



301 East Main Street
Lowell, Michigan 49331
Phone (616) 897-8457
Fax (616) 897-4085

CITY OF LOWELL
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 2018
12 NOON
AT
LOWELL CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SECOND FLOOR
301 EAST MAIN STREET

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL
2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
3. APPROVAL MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)
 - a) October 12, 2017
4. TREASURER'S REPORT
5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA
6. OLD BUSINESS
7. NEW BUSINESS
 - a) Approval of the 2018 meeting dates
 - b) Chamber of Commerce – Request Marketing Funds
 - c) Review Completed Surveys
8. REPORTS AND MEMBER COMMENTS
9. ADJOURNMENT

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2017**

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

The Meeting was called to order at 12:16 p.m. by Chair Reagan.

Present: Boardmembers Cliff Yankovich, Rita Reister, Mike Larkin, Dean Lonick, April McClure and Chair Reagan.

Absent: Boardmembers Doyle, Sprenger, and Mayor DeVore.

Also Present: City Manager Mike Burns, City Clerk Susan Ullery, City Treasurer Suzanne Olin, City Councilmember Greg Canfield and Department of Public Works Director Rich LaBombard.

2. EXCUSE OF ABSENSES

IT WAS MOVED BY LONICK and seconded by LARKIN to excuse the absence of Boardmembers Doyle, Sprenger and Mayor DeVore.

YES: 6. NO: 0. ABSENT: 3. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED BY YANKOVICH and seconded by MCCLURE to approve the agenda as written.

YES: 6. NO: 0. ABSENT: 3. MOTION CARRIED.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY LONICK and seconded by LARKIN to approve the minutes of the September 7, 2017 meeting as written.

YES: 7. NO: 0. ABSENT: 3. MOTION CARRIED.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
October 10, 2017**

Beginning Balance:	\$246,308.11
Revenue:	
TIFA Revenue	\$397,779.49

Total Revenues \$644,087.60

Expenditures:

Capital Outlay	\$9,845.00
Salaries/FICA	\$12,946.16
Maintenance Supplies	\$13,298.67
Utilities	\$7,520.84
Misc. and Community Promotions	\$110.61
Accrued Wages	\$3,045.57
Administration	\$3,784.61
Accrued Payables	\$7,347.62
Transfer to General Fund	

Total Expenditures: \$57,899.08

Ending Balance \$586,188.52

IT WAS MOVED BY YANKOVICH and seconded by REISTER to accept the Treasurer's Report as written.

YES: 6. NO: 0. ABSENT: 3. MOTION CARRIED.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

No comments were received.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Establishing a Brownfield District - Discussion.**

City Manager Mike Burns advised that the City has been approached by interested developers regarding the possibility of establishing a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRDA). The establishment of this district would be to allow reimbursement for abatement costs to contaminated, functionally obsolete, blighted or historic properties through tax increment financing (similar to the Downtown Development Authority). The advantage to this is, in addition to local tax capture, under state statute; school operating taxes can also be added to this capture. In addition, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, through the Michigan Strategic Fund, can also approve a 6% State Education Tax from approved developments to be captured for Brownfield remediation.

Burns advised he has approached the City Council and they are interested in forming the Authority. The State statute currently allows a Downtown Development Authority to serve as the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Since the Authority is project based, it might be better to utilize a board currently in place rather than creating an additional board for this purpose; especially since the number of projects may be limited. The City Council has directed Burns to ask the Downtown

Development Authority if they would be interested in serving as the board for this function. Creation of this Authority is a beneficial development tool for future development in the downtown as well as our city.

The boardmembers had some discussion of the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Burns advised that the Brownfield Tift can only be used for abatement costs, demolition, asbestos abatement, site preparation, public infrastructure, and infrastructure improvements. There are specific state guidelines to help the City get the Authority started and the City Attorney would help with this as well.

After some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to move forward on the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

b. Pavement Marking.

Department of Public Works Director Rich LaBombard explained that the Department of Public Works will be doing pavement markings on part of Bowes Road and on Foreman Street. They will be applying main line markings and school crossings. The total project is \$4,903.90. We are requesting \$3,000 from the DDA to assist with this project. The remainder will be paid for from the city's Major Street Fund.

LaBombard is recommending that the Downtown Development Authority approve expenditures at a cost not to exceed \$3,000 for the application of pavement markings on Bowes Road and Foreman Street.

IT WAS MOVED BY LONICK and seconded by LARKIN to approve expenditures at a cost not to exceed \$3,000.

YES: 6. NO: 0 ABSENT: 3. MOTION CARRIED.

9. REPORTS AND MEMBER COMMENTS

Boardmember Reister advised some of her customers complain that there is no parking in front of her store. She advised her neighbors take up most of the parking and block the driveway in the back.

Boardmember Larkin advised there is a yellow mark in front of City Hall and there should be no parking there, but people are still parking there.

Chair Reagan advised the City Council has been talking about Medical Marijuana dispensaries and he would like the DDA board to think about this and let the Councilmembers know how they feel about this if the Council decides to move forward with it.

Burns advised he will be talking to the Council on Monday night to possibly set a Public Hearing for Medical Marijuana on November 20th.

IT WAS MOVED BY YANKOVICH and seconded by LONICK to adjourn at 12:44 p.m.

YES: 6. NO: 0 ABSENT: 3. MOTION CARRIED.

Date:

APPROVED:

James E. Reagan, Chair

Susan Ullery, City Clerk

Pag 1/1

Check Date	Bank	Check #	Payee	Description	Account	Dept	Amount
Fund: 248 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY							
10/12/2017	GEN	70239	PETTY CASH	PETTY CASH 10122017	880.000	740	8.95
10/13/2017	GEN	70259	GERARD, LORI	DDA LUNCH REIMBURSEMENT	880.000	740	34.22
10/13/2017	GEN	70275	LOWELL LIGHT & POWER	ELECTRIC STATEMENTS	920.000	463	920.75
10/13/2017	GEN	70291	SITEONE LANDSCAPE SUPPLY LLC	LANDSCAPE SUPPLIES - DDA	930.000	463	24.02
10/13/2017	GEN	70304	VISA	MONTHLY STATEMENT	740.000	463	31.76
				MONTHLY STATEMENT	740.000	463	55.90
				CHECK GEN 70304 TOTAL			87.66
11/03/2017	GEN	70340	FORD'S SERVICE WORK	WORK AT 113 RIVERWALK PLAZA	930.000	463	375.00
11/03/2017	GEN	70349	KERKSTRA PORTABLE, INC.	PORTABLE RESTROOM - FLAT RIVER BOAT	802.000	463	190.00
11/03/2017	GEN	70355	LOWELL LIGHT & POWER	ELECTRIC STATEMENTS	920.000	463	916.95
				ACCESS POINT/ST LIGHT MAINT	930.000	463	1,260.02
				CHECK GEN 70355 TOTAL			2,176.97
11/03/2017	GEN	70390	WILLIAM BOS GREENHOUSE	FLOWERS	930.000	463	18.30
11/17/2017	GEN	70420	HOMETOWN DECORATION AND DISPLAY	DOWNTOWN CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS	880.000	740	4,736.00
11/17/2017	GEN	70431	M & M PAVEMENT MARKING	PAVING- GEE/FOREMAN/BOWES	930.000	463	1,257.93
11/17/2017	GEN	70452	THE VERDIN COMPANY	DDA CLOCK CONTRACT 2018	802.000	463	667.80
12/01/2017	GEN	70480	EVERGREEN UNDERGROUND, INC.	LIBRARY PROJECT	930.000	463	3,401.16
12/01/2017	GEN	70491	LOWELL AREA CHAMBER	DDA - CHRISTMAS 2017 FESTIVITIES	880.000	740	6,450.00
12/01/2017	GEN	70493	LOWELL LIGHT & POWER	ELECTRIC STATEMENTS	920.000	463	1,643.91
12/15/2017	GEN	70526	BERNARDS ACE HARDWARE	STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT	740.000	463	9.48
12/15/2017	GEN	70545	KING MILLING COMPANY	WINTER TAXES PARKING LOTS	955.000	463	602.52
12/15/2017	GEN	70572	THE ROBERT C. SHAVER CO., INC.	STREET LIGHTING	740.000	463	1,344.00
Total for fund 248 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY							23,948.67

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
January 4, 2018

Beginning Balance:	\$246,308.11
Revenue:	
TIFA Revenue	\$397,779.49
PPT Reimbursement	8201.79
Misc	72.98
Total Revenues	\$652,362.37
Expenditures:	
Capital Outlay	\$9,845.00
Salaries/FICA	\$21,456.40
Maintenance Supplies	\$26,808.39
Utilities	\$12,430.57
Misc. and Community Promotions	\$11,339.78
Accrued Wages	\$3,045.57
Administration	\$7,750.88
Accrued Payables	\$7,347.62
Transfer to General Fund	
<i>Total Expenditures:</i>	\$100,024.21
Ending Balance	\$552,342.47



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2018 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING DATES
12:00 NOON
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – SECOND FLOOR

January	4	July	5
February	8	August	9
March	8	September	6
April	5	October	4
May	10	November	8
June	7	December	6



Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation

November 30, 2017

*City of Lowell DDA
301 E Main St
Lowell, MI 49331*

Dear DDA Directors:

Several years ago the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with and support of business, government agencies, organizations, churches, and school established a Community Wide Business Marketing plan. We listened to several presentations by Marketing Agencies that recommended the first and critical stage for a marketing plan was to obtain accurate research. The Chamber hired The Aegis Group to provide us with marketing intelligence about the business community and local population to assist us in the development of a Community-Wide Business Marketing Plan. The research was split between a phone survey among local businesses and a mail survey among residents in in the Greater Lowell Community. Last year we asked Lowell Area Community Fund and the DDA to support repeating that process.

In February the Aegis Group completed 100 personal interviews via phone among Lowell Area businesses. Some of the objectives we charged them with was to determine the level of support on various possible initiatives, obtain an overall rating on the business climate, how likely were respondents to contribute to Community Wide Business Marketing Plan, investigate changes from 2005 to 2016 and several other objectives that can be seen in the final business report upon request. What is significant to this grant is that the business respondents understand the importance and favor the continued development of Community Wide Business Marketing Plan for the Greater Lowell Area. (Please see attachment from business survey)

The Aegis Group sent surveys to 800 households in the Greater Lowell Community, 345 surveys were returned giving us a 43% net response rate. Some of the objectives were readership levels of local publications, why respondents don't shop in the Greater Lowell Community, the level of and importance of various community –related characteristics and several objectives that can be seen in the final Home Owners report upon request. What we learned is that the Home Owners still rank the Lowell Buyers Guide as publication read regularly and types of media used most often is TV, Facebook and Radio. (Please see attachment from home owners survey)

Ongoing marketing of the Greater Lowell area benefits our entire community. For a community to grow, it must build strong relationships. That's where an effective marketing plan comes in. With a comprehensive, collaborative marketing plan, the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce can effectively communicate the mission, values and messages in ways that speak to a target audience. Benefits of an effective collaborative marketing plan include:

113 Riverwalk Plaza - PO Box 224 - Lowell, Michigan 49331
Phone (616) 897-9161 - Fax (616) 897-9101
E-mail info@lowellchamber.org - Web Site www.lowellchamber.org

Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation

- A stronger, more consistent universal image
- Greater loyalty among stakeholders
- A general public that is more aware of "Lowell the Next Place to Be!" local and regional impact
- The ability to attract and retain the best the visitors/customers, businesses and residents
- The ability to establish partnerships with a team atmosphere within the community
- The ability to show supporters that our brand equity is a valuable commodity

The survey data clearly indicates measured successful results:

- Lowell ranks extremely high on special events/recreation/cultural/ and attractiveness of schools
- Lowell ranks higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every activity investigated
- Lowell ranks very high on being "business friendly"
- Businesses view the overall business climate in Lowell excellent, scores jumped 10 points, while poor ratings declined by 4 points. This represents a net gain of 14% points from 2005 to 2016
- Overall, across all activities, Lowell residents spend about 55% of their time locally (on average) rather than going to Grand Rapids

Mission of the Community-Wide Business Marketing Plan:

To strengthen the Greater Lowell Community through the development of a Community-Wide Business Marketing Plan, which will promote Lowell as an attractive area to work, start a business, relocate a plant, go to school, raise a family, shop, dine and enjoy its many other amenities.

Today, we are requesting that the DDA continue their support for Marketing the Greater Lowell Community in the amount of \$25,000.

Sincerely,

Liz Baker

Liz Baker

*Executive Director – Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce
Committee Member - Marketing Steering Committee*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regarding governance, we calculate composite scores that combine excellent and good scores. These composite scores ranged from a low of 64% on *input to land use planning and decisions* to a high of 92% on *local government is business friendly*. In fact, Lowell government improved upon every issue investigated.

Regarding the relative importance of various factors, *growth and development* ranks first (85%) once again when “important” and “vital” responses are combined. On this same measure, the *supply of skilled labor* ranks the lowest (45%). Interestingly, many communities throughout the country consider the supply of skilled labor to be inadequate – even a problem. Also, when community businesses are growing, the need for skilled labor naturally increases.

Business respondents overwhelmingly agree (98% agree or strongly agree) that *area schools are an attractive asset* and 97% agree that *recreation/cultural, local industry/business & special events* are making a positive contribution to the overall success of the community. Thus, the Lowell Area benefits from a wide blending of contributions made by various sources. The agreement level ranged from 86% to 98% for all areas investigated. These figures are quite impressive overall. It’s also noted that the Lowell Area Chamber (government) improved on all measures since 2005, and on balance, receives high marks from business respondents.

From the perspective of local businesses, 88% of the respondents think growth in the Lowell Area has been “just about right” for their business. The remaining responses were generally split between “too slow” and “too fast.” Therefore, we conclude that Lowell Area growth has been acceptable to the clear majority of businesses. This is further evidenced by noting that 88% of respondents also believe that the impact of growth on their business is neither negative or positive.

Survey findings show that respondents generally believe more emphasis should be placed on *commercial development* (48%), followed by *industrial development* (42%), *preservation of natural areas* (28%), *residential development* (24%), and lastly, *preservation of agricultural areas* (20%).

When it comes to possible initiatives, respondents overwhelmingly support *future downtown development* (88%), followed by *more development of the Riverwalk area* (84%), *hotel/motel and lodging* (82%). The lowest support level was for an *RV park/campground* (59%). All other areas investigated show scores exceeding 69%.

Overall, respondents rate the business climate in the Lowell Area as fair-to-excellent (98%). Only 2% rated the Lowell Area as poor. Furthermore, four times as many respondents think the business climate has improved versus gotten worse.

Given an acceptable Community Wide Business Marketing Plan to promote the Lowell Area, 32% of respondents indicated they are likely to participate financially. Another 66% of respondents are undecided. Very few respondents (2%) indicated they oppose the idea. Given the large percentage of undecided respondents, the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce must sell (promote) this idea.

An encouraging finding is the high level of support for establishing a Community Wide Business Marketing Plan for the Lowell Area. In fact, 70% of business respondents specifically indicated they support this effort, while 29% were undecided or didn't answer. Finally, only 1% of respondents oppose this idea, which is encouraging.

Thus, we can conclude that businesses understand and favor continued development of a Community Wide Business Marketing Plan for the Lowell Area. However, many businesses will still need to be persuaded to support the plan financially.

Conclusion

Assessing the Overall Attitudes of Business Respondents in Lowell

Generally, the Lowell Chamber of Commerce shows improved scores among Lowell Area Businesses. Here are some key findings supporting this viewpoint.

1. Regarding business climate (Q1), a composite score combining excellent and good responses is calculated, and on this measure, Lowell ranks higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every activity investigated. It's also noted here that Lowell ranks very high on being "business friendly."
2. Regarding opportunities investigated in Q3, we derived a composite % agree score that combines ratings 4 and 5. On this measure, Lowell ranks higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every statement investigated. It is noted here that Lowell ranks extremely high on attractiveness of schools and recreation/cultural/special events.
3. When asked how businesses view the overall business climate in Lowell (Q7), we find that excellent scores jumped 10 points, while poor ratings declined by 4 points. This represents a net gain of 14 percentage points.

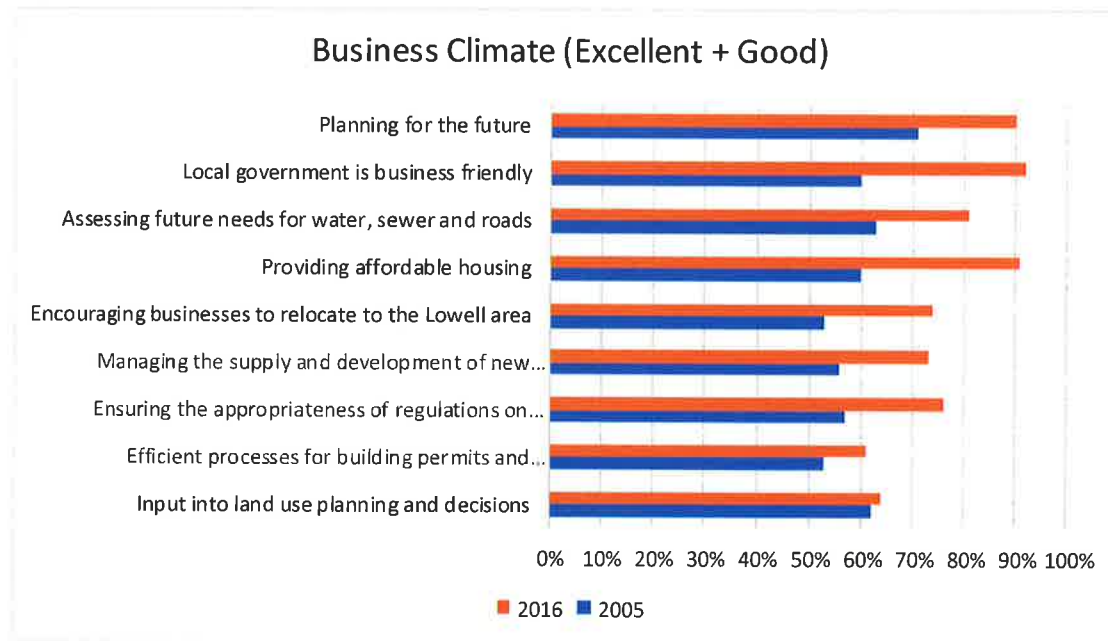
The above survey findings clearly show that new businesses should consider locating in Lowell. Further, the companion research conducted among Lowell residents reveals a strong desire to have a greater mix of new stores, restaurants, and other businesses to serve their local needs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Attitudes toward Local Government Entities

An overall composite score is derived by combining good and excellent scores. On this measure, local government entities rate the highest on *local government is business friendly* in 2016. Conversely, the lowest 2016 rating is on *efficient processes for building permits and development*.

Overall, the business climate appears to have improved across the board (i.e., on every topic). The following chart shows specific findings for each of the issues investigated for 2016 and 2005.



Q1 Composite "Good + Excellent Scores"

Input into land use planning and decisions	64%
Efficient processes for building permits and development	61%
Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses	76%
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	73%

Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	74%
Providing affordable housing	91%
Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	81%
Local government is business friendly	92%
Planning for the future	90%

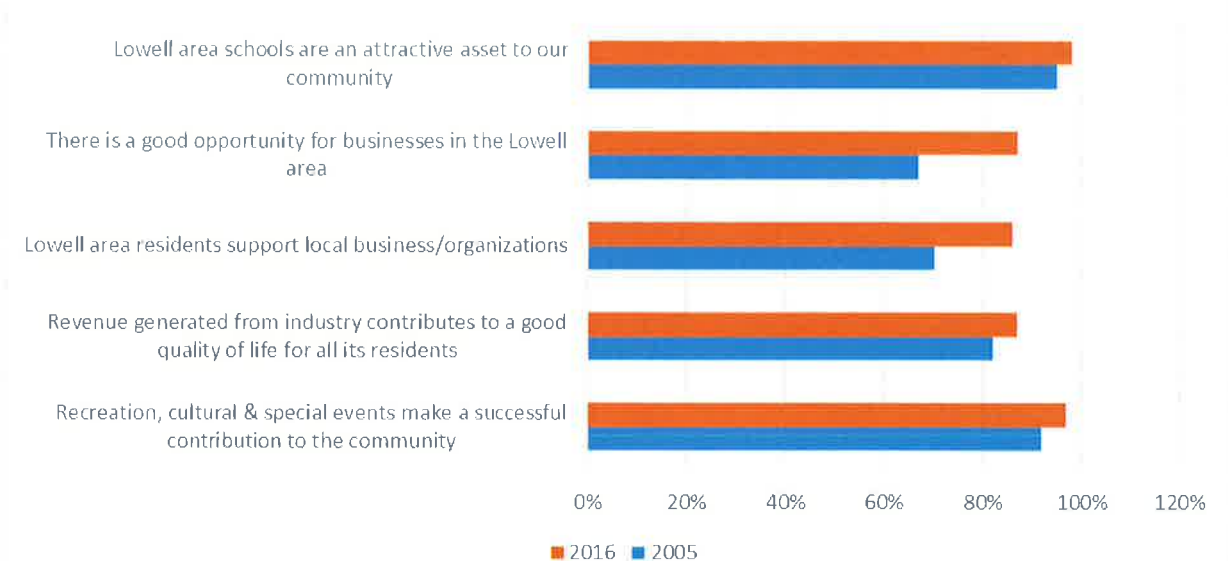
Level of Agreement with Various Opportunities/Issues

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements. We have derived a composite score for comparative purposes. The composite score is derived by combining agree and strongly agree responses for 2016 and 2005.

On this measure, Lowell Area schools receive the highest rating in 2016, followed closely by recreation, cultural & special events; whereas, the Lowell area residents support local business/organizations received the lowest rating (yet a good rating) in 2016. Interestingly, ratings are higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every opportunity/issue investigated.

The following charts show the level of agreement for each statement asked of respondents.

Level of Agreement with Various Opportunities/Issues



Q3. "Agree + Strongly Agree"

2016	Lowell area residents support local business/organizations	86%
97%	There is a good opportunity for businesses in the Lowell area	87%
87%	Lowell area schools are an attractive asset to our community	98%
	Recreation, cultural & special events make a successful contribution to the community	
	Revenue generated from industry contributes to a good quality of life for all its residents	

Detailed Analysis

Q1. I'd like your opinion on how the City of Lowell and surrounding townships governs. How do you rate the local government entities on the following issues?

Q1 Current 2016 Study	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Input into land use planning and decisions	3%	18%	53%	11%
Efficient processes for building permits and development	0%	12%	55%	6%
Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses	1%	10%	73%	3%
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	0%	15%	65%	8%
Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	3%	21%	66%	8%
Providing affordable housing	0%	5%	88%	3%
Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	1%	6%	76%	5%
Local government is business friendly	3%	4%	63%	29%
Planning for the future	3%	6%	75%	15%

"No Opinion" responses are not shown above. Hence, rows don't total 100%.

Q1 Composite "Good + Excellent Scores"	2005	2016
Input into land use planning and decisions	62%	64%
Efficient processes for building permits and development	53%	61%
Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses	57%	76%
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	56%	73%
Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	53%	74%
Providing affordable housing	60%	91%
Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	63%	81%
Local government is business friendly	60%	92%
Planning for the future	71%	90%

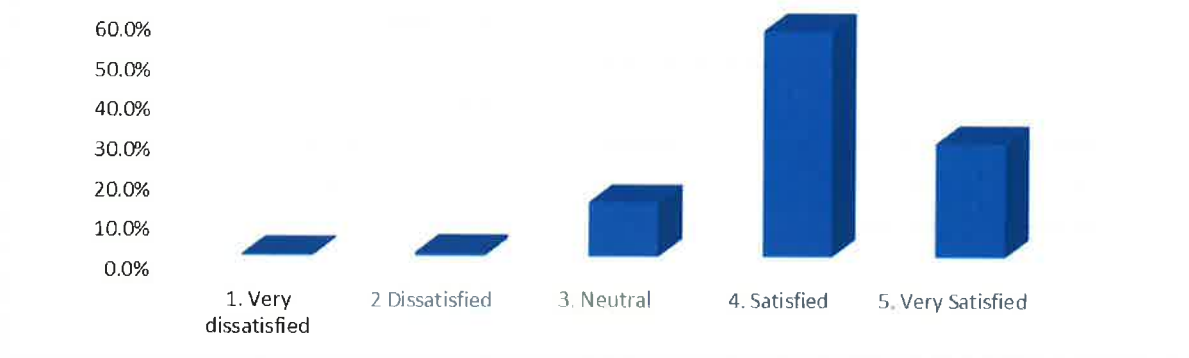
Summary Findings Continued

Based on composite satisfaction scores (ratings 4 + 5), the highest scores are for *Lowell as a great place to raise a family, small town atmosphere, and friendliness*. The lowest composite satisfaction scores are for *lodging, job opportunities, and affordable housing for seniors & low income workers*.

If we look at composite scores, we note that scores range from a low of 10% to a high of 86%, a 76-point difference. This large spread shows that respondents provided thoughtful answers to the various questions on satisfaction. When respondents gloss over questions they tend to pick safe, in-between ratings like 3 or 4. However, this is clearly not the case in this study given the vast differences in composite scores noted above.

The chart below shows overall findings for Lowell. Only about 1.5% of respondents indicated any dissatisfaction (1 + 2) with Lowell. Overall, Lowell receives a composite % satisfied score (4 + 5) of 85%.

Overall, how do you rate Lowell?

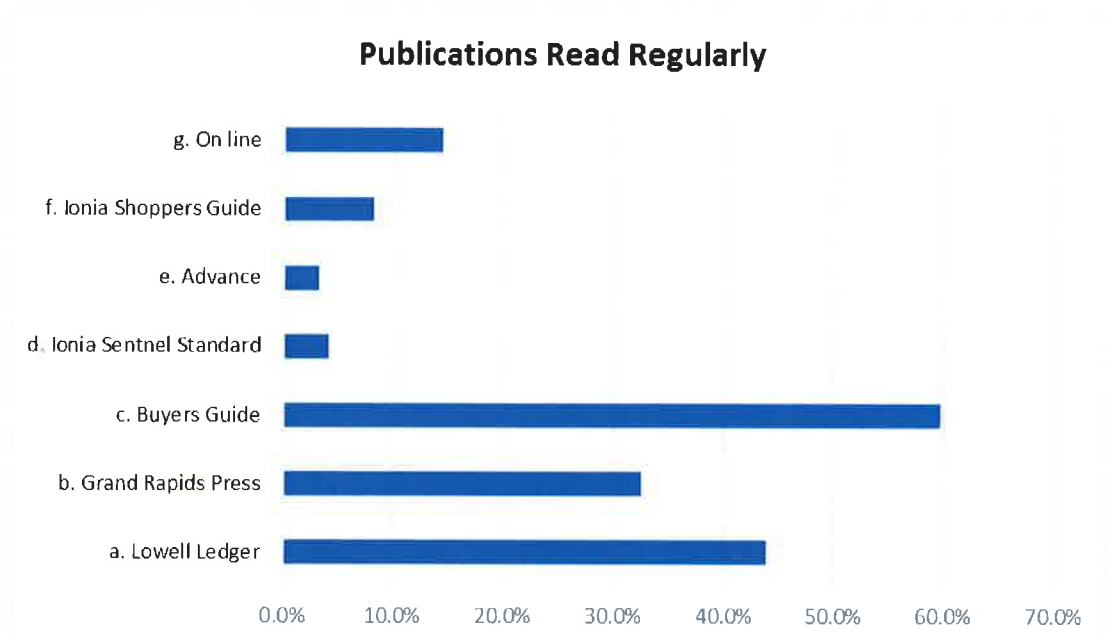


	Very Dissatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied
Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage	0.5%	0.9%	13.6%	56.6%	28.5%

Summary Findings Continued

Publications Read Regularly by Lowell Residents

The *Buyers Guide* was read regularly by the largest number of respondents (60%), followed by *Lowell Register* (44%), and the *Grand Rapids Press* (33%). Survey findings are summarized below.

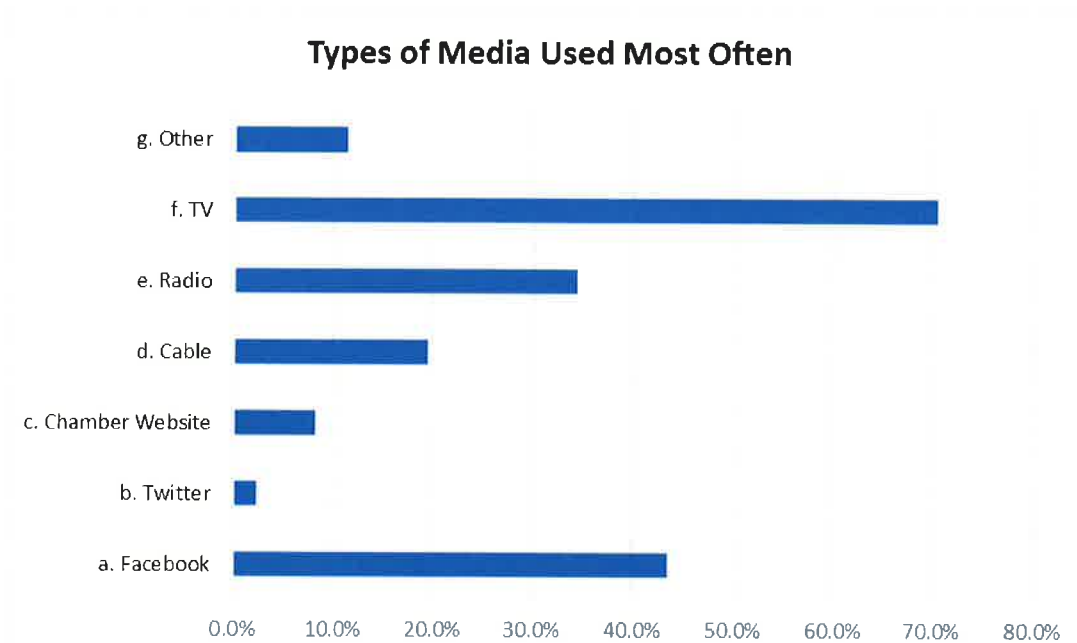


Publications:	Yes
a. Lowell Ledger	43.9%
b. Grand Rapids Press	32.6%
c. Buyers Guide	59.7%
d. Ionia Sentinel Standard	4.1%
e. Advance	3.2%
f. Ionia Shoppers Guide	8.1%
g. On line	14.5%

Summary Findings Continued

Types of Media Used Most Often

TV is the media used by the clear majority of respondents (71%). Next comes Facebook with 43% of respondents using this media. Survey findings are summarized below.



Types of media:	Yes
a. Facebook	43.4%
b. Twitter	2.3%
c. Chamber Website	8.1%
d. Cable	19.5%
e. Radio	34.4%
f. TV	70.6%
g. Other	11.3%

Attachement Words of Support

Words of Support

I love to see all the foot traffic in Lowell! The events bring the community together and make it easy and fun to shop local.

Cinnamin Piggott
All-Natural Promises

Lowell is a special community! It is involved in keeping the small town alive and well! Many special events that keep the community involved to make the downtown thrive. All the events help the current merchants and draws new businesses to the area.

Nancy DeBoer
Station Salon

I have found the Chamber Marketing to be a true value to the businesses of this community. Such marketing played a big role in drawing me to Lowell to establish my business here. It continues to provide a vehicle for businesses to be a part of something bigger than just their own business.

Heather Gietzen
Grand River Orthodontics

"By giving families fun opportunities to be active in the community, it is building more meaningful relationships between businesses and consumers. The connections that people have in Lowell are what keeps bringing the families and businesses to our tight-knit community."

Brianna Furlong
Marketing Representative
Advanced Eyecare Professionals

Love the marketing opportunities provided to us by our local Chamber of Commerce. Our area events give our community a special personality and flare that is much appreciated by our local businesses and residents. Keep up the great work you do!

Sherry Grimm
Avon

We would like to let you know that the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce is a great asset to all the business's here in Lowell, large and small. We truly appreciate all the advertising that is done for special events and the marketing money they receive goes a long way in helping achieve just that.
The extra promotional items that we can hand out in our business's is very useful to our customers.

Marty & Laurie Chambers
Red Barn Consignments & Antiques

Cooperative marketing through the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce is beneficial for Lowell's businesses, schools, and community organizations to expand their visibility to our Lowell residents and visitors. To keep up with the many avenues of marketing can be overwhelming for many smaller and midsize organizations. This support from the chamber is very much appreciated by us at LowellArts!, providing us the time to focus on focusing on program development.

Lorain Smalligan
LowellArts!

I just wanted to put in writing how important I feel the Chamber is to Lowell businesses. I come from a family of small business owners - 3 generations deep to be specific. I have watched Lowell's Chamber grow because of you and what all the members have created here in town. As I mentioned, it was a serious factor in me deciding to take a chance with my business here in Lowell. The Lowell Chamber provides a strong foundation and base of marketing and event promotions that is extremely beneficial to our downtown. Lowell has a history of recognizing the value of events since 1932 when they discovered the value of the Centennial celebration and started the Lowell Showboat.

I can't say enough about what I watch you and so many others do for this town. You are the core to what makes it great and a very necessary foundation to help any and all businesses in our community.

Tonia North
North Star Antiques

It is very hard to think of where and how Lowell would be if we did not have the active energy from our Chamber of Commerce. They have really taken us to higher levels to increase the quality of life for the entire community. I am sure all would agree their efforts in marketing plays a big part of this. I really appreciate what they do and I look forward to the next level they take us to.

Michael Sprenger
Springrove Variety

Attachment - Budget

Community-Wide Business Marketing Plan: June 2017 - May 2018	
EXPENSES	
Marketing Plan	Cash
Advertising using the various means of media	
Radio	\$ 20,000.00
Cable	\$ 9,500.00
On-line Marketing (Facebook and other online oportunities)	\$ 25,000.00
Print (local papers, flyers, inserts and post cards)	\$ 11,000.00
DiscoverLowell Website	\$ 2,000.00
Promotional Items (bags,water & misc)	\$ 3,500.00
Supplies and Mailings	\$ 2,000.00
Chamber Business Marketing Plan Administration - 100 hours x \$30 hour	\$ 2,000.00
Total Expenses:	\$ 75,000.00
Marketing Funds	
DDA	\$ 25,000.00
Lowell Area Community Fund	\$ 50,000.00
Total Revenue:	\$ 75,000.00

**THE LOWELL AREA CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

**AN ATTITUTED & OPINION STUDY
OF HOME OWNERS
IN THE GREATER LOWELL AREA
Feb 2016**

**Prepared by:
The Aegis Group**

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Total pages, 37

An Attitude & Opinion Study of Home Owners in The Greater Lowell Area

Purpose

This study was conducted in order to provide The Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce a deeper understanding of the attitudes and opinions of home owners in The Greater Lowell Area including, but not limited to, management issues, various satisfaction measures, involvement in the local community, time spent on various activities, readership, and general demographics (i.e., characteristics of home owners in the Greater Lowell Area).

Objectives

This study is designed and intended to gather the following information from respondents (home owners) in The Greater Lowell Area.

- Ranking of major management issues for the local community
- The level of satisfaction on various community-related attributes (characteristics)
- The relative importance of various community-related attributes (characteristics)
- The respondents' perceived level of involvement in the local community and type of involvement
- Time spent on various community-related activities
- Readership levels of local publications
- Reasons why respondents don't shop in The Greater Lowell Area
- The current work status of respondents (i.e., employment situation)
- The length of time respondent has lived in The Greater Lowell Area
- Level of household or family income
- The size of household (i.e., the number of people living at this residence)
- Profile of respondents (i.e., approximate age, gender, and level of education)

Methodology

Study methodology involved a mail survey among 800 home owners in The Greater Lowell Area. In general, mail is most effective at gathering broad-based, quantitative information. Some of the key advantages of mail are list below:

- Mail is very cost-effective on large samples, especially if superior response rates are obtained.
- Phone interviewing among heads of households (consumers) is difficult, given caller I.D. capabilities of cell phone technology and unpublished numbers.
- Mail is a passive medium and allows market data to be gathered unobtrusively; whereas, phone contacts are often viewed as a nuisance by the public.
- Mail is convenient and user-friendly (i.e., the recipient can respond at their leisure—they are not disturbed at dinner time and they don't have to access special technology to participate).
- Mail yields highly accurate information (i.e., because the list of questions in front of them, mail responders have more time to think about their answers).
- Mail surveys tend to yield more honest, and therefore, unbiased answers because respondents know that their answers are (in fact) anonymous and don't depend on a promise by the researcher like phone interviewing.
- Mail surveys are not associated with any personal bias—unlike phone interviewing which involves personalities.
- Mail is projectable to the total population because we have access to highly reliable county mail information and home ownership (i.e., highly accurate and representative database) and mail yields random returns unlike phone which will not reach individuals who only have cell phones).

Mail surveys conducted by Aegis Marketing are designed to yield superior response rates. The mail survey for this study consisted of a personalized cover letter, 2-page questionnaire, two dollar incentive, and postage-paid reply envelope. The personal cover letter, monetary incentive, user-friendly questioning format, monarch-size questionnaire, and convenient reply envelope all served to increase the response rate.

The Aegis Group was responsible for research administration, methodology, survey design, mailing mechanics, editing/sorting, computer data entry, data verification, generating tables/graphs, analysis, interpretation, and report preparation.

The list of names was obtained from a list broker from a database compiled from county information (i.e., county records related home ownership). The Greater Lowell Area had approximately 4,200 households. The 800 survey names were selected randomly on an Nth name basis from the entire listing.

Analysis of Returns

As of the cut-off date, we had received 345 returns for an overall response rate of 43%. This is an excellent response rate considering that we used a small two-dollar incentive for a rather extensive questionnaire (i.e., the mail survey involved 86 decision points plus some write-ins).

Cut-off date: Jan 15, 2016

Mail date: Nov 1, 2016

Number mailed:	800
Number returned:	345
Net response rate:	43%

Undeliverables	29
Unusables*	25
Usables**	291

*This includes blanks or partially completed surveys, as well as surveys that came in after the cut-off date for tabulation.

**These respondents become the tabulation base for this study.

Profile of Respondents

General demographics of household respondents for 2016 follows:

Years lived in Lowell:	%
0 - 1 years	7.7%
2 - 4 years	13.6%
5 - 9 years	7.7%
10 - 14 years	8.6%
15 - plus years	58.8%
No answer	3.6%
Total	100.0%

Level of Income:	%
\$0 - 20,000	10.0%
\$20,000 - 39,999	19.0%
\$40,000 - 59,999	13.1%
\$60,000 - 79,999	17.6%
\$80,000 - 99,999	8.6%
\$100,000 - 124,999	10.0%
\$125,000 - 149,999	6.3%
\$150,000 - 200,000	3.6%
\$200,000 - plus	0.5%
No answer	11.3%
Total	100.0%

Profile of Respondents Continued

Your age:	%
Less than 20	0.5%
20 - 29 year's old	5.0%
30 - 39	14.0%
40 - 49	18.6%
50 - plus	57.9%
No answer	4.1%
Total	100.0%

Gender:	%
Male	38.6%
Female	54.3%
No answer	7.1%
Total	100.0%

Level of education:	%
High school	20.4%
1-2 years	29.9%
Undergraduate	14.0%
Graduate	28.1%
Doctorate	1.8%
Other (trade, etc.)	1.4%
No answer	4.5%
Total	100.0%

Comparison of Survey Findings (2016 Vs. 2005)

Ranking of Management Issues

Top 3 issues ranked in order of mentions (first + second + third mentions)

	2005	2016
Rank #1.	More job opportunities	Broader business/retail mix
Rank #2.	Broader business/retail mix	More job opportunities
Rank #3.	Improved education	Improved education

Level of Satisfaction on Various Community-Related Factors

Based on composite satisfaction scores (ratings 4 + 5)

	2005	2016
Rank #1.	Great place to raise a family	Great place to raise a family
Rank #2.	Friendliness	Small town atmosphere
Rank #3.	Small town atmosphere	Friendliness

Lowest composite satisfaction scores

	2005	2016
Rank #21	Lodging	Lodging
Rank #20	Job opportunities	Job opportunities
Rank #19	Affordable housing: Seniors, low income.	Affordable housing: Seniors/low income

Desired Areas of Improvement

Top 4 responses in terms of times mentioned

2005	2016
Restaurants/dining	Restaurants/dining
Job opportunities	Community swimming pool
Shopping opportunities	Another grocery store
Lodging	Shopping opportunities

Involvement in the Local Community

	2005	2016
Very involved	7%	5%
Somewhat involved	48%	55%

Time spent on various activities in the Greater Lowell Area

Respondents who indicated they spend most of their time in Lowell

	2005	2016
Rank #1.	Grocery shopping	Grocery shopping
Rank #2.	Services (plumbing, lawn, etc.)	Services (plumbing, lawn, auto repair)
Rank #3.	Health services/pharmacies	Health services/pharmacies

Local publications read regularly

Based on percentage of responses

	2005	2016
Rank #1.	<i>Buyers Guide</i>	<i>Buyers Guide</i>
Rank #2.	<i>Grand Rapids Press</i>	<i>Lowell Ledger</i>
Rank #3.	<i>Lowell Ledger</i>	<i>Grand Rapids Press</i>

Work Status

Based on percentage of responses

	2005	2016
Full-time	60%	46%
Part-time	10%	8%

Years Lived in the Lowell Area

	2005	2016
10-14 years	10%	9%
15-plus years	56%	59%

Household Income

	2005	2016
Household income \$60,000-plus	47%	47%

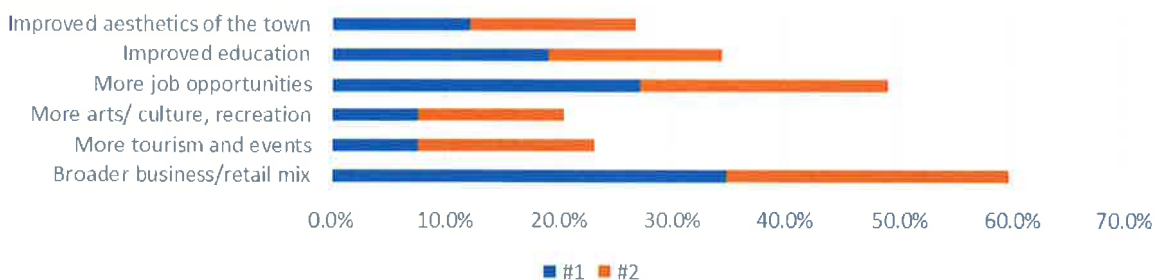
Summary Findings (2016 Study)

Ranking of major management issues for the local community

Regarding management priorities based on composite scores (first and second rankings combined), a broader business/retail mix ranks first (60%), followed more job opportunities (49%), and improved education (34%). Survey findings are summarized below:

Rankings of Management of the Greater Lowell Area Composite (Rank #1 + #2)	Broader business/retail mix	More tourism and events	More arts/ culture, recreation	More job opportunities	Improved education	Improved aesthetics of the town
	59.7%	23.1%	20.4%	48.8%	34.4%	26.7%

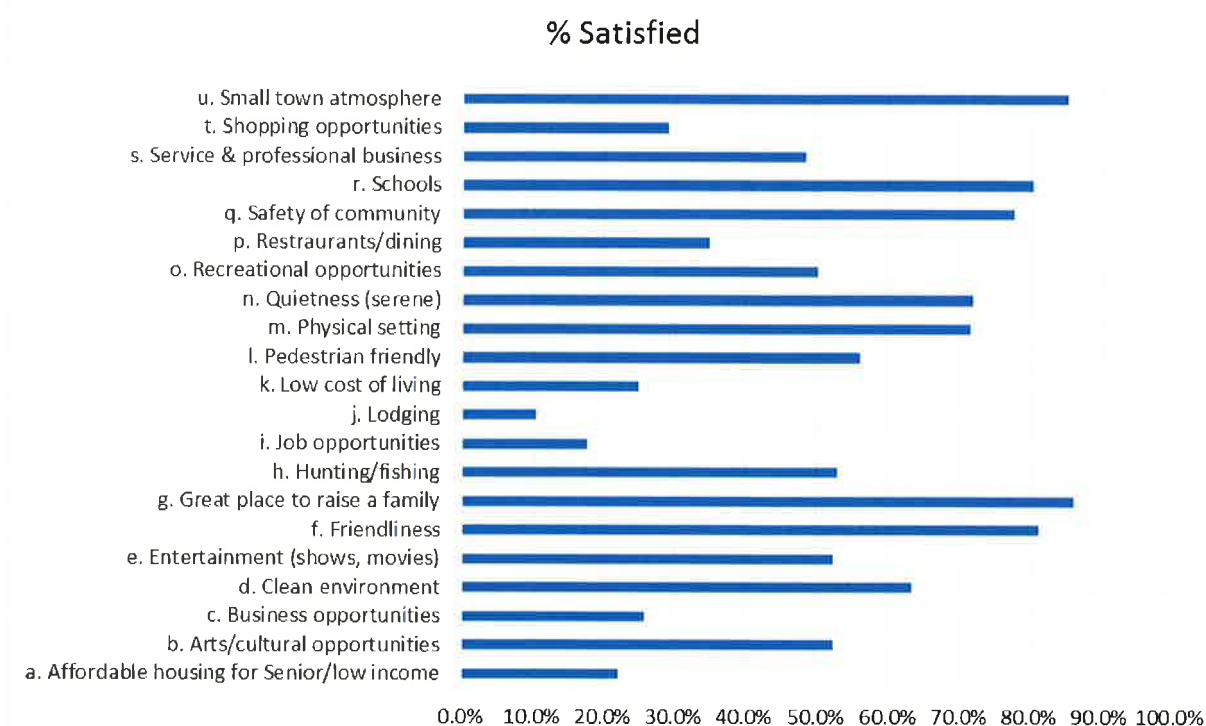
Management Factors of Greater Lowell Area Rank 1 & 2 Combined



Summary Findings Continued

Level of satisfaction on various community-related activities

The chart below shows composite satisfaction ratings (4 + 5) for the Greater Lowell Area overall. Overall, Lowell received an Overall Satisfaction score of 85%, which is excellent. The chart and table below show survey findings by individual activity.



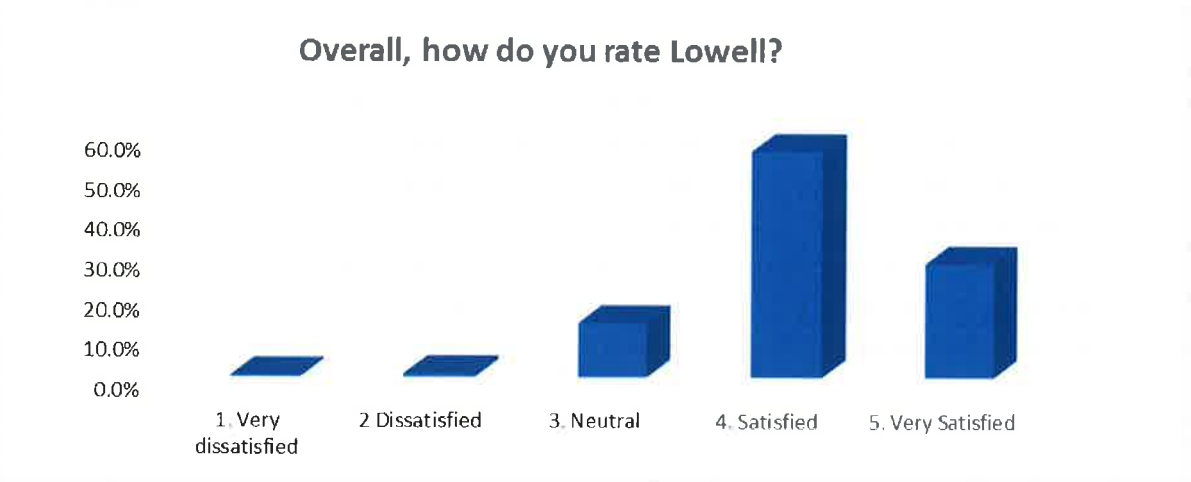
% Satisfied		% Satisfied	
a. Affordable housing for Senior/low income	22.2%	l. Pedestrian friendly	56.1%
b. Arts/cultural opportunities	52.5%	m. Physical setting	71.5%
c. Business opportunities	25.8%	n. Quietness (serene)	71.9%
d. Clean environment	63.3%	o. Recreational opportunities	50.2%
e. Entertainment (shows, movies)	52.5%	p. Restaurants/dining	34.8%
f. Friendliness	81.4%	q. Safety of community	77.8%
g. Great place to raise a family	86.4%	r. Schools	80.5%
h. Hunting/fishing	52.9%	s. Service & professional business	48.4%
i. Job opportunities	17.6%	t. Shopping opportunities	29.0%
j. Lodging	10.4%	u. Small town atmosphere	85.5%
k. Low cost of living	24.9%	Overall, how to rate Lowell?	85.1%

Summary Findings Continued

Based on composite satisfaction scores (ratings 4 + 5), the highest scores are for *Lowell as a great place to raise a family, small town atmosphere, and friendliness*. The lowest composite satisfaction scores are for *lodging, job opportunities, and affordable housing for seniors & low income workers*.

If we look at composite scores, we note that scores range from a low of 10% to a high of 86%, a 76-point difference. This large spread shows that respondents provided thoughtful answers to the various questions on satisfaction. When respondents gloss over questions they tend to pick safe, in-between ratings like 3 or 4. However, this is clearly not the case in this study given the vast differences in composite scores noted above.

The chart below shows overall findings for Lowell. Only about 1.5% of respondents indicated any dissatisfaction (1 + 2) with Lowell. Overall, Lowell receives a composite % satisfied score (4 + 5) of 85%.



	Very Dissatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied
Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage	0.5%	0.9%	13.6%	56.6%	28.5%

Summary Findings Continued

Involvement

Over 59% of respondents indicated they are at least somewhat involved with their local community (Lowell). Reasons cited include: church activities, school events, shopping, and volunteer work.

Lowell Buck\$ Program

Among respondents, 33% indicated they have heard of the Lowell Buck\$ program; whereas, 16.7% have purchased or plan to purchase Lowell Buck\$ (i.e., about half of the aware respondents).

It is also noted that two-thirds of respondents have not heard of the program. This represents a rather large group that needs to be informed of the Lowell Buck\$ program.

Desired Improvements/Projects

The most often cited or requested improvements/projects are:

1. More dining places/restaurants are needed (16 write-ins)
2. Community swimming pool (14 write-ins)
3. Another grocery store (besides Meijer's, for convenience) (7 responses).
4. More shopping/retail stores (5 responses)

Time Spend Locally by Residents rather than Grand Rapids

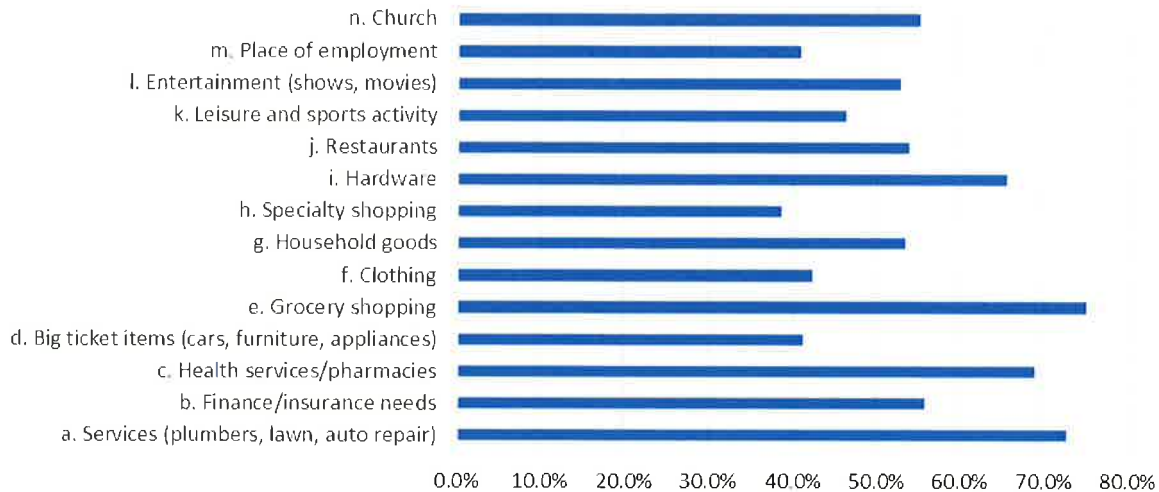
Respondents were also asked to indicate how much time they spend on various activities in Lowell rather than Grand Rapids. On average, Lowell residence spent the most time grocery shopping in Lowell (75%), followed by using local services (73%), and healthcare/pharmacies (69%).

The least amount of local activities/shopping was spent going to specialty stores (39%), big ticket items (41%), and clothing stores (42%). Note: travel to place of employment is not mentioned here because of the high numbers of retirees who don't travel to work.

Here it is noted that the time spent locally ranges from a low of 39% to a high of 75%.

Overall, across all activities, Lowell residents spend about 55% of their time locally (on average) rather than going to Grand Rapids. Details are shown on the following page.

Time Spent Using (Shopping In) Lowell vs. Grand Rapids Average Percentage Scores



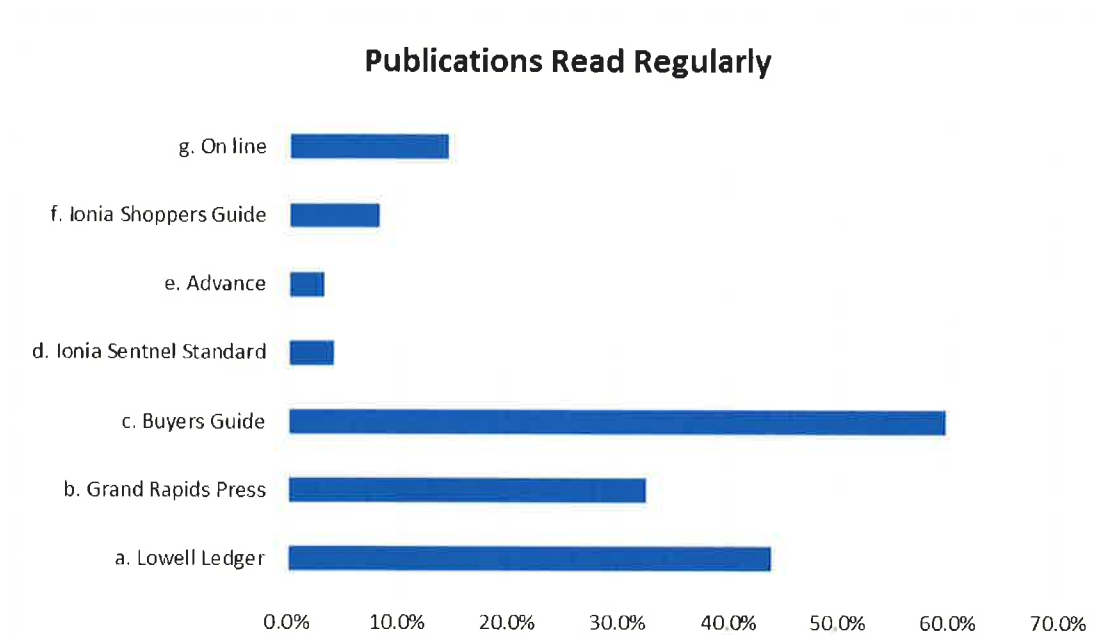
Activities:	Average Percentage Score
a. Services (plumbers, lawn, auto repair)	72.8%
b. Finance/insurance needs	55.8%
c. Health services/pharmacies	69.0%
d. Big ticket items (cars, furniture, appliances)	41.2%
e. Grocery shopping	75.1%
f. Clothing	42.4%
g. Household goods	53.5%
h. Specialty shopping	38.5%
i. Hardware	65.6%
j. Restaurants	54.0%
k. Leisure and sports activity	46.3%
l. Entertainment (shows, movies)	53.0%
m. Place of employment	40.8%
n. Church	55.3%
Average of all scores	54.5%

Note: Regarding “place of employee” above, it is noted here that 30.8% of respondents indicated they are retired, accounting for much of the low percentage observed in the study.

Summary Findings Continued

Publications Read Regularly by Lowell Residents

The *Buyers Guide* was read regularly by the largest number of respondents (60%), followed by *Lowell Register* (44%), and the *Grand Rapids Press* (33%). Survey findings are summarized below.

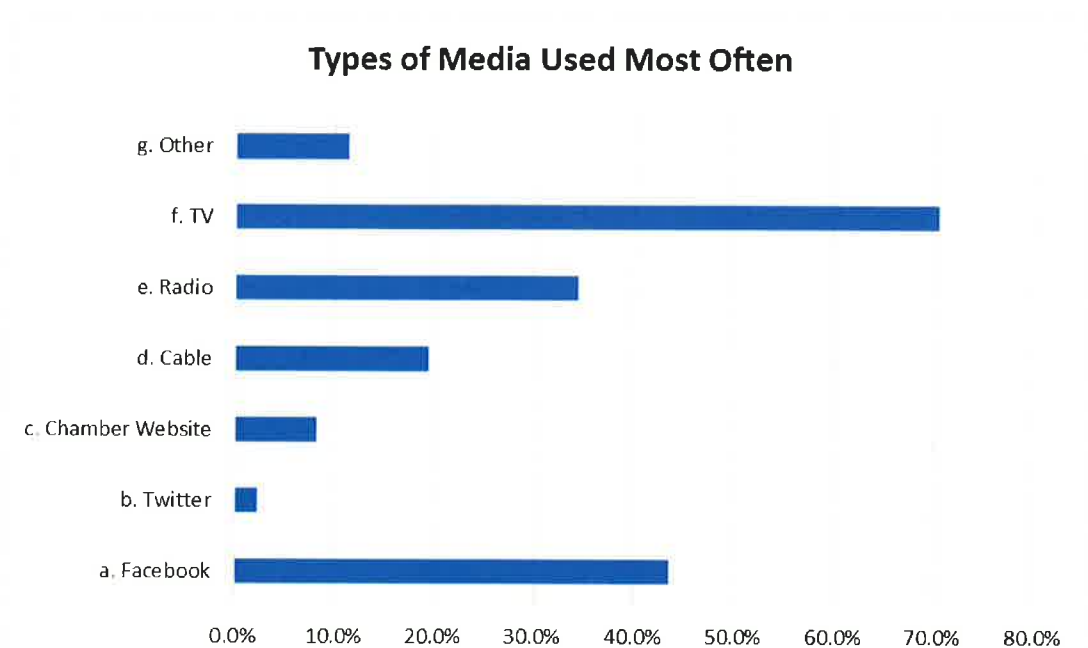


Publications:	Yes
a. Lowell Ledger	43.9%
b. Grand Rapids Press	32.6%
c. Buyers Guide	59.7%
d. Ionia Sentinel Standard	4.1%
e. Advance	3.2%
f. Ionia Shoppers Guide	8.1%
g. On line	14.5%

Summary Findings Continued

Types of Media Used Most Often

TV is the media used by the clear majority of respondents (71%). Next comes Facebook with 43% of respondents using this media. Survey findings are summarized below.



Types of media:	Yes
a. Facebook	43.4%
b. Twitter	2.3%
c. Chamber Website	8.1%
d. Cable	19.5%
e. Radio	34.4%
f. TV	70.6%
g. Other	11.3%

Summary Findings Continued

Why Lowell Area residents don't shop in the Greater Lowell Area

The most often cited reason for not shopping locally is because of limited selection/options, lack of variety/choices, or simply the item is not available locally (71 write-ins). The second most often cited reason was cost/pricing/expense (39 write-ins). This response was often associated with availability/selection/variety.

General information about Lowell Area home owners

Respondents were asked to provide basic information about themselves for classification purposes. Some key findings are:

- At least 47% of households have incomes of \$60,000-plus
- About 22% of households have just one member
- About 77% of respondents are 40 years or older
- At least 74% have attended college or have special training beyond high school

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Detailed Analysis

Base = 291

Q1. Please indicate how you would like to see the Greater Lowell Area managed by ranking the following factors in order of importance, where 1=first, 2=second, and so on.

Rank	Broader business/retail mix	More tourism and events	More arts/ culture, recreation	More job opportunities	Improved education	Improved aesthetics of the town
#1	34.8%	7.7%	7.7%	27.1%	19.0%	12.2%
#2	24.9%	15.4%	12.7%	21.7%	15.4%	14.5%
#3	15.8%	13.1%	16.3%	11.3%	13.1%	12.2%
#4	4.1%	26.7%	20.4%	4.5%	11.8%	11.8%
#5	6.8%	14.5%	15.8%	13.1%	14.0%	12.7%
#6	4.1%	9.0%	13.6%	10.4%	13.6%	24.0%
No opinion	9.5%	13.6%	13.6%	11.8%	13.1%	12.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Composite (Rank #1 + #2)	59.7%	23.1%	20.4%	48.8%	34.4%	26.7%

Q2. Please indicate your level of satisfaction on each of the following, using a 5-point scale.

Figures are in percentages.

	Very Dissatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Affordable housing for Senior or low income earners	7.7%	14.5%	55.7%	13.1%	9.0%
b. Arts/cultural opportunities	0.9%	6.3%	40.3%	41.6%	10.9%
c. Business opportunities	3.6%	16.3%	53.8%	20.4%	5.4%
d. Clean environment	4.5%	10.4%	21.7%	47.1%	16.3%
e. Entertainment (shows, movies)	0.9%	10.9%	35.7%	35.7%	16.7%
f. Friendliness	0.5%	2.3%	15.8%	42.1%	39.4%
g. Great place to raise a family	0.5%	0.5%	12.7%	34.8%	51.6%
h. Hunting/fishing	0.9%	3.6%	42.5%	34.8%	18.1%
i. Job opportunities	3.2%	27.6%	51.6%	15.8%	1.8%
j. Lodging	12.7%	38.0%	38.9%	7.7%	2.7%
k. Low cost of living	6.3%	27.6%	41.2%	20.8%	4.1%
l. Pedestrian friendly	3.6%	9.5%	30.8%	42.1%	14.0%
m. Physical setting	0.5%	3.6%	24.4%	45.2%	26.2%
n. Quietness (serene)	0.9%	3.6%	23.5%	48.9%	23.1%
o. Recreational opportunities	0.5%	9.5%	39.8%	37.6%	12.7%
p. Restaurants/dining	9.5%	31.2%	24.4%	25.3%	9.5%
q. Safety of community	0.0%	1.8%	20.4%	49.8%	28.1%
r. Schools	0.9%	3.2%	15.4%	33.9%	46.6%
s. Service & professional business	1.4%	8.6%	41.6%	37.6%	10.9%
t. Shopping opportunities	4.1%	33.0%	33.9%	21.7%	7.2%
u. Small town atmosphere	0.5%	0.9%	13.1%	48.0%	37.6%
Overall, how do you rate Lowell?	0.5%	0.9%	13.6%	56.6%	28.5%

Q3-4. Involvement

	Not Involved	Somewhat Involved	Very Involved
3. Overall, how involved to you feel you are in your local community?	40.3%	54.8%	4.5%
	Yes	No	Not sure, Undecided
4. Have you heard of our new community currency program Lowell Buck\$?	33.0%	66.1%	0.9%
4a. Have purchased or plan to purchase Lowell Buck\$ in the future?	16.7%	56.6%	26.7%

**Q5. What improvement/project/addition would you like to see our
community undertake?**

Below are the most often cited improvements/projects/additions desired in Lowell.

1. More dining places/restaurants (16 write-ins)
2. Community swimming pool (14 write-ins)
3. Another grocery store (besides Meijer's, for convenience) (7 responses).
4. More shopping/retail stores (5 responses)

Also noted is repair/re-pave roads, dislike of bio-digester, and clean up junk yards.

See Respondents' Comments Section for a more detailed breakdown of comments.

Q6. Of the activities listed below, please indicate the percentage of time you would use (shop in) Lowell rather than Grand Rapids or other towns?

Activities:	0% - 19%	20% - 39%	40% - 59%	60% - 79%	80% - 100%	N.A./No Opinion	Average of activities *
a. Services (plumbers, lawn, auto repair)	4.5%	6.8%	10.0%	22.2%	50.2%	6.3%	72.8%
b. Finance/insurance needs	19.0%	10.9%	13.6%	22.2%	27.6%	6.8%	55.8%
c. Health services/pharmacies	6.3%	8.1%	9.5%	23.5%	44.8%	7.7%	69.0%
d. Big ticket items (cars, furniture, appliances)	26.7%	21.7%	21.3%	12.2%	11.3%	6.8%	41.2%
e. Grocery shopping	3.2%	7.7%	9.5%	19.0%	55.2%	5.4%	75.1%
f. Clothing	24.9%	24.9%	19.5%	14.0%	11.3%	5.4%	42.4%
g. Household goods	11.3%	19.0%	27.1%	14.5%	21.7%	6.3%	53.5%
h. Specialty shopping	24.4%	26.7%	21.7%	14.0%	5.4%	7.7%	38.5%
i. Hardware	5.0%	12.7%	15.4%	27.6%	33.5%	5.9%	65.6%
j. Restaurants	5.4%	24.4%	28.1%	19.5%	16.7%	5.9%	54.0%
k. Leisure and sports activity	17.6%	14.5%	28.1%	18.1%	11.8%	10.0%	46.3%
l. Entertainment (shows, movies)	10.9%	19.0%	22.2%	20.4%	19.5%	8.1%	53.0%
m. Place of employment	38.5%	10.0%	10.4%	7.7%	23.1%	10.4%	40.8%
n. Church	24.9%	6.3%	12.2%	7.2%	40.3%	9.0%	55.3%
							54.5%

N.A. = Not applicable (no opinion). For example, not everyone goes to church regularly, retired people may not work, and so on.

* When all activities are considered and treated equally, and weighted by the midpoints of the specified percentages, we find that 54.5% of the time, respondents use local services. No opinion responses are removed from this analysis.

Q7. Which of the following publications do you read regularly?

Publications:	Yes	No	Total
a. Lowell Ledger	43.9%	56.1%	100.0%
b. Grand Rapids Press	32.6%	67.4%	100.0%
c. Buyers Guide	59.7%	40.3%	100.0%
d. Ionia Sentinel Standard	4.1%	95.9%	100.0%
e. Advance	3.2%	96.8%	100.0%
f. Ionia Shoppers Guide	8.1%	91.9%	100.0%
g. On line	14.5%	85.5%	100.0%

Q7a. What type of Media to you use most for information/events?

Types of media:	Yes	No	Total
a. Facebook	43.4%	56.6%	100.0%
b. Twitter	2.3%	97.7%	100.0%
c. Chamber Website	8.1%	91.9%	100.0%
d. Cable	19.5%	80.5%	100.0%
e. Radio	34.4%	65.6%	100.0%
f. TV	70.6%	29.4%	100.0%
g. Other	11.3%	88.7%	100.0%

Q7b. If you shop outside of the Greater Lowell Area, why?

The most often cited responses was:

Availability/selection/variety/options/choices (71 responses based on key word count)

Cost/Pricing/Less expensive (39 responses, often associated with the above)

Q8. Please indicate your work status by checking the category that best describes your situation?

Work status:	%
Employed full-time	45.7%
Employed part-time	7.7%
Unemployed	3.6%
Laid-off	0.0%
Retired	30.8%
Home maker	4.1%
Other	3.2%
No answer	5.0%
Total	100.0%

Q9. How long have you lived in the Lowell area?

Years lived in Lowell:	%
0 - 1 years	7.7%
2 - 4 years	13.6%
5 - 9 years	7.7%
10 - 14 years	8.6%
15 - plus years	58.8%
No answer	3.6%
Total	100.0%

Q10. Please indicate your level of income (all members of household)

Income:	%
\$0 - 20,000	10.0%
\$20,000 - 39,999	19.0%
\$40,000 - 59,999	13.1%
\$60,000 - 79,999	17.6%
\$80,000 - 99,999	8.6%
\$100,000 - 124,999	10.0%
\$125,000 - 149,999	6.3%
\$150,000 - 200,000	3.6%
\$200,000 - plus	0.5%
No answer	11.3%
Total	100.0%

Q11. How many people including yourself live at your residence?

Living at Residence	%
1 person (myself)	21.7%
2 people	37.6%
3	14.5%
4	10.4%
5	5.9%
6 - plus	4.1%
No answer	5.9%
Total	100.0%

Q12. And lastly for classification purposes, please tell us ...

Your age:	%
Less than 20	0.5%
20 - 29 years' old	5.0%
30 - 39	14.0%
40 - 49	18.6%
50 - plus	57.9%
No answer	4.1%
Total	100.0%

Gender:	%
Male	37.6%
Female	54.3%
No answer	7.1%
Total	100.0%

Level of education:	%
High school	20.4%
1-2 years	29.9%
Undergraduate	14.0%
Graduate	28.1%
Doctorate	1.8%
Other (trade, etc.)	1.4%
No answer	4.5%
Total	100.0%

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

Respondents' Comments

Q3. How are you involved, if applicable?

Arts, blood drive, shop locally
Donations
Attend events, visit parks
Attend meetings
Bark for life, art festival, use local restaurants
Better fast foods
Business (2)
Business events, school activities
Charitable donations
Christmas through Lowell
Church
Church activities
Church and food mobile
Church, FROM
Church, Lake Association, Shopping, arts/cultural events
Church, school
Church, volunteering
Civic organizations, church
Clean up environment, recycling center
Coaching of kids
Cook at Sneaker's feeding many of the board walkers
Donations
Elections
Follow news and events closely
Food Mobiles and fair grounds
FROM, LMS
Help keep clean, recycle
Help neighbors
Helping senior neighbors, church
I clean facilities in town, attend entertainment activities, dine here
I employ local tradesmen (builder)
I'm a resident for only 4 months
Involved with Schools
Kid in school, sports, cub scouts, shop here.
Kids' school, sports
Know a lot of business owners
Less expensive restaurant with normal food
Lowell Museum
More cell service by more homes
More restaurants (2)

Participate in River Walk
 Pink arrow project
 Pink Arrow Quiver, Lasso, Girls on the Run.
 Pink Arrow, football/sports
 Retired now, involved year's ago
 Rotary Club, Chamber
 School
 School games; local holidays
 School sports
 School, Chamber events
 Schools
 Schools/sports, church
 Self-help program
 Senior neighbors
 Served on a board
 Shop and dine here
 Shop in Lowell; attend church
 Shop local first; attend LHS sporting events
 Substitute teaching, tutor
 Support Flat River out-reach since start
 Support local sellers
 Teacher/KCYF arts superintendent
 Volunteer at church events
 Volunteer FROM, church
 Volunteer work
 Volunteer, high school
 Voting, voicing opinions
 YMCA, Volunteer, attend youth events

Q5. What improvement/project/addition would you like to see our community undertake?

More restaurants/dining places (16 responses)

[Family (2), Applebee's (2), Bob Evans (1), Chicken (1), KFC (3), Wendy's (2), Mexican (1),
 Restaurant along Riverwalk (1), More restaurants (5)]

A community pool (14 responses)

Advertise available places to rent; need Wendy's
 Alternative to Meijer's; sidewalks on Maple St.
 An improved performing arts center
 Another grocery store [smaller than Meijer's (4), Kroger's (1), another grocery store for convenience (2)]
 Better access to the Internet
 Better crosswalks for downtown
 Better play area for animals, kids, family
 Better road conditions in town
 Better stage for summer concerts; fix the showboat; fill vacant buildings downtown.
 Bigger hotel; KFC; more businesses
 Bike trail

Bring in Bob Evans, KFC, Bakery
 Clean up junk yard across from Meijer's
 Clean up Main St. all the way to Meijer's
 Cleaner, less expensive, restaurants
 Community splash pad
 Do something with the park behind Walgreens
 Doing just great!
 Easier to travel through town at rush hour
 Fence off the junk businesses so you don't see the junk
 Fewer bars
 Fewer bars
 Fix roads; bike paths finished
 Fix RR on S, Hudson & side roads
 Fix sidewalks
 Fix small ball politics of government; the bio digester is disgusting.
 Fix the roads, priority: Lincoln Lake
 Foster small business, job mentoring and training
 Fulton/Main St, is risky to cross - help pedestrians at crosswalk.
 Furnish garbage/recycle day to clean out yards, garages, basements.
 Get box store (Home Depot)
 Get rid of bio-digester
 Get rid of Lowell Forward - they go backwards and give Lowell a bad name.
 Golf carts in summer (street legal); paint upper buildings in town (trims, windows).
 Grocery store management or bring in competition
 Have more than Meijer's (2)
 Health/Fitness/Rec Center, YMCD with pool
 Home improvement, Walmart, restaurants.
 Improve roads
 Infrastructure
 Joint effort of city and school for a pool
 Like Lowell to be more refined without losing its small-town atmosphere, like Rockford, Ada
 Lower prices on water; turn signals on all sides at Main St, stoplight. Change Lowell slogan from It's not the next best place to It's the best place.
 Lower taxes - their too high
 Mark dedicated bike lanes; affordable housing; alternative to Meijer's.
 More shopping; clean up tractor dump yard across from Meijer's on Main St.
 More affordable housing, community pool
 More affordable rental housing; more fast food options
 More affordable senior housing and a pool
 More community activities
 More dining places/restaurants (16)
 More entertainment options (bowling, family things)
 More flowers
 More job opportunities
 More places to rent for low income people; more places to eat/shop

More playground equipment in parks.
 More recreation: walking and bike trails
 More retail/shopping (5)
 More riverfront development
 More variety of food stores
 Need swimming pool (school swim team), rehabilitation center
 On street parking stopped, very happy about Main St.
 Permanent stage for events
 Positive business actions
 Project behind Walgreens finished
 Renovate empty buildings downtown
 Repair streets
 Re-pave Washington St.
 Revive the Lowell Showboat
 Sidewalks outside of town are horrendous; foliage needs attention.
 Safe walking/biking path over river
 Somewhere to shop besides Meijer's
 Sports bar with lower prices
 Too many auto parts stores
 Trails/roads; more dining places
 Walking/biking path near river
 Walking/biking trail (off-road like Rockford); larger YMCA with pool; more restaurants

Q7. Which of the following publications do you read regularly? Other responses

Huffington Post, M live, NY Times
 Internet (2)
 M Live
 Phone apps
 Satellite
 Word of mouth

Q7. What types of media do use the most for information/events? Other responses ...

Dish
 Google
 Internet (2)
 Newspaper (2)
 Telephone book
 YouTube

Q7. If you shop outside of the Greater Lowell Area, why?

Always shop in GR (3)

Appliances

Availability (clothing, appliances)

Availability (furniture, big household items)

Availability, price/Cost (3)

Availability (19 responses)

Availability of stores (books, furniture, electronics, hardware)

Better choices/deals (3)

Better choices, pricing (2)

Better deals or closer to house

Better price (2)

Better pricing, convenience

Better selection (7)

Better selection and cost (2)

Better selection and pricing in G.R. (have friends there)

Broader selection of goods

Can't find it in Lowell

Cat food

Change of scenery

Cheaper, greater variety, near where I work

Choices in products/stores (4)

Choices, price

Closer and more choices

Clothes

Clothes, Costco

Clothing choices are limited

Clothing family desires, not Available

Clothing, tools - better selection

Competition

Convenience (near office)

Costco

Different stores than in Lowell

Dining and shopping

Don't have item or its cheaper

Elitist, unpleasant in Lowell; diversity

First Lowell, then outside

For certain stores

Go to a specific store

Go to GR, from there

Go where products/services are.

Greater variety

Greater variety (groceries, home goods, clothes)

Greater variety, odd ball items
 Groceries - dissatisfied with Meijer's
 Have routine doctor's appointment in GR
 If I get it here.
 Items not Available in Lowell
 Items not Available in Lowell (bulk, shoes)
 It's cheaper
 Less expensive
 Limited good stores in Lowell
 Limited options in clothing in Lowell
 Location
 Lowell doesn't have everything
 Malls
 Meijer
 More choices/options in stores/products (14)
 More choices, better pricing (3)
 More choices, like clothing
 More competitive (lower) prices
 More options for clothing, beauty; lower cost for hardware items
 More options, and cost
 More options, clothing stores are too expensive
 More selection, better prices
 More variety (like clothes, big ticket items)
 No department store for variety
 No Kroger's in Lowell
 No specialty shops; not into antiques
 Not Available in Lowell (4)
 Not enough places in Lowell (2)
 Only one grocery store, limited retail (clothing)
 Options, price
 Prices/cheaper (4)
 Price on big ticket items
 Price, variety
 Products - price
 Restaurants (Bob Evans, Panera Bread)
 Sales
 Selection (4)
 Selection (Home Depot)
 Selection, price
 Sometimes, if can't get in Lowell (2)
 Specialty items (3)
 To get clothing and household items.
 Types of stores
 Variety (6)
 Variety and price (9)

Walmart

We only have one choice of groceries and Lowell Meijer's is horrible.

When bored

When they don't have - what we need.

Women's clothing

Work outside of Lowell

Q8. Please indicate your work status? Other responses ...

Business owner

Disabled (2)

Looking for job

Self-employed (2)

Q12. Please tell us your - level of education? Other responses ...

8th grade

Trade (2)

Trade school (Medical Adm.)

APPENDIX

SAMPLE MAIL SURVEY



Aegis Marketing Research

1515 Michigan St. NE * Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-2030

May we have a moment of your time

to participate in an important study

for the Greater Lowell Area?

The objective of the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce is to promote the commercial welfare of the Lowell area, making the area a desirable location for capital investment and residence, also to promote the quality of life and harmony among the business and residential communities.

To accomplish this, the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce has asked our firm to determine the attitudes and opinions of the local community to better advise them on how to market Lowell and improve community development. Your answers will help guide their efforts to improve conditions for the Greater Lowell Area, as well as you and your family.

You can answer the simple check-off type questions in just a couple of minutes. Your answers will be treated confidentially and used only in combination with others for a composite picture. You are not asked to identify yourself. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it in the convenient pre-paid reply envelope.

On behalf of the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, we'd like to thank you for your assistance and participation in this very important project.

Cordially,

**Terry Ferrell
Research Director**

**P.S. Please accept the enclosed crisp two-dollar bill as token of our appreciation.
And, thanks once again for your help.**

ATTITUDE & OPINION SURVEY FOR THE GREATER LOWELL AREA

1. Please indicate how you would like to see the Greater Lowell Area managed by ranking the following factors in order of importance, where 1=first or most important, 2=second, and so on.

Rank	
Broader business/retail mix _____	More job opportunities _____
More tourism and events _____	Improved education _____
More arts/culture and recreation _____	Improved aesthetics of the town _____

2. Please indicate your level of satisfaction on each of the following, using a 5-point scale where 1=Very dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 3=Neutral/Undecided (neither dissatisfied nor satisfied), 4=Satisfied, and 5=Very Satisfied.

		Very Dissatisfied		Neutral	Very Satisfied	
		1	2	3	4	5
a	Affordable housing for Senior or low income earners	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
b	Arts/cultural opportunities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
c	Business opportunities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
d	Clean environment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
e	Entertainment (shows, movies)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
f	Friendliness	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
g	Great place to raise a family	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
h	Hunting/fishing	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
i	Job opportunities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
j	Lodging	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
k	Low cost of living	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
l	Pedestrian-friendly	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
m	Physical setting	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
n	Quietness (serene)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
o	Recreational opportunities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
p	Restaurants/dining	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
q	Safety of community	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
r	Schools	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
s	Service & professional business	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
t	Shopping opportunities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
u	Small town atmosphere	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Overall, how do you rate Lowell?		[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

3. Overall, how involved do you feel you are in your local community?

[] Not involved [] Somewhat Involved [] Very Involved

How are you involved, if applicable? _____

4. Have you heard of our new community currency program Lowell Buck\$ Yes [] No []

4a. Have you purchased or plan to purchase Lowell\$ in the future? Yes [] No []

5. What improvement/project/addition would like to see our community undertake?

6. Of the activities listed below, please indicate the percentage of time you would use (shop in) Lowell rather than Grand Rapids or other towns?

		0% - 19%	20% - 39%	40% - 59%	60% - 79%	80% - 100%
a	Services (plumbers, lawn, auto repair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Finance/insurance needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Health services/pharmacies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Big ticket items (cars, furniture, appliances)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	Grocery shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g	Household goods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h	Specialty shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	Hardware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j	Restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k	Leisure and sports activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l	Entertainment (shows, movies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m	Place of employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n	Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Which of the following publications do you regularly read?

☐ Lowell Ledger ☐ Buyers Guide ☐ Advance ☐ Online Publications
☐ Grand Rapids Press ☐ Ionia Sentinel Standard ☐ Ionia Shoppers Guide _____

7a. What types of Media do you use most for information/events?

☐ Facebook ☐ Twitter ☐ Chamber Website ☐ Cable
☐ Radio ☐ TV ☐ Other: _____

7b. When you don't use or shop in the Greater Lowell Area, why?

8. Please indicate your work status by checking the category that best describes your situation.

☐ Employed full-time ☐ Employed part-time ☐ Unemployed ☐ Laid-off
☐ Retired ☐ Home maker ☐ Other: _____

9. How long have you lived in the Lowell area?

☐ 0-1 year ☐ 2-4 years ☐ 5-9 years ☐ 10-14 years ☐ 15-plus years.

10. Please indicate your income level (all members of household).

☐ \$0-20,000 ☐ \$20,000-39,999 ☐ \$40,000-59,999 ☐ \$60,000-79,999 ☐ \$80,000-99,999
☐ \$100,000-124,000 ☐ \$125,000-149,999 ☐ \$150,000-200,000 ☐ \$200,000 plus

11. How many people including yourself live at your residence? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6-plus

12. And lastly, for classification purposes, please tell us your...

Approximate age ☐ Less than 20 ☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-plus
Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female
Level of education ☐ High school ☐ 1-2 years of college ☐ Undergrad
☐ Graduate ☐ Doctorate ☐ Other _____

Thank You!

**THE LOWELL AREA CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

**A STUDY OF THE BUSINESS CLIMATE
IN THE LOWELL AREA
February 2016**

**Prepared by:
The Aegis Group**

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Total pages, 33

Overview

Purpose

The primary objective of this research is to provide the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce with market intelligence about the business community and the local population to assist in the development of a Market Plan, which will promote the Lowell Area as an attractive area to work, raise a family, start a business, relocate a plant, shop, dine and enjoy its many other amenities.

Scope

The scope of the Community Wide Business Market Plan includes the entire Lowell area, not just the downtown business area. This report deals with the attitudes and opinions of the local business community. A separate mail survey is being used to determine the attitudes and opinions of the local population (i.e., residents, consumers).

Discussion

The basic data collection technique for the business community will be a phone survey; whereas, the local population will be canvassed via a mail survey.

A phone survey was recommended for the business community. The advantages of phone for this segment are:

- Phone is the most-effective method when gathering data on small samples (i.e., less than 200 significant businesses in the Lowell area).
- Phone contacts ensure that we obtain the stated quota (i.e., 100 interviews), and by cycling through all contact names several times, a reliable overall picture emerges naturally from the data.
- Phone interviewing is more personable and allows for an exchange between the interviewer and respondent so that we are better able to detect the extent to which businesses are likely to “buy in” to the idea of marketing Lowell.
- Phone interviewing is good PR. By giving businesses the opportunity to voice their opinions improves the likelihood that they will contribute to Lowell’s overall market/promotional effort.

Research Objectives

This study is designed and intended to accomplish the following:

- Rate local government entities on various issues.
- Determine the relative importance of various factors affecting the business environment.
- Determine the level of agreement on statements dealing with the contribution made by various elements of the local community.
- Evaluate the business climate and trends in the Lowell Area.
- Measure what areas need greater emphasis (natural, agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial).
- Determine the level of support on various possible initiatives.
- Obtain an overall rating on the business climate in the Lowell Area, and whether the business climate has improved, or not.
- Given an acceptable Community Wide Business Marketing Plan, how likely are respondents to contribute to such a plan?
- Investigate changes from 2005 to 2016, if possible given the changes made in the 2016 script.

Data Collection Efforts

The Aegis Group completed 100 personal interviews via phone among Lowell Area businesses. Contacts names were supplied by The Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce.

The interviews lasted about 10 to 15 minutes. A structured phone script was used to quantify the attitudes and opinions of local business respondents.

The 2016 phone script was updated since the 2005 study. This was done to remove items that were no longer applicable and add current items of interest. Therefore, 2016 and 2005 survey figures are not always comparable.

Aegis' interviewers cycled through the names at least three times. This procedure ensures that every candidate on the list had an equal chance to participate. This procedure yields a random sample so that the figures can be safely projected to the total population of business establishments in the Lowell Area.

The Aegis Group only employs skilled and knowledgeable interviewers who have extensive business experience. They understand the importance and methods of gathering unbiased answers to questions.

Profile of Respondents

The following table is a recap of respondent classification data. A more complete breakdown can be found in the Detailed Analysis section. The data below is provided as a quick and comprehensive review of respondent demographics.

Profile of Survey Respondents

Employees	2005	2016
<20	92%	87%
20-plus	8%	13%

Location	2005	2016
Downtown	26%	21%
Uptown	N.A.	9%
Township	N.A.	14%
Independent bldg	30%	46%

Note: Categories were changed in 2016. N.A. = Not Asked.
Not all categories are shown. Figures are not directly comparable.

HQ/Branch?	2005	2016
HQ	N.A.	82%
Branch	N.A.	7%
Franchise	N.A.	6%
No Answer	N.A.	5%

Note: this question was added in 2016.

Age of Business	2005	2016
< 20 years	64%	70%
20-plus years	36%	30%

Title	2005	2016
Owner/Partner/Pres/VP	80%	76%
Manager	10%	16%
Sales/Other	10%	8%

Continued: Profile of Respondent

Type of Business	2005	2016
Retail/dealer	17%	14%
Business services	17%	14%
Building contractor	10%	9%
Wholesale/distributor	1%	2%
Non-profit	6%	7%
Manufacturer	3%	7%
Restaurant	10%	12%
Other	36%	35%

Bases: 2005 (103 respondents); 2016 (100 respondents)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regarding governance, we calculate composite scores that combine excellent and good scores. These composite scores ranged from a low of 64% on *input to land use planning and decisions* to a high of 92% on *local government is business friendly*. In fact, Lowell government improved upon every issue investigated.

Regarding the relative importance of various factors, *growth and development* ranks first (85%) once again when “important” and “vital” responses are combined. On this same measure, the *supply of skilled labor* ranks the lowest (45%). Interestingly, many communities throughout the country consider the supply of skilled labor to be inadequate – even a problem. Also, when community businesses are growing, the need for skilled labor naturally increases.

Business respondents overwhelmingly agree (98% agree or strongly agree) that *area schools are an attractive asset* and 97% agree that *recreation/cultural, local industry/business & special events* are making a positive contribution to the overall success of the community. Thus, the Lowell Area benefits from a wide blending of contributions made by various sources. The agreement level ranged from 86% to 98% for all areas investigated. These figures are quite impressive overall. It's also noted that the Lowell Area Chamber (government) improved on all measures since 2005, and on balance, receives high marks from business respondents.

From the perspective of local businesses, 88% of the respondents think growth in the Lowell Area has been “just about right” for their business. The remaining responses were generally split between “too slow” and “too fast.” Therefore, we conclude that Lowell Area growth has been acceptable to the clear majority of businesses. This is further evidenced by noting that 88% of respondents also believe that the impact of growth on their business is neither negative or positive.

Survey findings show that respondents generally believe more emphasis should be placed on *commercial development* (48%), followed by *industrial development* (42%), *preservation of natural areas* (28%), *residential development* (24%), and lastly, *preservation of agricultural areas* (20%).

When it comes to possible initiatives, respondents overwhelmingly support *future downtown development* (88%), followed by *more development of the Riverwalk area* (84%), *hotel/motel and lodging* (82%). The lowest support level was for an *RV park/campground* (59%). All other areas investigated show scores exceeding 69%.

Overall, respondents rate the business climate in the Lowell Area as fair-to-excellent (98%). Only 2% rated the Lowell Area as poor. Furthermore, four times as many respondents think the business climate has improved versus gotten worse.

Given an acceptable Community Wide Business Marketing Plan to promote the Lowell Area, 32% of respondents indicated they are likely to participate financially. Another 66% of respondents are undecided. Very few respondents (2%) indicated they oppose the idea. Given the large percentage of undecided respondents, the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce must sell (promote) this idea.

An encouraging finding is the high level of support for establishing a Community Wide Business Marketing Plan for the Lowell Area. In fact, 70% of business respondents specifically indicated they support this effort, while 29% were undecided or didn't answer. Finally, only 1% of respondents oppose this idea, which is encouraging.

Thus, we can conclude that businesses understand and favor continued development of a Community Wide Business Marketing Plan for the Lowell Area. However, many businesses will still need to be persuaded to support the plan financially.

Conclusion

Assessing the Overall Attitudes of Business Respondents in Lowell

Generally, the Lowell Chamber of Commerce shows improved scores among Lowell Area Businesses. Here are some key findings supporting this viewpoint.

1. Regarding business climate (Q1), a composite score combining excellent and good responses is calculated, and on this measure, Lowell ranks higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every activity investigated. It's also noted here that Lowell ranks very high on being "business friendly."
2. Regarding opportunities investigated in Q3, we derived a composite % agree score that combines ratings 4 and 5. On this measure, Lowell ranks higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every statement investigated. It is noted here that Lowell ranks extremely high on attractiveness of schools and recreation/cultural/special events.
3. When asked how businesses view the overall business climate in Lowell (Q7), we find that excellent scores jumped 10 points, while poor ratings declined by 4 points. This represents a net gain of 14 percentage points.

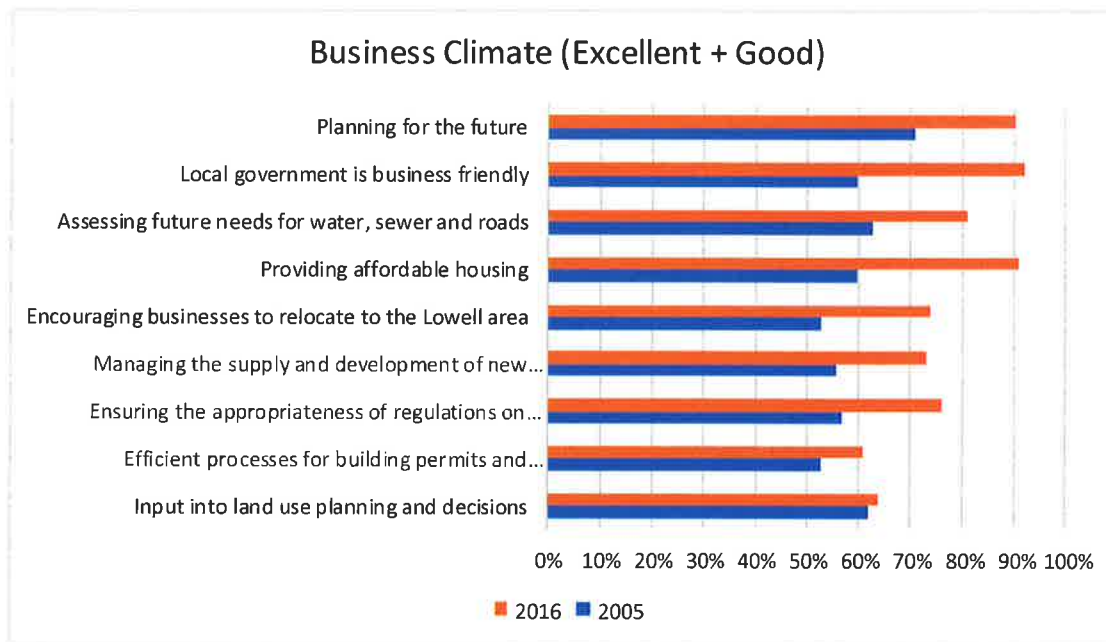
The above survey findings clearly show that new businesses should consider locating in Lowell. Further, the companion research conducted among Lowell residents reveals a strong desire to have a greater mix of new stores, restaurants, and other businesses to serve their local needs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Attitudes toward Local Government Entities

An overall composite score is derived by combining good and excellent scores. On this measure, local government entities rate the highest on *local government is business friendly* in 2016. Conversely, the lowest 2016 rating is on *efficient processes for building permits and development*.

Overall, the business climate appears to have improved across the board (i.e., on every topic). The following chart shows specific findings for each of the issues investigated for 2016 and 2005.



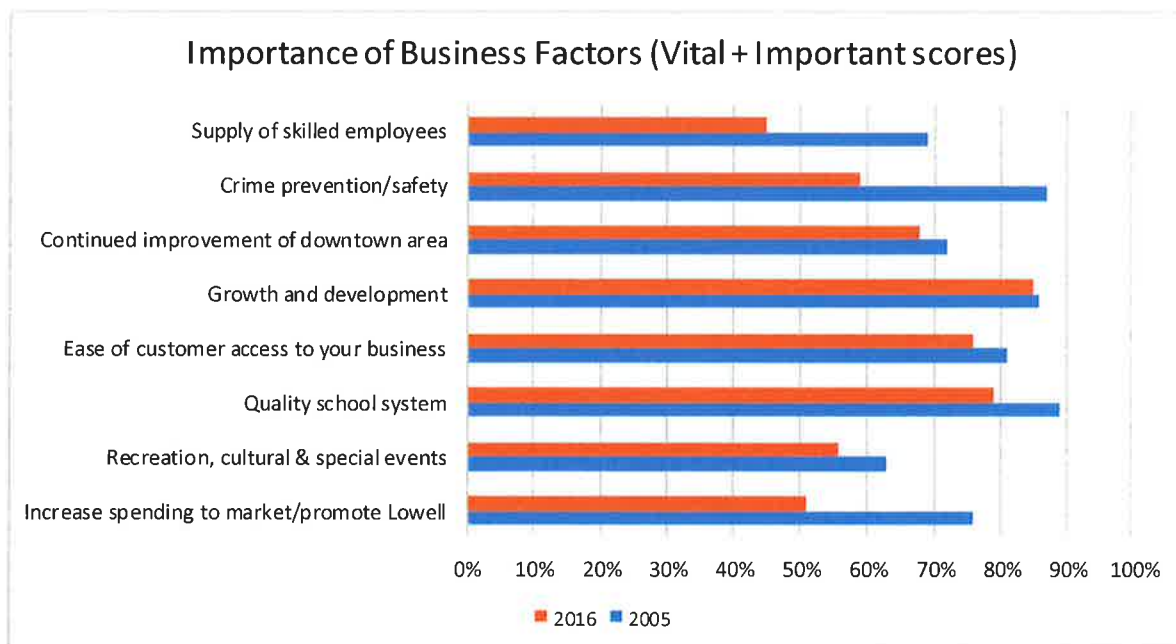
Q1 Composite "Good + Excellent Scores"			
	2016	Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	74%
Input into land use planning and decisions	64%	Providing affordable housing	91%
Efficient processes for building permits and development	61%	Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	81%
Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses	76%	Local government is business friendly	92%
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	73%	Planning for the future	90%

Importance of Various Factors that Impact Business

The chart below compares the relative importance of various business factors based on composite figures (vital + important scores) for 2016 and 2005. On this measure, *growth and development* ranks highest in 2016 among business respondents; whereas, the *supply of skilled employees* ranks the lowest in 2016.

It's also evident that local businesses feel the various factors listed are not as important, pressing or critical to them as they were in 2005. This interpretation of the findings is justified because of the improved attitudes toward Lowell (across the board) in Q1 and Q3.

The following chart shows composite figures for each of the business factors investigated.



Q2 "Important + Vital Scores"

2016			
Increase spending to market/promote Lowell	51%	Growth and development	85%
Recreation, cultural & special events	56%	Continued improvement of downtown area	68%
Quality school system	79%	Crime prevention/safety	59%
Ease of customer access to your business	76%	Supply of skilled employees	45%

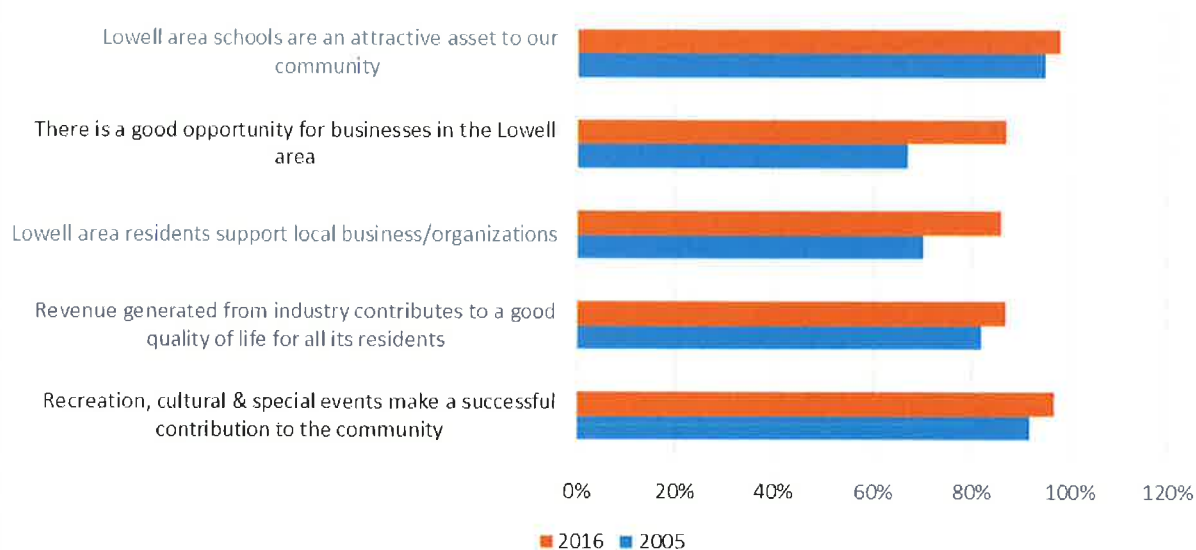
Level of Agreement with Various Opportunities/Issues

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements. We have derived a composite score for comparative purposes. The composite score is derived by combining agree and strongly agree responses for 2016 and 2005.

On this measure, Lowell Area schools receive the highest rating in 2016, followed closely by recreation, cultural & special events; whereas, the Lowell area residents support local business/organizations received the lowest rating (yet a good rating) in 2016. Interestingly, ratings are higher in 2016 compared to 2005 on every opportunity/issue investigated.

The following charts show the level of agreement for each statement asked of respondents.

Level of Agreement with Various Opportunities/Issues



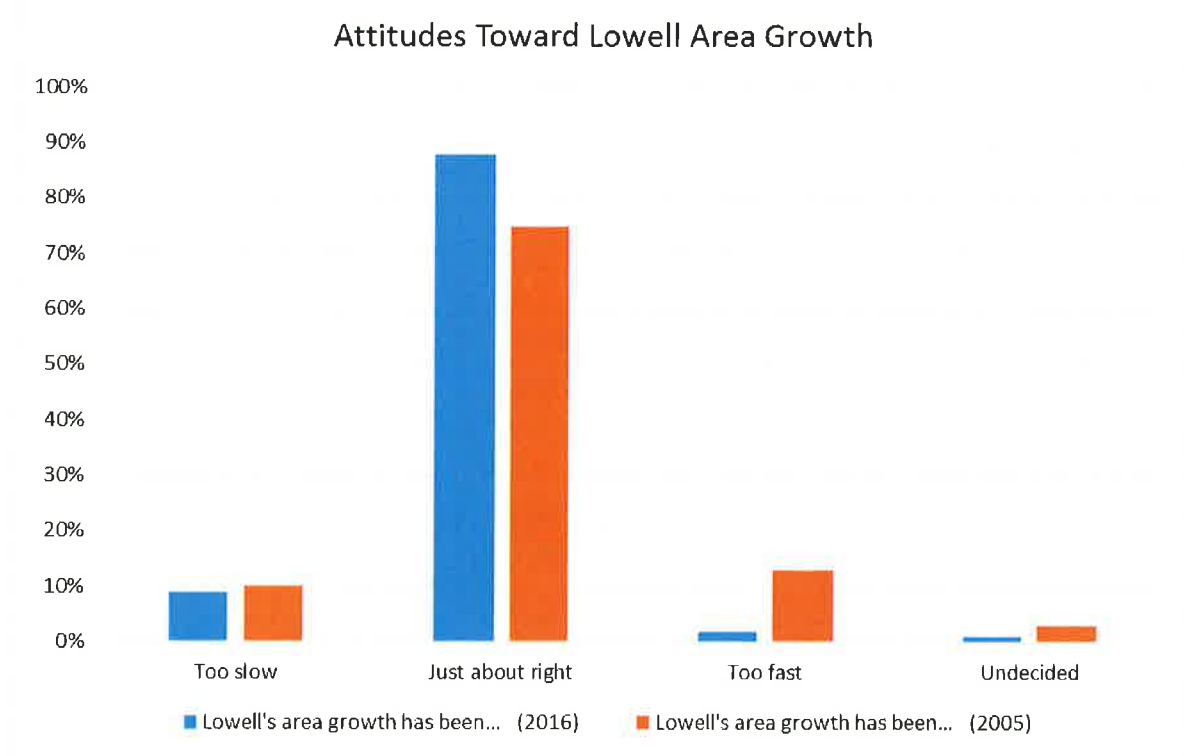
Q3. "Agree + Strongly Agree"

2016	Lowell area residents support local business/organizations	86%
97%	There is a good opportunity for businesses in the Lowell area	87%
87%	Lowell area schools are an attractive asset to our community	98%
	Recreation, cultural & special events make a successful contribution to the community	
	Revenue generated from industry contributes to a good quality of life for all its residents	

Attitudes/Opinions toward Growth in the Lowell Area

Regarding attitudes toward Lowell Area growth, 88% of 2016 respondents think growth has been just about right. Only 9% think growth has been too slow, while only 2% think growth has been too fast. Note that 1% of respondents were undecided.

Thus, we conclude that the pace of growth in the Lowell area is at a good, measured pace that is acceptable to most businesses in the area.

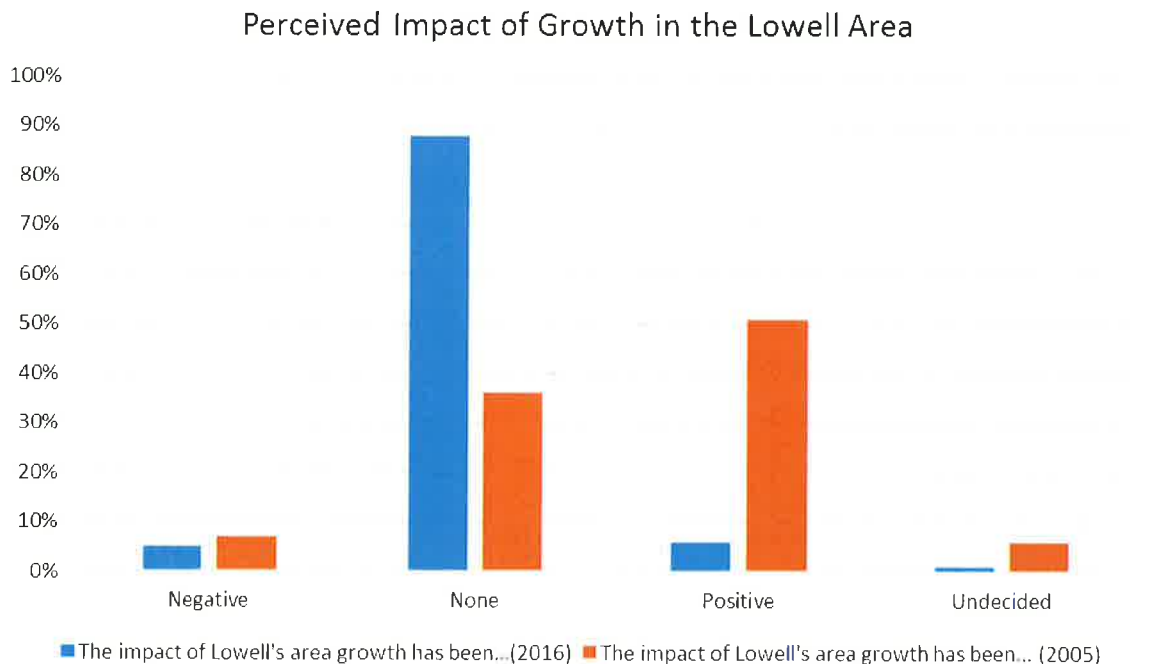


Q4a	Too slow	Just about right	Too fast	Undecided
Lowell's area growth has been... (2016)	9%	88%	2%	1%

The Perceived Impact of Growth in the Lowell Area

We also note that the clear majority of respondents (88%) feel that area growth has had no impact on their business – neither negative nor positive. This finding corresponds closely to the 88% of believe Lowell's growth to be just right.

Comparable figures for 2016 and 2005 studies are shown below.



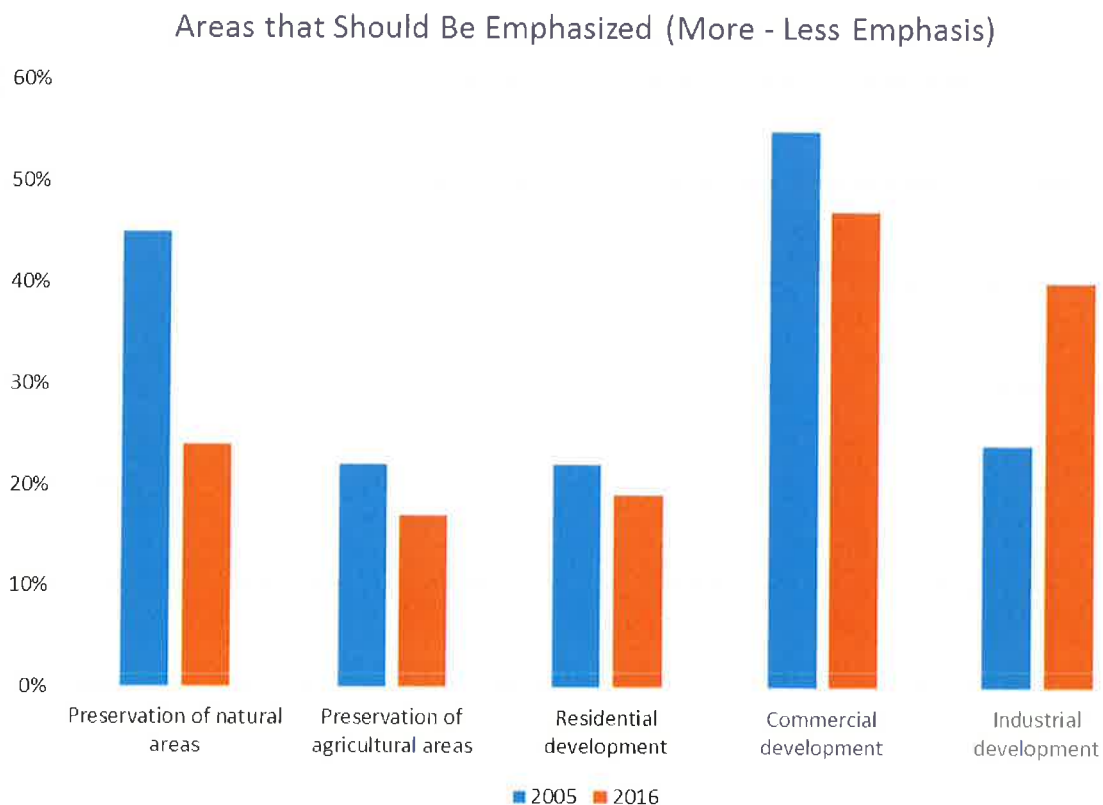
Q4b	Negative	None	Positive	Undecided
The impact of Lowell's area growth has been... (2016)	5%	88%	6%	1%

Here it is noted that the companion survey among local residences clearly shows that local area residents like and enjoy the small-town atmosphere that Lowell provides. Therefore, we can conclude that Lowell meets the needs of both the business community and the local residences.

What Should or Should Not Be Emphasized

Business respondents were asked to indicate whether Lowell should place less emphasis, keep the status quo, or place more emphasis on various areas of development. For comparison purposes, we created a composite score (More Emphasis – Less Emphasis). Thus, this composite (net) score indicates the degree to which respondents lean toward more over less emphasis.

The chart below shows composite scores for 2016 and 2005. Interestingly, in 2016, commercial development ranks first and industrial development ranks second.

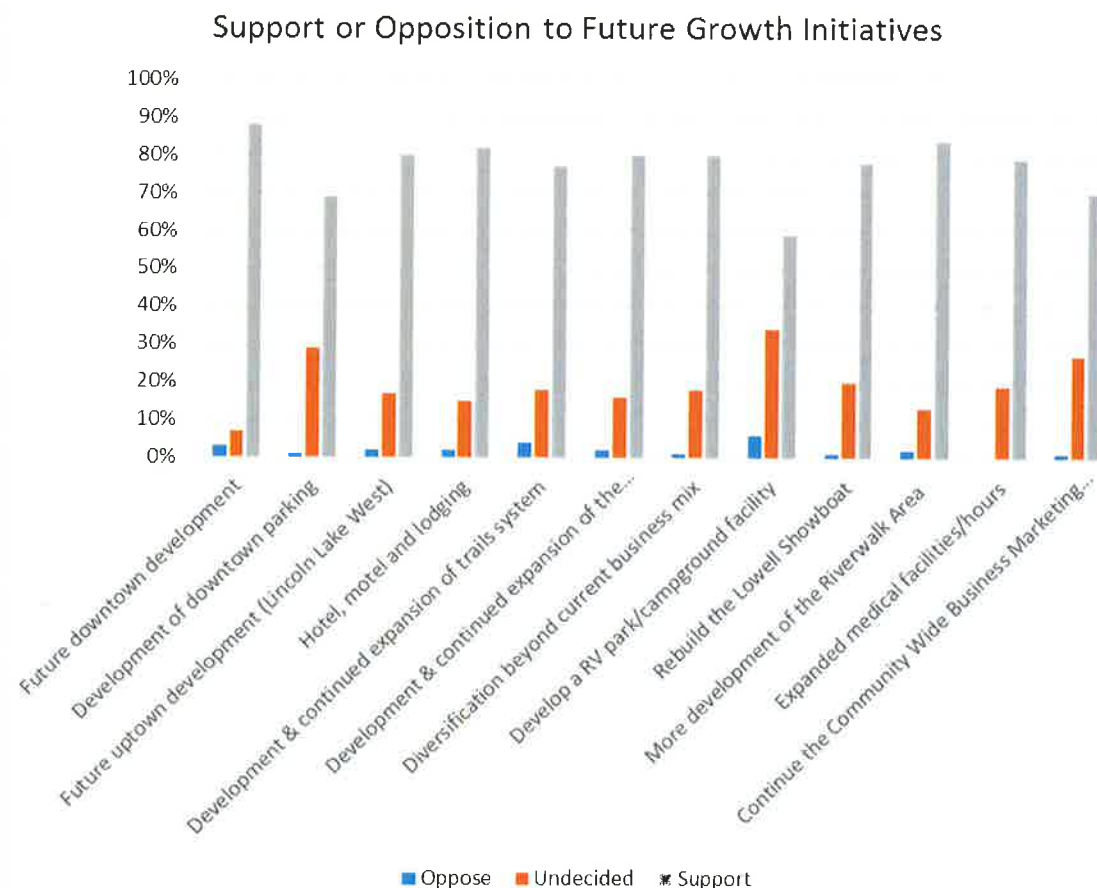


Q5 "More - Less Emphasis"	2016	Residential development	19%
Preservation of natural areas	24%	Commercial development	47%
Preservation of agricultural areas	17%	Industrial development	40%

What Initiatives Business Supports or Opposes

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they oppose, are undecided, or support various possible initiatives. The business communities support runs from a low of 59% (development of an RV park) to a high of 88% (future development of downtown).

The following chart shows survey findings for each of the initiatives investigated. Given that the list of initiatives was changed in 2016, current figures are not directly comparable to earlier figures, and therefore, are not shown.



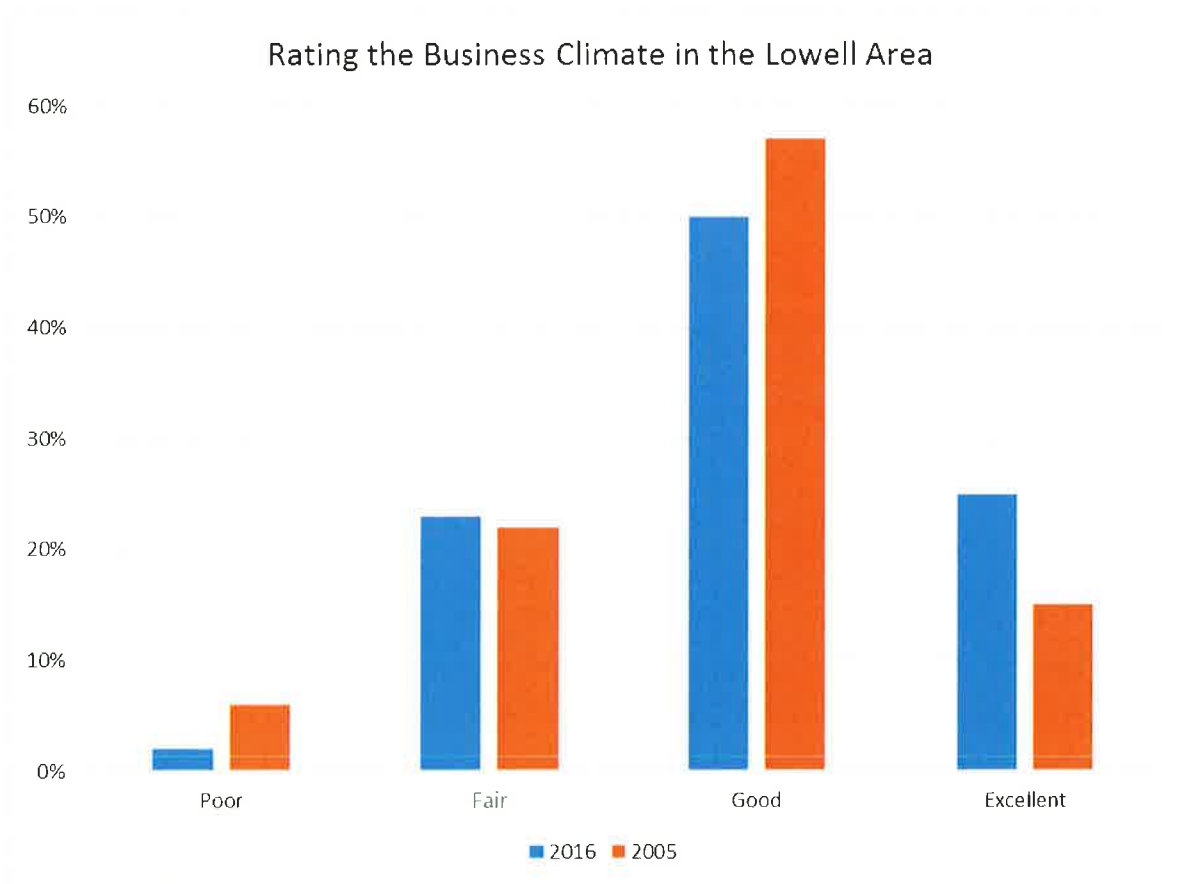
Q6: 2016 Figures

Support	
Future downtown development	88%
Development of downtown parking	69%
Future uptown development (Lincoln Lake West)	80%
Hotel, motel and lodging	82%
Development & continued expansion of trails system	77%
Development & continued expansion of the waterfront	80%
Diversification beyond current business mix	80%
Develop a RV park/campground facility	59%
Rebuild the Lowell Showboat	78%
More development of the Riverwalk Area	84%
Expanded medical facilities/hours	79%
Continue the Community Wide Bus. Marketing plan	70%

Understanding the Business Climate

About 75% of respondents rated the local business climate good or excellent in 2016. This composite figure (Excellent + Good scores) was 72% in 2005. This finding suggests that business respondents feel that the business climate has improved overall.

The chart below compares study figures for 2016 and 2005. Interestingly, excellent ratings are much higher in 2016 compared to 2005.

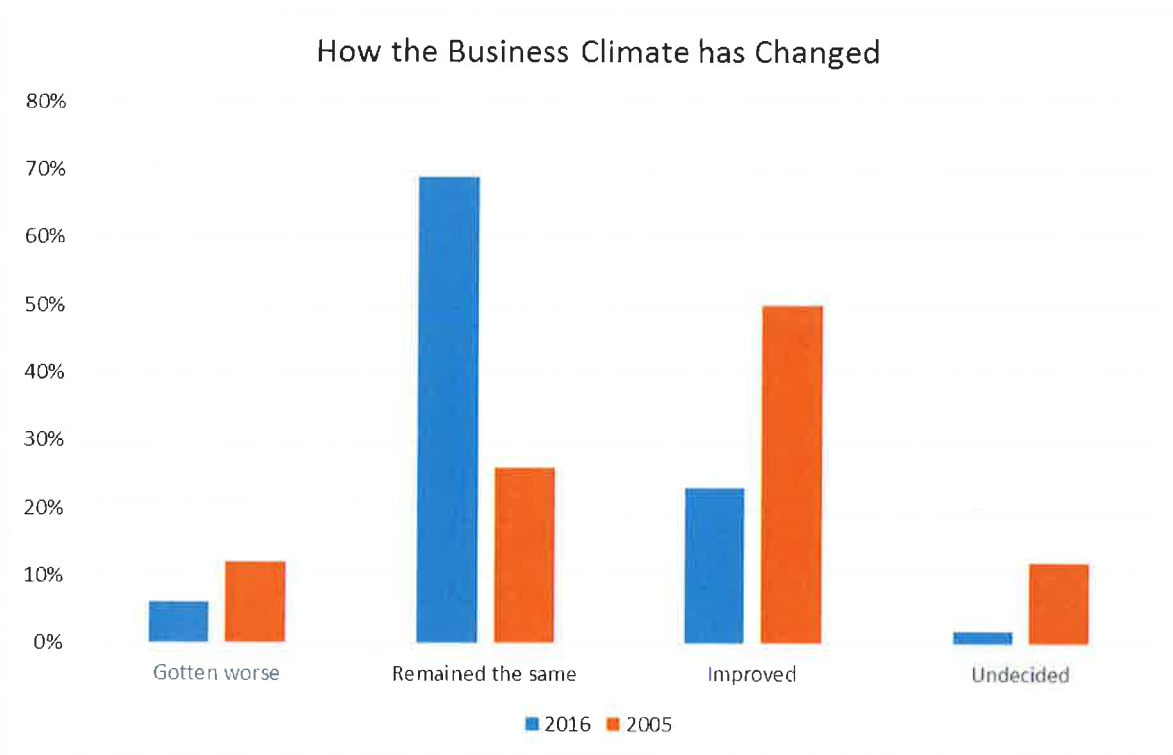


Q7. How would you describe the climate ...

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2016	2%	23%	50%	25%

When specifically asked how the business climate has changed, we find that a greater number of respondents feel the business climate has improved compared to those who feel it has gotten worse. In fact, respondents think the business climate has improved versus gotten worse by nearly a 4 to 1 margin.

It is noted here that the 2005 respondents also felt the business climate had improved. This shows a long-term improvement in the local business climate. Thus, it is not surprising that a larger percentage of respondents in 2016 think the business climate has remained the same, given the long history of improvement.

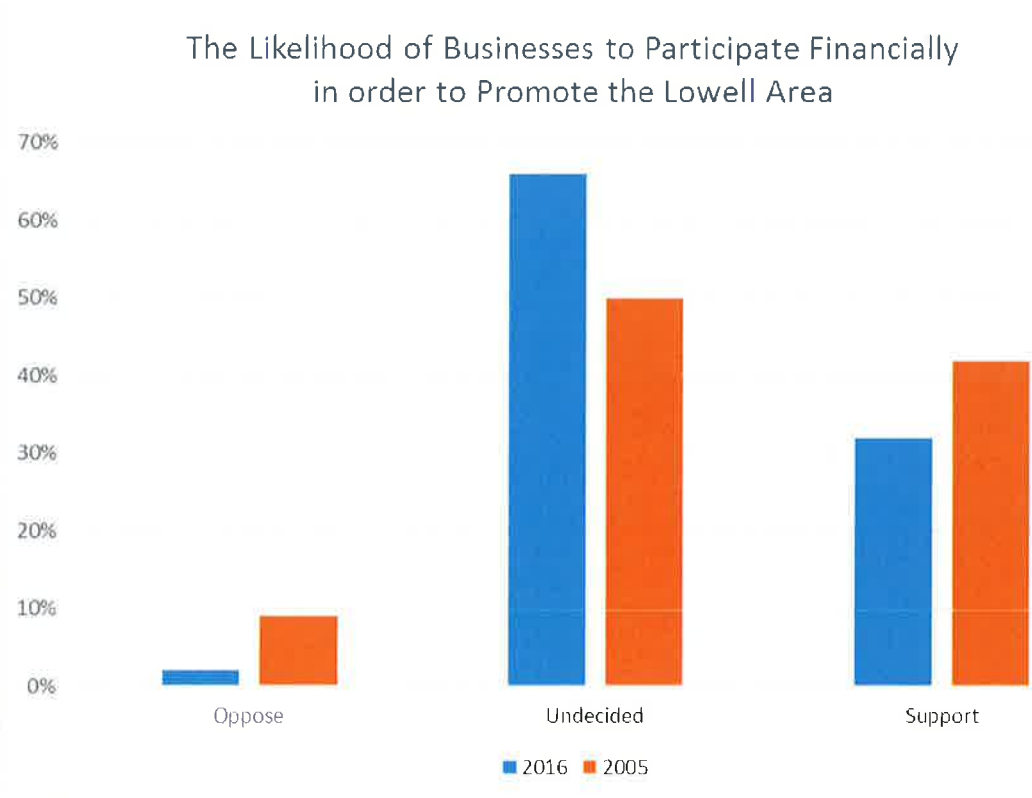


Q8. Would you say the business climate has ...	Gotten worse	Remained the same	Improved	Undecided
2016	6%	69%	23%	2%

Likelihood of Participating Financially to Promote the Lowell Area

Business respondents were also asked to indicate whether they would likely participate financially in promoting the Lowell Area. Here we note that relatively few respondents indicate they would not participate (2% in 2016). However, in 2016, 32% said they would support this effort, while 66% are undecided.

Given the large percentage of undecided respondents, businesses need to be sold on the idea of participating financially in marketing/promoting the Lowell Area. However, it is noted elsewhere in this study that business respondents continue to support the establishment of a Community Wide Business Marketing Plan.



Q9. Given the presence of an acceptable Community Wide Business Marketing Plan to promote your area business, how likely is your business to participate financially?

	Oppose	Undecided	Support
2016	2%	66%	32%

Detailed Analysis

Q1. I'd like your opinion on how the City of Lowell and surrounding townships governs. How do you rate the local government entities on the following issues?

Q1 Current 2016 Study	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Input into land use planning and decisions	3%	18%	53%	11%
Efficient processes for building permits and development	0%	12%	55%	6%
Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses	1%	10%	73%	3%
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	0%	15%	65%	8%
Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	3%	21%	66%	8%
Providing affordable housing	0%	5%	88%	3%
Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	1%	6%	76%	5%
Local government is business friendly	3%	4%	63%	29%
Planning for the future	3%	6%	75%	15%

"No Opinion" responses are not shown above. Hence, rows don't total 100%.

Q1 Composite "Good + Excellent Scores"	2005	2016
Input into land use planning and decisions	62%	64%
Efficient processes for building permits and development	53%	61%
Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses	57%	76%
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	56%	73%
Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	53%	74%
Providing affordable housing	60%	91%
Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	63%	81%
Local government is business friendly	60%	92%
Planning for the future	71%	90%

Q2. Please indicate how important each of the following are to your business?

Q2. Current Study	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Vital
Increase spending to market/promote Lowell	7%	40%	37%	14%
Recreation, cultural & special events	6%	35%	29%	27%
Quality school system	2%	16%	45%	34%
Ease of customer access to your business	7%	14%	31%	45%
Growth and development	2%	10%	40%	45%
Continued improvement of downtown area	5%	25%	42%	26%
Crime prevention/safety	2%	38%	47%	12%
Supply of skilled employees	12%	42%	38%	7%

Base = 100 respondents. Rows total 100%. Differences due to rounding.

Q2 "Important + Vital Scores"	2005	2016
Increase spending to market/promote Lowell	76%	51%
Recreation, cultural & special events	63%	56%
Quality school system	89%	79%
Ease of customer access to your business	81%	76%
Growth and development	86%	85%
Continued improvement of downtown area	72%	68%
Crime prevention/safety	87%	59%
Supply of skilled employees	69%	45%

Q3. Please indicate your level of agreement on the following statements, using a 5-point scale where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral (neither agree or disagree), 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Q3	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Recreation, cultural & special events make a successful contribution to the community	0%	0%	3%	45%	52%
Revenue generated from industry contributes to a good quality of life for all its residents	1%	2%	10%	49%	38%
Lowell area residents support local business/organizations	2%	3%	9%	42%	44%
There is a good opportunity for businesses in the Lowell area	1%	5%	7%	49%	38%
Lowell area schools are an attractive asset to our community	0%	0%	2%	39%	59%

Base = 100 respondents. Rows total 100%. Differences due to rounding.

Q3 "Agree + Strongly Agree"	2005	2016
Recreation, cultural & special events make a successful contribution to the community	92%	97%
Revenue generated from industry contributes to a good quality of life for all its residents	82%	87%
Lowell area residents support local business/organizations	70%	86%
There is a good opportunity for businesses in the Lowell area	67%	87%
Lowell area schools are an attractive asset to our community	95%	98%

4. In your opinion, looking back over the last three years has the Lowell area's growth...

Q4a. Been too slow, just about right, or too fast?

Q4b. Had a negative impact, little/none, or positive impact on your business?

Q4a	Too slow	Just about right	Too fast	Undecided
Lowell's area growth has been... (2016)	9%	88%	2%	1%
Lowell's area growth has been... (2005)	10%	75%	13%	3%

Q4b	Negative	None	Positive	Undecided
The impact of Lowell's area growth has been... (2016)	5%	88%	6%	1%
The impact of Lowell's area growth has been... (2005)	7%	36%	51%	6%

5. Looking ten years into the future, do you think the Lowell area should place less, keep the status quo, or place more emphasis on each of the following areas of development.

Q5. 2016 Figures	Less emphasis	Status quo	More emphasis
Preservation of natural areas	4%	68%	28%
Preservation of agricultural areas	3%	77%	20%
Residential development	5%	71%	24%
Commercial development	1%	51%	48%
Industrial development	2%	56%	42%

Q5 "More - Less Emphasis"	2005	2016
Preservation of natural areas	45%	24%
Preservation of agricultural areas	22%	17%
Residential development	22%	19%
Commercial development	55%	47%
Industrial development	24%	40%

6. Thinking about future growth in the Lowell Area, do you support or oppose the following possible initiatives?

Q6: 2016 Figures	Oppose	Undecided	Support
Future downtown development	3%	7%	88%
Development of downtown parking	1%	29%	69%
Future uptown development (Lincoln Lake West)	2%	17%	80%
Hotel, motel and lodging	2%	15%	82%
Development & continued expansion of trails system	4%	18%	77%
Development & continued expansion of the waterfront	2%	16%	80%
Diversification beyond current business mix	1%	18%	80%
Develop a RV park/campground facility	6%	34%	59%
Rebuild the Lowell Showboat	1%	20%	78%
More development of the Riverwalk Area	2%	13%	84%
Expanded medical facilities/hours	0%	19%	79%
Continue the Community Wide Business Marketing plan	1%	27%	70%

2005 Support levels are shown below.

However, it is noted that a comparison between 2016 and 2005 studies is not provided because of the changes made in 2016 which shifted responses among the categories.

Q6: "Support Scores"	2005
Downtown development	86%
Hotel, motel and lodging	66%
Diversification beyond current business mix	80%
Establish a Community Wide Business Marketing Plan	84%
Development and continued expansion of trails system	71%
Restoration of current amphitheater on Riverwalk	77%
Develop a farmers' market	74%
Develop a RV park/campground facility	41%
Develop a skateboard park	35%
Expanded medical facilities/hours	74%

7. How would you describe the climate for operating a business in the Lowell area?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2016	2%	23%	50%	25%
2005	6%	22%	57%	15%

8. Would you say the business climate has gotten worse, remained about the same, or improved compared to three years ago?

	Gotten worse	Remained the same	Improved	Undecided
2016	6%	69%	23%	2%
2005	12%	26%	50%	12%

9. Given the presence of an acceptable Community Wide Business Marketing Plan to promote your area business, how likely is your business to participate financially?

	Oppose	Undecided	Support
2016	2%	66%	32%
2005	9%	50%	42%

10. Lastly, for classification purposes, please tell me...

Location of Business	2016
City downtown	21%
City uptown	9%
Township	14%
Strip mall	2%
Industrial park	1%
Independent building	46%
Home-based	6%
No Answer	1%
Total	100%

Number of Employees	2016
<4	43%
4-9	27%
10-19	17%
20-49	8%
50-99	2%
100-plus	2%
No answer	1%
Total	100%

Type of Company	2016
Retail/dealer	14%
Business services	14%
Building contractor	9%
Wholesale/distributor	2%
Finance/banking	0%
Non-profit	7%
Manufacturer	7%
Restaurant	12%
Other	35%
Total	100%

Q10, Continued.

HQ/Branch/Franchise?	2016
HQ	82%
Branch	7%
Franchise	6%
Other	5%
Total	100%

Age of Business	2016
<1 yr	5%
1-4 yrs	18%
5-9 yrs	21%
10-19 yrs	26%
20-39 yrs	20%
40-plus yrs	10%
Total	100%

Title	2016
Owner/President	62%
V.P./Director	9%
Partner	5%
Manager	16%
Sales	2%
Other	6%
Total	100%

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

Verbatim Responses

Q4. Impact of growth on business: Negative, Positive, or None

Pos	LOT OF BUSINESS OWNERS DOWNTOWN TREAT BUSINESSES AS HOBBY -NOT OPEN ENOUGH HOURS
Pos	GOVERNMENT HEAVY HND
Pos	MAIN STREET HAS BECOME EMPTY
Pos	WOULD LIKE TO SEE STRONGER BUY LOCAL INITIATIVE AND HOW IT IMPACTS COMMUNITY POSITIVELY
None	A LOT OF BUSINESSES HAVE COME & GONE IN DOWNTOWN
None	SLOW BUT MOMENTUM IS BUILDING
None	EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON GROWING BUSINESSES THAT ARE ALREADY IN LOWELL
None	TOO MANY BUSINESSES COME & GO DOWNTOWN
None	WE DON'T NEED ANYMORE SUPER STORES IN LOWELL-DON'T FIT SMALL TOWN & KILL SMALLS BUSINESSES
Neg	STEADY IS THE WAY TO GO
Neg	CITY WELCOMED OUR BREW PUB WITH OPEN ARMS- GREAT TO WORK WITH

Q8. Explanation of business climate: Worse, Improved or Same.

Worse	BIG COMPANIES TAKE BUSINESS FROM SMALL COMPANIES
Worse	CITY GOVERNMENT IS NOT PRO BUSINESS
Worse	TOO MANY BIG RETAILERS -SMALL BUSIESS DISAPPEARING
Worse	CITY OF LOWELL, LOWELL PUB SCHOOLS BUY ON PRICE ALONE/IGNORE THE FACT THAT LOCAL BUSINESSES PAY TAXES, ETC.
Improved	DUE TO CORPORATE INCREASE IN MARKETING
Improved	WE'VE EXPREIENCED AN INCREASE IN UR BUSINESS
Improved	OVERALL, BUSINESS IS DOING BETTER/STABLE
Improved	UPTICK FOR US IN BUSINESS
Improved	HOUSING MARKET IS HEATED UP
Improved	CONSUMER CONFIDENCE UP
Improved	WE'VE HD A VERY PROFITABLE YEAR
Improved	GREAT PRODUCT AT RIGHT PRICE
Improved	INCREASED OUR DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDI MARKETING
Improved	EVENT MARKETING
No Answer	N/A -WE'RE NEW TO LOWELL

Q10. Other Townships mentioned

ADA
ADA
ADA
AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR
BAKERY/FARM STAND
BOSTON
BREWERY
BUSINESS OFFICE MANAGER
CHIROPRACTIC
DENTAL
ENGINEERING SERVICES
FARM
FREIGHT HAULER
HAULAGE
LOWELL CHARTER
LOWELL CHARTER
LOWELL CHARTER
LOWELL CHARTER
SKILLED NURSING
VERGENNES

Q10. Other job responsibilities mentioned

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PASTOR
RESIDENT MANAGER

Q10. Other Types of Businesses Mentioned.

ATTORNEY SERVICES
AUTO REPAIR
AUTO REPAIR
CATERING / EVENTS VENUE
CHILD CARE
COSMETICS
FEED STORE
FITNESS/HEALTH
FUNERAL SERVICES
HEALTH CARE/MEDICAL
HOUSING
LANDSCAPE/CONCRETE WORK
PAVING
PLUMBING/HEATING
PLUMBING/HEATING &AC
REAL ESTATE
REALESTATE
REALESTATE
SALON
SEPTIC TANK CLEANING
UPHOLSTERY
VETERINARY MEDICINE

Final Respondents' Comments (Volunteered)

- BE CAREFUL WITH RECRUTING BIG BUSINESS LIKE MEIJER'S. THEY PUT SMALLER STORES OUT OF BUSINESS
- PURCHASING DECISIONS SHOULD BE WEIGHTED FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES. WE CAN'T ALWAYS BE THE LEAST EXPENSIVE.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE BUSINESS PHONE SCRIPT

PHONE SURVEY AMONG LOWELL BUSINESSES

Hello, I'm _____ from Aegis Marketing Research and I'm conducting a survey on behalf of the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce to determine the attitudes and opinions of business people, such as yourself, regarding the current and future business climate in Lowell and surrounding areas. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions?

1. I'd like your opinion on how the City of Lowell and surrounding townships governs. How do you rate the local government entities on the following issues?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Input into land use planning and decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Efficient processes for building permits and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Ensuring the appropriateness of regulations on businesses</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing the supply and development of new commercial and industrial areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encouraging businesses to relocate to the Lowell area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Providing affordable housing</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessing future needs for water, sewer and roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local government is business friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Please indicate how important each of the following are to your business?

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Vital
Increase spending to market/promote Lowell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation, cultural & special events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality school system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of customer access to your business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growth and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continued improvement of the downtown area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crime prevention/safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supply of skilled employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Please indicate your level of agreement on the following statements, using a 5-point scale where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral (neither agree or disagree), 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

	Strongly disagree		Neutral	Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation, cultural & special events make a successful contribution to the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revenue generated from industry contributes to a good quality of life for all residents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lowell Area residents supports local business/organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is a good opportunity for businesses in the Lowell area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lowell Area Schools is an attractive asset to our community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. In your opinion, looking back over the last three years has the Lowell area's growth...

Been too slow, just about right, or too fast? ☐ too slow ☐ just about right ☐ too fast

Had a negative impact, little/none, or positive impact on your business? ☐ negative ☐ none ☐ positive

If "negative or positive," please explain: _____

5. Looking ten years into the future, do you think the Lowell area should place less, keep the status quo, or place more emphasis on each of the following areas of development?

	Less emphasis	Status Quo	More emphasis
Preservation of natural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preservation of agricultural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residential development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Thinking about future growth in the Lowell Area, do you support or oppose the following possible initiatives?

	Oppose	Undecided	Support
Future downtown development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of downtown parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future uptown development (Lincoln Lake West)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hotel, motel and lodging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development & continued expansion of trails system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development & continued expansion of the waterfront	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diversification beyond current business mix	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop a RV park/campground facility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rebuild the Lowell Showboat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More development of the Riverwalk Area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expanded medical facilities/hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue the Community Wide Business Marketing plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How would you describe the climate for operating a business in the Lowell area?

☐ Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐ Excellent

8. Would you say the business climate has gotten worse, remained about the same, or improved compared to three years ago?

☐ Gotten worse ☐ Remained about the same ☐ Improved

Please explain: _____

9. Given the presence of an acceptable Community Wide Business Marketing Plan to promote your area business, how likely is your business to participate financially?

☐ Oppose ☐ Undecided ☐ Support

10. Lastly, for classification purposes, please tell me...

Location of company ☐ City downtown ☐ City uptown ☐ Township
☐ Strip mall ☐ Industrial park
☐ Independent building ☐ Home-based _____

The number of employees ☐ <4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10-19 ☐ 20-49 ☐ 50-99 ☐ 100-plus

Type of company ☐ Retail/dealer ☐ Wholesaler/Distributor ☐ Manufacturer
 ☐ Business Services ☐ Finance/Banking ☐ Restaurant
 ☐ Building/Contractor ☐ Non-profit ☐ Other _____

Is this location your headquarters or branch/division or franchise? ☐ HQ ☐ Branch ☐ Franchise

Age of business ☐ <1 yr ☐ 1-4 yrs ☐ 5-9 yrs ☐ 10-19 yrs ☐ 20-39 yrs ☐ 40-plus yrs

Your title/position ☐ Owner/President ☐ VP/Director ☐ Partner ☐ Manager
 ☐ Sales ☐ Other _____

This concludes my survey. Thank you for your assistance. Good-bye.