

Town of Dayton, Virginia

Economic Development Plan



Presented to the Dayton Town Council on Monday, May 14, 2012

Acknowledgements

The completion of this Economic Development Plan would not have been possible without the support from several people. I wish to thank each of the following: Dayton residents and business owners who completed the mailed survey; Dayton residents and business owners who participated in a focus group session; the members of Dayton Town Council; town employees; students from my fall PUAD 573/PPA 483 Economic and Community Development class; and finally Mr. Benjamin Craig who served as a liaison between myself and the Town of Dayton. I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with and getting to know Dayton residents, business owners, council members, and staff. I look forward to working with the Town of Dayton in the future!

Dr. Nicholas J. Swartz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE #
1. Introduction and Outline	7
2. Present State	9
3. Local and Regional Economy	10
4. Citizen Input: The Mailed Survey	16
5. Citizen Input: Focus Groups	36
6. Citizen Input: SWOT Analysis	39
7. Grant Opportunities	42
8. Property Identification and Recommendations	46
9. Recommendations	52
10. Appendix	56

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NAME	PAGE #
1. Regional Location Quotients	15
2. Current Challenges Facing Dayton	33
3. Future Challenges Facing Dayton	34
4. One Word Descriptor of Dayton	34
5. Top Likes of Dayton	35
6. SWOT Analysis for the Town of Dayton	40
7. Number of Businesses in Dayton	46

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NAME	PAGE #
1. Town of Dayton, VA Map	6
2. Residency Status	16
3. Length of Time Lived in Dayton	17
4. Highest Level of Education Attained	18
5. Employment Status	18
6. Primary Place of Employment	19
7. Respondent Age Range	19
8. Gender	20
9. Dependents Living in Household	20
10. Perceived Economic Performance	21
11. Types of Investment Needed	22
12. Types of Industries and Commercial Development Needed	23
13. Attracting More Visitors and Customers	24
14. Kinds of Businesses and Services Needed	25
15. Barriers to Economic Development	26
16. Level of Cooperation Among Town Organizations	27
17. Greatest Challenges to Growing Dayton's Economy	28
18. Greatest Opportunities to Growing Dayton's Economy	29
19. Adequate Space for Business Growth	29
20. Trust in Town Officials	30
21. Strengths in Housing	30
22. Weaknesses in Housing	31
23. Underrepresented Populations	32
24. Support Dog Park in Town	32
25. Town of Dayton Parcel and Zoning Map	47

Introduction and Outline

It is my pleasure to submit this Economic Development Plan to the Dayton Town Council and Town Administrator. This Plan is the result of many hours of work completed between August 2011 and May 2012 by myself as Principal Investigator, Mr. Benjamin Craig as the liaison between James Madison University and the Town of Dayton, and students from my fall 2011 Economic and Community Development class. This project is a part of the JMU Master in Public Administration and undergraduate Public Policy and Administration programs *Partners in Community Leadership Program*.

It is important to first have a better understanding of the concept Economic Development. Economic Development refers to a concerted effort by policymakers and communities to promote a standard of living and level of economic health in a particular area. This development could include developing human capital, infrastructure, regional competitiveness, sustainability of the environment, health, safety, literacy, and others. It is a process of retaining, expanding, and attracting jobs, wealth, and income in such a way that it improves the quality of life of residents and propels economic opportunities. Economic growth, however, is different from economic development. Economic growth refers to the increase in capacity of an economy to produce more goods and services, compared from one period to another. It can be measured in nominal terms like inflation or real terms such as Gross Domestic Product. Economic development requires that qualitative improvements occur---oftentimes these improvements are measured through community quality of life studies.

Economic Development in Dayton is defined as: *Dayton’s policies and services for growing and enhancing the local economy in order to increase the quality of life of its citizens.*

This Economic Development Plan is outlined as follows:

- ❖ Section 1: *Introduction and Outline*
- ❖ Section 2: *Present State*
- ❖ Section 3: *Local and Regional Economy*
- ❖ Section 4: *Citizen Input—The Mailed Survey*

- ❖ Section 5: *Citizen Input—Focus Groups*
- ❖ Section 6: *Citizen Input—SWOT Analysis*
- ❖ Section 7: *Grant Opportunities*
- ❖ Section 8: *Property ID and Recommendations*
- ❖ Section 9: *Recommendations*
- ❖ Section 10: *Appendix*
 - *Citizen Survey*
 - *Additional Grant Opportunities*
 - *Web Content and Design*

Present State

Dayton is a beautiful small town of 1,530 residents nestled in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley and surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Allegheny Mountains. Dayton is situated near various academic, commercial, and recreational getaways. Dayton's closest neighbor is Harrisonburg, which is home to James Madison University which lies only 5 minutes to the north. Dayton is just off a major shipping highway, Interstate 81, lying just 10 minutes west of exit 243. Nearby outdoor recreational opportunities include Skyline Drive, Shenandoah National Park, and the George Washington National Forest. Dayton is just 1 hour northwest of Charlottesville (home to the University of Virginia), 2 hours northwest of Richmond, and 2.5 hours southwest of Washington, D.C.

Dayton residents prize its "small town" charm and agrarian feel. There is strong community support for economic development that maintains the current charm of the town. The downtown is in need of desperate revitalization in the form beautification, facade improvements, and signage.

PRESENT STATE – The Town of Dayton is in need of revitalizing its downtown area (***Beautify and Enhance***) while maintaining its small town charm (***Preserve***). Furthermore, the Town of Dayton needs to effectively communicate and coordinate with town residents, businesses, and potential visitors (***Connect***). Preserve, Beautify, Enhance, and Connect are key concepts that will drive the future of Dayton as it relates to its economic development efforts.

Local and Regional Economy

Let's begin with some demographics related to Dayton, the surrounding area and region, and Virginia. The median age in Dayton is 41 years. Twenty percent of the population is under the age of 16 and 16% above the age of 65. Roughly 43% of the population is between the ages of 25-54. Eighty-nine percent of the population is White alone, 10.9% is non-White (9% Hispanic, 0.7% African American, 0.5% Asian).¹ Dayton's average household size is 2.45 and average family size is 2.98. Thirty-one percent of households have individuals under the age of 18 and 28.2% of households have individuals 65 years old and above, making up a community of primarily families with children and retirees.

Of Dayton's 25 and older population, 10.5% have attained up to a Graduate or Professional Degree, 14.5% a Bachelor's degree, 8.9% an Associate's degree, 15.2% some college and 33.4% a High School Diploma. Seventeen percent of this population has not finished High School. Across the Commonwealth of Virginia, 13.6% have attained up to a Graduate or Professional Degree, 19.8% a Bachelor's Degree, 6.6% an Associate's degree, 19.4% some college, 26.3% a High School Diploma, and 14.2% have not finished High School.

In Dayton, white residents occupy 99.5% of owner-occupied housing units while 16.1% of renter-occupied units are occupied by Hispanic residents.² Thirty-eight of Dayton's 624 housing units are vacant, yielding a vacancy rate of 6%. This is significantly lower than that of the nation's 12.8% vacancy rate.³ Fifty-five percent of households in Dayton have moved into their housing unit since 2000. Thirty-four percent of homeowners have moved into their homes since 2000, 23% between 1990-1999, 15.6% between 1980-1989, 13.2% between 1970-1970, and 14.2% before 1969. Almost eighty-nine percent of renters have moved into their housing unit since 2000, 5.2% between 1990-1999, and 6.1% between 1980-1989.

¹ 2010 Census, Table DP-1

² 2005-2009 American Community Survey

³ 2010 Census

Employment in Dayton

According to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey, the median household income in Dayton was \$39,750, compared to the nation's median of \$51,425.⁴ Of the 1,064 residents aged 16 and above, roughly 740 are working or actively seeking employment, yielding a strong labor force participation rate of 69.5%. During the same period, the U.S. as a whole had a labor force participation rate of 65%. Roughly 72% of the working population in Dayton commutes to work in less than 20 minutes. About 22% of employed residents work in the educational services, healthcare, and social services industry, 20% work in manufacturing, 13% work in construction, and 12% work in the retail trade industry.

Regional Economy

Through the economic downturn, Rockingham County's economy has remained relatively diverse and strong. As of September 2011, The Harrisonburg-Rockingham MSA's unemployment rate was 6.1%, significantly lower than the national rate of 9.1%.⁵ Agriculture plays a huge role in the region, as it ranks in the top twenty nationally for livestock and poultry production. An industrial base and growing commercial sector, catering to the strong population growth, further strengthen the economy.⁶ Rockingham Memorial Hospital and its affiliated clinics as well as James Madison University are major economic institutions in the region. The area has been attracting and fostering information technology companies such as Rosetta Stone, SRI International, DBT Data, and Merck.⁷

Forecasts

According to the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission's (CSPDC) 2006 Demographic Forecasts for the Central Shenandoah Valley Region of Virginia, the region should anticipate a 31.4% increase in overall population by 2030 and a 38.9% increase in the number of households. Furthermore, the region's fastest growing age cohort is forecasted to be 65 and older, with a projected increase of over 32,000, growing to over 20% of the population by

⁴ 2005-2009 American Community Survey

⁵ U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Force Statistics

⁶ www.rockinghamcountyva.gov

⁷ Rockingham County Office of Economic Development and Tourism: www.yesrockingham.com

2030.⁸ Dayton is currently the home of a significant amount of retirees with 16% of its population above the age of 65. This is significantly higher than the Virginia average of 12.2%.⁹ Additionally, the CSPDC projects that 23% of the region's population growth will be Hispanic residents. They forecast that roughly 15,000 of the new 18,500 Hispanic residents in the valley will locate in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of which Dayton is included. Currently, Hispanic residents make up 9% of Dayton's population, up from roughly 6% in 2000.¹⁰ The CSPDC also notes that 43,000 or 73.7% of all forecasted increases in regional employment are to come from the services or wholesale/retail trade sectors. These jobs typically pay 1/3 less in weekly wages than the manufacturing sector which has been the predominant sector in the region in terms of total projected earnings. These long term trends should be studied closely in order to make proper investments that will serve future demands of Dayton residents.

Regional Resources

The town of Dayton should not look only internally for support in economic development and procuring businesses and industry. There are a number of regional organizations aimed at fostering economic development and growth:

The Shenandoah Valley Partnership has a regional strategic initiative focused on economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and community participation. They utilize their regional resources to promote the area on a national level and funnel potential funding from the State for development projects.

The Small Business Development Center, a resource asset associated with James Madison University and Blue Ridge Community College, assists with workforce and business development in the valley. They regularly host advisory consultations for potential entrepreneurs and help current businesses access expansion capital and improve operations through technology.

⁸ Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission: www.cspdc.org.

⁹ 2010 Census, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: www.census.gov.

¹⁰ 2000 Census, P8 Hispanic or Latino by Race: Census.gov

The Virginia Municipal League allows a sharing of best practices across municipalities in the Commonwealth. Specifically, they have a committee devoted to economic development best practices staffed by professionals from a variety of local governments.

Location Quotients

Economic Development practitioners are tasked with analyzing regional economies. Location quotients are “tools for assessing a region’s specialization in an industry.”¹¹ More specifically, location quotients “measure the extent to which the contribution of one subgroup of economic actors to a regional economy is greater or lesser than the contribution of that subgroup to a larger, reference Economy.”¹² Data can be found on regional employment from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey (the data is based on a random sample survey).

Assumptions of Location Quotients:¹³

1. Benchmark economy is self-sufficient.
2. Every region has the same economic structure of the nation.
3. Local and benchmark economies demand or consumption patterns are equal.
4. All local demands are met by local production.
5. Labor productivity is constant across regions.
6. Each firm in an industry produces an identical product.¹⁴

Location quotients for a region are calculate for each industry (i) and for each year (t) as follows:¹⁵

$$LQ_{it} = (e_i / e_t) / (US_i / US_t)$$

Where:

LQ_i= Location Quotient for industry I
E_i= Region employment in industry i
E_t= Region’s Employment in all industries in year t.
US_i= National employment in industry i
US_t= total national employment

¹¹ *Local Economic Development: Analysis, Practices, and Globalization* by Blair and Carroll, 2009, Page 80.

¹² U.S. Department of Labor, www.data.bls.gov/help/def/lq.htm.

¹³ *Regional Models of Income Determination: Simple Economic Based Theory*, William Schaffer, Section 2.5.4, <http://rri.wvu.edu/WebBook/Schaffer/chap02.html>.

¹⁴ McLean and Voytek, pg. 63.

¹⁵ *Local Economic Development: Analysis and Practice*, John Blair, 1995, Page 107.

The following steps are used to calculate location quotients for a specific industry in a specific region or location:

- 1) Calculate the national employment in each industry;
- 2) Divide that number by the total employment in the United States (This number yields the percentage of national employment devoted to each industry);
- 3) The ratio of employment in each industry is divided by the total regional employment; and
- 4) The regional ratio is divided by the national ratio for each industry.

Location quotients greater than 1 indicate industries export from a region because the percentage of employment in the industry is greater in the region than for the nation. When $LQ < 1$ that “implies that an area has less than a proportionate share of employment in a particular industry. When $LQ > 1$ that “implies that an area has more than a proportionate share of employment in that industry.”¹⁶ Location quotients are useful because practitioners can target under (or over) employment in industries and location quotients are the cheapest tool for measuring regional employment.¹⁷

Location quotients for the state of Virginia, Rockingham County, the City of Harrisonburg, and the Town of Dayton are displayed in Table 1 below. As shown, Dayton’s highest concentration of employment (Location Quotient= 1.875) is in the Wholesale Trade sector. Other location quotients within Dayton greater than one are:

- A) Construction
- B) Manufacturing
- C) Retail Trade
- D) Educational services, and health care and social assistance
- E) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services

Location quotients within Dayton that are less than one, implying goods are imported rather than exported, are:

- A) Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining
- B) Transportation and warehousing, and utilities
- C) Information

¹⁶ *Local Economic Development: Analysis and Practice*, John Blair, 1995, Page 108.

¹⁷ Regional Models of Income Determination: Simple Economic Based Theory, William Schaffer, Section 2.5.4, <http://rri.wvu.edu/WebBook/Schaffer/chap02.html>.

- D) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing
- E) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services
- F) Other services, except public administration
- G) Public administration

Table 1: Regional Location Quotients

	Rockingham			
	Virginia	County	Harrisonburg	Dayton
BASE INDUSTRY: Total, All Industries	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Natural Resources, and mining	0.67	3.17	1.00	0.56
Construction	1.05	1.38	0.92	1.76
Manufacturing	0.75	1.47	1.29	1.79
Wholesale trade	0.72	1.13	0.78	1.88
Retail trade	0.96	1.23	1.11	1.05
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	0.84	0.86	0.63	0.31
Information	1.13	0.63	0.71	0.67
Finance and insurance, and real estate	0.94	0.52	0.38	0.75
Professional, scientific, waste management services	1.35	0.55	0.62	0.29
Educational services, and health care	0.92	0.97	1.26	1.02
Arts, entertainment, and food services	0.89	0.74	1.50	1.07
Other services, except public administration	1.06	0.88	1.10	0.44
Public administration	1.87	0.62	0.43	0.64

Key

Blue: Greater than 1.0—the darker the shade, the higher the concentration of jobs in that sector
 Red: Less than 1.0—the darker the shade, the lower the concentration of jobs in that sector
 White: Close to or at 1.0

Citizen Input: The Mailed Survey

A survey in any Economic Development plan is an important step to include. It provides a method for the plan developers to gain the insight of the town's citizens, business owners, and other vested stakeholders. The academic literature is split on this issue with one side holding that the academic expert is the person who has the expertise and should be able to tell a town how to properly implement a successful economic and community development plan. The other side of the debate holds the notion that the citizens are a vital part of the process and their wants should be included when providing recommendations for development. The idea is while it may be most advantageous for a town to develop commercially, it may not be the best fit for the town, as is the case in Dayton. A recommendation needs to be holistic and capture as many of the stakeholders' wishes as possible. That is why a citizen survey was developed for this project.

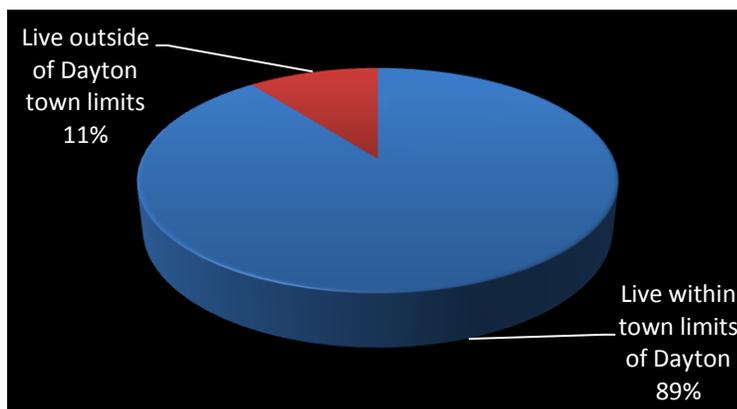
The survey was mailed to all individuals with a Dayton address or P.O. Box, as well as business owners within Dayton. We received a 39.8% response rate. This was much higher than our targeted 20% response rate.

Demographic Information

Survey Question 1: Which of the following best describes your residency status?

Respondents were asked to identify which answer best described their residency status. Approximately, 90% of respondents acknowledged that they live within Dayton town limits (89.5%). The remaining ten percent were not residents of Dayton, and likely business owners who reside outside of town limits.

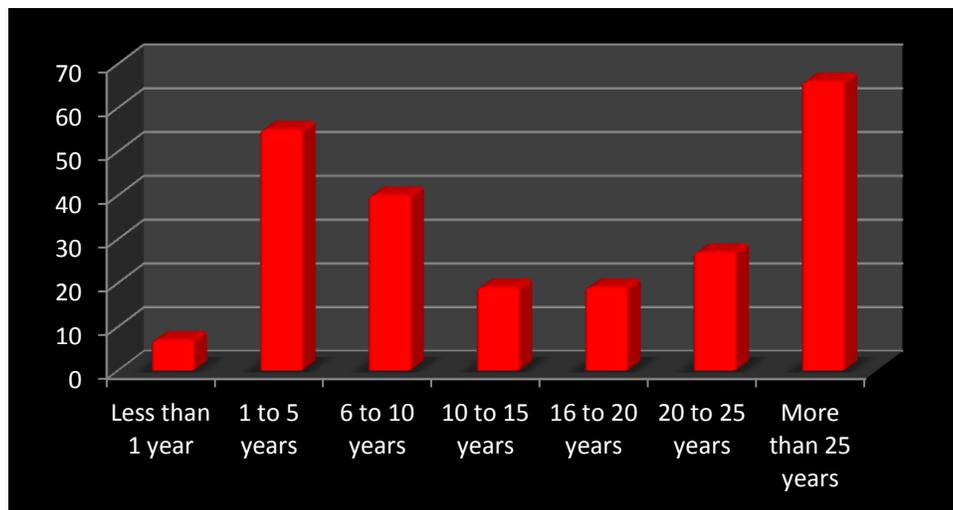
Figure 2: Residency Status



Survey Question 2: Please identify how long you have lived in Dayton (if you identified yourself as living in town limits).

The majority of respondents have resided in Dayton for over 25 years (28.3%). 23.6% of respondents have lived in town for at least one year, but no more than five, and 17.2% have lived in Dayton between 6 to 10 years. 11.6% of respondents indicated Dayton residency for 20 to 25 years, while 16% have lived in Dayton 10 to 20 years. Only 3.0% of respondents have lived in Dayton for less than a year.

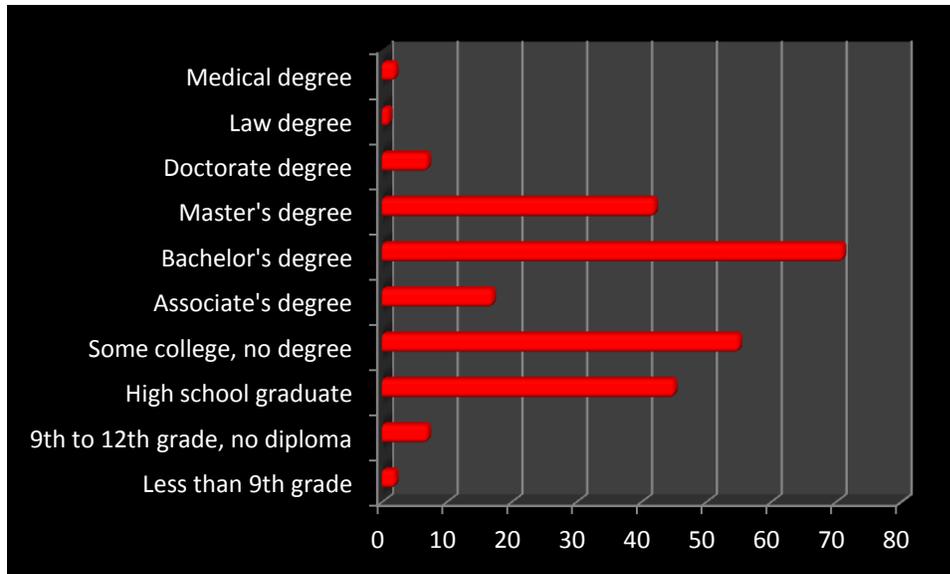
Figure 3: Length of Time Lived in Dayton



Survey Question 3: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

28.5% of residents have a Bachelor’s degree, followed by those with some college (22.1%), and high school graduates (18.1%). Approximately, 16.9% of respondents have earned a Master’s degree, and 4% have either earned a doctorate, law, or medical degree. Associate’s degree garnered a 6.8% response. Less than 1% of respondents did not attend high school, while 2.8% attended high school but did not graduate. Over three fourths of the respondents have some form of education beyond high school.

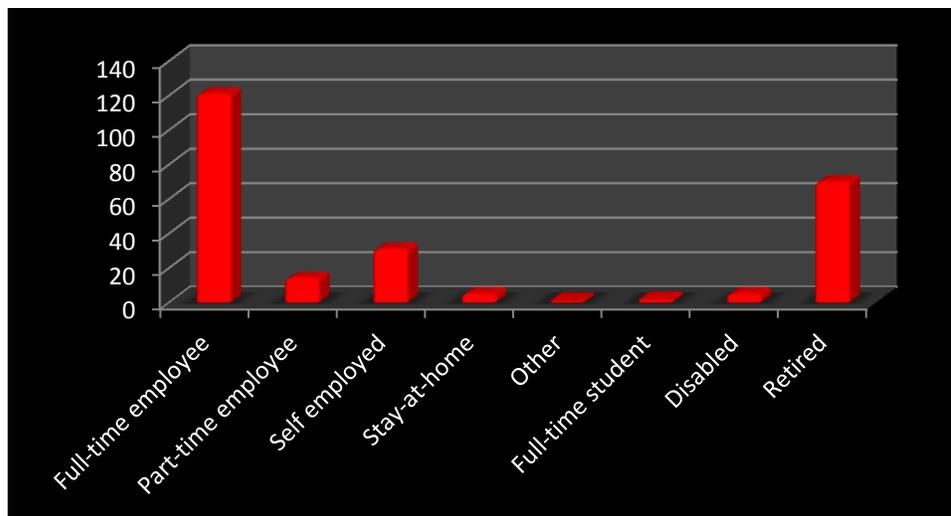
Figure 4: Highest Level of Educated Attained



Survey Question 4: What is your employment status? *Select one (1).*

The results show that 48.6% of survey respondents are employed full-time, followed by retirees (28.1%), and the self-employed (12.4%). Part-time employees accounted for over five percent, while those that stay-at-home or are disabled accounted for 2 percent, respectively.

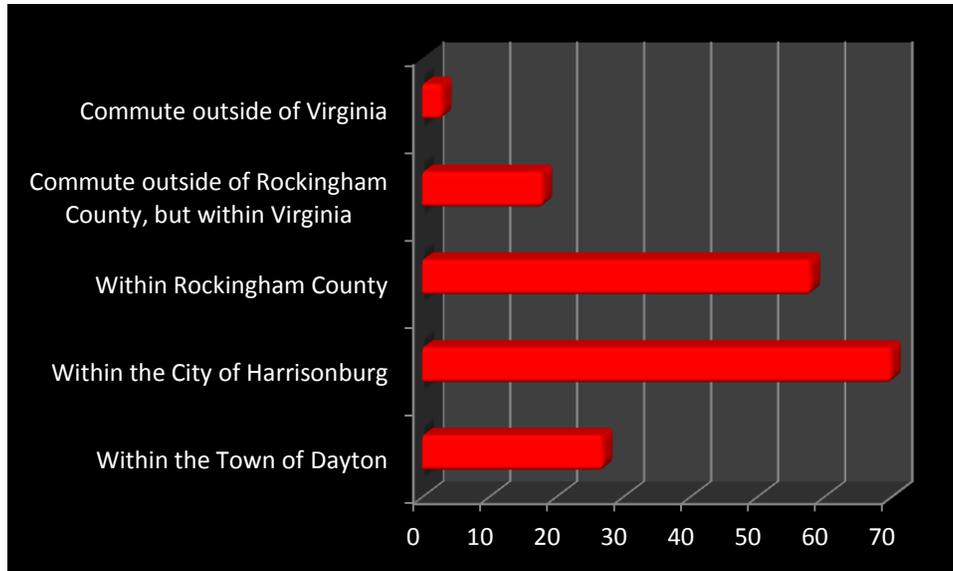
Figure 5: Employment Status



Survey Question 6: Where is your primary place of employment? *Select one (1).*

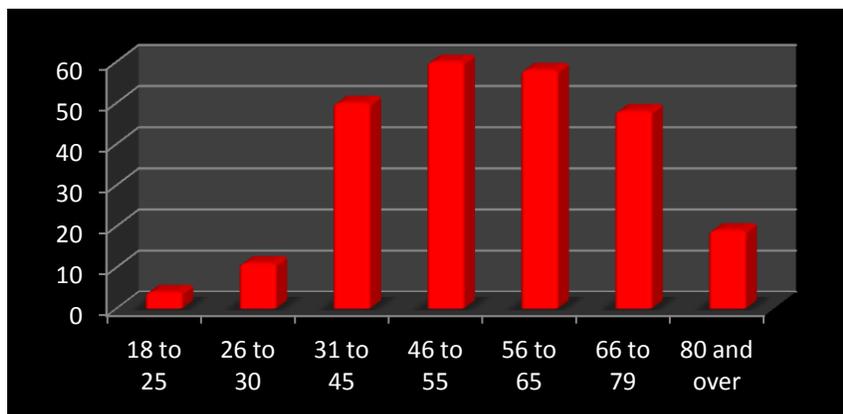
The majority of respondents work in the City of Harrisonburg (39.8%) or Rockingham County (33.0%). Approximately, 15 percent work in the Town of Dayton (15.3%). Just over ten percent commute outside of Rockingham County (10.2%) for work, and close to two percent work outside the Commonwealth of Virginia (1.7%).

Figure 6: Primary Place of Employment



Survey Question 7: Which of the following age range do you fall under?

Figure 7: Respondent Age Range

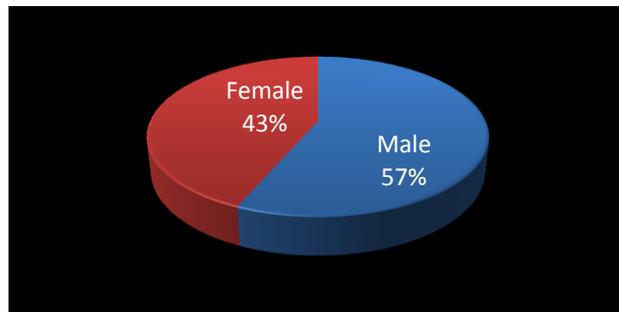


The survey results show that over two-thirds of the respondents were between the ages of 31 and 65. More than a quarter of the respondents were at least 66 years old, while respondents under the age of 30 accounted for 6.0% of the survey response.

Survey Question 8: Gender

The survey gender break down was 56.5% male, and 43.5% female.

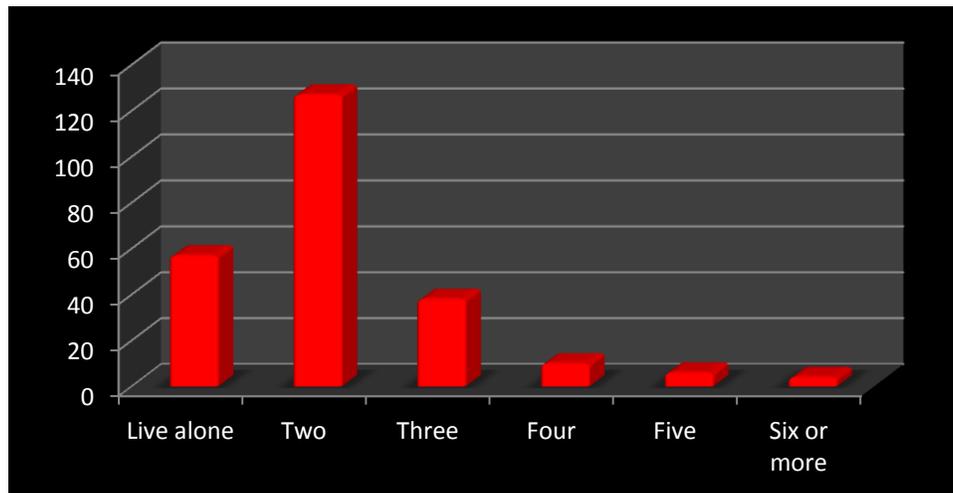
Figure 8: Gender



Survey Question 9: Please identify the number of dependents living in your household.

Over half of the respondents live with one other person (52.5%), while 23.6% live alone. Approximately, 16% of respondents have three dependents in their household (15.7%). Over 8% indicated they have more than four dependents.

Figure 9: Dependents Living in Household



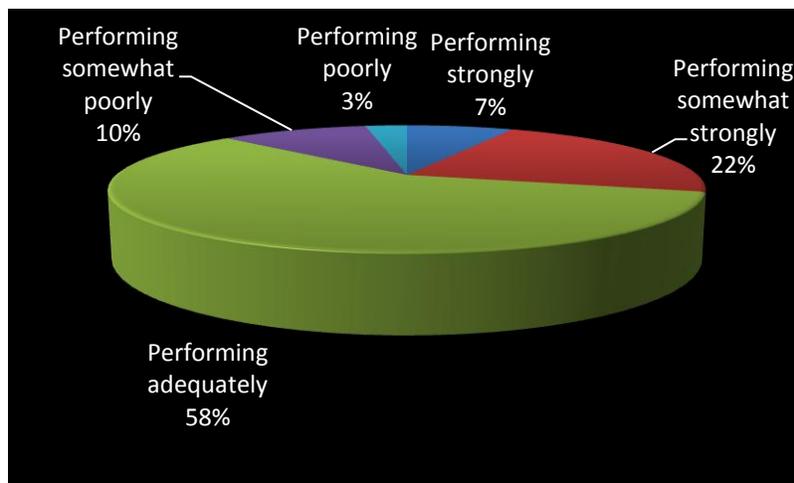
Analysis of Quantitative Survey Variables

The residents were asked to highlight their opinion of various economic and social factors impacting Dayton’s economic development. The results are presented in the following figures. All relevant data used in the making of the charts were gathered from the Dayton Economic Development Survey.

Survey Question 1: What is your opinion of Dayton’s current economic performance? *Please select your top choice.*

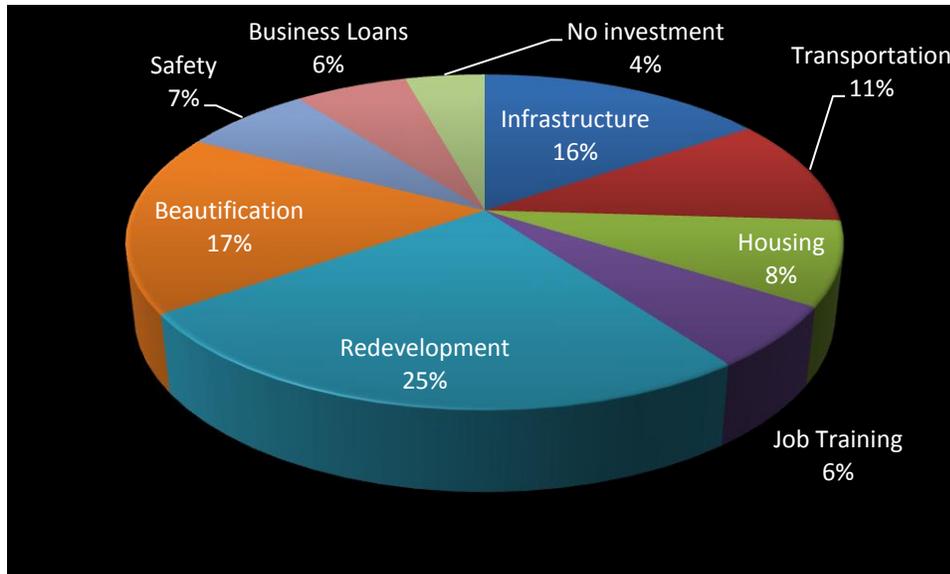
Figure 10 below captures the opinion of town residents as to the performance of the Dayton economy. As Figure 10 shows, 58.1% of respondents believe the Dayton economy is performing adequately. Meanwhile, 22.1% of respondents thought the local economy was performing somewhat strongly. Approximately, 10% of respondents perceived the local economy as performing somewhat poorly. Finally, 7.1% of respondents believed the local economy was performing strongly, and 2.8% believed it was performing poorly.

Figure 10: Perceived Economic Performance



Survey Question 2: Which of the following types of investment do you believe would have the greatest positive impact on Dayton? Please identify your top three (3) choices.

Figure 11: Types of Investments Needed



The survey continued with a question inquiring as to opinions concerning investments the town might need. Respondents were asked to identify their top 3 choices as to possible investments Dayton could pursue. The results of this particular question are captured in Figure 11 above. 25.3% of respondents identified redevelopment of abandoned properties or poorly operating facilities as a top choice for investment. In addition, 17.4% of respondents highlighted beautification as one of their top choices. Additionally, 15.5% of respondents identified infrastructure construction and development as a top priority for investment. 10.4% of respondents identified transportation improvement.

Survey Question 3: Please identify the types of industries and commercial development you believe Dayton is in need of from the list below. Choose up to three (3) choices

Figure 12: Types of Industries and Commercial Development Needed

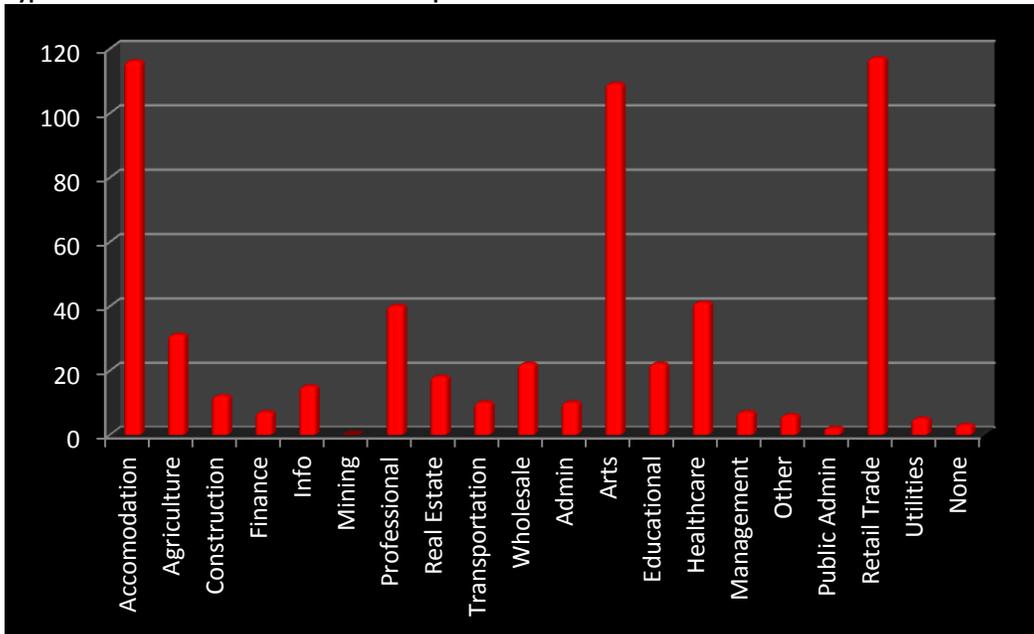


Figure 12 presented above, captures the opinions of Dayton residents as to industries and commercial developments they believe the town needs. Retail trade (19.7%), Accommodation & Food Services (19.6%), and Arts & Entertainment were by far the favorites among respondents when asked to identify what types of industries and commercial development Dayton is in most need. 7% stated they wanted more Health Care & Social Assistance (6.9%) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (6.7%). Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (5.2%), Educational Services (3.7%), Wholesale Trade (3.7%), and Real Estate (3.0%) were favorable selections. Respondents felt that Utilities, Public Administration, Mining, and Management were less desirable industries to attract.

Survey Question 4: How Can Dayton attract more visitors and customers? *Select your top two (2) choices.*

Figure 13: Attracting More Visitors and Customers

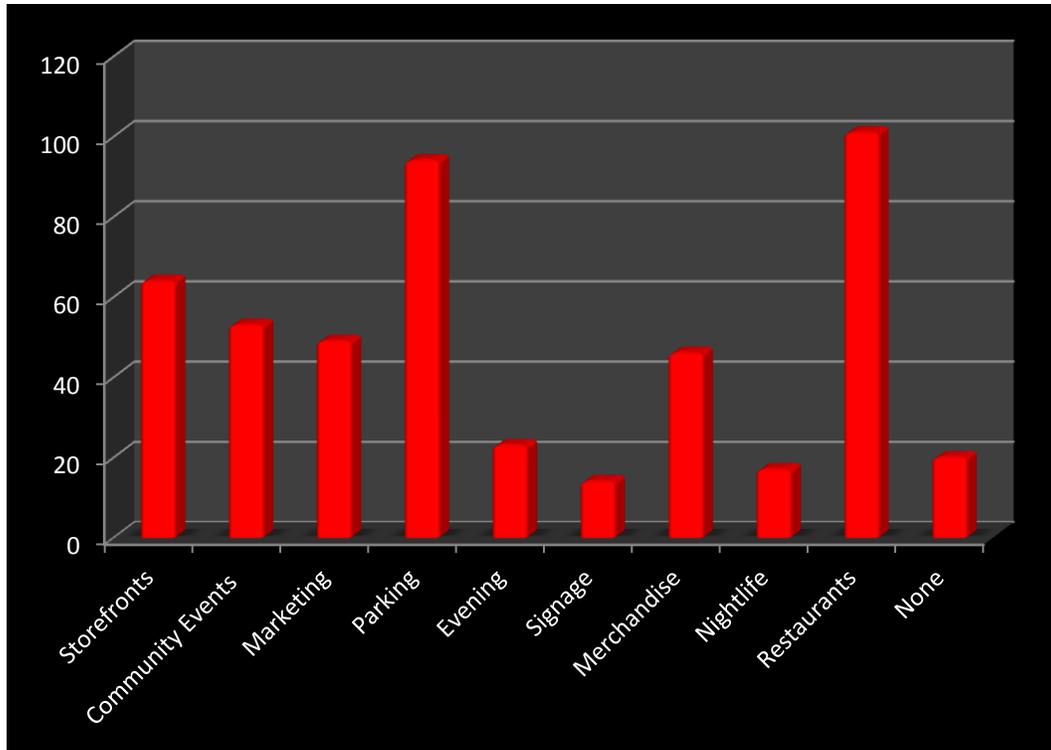
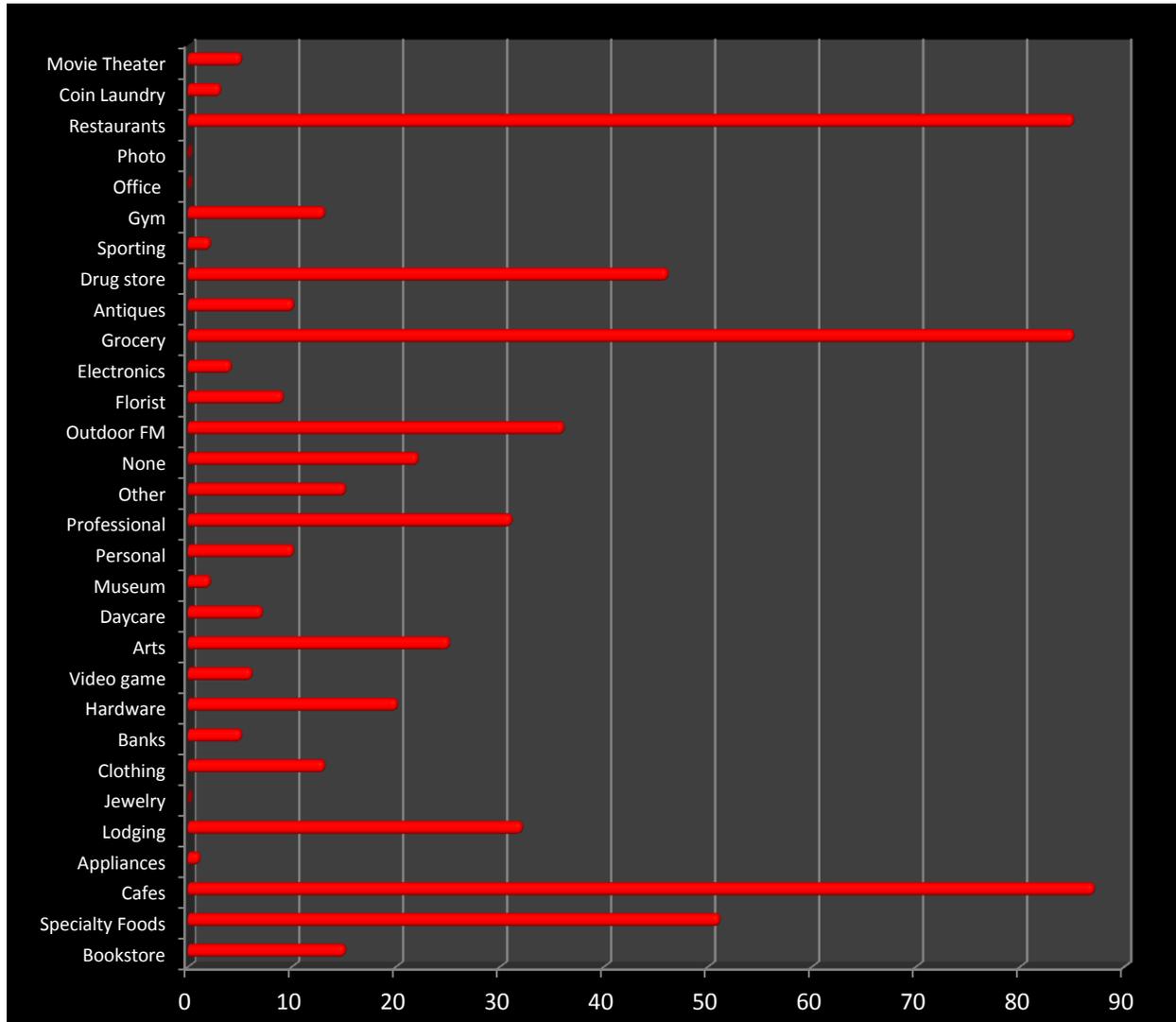


Figure 13 above demonstrates the opinion of Dayton residents as to methods which might attract more visitors and customers to the town. 21% of the respondents highlighted more restaurant options as a top choice to draw more visitors to the town. In addition, 19.5% of the respondents highlighted improved parking. Meanwhile, 13.3% of respondents identified store façade improvement, and 11.0% felt more community events as important draws. Approximately 10% of respondents identified improved merchandise selection and improved marketing & advertising as a means to attract a larger customer base. Respondents felt adding nightlife, evening activities, and signage was less important.

Survey Question 5: In your opinion, what kind of businesses and services does Dayton need? *Choose up to three (3) choices.*

Dayton residents were asked to identify what types of businesses and services the town needs. This data, captured in Figure 14 below, shows the top preferences survey respondents identified.

Figure 14: Kinds of Business and Services Needed



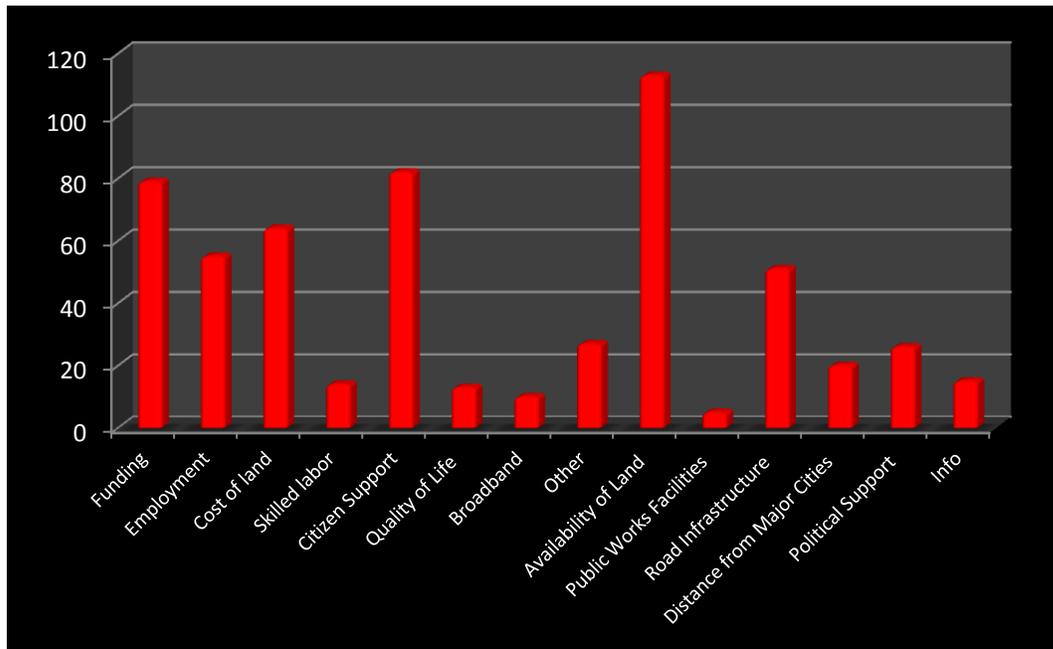
The categories of cafes, bistros, and coffee shops (13.6%), grocery store/ deli (13.3%), restaurants (13.3%), and specialty foods (8.0%) were the top four selections. Aside from the food services, respondents felt that Dayton could use a drug store/ pharmacy (7.2%), an outdoor farmer’s market (5.6%), and lodging options (5.0%). Professional offices (4.8%) and arts/crafts were moderately favored by respondents.

**Survey Question 6: What do you think are barriers to economic development in Dayton?
Choose up to three (3) choices.**

Figure 15, presented below, captures the top choices Dayton residents believed to be significant barriers to the town’s economic development. This variable shows that

approximately 20% of respondents identified land availability as a primary impediment to economic development. Meanwhile, roughly 14% of respondents highlighted citizen support (14.3%) and funding (13.8%) as obstacles to economic development. Additionally, cost of land (11.1%), employment opportunities (9.6%), and road infrastructure (8.9%) were popular selections.

Figure 15: Barriers to Economic Development

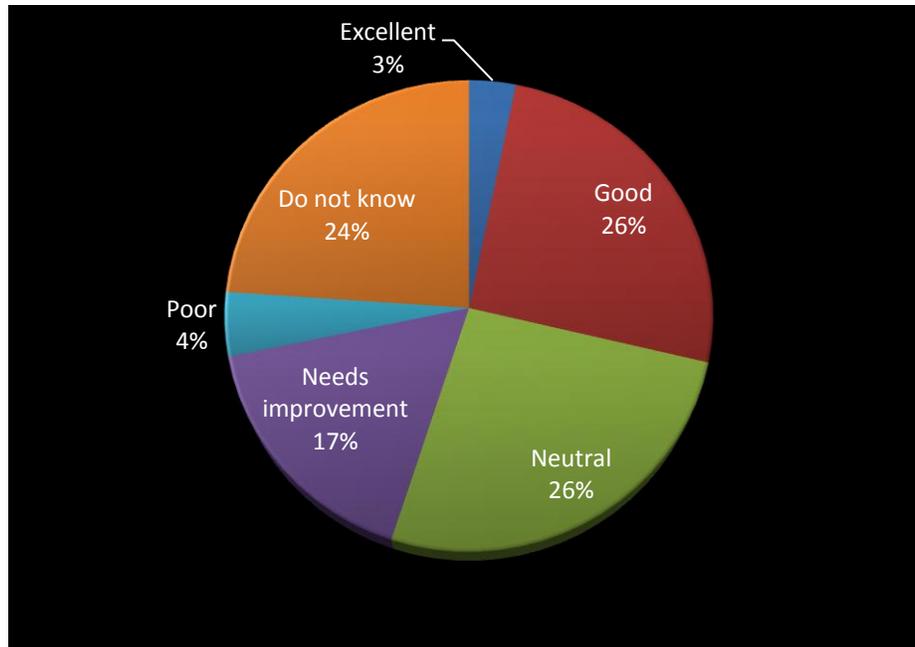


Survey Question 7: How would you describe the level of cooperation/coordination among Dayton organizations involved in economic development? *Select your top choice.*

In addition to inquiries focused primarily upon economic performance, Dayton residents and business owners were asked to rate the cooperative relationship of citizen groups and organizations within the Dayton area. These results are presented in Figure 16 below. Over half of the respondents felt the level of cooperation and coordination among Dayton organizations was either neutral (26.3%) or good (25.5%). 23.9% of respondents did not know the state of interaction amongst area groups, while approximately 17% of respondents believed citizen

group cooperation is in need of improvement (16.7%). Very few thought the level of organization cooperation was either poor (4.4%) or excellent (3.2%).

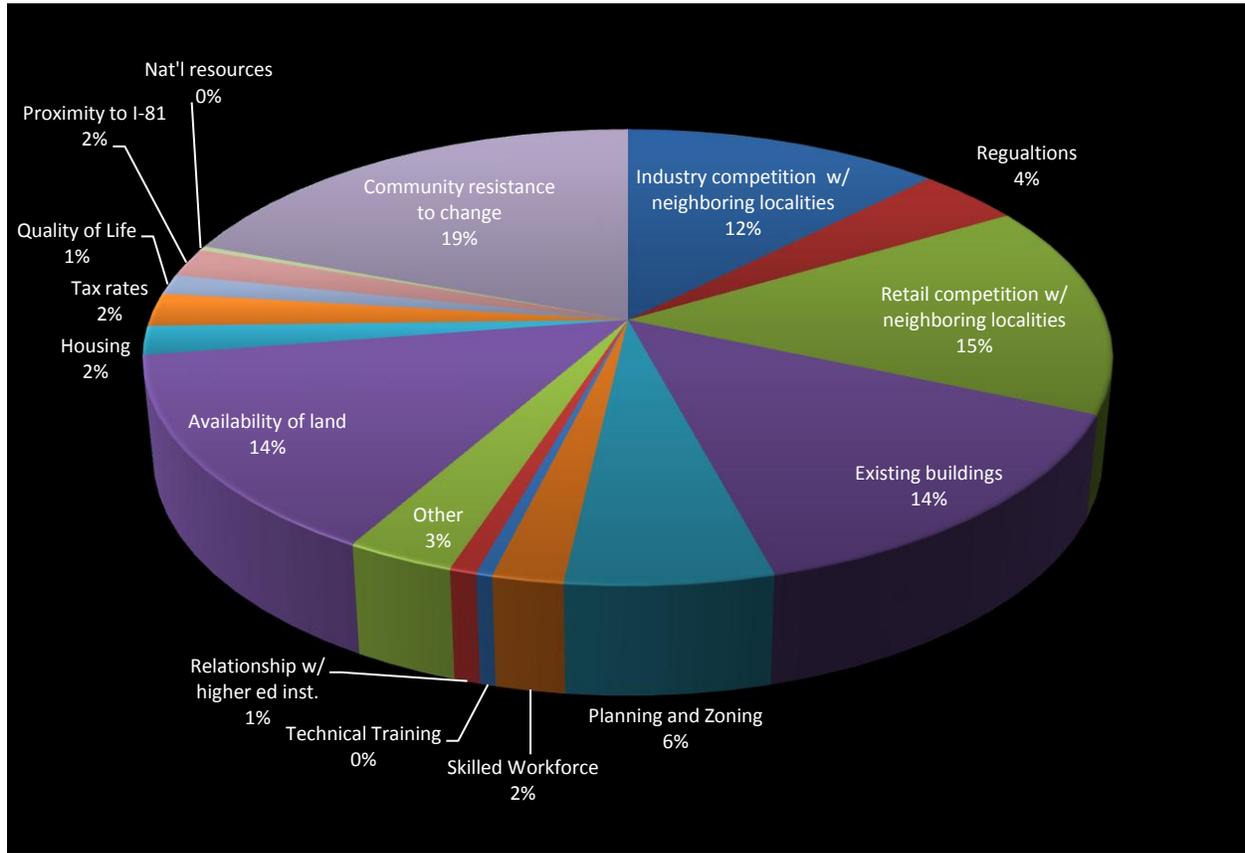
Figure 16: Level of Cooperation Among Town Organizations



Survey Question 8: Which of the following do you consider the greatest *CHALLENGES* with respect to growing Dayton’s economy? *Select up to three (3) choices.*

Respondents were asked to identify some of the greatest challenges to growing the Dayton economy. Their responses (Figure 17 below) show that the community’s resistance to change (19.3%) is the largest challenge. Over one-quarter of the respondents felt competition from neighboring communities was a serious challenge to Dayton’s economy, either from retail competition (15.1%) or industry competition (12.4%). Existing buildings and infrastructure need upgrades (14.3%), as well as availability of land (14.3%) were also important challenges to consider. Respondents were moderately concerned with planning and zoning (6.0%) and regulations (4.1%) as serious challenges to growing the local economy.

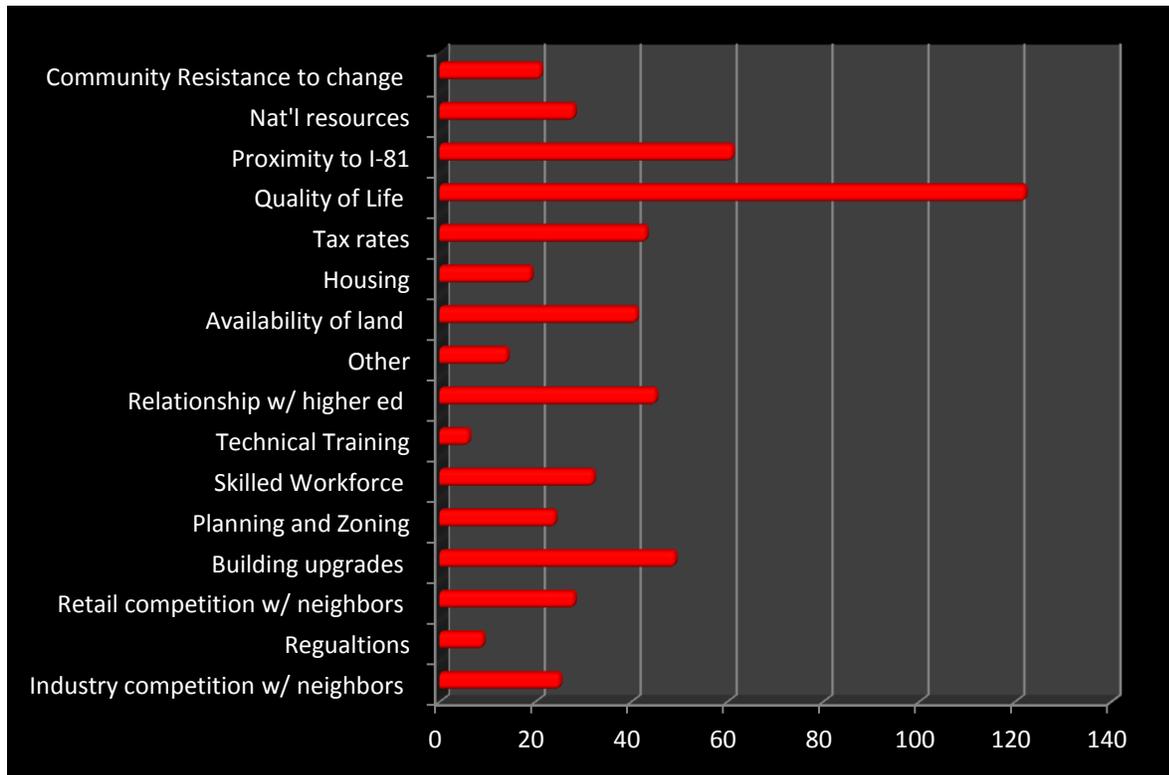
Figure 17: Greatest Challenges to Growing Dayton's Economy



Survey Question 9: Which of the following do you consider the greatest *OPPORTUNITIES* with respect to growing Dayton’s economy? *Select up to three (3) choices.*

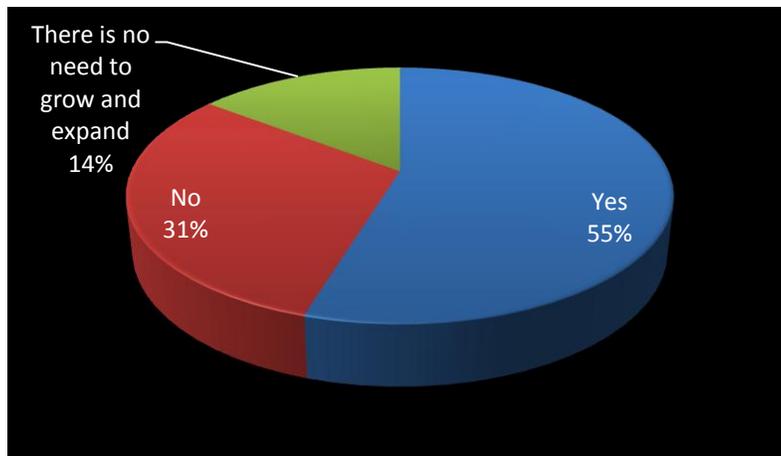
As a follow up to the preceding survey question concerning the greatest challenges to growing Dayton’s economy, respondents were asked to assess the greatest opportunities to growing the local economy. The results of this particular inquiry are presented in Figure 18 below. 21.5% of respondents believed that quality of life within the area is the biggest opportunity to growing the local economy. Additionally, 10.8% of respondents identified the town’s proximity to I-81 as a top opportunity for the town. Existing buildings and infrastructure need upgrades ranked third on the list (8.6%). Other major areas of opportunity to grow the local economy identified by residents included relationships with higher educational institutions (7.9%), tax rates (7.6%), and availability of land (7.2%).

Figure 18: Greatest Opportunities to Growing Dayton's Economy



Survey Question 10: Do you think there is adequate space for business growth and expansion in Dayton? *Select your top choice.*

Figure 19: Adequate Space for Business Growth



Over half of the respondents felt Dayton has adequate space for business growth and expansion (54.7%). Approximately 30% believe Dayton does not have room for business growth, while 15% think Dayton should not grow.

Survey Question 11: Do you believe Dayton residents and business owners have trust with town officials?

Figure 20: Trust in Town Officials

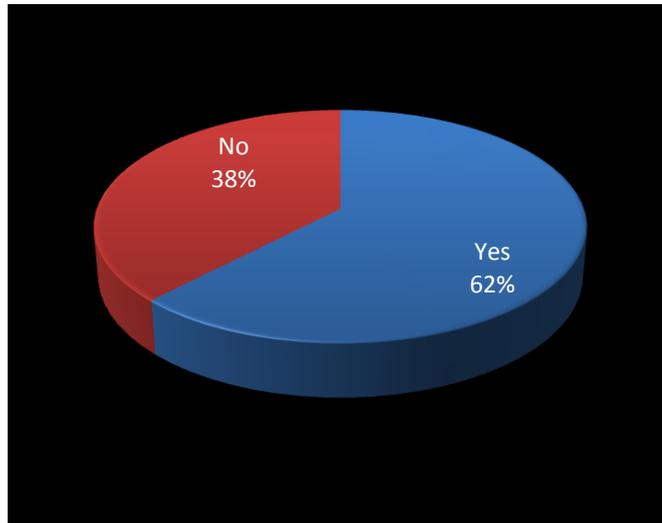
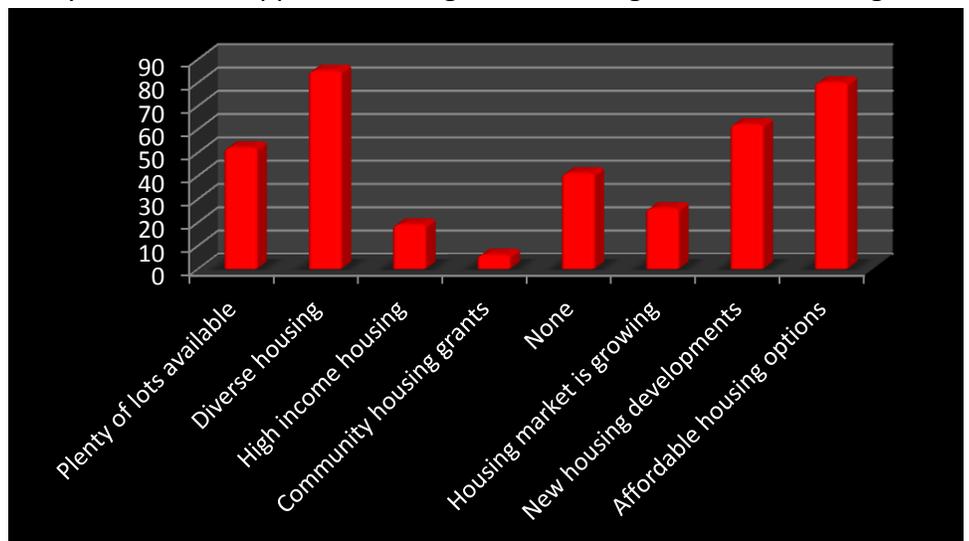


Figure 20 above reveals that three out of five respondents believe that Dayton residents and business owners have trust with their town officials.

Survey Question 12: Please identify any strengths of housing in your community. Select two (2) choices

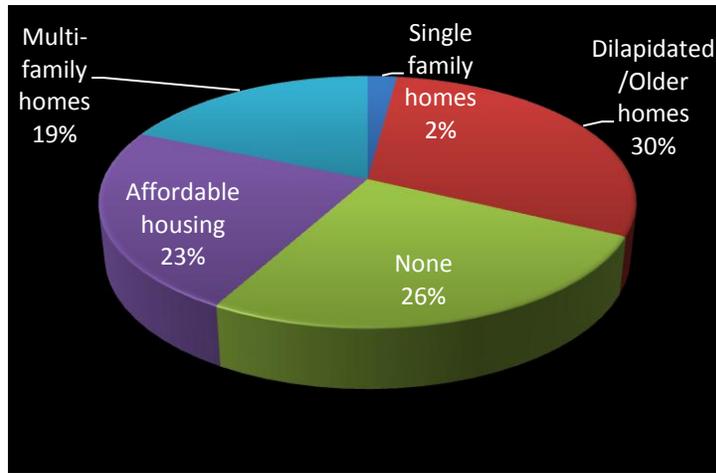
Respondents were asked to identify strengths of housing in the Dayton community. The diverse housing options (22.9%) along with the affordability of housing (21.6%) make Dayton an attractive locality to live, according to the respondents. New housing (16.7%) and the number of lots available (14.0%) were also major strengths of Dayton housing. Over 10% of respondents felt housing in Dayton has no apparent strengths, while high income housing (5.1%) and community housing grants (1.6%) were not significant strengths to Dayton housing.

Figure 21: Strengths in Housing



Survey Question 13: Please identify any weaknesses of housing in your community. *Select two (2) choices.*

Figure 22: Weaknesses in Housing

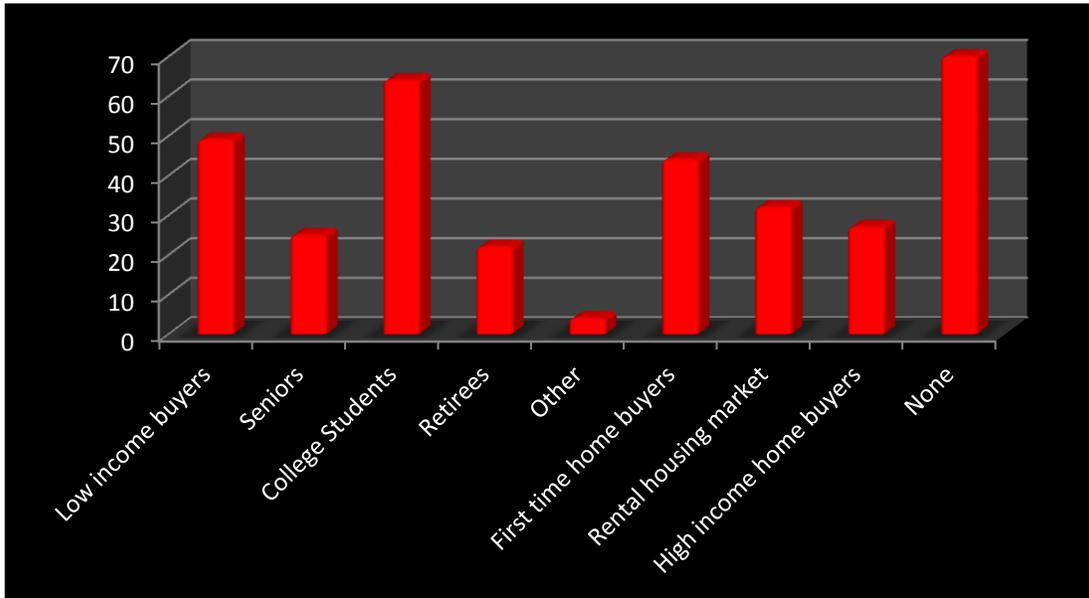


Respondents were asked to identify any weaknesses they perceived in their community with regards to housing. 30.1% of respondents believed that there are too many dilapidated or older homes in Dayton, while 25.9% believe there are no weaknesses in housing. It is interesting to note that respondents believed affordable housing is a major weakness (23.4%), whereas in the previous question, strengths of housing in your community, respondents believed it to be a major strength. Multi-family homes were a concern to 18.5% of respondents, while only 2.1% felt single family dwellings were a weakness to Dayton housing.

Survey Question 14: Are any of these populations underrepresented by your housing market? *Choose all that apply.*

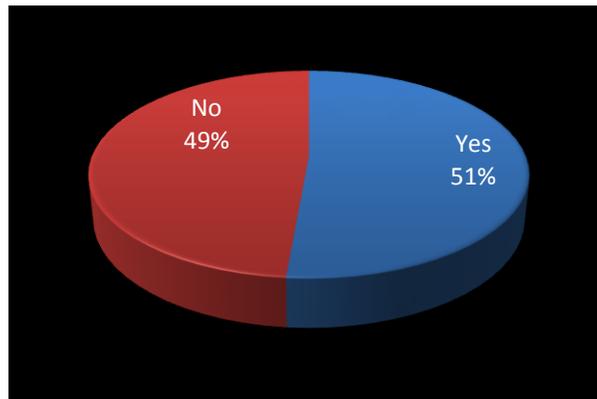
In this question, respondents were asked to identify, if any, specific groups of people that are currently underrepresented by the Dayton housing market. One of five respondents believed there are no underrepresented populations in Dayton’s housing market. Respondents who did feel certain populations were underrepresented in Dayton selected College students (19.0%), low income home buyers (14.5%), and first time home buyers (13.1%). Based on their responses, respondents felt high income home buyers (8.0%), seniors (7.4%), and retirees (6.5%) are more representative of the Dayton housing market.

Figure 23: Underrepresented Populations



Survey Question 15: Would you support a dog park in Dayton if the land were given to the town as a gift and the town would be responsible for maintenance?

Figure 24: Support Dog Park in Town



Respondents were evenly split on whether they would support a dog park in Dayton. Those in favor of supporting a dog park narrowly surpassed the opposition, 51.4% to 48.6%.

Analysis of Qualitative Survey Questions

Survey Question 16: Please list the top three (3) challenges Dayton currently faces, in order of importance.

Table 2: Current Challenges Facing Dayton

Current Challenges	Frequency
Leadership	74
Development	54
Traffic & Street Issues	45
Taxes	42
Appearance of Downtown	37
Maintain Small Town Feel	20
Water Issues	16
More Restaurants & Retail	14
Competition with Surrounding Communities	8
Community Resistance to Change	6

Respondents were asked to identify, according to their own personal opinion, the top three current challenges facing Dayton. These questions were then examined according to a methodological construction of host variables: Taxes, Traffic & Street Issues, Leadership, Small Town Feel, Development, and Appearance of Downtown, Water related issues, More restaurants, Competition, and Community Resistance. Traffic and street issues mainly focused on trucks from Cargill and lack of parking and flow of traffic in the downtown area. Leadership dealt mainly with citizen trust with officials, official's salaries, and corruption among officials. Development was geared mainly towards smaller scale while maintaining the small town feel. Some development issues focused on larger scale, but not many. The appearance of downtown was a concern to a good portion of the respondents and water related issues focused slightly on fixing current infrastructure and more on developing future water sources.

Survey Question 17: Please list the top three (3) challenges Dayton will face in the next 15 years, in order of importance.

Table 3: Future Challenges Facing Dayton

Future Challenges	Frequency
Funding & Other Government Issues	88
Growth & Economic Issues	69
Traffic & Street Issues	37
Spatial Issues	33
Issues with Neighboring Localities	30
Community Atmosphere Issues	30
Population Issues	18
Water Issues	15
Cargill Issues	13

Respondents were asked to consider the top three challenges Dayton may face in the next 15 years. The most often cited challenge was funding and government-related issues, which included everything from taxes to crime. Growth and economic issues came in next with a frequency of 69, followed by traffic and street issues (37), and spatial/land availability issues (33). Issues with surrounding localities and community atmosphere issues each garnered 30 responses each. Population (18), water (15), and Cargill-specific issues were not viewed as a major concern at this time.

Survey Question 18: Please list one word that makes Dayton a unique town.

Table 4: One Word Descriptor of Dayton

One Word Describing Dayton	Frequency
Community Spirit descriptor	75
Size descriptor	65
History descriptor	39
Mennonite-specific descriptor	16

Respondents were asked to provide a one-word descriptor of the Town of Dayton. These responses show that many respondents value Dayton’s community spirit. Size of the town was

the next most favored descriptor. Additionally, history and historic descriptors was the third favored descriptor. Finally, the Mennonite descriptor was the last significant descriptor.

Survey Question 19: Please list the top three (3) elements that you like about Dayton, in order of importance.

Table 5: Top Likes of Dayton

Top Dayton Likes	Frequency
Small Town Atmosphere	260
Friendly Residents	85
Proximity to Larger Areas	48
Quality of Life	37
History	30
Safety	18
Parks	15
Schools	5

Residents were asked to list the top 3 elements they believed were best about Dayton. The results are noted in Table 5 above. The overwhelming majority, 260 responses, described a small town feel with limited growth as their top like. The next largest category was friendliness of residents at 85 responses. Proximity to larger areas received (48), town history (30), and quality of life (37) were significant reasons respondents like to live and work in Dayton. Safety (18), parks (15), and the local school system (5) were also appreciated.

Survey Question 20: Please list the top three (3) elements that you dislike about Dayton, in order of importance.

There were a number of trends and themes seen throughout the survey results, with 5 trends being mentioned most often. The 5 disliked elements mentioned repeatedly were: rundown houses/dilapidated store fronts or businesses; problems with town administration/town officials; the view and smell from Cargill; the need for more shops, including grocery stores, gas stations, and restaurants; and finally the police department.

Citizen Input: Focus Groups

Five focus group sessions were held at the Dayton municipal building. Each session was divided into two parts. Each session was divided into two parts: a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis and focus group. The second half of each session afforded us the opportunity to flush out common themes and expand on the thoughts previously provided by the residents. There were four weekday sessions, November 16th, 21st, and 30th and December 1st. These sessions were held from 6:30-8pm. The one weekend session occurred on November 19th from 9-11am. There was an additional session held on February 6, 2012. This luncheon was with invited Dayton business owners.

A total of 24 area residents and business owners participated in the group sessions. All attendees were Caucasian and the estimated average age of the group was mid-to-upper 40s. All participants in the sessions were residents of Dayton, except for two business owners that did not reside in the town. The focus group sessions were fairly representative of the demographics of Dayton as well. Residents were sent surveys that asked them, among other topics, if they were willing to participate in a focus group session at a later date. Those willing to participate were contacted and assigned to a group session on one of the aforementioned dates.

PRESERVE DAYTON

The residents and business owners of Dayton strive to preserve the small town feel within the community. Their close proximity to large towns allows for easy commutes to local businesses and stores without a lot of traffic congestion and noise. This proximity to larger markets allows their town to be perceived as the “best kept secret” within the Shenandoah Valley. The large Mennonite population contributes to the unique and quaint atmosphere found in Dayton, as there are several unique attractions such as the Dayton’s Farmers Market and Silver Lake Mill. Dayton is a family oriented town with low crime and an efficient neighborhood watch system, which ensures safety and comfort within the community.

BEAUTIFY DAYTON

Local residents seem to be pleased with their town overall and are interested in enhancing its innate charm and beauty. Therefore, instead of suggesting radical changes to the town, residents prefer to beautify and enhance current attributes and infrastructure to greater accentuate characteristics of the community.

Since Main Street is one of the key focal points in Dayton, it is also one of the primary sources of beautification possibilities in the area. Residents and business owners feel that increased signage along various streets throughout the town will allow tourists and visitors to more easily locate the main attractions in town. The signage that nearby Harrisonburg created a few years earlier could be used as a template. Furthermore, residents believe that Main Street is too narrow and that widening the street would allow for a better-functioning traffic system in the area, as well as improve parking downtown. The change could also entice more tourists to visit this section of town.

Further downtown revitalization should focus on existing buildings and properties, according to local residents and business owners. The residents believe that improving facades to existing structures and moving utilities underground, while maximizing the use of available trees, benches, and green spaces for gathering spots will go a long way in improving the downtown area.

Another important area of concern for Dayton residents is the effect that the Cargill factory has on the aesthetic beauty of the area. While there is no clear-cut remedy proposed to beautify Cargill, the residents agree that the factory is an eyesore due to its industrial characteristics and location at the “entrance” point of town, so to speak. While the area’s residents had suggestions to beautify Dayton (such as a mural on the Cargill building, a green screen, and/or trees and shrubs), they were hopeful that the proposed alterations to the town were realistic and can enhance a community that already has many positive attributes.

ENHANCE DAYTON

Within the Dayton town limits, residents would like to capitalize on the historical characteristics within the town by efficiently using low-occupancy buildings and land to promote tourism and

social gatherings. By keeping commercialized businesses along route 257 and Route 42, Dayton's Main Street would have the opportunity to enhance their local sense of community (by promoting outdoor activities such as a drive-in theater or ice cream socials). These events bring together local residents to admire the shops and businesses along Main Street. Businesses such as cafes, bakeries, ice cream shops and restaurants could provide additional activities and events for Dayton residents, giving them an opportunity to invest more into their community.

CONNECT DAYTON

Many residents like the small town nature of Dayton and the close-knit relationships they have with each other. However, many of those same residents expressed feelings that the Dayton town government could make more of an effort to keep them informed about issues and land purchases and uses. Many mentioned that they were unaware land had been purchased for the Artisans Courtyard project, until construction was well under way. The town newsletter, website, or a Facebook (or other social networking) page could act as a communication avenue between residents and town officials. The participants suggested that alternative and multiple communication methods between town administrators and business owners could attract potential business owners, residents, and visitors. Business owners would like to see town officials be more welcoming to new businesses to the community. Furthermore, Dayton has the unique opportunity of being geographically located near a variety of higher learning institutions. James Madison University, Bridgewater College, Eastern Mennonite University, and Blue Ridge Community College all offer an opportunity to connect with Dayton in a variety of ways. Dayton could partner with these universities and colleges to take advantage of local resources. The residents and business owners who participated in the focus group sessions valued these sessions and were enthusiastic and hopeful for improvements in the very near future.

Citizen Input: SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis Process

A comprehensive analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) for the Town of Dayton was conducted at five focus group sessions and business owners' luncheon. The approach used in developing the SWOT analysis was very inclusive, gathering as much information and input as possible from various perspectives and stakeholders. A SWOT analysis examines an entity's (ie: organization, town, etc) internal Strengths, internal Weaknesses, external Opportunities, and external Threats.

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee developed the first drafts of the SWOT Analysis independently after visiting Dayton, and later collaboratively through successive drafts incorporated new information. To gain additional perspective, a meeting was scheduled with the two members of Dayton Town Council charged as the Economic Development Committee. Although a formal SWOT Analysis was not conducted with members of the Town Council, the discussion allowed for a better understanding of Council's view of the Town of Dayton and their vision for its future. The next step was to receive input through other formal SWOT analyses: an in-class SWOT analysis was conducted after members of the JMU Economic and Community Development class visited the town and research was conducted by the strategic planning group and advisors. The final steps involved conducting a SWOT analysis with residents during focus group sessions and checking the SWOT results against the overall resident survey responses. Five separate sessions were conducted. A SWOT analysis was also conducted during the business owners' luncheon.

The results of these various inputs were then combined into a final document, with items of greater frequency assigned a higher value, and those listed less frequently were assigned a lower value. Although there were slight variations throughout, the process yielded far more similarities than differences. This was very helpful as the combined results of the final SWOT Analysis were used as a guide in the process of establishing the Vision, Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives for the Town of Dayton as found in the recommendation section (see Table 6 below).

Table 6: SWOT Analysis for the Town of Dayton

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe/Low Crime Rate (6) • History and Historical Structures (6) • Main Street Uniqueness (5) • Mennonite Heritage (4) • Quiet (3) • Small Business Presence (4) • Small Town Charm (4) • Scenery (3) • Proximity to Harrisonburg (3) • Tourism Element in place (3) • Geographic Location (2) • Strong Tax Base (2) • Town is Managed Well (2) • Attractive and Well-Kept (2) • Proximity to I-81 (2) • Close to Larger Markets (2) • Educated and Diverse Population (2) • Happy Citizenry, Sense of Community (2) • Educational Access/Opportunities (2) • Good School District (2) • Not Overdeveloped • Different Cultures Exist in Harmony • Adequate Housing/Types • Cargill Major Utility Revenue Provider • Low Poverty Rates • Stable Housing Market • Stable Population Trends • Strength of Job Market Performance • New Development • Quality of Life • Stable Economy • Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Business Diversity (6) • Main Street Businesses Lack Quality (6) • Downtown Lacking (5) • Few Pedestrian Friendly Areas (4) • Industry Detracts From Town (4) • Poor Urban Planning (3) • Lack of Communication From Town (3) • Limited Land (3) • Poor Downtown Planning (3) • Dayton Lacks Identity (3) • Limited Quality Green Space/Recreational Facilities (3) • Not Visible from Route 42 (3) • Limited Parking (3) • Smell (2) • Boredom (2) • Police Presence (2) • Downtown Cluttered, Cars, Trucks, Overhead Utilities (2) • Run-Down/Vacant Buildings (2) • Town Tax • Diverse Group May Be Difficult to Engage • One Industry Consumes Most of Utility Capacity • Rural • Water Lease from Silver Lake Expires 2014 • Lack of Revenue Diversity • Incentives Not Offered to Businesses/Property Owners • Aging Population • Dependence on Cargill • Lack of Public Transit • Dated Feel • No Cohesive Direction • Lack of Available Retail Space

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Opportunities Incorporating Mennonite Heritage (6) • Main Street/Downtown Revitalization (6) • Increased Tourism (6) • Recreation and Community Based Events (6) • Growth Opportunities Along Route 42 (4) • Pedestrian/Bike Paths Linking Attractions (4) • Niche Marketing Opportunities (3) • Annexation (3) • Better Signage/Divert from Route 42 (3) • Stabilize Economy Through Diversity of Businesses (3) • Signs of Basic Economic Development Efforts Indicate the Town is Ready for More Comprehensive Initiatives (3) • Town’s Ability to Annex (3) • Farmers Market (3) • Arts and Cultural Opportunities (3) • Work with Cargill/to Reduce Emissions and Mitigate Negative Aesthetic Issues (2) • Tourism and Agricultural Grants (2) • Available Land (2) • Proximity to Harrisonburg (2) • Grant Opportunities (2) • Festivals/Events (2) • Proximity to I-81 • Low Tax Rate Related to Business Recruitment • Proximity to Employment • Proximity to JMU • Forward Thinking Town Government • Growth in the Valley • Retirees • Dog Park • Business Recruitment/Marketing of Town • Development of Retail Merchants Association • More Rental Properties • Business Incentives • Home Shoring/Tele-commuting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Diverse Tax Base—One Revenue Source for Town: Cargill (4) • Negative Aspects of Cargill (pollution, noise, traffic)(3) • Cargill is Major Utility Fee Provider (3) • Competition from Harrisonburg and Bridgewater (3) • Harrisonburg Market Changes (3) • Sprawl/Congestion (3) • Loss of Charm (3) • Growth of Water and Sewage Capacity Limited • 2014 Silver Lake Water Source Lease (outsourced water supply) • Possible Co-op Cost Sharing Programs from County and Harrisonburg re: infrastructure, education, transportation, tourism, etc. on the horizon? • Current Economy • Competitive Revitalization of Towns and Cities Across the Shenandoah Valley • Easily missed from main Highway Route 42 • Competition for Higher Wage Earners (Harrisonburg, Bridgewater) • Volatility of Poultry Industry and Agribusiness • Annexation Challenges • Homogenous Population • Resident Resistance to Change • No Direct Access to I-81 • Relations with Rockingham County • Commuter Population • Residential Development Elsewhere in Rockingham County • Potential Regulations for Water/Air Pollution by Cargill • Lack of Funding • Lack of Interest in Living in and Visiting Dayton • Business Turnover/Reluctance to invest in Town • Absentee Landowners • Inaction by Town Council • Too Many Town Employees

GRANT Opportunities

Our methodology used when searching for grants to aid the Town of Dayton included a variety of topical areas including Main Street revitalization, historic preservation, transportation, agriculture, facade improvement, arts, signage, and housing grants via online search engines. We also looked for grants that were recently awarded to other communities within the Shenandoah Valley. Expanding out search enabled us to identify some unique grant opportunities that were not discovered in our initial search.

Some grants, due to the economy, are withholding funding for an indefinite period of time. Others have pulled their grant applications for the year because the grant application deadline has lapsed and some grants have already been awarded for 2012. After an exhaustive search, the list was narrowed to those that best fit the current needs of the Town of Dayton. Examination of three of the most relevant grant opportunities (based on citizen input) immediately follow. Descriptions of draft applications for these are included in the CD packet. Descriptions of additional grant opportunities can be found in the appendix. Additionally, the CD packet includes an in-depth description and application for each grant available.

FARMERS MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM GRANT

The Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant is offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to stimulate relationships between producers and consumers of agriculture through farmers markets. This grant would be administered by the Shenandoah Valley Produce Auction, LLC, which is a farmer's market that allows farmers within 100 miles to have their goods auctioned off in bulk. Grant money would be used to implement educational workshops and resources for area agricultural producers and nonprofit consumers. This will allow farmers to learn better strategies to growing "green," diversify their crops, and to learn new farming techniques and practices. Workshops will also be offered to teach how to buy in bulk, preserve your produce, as well as new recipes to area non-profits who work with the under-served.



Funding Agency: United States Department of Agriculture: Agriculture Marketing Service

Amount: \$5,000 – \$1000,000

Requires Matching Funds: No

Purpose: Encouraging the development, promotion, and expansion of direct marketing.

Description: Program is designed to assist successful applicants in promoting domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities

Eligible Applicants: Available to agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, non-profit corporations, public benefit corporation, economic development corporation, or regional farmers market authorities.

Eligible Activities: Program provides non-construction grants that target improvements and expansion of domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Explain the direct benefit to farmers and/or vendors of the market entity
- Provide a clearly identified issue/problem and the actions or project work to address it
- Provide a quantitative evaluation and measurement of the project's long term impact
- Outline the collaboration/partnerships formed and farmer/vendor participation for the project
- Provide justification for the budget and funds usage by explaining how the budget items support the work plan in achieving the project goals
- Describe the project's sustainability and transferability
- Outline the proposal's activities and the identified FMPP priority scoring

Application Due: TBA

Post-award: Agriculture Marketing Service announces awards in the fall and funds will become available in October. Projects must be completed within 24 months.

Website: www.ams.usda.gov/FMPP

DEUPREE FAMILY FOUNDATION GRANT

The Deupree Family Foundation grant is open to many uses. The grant application was written to focus on beautification and signage along Route 42. From the citizen focus group sessions, it was clear that residents are unhappy with the industrial look of Cargill immediately in front of the main access route to their town. Grant funding would be used to build a wall between Cargill and Route 42. The wall will then be covered with a mural, to improve the aesthetics and make Dayton look like a more welcoming tourist destination. Additionally, directional signage

will be positioned off of Route 42 to better direct tourists to the downtown and local businesses.



Funding Agency: Deupree Family Foundation

Amount: \$1,000 - \$25,000

Requires Matching Funds: No.

Eligible Applicants: Federal 501(c)3 non-profit organizations.

Eligible Activities: No limitations mentioned, however grants have been awarded for human services, arts, education, and the environment.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Explain the direct benefit to farmers and/or vendors of the market entity
- Provide a clearly identified issue/problem and the actions or project work to address it
- Provide a quantitative evaluation and measurement of the project's long term impact
- Outline the collaboration/partnerships formed and farmer/vendor participation for the project
- Provide justification for the budget and funds usage by explaining how the budget items support the work plan in achieving the project goals
- Describe the project's sustainability and transferability
- Outline the proposal's activities and the identified FMPP priority scoring

Application Due: April 15, 2012

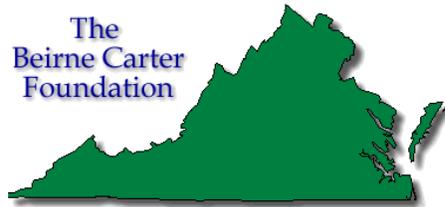
Post-award: Grants awarded in June.

Website: www.deupreefamilyfoundation.org

THE BEIRNE CARTER FOUNDATION GRANT

After various focus groups and discussions, a recurring topic was facade improvements and aesthetic beautification. We recommend the creation of a downtown historic and renovation association called the "Downtown Dayton Alliance." This organization would be similar to that of Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, but focusing on historic revitalization and preservation efforts as well as economic development. The Downtown Dayton Alliance would request grant

funding from Beirne Carter and administer the grant distribution to downtown businesses that apply for funding to improve the aesthetic and signage of their historic buildings.



Funding Agency: The Beirne Carter Foundation

Amount: Unspecified

Requires Matching Funds: No.

Purpose: Helping citizens of all walks of life who live in all geographical areas of Virginia

Description: Grants are traditionally awarded to projects involving health, education, local history, conservation and preservation, nature and ecology, and social/community welfare.

Eligible Applicants: Available to tax exempt entities

Eligible Activities: Award money can be used for organizations involved in environmental, conservation, or preservation activities that directly benefit Virginians; and organizations that have limited access to outside funding and whose missions address unmet needs or underserved or un-served persons (e.g., youth, elderly, disabled/handicapped, etc.).

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Proposal should be consistent with the Foundation's guidelines.

Application Due: Foundation has two grant making cycles per year, in the spring and fall. It employs a two step approach: an initial preliminary proposal which if approved will be followed by a formal application. Preliminary proposals due either February 1, 2012 or August 1, 2012. If approved, grant application due either April 11, 2012 or October 10, 2012.

Website: <http://bcarterfdn.org>

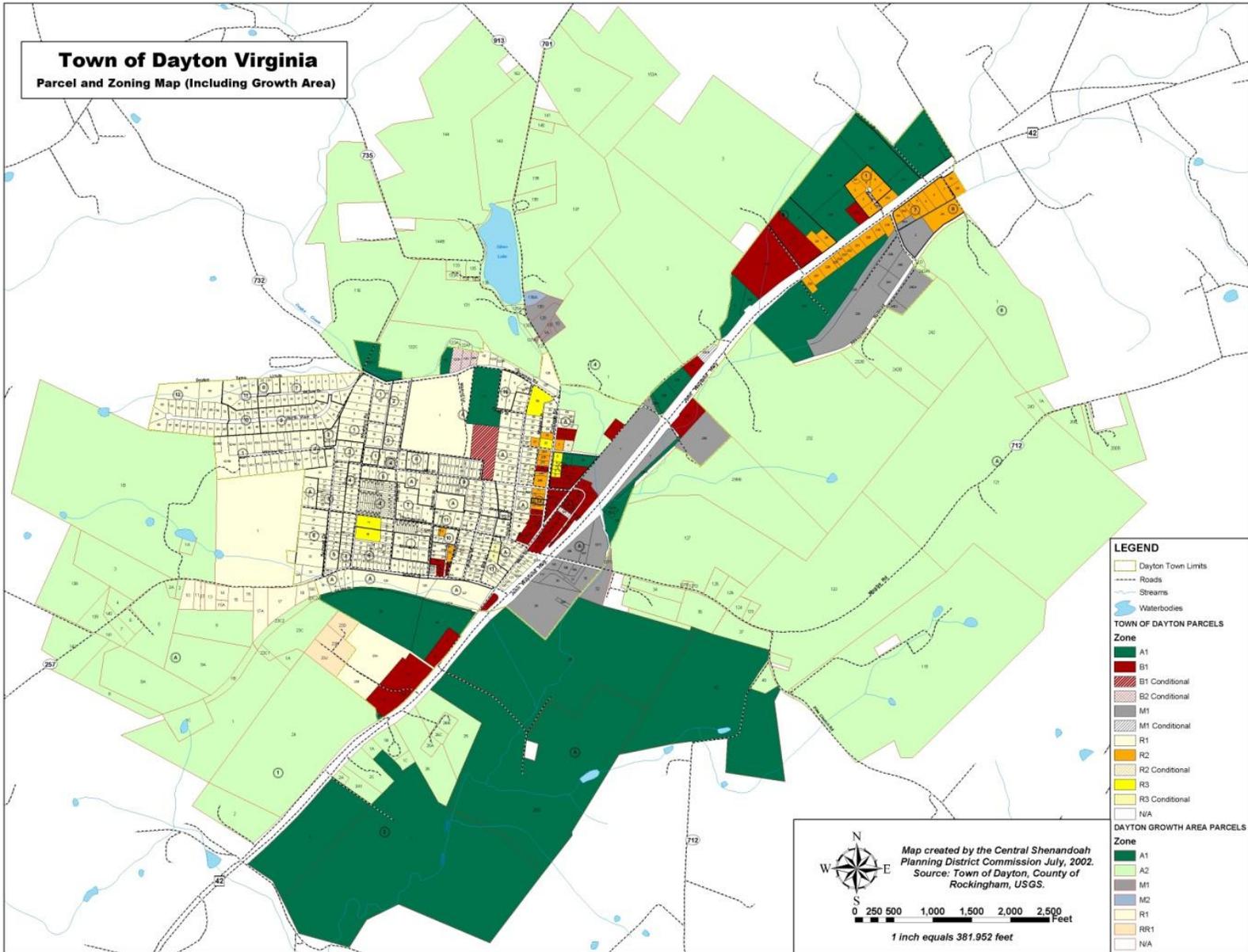
Property Identification and Recommendations

A comprehensive examination of businesses and business properties were conducted to assess the existing services and industries, as well as determine additional businesses that might benefit the town. Currently, there are 151 current operating businesses within the town limits according to a review of all current business owner license registrations obtained from Dayton Town Hall. Businesses are listed below in table 7 according to industrial classification. Please see figure 25 for the Town of Dayton Parcel and Zoning Map.

Table 7: Number of Businesses in Dayton

<i>Industry/Business Category</i>	<i>Number of Businesses in Dayton</i>	<i>Percentage of all Businesses</i>
Arts, Recreation, Leisure	4	2.5%
Construction	3	2%
Financial Services	5	3%
Food and Dining	18	12%
Health and Fitness	7	5%
Manufacturing	7	5%
Professional Services	28	18.5%
Real Estate and Rental Properties	53	35%
Retail	26	17%
TOTAL	151	

Figure 25: Town of Dayton Parcel and Zoning Map



An inventory of all businesses was taken in order to create database. Below are selected vacant buildings and properties along with potential business ideas. These potential business ideas are based upon the information received from all forms of citizen input. Citizens did not match business use with each individual property below.

280 College Street (“Fuzzy Duck”)

Purchased by the Town of Dayton; scheduled for demolition

Size: 0.138 acres

Zoning: B-1, General Business District

Potential Opportunities:
Downtown parking lot



245 Main Street

Purchased by the Town of Dayton

Size: 0.087 acres

Zoning: B-1, General Business District

Two-story, historic building (former 1930’s barber shop)

Potential Opportunities:
Café
Coffee Shop
Diner
Welcome Center



255 College Street (Former Shenandoah Press building)

Size: 2,020 square feet (both units); 1,350 square feet (right unit); 670 square feet (left unit)

Zoning: B-1, General Business District

Two-story, historic building

Potential Opportunities:

Deli

Specialty Food store

Restaurant



195 Main Street

Historic Victorian style home; circa 1860

Specifications: 2,600 square feet; 4 bedrooms; 1 full, 1 partial bathroom

Size: 0.1120 acres

Zoning: R-2, Medium Density Residential

Potential Opportunities:

Bed & Breakfast

Restaurant



275 Main Street (Former Shenandoah Journal building)

Specifications: 2 buildings, 1 story each; 8 rooms, 2 bathrooms
Size: 0.23 acres

Zoning: B-1, General Business District

Potential Opportunities:

- Café
- Coffee Shop
- Welcome Center



Mason Street (South Breeze – Commercial)

Undeveloped

Size: 3.1 acres

Zoning: B-1 Conditional, General Business District

Potential Opportunities:

- Retail Stores
- Outdoor Farmers Market
- Convenience store
- Grocery store
- Restaurant
- Specialty food shops



3049 Koogler Lane (Route 42, south of Woodmen of the World)

Undeveloped

Size: 8.96 acres

Zoning: B-1, General Business District

Potential opportunities:

- Grocery store
- Gas station/convenience store
- Restaurant
- Retail shops
- Specialty food shops
- Outdoor Farmers Market



360 College Street (formerly Jim's Drive-in restaurant)

Purchased by the Town of Dayton

Size: 0.772 acres

Zoning: B-1, General Business District

Potential Opportunities:

- Outdoor performance venue
- Park
- Grocery store
- Farmers Market



Recommendations

The town is currently in a unique position as it is in the process of seeking an individual to replace its long time town administrator, Rick Chandler. Mr. Chandler is retiring from the Town of Dayton after having served the town for 33 years. In order to successfully implement the recommendations below, the town should have economic development as part of the next administrator's core responsibilities. Many residents, as discussed during the focus group sessions and business owner meetings, support the idea of hiring an individual to successfully implement the recommendations as presented in this report. The general sentiment among residents and business owners is that they are ready for the town to finally take economic development seriously. A majority of the residents and business owners expressed concern that nothing would be done if economic development was not a core responsibility of someone's position among town employees. Business owners also expressed a desire to have someone from town hall (not an elected individual) facilitate the leadership of the Dayton Merchants Association. This is the moment in time for council to decide whether or not economic development and improvements in resident and business owner quality of life are top priorities.

The town should immediately implement the following strategic plan focused on economic development. The strategic plan will strive to:

- **PRESERVE** the town's small town charm and unique historical and agrarian culture
- **BEAUTIFY** and revitalize the town's downtown and edge areas
- **ENHANCE** and improve the residents' quality of life
- **CONNECT** the town's residents, businesses, and potential visitors through better communication

Strategic Plan for the Town of Dayton

Vision Statement: Dayton, Virginia seeks to preserve its heritage as a small town with historic ties, as it explores opportunities for the future.

Mission Statement: Dayton, Virginia reflects the values of a nineteenth century mill town, preserving an historic downtown heritage while exploring complementary economic development opportunities.

Tagline for publications: Preserving a little Valley heritage.

Goals:

Develop Tourism/Historic Opportunities

- 1. Develop a consistent look and feel for downtown that reflects Dayton's historic charm.**
 - Relocate all overhead utilities underground along Main Street from the Harrison House to Route 257
 - Develop a pedestrian walkway concept that can be inlayed with brick along Main Street
 - Explore branding opportunities for local businesses and Main Street areas including consistent façade, lighting and signage commissioned by a well-known local artist, like P. Buckley Moss.
- 2. Modify and improve gateways into Dayton.**
 - Solve drive-by tourism by inviting people to stop and walk around downtown through adequate parking, signage, businesses, and events.
 - Extend consistent downtown branding signage into gateways by Eberly Road and Dayton Farmers Market in an attempt to create immediate gateways into town.
 - Identify future road planning to move traffic into town from Route 42 along the Main Street corridor instead of Mosby Road.
 - Identify opportunities to improve Mosby Road gateway into Dayton, including hiding part of the Cargill plant or decorating it with Dayton signage.

3. Identify and support complementary projects and marketing opportunities, to improve the quality of downtown activities related to tourism.

- Evaluate marketing opportunities to the Massanutten vacationers, visiting college parents, and local residents.
- Examine opportunity to develop a public working farm concept around the Harrison House using Mennonite practices, similar to Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton.
- Integrate activities from the working farm and Buy Local initiatives into a public market or grocery store unique to the area.
- Attract artisan tenants and small retail stores to downtown areas that fit the concept, similar to current ABC Dayton project.
- Connect core downtown activities with other areas like Silver Lake Mill and Dayton Farmers Market with walkways or artery road systems.
- Explore agritourism opportunities with Rockingham County similar to Staunton and Waynesboro partnering with Augusta County to obtain grants and combine marketing of local events/attractions (see Fields of Gold Initiative in the Additional Grants Section).

Improve Residents' and Business Owners' Quality of Life

1. Develop recreational activities around downtown core.

- Biking, hiking and walking trails with appropriate infrastructure and social opportunities to keep people in/near town.
- Public park and green space opportunities.

2. Develop and expand social interaction opportunities close to Dayton.

- Tie in to local events, supporting restaurant, coffee house, and/or café.
- Movie nights in downtown or park area.
- Amphitheater
- Institute special event parades downtown or a lawn party near the middle school.

Future Planning

1. Identify complementary activities between Dayton and Cargill.

- Water conservation plans, beautification projects, how to reduce the smell in downtown, etc.
- Promote buy-in of Cargill management toward downtown plan, perhaps by altering look of the plant area, capturing some of the negatives and being a better partner on each side.

2. Study how to mix current focus on historic downtown with future development in residential and commercial areas.

- Development of residential and commercial areas adjacent to population centers (e.g. on Route 257 near the South Breeze development) that have a complementary look and feel.
- How to attract complementary businesses in conjunction with successful downtown projects?
- Appropriate locations and need for higher density, lower income housing.
- Consider annexing lands from current town boundaries towards Harrisonburg city limits on Route 42 towards Wal-Mart in order to diversify the tax base.

3. Expand current partnership with James Madison University.

- Commit to offering a fellowship/assistantship position for Master in Public Administration student that would be dedicated to helping town implement economic development initiatives.

Appendix

A: Citizen Survey	Page 57
B: Additional Grant Opportunities	Page 64
C: Web Content and Design	Page 80

Appendix A:
The Town of Dayton, Virginia
Economic Development Survey

The Town of Dayton's Economic Development Committee and Town Council would like to hear from you regarding the Town's future as it relates to Economic Development. Please follow the directions in each item below. Should you have specific questions or need further explanation or clarification for any questions please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Nicholas Swartz at swartznj@jmu.edu or (540) 568-5830. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in responding to this survey!

1. What is your opinion of Dayton's current economic performance? Please select your top choice.

- Performing strongly
- Performing somewhat strongly
- Performing adequately
- Performing somewhat poorly
- Performing poorly

2. Which of the following types of investment do you believe would have the greatest positive impact on Dayton? Please identify your top three (3) choices.

- Infrastructure construction and development
- Improve safety and security
- Improve transportation options
- Business loans
- Improved housing affordability
- No investment needed
- Job training and workforce development programs
- Redevelopment of abandoned properties or poorly operating facilities
- Beautification projects (landscaping, road clean-up, etc.)

3. Please identify the types of industries and commercial development you believe Dayton is in need of from the list below. Choose up to three (3) choices.

- Accommodation and Food Services
- Administrative and Support
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- Construction
- Educational Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Information
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Mining
- Other Services (except Public Administration)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Public Administration
- Real Estate Rental and Leasing
- Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing

- Utilities
- Wholesale Trade

4. How can Dayton attract more visitors and customers? Select your top two (2) choices.

- Improve the storefronts of local area businesses
- Better signage
- More community events
- Improve merchandise selection
- Improve marketing and advertising
- Nightlife
- Improve parking
- More restaurants
- Evening activities
- No additional means needed

5. In your opinion, what kind of businesses and services does Dayton need? Choose up to (3) choices.

- Bookstore/ Magazine shop
- Outdoor farmer's market
- Specialty Foods (bakery, butcher, fish market, pastry shop, etc.)
- Florist
- Cafes, bistros, coffee shops
- Electronics store
- Appliances (refrigerator, stove/ oven, air conditioner, etc.)
- Grocery store/ Deli
- Lodging/ Hotel/ Motel/ Bed & Breakfast
- Antiques and Furniture
- Jewelry Drug Store/ Pharmacy
- Clothing/ Shoe stores
- Sporting goods
- Banks, credit unions, mortgage brokers, other financial services
- Gym
- Hardware (painting, floor covering, etc.)
- Office supplies
- Movie/ Video game store or rental
- Photo developing and printing
- Arts/ Crafts
- Restaurants
- Daycare services
- Coin operated laundry
- Museum
- Movie theater
- Personal services (tailor, hair salon, barber shop, nail salon, tanning, dry cleaning, shoe repair, etc.)
- Professional offices (doctors, lawyers, dentists, insurance, real estate, etc.)
- Other (please specify) _____
- None

6. What do you think are barriers to economic development in Dayton? Choose up to three (3) choices.

- Funding
- Availability of land (commercial or residential)
- Employment opportunities

- Public works facilities
- Cost of land (lease/ commercial real estate)
- Road infrastructure
- Skilled labor/ Workforce
- Distance from major cities
- Citizen support
- Political support
- Quality of life
- Information
- Broadband/ Wi-Fi access
- Other (please specify) _____

7. How would you describe the level of cooperation/coordination among Dayton organizations involved in economic development? *Select your top choice.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral
- Needs improvement
- Poor
- Do not know

8. Which of the following do you consider the greatest *CHALLENGES* with respect to growing Dayton's economy? *Select up to three (3) choices.*

- Competition with neighboring communities for industry
- Availability of land
- Regulations
- Housing
- Retail competition with surrounding communities
- Tax rates
- Existing buildings and infrastructure need upgrades
- Quality of life
- Planning and zoning
- Proximity to I-81
- Skilled workforce
- Natural resources
- Technical training
- Community resistance to change
- Relationship with higher educational institutions
- Other (please specify) _____

9. Which of the following do you consider the greatest *OPPORTUNITIES* with respect to growing Dayton's economy? *Select up to three (3) choices.*

- Competition with neighboring communities for industry
- Availability of land
- Regulations
- Housing
- Retail competition with surrounding communities
- Tax rates
- Existing buildings and infrastructure need upgrades
- Quality of life

- Planning and zoning
- Proximity to I-81
- Skilled workforce
- Natural resources
- Technical training
- Community resistance to change
- Relationship with higher educational institutions
- Other (please specify) _____

10. Do you think there is adequate space for business growth and expansion in Dayton? *Select your top choice.*

- Yes
- No
- There is no need to grow and expand

11. Do you believe Dayton residents and business owners have trust with town officials?

- Yes
- No

12. Please identify any strengths of housing in your community. *Select two (2) choices.*

- Plenty of lots available
- Housing market is growing
- Diverse housing
- New housing developments
- High income housing
- Affordable housing options
- Community housing grants (HUD grants, USDA Rural Development, etc.)
- None

13. Please identify any weaknesses of housing in your community. *Choose all that apply.*

- Single family homes Affordable housing
- Dilapidated/ Older homes Multi-family homes (apartments, etc.)
- None

14. Are any of these populations underrepresented by your housing market? *Choose all that apply.*

- Low income home buyers
- First time home buyers
- Seniors
- Rental housing market
- College students
- High income home buyers
- Retirees
- None
- Other (please specify) _____

15. Would you support a dog park in Dayton if the land were given to the town as a gift and the town would be responsible for maintenance?

- Yes
- No

16. Please list the top three (3) challenges Dayton currently faces, in order of importance:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

17. Please list the top three (3) challenges Dayton will face in the next 15 years, in order of importance:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

18. Please list one word that makes Dayton a unique town.

19. Please list the top three (3) elements that you like about Dayton, in order of importance:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

20. Please list the top three (3) elements that you dislike about Dayton, in order of importance:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

21. If the Town were to accept Debit or Credit card payment for town bills (in person or on-line), would you utilize this service and accept a small service charge?

- Yes
- No

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Which of the following best describes your residency status?

- Live within town limits of Dayton
- Live outside of Dayton town limits

2. Please identify how long you have lived in Dayton (if you identified yourself as living in town limits).

- Less than 1 year
- 1 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- 10 – 15 years
- 16 – 20 years
- 20 – 25 years
- More than 25 years. Please specify _____

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than 9th grade
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree

- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate degree
- Law Degree
- Medical Degree

4. What is your employment status? *Select one (1).*

- Full-time employee
- Part-time employee
- Unemployed, not collecting benefits
- Full-time student
- Part-time student
- Self employed
- Stay-at-home
- Disabled
- Unemployed, collecting benefits
- Retired
- Other (please specify) _____

5. If you are unemployed are you currently seeking employment?

- Yes
- No

6. Where is your primary place of employment? *Select one (1).*

- Within the Town of Dayton
- Within the City of Harrisonburg
- Within Rockingham County
- Commute outside of Rockingham County, but within Virginia
- Commute outside of Virginia
- Do not work

7. Which of the following age range do you fall under?

- Under 18
- 18 – 25
- 26 – 30
- 31 – 45
- 46 – 55
- 56 – 65
- 66 – 79
- 80 and over

8. Gender

- Male
- Female

9. Please identify the number of dependents living in your household.

- Live alone
- Two
- Three
- Four

- Five
- Six or more

=====
The researchers would like to conduct focus group interviews to discuss Dayton’s economic future. Are you interested in participating in one of our focus groups in the very near future?

- YES** **No**

If yes, please provide the information below. Including your name and contact information below will not be used to identify your responses above.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

=====
THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!

Please place the completed survey in the pre-stamped envelope provided and mail it back within one week.

Appendix B: Additional Grant Opportunities

Local Government Challenge Grant

Funding Agency: Virginia Commission for the Arts

Amount: Up to \$5,000, subject to funds available

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, local government match must be from local government funds. Federal funds may not be included.

Purpose: To encourage local governments to support the arts.

Description: The Commission will match, up to \$5,000, subject to funds available, tax monies given to independent town, city, and county governments to arts organizations. The money, which does not include school arts budgets or arts programming by parks and recreation departments, may be granted either by a local arts commission/council or directly by the governing board.

Eligible Applicants: Open to any Independent city, town, or county government in Virginia.

Eligible Activities: Grants to independent arts organizations for arts activities in the locality. The Commission does not match payments paid to performers for specific performances.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Artistic quality of the organizations supported by the city/county/town;
- Clearly defined policies and procedures for awarding local funds to arts organizations;
- Degree of involvement of artists and arts organizations in the local process of awarding grants;
- Responsiveness to community needs; and
- Evidence of local government support of the arts.

Application Due: April 1, 2012, for local government grants awarded in 2012-2013.

Post-award: After confirmation of the grant award, each local government will confirm in writing to the Commission that its governing board has appropriated the matching funds. This confirmation must be provided to the Commission no later than February 1, 2013. The Commission will pay the grant in full after receiving this confirmation.

Website: http://www.arts.virginia.gov/grants/locgov_challenge.html

Community Nonprofits' Funding Needs Program

Funding Agency: The Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County

Amount: \$250 - \$20,000

Requires Matching Funds: No

Purpose: Developing philanthropic funds for our community's benefit.

Eligible Applicants: Tax-exempt public charities under Section 501(c)3 of the other nonprofit status from the IRS code.

Eligible Activities: Award money can be used for philanthropic services.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Purpose of requested grant;
- Clear outline of the project or program to be funded;
- Brief history of your organization;
- Description of the people or community your organization serves or benefits; and
- Listing of the expected results of the grant; who or what will this funding help.

Application Due: Proposal deadlines are March 1 and September 1 of each year.

Website: www.the-community-foundation.org

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Grant Program

Funding Agency: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Amount: Application projects must be for a minimum of \$10,000 in total cost or a grant amount of no less than \$5,000.

Requires Matching Funds: Certain programs and activities require a match.

Purpose: For purchasing interests in real property for land conservation purposes.

Description: Funds are divided equally among four primary categories: natural area protection; open spaces and parks; farmlands and forest preservation; and historic area preservation. At least one third of the funds must be used to secure easements to be held or co-held by a public body. Up to 50 percent of a project's cost may be funded with a VLCF grant.

Eligible Applicants: Agencies, localities, public bodies, and registered (tax-exempt) nonprofit organizations.

Eligible Activities: Projects include fee simple acquisition, easement, purchase of development rights, and site development.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

* Specific criteria dependent upon program

- Proposed project must be for a specific site or sites that meet criteria for one or more of the application categories;
- Reported value of any property, whether fee-simple or easement, must be substantiated by an approved appraisal done no more than six months prior to the acquisition;
- Letter from landowner(s) indicating willingness;
- Prove that resources are in place to complete the project within two years of project approval;
- Capacity to manage the project;
- Description of how the project is consistent with or complements local and regional plans; and
- Quantitative and qualitative projections on the benefits of the proposal (e.g. economic impact on the locality or region).

Post-award: Projects must be completed within two years.

Website: www.dcr.virginia.gov/virginia_land_conservation_foundation

Preserving and Sustaining Unique Historic Places for the Future Grant

Funding Agency: American Express

Amount: TBD

Requires Matching Funds: No

Purpose: To save and sustain historic places – preserving them for future use and protecting them for all to enjoy.

Description: We support organizations and projects that preserve or rediscover major historic sites and monuments in order to provide ongoing sustainable access and enjoyment for current and future audiences. The programs we support include historic landmarks and public spaces. We emphasize preserving sites that represent diverse cultures.

Eligible Applicants: Tax-exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1), (2) or (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Supported projects embrace the preservation, restoration or sustainability of historic places and demonstrate their significance to the community through one or more of the following:
 - Restoring historic places to ensure ongoing public access and interaction with the sites.
 - Preserving historic places for future or innovative use.
 - Sustaining historic places by creating systems to manage increased visitor activities and environmental impacts.
- Historic Preservation must follow three criteria:
 - Why is this historic place important to the community? Meaning, what is its historical significance and its role in the community?
 - What is the specific, quantifiable impact of the project to the community? How will you measure it?
 - What is the expected number of people who will visit the historic place after the completion of the project? How does this compare to your usual attendance?

Application Due: Inquiries for funding are accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Website: <http://about.americanexpress.com/csr/hpc.aspx>

Preserve America Grant Program

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Amount: \$20,000 - \$250,000

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, equal matching

Purpose: For our country to gain a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities.

Description: The Preserve America matching-grant program provides planning funding to designated Preserve America Communities to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning.

Eligible Applicants: Designated Preserve America Communities and Neighborhoods, State Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices and Certified Local Governments that have applied for Preserve America Community designation.

Eligible Activities: Program supports planning, development, and implementation of innovative activities and programs in heritage tourism such as surveying and documenting historic resources, interpreting historic sites, planning, marketing, and training.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Projects must fit one of the following categories:
 - Research and Documentation
 - Education and Interpretation
 - Planning
 - Marketing
 - Training
- Emphasize creative projects that promote and preserve the community's cultural resources.
- Involve public-private partnerships and serve as models to communities nationwide for heritage tourism, education, and economic development.

Application Due: Currently not accepting applications or awarding grants in FY 2012.

Website: www.nps.gov/hps/HPG/preserveamerica

Wells Fargo Corporate Giving

Funding Agency: Wells Fargo

Amount: TBD

Requires Matching Funds: TBD

Purpose: To support programs and organizations whose chief purpose is to benefit low- and moderate-income individuals and families. We look for projects that keep our communities strong, diverse, and vibrant.

Description: Wells Fargo makes contributions in areas that are important to the future of our nation's vitality and success. Wells Fargo looks for projects that keep our communities strong, diverse, and vibrant. Funding is provided for the following areas: Community Development, Education, Health and Human Services, Arts and Culture, Environment, and Civic Engagement.

Eligible Applicants: Organizations with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, as well as qualified tribal and governmental agencies, including public school systems.

Eligible Activities: Examples from each funding area –

Community Development – preventing foreclosure; creating affordable housing; revitalizing low-income neighborhoods; workforce training; financial literacy training.

Education – services that support low- and moderate-income students; providing mentoring and out-of-school programs.

Health and Human Services – addressing critical needs such as hunger and homelessness; ensuring access to quality health care; enabling independence for individuals and families.

Arts and Culture – supporting art, culture, science, and history organizations that advance education through school partnerships or outreach programs; facilitating access to and participation in cultural experiences; ensuring the availability of a broad array of artistic opportunities and venues that reflect the community's diversity.

Environment – preserving our environment through education programs that teach green practices.

Civic Engagement – enhancing a community's quality of life through events and activities that promote cultural diversity and involve public policy, community beautification, civic leadership, and citizen education.

Website: www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable

Transportation Enhancement Program

Funding Agency: Virginia Department of Transportation

Amount: Maximum of \$1 million per award

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, a 20% local match

Purpose: To integrate transportation into our communities and environment.

Description: Funding is meant to improve non-motorized transportation, enhance the public's traveling experience, revitalize communities, and improve the quality of life.

Eligible Applicants: All local governments, as well as, state and federal agencies. Non-profit groups may also apply, but are required to "partner" with a local government.

Eligible Activities: Twelve eligible activities –

1. Provision of Facilities for Bicycles and Pedestrians
2. Provision of Safety and Educational Activities for Pedestrians and Bicyclists
3. Acquisition of Scenic Easements and Scenic or Historic Sites
4. Scenic or Historic Highway Programs, including tourist and welcome center facilities
5. Landscaping and Scenic Beautification
6. Historic Preservation
7. Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures, or Facilities
8. Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors, including the conversion and use of the corridors for pedestrian or bicycle trails
9. Inventory, Control, and Removal of Outdoor Advertising
10. Archaeological Planning and Research
11. Environmental Mitigation
12. Establishment of Transportation Museums

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- Prior to submission of an application, the project being proposed for funding must be presented at a duly advertised public hearing and formally endorsed by a local jurisdiction or public agency.
- Projects that are located within a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area will require an endorsement from the local MPO.
- Must meet federal program eligibility requirements of: relationship to surface transportation and qualifying under one or more of the 12 eligible activities.
- Projects are scored based on the following criteria: demonstrated need; use and benefit; amenities and support facilities; educational/ historical value; and project resources.

Website: www.virginiadot.org/business/prehancegrants.asp

Bikes Belong Grant Program

Funding Agency: Bikes Belong

Amount: \$10,000 maximum

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, however do not require a specific percentage match. Bikes Belong will not consider grant requests in which their funding would amount to 50% or more of the project budget.

Purpose: To put more people on bicycles more often by funding important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S.

Description: Program has two application categories: Facility and Advocacy. For the Facility category, Bikes Belong accepts applications from nonprofit organizations whose missions are bicycle and/or trail specific. Applications from public agencies and departments at the national, state, regional, and local levels are accepted as long as the municipality aligns with a local bicycle advocacy group. For the Advocacy category, Bikes Belong will only fund organizations whose primary mission is bicycle advocacy.

Eligible Applicants: Nonprofit organizations whose missions are bicycle and/or trail specific; public agencies and departments at the national, state, regional, and local levels who align with a local bicycle advocacy group.

Eligible Activities: Fundable projects under the Facility category include –

- Bike paths, lanes, trails, and bridges;
- End-of-trip facilities such as bike racks, parking and storage;
- Mountain bike facilities;
- Bike parks; and
- BMX facilities.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications: All proposals must address the items below.

- Encourage ridership growth;
- Promote bicycling;
- Build political support;
- Leverage funding;
- Address the project objectives of the facility or advocacy funding categories; and
- Propose a specific program or project that is measurable.

Website: www.bikesbelong.org/grants

Fields of Gold Agritourism Initiative

Funding Agency: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Amount: No funds are delegated to applicants; planning grant is for education and marketing of regional agritourism businesses.

Purpose: This planning grant is to establish a regional agritourism program that promotes the Shenandoah Valley as an agritourism destination and creates jobs on and off the farm.

Description: Fields of Gold is a regional agritourism initiative that seeks to promote the abundance of agricultural resources in the Shenandoah Valley through a collaborative approach to marketing and promotion. This initiative showcases educational and recreational activities for visitors while sustaining local farms and creating an environment for entrepreneurship.

Eligible Applicants: Open to interested local farms and agritourism businesses within member localities of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission.

Application Due: No official application process. Interested participants should complete the following survey to receive more information and be added to the inventory and mapping of agritourism sites and businesses that exist in the Region: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Fields_of_Gold

Website: <http://www.cspdc.org/fieldsofgold/>

Project Grants

Funding Agency: Virginia Commission for the Arts

Amount: \$1,000 and \$10,000. Applicants may submit more than one application for a combined total of no more than \$10,000.

Requires Matching Funds: No

Purpose: To increase access to high quality arts for all Virginians; to increase opportunities for artists to create and present their work; and to expand arts education opportunities for young people.

Description: Project grants are limited to 50% or less of cash costs of any activity funded through a Project Grant. Additionally, Project Grants to any established arts organization in one year will total no more than 30% of that organization's income for the previous year. 2012-2013 Project Grants are for expenses occurring between July 1, 2012 and June 15, 2013.

Eligible Applicants: Any non-profit Virginia organizations and exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(a), which includes the 501(c)(3) designation of the Internal Revenue Code, or are units of government, educational institutions, or local chapters of tax exempt national organizations.

Eligible Activities:

- Operating support for new and emerging arts organizations (organizations whose primary purpose is the arts, that are three years old or less, and that had a previous year's income of less than \$50,000.
- Commissions of new work.
- New or expanded arts education programs, such as artist residencies, workshops, classes, or summer arts camps.
- New or expanded performances and exhibitions.
- Services to artists and arts organizations, such as research studies, shared administrative and/or technical services, professional development workshops, and shared promotional materials.

Application Due: March 1, 2012

Website: www.arts.virginia.gov/grants/project_grants.html

Save America's Treasures

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Amount: No funding for Fiscal Year 2012. A dollar-for-dollar, non-Federal match is required. Typically, the minimum request for collections projects is \$25,000, while the minimum request for historic property projects is \$125,000. The maximum grant request for all projects is \$700,000.

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, an equal non-Federal match is required

Purpose: To protect our nation's endangered and irreplaceable cultural heritage.

Description: Grants are available for preservation and/or conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and historic structures and sites. Intellectual and cultural artifacts include artifacts, collections, documents, sculpture, and works of art. Historic structures and sites include historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects.

Eligible Applicants: Federal, state, local, and tribal government entities, non-profit organizations, and historic properties and collections associated with active religious organizations are eligible.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications:

- The collection or historic property must be nationally significant;
- The collection or historic property must be threatened or endangered, and the application must document the urgent preservation and/or conservation need;
- Projects must substantially mitigate the threat and must have a clear public benefit (e.g. historic places open for visitation or collections available for public viewing or scholarly research); and
- The project must be feasible (i.e. able to be completed within the proposed activities, schedule, and budget described in the application), and the application must document adequately the required non-Federal match.

Application Due: TBD

Website: www.nps.gov/hps/treasures/national.htm

Technological Innovation: 2012 PTT Grant Program

Funding Agency: National Center for Preservation Technology and Training

Amount: Maximum award of \$25,000 (including indirect costs)

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, all grants require a one-to-one match of cash or in-kind services. Source of the match may be federal or non-federal resources.

Purpose: To fund projects that advance science and technology for historic preservation.

Description: The PTT Grants program funds projects that develop new technologies or adapt existing technologies to preserve cultural resources. NCPTT funds projects with the following overlapping disciplinary areas: archeology, architecture, collections management, engineering, historic landscapes, and materials conservation.

Eligible Applicants: U.S. universities and colleges; U.S. non-profit organizations: museums, research laboratories, professional societies and similar organizations in the U.S. that are directly associated with educational or research activity; and government agencies in the U.S.: National Park Service and other federal, state, territorial and local government agencies.

Eligible Activities: Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Laboratory or field research that explores or assesses novel or adaptive methods;
- Training activities, including workshops, and course or curriculum development that promote the use of new or adaptive technologies;
- Documentation using new methods;
- Manuscript or website development that disseminates innovative preservation technologies; and
- Meetings that convene experts to discuss the use of technologies to address preservation problems.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications: NCPTT will give preference to proposals that advance technologies or methods to:

- Conserve cultural resources of the “recent past”
- Monitor and evaluate preservation treatments
- Investigate minimally invasive techniques to inventory and assess cultural resources
- Protect cultural resources against natural and human threats
- Preserve cemeteries and places of worship
- Safeguard resources from effects of pollution and climate
- Ensure a sustainable future for cultural resources

Website: <http://ncptt.nps.gov/grants/call-for-proposals>

Open Grant Program

Funding Agency: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities

Amount: Maximum of \$10,000

Requires Matching Funds: No

Purpose: To develop public humanities programs for audiences in Virginia.

Description: The grant program encourages projects that increase public understanding of important issues and enrich the cultural life of Virginia. Open to proposals on a wide range of subjects, for projects in any format.

Eligible Applicants: Any incorporated nonprofit organization located in Virginia.

Eligible Activities:

- Exhibits;
- Lectures or lecture series;
- Community forums and public discussions, including book or film discussion programs;
- Festivals;
- Conferences and symposia;
- Media programs: films, script development, videos, television, radio, and digital media projects;
- Publications: brochures, posters, pamphlets, maps, books, journals, and catalogs;
- Research leading to programs that have a direct public audience; and
- Community history projects, including oral histories.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications: VFH funding priorities are: Books, reading, and literacy; Rights and responsibilities; Media and culture; Violence and community; Science, technology, and society; and Virginia history.

Other specific areas of long-term interest and commitment for the VFH and its grant programs include: Teacher education programs (especially those related to Virginia's Standards of Learning); African American history and culture; Virginia Indian history and culture(s); Cultures and communities in Virginia; Virginia's folk-life and traditional culture(s); and Local and regional history.

Application Due: Recurring deadlines of February 1st, May 1st, and October 15th. Draft proposals are strongly encouraged.

Website: <http://virginiahumanities.org/grants>

Our Town

Funding Agency: National Endowment for the Arts

Amount: \$25,000 - \$150,000

Requires Matching Funds: No

Purpose: To provide creative place-making projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core.

Description: Will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to:

- Improve their quality of life;
- Encourage creative activity;
- Create community identity and a sense of place; and
- Revitalize local economies.

Eligible Applicants: Partnership that involves two primary partners: a nonprofit organization and a local government entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Additional partners are welcomed. One of the two primary partners must act as the official applicant (lead applicant) and meet the eligibility requirements. To be eligible, the lead applicant organization must:

- For an organization other than a local government, have a three-year history of programming prior to the application deadline;
- Meet the Arts Endowment's "Legal Requirements"; and
- Have submitted acceptable Final Report packages by the due date(s) for all Arts Endowment award(s) previously received.

Eligible Activities: Projects may include planning, design, and arts engagement activities, such as:

Planning:

- creative asset mapping
- cultural district planning
- development of master plans or community-wide strategies for public art
- support creative entrepreneurship
- creative industry cluster/hub development

Design:

- Design of rehearsal, studio, or live/work spaces for artists
- Design of cultural facilities – new construction or adaptive reuse

- Design of public spaces (e.g. parks, plazas, streetscapes, landscapes, neighborhoods, districts, infrastructure, bridges)
- Design of wayfinding systems
- Community engagement activities including charrettes, competitions, and community design workshops.

Arts Engagement:

- Innovative programming that fosters interaction among community members, arts organizations, and artists, or activates existing cultural and community assets
- Festivals and performances in spaces not normally used for such purposes
- Public art that improves public spaces and strategically reflects or shapes the physical and social character of a community

Criteria for Evaluating Applications: Projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities and must reflect:

- A systemic approach to civic development and a persuasive vision for enhanced community vibrancy;
- Clearly defined civic development goals and objectives that recognize and enhance the role that the arts and design play at the center of community life;
- An action plan aligned with the project vision and civic development goals; and
- A funding plan that is appropriate, feasible, indicates strong community support, and includes a well-conceived sustainability strategy.

Application Due: March 1, 2012

Website: www.nea.gov/grants/OurTown

Performing Arts Touring Assistance Program

Funding Agency: Virginia Commission for the Arts

Amount: Grant amounts are a minimum of \$100. Amount varies based upon artist's reservation fee (see *Tour Directory* for pricing). The Commission will fund up to 50 percent of the artist's fee for any touring program listed in the *Touring Directory*.

Requires Matching Funds: Yes, an equal match

Purpose: To increase opportunities for Virginians to experience high-quality performing arts events.

Description: The program supports touring by Virginia performing artists and ensembles within the state. The touring activities are restricted to those listed in the Commission's annual *Tour Directory*. Grants are made to the presenter (sponsor), not to the touring artist(s). Touring artists apply to be listed in the *Tour Directory* with a set dollar amount reserved to support their touring.

Eligible Applicants: Virginia nonprofit organizations, units of local government, and educational institutions.

Eligible Activities:

- Programs listed in the *Performing Arts Tour Directory* which take place outside of the home area of the touring artist(s); and
- Programs should be open to the public, and the presenter (sponsor) must provide community-wide publicity. Elementary and secondary schools, senior living facilities, correctional facilities, and hospitals may be exempt from this requirement.

Application Due: Presenters should send applications for touring support, including copies of signed contracts with touring artists/ensembles, to the Commission at least four weeks prior to the event, and before December 1.

Website: http://www.arts.virginia.gov/grants/assistance_performing.html

Appendix C: Web Content and Design

It is imperative that a government entity have a professional and interactive website to serve as its home base. If an organization does not have one, their credibility immediately decreases. Having a good website is a sign of professionalism, (Miller 67). Before getting too complex with content, governments must ensure that they focus on the basics first and do them well. This typically means that a website is up to speed and fully interactive (Miller 10). With that covered, the area of new media can be explored in order to fully exploit the resources of the new age (Blogs, Articles, Slideshows, videos, etc).

Expansions in technology, web design, and the emergence of social media have changed the way people connect and stay in touch and it is no longer just for young people. Individuals in their forties, fifties and sixties are using websites on a daily basis and organizations use them to stay in touch and keep up with other governments and groups (Miller 67). The idea that governments should not market themselves to the general public or to their own citizens is old and outdated. New media and websites allow for towns to communicate directly with their citizens in an attempt to increase engagement and improve overall citizen awareness.

Website as a Communication Tool:

An interactive and easily accessible website is essential for governments to interact with their citizens. In recent years, cities and towns across the globe have made an effort to place information and services online for their citizens, though many variations to the information provided differs as government entities weigh what exactly to provide digitally (West 1). The term e-government refers to these efforts, and the act of providing information digitally to citizens. “E-government offers the potential to bring citizens closer to their governments,” (West 2). E-government goes beyond merely providing information, though. It also allows for citizens to interact directly with their government. “One of the prime virtues of the web is its capacity for interactivity,” providing features that allow citizens to have access to information and facilitate communications between citizens and government agencies (West 16).

E-mail is acknowledged as the easiest way to keep lines of communication open, although it is just the first of many tools governments can use. In one particular case study, 69% of city governments analyzed provided email contact information for various departments and government employees to their citizens. This allows ordinary citizens, particularly those who do not or cannot attend council meetings, to pose questions or request information from particular government employees (West 12). A website that does not provide contact information on each page or for every government agency can limit the ability for citizens to interact with their officials, as well as preventing effective citizen engagement (Gehrke 3). Governments can also provide sections for citizen feedback in a comments area, either through individual posts or in a general forum. This allows citizens to provide direct feedback and allow for the government to respond directly to inquiries or questions. In West’s study, 54% of government websites analyzed provided some form of a comment section to allow citizens to voice

concerns or praises (West 12) Many experts; however, suggest this level of interaction as being the most effective and impactful (Gehrke 3). Direct searching is also an effective way to allow citizens to cut through the navigation and find the information they seek directly.

Content:

In addition to opening up communication channels and increasing citizen engagement, governments must also provide accurate and effective content. Government websites must also be timely and accurate. Users want to engage with content that is relevant to them and their needs (Gehrke 3). Website satisfaction is key to getting citizens to return in the future. Users who are satisfied with a website's design are more likely to stay on the site longer and return in the future. For a government, having a quality website also conveys a certain degree of professionalism and effectiveness. A badly designed website can reflect poorly on the image of the government. For website visitors, particularly those seeking more information of a town or city, a poorly designed website would be the first impression of the location, especially for smaller, lesser known locales like Dayton.

Layout:

"Many elements of design and graphic art can be used to convey content on the web. The choices are truly endless. Elements of space, use of images, size of images, use of animation and/or audio, number of words per line, color and size of characters are among just a few of the factors," (Rosen 1). Taking those elements into consideration, governments must be sure to build their websites to be user friendly and not overly busy. A study of user impressions of different web designs revealed that less is more. Simple websites with eye-catching but appropriate elements are most attractive to browsers. Websites also should not suffer from information overload, but "rather, should be able to give access to the information web surfers' desire in the most expedient way possible," (Rosen 6). For local governments whose goal is not to sell a product or attract customers, this is especially important. Simple background colors and textures, mixed with a level of aesthetically pleasing content interaction can draw and retain more citizens to a website than one that is messy and difficult to navigate (Gehrke 3). "Poor web interface functionality is one potential cause for web usability meltdown," (Zhang 1253). Keeping it simple is necessary and it is important to lay out a website in such a way that users do not become overwhelmed and distracted. "Abundant literature on the subject indicates the trend in designing websites is toward simplicity," (Gehrke 6).

First and foremost, government websites are essential means of communication with the public. Citizens want to be engaged with their government and feel as though their officials are accessible. Aside from attending council meetings or reading occasional newsletters, citizens are typically disconnected with the operations of their local governments. Websites allow for easy and direct access to content that would otherwise be inconvenient for many citizens. Local governments should provide as much relevant information as possible while doing so in a controlled and well-designed fashion. Simple, organized websites allow users to quickly and easily access the information

they desire while also providing information the user may also find useful. This is particularly important regarding transparency and how the public perceives its government.

Having a simple, well laid out website is essential to not only interacting with citizens and making interconnectivity efficient; it is also a means of advertising. Oftentimes, a website is the first impression an individual has about a location, especially if they reside outside of the area. Potential businesses and future residents may turn to a locality's website to get more information. Thus, this first impression must be impactful and impressive. A well designed website that is easily accessible and full of vital information can relay a very strong sense of efficiency, effectiveness and transparency.

New Media and Local Governments:

One of the primary reasons to have a website is to communicate with citizens and provide information for outsiders seeking more information. Communication is absolutely essential to enhancing civic engagement and attracting outside businesses and individuals to consider re-locating to your area. This was one of the factors in the recent decision to revamp the Virginia Beach, Virginia website. "Last overhauled in 2006, the new site features updated branding, design improvements ... prompted by advances in technology, an increase in mobile computing, the popular rise of social networking and changing user needs," (Virginia Town & City).

Before moving on to social networking endeavors, it is imperative that local governments have a professional and interactive website. Every town needs a basic website to serve as its home-base. If they do not have one, their credibility immediately decreases. Having a decent website is a sign of professionalism, (Miller 67). Before focusing too much on other social networking services, ensure you focus on the basics first and do them well. Before setting up a Facebook or Twitter account and concerning yourself with the number of followers you have, you must ensure your website is up to speed and fully interactive (Miller 10). With that covered, the area of new media should be explored in order to fully exploit the resources of the modern age.

Advances in technology have allowed individuals and organizations from around the globe to connect with the point of a mouse and click of a finger. Social media networks are taking these connections to new levels, and governments are beginning to take full advantage of this cost-effective tool for marketing, public relations and communication efforts. The term new media has a number of definitions, but the most accurate description is: technology that allows interactivity and independent distribution of information, such as websites, blogs, podcasts and Wikis.

After developing a new website, Dayton needs to exploit this tool for all it has to offer. The City's manager, board and citizens should be encouraged to create short reports and blogs to post online, along with any pictures, videos or interviews that showcase the impact and scope of each new initiative or new developments. This effort would not require much additional time from town staff, but would rather bring together materials that are already collected so that Dayton can expose as many people to the projects as possible. Dayton's website and a newly

developed Facebook page could be used to promote one another, as well. Dayton may also want to consider starting a Twitter page, mainly because it requires virtually no maintenance, aside from the posting of links/short write-ups/town developments. Because it would be considered a “niche” tool, the overall reach of the page would be minimal in scope, but the town would reach those it finds most vital to keep informed.

An organization’s website also acts as the primary tool in providing individuals with Videos, Blogs and Images of town activities. Videos and podcasts are easier and cheaper than ever to produce. “It is so much easier to share the human side of your work and the personality of your organization when people can hear your voice and see your face,” (Miller 67). Many individuals, especially in the new age of technology, would prefer to get information about town developments and initiatives by watching or listening rather than reading. Even when an organization does not have the audio to go along with videos, photo essays and slide presentations can quickly convey information through the power of imagery. Captions in the form of slideshow captions can also help convey the general message of the project (Miller 67).

Critiquing the Current Dayton Website:

Critiquing a local government website is distinctively different than reviewing a commercial website.

The initial quality that must be examined in a website is its Uniform Resource Locator, or URL, as anything contained in the website is irrelevant if it cannot be found. www.daytonva.us is a very straightforward and expected URL, and one that needs no improvement. There are no strange symbols or anything else that could ensnare prospective visitors. Another important factor in its ability to be located is its search engine ranking. When typing “Dayton” into Google, the most popular search engine, it ranked second behind the University of Dayton. In Bing and Yahoo, Dayton appeared third, so it appears the website’s ability to be found is not in need of improvement. Although it should be noted that this is a rather cursory way of examining a website’s ability to be found, it doesn’t seem like much more analysis is necessary.

The visual appearance is the primary concern for Dayton’s website and where the most improvement is necessary. However, a quick retool is not what it is going to take to bring the site into the 21st century, but luckily there are many website designers available that have the capability to create a high quality website. The most obvious place to begin Dayton’s critique is with the width of the website. The website is oriented to the left of the page, which when combined with the quality of it being about half the width of a monitor, exhibits a very unprofessional quality. Half of the website is blank, while the other half of the page has a gaping longitude expanse. One of the trends in websites today is preventing a user from having to scroll extensively down a page to find information, unless it is a forum or specific type of page. Dayton’s website requires you to continue scrolling down to find the information at the bottom of the page, when it could be spread out onto multiple pages that only require you to scroll down a page length... An obvious recommendation would be to spread the information out onto multiple pages, and then have a navigation bar link to the pages so that the viewer can find the specific information he/she desires instead of having to sort through haphazardly organized information.

The next criticism is one that encapsulates the primary detriments of this website, which is the general disorganization of information. It is important to note that Dayton provides a plethora of information that should all remain accessible to a visitor. The concern is that the information is too jumbled and must be spread out in a more organized and less cluttered layout. Although there is a vertical navigation bar on the current site, the excessive information on the homepage is unorganized. The home page contains what you would typically expect to find on a homepage, but it then digresses into events, queries, local information, and other miscellaneous topics as you continue down the page. A modern home page must be relatively cut and dry, and provide mainly a nexus to other enumerated information. If the home page's dimensions are normalized so that it stretches to the dimensions of the monitor that is viewing it, more information can then be displayed without requiring that you scroll down. However, a current events page would replace the need to hodgepodge general information, current events, and miscellaneous information in the same location.

The next criticism is the website and town's graphic art; a professional logo or image for Dayton needs to be created for use on the website and perhaps other non-electronic documents. The image should be simple and polished, yet exude some distinctly Dayton qualities. These types of images and logos are useful for placing at critical locations around the website as per the standards and trends apparent in highly respected websites, such as Google. As it stands now, the images and logos on the website are blurry and rudimentary. In the same breath, the Dayton website needs a distinctive and consistent font to use for every page in specific locations that is relatively professional. A generic font works fine, but one that exudes more character is preferable, though you should avoid choosing a font that features too many curls or other eccentric qualities. The primary struggle is to create a distinctive website that is interesting but also straightforward and professional. The artistic qualities of the Dayton website are not in line with the current trends and standards. Professional websites usually have a specific color set that they employ throughout the website. This thematic quality shows continuity throughout the site; it's not only professional but visually agreeable.

The main criticisms of the site boil down to the three primary areas that were just covered. The format of the site must be retooled into one that allows for visual enhancement and an efficient means of conveying information. Distinctive logos and graphics must be forged for Dayton's usage both on and offline. Finally, the site must be integrated with social media and other online aggregators and website services. Once the foundation of a professional website is has been laid down, ancillary services such as online bill paying can be introduced and integrated.

Proposals for a New Dayton Web Design:

Proposed Elements of Website Design

An informative and interactive website is an invaluable tool for a government entity to effectively communicate with the public. Web-based content has been assimilated in today's society in such a way that users expect to find the desired information in a fast and efficient manner. A properly maintained website fosters a sense of accessibility between a government body and its citizens and addition to providing information that is readily

available. The proposed website plan for Dayton will seek to increase the ease of communication between the town and public, provide ample and up to date content for visitors, and provide a layout that is both easy to navigate and informative. The improvements to the current website will allow visitors access to content that can serve as a proper representative to the town of Dayton.

Capitalizing on Communication:

The proposed website improvements would allow citizens more efficient channels in which to stay in contact with Dayton. The Information Age has spawned a rise in e-government, a concept centered on increasing avenues in which a government can keep in touch with its constituents. The current website is not utilizing these avenues to their full potential. E-mail addresses to all necessary public officials will be made available efficiently on a subsection dedicated to communicating with Dayton. Reaching officials should also be made easier with the addition of a message board designed to allow visitors to get timely responses to address their needs. This message board will allow for dialogue that can give citizens a greater sense of community among fellow citizens and public officials. Visitors can express their suggestions and concerns that are vital to improving the town of Dayton. A mailing list is another option that will help keep citizens informed on the activities of Dayton. Users can add their e-mail addresses to the mailing list to receive information on occurring events that is not always efficiently given with the current quarterly newsletter. A successful government must keep in touch with citizens and the proposed communication improvements allow for greater transparency and dialogue between Dayton and its residents.

Proposed Content:

A well-structured government website should be able to convey the necessary information required by both its citizens and potential visitors. The proposed website aims to deliver this information in an efficient manner to both parties through easy to navigate subsections. Sections will be dedicated to the history of Dayton as well as tourism attractions to offer visitors a better understanding of the town and what it has to offer. The new webpage would also serve as a valuable tool for informing current citizens what will be happening in Dayton in the near future. An adequately updated events calendar allows for greater participation in town affairs, as well as consistent viewership of the webpage. A consistent audience will allow Dayton to potentially attract advertising revenue from the site, helping both the public and private sectors in Dayton. Government transparency will also be aided in the new format with easy access to upcoming plans and meeting overviews for Dayton citizens. Meeting minutes and hearing schedules should be made readily available to the public with the new website. The improved site will give visitors the opportunity to stay better informed on what is happening in Dayton.

Proposed Layout:

The layout and overall appearance of a website can convey either a positive or negative portrayal of Dayton. The current format is outdated and bulky, potentially driving away visitors from both the webpage and Dayton. The

new layout will possess a professional and modern look that will show Dayton in a more modern and up to date light. The layout of the site would be a central homepage that gives an introduction to Dayton and the important events. A homepage is the first thing users see and can turn off visitors if it is utterly cluttered with information and features. Subsections are available for visitors to gather information in whatever area they see fit. These sections possess information based on what type of information the user is looking for, allowing visitors to see exactly what they want to see without clutter. The overall goal of the new layout is to offer the public a well-organized and simple to navigate page to help maximize their experience on Dayton's website.

Exploring New Media:

Once Dayton has established a new and fully interactive website, the town should expand their reach into social media. Creating a Facebook account would be the first step in reaching out to Dayton residents who might otherwise have limited or no knowledge regarding town initiatives. One of the most prominent themes that emerged from the focus groups was a concern over limited communication and transparency. The average Dayton resident typically has no idea what the town is doing, and often do not pay attention to the town's newsletter. An attractive and reliable website, along with a Facebook account, would allow the average citizen to connect to and understand new town developments. Some residents indicated that they had no idea what the Artisans Park was until they inquired, but the information was not directly available to them (in their minds). Almost everyone is on Facebook, and any efforts to link the Dayton website to a Facebook page would increase transparency and expand the scope of how information is released to the public.

Social networking can also help connect different local groups and build cohesiveness between residents and local organizations and businesses. The Town of Dayton could connect with other local towns, cities, and even media outlets to spread information it believes the public would desire. Expansion into social media is not only efficient but it is also virtually free. Aside from upkeep, which could easily be incorporated into existing roles, there are virtually no costs associated with the initiative. Social media acts as more than just a means to blast out information, but it also provides an outlet for interaction and interconnectivity. In a town as small as Dayton this can have a profound effect.

Conclusion:

Dayton is a town full of culture and historical tradition. The proposed webpage will allow Dayton to best express those traits to visitors who are unfamiliar with the area, as well as keep citizens adequately informed with Dayton's activities. These improvements will allow both a level of transparency and readily available information that modern society desires from a government webpage. The more efficient layout will ensure that more users will want to revisit the website in the future. The improvements in communication between Dayton and the public, the continual publication of informative content, and easy to navigate layout will offer a website that best suits the needs of a 21st Century Dayton.

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