

3. ECONOMIC PLAN

Section 3: Economic Plan is the second piece for describing, understanding and restructuring the downtown target area's economy (the first piece being the physical plan). This section analyzes the data compiled through the Downtown Business Owner Survey and the Consumer Intercept Survey to develop an understanding of the existing economic conditions present in the downtown target area.

3.1 Downtown Business Owner Survey

As discussed in Section 1.2, survey forms were delivered to businesses located within the downtown target area. The purpose of the Downtown Business Owner Survey is twofold: first to develop a profile of the businesses within the downtown and secondly to determine what issues or problems the business community currently faces.

A total of twenty business owner surveys were completed. Of the businesses that responded, 100% are independently owned, 42% have been in existence for twenty years or longer, and 75% own their business space. A total of 112 individuals are employed by these businesses. A variety of products and services are provided, ranging from books, fabrics, and gifts to auto-repair, insurance, and photography. Respondents identified Friday as the busiest day of the week and the busiest time of the day occurring between 10 A.M. and noon.

The Downtown Business Owner Survey identified the "average" customer as traveling from outside the Village of Macedon to shop in the target area. Parking is not a problem for 78% of the employees of those businesses; however, customer parking was identified as an issue for 50% of the businesses that replied.

Zoning and other regulations are an issue for 59% of the surveyed businesses, with parking enforcement and the speed of permit approvals cited by a majority of responding businesses. Of those businesses responding, 50% indicated they are interested in training or technical assistance, with façade design and marketing assistance identified. A majority of respondents (70%) are also interested in grant or loan programs to assist with business improvements, with several citing the upkeep of their building as the reason for their interest.

Lastly, regarding improvements to the downtown target area that could enhance the business community: nine respondents identified parking and seven indicated they would like to see more businesses—especially retail business—in the downtown to help attract more consumers. Overall improvement of the buildings and streetscape was also identified through the survey. Results of the Downtown Business Owner Survey are available in Appendix E.

3.2 Consumer Intercept Survey

To complement the Downtown Business Owner Survey, an additional survey was designed to target residents and visitors that use the downtown. One of the goals of the Consumer Intercept Survey is to develop a profile of downtown Macedon's consumers and visitors. Additionally, the

surveys gathered data on the likes and dislikes of respondents using the downtown and what areas they would like to see improvements.

To obtain the most accurate results, a goal of 400 completed surveys was established.⁷ Despite this target, the total completed surveys fell short with 298 surveys being completed for the Village of Macedon. While the response rate was lower than desired, the data is still valuable and provides information about the target area from both the visitors' and consumers' perspective.

It is important to note that many of the survey forms that were received were not fully completed; therefore, the percentages discussed are based upon the response rate for that particular question and not the total surveys received. Of the total respondents: 58% are female; 63% are between the ages of 36 and 65; 75% live in the Village of Macedon; and 39% work in the Village of Macedon. The two largest household income groups are: (1) 32% with income between \$50,000 and \$74,999 and (2) 22% with income between \$75,000 and \$99,000. This information provides some local demographic background and helps put survey results into perspective.

Additional survey results provide a more detailed look into the routines of those surveyed. Approximately 70% of respondents drove to the downtown target area. Excluding the choice of "Other," the top reasons for their visit are: "I live here" (37%); "Shopping/retail" (24%); and "Village hall" (20%). Of the respondents who were shopping in the downtown, 38% were purchasing floral/gifts and 26% were patronizing the bookstore. Approximately 30% of those surveyed answered that they do not shop in the downtown with another 30% stating they shopped in the downtown less than once a month. The most identified shopping destinations (outside the downtown target area) are: the discount super center (68%); the regional mall (57%) and the next town over (27%). Fifteen percent identified the City of Rochester as a place they shop as well.

The last set of survey questions address the respondents' opinions about the downtown target area. Approximately 68% indicated that store hours are adequate in the downtown; 51% stated that parking is a problem; 63% felt that signage is adequate; 58% felt safe walking/crossing the street; and 70% thought the downtown is clean and properly maintained. A majority of replies regarding what kinds of improvements they would like to see in the downtown are: selection of retail/services (70%); appearance of streets/buildings (49%); and parking (32%). While statistics were not developed for the open-ended questions, which asked about the likes and dislikes concerning the downtown, several themes were apparent. In response to the question, "What is your favorite thing about the Village downtown?," many individuals identified the hanging flower baskets and the quiet small-town feel. In response to the question, "What do you dislike most about the Village downtown?," many individuals identified the limited number of stores and a general lack of things to do in the target area. Results of the Consumer Intercept Survey are available in Appendix F.

⁷ Joshua Bloom, "Surveys," *Main Street News*, no. 217 (April 2006): 7.