



*Commercial District Revitalization ■ Historic Preservation ■ Non-Profit Organizational Development*

## **Fast Facts from the Vineland Consumer and Stakeholder Survey**

Heritage Consulting Inc. conducted a three-week online survey in mid-September 2012. There were 462 survey responses with a 70% completion rate. This sample has 95% accuracy because of the large sample size. However, only 16 business owners/property owners participated in survey, so their views cannot be determined from this survey results.

## **STAKEHOLDER RESULTS**

### **What should VDID/VMS be doing?**

Create job opportunities 50%, recruit new businesses 50%, green activities 50%, outdoor dining 50%, retain existing businesses 47%, storefront rehab 41%, joint promotional events 45%, and merchant networking 45%.  
Create a merchant association was least interesting option.

### **Most highly regarded activities (in order)**

Street fairs/entertainment, maintenance of planter's, holiday décor, Lamppost banners, and cleaning and maintenance

### **What else should Vineland Main Street be doing? COMMENTS**

A third had concerns about perception of safety downtown, and another third of respondents wanted changes in the business mix and focus on retention and recruitment. The remaining third had a variety of other ideas.

## **CONSUMER AND CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS**

Landis Marketplace is the major trip driver for downtown. The majority of customers come during the workday and then Saturday during the day. Downtown Vineland shuts down after 5PM.

**Where customers get news about downtown?** Newspaper articles 53%  
Word of mouth 51%, Newspaper ads 51%, direct marketing 44%, Social media less than 10%.

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**What media channel works best for these customers?** *The Grapevine* 66% and *Daily Journal* 65% were the most often-cited news channels. Vineland Main Street web site is underutilized, but email marketing and social media might be useful and will bring a younger demographic

**Opinions on existing events held in downtown.** Consumers are highly positive about all current events, but no one event is held in higher regard than others are. Most popular in order of popularity: Cruise down memory lane 33%, Sidewalk sale 31%, Holiday parade 33%, Seafood Festival 31%, and Chili/ BBQ 32%. Fewest responses were the Wedding weekend 41% and Soapbox derby 32%, so consider eliminating or folding these events into others.

**How easy is it to use downtown?** About 40% of all respondents found it easy to park, and find stores and restaurants in downtown. A third said they do not feel there is a good selection of stores in downtown now. About a third also said that they shop in several stores while visiting downtown.

**How much do consumers spend when downtown?** Based on the amounts spent, people are eating lunch rather than dinner downtown, especially during the weekday Saturday. Spending in retail stores is \$30 to \$100, which would indicate a middle income sales

**Write in comments for suggested restaurants, shops and entertainment businesses to recruit.** Restaurants requests were very high. 46 respondents wanted a name brand chain restaurant. Other types of restaurants in order of popularity. Italian 29, Seafood 12, Sushi 10, Indian 9, Steakhouse 8. Mom and pop restaurants are welcome. The name brand restaurants mentioned most often were fast casual brand names—Olive Garden, Panera, Salad Works. These are more mid-priced brands.

Retail shops requested were staggering in their diversity. New or used bookstore, Women's clothing, Clothes (in general), Antiques, Hobby/craft store. Trader Joes and Whole Foods most often mentioned retail shops. For Arts, entertainment, leisure business to recruit the following were the most popular, Bookstore, Movies and Craft fair.

**Would you visit downtown more often if it offered more of the following food or dining options?** All kinds of restaurant and eateries (except for takeout) scored over 45%. In order of preference, survey respondents wanted to see a full service restaurant (65%), coffee shop/café (57%), a bakery (56%), pubs/clubs/taverns (45%), and a fine dining (white table cloth) restaurant (44%). This category should be the first for business recruitment efforts based on these high scores.

**Would you visit downtown more often if it offered more of the following retail stores, merchandise or service businesses?** The most popular choices for attractive downtown businesses include: Bookstores (64%), home goods stores (57%), national chain/brand stores

(55%), arts and crafts (50%), and antiques/vintage stores (49%). Other top stores with interest above 40% of respondents were music venue (47%), museum (45%), women's apparel (41%), women's accessories (41%), and fine gifts and collectibles (41%). These would represent the businesses to recruit in order of preference.

**Which one of the following is the main reason you do not visit downtown more often?**

Twenty four percent (24%) of customer's listed personal safety as an issue, but safety concerns were mentioned more often in write-in votes (about a third). Merchandise selection and variety also elicited similar number of concerns about a quarter.

**Model Customer Profile.** An older woman, in a two-person household between 40 and 60 years old, whose income is between 50K and 75K who lives outside of Vineland?

**ANALYSIS OF WRITE IN COMMENTS**

57% of all respondents wrote comments, and the majority were positive, some glowing in fact about downtown improvements. The Amish market is clearly well loved institution in downtown.

Customers had these concerns in order: Loitering, general safety concerns, store quality, variety and convenience, Hours on weekends, want more upscale shops, Want quality shops and merchandise, less emphasis on chain stores to recruit except Olive Garden.

Negative comments were not based on income or age and mirror Vineland's current population as demographics as a whole.

**STORE QUALITY IS THE MAIN CONCERN ABOUT DOWNTOWN, NOT SAFETY.**

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