

Town of Conway: Resident, Visitor, and Business Survey



December 2017

A survey to inform discussions and develop strategies to increase economic activity in Conway, while preserving the community character.

Conducted by the Conway Planning Board with support from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). Funding for FRCOG support from a 2017 District Local Technical Assistance award from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.

Town of Conway, Resident, Visitor and Business Survey

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INTRODUCTION

The Conway Planning Board, with assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, launched a survey of residents, visitors, and business owners and workers in Conway in September 2017. The purpose of the survey was to find out where people shop, what businesses they think would be successful in Conway, and what types of businesses are already in Conway. The information collected will be used by the Planning Board and other local officials to inform their decisions and help develop strategies to increase economic activity in Conway, while also preserving the community's character. Encouraging greater business activity can translate into more local job opportunities, closer access to shopping and services, and an expanded tax base to support important municipal functions.

This report includes three parts. The first part provides an overview of demographic and socio-economic characteristics for the Town of Conway. This data has been assembled to describe the current conditions in the community, identify trends, and provide a context for survey responses. The second part presents each survey question and their responses. The third part summarizes key findings from the information gathered. In the Appendix is a copy of the survey format used, and an article about the survey's release from The Greenfield Recorder.

Map of Conway

Source: FRCOG



CONTEXT

From its hills to the Town Center, Conway is known for its rural landscapes and historic character. When traversing the community, residents and visitors are offered scenic views of farmland and forests, access to outdoor recreation, and opportunities to enjoy cultural and historic sites. These characteristics led to the Route 116 corridor, a main transportation route through Conway, to be designated a Scenic Byway by the Commonwealth in 2008.

According to the U.S. Census, Conway has had one of the highest rates of population growth in the county over the past few decades. From 1980 to 2010, the total population of Conway grew over 50%. For the same time period, Franklin County only grew 11% and the Commonwealth grew 14%. Since the 2010 decennial census, U.S. Census estimates show Conway experiencing a small decline in total population, while the county had no growth and the state had modest growth.

The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) Program provides demographic and socio-economic data at the municipal level from surveys collected from a sample of households over a five-year period. The most recent estimates are from the period 2012 to 2016. The following data points are from this dataset.

Table of Selected Statistics, 2012-2016

	Conway	Franklin County	Massachusetts
Total population	1,783	70,916	6,742,143
Median age of population	50.9	45.4	39.4
Number of households *	731	30,389	2,558,889
Average household size of owner-occupied units	2.43	2.28	2.54
Number of families	498	17,991	1,627,194
Number of housing units	877	33,684	2,836,658
% of population age 16 years and over in Labor Force	76%	67%	67%
% of workers who work from home	12%	6%	5%
Median household income	\$89,297	\$56,347	\$70,954

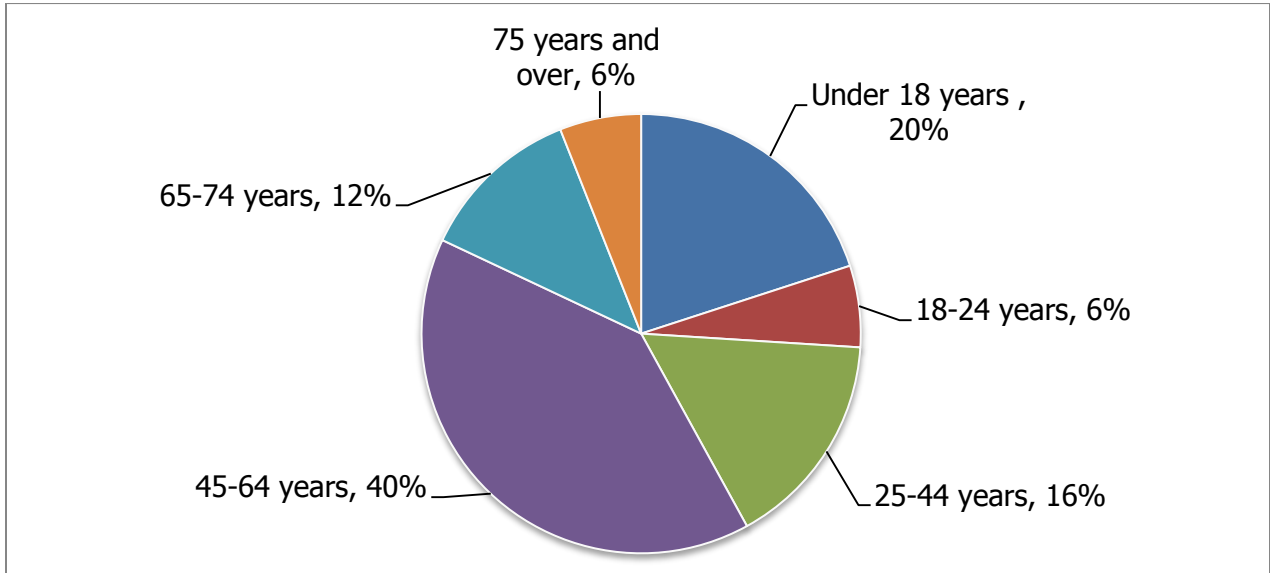
* Note: Households include families, people living alone, and unrelated people living together.

Housing Units include occupied and unoccupied dwelling units.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS Five-Year Estimates

As the median age indicates, the population of Conway and the county has an older population than the state and nation. The chart below shows the 45-64 age group as the largest age cohort in Conway.

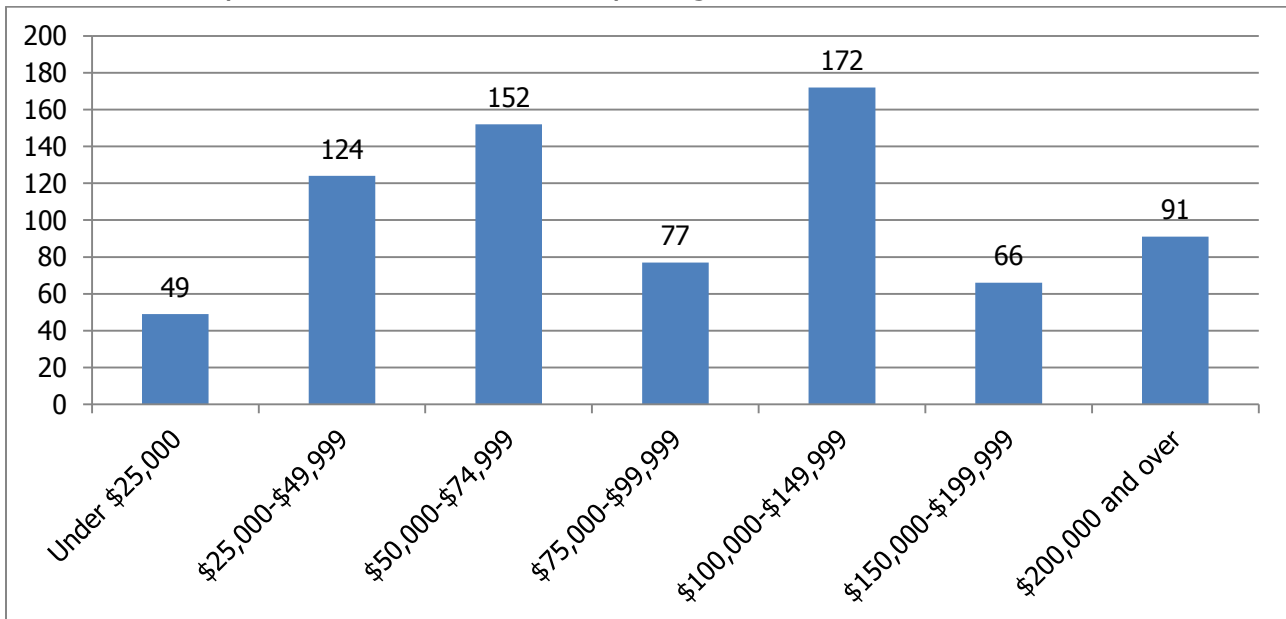
Town of Conway: Percent of Total Population by Age Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS Five-Year Estimates

The chart below depicts the number of households in each range of annual income for the 731 households in Conway.

Town of Conway: Number of Households by Range of Annual Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS Five-Year Estimates

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

In September 2017, the survey was released and made available to the public using the SurveyMonkey.com online platform. Respondents were not asked for identifying information, so that responses would be confidential. Information about the survey and a link to the online survey was included in a newsletter distributed to households town-wide and in a news article in the September 25, 2017 edition of The Greenfield Recorder. For those who did not want to or could not complete the survey online, paper copies were made available to the public at the Town Offices. A copy of the survey and the newspaper article are included in the Appendix. By the close of the survey period on October 18, 2017, a total of 56 responses were collected. These responses have been analyzed and summarized in this report.

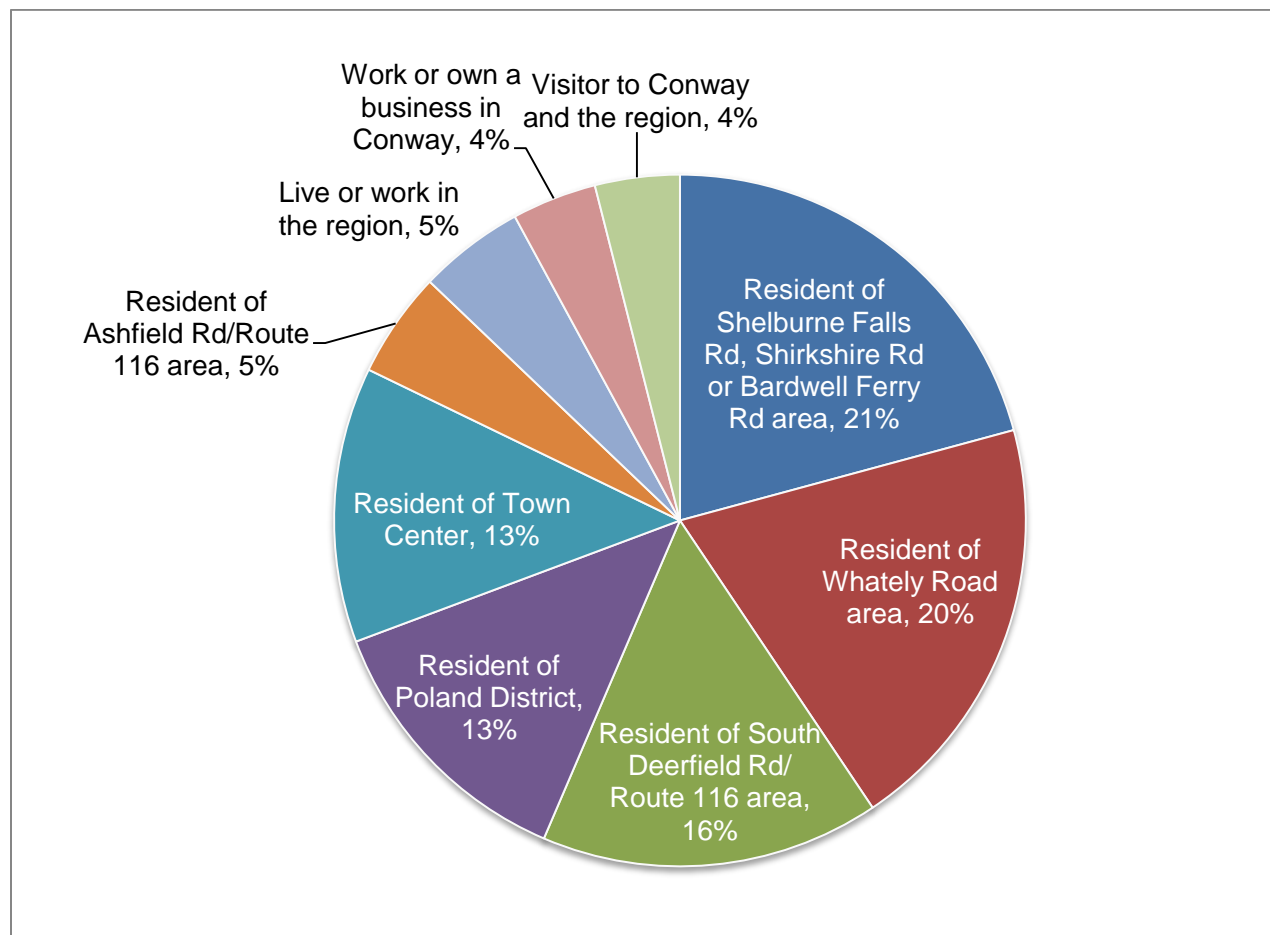
Individual respondents were not required to answer every question on the survey. As a result, some questions had more respondents than others. The total number of respondents who answered each question is noted for each question. Some questions only allowed one answer or a finite number of selections (such as "top three"); while other questions allowed as many selections as the respondent wanted. The type of responses allowed per question is also noted for each question. In addition, some questions offered an "Other" category and asked respondents to specify another option not listed, or were open-ended questions. The "Other" options selected by respondents and open-ended questions are summarized with the results of the corresponding question.

The survey had four sections. The first section asked respondents their opinions about the current status or prospective activities or items related to either the Town Center or the remaining areas of Town. The second section asked respondents about themselves, such as their age, household, and income. The third section was an open-ended question seeking their suggestions related to economic development in Town. The last section had questions for owners of businesses located in Conway.

Q1: Connection to Conway

This question asked respondents to select the one option that best describes their connection to Conway. If they were a town resident, they were asked where they resided. If they were not a town resident, they were asked if they had a business or worked in the town, or were a visitor to the town. Survey responses were received from each area of Conway. The number of responses from residents was relatively close for five of the six areas of Conway. Less than 10% of the responses came from people who live in the area or work in Conway, but are not residents. Less than 5% of the responses came from visitors.

Question 1. Select the option that best describes your connection to Conway. (Select one)

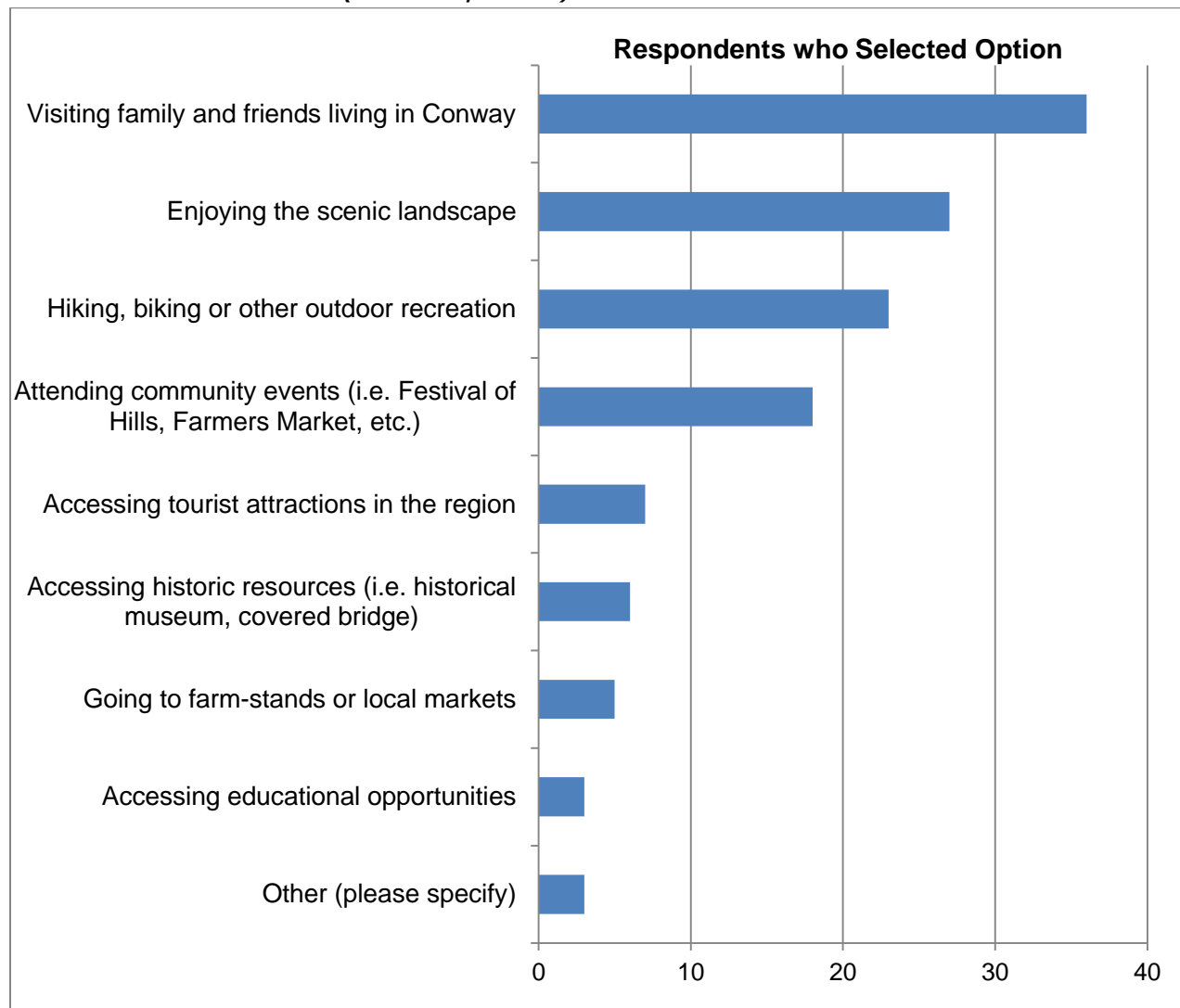


Total Respondents: 56

Q2: Interest to Visitors

This question asked respondents if they are a visitor or a resident who has family or friends who visit, what are the top three items that would be of most interest to visitors? They were provided with eight options plus an option of "other" with a request for them to specify. The top three responses were: Visiting family and friends living in Conway; Enjoying the scenic landscape; and Hiking, biking or other outdoor recreation. Two of the "other" items specified were outdoor recreation activities (disc golf and snowmobiling), with the third being work.

Question 2. If you are a visitor or a resident who has family or friends visit, what is of most interest to visitors? (Select top three)



Total Respondents: 46

Q3: Going to the Town Center or other areas

This question asked respondents why they go to the Town Center or other areas of Conway, and approximately how often. Five activities were offered for why the respondent would go, plus the option of "other" with a request for them to specify. Under each activity, they were asked to respond with the frequency of several times per week, per month, per year, or rarely or never.

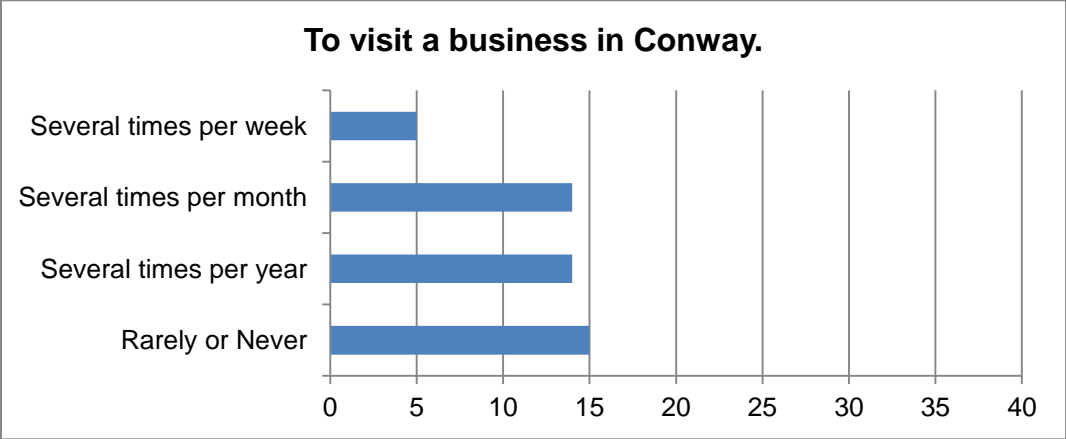
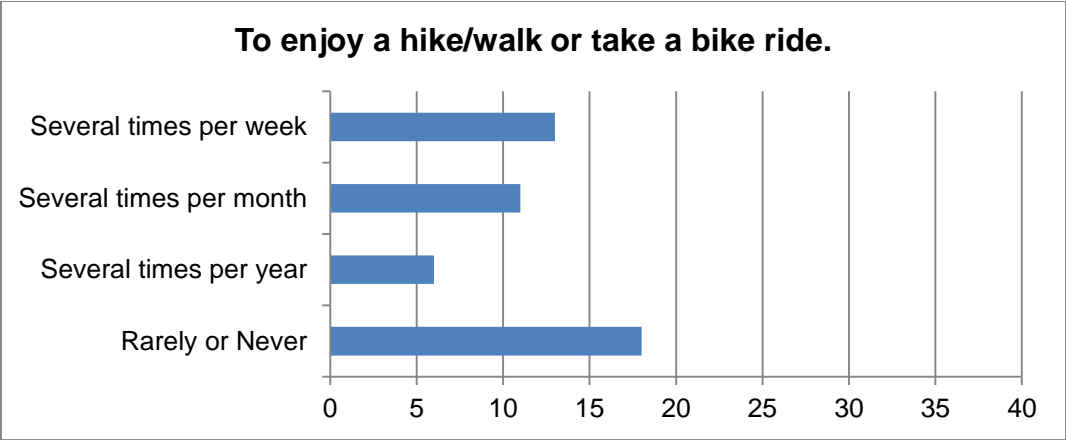
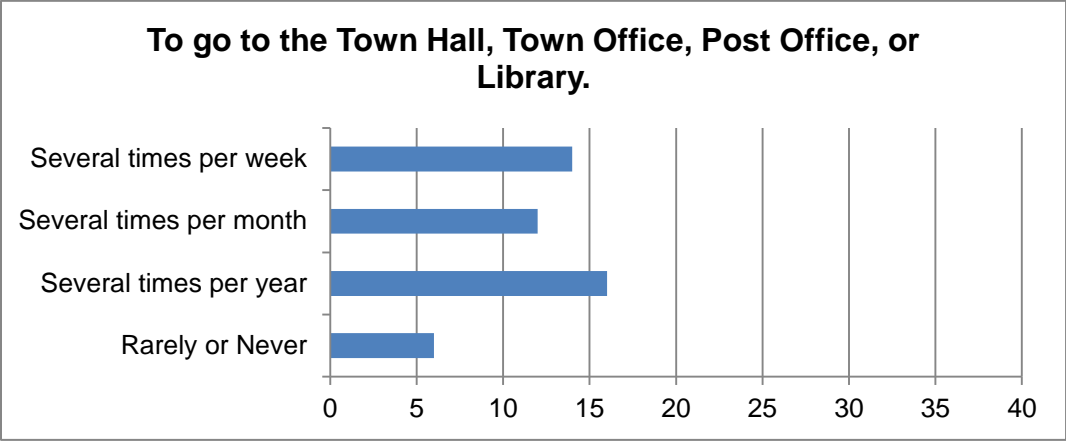
Based on the survey answers, respondents most frequently (i.e. go several times per week or per month) go to the Town Center or other areas for the purpose of going to the Town Hall, Town Office, Post Office, or Library. The second most frequent reason is to enjoy a hike/walk or take bike ride. The least frequent activity (i.e. go several times a year or rarely or never) is to attend a community or cultural fair, festival or event. The next less frequent activities are to go to a park or recreation area, or visit a business in Conway.

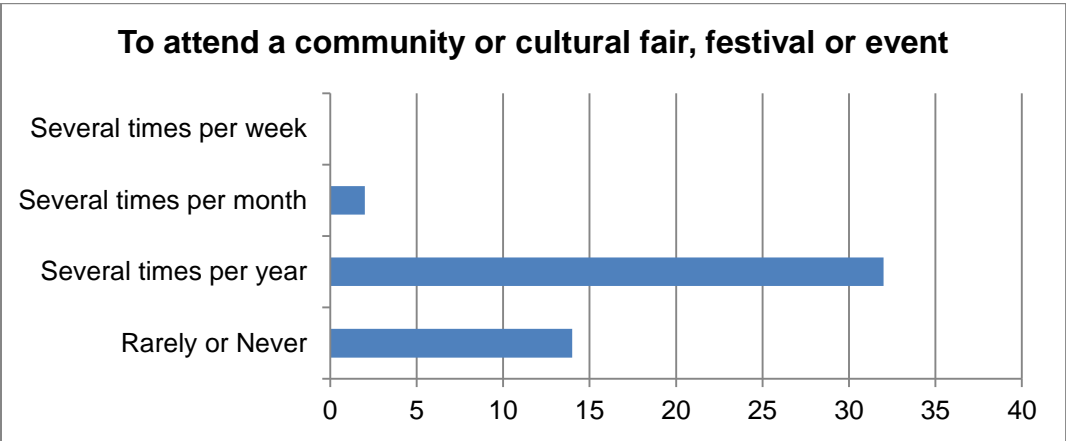
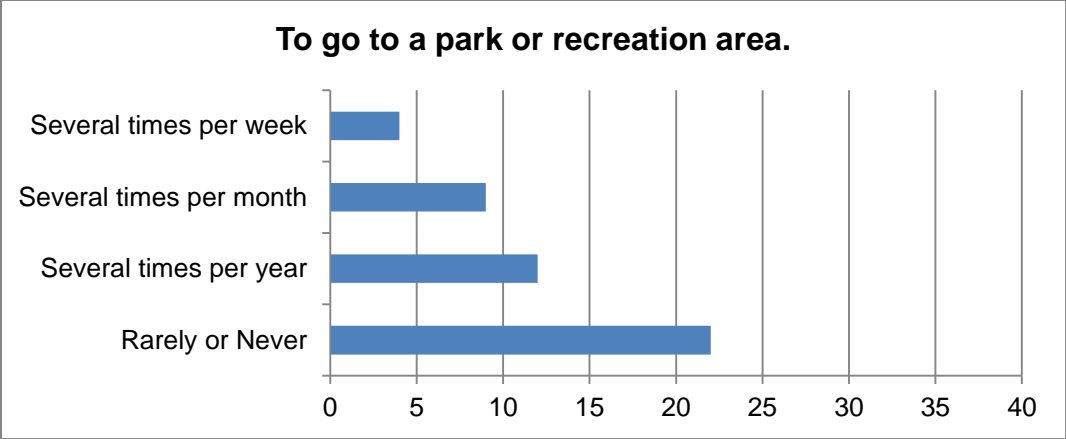
Question 3. Why do you go to the Town Center or other areas of Conway, and approximately how often? (Select one frequency category per activity)

Top Responses by Frequency			
Several times per Week	Several times per Month	Several times per Year	Rarely or Never
To go to Town Hall, Town Office, Post Office or Library	To visit a business in Conway	To attend a community event or cultural fair, festival or event	To go to a park or recreation area
To enjoy a hike/walk or take a bike ride	To go to Town Hall, Town Office, Post Office or Library	To go to Town Hall, Town Office, Post Office or Library	To enjoy a hike/walk or take a bike ride

Total respondents: 49

Question 3 Responses by Activity:





Q4: Current Shopping Locations

This question asked respondents where they most frequently go for a variety of goods or services. Twenty different types of goods and services were listed and the option of "other" allowed for respondents to specify other categories of goods or services. The areas identified for where to go included:

- Conway
- Ashfield/Shelburne Falls area
- Deerfield/Greenfield area
- Williamsburg/Northampton area
- Amherst/Hadley area
- Other locations or online
- Not applicable

The category of goods or services most frequently procured in the Town of Conway was Farm-stand or Farmer's Market, with 25% of respondents selecting Conway for this category. Few other categories were selected for being procured in Conway.

Of the twenty categories of goods and services listed, there were three categories that had a large percentage of respondents expressing it was not applicable to them. These categories were: Hotel, B&B or Inn; Gym, Yoga, Dance or Martial Arts; and Laundromat. The following table includes information about the remaining 17 categories of goods and services that had a low response rate for "not applicable."

This table identifies the categories of goods and services applicable by the locations where it is most frequently purchased. For a location to be listed it had to have at least a 20% response rate or higher. If only one or two locations are listed, it is due to a high response rate for that category. For example, 77% of respondents most frequently purchased from a Gas Station in the Deerfield/Greenfield area, so only one location is listed. For the example of Grocery or Food Co-op Store, there are three areas listed because they all had response rate. They are: Deerfield/Greenfield area (37%); Amherst/Hadley area (31%); and Williamsburg/Northampton area (24%).

Question 4. Where do you most frequently go for the following goods or services?
 (Select one location per category)

Category of Good or Service	Top Locations Selected:		
	First	Second	Third
Book or Gift store	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	Other locations or online	Amherst/Hadley area
Clothing or Shoe store	Amherst/Hadley area	Other locations or online	
Home Furnishing or Antiques store	Other locations or online	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Amherst/ Hadley area
Hardware or Gardener Supply store	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Amherst/ Hadley area	
Bike or Sporting Goods store	Amherst/ Hadley area	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	
Grocery or Food Co-op store	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Amherst/ Hadley area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area
Farm-stand or Farmer's Market	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Conway	
Restaurant or Café	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	Ashfield/ Shelburne Falls area	
Beer/Wine/Liquor store	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	
Theater or Performance Space	Amherst/ Hadley area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	
Art Gallery or Museum	Other locations or online	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	
Professional services (financial, legal, etc.)	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	
Medical or Healthcare services	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	
Beauty Salon or Spa services	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	Amherst/ Hadley area
Pharmacy	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	
Gas Station	Deerfield/ Greenfield area		
Auto/Vehicle Repair	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	Other locations or online

Note: An area had to have at least a 20% or higher response rate to be listed as a first, second, or third top location for this category.

Total Respondents: 49

Q5: Prospective Shopping in Conway

Similar to question four, this question asked respondents about the same twenty different types of goods or services. However, this question asks if these goods or service or if additional options for they goods or service were located in Conway, how often would they frequent them.

Of the options presented, categories with high response rates for weekly and monthly frequency were identified. Each of these categories had over half of the respondents indicating that they would go several times a week or a month. The top three categories were:

- Grocery or Food Co-op Store (64% of respondents)
- Farm-stand or Farmer’s Market (58% of respondents)
- Restaurant or Café (41% of respondents)

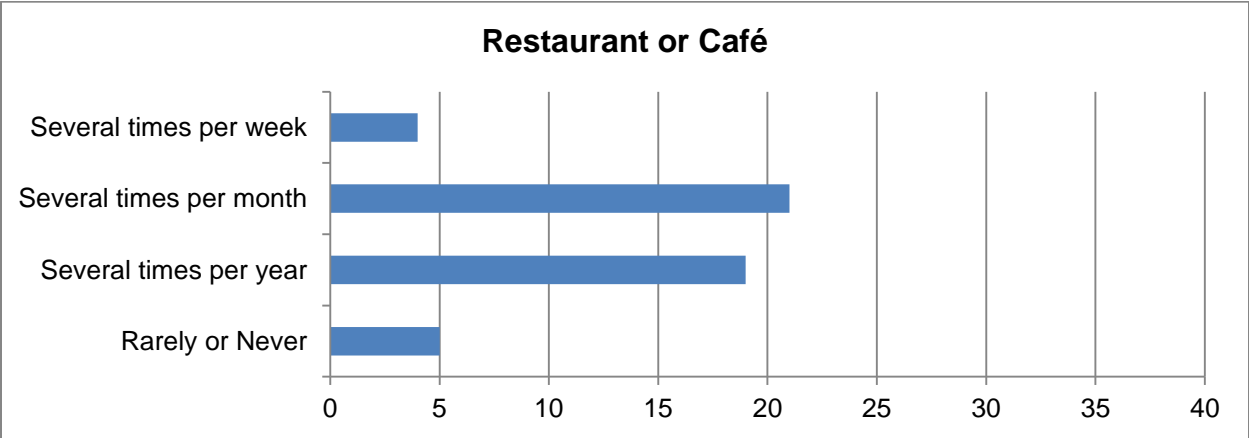
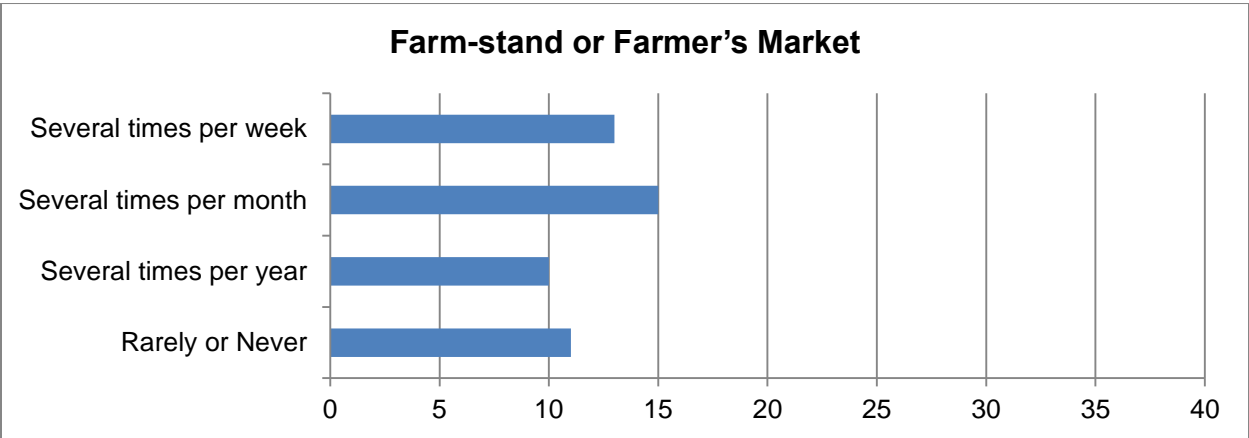
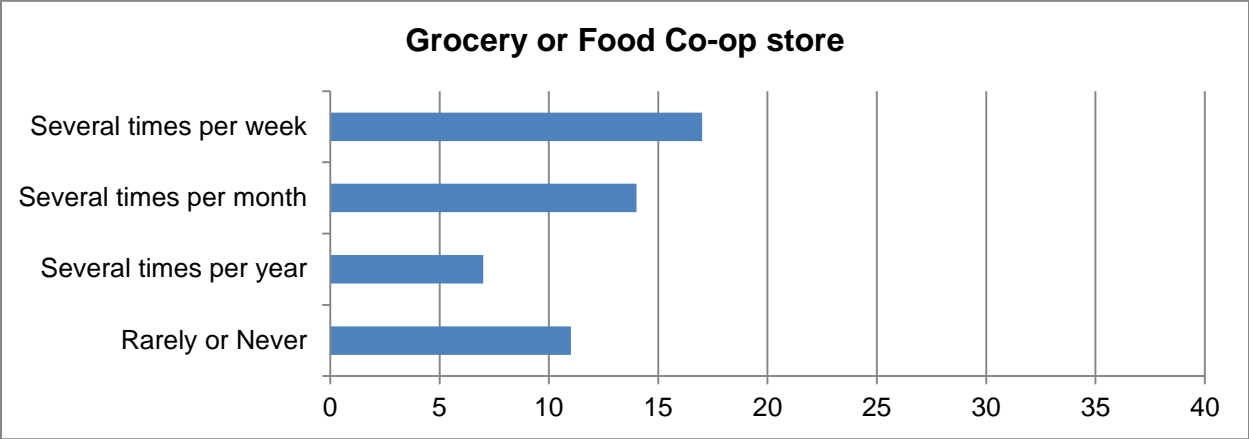
The next categories with the greatest prospective frequency (i.e. several times a week or a month) were: Gas Station; Hardware or Gardener Supply Store; Beer/Wine/Liquor Store; and Gym, Yoga, Dance or Martial Arts. The following chart lists the top eight categories of the twenty by greatest prospective frequency (i.e. combined responses for several times a week and a month). The categories identified as least prospective frequently (i.e. rarely or never) were: Hotel, B&B or Inn; Laundromat; Beauty Salon or Spa Services; Professional Services (financial, legal, etc.).

Question 5. If these goods/services or additional options for these goods/services were located in Conway, how often would you frequent them? (Select one frequency per category)

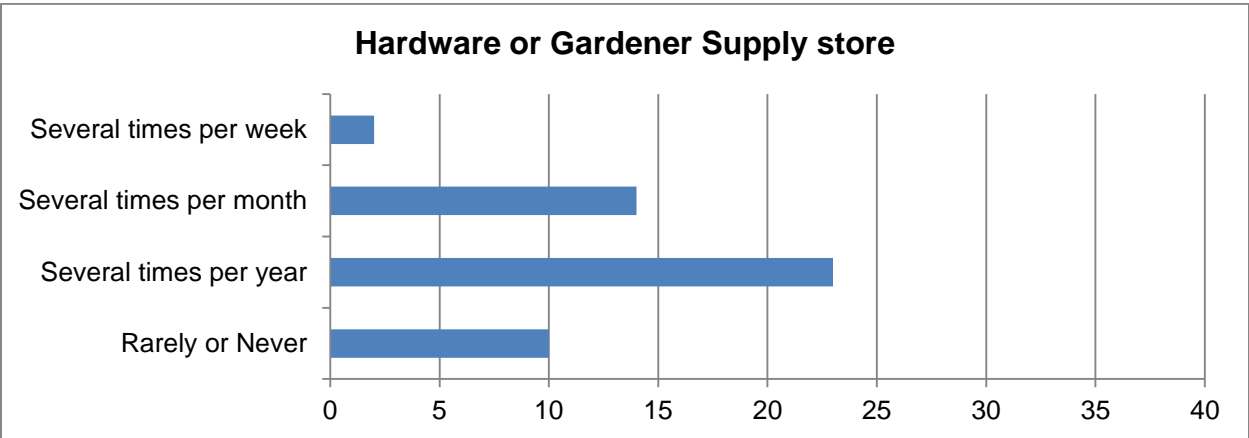
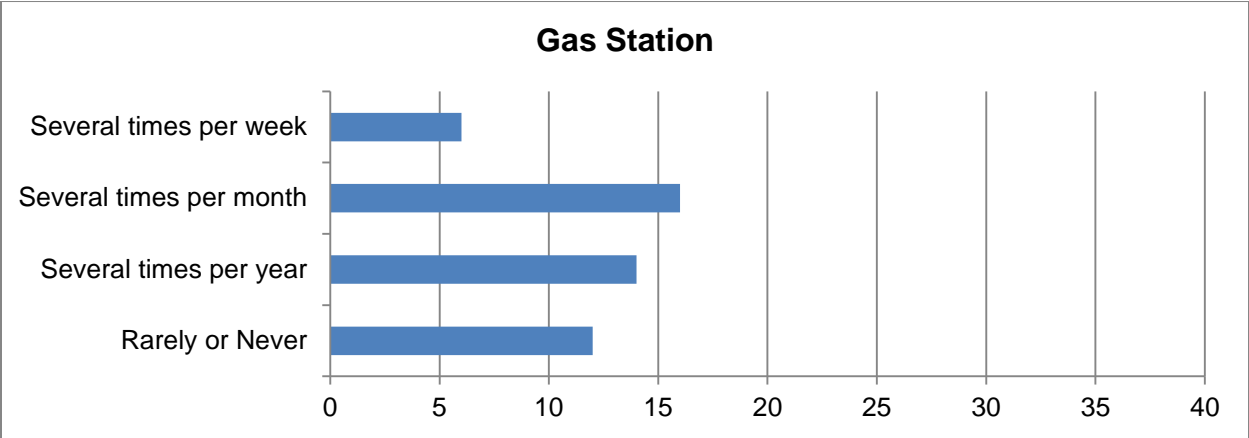
Category of Good or Service	Rate of Response for the Prospective Frequency:	
	Several times a Week	Several times a Month
Grocery or Food Co-op store	35%	29%
Farm-stand or Farmer’s Market	27%	31%
Restaurant or Café	8%	43%
Gas Station	13%	33%
Hardware or Gardener Supply store	4%	29%
Beer/Wine/Liquor store	4%	27%
Gym, Yoga, Dance or Martial Arts	6%	23%

Total Respondents: 49

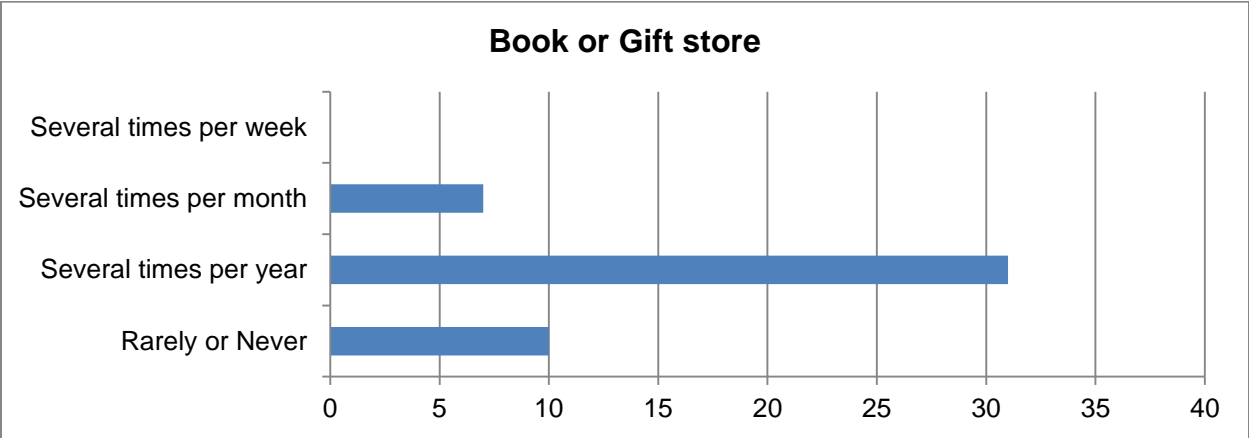
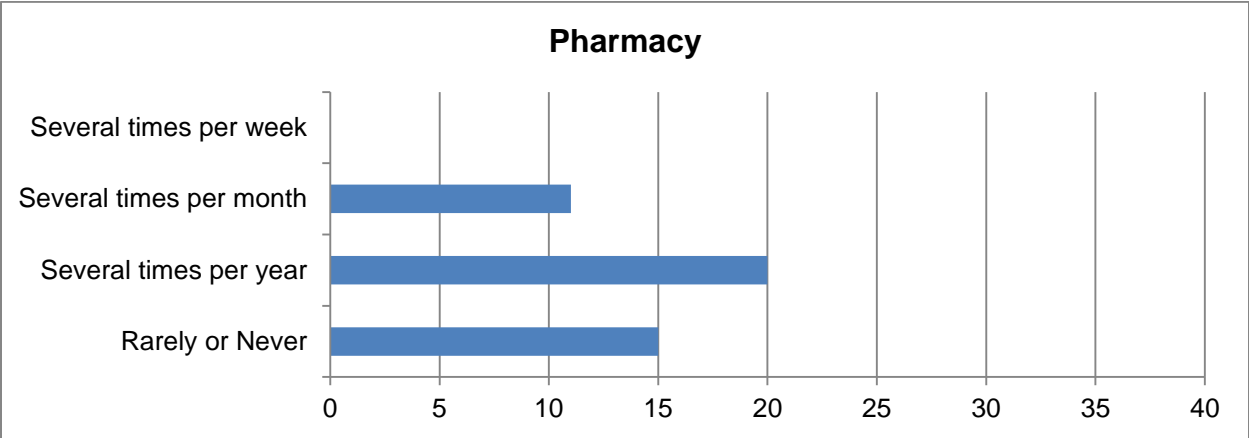
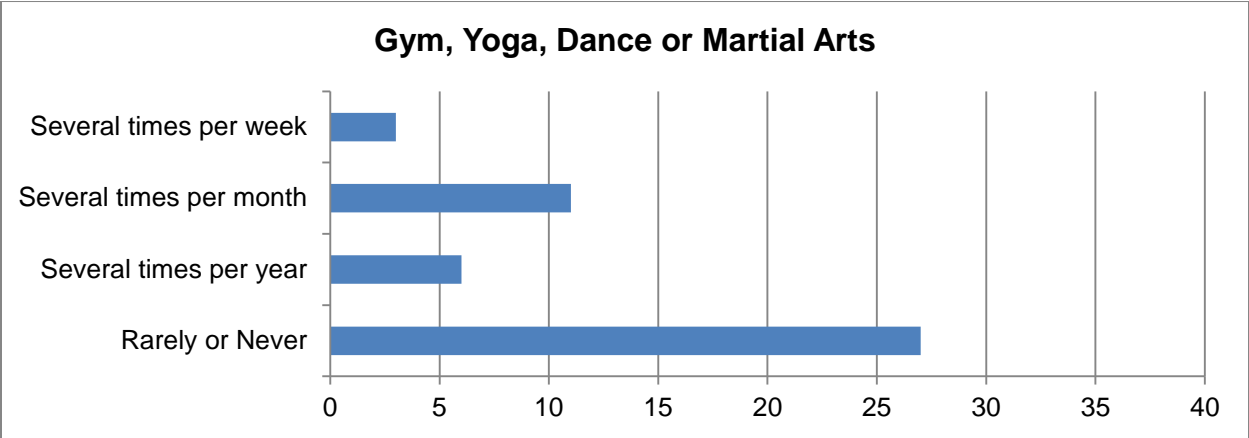
Question 5 Responses by Good or Service:



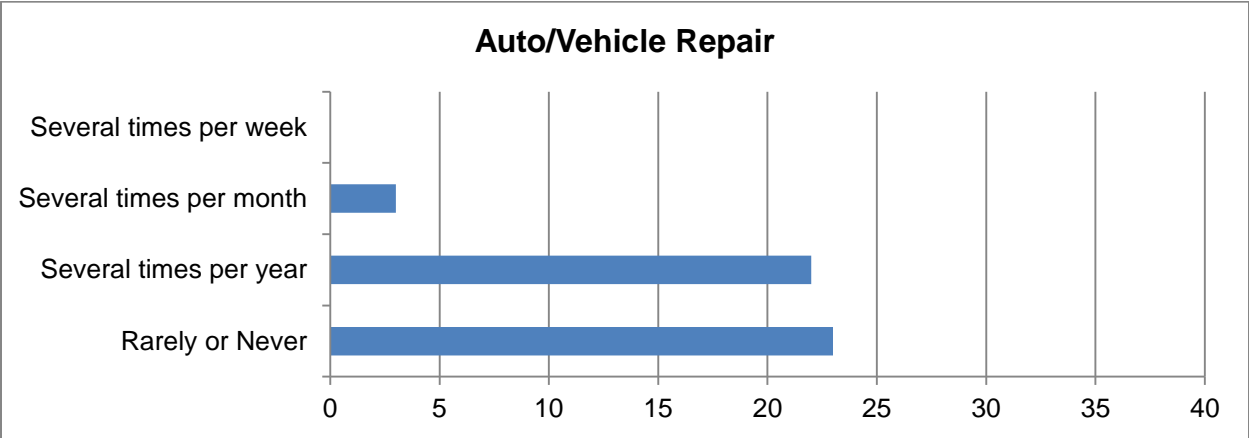
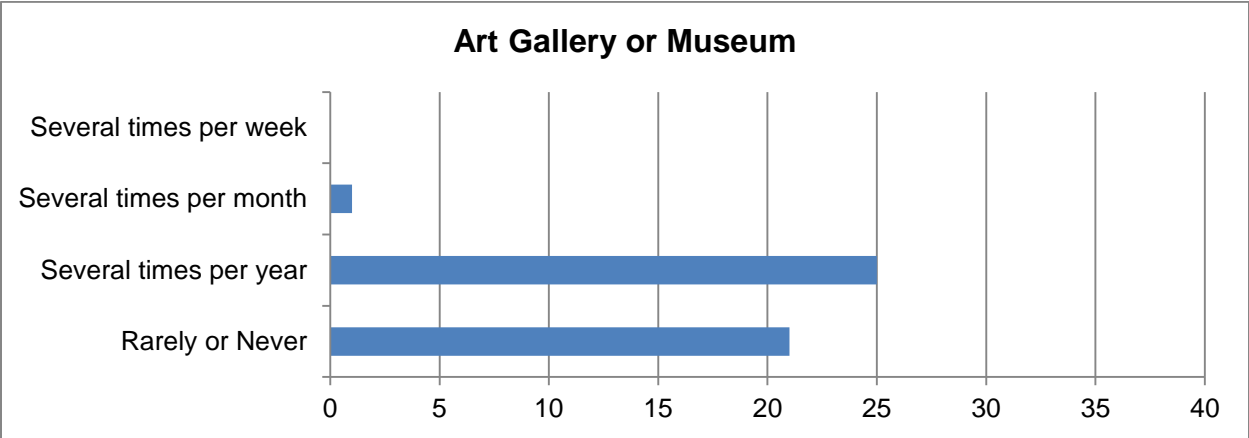
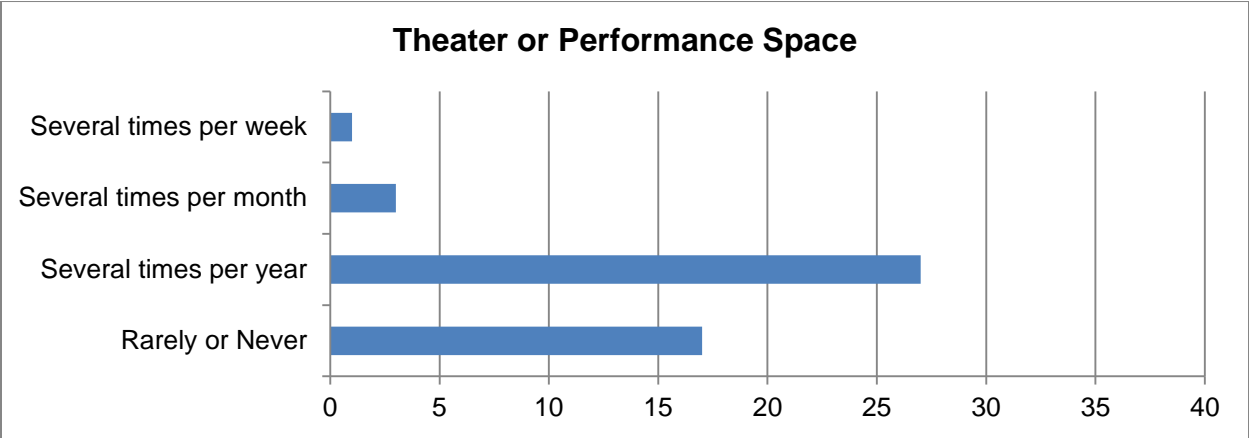
Question 5 Responses by Good or Service continued.



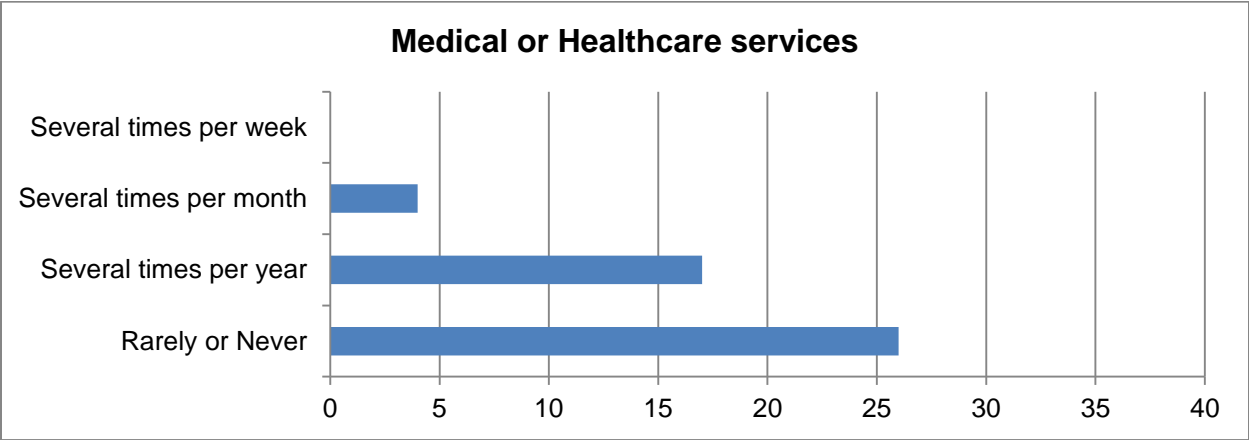
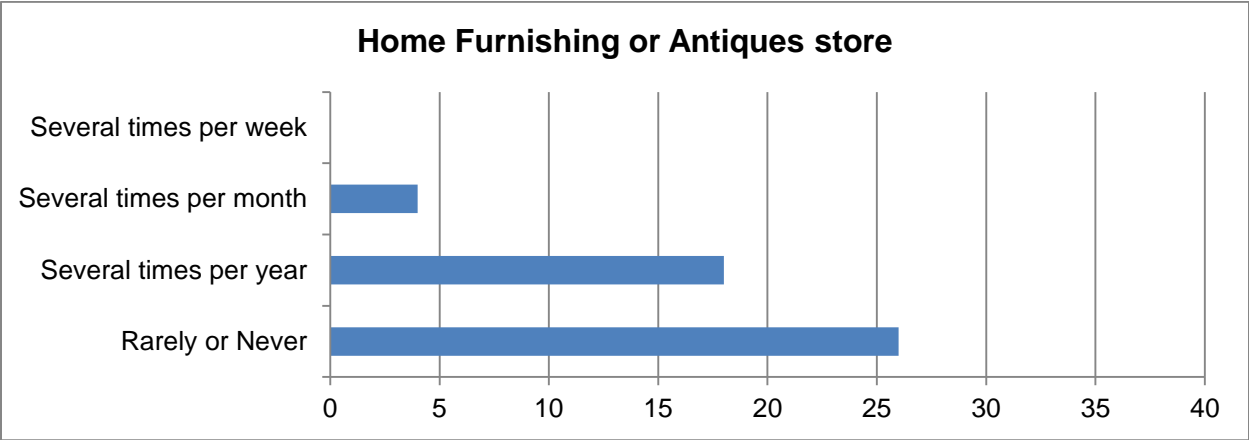
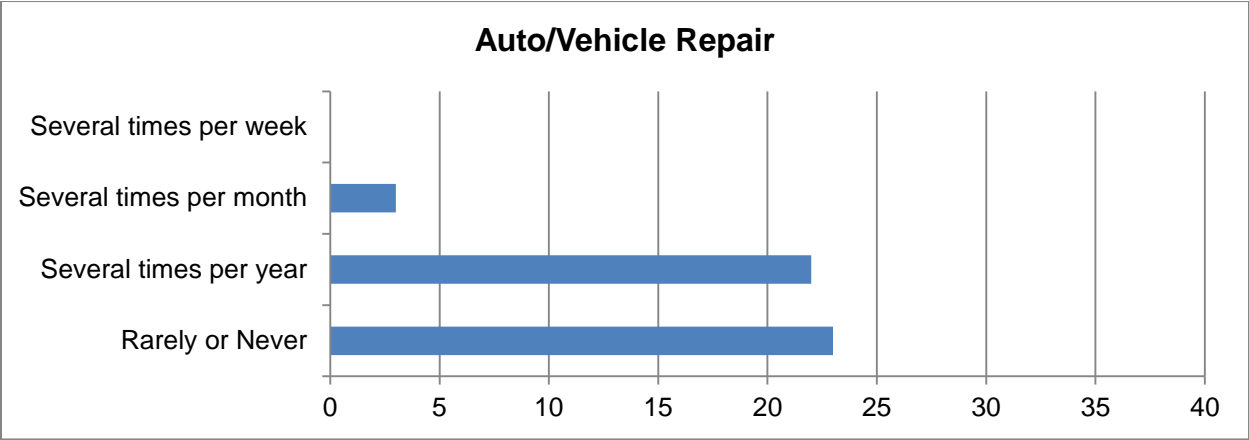
Question 5 Responses by Good or Service continued.



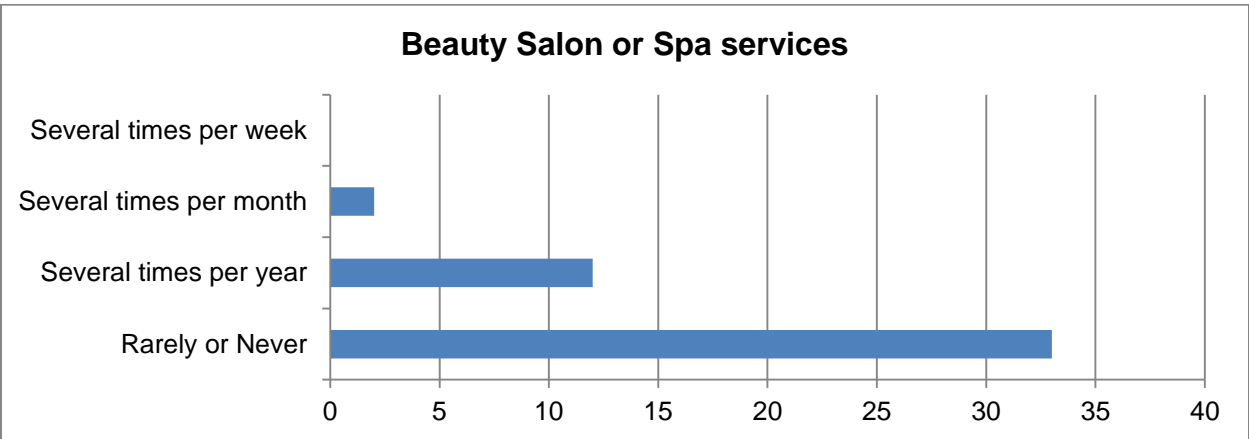
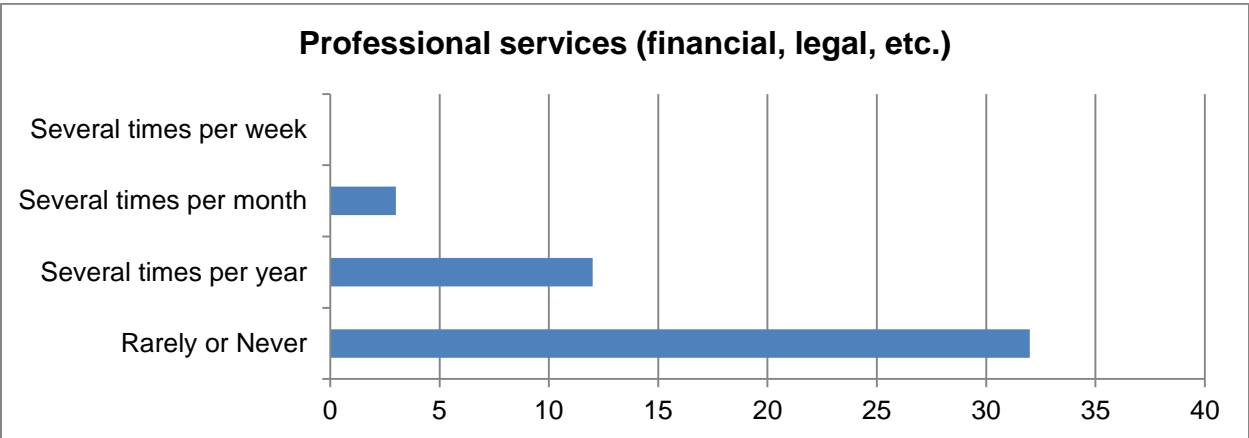
Question 5 Responses by Good or Service continued.



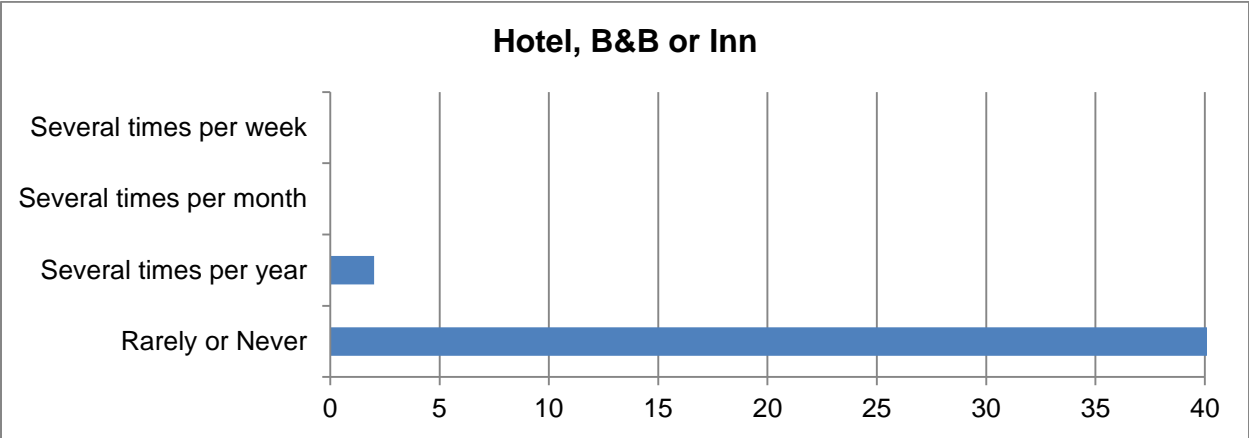
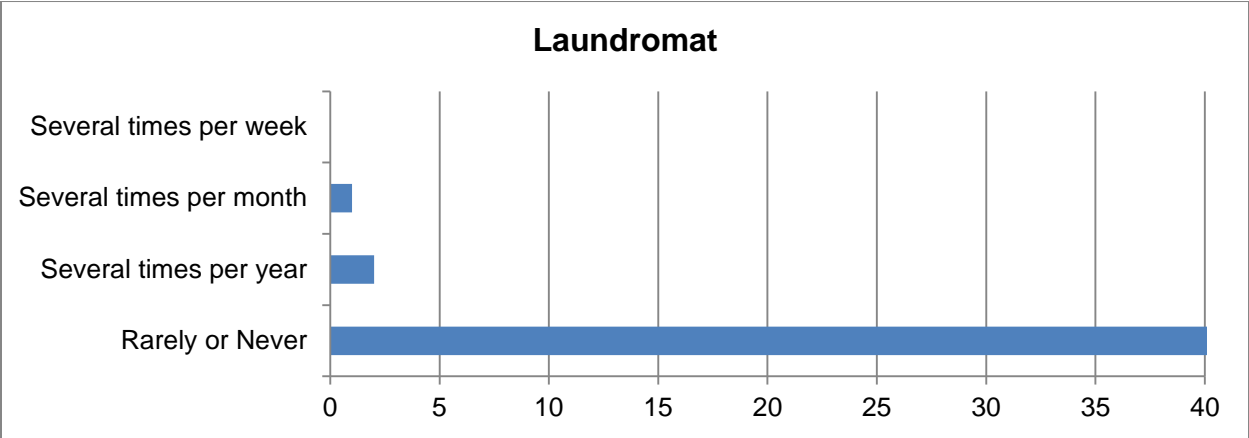
Question 5 Responses by Good or Service continued.



Question 5 Responses by Good or Service continued.



Question 5 Responses by Good or Service continued.

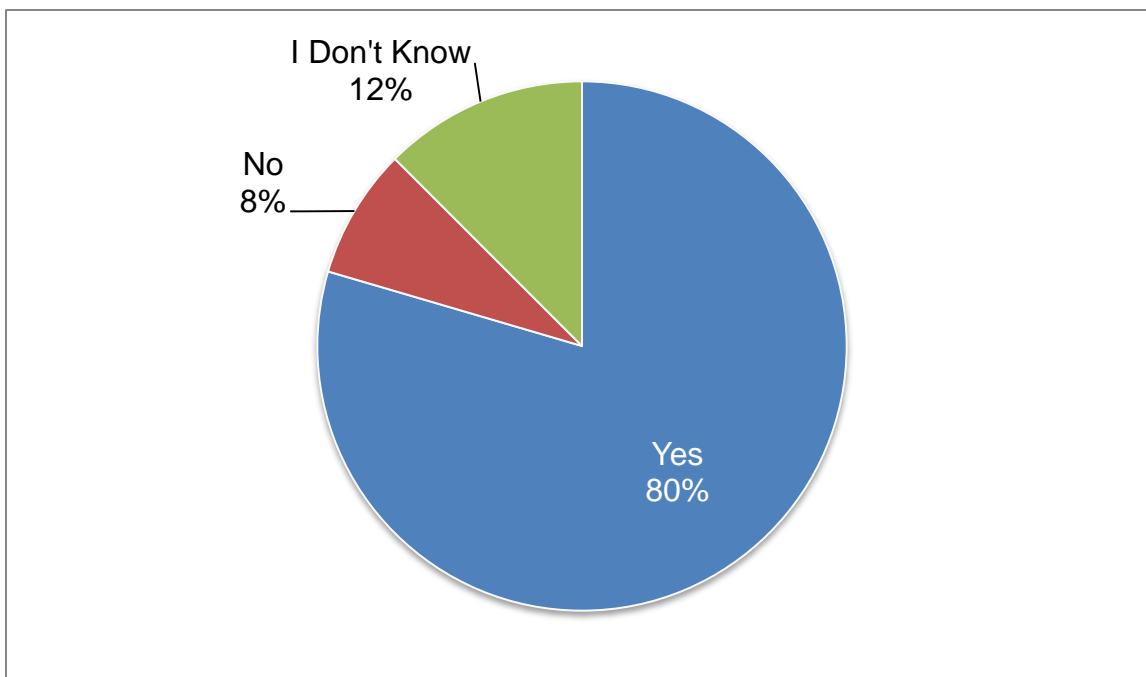


Total Respondents: 46 to 49

Q6: Food or Beverage Establishments

Food or beverage establishments are often gathering places for community members and key drivers in generating economic activity at the neighborhood level. This question asks if respondents think more food or beverage establishments are needed in Conway. The overwhelming majority said "Yes" that more food or beverage establishments are needed.

Question 6. Do you think more food or beverage establishments are needed in the Conway? (Select one)



Total Respondents: 49

Q7: Types of Food or Beverage Establishments

Building off of the previous question, this question asks for more information about the type of food or beverage establishment that would be of most interest. Five types of businesses were presented, as well as an "other" option for respondents to specify their preference. Respondents were asked to estimate how frequently they would go to each type of establishment. This frequency was measured by if they would go several times a week, a month, a year, or rarely or never.

The top type of establishments selected by the percent of respondents who said they would go several times a week or a month were:

1. Coffee Shop or Bakery (69% of respondents)
2. Take-out Restaurant (48% of respondents)
3. Dine-in Restaurant (32% of respondents)

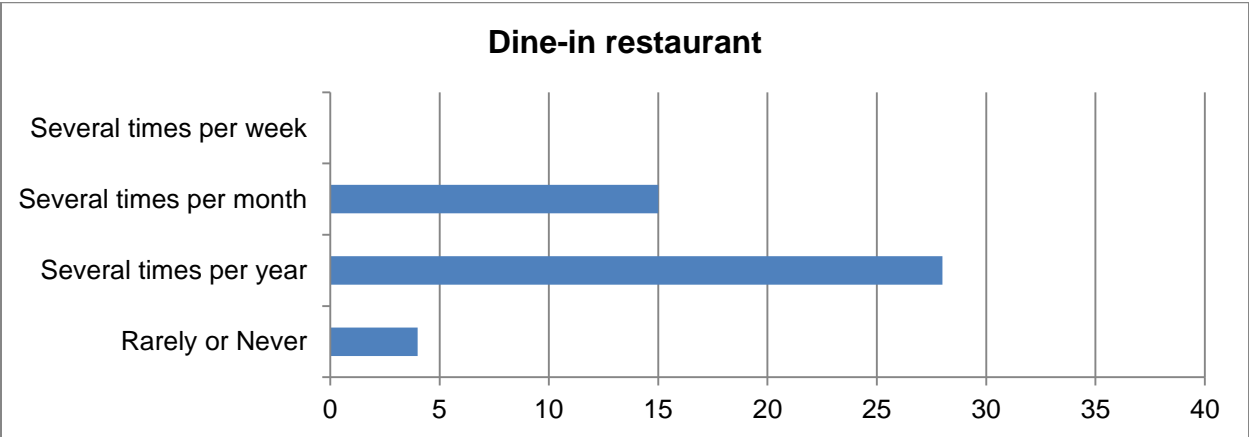
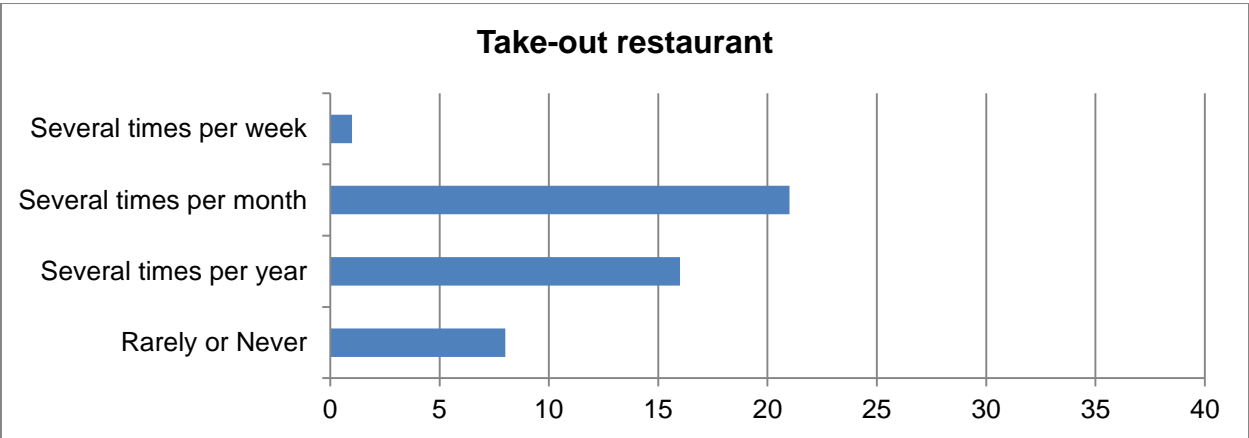
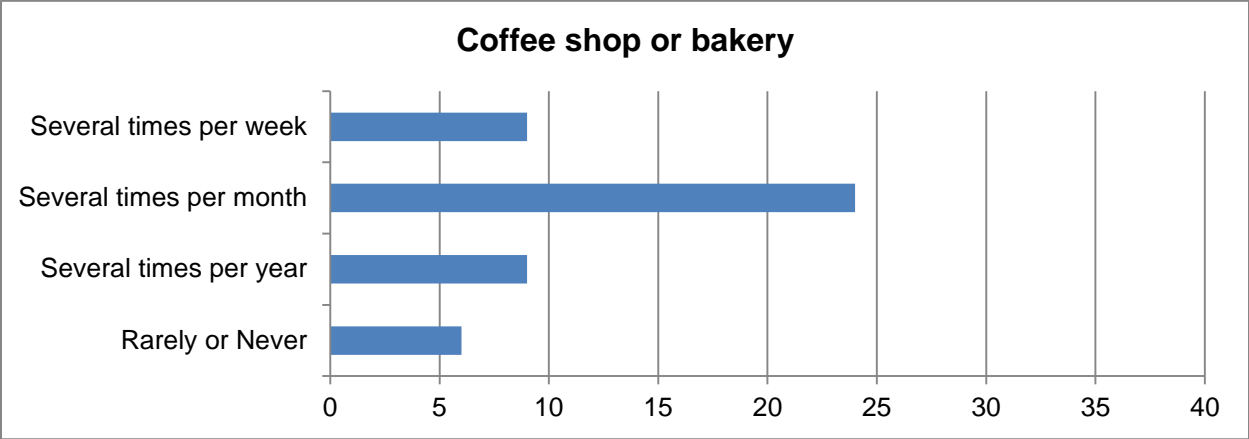
Of the five options presented, the top type of establishment selected was Coffee Shop or Bakery with 69% of respondents selecting to go several times a week or a month. Under the "other" option, suggestions included a grocery or food co-op with prepared foods, and a natural foods eatery. One comment mentioned that a previous coffee shop in town was missed, and another comment was unsure if a food or beverage establishment would be successful.

Question 7. If you think more food or beverage establishments are needed, how often would you frequent these types of businesses if they were in Conway?

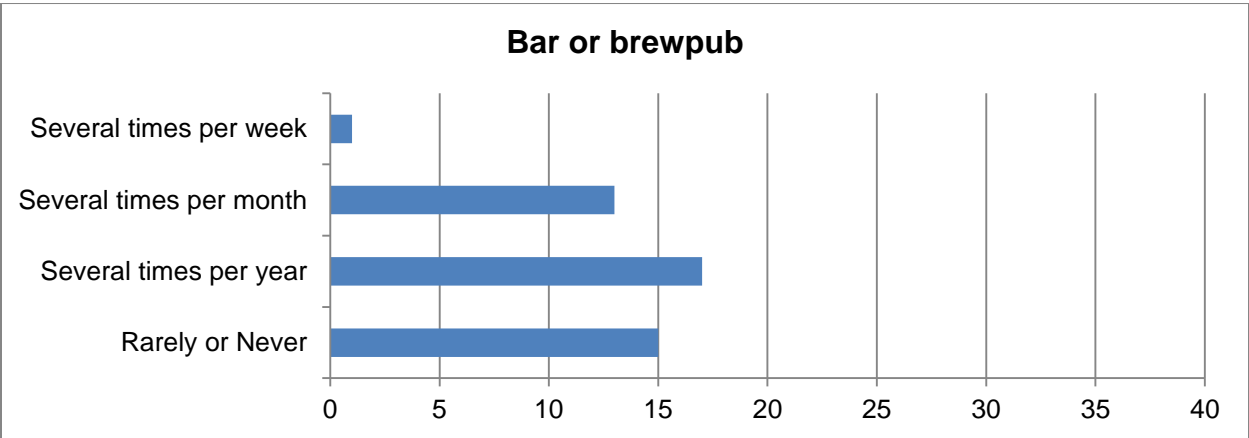
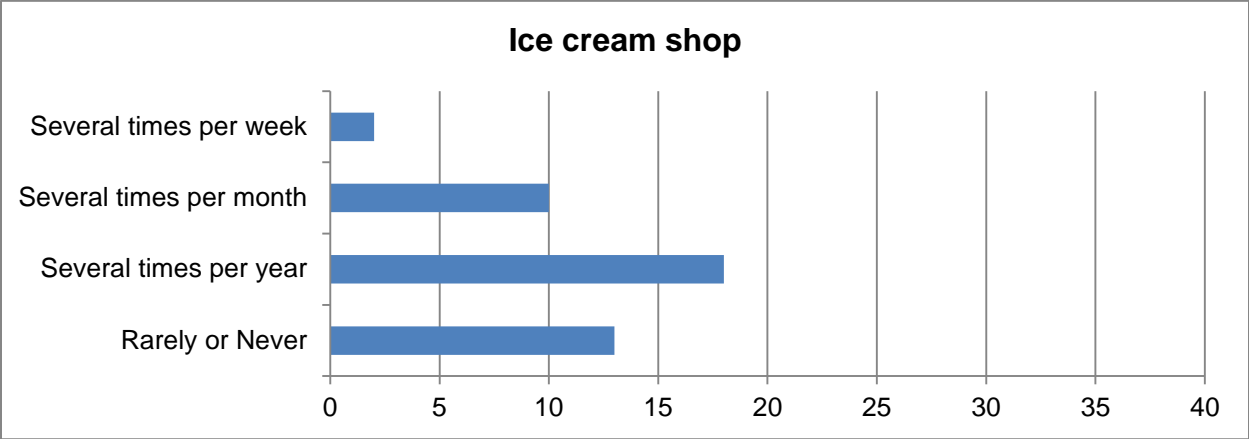
Category of Good or Service	Rate of Response for the Prospective Frequency:	
	Several times a Week	Several times a Month
Coffee shop or bakery	19%	50%
Take-out restaurant	2%	49%
Dine-in restaurant	0%	32%
Bar or brewpub	2%	28%
Ice cream shop	5%	23%

Total Respondents: 46-48

Question 7 Responses by Food or Beverage Establishment.



Question 7 Responses by Food or Beverage Establishment continued.



Total Respondents: 46-48

Q8: Changes to Town Center

This question asked respondents to select the top five things they would most want to change about the Town Center, if anything. Eighteen options were provided, as well as an "other" option with a request for them to specify. These options included physical improvements, to suggestions for businesses, to community initiatives. Also included was an option that said no changes were needed.

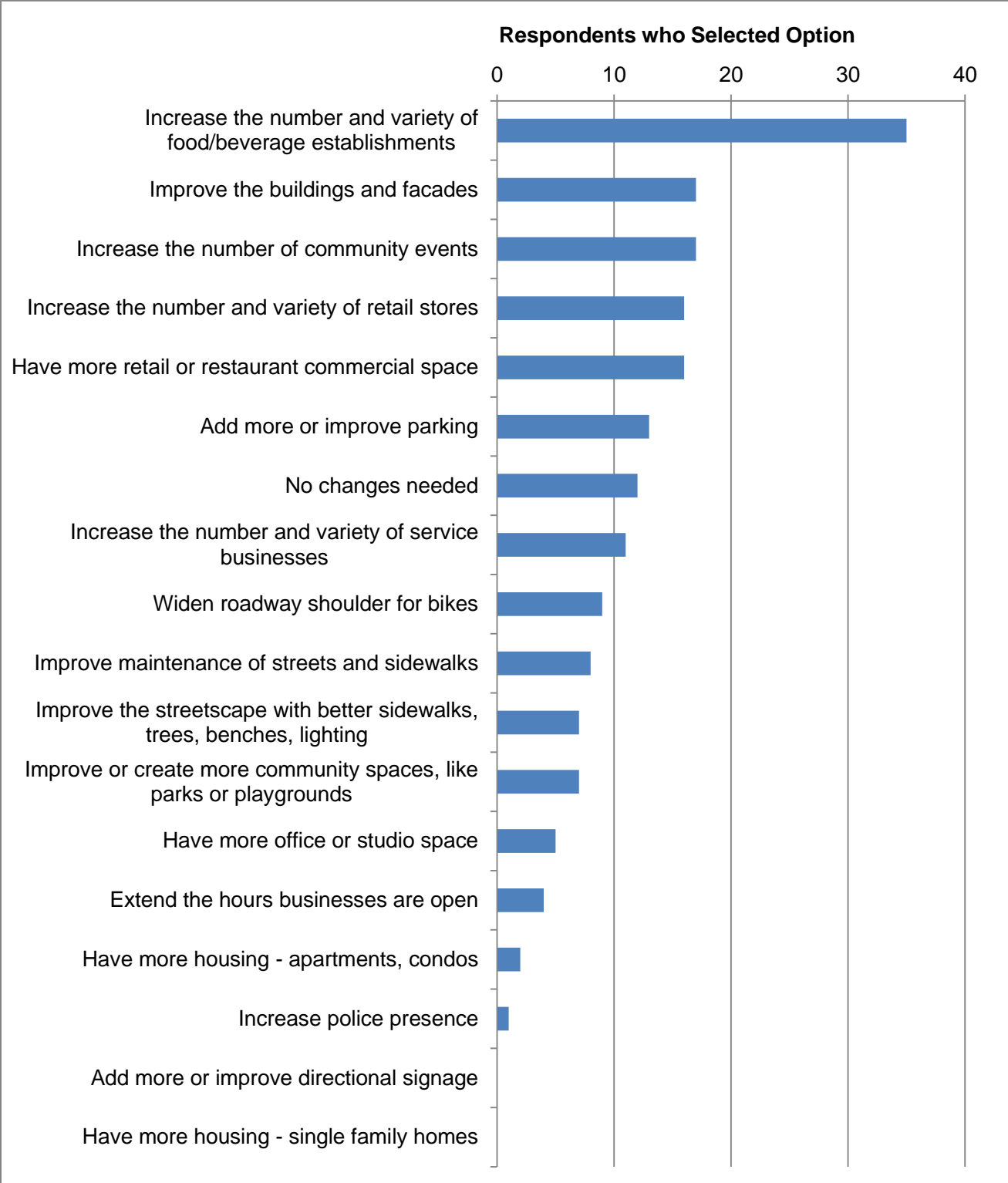
The top item selected was to increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments, with 71% of respondents selecting this option. The next four items were related to buildings, community events, and commercial activities, with 33%-35% of respondents selecting these options. Twenty-four percent of respondents said no changes were needed to the Town Center.

The top five selections were:

1. Increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments
2. Improve the buildings and facades
3. Increase the number of community events
4. Increase the number and variety of retail stores
5. Have more retail or restaurant commercial space

Under the "Other" option, respondents provided comments about the status of the Town Center. Comments included the need for wastewater or shared leach fields, the preference to have had an elementary school closer to the Town Center, and the statement that it is a residential community with no room or need for businesses in the Town Center.

Question 8. What would you most want to change about the Town Center? (Select top five)



Total Respondents: 49

Q9: Changes to Other Areas of Town

While the previous question focused on the Town Center, this question asked about what respondents would most want to change about the other areas of Town, if anything. Again, respondents were asked to select their top five items. Many of the same options were provided as in the previous question, with the exception of two. The option of adding more or improving parking, and improving the streetscape with better sidewalks, trees, benches and lighting were not included. As with the previous question, an option for “other” was also provided.

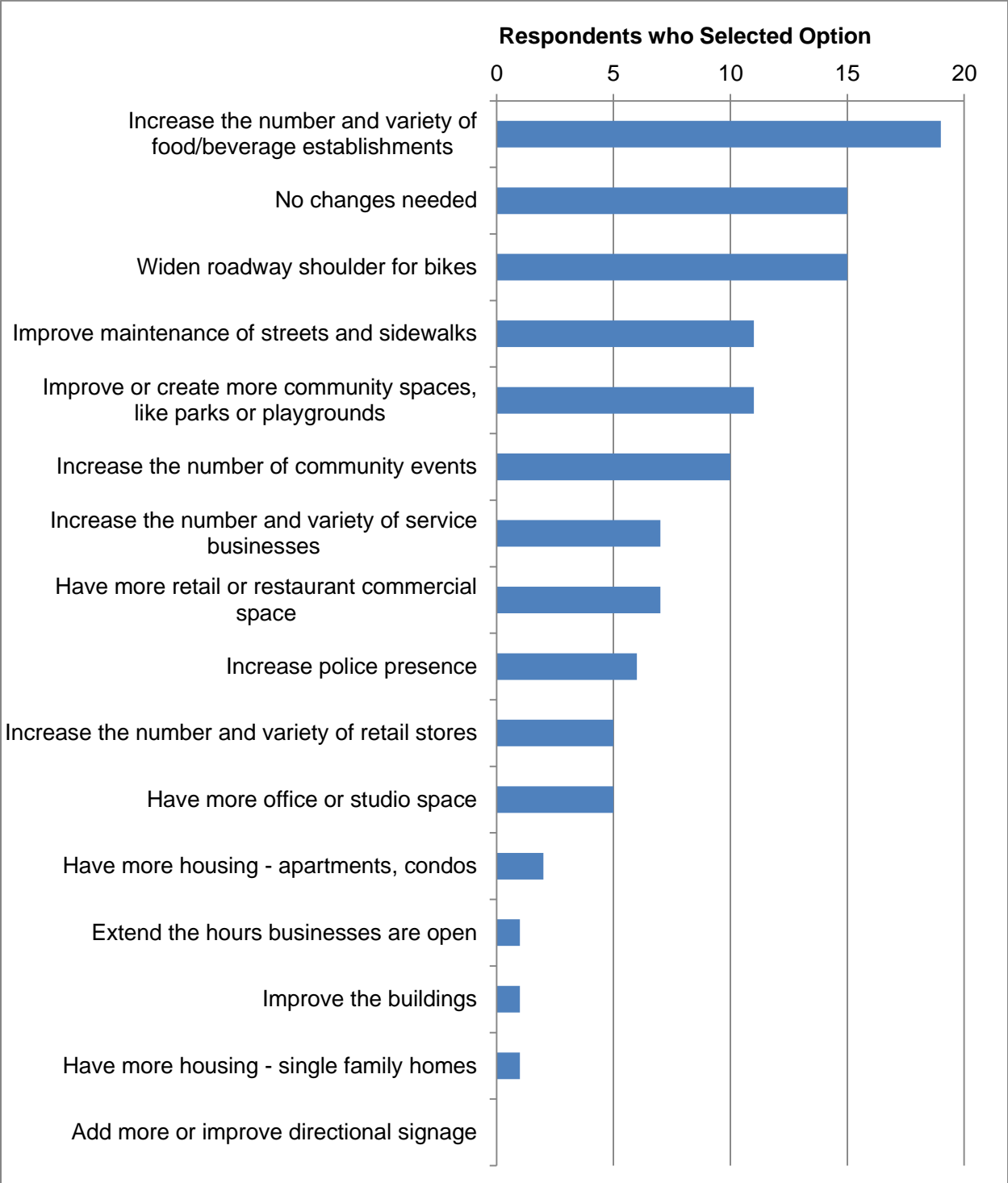
The top item selected, with 41% of respondents selecting this option, was to increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments. The next four options were selected by 24% to 33% of the question’s respondents. Tied for second most selected option was that no changes were needed in these other areas of Conway.

The top five selections were:

1. Increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments
2. No changes needed (tied for 2nd)
2. Widen roadway shoulder for bikes (tied for 2nd)
3. Improvement maintenance of streets and sidewalks (tied for 3rd)
3. Improve or create more community spaces, like parks or playgrounds (tied for 3rd)

Under the “Other” option, there were two comments about the need to complete the broadband access expansion in the community and one comment about policing in the community.

Question 9. What would you most want to change about other areas of Conway (i.e. not the Town Center)? (Select top five)

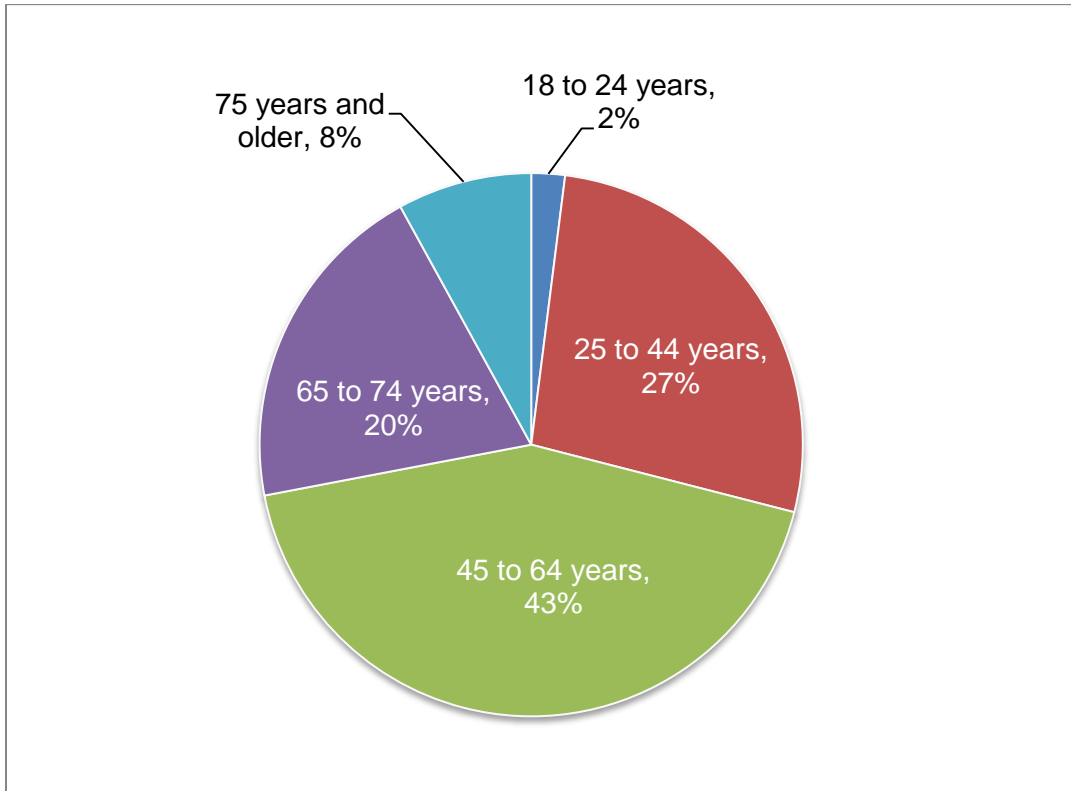


Total Respondents: 46

Q10-Q14: Respondent Demographics

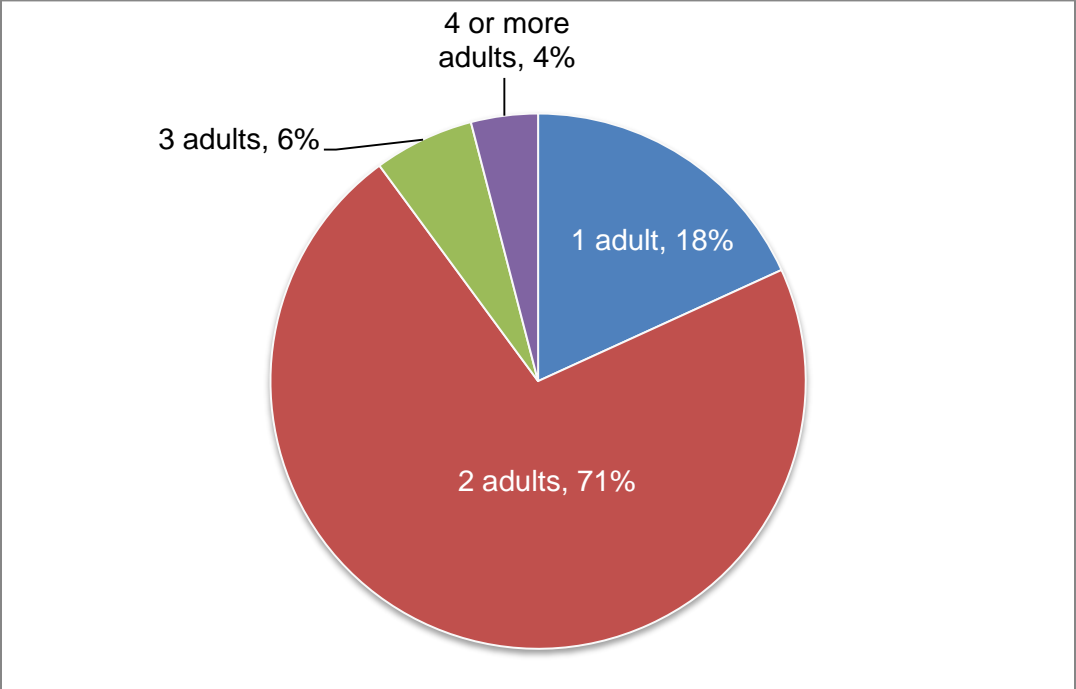
Questions 10 through 14 asked respondents about themselves and their households. These responses may be compared to the general demographics about the Town to get a general sense of who in the community responded to the survey.

Question 10. How old are you? (Select one)



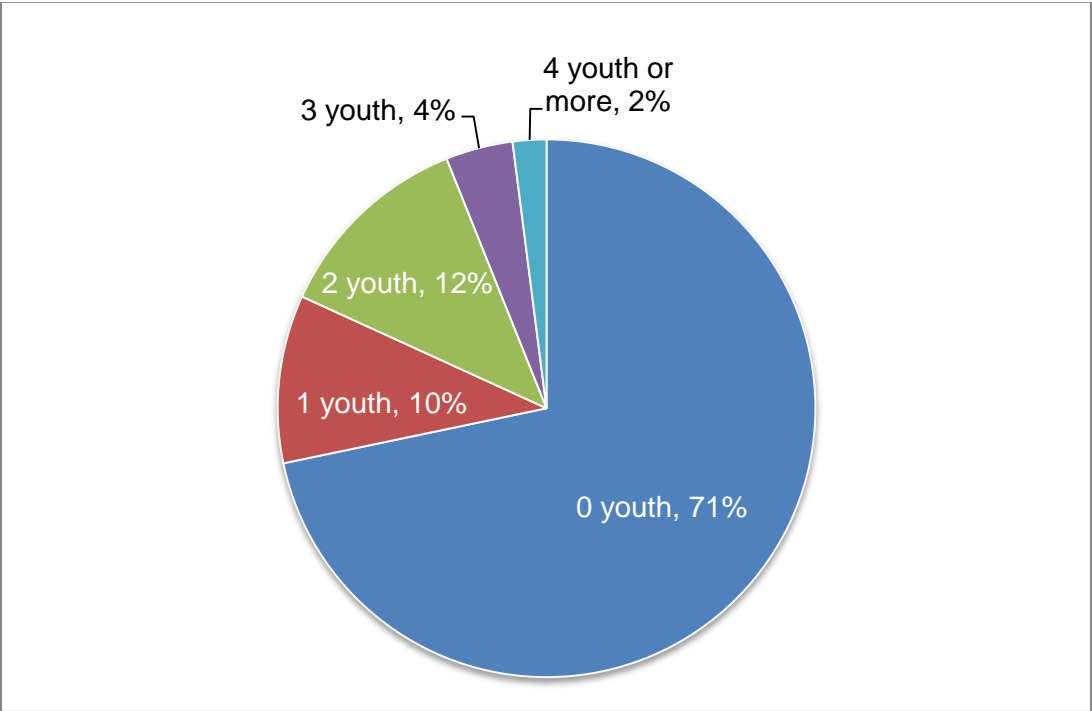
Total Respondents: 49

Question 11. How many adults live in your household? (Select one)



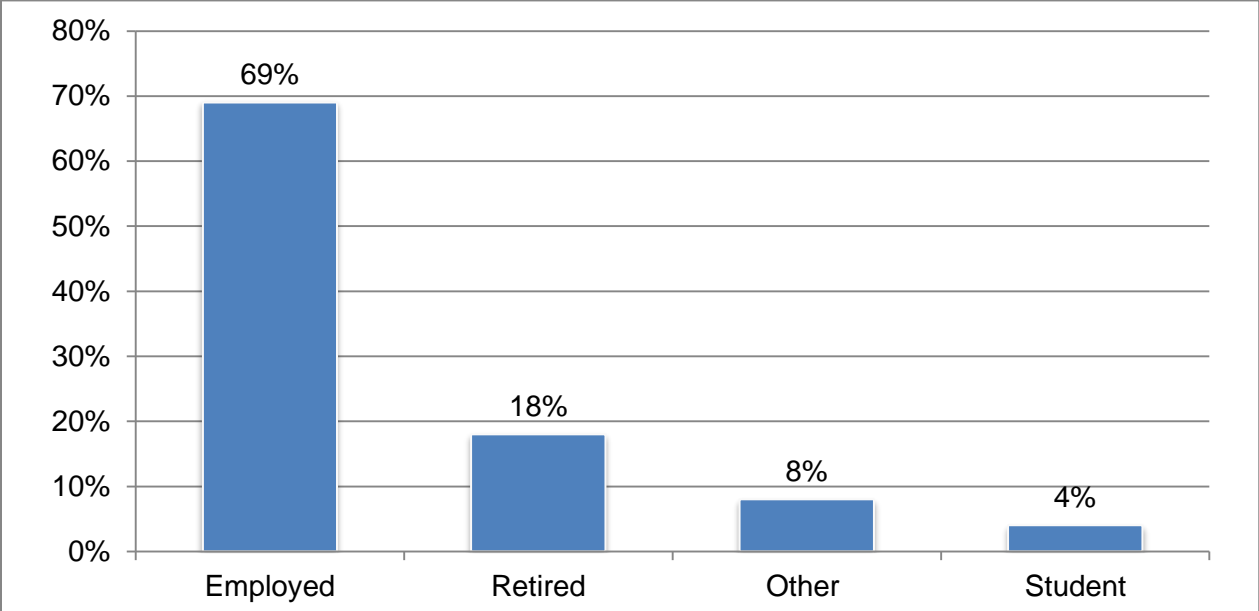
Total Respondents: 49

Question 12. How many kids or young adults under age 18 years live in your household? (Select one)



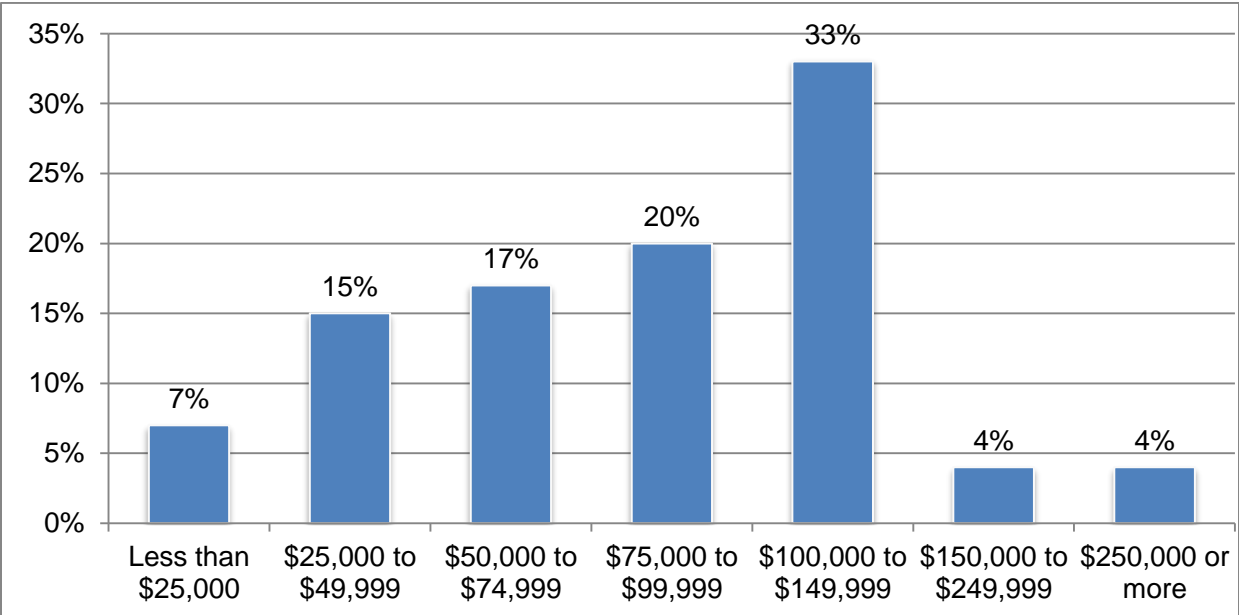
Total Respondents: 49

Question 13. Select what best describes your employment status. (Select one)



There were no responses for "Unemployed" or for "Not Seeking Employment."
 There were four respondents to "Other" that each specified they are semi-retired.
Total Respondents: 49

Question 14. My household's total annual income is: (Select one)



Total Respondents: 46

Q15: Respondent Suggestions

Respondents were asked to provide any other suggestions for creating more business or employment opportunities or expanding the tax base of the Town. This question was in an open-ended format to allow respondents to expand on their ideas. Nineteen respondents provided suggestions. Suggestions were summarized and categorized in the following table. The complete statements were shared with Planning Board members and the Town Administrator, and can be made available upon request.

Question 15. Please provide any other suggestions for creating more business or employment opportunities or expanding the tax base of the Town. (Open-ended comment)

Topic Area	Suggestions
Suggestions for Businesses in Conway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three suggestions for more food/beverage establishments, with one recommending the establishment be accessible to trail users (i.e. mountain bikers, snowmobilers, and others). ▪ Two suggestions for a small grocery or food co-op, with one suggesting something similar to the Cummington Creamery. ▪ A place to sell home crafts and food. ▪ A gas station with convenience store. ▪ Shared office/meeting space. ▪ An industrial/business park. ▪ Production of local forest products. ▪ Attract business/industry to take advantage of marijuana legalization. ▪ Noted importance of having quality businesses, and not quantity.
Suggestions for Infrastructure or Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Important to prioritize broadband access throughout community. ▪ Need for wastewater infrastructure and upgrades to fire and highway departments to support expand business opportunities. ▪ Interest in more and improved hiking and biking trails for residents and to attract visitors. ▪ Interest in more opportunities for socializing in the community. ▪ Interest in senior housing development.
General Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four statements related to it being unlikely to have more businesses in town, with one noting the difficulty competing with larger nearby communities. ▪ Cautious about changing rural community character. ▪ Support for how the community is now.

Total Respondents: 19

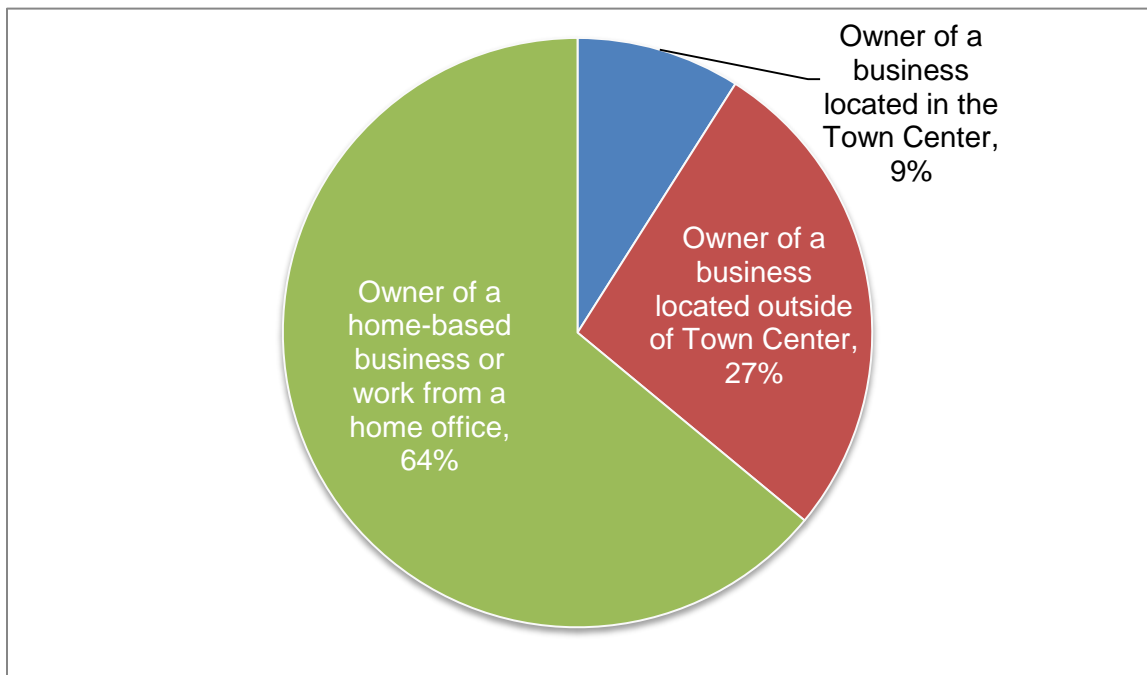
Q16-21: Owners of Businesses in Conway

To better understand the businesses located in Conway and their needs, questions 16 through 21 were only for owners of businesses located in Conway. Eleven respondents indicated they have a businesses in Conway. Of those businesses, the majority were home-based busiessses or had the owner working from a home office. They were asked how many employees they had at their Conway location (including themselves). As expected, most of the respondents indicated their business had only one employee. The industry of their business varied. When asked about the advantages and issues or obstacles related to having their business in Conway, the top response was that the beautiful rural and historic setting was an advantage to having their business in Conway.

Question 16. Do you have a business located in Conway? (Select one)

Total number of respondents who selected "Yes" was 11.

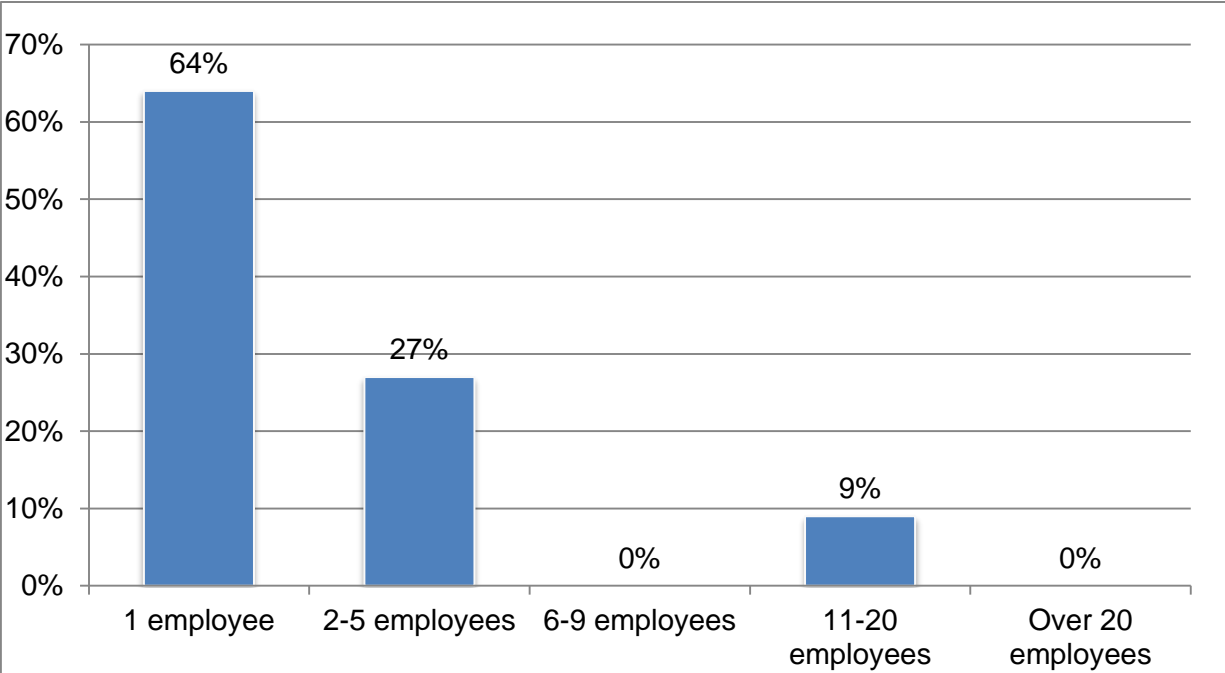
Question 17. Which one of these answers best describes the location of your Conway-based business? (Select one)



No respondents selected "Other".

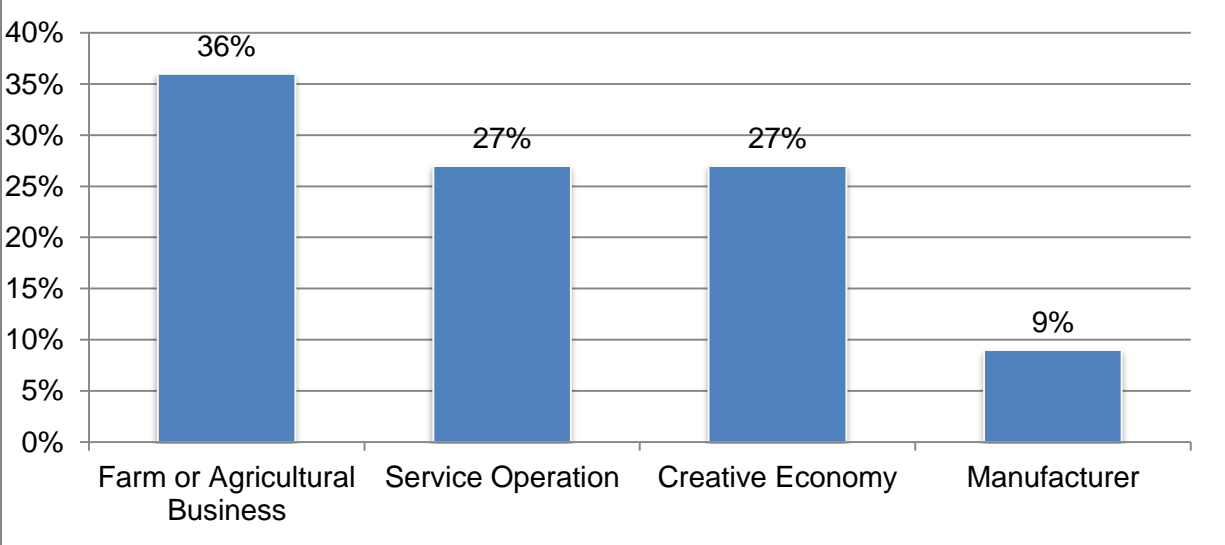
Total Respondents: 11

Question 18. Including yourself, how many employees are employed at your Conway location? (Select one)



Total Respondents: 11

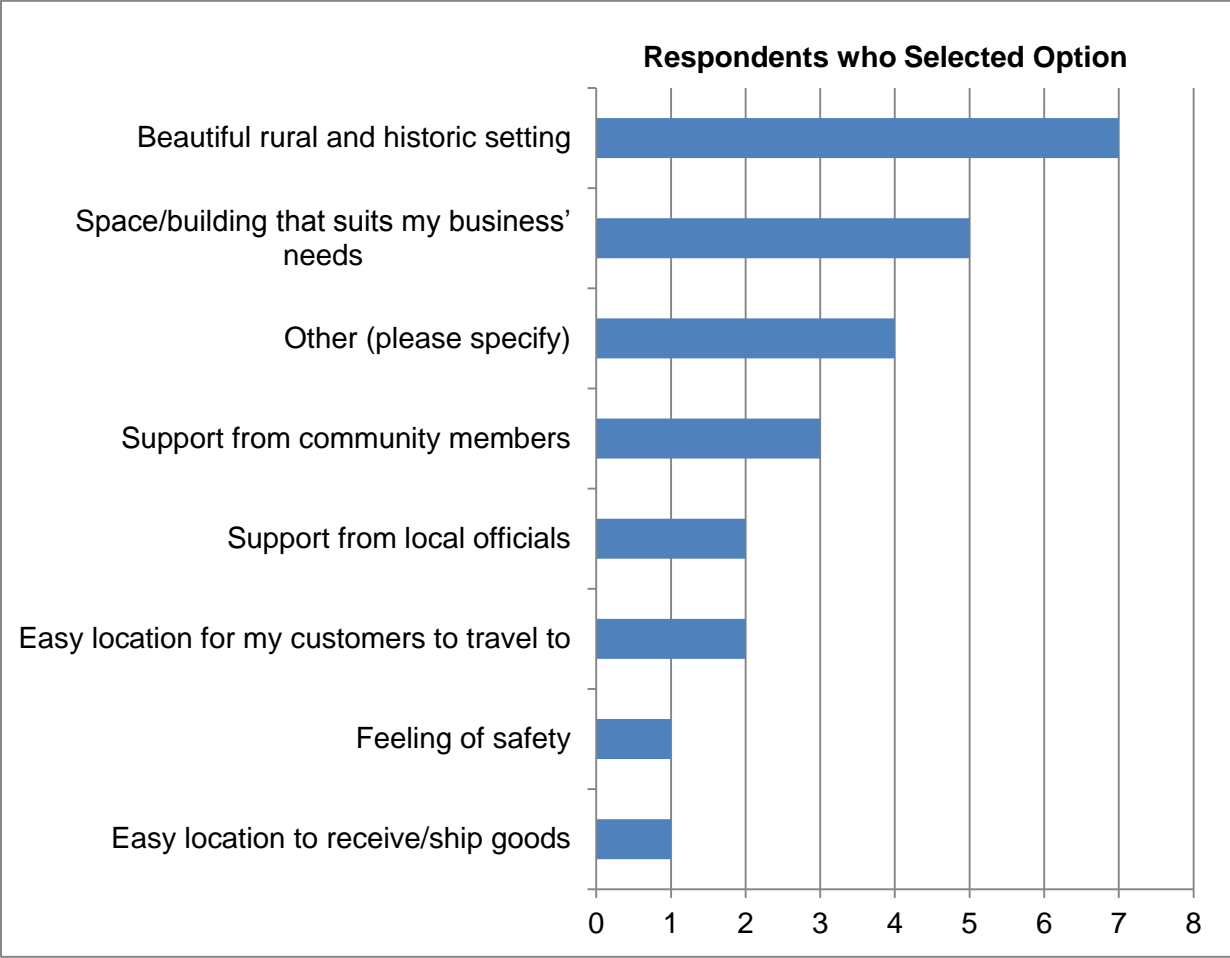
Question 19. Which one of these best describes the type of business? (Select one)



The one response for "Other" was re-categorized as a Service Operation. There were no responses for Retail Store or Restaurant; Online-based Business; or Construction Trades.

Total Respondents: 11

Question 20. What are some advantages to having your business in Conway? (Select top five)

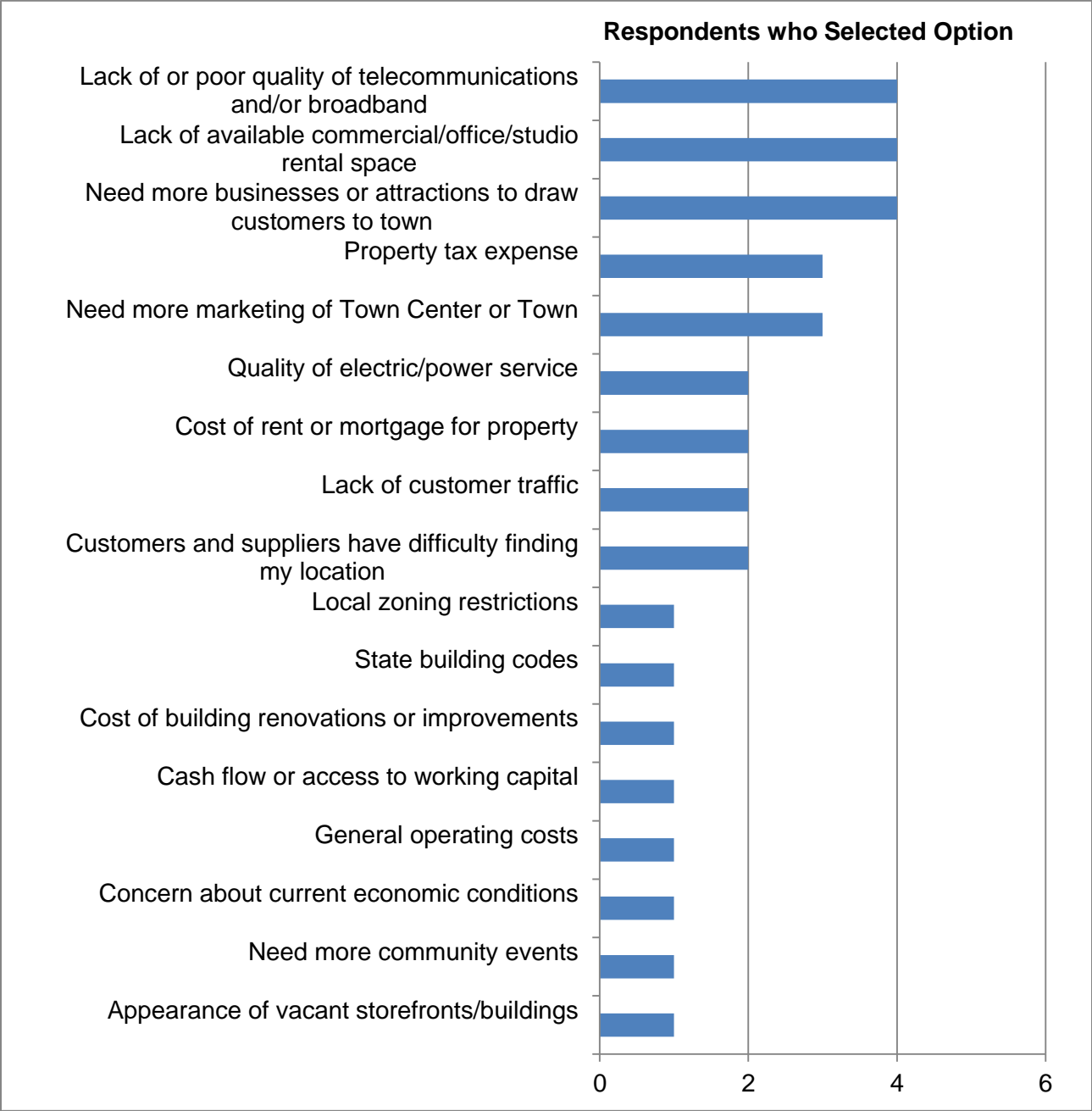


There were no responses for the options of: Accessible, convenient public parking; Effective marketing or promotion of area; Good condition of streets, sidewalks, public spaces; Location on Route 116 Scenic Byway; Other nearby businesses or attractions draw customers; Sufficient vehicle traffic; or Sufficient pedestrian or bicycle traffic.

There were four responses for the "Other" option. Respondents specified that advantages include: the good fortune to be from Conway and be able to farm "in one of the most beautiful places in the state"; inexpensive home office space; quality of life, peaceful surroundings, and access to broadband. There was also a comment that none of the options were an advantage, and that it was difficult to conduct business in Conway because of its location.

Total Respondents: 10 (note: not all respondents selected up to five options)

Question 21. What are some issues or obstacles to having your business in Conway?
(Select top five)



There were no responses for the options of: Concern about safety or crime; Lack of convenient parking; Lack of public sewer infrastructure; Lack of public water infrastructure; Need for technical assistance/expertise to help with business; and Poor condition of streets, sidewalks, public spaces. There was one response for the “Other” option. The respondent specified that taxes were an issue or obstacle to having a business in Conway.

Total Respondents: 8 (note: not all respondents selected up to five options)

SURVEY FINDINGS

The Town of Conway is scenic rural community with a population of about 1,780 with 738 households. In comparison to the county and state, the population is generally older, active in the work force, and has higher incomes. The information submitted by respondents about themselves mostly reflect these same demographic and socio-economic patterns.

There was approximately a 7% household response rate to the survey. Residents from throughout the community completed the survey, with few responses submitted by people who only work in or visit Conway. The prevailing reasons why visitors come to Conway are to visit friends and family, enjoy the scenic landscape or take advantage of the outdoor recreation amenities. People go to the Town Center primarily to visit the Town Hall, Town Office, Post Office or Library, but also to enjoy a hike/ walk or take a bike ride, or visit a business.

When it comes to shopping habits, the most frequently procured good or service in town is from a Farm-stand or Farmer's Market, with 25% of respondents selecting this option for Conway. Most commonly used goods and services are procured in the Deerfield/Greenfield area, but the Amherst/Hadley area and Williamsburg/Northampton area are also top locations for shopping. The Ashfield/Shelburne Falls area is identified as a top location for going to a restaurant or café. For some categories, such as Book or Gift Store, or Art Gallery or Museum, "Other locations or online" were selected. Selection of this category may reflect increased trends for online shopping (such as for books and gifts) or other areas outside of the vicinity of Conway that have more options (such as major cities for museums).

A question was asked regarding prospective shopping in Conway. It asked about if specific goods or services were available in town or if more options were available, how often would frequent them. The top categories selected for respondents to go several times a week or a month were Grocery or Food Co-op Store (64% of respondents), then Farm-stand or Farmer's Market (58%), and Restaurant or Café (41%).

When asked specifically about whether there should be more food or beverage establishments in Conway, 80% of respondents said yes. Based on survey responses, the type of establishment they would go to most frequently if it were in town was a Coffee Shop or Bakery (69% of respondents) followed by a Take-out Restaurant (48%). Question 15 offered respondents to provide their suggestions for creating more business or employment opportunities or expanding the tax base. There were several

respondents who highlighted the opportunity to have more food and beverage establishments, a small grocery or food co-op, or other venues for people to purchase food.

Respondents were also asked about things they would most want to change about the Town Center or the other areas of Conway. For what could be changed about the Town Center, the overwhelming top selection from the options provided was to increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments. The next top selections, but to a much lesser degree, were: to improve the buildings and facades; to increase the number of community events; to increase the number and variety of retail stores; and to have more retail or restaurant commercial space.

The top selection for what could be changed about other areas of Conway was again to increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments. The other top selections included: no changes needed; widen roadway shoulder for bikes; improve maintenance of streets and sidewalks; and improve or create more community spaces, like parks and playgrounds. Again in Question 15, in addition to food/beverage related businesses, respondents suggested the need for infrastructure and amenities. The importance of expanding broadband throughout the community was highlighted, as was the need for wastewater infrastructure and upgrades to municipal departments. There was interest in more outdoor recreation facilities as well as opportunities to encourage more socializing in the community.

The survey included questions targeted for owners of businesses located in Conway. There were eleven respondents who answered questions about their respective businesses. Most respondents reported that their businesses were home-based, with one respondent's business located in the Town Center and another two respondents' businesses located outside of the Town Center. Most respondents indicated their businesses had only one employee. These businesses included farm or agricultural businesses, service operations, creative economy businesses, and a manufacturer.

When asked about advantages to having a business in Conway, the option most selected was the town's beautiful rural and historic setting, with second most selected option being that the space/building suits their business' needs. Conversely, a question was asked about issues or obstacles with having their business in Conway. There was not one overwhelming selection shared by the majority of respondents. Three options were tied as the most selected. They were: lack of poor quality of telecommunications and/or broadband; lack of available commercial/office/studio rental space; and need more businesses or attractions to draw customers to town.

The open-ended question asking for suggestions from respondents was Question 15. As stated previously, there were suggestions supporting more food/beverage, small grocery or food co-op establishments. Suggestions related to improving infrastructure and amenities were made as well. Respondents also provided general statements about the community and economic development. There were multiple statements related to the unlikelihood and/or difficulty of having more businesses in town. There was caution for changing and support expressed for how the community is currently.

These survey findings can be part of the discussion and consideration of Planning Board members and other municipal officials, as they move forward with determining strategies for supporting economic development in Conway.

APPENDIX

- Survey Questionnaire
- Article from The Greenfield Recorder, September 25, 2017

Survey Questionnaire

Town of Conway: Resident, Visitor & Business Survey

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to ask you - residents, visitors, and owners and workers of businesses in Conway - about the businesses where you shop, what businesses you think would be successful in Conway, and what types of businesses are already in Conway. This information is being collected to help local officials develop strategies to increase the amount of economic activity happening in Conway, while also preserving the community's rural character. Encouraging greater business activity can translate into more local job opportunities, closer access to shopping and services, and an expanded tax base to support important municipal functions.

Responses are due by no later than **Wednesday, October 18, 2017**. Please note that all individual responses are confidential. We appreciate your input. Thank you!

Survey Questions

1. Select the option that best describes your connection to Conway: (select one)

	I am resident of the Town Center
	I am resident of the of South Deerfield Road/Route 116 area
	I am resident of the Ashfield Road/Route 116 area
	I am resident of the Shelburne Falls Road, Shirkshire or Bardwell Ferry Road area
	I am resident of the Whately Road area
	I am resident of the Poland District
	I do not live in Conway, but I work or own a business in Conway
	I do not live in Conway, but I live or work in the region
	I am a visitor to Conway and the region.

2. If you are a visitor or a resident who has family or friends visit, what is of most interest to visitors? (select top 3)

Visiting family and friends living in Conway
Attending community events (i.e. Festival of Hills, Farmers Market, etc.)
Hiking, biking or other outdoor recreation
Going to farm-stands or local markets
Enjoying the scenic landscape
Accessing historic resources (i.e. historical museum, covered bridge)
Accessing tourist attractions in the region
Accessing educational opportunities
Other: _____

3. Why do you go to the Town Center or other areas of Conway, and approximately how often?

	Several times per week	Several times per month	Several times per year	Rarely or Never
To visit a Conway business				
To go to the Town Hall, Town Office, Post Office, or Library				
To attend a community or cultural fair, festival or event				
To go to a park or recreation area				
To enjoy a hike/walk or take a bike ride				
Other: _____				

4. Where do you **most frequently** go for the following goods or services?

	Conway	Ashfield/ Shelburne Falls area	Deerfield/ Greenfield area	Williamsburg/ Northampton area	Amherst/ Hadley area	Other locations or online	N/A
Book or Gift store							
Clothing or Shoe store							
Home Furnishing or Antiques store							
Hardware or Gardener Supply store							
Bike or Sporting Goods store							
Grocery or Food Co- op store							
Farm-stand or Farmer's Market							
Restaurant or Café							
Beer/Wine/Liquor store							
Hotel, B&B or Inn							
Theater or Performance Space							
Art Gallery or Museum							
Professional services (financial, legal, etc.)							
Medical or Healthcare services							
Beauty Salon or Spa services							
Gym, Yoga, Dance or Martial Arts							
Pharmacy							
Laundromat							
Gas Station							
Auto/Vehicle Repair							
Other: _____							

N/A= Not Applicable

5. If these goods/services or additional options for these goods/services were located **in Conway**, how often would you frequent them?

	Several times per week	Several times per month	Several times per year	Rarely or Never
Book or Gift store				
Clothing or Shoe store				
Home Furnishing or Antiques store				
Hardware or Gardener Supply store				
Bike or Sporting Goods store				
Grocery or Food Co-op store				
Farm-stand or Farmer's Market				
Restaurant or Café				
Beer/Wine/Liquor store				
Hotel, B&B or Inn				
Theater or Performance Space				
Art Gallery or Museum				
Professional services (financial, legal, etc.)				
Medical or Healthcare services				
Beauty Salon or Spa services				
Gym, Yoga, Dance or Martial Arts				
Pharmacy				
Laundromat				
Gas Station				
Auto/Vehicle Repair				
Other: _____				

6. Do you think more **food or beverage establishments** are needed in the Conway? (select one)
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know

7. If you think more **food or beverage establishments** are needed, how often would you frequent these types of businesses if they were in Conway?

	Several times per week	Several times per month	Several times per year	Rarely or Never
Dine-in restaurant				
Take-out restaurant				
Coffee shop or bakery				
Ice cream shop				
Bar or brewpub				
Other: _____				

8. What would you most want to change about the **Town Center** (select your top five answers)

	Increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments
	Increase the number and variety of retail stores
	Increase the number and variety of service businesses
	Increase the number of community events
	Extend the hours businesses are open
	Improve the buildings and facades
	Improve the streetscape with better sidewalks, trees, benches, lighting
	Improve maintenance of streets and sidewalks
	Improve or create more community spaces, like parks or playgrounds
	Add more or improve directional signage
	Add more or improve parking
	Widen roadway shoulder for bikes
	Have more housing – single family homes
	Have more housing – apartments, condos
	Have more office or studio space
	Have more retail or restaurant commercial space
	Increase police presence
	No changes needed
	Other: _____

9. What would you most want to change about **other areas of Conway** (i.e. not the Town Center) (select your top five answers)

	Increase the number and variety of food/beverage establishments
	Increase the number and variety of retail stores
	Increase the number and variety of service businesses
	Increase the number of community events
	Extend the hours businesses are open
	Improve the buildings
	Improve maintenance of streets and sidewalks
	Improve or create more community spaces, like parks or playgrounds
	Add more or improve directional signage
	Widen roadway shoulder for bikes
	Have more housing – single family homes
	Have more housing – apartments, condos
	Have more office space
	Increase police presence
	No changes needed
	Other: _____

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF

10. How old are you? (select one)

	17 years or under
	18 to 24 years
	25 to 44 years
	45 to 64 years
	65 to 74 years
	75 years or over

11. How many adults live in your household? (select one)

	1
	2
	3
	4 or more

12. How many kids or young adults under age 18 years old live in your household? (select one)

	0
	1
	2
	3
	4 or more

13. Select what best describes your employment status. (select one)

	Employed
	Unemployed
	Retired
	Student
	Not seeking employment (such as an at-home caretaker)
	Other: _____

14. My household's total annual income is: (select one)

	Less than \$25,000
	\$25,000 to \$49,999
	\$50,000 to \$74,999
	\$75,000 to \$99,999
	\$100,000 to \$149,999
	\$150,000 to \$249,999
	\$250,000 or more

COMMENTS

15. Please provide any other suggestions for creating more business or employment opportunities or expanding the tax base of the Town.

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If you do not have a business located in Conway, you have completed the survey. Thank you for your feedback. If you own a business in Conway, please answer the following questions.

QUESTIONS FOR OWNERS OF BUSINESSES IN CONWAY

16. Do you have a business located in Conway? (select one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

17. Which one of these best describes your Conway-based business? (select one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Owner of a business located in the Town Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Owner of a business located outside of Town Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Owner of a home-based business or work from a home office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

18. Including yourself, how many employees do you employ at your Conway location? (select one)

	1 employee
	2-5 employees
	6-10 employees
	11-20 employees
	Over 20 employees

19. Which one of these best describes the type of business? (select one)

	Farm or other agricultural business
	Retail store or restaurant
	Service operation (i.e. financial, attorney, healthcare, childcare, etc.)
	Creative economy (i.e. artist, writer, etc.)
	Construction trades
	Manufacturer
	Online-based business
	Other: _____

20. What are some **advantages** to having your business in Conway? (select top five that apply)

	Easy location for my patrons to travel to
	Easy location to receive/ship goods
	Other nearby businesses or attractions draw customers
	Space/building that suits my business' needs
	Beautiful rural and historic setting
	Sufficient vehicle traffic
	Sufficient pedestrian or bicycle traffic
	Accessible, convenient public parking
	Good condition of streets, sidewalks, public spaces
	Feeling of safety
	Effective marketing or promotion of area
	Location on Route 116 Scenic Byway
	Support from community members
	Support from local officials
	Other: _____

21. What are some **issues or obstacles** to having your business in Conway? (select top five that apply)

	Customers and suppliers have difficulty finding my location
	Lack of customer traffic
	Need more businesses or attractions to draw customers to town
	Lack of available commercial/office/studio rental space
	Appearance of vacant storefronts/buildings
	Need more marketing of Town Center or Town
	Need more community events
	Poor condition of streets, sidewalks, public spaces
	Concern about safety or crime
	Concern about current economic conditions
	Need for technical assistance/expertise to help with business
	General operating costs
	Cash flow / working capital
	Cost of rent or mortgage for property
	Cost of building renovations or improvements
	State building codes
	Local zoning restrictions
	Property tax expense
	Lack of convenient parking
	Lack of public water infrastructure
	Lack of public sewer infrastructure
	Lack of or poor quality of telecommunications and/or broadband
	Poor quality of electric/power service
	Other: _____

This is the end of the survey. Thank you for your participation.

Conway asks residents for local economy ideas in survey

Recorder Staff

CONWAY — The Planning Board is looking for input to help promote the local economy.

A survey circulating the town asks residents, visitors, business owners and workers “where you shop, what businesses you think would be successful in Conway and what types of businesses are already in Conway,” a press release states.

“This information will help us develop strategies to increase the amount of economic activity happening in Conway, while also preserving the community’s rural character,” it continues.

Increased business means more local jobs, closer access to shopping, “and an expanded tax base to support important municipal functions.”

Find the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CONWAYSURVEY. There are also printed copies at the town office building and Field Memorial Library.

Responses, which are confidential, are due by Oct. 18.