



*Main Street* Main Street FORT DODGE

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## PARTICIPATE IN MAIN STREET FORT DODGE MARKET SURVEY

Main Street Fort Dodge, in conjunction with Main Street Iowa, is currently conducting a Market Analysis for the 33-block Main Street District. Main Street Fort Dodge is taking a proactive approach to planning for the future prosperity of the traditional downtown business district. The preliminary work began in July with the survey work kicking off Thursday, September 6, 2018. "We hope every consumer in Fort Dodge participates," stated Kris Patrick, executive director. "Three separate surveys will be conducted, an intercept shopping survey, a separate business owner survey, and online survey link."

Main Street Fort Dodge can collect this primary data through a \$15,000 technical service grant from Main Street Iowa. "The Main Street Iowa team is working to enhance the current process to incorporate the development of market-based strategies as part of the implementation plan to reflect the process and outcomes," remarked Robin Bostrom, business specialist with IEDA. The Market Study will be conducted over the next three months. Clarence, Iowa and Fort Dodge are the first two communities to initiate the new formula.

Economic Vitality Chair, Natalie Newell, is organizing volunteers to distribute business and intercept surveys. "Our team will be hand-delivering a one-page survey to all the businesses in the downtown between September 6-14<sup>th</sup>. Business owners will answer questions describing the type of marketing they use, types of new businesses or attractions which would benefit their business, sales trends, future plans and interest in seminars and technical services," explained Newell. "The surveys are confidential, and we will pick up the sealed envelopes within two days. We have a separate team that will complete the data entry. All online data will be collected through survey monkey in a 3-minute survey form."

"We have a short window to collect 384 intercept surveys, 227 business surveys and over 1,000 online surveys," mentioned Patrick. "Main Street Iowa has challenged Fort Dodge to surpass the 1,000 surveys collected by the Ames team when they implemented the survey process. We will begin Thursday, September 6, 2018 and all data must be collected by Saturday, September 22." The online survey link is [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FortDodge\\_Consumer](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FortDodge_Consumer). Main Street hopes to consumers from high school age through seniors to complete the online survey.

Teams of two will work on gathering the 384 shopper surveys. The one-page surveys take less than three minutes to complete and will reflect direct opinions of shoppers. Questions range from how far they live from downtown to how often shoppers are in the district, what types of products they purchase online, what media sources they rely on for local information, what they love downtown, and what they would improve first.

This information will be quantified by Main Street Iowa and the local program will create the report during October and November. The report will identify opportunities for new businesses, expansion of product lines for existing businesses,

and identify possible economic incentives to catalyze new investment and entrepreneurial opportunities. The information will be shared with all businesses in the downtown. The information will also identify possibilities for a variety of non-commercial uses in downtown including housing, cultural, and recreational that could support commercial development goals. The study will identify key assets, market segment and audiences providing a basis for development of new events or repositioning existing events, and cooperative advertising. "This process will create benchmarks, track changes and quantify our progress. This is an ongoing project and each year we will update our action plan, and review changes in the district to better understand the needs of Fort Dodge," Patrick stated.

Main Street Iowa has shared market data collected through ESRI, a geographic information system company, with the local program. Main Street Fort Dodge began sharing this secondary data with businesses, service clubs and other nonprofits in August. The efforts of Main Street Fort Dodge and its partners are working to generate interest and invite members from all sectors of the community to participate. The Study engages the market itself, community members, residents, business persons, and other stakeholders, to gain an understanding of the local and regional market conditions and trends impacting the district's position in the market and opportunities for the future. To gain an accurate picture of the market climate a large cross-section of the community will be engaged so the information will represent the Fort Dodge area as a whole.

More information, the Market Snapshot, and link to the online survey are on [www.mainstreetfd.org](http://www.mainstreetfd.org).

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Main Street at 515.573.3172 or email at [kris@mainstreetfd.org](mailto:kris@mainstreetfd.org).