

A blurred, high-angle photograph of a large crowd of people, likely at a public event or festival. The people are seen from behind, walking away from the camera. The image is out of focus, creating a sense of movement and a large gathering. The colors are muted, with a lot of light and some darker silhouettes.

City of Smithville Community Insights™ Report

candid®
MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS

About the Community Insights™ Report

- Insights rooted in research are key to developing a successful strategy. The Community Insights Report summarizes the first stage – Research and Discovery – and helps determine the road map for the development of the City's brand position and subsequently the brand identity.



Our Approach to Community Branding

- The brand development journey will help define **key attributes of the City of Smithville.**
- Developing a new brand identity will allow the City to **embrace** the elements that make it unique, while differentiating itself from other communities in the Kansas City area.

Executive Summary

This Executive Summary represents a snapshot of the critical highlights from the Research and Discovery stage.

Brand Partners

Brand Partners

- The City of Smithville, through City Staff and elected officials, contracted with **candid** to determine the City's true, unique and relevant brand position to help the area distinguish itself in the marketplace.

Research and Discovery

Findings

- **candid** conducted research to identify what differentiates Smithville from its neighbors and competitors.
- The Research and Discovery Stage examined the community, and the competition.

In-Market Research Methodology

Four Phases

1. Community Profile/Economic Development Insights
2. Community Engagement
 - In-Market Immersion
 - Citizen and Vision Survey
 - Online Engagement Portal
3. Community Insights SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)
4. Insights and Conclusions

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Methodology

- To understand Smithville's current brand positioning, **candid** assessed the environment; demographics and psychographics of residents; perceptions of residents and stakeholders; current communications and the competition.
- Most importantly, we gathered input from Smithville and its constituents.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- Our assessment shows that Smithville's brand has been rooted around a few key themes: small town, bedroom community, great place to raise a family, peaceful and friendly, good school district and Smithville Lake.
- In addition, a select group of older residents still reference two fairly significant community events – the flood in 1965 and the hospital purchase – both of which are likely contributing factors to a sense of lagging progress.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- Traditionally, the community has not been viewed favorably by economic development decision makers because of perceived challenges of permitting costs, land costs and the attitudes and lack of desire for growth of past elected officials.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- The community is also divisive regarding the perception of itself. Some of the “old guard” seem unwilling to make changes needed for progress, fueled by a preference to keep things the same, while the “new guard” is desperately seeking change and advancement in recreational amenities, retail, events and entertainment.
- Both however, have unrealistic expectations about how to achieve their desired goals.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- Because Smithville has the lowest tax rate in the Kansas City metro area, the community remains at a deep disadvantage in delivering quality of amenities or services to its constituents.
- Decisions that were made decades ago by City leadership stunted the ability of the City to progress like other neighboring communities who have been successful at growing their residential housing and commercial tax bases.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- The school district will also continue to be challenged by the attitudes of voters who are unwilling to support tax increases, while the expectation by many in the community is for the school district to accommodate growth and maintain high academic standards without additional funds.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- This puts Smithville at a crossroads with its identity and future. With a relatively new and energized leadership that is looking forward, along with a new resident population, including many young families, the community is poised to overcome this challenge.

Where Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

Assessment

- Today, Smithville does not have an identifiable brand of any kind, but the potential to build one is great.

Community Profile

Data collected from the U.S. Census Bureau's Five-Year 2012 American Community Study, the Missouri Department of Revenue, along with Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020.

Demographics

Highlights:

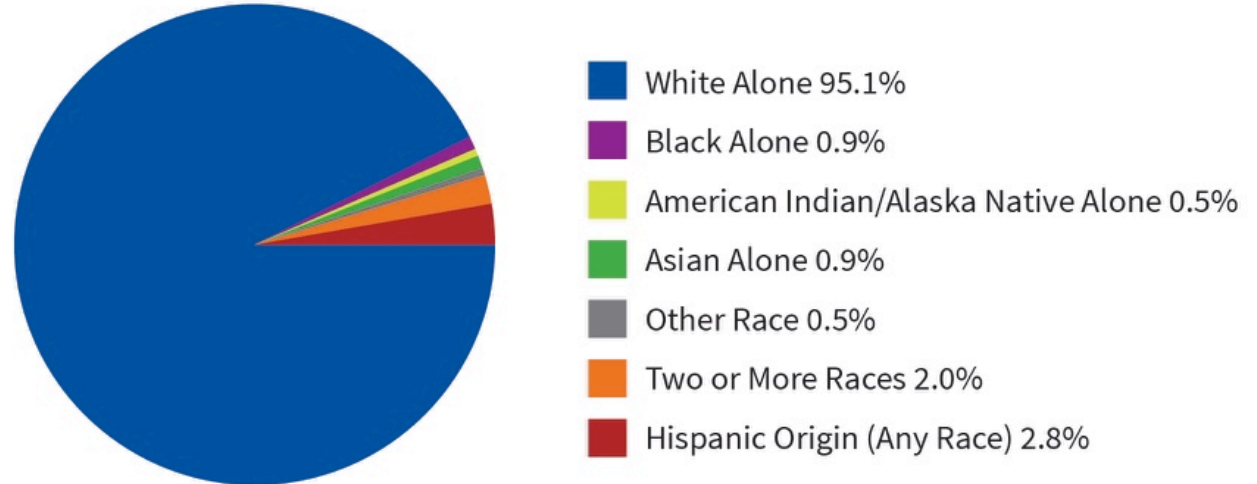
Population

- Smithville's population has grown from 2,786 in 1990 to 8,768 in 2012, a 318% increase.
- 2015 population is 8,870. In 2010, the Census count in the area was 8,425. The rate of change since 2010 was 0.95% annually.
- The five-year projection for the population in Smithville is 9,439, representing a change of 1.25%.
- Currently, the population is 49.1% male and 50.9% female.

Demographics

Highlights: Composition

- The median age in the area is 39.3, compared to a U.S. median age of 37.9.
- Racial Composition



Demographics

Highlights:

Household Income

- Current median household income is \$70,788, compared to \$53,217 for all U.S. households. Median household income is projected to be \$80,482 in five years, compared to \$60,683 for all U.S. households.
- Average household income is projected to be \$92,412 in five years, compared to \$84,910 for all U.S. households.

Demographics

Highlights: Home Values

- Currently, 79.4% of the 3,349 housing units in the area are owner occupied; 18.5% renter occupied and 2.0% are vacant.
- Median home value in the area is \$212,297, compared to a median home value of \$200,006 for the U.S.
- In five years, median home value is projected to change by 4.01%.

Demographics

Highlights:

Educational Attainment

- Smithville has slightly lower levels of educational attainment than the Kansas City metro.
- Just 21% of Smithville's adult population (25 and over) have at least a bachelor's degree. In the Kansas City metro, that figure is 22%.

Community Tapestry Study

Profile

- Tapestry segmentation identifies neighborhood segments in Smithville and describes their socioeconomic quality and demographic composition.
- This profile mirrors the involvement of residents who participated in the Brand Smithville Survey at www.visionsmithville.com and brandsmithville.com.

Community Tapestry Study

Top Life Mode Groups

1. Suburban Periphery
 - a. Soccer Moms
 - b. Midlife Constants
2. Semirural
 - a. Middleburgs
3. Rural
 - a. Green Acres

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Overview

Suburban Periphery Composition: 51.6% of Smithville's Population

- Urban expansion: affluence in the suburbs or city-by-commute.
- The most populous and fastest-growing among Urbanization groups, Suburban Periphery includes one-third of the nation's population.
- Commuters value low-density living, but demand proximity to jobs, entertainment and the amenities of an urban center.
- Well-educated, two-income households; accept long commute times to raise their children in these family-friendly neighborhoods. Many are heavily mortgaged in newly built, single-family homes.

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Highlights:

Soccer Moms

Soccer Moms make up 35.1% of Smithville's Population

- Soccer Moms is an affluent, family-oriented market with a country flavor. Residents are partial to new housing away from the bustle of the city, but close enough to commute to professional job centers.
- Life in the suburban wilderness offsets the hectic pace of two working parents with growing children. They favor time-saving devices, like banking online or housekeeping services, and family-oriented pursuits.

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Highlights: Soccer Moms

- Median age is 36.6
- Seventy-nine percent (79%) are white, non-Hispanic
- Education: 37.7% are college graduates; more than 70% with some college education
- Medium household income: \$84,000

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Highlights:
Soccer Moms

Top Five Types of Occupation

- Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
- Management
- Education Training and Library
- Sales and Related
- Office and Administrative Support

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Highlights:

Midlife Constants

Midlife Constants make up 16.5% of Smithville's population

- Midlife Constants residents are seniors, at or approaching retirement, with below-average labor force participation and above-average net worth.
- Although located in predominantly metropolitan areas, they live outside the central cities, in smaller communities. Their lifestyle is more country, than urban. They are generous, but not spendthrifts.

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Highlights:

Midlife Constants

- Median age is 45.9
- 86.9% are white, non-Hispanic
- Education: 64% have a high school diploma or some college
- Median household income: \$48,000

Tapestry Group: Suburban Periphery

Highlights:

Midlife
Constants

Top Five Types of Occupation

- Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
- Management
- Education Training and Library
- Sales and Related
- Office and Administrative Support

Tapestry Group: Semirural

Overview

Semirural Composition: 37.9% of Smithville's Population

- The most affordable housing – in smaller towns. Single-family and mobile homes in the country, but still within reach of some amenities.
- Embrace a quiet, country lifestyle, including country music and hunting.
- Prefer domestic products and vehicles, especially trucks.

Tapestry Group: Semirural

Highlights:

Middleburgs

- Middleburg neighborhoods transformed from the easy pace of country living to semirural subdivisions in the last decade, when the housing boom reached out.
- Residents are conservative, family-oriented consumers. Still more country than rock-and-roll, they are thrifty, but willing to carry some debt and are already investing in their futures.
- They rely on their smartphones and mobile devices to stay in touch and pride themselves on their expertise.

Tapestry Group: Semirural

Highlights: Middleburgs

- Median age 35.3
- 80.7% are white, non-Hispanic
- Education: 66% with a high school diploma or some college
- Household income: \$55,000

Tapestry Group: Semirural

Highlights:
Middleburgs

Top Five Types of Occupation

- Management
- Production
- Transportation and Material Moving
- Sales and Related
- Office and Administrative

Tapestry Group: Rural

Overview

Rural Composition: 10.5% of Smithville's Population

- Country living featuring single-family homes with acreage, farms and rural resort areas.
- Over half of all households are occupied by persons 55 years and older; many are married couples without children at home.
- Blue collar jobs dominate the landscape, including manufacturing, agriculture, mining and construction. Many are self-employed, retired, or receive income from Social Security.

Tapestry Group: Rural

Highlights: Green Acres

- The Green Acres lifestyle features country living and self-reliance. These individuals are avid do-it-yourselfers, maintaining and remodeling their homes, with all the necessary power tools to accomplish the jobs. Gardening, especially growing vegetables, is also a priority, again with the right tools, tillers, tractors and riding mowers.
- Outdoor living features a variety of sports: hunting and fishing, motorcycling, hiking and camping, and even golf. Self-described conservatives, residents of Green Acres remain pessimistic about the near future, yet are heavily invested in it.

Tapestry Group: Rural

Highlights: Green Acres

- Median age is 43
- Ninety-one percent (91%) are white, non-Hispanic
- Education: 60% are college educated
- Median household income: \$72,000

Tapestry Group: Rural

Highlights:
Green Acres

Top Five Types of Occupation

- Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
- Management
- Education Training and Library
- Sales and Related
- Office and Administrative Support

Economic Development Insights

Economic Development Insights

Retail Leakage

Smithville's industry landscape indicates a 100% leakage in retail, electronic and appliance stores, lawn and garden stores, all retail (clothing, specialty items, etc.) and special food services (restaurants).

The summary also indicates large gaps of retail opportunities that can be filled with three industry categories: Retail Trade, Food and Drink.

Economic Development Insights

Retail Leakage

Retail leakage means that residents are spending more for products than local businesses capture. Retail sales leakage suggests that there is unmet demand in the trade area and that the community can support additional store space for that type of business.

However, retail leakage does not necessarily translate into opportunity. For example, there could be a strong competitor in a neighboring community that dominates the market for that type of product or store.

Economic Development Insights

Top Business
Sectors by
North
American
Industry
Classification
System
(NAICS)

Total Retail Trade and Food and Drink

- NAICS: 44-45,722
- Demand (retail potential): \$110,959,467.00
- Supply (retail sales): \$70,957,469.00
- Retail Gap: \$40,001,998.00
- Leakage/Surplus Factor: 22.0
- Number of Current Businesses: 73

Economic Development Insights

Top Business
Sectors by
North
American
Industry
Classification
System
(NAICS)

Total Retail Trade

- NAICS: 44-45
- Demand (retail potential): \$99,499,871.00
- Supply (retail sales): \$61,354,961.00
- Retail Gap: \$38,144,910.00
- Leakage/Surplus Factor: 23.7
- Number of Current Businesses: 62

Economic Development Insights

Retail Leakage

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 44-45 sectors comprises two main types of retailers: store and non-store retailers.

Store retailers operate fixed point-of-sale locations, located and designed to attract a high volume of walk-in customers. In general, retail stores have extensive displays of merchandise and use mass-media advertising to attract customers.

They typically sell merchandise to the general public for personal or household consumption, but some also serve business and institutional clients. These include establishments, such as office supply stores, computer and software stores, building materials dealers, plumbing supply stores, and electrical supply stores. Catalog showrooms, gasoline service stations, automotive dealers, and mobile home dealers are treated as store retailers.

Economic Development Insights

Retail Leakage

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 44-45 sectors comprises two main types of retailers: store and non-store retailers.

Non-store retailers, like store retailers, are organized to serve the general public, but their retailing methods differ. The establishments of this subsector reach customers and market merchandise with methods, such as the broadcasting of “infomercials,” the broadcasting and publishing of direct-response advertising, the publishing of paper and electronic catalogs, door-to-door solicitation and in-home demonstration. Establishments engaged in the direct sale (non-store) of products, such as home heating oil dealers and home delivery newspaper routes are included here.

Economic Development Insights

Top Business
Sectors by
North
American
Industry
Classification
System
(NAICS)

Total Food and Drink

- NAICS: 722
- Demand (retail potential): \$11,459,596.00
- Supply (retail sales): \$9,602,508.00
- Retail Gap: \$1,857,088.00
- Leakage/Surplus Factor: 8.8
- Number of Current Businesses: 11

Economic Development Insights

Retail Leakage

North American Industry Classification System 722

Food Services and Drinking Places subsectors prepare meals, snacks, and beverages to customer order for immediate on-premises and off-premises consumption. There is a wide range of establishments in these industries. Some provide food and drink only; while others provide various combinations of seating space, waiter/waitress services and incidental amenities, such as limited entertainment. The industries in the subsector are grouped based on the type and level of services provided.

The industry groups are full-service restaurants; limited service eating places; special food services, such as food service contractors, caterers, and mobile food services, and drinking places

Economic Development Insights

LOIS

LocationOne Information System (LOIS)

LOIS is the leading online economic development site selection tool in the U.S. LOIS provides a GIS-enhanced site database system, which gives a strong competitive advantage in the rough-and-tumble-world of site selection.

Economic Development Insights

LOIS

Currently, the City of Smithville does not have LOIS integrated into the City's website and the database has not been populated with available land, sites or buildings.

This is a service that should be considered as part of actively marketing Smithville for economic development. LOIS is however, integrated with the Clay County Economic Development Council's (EDC) website without Smithville's sites and buildings.

How will site selectors and economic developers find potential sites and buildings in Smithville?

Economic Development Insights

Clay County EDC

Clay County Economic Development Council

The Clay County Economic Development Council is a partnership of the private and public sectors aimed at the overall economic development for the county.

Smithville data from 2011 and 2012 is being used in presentations to key decision makers to attract businesses to Clay County.

Economic Development Insights

Clay County EDC

Twenty-two percent (22%) of employees working in Smithville, also live in Smithville. The bulk of the remaining employees commute in from other suburban communities in Clay and Platte counties.

Smithville residents who work outside of Smithville totals 3,506. The vast majority of these workers commute to the south to employment centers along the I-29 corridor, the Fairfax district in Kansas City, Kan. and Kansas City, Mo.'s central business district.

Economic Development Insights

Clay County EDC

Smithville's overall pull factor is .65, indicating there is a good amount of retail leakage. A pull factor of one (1) would indicate balance with the rest of Clay County.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Smithville Pull Factor} &= \frac{\left(\frac{\text{Smithville Taxable Sales}}{\text{Smithville Population}} \right)}{\left(\frac{\text{Clay County Taxable Sales}}{\text{Clay County Population}} \right)} \\ \text{Smithville Pull Factor} &= \frac{\left(\frac{\$74,534,334.70}{8,411 (2011 - 2012)} \right)}{\left(\frac{\$3,114,996,446.09}{227,577} \right)} = .65\end{aligned}$$

Smithville Pull Factors: 1 = Balanced

Retail Industry	Pull Factors
Lumber and Other Building Materials	0.57
Hardware Stores	1.17
Grocery Stores	1.19
Womens Ready-To-Wear Stores	0.42
Family Clothing Stores	0.06
Eating and Drinking Places	0.82
Drug Stores and Proprietary Stores	0.13
Auto Repair Shops	2.24

Economic Development Insights

Growth Trends

Smithville Growth Trends

Census	2010	2015	2020	2015 – 2020 Change	2015 – 2020 Annual Rate
Population	8,425	8,870	9,439	569	1.25%
Median Age	36.7	39.3	40.2	0.9	0.45%
Households	3,115	3,281	3,492	211	1.25%
Average Household Size	2.68	2.68	2.68	0.00	0.00%

Community Engagement

Methodology

“Community Engagement” is defined as promotion and awareness of how Smithville residents and stakeholders could participate in the brand development process.

Residents and community stakeholders were asked to visit www.visionsmithville.com and participate in a vision survey.

Community Engagement

Outreach

Communication and Outreach

- Dedicated website, www.visionsmithville.com.
- **candid** staff t-shirts promoting the project for man-on-the street interviews.
- One thousand (1,000) promotional cards and 50 posters distributed throughout the community.
- City website links and multiple social media pushes through Facebook.
- Chamber of Commerce support in distributing posters/ cards and a link on website.
- Article on front page of Smithville Herald promoting participation.
- Advertisement in City's October newsletter.
- Print and online ads in the Smithville Herald.
- Message in water bill.
- Hard copy surveys at City Hall and Senior Center.

Community Engagement

Outreach

Communication and Outreach

Promotional Cards

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Please help Smithville create the **perfect brand message and identity** for our community by participating in a community-wide survey.

Share your perceptions about Smithville.
Visit www.visionsmithville.com to engage online

If you do not have internet access, please stop by City Hall and pick up a survey. **Survey ends November 6, 2015.**

Posters

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Please help Smithville create the **perfect brand message and identity** for our community by participating in a community-wide survey.

The City is working with **candid marketing + communications**, a local company specializing in community branding, and this survey is an essential part of the research necessary to create a new strategic brand message for Smithville.

Share your perceptions about Smithville.

Visit www.visionsmithville.com to engage online

We hope you will take **5 minutes** to participate in the community conversation and take the survey. And of course, share additional thoughts and ideas about why you think Smithville is a special place to live.

We will not share your information with anyone. All information collected will be presented in total. **Please complete the survey before November 6, 2015.**

Please forward this survey link to friends, family or co-workers that live or work in Smithville. We want everyone's voice to be heard!

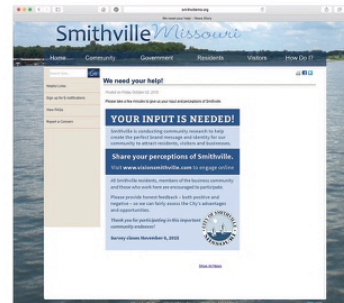


www.justbecandid.com



smithvillemo.org

Link from City's website



Website



YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Help the City of Smithville create the perfect brand!

The City of Smithville is working with **candid marketing + communications**, a local marketing firm specializing in community branding, to conduct community research to help create the perfect brand image, identity and message for our community to attract residents, visitors and businesses.

All Smithville residents, members of the business and civic community and those who work here are encouraged to participate two ways:

- 1 Visit www.brandsmithville.com
Share your perception of Smithville by taking five minutes to answer five questions.
- 2 Click here to take the online Vision Survey
This anonymous survey should take you no more than 15 minutes to complete.
Simply complete the survey by checking the boxes that most apply and click done when finished!

Thank you for participating in this important community endeavor!

Interested in getting more involved with the City's branding initiative?
Contact Becky Freely-Gardner at becky@justbecandid.com for more information!
Survey ends November 6, 2015.



Smithville Herald Ad

LAST CHANCE... YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Please help Smithville create the perfect brand message and identity for our community by participating in a community-wide survey. All Smithville residents, members of the business and civic community and those who work here are encouraged to participate by visiting www.visionsmithville.com.

This anonymous survey will allow the community to share their perceptions of Smithville, along with thoughts and ideas about why Smithville is a special place to live. Copies of the survey are also available at City Hall.

DEADLINE TO COMPLETE SURVEY IS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2015.



Online Ad

LAST CHANCE... YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Help Smithville create the perfect brand message and identity for our community by participating in a community-wide survey.

DEADLINE TO COMPLETE SURVEY IS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2015.

[CLICK HERE](#)



In-Market Immersion

Community Conversations

Methodology

Residents, Community Stakeholders, Elected Officials and City Staff

A “Community Conversation” is defined as in-market immersion and research to understand the attitudes and perceptions of the community-at-large using:

- Stakeholder interviews
- Key messaging sessions
- Man-on-the-street interviews

Community Conversations

Methodology

Residents, Community Stakeholders, Elected Officials and City Staff

- These conversations were conducted by phone or in-person. More than 150 residents were reached by phone or in-person during various canvassing-the-community events, such as the homecoming parade, Chamber of Commerce lunch, individual meetings and man-on-the-street interviews.
- The in-market immersion study was conducted September – November 2015.

Community Conversations

Highlights

Resident and Stakeholder Conversations

Primary assets include:

- Smithville Lake, however, many feel it should be utilized more for visitor and economic development attraction.
- Friendly small town, highly desirable school district, great place to raise a family.
- A strong desire by many to find a solution to make the community better; a safe community with low crime.

Community Conversations

Highlights

Resident and Stakeholder Conversations

Primary challenges include:

- Although Smithville is very close to neighboring communities, there is little recreation outside of the lake for young families and children.
- An “old guard vs. new guard” struggle is preventing the community from moving forward.
- Limited tax dollars due to lack of commercial development cause a lack of amenities and inadequate infrastructure.
- A perception that Smithville has expensive permitting and land costs.
- General concern about the future of elected leadership.

Community Conversations

Highlights

Resident and Stakeholder Conversations

Primary opportunities include:

- Increased City-sponsored Parks and Recreation programs and events.
- Leveraging the ease of access to downtown Kansas City to attract young professionals and families.
- Revitalizing the entry into the community from Highway 169.
- Strong belief by many interviewed that the lack of commercial growth is a solvable challenge.

Community Conversations

Highlights

Elected Officials and City Staff

Primary assets include:

- Strong community core.
- Staff committed to improving the vision and perception of the community.
- Strong desire to communicate with residents to explain why changes or decisions are made.
- The ability to grow the City intelligently.

Community Conversations

Highlights

Elected Officials and City Staff

Primary challenges include:

- Communication channels that reach a diverse resident base who want to receive information differently.
- Lowest taxes in the Kansas City metro area with residents not inclined to raise them.
- Community with an identity crisis.
- Overcoming resistance from a small minority of negative residents who are unwilling to change, while managing the expectations of many.

Community Conversations

Highlights

Elected Officials and City Staff

Primary opportunities include:

- Leveraging the positive perception of the school district to attract new residents.
- Opportunity to move the community from a “small town to a small city” through strategic planning.
- Connect and engage with residents who want to be a part of the change.
- Promote and market the community and its successes to residents with a focus on attracting economic development.

Online Engagement Portal

Online Engagement Portal

Highlights

Online Engagement Portal: www.visionsmithville.com

Ninety-three (93) residents and community stakeholders were actively using the open forum, online engagement portal: www.visionsmithville.com during the in-market immersion study.

Online Engagement Portal

Highlights

Online Engagement Portal: www.visionsmithville.com

19,970 Views

- Views are defined as how many times www.brandsmithville.com appeared or was viewed in social media newsfeeds, and how many people actually visited the site.
- The portal does not separate the two out, which is why the number is so high. A view was generated every time the City, Chamber or Smithville Herald promoted the site via Facebook or Twitter. Because the link appeared in their followers' newsfeeds, it was considered a "view."

Online Engagement Portal

Highlights

Online Engagement Portal: www.visionsmithville.com

There were five topics and an open forum to share ideas and insights:

1. Describe Smithville to someone who has never heard of it/been here.
2. What are Smithville's biggest opportunities?
3. What are Smithville's biggest challenges?
4. What does Smithville look like in 10 years?
5. If you were Mayor, what would you add to Smithville to make it even better?

An optional comments section was also available for those who wanted to share more feedback.

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 1: Describe Smithville to someone who has never heard of it/been here.

Total number of participants engaging on this topic:
19

Number of views: 4,475

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 1

Top Two Aggregated Themes

- Quiet city just 25 minutes north of downtown Kansas City. Safe place with great neighborhoods spread throughout the city. Plenty of outdoor activities including golf, hiking and boating. Good schools, but they are becoming overcrowded. Lacks any indoor activities or things for youth to do other than the parks. Nowhere to be able to get most household goods. Lack of dining options.
- Seems to be turning the corner on many years of bad decisions and starting to make progress in preparing for growth.

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 2: What are Smithville's biggest opportunities?

- Total number of participants engaging on this topic: 15
- Number of views: 4,258

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 2

Top Two Aggregated Themes

- The biggest opportunity are recreation resources. With Smithville Lake, the parks, the trails and a growing downtown, the city could truly capitalize as the recreation center for the Northland.
- Major beautification effort needed for 169 corridor through town. Landscaping requirements would help. Islands with trees and turn lanes would warm up the entrance. Also, it's impossible for someone not from here to understand how to find downtown. Route DD? Should reconsider street name for entrance off 169. Encourage development in keeping with historic nature of downtown. Better promotion of lake and parks. Restaurant on lake!

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 3: What are Smithville's biggest challenges?

Total number of participants engaging on this topic:
14

Number of views: 3,908

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 3

Top Two Aggregated Themes

- There seems to be a strong vocal group of longtime residents who prefer to look back to the past instead of to the future, and this will hamper this city.
- A big challenge is having decision makers that “get it.” There are some in town that seem to want to relive the past and others that just don’t “get it.” I have been told we have a City Council member that brags that he doesn’t do any of his shopping here. Overcoming that kind of attitude is a big challenge. City leaders that fail to listen to the concerns of citizens and are not proactive when it comes to economic development.

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 4: What does Smithville look like in 10 years?

Total number of participants engaging on this topic:
13

Number of views: 3,661

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 4

Top Two Aggregated Themes

- If Smithville stays on same track as present: it'll look like Raytown, Mo. With proper planning and investment, there's no reason why Smithville can't create its own unique identity as a recreation mecca with unique dining and shopping options. A fabulous place to live! Unless there is more economic development, it will probably look pretty much the same.
- Growth is inevitable for Smithville to remain a desired community. Controlled growth will be the key to being a successful city. If Smithville goes the same way as, say Liberty, then it will just be a "me too" city. The key will be attracting businesses and retail that help to keep Smithville's unique identity.

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 5: If you were Mayor, what would you add to Smithville to make it even better?

Total number of participants engaging on this topic:
17

Number of views: 2,092

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Topic 5

Top Two Aggregated Themes

- Connecting neighborhoods with trails, connecting downtown to the lake. Attract businesses that complement Smithville. Encourage more events: festivals, street fairs, farmers' markets, etc. to draw more attention to the community and make it a "staycation" destination.
- Taxes are the lowest of any city in the Metro, so with limited resources, citizens need to manage expectations to the level of taxes! Smithville is a community, we can't just leave it up to a Mayor or City Council. They need our input and opinions to make these kinds of decisions.

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Optional: Other thoughts, comments or ideas that you would like to share about the development of the City of Smithville brand?

Total number of participants engaging on this topic:
15

Number of views: 1,576

Online Engagement Portal

Key Themes

Optional

Top Two Aggregated Themes

- Unique, quaint, a must-visit area. Because we have the lake already, let's add more recreational opportunities that would draw people from KC. Trails, festivals, adventure racing, major bicycling events, etc.
- Smithville is going to grow. There are some in charge who are fighting against growth. Traffic will continue to grow on 169. The schools are going to get overwhelmed and then it will be too late to fix it. No one is looking to the future and simply fighting off growth. Problem is, Smithville might get caught short as the world grows around us.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Methodology

- Four hundred and fifty (450) residents and businesses participated in an online, 20-question community vision survey. For those residents who could not take the survey online, hard copy surveys were printed and circulated throughout the community and made available at City Hall.
- Twenty-one (21) hard copy surveys were completed, mailed back and incorporated into the results.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Results

Smithville was compared to Cities of a similar size that participated in the same research methodology to identify a community brand. The results of the survey indicate a higher level of participation and engagement rate.

- Using the current population, which is estimated at 8,954, the overall citizen participation rate was just at 5% (.50). Typically, a less than 1% participation rate is expected.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Results

- Comparatively, the voter turnout rate at the last General Municipal Election (with three Aldermen Wards on the ballot), was less than one percent (.012).
- The voter turnout rate at the Smithville R-II Bond Election November, 2014 was just below 42% (.419) with 311 determining the vote.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

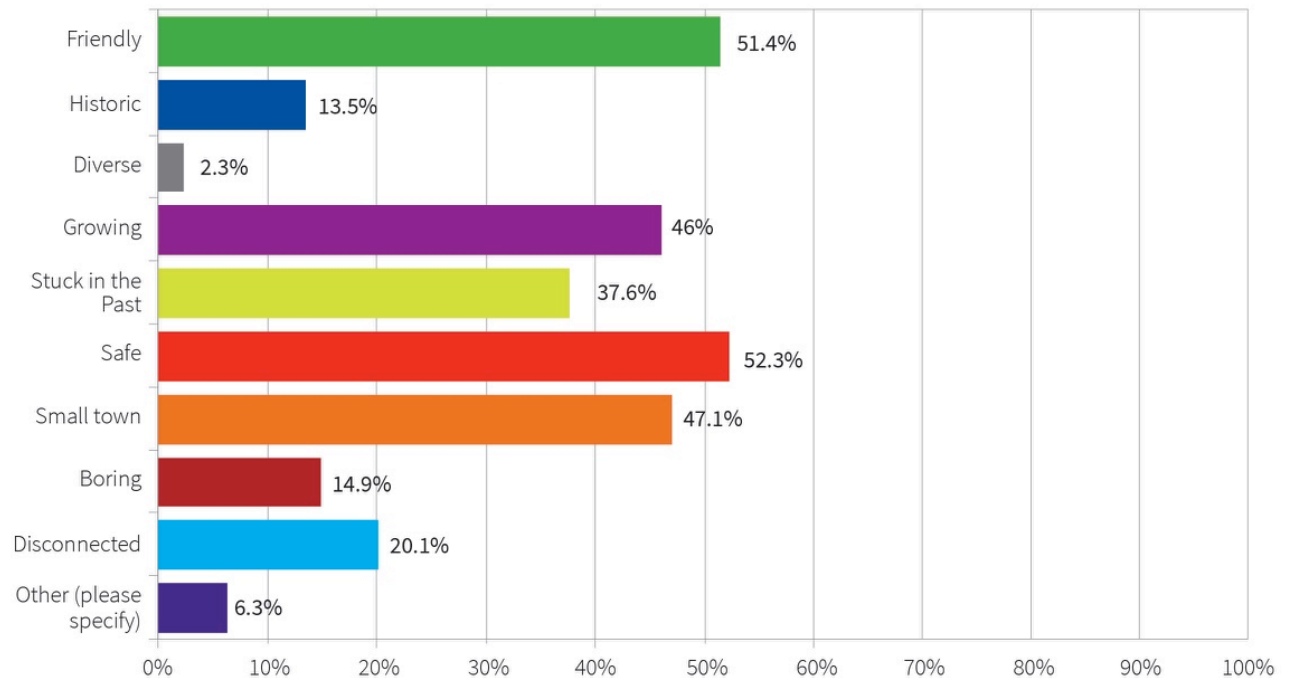
Responses

Question 1

Number of
comments: 22

Number of
respondents:
348; zero
skipped this
question

Q1: How would you describe Smithville today? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 1

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Has potential to be a destination town that has not been realized. Lack identity, identity crisis, nice town, but stagnant, confused, mired in small town politics, not spending money wisely, locals are cliques, low income, slow to grow. Dedicated to being forever a bedroom community with absolutely no regard for the active, involved, members of the community. No activities for children, no anchor businesses with no plan or drive to change it.
- City officials and aldermen are quick to pass the buck. They need to be more proactive in the community instead of deterring growth. There are factions that want growth and change, factions that want to go back to 1950, and factions that are indifferent or blind to the changes going on in the community.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

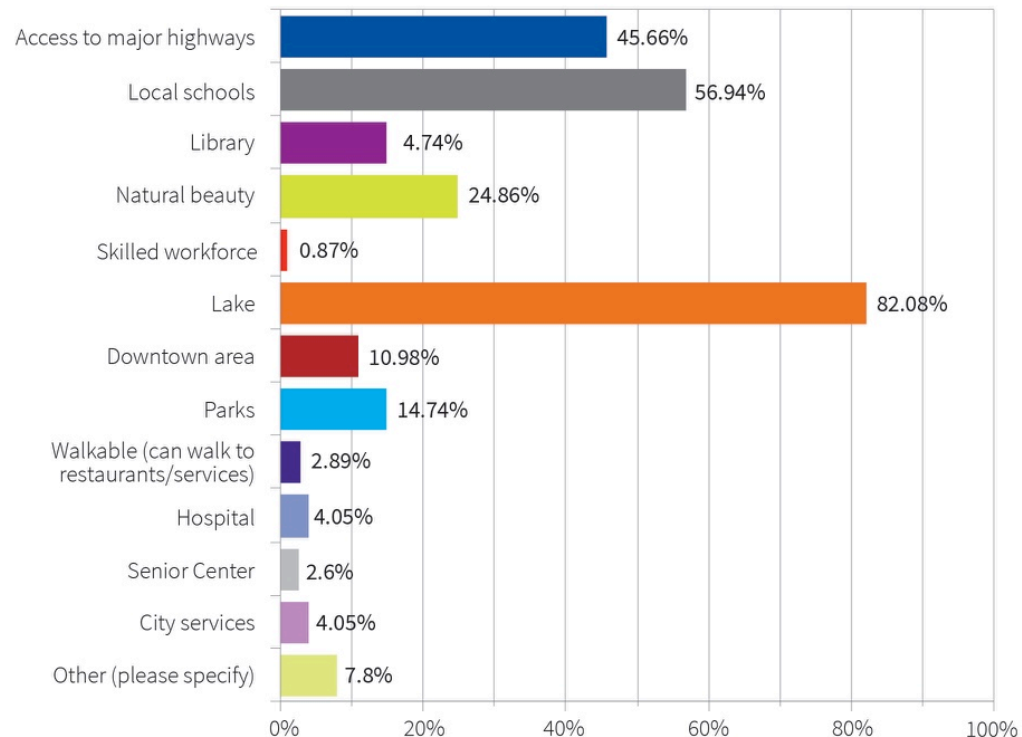
Responses

Question 2

Number of
comments: 22

Number of
respondents:
346; two skipped
this question

Q2: What is Smithville's greatest asset? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 2

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Smithville is a small, safe & friendly community, but also has close access to the convenience of city life. Smithville has that rural feel with the convenience of working in Kansas City. Close to KC, but far enough away to see the stars at night.
- Smithville's greatest asset is its opportunity. We have the opportunity for great change. Without change and investment, our schools and city services will continue to suffer and decline.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

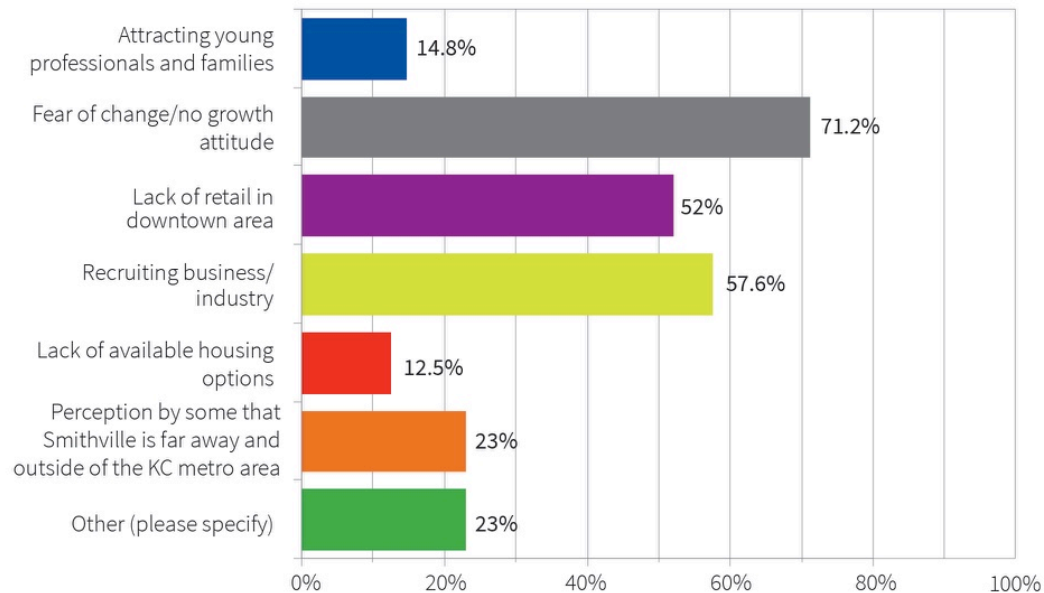
Responses

Question 3

Number of
comments: 79

Number of
respondents:
344; four
skipped this
question

Q3: What is the greatest challenge currently facing Smithville? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 3

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Negative attitude of lifetime residents. Infrastructure to allow for growth and the lack of community support for children and their schools.
- Administration, no clear communication from the City to the people, website doesn't work for this, nor does the lacking newspaper. Need to be better at maintaining what we already have (old homes, sidewalks could be kept up better). The low-tax mentality.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

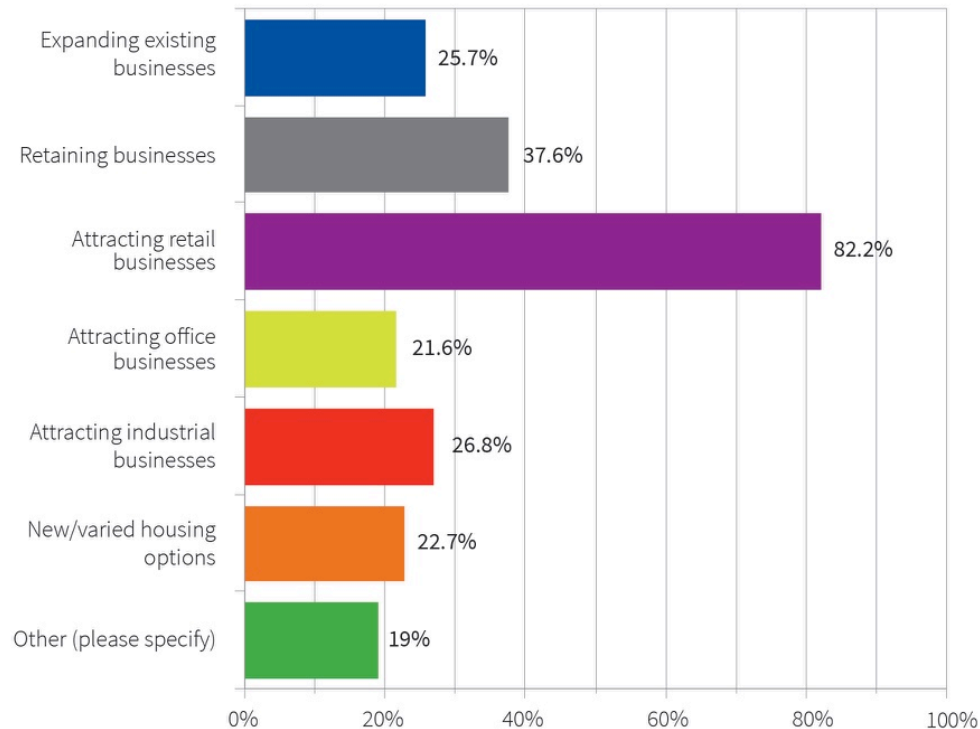
Responses

Question 4

Number of
comments: 65

Number of
respondents:
347; one
skipped this
question

Q4: What is the greatest opportunity for growth in Smithville? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 4

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Changing attitude toward growth. The appeal of Smithville as the small-town family, friendly environment, and if there is too much big business brought in, then Smithville will lose itself. The greatest opportunity would be to stop trying to be KC and focus on the small community and its small businesses.
- Complete the Commons. Promote downtown by updating the buildings. “Connecting” the downtown to the lake. Leverage the lake; it’s the best asset and it is not utilized. Expanding tourism options and features at the lake. We need park improvements.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 5

Q5: How likely would you be to recommend Smithville to a friend or colleague to:

	Extremely unlikely	Unlikely	Not sure	Likely	Extremely likely	Total	Weighted Average
Live in Smithville	5.19% 18	8.36% 29	10.09% 35	35.16% 122	41.21% 143	347	3.99
Visit Smithville	4.40% 15	9.68% 33	7.92% 27	39.59% 135	38.42% 131	341	3.98
Conduct business in Smithville	11.40% 39	19.88% 68	25.44% 87	26.32% 90	16.96% 58	342	3.18

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 6
Please
describe why
you would or
would not
recommend
Smithville to a
friend or
colleague.

Top Aggregated Common Themes

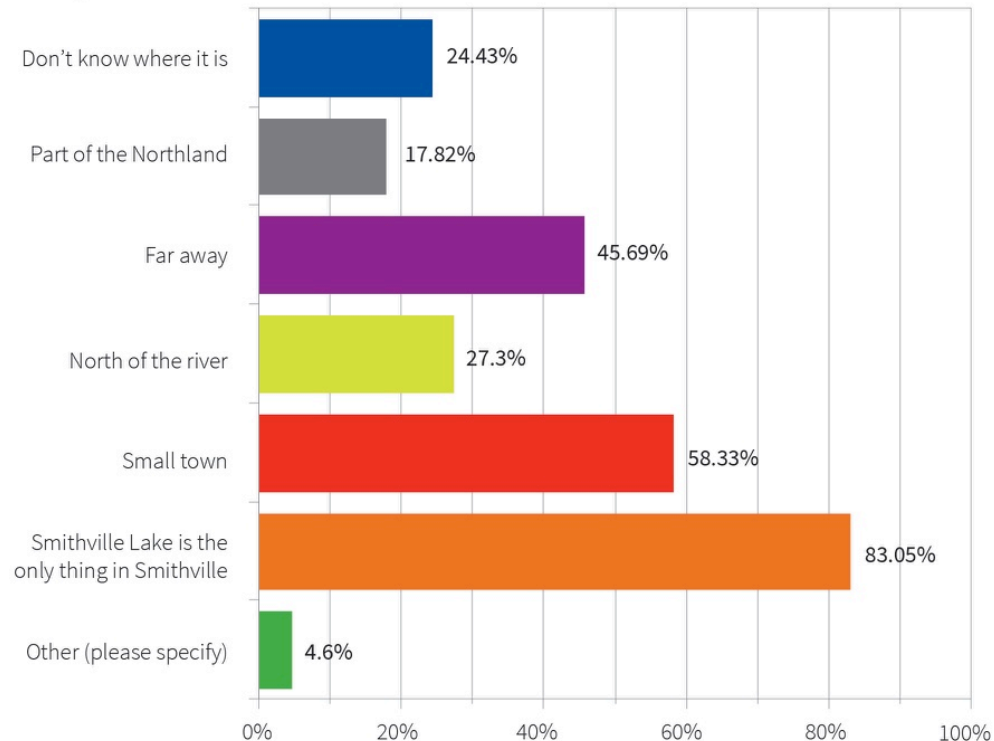
- It's a safe town. It's a nice place to raise a family. Don't want to lose the small-town feeling. It's a great little town, but a few old families have blocked progress and new business for a long time, maybe too long. The City has great potential, but until the old guard is gone, they won't listen. With stagnant leadership and a substantial segment of the population adamantly opposed to any growth or local taxes, Smithville's infrastructure is failing.
- I would not recommend Smithville to my friends who are mostly young professionals with young families. This community has shown they do not want us here. I love Smithville as a place to live and as a community. However, I would not advise a friend to bring their business.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 7

Q7: How do you believe most people who do not live or work in Smithville view the City? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

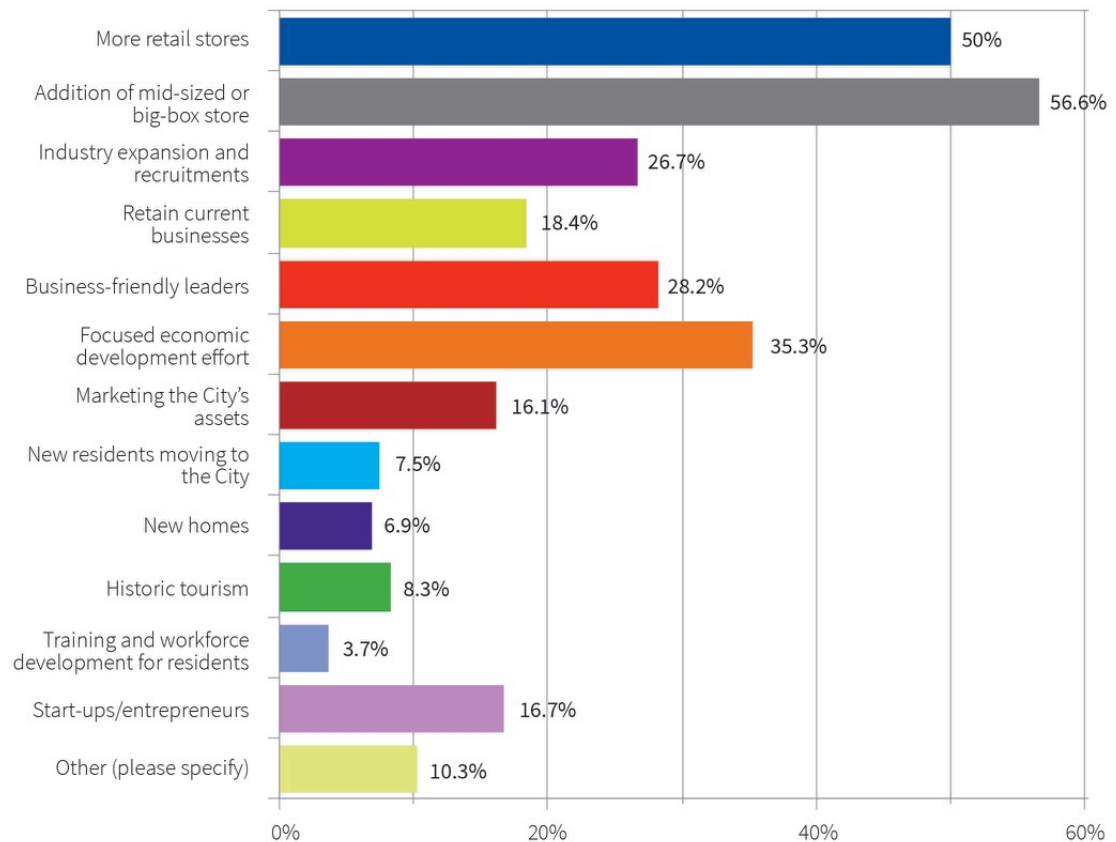
Responses

Question 8

Number of
comments: 36

Number of
respondents:
348; zero
skipped this
question

Q8: In your opinion, which of the following would create the most jobs for Smithville? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 8

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Aldermen that don't want any new businesses to move in; we need new blood running the City. Price building permits to compete with other communities. Improved community development. The low taxes here are becoming more of a detriment to us than they are a help. A city government that wants to change. Going to have to do some tax credits to bring in major companies. Better City services.
- Clean up the downtown area, including the surrounding blocks by enforcing maintenance codes. You don't need to create jobs in Smithville; there are thousands of jobs within 20 minutes of driving distance.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

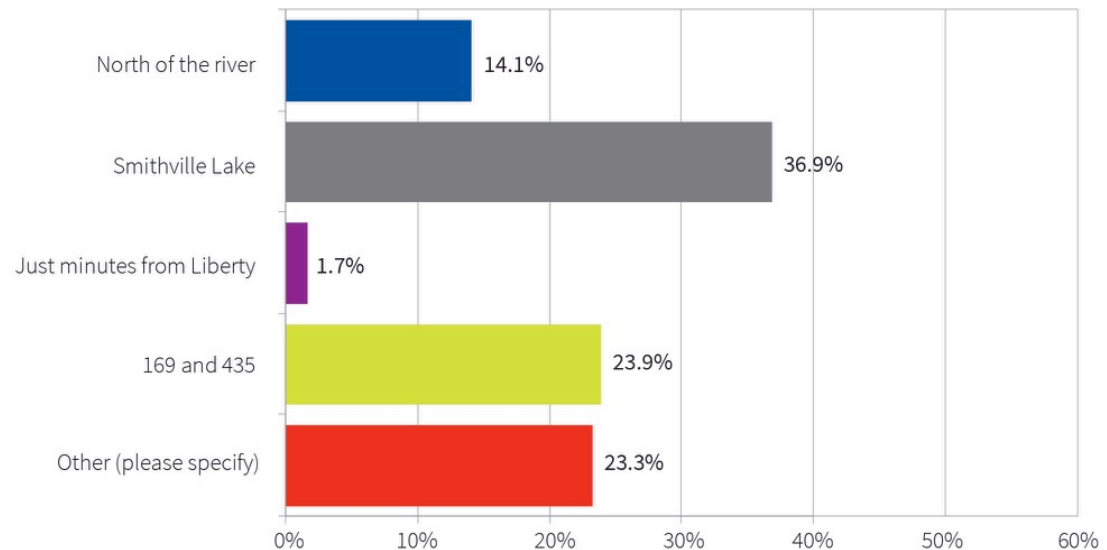
Responses

Question 9

Number of
comments: 81

Number of
respondents:
347; one
skipped this
question

Q9: How do you describe where Smithville is located? For example, what reference points do you use to tell people how to find Smithville?



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 9

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Twenty-four (24) miles north of the Broadway bridge. North of Kansas City between I-29 & I-35. Less than 10 minutes from KCI; 25 miles south of St Joseph. North on Hwy 169 (in between Platte City & Kearney).
- Far away. A suburb on the north side of the Kansas City, Mo. border. North of the Northland. Take 169 north until you run into it. Fifteen to twenty (15-20) minutes north of the old Metro North Mall between Worlds of Fun and the airport off 435 & 169 Highway.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

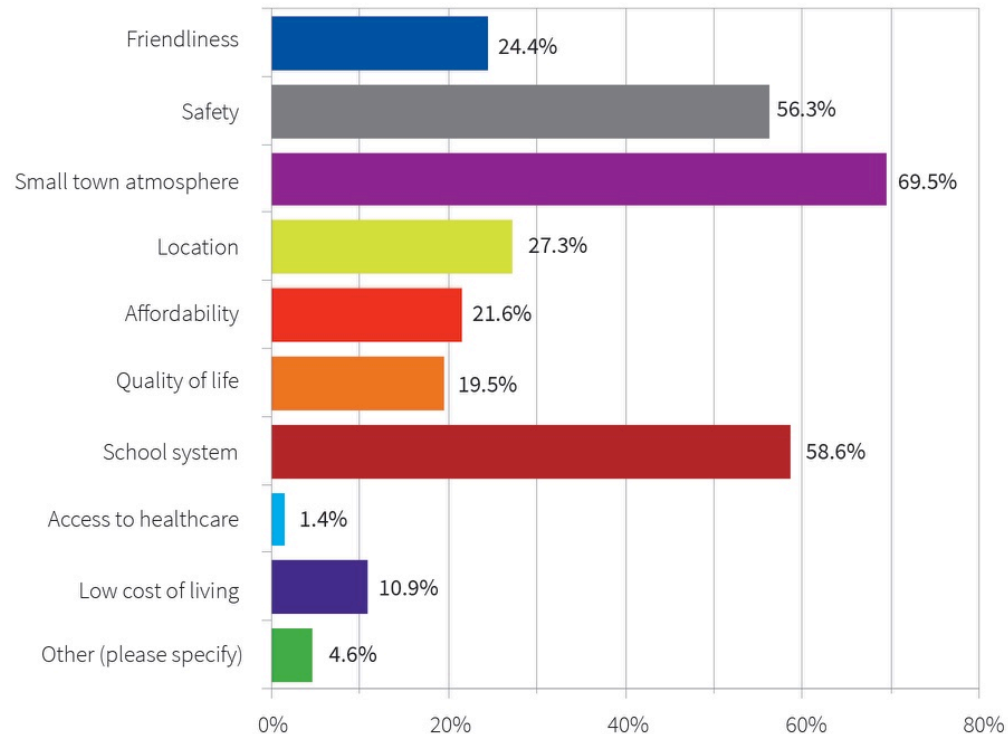
Responses

Question 10

Number of
comments: 81

Number of
respondents:
348; zero
skipped this
question

Q10: Residents of Smithville are most attracted to which of the following? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 10

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- The natural beauty of the area is Smithville's biggest asset and draw. The lake, trails and gorgeous countryside. The lack of crime. If you bring in industry to increase revenue and population density, you will destroy the safety and natural assets.
- Escape the congested traffic in the original Northland with aging housing areas and lower income residents. School system would be even better if administrators lived in the community. They're much more likely to make better decisions if they're forced to live within the community they serve.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

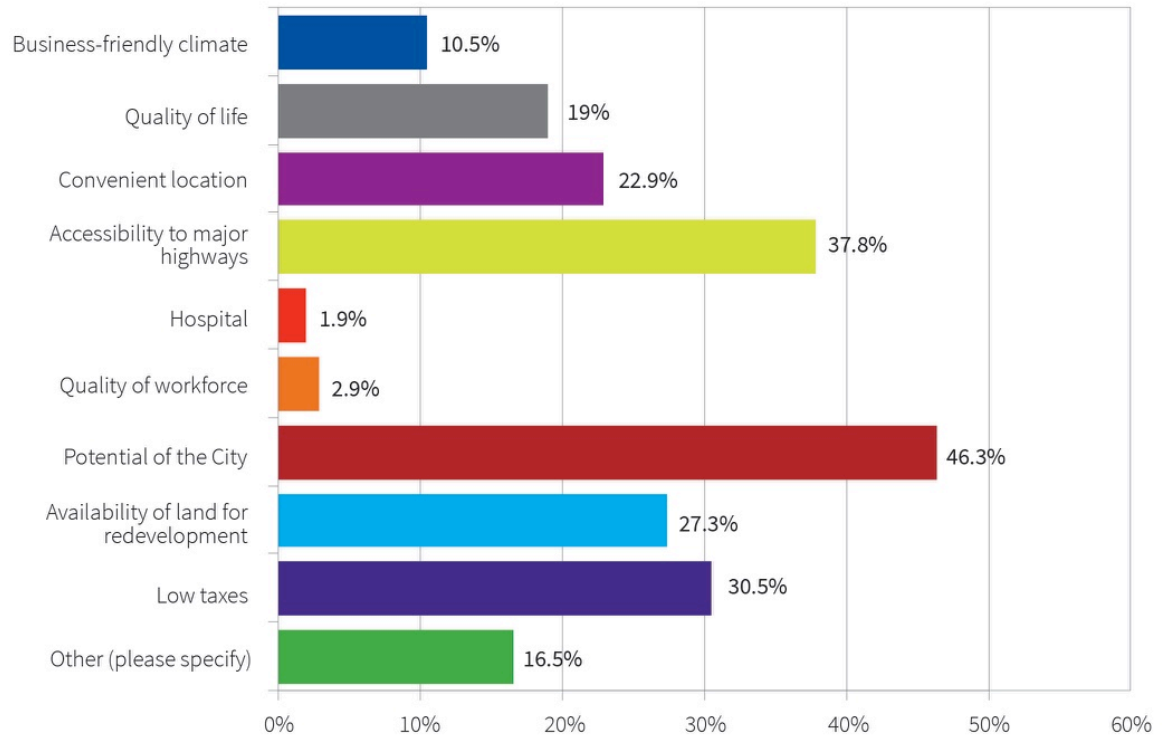
Responses

Question 11

Number of
comments: 52

Number of
respondents:
315; 33 skipped
this question

Q11: Most businesses are attracted to Smithville due to which of the following? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 11

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- There are hardly any businesses here. We do not have a business-friendly climate. The fear of the Smithville school tax increase that was voted down last year will be brought up again. There is nothing here in Smithville for much of any business and the City doesn't want any new business in town. Cost of rent/purchase.
- School system. Less competition. I would think the population of the town and the incomes represented would draw businesses in. A need for what they offer and sell. Businesses would be smart to locate in Smithville, because the growth potential is incredible. People are flocking to Smithville to escape the crowded mess to the south. There are some serious opportunities and not a lot of competition is in town yet. We just have to be welcoming to it.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

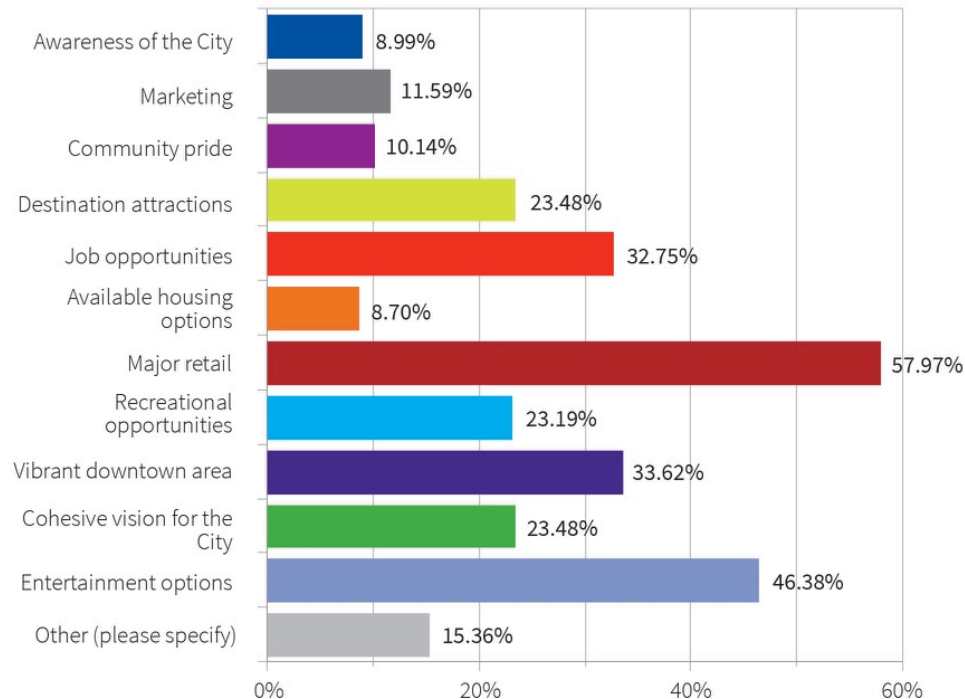
Responses

Question 12

Number of
comments: 53

Number of
respondents:
345; three
skipped this
question

Q12: What is missing in Smithville? (Select up to three choices.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 12

Top Aggregated Common Themes

- Realistically you could have checked “all of the above.” It’s hard to have pride when the area around downtown is not kept up. We need nice places for people to go and have nice meals and conversations. We need nearly everything on the list. First, we need to clean up the place.
- Smithville is missing everything. A cohesive vision for the City and entertainment options, too. Better rural roads. Community services. A drugstore that is open when we get back into town from working in the city. Community center/ community pool. A great town as is. Leadership. Another school. Better park system. More restaurants, fast food choices.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses Question 13

Q13: Please rate the following community attributes.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Total	Weighted Average
Friendly community	2.91% 10	7.85% 27	23.84% 82	38.37% 132	27.03% 93	344	3.79
Diversity	18.10% 61	37.09% 125	29.38% 99	10.68% 36	4.75% 16	337	2.47
Safety	0.88% 3	2.05% 7	13.45% 46	38.60% 132	45.03% 154	342	4.25
Entertainment/nightlife	58.94% 201	28.45% 97	10.85% 37	0.59% 2	1.17% 4	341	1.57
Quality of schools	1.18% 4	5.29% 18	19.71% 67	41.76% 142	32.06% 109	337	1.97
Arts and culture	34.72% 117	39.76% 134	19.88% 67	4.75% 16	0.89% 3	331	2.20
Restaurants	24.49% 84	38.78% 144	25.95% 89	9.04% 31	1.75% 6	343	2.25
Community pride	5.26% 18	14.04% 48	28.36% 97	35.38% 121	16.96% 58	342	3.45
Affordable cost of living	3.22% 11	14.04% 48	42.40% 145	27.78% 95	12.57% 43	342	3.32
Great place to raise a family	0.87% 3	5.25% 18	20.99% 72	34.69% 119	38.19% 131	343	4.04
Intercultural interaction	36.39% 123	32.54% 110	22.19% 75	6.80% 23	2.07% 7	338	2.06
Recreation opportunities	15.54% 53	19.94% 68	26.39% 90	21.11% 72	17.01% 58	341	3.04
Distinct identity	17.11% 58	27.73% 94	33.63% 114	14.75% 50	6.78% 23	339	2.66
Healthcare	14.71% 50	31.18% 106	35.88% 122	14.12% 48	4.12% 14	340	2.62
Retail	51.61% 176	34.60% 118	10.26% 35	2.93% 10	0.59% 2	341	1.66
Community events	15.29% 52	30.88% 105	34.41% 117	15.59% 53	3.82% 13	340	2.62
Strength of City leadership	21.18% 72	32.94% 112	29.12% 99	13.53% 46	3.24% 11	340	2.45
Vibrant downtown	33.24% 114	39.94% 137	19.53% 67	5.54% 19	1.75% 6	343	2.03
Appearance of the City	15.79% 54	31.29% 107	30.99% 106	16.96% 58	4.97% 17	342	2.64
Volunteerism	15.36% 51	28.31% 94	39.76% 132	11.45% 38	5.12% 17	332	2.63

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 14

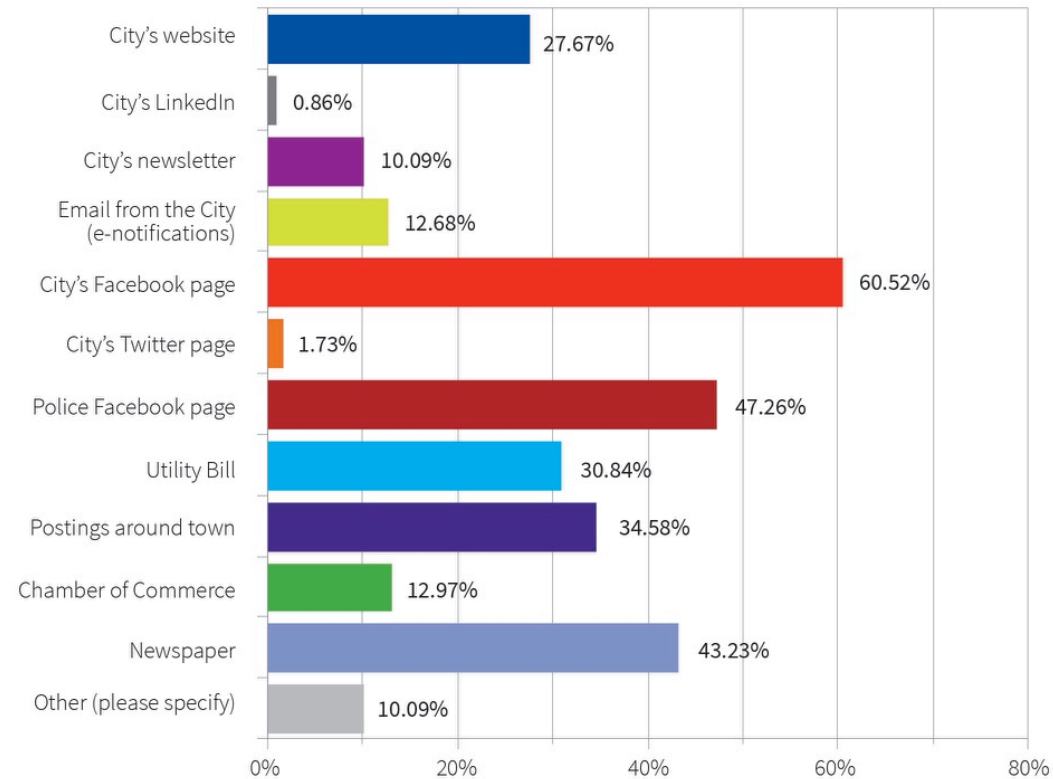
Q14: Please rate the following business attributes.

	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	Excellent	Total	Weighted Average	
Access to major highways	0.88% 3	2.92% 10	35.09% 120	32.75% 112	28.36% 97	342	3.85	
Support for small businesses	7.58% 25	24.55% 81	46.36% 153	16.67% 55	4.85% 16	330	2.87	
Collaboration among businesses	5.61% 18	28.66% 92	50.47% 162	10.90% 35	4.36% 14	321	2.80	
Business-friendly climate	8.87% 29	27.83% 91	42.81% 140	15.60% 51	4.89% 16	327	2.80	
Convenient location	1.76% 6	10.29% 35	46.47% 158	27.65% 94	13.82% 47	340	3.41	
Attracting and retaining young professionals	19.64% 65	48.94% 162	24.77% 82	5.44% 18	1.21% 4	331	2.20	
Employment opportunities	29.25% 98	53.73% 180	14.63% 49	1.49% 5	0.90% 3	335	1.91	
Entrepreneurial environment	15.85% 52	46.65% 153	32.32% 106	4.27% 14	0.91% 3	328	2.28	
Awareness of business strengths by those outside of Smithville	30.42% 101	46.08% 153	20.18% 67	2.71% 9	0.60% 2	332	1.97	
Skilled workforce	10.94% 36	27.36% 90	45.90% 151	12.46% 41	3.34% 11	329	2.70	

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses Question 15

Q15: How do you get news about events and other things happening in Smithville? (Select all that apply.)



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 16

Number of
comments: 57

Number of
respondents:
57; 291 skipped
this question

Are there other ways in which you would like to receive news about Smithville?

Top Aggregated Common Themes

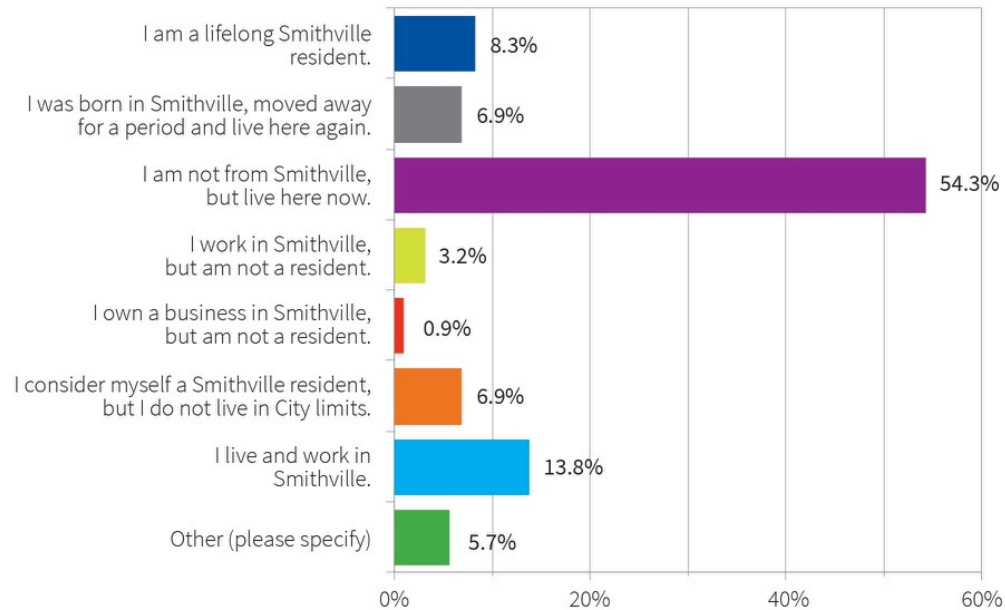
- Maybe an event calendar by City Hall. Collaborate with the schools and send information through their resources.
- Billboards possibly north of Second Creek Road on 169 announcing big city events. Texting, emails, quarterly newsletters, direct mail, Facebook and a local flyer at Price Chopper.

Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 17

Q17: Which option best describes your relationship with Smithville?

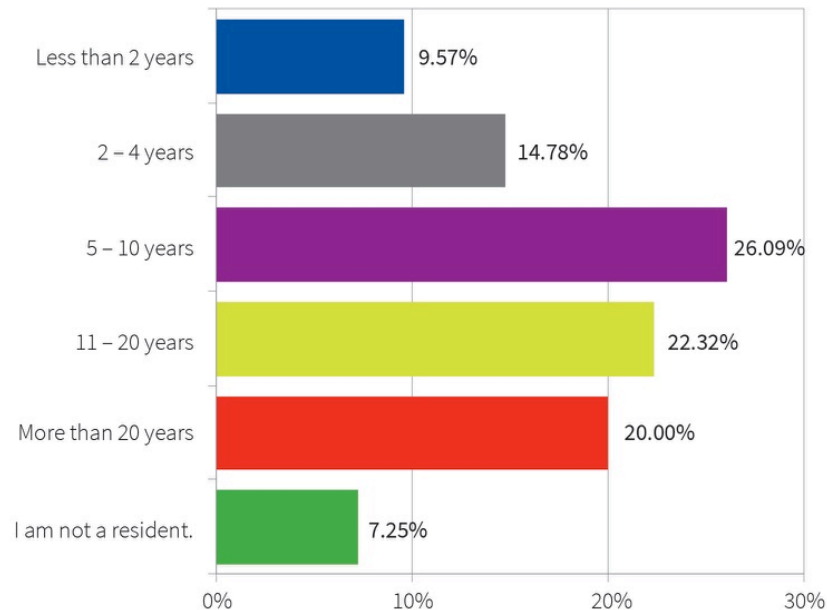


Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 18

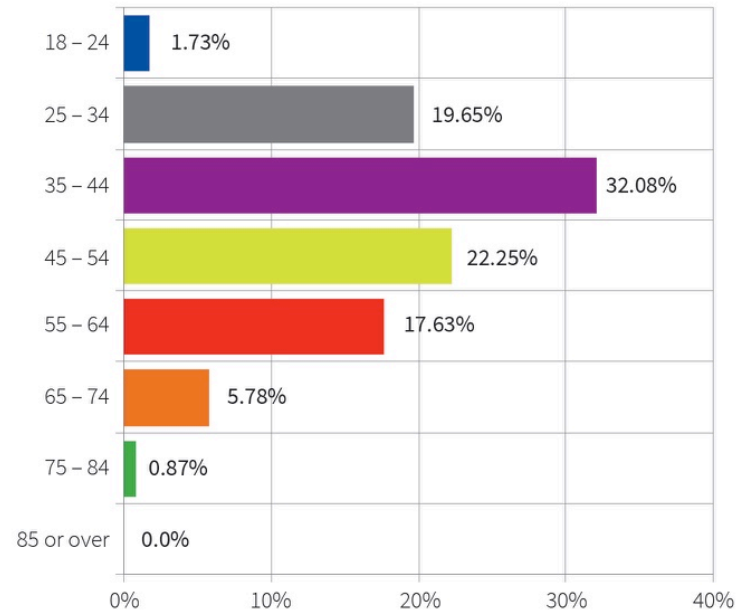
Q18: If you are a resident of Smithville, how long have you lived here?



Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses Question 19

Q19: Please indicate your age.

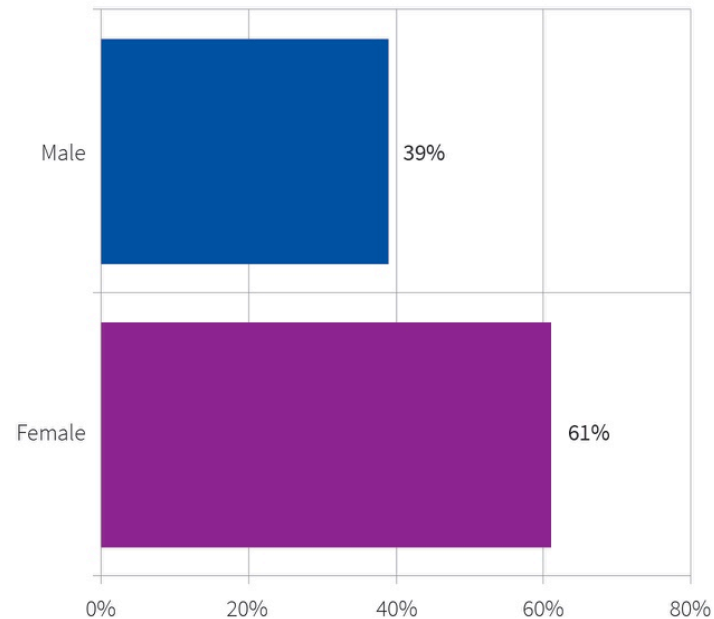


Citizen and Stakeholder Vision Survey

Responses

Question 20

Q20: What is your gender?



SWOT

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats

Community Insights SWOT

Strengths

- Safety and friendliness are among the top community attributes with affordability, the school district and the small-town atmosphere as key decision points considered when choosing to live in Smithville.
- A well-managed, affordable living city with such high quality of life factors is particularly compelling for economic development and business attraction interests as they choose where to relocate their company and employees or where to grow their enterprise.

Community Insights SWOT

Strengths

- The community is poised for growth, particularly in the restaurant and retail industries. However, many residents define retail as mid-sized retailers and most in the community understand more business is needed to level the tax base.
- However, big-box retailers may diminish the small town atmosphere – a compelling reason many choose to live in Smithville.

Community Insights SWOT

Strengths

- There is a strong desire by many in the community for change. Change is needed in the vision of how the community is seen by others (especially young families) and amongst each other. Consistent communication will help bridge the gap between the “old guard” and the “new.”
- The survey indicated there are several key population segments who are interested in being more involved in the community. There is also a strong desire for the school district to retain its standard of excellence.

Community Insights SWOT

Strengths

- Many stakeholders view the City as having enormous potential in attracting, retaining and expanding businesses because of its accessibility, available land for redevelopment and because of the personality of the community.
- We learned that Smithville is comprised of residents and businesses with a strong sense of community, focused less on self and status, than perhaps others in the metro area. Many have great community pride and most residents surveyed selected to live in Smithville for its quality-of-life factors and natural beauty.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- No community is without challenges. We learned about respondents' concern for the lack of quality housing, which attracts a younger demographic bringing families and new opportunity to the community.
- There is also a significant lack of amenities for younger residents and children outside of the school district, with particular concern about City parks and not enough Parks and Recreation programs.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- Smithville's weak promotion of itself and lack of consistent communication has frustrated some.
- Research pointed to a few immediate concerns expressed by community stakeholders including, apathy or lack of innovation by some at the City (staff and elected officials) and residents, the need for more residential housing options, more entertainment, and more retail and dining options.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- The majority of stakeholders surveyed are concerned that although Smithville has leaders who want to improve the community, there is a small group of citizens who continue to hold the community back. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents selected, “Fear of change/no growth attitude” as the top choice for the question, “What is the greatest challenge currently facing Smithville?”.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- This is validated by the failed passing of two school district bond issues along with an emergency services request for a tax increase and several possible economic development projects that were unsuccessful for varying reasons, some out of the City's control.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- Some respondents believe that many who serve on the Board of Aldermen do not believe that Smithville needs to change. A few comments indicated that some Aldermen are visibly unseen in the community and some believe that several Aldermen purposely vote down opportunities that provide the possibility for change.
- Other comments indicate that many who hold leadership positions in the community do not have a global view of the development success that many of Smithville's neighboring communities have had in the last decade.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- There is a growing frustration by some who would classify themselves as the “new guard.” Generally, those surveyed acknowledge needing balance between keeping Smithville a small town, while growing intelligently.
- Even though Smithville enjoys a small amount of charm in its downtown area, the primary entryway to Smithville on Highway 169 is undefined and lacks inviting aesthetic. The consensus of many is that several parts of the community, as well as residential homes around the downtown area need cleaning up.

Community Insights SWOT

Weaknesses

- Respondents also shared their concern about the need for broadening the tax base by attracting new businesses in order to gain the amenities they desire, and more critically, keeping the school district properly funded.
- Like many communities, addressing and solving weaknesses is a significant challenge.

Community Insights SWOT

Opportunities

- Smithville's opportunities are rooted in its greatest strengths: accessibility and desire for growth. The quality of life factors will continue to attract the residential tax base, but the opportunity for economic development improvement is higher than most communities in the area.
- Using the tools available to the City to elevate its location, sites and buildings, along with communication with key economic developer influencers will create an environment for development to occur.

Community Insights SWOT

Opportunities

- Participation and promotion of Smithville, particularly by the energetic next generation of residents, needs to be thoughtful, loud and frequent.
- The community can spur change by engaging with those residents and community partners (Chamber of Commerce, religious groups, civic clubs and school district) who want change and will help to make it happen.

Community Insights SWOT

Opportunities

- Increasing promotion of the City and implementing consistent communications in the mediums where citizens consume information may help solve frustration, confusion and negativity.
- Smithville Lake is also an emerging key theme of opportunity from the results of the survey, as both a recreational asset, as well as an economic development and visitor attraction.

Community Insights SWOT

Threats

- Respondents indicate Smithville's greatest threat is people in the community itself, primarily the attitudes of some who have a fear of change or an anti-growth philosophy.
- It is critical for growth to occur in Smithville, however, the gap between the majority of citizens surveyed who want growth, and the small group of citizens who don't, needs to be addressed.
- This attitudinal threat will never allow for Smithville to intelligently grow and diversify the tax base.

Community Insights SWOT

Threats

- Additionally, the threat of non-engagement with next generation leadership is concerning for the future of Smithville. There is a critical need for emerging leaders to engage with the City and the opportunity to serve in elected positions. Change in Smithville will not occur if the community continues to have elected leaders who don't share in the same pro-growth/change philosophy as the majority of the survey respondents.

Community Insights SWOT

Threats

- By increasing communication and engagement with citizens, growth can be achieved by marketing and promoting Smithville's economic development assets using channels that have a broader reach.
- Primary threats for economic development include Liberty, Platte City and Kearney, yet residential threats are few because of Smithville's small-town, quality-of-life factors, and the desire for some to live in a community that has such a value system.

Community Insights SWOT

Threats

- The challenges and threats inherent to attracting investment and development/redevelopment is rooted in the past. Previous City leaders stunted Smithville's growth by past decisions. Still, the community is ready and has the opportunity to become a "small city."
- While City management is seen as mostly cooperative, many surveyed feel that policymakers in Smithville make conservative decisions and push personal agendas on topics of progress that impede growth. What's more, the current economic climate nationally is a threat to every community.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Smithville cannot be everything to everyone.

It does not work to try and meet everyone's needs all of the time, especially when Smithville is competing with other communities with larger City budgets.

There are two clear resident segments in Smithville – those who want growth and those who will do what they can to prevent it. This puts Smithville at a concerning crossroads.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Narrow the focus.

Smithville needs to find more channels of communication to reach a diverse population.

The perceived lack of communication from City Hall frustrates those who are interested in engaging with the community and hinders the City's ability to identify next generation leadership.

Better communication will help City Hall build a singular voice that is consistent and cohesive.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Narrow the focus.

Intelligent economic development is a high priority for the community. The City must find a way to use existing partners and resources to initiate an economic development strategy that has a realistic view of what industry and business sectors fit the community.

Once the strategy is in place, internal City departments and elected officials must unify to support the plan and implement it.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Differentiate.

Smithville has the opportunity to differentiate itself from competitive communities with one clear message disseminated broadly and frequently.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Differentiate.

Smithville has several unique assets; however, the reason why people choose to live in Smithville is its greatest – small town, friendly atmosphere, wide open spaces, access to lake-related activities and close proximity to major interstates.

The majority of Smithville citizens surveyed want to find a way to balance the small-town value system with economic development progress.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Differentiate.

Smithville's neighboring communities have lost their uniqueness by attracting templated big-box retail centers and entertainment venues. Unlike those neighboring communities, the majority of Smithville citizens surveyed do not have that desire.

Insights and Conclusions

Insights

Differentiate.

This differentiation factor gives Smithville the ability to communicate its unique position to key economic development influencers and potential residents who are seeking a more authentic community experience.

Smithville is suited for tailor-made economic development projects.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville has potential.

Many citizens believe the potential for Smithville is great only if there is change. The community believes there is potential to enhance quality of life factors like healthy lifestyle amenities and mid-sized retailers and restaurants.

Others view potential as leveraging the lake as a dynamic tourism asset for the City's tax benefit. Many see the potential of overcoming funding challenges to ensure the school district not only survives; but thrives.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville has potential.

The potential can only be realized if the community can unify.

If Smithville does not find a way to connect citizens of all generations through communication, education and engagement, it will remain stagnant and the tax base will increase at a slower rate.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville residents are concerned about the future of the community.

The majority of citizens surveyed are primarily concerned and frustrated by the overall lack of economic development progress in Smithville.

There is also a general concern about the lack of support to fund the school district appropriately, as well as limited code enforcement around the downtown area.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville residents are concerned about the future of the community.

Other dominant concerns relate to City government and elected officials. Current and past attitudes by some on the Board of Aldermen and City Staff have sent a strong and clear message to the community that there is no desire for growth or change.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville residents are concerned about the future of the community.

Regardless of the validity of these concerns and frustrations, it is a general community view and perception shared by many.

This perception is largely advanced because Smithville has a small, older-citizen segment who opposes change. As local voting trends indicate, this citizen segment doesn't generally support tax increases of any kind.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville residents are concerned about the future of the community.

Conversely, Smithville has a large newer citizen population segment with a strong desire for progress and the greatest concern for the community's future.

This group is comprised of young, working family households with children in the school district.

Insights and Conclusions

Conclusions

Smithville residents are concerned about the future of the community.

Although this large segment of the population is present, it will be a challenge to find ways to engage them in civic or political endeavors because of their family and career commitments.

Engagement with this group is a critical step in resolving opposition voter trends. The City of Smithville cannot be solely responsible for finding the solution to connect, engage and motivate the community. However, it must play an active role in working to better communicate and educate this target segment through its community partners.

Brand Insights

Brand

The community brand will be part of a long-term strategy, and it will need strong champions to pioneer the effort. There are three killers to any community brand:

1. Local politics
2. Lack of champions
3. Lack of money, both public and private

Brand Insights

Brand

Community brands should represent the personality of the community. It is the promise of what people can expect when they are in Smithville.

Branding is not a cure-all; it is just one part of a clear focus that the community can rally behind.

Brand Insights

Brand

The brand will avoid words and phrases such as “conveniently located,” “inviting,” “safe” and “small town atmosphere.”

These terms are overused and trite.

Smithville must tell its own authentic story using words and phrases that uniquely describe the community experience.

Brand Insights

Brand

If you can plug in any other town name into your headline and it still works, you've got trouble.

What's Next?

Brand Development

First Quarter

January – March 2016

Present initial brand strategy and identity concepts.

Brand Development

First Quarter

February – March 2016

- Adopt final logo and creative platform.
- Deliver Brand Standards Guide.
- Begin development of brand tool box and marketing materials.
- Brand Action Plan.

Brand Development

Balance of
2016

March – December 2016

When the brand has been established, the next step is to **begin strategic implementation, moving from conceptual stage to action.**

Consider extending the contract with **candid** to:

- Provide **ongoing brand implementation services**, including creative services, project management, and copywriting support.
- **Coordinate positioning and education efforts** through high impact channels.
- Bring the brand to life through the **website**.
- Assist in development of **economic development outreach programs**.

Thank you!

Becky Freetly
President + Partner
candid marketing + communications