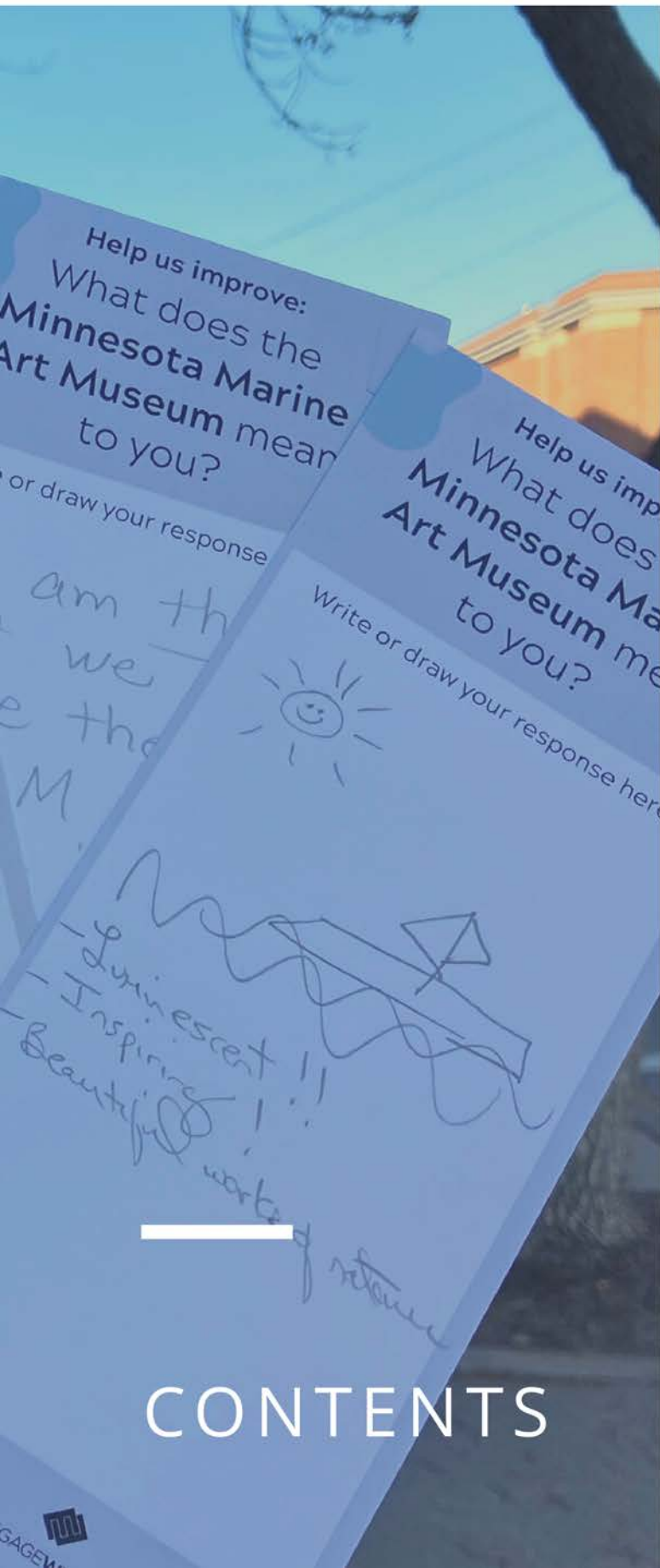




## **MINNESOTA MARINE ART MUSEUM: UNDERSTANDING AND GROWING LOCAL IMPACT**

NOV 2022 // PREPARED BY MARCIA RATLIFF



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Photo on cover: Mai'a Williams of Engage Winona and Ingrid Ogren of MMAM interact with kids at the pop-up booth at Bob Welch Aquatic Center in Winona in late July.

At left: response cards

November 1, 2022

Scott Pollock  
Executive Director, Minnesota Marine Art Museum

Dear Scott,

I am pleased to submit the final Engage Winona report gathering current local perceptions of MMAM, along with ideas for the museum's continued work to welcome and inspire residents of the Winona area.

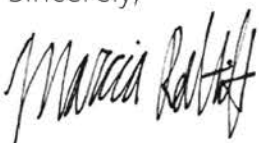
This project brought us from hot July afternoons at the Winona County Fair, the scent of cheese curds blending with kettle corn and show animals, to the Bob Welch Aquatic Center, where we handed out popsicles and talked to kids on their way to and from the pool. We went to the American Legion, and to WSU's Kryzsko Commons over a busy lunch hour, where we discovered that free stickers go a long way with college students. We spoke with folks who'd never heard of MMAM and folks who love it and visit often.

Along the way, we heard hundreds of ideas for how the museum can address barriers to local audiences, ranging from those the museum has been doing for years to new programs the museum has just begun this year. Many people expressed their enjoyment of existing programs and offerings at the museum, and only said "we want more of this," which is a tremendous vote of confidence for the work you are already doing to make the museum a place where local residents feel a sense of belonging and connection.

In the dizzying array of ideas presented here, there are strong throughlines -- of deeper local partnerships, approachable activities, and a variety of art styles and interpretations always available at the museum. These recurring themes can guide you and your staff and board as you move forward over the next few years.

I look forward to discussing these findings with you. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, and for your investment in Engage Winona's work to move Winona forward, together.

Sincerely,



Marcia Ratliff  
Executive Director, Engage Winona

# PROJECT SUMMARY

From June - October 2022, Engage Winona served as a partner with MMAM to help establish a baseline for future social impact measurement. Broadly, the project purpose was to measure current perceptions toward the museum among its local audience - primarily in Winona and surrounding communities. The work involved pop-up booths with creative prompts, conversations with stakeholder groups, and a survey. Engage Winona worked in partnership with Minnesota Marine Art Museum staff, who provided logistical and hands-on support.

A note about language - throughout the report, we've used MMAM as an abbreviation for Minnesota Marine Art Museum. In public engagement activities and outreach, we used the full name in case folks were not familiar with the abbreviation.

## **Activities and participation**

This project had a total of 690 participants across all methods - 290 at the pop-up booth, 273 via online survey, 78 via paper response cards, and 49 focus group participants. We received more than 1,000 unique comments from survey, response card, and focus group participants. The majority of participants - about 90% - lived within an hour of the museum.

MMAM asked us to bring our ideas about who is Winona, paying particular attention to groups the museum isn't engaged with yet, and doesn't have a direct pathway to meet with. We worked with the museum to identify groups that the museum is not already in touch with. The final focus group audience included Treatment Court participants, veterans, and Winona State University students.

Across all methods used, demographics generally tracked with Winona County census data. The survey population was slightly older, wealthier, and more highly educated than Winona County as a whole, but pop-up booth and focus group participation was younger, less wealthy, and less highly educated.

## Top findings

Below you'll find quick takes on the most salient points of our analysis, with detailed summaries in the body of the report.

### Image (871 responses and comments)

Perceptions of the museum were generally positive, and many of the people involved had heard of the museum even if they hadn't been there yet.

### Key themes

- The top impression from pop-up booth participants was "historic," selected 29 times. Close behind it were inspiring, fascinating, never heard of it, welcoming, and peaceful (each selected between 25-27 times).
- Most folks found the atmosphere of the museum welcoming, but were more split on its kid-friendliness and level of connection with the local community.

### Likes (377 responses and comments)

There's a lot to love about MMAM, and folks highlighted the art, atmosphere, programs, and educational offerings.

### Key themes

- A range of comments about art, from European and American collections to modern and contemporary visiting artists. More folks highlighted the rotating collections and variety in their responses than the permanent collection.
- Programming is a major draw to the museum - some folks shared that they don't know what to do with art, and programming led by friendly staff and volunteers helps them enjoy the museum more.
- The museum is a great place to take out-of-town guests, and folks appreciated having MMAM in a community the size of Winona.

### Barriers (378 responses and comments)

We asked about barriers that have come up in the past, including, hours, location, and cost, and invited folks to share any other reasons why they didn't visit the museum more.

### Key themes

- Hours, cost, and location remained top barriers, each with about 20% of participants. Folks mentioned evening hours in particular, and a desire for more low-cost family programming. Location came up most often in responses from folks living outside a 1-hour radius of Winona, but local folks mentioned it too - especially the difficulty of getting to the museum by foot or bike along Riverview Drive.

- Folks felt that hours, cost, and “perception that it’s not for me” would make the biggest difference if addressed.
- Longtime residents who had never been to the museum cited “backyard syndrome,” a feeling that they could visit anytime, so they didn’t think to actually do it. Others mentioned they forgot the museum was there because of its location off the beaten path.
- Some folks felt that once they’d been to the museum, they didn’t have a reason to go again.
- Some folks shared a perception that the museum was stuffy, and they preferred to come only when something special was going on.

### **Changes (831 responses and comments)**

Residents had lots of ideas for new amenities, programs, and other changes to the museum that would make them want to visit more.

### **Key themes**

- There are ample opportunities for partnerships with local and regional organizations to increase interest and access, and some folks highlighted existing partnerships the museum is already working on.
- Ideas for programming ranged from make-and-take classes to more frequent tours to date nights with onsite childcare. Some folks preferred age-specific programming, while others loved all-ages options such as those at Seasonal Saturday.
- Folks pointed out opportunities for more physical programming elements, such as children’s museum aspects or outdoor art and programming that makes the most of the museum’s location on the river.
- Many comments about the art included a desire to see more variety and new exhibits, and others said they missed the permanent collection and still wanted to see works by masters.
- Some comments referenced accessibility measures, such as larger print and better lighting for educational signage, more seating, motorized mobility scooters, and adult size changing tables.
- People enjoyed the food-and-beverage events such as Mississippi Sippin and wanted more - suggesting a cafe, chef-driven restaurant, tea room, wine bar, and cocktail lounge.

## **What's included in the full report**

The full report takes a deeper dive into the results in the following sections:

### **Findings by topic**

- What does MMAM mean to you?
- What do you like about MMAM?
- What barriers prevent you from visiting MMAM more?
- What would you change about MMAM?
- Other audience behavior questions

### **Audience demographic summary**

### **Appendix: What does MMAM mean to you - full list of responses**

#### **Attachments**

- Raw data of all open-ended responses, keyword coded and with identifying information removed, xlsx
- Survey pdf
- Response card pdf
- Focus group questions pdf
- Pop-up booth word list pdf

# WHAT DOES THE MMAM MEAN TO YOU?

A primary purpose of this project was capturing a baseline of what a mostly local audience thinks of MMAM today. We asked this question via survey, via pop-up booth at community events and via comment cards at the museum itself.

## Pick-a-word - booth and survey

As a quick way to capture folks' impressions of the museum at this moment in time, we presented folks with a board of 30 words, and asked them to choose a word that described what the MMAM meant to them. The words were presented in the same order at all sites, and the collection was balanced to have 10 positive words, 10 negative words, and 10 neutral words.

We received 290 responses at the pop-up booth. The word cloud below shows the pop-up booth responses; larger words were selected more often. Of the words selected, 31% were neutral, 56% were positive, and 13% were negative.





**The most often selected words at the booth were as follows:**

**Neutral:**

- Historic: 29
- Never heard of it: 26
- Don't Know: 19
- Local: 15
- Touristy: 10

**Positive:**

- Inspiring: 27
- Fascinating: 26
- Welcoming: 25
- Peaceful: 25
- Community: 14
- Entertaining: 14

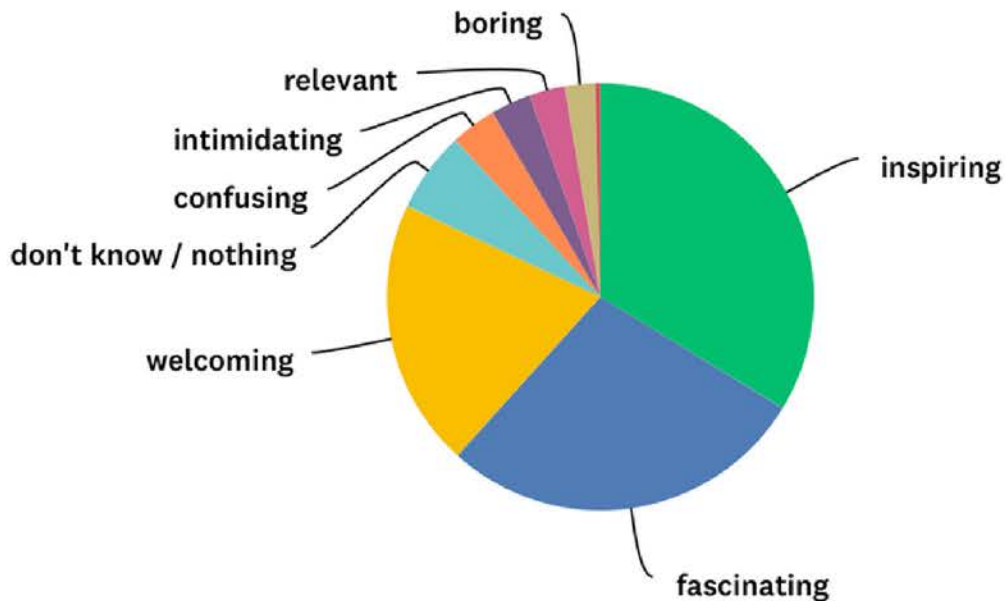
**Negative:**

- Hidden: 4
- Boring: 3
- Unfriendly: 3
- Small: 3
- Confusing: 2
- Irrelevant: 2



We presented our survey participants with a subset of the same words. The chart below shows the 261 responses we received for this question in the survey, of which 6% were neutral, 85% were positive, and 9% were negative.

**Survey responses to the question, Pick a word that describes what the Minnesota Marine Art Museum means to you, right now:**



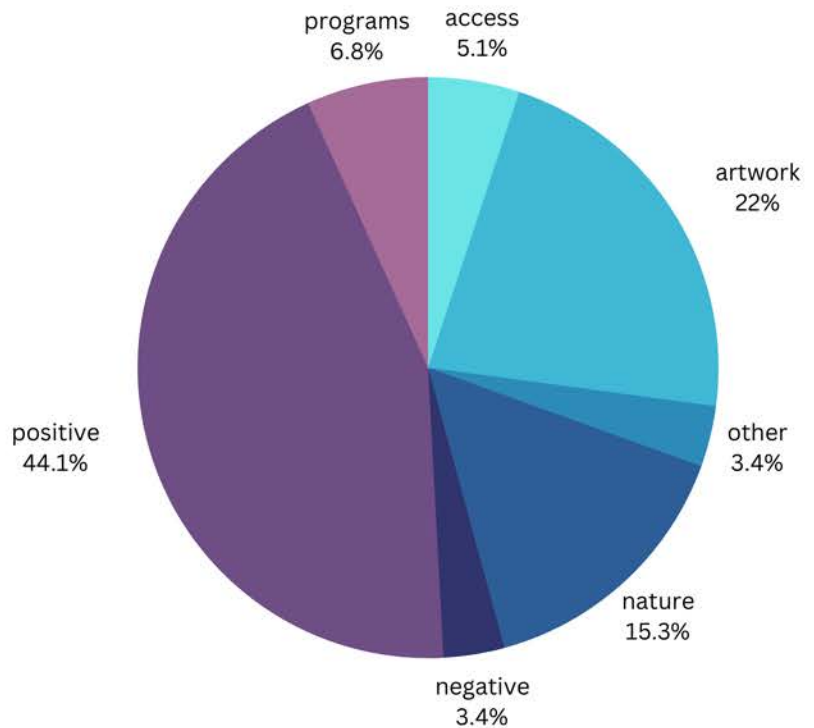
### Open-ended responses

We asked *What does the Minnesota Marine Art Museum mean to you?* as an open-ended prompt on written response cards, with space to write or draw. We received 59 responses - folks responded with a range of comments that touched on the ambience of the museum, its setting, the art, and their experience of all of it. We've included a sampling of comments in this section; the full set is available in the appendix.

As shown in the chart here, the majority of comments expressed general enjoyment, enjoyment of the art, and connection with nature. A few folks noted how special it was to have a museum of MMAM's caliber close to Winona and how much they enjoyed the programming on Seasonal Saturday. A couple of comments expressed disappointment about the loss of the BK collection.

### Selected comments

- Small town such as Winona- can nourish themselves with great art, culture, and beauty of knowledge of the world we live in. Thanks
- Drawing: two people having a conversation, one person saying "Wow. This place is filled w/ talent" the other person saying "Look at the ghost moriset painted!"
- Many times better than modern art galleries
- It is stunning! Loved the mix of styles and times
- A chance to view GREAT art, learn about art genres and not be too overwhelmed!
- It means a celebration of the arts, local artists and other famous artists. Good fellowship with others.
- I particularly enjoy the rotating displays. However, the basic collection is excellent, and the museum is a lovely place to bring company
- This was an enriching, enjoyable afternoon. We will definitely return. Thank you to all of the gracious volunteers
- Kettle corn



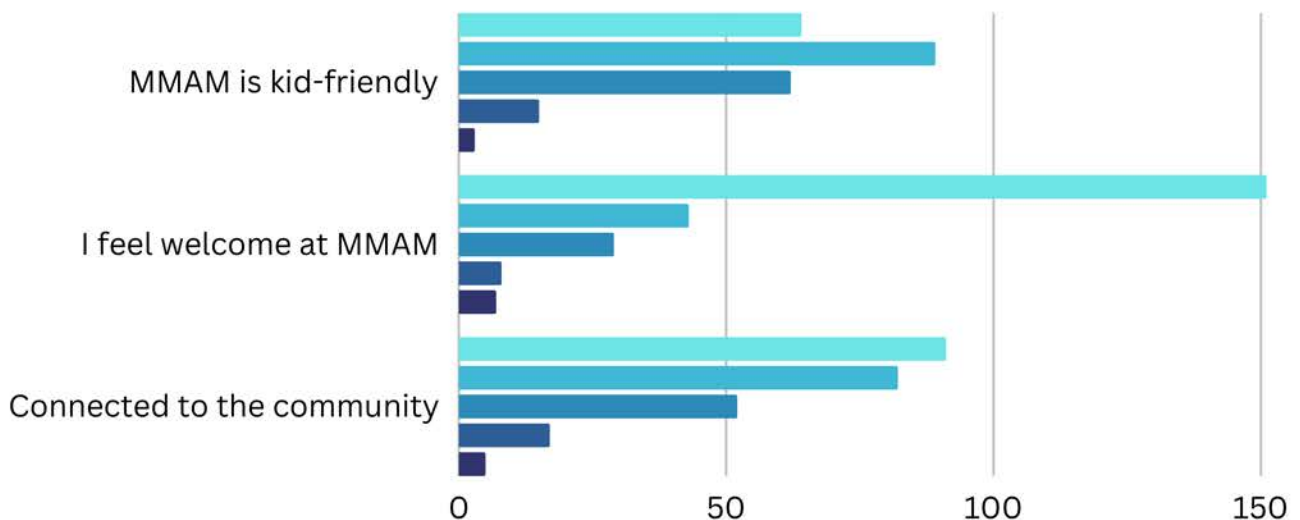
**Selected comments - continued**

- Drawing: person looking down a path with one side of a lighthouse and the other side of a boat in water
- Drawing: pink, green, blue, purple flower. "wonderful, marvelous, beautiful, colorful, paradise. Thank you"
- Not much
- It "used" to mean a lot more when ALL the paintings were here. So SAD to hear they have been sold by owner!! :( The current exhibitions are good but really miss the "old" ones too.
- Great inspiration beautiful setting calming. Drawing: heart. Thank You!
- Learning, feeling, expanding, inspire, create, art
- Drawing: mother and two children "family time @ the museum"
- A great interesting and friendly place to bring family and friends. A quiet place to reflect on beautiful pictures, views
- A whole day of fun! Bingo board is a great way to look at pictures. Fun! Inspiration!
- A great place to see beautiful art and experience Nature. Loved the water tour by Heather Casper. A serene space
- Relaxation, Interesting artwork crafts, experiences, Beautiful building

**Survey questions about museum atmosphere**

In our survey we asked folks to indicate their level of agreement with three statements about the museum. We received 261 responses to this question. The chart below shows responses for the three statements, with the lightest blue bar representing "strongly agree" and descending from there.

**Responses to the question, indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement below:**



**Statement 1: The Minnesota Marine Art Museum is kid-friendly.**

Most respondents agreed with this statement, but it also had the highest percentage of respondents who were neutral or disagreed. 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, and 44 percent were neutral or disagreed. The average across responses was 3.84/5, with 5 being “strongly agree.”

**Statement 2: I feel welcome at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum.**

This statement had the highest overall agreement - 82% agreed or strongly agreed. The average across responses was 4.36/5.

**Statement 3: The Minnesota Marine Art Museum is connected with the local community.**

70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, and the average across responses was 3.96/5.

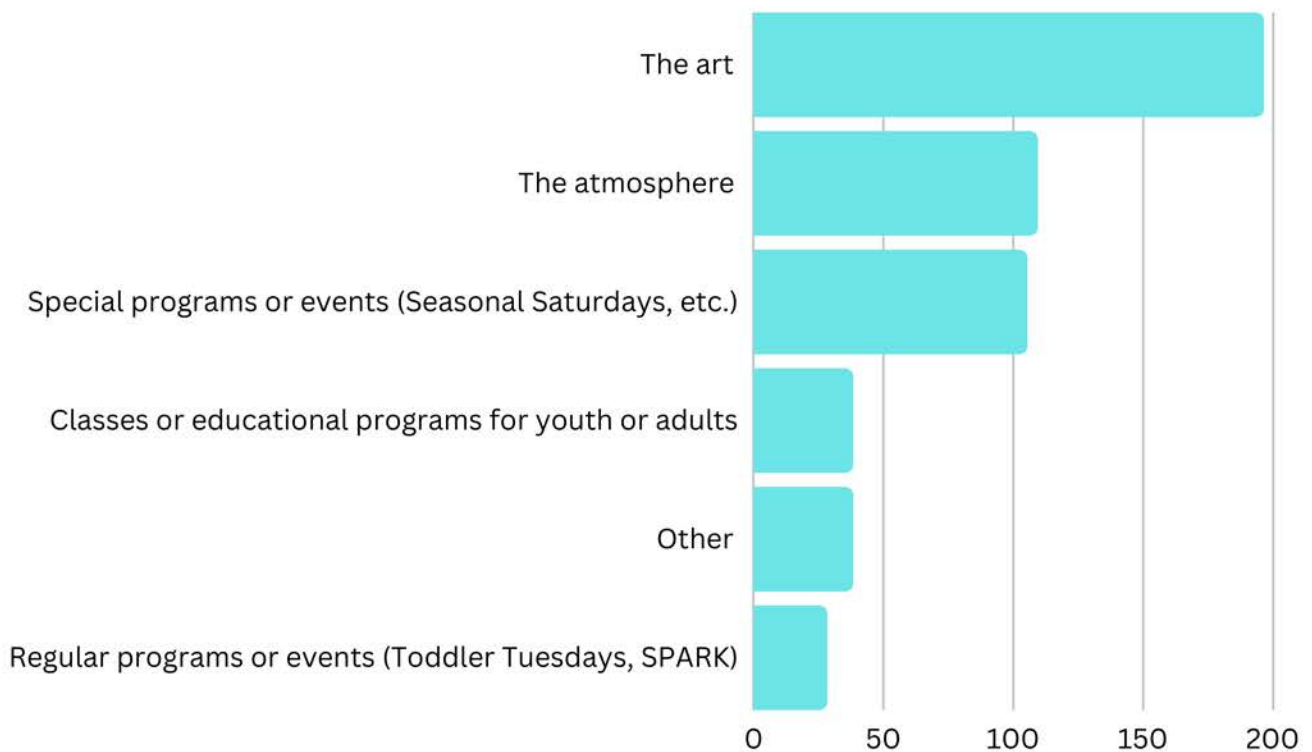
# WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT MMAM?

We asked survey respondents and focus group participants to tell us what they liked about MMAM. We received 377 total responses to questions about what folks like about the museum currently.

## Survey responses

The chart below shows responses to the multiple-choice question, “If you’ve gone to the museum, what do you like most about it?” (Participants could choose as many as applied.) 78% of respondents chose the art, 44% the atmosphere, and 42% chose special programs or events such as Seasonal Saturdays.

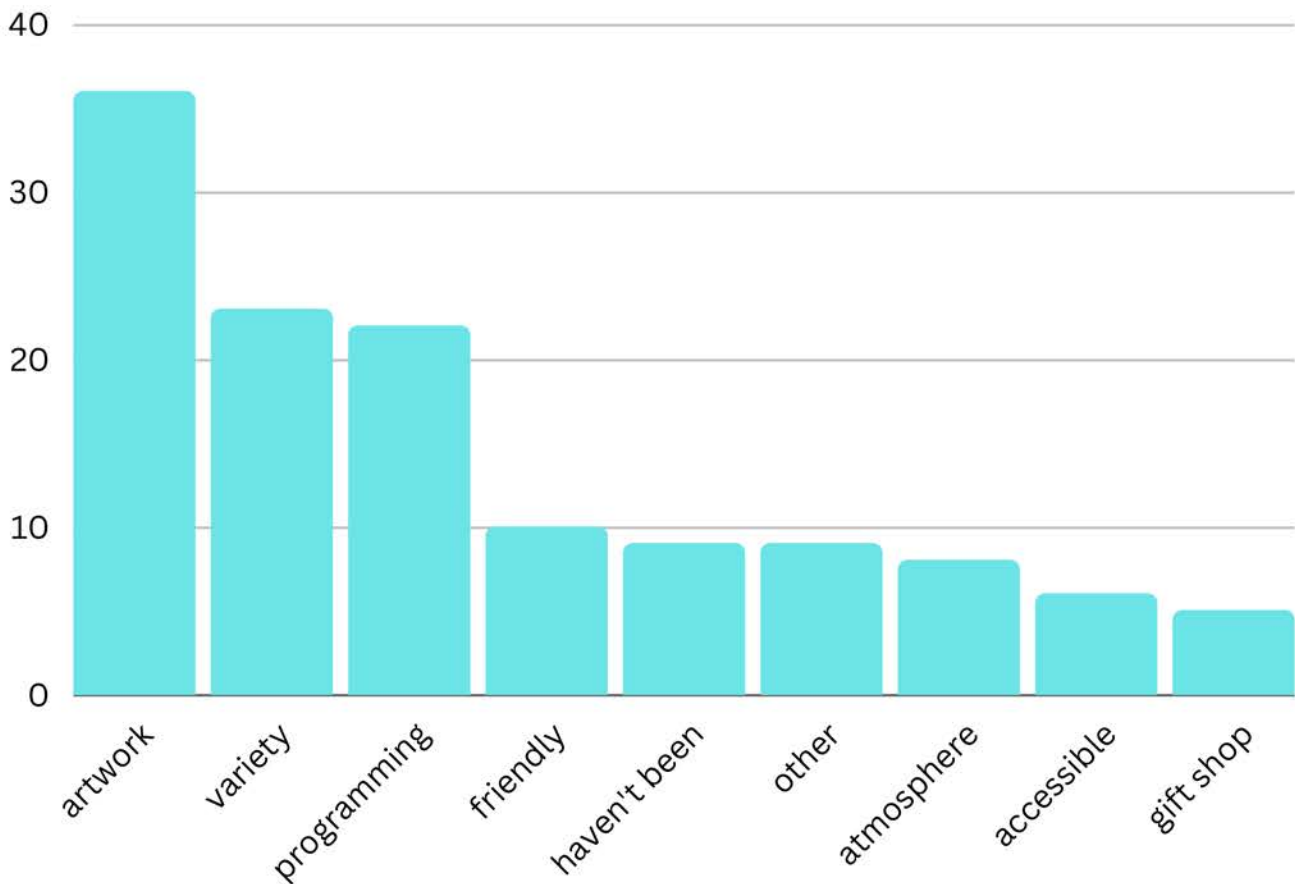
### Responses to the question, If you’ve gone to the museum, what do you like most about it?



## Open-ended responses

This section unpacks themes in what we heard from survey respondents, response card participants, and focus groups. Categories are different here to show additional granularity beyond the multiple-choice checkbox options above. For each section, we've selected comments to show the range, not necessarily prevalence, of opinions we heard. Across all methods, we received 128 total comments about what people liked.

### Responses to the question, What do you like about MMAM?



#### Artwork (36 comments)

Comments about the art reflected a range of audience tastes. Some respondents also named specific periods, styles, and content they enjoyed.

#### European and American collection, classics - 12 comments

- Seeing pieces that are well known from renowned artists
- Seeing Washington crossing the Delaware in person
- The historical ship artwork. How art close up is much different when viewed from a distance
- The hudson section

### **General comments about the art - 24 comments**

- Being able to walk around and look at and enjoy the amazing art
- Peaceful, lovely atmosphere with beautiful art
- More abstract art not on campus
- The Sonja Peterson exhibit was the reason I went. What a great space for her work!?
- Really beautiful, cohesive curation and explanatory content, in addition to the excellent art.

### **Variety (23 comments)**

Many respondents said they liked the rotating exhibits and presentation of multiple artists, styles, and types of art.

- Regular displays and featured artists. Ukrainian owls. Food and gifts. Could use more signs to poke around. Discovered more rooms on subsequent visits ( food and Ed. room where owls were.)
- The gallery that features a single artist's work that rotates on a regular basis (also the small gallery in the children's area that does the same).
- Enjoy the rotating exhibits so I see something new each time
- The variety over the months, not a stagnant collection
- A great changing exhibits, such beautiful atmosphere

### **Programming (22 comments)**

Comments about programming highlighted hands-on crafting activities, music, Seasonal Saturday activities, community collaborations, artist talks, and other special events.

- I loved the classes on art history. I would love to do more classes.
- Artist talks
- I love the collaboration with the Winona Symphony!
- Loved the murder mysteries!
- It's great to have something to do when the weather is bad. I really like all the events that welcome the community, and wish to see more of that!
- I don't always know how to engage with art, so special events help me with that
- I'd like to attend a dinner event but haven't been able. I also missed the wine event. I love when you connect with the community and make Art less intimidating
- I like the special exhibits and I like the engagement activities.
- Fun for the kids I babysat, we did the art scavenger hunt
- All the extras on seasonal sats that help me and friends learn/engage/exc
- The music

**Friendly (10 comments)**

Several responses called out staff and volunteers as being helpful, friendly, and fostering a sense of community. One respondent said Heather Casper was what they liked most about the museum.

**Other, or haven't been (9 comments each)**

Other comments about what people liked touched on the newsletter communications and how much fun it is to take guests or family there.

**Atmosphere and setting (8 comments)**

These comments used words like calming, ambience, vibes, and beautiful to describe the museum.

**Hours, location, accessibility (6 comments)**

A handful of comments mentioned how nice it was to have the museum in a small community close to home, and the ease of parking.

**Gift shop (5 comments)**

Five responses mentioned the gift shop including the selection of items.



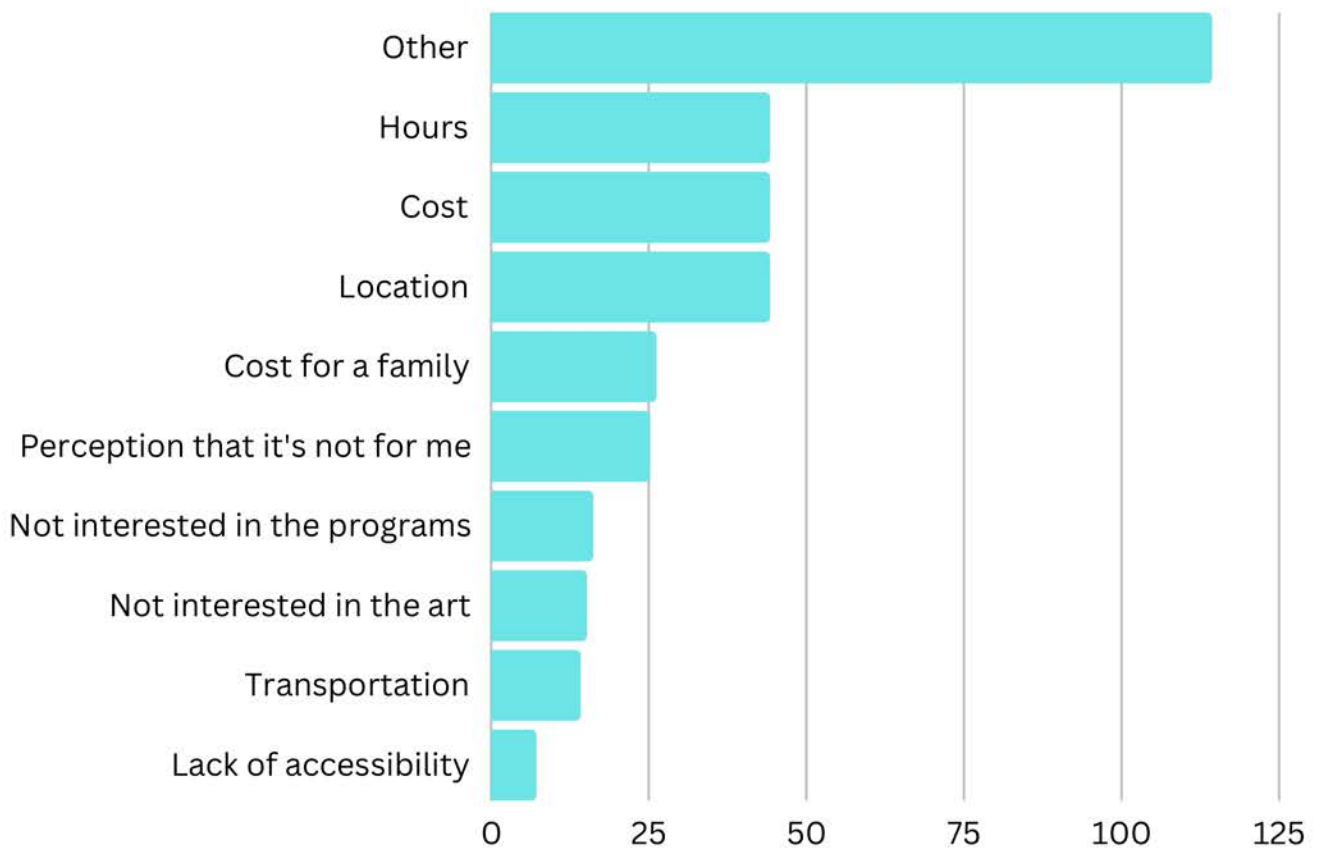
# WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT YOU FROM VISITING MORE?

We asked survey respondents and focus group participants to tell us what barriers prevented them from visiting MMAM more. We received 378 responses to this question.

## Survey responses

The chart below shows responses to the multiple-choice question, "What barriers prevent you from coming to the museum more often?" (Participants could choose as many as applied.) The chart below reflects 230 responses in the survey. Apart from what respondents chose to self-describe, hours, cost, and location were the top three barriers, each with about 19% of respondents choosing that option.

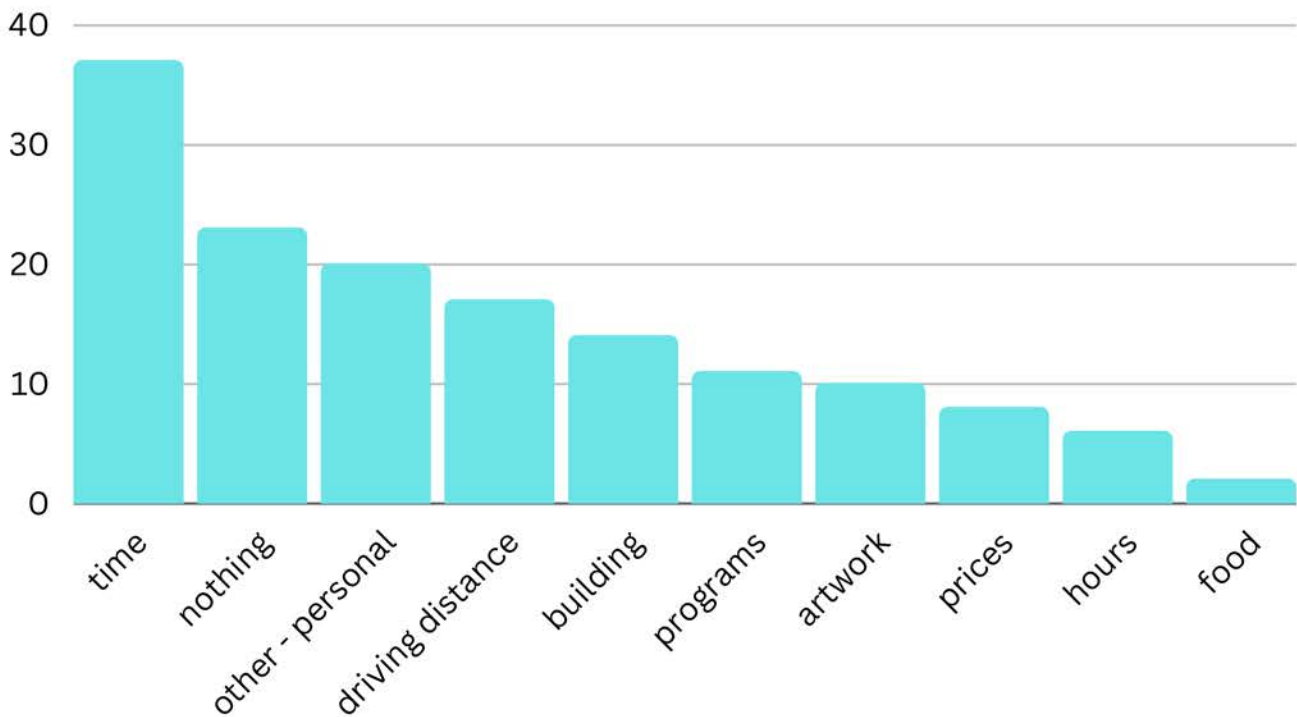
## Responses to the question, What barriers prevent you from coming to the museum more often?



## Open-ended responses

This section unpacks what we heard from survey respondents and focus groups who were asked this question. About half of survey respondents selected “Other” in the question above and chose to unpack their response in more detail. Categories are different here to show additional granularity beyond the checkbox options above. For each section, we’ve selected comments to show the range, not necessarily prevalence, of opinions we heard. The chart below reflects a total of 148 responses to this question.

### Responses to the question, What barriers prevent you from visiting MMAM more?



#### Time (37 comments)

Many respondents said they simply didn't have time to visit the museum more often or had too many other things going on.

- I feel I am able to attend the Museum whenever I wish--just need to make more time on my end
- Life gets busy, but I still go there a lot mostly for inspiration
- Like to bring friends...some are disabled and it's hard to find a time/date to bring them!
- Too many other things to do (with family) when I visit Winona.
- Motivation-not knowing whether it would be worth my time committment

### **No barriers (23 comments)**

A few of these respondents offered other reasons such as the number of other events to enjoy, not getting around to it, and not making it a priority.

- Never any barrier..I drop in just to have private moments with the collections. A place of peace & sanctuary. Even the lovely gardens & river walk.
- Not necessarily any barriers, just many other events to enjoy.
- Often just overlook the opportunity
- Sometimes just don't get around to coming.
- Lots of other things going on
- It's not that I'm not interested in art, it's just isn't a priority interest

### **Other - personal (20 comments)**

20 responses referenced other barriers including personal preferences, forgetting about the museum, and "backyard syndrome (I can do that anytime)."

- Not getting the membership. I say I am going to and then don't.
- Other options.
- Went once, didn't need to see it again
- I have always wanted to go, but I never have had anyone to go with and it's something I would like to experience with someone else
- I truly am not knowledgeable about art and it isn't one of my passions so I just don't make the effort that I could
- It is an EVENT for me. An ATTRACTION. So I usually only go when I can introduce new people or friends from out of town to the museum.
- I bought a family pass, but we are not in the habit of going. I have hopes.
- I'm a homebody.
- Our son is not always interested and so we need to talk him into it. My husband and I, however, think it is a gem and we are lucky to have it! We always bring people who visit us to see it.

### **Driving distance (17 comments)**

These comments primarily came from folks living outside the region. Many said they enjoyed the museum, but it was also a day trip commitment.

### **Building - including location for local attendees (14 comments)**

Comments about the physical environment or location of the museum referenced the difficulty of walking or biking to the museum, a tendency to forget the museum because of its location outside the city proper, and concerns related to Covid-19.

- Transportation, I don't want to bike everywhere and my sister has the car
- I forgot it exists because it is so out of the way
- I am still not participating indoor crowd events
- I'm a college student who walks everywhere
- No safe bike infrastructure to get there
- The MMAM is an amazing space but its location and the "reserved" feeling it has makes it feel detached from much of Winona and therefore feels disconnected to me and others.
- Most recently, the pandemic. I have visited less often because of it--the main reason I don't participate in the group programs.

### **Programs (11 comments)**

Comments about programs referred to activities or activations of spaces as the primary draw for visiting. Some also commented on community outreach and connections to a local audience.

- Unsure of when new exhibits start/end
- I wish there would be more inclusiveness for surrounding areas. Luxemburg heritage, etc. History of surrounding, not just city of. Winona is terrible at including.
- It's not cost prohibitive, and there's less expensive Tuesdays and Saturdays. I think we just tend to come when there's a special exhibit or something for kids to do.
- Would like to see more community events that are tangentially related to art, not events that are tied to the art that is there
- Would like it to be more family friendly
- Diversity of thematic programs. The singular mission of being water focused is limiting. It feels like a one-note museum being focused on water mainly as a scenic element in landscape paintings. But if that remains the theme, can water be explored more in depth? What about water rights issues, accessibility, environmental issues, global warming issues, water in relation to immigration, water in relation to growing and making food, etc. With exhibitions on these topics, what about talks and lectures to educate people also. Topics in relation to water are really endless.
- I wish there were some evening hours once in a while - a 'night at the museum' would be fun with kids - with the galleries open.

### **Programs comments continued**

- Time frames of updating new exhibitions....seems that some stay too long...would be nice to see local artist show, youth art and for fun in the summer, a mobile museum for the kids to go to....instead of a food truck,its a mini art gallery with options for outside art making!...I could help with this idea...

### **Art (10 comments)**

Comments about the art touched on new exhibits being the primary reason for visiting multiple times. A few folks mentioned wanting more classical art, while others were excited about the rotating exhibits.

- Once you have already been, I like to wait until there's new exhibits
- i believe the museum has turned a corner in a good way, and maybe this was a necessity when the rich folk bailed. i always liked that it existed, and was impressed by the location, it's design, it's intention, the art on the walls and the programming BUT YEAH it was a bit stuffy (and maybe that's just cuz i knew it was a kind've hobby-project for some very rich people)
- I visit often but am disappointed in the reduced collection
- While it was nice to have the famous impressionist paintings, after seeing them several times I am ready to see something else. I was never a fan of all the boat/ship paintings... I think the theme of water can be expanded beyond that. The rotating featured artists were a hit or miss for me... I preferred the Minnesota and local artist exhibits (and some national artists that emphasized natural themes in their work... the dog photography was also just a fun change of pace from the overemphasis on boats/ships)
- Limitations of "marine" identity. Seems like an unnecessary gimmick.
- Concern that the museum is no longer focused on art, that it's more general entertainment/fun

### **Prices (8 comments)**

A few folks mentioned the cost of regular admission as a barrier. Folks were generally aware of promotional rates such as Seasonal Saturday and free student Tuesdays.

- cost for a family
- My schedule, I am pretty busy on tuesday's and would prefer not to pay when free is an option
- I would love to take advantage of more activities but I'm now hampered by a long recovery from a sports injury. I used to be a member but with medical expenses 'plus' have made it difficult.

### **Hours (6 comments)**

A handful of comments referenced museum hours overlapping with work or class.

- Hours, not being available
- Hours are tough
- Hours are difficult, I'm either working or in class so when I am able to go it's unfortunately closed

### **Food (2 comments)**

Two folks spoke specifically about food as something that would bring them to the museum more regularly.

- It's not on my orbit the way it really should be. Maybe if they had crazy exotic coffees and deserts or snack or treats i.d make it a destination....
- No permanent food or drink options

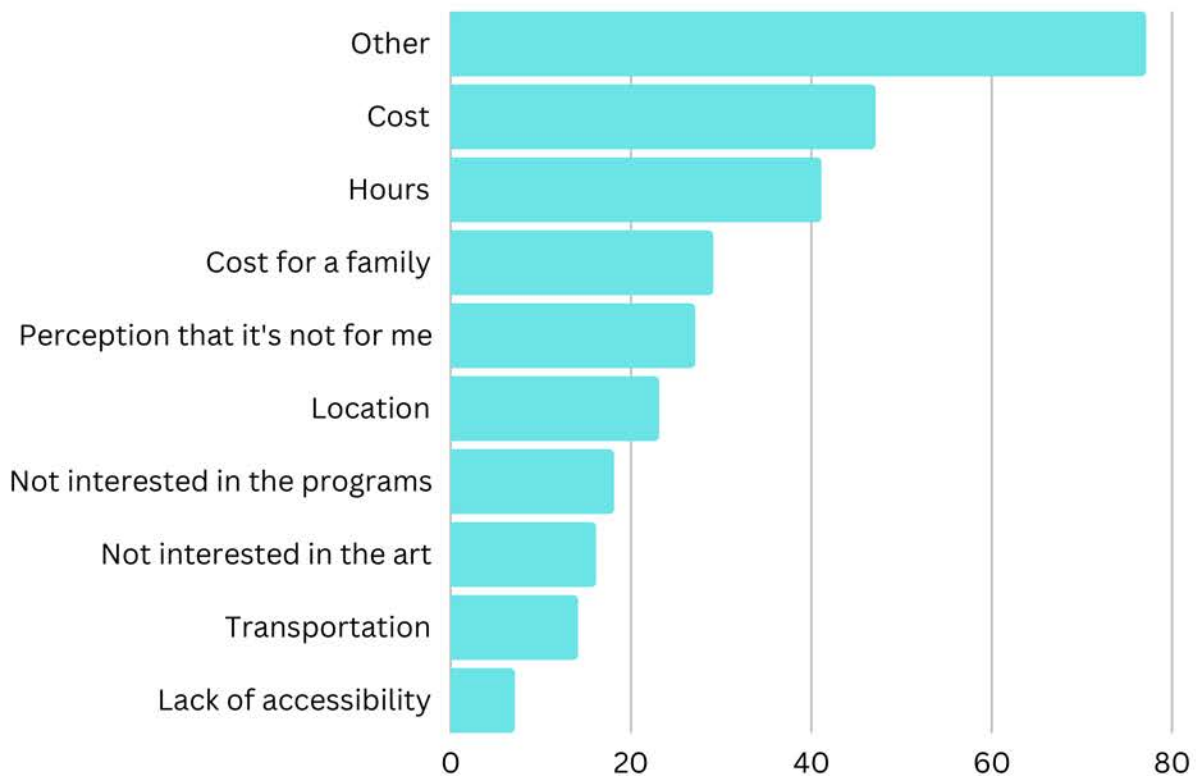
# WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT MMAM?

We asked survey respondents, focus group participants, and response card participants to tell us what they would change about or add to MMAM, in order to transform it into a place they would visit often. We received 831 total responses to questions about changes to the museum.

## Survey responses

The chart below shows 194 responses to the multiple-choice question, “What barriers, if addressed, would encourage you to attend the museum more?” Participants could choose as many as applied. Apart from “Other” - what respondents chose to self-describe, which we unpack in the open-ended responses section - cost, hours, and “perception that it’s not for me” were the top three barriers that would make a difference if addressed. About 24% of respondents chose Cost, and another 15% chose Cost for a family. 21% of respondents chose Hours, and 14% chose “perception that it’s not for me.”

## Responses to the question, What barriers, if addressed, would encourage you to attend the museum more?



The chart below shows 232 responses to the multiple-choice question, “Which amenities would make you feel more welcome and included at the museum?” Participants could choose as many as they liked.

Among multiple-choice responses, 59% of respondents selected a cafe, 47% chose partnerships with local organizations and artists, 40% chose museum activities that happen in the community, such as at recreation centers, community events, etc., and 28% chose extended weekend hours. We unpack open-ended responses to “Other” in the section below.

### Responses to the question, Which amenities would make you feel more welcome and included at the museum?

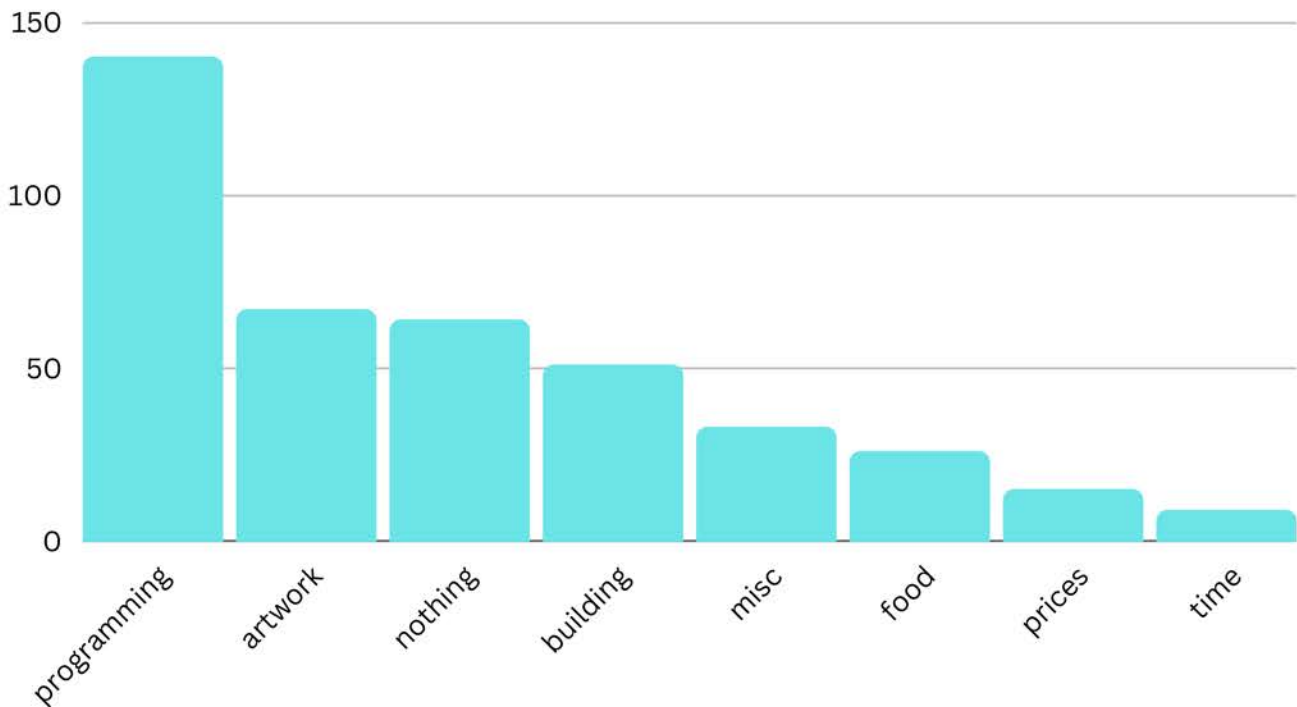


### Open-ended responses

In this section, we unpack themes in 405 open-ended responses we received to questions about barriers to remove, amenities to add, or changes to make in order to transform MMAM into a place folks would visit more often. The chart on the next page reflects open-ended responses from the survey, response cards, and focus groups.



## Responses to the question, What would you change about MMAM?



### Programming (140 comments)

We received by far the most comments with ideas for new programs, activities, activations, and outreach. Many of these ideas reflect things the museum is already doing or has done in the past, and a desire to see more of those activities.

### Partnerships

- Develop a partnership with St. Paul-based Urban Boatbuilders to do an art exhibit and building exhibit on boat building along the river.
- Like I said book clubs could meet in your beautiful spaces or you would have seated chair exercise for seniors, or you could have sobriety meetings for people in recovery from chemical dependency or you could have support groups for survivors of domestic violence etc etc etc I think we're going to reach into you all if you reach out to us as Community more broadly and thanks for listening to these ideas.
- I would like to see something set up with partners like Big Brothers Big Sisters and HCO. HCO could get house passes
- The partnerships with local organizations have been made and are continuing to expand as I perceive their efforts.
- Connecting with local artisans—MMAM as the hub for local artists somehow? Residencies or workshops?

### **Partnerships, continued**

- There is real opportunity here to address the "high-brow tourist" issue associated with the MMAM. Do more local art, up-and-coming art, art for kids, art for "regular people," and events that are less "wine and cheesy" more informal. Continue the availability of free days and special tours for local kids. INCREASE representation... more women, people of color, people of varying abilities, kids, people with varying socio-economic status as both target audiences and ARTISTS. It would go a long way toward dismantling the elitist perceptions and make it a museum truly representative of all people (not just rich, white folks).
- No socializing feasible. No movement classes, no book clubs. COULD you all make your space available for different purposes if you have wide Open spaces where people could gather and make that deeply affordable? That might get people in the door.

### **Regular programs and activities**

- Interactive arts on a regular basis, not only on Seasonal Saturdays!
- More things besides art on walls. Maybe books, videos, interactive experiences and entertainment.
- Perhaps a suggested "path" through the museum with suggested times for each.
- I would love to see more "interactives": a path or walkway that outlines physically the winding Mississippi River; a cloud-identification activity near a painting that features a cloudscape; scavenger hunts for adults; more variety in the types of information provided on/with text panels
- I'd love to get my daughter more interested in the arts, more kids activities would be great
- fewer permanent displays... more guest displays and/or program area spaces... you want to create a place that isn't the same every time you go back
- I love the activities the docents create for our class trips there. Hand me an assignment at the desk! I love learning!
- Wish it had talking descriptions (headphones) of art to use as you visited each gallery
- Interactive/3-D exhibit. I also think it would be really neat to have a space for visitors to create their own art. Whenever I go to the museum I am really inspired to paint/draw, but that feeling is usually squashed by my responsibilities by the time I get home. So maybe an area in one of the galleries with a table/chair.
- I like when there are interactive programs to meet artists or to get to hear about the artist and context of the art being shown. I have a hard time reading the print that is available. Even recorded audio tours to listen to while going through the museum would be cool. This may already be an option that I'm not aware of.

### **Special programs and activities**

- What about partnering with History Center, GRSF, MCA to bring the art to life? (Cemetery Walk inside MMAM or the musical Sunday in the Park with George)
- An opportunity for the kids to have their own activities so my partner and I could enjoy an event (but not have to pay for a babysitter!).
- a forum that uplifts female artists, sessions that would teach non-artists about various art applications, a forum that uplifts local artists - especially young artists in the area.
- More community events - give me more excuses to get over there!
- What about a film series on either artists or different aspects of design. ... that may provide additional draw to the museum
- Perhaps some kind of activity where you could learn to make something like one of the pieces?
- The murder mystery was fun. Should do them more often
- I would like to participate in art classes, such as painting, watercolor, or color pencil. Or one-day special workshops, such as Swedish wood ornaments making, origami, printmaking, oil pastels, etc. Designed for many different age groups.
- Art for idiots day - or art for those who don't understand or know about art.
- Drumming Circle
- More social opening of exhibition - when change.. like maybe am coffee one on same day as evening event
- More of those fabulous events that are celebratory of the community & the arts with all sorts of activities for people of all ages learning together and enhancing our sense of community.
- Create more family friendly events that are promoted throughout the community, as a way to "remind" people that the museum is in our town and a great asset
- More concerts - informal and free included in admission fee on a regular schedule. (Such as: noon concert series - short 45 minute performances.)

### **Built and outdoor elements**

- I think adding some children's museum aspects would be incredible - Winona doesn't have many indoor play/exploration spaces for babies and kids.
- ... stuff related to the actual river...like using the one right there (might be port problems, but): canoe/kayak rentals (insurance stuff might be a setback), boat rides that use the various harbors in the area to take people to/from MMAM by water...package-deals/Winona Boat Tour Boat or the Cal Fremling(???) bigger/imaginary...the Centennial Showboat at the Dam Saloon. ...
- A few kids' spots throughout the museum that are split up for varying age groups vs just one general room (hard to mix infants with school-agers).
- Night sky's telescoping

### **Built and outdoor elements, continued**

- I would be interested to attend programming that features the beautiful gardens on site. Perhaps with a program that connected those gardens to the currently featured art.
- A greeter or docent wandering through to engage with viewers, not behind a counter or security desk. Rearrange entry so engagement with art is immediate rather than gift shop and empty food areas being the first visual intro to museum.

### **Educational opportunities**

- Docent need a change of pace- What are some classroom management ideas. - How can they get others excited about what they are seeing.
- My kids love making art. If there was an event for kids ages 8-12 they might be convinced to come. They love comic books and manga and anime. They love to draw on paper and color and shade. They might love paper crafts or papier mache.
- A date night at the museum focused on parents and a tour of the museum to provide guidance on explaining current art on display to children. More interaction between museum staff and public to learn about the art on display.
- Virtual tours. Do you have that?!
- Continued focus on masterpieces with days dedicated to education about specific artists/works - why is it a masterpiece, what was the historical setting, explanation of artist's technique. Perhaps opportunity to express oneself in the manner of the artist - draw, paint. ...
- Include all surrounding areas. You have excluded all the rural schools and communities by closing an ear to their needs.

### **Artwork (67 comments)**

Comments about art ranged from wanting more classical masters to wanting totally different interpretations of *marine*, including boat building and fishing, and *art*, including sculpture, music, poetry, and dance.

- Have some art that can be touched and feel.
- There is a fantastic artist in Two Harbors who created a special camera and takes amazing photos from inside Lake Superior wearing a wet suit. He has won top photography awards. I keep asking to have his art presented at mmam but nobody is listening to me. I will look up his name right now. Christian Dalbec. They are awesome. Please look into his work. I have asked repeatedly. Thank you.
- As mentioned, restoration of the European art. I appreciate the size of the museum. Human sized, not too big.

**Artwork, continued**

- A featured art exhibition and program looking at past and present day life of people living on the river, especially those working on the river and those living on river houseboats.
- I think nature and the outdoors fit really well together, and I know it's the marine art museum - but other forms of outdoor art might be nice other than marine depictions.
- Themes like river food art or boat building art, etc. Things that tie in peripherally because the paper art is what drew us today and not necessarily the water theme.
- More paintings by famous artists.
- local artist who are beginners
- Feature local photographers exhibits.
- I've never seen any critical environmental, conservation or recreation related exhibits or events. I would gladly teach/host talks or education events about water, but I've never offered because I feel the museum is focused on art and only art.
- Edgy performance art
- There are so many different forms of art, so it'd be great to see more artwork beyond paintings; Woodwork, ironwork, a sculpture garden, etc.
- Mississippi River art or fishing related
- More modern and contemporary art - I love the rotating exhibits. I also love classical art, but contemporary work is more exciting to me.
- We so enjoy the art from the various periods of the permanent collection. We never tire of seeing them each time at MMAM. ... With MMAM -- SO MANY pieces in the permanent collection are divine. We see the entire museum every time. We would go to MMAM just to see the permanent collections. BUT, when MMAM has a stunning exhibit - we want to visit even more. "The permanent collection shines! The exhibits add more sparkle."
- More representative art
- Bearing sea fishing
- I would like the museum to focus strongly on art and bring in exhibitions. This space was a hidden gem but it seems to be less focused on being an art museum lately.
- i guess i already kind've answered this. i like the direction the museum is headed. it seems like some more creative and risky endeavors might occur. (too bad that it's saddled with the word Marine, but it also does have name recognition, so that's good) i actually can't think of the name of the new director, but i've recognized him riding his bike (presumably to-from work on a road i rarely ride) and at "weird" events...so i feel more connected to the museum JUST based on that.
- There are no barriers other than it needing more diverse, and contemporary and challenging art.

### **Artwork, continued**

- I always recommend the museum to people especially those traveling from out of town. In all honesty, since Bob Kierlien withdrew so many of their paintings which had name recognition value it is harder to be specific.
- Identity limitations on scope of artwork
- I don't understand the changing mission of the museum and if it is still dedicated to art
- Thomas Hart Benton art, more O'Keeffe a coffee shop and tiny diner area....with pie....you can't get a pie slice in downtown Winona! I can see it... MMAMies Art Cafe on the River!
- More culturally diverse artists, more advertising/more visible, more food and drink special events/evenings
- Digital aspects
- An old ship/boat more pictures of boat/ship history

### **Nothing (64 comments)**

64 respondents said they experienced no barriers, would not change anything, or simply said nice things about the museum.

- The museum is already doing an amazing job making my children and me feel welcome and included!
- Not sure, always surprised by what exhibits are present.
- No clue only been there once because I'm a freshman from outside of winona in their first year of college. Was interesting to go to a different art museum since I'm usually at M.I.A.
- I love it, the exhibits are changed frequently to encourage re visiting, but are not so often to prevent getting to come again and again to see your favorite pieces.
- I just want to say..., Congratulations on the wonderful emails sent out about all the wonderful things happening at MMAM. Very exciting things are happening there with the (relatively) new director! Kudos!

### **Building (51 comments)**

These comments concerned the atmosphere of the building itself, its location and open hours, and access to the building from the rest of Winona, especially by foot or bike. A few comments referenced accessibility measures, such as larger print or better lighting, more seating, motorized mobility scooters, and adult size changing tables.

- Better welcoming when entering.
- Though small, the layout feels a bit confusing

**Building, continued**

- Extended weekend hours from time to time. There's so much to do when we visit Winona.
- Extended hours during the week. I love the art and love to get there, but can't make it after work. Weekends are usually busy with other things
- Better lighting for some placards describing artwork--some of us have older eyes!
- Bike parking, more outdoor space utilization (with shade)
- The feeling of warmth.
- I would like to see more of a direct connection to the river area
- More benches to sit on while enjoying the art work.
- Motorized wheelchairs or scooters for those of us who walk with a cane or worker.
- Outdoor park for kids
- More light and lively atmosphere
- A Shared Use Path along Riverview Drive that makes it feel like I am walking or biking along a linear park to reach the MMAM. It will also drive more people who wouldn't be your typical "high art" crowd to engage with the museum. ...
- Quietness in the museum - no music playing.
- Adult size changing table in lieu of a baby changing table. It would give access to individuals with disabilities or elderly with additional toileting needs
- .... the truck gallery could show up at Winona events simply for pr purposes....even showing it in the towns that surround Winona...might create new energy to come to the museum, brewery's and live music might be a great connection for the museum...young families...
- Covid precautions in place - masked day options, more modern art
- Outdoor sculpture garden with beverages (tea, coffee, wine, etc.) and different types of seating
- We did go to the Sippin' Mississippi last night. As we sat out by the water I noticed a piece of land behind the benches unused. I thought of removing the benches and building a building that has a cafe, brewery store front, winery store front, and old fashioned candy shop.
- Update the place, make it more modern
- Add stage for music or theater
- Place to hangout
- Dress up the entrance (it's pretty easy to miss- all you see is the grain elevators
- Small shop inside that sold painting supplies
- More laid back
- I volunteer at the History Center, often on Mondays. I wish I had a dollar for every visitor who is disappointed, sad, or angry that the MMAM is not open for them to visit.
- Keeping the windows clean to look at the river in first room on the right... They're filthy

### **Miscellaneous (33 comments)**

Some folks commented that they simply lived too far away to visit more, or had not been to the museum yet. Other responses mentioned publicity, personal preferences, and other factors.

- do tourists from cruise boats have transportation? Do local schools have field trips?
- Perhaps more descriptive web pages or occasional personal mailings.
- More info publicity on displays
- I've never been to the museum and we are new to the community, so not sure.
- I live far away but wouldn't want this place located anywhere else
- Displeasure with former management
- More welcoming staff who get to know the volunteers.
- I'm not overly interested in art and art programs but if there was a reason to engage I would because I'm very community minded and want to see MMAM thrive.
- I feel like if I've gone once, I've seen what's there. Why go again. Maybe really highlight how frequently the museum displays change
- It was easier when my kids were little and I drove them everywhere. Now they are old enough to say no thanks, that doesn't sound fun.
- Nothing you can really do. I just need to get myself out more!
- Better items in the giftshop

### **Food and beverages (26 comments)**

Folks had a wide range of ideas for improving the museum's food and beverage options, often in conjunction with program ideas or space activations.

- A cafe or tea room so I could make a visit be more of a social outing with a friend.
- A safe bike path from downtown Evening hours with cocktails in the winter (opposite seasonal offering to Sippin')
- It would be nice to be able to sip a cocktail while enjoying the artwork
- Quality chef run Restaurant
- Have food trucks
- Fully funded culinary opportunities (cafe, cooking class, etc.) Sorry, I have two! A safer, more pedestrian/bike friendly path along Riverview Dr.
- add a cafe of some sort to turn it into a hang out place. maybe some live music too
- Good food, entertainer, on the boat by the museum
- Wine bar (featuring local wine)
- Make it a casino (with restaurants on boat)



### **Prices (15 comments)**

These comments touched on admission costs and wanting more discounted options.

- Guest passes for members. We'd love to bring friends here so they can consider joining.
- Monthly or every two months with a \$1 pass
- More free student days!
- Special on membership- Like get this as a x-mas gift:)
- Cost may be a barrier for some folks. Making a few more free or low cost days may be really good. I have a membership--so I have not excuse to not come often.
- Not taking the time to get a family pass that would make it more affordable to do short visits. I would like to see something with HCO so clients could visit more often. It can be costly for client and staff to go and then stay for a short time.
- Seasonal Saturdays more than 4x per yr

### **Time (9 comments)**

A few folks mentioned their own limited time as the main thing that would have to change.

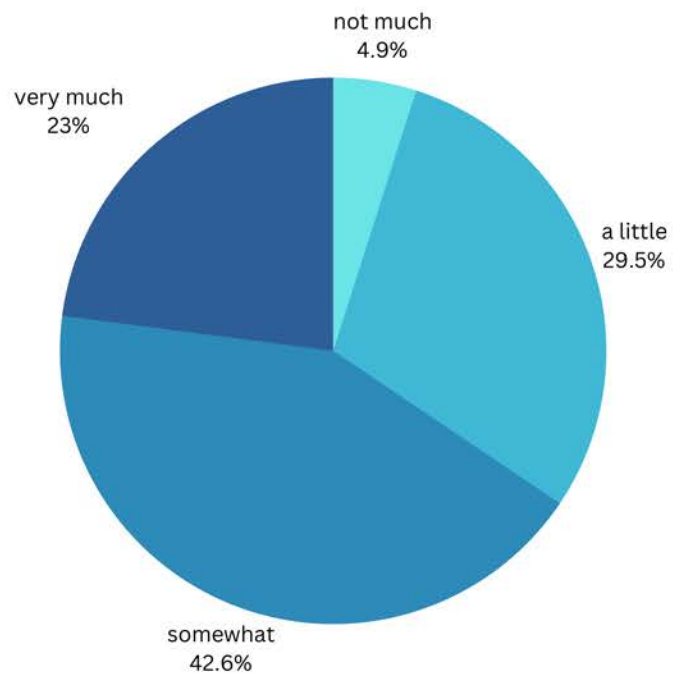
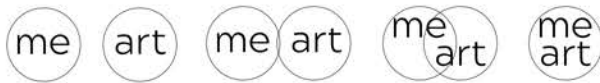
# OTHER AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR QUESTIONS

In this section, we take a look at responses to a few additional questions we asked in the response card and focus group populations.

## Response cards: How much do you connect with art?

We asked folks to show us how much they connected with art with a visual prompt, shown below. Most folks circled one of the middle two options. The chart at right reflects 61 responses to the prompt.

How much do you connect with art?  
Choose 1.



## Response cards: What kind of art matters most to you?

We asked folks to share with us what kind of art matters most to them. We received 57 responses, with a beautiful range of answers referencing styles, periods, features, and more.

### Style - including period or medium (25 comments)

Specific periods and styles (14 responses)

- Classical, historic (7 comments)
- Impressionistic (3)
- Realistic (4)

## **Style, continued**

Other styles and media (all 11 responses shown)

- Different mediums presented
- Sculpting and oil painting
- Drawing
- Paintings
- Music, dance, acting, visual arts
- Music
- Visual arts (all kinds), live theatre, music performances
- Abstract
- American, esp local artists
- Like photos, prints, nature, history

## **Content - what's depicted in the art (20 comments)**

Scenery (7 comments)

- Beautiful art that celebrates nature
- Nature- beautiful-deep (also art made by my family- haha)
- Early America and water, seas
- Nature-scenery- finely detailed with depth

Story, feeling conveyed (7 comments)

- Tells a story
- Like my art to show something, not just stuff with no purpose
- Ones with a story. Love hidden details by the artist
- The kind that conveys feeling, and that can cause feeling too

Easy to access or understand (6 comments - all shown)

- Art that is open to everyone
- All old and current that is understandable
- So many kinds, old and new, but it needs to be understood
- Love to have the hands on out for kids
- Accessible art, and art you can do yourself
- Art the everyone can participate in and touch

## **Any (12 comments)**

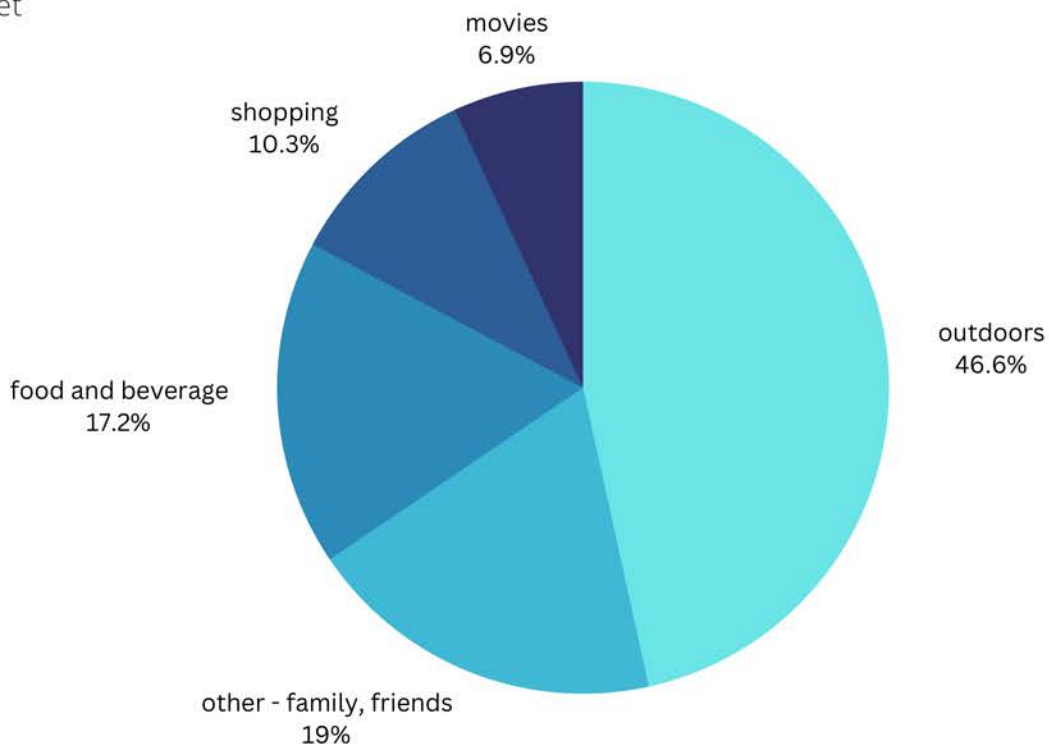
- Absolutely any kind
- All art matters. The richness and variety of art is what makes life interesting. (personally I enjoy art museums viewing)
- All art matters. Different perspectives on nature

**Focus groups: What do you do for fun in Winona?**

We asked focus group participants to tell us what they already did for entertainment in Winona. We received 58 responses, which fell into themes around food and beverages, activities with friends or family, movies, outdoor activities, and shopping.

**Selected comments**

- Going out to eat
- Karoke at Lucky's
- 3rd street shut down
- Gym
- Napping
- Do things with my kiddos
- Attend na meetings and events
- I love renting stuff like kayaks or bikes you can do it alone or with people
- Boating, fishing, camping
- Driving around
- Walking around lake
- Jiu jitzu, hiking, motorcycle riding
- Going to the movies, playing at the park with my daughter
- Painting, rock hunting,camping,fishing.
- Hunt fish
- Going downtown
- Bring friends to downtown businesses
- Target

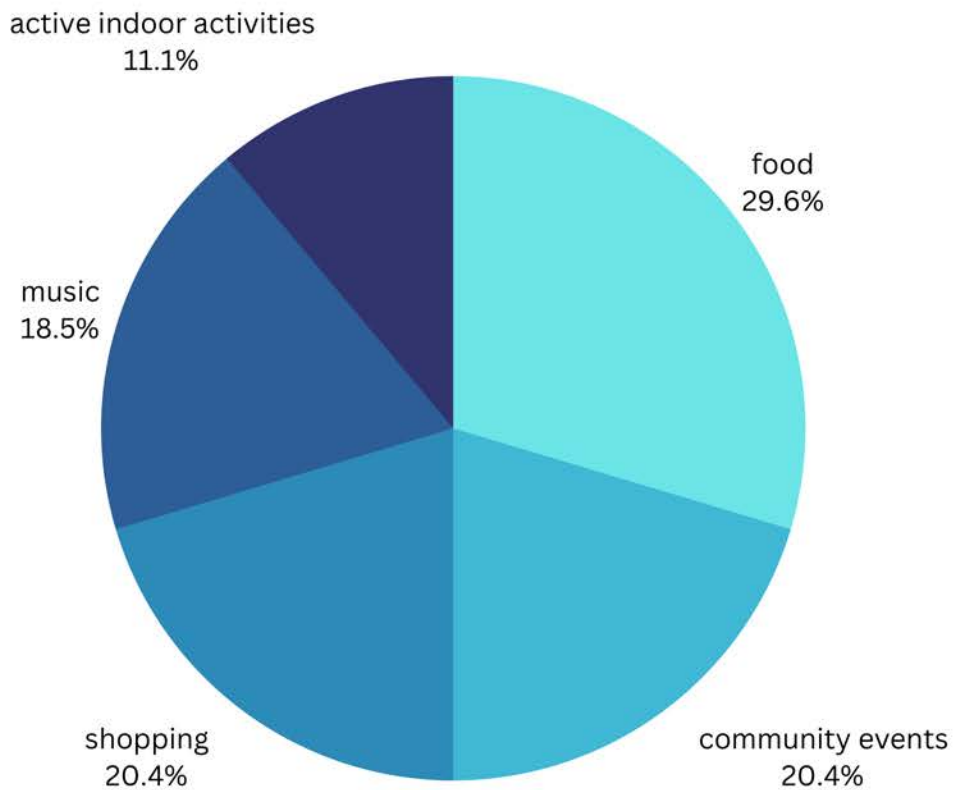


**Focus groups: What do you wish you could do in Winona, that you currently go to other communities for?**

We asked focus group participants to tell us about things they wished they could do in Winona. We received 54 responses, most naming food, events, shopping, music, and active indoor pursuits.

**Selected comments**

- Roller skating
- La Crosse has a bounce house (winter)
- Out for meals in other communities
- Places with cocktails
- Winona doesn't have fine dining
- more good places to eat
- More city life for under 21
- Art festivals/festivals
- Can't host a big event here
- Nice conference center
- Any events that are sober related
- More live music
- Comedy shows and concerts
- I live close to MOA, I go home for that



# AUDIENCE SUMMARY

In this section we provide a summary of participant demographics. Demographic information from pop-ups and focus groups is based on informal windshield counts. Response cards included 3 demographic questions due to limited space. We collected detailed demographic information from survey respondents.

## Pop-up booth attendees

TOTAL NUMBER: 290

At Winona County Fair: 181 booth participants were about 80% youth, with the remaining 20% a good mix of younger, middle-aged, and older adults. Racial demographics tracked with those of Winona County as a whole.

At Bob Welch Aquatic Center/Lunch Bus: 36 participants were about 50% youth, with the remaining 50% parents or grandparents. Racial demographics tracked with those of Winona County as a whole.

At Winona State University Kryzsko Commons: 75 participants were all college-aged, with racial demographics tracking with WSU student population numbers - about 85% white.

## Focus group participants

TOTAL NUMBER: 49

We met with three distinct populations for focus group conversations: veterans (10), Winona State University students (32), and treatment court participants (7).

## Response cards at Seasonal Saturday and MMAM front desk

TOTAL NUMBER: 78

The largest respondent age groups for response cards were 65-74 (30% of responses), 45-54 (18% of responses), and 18-24 (18% of responses).

The response card included a simplified income question with options for 0-49,999, 50-99,000, and 100,000+. More folks chose to leave this question blank (44%), but among those who responded, 44% reported incomes under \$50,000, 36% reported incomes between 50,000-99,999, and 21% reported incomes of \$100,000 or more.

## **Survey population**

TOTAL NUMBER: 273

### **Geographic area**

62% of survey respondents said they lived in Winona, and 38% said they lived elsewhere. Of those who lived elsewhere, 68% were from communities less than 1 hour away, and 32% were from communities greater than 1 hour away. In total, 88% of survey participants were from the region.

### **Age**

The survey population was slightly older than the Winona County population. In the survey population, 18% were under age 35, compared to 50% under age 35 in Winona County's population. The three age categories with the highest number of responses were 35-44, 55-64, and 65-74.

### **Race or ethnic group**

Racial and ethnicity demographics track with Winona County population data, with about 89% of the survey population identifying as white compared to 91% of Winona County's population. Respondents included those identifying as Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, and multiple races.

### **Gender identity**

We saw greater participation by respondents identifying as female - 77 percent of responses. 18 percent of respondents identified as male, and the remaining 5 percent identified as gender non-conforming, preferred not to answer, or preferred to self describe.

### **Income**

The survey population reported incomes slightly higher than Winona County as a whole. In the survey population, 22% of respondents reported incomes below \$50,000, compared to 42.5% in Winona County as a whole.

Above \$50,000, the respondent pool tracked closely with Winona County. The largest group of respondents were those with household incomes of \$100,000 or more, with 23% of responses. This percentage was consistent with Winona County, where 25% have incomes of \$100,000 or more. 19% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

The largest income group in Winona County is income of less than \$35,000, representing 28% of Winona County's population.

### **Highest level of school you completed**

The survey respondent population had higher education levels than Winona County - 77% had a Bachelor's degree or higher in the survey population, compared to 31% of Winona County residents.

### **Children 18 or younger at home**

Survey respondents were slightly more likely to have children under 18 at home - 30% of the survey population compared to 22% of Winona County residents.

### **Frequency of museum attendance**

Most survey participants attended the museum 3 times per year or fewer. 38% said they attended 1-3 times per year, 28% said they'd attended a few times total, and 6% had never been. 28% of respondents attended 4 times a year or more.

### **Membership status**

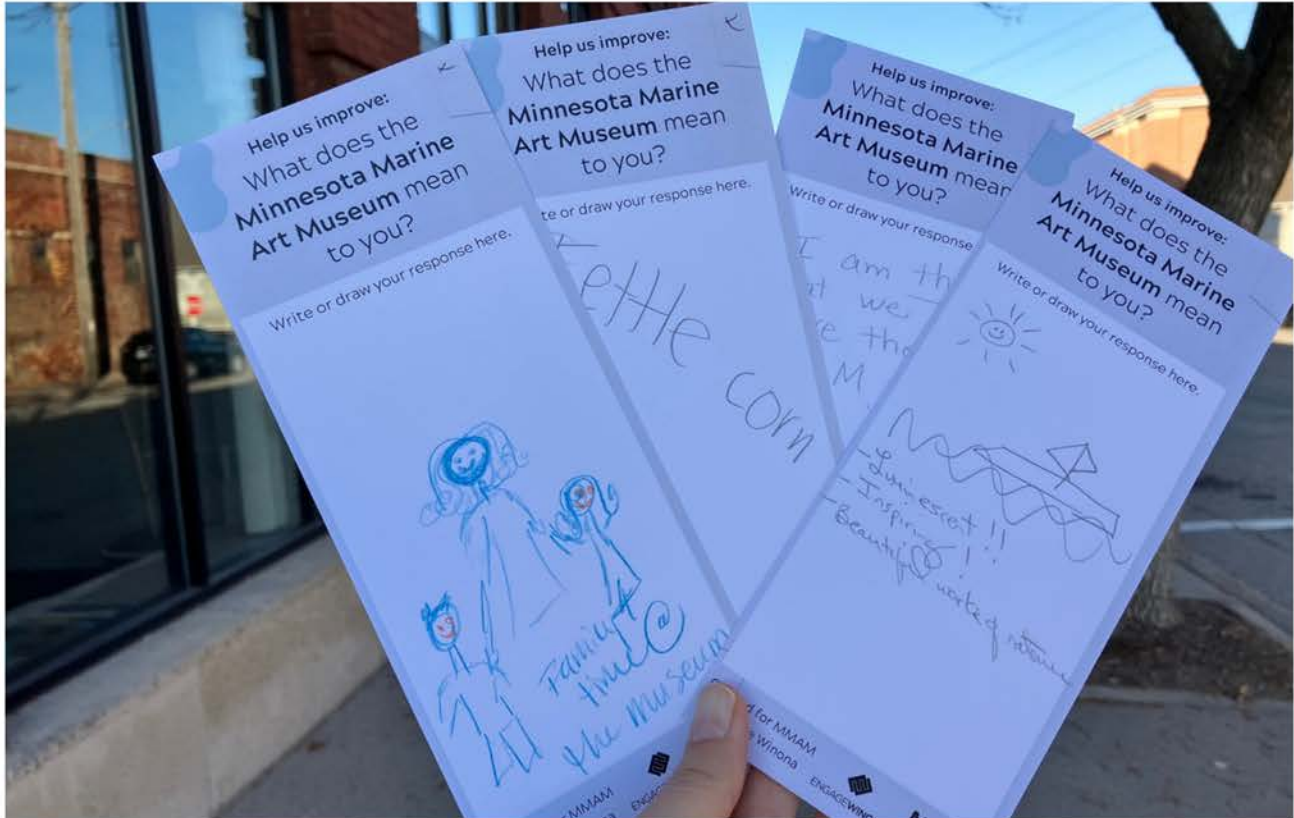
36% of respondents were museum members, and 64% were not.

### **Docent or volunteer status**

This question asked folks if they are, or have ever been, a museum docent or other volunteer. 88 percent did not have volunteer experience, and 12 percent did.







- Drawing: smiling sun in some waves of water with clouds
- Drawing: stick figure smiling
- Drawing: Tree
- Drawing: two people having a conversation, one person saying "Wow. This place is filled w/ talent" the other person saying "Look at the ghost moriset painted!"
- Drawing: Two smiling faces
- Drawing: water and shore
- Drawing: wavy circle, "inspirational"
- Drawing: woods/trees with a path
- Emotionally uplifting
- First class close to home for an affordable price.
- fun
- Great inspiration beautiful setting calming. Drawing: heart. Thank You!
- Growing minds, Drawing: Leaf
- Haha, that was cool
- I am thrilled that we have the MMAM here in Winona! We are members and enjoy coming here often.
- I particularly enjoy the rotating displays. However, the basic collection is excellent, and the museum is a lovely place to bring company

- It "used" to mean a lot more when ALL the paintings were here. So SAD to hear they have been sold by owner!! :( The current exhibitions are good but really miss the "old" ones too.
- It is a cool and fun museum Drawing: smiling face
- It is stunning! Loved the mix of styles and times
- It means a celebration of the arts, local artists and other famous artists. Good fellowship with others.
- It's a close and easy great place to go to take in the wonderful art work here
- It's a fun outing with friends and family to see some beautiful and unique art.
- Just enjoy the whole museum
- Kettle corn
- Learning, feeling, expanding, inspire, create, art
- Many times better than modern art galleries
- Mn Marine Art Museum is quite the gem! It was our family's first visit. We will be back!!
- Not much
- Peterson's cut art reminds me of my grandma's minute crochet. Check out gail grinnell's (wash state) lace installations
- Relaxation, Interesting artwork crafts, experiences, Beautiful building
- Small town such as Winona- can nourish themselves with great art, culture, and beauty of knowledge of the world we live in. Thanks
- The beauty of life presented in different mediums
- This was an enriching, enjoyable afternoon. We will definitely return. Thank you to all of the gracious volunteers
- water
- We enjoyed the tour of the MMAM gallery. Excellent collection of world class art! Beautiful location adjacent to the Mississippi River
- Where else can someone like me see such beauty- have to thank the Winona visitors place for suggesting. And to all your donors. It is unique in a beautiful city.