

# Public Opinions

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM



The foundation of a good Comprehensive Plan is the incorporation of public input early and often throughout the development of the document. Visualizing a future for the Village of Granville is an intensive and integral component of the Plan. It requires the input of the Village's elected and appointed leaders, business owners, and residents, as well as the knowledge contained within Village resources to provide an arena for the development of coordinated goals and objectives. To facilitate this, the Village of Granville has both created a broad based Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and developed a Comprehensive Community Outreach Program aimed at incorporating varying levels of public participation throughout the planning process.

Recognizing the importance of public involvement, the Village of Granville sought methods of community outreach beyond simply inviting the public to the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee meetings. Several opportunities for community outreach were afforded to the residents, including: community surveys, business surveys, a community S.W.O.T. Analysis workshop where Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats were identified, articles in *The Granville Sentinel* newspaper, and both draft and final Comprehensive Plan presentations given at public meetings.

## *Community Residential Survey*

A Community Residential Survey was distributed to every household in the Village (approximately 1,000). The purpose of the broad distribution was to afford the majority of people in the Village the opportunity to participate in the planning process. The combination of different perspectives, experiences, opinions, backgrounds and talents seems to be the "unlocking" mechanism which opens more opportunities for a successful plan; a plan that represents what the

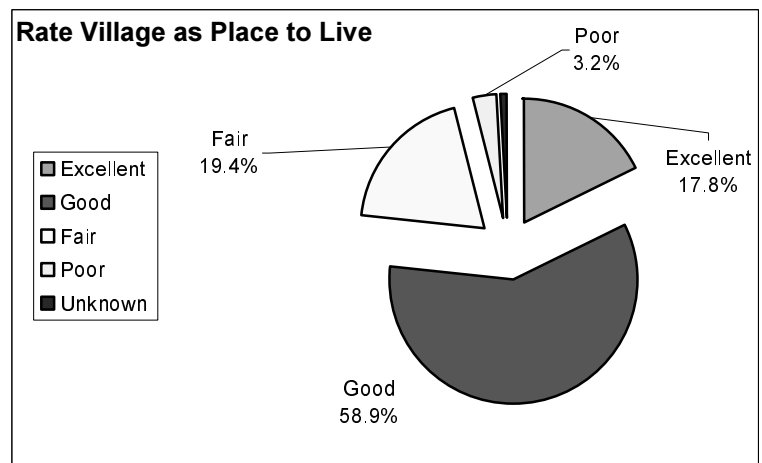
community has collaboratively created, and one that focuses on a common vision that can be achieved.

Approximately 256 written surveys were returned to the Village, resulting in a return rate of 25.6%. Responses to the survey were tabulated, illustrated as charts, and presented to the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. A copy of the survey and the actual results of all the survey questions can be found in Appendix B. The following provides the highlights of the community residential survey.

Quality of life issues can be defined as the many elements of daily living that are the forefront of everyday existence; how one enjoys, experiences and is affected by ones surroundings, systems and interactions. Being satisfied with the elements, which most frequently and personally touch our lives, will usually produce a favorable rating of quality of life. The results of the Community Residential Survey reflect this satisfaction, as respondents generally feel that they live in a nice, safe, affordable place.

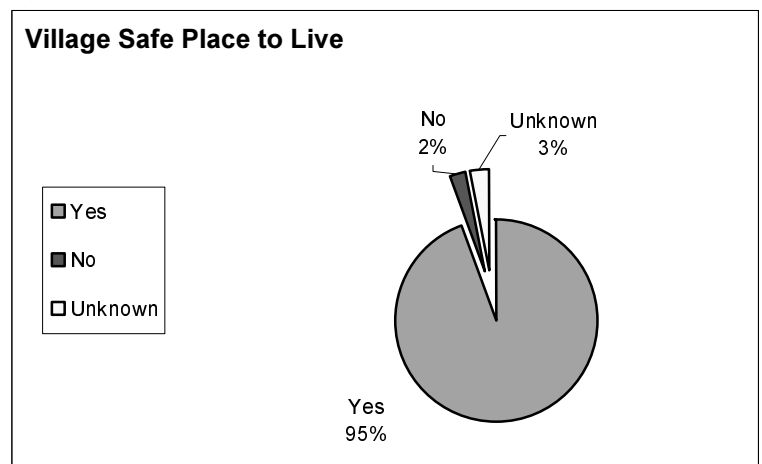
When asked to rate the Village as a place to live, 58.9% of the respondents stated that the Village is a good place to live, 17.8% thought it was an excellent place to live, 19.4% reported it as fair, and a mere 3.2% of those surveyed rated the Village as poor (Figure 9). In addition, 85% of the respondents commented that they thought housing was affordable in the Village, and an astounding 95% thought that the Village was a safe place live (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Rate Village as Place to Live



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

Figure 10: Village Safe Place to Live

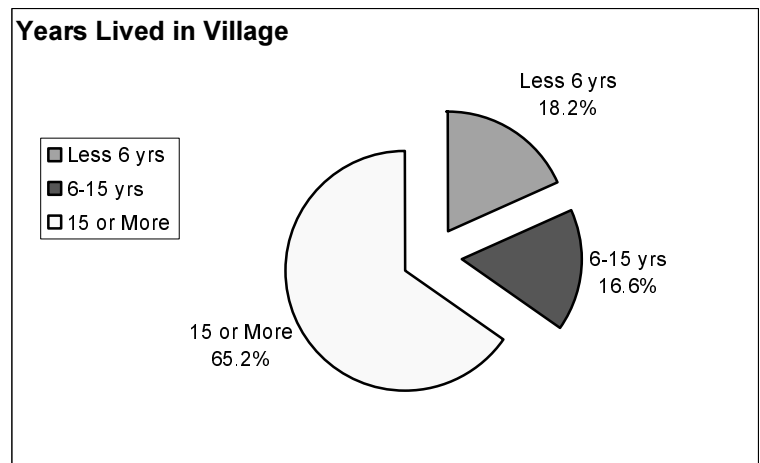


Source: 2002 Residential Survey

### *Long-time Residents*

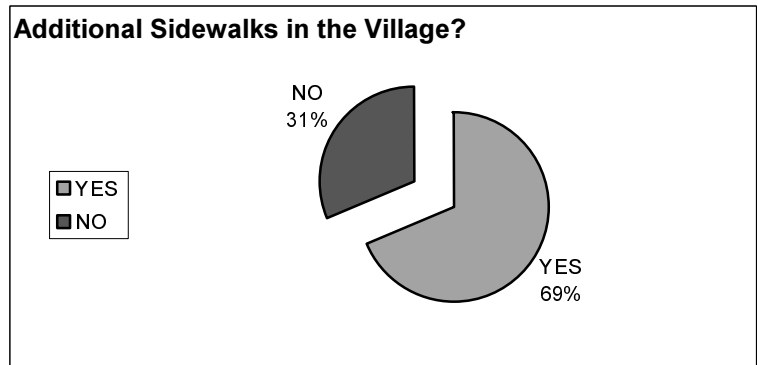
Of the population surveyed, 65.2% of the respondents reported to having lived in the Village for more than 15 years. Sixteen percent (16.6%) said that they had lived in the Village for 6-15 years and 18.2% for less than 6 years. With over 4/5 of those responding having lived in the Village for six or more years (perhaps for many others, a life-time), the responses from the survey reflected much of the quality of life and sense of place issues that “rooted” individuals have. (Figure 11) The results of the Community Residential Survey show that, in general, people choose to live in the Village of Granville because of its’ hometown feel, its’ friendly neighbors, open space, safe streets and many other positive aspects of village life. Nevertheless, some minor criticisms were noted such as the belief in the need for additional sidewalks (Figure 12). Overall, the assessment and ratings were mostly positive.

**Figure 11: Years Lived in Village**



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

Figure 12: Additional Sidewalks in the Village

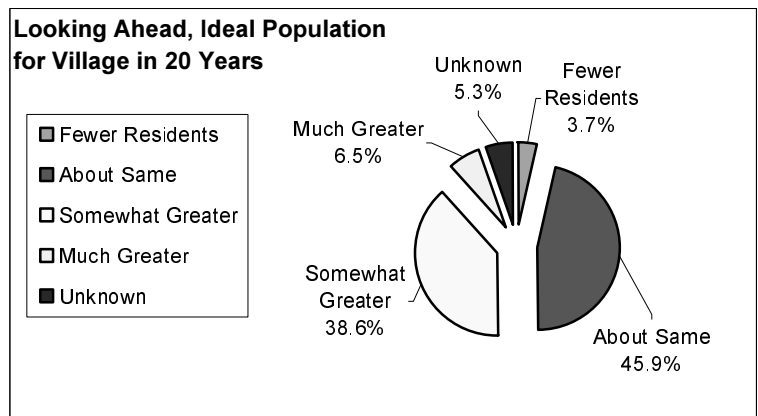


Source: 2002 Residential Survey

*Attitude Toward Growth*

When asked about future growth and looking ahead to the *Ideal Population for the Village in 20 years*, 45.9% expressed that they wanted the population to stay about the same and 38.6% said the Village should grow somewhat. There were those who thought the Village could stand to grow much greater (6.5%) and some (3.7%) wishing that there were even fewer residents than there are now. Those that answered unknown (5.3%) are probably comfortable with the size of the Village and not very sure how growth would affect this comfort level. (Figure 13)

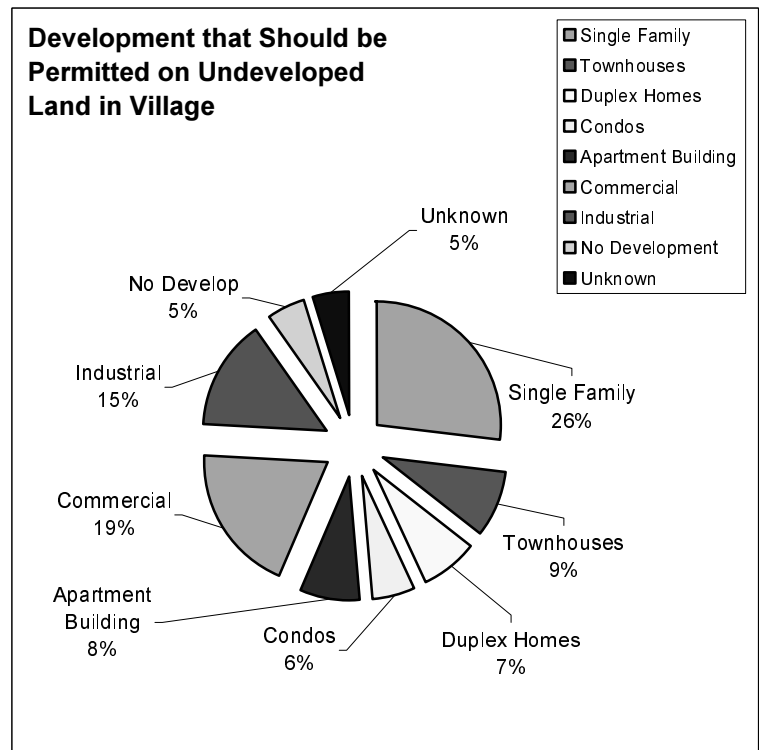
Figure 13: Looking Ahead, Ideal Population in 20 Years



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

While the respondents are divided on perceptions of the “*Ideal Population*”, they agree on the type of development that should occur on undeveloped land in the Village. A small majority (56%) of the residents surveyed, stated that future growth on undeveloped land should be residential in nature (Figure 14). The remaining 19% wanted new commercial development, 15% wanted industrial, and 5% each wanted “*No Development*” at all or had no opinion.

**Figure 14: Development that should be permitted on Undeveloped Land**

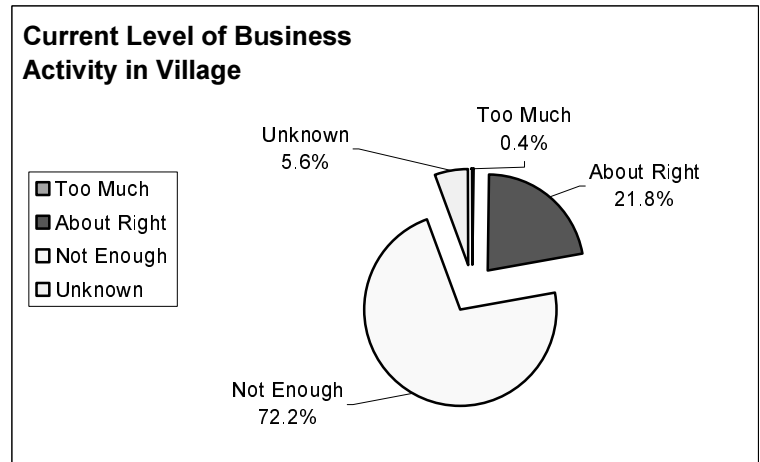


Source: 2002 Residential Survey

When asked about the current level of business activity in the Village, a majority (72.2%) of the respondents thought there was *not enough* business in the Village, 21.8% said it was *just about right*, zero surveys were returned indicating *too much* activity, and only 5.6% responded, *unknown*. Types of new business that were expressed as wanted and needed were; a department store, a grocery store, fine dining

restaurants, a movie theater, and specialty gift shops. The loss of the Grand Union grocery store and the Ames department store represents not only a loss of jobs and tax revenue, but also a loss of the convenient and economical goods and services these two major businesses once provided. (Figure 15)

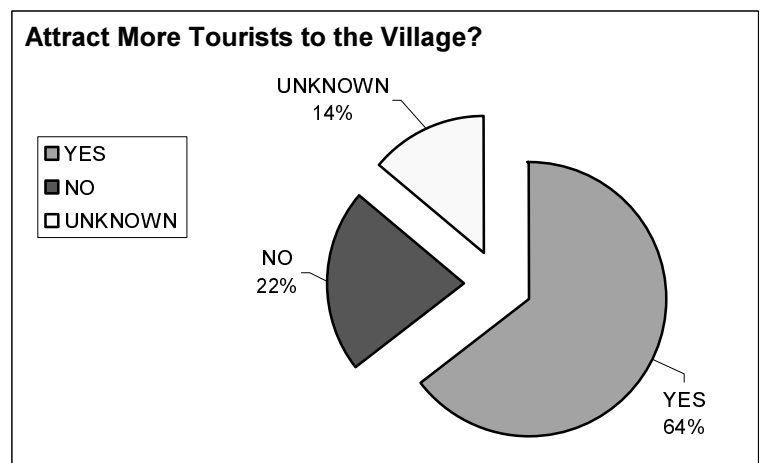
Figure 15: Current Level of Business Activity



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

The Community Residential Survey questioned if more tourists should be attracted to the Village. Sixty four percent (64%) of the respondents answered yes, and 22% answered no (14% were tallied as unknown). (Figure 16) With 2/3's of all those surveyed indicating that tourism should be promoted and encouraged, it is evident that residents understand the positive affects of tourism. Tourism could lead to the creation of new tourist serving jobs, and the collection of more revenue for the community. With an influx of tourism, it is safe to assume that many of the empty storefronts of "Main Street" could be retrofitted to meet the needs of tourists, with opportunities for dining, specialty souvenir shops, and lodging accommodations.

Figure 16: Attract More Tourists

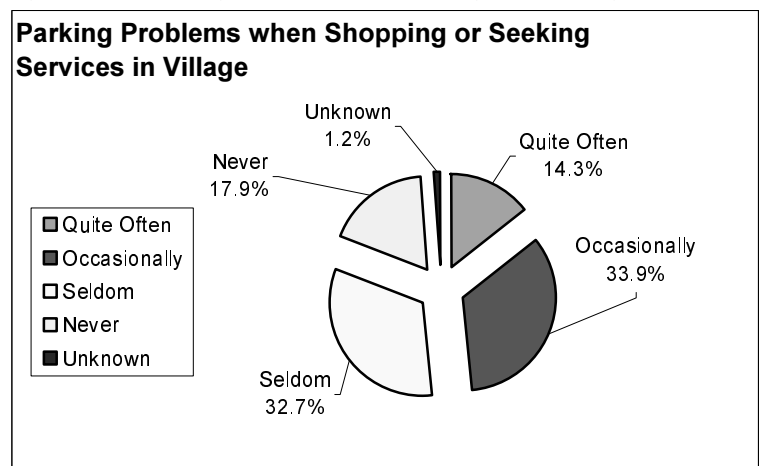


Source: 2002 Residential Survey

*Traffic and Parking Issues*

Over seventy percent of those responding to the Community Residential Survey stated that they *quite often* seek services in the Village. In regards to parking, the survey revealed that for some, parking was a problem *quite often* (14.3%). Others (33.9%) stated that parking was only an *occasional problem*, 32.7% stated it was *seldom* a problem, and 17.9% said parking was never a problem. (Figure 17)

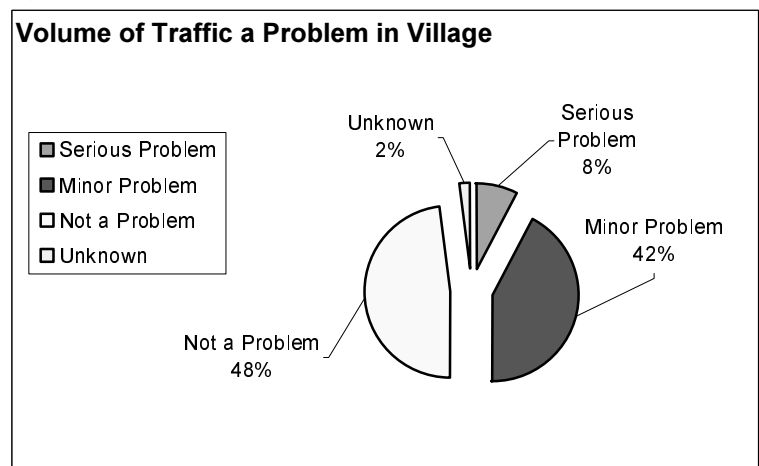
Figure 17: Parking Problems; Shopping or Seeking Services



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

When asked if the volume of traffic in the Village was a problem, most survey respondents stated it was *not a problem* or a *minor problem*. We might assume that nearly 90% of the respondents do not see traffic in the Village as a major problem at all, or that the respondents are possibly pedestrians or drivers who experience worse parking and traffic conditions elsewhere in comparison. (Figure 18)

Figure 18: Volume of Traffic a Problem



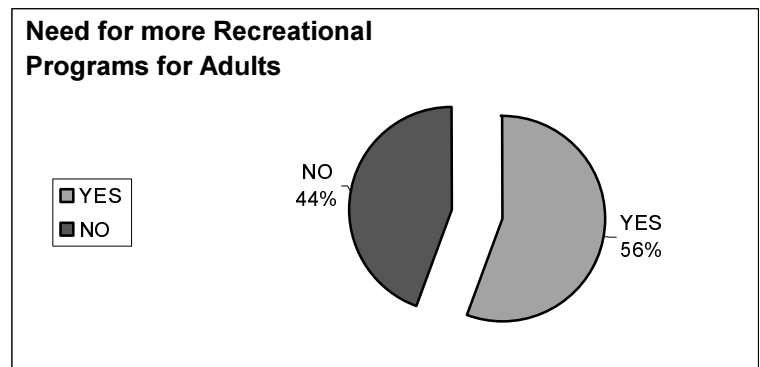
Source: 2002 Residential Survey

## Recreation

As in most communities, recreational resources are valued amenities that contribute greatly to the overall quality of life. The Village of Granville is no exception. Survey questions, which attempted to reveal the satisfaction level of recreation options in the community, were answered in the following manner. Approximately 38% of the survey respondents were satisfied with recreation programs for youths; and 27.8% were not. All others were unsure. Fifty six percent of the respondents thought there was a need for more recreational programs for adults and 44% did not. The most frequently requested additional amenity for the Village was a swimming pool. Other popular wants/needs listed were, a movie theater, bike and walking trails, and additional sports and

recreation fields (including tennis courts), a YMCA facility (or equivalent) and summer camp programs for children. (Figure 19)

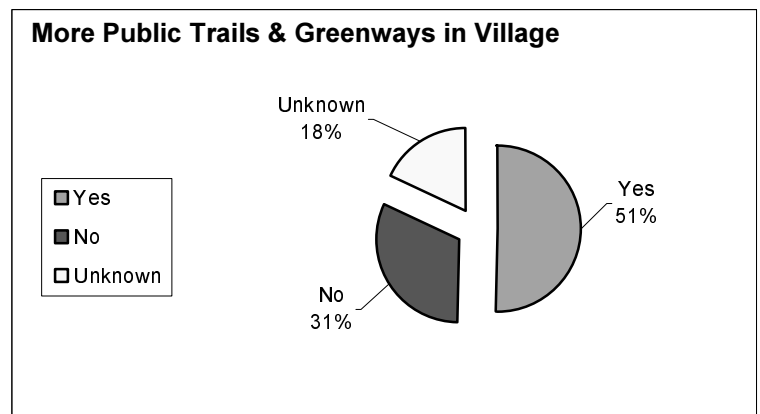
Figure 19: Need for more Recreational Programs for Adults



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

Open space protection usually yields more opportunity for recreational activities (active and passive) especially in natural settings like open fields, wooded areas and waterfronts. Almost half of all survey respondents indicated that there was a need for more greenways and public trails. If additional greenways and public trails were created, not only would Village residents benefit from these amenities, but they would also serve non-resident recreation enthusiasts. (Figure 20)

Figure 20: More Public Trails & Greenways



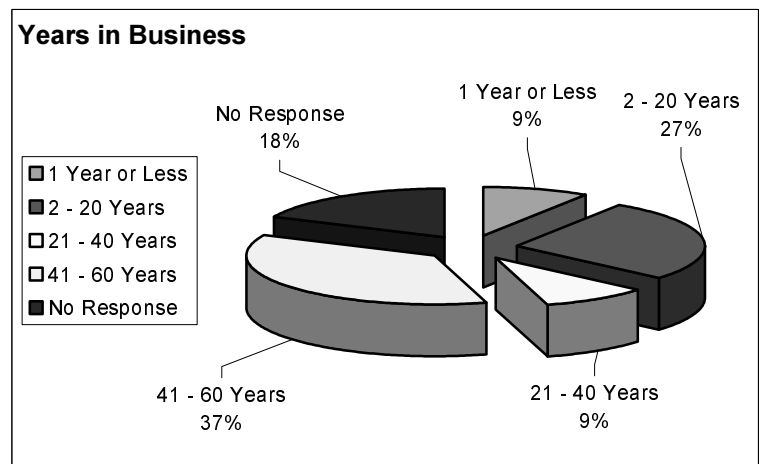
Source: 2002 Residential Survey

*Community Business Survey*

A Community Business Survey was distributed to 84 Village businesses. Twelve surveys were returned, resulting in a response rate of 14%. A copy of the survey and the actual results of all the survey questions can be found in Appendix C. The following provides the highlights of the Community Business Survey.

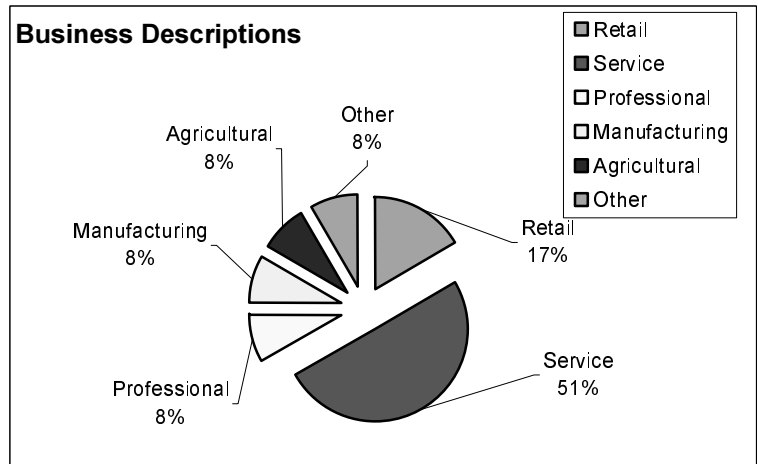
Several businesses in the Village have a long local history of operating in Granville. The results of the community business survey showed that 37% of the respondents have been in business between 41 and 60 years. Nine percent (9%) have been in business between 21 and 40 years and 27% have been in business between 2 and 20 years. (Figure 21) The percentage break down of all Village businesses can be best be described as: 51% Service orientated, 17% Retail and 8% Professional, 8% Manufacturing, 8% Agricultural and 8% other. (Figure 22)

**Figure 21: Years in Business**



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

Figure 22: Business Descriptions

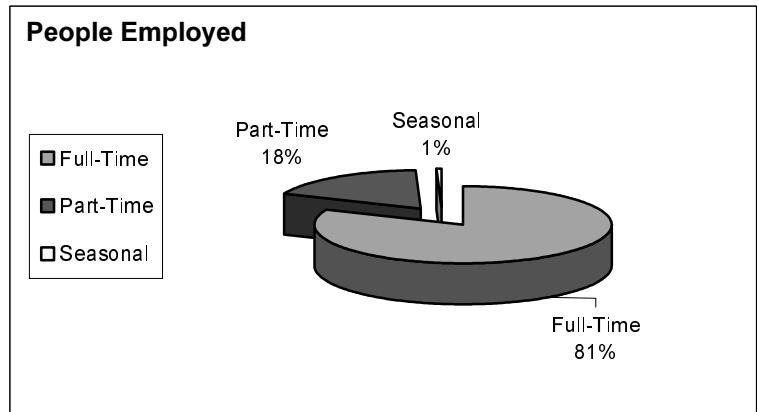


Source: 2002 Residential Survey

## Employment

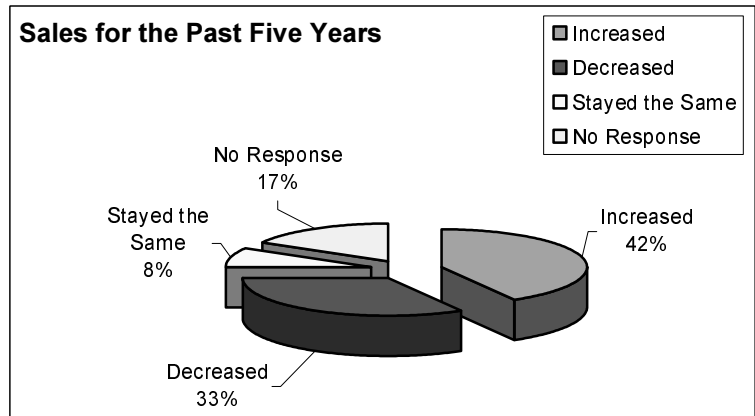
When asked *how many people are employed*, the total results of the Community Business Survey showed that 81% are employed full-time, 18% part-time and 1% seasonal. (Figure 23) Of the businesses surveyed, 67% were owned, 25% rented and the remaining 8% reflected no response to the survey question. Most of the survey respondents reported that in general, sales have increased over the past five years. Other businesses (33%) reported a decrease in sales or no change in sales (8%). (Figure 24)

Figure 23: People Employed



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

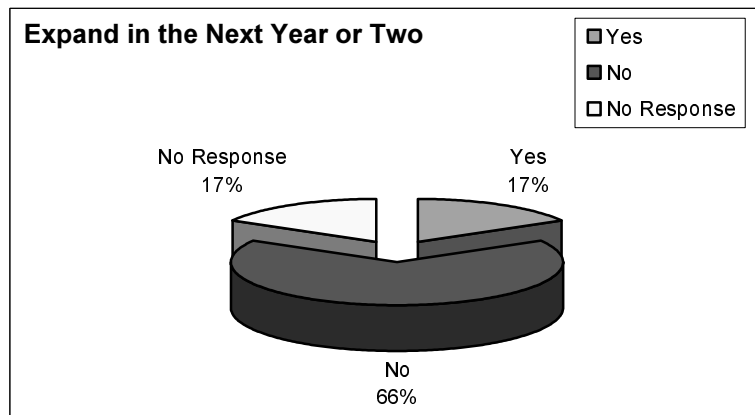
**Figure 24: Sales for the Past Five Years**



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

Expansion of businesses is largely connected to current trends in the overall economy. On a localized level, 17% of the businesses responding to the Community Business Survey claim to be considering expansion in the near future, while 66% do not. (Figure 25) Businesses owners see issues with parking, empty buildings, and loitering. Respondents also indicate that improved building facades and sidewalks would directly benefit the local business environment. In addition, respondents expressed the negative affects of the Route 22 By-pass, and concerns over the diversion of small businesses from Main Street to malls and shopping centers elsewhere.

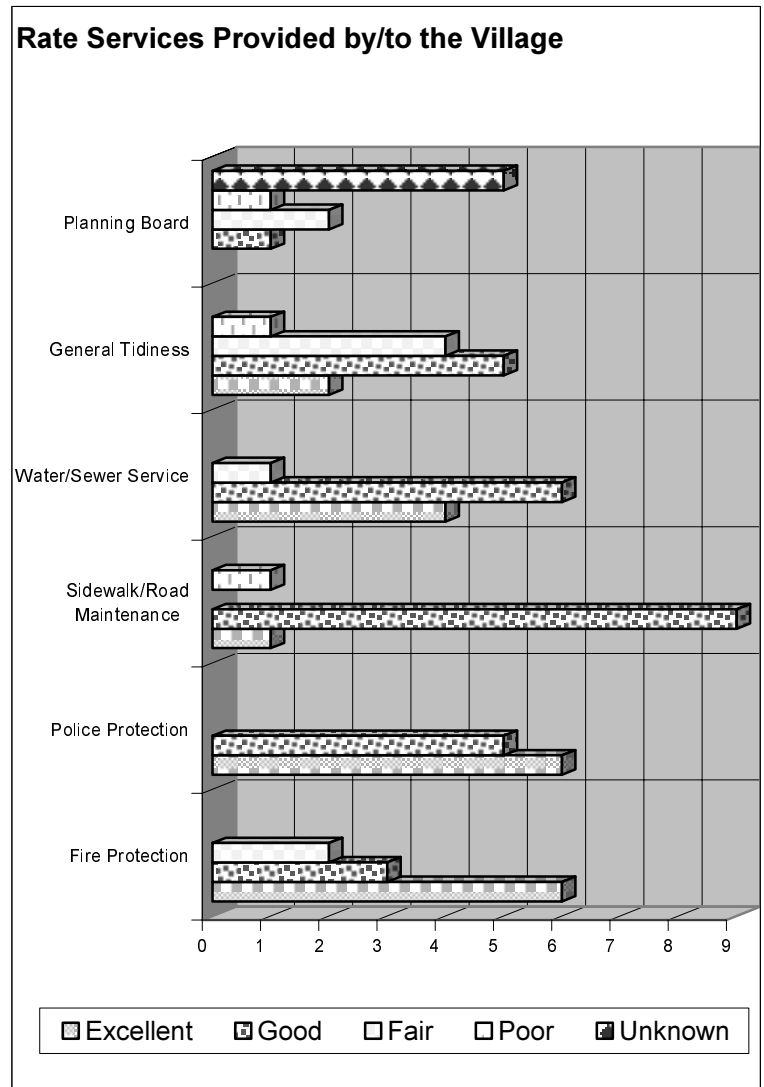
**Figure 25: Expand in the Next Year or Two**



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

When asked to rate the services provided by the Village, most businesses responded very positively as shown in the responses of the survey by business owners. (Figure 26)

Figure 26: Rate Services Provided



Source: 2002 Residential Survey

### S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

*Strengths Weaknesses  
Opportunities Threats*



During the September and October Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee meetings, the Committee and public attendees performed an exercise called a S.W.O.T Analysis. A S.W.O.T Analysis is a method for describing the community in terms of its *Strengths*, *Weaknesses*, *Opportunities*, and *Threats*. Essentially, the meeting attendants discussed and listed those factors that have the most impact on the community. The *Strengths* of a community are defined as characteristics that allow a community to take advantage of opportunities, or reduce the impact of barriers. *Weaknesses* are characteristics that could stand in the way of the community's ability to take advantage of opportunities. *Opportunities* are factors that allow the community to take action or encourage something to be done. *Threats* are factors that stand in the way of a community's efforts to get something done.

A S.W.O.T Analysis is an easy, understandable way of identifying the key issues and communicating them to others. The aim of a S.W.O.T Analysis is to identify the critical issues in any situation and to organize them in a way that enables a community to develop a sound strategic approach to addressing those issues. The approach should enable you to do the following:

Build on **Strengths**  
Minimize **Weaknesses**  
Seize **Opportunities**  
Counter **Threats**

During the September meeting, the attendees worked on identifying *Strengths* and *Weaknesses*. The large group broke into smaller groups of about 4-6 individuals representing Village residents and business owners, to identify and discuss *Strengths* and *Weaknesses* relating to land use, physical and environmental resources, community and municipal resources, historical and cultural resources, and recreational and educational resources. Each group

assigned a spokesperson to record and report the results of their *brainstorming session*.

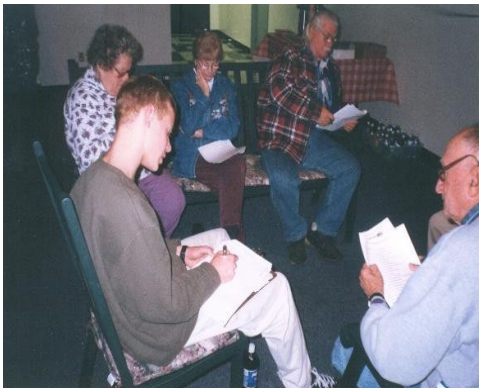
To assist the group in identifying the *Strengths* of the community, a group facilitator might ask questions like: What does your community do well? What distinct advantages does your community offer? Why do residents enjoy living in the community? To identify *Weaknesses* of the community, the group facilitator might ask questions like: What could be improved about the community? What stumbling blocks does the community continue to encounter? What do other communities do better than yours? After about one hour, the separate groups joined to discuss their results. A spokesperson for each group reported what they had listed as *Strengths* and *Weaknesses*.

The following is a list of *Strengths* and *Weaknesses* compiled at the first S.W.O.T Analysis workshop held in September. All of the responses given are listed, however the meeting participants ranked the first five in order of importance:

### S.W.O.T Analysis Final Results

#### Strengths - Residential Group

1. Safety, Security Good Police Department
2. Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Center
3. Health Care Facilities (Doctors, Dentists)
4. Good Infrastructure (water, sewer)
5. Village leadership
  - Friendly residents
  - Emergency Services (Fire, Rescue Police)
  - Variety of Churches-Strong Religious Alliances
  - Tourist attractions, Slate Valley Museum, Pember Museum and Library
  - Excellent municipal services/management



- Natural Areas (rivers, mountains) for recreation and scenic beauty
- Proximity to Lake Saint Catherine, VT, Adirondacks, Green Mountains (recreation)
- Strong Senior Citizen groups
- Employers (Telescope, Norton, Manchester Wood, Slate Industry)
- Historic buildings (Victorian homes)
- Accessibility - Easy to find your way around
- Shopping within walking distance - Intact Main Street
- Newspaper (rally the community)
- Community involvement, commitment
- Banking, Hardware Stores
- Well-maintained properties
- Active growth
- Clubs, fraternal/ civic organizations

### **Weaknesses - Residential Group**

1. Loss of jobs (Grand Union, Ames) Lack of employment opportunities
2. Lack of communication within Village Government entities and between Village Government, the School Board, and the Public
3. Lack of code enforcement, outdated Zoning Code
4. Lack of evening entertainment (dancing, movies, variety of restaurants) and recreation facilities
5. Lack of places to build (developable land) and lack of an Industrial Park
  - Lack of tourist accommodations
  - Route 22 by passes the Village Main Street (loss of potential tourist/shoppers)

- Conversion of Single-family homes to apartments
- Poor sidewalk condition and lack of sidewalks
- Signage at gateways to Village is poor
- Poor school athletic tract condition
- Lack of cellular service
- Parking issue (Lighting for parking is poor, Speeding a problem for parking cars, No signage for parking)
- Lack of activities and services for Senior Citizens
- Lack of ethnic diversity
- Aesthetics of slate quarries

### **Strengths - Business Group**

1. Tourist attractions, Slate Valley Museum, Pember Museum and Library
  2. Shopping within walking distance - Intact Main Street
  3. Employers (Telescope, Norton, Manchester Wood, Slate Industry)
  4. Safety, Security Good Police Department, Emergency Services (Fire, Rescue Police)
  5. Natural Areas (rivers, mountains) for recreation and scenic beauty
- Friendly residents
  - Variety of Churches-Strong Religious Alliances
  - Health Care Facilities (Doctors, Dentists)
  - Good Infrastructure (water, sewer)
  - Excellent municipal services/management
  - Proximity to Lake Saint Catherine, VT, Adirondacks, Green Mountains (recreation)
  - Strong Senior Citizen groups
  - Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Center
  - Historic buildings

- Accessibility - Easy to find your way around
- Little League
- Educational facilities
- Scenic By-Ways
- Lakes-to-Locks Program
- Veterans Park and bandstand
- Price Chopper Plaza
- McDonalds
- Fireman's Carnival
- Cemeteries tourism for genealogy
- Hick's Orchard, strawberry patch
- Maple sugaring
- Historic buildings on Main Street
- Pedestrian bridge over the Mettowee

### **Weaknesses - Business Group**

1. Loss of jobs (Grand Union, Ames)
  2. Diversion of small businesses from Main Street to malls and home-based offices
  3. Lack of tourist accommodations
  4. Vacant storefronts and second stories of Main Street buildings
  5. Lack of organizations, facilities, activities for youth
- Lack of code enforcement, outdated Zoning Code
  - Route 22 by passes the Village Main Street (loss of potential tourist/shoppers)
  - Conversion of Single-family homes to apartments
  - Poor sidewalk condition and lack of sidewalks
  - Poor signage at gateways to Village
  - Perception of school system as poor, low scholastic esteem

- Off the beaten path
- No strong marketing package (web site)
- Police Report gives negative picture of the Village
- Low household income
- Broken families
- Poster proliferation (yard sale signs, etc.)
- Lack of alternative transportation
- Business sprawl
- Not enough foot traffic on Main Street
- Second Hand shops overflow to sidewalks
- Poor commercial signage
- Conversion of front lawns to parking areas
- Lack of other places to shop in the Village

During the October meeting, the attendants worked on identifying *Opportunities* and *Threats* to the community. To identify *Opportunities* a group facilitator might ask questions like: What needs are not being met by the community that are being met by other municipalities. How can the community meet these needs and improve the community? To identify *Threats* to the community, a group facilitator might ask questions like: What are the obvious obstacles in your way, both potential and actual? What are neighboring communities doing that might cause negative impacts on your community? After about one hour, the separate groups joined to discuss their results. A spokesperson for each group reported what they had listed as *Opportunities* and *Threats*.

Due to the lack of meeting time, and the wide range of responses generated from the *brainstorming* session on *Opportunities* and *Threats*, the results of the workshop were not ranked. The following is a list of

*Opportunities* and *Threats* compiled at the second S.W.O.T Analysis workshop:

### **Opportunities - Residential Group**

- Utilize vacant retail/commercial space
- Empire Zone, attract business
- Develop tourism, tourist accommodations
- Enhance and protect the waterfront and natural resources for recreational purposes
- Communication and Partnerships within Village Government entities and between Village Government, the School Board, the Public and the Chamber of Commerce to promote local resources
- Expansion of Little League field for multi-purpose activities
- Public participation involvement improvement
- Village/Town cooperation/joint efforts – Library, Parks
- Compatible land uses – less competition
- Develop Main Street, Pedestrian friendly

### **Threats - Residential Group**

- Fragmented Government in Village – Lack of communication between Committees
- Empty storefronts
- Lack of employment
- Citizen apathy – Lack of citizen involvement in government
- Tax burden
- Deterioration of school system
- Lack of parking signs – directing to parking lots
- Narrow streets – double parking problem
- Loitering/quality of life/noise, crime
- Low water table

- River pollution from failing septic, agricultural runoff and trash
- Destruction of historic Victorian homes (multi-family conversion)

### **Opportunities - Business Group**

- Empire Zone
- Intact Main Street
- Available vacant retail space
- Rivers
- Rails-to-Trails
- Museums
- Bed and Breakfast accommodations
- Tourist attracting programs (promotion of history and natural resources)

### **Threats - Business Group**

- Malls (Glens Falls, Rutland)
- Vacant buildings
- Lack of jobs
- Poor perception of community by the community
- Lack of cohesiveness with in Town and Village
- Route 22 By-pass