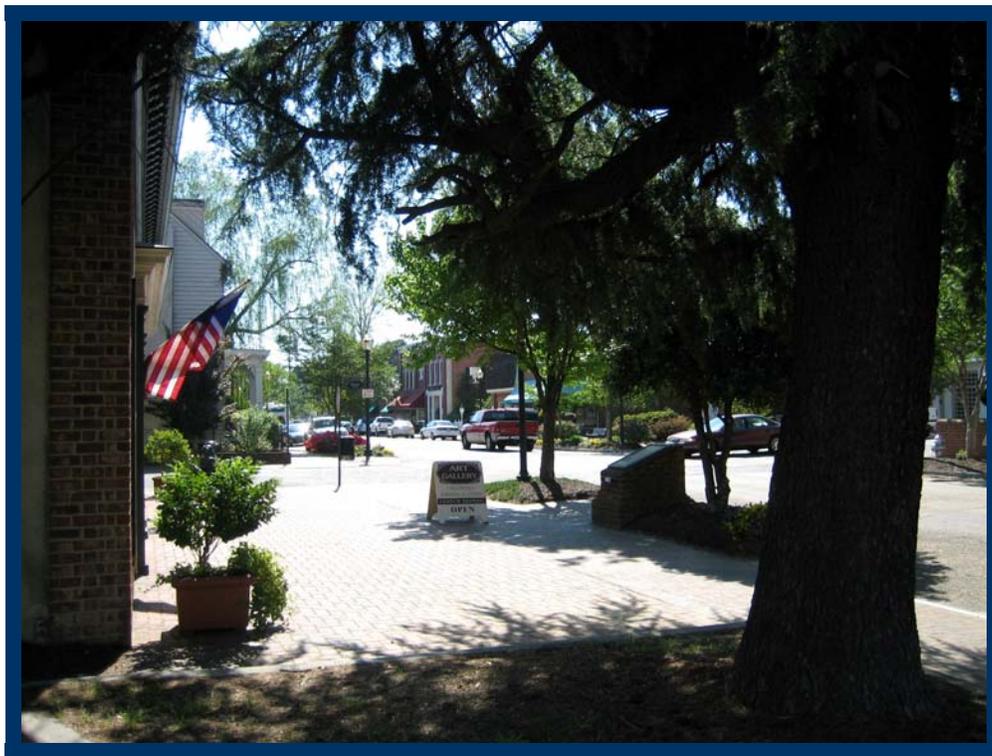


Enhancing the Economy of Historic Downtown Smithfield

A Strategic Program Plan



SH
SANFORD HOLSHOUSER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING

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Visitor Survey – Summary

Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting

Executive Summary

The recent downturn in the economy, recognition of the changes taking place in business activity and the presence of vacant store fronts on Main Street prompted a group of business people, elected officials, town and county staff, chamber of commerce leadership and involved citizens to form a development committee. The committee determined that a strategy to revitalize the downtown historic district was warranted.

To assist in evaluating the economy of downtown Smithfield, the committee engaged Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting, Ltd. Sanford Holshouser conducted a study of the Historic District and recommended specific actions directed toward achieving the committee's objectives.

The methodology used to prepare an appropriate and actionable strategic program plan is based on:

- a review of the historic evolution of the town's economy
- recognition of the work that has been accomplished to protect and improve the character and appearance of downtown Smithfield
- gathering additional information from other sources to help identify as well as verify the types of strategic actions that were recommended

Input was sought from both stakeholders and visitors to gather their impressions about current conditions as well as their ideas about how best to enhance the downtown's economic vitality. An investigation of similar towns was conducted to provide additional background on what types of development and local practices appear to create a vital economic environment. Based on this information and the experience of Sanford Holshouser, a comprehensive series of recommendations were made that identify specific actions and types of development projects to be considered, as well as a suggestion to consider assigning responsibility for growing and sustaining the downtown economy to a single non-profit organization.

Enhancing the Economic Vitality of Historic Downtown Smithfield

A Strategic Program Plan

Background

The Town of Smithfield was incorporated in 1752 by Arthur Smith IV who built and resided in Windsor Castle, a plantation house listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Smithfield's strategic location on the Pagan River, close to the James River, defined and characterized the nature of its evolutionary development and the town's economy from the earliest of colonial times. Situated across from Jamestown, Smithfield originally functioned as a river port whose residents engaged in the trade and commerce that emerged in the colonies after the settling of Virginia by the Virginia Company in 1607.

As agricultural activity advanced in the area, peanut farming and the associated raising of hogs soon became the underpinning of Smithfield's economy during the 19th Century. In the decade after the Civil War, P. D. Gwaltney and a partner started a peanut business in Smithfield. In the 1880's, Gwaltney modernized his peanut processing facilities and also began producing hams. By the early twentieth century hams produced in Smithfield, Virginia became known around the world. In 1983, a little more than ten years after the last remaining members of the Gwaltney family retired from the meat processing business, P. T. Gwaltney & Co. was acquired by Smithfield Foods. Smithfield Foods, currently one of largest meat producers in the country with subsidiaries, facilities and sales worldwide, grew from the Smithfield Packing Company, established in 1936 by Joseph Luter, Sr, another Smithfield resident. Today Smithfield Foods and Smithfield Packing, the largest subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, are headquartered in the Smithfield Center in downtown Smithfield, Virginia.

Since Arthur Smith IV first subdivided his land into four streets and 72 lots that became the Town of Smithfield, the community expanded its original "downtown" to encompass 10.4 sq. miles (9.5 sq. miles of land area) with a population of 6800. Recognition of the historic evolution of the town, and an understanding of the continuing process that has taken place to maintain and direct the economic vitality of Smithfield, are important considerations in determining an appropriate strategic program plan for the historic downtown area.

Smithfield Today

For more than a century Smithfield functioned as a river port town and then a town that became the commercial center for the maturing agricultural economy of Isle of Wight and surrounding counties. During the 19th and 20th Centuries, many of the entrepreneurs who started and grew their businesses during this period made their homes in Smithfield.

The producers of Smithfield Hams and the Town of Smithfield became strong economic and community partners for more than 100 years.

Beginning in the 1970's a period of significant and rapidly occurring technological advances and social changes began to alter the economic model that sustained Smithfield for generations. These included:

- Substantial Federal support for the construction of highways and the concurrent love affair people developed with the automobile
- Increased personal mobility quickly expanded smaller communities into larger regional economies
- New and existing retail establishments followed the new highways, the growing population and the expansive movement of people to outlying areas
- An increasing number of shopping centers and big box stores were located outside of downtowns to better serve customers by providing easy access to a wide variety of products and services in one place
- The emergence of a truly global economy that brought more companies and businesses from around the world to the United States and encouraged more American companies to locate in foreign markets
- More U. S. and family owned businesses were bought and/or controlled by corporate boards located in distant places or overseas
- The internet and the almost instant world wide communication made possible by the cell phone and later technologies provided even greater economic flexibility and informed decision making to both businesses and individuals

The economies of small towns (and some bigger cities) suffered as a result of these wide spread changes. In Smithfield's case the impact was partially off-set by:

- a long standing foundational economy anchored by Smithfield Foods
- recognition of the town's historic attributes that resulted in the establishment of the Historic District, along with protective guidelines
- follow-up initiatives that included the project to beautify downtown Smithfield

In the process of addressing the negative impacts of these changes, the Town of Smithfield and community leaders undertook a number of important preservation and development projects that were designed to maintain the historic character of the community and the economy of the downtown area.

Setting the Stage for an Enhanced Downtown Economy

In recognition of the historic and architectural significance of the downtown area and in response to the economic changes that were occurring that could threaten long standing patterns of development, a number of local initiatives and projects took place that are worth noting. These events helped to preserve the history and unique character of Smithfield, maintain the economic vitality of the community, and set the stage for further enhancing the downtown economy.

Historic District

Given the presence of many Colonial, Georgian, Federal and Victorian homes in Smithfield, and the many buildings along Main Street that depict the styles and types of commercial structures that were constructed during the late 19th and 20th centuries, the Town engaged an architectural firm to undertake a survey to determine what properties in Smithfield were historically significant. More than 70 buildings were found to be of exceptional historical and architectural importance.

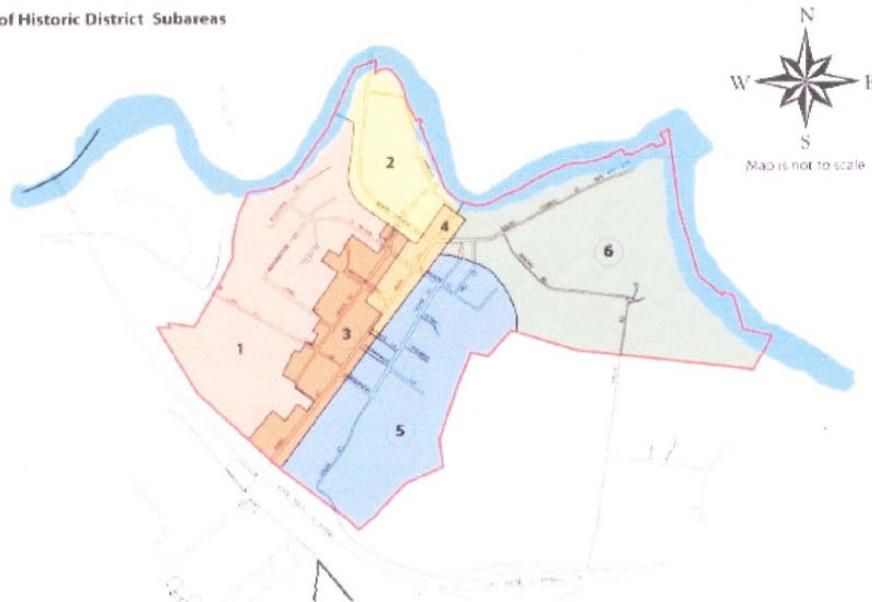
Based on the findings of the survey, the Smithfield National Register Historic District was established in 1973. The designated historic area was included on the Virginia Landmarks Register in the same year. The current Historic District encompasses the areas on each side and in proximity to North and South Church Street (the so-called land between the bridges), the properties along Main Street from the Route 10 by-pass to Church Street, as well as the areas several blocks deep, behind and parallel to the Main Street properties.

The Historic Areas component of the Town's current comprehensive plan divides the Historic District into six sub-areas:

1. Riverview
2. North Church Street
3. Main and Grace Streets
4. Commercial Main Street
5. Cedar Street
6. South Church Street

(The recommended actions that make up the strategic program plan focus on sub-areas 3, 4, 2 and 6 in the Historic District. Initiatives in or in close proximity to sub-areas 1 and 5 were also considered if they had an economic impact on downtown business activity)

Map of Historic District Subareas



Subareas

- 1 Riverside
- 2 North Church Street
- 3 Main and Grace Streets
- 4 Commercial Main Street
- 5 Cedar Street
- 6 South Church Street

Smithfield Historic District Sub-Areas

Board of Historic and Architectural Review

In response to the designation of the Smithfield Historic District, the Town enacted a Historic Preservation District Ordinance in 1979. The overlay district within which the ordinance applies is comparable to the designated Historic District. A Board of Historic

and Architectural Review, appointed by Town Council, applies adopted guidelines to help ensure that repairs and/or changes to existing buildings, or that any new construction that takes place maintains the historic integrity and appearance of specific structures as well as the character of the District.

Downtown Revitalization



Main Street & Smithfield Inn



Main Street Shop

Although there was formal recognition of the historic and architectural significance of downtown Smithfield, age and the changing economic conditions had a deleterious affect on the appearance of the Main Street area. Through the creation of Historic Downtown Smithfield Inc. in 1988, money was raised from public and private sources to undertake a ten year effort to beautify Main Street. Sidewalks were bricked, utility lines placed underground and landscaping and attractive street furniture added to create a place people would find more appealing. In 1999 Smithfield received an award from the Virginia Downtown Development Association for its Main Street Beautification Project.

Smithfield Center



Smithfield Foods Corporate Offices

Smithfield Little Theater

The Smithfield Center, a joint initiative involving the Town of Smithfield, Isle of Wight County and Smithfield Foods, Inc. was completed in 2000. Located on North Church Street adjacent to the Pagan River, the complex includes the corporate offices of Smithfield Packing and Smithfield Foods; a large conference center for a variety of business and private meetings, dinners and events; and the Smithfield Little Theater. This attractive mixed-use development solidifies the corporate presence of Smithfield Foods in the town, while integrating facilities that accommodate business and community activities as well as the arts.

Windsor Castle

Windsor Castle was built in approximately 1725 by Arthur Smith IV on 1450 acres of land acquired from a local Indian tribe by his great grandfather in 1622 and patented in 1637. It was from a portion of these 1450 acres that the Town of Smithfield was laid out and established in 1752. In the almost 300 years since originally constructed, the house and a portion of the surrounding acreage remained in the ownership of four families until bought by a local developer. In 2000 Windsor Castle was placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. With the assistance of Joseph Luter III, then the president and chief executive officer of Smithfield Foods, the Town acquired the house and the surrounding 208 acres from the developer in 2007. An initial master plan for the property was prepared and adopted in 2008. A commission was established to consider appropriate uses for the large portion of land that extends from the House and the immediate 46 acres that are protected by an historic easement controlled by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Smithfield Station



Lighthouse Suites



Main Lodge and Commercial Space

In 1983 a local family saw the potential of bringing attractive water front development back to Smithfield. Since construction began in the 1980's, Smithfield Station has added amenities. The site now consists of a number of different uses that include a marina, a restaurant, commercial space, and a variety of overnight accommodations. These consist of the main lodge, the boardwalk rooms and cottages, and two suites in a lighthouse modeled after the lighthouse from Hooper Strait in Maryland.

Current Situation

Today's national and global economies have had an effect on what many people now consider to be desirable or valuable. There is growing recognition of the existence of what many choose to call an experience economy. Such an economy is based not only on attracting traditional shoppers, visitors and tourists, but also on providing local people an opportunity to experience the simple pleasures that are often characteristic of a former lifestyle, while still accommodating today's needs. To a great extent this is reflected in projects such as the development of the Smithfield Center that includes a multi-use convention facility that serves the town and the region as well as the Smithfield Little Theater that brings live arts downtown. In addition the Center also provides an impressive downtown location for the headquarters of Smithfield Packing and Smithfield Foods.

The Downtown Beautification Project created a more attractive environment for shoppers and those coming downtown for business, while downtown preservation initiatives have helped to maintain the history and appearance that differentiates Smithfield from other venues. Initiatives and organizations such as the Arts Center and Arts League that promote cultural economic development, the work of the convention and visitors bureau that markets the area's attractions, the smARTS program that combines, art, culture, entertainment and shopping, as well as existing shops, dining establishments and in-town accommodations, have all added to Smithfield's ability to appeal to businesses as well as locals and visitors. The current task is to determine how best to strengthen and build on what has been accomplished.

Stakeholder and Visitor Surveys

To help determine how the downtown environment can be made more supportive of local businesses, as well as what would make the area more appealing to locals and out of town visitors, two on-line surveys were developed. The Stakeholder Survey was designed to solicit input from business owners, property owners, elected officials and residents of the Downtown Historic District. These individuals are considered investors in the community, the people who frequently determine the nature and quality of the "product" that is downtown Smithfield. The Visitor Survey focused on soliciting input from local people and those from the region and beyond that are attracted by the existing product and who respond by spending their time and money purchasing the goods and services that are offered downtown. A summary of both surveys can be found in the Appendix.

Stakeholder attitudes were solicited in many areas; however, three are particularly important when formulating a plan to enhance the economy. Stakeholders were asked to prioritize:

- The support services that are considered important to promoting more investment
- The types of development or downtown amenities that would improve the product for which they are collectively responsible

- The kinds of activities or conditions that would be effective in attracting more visitors or “customers” to downtown Smithfield

Although the weighted average of the responses in each category were relatively close, of the six support services posed, the three that ranked the highest among stakeholders were:

- Educational Seminars for Retailers/Small Businesses
- Incubator/Multi-Tenant Space for Start-Up Retailers/Small Businesses
- Greater Use of the Web/Technology for Advertising/Education

Among six types of new development in the Historic District, the three that Stakeholders considered most likely to have a positive affect on the economic vitality of downtown Smithfield were:

- More Off-Street Parking (conveniently located)
- The Provision of WiFi in Selected Downtown Areas
- Bike Lanes/Bike Paths in the Historic District
(More Oriented Water Facilities/Marinas followed very closely with a weighted average of 3.17 vs. 3.20 for Bike Paths)

Stakeholders were then asked to rate different types of activities/conditions that would contribute to the economic vitality of downtown Smithfield. Of the six presented, three were clearly considered to have the biggest impact.

- Longer/More Uniform Hours of Operation for Retailers
- More Arts and Cultural/Leisure Events
- More Diverse Mix of Retail Establishments

To further validate and expand on the opinions and ideas of stakeholders, it was important to solicit input and ideas from visitors - those who choose to utilize (buy) the product. A visitor or “customer” survey was conducted to determine the nature of the customer and their visit, as well as to assess their experience.

The key questions asked of visitors were:

- Why did/do you choose to come to Historic Downtown Smithfield?
- Prioritize the amenities or conditions that would attract you or others to come to Historic Downtown Smithfield more often

- List the types of shops and restaurants that you would like to have in downtown Smithfield

By a significant margin, the two reasons for visiting downtown Smithfield that were given most often were:

- Shopping
- Dining

Further down the list and in order of the number of times indicated were:

- Historic and architectural attractions
- Community events
- Arts and cultural activities

Of the presented amenities or conditions that would influence visitors to return more often, responders most often selected:

- More diverse shopping
- Shops having longer/more uniform hours of operation

These two amenities or conditions were followed in order by:

- More arts and cultural/leisure events
- More public parking
- More recreational opportunities/boating

The responses to the question regarding the types of shops and restaurants visitors would like to have downtown provided an important indication of what businesses to “target” when seeking to encourage certain types of development. In addition to shopping and dining, arts and cultural activities were also mentioned as being a reason to visit downtown Smithfield.

Many efforts to identify the kinds of businesses that are suitable for a particular area are based on a detailed market analysis of existing establishments, as well as an evaluation of such things as the availability of workers and other factors. This is generally not the case for small retail shops and service operations. An assessment of the immediate competition and the ability to attract an adequate customer base must be considered.

Many small retailers depend on such things as local support services, the collective ability of the community to attract potential customers, and the ready availability of the information that facilitates an individual business owner's decision to locate.

One initiative that demonstrates how local support can facilitate a business activity complementary to attracting a larger customer base for existing businesses, as well as helping to create arts related businesses, is the existing Arts Center. The Center serves as both an incubator for artists to produce, display and sell their wares, but also is an attraction for those visiting downtown Smithfield.

Based on the attitudes of many potential customers, possible businesses to target include:

Retail

- Bookstores
- Art Galleries and Studios
- Craft Shops
- Specialty Food/Grocery Stores
- Variety Stores (Ben Franklin)
- Quality/Specialty Clothing Stores
- Wellness/Fitness Facility/Spa
- Sweet Shops
- Hardware/Boating Supplies
- Expansion of the Farmer's Market Concept
- Kitchen Gourmet
- Wine and Cheese Shops

Restaurants – Eating Establishments

- Sandwich Shop/Delicatessen
- Coffee Shops
- Casual Italian
- Pub (Ham/Micro Brewery)
- Internet Café
- Casual Seafood/Raw Bar
- High End Dining/Tea Room
- Colonial Style Eatery
- Southern Country/Smithfield Ham Dishes
- Sidewalk/Outdoor Dining

The responses to the questions related to the shopping/dining experiences indicated what types of establishments appeal to visitors and would likely attract more people to downtown Smithfield. The information gathered from the Stakeholder Survey help establish priorities for the types of business services and development projects that would encourage locating and enhancing the vitality of retail and service establishments.

Information gathered from both surveys identified those actions and projects that likely would be effective in enhancing the downtown economy.

Characteristics of Similar Communities

To further guide the preparation of a strategic program plan, comparisons were made between what exists in Smithfield with what similar communities offer, as well as what local actions and activities in these places are likely to be successful elsewhere. An effort was made to select three small towns with historic areas located near water. The localities whose characteristics were determined to reflect economies from which Smithfield might benefit when making comparisons are – Beaufort, South Carolina, Shepherdstown, West Virginia and Cape Charles, Virginia. Phone interviews were held with each of the three communities, while additional information was gathered from on-line research.

Beaufort, South Carolina

Area - 23.4 sq. miles (land 18.6, water 4.8)

Population – 12,000

Beaufort was chartered in 1711, making it one of the oldest cities in South Carolina, second only to Charleston. A 304 acre National Historic Landmark District has been designated in Beaufort. Three institutions of higher learning are located in the area – the University of South Carolina Beaufort Campus, the Technical College of the Lowcountry Beaufort Campus and the Clemson University extension office. The Downtown Marina of Beaufort serves as the nautical gateway to the Inter-coastal Waterway and the surrounding Sea Islands.

The City has an active incentive program to attract business. All new businesses locating in the City are eligible for reduced Business License fees in the early years of operation. New businesses are required to pay a base license fee after which they pay 40% of the applicable fee the first year and 60% of the fee the second year; thereafter, 100% of the fee is charged. To promote the redevelopment of vacant structures, the City has an incentive program to offset the cost of rehabilitation. A person who acquires a qualified vacant commercial building and is subject to paying city real property taxes receives credits for taxes paid. The amount of these credits is calculated as follows: a new property owner receives a cash reimbursement for all city real property taxes paid for the same number of years a qualified property was continuously vacant and available for sale and/or lease, up to a maximum period of five years.

The primary organization promoting downtown Beaufort is Main Street Beaufort. The organization was created as a 501(c) (3) non-profit partner with the City to provide services directly related to downtown redevelopment such as promotion and advertising, business retention and recruitment, design assistance and working with local realtors to list available properties. Main Street Beaufort absorbed the Downtown Merchants

Committee twenty years ago to enlarge the membership base and create a unified voice for small business owners in the downtown district. The organization is also a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Center program directed toward maintaining the economic vitality of small, historically significant downtowns.

Main Street Beaufort is funded by the City (\$40,000 annually from an accommodations tax), and through grants and memberships. Businesses pay \$225 and the Friends of Beaufort pay fees of \$35, \$50 and \$100 annually. A staff of 1 ½ and volunteers carry out their program. Main Street Beaufort works closely with the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce and other organizations in the provision of services and promotion of the area.

Summary of the Downtown Historic District:

- Fine dining
- Best Western Sea Island Inn
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Carriage Rides
- Walking Tours
- Public Restrooms
- Metered Parking
- Museums: Verdier House and Beaufort Arsenal
- No wireless communication
- No Farmers Market
- Downtown Housing
- Residential Apartments - many over shops

Shops such as:

- Bookstores
- Music Shops
- Kayak, Bike and Surfboard Rentals
- Woman's and Men's Clothing
- Florists and Garden Shops
- Antique Shops
- Gifts
- Arts and Crafts
- Art Galleries
- Wine Shops
- Professional Services
- Jewelry
- Hardware
- Home Furnishing
- Service Businesses

Three festivals are held each year, a Water Festival, a Shrimp Festival and the "Taste of Beaufort," that utilize a waterfront park and are funded by sponsors and by selling tickets

for food and beverages. The City owns and leases dock space at the marina where slips are provided for transient boaters and from where local cruises emanate. The nearby universities have programs that support small businesses, while Main Street Beaufort works with the City to consider new incentive programs to benefit the local economy.

Shepherdstown, West Virginia

Area - .4 sq. miles

Population – 1200

Shepherdstown was laid out by Thomas Shepherd on a 50 acre portion of a larger parcel of land acquired in 1734. Mecklenburg, as it was originally called, was eventually chartered by the Virginia General Assembly in 1764. Shepherdstown claims to be the oldest town in the state of West Virginia. The current Historic District covers the downtown core along German Street and includes many Federal Style brick houses. Shepherd University is close to the downtown area and the Antietam National Battlefield is several miles away in nearby Maryland.

Shepherdstown operates with an elected town council and a limited staff. The downtown area is promoted and tourism activities are carried out by the Shepherdstown Visitors Center in cooperation with the Downtown Merchants Association and the County Wide Chamber of Commerce. A single staff member is funded by the Town largely from a Hotel/Motel tax. The work of the Center is overseen by a non-profit board of directors. In addition, Rotary and service organizations promote and raise money for downtown events. Although shops and stores turn over periodically, they don't remain vacant long. Locals refer to changes in store ownership and business locations as the "German Street Shuffle"

Summary of the Downtown Historic District

- No antique stores
- No grocery or food stores
- Multitude of good restaurants (more than a dozen fine dining and casual restaurants)
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Bavarian Inn – overlooking the Potomac River, 72 rooms, four diamond hotel
- Entler Hotel – 32 room complex in a historic building
- Historic Shepherdstown Museum located in the Entler Hotel (has a half scale replica of James Rumsey's steam powered vessel that sailed the Potomac on December 3, 1787)
- Shepherdstown Public Library – oldest in West Virginia
- Metered Street Parking
- No public parking provided - free parking is provide in a designated Shepherd University parking lot
- No public transportation provided
- No downtown wireless

- Older portions of Shepherd University
- German Street furnished with 19th Century “street furniture” (metal fences, mounting blocks and wooden pumps)

Shops such as:

- Infant and Toddler Clothes
- Woman’s Dresses and Clothing
- Jewelry
- Shoes
- Gifts and Arts and Crafts
- Books
- Toys
- Florist
- Handcrafted Furniture
- Bakery
- Sunday Farmers Market – Multiple Locations (close a number of streets downtown)
- Old Frontier General Store (owner/locals play country western music Thursday nights)
- Bicycle/boat rentals - canoes (people ride the tow path along the C&O Canal/canoe on the Potomac River - less than a mile away)

Events that promote economic activity in downtown Shepherdstown include parades along German Street on holidays such as the Fourth of July and Christmas – usually four or more parades take place each year. Shepherd University hosts the Contemporary American Theater Festival along with classical music performances that encourage people to frequent the downtown area. In addition, the “Freedoms Run” marathon is held every year.

Cape Charles, Virginia

Area – 4.4 sq. miles (land 3.7, water 0.7)

Population – 1500

Cape Charles was established as a result of an interest in creating a rail connection between Pocomoke, Maryland and Norfolk, Virginia and points south. The desired link was accomplished by extending a rail line down the eastern shore of Virginia and connecting with Norfolk by building a harbor, dredging a channel and providing barge and steamer service across the Chesapeake Bay. William L. Scott, a congressman from Erie Pennsylvania with significant rail interests, purchased three plantations at the planned terminus of the rail line and laid out Cape Charles on 136 acres of land.

Incorporated in 1886, the Cape Charles economy became inextricably tied to the harbor and the railroad connection to Norfolk that existed at the location of the newly developed

town. After the Chesapeake Bay Bridge tunnel was completed in 1964, and with the subsequent growth in trucking, the local economy began to experience a down turn.

In 1989 the Cape Charles National Register Historic District, containing many Victorian, Craftsman and Neo Classical homes, was established. In 1997 the Town adopted a Historic Preservation Plan and in 2001 adopted Historic District Guidelines. In 1992 Cape Charles annexed 2,191 acres of land in close proximity to the Chesapeake Bay. A large portion of the annexed land was sold to a developer who acquired additional property and began building a major residential golf course community adjacent to the original town of Cape Charles. Today the Cape Charles economy is heavily impacted by the vitality of the housing market and the fortunes of Bay Creek development.

Downtown Cape Charles attracts entrepreneurs and small businesses that recognize an opportunity to acquire and renovate older structures in the historic area. The amenities offered by Bay Creek Resort and Club, the protection of the character of the original community, the development of a public pier and beach, along with other facilities, and the restoration of individual properties have all helped to enhance the local economy.

Summary of the Downtown Historic District

- Public Beach (public restrooms – no fee)
- Town Pier (also known as the Fun Pier)
- Recreational Fishing
- Historic Hotel, Inn and Shops
- 120 acre Sustainable Technology Park adjacent to downtown
- Dinner and Pizza Excursion Trains
- Restaurants
- Historic Palace Theater
- Arts Enter - Offering Arts and Education Program and Musical Performances
- Cape Charles Museum and Welcome Center

Shops such as:

- Antiques
- Quick Mart
- Office Supply
- Coffee Shop
- Gift Stores
- Upscale Apparel
- Gym
- Seafood Shop
- Hardware Store
- Real Estate Offices
- Golf and Sporting Goods
- Fine Linens

Businesses are served by a downtown merchants association and Cape Charles is promoted by the Eastern Shore Tourism Commission. The Town, the Bay Creek developer and the short line railroad work together on behalf of the community.

Findings

Both the Stakeholder and Visitor Surveys reflected a positive attitude about downtown Smithfield. The number of respondents, 85 stakeholders and 155 visitors, demonstrate the interest these two groups have in Smithfield and its future. The shortcomings that were cited, and the suggestions that were given to improve both the environment for small businesses and the community's ability to attract people, were solicited to help substantiate what new initiatives and changes should be considered. One area in which stakeholders were in strong agreement was their opinion of the downtown economy. More than 85% of the respondents felt that the economy was merely okay or less than okay, ranking it a 2 or 3 out of a possible 5. Although current national economic conditions likely had an affect, the attitude among stakeholders demonstrates that something should be done to enhance the local economy.

The survey of other communities reinforced a perception that places with similar attributes were often more intensely developed, and they were actively engaged in creating a product that was attractive, historically preserved and aggressively promoted.

Each of the surveyed communities appears to:

- Offer a diversified shopping and dining experience
- Actively utilize a nearby water way or body of water
- Provide a wide range of cultural, entertainment, dining and leisure activities
- Have a focused responsibility to develop and promote the total environment that defines them

Recommendations



“Good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning.”

*Thomas Edison
(1847 -1931)*

Sanford Holshouser believes that Historic Downtown Smithfield has all the elements in place to create a vibrant “experience” destination for locals as well as visitors from the region, state and beyond. There are few small towns that are fortunate to have the assets that, when pulled together, can compete with what Smithfield can offer to attract small retail and service businesses and as well as the people to frequent those businesses.

The recommendations that follow are presented in priority order. The first two series of recommendations focus on activities that can be initiated by existing groups and with a minimal amount of additional resources. The first focuses on attracting visitors and improving the visitor experience. The second identifies ways to encourage the location of new businesses as well as provide support to existing businesses in the downtown area. The third series of recommendations present the need to prepare a Historic District Plan that includes the components that bring together the existing attributes of the District and identifies and determines the location of future amenities. The initial Historic District Plan might be prepared by the Town with active involvement and participation of all District stakeholders.

The fourth and fifth series of recommendations are directed toward the marketing of the strategy to gain support for the work that is being done, with the ultimate objective of selecting or establishing an organization that will assume responsibility for all the program plan elements and for the economic vitality of Historic Downtown Smithfield.

The recommended strategic program plan consists of:

1. Improving the overall experience for visitors to Smithfield by increasing the appeal of the Historic District for local residents as well as out of town visitors
 - Encourage longer/more uniform hours of operation for retail establishments with input from downtown business owners

- Maintain an updated list of targeted businesses that, if located in Smithfield, would act to diversify the shopping and dining venue for visitors to the downtown area
- Evaluate issues associated with the local business climate and, if appropriate, work with the Town to recommend incentives to help attract selected business
- Engage with Smithfield Foods to seek ways to support their presence in Smithfield and to build on past relationships by proposing new projects and promotional initiatives that would be mutually beneficial
- Build on the work of the Arts League and the success of the Arts Center to promote cultural economic development and investigate

the possibility of creating an Arts and Cultural District to incentivize these types of activities

- Join with the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Merchants Association, and the Arts League to conceive and schedule cultural events and leisure activities
- Establish a working relationship with the Board of Historic and Architectural Review to assist in their mission to protect the heritage and character of the Historic District while encouraging sensitivity to the needs of businesses
- Advance the opportunities to present the history of Smithfield through existing museums, walking tours and designated sites, as well as promoting the development of new historic attractions such as Windsor Castle
- Test the appropriateness of making other means of travel available within the Historic District such as bicycle or segway rentals, jitney service and horse drawn carriages

2. Providing support services for existing and new businesses

- Work with existing business groups and the staffs of appropriate business assistance programs to identify topics and schedule work shops designed to provide information to existing business owners, potential new businesses and entrepreneurs

- Identify potential locations that would accommodate selected start up retailers or services providers and investigate the demand and suitability of establishing a small business incubator or multi-tenant space in downtown Smithfield
 - Create an on-line business resource center that provides information or links to sources of information of interest to new or existing business such as a summary of local business taxes and regulations, available assistance programs, relevant government agencies and private sector service providers
 - In consort with local realtors, maintain an inventory of available commercial/retail space as well as property in the downtown area and make the information available on the chamber's website
 - Bring together the downtown business community and the Convention and Visitors Bureau to identify marketing opportunities through cooperative advertising
3. Overseeing the preparation of a comprehensive development plan for the Historic District that focuses primarily on sub-areas 3, 4, 2 and 6.

The Historic District Development Plan includes an inventory of existing land use, downtown businesses and designated commercial property; recognizes historic structures and areas; and identifies new projects that will better integrate existing major elements and amenities such as the Smithfield Center, Windsor Castle, Smithfield Station and the Main Street area. The Historic District Development Plan is designed to present a clear vision for downtown Smithfield

- Identify places where off-street parking could be developed and where other public amenities might be located
- Show a system of walkways and bike trails/lanes that serve to connect existing and planned amenities in the designated sub-areas of the Historic District
- Delineate areas where the provision of WiFi service might enhance the appeal of downtown Smithfield to certain groups of visitors/customers
- Designate areas suitable and acceptable for different types of water oriented development and/or facilities

- Describe projects designed to make areas within the Historic District more attractive such as extending the bricking of sidewalks along South Church Street
- Determine the optimum utilization of Windsor Castle and surrounding property to build on the variety of experiences that are offered in downtown Smithfield and bring additional economic vitality to the area
- Assess the appearance of the entrance corridors to downtown Smithfield and consider the application of available resources to create the most positive sense of place for those coming to the Historic District
- Assemble information about residential use in the Historic District to help determine the suitability of providing selected types of additional housing

4. Marketing the Strategic Program Plan and Historic Downtown Smithfield

- Distribute the final version of the Strategic Program Plan to stakeholders to encourage and attract local investment and to build recognition and enthusiasm for realizing a common vision of Historic Downtown Smithfield
- Prepare a version of the Strategic Program Plan that is suitable for attracting the interest of potential new businesses by presenting information about Smithfield, the work being done to improve the product, as well as the services that are available to assist prospective investors
- Distribute information to the community that reports on achievements and program updates

5. Establishing or identifying an entity that will have the primary responsibility for maintaining and promoting the implementation of the comprehensive development plan for the Historic District as well as the other elements of the strategic program plan.

The organization should:

- Bring together a multitude of interests to develop and promote the economy of downtown Smithfield

i.e. a non-profit public-private corporation with representation on its board from the Town of Smithfield, Isle of Wight County, the

Convention and Visitors Bureau, Downtown Merchants Association, Chamber of Commerce, Smithfield Foods, local businesses, residents and property owners

- Have the ability to raise money from a variety of both public and private sources
- Actively communicate activities and accomplishments with its investor members and the community

The objective of the study prepared by Sanford Holshouser was to assist downtown businesses, residents and government officials to:

- verify what many know about their community, its business climate and economy;
- provide a comprehensive perspective on what actions can be taken to improve the “product” that is Historic Downtown Smithfield by better serving appropriate new and existing businesses, as well as attracting more “customers” more often; and
- begin organizing to implement a program plan that will set a course for greater economic vitality

The Strategic Program Plan serves as a blueprint that guides the broader community in taking those actions that, together, create and maintain a business climate, as well as the physical environment, that are conducive to fostering and sustaining a vital economy for Historic Downtown Smithfield.

Appendix

Stakeholder Survey – Summary

Visitor Survey – Summary

Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting

Historic Downtown Smithfield

Stakeholder Survey – Summary

The conducted Stakeholder Survey was designed to solicit input from Historic District business and property owners, residents and other interested parties concerning a wide variety of subjects affecting the local economy. Eighty five surveys were submitted, 26 from business and property owners, 8 from residents and 51 from other interested parties. The vast majority of respondents characterized downtown Smithfield as “quaint,” “charming,” “historic,” “clean,” architecturally attractive,” “small town America” and “compact.” A theme frequently presented was the community’s friendly, welcoming atmosphere and the hospitality of the local shop owners. Some also mentioned the limited number and types of shops and their hours of operation. Almost sixty percent of the respondents felt that the economy of downtown Smithfield was merely “okay,” ranking it a three out of a possible five, with five being the most economically vital. Another 28 percent ranked the economic vitality of downtown Smithfield as being less than okay, ranking it only a two, while 4 percent thought that the economy was as low as a one and only one percent thought it was great, ranking it a five. These results indicate that, among stakeholders, there is a perceived need to improve the vitality of the local economy.

When asked the open ended question as to what were the obstacles that discourage the starting and/or operation of a business, the most frequently mentioned obstacles that can be addressed, at least in part, were related to local government policies and related initiatives, followed by the lack and cost of retail space, the availability of convenient parking, current store hours and, finally, local resistance to change. Other obstacles that were mentioned tended to be characteristics and/or conditions that are beyond any local control such as the economic downturn and not being close to other attractions or commercial centers.

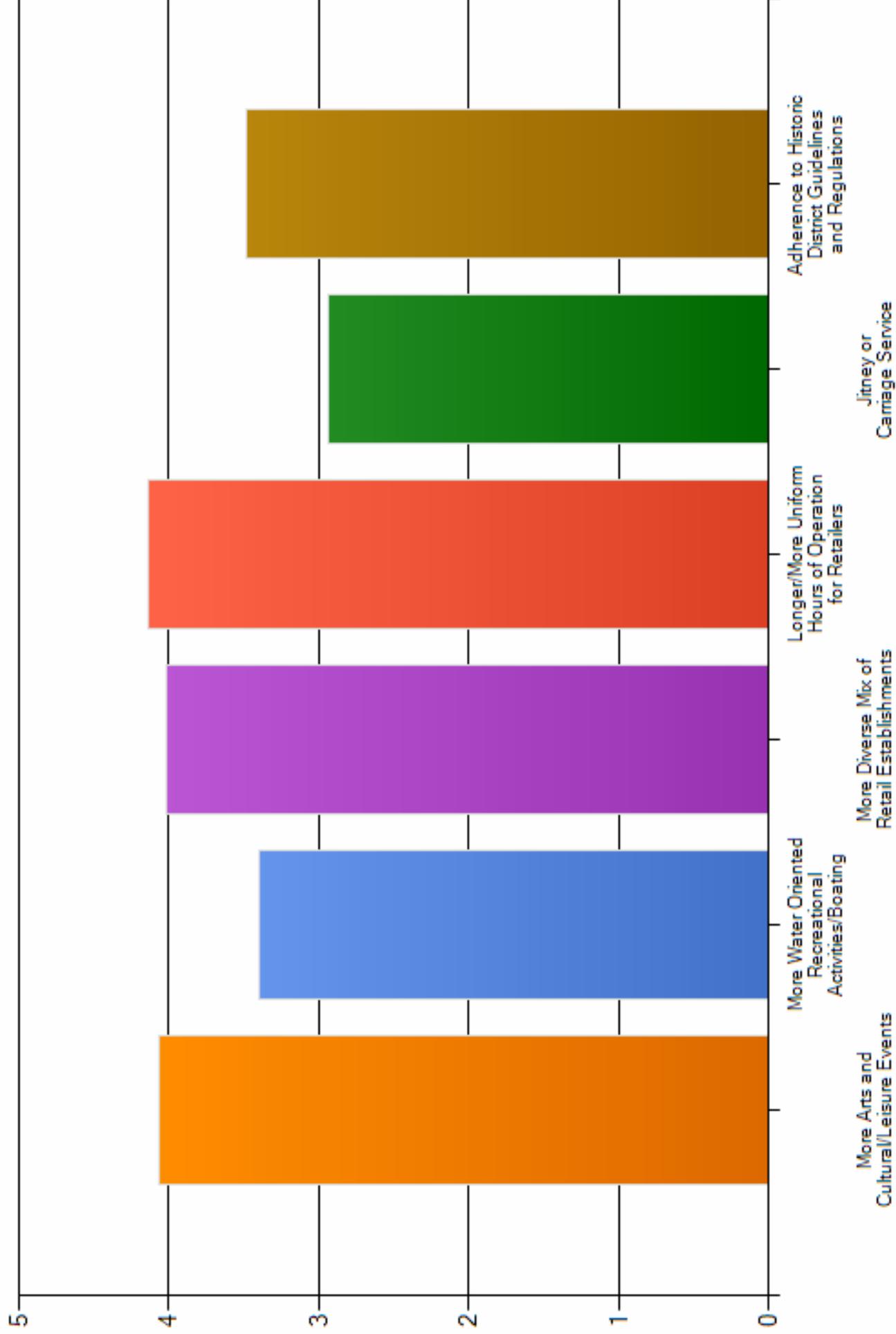
The survey asked respondents to rank three different types of factors that could potentially have a positive affect on the economic vitality of downtown Smithfield. The first group included the types of support services that are designed to assist and encourage small businesses to operate and locate downtown, the second group was associated with the type of development and/or amenities that could enhance business vitality, and the third group focused on those activities or conditions that act to support local businesses. The following weighted charts reflect the ideas and opinions of the responding stakeholders. Although the weighted differential among the items in each group was not great, the idea of conducting educational seminars for retailers and small businesses and the creation of a small business incubator and/or multi-tenant space for small businesses ranked the highest among the support services desired; more off-street parking and providing WiFi downtown were the highest rated in the development or amenities group; and longer more uniform hours of operation and additional cultural/leisure events were thought to have the most positive affect on downtown Smithfield’s economic vitality in the activities/conditions group.

In response to the open ended question - “what three things would you suggest be done to improve the economic vitality of Historic Downtown Smithfield? - respondents most frequently mentioned ideas associated with having more diversity of shops and restaurants as well as longer hours of operation as being important to the downtown’s economic vitality; providing more cultural/leisure events came in second, initiatives associated with branding, local history and advertising were third; enhancing downtown’s physical appearance, having more attractive signage and promoting certain types of development was fourth; and having more parking was fifth.

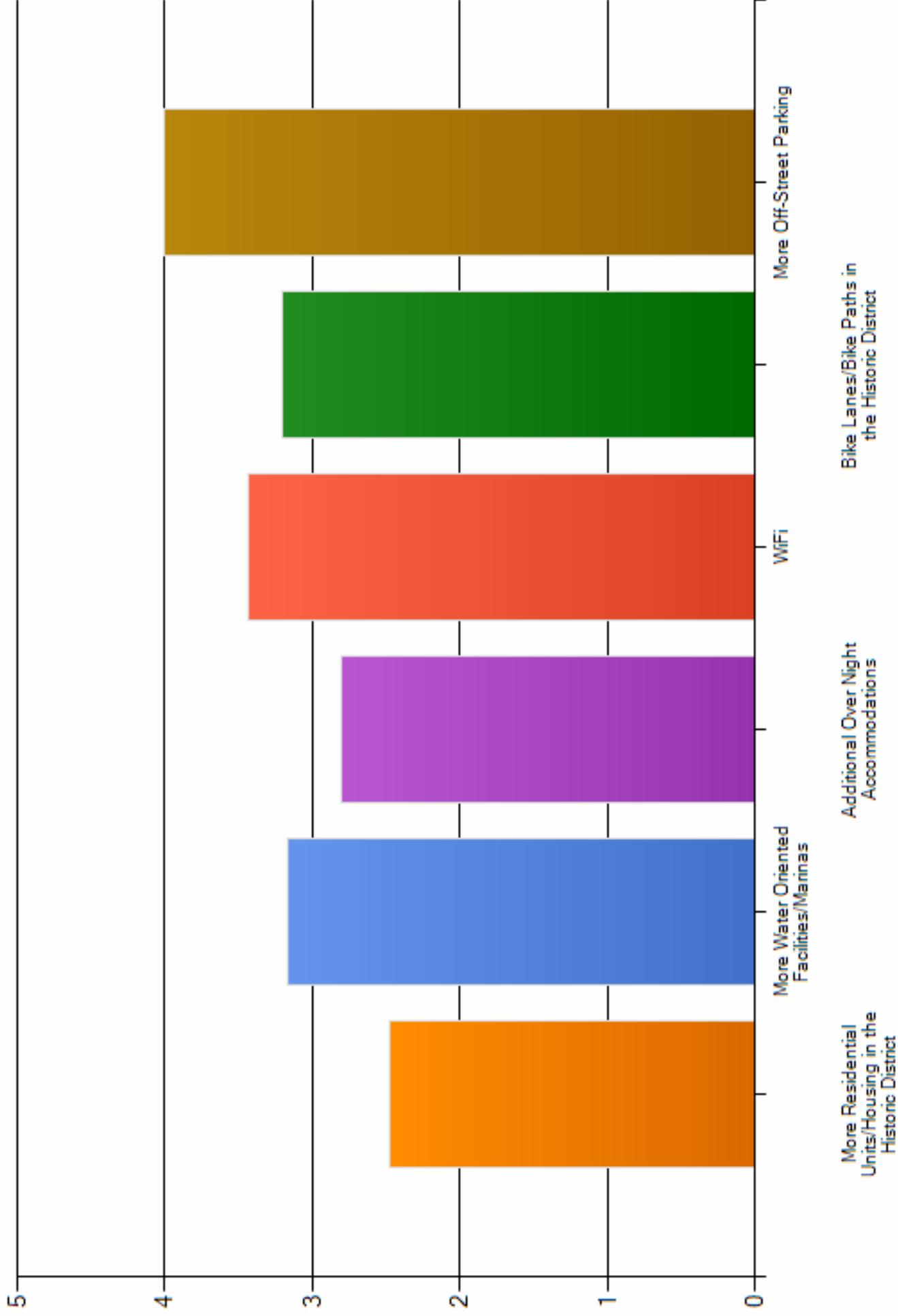
Some of the more compelling “visions” for a future downtown Smithfield that were offered included:

- To be one of THE COOLEST places to live, work & shop in Hampton Roads
- Embracing the future as a regional boutique arts destination with live music, live artists, live actors, living history and festivals and events of many original sorts
- To remain as the easy going, laid back, quaint, unique town we grew up with - southern charm at its finest.
- A destination for arts and shopping tied to history and the waterfront
- A "go to" place for a growing community and a day trip destination for SE Virginia.
- A cultural tourism destination offering great art/cultural opportunities, great shopping and dining

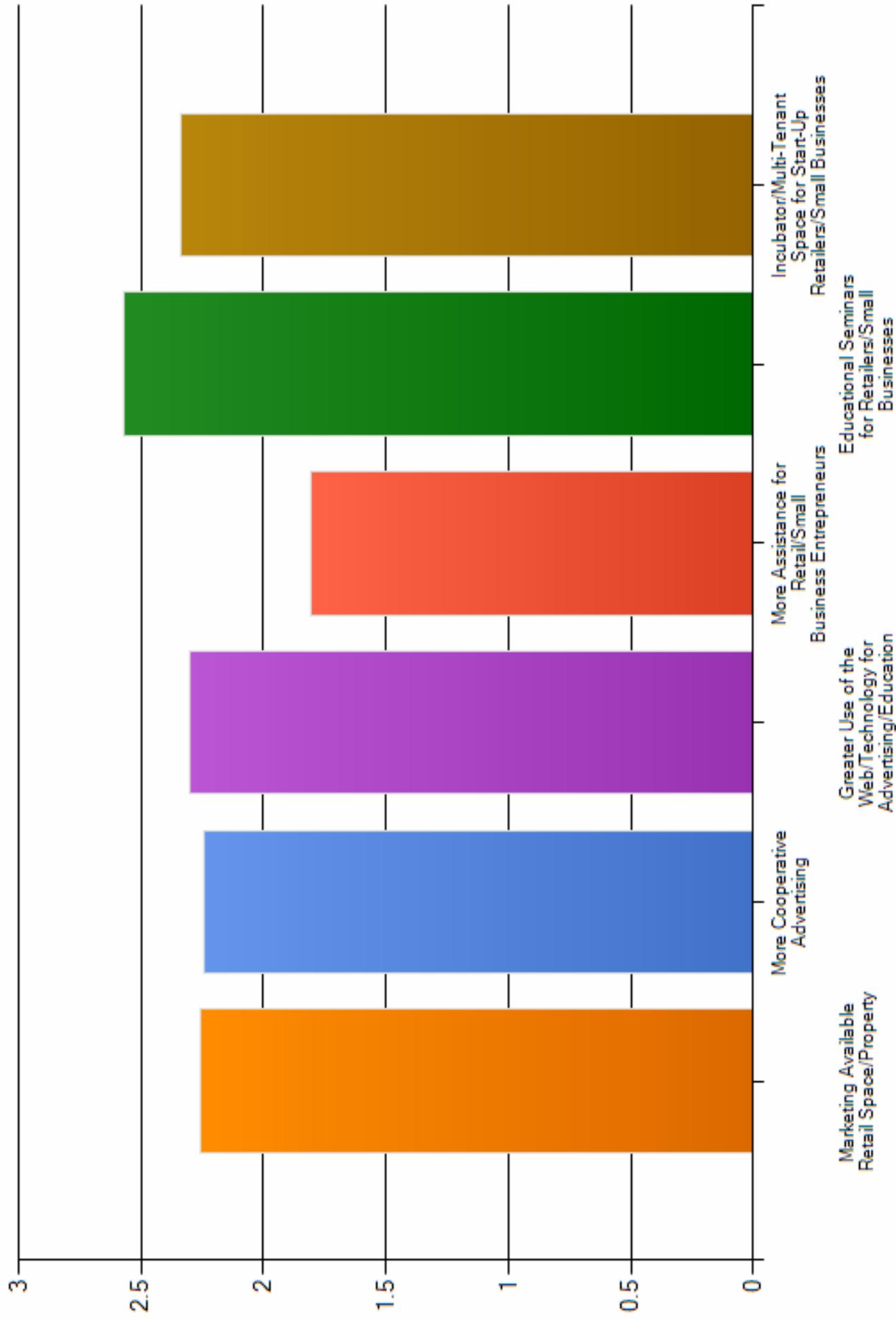
On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, rate the following types of activities/conditions that would/could have a positive affect on the economic vitality of Historic Downtown Smithfield.



On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, rate the following types of development/amenities that would/could have a positive affect on the economic vitality of Historic Downtown Smithfield.



On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, rate the following types of support services that would/could have a positive affect on the economic vitality of Historic Downtown Smithfield.



Historic Downtown Smithfield

Visitor Survey – Summary

The conducted Visitor Survey was designed to solicit input from town residents living outside of the historic district, county residents, as well as visitors from the region, state and beyond. Its purpose was to gain an understanding of why people visited downtown Smithfield, how frequently they visited, their experience while in Smithfield and what changes would encourage them to come back more often.

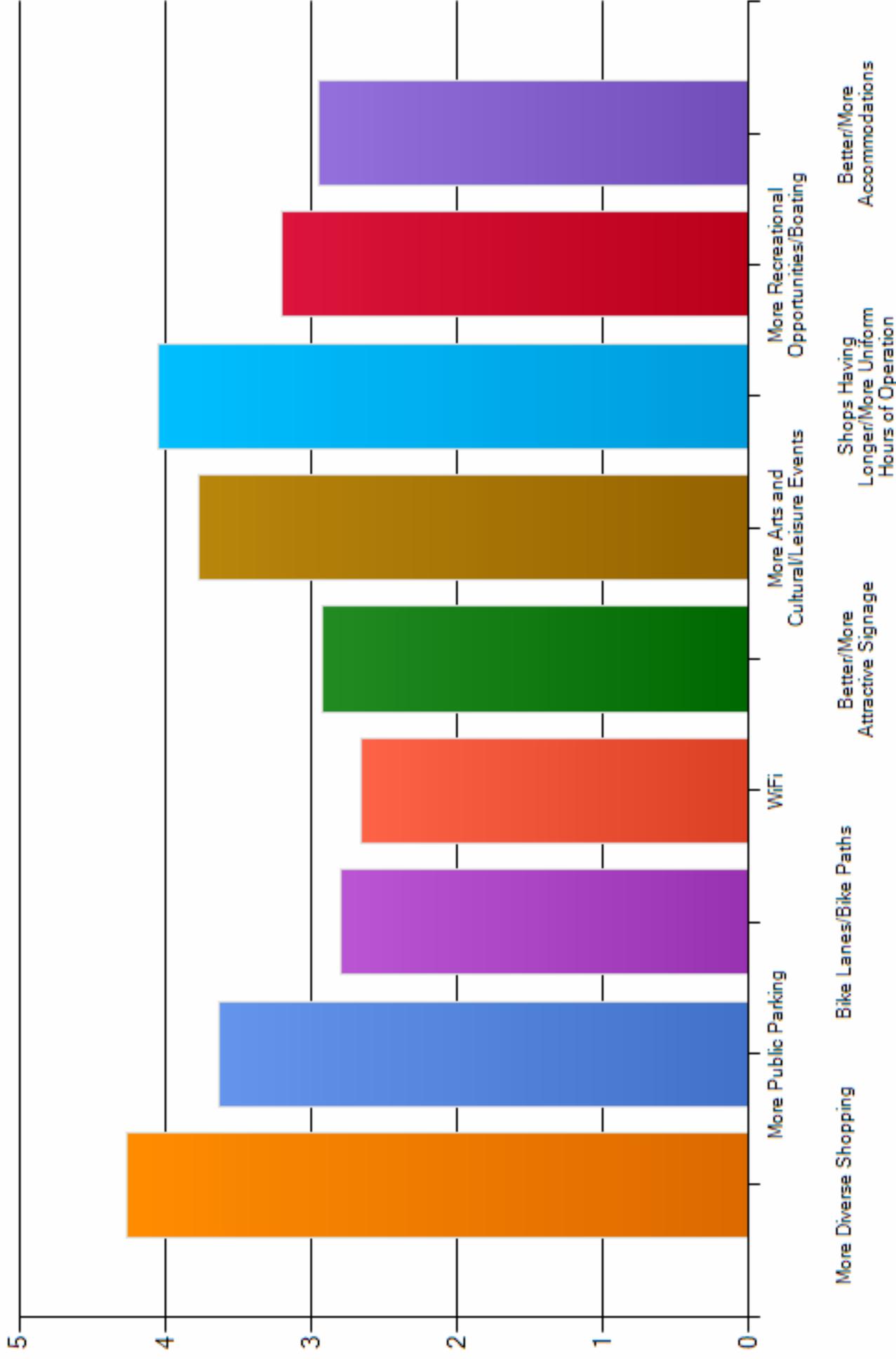
One hundred and fifty five completed surveys were received, 71 from town or county residents, 76 from residents of the region or Virginia and 7 from outside the state or country. Ninety eight indicated that they visited downtown Smithfield regularly, 29 visited more than 5 times, 23 visited 2-5 times and 4 visited only once. The major influences that respondents gave for visiting Smithfield were personal familiarity with the area or for business reasons, followed by information provided by a friend or by word of mouth, local advertising/newspaper and “other.” The other things that encouraged them to come to Smithfield were information they received from the internet, the convention and visitors bureau or the chamber of commerce.

The respondents were also asked why they visited downtown Smithfield and, by a large margin, shopping and dining were the reasons included most often. Historic attractions and community events followed as the most frequently mentioned reasons for coming to Smithfield. The chart that follows shows the complete breakdown of visitor responses. Based on their experience, respondents were then asked to rate the influence certain amenities or conditions might/would have on attracting more people to downtown Smithfield more often. The weighted responses of those submitting surveys indicated that more diverse shopping and shops having longer/more uniform hours of operation would be the most influential factors. The next two factors considered to be influential in attracting more people were more arts and cultural/leisure events and more public parking. Providing WiFi downtown was considered least important. The chart that follows shows the complete breakdown of visitor responses.

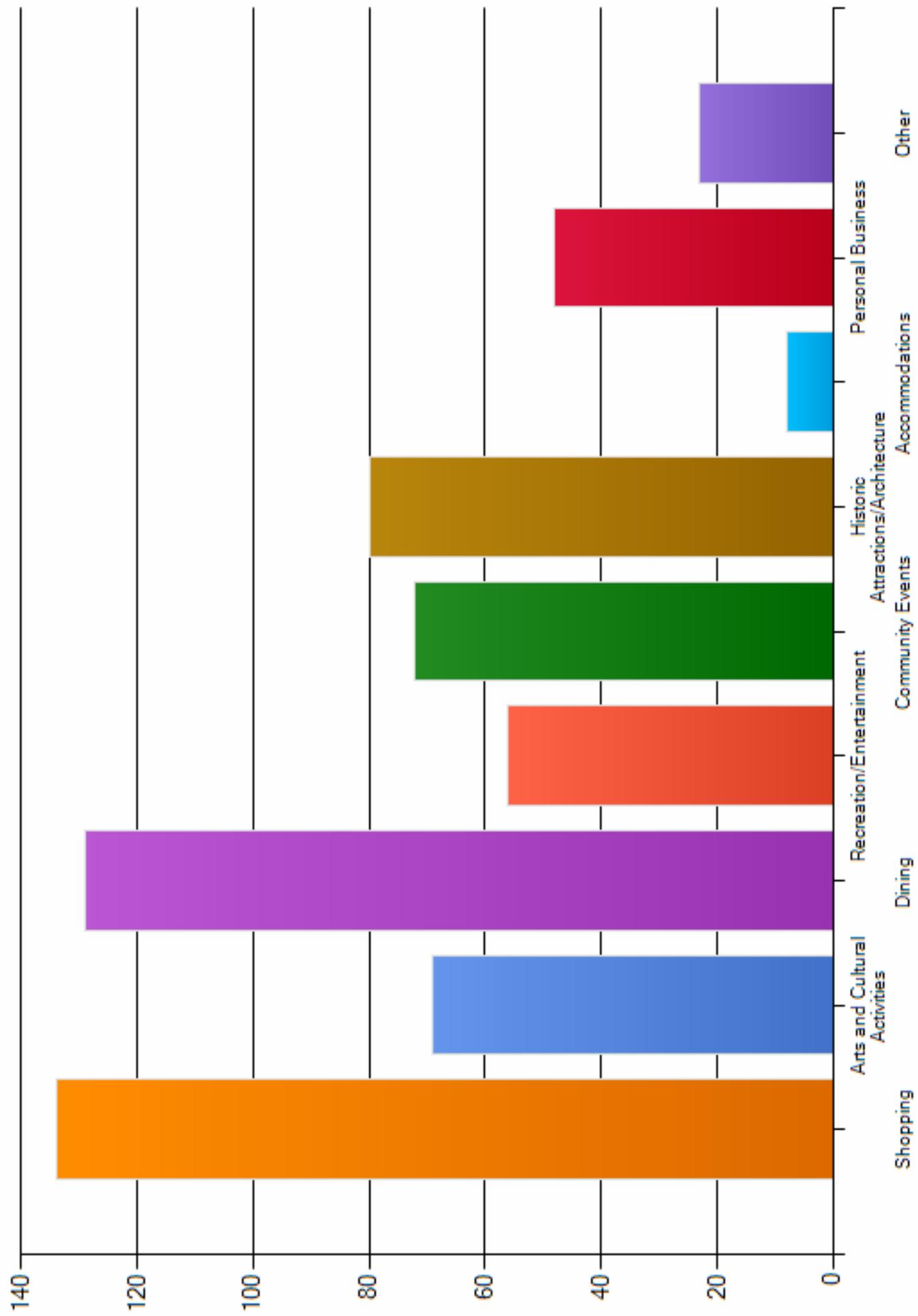
Of those responding to the survey, the most (37%) indicated that they visited downtown Smithfield several times a year, while 32% said they visited Smithfield once a week or more. Only 15% indicated that they visited only occasionally.

Two open ended questions were asked of visitors: what three things would improve or make downtown Smithfield more appealing/attractive and what one major change in downtown Smithfield would encourage you to return more often and/or recommend your experience to a friend? As one might expect, having a greater variety of shops, along with the related suggestions of providing more restaurants and parking, as well as businesses having longer/more uniform hours of operation were the things mentioned most often.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with five being the highest, rate the influence the following amenities or conditions might/would have on attracting more people to Historic Downtown Smithfield more often.



Why did/do you visit Historic Downtown Smithfield? (select all that apply)





Your Partner for Sustainable Economic Prosperity

The Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting is an innovative and growing economic development consulting firm that provides action planning, site selection services, and unique strategies to communities, organizations, and companies worldwide. Affiliated with the law firm Nexsen Pruet, our firm proudly continues the legacy of integrity and leadership and furthers the visionary economic development ideas of the firm's founders, former US Senator and NC Governor Terry Sanford and former NC Governor Jim Holshouser.

Sanford Holshouser's partners' direct economic development experience includes:

- * marketing and business recruitment
- * existing industry retention and expansion
- * site selection
- * small business development
- * infrastructure development
- * workforce development
- * industrial, business, and research park development
- * shell building development
- * site certification
- * utility related economic development programs
- * entrepreneurial initiatives
- * structuring economic development organizations
- * operational strategies for EDOs
- * incentive negotiations
- * incentive policy development
- * and a range of other economic development strategies

Sanford Holshouser Services

Site Selection

- ✦ Selection Criteria – assist companies in developing location importance factors.
- ✦ Search – comprehensive search for sites and/or buildings that meet client needs.
- ✦ Comparisons – develop a standardized cost/benefit comparison of communities.
- ✦ Incentive Negotiating – negotiate fair, reasonable incentives for a long term partnership between the company and community.

Operations and Management

- ✦ Strategic Planning – action planning that provides unique solutions to communities with a focus on sustainability and implementation.
- ✦ Board Development – assist ED boards in building leadership roles; retreat facilitation.
- ✦ Executive Search - recruit the qualified professional for your program; negotiate the contract.
- ✦ Bridge Management - professional management of the economic development program during the executive search.
- ✦ Private Sector Partnerships - assess the current organization and program and capitalize on partnerships with the local private sector.
- ✦ Fundraising - through association with one of the nation's best professional economic development fundraising groups.

Program Development

- ✦ Local Program Development - assist communities in broadening their ED program by developing strategies for Business Retention and Expansion, Workforce Development, Small Business Assistance, Entrepreneurship and Agribusiness.
- ✦ Marketing – through association with the nation’s leading lead generation firm, qualify leads, reaching the decision makers who are managing active projects; target-market analysis to enable the recruitment of companies that are compatible with the community.
- ✦ Client Handling - ensuring prospects are provided professional treatment.

Product Development

- ✦ Product Development – industrial/business/technology park development; shell building programs; consortium financing; site certification/qualification; brokerage; land banking; product development deal structuring; multi-jurisdictional industrial parks.

Incentives and Financing

- ✦ Incentives Negotiations - ensure the deal is right for the community.
- ✦ Incentive Policies – assist communities in developing policies that protect investment.
- ✦ Financing - strategies for financing product development and program operation.

Sanford Holshouser Partners

- **Governor Holshouser** participates in SHEDC consulting projects involving economic development policy.
- **Ernie Pearson** is North Carolina's leading expert on incentives, incentive policies and structuring product development initiatives and nonprofit economic development activities.
- **Bob Comer** has specific experience restructuring economic development organizations.
- **Crystal Morphis** specializes in existing business, product development and comprehensive economic development planning.
- **Rocky Lane's** specialties include workforce development, training and existing business retention and expansion.
- **Mike Geuge** has extensive experience in city planning and electric utility related economic development issues.
- **Bob De Mauri** has more than thirty-five years of experience in economic and community development at the local, regional, and state levels.
- **Ross Steckley** has 30 years of professional experience in the U.S. and Canada including entrepreneurial ventures, facilities design, and management.

Governor James E. Holshouser, Jr. has been involved in public service throughout his career as a lawyer dedicated to his clientele, a state representative, Governor from 1973 to 1977, and by service in numerous public and private sector boards, such as the UNC Board of Governors. During his tenure as Governor, North Carolina saw a number of economic development "firsts", to include the first North Carolina overseas recruitment office in Germany and the first time this state had total new investment to surpass one billion dollars. He has guided and participated in policy matters related to economic development initiatives from local to the state level.

Ernest C. Pearson has served both in the private practice of law and in public policy positions. He served as Assistant Secretary for Economic Development of the NC Department of Commerce. He managed economic development programs, including industrial recruitment, international trade, small business development, tourism, film industry recruitment, and finance programs for industry. Since returning to the private sector in 1993, his law practice has focused on economic development matters, representing numerous local jurisdictions in economic development projects and companies in site selection projects.

Robert F. Comer has developed strategic action plans, organizational restructuring and privatization, marketing plans, personnel policies and funding campaigns for several local and regional economic development organizations in North Carolina. A local developer for 15 years and a pioneer in regional economic development, Bob most recently was chairman of Piedmont Triad's regional economic development Foundation. A retired US Navy Captain, Bob graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill and has a Master Degree equivalent from the US Naval War College.

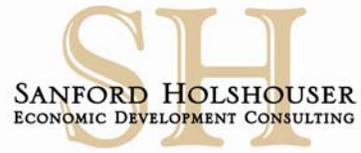
Crystal P. Morphis, CECD, has over 10 years of direct economic development experience. She has experience in developing industrial parks, site certification, marketing, existing industry program development, strategic planning, private sector fundraising, executive searches and research for economic development. She serves on the Advisory Board for NC State University's Industrial Extension Service and is an instructor at the UNC-Chapel Hill Basic ED Course. Crystal holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Salem College and a Master of Science in Economics from UNC-Charlotte.

L. Calvin "Rocky" Lane, Jr., has over 13 years experience as an economic developer and 15 years in workforce development. During that tenure, he was responsible for developing a fully serviced industrial park, a shell building, two NCDOC Certified Sites, an award winning marketing program, and the successful recruitment of 17 new companies and numerous expansions representing over \$1.5 billion in new investment and over 2000 new jobs. Rocky served in various positions with Halifax Community College for over 13 years, the last three as Dean of Continuing Education. He holds Bachelor and Master Degrees from N.C. State University.

Michael K. Geouge, CECD, has over 37-years of economic development and city planning experience. He has been the Manager of Economic Development for Duke Power/ Nantahala Power, manager of the western regional office of the North Carolina Department of Commerce and spent 15-years experience as a city planner and/or planning director with the states of North Carolina, Tennessee and Mississippi. He has participated in over 300 industrial client visits and in nearly 100 industrial client announced locations. He earned a Bachelor of Science in urban geography from East Tennessee State University.

Robert S. De Mauri, AICP, has more than thirty-five years of experience in economic and community development. He has held positions with local and state governments as well as in the private sector and was Director of the Thomas Jefferson Partnership for Economic Development in the Charlottesville, Virginia region. His experience includes preparing economic development strategies, marketing plans and local land use plans and ordinances. He has also worked with companies to provide site location assistance while evaluating the competitive advantages of communities. He earned a Bachelor in City Planning from the University of Virginia.

Ross M. Steckley was an economic developer for Washington County, NC and as a professional consultant in facilities management and engineering carries over 30 years of planning and project development experience. Ross, a Canadian Citizen and a creative grant writer adds financial opportunity to previously struggling projects by elevating their "project exposure" and then successfully implementing these projects within their respective community. He focuses on expanding the firm's site selection and economic development consulting services into Canada and Central America.



Current and Previous EDC/Local Government Clients of Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting, LLC

Albert Lea, MN
Anson County, NC
Carteret County EDC, NC
Chester County, SC
Chesterfield County, SC
On behalf of ElectriCities, Inc.
 City of Albemarle, NC
 City of Cherryville, NC
 City of Gastonia, NC
 City of High Point, NC
 City of Kinston, NC
 City of Laurinburg, NC
 City of Lexington, NC
 City of Lumberton, NC
 City of Monroe, NC
 City of Morganton, NC
 City of Newton, NC
 City of Shelby, NC
 City of Statesville, NC
Danville, VA
Davidson County EDC, NC
Elizabeth City State University, NC
Greenwood County, SC
Henderson County Partnership, NC
Hertford County, NC
Hoke County EDC, NC
Hyde County, NC
Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments, NC
Laurens County, SC
Business Development Board of Martin County, FL
Montgomery County EDC, NC
North Carolina's Eastern Region
North Carolina Motorsports Association
North Carolina Northeast Partnership
North Carolina School Start Coalition, NC
North Carolina's Southeast
Orange County, NC
Pamlico County, NC
Piedmont Palmetto Economic Development
 Alliance, SC

Research Triangle Regional Partnership, NC
Rockingham County Partnership for Economic &
 Tourism Development, NC
Rutherford County, NC
Salisbury-Rowan EDC, NC
On behalf of ElectriCities, Inc.
 Town of Apex, NC
 Town of Ayden, NC
 Town of Benson, NC
 Town of Clayton, NC
 Town of Cornelius, NC
 Town of Drexel, NC
 Town of Farmville, NC
 Town of Huntersville, NC
 Town of Landis, NC
 Town of Louisburg
 Town of Maiden, NC
 Town of Pineville, NC
 Town of Selma, NC
 Town of Smithfield, NC
 Town of Wake Forest, NC
 Town of Granite Falls, NC
 Town of Red Springs, NC
Town of Cary, NC
Town of Cheraw, SC
Town of Fuquay-Varina, NC
Town of Littleton, NC
Town of Morven, NC
Town of Nashville, NC
Town of Smithfield, VA
Town of Yadkinville, NC
Turning Point Workforce Development Board
NC Seafood Industrial Park Authority/Wanchese
 Seafood Industrial Park, NC
Wayne County Development Alliance, NC
Washington County, NC
Yadkin County, NC
Yancey County EDC, NC
York County, SC

Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting and Nexsen Pruet (formerly Sanford Holshouser, LLP), have been involved in some or all of the site selection process for the following companies.

- 3C Alliance LLP – Battery manufacturer (Japanese/German/US joint venture)
- 3 Tex, Inc. – Composite materials manufacturer
- Ann’s House of Nuts, Inc. – Snack processing and packaging
- Anpota Development Inc. – Concrete manufacturer (Jamaican)
- Applied Distribution Resources, Inc. – Distribution
- Biosignia, Inc. – Serum marker analysis
- Biotron Waste Research, Ltd. – Waste recycling (Canada)
- Blueberry Plastic Mill Corp. – Plastics recycling
- Citterio USA, Inc. – Specialty meat processing and packaging (Italian)
- Corrugated Container Corporation - Corrugated container manufacturer
- Cott Beverages USA, Inc. – Beverage bottler (Canadian)
- Cranberry Clouds Ltd. – Furniture manufacturer (England)
- Dudson USA, Inc. – Distribution of institutional china (England)
- Duracell Battery, Inc. – Joint venture partner in 3C Alliance
- Environ Products – Rotational molding manufacturer and headquarters
- EnviroTire Recycling Technologies LLC – Tire recycling (Canada)
- Formscape LLC – Electronic form systems (England)
- Gailey & Lord – Textile fiber manufacturer
- GoGo Motorsports USA, LLC – Scooter assembly/distribution (China)
- Hickory-White Furniture Company – Furniture manufacturer
- Intercord Technische Faden, GmbH – Industrial/tire cord manufacturers (Germany/Turkey joint venture)
- Kordsa, Inc. - Industrial/Tire manufacturer (Germany/Turkey joint venture)
- Just Care, Inc. – Private prison hospital facility
- Liberty Hardware Manufacturing Corporation – Distribution of hardware for furniture manufacturers
- Logic Marine Corporation – Boat manufacturer (Indonesia)
- Loparex LLC - Corporate HQ and R&D relocation and manufacturing expansion (The Netherlands)
- Magma Entertainment Corp – Animal bedding manufacturer
- Matisse Derivan (USA) Inc. – Artist paint manufacturer (Australia)
- Meadows Metalcraft LLC – Lamp manufacture (Dubai)
- Miza Pharmaceuticals, Inc. – Pharmaceutical packager (Canada)
- Norske Skog Industries ASA – Flooring manufacture (Norway)
- North Carolina Quadel Consulting Corporation – Data processing
- Novo Nordisk Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc. – Production facility
- Recycling Earth Products, Inc. – Recycling building materials
- Royal Laser Technologies, Inc. – Component manufacturer
- Rutherford Motorsports, LLC – Motor scooter/cycle distribution
- Sherrill Furniture Company – Furniture manufacturer
- Spetronic Plating – Plating components for computers (Canada)
- Tensor Machinery – Furniture component manufacture (Canada)
- Texel, Inc. – Non woven fabrics manufacture (Canada)
- Toshiba Battery, Inc. – Joint venture partner in 3C Alliance (Japan)
- Varta Batterie AC – Joint venture partner in 3C Alliance (German)