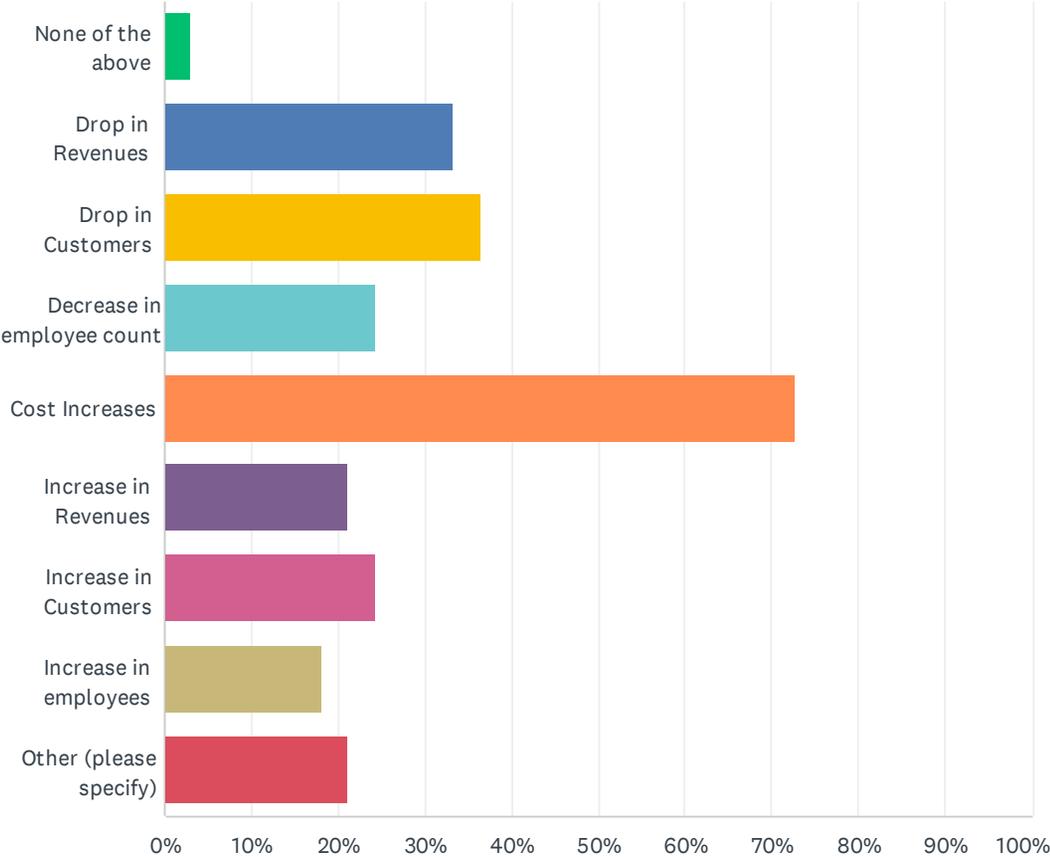


2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	9.09%	3
Staffing	51.52%	17
Supply Chain Deficiencies	39.39%	13
Business/Market Development	12.12%	4
Cost Control	42.42%	14
Government Regulation (Codes, Tax, Licensing, Mandates)	54.55%	18
Other (please specify)	9.09%	3
Total Respondents: 33		

# Q9 What has been the biggest change in your business in the last two years? Check all that apply.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 0

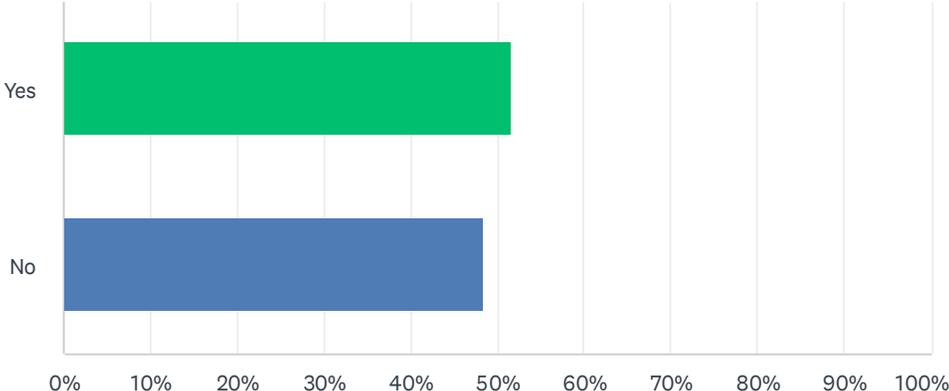


2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	3.03%	1
Drop in Revenues	33.33%	11
Drop in Customers	36.36%	12
Decrease in employee count	24.24%	8
Cost Increases	72.73%	24
Increase in Revenues	21.21%	7
Increase in Customers	24.24%	8
Increase in employees	18.18%	6
Other (please specify)	21.21%	7
Total Respondents: 33		

### Q10 Are you planning an expansion of your business in the next 5 years?

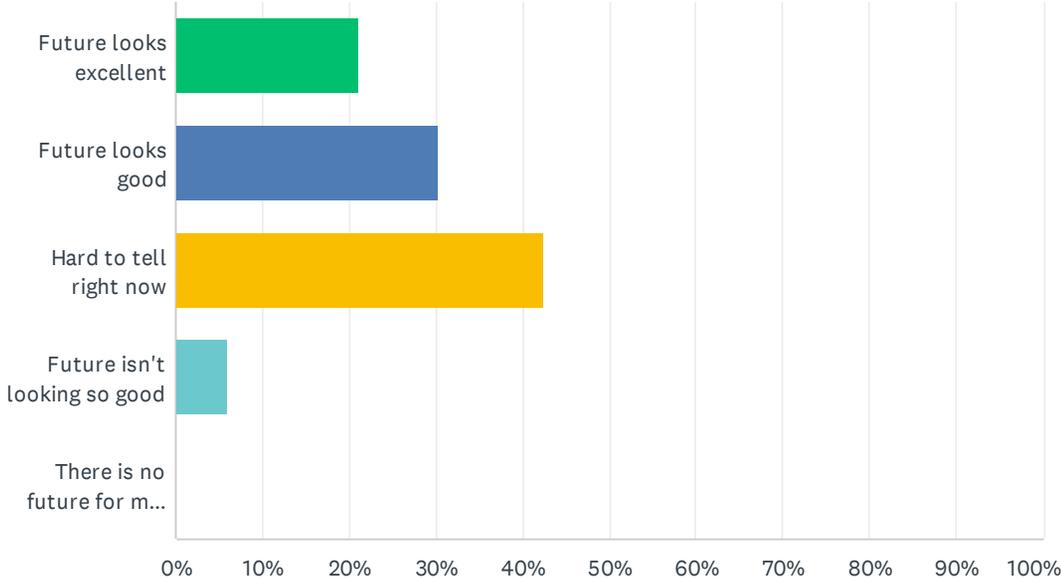
Answered: 33 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51.52%	17
No	48.48%	16
TOTAL		33

### Q11 What is the outlook for your business?

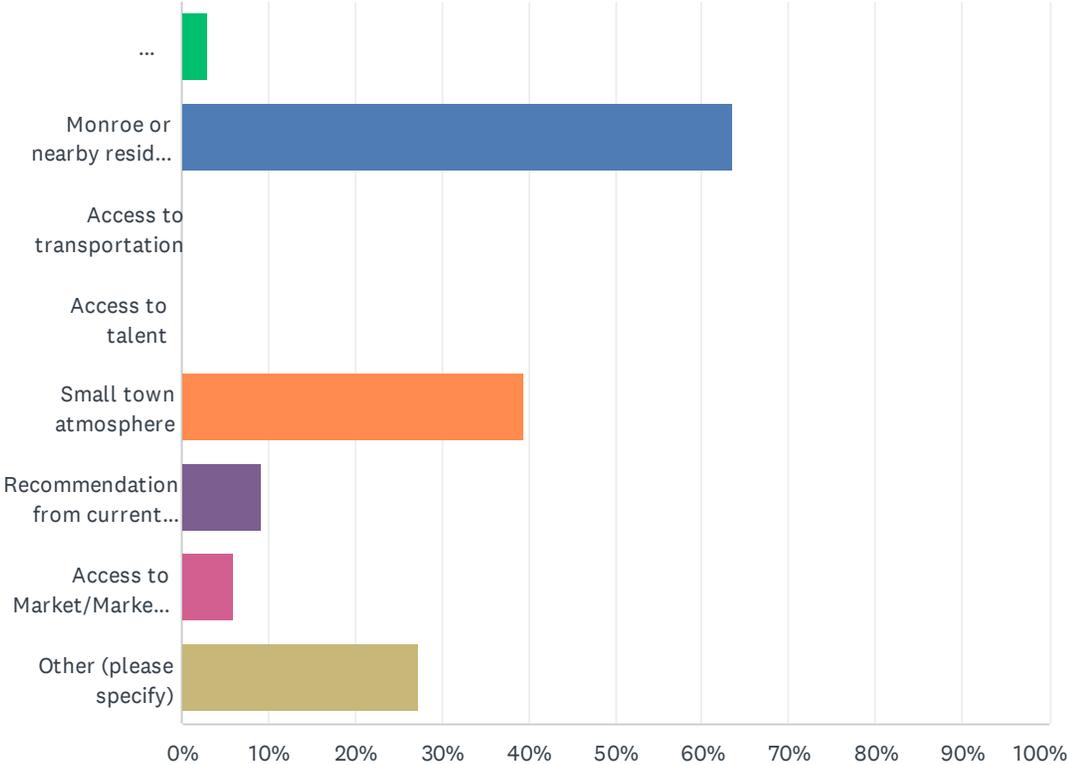
Answered: 33 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Future looks excellent	21.21%	7
Future looks good	30.30%	10
Hard to tell right now	42.42%	14
Future isn't looking so good	6.06%	2
There is no future for my business, I'm closing down.	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>33</b>

# Q12 What attracted you to Monroe as a location for your business? Check all that apply.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 0

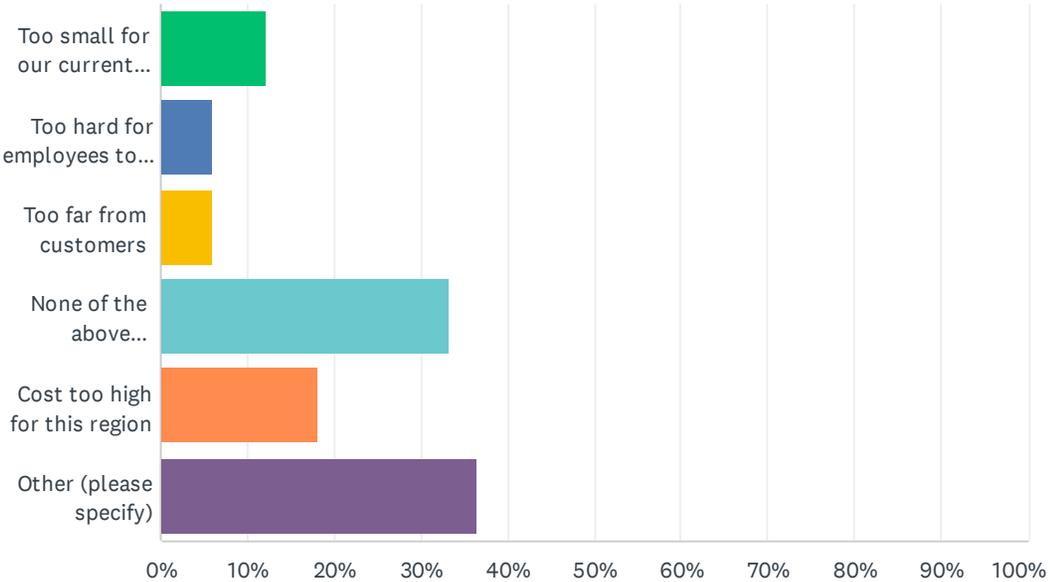


2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	3.03%	1
Monroe or nearby resident and wanted to be close	63.64%	21
Access to transportation	0.00%	0
Access to talent	0.00%	0
Small town atmosphere	39.39%	13
Recommendation from current Monroe business owner	9.09%	3
Access to Market/Market Demand	6.06%	2
Other (please specify)	27.27%	9
Total Respondents: 33		

### Q13 What challenges does your current location present? Check all that apply.

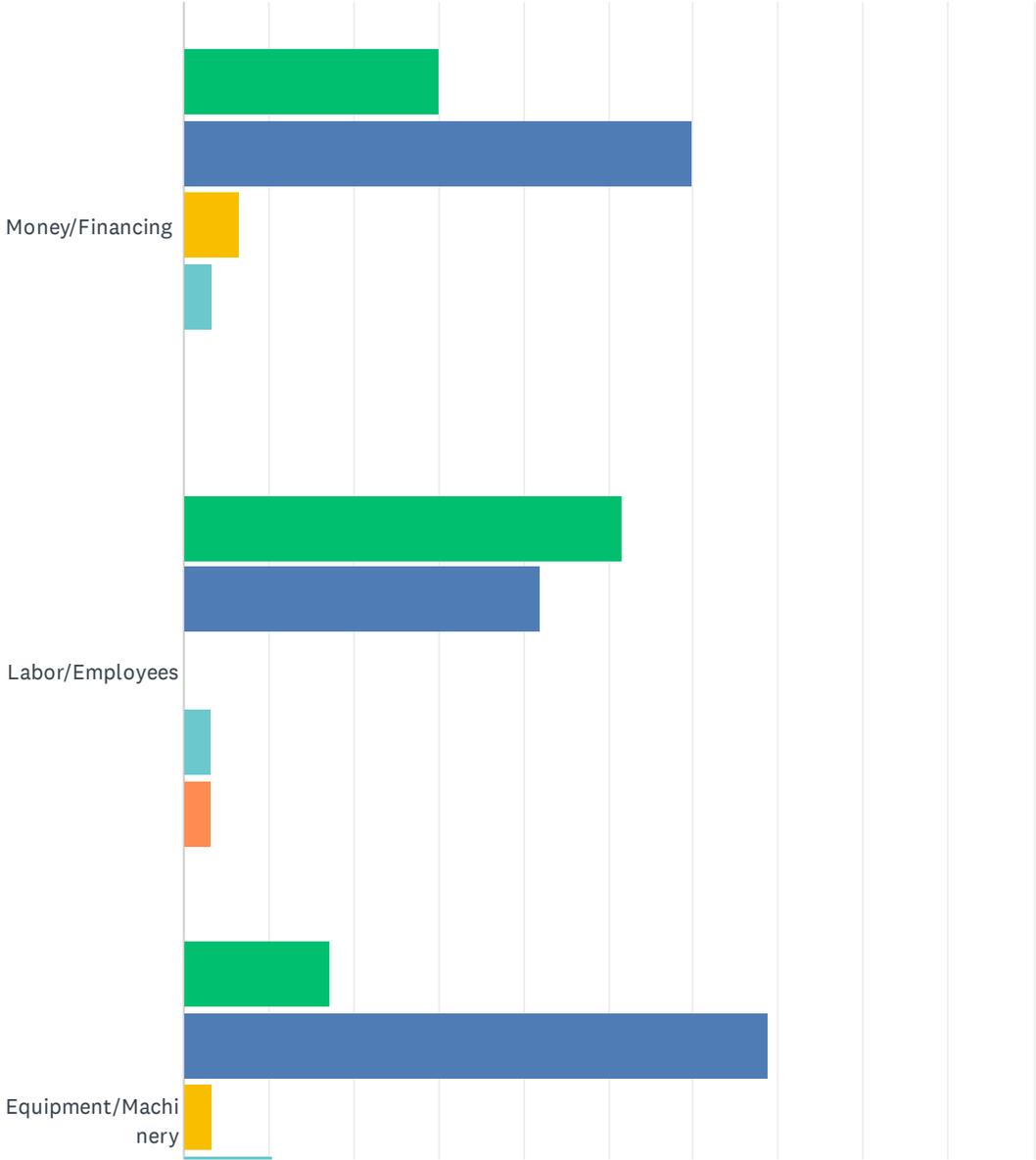
Answered: 33 Skipped: 0



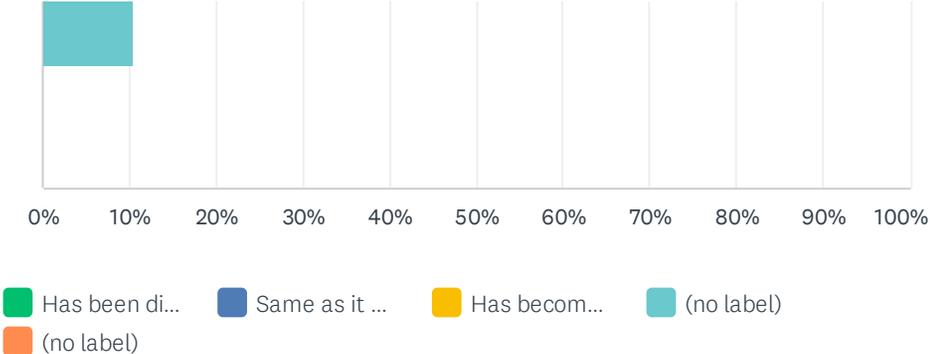
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Too small for our current needs, does not accommodate growth	12.12% 4
Too hard for employees to get here	6.06% 2
Too far from customers	6.06% 2
None of the above	33.33% 11
Cost too high for this region	18.18% 6
Other (please specify)	36.36% 12
Total Respondents: 33	

### Q14 Rank the difficulty in obtaining your current capital asset needs?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 2



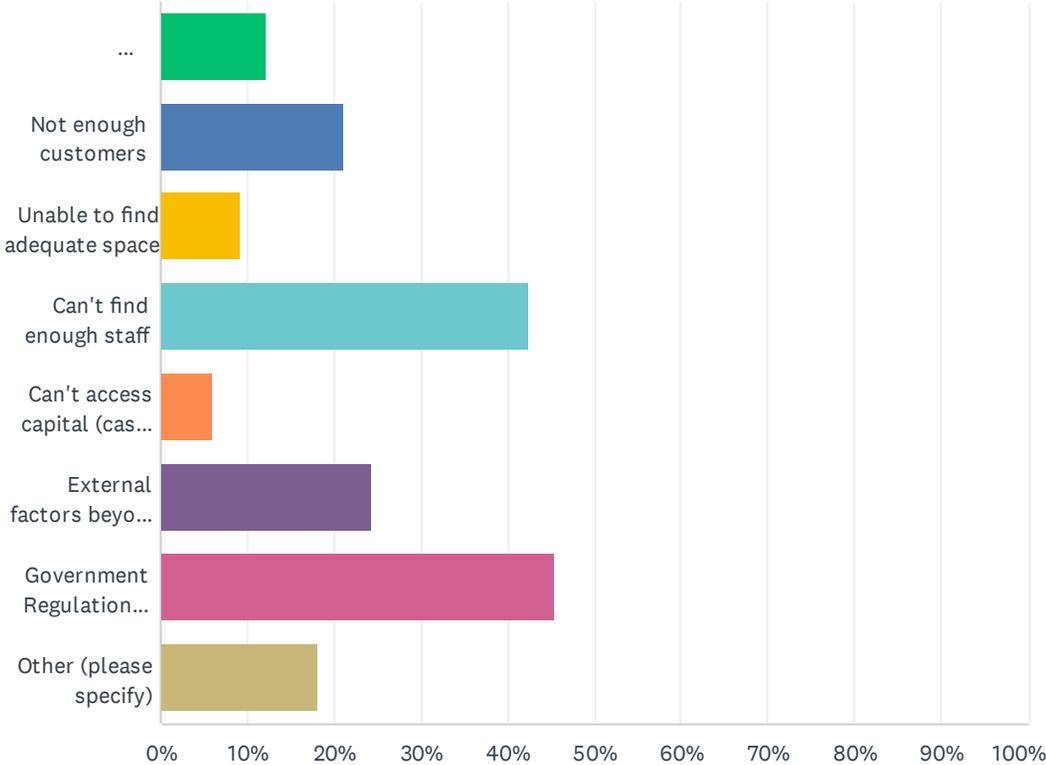
### 2021 City of Monroe Business Survey



	HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN	SAME AS IT EVER WAS	HAS BECOME EASIER TO OBTAIN	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Money/Financing	30.00% 9	60.00% 18	6.67% 2	3.33% 1	0.00% 0	30	1.83
Labor/Employees	51.61% 16	41.94% 13	0.00% 0	3.23% 1	3.23% 1	31	1.65
Equipment/Machinery	17.24% 5	68.97% 20	3.45% 1	10.34% 3	0.00% 0	29	2.07

### Q15 What is the greatest hindrance to your growth? Check all that apply.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 0

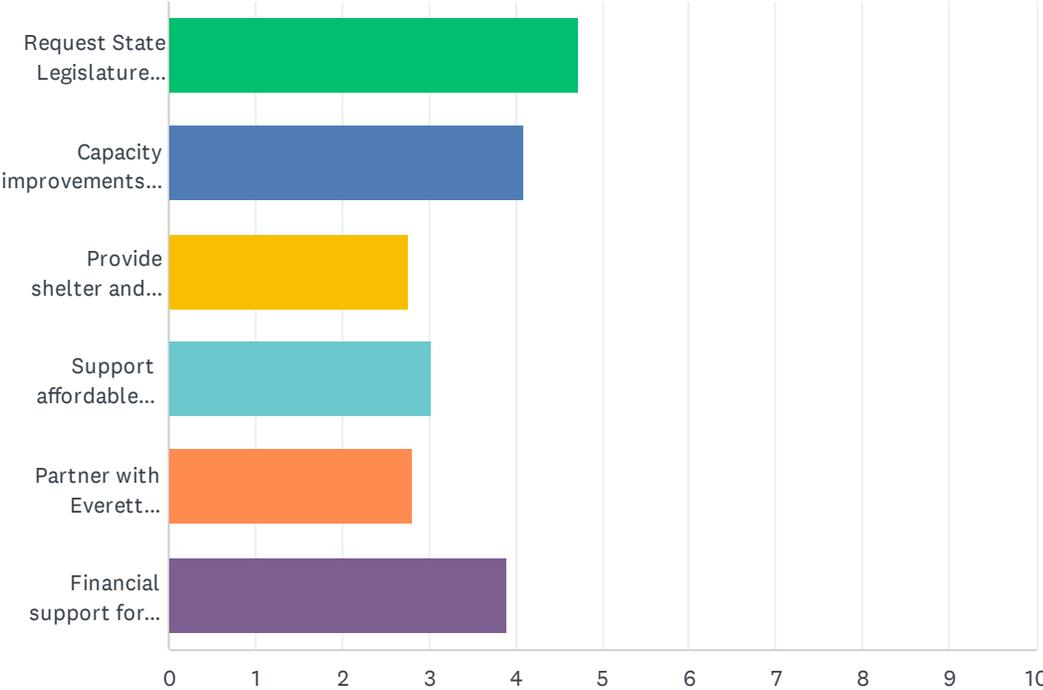


## 2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	12.12%	4
Not enough customers	21.21%	7
Unable to find adequate space	9.09%	3
Can't find enough staff	42.42%	14
Can't access capital (cash or machinery/equipment)	6.06%	2
External factors beyond control	24.24%	8
Government Regulation (Codes, Tax, Licensing, Mandates)	45.45%	15
Other (please specify)	18.18%	6
Total Respondents: 33		

# Q16 Please rank the city's Economic Development investment priorities. #1 as the most important

Answered: 33 Skipped: 0



## 2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Request State Legislature finish State Route 522 between Monroe and Paradise Rd.	43.33% 13	26.67% 8	10.00% 3	6.67% 2	6.67% 2	6.67% 2	30	4.73
Capacity improvements on US2 between Monroe and Stevens Pass	21.88% 7	28.13% 9	18.75% 6	9.38% 3	12.50% 4	9.38% 3	32	4.09
Provide shelter and services to chronically homeless	9.38% 3	12.50% 4	12.50% 4	18.75% 6	6.25% 2	40.63% 13	32	2.78
Support affordable housing adjacent to business districts.	6.25% 2	15.63% 5	9.38% 3	18.75% 6	43.75% 14	6.25% 2	32	3.03
Partner with Everett Community College to provide workforce training.	0.00% 0	6.06% 2	21.21% 7	36.36% 12	21.21% 7	15.15% 5	33	2.82
Financial support for small businesses impacted by COVID-19	24.24% 8	12.12% 4	30.30% 10	9.09% 3	12.12% 4	12.12% 4	33	3.91

## Q17 What tools, actions, could government (City of Monroe, Snohomish County or WA State) take to assist in your business growth or expansion, or prevent a downsize, relocation or closure?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 7

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I'm good	3/9/2022 2:00 PM
2	complete hwy projects for easier access to and from Monroe	2/26/2022 11:48 AM
3	Affordable rent / better understanding of demographics information for informed retail expansion decision making.	2/26/2022 8:25 AM
4	Streamline permitting and inspection processes.	2/24/2022 8:28 AM
5	I haven't looked for a new staff member to replace the one I lost at the end of last year. I am hesitant to start looking since people are wanting \$55 an hour and that's more than I can afford. My work is 100% remote and finding people who can work independently is difficult.	2/24/2022 8:20 AM
6	It's time to open the state back up. Stop funding employees to stay home. Start cleaning up the streets and make the homeless population either move into shelters, or get a job. It's time to clean up Monroe	2/6/2022 12:39 AM
7	We would like to stay in Monroe, but recognize that we would also like to grow/expand. We are actively looking for a space or looking to build a space. Parking in downtown Monroe is very difficult for our clients. In 2016, the state of Washington began taxing our type of service as a retail. This means taxes are significantly higher for our type of business as well. We would love to connect and receive more support from the city of Monroe, as well as the Chamber but recognize that we are also limited in our time. We are heavily invested in this community and volunteer in other areas as well and would love to know how we can better partner with the city of Monroe to engage and collaborate on ways to offer our services to more residents.	2/2/2022 7:42 AM
8	Attract more businesses, create affordable housing including more rental units, tax incentives to attract larger businesses, faster approval of zoning requests and subdivision approval.	2/2/2022 7:32 AM
9	Do not make the vaccine mandatory for employment. Do not make the vaccine required for dining in. Do not impose the bag ban. Do not make things harder for small biz than they already are.	2/1/2022 9:27 PM
10	Traffic reduction. Safety in the neighborhoods and around downtown areas	2/1/2022 8:42 PM
11	End all mandates immediately. Its ridiculously for them to even try and enforce and a huge overstep of their power. End all mandates now.	2/1/2022 8:02 PM
12	Help prevent negative comments on social media	1/31/2022 8:02 PM
13	It has become increasingly hard for potential and existing students/customers to find parking on West Main Street. There are owner operated businesses in downtown Monroe, like myself, who have not qualified for Covid-19 assistance and we continue to struggle as we are impacted by issues like a lack of public parking for our clients. I would like to see the City make it easier for local, actually small owner operated business like mine to stay in business in Monroe. As a city licensed and tax paying business owner in downtown Monroe, I feel that the city appears to have very little interest in promoting this area and driving people to it. It is all left up to Monroe Chamber of Commerce and any other small downtown groups to promote this area.	1/31/2022 10:25 AM
14	resolve the unwarranted COVID restrictions before I move out of state.	1/26/2022 7:17 PM
15	Small town and not enough available retail space available in 15,000 sq. ft. plus size.	1/15/2022 12:32 PM
16	Vote to get rid of any COVID related restrictions. Do not allow any COVID related mandates.	1/14/2022 9:45 PM
17	Don't be anything like King County	1/14/2022 8:02 PM

## 2021 City of Monroe Business Survey

18	The city of Monroe in my eyes is doing an excellent job of communicating with business owners, Organizations, Community members, Workers in the community, and all around involvement with on going interest and events in Snohomish County especially local in Monroe. Monroe shows appreciation to and for the community and its members. I wish all towns were more like the City of Monroe. Well Organized, efficient, caring, interested, involved. Thank You for all you do, and the support you have given me during my transition into the East County Navigation position, contracted through Snohomish County. It has been a pleasure working with the city of Monroe and its staff members.	1/10/2022 9:32 AM
19	Better commute for possible employees outside Monroe, 522 and Hwy 2	12/28/2021 9:47 AM
20	With additional population growth, i.e. more cars on the road, there needs to be more funding put towards transportation and easing congestion on roadways. E.g. US 2 needs to be four lanes from Everett to the top of Stevens Pass. Also bypassing would be another option to look at. Thanks for your interest!	12/28/2021 8:22 AM
21	Greater emphasis on vaccinating residents. There was great difficulty finding an appropriate booster shot. Finally find one in City of Snohomish.	12/27/2021 5:20 PM
22	More Zoning for Business properties	12/22/2021 3:45 PM
23	Relocation is on the table for us due to not feeling safe getting from our office to cars, especially late at night. The police force has been rude to my employees, making me look for new office space.	12/22/2021 1:45 PM
24	Remove the mandates.	12/22/2021 12:17 PM
25	Keep a lid on local sales tax increases	12/22/2021 9:46 AM
26	The businesses that are NOT on Main street need to be acknowledged! Signage on hiway 2 and on 522 coming into Monroe.	12/22/2021 9:35 AM