

**News Release**  
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## **Results of Economic Surveys Point Direction for City of McBain**

McBain, MI – The results of the economic surveys for the City of McBain are in. City leaders are seeking ways to improve the community and the survey results will help guide efforts related to economic development and future growth. Over 550 workers travel into McBain daily for work and it appears that trend is increasing. Recently, McBain has seen notable economic activity including the \$31 million expansion of the Biewer Sawmill and the hiring of 17 additional workers; construction of a new store for discount retailer, Dollar General; and plans for a new gas station. Building on that momentum, the City recently surveyed local residents and business owners with one questionnaire and another survey for high school students.

For the first survey, the City mailed questionnaires out to every address in the 49657 zip code and made the survey available online. One hundred sixty-five (165) responses from residents and business owners and operators identified economic preferences and needs along with an evaluation of current conditions.

With the second survey, the City sought input from local high school students. This separate, shorter economic survey for students focused on the interest of students in what businesses, activities, and opportunities they'd like to see in the McBain area. Two hundred eighty-nine (289) students from the McBain Rural Agricultural School and the Northern Michigan Christian School responded to the questionnaire.

Assistance conducting the surveys was provided by Networks Northwest. A report prepared by Networks Northwest summarizes the responses in both surveys and is available on the City website at: [www.cityofmcbainmichigan.com](http://www.cityofmcbainmichigan.com).

Highlights of the Economic Survey to residents and business owners are as follows:

(MORE)

- McBain is a community of long-standing, family businesses. Their biggest issues are the smaller sized customer base and competition from nearby communities, particularly Cadillac.
- The top destination for McBain residents for shopping is Cadillac with the primary shopping destination being a supermarket. One-third of the community travels 20 miles or more once a week for shopping.
- Like shopping, the top destination for McBain residents for dining is Cadillac with the vast majority of diners visiting a casual /family style restaurant. However, unlike shopping, residents are less likely to travel long distances for dining.
- Healthcare services were the top responses for needed services in McBain while the top desire for goods was a grocery store and/or a discount store. Once complete, the new Dollar General will serve immediate needs for a discount store by providing affordable and essential products. It's unknown if the market is strong enough for a grocery store.
- City infrastructure, including water, sewer, and streets, were rated above average in terms of quality and cost by both residents and businesses. However, more than one-third of both residents and businesses feel their Internet service is not adequate. This is a challenge facing McBain as Internet access is essential to business development.
- Many respondents supported making the community more attractive for young people, including gathering places and recreation opportunities.

Highlight from the survey of high school students included the following:

- Students have a positive outlook about McBain with 63% rating their quality of life from good to excellent.
- Top choice for what students would like to see in McBain is more choices in restaurants.
- 7 out of 10 students plan to attend college after high school.
- While 42% of the students were not likely to live in McBain in the future, 34% were somewhat likely and 19% were highly likely to live in McBain as an adult. Most students not staying are seeking greater opportunities beyond McBain or just wanting to see the world.
- For what they'd like to see more of in McBain, students identified places to gather with other teens, increased job opportunities, new fast-food restaurants and clothing stores, and improved parks with athletic facilities as their top choices.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the surveys, please contact:

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at [dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org) and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: [networksnorthwest.org/media](http://networksnorthwest.org/media)

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