



Evaluating the Economic and Social Impacts of the Barton Village Festival

Prepared for
Barton Village BIA

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Executive Summary

The Barton Village Business Improvement Area (BIA) organizes the Barton Village Festival, which occurred most recently on June 11, 2022. While the event intends to create a sense of community and bring economic growth and prosperity to the business district, little is known about the social and economic impacts of the festival.

A team of McMaster University Research Shop researchers collaborated with the Barton Village BIA to conduct this study to investigate the financial and social impacts of the festival. To do so, they conducted an online survey of 45 respondents who attended the festival, carried out an online survey of five local business owners, and facilitated a semi-structured interview with one business owner. The findings from this research describe the economic impacts of the Barton Village Festival on local businesses, the sense of community and pride among attendees, and overall satisfaction with the festival to inform future planning.

The Barton Village Festival seemed to have a single-day positive financial impact on local businesses, with most attendees reporting spending money at various vendors during the festival. Similarly, most business owners indicated they experienced increased sales revenues.

The festival's impact on the sense of pride and community in Barton Village appeared to be largely positive. Most attendees lived in the surrounding neighbourhoods and shared that their experience at the festival contributed to feeling proud where they live and made them feel part of the community. Business owners largely shared that the festival increased their sense of belief that Barton Village is a good place to operate their business and contributed to their sense of pride as business owners.

Attendees and business owners were largely satisfied with the event but had several recommendations for future planning. Uniquely, attendees suggested increasing the festival's duration and offering more amenities like toilets, water refill stations, and shaded areas. Business owners suggested extending the street closure and involving local businesses in future planning. Both attendees and business owners suggested holding the festival on multiple dates, improving advertisements and marketing, and increasing festival offerings.

All findings from this research should be interpreted with care. The sample size was relatively small and might not represent all business owners and attendees, which impacts generalizability. Engagement in the surveys and interviews was low, despite efforts to re-strategize recruitment methods. For future evaluations, improving data collection efforts is the greatest way to strengthen the depth and generalizability of the findings.

Overall, this study provides evidence regarding the impacts of the Barton Village Festival from the perspectives of local business owners and attendees. The findings from this report may help inform the planning of future events.

Key Terms

In this report, “**business owners**” refer to those who own, operate, or manage a business within the jurisdiction of the Barton Village BIA. “**Attendees**” include those who participated socially or economically at the Barton Village Festival. “**Social impacts**” refer to interpersonal or environmental impacts of festivals on business owners, residents, visitors, and others. “**Community partner**” refers to the Barton Village Festival organizer we partnered with to conduct this research project.

Introduction

Background

Barton Street is the longest street (21 km) in Hamilton, Ontario and is located in the city's lower end.¹ The street consists of residential properties and commercial tenants, including the Hamilton General Hospital, parks, trails, churches, schools, community organizations, restaurants, cafes, services, and retail shops. Barton Village, which spans from Ferguson Avenue to Sherman Avenue, houses 21 neighbourhoods and several community landmarks.² Some examples include the residence of Colonel Robert Land (considered the founder of Hamilton) and the Bank of Hamilton, which later became part of CIBC and is currently a Café shop. Barton Village is also known as Hamilton's historic shopping district.

The Barton Village Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a non-profit association that aims to develop relationships with the community to build a safe, vibrant place to live, work, play, shop, and invest.³ The BIA works on behalf of businesses in Barton Village to support and promote local communities and initiate events and street beautification. One of the largest events organized by the BIA includes the Barton Village Festival, which occurred most recently on June 11, 2022.⁴

During the festival, Barton Street transforms into a car-free street that hosts live performances and encourages business vendors to sell their goods outdoors. An overview of the amenities and activities offered during the Barton Village Festival is displayed in **Figure 1**. The map displays two entertainment stages (for music, theatre, and dance performances), a busker stage, an art zone, and areas for children's activities. The festival typically draws over 20 thousand people and is intended to create a sense of community in the area and bring economic growth and prosperity to the business district. The festival has been running for six years and continues to grow each year.²



Figure 1: Map of the Barton Village Festival

Purpose

This research project aimed to investigate whether the Barton Village Festival increased sales and business visibility for businesses within the Barton Village BIA boundary. It also assessed whether business owners and community members were satisfied with the festival and whether attendees hold a sense of community and pride based on their experiences.

This research was intended to be used internally by the Barton Village BIA to communicate the value of the Barton Village Festival and make decisions about how the event will be planned and implemented in the future. This research was also intended to be used when applying for future funding. Business owners may also be interested in the findings to inform their decision to participate in similar events.

The primary research question for this project was:

1. To what extent, if at all, did the Barton Village Festival increase sales and business visibility for businesses within the Barton Village BIA boundary?

In addition to this research question, based on our consultation with the community partner, we developed the following secondary questions:

2. To what extent, if at all, were business owners and community members satisfied with the Barton Village Festival, and why?
3. To what extent, if at all, did the Barton Village Festival increase community members' sense of community and pride in where they live?

Scope

Our research focused on assessing how impactful the Barton Village Festival was to business owners and attendees that participated. The research period spanned from May 1 to August 30, 2022 (approximately four months). This duration dictated the types of analysis chosen, research methodology, and questions investigated.

Report Structure

Our report is organized by the three research questions that the McMaster Research Shop developed in consultation with the Barton Village BIA. We begin by describing the process used to collect and analyze data, and then report our findings organized by each research question. We present both quantitative and qualitative research findings, including tables and figures to display the data where possible. Finally, we conclude with some key takeaways and opportunities to inform future festival planning and evaluations.

Process

Overview

A team of researchers from the McMaster Research Shop started the project in May 2022. The group met regularly to develop the research questions, plan the methods, design data collection tools, revise recruitment strategies, conduct the analysis, discuss findings, and write this report. We communicated regularly with the Barton Village Festival organizer (our community partner) to ensure alignment with the original research plan.

We used mixed methods to answer our research questions, which means that both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. This approach was appropriate to thoroughly answer the research questions and examine multiple facets of the festival using complementary methods.⁵

This project involved collecting data from attendees and business owners who participated in the 2022 Barton Village Festival. We used three data sources to answer our research questions: survey responses from attendees, survey responses from business owners, and interviews with business owners. The following section of our report describes our data collection process.

Data Collection

Attendees: We used a survey to collect feedback from attendees about the social and economic impacts of the Barton Village Festival. The research team developed the survey in consultation with the community partner, which consisted of 28 questions (**Appendix A**). 26 questions collected information about participants and feedback about the Barton Village Festival, while two questions were for respondents interested in entering a gift card draw. The Barton Village Festival organizer sponsored our survey by offering a \$50 gift card for one randomly selected respondent to redeem at a business within the Barton Village BIA. Attendees filled out the survey on a Google Form. The survey questions were in the format of Likert scales, raw numbers, and free-text responses.

We encouraged attendees to complete the survey via posters displayed at the Barton Village Festival and a graphic prepared for the Barton Village BIA's Instagram account (**Appendix B**). The poster was printed and displayed at the information booth at the festival as well as by some businesses, and volunteers at the festival encouraged attendees to complete the survey through word-of-mouth.

After leaving the survey open for two weeks after the festival, we only received seven responses. Intending to increase our sample size, our research team met with the Barton Village BIA President to discuss alternative options to recruit attendees. We launched a social media blast to post the original Instagram graphic in early July. The Barton Village BIA account

periodically re-shared the graphic as an Instagram Story throughout the month and re-posted the graphic in mid-July. In addition, the Barton Village BIA circulated the survey link in a newsletter sent to their community mailing list. We increased our sample size to 45 after these additional recruitment efforts.

As an alternate and final attempt to reach additional attendees, we asked the community partner to identify some highly engaged neighbours who may want to participate in an interview about the festival. We developed an interview guide from the survey to collect data. However, due to time constraints and capacity issues, these interviews did not occur, but could be considered as a future data collection strategy.

Business owners: We planned to conduct a survey and interviews with business owners to gather their feedback about the Barton Village Festival. We developed the survey questions with the community partner and aimed to collect numeric, ranking, multiple selection, and free-text responses. The survey consisted of 25 questions, although the final question asked respondents whether they were interested in participating in interviews to share additional insights (**Appendix C**). The research team developed a semi-structured interview guide, which was reviewed by the community partner, and consisted of 10 primary questions with numerous prompts or sub-questions (**Appendix D**).

We recruited business owners by circulating a research study description and a link to the Google Form via the Barton Village BIA's mailing list (**Appendix E**). After our first circulation of these materials, we only recruited two survey participants, so we re-circulated the information twice in July. The Barton Village BIA President also personally emailed some highly engaged business owners. After these additional efforts, we ended up with five survey respondents and one interview participant.

A research associate coordinated the interviews based on the availability provided by the business owner. After an interview time was coordinated, the research associate sent a confirmation email and Zoom link to the business owner. We used the Zoom Cloud recording feature to save an automated interview transcript.

Data Analysis

We inputted the survey data, collected from both attendees and business owners, into Microsoft Excel. Research associates produced descriptive summaries of the quantitative data, including overall counts, frequency distributions, and proportions. We visualized data using tables and figures, where appropriate. Due to the low sample size, we did not break down (stratify) our findings by any sub-groups.

We moved free-text survey responses into a Microsoft Word document to allow for the qualitative analysis. The researchers used content analysis as the primary approach to analyze the free-text survey responses. Content analysis involves distilling qualitative data into

categories and themes that align with the research objectives.⁶ We created a codebook to assign initial codes and establish categories. We conducted the analysis in pairs to ensure we were consistent in interpreting the text. The researchers frequently referenced the project's research questions to ensure their analysis was targeted.

One research associate reviewed the Zoom Cloud recording to ensure the accuracy of the automated transcript from the interview and revised it to ensure accuracy. Two researchers coded the interview data using content analysis, as described previously.

Ethical Considerations

We obtained informed consent from survey and interview participants by including a statement in the first survey question and interview guide explaining the purposes of the research, describing how information was collected and used, indicating confidentiality measures, and clarifying the voluntary nature of their participation. We ensured that all data were deidentified to ensure anonymity.

Limitations

We identified several limitations in the process of data collection and analysis. The small sample size encountered across all data sources suggests that the conclusions drawn may not represent the Barton community. For instance:

- Only 45 attendees filled out our survey out of the reportedly thousands that attended the festival. Therefore, we could not generalize the attendees' feedback.
- A small sample of business owners (n=5) filled out our survey, which is likely not illustrative of the diverse perspectives of business owners in the Barton Village BIA. Three participants owned food or drink establishments and two owned specialty shops, which is not representative of all the different business types in the Barton Village BIA.
- Self-selection bias may be present, meaning those who opted to complete the surveys or interviews may have done so because they are strong festival and BIA supporters.⁷ This could have biased our findings towards more positive feedback than those who had a negative experience.
- Finally, recall bias may have affected the final results, as the surveys and interviews were completed after the festival occurred.⁷ Recall bias is caused by the inaccurate or incomplete recollection of events by the survey respondents.

Findings

Participant Characteristics

In total, 50 individuals participated in our research study. We heard from 45 individuals who attended the Barton Village Festival and five business owners within the Barton Village BIA who had their establishments open during the festival.

Attendees: 14 (31%) attendees completed our survey on behalf of their family or group, while 31 (69%) filled it out for themselves. Among those who filled out the survey for their family or group, the size of their groups ranged from two (n=2, 14%) to four people (n=6, 43%). Most groups (n=8, 57%) included at least one person under the age of 18.

The festival attracted attendees from across Hamilton and neighbouring cities (**Table 1**). Most survey respondents resided in areas with the postal code L8L (n=29, 64%), which primarily corresponds to the Beasley and Central Hamilton neighbourhoods.

Table 1: Postal codes of respondents to the attendee survey

Postal code	City	Corresponding neighbourhoods	Count (%)
L8L	Hamilton	Beasley, Central Hamilton, Crown Point West, Gibson, Industrial Sector A and Keith, Industrial Sector B and Keith, Industrial Sector C, Industrial Sector D, Landsdale, North End East, North End West, Stipley	29 (64%)
L8M	Hamilton	Blakeley, Crown Point West, Delta West, Gibson, St. Clair, Stipley	5 (11%)
L8N	Hamilton	Beasley, Central Hamilton, Corktown, Flamborough, Stinson	2 (4%)
L8W	Hamilton	Butler, Eleanor, Hannon North, Hannon West, Rushdale, Rymal, Templemead	2 (4%)
L8H	Hamilton	Crown Point East, Crown Point West, Homeside, Industrial Sector G, McQuesten West, Nashdale, Normanhurst, Parkview West	1 (2%)
L8K	Hamilton	Bartonville, Corman, Crown Point East, Delta East, Glenview East, Glenview West, Homeside, Kentley, McQuesten West, Red Hill, Rosedale, Vincent	1 (2%)
L8P	Hamilton	Central Hamilton, Corktown, Durand, Kirkendall North, Strathcona	1 (2%)
L8R	Hamilton	Beasley, Central Hamilton, Strathcona	1 (2%)
L9H	Hamilton	Dundas	1 (2%)
N1P	Cambridge	N/A	1 (2%)
Not disclosed			1 (2%)

Business owners: The five business owners who completed our survey were situated in different areas of Barton Village (**Figure 2**). Two respondents had establishments located in the blue region of our figure, two respondents had establishments located in the green region, and one respondent had an establishment located in the red region. The survey participants have also owned and operated their businesses within the Barton Village BIA for different lengths of time (**Table 2**).

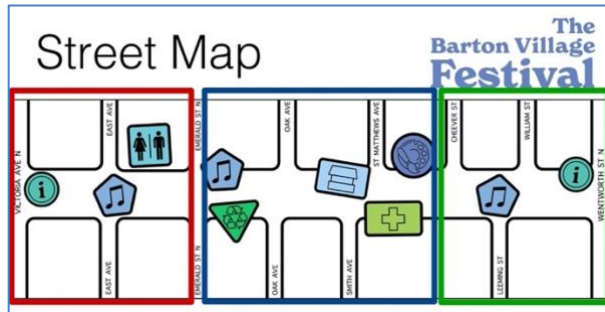


Figure 2: Segments of Barton Village

Table 2: Business owner's length of time within Barton Village

Length of time on Barton Street	Count (%)
More than 10 years	0 (0%)
5 years to 10 years	1 (20%)
4 years to 5 years	0 (0%)
3 years to 4 years	0 (0%)
2 years to 3 years	2 (40%)
1 year to 2 years	2 (40%)
6 months to 1 year	0 (0%)

Most of the business owners had a food or drink establishment (n=3), while the other respondents (n=2) had a specialty shop (**Table 3**). Several business owners (n=5) shared that they had paid parking space(s) near their establishments, as well as city bus stops (n=3), street intersections (n=3), bike racks/hubs (n=3), and clear and legible storefront signs (n=3).

Table 3: Business types of survey respondents

Business type	Count (%)
Food or drink establishment	3 (60%)
Specialty shop	2 (40%)
Medical Clinic	0 (0%)
Personal care store	0 (0%)
Home furnishings, decor, or gift store	0 (0%)
Professional services	0 (0%)
Book, music, toy, or hobby store	0 (0%)
Health or wellness store/service	0 (0%)
Clothing/fashion store	0 (0%)

Table 4: Nearby amenities to businesses

Nearby amenities	Count (%)
Paid parking space(s)	5 (28%)
City bus stop	3 (18%)
Street intersection	3 (18%)
Storefront sign	3 (18%)
Bike racks/hubs	3 (18%)
Wheelchair ramp	0 (0%)
Free parking space(s)	0 (0%)
Bench	0 (0%)

Two business owners indicated they extended their business hours during the festival, while three maintained regular hours (**Table 5**). When owners were asked how they modified their storefront for the festival, most either put products outside and/or had staff standing outside their business. Four businesses required more staffing during the festival, while one did not.

Table 5: Storefront modifications during the festival

Storefront modifications	Count (%)
Extending your patio/seating area	1 (10%)
Putting out signs	2 (20%)
Putting products outside	3 (30%)
Staff standing outside business	3 (30%)
Other: 'blow up pool'	1 (10%)

Research Objective #1: Impact on Sales and Business Visibility

Attendees: 93% (n=42) of attendees indicated spending or planning to spend money during the Barton Village Festival (**Figure 3**). Among these attendees, the majority (n=30, 70%) spent between \$10 and \$50. The distribution of where attendees spent their money is shown in **Figure 4**. The top three business types where attendees spent money included restaurants, street vendors, and stores. In addition, 82% (n=37) of attendees indicated becoming aware of a new store, restaurant, or another amenity at the festival.

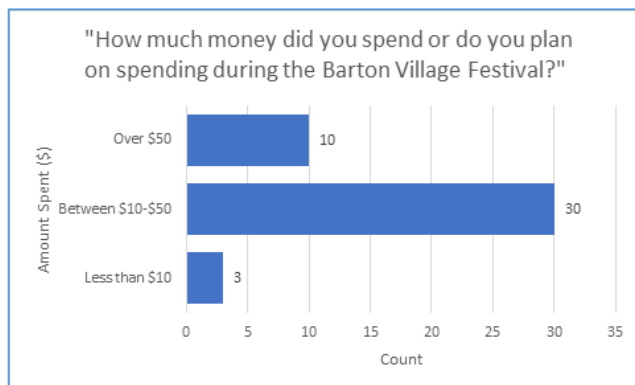


Figure 3: Money spent by attendees during the Barton Village Festival



Figure 4: Business types that attendees reported spending money

Business owners: Four out of five business owners estimated an increase in sales revenue during the Barton Village Festival. To describe this experience in the words of one business owner, "It increased my sales, like, exponentially. From a normal Saturday, it's like triple maybe or more." Among those who reported an increase in sales revenue, two estimated an increase of 25% to 50%, and two estimated an increase of over 50%. One business owner reported no change in sales revenue during the festival. The business owner who participated in our interviews expressed that they were very busy during the festival with more business than usual and "a constant flow of customers."

When asked about being able to attract new customers during the festival, three business owners believed they did, whereas one business owner reported "maybe," and another reported "no." However, all owners agreed that they experienced an increase in customers

(foot traffic) at their business during the festival; Four business owners “strongly agreed,” and one “agreed”. One participant described this experience as:

“It was like it was a whirlwind day. I didn’t have a second to stop and eat lunch basically because I was so busy with customers. Lots of people buying you know different accessories as well, so yeah. It was just a constant flow of customers.”

When asked if the business owners felt there was an increase in demand for their products after the festival occurred, one participant indicated “yes,” two indicated “no,” and two were “unsure.”

Business owners were asked to rate various factors to further investigate the factors that impacted sales during the festival. The factors prompted in our survey included weather conditions, social media advertisements, local media promotion, contests, word-of-mouth marketing and print advertisements. Out of all the factors examined, the top two that were perceived to have impacted sales (positively) were weather conditions and word-of-mouth marketing.

Research Objective #2: Event Satisfaction

Attendees: Most attendees reported feeling satisfied with the Barton Village Festival; Nine (20%) individuals ranked “strongly agree,” compared to only two (5%) individuals who ranked “strongly disagree” (**Table 6**). In addition, most attendees stated that they would recommend the festival to a friend. Specifically, 14 individuals (31%) ranked “strongly agree,” and two (5%) individuals ranked “strongly disagree” (**Table 7**). 43 (96%) individuals said they would attend the Barton Village Festival or a similar event in the future.

Table 6: Overall satisfaction of attendees

Satisfaction with the festival	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	9 (20%)
2	14 (31%)
3	11 (24%)
4	9 (20%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	2 (5%)

Table 7: Likelihood of recommending the festival

Likelihood of recommending	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	14 (31%)
2	12
3	10
4	7
5 (Strongly disagree)	2 (5%)

When asked about their favourite things during the festival, attendees indicated live music (n=8), the people attending (n=7), opportunities to try new foods and restaurants (n=4), the street closure to cars (n=4), and the community feel (n=4). Attendees suggested the following improvements to the festival: having more food options and vendors (n=12), increasing the number of children’s activities (n=6), offering more entertainment (n=4), improving advertising of the event (n=3), extending the duration and frequency (n=3), and having more washrooms, shaded seating, and water stations (n=2).

For those who required parking to attend the Barton Village Festival, most individuals found it easy to find a parking spot (**Table 8**).

Table 8: Ease of finding a parking spot

Easy to find a parking spot	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	7 (44%)
2	1 (6%)
3	5 (32%)
4	2 (12%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	1 (6%)

Business owners: Three business owners “strongly agreed” that the Barton Village Festival should continue to happen (**Figure 5**). Further, four business owners “strongly agreed” that the festival should happen more often (**Figure 6**).



Figure 5: Views towards the festival continuing to occur

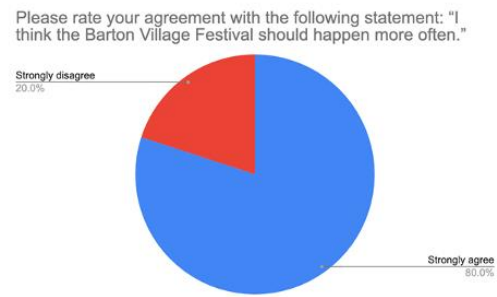


Figure 6: Views towards the festival's frequency

Business owners provided some constructive feedback about the event. Their suggestions included: holding the festival on multiple dates (n=3), improving advertisements, marketing, and signage (n=2), involving local businesses in planning (n=2), offering more live music performances (n=2), and extending the street closure (n=2).

One interview was conducted with a business owner, in which the owner shared some of their experiences from the festival. They praised having the street closed without vehicle traffic to allow for this environment to occur. The participant suggested increasing signage about festival hours, increasing food options, increasing local business involvement in planning, adding more activities for children, and hosting the event more frequently.

Research Objective #3: Impact on Sense of Community and Pride

Attendees: When attendees were asked whether their experience at the Barton Village Festival made them believe (or increased their belief) that the Barton Village area is a good place to live, the majority of respondents “agreed” (n=25, 56%) (**Table 9**). One attendee suggested that the

festival “aids in debunking peoples preconceived ideas that [Barton Village] is a bad neighbourhood,” and another said that the festival “increases [their] love and pride of [their] chosen home.” Another respondent described the Barton Village area as a “hidden gem in the city.” Likewise, 67% (n=30) of attendees agreed that their experience at the festival makes them believe that Hamilton is a good place to live (**Table 10**). However, one attendee said there are “ups and downs of living in Hamilton,” and another indicated a need for more community-led events in the city.

Table 9: Views towards Barton Village

My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me believe (or increases my belief) that the Barton Village area is a good place to live.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	0 (0%)
2	25 (56%)
3	16 (36%)
4	2 (4%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	2 (4%)

Table 10: Views toward the city of Hamilton

My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me believe (or increases my belief) that Hamilton is a good place to live.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	4 (9%)
2	30 (67%)
3	10 (22%)
4	1 (2%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	0 (0%)

The majority of respondents felt that the Barton Village Festival made them proud of where they live, with 27 respondents (60%) “agreeing,” and three (7%) “strongly agreeing” (**Table 11**). Similarly, when asked whether the festival made them feel like part of the community, 75% (n=34) of respondents either “agreed,” or “strongly agreed” (**Table 12**).

Table 11: Views towards where they live

My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me feel proud to live where I live.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	3 (7%)
2	27 (60%)
3	12 (27%)
4	0 (0%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	1 (2%)
Not applicable	2 (4%)

Table 12: Feeling like part of the community

My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me feel like a part of the community.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	5 (11%)
2	29 (64%)
3	9 (21%)
4	1 (2%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	0 (0%)
Not applicable	1 (2%)

Many respondents felt as though the festival provided an opportunity to socialize with old and/or new acquaintances; 69% (n=31) either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” (**Table 13**). 21 (47%) attendees ran into a friend or family member unplanned at the festival, along with 13 (29%) who ran into a neighbour. One individual shared, “It was great to see so many people

[they] have not been able to connect with because of the pandemic.” The vast majority (n=39, 87%) felt as though the Barton Village Festival provided a welcoming environment for everyone (**Table 14**). One attendee mentioned that the festival seemed to “draw people from all walks of life.”

Table 13: Unplanned run-ins at the festival

The Barton Village Festival allows socializing with old and/or new acquaintances.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	9 (20%)
2	22 (49%)
3	11 (25%)
4	1 (2%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	1 (2%)
Not applicable	1 (2%)

Table 14: Welcoming environment at the festival

The Barton Village Festival provides a welcoming environment for everyone.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	7 (16%)
2	32 (71%)
3	4 (9%)
4	2 (4%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	0 (0%)

In contrast to the above, some individuals could not connect with others through the festival. One attendee said that they did not socialize with anyone at all, and one only spoke briefly to some business owners.

Business owners: Four business owners agreed that their experience at the festival made them believe (or increased their belief) that Barton Village is a good place to operate their business. Most business owners believe the festival provided a welcoming environment for attendees; one “strongly agreed,” and four “agreed.” When asked about feelings of pride in operating a business in Barton Village after the festival, one business owner “strongly agreed,” that they felt proud, three “agreed,” and one “disagreed.”

Based on their experiences at the Barton Village Festival, four business owners “agreed,” that Barton Village is a good place to operate their business. Likewise, four business owners believe that Hamilton is a good place to run their business.

Most business owners “agreed,” or “strongly agreed,” that their experience at the Barton Village Festival made them feel proud to operate their business within Barton Village (**Table 15**). All respondents believed the festival provided a welcoming environment for everyone (**Table 16**). The interview participant discussed how a sense of community was felt during the festival, and how the environment was enjoyable and interactive.

Table 15: Pride in operating a business in Barton Village

My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me feel proud to operate my business within Barton Village.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	1 (20%)
2	3 (60%)
3	0 (0%)
4	1 (20%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	0 (0%)

Table 16: Views towards fostering a welcoming environment at the festival

The Barton Village Festival provides a welcoming environment for everyone.	Count (%)
1 (Strongly agree)	1 (20%)
2	4 (80%)
3	0 (0%)
4	0 (0%)
5 (Strongly disagree)	0 (0%)

In our interview with a business owner, the participant expressed that the festival allowed individuals in other parts of Hamilton to explore the Barton Village area, which increased community connections. They could also connect with customers from their previous business location, which was located elsewhere in Hamilton. When asked to describe the general atmosphere of the event, the business owner described it as “jovial,” and that they “felt like there is a real community.” The business owner did note that it was difficult to connect with other business owners on the day of the event, since they were focused on the high volume of customers that came to their store.

Key Takeaways

Takeaways from the Evaluation Process

In this research project, we heard from 45 attendees and 5 business owners who participated in the Barton Village Festival. Compared to the thousands of attendees and tens of local businesses who attended the event, we only collected data for a small subset of participants. We encountered several challenges when collecting data for this project, including a lack of survey visibility at the event. Engagement in both surveys (for attendees and business owners) was relatively low. We consulted with our community partner and the Barton BIA President to re-strategize our recruitment efforts partway through the project's timeline. However, we could only attract a few more respondents through these increased efforts.

For future evaluations, improving data collection efforts is the greatest way to strengthen the depth and generalizability of the findings. Encouraging in-person data collection is a viable strategy to recruit more survey participants during the festival. We discussed with our community partner the importance of diversifying data collection efforts, and that some demographics may not want to fill out an online survey, or face accessibility issues like lack of technology or digital literacy. We recommend that future evaluations of the event use a dedicated team of volunteers to help distribute the survey to attendees, including both hard and digital copies, and administer the survey to attendees who might find it difficult to fill it out themselves. We also suggest having a member of the Barton Village BIA inform local business owners about the research project in advance of the festival. This outreach may encourage more business owners to display posters promoting the survey in their stores/restaurants and share information about the study on social media. We also suggest having staff or volunteers go door-to-door to businesses immediately after the event to encourage them to fill out the business owner survey and offer to fill it out on-the-spot with them. These efforts will likely necessitate increasing volunteer numbers to add capacity for evaluation.

Takeaways from the Findings

Despite our small sample size, we were able to collect and analyze data exploring the impact of the festival on businesses and attendees. The Barton Village Festival seemed to have a single-day positive financial impact on local businesses, with most attendees reporting spending at least \$10-50 at various vendors. Similarly, most business owners we surveyed indicated they experienced increased sales revenues by 25% to over 50% that day. It is difficult to discern whether the Barton Village festival has long-term financial impacts. Though some attendees reported discovering new businesses and services, most businesses we surveyed did not think or were unsure that demand for their products or services increased after the event. Given our small sample size, we could also not stratify our findings to understand if sales revenues tended to differ according to business types (e.g., bar/restaurant vs. retail) or those situated in different areas of Barton Village.

The festival's impact on the sense of pride and community in Barton Village appeared to be largely positive. Most attendees lived in the surrounding neighbourhoods and shared that their experience at the festival made them believe that Barton Village is a good place to live, contributed to their pride in where they live, and made them feel part of the community. Most attendees shared that the festival provided them with an opportunity to socialize with old and/or new acquaintances, including unplanned encounters with neighbours, friends, and family members. Respondents largely shared that the festival increased their belief that Barton Village is a good place to operate their business and contributed to their sense of pride as business owners. All respondents also believed that the Barton Village Festival provided a welcoming environment for everyone.

The survey and interview data suggested that attendees and business owners were largely satisfied with the event but had several recommendations for future planning (**Figure 7**).

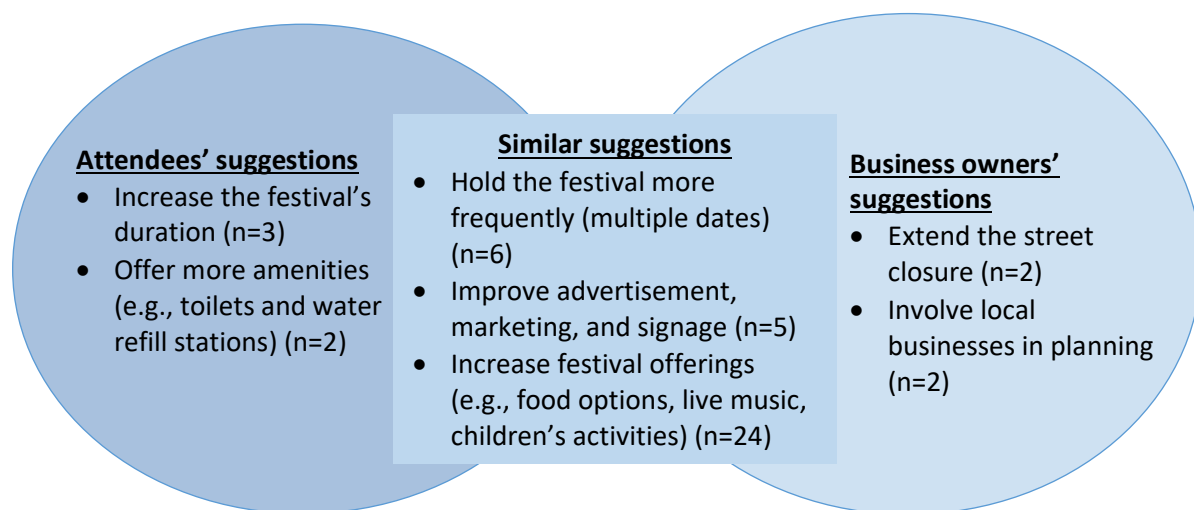


Figure 7: Recommendations for future planning of the Barton Village Festival

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Appendices

Appendix A – Attendee satisfaction survey questions

Legend:

- ◇ Tick box (Select multiple responses)
- Radio button (Select one response)

Section 1 - Survey Information

The Barton Business Improvement Area (BIA) is working with the McMaster Research Shop to evaluate the social and economic impact of the Barton Village Festival on the community and businesses. We are looking to gather feedback from attendees to help us understand these impacts.

We plan to use your feedback to:

1. Make decisions for planning future festivals,
2. Improve the quality of our events, and
3. Apply for grants to support other initiatives within the Barton BIA.

Time Required: This survey will take approximately five minutes to complete.

At the end of the survey, you will have a chance to be entered into a draw for a \$50 gift card to use at your favourite business within Barton Village!

This survey is confidential, and any identifying information we collect (e.g., your email for the gift card draw) will not be associated with your responses.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact Julie Freeman (bartonstevent@gmail.com).

Section 2 - Visitor Information

1. Did you attend the Barton Village Festival on Saturday, June 11, 2022?
 - Yes → **Go to Section 3**
 - No → **Thank you for completing the survey.**

Section 3 - Visitor Information continued

2. What are the first three digits of your postal code?

3. Are you filling out this survey for yourself, or on behalf of your family/group?
- ☐ For myself
 - ☐ For my family or group

Section 4 - Visitor Information continued

4. How many people are/were in your group?
5. How many in your group are/were under the age of 18?

Section 5 - Barton Village Festival Feedback

6. Why did you choose to attend the Barton Village Festival? (Select all that apply)
- ◇ Socializing with neighbours or friends
 - ◇ Shopping
 - ◇ Dining in the street
 - ◇ Playing in the street – cycling, walking, skateboarding, scooter, hopscotch
 - ◇ Other: _____
7. How did you hear about the Barton Village Festival? (Select all that apply)
- ◇ Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
 - ◇ Poster
 - ◇ Word of mouth
 - ◇ Friend
 - ◇ Local media (Urbanicity, Spectator, CHML, Channel 14, etc.)
 - ◇ Other: _____
8. How did you get to the Barton Village Festival?
- ☐ Walk/run
 - ☐ Automobile
 - ☐ Public transportation
 - ☐ Cycle/skateboard/scooter
 - ☐ Other: _____
9. If you required parking to attend the Barton Village Festival, how would you rate the ease of finding a parking spot?
- ☐ 1 – Extremely easy
 - ☐ 2
 - ☐ 3
 - ☐ 4
 - ☐ 5 – Extremely difficult

Section 6 - Social Impact

10. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me believe (or increases my belief) that the Barton Village area (Ferguson to Sherman Ave.) is a good place to live.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

(Optional) Please elaborate on your response:

11. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me believe (or increases my belief) that Hamilton is a good place to live.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

(Optional) Please elaborate on your response:

12. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me feel proud to live where I live.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Not applicable

(Optional) Please elaborate on your response:

13. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me feel like a part of the local community.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Not applicable

(Optional) Please elaborate on your response:

14. The Barton Village Festival provides an opportunity to socialize with old and/or new acquaintances.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Not applicable

(Optional) Please elaborate on your response:

15. The Barton Village Festival provides a welcoming environment for everyone.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

(Optional) Please elaborate on your response:

16. Did you run into anyone unplanned that you knew during the festival on Barton Street?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ A neighbour
- ☐ A friend
- ☐ A store owner or staff member on Barton that I know
- ☐ An acquaintance
- ☐ Other: _____

Section 7 - Economic Impact

17. Did you spend or do you plan on spending money today at a store or restaurant during the Barton Village Festival?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

18. How much money did you spend or do you plan on spending during the Barton Village Festival?

- ☐ Less than \$10
- ☐ Between \$10-\$50
- ☐ Over \$50

19. Where have you spent or do you plan on spending your money during the Barton Village Festival? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ At a restaurant
- ☐ At a store

- ◇ Public transportation/parking
- ◇ Street vendors
- ◇ Food trucks
- ◇ Other: _____

20. During the Barton Village Festival, did you become aware of a new store, restaurant, or other amenity within Barton Village?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Section 8 - General Satisfaction

21. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Barton Village Festival?

- ☐ 1 – Very satisfied
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Not satisfied

22. How likely are you to recommend the Barton Village Festival to a friend?

- ☐ 1 – Very likely
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Not likely

23. Are you likely to attend another Barton Village Festival (or similar event) in the future?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

24. What was/is your favourite things about the Barton Village Festival?

25. What would have made the Barton Village Festival better?

26. Please share any additional comments, thoughts, or suggestions for the Barton Village Festival:

Section 9 - Information for Gift Card Draw

27. Do you want to be entered into a draw for a \$50 gift certificate to use at your favourite business within Barton Village?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

28. Email address to be contacted regarding prize:

Thank you for completing the survey!

Appendix B – Recruitment materials sent to attendees for survey

Instagram caption:

Did you attend the Barton Village Festival on June 11?

Click the link in our bio to take part in a survey and share your thoughts and feedback about the festival. We are interested in learning about your experiences to help us plan future open streets events.

TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS!

We want to learn more about your experience at the 2022 Barton Village Festival. After attending the festival and completing a 5-minute survey about your experience, you will be entered into a draw to **win a \$50 gift card** to a Barton Village business of your choice!

FOR THE CHANCE TO WIN A \$50 GIFT CARD, VISIT THE LINK IN OUR BIO!



Appendix C – Business owner survey questions

Legend:

- ◇ Tick box (Select multiple responses)
- Radio button (Select one response)

Section 1 - Survey Information

Thank you for your interest in participating in our survey about the Barton Village Festival. Please carefully read over this introduction prior to completing the survey.

We are a group of volunteers from the McMaster University Research Shop. We are helping the Barton Village BIA conduct research to understand the social and economic impacts of the Barton Village Festival. Your feedback will inform the planning of future events and festivals.

We have created a short survey (approximately 5 minutes to complete) that we are hoping you will fill out. The survey asks about your participation in the festival and opportunities for improvement. The survey will not ask you for any identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.).

Your responses will be completely confidential. All survey information is accessible only by the McMaster Research Shop volunteers. Participating in this survey is completely voluntary. You have the option to skip any question that you are not comfortable answering.

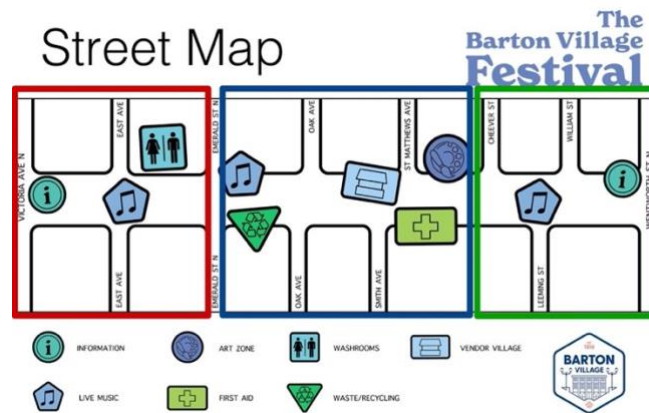
If you have any questions or concerns about the collection or analysis of data from this survey, please contact Rebecca Correia (correirh@mcmaster.ca). Alternatively, please contact Julie Freeman (bartonstevent@gmail.com) with any general comments or questions about this research project.

Please only complete this survey once per business

1. Please check off all of the following items to indicate your consent to participate in this survey.
 - ◇ I understand that my participation in this survey is completely voluntary and that I am able to stop taking the survey at any time.
 - ◇ I understand that my individual responses to this survey will be kept anonymous and will not be shared with anyone outside of the McMaster Research Shop.
 - ◇ I understand that I have had the opportunity to ask any questions about my participation in this survey.
2. Was your business open during the Barton Village Festival on June 11, 2022?
 - Yes → **Continue to next section**
 - No → **Thank you for completing the survey.**

Section 2 - Information about your Business

3. What kind of business do you own/operate within Barton Village?
 - Book, music, toy, or hobby store
 - Clothing/fashion store
 - Food or drink establishment (e.g., bakery, restaurant)
 - Health or wellness store/service
 - Home furnishings, décor, or gift store
 - Personal care store
 - Professional services
 - Specialty shop
 - Other: _____
4. What portion of Barton Street is your business or property located within?



- ☐ Red box
 - ☐ Blue box
 - ☐ Green box
 - ☐ Other: _____
5. How long as your business been located within Barton Village?
- ☐ Less than 6 months
 - ☐ 6 months to 1 year
 - ☐ 1 year to 2 years
 - ☐ 2 years to 3 years
 - ☐ 3 years to 4 years
 - ☐ 4 years to 5 years
 - ☐ 5 to 10 years
 - ☐ More than 10 years
6. Which of the following amenities are located near (within 10 meters) of your business or property? (Select all that apply)
- ☐ City bus stop

- ◇ Free parking space(s) or lot
- ◇ Paid parking space(s) or lot
- ◇ Bench
- ◇ Wheelchair ramp
- ◇ Street intersection
- ◇ Clear and legible storefront sign
- ◇ Bike racks/hubs
- ◇ Other: _____

Section 3 - Participation in the Barton Village Festival

7. Were your business hours impacted by the Barton Village Festival?
 - Yes, we extended our business hours
 - Yes, we reduced our business hours
 - No, we maintained our business hours as usual
 - Other: _____

8. How did you modify your storefront during the Barton Village Festival, if at all? (Select all the apply)
 - ◇ Extending your patio/seating area
 - ◇ Putting out signs
 - ◇ Putting products outside
 - ◇ Staff standing outside business
 - ◇ Other: _____

Section 4 - Economic impacts

9. If you were to estimate the change in sales, how did your sales revenue during the Barton Village Festival compare to another Saturday in the summer? What percentage would you give this change?
 - My sales revenue was over 50% less
 - My sales revenue was 25-50% less
 - My sales revenue was 0-25% less
 - There was no change in my sales revenue
 - My sales revenue was 0-25% higher
 - My sales revenue was 25-50% higher
 - My sales revenue was over 50% higher

10. Were you able to attract new customers to your business during the Barton Village Festival?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Maybe

11. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "There was an increase in customers/foot traffic at my business during the Barton Village Festival."

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

12. Have you noticed a greater demand for your products or services after the Barton Village Festival ended?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

13. Did you need more staffing during the Barton Village Festival?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Section 5 - Social impacts

14. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me believe (or increases my belief) that Barton Village is a good place to operate my business.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

15. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me believe (or increases my belief) that Hamilton is a good place to operate my business.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

16. My experience at the Barton Village Festival makes me feel proud to operate my business within Barton village.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

- Strongly disagree

17. The Barton Village Festival provides a welcoming environment for everyone.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Section 6 - Factors impacting the festival

18. From your perspective, please rate how the following factors impacted your sales during the Barton Village Festival (if at all).

	1 (Large negative effect)	2 (Small negative effect)	3 (Neutral/ No effect)	4 (Small positive effect)	5 (Large positive effect)	Unsure
Weather conditions						
Social media advertisements						
Local media promotion						
Contests						
Word-of-mouth						
Print ads						

Section 7 - Future planning

19. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "I think the Barton Village Festival should continue to happen."

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

20. What day during the year would you prefer the Barton Village Festival to occur, if not on a Saturday in June?

21. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "I think the Barton Village Festival should happen more often."

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

22. What resources or support would you like to receive if the Barton Village Festival continued to occur, if anything?

23. From your perspective, how could the Barton Village Festival be improved, if at all?

24. Please use this space to give any additional feedback or expand on any of your answers.

Section 8 - Interest in Participating in an Interview with the Research Team?

25. We would love to hear more about your experience as a business owner during the Barton Village Festival so that we can improve future events. Would you be willing to participate in a short telephone interview (10-15 minutes)? If so, please provide an email address we can reach you at and the name of your business, and we will follow up with you. (Your business name will NOT be associated with any of your survey responses)

Thank you for completing the survey!

Appendix D – Interview guide for business owners

Hello, my name is _____. I'm a student volunteer with McMaster University's Research Shop. We are working with the Barton Village BIA to evaluate the Barton Village Festival that occurred on June 11, 2022.

Before we begin, I want to thank you for making time for this interview!

The purpose of this interview is to understand the social and economic impacts of the festival, and to gather constructive feedback that will inform the planning of future events. We're interested in learning from your insights and experiences as a business owner to identify the factors that influence the success of the Barton Village Festival.

Do you have any questions about the project? [\[Pause\]](#)

Please note that my research team at McMaster University is a neutral (third-party) entity conducting this study. Your identity will remain confidential from other business owners and the BIA.

Confidentiality – Before we begin our discussion, I want to spend a few moments going over some basic ground rules for today: [\[Copy and paste the following bullet points into the Zoom chat\]](#)

- Your participation is voluntary. You can leave or stop participating in this interview at any moment with no repercussions.
- You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.
- The information which we collect from these interviews will not be associated with you.
- I will strive to protect the confidentiality of our discussion. Keep in mind that your or your business could be identified, though, based on the stories or experiences you disclose.

Use of Zoom Recording – With your permission, this interview will be recorded to increase accuracy and reduce the chance of misinterpreting what you say. [\[Copy and paste the following bullet points into the Zoom chat\]](#)

- All audio files and transcripts will be securely stored in a Microsoft OneDrive folder that only the Research Team can access.
- I may take notes throughout the discussion for future reference.
- Only the research team will have access to transcripts from this discussion.
- The recording and transcripts will only be used for this project and will be destroyed once the research report is complete.

Also, we ask that you say the full name at least once when using abbreviations or acronyms to aid transcription.

If at any point you feel fatigued, please let us know, and we can take a short break.

Do you have any questions before we begin? [Pause]

Do you give your consent to participate in this interview? [Pause]

Reminder: START ZOOM CLOUD RECORDING!

1. To begin, let's talk a little bit about your business.
 - a. Can you tell me about the type of business you own or operate within Barton Village?
 - b. What type of products or services does your business provide?
 - c. How long has your business been operating within Barton Village?
2. Before participating in the Barton Village Festival this year, have you previously participated in the festival or another event involving street closures within Barton Village?
 - a. Can you tell us about those past experiences?
3. Can you walk me through the **days leading up to the Barton Village Festival**? What (if anything) did you and your staff do to prepare?
4. Now, what about **the day of the festival**. Can you walk me through that day?
 - a. (Prompt) How did you begin your day?
 - b. (Prompt) Did you make any changes throughout the day? (e.g., preparing or ordering more food/supplies, calling in more staff)
 - c. (Prompt) Were there any surprises?
5. If you previously participated in the Barton Village Festival, how did this year's event compare to ones in the past?
 - a. (Prompt) Was the foot traffic different/similar? Were your sales different/similar?
6. How, if at all, did the Barton Village Festival financially impact your business?
 - a. (Prompt) Did you witness an increase, decrease, or no change in sales revenues?
7. Can you describe any other impacts the Barton Village Festival had on your business? (e.g., customer satisfaction, expanding your business to new customers)
 - a. (Prompt) As a result of this festival, have you connected with any business owners regularly?
 - b. (Prompt) Did the festival impact your relations with customers? (e.g., regulars or new customers) If so, how?

8. What factors do you think shaped the success (or lack of success) of your business sales during the Barton Village Festival?
 - a. (Prompt) Did you do or notice anything different during the events?
 - i. Did you have more employees staffed?
 - ii. Did you have customers arriving earlier?
 - iii. Was/were there more foot traffic/customers?
 - iv. Did you display decorations outside your storefront?
 - v. Did you leave the door open?
 - vi. Did you host a contest?
 - vii. Did you offer any sales or promotions?
 - b. (Prompt) What about factors outside your control?
 - i. How, if at all, do you think COVID-19 impacted the event?
 - ii. How about the weather?
 - iii. The setup/planning of the event
 - iv. Access to parking?
9. Let's also consider the impact of the Barton Village Festival from the customer's point of view.
 - a. Who was the main clientele attending the Barton Village Festival at your business? (e.g., families, students, elderly persons, etc.)
 - i. Is this clientele different from consumers you might expect on a regular business day?
 - b. Have you received any feedback from customers about the festival? If so, what were their thoughts?
 - c. What was the atmosphere like during the events?
 - d. Has your business identified any barriers related to the festival that may have prevented some customers from participating? (e.g., parking, day of the week)
10. Now, to wrap up...
 - a. Would you opt to do more events like the Barton Village Festival in the future? Why or why not?
 - b. If you were the organizer, would you do anything differently with the planning or management of the Barton Village Festival?
 - c. Do you have any final thoughts or comments?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. I will turn off my recording device now.

Appendix E – Recruitment email sent to business owners

Hello,

We are a team of volunteer researchers at the McMaster University Research Shop working with the Barton Street BIA to evaluate the Barton Village Festival. We are currently collecting feedback from businesses and hope you might be willing to participate.

We are hoping to gather feedback on the social and economic impacts of the Barton Village Festival. Obtaining a better understanding of the festival's impacts (good and bad) will help the Barton Street BIA assess the value of continuing to hold the festival. Your perspective would therefore help shape the future direction of the festival and other events.

Your feedback would also help the Barton Street BIA:

1. Make decisions about how the Barton Village Festival is planned and implemented,
2. Evaluate how that Barton Village Festival can be improved in the future, and
3. Apply for grants to support initiatives like Barton Village Festival.

Action: We are asking for you to complete a brief five-minute survey. You can access the survey by clicking here: <https://forms.gle/iZWvRgtEEXrNqDMf9>

If interested, there is also an opportunity for you to participate in an interview with a member of our research team to elaborate on your perspective and experience. Please indicate whether you are interested in participating in an interview in the final question of the survey.

Please note that we are a neutral (third-party) entity in data collection and analysis. This survey is confidential, and any identifying information we collect will not be associated with your responses.

If you have any questions or concerns about the collection or analysis of data for this project, please contact Rebecca Correia (correirh@mcmaster.ca). Alternatively, please contact Julie Freeman (bartonstevent@gmail.com) with any general comments or questions about this research project.

Many thanks,

The McMaster Research Shop