

# Assessing Employers' Plans for Resuming Operations at Downtown Office Buildings

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# SURVEY OVERVIEW

- **Purpose**: To gather information from office building managers and employers to **better understand the dynamics and pace** in which **downtown's workforce is physically returning to their office buildings** for regular work as the City of Milwaukee continues to reopen
- **Survey Design**: 15 question survey target emailed to downtown property manager database
  - Focused on largest (30 +/-) properties most likely to have a full-time building management staff
  - Non-scientific sample
  - Extrapolate findings for downtown workforce
- **Survey Timeframe**: Open from June 10 – 26<sup>th</sup>

# SURVEY OVERVIEW CONT.

## Responses & Representation:

- 25 respondents representing 27 downtown office properties of various sizes
  - Representing an estimated 26,700+ downtown employees
  - Approx. 30% of downtown's 90,000 estimated workers
- Over 75% of respondents have either surveyed their tenants or are in the process of surveying their tenants on their return to downtown office plans



# SURVEY OVERVIEW CONT.

## Central Question:

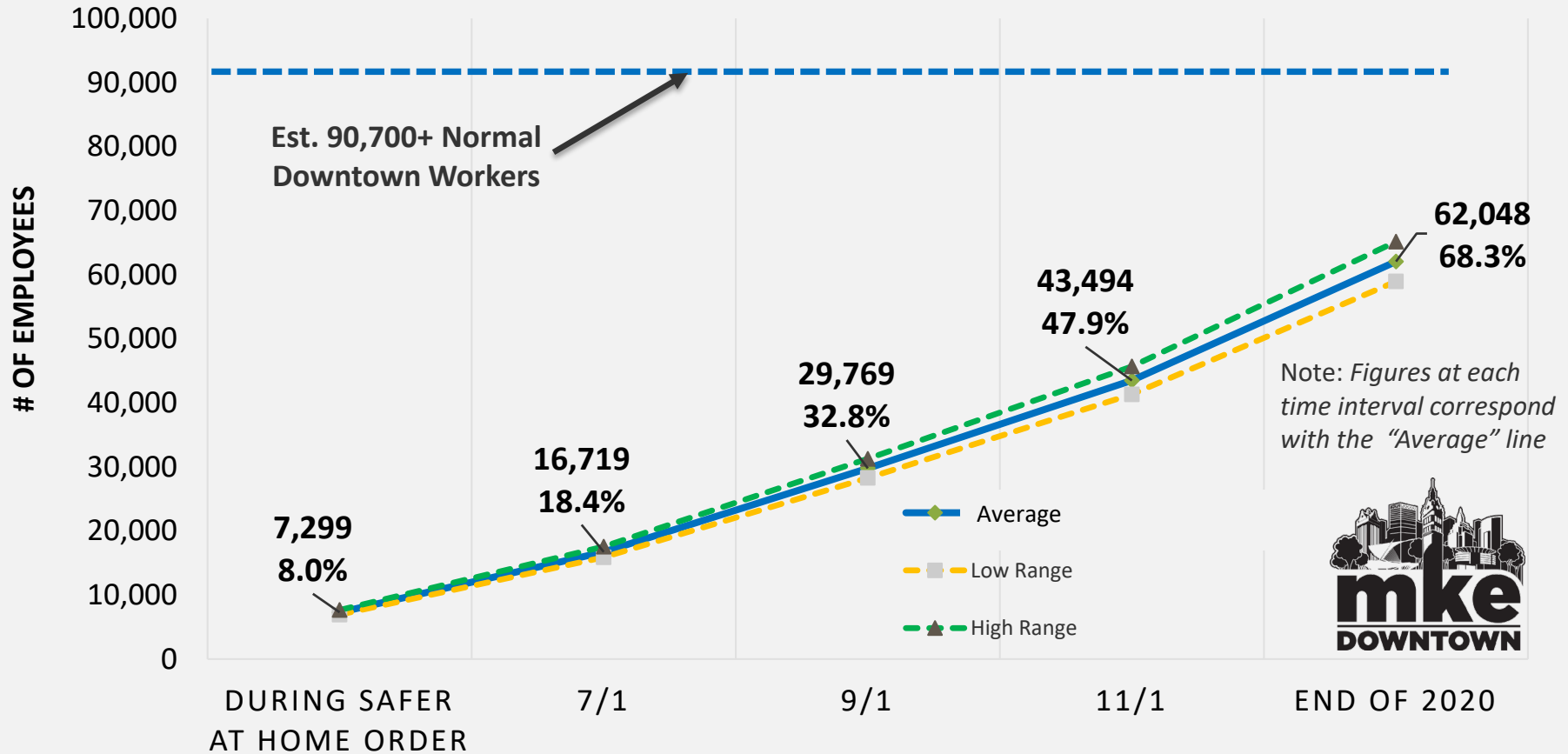
- Asked the following question using 2 month intervals for the remainder of 2020:  
*What percentage of employees do you expect will regularly return to work at the office building you own or manage by \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_ ?*
- Response options are grouped in 10% increments (i.e. 10-20%, 21-30%, etc.)

## Analysis Methodology:

- The following line chart illustrates the “low”, “average”, and “high” percentages for each time interval in three separate line.
- Responses are weight adjusted by percentage of total employees of the sample population and extrapolated against the total downtown workforce

# Survey Data Summary Questions & Key Takeaways

# ESTIMATED WORKER RETURN TO DOWNTOWN



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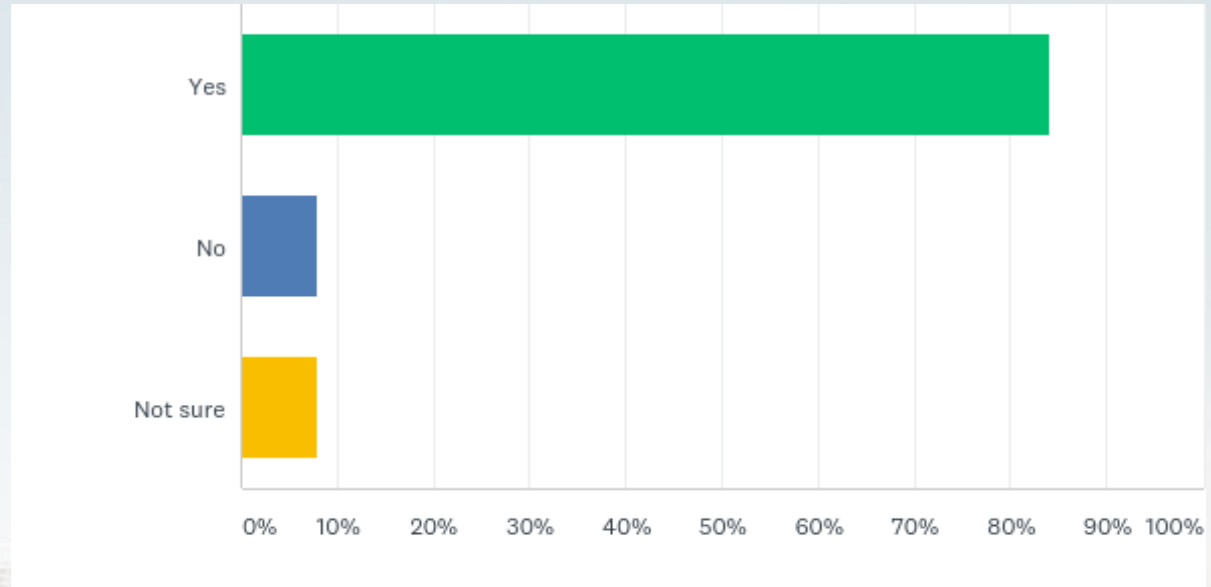
## DETAILS CONT.

Time Intervals		<u>Low Range</u>		<u>Average</u>		<u>High Range</u>	
		%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
% of 90,700 Employees Working Downtown	During Safer at Home Order	7.6%	6,934	8.0%	7,299	8.4%	7,664
	as of July 1st	17.5%	15,883	18.4%	16,719	19.3%	17,555
	as of September 1st	31.1%	28,280	32.8%	29,769	34.4%	31,257
	as of November 1st	45.5%	41,319	47.9%	43,494	50.3%	45,668
	as the End of 2020	64.9%	58,946	68.3%	62,048	71.8%	65,150
% Working Remotely into 2021		28.2%	25,615	29.7%	26,963	31.2%	28,312

**Key:** Response options were grouped in 10% increments (i.e. 10-20%, 21-30%, etc.). Therefore, an example for the chart above is: “Low Range” = 10%, Average = 15%, High Range = 20%

**Question:** Do you anticipate that by the end of 2020 some employees will still be working remotely?

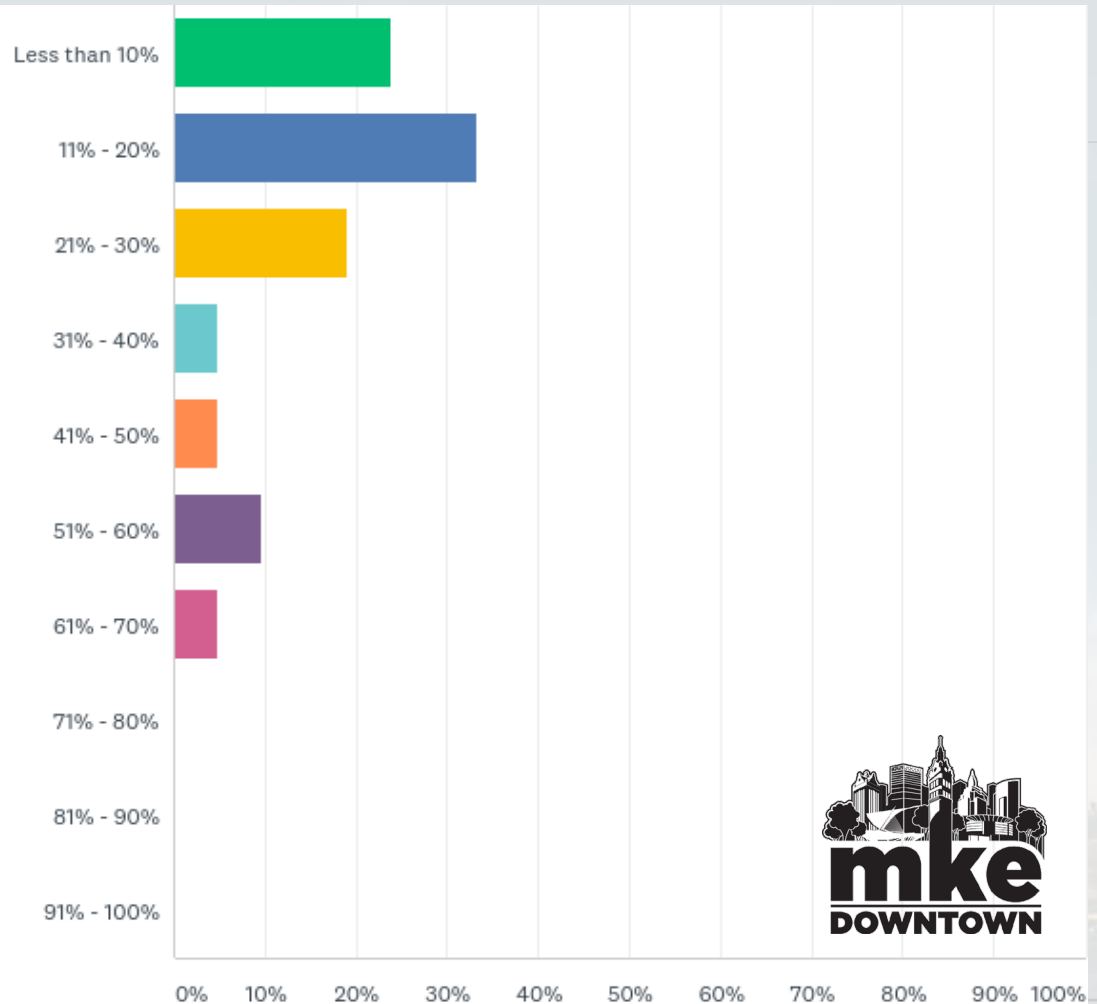
**Takeaway:** 85% of office buildings expect some employees to still be working remotely at the end of 2020





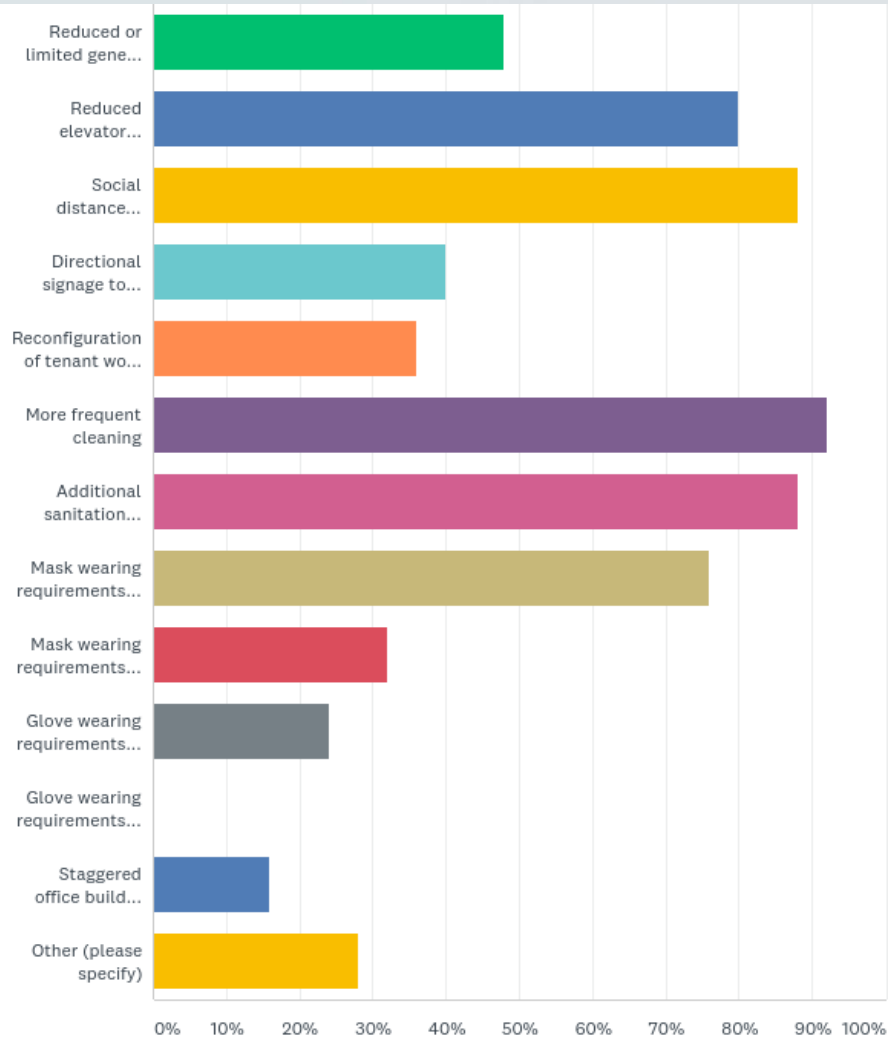
**Question:** What approximate percentage of employees that may still be working remotely at the end of 2020.

**Takeaway:** The majority (57%) of office building managers believe the amount of people still working remotely at the end of the year will be less than 20%. More than 75% believe the amount of employees working remotely will be less than 30%



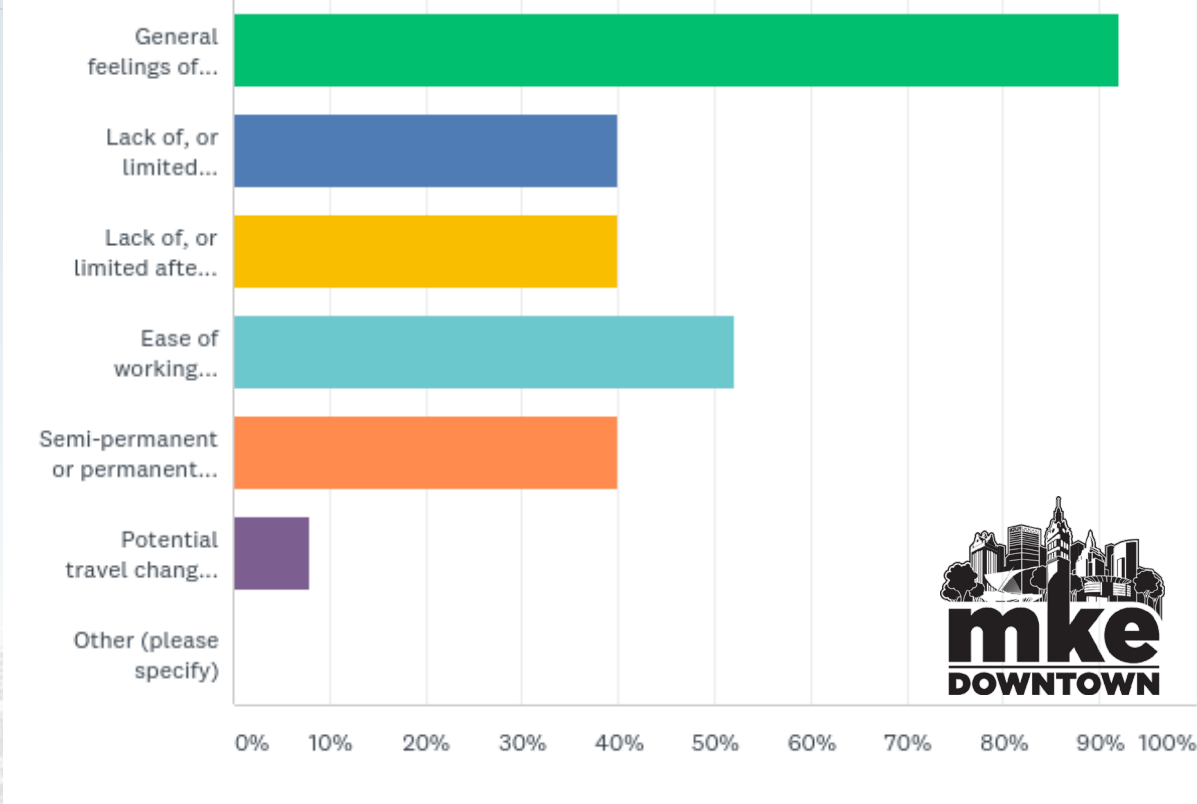
**Question:** What accommodations, if any, are being implemented in the office building you manage or own to increase safety and comfort levels as employees return to work?

**Takeaway:** Top responses include: more frequent cleaning, additional sanitation stations, mask wearing by management staff, social distancing, and reducing elevator capacity



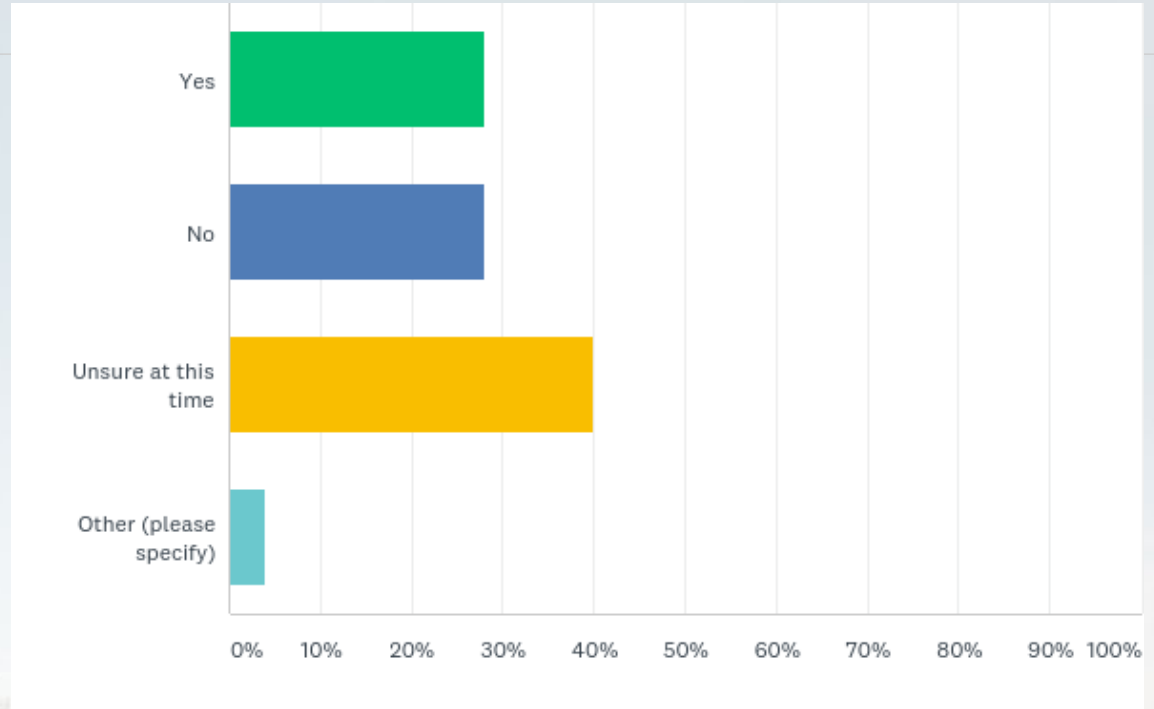
**Question:** What do you believe to be the most significant challenge to employees returning to work in the office building you manage?

**Takeaway:** Top responses included: General feelings of safety and the ease of working from home, followed by lack of child care and summer children programming



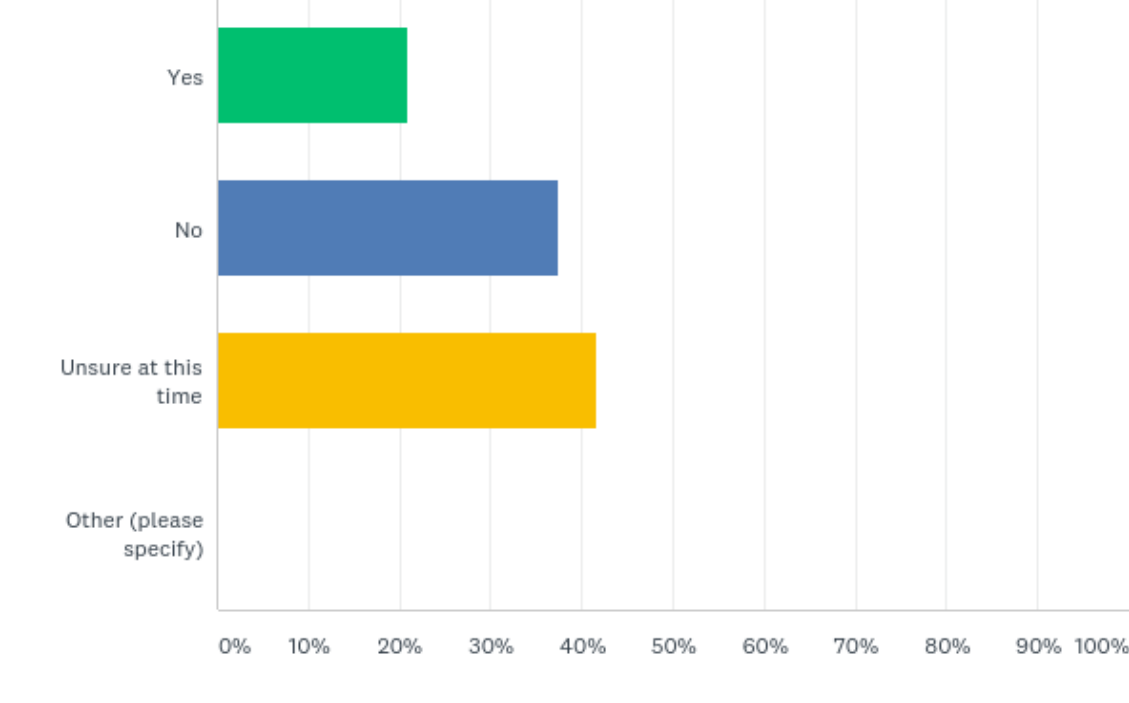
**Question:** Do you anticipate tenant requests for office space size reductions as a result of more employees working from home permanently or in rotation?

**Takeaway:** A majority of building managers are still unsure of the impact work from home will have on tenant requests for permanent office space increase to accommodate social distancing



**Question:** Do you anticipate tenant requests for additional office space needs to accommodate physical distancing of employees?

**Takeaway:** A majority of building managers are still unsure of the impact work from home will have on tenant requests for permanent office space additions to accommodate social distancing



# SURVEY CHALLENGES & NEXT STEPS

## Challenges:

- Rapidly changing environment
- Differences in return plans between smaller and larger office buildings & tenants (*larger tenants appear to be more delayed*)
- Differences in return plans between multi-tenant buildings and single tenant buildings (*single tenant buildings appears to be more delayed*)
- Survey did not account for those that are splitting time between Work From Home and Work in the Office

## Next Steps:

- Check findings with a few individual tenants of various sizes
- Continue to monitor changing employee return to downtown plans



LAND AND SPACE

# Downtown Milwaukee office employees expected to slowly return to their workplaces, new survey says

**Tom Daykin** Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Published 11:11 a.m. CT Jul. 9, 2020



Badger Mutual Insurance Co. is among the downtown Milwaukee employers that are gradually bringing workers back to their offices. *Michael Sears / Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

## [Journal Sentinel Article](#)



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