

Planning Amherst Together: A Community Survey

Comprehensive Planning Committee

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August 14, 2007

Survey Background

- Purpose
- Sampling and sample size
- Questionnaire design
- Survey implementation
- Data entry, analysis and presentation

Q 1. How many years have you lived in Amherst?

<u>Years</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
0-5	126	19.1
6-10	98	14.8
11-15	89	13.5
16-20	92	14.0
21-25	52	7.8
26-35	96	14.6
36-50	68	10.3
> 50	39	5.9
Total	660	100.0

Mean years = 20.2

Q2. Do you rent or own your place of residence?

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Rent	122	18.8
Own	528	81.2
Total	660	100.0

Q 3. In which Village Center do you live?

<u>Village Center</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Echo Hill	86	13.1
Cushman	63	9.6
North Amherst	84	12.7
Pomeroy/West Street	109	16.5
Atkins Corner	74	11.2
East Amherst	42	6.4
Downtown Area	162	24.6
None of the Above	29	4.4
Don't Know	10	1.5
Total	659	100.0

Q 4. In the downtown area and the existing village centers, would you support or oppose:

	<u>Mean</u>
Increasing the density (number of housing units allowed)	2.85
Encouraging mixed-use buildings	3.75
Allowing the more intensive uses...if they bring a reduction in the number of new homes and businesses in other parts of town	3.03

1=Strongly oppose, 2=Oppose, 3=Neutral, 4=Support, 5=Strongly support

Q 4. In residential neighborhoods, would you support or oppose:

	Mean
Encouraging apartments being added to existing houses	2.79
Allowing increased housing density while requiring compatible design standards	3.08
Allowing increased density while giving current residents significant input into planning and design	3.19
Requiring developers ...cluster the homes on smaller lots and place remaining land in conservation	3.58

Q 4. Elsewhere in town, would you support or oppose:

	<u>Mean</u>
Allowing businesses that need to have walk-in or drive-in customers to locate in professional research parks	3.74
Zoning for a light industrial/office park	3.86

Q 5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following ideas about future development in Amherst?

	<u>Mean</u>
New development should take place in and near the existing village centers listed in Question #3	3.44
Additional village centers for mixed business and residential use should be created in Amherst	3.03
New development should be spread evenly across the town (NOT concentrated in the village centers and downtown)	2.75
More commercial uses that serve the student population should be encouraged in appropriate areas close to the UMass campus	3.77

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Q 6. Where would you take public transportation if it were available?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
To other towns	296	45.5	355	54.5
To shopping areas	329	50.5	322	49.5
To downtown	370	56.8	281	43.2
To Village Centers	269	41.3	382	58.7
To recreation areas	237	36.4	414	63.6
I would not use public transportation	196	30.2	454	69.8

Q 7. In future land use decisions, do you think the creation of moderate income housing should get less priority, equal priority, or greater priority than the protection of additional open space?

Mean response

Mean

2.78

1=Much lower priority, 2=Lower priority, 3=Equal priority,
4=Greater priority, 5=Much greater priority

Q 8. Would you support the construction of a greater number of small homes on smaller lots rather than a fewer number of large homes on larger lots, if this resulted in homes that were affordable to moderate income households?

Mean response

Mean

3.74

1=Strongly oppose, 2=Oppose, 3=Neutral, 4=Support, 5=Strongly support

Q 9. To what extent would you support or oppose each of these in order to create housing that is more affordable to the average household?

	<u>Mean</u>
Small houses on small lots	3.70
Duplexes	3.50
Condos	3.56
Apartment buildings	2.74

1=Strongly oppose, 2=Oppose, 3=Neutral, 4=Support, 5=Strongly support

Q 10. If increasing density is used as an incentive to create a mix of moderately priced housing choices, then:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>%</u>
Do you think increased density should be concentrated in Downtown and Village Centers?	327	52.7	176	28.4	117	18.9
Do you think increased density should be allowed in all areas of the Town, if open space is also required as part of the development?	316	49.3	216	33.7	109	17.0

Q 11. Do you believe that all new residential developments should contain a mix of housing prices?

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	365	56.2
No	195	30.0
Don't Know	90	13.8
Total	650	100.0

Q 12. To what extent would you support or oppose each of the following?

	<u>Mean</u>
Having housing specifically set aside for seniors	3.72
Small, moderately priced units set aside for seniors	3.82
Upscale, market rate units set aside for seniors	3.10

1=Strongly oppose, 2=Oppose, 3=Neutral, 4=Support, 5=Strongly support

Q 13. To what extent do you feel the following economic development initiatives are desirable or undesirable?

	<u>Mean</u>
University/research/clean/high technology	4.38
Retirement communities	3.76
Culture and tourism based	3.95
Agriculture based businesses and services	4.03
Retail services	3.74
Light industry	3.42
Luxury housing	2.53
Off-campus privately owned student housing	2.61

1=Very undesirable, 2=Undesirable, 3=Neutral, 4=Desirable, 5=Very desirable

Q 14. From Question #13 above, which three do you most prefer?

	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Third</u>
University/research/clean/high technology	1	4	6
Retirement communities	4	3	4
Culture and tourism based	3	1	1
Agriculture based businesses and services	2	2	3
Retail services	5	5	2
Light industry	6	6	5
Luxury housing	8	8	8
Off-campus privately owned student housing	7	7	7

Q 15. In your opinion, how important is it that Amherst:

	<u>Mean</u>
Protect its environmental quality (air/water quality)	4.56
Protect its natural environment (forests, wildlife, fish, habitat)	4.42
Create a range of housing alternatives	3.47
Preserve historic structures and landscapes in Amherst	3.84
Provide public facilities for cultural activity	3.42
Encourage historic preservation	3.62
Have more recreational facilities	2.94
Preserve the current level of farming	3.85
Better link existing parcels of open space	3.27
Actively support contemporary cultural life	3.23

1=Not at all important, 2=Slightly important, 3=Moderately important, 4=Very important, 5=Extremely important

Q 16. From Question #15 above, which three do you feel are the most important for Amherst to do?

	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Third</u>
Protect its environmental quality (air/water quality)	1	2	5
Protect its natural environment (forests, wildlife, fish, habitat)	2	1	2
Create a range of housing alternatives	3	3	3
Preserve historic structures and landscapes in Amherst	5	5	4
Provide public facilities for cultural activity	8	6	7
Encourage historic preservation	10	7	8
Have more recreational facilities	6	10	9
Preserve the current level of farming	4	4	1
Better link existing parcels of open space	9	9	9
Actively support contemporary cultural life	7	8	6

Q 17. How many more of the following types of new housing units should be built in Amherst?

	<u>Mean</u>
Large single-family houses on large lots	1.98
Small single family houses on small lots	2.99
Duplexes	2.58
Apartments added to existing homes	2.38
Rental apartments	2.28
Townhouses/Condominiums	2.74
Retirement housing	2.97
Privately-owned student housing	2.01
Luxury homes	1.69

1=None, 2=A few more, 3=Some more, 4=Many more, 5=A great many more

Q 18. Do you agree or disagree that the following are transportation problems in Downtown Amherst?

	<u>Mean</u>
Lack of downtown parking	3.34
Downtown traffic congestion	3.25
Infrequent buses	3.02
Too few bicycle lanes leading into the downtown area	3.01
Poorly maintained bike lanes	3.00

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Q 19. Would you support or oppose an increase in the property tax rate to pay for each of the following purposes?

	<u>Mean</u>
A new multi-generational recreation center	2.41
Enhance town library offerings	3.07
Acquire additional open space	2.97
Enhance fire and ambulance services	3.36
Enhance public school program offerings	3.54
A new Department of Public Works building	2.47
A revolving fund for historical preservation projects	2.74
Enhance Town supported social services	2.97
To create affordable housing	2.92

1=Strongly oppose, 2=Oppose, 3=Neutral, 4=Support, 5=Strongly support

Q 20. From Question #19 above, which three do you feel are the most important for Amherst to do?

	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Third</u>
A new multi-generational recreation center	6	7	8
Enhance town library offerings	5	3	4
Acquire additional open space	3	4	3
Enhance fire and ambulance services	2	1	5
Enhance public school program offerings	1	2	6
A new Department of Public Works building	8	9	9
A revolving fund for historical preservation projects	8	8	7
Enhance Town supported social services	7	6	1
To create affordable housing	4	5	2

Q 21. The two most common types of residential development in towns like Amherst are Conventional subdivision and Cluster subdivision. To what extent would you support or oppose additional residential development of either type in Amherst?

	<u>Mean</u>
Conventional subdivision	2.74
Cluster subdivision	3.62

1=Strongly oppose, 2=Oppose, 3=Neutral, 4=Support, 5=Strongly support

Q 22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning transportation in Amherst?

	<u>Mean</u>
Create a car-free pedestrian mall in part of downtown Amherst	3.11
New residential development should be accessible to bus service	3.76
New residential development should be accessible to bicycle routes	3.63
Bus service should meet the year-round needs of Amherst on all routes	3.77

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Q 23. In your opinion, how important is it that Amherst promote alternative forms of transportation as a means of:

	<u>Mean</u>
Managing traffic congestion	3.36
Decreasing Amherst's contribution to global warming	3.59
Promoting a more active community	3.34

1=Not at all important, 2=Slightly important, 3=Moderately important, 4=Very important, 5=Extremely important

Q 24. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the development of small scale businesses, like convenience stores, should be encouraged in or near areas of town where access to public transportation is not convenient?

	<u>Mean</u>
Mean response	3.72

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral,
4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Q 25. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	<u>Mean</u>
Historic resources are part of the distinctive character of Amherst	4.10
Historic resources are worth preserving even at the expense of some development	3.76
Historic resources deserve support through tax incentives	3.38

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Q 26. What best describes the highest level of education that you have completed?

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than a High School diploma	7	1.1
High School diploma	37	5.6
Some college	79	12.0
College graduate	170	25.9
Masters degree/Ph.D.	364	55.4
Total	657	100.0

Q 28. What is your age?

<u>Years</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
17-20	25	3.9
21-25	37	5.8
26-30	32	4.9
31-40	68	10.6
41-50	146	22.8
51-60	147	22.9
61-70	98	15.2
71-91	89	13.9
Total	642	100.0

Mean years = 51.5

Q 29. Please tell us which ethnic or racial group you most closely identify with?

<u>Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Asian	49	7.9
Black/African-American	20	3.2
Hispanic/Latino	23	3.7
White/Caucasian	515	82.8
Mixed race	11	1.8
American Indian/White	2	0.3
Jewish	2	0.3
Total	622	100.0

Q 30. What is your approximate annual household income before taxes?

<u>Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than \$15,000	44	7.5
\$15,001 - \$34,999	84	14.2
\$35,000 - \$49,999	57	9.7
\$50,000 - \$74,999	114	19.3
\$75,000 - \$99,999	99	16.8
\$100,000 - \$149,999	118	20.0
Greater than \$150,000	74	12.5
Total	590	100.0

Q 31. Are you:

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Male	309	47.8
Female	337	52.2
Total	646	100.0

Q 32. Do you have children living at home?

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	265	40.8
No	385	59.2
Total	650	100.0

If Yes, the average ages are: 13.2 (n=238), 11.8 (n=152), 9.8 (n=38), 8.6 (n=14), 7.5 (n=2)

Q 3. In your household are there (including yourself)?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Persons 65 years of age and over	182	28.9	447	71.1

If Yes,	Number	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
	1	91	53.2
	2	80	46.8

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
College students	122	20.6	469	79.4

If Yes,	Number	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
	1	76	63.3
	2	33	27.5
	3	7	5.8
	4	4	3.3

The End