Waterville Main Street
Business Survey Report
<u>April 2009</u>

Prepared For:
Waterville Main Street Commitee

By:
Carlee Evans, Matt Schultz, and Scott Chilafoe, Thomas College students under the direction of Prof. Pat Karush.

Reviewed and edited by WMSt staff.

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Introduction

Students in the Business Consulting Practicum class, under the direction of Professor Pat Karush of Thomas College, assisted in the reconstruction of this survey in coordination with Shannon Haines, Executive Director of the Waterville Main Street (WMSt) Program. This report is a comprehensive collection of all results based on what WMSt businesses reported though the distributed surveys. The sample size consisted of 59 downtown businesses and individuals.

The following data was collected by students; the surveys were edited, coded, and then entered into the statistical package program MINITAB.

Methodology and Limitations

The following represents the findings of the 2009 survey of Downtown Waterville businesses. Surveys were distributed and collected by the WMSt group. In all, 59 surveys were collected; however, in 2007 75 surveys were collected. This indicates the response rate dropped 27% from the previous study.

One of the drawbacks with this survey is the fact that it was very lengthy and was too broad to apply equally to each individual business. The survey was not tailored to specific businesses' interests and some of the questions were difficult for some respondents to answer. Some of the reasons it was so lengthy are that it was designed to contain many of the questions used in a previous 2005 survey for comparison purposes, and it was also intended to be sufficiently comprehensive to assist in the development of WMSt committee. Questions were deleted from the 2007 survey and a few more individually tailored questions were added this year to help; however, the response rate still remained weak.

The objectives of this survey were to determine the general business climate in downtown, identify the needs of downtown businesses, and also determine satisfaction with the Waterville Main Street program.

Executive Summary

The major findings of this report are as follows:

- 35.5 % of businesses reported that they were a service business type.
- 30 people (55.5%) of the respondents surveyed believe that the Waterville Main Street Program is somewhat helpful to the growth of the downtown area.
- Out of the participants surveyed, they strongly agreed that local fire protection was at a satisfactory level.
- 82.7% are either satisfied or very satisfied with the current location of their business.
- Business owners strongly agree that the Main Street Program helps the downtown.
- The biggest challenge that employers are facing right now are cash flow & insurance costs (health).
- 35.1% of the owners surveyed said that they saw a decrease in profits in 2008.
- 74.5% of the businesses maintained about the same levels of employment between the last two years.
- The biggest reason that business saw a fluctuation in employment was due to business decline, which was 29.4% of those surveyed.
- 19.2% of those surveyed stated that they have plans to expand products/services and/or square footage somewhere in the downtown area.
- If changes are planned, 28.5 % would like assistance in drafting and issuing a press release to promote expansion, or finding a new space.
- 32.6% of those surveyed currently have plans to make building improvements in the near future.
- The incentive that businesses would most likely use would be to sign grant up to $2,500.
- Most Main Street businesses seem to compete with others right on Main Street then, in malls/shopping centers & nearby in Augusta, online, or in other areas.
- The majority of the businesses feel that their best competitive advantage over their competition is through price.

- 67.8% felt that there was no specific gender difference in target market.
- 48.1% felt there was no specific age difference in target market.
- The majority of WMSt Businesses draw customers from Winslow- Waterville, Clinton-Fairfield-Benton, Belgrade-Oakland-Rome-Sidney, and Albion-China-Vassalboro areas.
- The majority of WMSt. Businesses have a foot traffic less than one hundred people to about five hundred people.
- During the week, 60% of the of the downtown businesses are busiest between 10:00 am – 2:00 pm; the second busiest times for business was 2:00pm- 5:00 pm (20%), and 13.34% of the downtown businesses were busy after 5:00 pm.
- On weekends, 47.61% of the of the downtown businesses are busiest between 10:00 am – 2:00 pm; the second busiest times for business was from 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm and after 5:00 pm; 14.29% of the downtown businesses were busy before 10:00am.
- The busiest month is December, followed by May and August.
- The Colby Family Weekend, Downtown Waterville Farmers' Market, Maine International Film Festival, Kringleville, Taste of Greater Waterville, and Waterville Opera House Performances increased foot traffic the most.
- 84.78% were not interested in learning about sponsorship opportunities associated with the events stated above.
- 50.90% of the downtown business have taken advantage of the free What's Up In Downtown E-Newsletter issued monthly by Waterville Main Street.
- 62.50% of businesses were not interested in participating in a cooperative Buy Local Waterville Campaign.
- 86.27% of businesses have not participated in the Waterville Main Street's FISH! Customer Service Training.
- 38.46% of businesses said no to the customer training program because they had no interest, while 28.21% didn't know about the program.
- 86.36% of businesses were not interested in WMSt's Mystery Shopper Program.

- 31.82% are willing to participate in the Economic Restructuring Committee; 18.18% are willing to participate in both the promotion committee and business relationships team.
- 61.82% of employees use STAR parking spaces in the Concourse.
- 68.75% of businesses rent the space in which they are located in. Only 5 out of the 16 businesses that replied to this question, own their building.
- 16 businesses out of a possible 59 answered this question. We found this very odd that no new businesses have entered the down town area. Majority (43.75%) have been in operation for 11-20 years.

TABLE 1: BUSINESS TYPE

Q 1. Please indicate your business type

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Art/Culture	3	5.0
Grocery/Meat	1	1.6
Nonprofit	11	18.6
Restaurant/bar/pub	4	6.7
Retail	11	18.6
Service	21	35.5
Salon/Spa	2	3.3
Other	6	10.1
N= 59	n=59	100%

35.5 % of businesses reported that they were a service business type. The second highest percentage was a tie between Retail and Nonprofit at 18.6%. For other, respondents noted career training, healthcare, barbershop, craft store, optical/hearing ads, and TV media.

TABLE 2: HELPFULNESS OF WMSt PROGRAM

Q 2. How helpful do you believe the Waterville Main street program has been to you and your business?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Very Helpful	14	25.9
Somewhat Helpful	30	55.5
Not Helpful	6	11.1
Not Sure	4	7.4
N= 59	n=54	100%

30 respondents (55.5%) believe that the Waterville Main Street Program is somewhat helpful to the growth of the downtown area. 25.9% found the program to be very helpful, and only 11.1% believed that it wasn't helpful. 7.4% felt unsure about the impact that the Waterville Main Street Program had on the area.

TABLE 3: SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

Q 3. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following services and circumstances? (circle ONE answer for each) (1 = strongly agree, 2 = somewhat agree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = strongly disagree, and 5 = don't know.)

	Mean	Standard Deviation +/-
Local fire protection	1.170	0.475
Local waste management services	1.881	0.878
Local municipal services	1.745	0.652
Current internet services	1.863	0.817
Current telephone services	1.772	0.773
Level of local taxation	2.196	0.679
Level of local business regulations	2.189	0.765
Amount of convenient customer parking that is available	1.912	0.756
The quality of the workforce is sufficient to sustain and grow my business.	1.935	0.704

The mean calculations eliminated the answer "5" (don't know

There is a strong agreement that local fire protection was at a satisfactory level with a mean of 1.170. Waste management services, municipal services, internet services, convenient parking, and quality of work force all had means below 2, which indicates a high degree of satisfaction. Local taxation and business regulations had means between 2 and 3. The statement with the lowest level of satisfaction was that of local taxation, with a mean of 2.19. For comments, one respondent noted they haven't needed the services, one noted they wanted trash pickup, sidewalk plowing, and sweeping two to three times a week, one noted they felt uninvolved with WMSt businesses, one respondent noted they enjoyed the decrease in RE taxes, and one noted that waste management does not apply for all businesses.

TABLE 4: SATISFACTION WITH LOCATION

Q 4. How satisfied are you with the present location of your business? (Mark ONE)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Very Satisfied	31	53.4
Satisfied	17	29.3
Neutral	6	10.3
Unsatisfied	2	3.4
Very Unsatisfied	0	0.0
Plan to Move	2	3.4
N= 59	n=58	100%

82.7% of the sample are either satisfied or very satisfied with the current location of their business. Only 10.3% are neutral on the location and 3.4% plan to move the location of their business.

TABLE 5: DOWNTOWN ATMOSPHERE

Q 5. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (circle ONE answer for each) (1 = strongly agree, 2 = somewhat agree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = strongly disagree, and 5 = not knowing)

	Mean	Standard Deviation +/-
I find that the look and feel of downtown helps my business	1.846	0.662
I find that my building façade draws customers into my business	2.038	0.800
I am knowledgeable about creating my own window and store displays	1.611	0.591
I feel safe downtown, even at night	1.732	0.694
I always direct customers to other downtown businesses	1.393	0.524
My employees and I are knowledgeable about other downtown businesses and the services and products they offer.	1.589	0.560
I believe the existing downtown business mix helps my business	2.130	0.740
I believe the Main Street Program helps the downtown	1.296	0.496
I have a good understanding of the services, events, and programs that Waterville Main Street coordinates.	1.607	0.618
I would support a new retail promotion event	1.676	0.572

Of the people surveyed, people strongly agree that the Main Street Program helps the downtown (1.296). Participants somewhat agree that they have a good understanding of the services, events, and programs that Waterville main Street coordinates along with they somewhat support a new retail promotion even The remaining five statements all have means above one; however, no mean is higher than 2.130, which is supporting existing downtown business mix helps my business. For suggested events, one respondent noted summer events at the square, one noted “Dil’ Dickens”, one noted sidewalk sales, and one noted a pie bake-off.

TABLE6: BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Q 6. Are you currently dealing with any of the following business challenges?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Cash Flow	24	51.0
Competition- In town	13	27.6
Competition- Out of town	12	25.5
Difficulty recruiting employees	3	6.3
Financing	11	23.4
Insurance Costs- Health	24	51.0
Insurance Costs- Other	15	31.9
Personal Costs	10	21.2
Product Costs/ Availability	6	12.7
Shipping/Transportation Costs	9	19.1
Shoplifting/Theft	2	4.2
Utility Costs/Availability	11	23.9
Vandalism	3	6.3
Other	4	8.5
N= 59	n= 47	

* Totals to more than 100% due to multiple response*

The biggest challenge that employers are facing right now are cash flow & insurance costs (health) with 24 respondents. The smallest challenge that employers have to deal with is shoplifting/theft.

TABLE 7: PROFITABILITY COMPARISON

Q 7. Comparing 2008 with 2007, was your business:

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
More profitable in 2008	17	31.4
Less profitable in 2008	19	35.1
About the same	18	33.3
N= 75	n= 54	100%

31.4% of the respondents surveyed claimed that they saw an increase in profits in 2008 in comparison to 2007. 35.1% of the people surveyed said that they saw a decrease in profits in 2008. The remaining 33.3% felt that their profits were about the same for the last two years.

TABLE 8: EMPLOYMENT COMPARISON

Q 8. Comparing 2008 with 2007, did your business employ:

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
More people in 2008	5	9.0
About the same	41	74.5
Less people in 2008	9	16.3
N= 59	n= 55	100%

In 2008, some businesses saw a small increase in employees, (9.0%) as compared to 2007. 16.3% of the businesses had fewer employees in 2008 as compared to 2007. 74.5% of the businesses maintained about the same levels of employment between the two years.

TABLE 9: JOBS IN 2009

Q 9. How many jobs did your business provide in 2008, including owners who work in the business?

	Number Reporting	Number Employed
Lowest Point Full-time	22	1 – 3
	3	4 – 6
	5	7 – 10
	1	11 – 15
	0	16 – 20
	2	21 or more
Lowest Point Part-time	13	1 – 3
	3	4 – 6
	4	7 – 10
	2	10 or more
Highest Point Full-time	27	1 – 3
	8	4 – 6
	7	7 – 10
	1	11 – 15
	1	16 – 20
	1	21 – 25
	1	26 – 30
	1	31 or more
Highest Point Part-time	18	1 – 3
	3	4 – 6
	1	7 – 10
	2	11 – 15
	1	16 – 20
	0	21 - 25
	0	26 - 30
	2	31 or more

TABLE 10: EMPLOYMENT IN 2008

Q 10. What is the main reason for any fluctuation in the number of jobs your business provided in 2008?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Seasonal Business	6	17.6
Business Growth	5	14.7
Business Decline	10	29.4
Management Change	0	0
Employee Turnover	6	17.6
Other	7	20.5
N= 59	n= 34	100%

The biggest reason that business saw a fluctuation in employment was due to business decline, which was reported by 29.4% of those surveyed. 17.6% of the fluctuations were due to employee turnover. Seasonal business accounted for 17.6% of the fluctuations, while management change accounted for 0%. Only 14.7% of the fluctuations were due to business growth.

TABLE 11: BUSINESS EXPANSION OR REDUCTION

Q 11. Do you have plans to expand or reduce operations for your business in the foreseeable future?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
I plan to expand products/services or square footage downtown	11	19.2
I plan to expand products/services at a location outside of the downtown	3	5.2
I plan to reduce products/services or square footage downtown	1	1.7
I don't have any plans for changes	42	73.6
N= 59 n=	57	100%

19.2% of those surveyed stated that they have plans to expand products/services and/or square footage somewhere in the downtown area; 5.2% has plans to expand there business outside of the downtown area. Only 1.7% have plans to reduce their products/services and/or square footage in the downtown area. 73.6% currently do not have any plans to make changes to their products/services and/or their square footage.

Q 11a. If changes are planned, would you like help from the Waterville Main Street?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
I would like to meet with the Business Retention Team for guidance	1	14.2
I would like assistance drafting and issuing a press release to promote expansion	2	28.5
I would like assistance finding new space	2	28.5
Other	2	28.5
N= 15 n=	7	100%

If changes are planned, 28.5 % would like assistance in drafting and issuing a press release to promote expansion, finding a new space, and "other". While 14.2% would like to meet with the Business Retention Team for Guidance. In the other section one respondent noted they needed help finding new tenants while another left the column blank.

TABLE 12: BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

Q 12. Are you, or the building owner, considering any building improvement projects?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	16	32.6
No	33	67.3
N= 59	n= 49	100%

32.6% of those surveyed currently have plans to make building improvements in the near future. The remaining 67.3% currently have no plans to make changes to their buildings. For respondents who are considering a project, five noted cosmetic/interior improvements, four noted renovations/additions, three noted external/facade cosmetic improvements, three noted boiler/oil tank installations, three noted roof work and two noted windows.

TABLE 13: INCENTIVES

Q 13. Which incentives would you use for this business if they existed? (Circle a rating for the following question. 1= definitely use, 2= probably use, 3= probably not use, 4=definitely not use, 5= don't know)

	Mean	Standard Deviation +/-
Low Interest Business Loan Program	2.385	1.077
Low Interest Building Improvement Loan	2.533	1.024
Low Interest Façade Loan	3.25	0.777
Façade Grant	2.821	1.136
Sign Grant up to $2,500	2.094	1.234

The incentive that businesses would most likely use would be to sign grant up to $2,500.

The lowest level of interest reported yes for the façade grant.

TABLE 14: LOCATION OF COMPETITION

Q 14. Where is your major competition located?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Downtown Waterville	16	34.7
Local mall/shopping center	9	19.5
Augusta	9	19.5
Internet/Online	7	15.2
Other	14	30.4
N= 59	n=46	

* Totals to more than 100% due to multiple responses*

Most Main Street businesses seem to compete right on Main Street then in malls/shopping centers & nearby in Augusta, online, or in other areas. Other areas were the second highest percentage with 30.4%. For written-in areas three noted nationwide, three noted within the region, three noted throughout Maine, three noted no competition, two noted Portland, and one noted Bangor.

TABLE 15: MAIN COMPETITIVE EDGE

Q 15. What is the main competitive edge of your business versus the competitors listed above? (Mark ONE)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Location	5	5.8
Hours	8	9.4
Service	2	2.3
Name Brands	12	14.1
Quality	15	17.6
Selection	3	3.5
Price	30	35.2
Other	10	11.7
N= 59	n= 85	100%

From this we can see that the majority of the businesses feel that their best competitive advantage over their competition is through price. In the previous survey, participants felt it was their service that maintained a competitive edge over competition. For responses in the other section, one noted reach, one noted service to out of state clients, one noted staff, one noted nature of business, one noted small vs. big box, one noted free services, and one noted history.

TABLE 16: TARGET MARKET

Q 16. Please describe your target customer

Gender	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Male	5	8.9
Female	13	23.2
No specific gender difference	38	67.8
N= 59	n=56	100%

67.8% felt that there was no specific gender difference in target market.

Age	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Under 18	2	2.5
28-24	3	3.7
25-44	12	15.1
45-54	10	12.6
55-64	10	12.6
65+	4	5.0
No age difference	38	48.1
N= 59	n= 79	100%

Once again, 48.1% felt there was no specific age difference in target market.

COMPLEMENTARY BUSINESSES

Q 17. What three downtown businesses complement your business the most? (Specify up to 3 businesses by name)

- (7) Jorgensen's.
- (7) the Maine Made Shop.
- (6) All Banks
- (4) GHM Insurance
- (3) Day's Jewelers
- (3) Waterville Main Street
- (3) Town Office
- (3) Opera House
- (3) All Restaurants
- (2) The Bread Box.
- (2) Atkins Printing.
- (2) Earthbound
- (2)The Farmer's Market.
- (2) Soup to Nuts
- (2) Adams and Worth
- (2) Berry's Stationers.
- (1) The Paragon Shop
- (1) Yardgoods.
- (1) The Last Unicorn.
- (1) SBS Carbon Copy.
- (1) Dollar Store.
- (1) MID Maine Chamber of Commerce.
- (1) Saturn Systems.
- (1) Kennebec Federal Savings Bank
- (1) Key Bank.
- (1)Bank of America
- (1)Let's Talk Language School
- (1) Midnight Blues Club
- (1) Framemakers
- (1) WTVL
- (1) Morning Sentinel
- (1) Al Corey's Music Center
- (1) Sign of the Sun
- (1) AE Hodsdon Engineers

TABLE 18: OTHER BUSINESSES WANTED

Q 18. With your business in mind, what four businesses from the following list would you most like to see in downtown Waterville? (Please mark FOUR and rank them 1-4 with 1 being your top choice)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Antique Shop	4	8.51
Art Gallery/Museum	7	14.89
Bakery	15	31.91
Coffee Shop	4	8.51
Grocery/Convenience Store	20	42.55
Specialty Foods Store	10	21.28
Hardware Store	8	17.02
Home Furnishing Store	3	6.38
Restaurant	8	17.02
Pet Store	5	10.64
Toy/Hobby/Game Shop	6	12.77
Children's Clothing Store	5	10.64
Men's Clothing Store	10	21.28
Women's Clothing Store	7	14.89
Shoe Store	5	10.64
Other	4	8.51
N= 59	n=47	

This table shows us that many WMSt businesses would like to see a Grocery/Convenience Store, Specialty Foods Stores, Men's Clothing Stores, and a Bakery; to go into the Main Street area. For responses in the other section two noted large department store and two noted drug store. Rankings could not be calculated, as respondents did not follow instructions.

TABLE 19: WHERE CUSTOMERS COME FROM

Q 19. From which three areas does your business draw the most customers? (Please mark THREE by ranking them 1-3 with 1 being the top area from which you draw).

	Number Reporting	%Reporting
Albion-China-Vassalboro	12	23.0
Belgrade-Oakland-Rome-Sidney	26	50.0
Clinton-Fairfield-Benton	20	38.4
Winslow-Waterville	36	69.2
Greater Augusta Area	7	13.4
Greater Farmington Area	1	1.9
Greater Pittsfield Area	0	0.0
Greater Skowhegan Area	7	13.4
Greater Unity Area	1	1.9
Coastal Towns	0	0.0
Other	1	1.9
Don’t Know/Not Applicable	5	9.6
N= 59	n=52	

* Percentages could not be calculated due to the nature of this question (12 areas could be checked)

Here we can see that the majority of WMSt Businesses draw customers from Winslow-Waterville, Clinton-Fairfield-Benton, Belgrade-Oakland-Rome-Sidney, and Albion-China-Vassalboro areas. One respondent in the other section noted Bangor and another noted Lewiston.

TABLE 20: VISITS PER WEEK

Q 20. How many customers/clients visit your business per week? (What is your average weekly foot traffic?)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
None- all business via phone, Internet, etc.	7	14%
Less than 100	24	48%
100-500	12	24%
500-1000	3	6%
Over 1000	4	8%
N=59	n=50	100%

The above table reports that the majority of WMSt. Businesses have a foot traffic of less then one hundred people to about five hundred people.

TABLE 21: HOURS OF OPERATION

Q 21. What are the hours of operation for your business?

Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours	Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours
Monday	1	7:00-6:00	**Tuesday**	1	7:00-6:00
	1	7:30:-5:30		1	7:30:-5:30
	1	7:30-4:00		1	7:30-4:00
	1	7:30-4:30		1	7:30-4:30
	2	7:30-5:00		3	7:30-5:00
	1	7:30-5:30		1	7:30-5:30
	1	8:00-2:00		1	8:00-2:00
	1	8:00-4:00		1	8:00-4:00
	7	8:00-5:00		7	8:00-5:00
	1	8:00-5:30		1	8:00-5:30
	2	8:00-6:00		2	8:00-6:00
	1	8:00-8:00		1	8:00-8:00
	1	8:30-4:30		1	8:30-4:30
	2	8:30-5:00		2	8:30-5:00
	2	8:30-5:30		2	8:30-5:30
	2	9:00-4:00		2	9:00-4:00
	1	9:00-4:30		1	9:00-4:30
	6	9:00-5:00		6	9:00-5:00
	2	9:00-5:30		2	9:00-5:30
	1	9:00-6:00		1	9:00-6:00
	1	9:00-8:00		1	9:00-8:00
	1	9:00-9:00		1	9:00-9:00
	1	9:30-4:30		1	9:30-4:30
	1	9:30-5:00		1	9:30-5:00
	1	10:00-4:00		1	10:00-4:00
	1	10:00-5:00		1	10:00-5:00
	1	10:00-7:00		1	10:00-7:00

Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours	Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours
Wednesday	1	7:00-6:00	**Thursday**	1	7:00-6:00
	1	7:30:-5:30		1	7:30:-5:30
	1	7:30-4:00		1	7:30-4:00
	1	7:30-4:30		1	7:30-4:30
	3	7:30-5:00		3	7:30-5:00
	1	7:30-5:30		1	7:30-5:30
	1	8:00-2:00		1	8:00-2:00
	1	8:00-4:00		1	8:00-4:00
	7	8:00-5:00		7	8:00-5:00
	1	8:00-5:30		1	8:00-5:30
	2	8:00-6:00		2	8:00-6:00
	1	8:00-8:00		1	8:00-8:00
	1	8:30-4:30		1	8:30-4:30
	2	8:30-5:00		3	8:30-5:00
	1	8:30-5:30		1	8:30-5:30
	2	9:00-4:00		1	8:30-7:00
	1	9:00-4:30		2	9:00-4:00
	6	9:00-5:00		1	9:00-4:30
	2	9:00-5:30		6	9:00-5:00
	1	9:00-6:00		2	9:00-5:30
	1	9:00-8:00		1	9:00-6:00
	1	9:00-9:00		1	9:00-8:00
	1	9:30-4:30		1	9:00-10:00
	1	9:30-5:00		1	9:30-4:30
	1	10:00-4:00		1	9:30-5:00
	1	10:00-5:00		1	10:00-4:00
	1	10:00-7:00		1	10:00-5:00
				1	10:00-7:00

Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours
Friday	1	7:00-6:00
	1	7:30:-5:30
	1	7:30-4:00
	1	7:30-4:30
	3	7:30-5:00
	1	7:30-5:30
	1	8:00-2:00
	1	8:00-4:00
	7	8:00-5:00
	1	8:00-5:30
	2	8:00-6:00
	1	8:30-4:30
	3	8:30-5:00
	2	8:30-5:30
	2	9:00-4:00
	1	9:00-4:30
	6	9:00-5:00
	2	9:00-5:30
	1	9:00-6:00
	1	9:00-8:00
	1	9:30-4:30
	1	9:30-5:00
	1	9:00-12:00
	1	10:00-4:00
	1	10:00-5:00
	1	10:00-7:00

Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours
Saturday	1	6:00-10:00
	1	7:00-6:00
	1	7:30-12:00
	1	8:00-2:00
	1	8:00-4:00
	1	8:00-5:30
	1	8:30-5:00
	1	9:00-1:00
	1	9:00-1:30
	1	9:00-11:00
	3	9:00-12:00
	1	9:00-3:00
	2	9:00-5:00
	1	9:00-5:30
	1	9:00-6:00
	1	9:00-9:00
	1	9:30-4:30
	1	10:00-3:00
	1	10:00-4:00
	1	10:00-5:00
	1	4:00pm-10:00am

Day	# of Businesses	Store Hours
Sunday	1	7:00-4:00
	1	9:00-9:00
	1	12:00-2:00
	1	12:00-5:00
	1	4:00pm-10:00am

There were 46 respondents in this table. 21 (45.6%) are open Monday—Friday and are closed on the weekends. 16 (34.7%) are open Monday—Saturday and are closed on Sundays. Most business es operate very close to 9 :00am—5 :00pm as we would expect.

TABLE 22: HOURS OF OPERATION COMPARISON

Q 22. How do your hours of operation compare to those of your primary competitor(s)?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
About the same	20	47.6
I am open fewer days	7	16.6
I close later	8	19.0
I open earlier	8	19.0
I am open more days	4	9.5
Question does not apply to my business	13	30.9
I open later	2	4.7
I close earlier	4	9.5

N= 59

This table reports that the largest percent of WMSt. Businesses' business hours are comparable to their competitors. We also see that some are open fewer days, they close later, or open earlier then their competition.

TABLE 23: SHIFTING HOURS

Q 23a. Given that studies have proven that approximately 70% of all retail sales in the U.S. occur on weeknights after 5pm or on weekends, would you be willing to shift your hours by two hours (i.e., from 9 am-5pm to 11am-7pm) one day per week?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	10	28.57%
No	25	71.42%
N=59	n=35	100%

We can see from this table that most WMSt. businesses would not stay open later.

Q 23b. Would you be willing to extend your hours (i.e., go from 9am – 5pm to 9am – 7pm) one day per week?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	12	35.29%
No	22	64.71%
N= 59	n=34	100%

Once again, most WMSt Businesses would not be willing to extend their hours of operations one day per week.

TABLE 24: CHANGE HOURS WITH OTHERS

Q 24. Would your willingness to shift or Extend your current business hours change to yes if all, or most, other downtown retailers shifted or extended their hours one night a week?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	9	37.50%
No	15	62.50%
N= 75	n=24	100%

According to this table, WMSt. Businesses would not extend their hours later even if their competition or stores in the area did the same.

TABLE 25: BUSIEST TIMES OF DAY

Q 25. What are the two busiest times of day for your business? (Mark the busiest times day)

Weekdays	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Before 10:00 am	3	6.66%
10:00 am – 2:00 pm	27	60.00%
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	9	20.0%
After 5:00 pm	6	13.34%
N= 59	n= 45	100%

This table shows the busiest times for weekdays. 60.00% of the of the downtown businesses are busiest between 10:00 am – 2:00 pm; the second busiest times for business was 2:00pm- 5:00 pm (20%), and 13.34% of the downtown businesses were busy after 5:00 pm.

Weekends	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Before 10:00 am	3	14.29%
10:00 am – 2:00 pm	10	47.61%
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	4	19.05%
After 5:00 pm	4	19.05%
N= 59	n=21	100%

This table shows the busiest times for weekends. 47.61% of the of the downtown businesses are busiest between 10:00 am – 2:00 pm; the second busiest times for business was from 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm and After 5:00 pm; 14.29% of the downtown businesses were busy before 10:00am.

TABLE 26: BUSIEST DAY OF THE WEEK

Q 26. What is the busiest day of the week for your business? (Check ONLY ONE)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Sunday	1	1.66
Monday	14	23.34
Tuesday	6	10.00
Wednesday	6	10.00
Thursday	7	11.66
Friday	18	30.00
Saturday	8	13.34
N=59		100%

This table shows the break down for the busiest days of the week for downtown businesses. 23.34% stated that Monday was the busiest day.

TABLE 27: BUSIEST MONTHS OF THE YEAR

Q 27. What are the three busiest months of the year for your business? (Mark up to THREE)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
January	3	6.6
February	4	8.8
March	2	4.4
April	1	2.0
May	11	24.4
June	10	22.2
July	8	17.7
August	11	24.4
September	10	22.2
October	9	20.0
November	8	17.7
December	13	28.8

N=59

* Percentages could not be calculated due to the nature of this question (mark up to three)

This table shows the five busiest months of the year for businesses: May, June, Auguest, September, and December. The busiest month is December, followed by May and August.

TABLE 28: SLOWEST MONTHS OF THE YEAR

Q 28. What are your three slowest months? (Please mark three by ranking them 1-3 with 1 being your slowest month).

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
January	22	45.8
February	16	33.3
March	10	20.8
April	3	6.0
May	2	4.1
June	2	4.1
July	6	12.5
August	7	14.5
September	2	4.2
October	6	12.5
November	5	10.4
December	9	36.0
N=59	n=48	

The slowest months of the year are January and February, January being the slowest.

TABLE 29: MAJOR SALES/SPECIALS

Q 29. When do you typically plan major sales/specials for your business? (Mark ALL that apply)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
January	3	23.0
February	2	15.3
March	2	15.3
April	3	23.0
May	3	23.0
June	2	15.3
July	4	30.7
August	4	30.7
September	2	15.3
October	1	7.6
November	4	30.7
December	7	53.8
N=59	n=13	

* Totals to more than 100% due to multiple response*

This table shows that businesses in downtown Waterville typically plan major sales or specials in the months of (listed in descending order) December, August, July, November, January, and April. The least popular months to plan a sale or promotions for businesses were October, September, June, February, and March.

TABLE 30: DOWNTOWN EVENTS

Q 31. Which of the following events increased foot traffic or sales volume for your business? (Mark all that apply)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Alive After 5	5	20.0
Colby Family Weekend	12	48.0
Colby/Thomas Graduation	7	28.0
Get Up Downtown	2	8.0
Downtown Waterville Farmers' Market	11	44.0
Harvest Fest	4	16.0
The Hill 'n the Ville	2	8.0
Maine International Film Festival	14	56.0
Kringleville	10	40.0
Main Street Madness 3-on-3 Tournament	2	8.0
Parade of Lights	6	24.0
Seize the Mic	4	16.0
Summer Sidewalk Sales	8	32.0
Taste of Greater Waterville	11	44.0
Waterville Intown Arts Fest	9	36.0
Waterville Opera House Performances	12	48.0
N= 59	n=25	

* Totals can not be calculated to 100% due to multiple responses*

The Colby Family Weekend, Downtown Waterville Farmers' Market, Maine International Film Festival, Kringleville, Taste of Greater Waterville, and Waterville Opera House Performances increased foot traffic the most.

TABLE 31: SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Q 31. Would you be interested in learning about sponsorship opportunities associated with these events?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	7	15.22%
No	39	84.78%
N= 59	n=46	100%

84.78% were not interested in learning about sponsorship opportunities associated with the events stated above.

TABLE 32: ADVERTISING STRATEGIES

Q 32 a. Approximately what percentage of your annual operating budget is spent on advertising?

	Number Reporting
1%	1
3%	5
3.5%	1
4.5%	1
5%	3
7%	1
10%	1
25%	1
40%	1

N= 59 n=15

2/3 of businesses spend between 3-5% of their annual operating budget on advertising.

Q 32 b. Which of the following media do you use (Check all that apply; Circle the one that you use most often).

	Number Reporting	%Reporting
Direct Mail	24	48.9
E-Newsletters	11	22.4
Internet ads	12	24.4
Magazine ads	2	4.0
Newspaper ads	31	63.2
Radio ads	19	38.7
Sponsorships	11	22.4
Televisions ads	6	12.2
Window Displays	13	26.5
Yellow Pages	25	51.0
Other	12	24.4
N=59	n=49	100%

This table shows how businesses divide their annual advertising budget among different media. The majority reported newspaper ads, yellow pages, and direct mail as the most used medium. Magazines were reported by the smallest number of respondents.

TABLE 33: DOWNTOWN E-NEWSLETTER

Q 33. Have you taken advantage of the free What's Up In Downtown E-Newsletter issued monthly by Waterville Main Street? Why or why not?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	28	50.90
No	27	49.10
N= 59	n=55	100.00%

The data shown above displays that 50.90% of the downtown business have taken advantage of the free What's Up In Downtown E-Newsletter issued monthly by Waterville Main Street. On the other end of the spectrum 49.10% replied that they haven't taken advantage of this opportunity yet. For respondents noting "why not", nine where not aware and two noted they will be taking advantage of the newsletter.

TABLE 34: PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE BUY WTVL CAMPAIGN

Q 34. Would you be interested in participating in a cooperative Buy Local Waterville Campaign?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	15	37.50
No	25	62.50
N=59	n=40	100%

62.50% of businesses were not interested in participating in a cooperative Buy Local Waterville Campaign. For respondents noting how much they would be willing to spend annually, two expressed it was cost dependent, two noted $100.00, one noted $300.00 and one noted $500.00.

TABLE 35: DECORATING PROGRAMS

Q35. In which of the following seasonal decorating programs do you participate?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Flower Box Program	22	57.89
Holiday Wreath & Garland Program	16	42.11
N=59	n=38	100%

The Downtown flower box decretive program has the most amount of participation (57.89%); closely following is the Holiday Wreath & Garland decretive program (42.11%).

TABLE 36: WTVL MAIN ST. CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING

Q36. Have you and/or your employees taken advantage of Waterville Main Street's FISH! Customer Service Training?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	7	13.73
No	44	86.27
N=59	n=51	100%

86.27% of businesses have not participated in the Waterville Main Street's FISH! Customer Service Training.

TABLE 36a: REASONS FOR LACKING INTREST IN TRAINING

Q36a. If no, why not?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Didn't know about it	11	28.21
No interest	15	38.46
Our customer service is already World class	3	7.69
Timing isn't convenient	9	23.08
Too expensive	1	2.56
N=59	n=39	100%

38.46% of businesses said no to the customer training program because they had no interest, while 28.21% didn't know about the program.

TABLE 36b: ON SITE TRAINING

Q36b. Would you be interested in customized, on-site customer service training for your business?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	6	13.95
No	37	86.05
N=59	n=43	100%

Once again, businesses are not interested in customer service training—even if it was on-site.

TABLE 37: WMSt's MYSTERY SHOPPER PROGRAM

Q37.Woud you be interested in participating in the WMSt's Mystery Shopper Program through which you pay $100 for confidential reports from three mystery shoppers who have been trained to evaluate your business?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	6	13.64
No	38	86.36
N=59	n=44	100%

86.36% of businesses were not interested in WMSt's Mystery Shopper Program.

TABLE 38: VOLUNTEERING

Q 38. Would you and/or any of your employees be interested in volunteering for any of the following programs?

Response for YES	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Business Relations Team	4	18.18
Downtown clean ups	2	9.09
Economic Restructuring Committee	7	31.82
Design Committee	3	13.64
Promotion committee	4	18.18
Freshwater Arts	2	9.09
N=59	n=22	100%

The data in this table shows the willingness of the Owner and employees to volunteer for the various programs. 31.82% are willing to participate in the Economic Restructuring Committee; 18.18% are willing to participate in both the promotion committee and business relationships team, and the other categories show small interest.

TABLE 39: STAR PARKING

Q 39. Are you and/or your employees using the STAR parking spaces in the Concourse?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	34	61.82
No	21	38.18
N= 59	n=55	

61.82% of employees use STAR parking spaces in the Concourse. Of respondents entering the number of spaces they use, 64% use one, two, or three, 29% use four, five, or six, and 7% use more than seven with one respondent using twenty spaces.

TABLE 40:NEW EMPLOYEE USE OF STAR PARKING

Q 40. Do you train new employees to park in the STAR parking spaces?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	27	84.38
No	5	15.62
N= 59	n=32	

84.38% of businesses train their new employees to park in the STAR parking spaces.

TABLE 41: STAR PARKING IN COMPARISON TO OPEN SPACES

Q 41. Has the STAR parking designation helped make parking more available to your customers?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Yes	6	50.00
No	6	50.00
N= 59	n=12	

50% of businesses felt the STAR parking has and hasn't helped make parking more available to customers.

TABLE 42: BUSINESS SIZE

Q 42. How many square feet does your business occupy?

- (12) Businesses less than 1,000 sq. ft.
- (17) Businesses that are within 1,001 – 5,000 sq. ft.
- (4) Businesses that are within 5,001 – 10,000 sq. ft.
- (1) Businesses that are within 10,001 – 15,000 sq. ft.
- (0) Businesses that are within 15,001 – 20,000 sq. ft.
- (1) Businesses that are greater than 20,001 + sq. ft.

Majority of businesses (29 out of 35) have businesses under 5,000 sq. ft.

TABLE 43: TYPE OF OCCUPANCY (RENT OR OWN)

Q39. A. Does your business own or rent the space in which you are located?

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Own	5	31.25
Rent	11	68.75
N= 59	n=16	100%

68.75% of businesses rent the space in which they are located in. Only 5 out of the 16 businesses that replied to this question, own their building. There were twelve responses noting rental fees.

- 5 (41.65%) businesses that are within $350-750
- 4 (33.3%) businesses that are within $751-1500
- 1 (8.3%) businesses that are within $1501-2250
- 2 (16.6%) businesses that are within $2251-3000

TABLE 44: HOW LONG BUSINESS HAS BEEN IN OPERATION

Q 44. How long has your business been in operation? (Mark ONE, include time at this & any previous locations)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Under 1 year	0	0
1-5 years	0	0
6-10 years	3	18.75
11-20 years	7	43.75
Over 20 years	6	3.75
N= 59	n=16	100%

16 businesses out of a possible 59 answered this question. The majority (43.75%) have been in operation for 11-20 years.

There were 26 responses noting establishment dates in years.

- 1800-1900: 1
- 1900-1910: 2
- 10s: 3
- 20s: 2
- 30s: 1
- 40s: 1
- 50s: 0
- 60s: 1
- 70s: 7
- 80s: 2
- 90s: 6
- 2000-2006: 2

TABLE 45: LENGTH OF OWNERSHIP

Q 45. How long have you been the owner of your business? (Mark ONE)

	Number Reporting	% Reporting
Under 1 year	1	6.67
1-5 years	1	6.67
6-10 years	3	20.00
11-20 years	5	33.33
Over 20 years	4	26.67
N=59	n=15	100%

The majority of respondents have been the owner of their business for more than 11 years.

HOW WMSt CAN BETTER ASSIST

Q 50. Is there anything that has not been mentioned that you believe WMSt should know in order to better assist you and your business?

(Sample responses)

- I appreciate all that WMSt does very much! I have very little time to give as I am so busy. LOCAL IS BEST
- Help Adams & Worth
- Skateboarding in Concourse & Concourse Park creates a dangerous problem. More enforcement is required.
- Is there any effort towards some form of a group or Co-op health care insurance purchase by area business people for truly cost effective health insurance?
- Survey is largely not applicable to professional services
- Silver Street should be spotless as many visitors frequent the area.
- I have support group on Wednesday evenings 7-9 for single moms, who also bring their children with them a lot of the time. I end up leaving alone sometime after 10:00 pm and am afraid to park in star spots far away from my office. I wish there was better security in the area at that time on Wednesday evenings – after nine when they are leaving and after 10 when I leave.
- Be aware that some businesses downtown need quiet or work unusual hours. Need adequate warning of noisy "fests". We have to close on those days.
- The Star Parking Education of Business needs to be an ongoing & continuous effort since business owners or employees continue to park all day long in front of my business and theirs. It is a sad commentary for arthritic people & people with sore bodies to be forced to park 100 to 200 feet away because of some selfish & unintelligent business owner. The best & most convenient spaces are for consumers before a few select downtown businesses. Perhaps select enforcement is in order since the honor system works for most but not for all.
- Thanks you for your efforts to keep Main Street healthy.
- I'd like to know where the "70% of retail sales occur after 5pm" info comes from. Does this include people picking up a gallon of milk after work?
- Because we are a non-profit dental center, much doesn't apply to us as far as retail, etc.