



## GANANOQUE RESIDENT CONSUMER SURVEY



**GANANOQUE RESIDENT CONSUMER SURVEY**  
Prepared by: Town of Gananoque  
Economic Development Department  
2014

## 1.0 Executive Summary

---

The Town of Gananoque with support from the Gananoque BIA and Gananoque Public Library, developed a twenty-two question survey regarding resident consumer trends. The survey was distributed to each household within the Town of Gananoque through Canada Post unaddressed airmail. The objective of creating this survey was to gather information that will assist the Town of Gananoque and associated partners and organizations to establish plans that meet the needs of the community and increase the area's economic viability.

## 2.0 Background

---

### 2.1 TOWN OF GANANOQUE

The Town of Gananoque is internationally renowned as the “Gateway to the 1000 Islands” and is recognized as one of Eastern Ontario's most stunning waterfront communities. The community is comprised of 5200 people and welcomes over 300 000 visitors each year. Strategically located on the Hwy 401 corridor and near the U.S border, Gananoque is centrally located between major urban centres including Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa. With its unbeatable quality of life and larger centers only minutes away, Gananoque has developed into a world class destination for travelers, businesses and residents.

### 2.2 RESIDENT CONSUMER SURVEY

The Resident Consumer Survey was created based on the Resident Survey that was distributed in 2007 with the assistance of Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, OMAFRA. The intent was to create a similar survey so that there was consistency and comparable information. The survey focuses on consumer trends and shopping habits while exploring the needs of the business community. The survey focuses on the local consumer base that support the businesses on a year around basis. To provide further analysis, this study should be complemented with a Trade Area Analysis that examines the broader scope of the consumers from the region and tourism market.

### 2.3 DATA INTERPRETATION

The information from the surveys was compiled on a survey program, Survey Monkey, and then generated into graphs and charts to accurately measure and assess the interview responses. The surveyed household responses represent approximately 15% of the total 2346 households in the Town of Gananoque providing a statistical significant analysis. The results provide both quantitative and qualitative information based on the information collected in the survey.

## 3.0 Survey Summary

---

A total of 355 households completed the Consumer Survey in January/February 2014. Overall the profile of the respondents represented long term residents with 54% having resided in the community over 25 years and 22% having resided in the community between 10-25 years. Of the respondents, a total of 80% were over 45 while 20% were between the ages of 20-45 reflecting the aging population. The average household size recorded in the survey was 2.4 which are similar results in relation to Statistics Canada that recorded the average household size as 2.7 in 2011. While 40% of the respondents were retired, 30% were employed locally with 17% being employed in Kingston and 4% in the Township of Leeds and Thousand Islands.

The following points summarize the qualitative and quantitative results of the survey.

- The majority of residents of Gananoque prefer to shop in their Town's downtown as opposed to outside the community.
- The most prominent reason for shopping outside of Gananoque is the greater selection, price and availability of products.
- The majority of respondents (80.86%) shop in the Town of Gananoque two or more times a week, followed by Kingston (14.81%).
- Quick errands, groceries, automotive supplies, hardware goods, pharmacy & drug store, personal care services, professional services, banking and recreational activities are the goods and services that respondents predominately purchase in Gananoque.
- Clothing & apparel, furniture, appliances/TV/electronics, gift & novelty are items that respondents travel outside of Gananoque to purchase, predominately to Kingston.
- Quality and price were rated the most important characteristics when making a purchase decision.
- There are requests for increased operational hours for the downtown businesses as respondents feel it would allow them to invest more in their local economy if goods and services were available at more convenient hours. Overall 35% of respondents recommended Friday after 6:00pm for extended business hours followed by 22% recommending Sunday afternoon.
- There is an overwhelming need for a moderately-priced family clothing store, with 76% respondents stating this is a necessary addition to Gananoque. Suggestions typically included Giant Tiger and Marks Work Warehouse.
- There is also an abundant need for a department store, with over 35% of respondents specifically requesting a Giant Tiger or a department store of similar nature.
- There were comments regarding the need for continued downtown beautification efforts.
- The majority of respondents continue to rely on print and local radio for information on local events and promotions, including the Gananoque Reporter (80.23%), St. Lawrence EMC (49.28%) and MyFM (41.26%).
- The Santa Claus Parade and Ribfest were the events most attended by respondents.

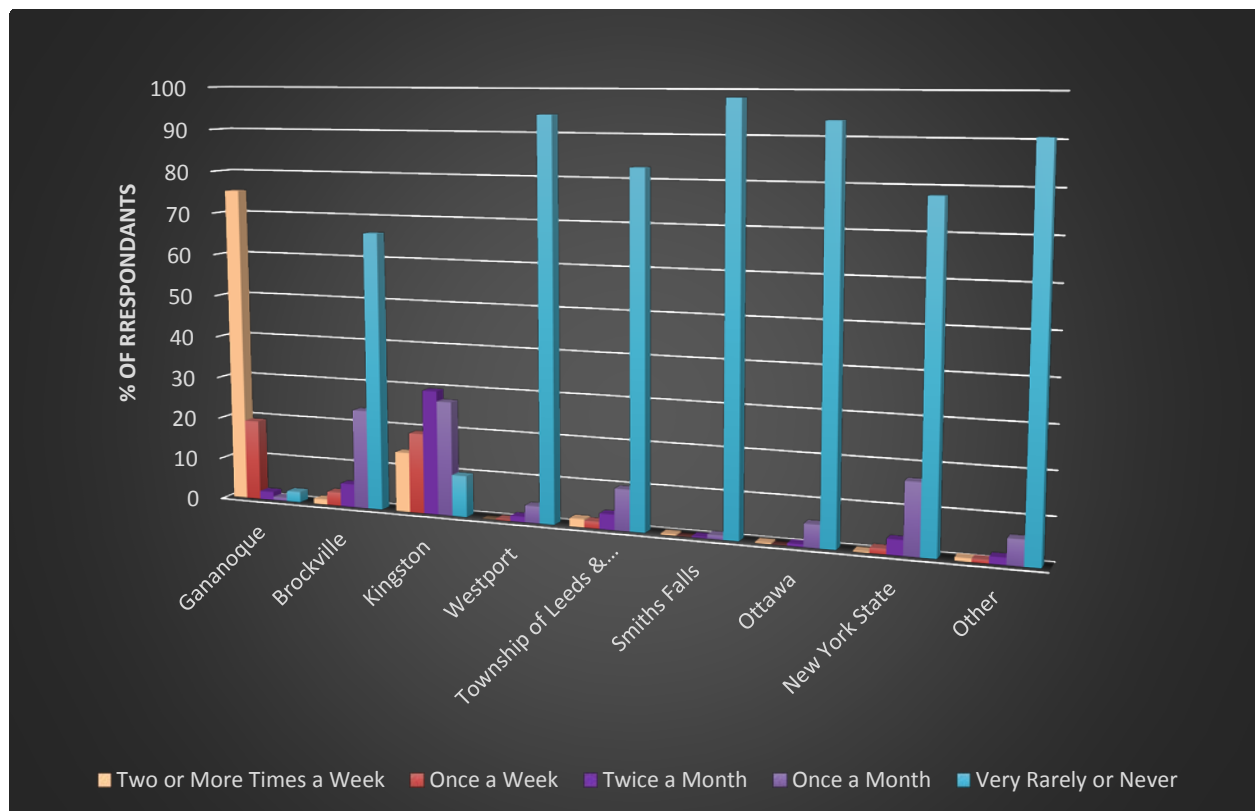
## 4.0 Survey Questions and Results

---

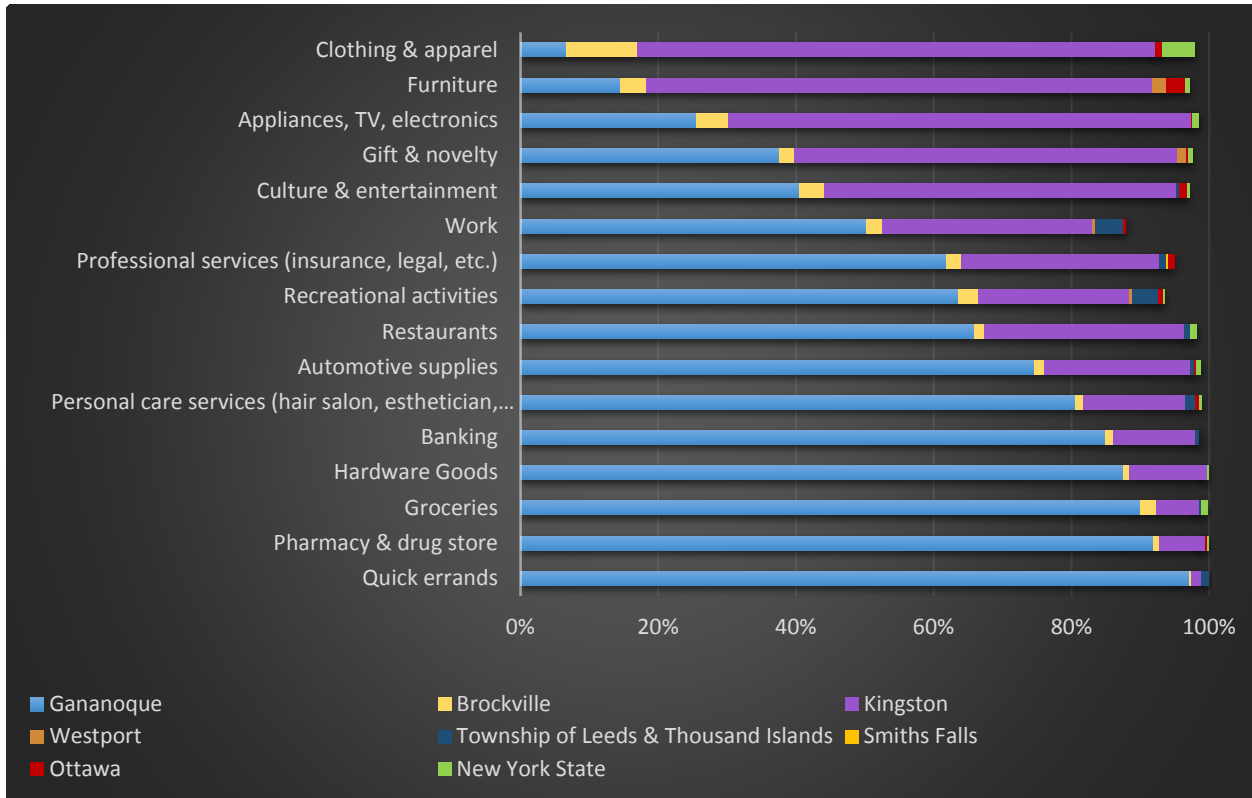
1. What is your home postal code?

321 Responses

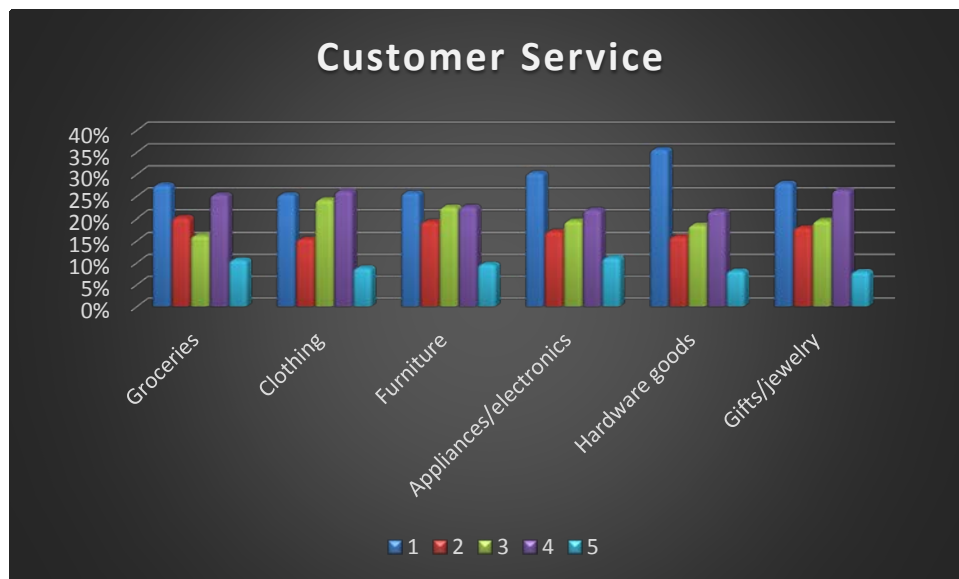
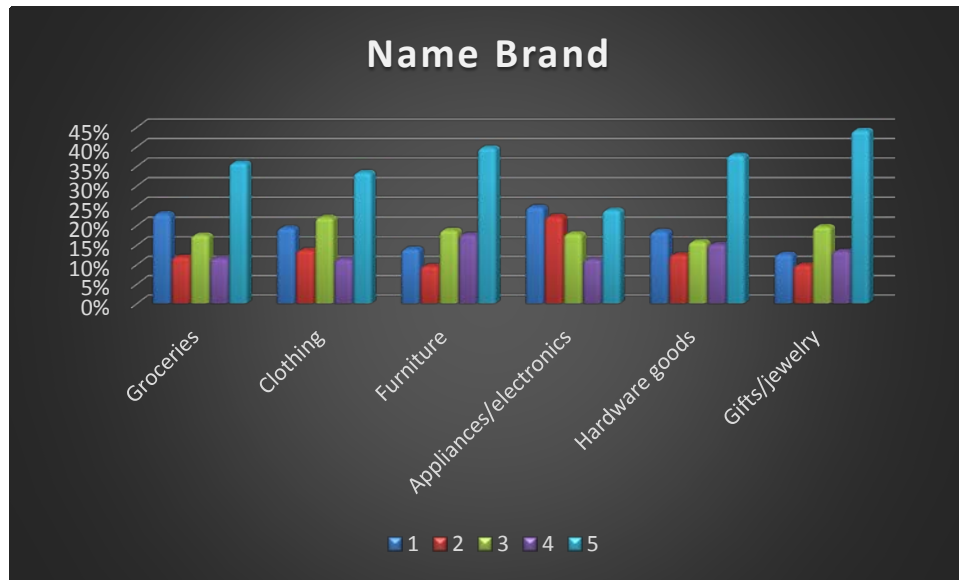
2. How often do you shop at the following locations: Gananoque, Brockville, Kingston, Westport, Township of Leeds & Thousand Islands, Smiths Falls, Ottawa, New York State, Other.



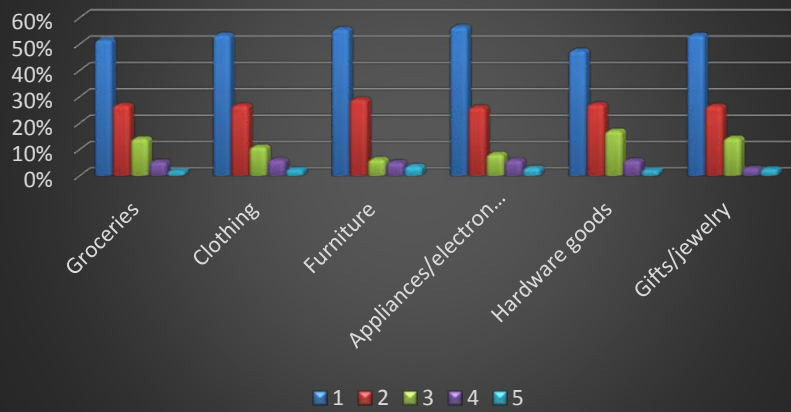
3. Where do you travel for the majority of the following: Quick errands, groceries, clothing & apparel, furniture, appliances/TV/electronics, automotive supplies, hardware goods, pharmacy /drug store, gift & novelty, restaurants, personal care services (hair salon, esthetician), professional services (insurance, legal), work, culture & entertainment, banking, recreational activities.



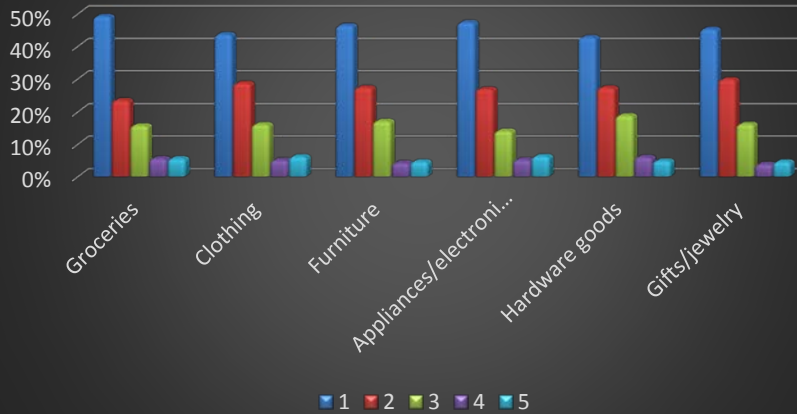
4. Please RANK the importance of the following characteristics (Name Brand, Customer Service, Quality, Price, Local Availability) on the decision to purchase each good (Groceries, clothing, furniture, appliances/electronics, hardware goods, gifts/jewellery).  
Please rank 1 through 5, **1=most important, 5=least important**.



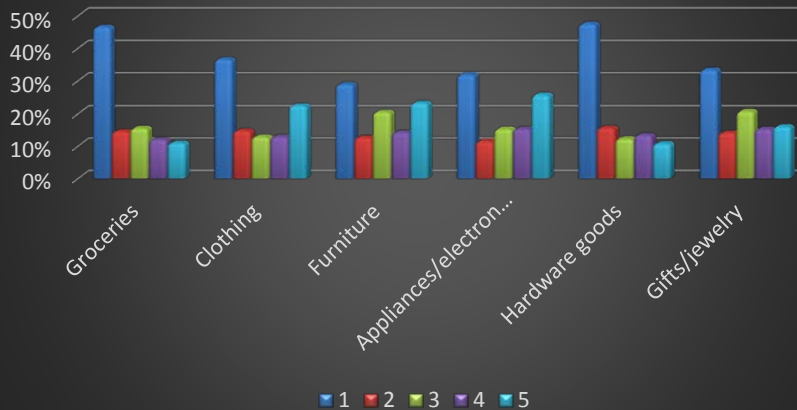
## Quality of Products



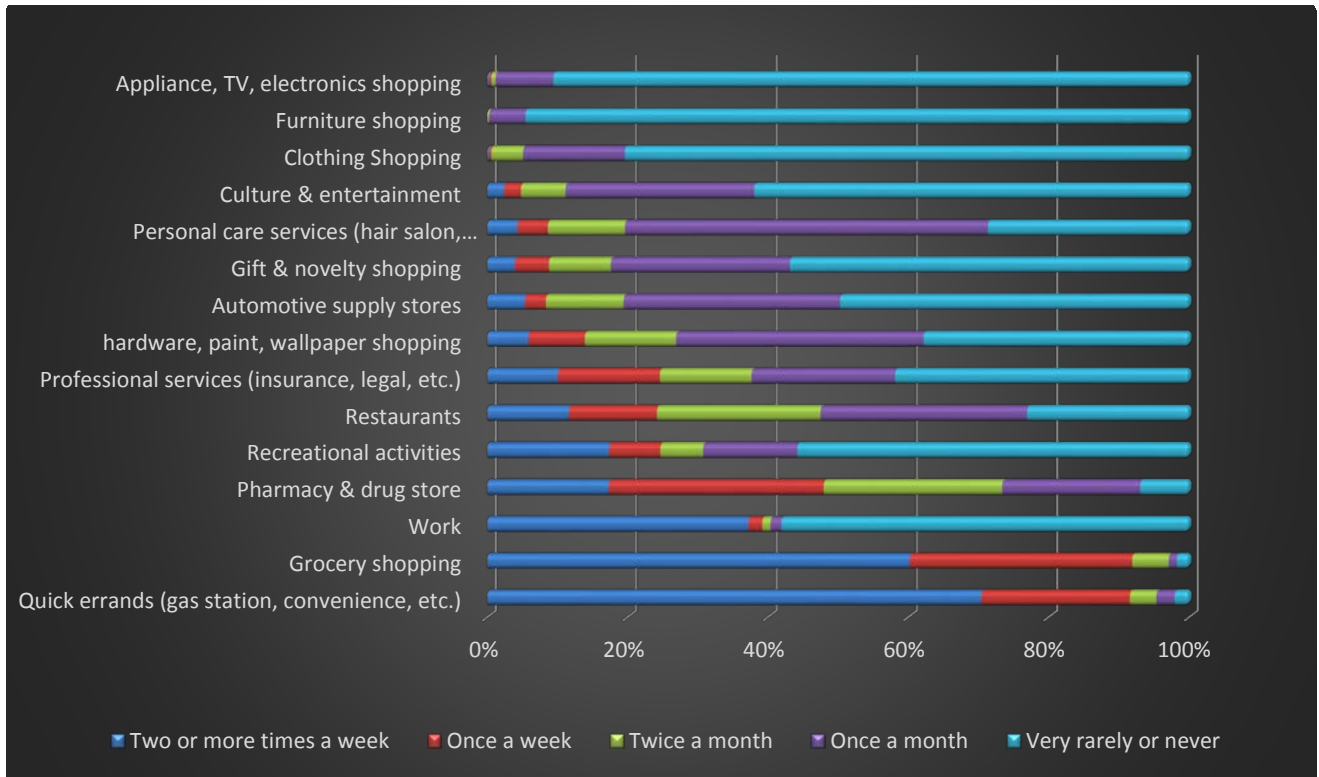
## Price



## Local Availability



5. How often do you visit Gananoque's Downtown rather than travelling elsewhere for the following: Quick errands (gas station, convenience store, etc.), grocery shopping, clothing shopping, furniture shopping, appliance/TV/electronics shopping, automotive supply stores, hardware/paint/wallpaper shopping, pharmacy & drug store, gift & novelty shopping, restaurants, personal care services (hair salon, esthetician), professional services (insurance, banking, legal), work, culture & entertainment, recreational activities.

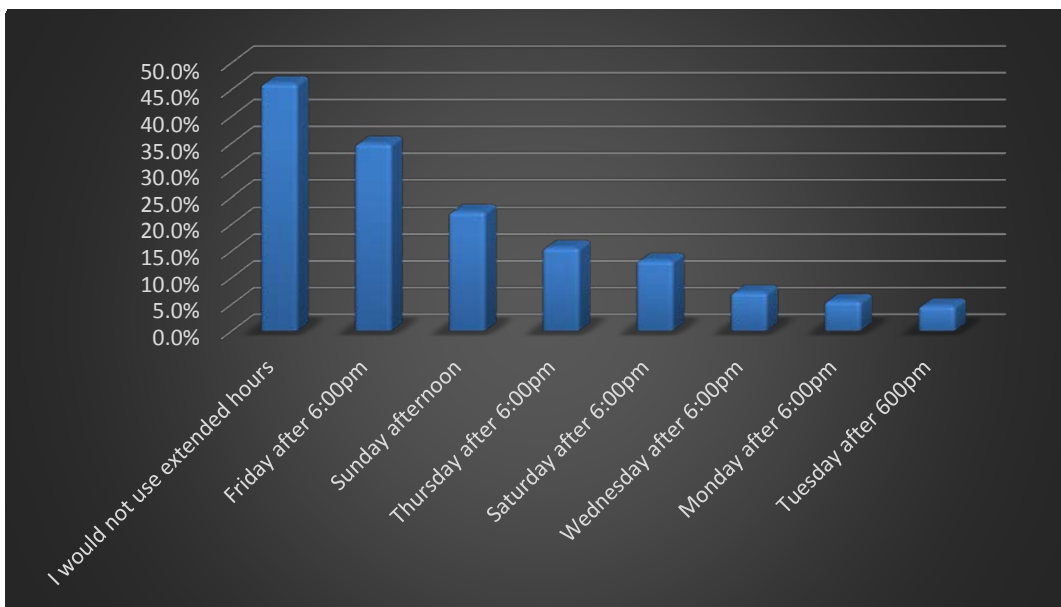




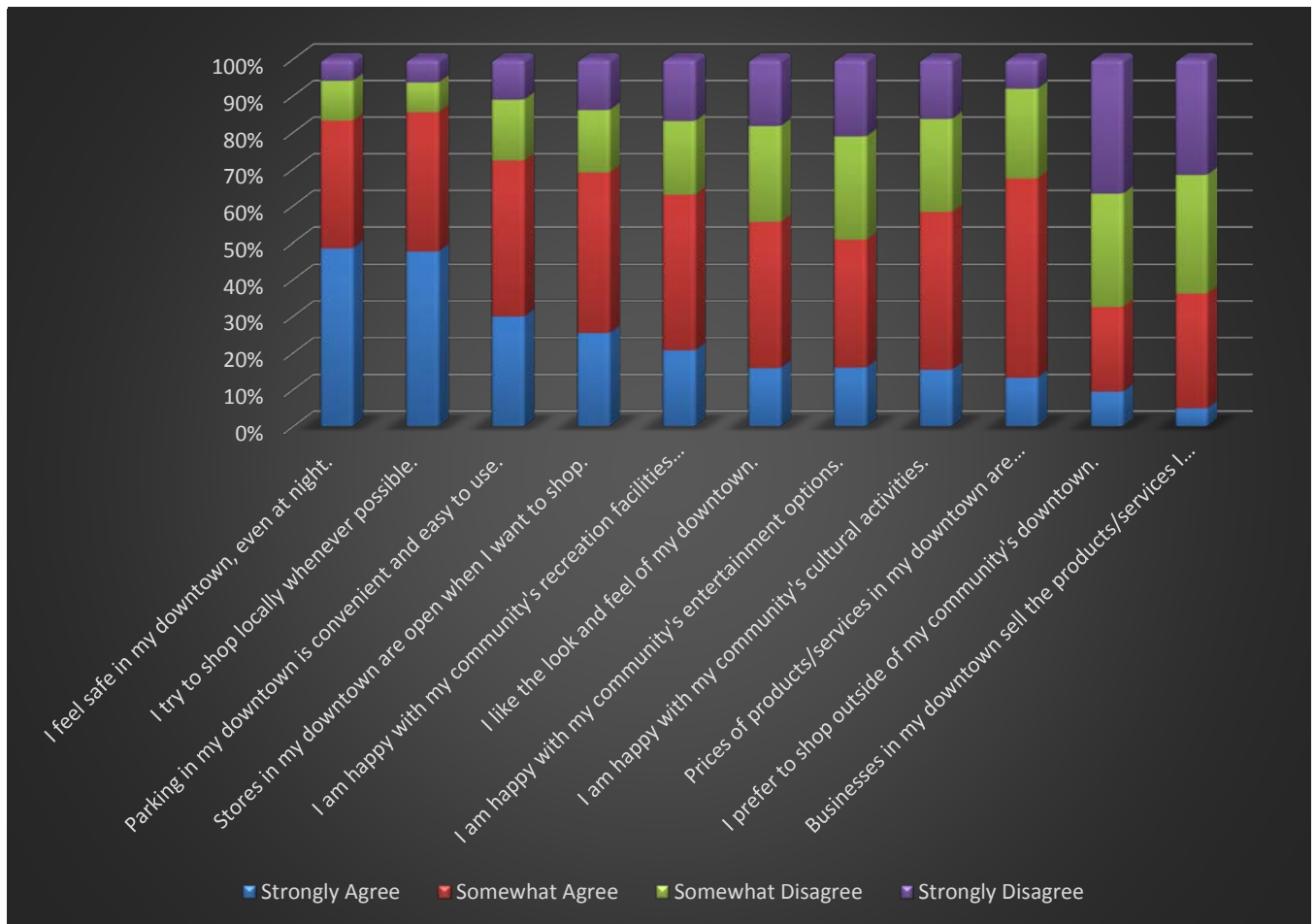
6. When you shop in a location other than in your community's downtown, what are the two main reasons why? (Closer to home, closer to work, better hours, better selection, better price, better quality, other (please specify), I only shop in my downtown.)



7. If stores in the downtown offered extended hours, when would you most likely shop: Monday after 6:00pm, Tuesday after 6:00pm, Wednesday after 6:00pm, Thursday after 6:00pm, Friday after 6:00pm, Saturday after 6:00pm, Sunday afternoon, Other (please specify), I would not use extended hours. (Please choose two answers)



8. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Check one answer for each statement) Stores in my downtown are open when I want to shop.



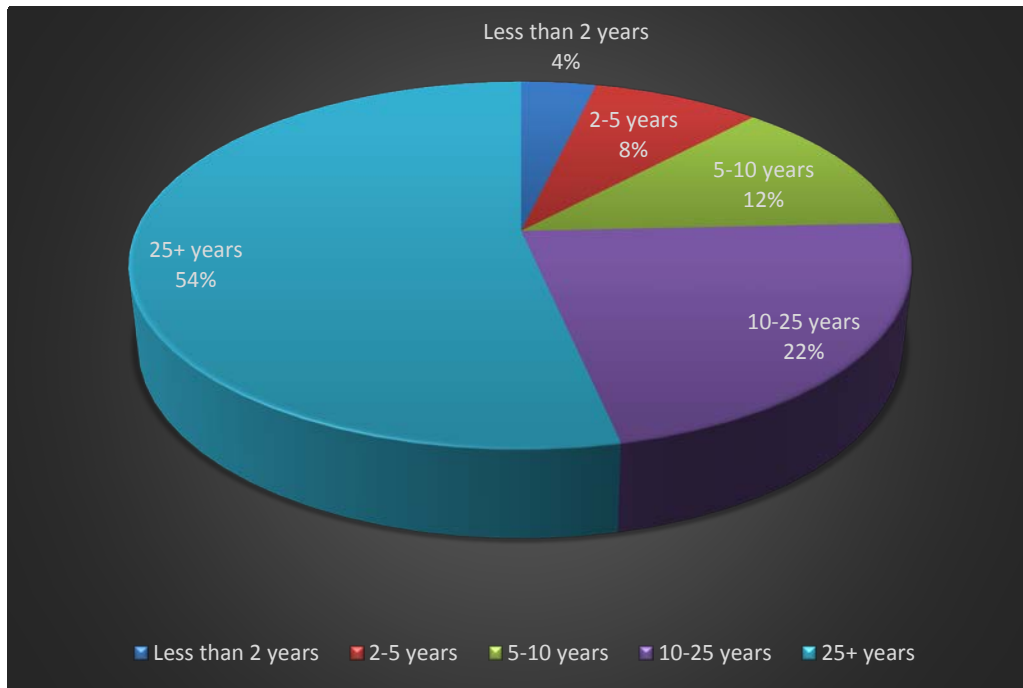
9. What new businesses or services would you like to see in Gananoque's downtown?

274 Responses

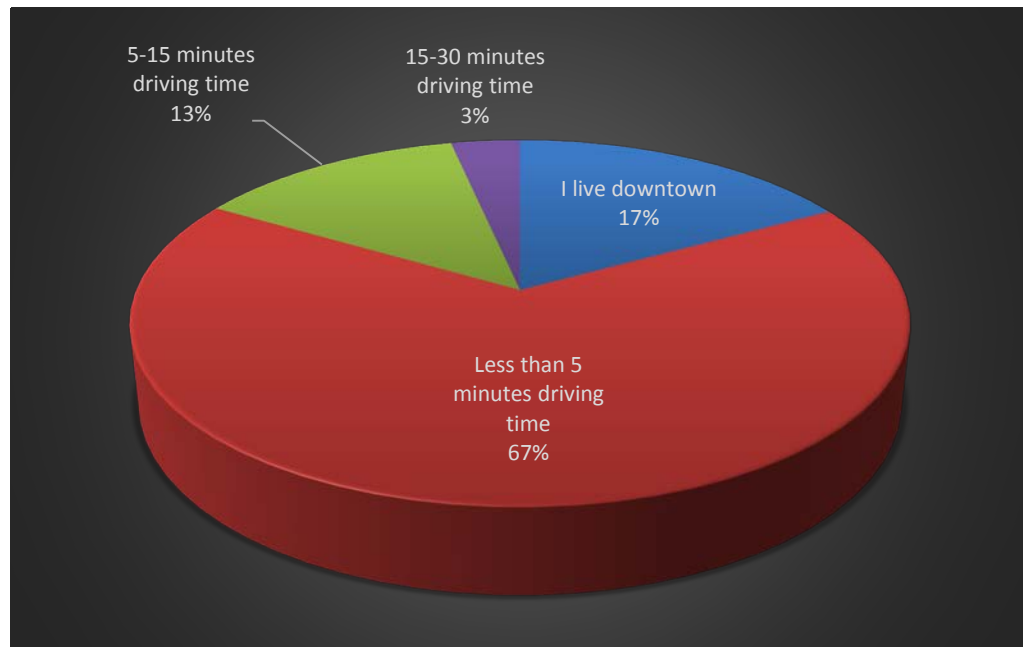
Most common responses include:

- Family clothing/apparel store
- Department store such as Giant Tiger
- Butcher/meat shop
- Other specialty or health food store
- Fitness/recreational facility
- Fine gift store
- Electronics
- Ethic food or family restaurant

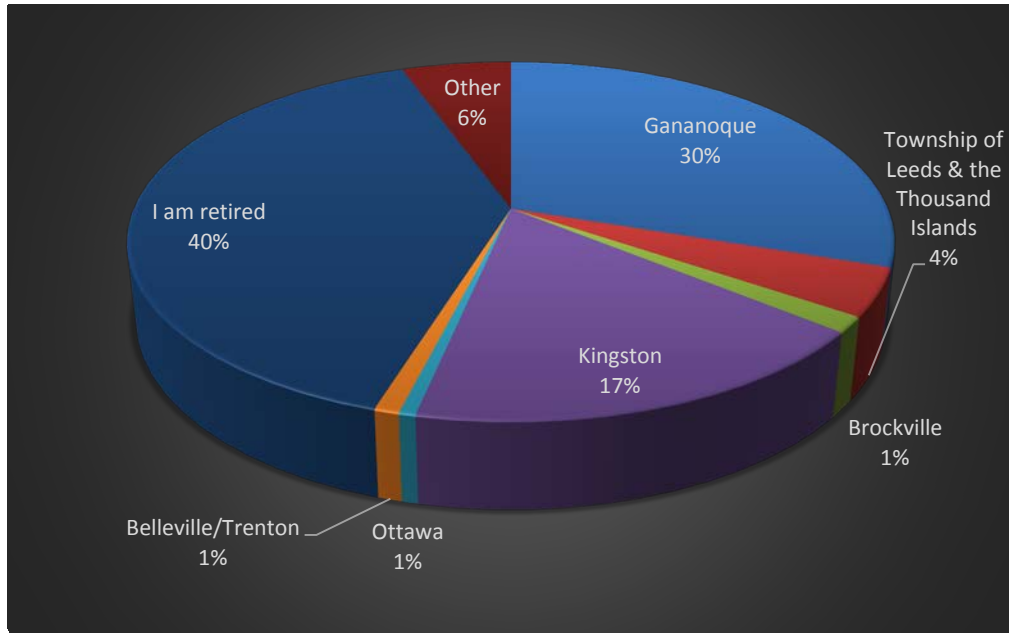
10. How long have you lived in our community? (Check one answer)



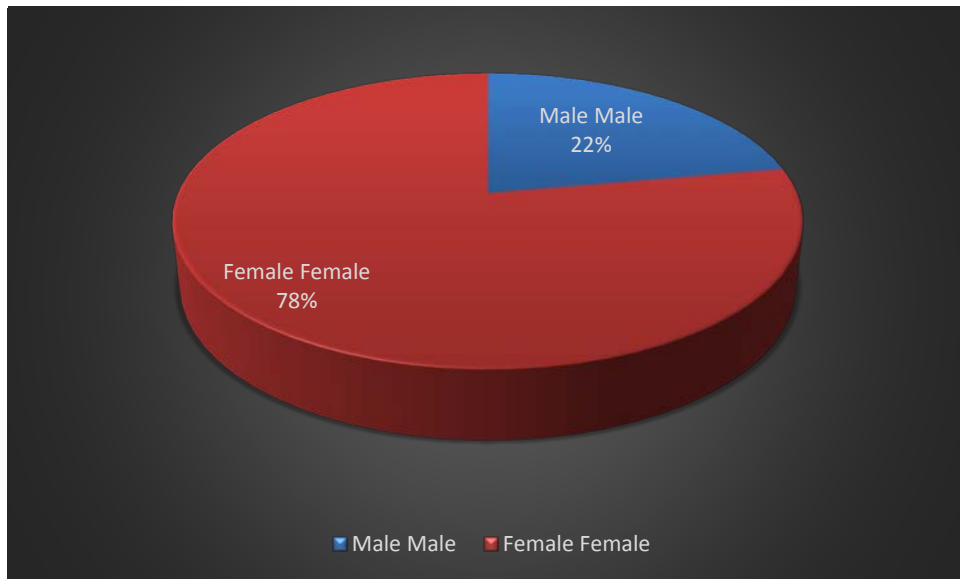
11. How far do you live from Gananoque's downtown? (Check one answer)



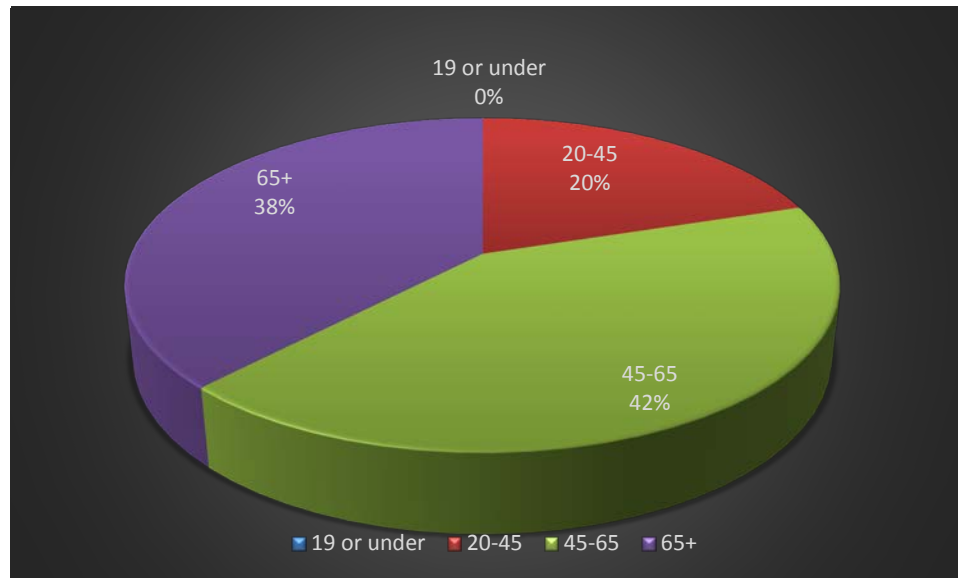
12. Where do you work? (Check one answer)



13. What is your gender (optional)



14. What is your age (optional)

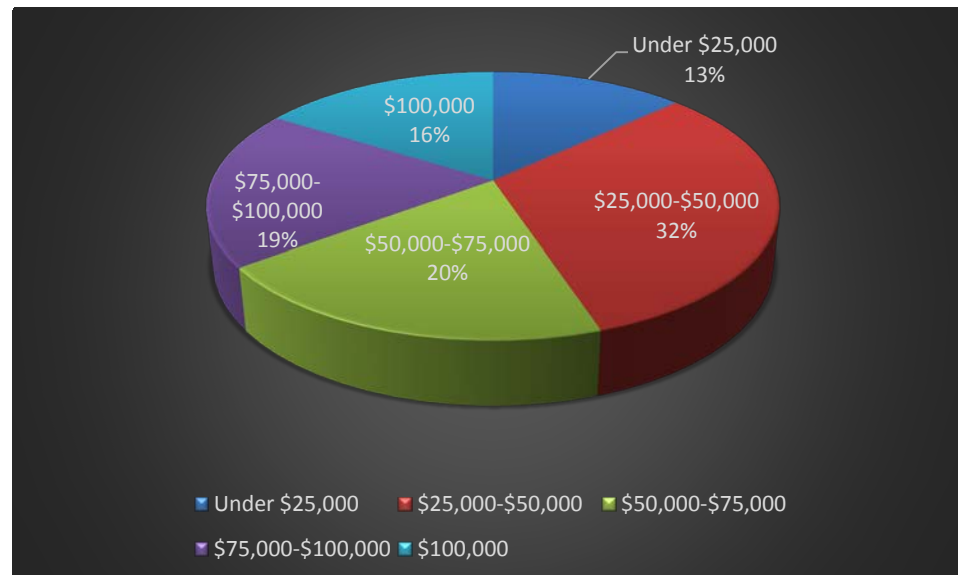


15. What is your household size (optional)

312 Responses

Average 2.4/household

16. What is your household annual income (optional)



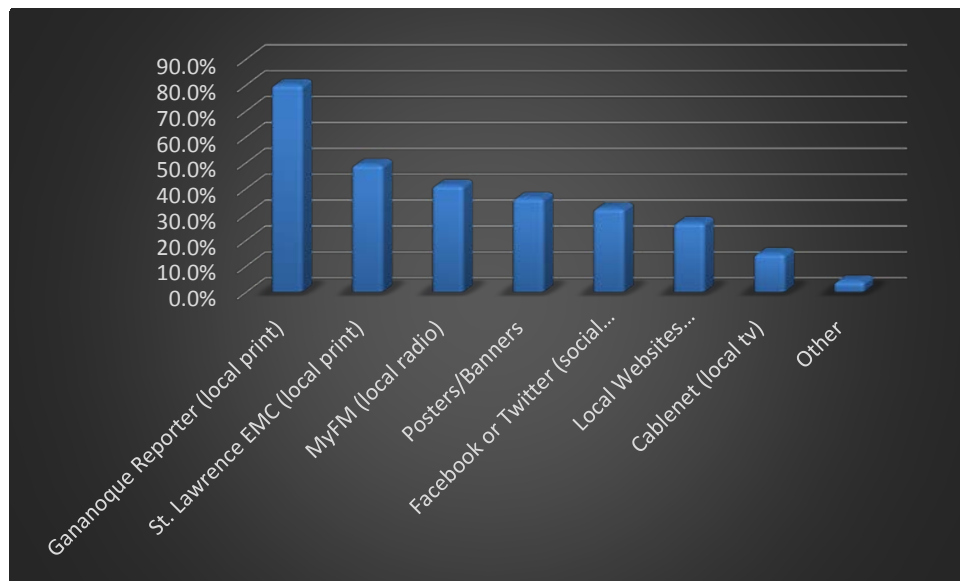
17. Please list any community events you have attended in the past year (i.e. Santa Claus Parade, local festival, etc.).

275 Responses

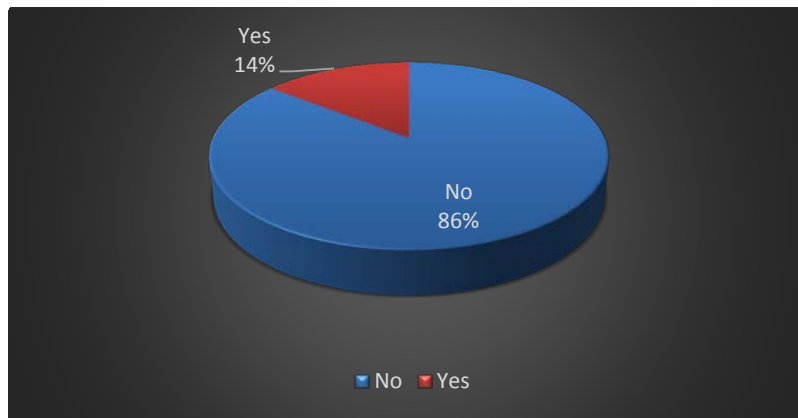
Most common responses included:

- Santa Claus Parade
- Ribfest
- Craft shows
- Farmers market
- Theatre (Thousand Islands Playhouse & Dreams in Motion)
- Hockey games

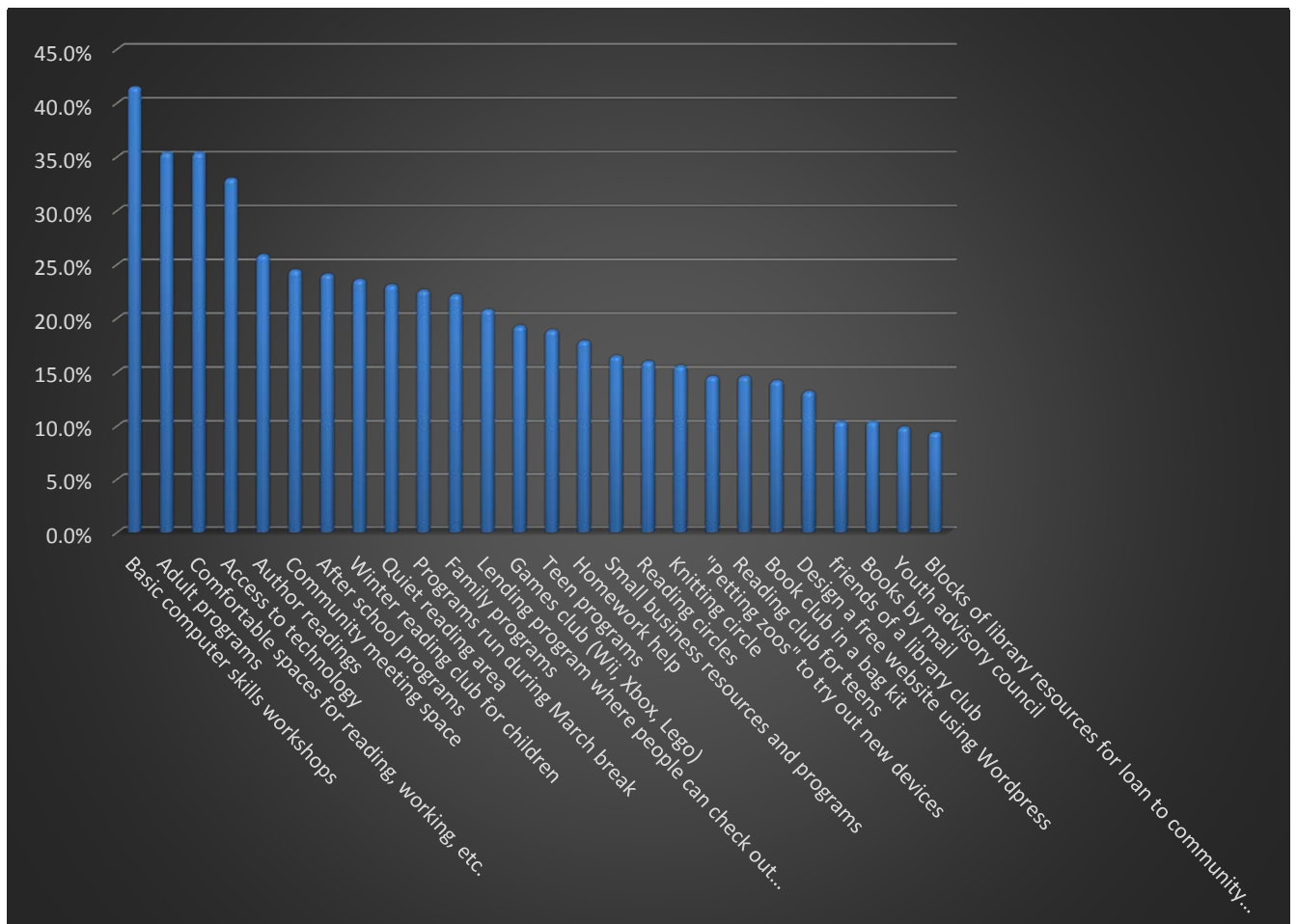
18. What forms of media do you rely on for information on local events, promotions, etc? (Check as many as apply).



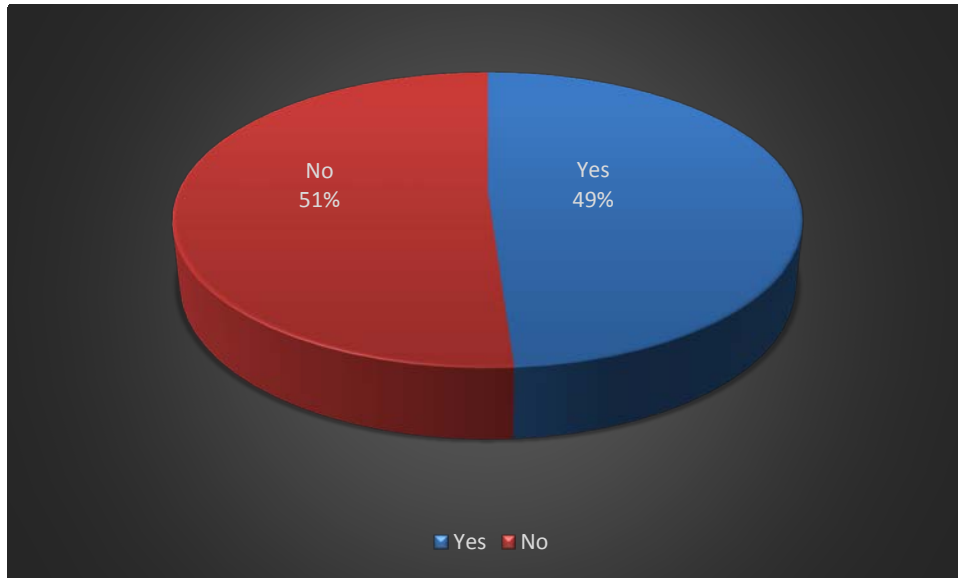
19. The Gananoque Public Library current hours (listed in survey). Is there another time when you would like to see the Gananoque Public Library open?



20. Library services are evolving. Please consider the following services and indicate what you would like to see in the future. (Check as many as apply)



21. Are you currently a library user? (Check one answer) If no, why not? (Please list reasons)



22. If you have any other comments regarding the retail shopping and/or services in Gananoque's downtown, please add them below.

216 Responses (See Survey Summary for the most common responses)

---



## 5.0 Comparator Results

---

The Resident Consumer Survey was created based on the Resident Survey that was distributed in 2007 with the assistance of Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, OMAFRA. The intent was to create a similar survey so that there was consistency and comparable information. The 2007 results can be found online at the following web address.

<http://www.gananoque.ca/sites/gananoque.ca/files/Market-Research-Resident-survey.pdf>

Overall, the responses were very similar with respect to the 2007 and 2014 surveys. The 2007 survey had a greater response with an additional 83 completed surveys. Based on the information collected, the frequency of shopping has declined slightly over the past 7 years with 83% in 2007 to 75% in 2014 of residents shopping in Gananoque two or more times a week. However, there has been an increase from 13% in 2007 to 19% in 2014 of residents shopping locally once a week. In both surveys quick errands, groceries, automotive supplies, hardware goods, pharmacy & drug store, personal care services, professional services, banking and recreational activities are the goods and services that respondents predominately purchase in Gananoque. The only category that changed significantly was clothing shopping which decreased from 14% in 2007 to 7% in 2014. This change may be accounted for by the loss of family clothing stores in 2007 including Scott's, Diers and Fields. Although family clothing stores are still present in 2014 there seems to be a lack of awareness in the community.

The downtown consumer trends have remained similar in the past 7 years with a similar percentage of residents shopping in the downtown area. There remains a demand for longer business hours and the day and time has been consistent with a request for extended hours Friday evening after 6:00pm and Sunday afternoon. Two additional questions were added to the 2014 survey regarding events and use of media to assist the Gananoque BIA with their event planning activities. Additionally, three questions were added to the 2014 survey to assist the Library with their planning needs.

## 6.0 Recommendations

---

Following the completion of the survey and an analysis of the data, a number of recommendations have been provided. These recommendations have been established based on the initial review. However, it is essential that the next steps focus on collaboration between the business organizations and related community groups. It is suggested that the primary groups engaged include the Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement Area, Thousand Islands Accommodation Partners, Keys Employment Centre and interested business members. Through the collaborative effort, a work plan can be established to address the various recommendations and further analyse the document.

- The promotion of existing local businesses is necessary as there were requests from respondents for goods and services that are currently available within Gananoque. This was especially observed with family clothing stores.
- Adjusting the selection and availability of goods and services to better suit the consumer would encourage residents to shop in Gananoque.
- An increase in awareness and engagement in festivals and events could translate exposure for businesses and opportunities to engage the consumer.
- Based on the gaps identified by the local residents, there are a variety of business opportunities including family clothing, specialty foods, household/electronic goods and a butcher shop. These businesses will continue to be targeted through investment attraction activities.
- Establishing a family apparel and/or department store would fill a large gap in Gananoque's consumer needs and deter many residents from travelling outside to purchase apparel and household items.
- A more collective business community that takes pride in their downtown shopping district would help to promote the area to draw future investment.
- Creating a co-op or other projects similar to that of the Gananoque Farmer's Market is a great way to promote local goods and assist in the launching of businesses.
- Create a pilot project with the BIA businesses extending hours on Friday evening during the busy summer period.
- There is a desire in the residents of Gananoque to shop local. Taking initiative to better understand their consumer needs will allow the business community to adapt and grow to better meet these needs.
- There is an opportunity to establish a formal Business Retention and Expansion Alliance with the associated partners and organizations to oversee activities that address the recommendations. Activities could be to provide business workshops, promote business awareness, create business profiles and provide recommendations to address the community's economic viability.