MAIN STREET
ALABAMA

DOWNTOWN
PROFESSIONALS
NETWORK

Downtown Atmore

Atmore, Alabama

Market Study and Strategies 2021

Prepared For:

MAIN STREET
Atmore

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Introduction

The economic landscape of traditional downtown and neighborhood commercial districts continues to change. Expanding retail competition, evolving technologies, changing lifestyle trends, and the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to affect commerce and the way of life in our traditional downtown and neighborhood business districts.

Main Street Alabama commissioned this study to engage stakeholders and to promote an in-depth understanding of local and regional market conditions, trends impacting Downtown Atmore's economic performance, and opportunities for the future. Information and direction gained from the study provide a sound basis for local decision-making processes and strategies for enhancing Downtown Atmore.

This document summarizes key findings and proposed strategies for Downtown Atmore economic development and enhancement initiatives based on an extensive review of background information and current market data, input provided via consumer and business surveys, and direction and leadership provided by Main Street Atmore (MSA) leaders and volunteers. Supplemental documents referenced in this summary document include:

- Downtown Atmore Market Snapshot
- Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey Results
- Downtown Atmore Business Survey Results

Inside

MAIN STREET
★ ALABAMA ★

Atmore is a Main Street Alabama Community

Main Street Alabama is focused on bringing jobs, dollars and people back to Alabama's historic communities. Economic development is at the heart of the organization's efforts to revitalize Alabama's downtowns and neighborhoods.

Main Street Alabama is affiliated with the National Main Street Center and utilizes the proven Main Street Four-Point Approach® to help communities organize themselves for success, improve the design of their neighborhoods, promote their districts, and enhance their economic base.

DOWNTOWN PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

Downtown Professionals Network (DPN) is a planning and research firm specializing in the revitalization and enhancement of traditional downtown and neighborhood business districts. Since 2000, DPN has evolved to serve a clientele that includes local, state and national Main Street organizations and economic development agencies located throughout the country.

Limitations and Disclaimers

Retail market studies and analyses, their components (such as retail sales gap analyses and surveys interpretation) and derivative business development plans provide important guidance on how a commercial area should, theoretically, be able to perform and on the sales levels businesses should be able to achieve. However, a number of factors affect the actual performance of businesses and commercial areas, including the skills of the business operator, level of business capitalization, the quality of the physical environment, changes in overall economic conditions, the effectiveness of business and district marketing programs, and many other factors. The information in this document is intended to provide a foundation of information for making district enhancement and business development decisions, but it does not and cannot ensure business success.

As is true of all demographic, economic and market studies, our analysis' reliability is limited to the reliability and quality of the data available. Our research assumes that all data made available by and procured from federal, state, county, city, primary and third party sources is accurate and reliable.

Because market conditions change rapidly and sometimes without warning, the information and opinions expressed here represent a snapshot in time and cannot predict or gauge future changes or results.

Downtown Atmore Profile

Welcome to Downtown Atmore

Nestled in southern Alabama in Escambia County along the Alabama/Florida border, Atmore, began as a supply stop for William Larkin Williams along the Mobile and Great Northern Railroad. It was first known as Williams Station. As the community grew, its leaders decided a name change was needed to something more cosmopolitan, befitting of the progress the community was making in all areas of growth. By 1897, the name changed to Atmore, in honor of C. P. Atmore, a ticket agent for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

Business and industry in Atmore enjoy multiple points of transportation access—rail, highway, and interstate. Atmore has a rich railroad history, and the romance of a railroad that few towns have. Two railroads intersect just a couple of blocks west of downtown. Defining the center of town, State Highway 21 and US Highway 31 intersect and become North and South Main Street and Louisville and Nashville Avenues. Both highways provide visitors with an opportunity to enjoy the community, and access to I-65, Pensacola, and Florida beaches, Mobile and the Tensaw River Delta, and the sugar white beaches of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach located in neighboring Baldwin County.

Economic growth has been positive and boosted the revitalization of downtown since being designated as a Main Street community. This program is further enhanced by the downtown historic district and will serve as the springboard to continued long-term economic vitality. The Strand Theatre and Atmore Hardware serve as the district's keystone where the focus is on preservation and restoration of historic structures. Recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the theatre and hardware buildings will combine to provide venues for various forms of entertainment and educational opportunities from resident artists.

First National Bank and Trust has invested in building space improvement and created green space with an off-street parking area. United Bank, Alabama's largest community development financial institution, is the only community development entity in Alabama to win New Market Tax Credits in multiple cycles. This sophisticated group provides access to capital for quality rural projects anywhere in the Southeast. United Bank provides low interest funding and assistance for grant opportunities, including façade restoration and improvement.

Revitalization efforts are magnified by a small business incubator to provide space for new businesses to grow and take their place in the downtown community providing various goods and services.

Main Street Atmore works to establish relationships with property owners and businesses to provide mentorship opportunities and resources giving everyone downtown the best chance of success in a community burgeoning with economic opportunity, culture, and history.

Future projects include the addition of off-street parking areas and community space. Botanical and arboreal renovations and additions appropriate for aesthetic enhancement will be installed as well as improvements to the streetscape with particular attention to safety and pedestrian traffic.

Downtown Atmore Profile

A reminder of our past, present, and future, silos near the railroad trestle are the object of a long-term goal to cover the entire structure with an agricultural-themed mural. Nearby, construction of a French Quarter style building will be the new home of West Escambia Utilities. This addition will attract residents to downtown to pay their utilities and will serve as an anchor for East Ridgeley Street.

The business mix includes a variety of choices for dining, clothing, florists, antiques and consignment, home décor, and a pub, as well as other goods and services. The Ridgeley Street area has become the driving force for merchants. Once vacant buildings have been given new life and are host to multiple shopping opportunities.

West Ridgeley also hosts several community events, including Ribs on Ridgeley benefiting the Pride of Atmore, a non-profit group leading the restoration of the Strand Theatre and Atmore Hardware buildings on South Main Street.

Church Street is transforming with new businesses and is the location for a Leadership Atmore fundraiser known as Chicken on Church. Anchoring the southern downtown area is the American Legion Building where veterans congregate and host occasional dance events. The three-story structure provides office space and sports a new patriotic mural. The adjacent open area will become Veterans Park complete with a butterfly garden, water feature, entertainment area, and park benches.

One of North Main Street's most historic structures is the Post Office. It was built in 1938 as a WPA project and was part of Roosevelt's New Deal and is also home to a mural painted in the same year as an extension of the New Deal projects. During the Cold War, the post office was also a designated fallout shelter and has contributed items to the Smithsonian Institute Museums in Washington D.C.

The timber and agriculture industry has always provided a strong foundation for the community and its people. The Atmore Industrial Park will become home to an $87 million peanut shelling and storage facility on more than 60 acres in 2021. The average wage will be more than $17 per hour for the 100-plus full-time workers. This facility will turn Atmore into a hub for peanut shelling in southwest Alabama.

Atmore's city limits extend to I-65 near the Reservation of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians—Alabama's only federally recognized tribe. The Tribe, one of the area's largest employers, provides entertainment at the WindCreek Casino and Hotel and shares its culture at its museum and cultural events, including its annual Thanksgiving PowWow. The Poarch Creek Indians have been excellent corporate neighbors and community partners contributing money and resources for the betterment of everyone in the Atmore area.

Business, corporate, and private reinvestment continue to cultivate growth in the community and downtown area making Atmore a prime location for existing and new businesses, residents, and visitors. This effort is improving the overall economic outlook for the area and continually enhances quality of life overall.

In moving toward the future, we embrace the past. A storied history rich in pioneer spirit, tradition, culture, and diversity, combine to make Atmore a unique setting. It is a place for living, working, shopping, entertainment, and rewarding experiences all found in a place full of southern charm and hospitality to give everyone more from Atmore.

Atmore Market Overview

Downtown Atmore Drive Time Market

Demographic Fast Facts Esri 2020

Population

11,212

10 Minute Drive Time | 2020
2010—25 Growth: -1.2%

Population	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2020 Estimate	7,109	11,212	23,535
Growth (2020-25)	-1.9%	-1.2%	0.5%
Est. State Pop Growth (2020-25)			2.3%

Daytime Pop

12,250

5 Minute Drive Time | 2020
Daytime Change: 17.3%

Daytime Population	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
Total Daytime Pop	8,338	12,250	21,107
Daytime Change	17.3%	9.3%	-10.3%

Households

4,510

10 Minute Drive Time | 2020
2019—24 Growth: -1.2%

Households	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2020 Estimate	2,885	4,510	8,348
HH Growth (2020-25)	-1.8%	-1.2%	0.5%
Est. State HH Growth (2020-25)			2.4%

Median HH Income

$32,888

10 Minute Drive Time | 2020
2020—25 Growth: 6.1%

Median HH Income	5 Min	10 Min	20 Min
2020 Estimate	$29,056	$32,888	$38,057
Growth (2020-25)	3.2%	6.1%	6.2%

2020 State: $50,554 | 2020-25 Growth: 5.8%

Per Capita Income
2020

5 Minutes	$17,845
10 Minutes	$19,142
20 Minutes	$19,739
State	$27,941

Median Age
2020

5 Minutes	38.1
10 Minutes	39.2
20 Minutes	39.6
State	39.6

2020 Employed
Civilian Pop 16+

5 Minutes	78.8%
10 Minutes	82.1%
20 Minutes	85.8%
State	87.4%

Source: Esri Market Profile | 12.20

Top Esri Tapestry LifeMode Groups

Downtown Atmore Drive Time Areas | Esri 2020

Esri Tapestry LifeMode groups represent markets that share a common experience—born in the same generation or immigration from another country—or a significant demographic trait, like affluence. The Hometown and Rustic Outposts LifeMode Groups are among those most prevalent in the Downtown Atmore drive time areas.

Hometown

36% 5 Minute Drive HHs

- Growing up and staying close to home; single householders
- Close knit urban communities of young singles (many with children)
- Owners of old, single-family houses, or renters in small multi-unit buildings
- Religion is the cornerstone of many of these communities
- Visit discount stores and clip coupons, frequently play the lottery at convenience stores
- Canned, packaged and frozen foods help to make ends meet
- Purchase used vehicles to get them to and from nearby jobs

Rustic Outposts

64% 20 Minute Drive HHs

- Country life with older families in older homes
- Rustic Outposts depend on manufacturing, retail and healthcare, with pockets of mining and agricultural jobs
- Low labor force participation in skilled and service occupations
- Own affordable, older single-family or mobile homes; vehicle ownership, a must
- Residents live within their means, shop at discount stores and maintain their own vehicles (purchased used) and homes
- Outdoor enthusiasts, who grow their own vegetables, love their pets and enjoy hunting and fishing
- Technology is cost prohibitive and complicated. Pay bills in person, use the yellow pages, read newspapers, magazines, and mail-order books

Source: Esri Community Tapestry Segmentation | 12.20

ATMORE MARKET OVERVIEW

RETAIL POWER CLARITAS 2020

The Retail Market Power (RMP) 2020 report from Claritas provides a direct comparison between retail sales and consumer spending by industry. To capture a snapshot of an area's retail market, a sales surplus or leakage—expressed in current dollars—is calculated to summarize the relationship between supply (sales by businesses) and demand (consumer spending).

Example: Calculating Sales Surplus/(Leakage) Estimates
Estimated Actual Sales — Potential Sales = Surplus/(Leakage)

	Estimated Sales (Supply)	$7,435,944
—	Potential Sales (Demand)	$7,023,767
=	Surplus or (Leakage)	$412,777

Retailers and real estate analysts use RMP to understand the difference between supply and demand in existing and potential new trade areas. In areas where demand exceeds supply, an opportunity gap—or leakage—exists that can attract new retail operations or inform what changes need to be made to a store's product mix to increase market share. In areas where supply exceeds demand, a surplus exists, which can signal that new marketing strategies may be needed to attract new customers, or that the area is attractive to niche retailers, or it may prompt a store network re-alignment.

DOWNTOWN ATMORE DRIVE TIME AREAS
SALES SURPLUS AND LEAKAGE ESTIMATES | ($MM)

Sales Surplus & Leakage ($MM)	5 Minutes	10 Minutes	20 Minutes
Categories	Surplus/ (Leakage)	Surplus/ (Leakage)	Surplus/ (Leakage)
Retail Trade (NAICS 44 – 45)	$35.5	$48.9	$12.5
Food & Drink (NAICS 722)	$0.4	$1.0	($4.0)
Total (NAICS 44 – 45, 722)	$35.9	$49.9	$8.5

Source: Claritas Market Power® 2020 | Retail Stores Gap.

Data Note: The polarity of surplus/leakage estimates shown above (as compared to those shown in source reports) have been reversed to show surplus as a positive value, and leakage as a negative value. The Retail Gap (Sales Surplus/Leakage) represents the difference between Retail Potential (Demand) and Retail Sales (Supply). A positive value represents a surplus in sales, often indicating a market where customers are drawn in from outside the defined area.

RMP focuses on Retail Trade NAICS codes 44 and 45, as well as the Food Services industry NAICS code 722. Once national and county level CRT tables are retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau, all establishments are coded using 2012 North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes to match the data source. The 2012 NAICS codes are then matched with the latest release of NAICS codes from 2017 to reflect any changes in codes.

TOTAL SALES

[Retail Trade (NAICS 44—45) + Food & Drink (NAICS 722)]

$101 Million	$191 Million	$262 Million
5 Minutes	10 Minutes	20 Minutes

Performance by Category

Sales gap factors provide a quick-look means of assessing the relative strength of retail categories for a defined geography. The factor is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total surplus) to -100 (total leakage). A positive value represents a surplus of retail sales and can be indicative of a market where customers are drawn from outside the defined area. Categories showing the highest surplus factors might signal opportunities for expansion or the introduction of complementary products and services to build on market strengths or niches. Likewise, categories with negative factors might offer an initial indication of gaps in the business mix and potential for re-positioning, expansion or recruitment.

SALES GAP FACTORS | 5 MIN AND 10 MIN DRIVE TIME AREAS

Category—Factor	5 Min	10 Min
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	14.6	10.7
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	51.1	35.3
Electronics & Appliance Stores	(70.8)	(78.7)
Building Materials, Garden & Supply	36.0	28.6
Food & Beverage Stores	(29.0)	(23.7)
Health & Personal Care Stores	55.9	42.4
Gasoline Stations	35.4	39.6
Clothing and Clothing Accessories	22.1	2.3
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music	(44.0)	(57.4)
General Merchandise Stores	43.6	34.2
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	47.3	48.8
Nonstore Retailers	(28.4)	(44.1)
Food Services & Drinking Places	2.9	3.2

Source: Claritas Market Power® 2020 | Retail Stores Gap

Note: The complete Downtown Atmore Market Snapshot and source Esri and Claritas reports are available as supplemental documents.

Market Insights and Directions

Downtown Drivers and Traffic Generators

The purpose and frequency of consumers' pre-COVID-19 visits to the district reinforce a sense of Downtown Atmore as a center of community life and help to demonstrate the important role both retail and non-retail uses play as part of a vibrant district.

68%
Visit downtown most often for
DINING

66%
Visit downtown daily or weekly for
ERRANDS
or office/service-related purposes

Table 1

Q: Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, for which of the following activities or purposes did you visit Downtown Atmore most often?

Most Frequent Consumer Survey Responses	Percent
Dining	67.6%
Shopping	56.1%
Banking/Financial Services	45.1%
Work	28.2%
Festivals/Special Events	16.7%
Religious	10.2%
Health Care	7.7%
Personal Services	6.0%
Entertainment	5.5%
Recreation	5.2%
Government	3.5%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey. Most frequent responses shown.

Table 2

Q: How often do you visit Downtown Atmore...

Frequency—Daily or Weekly	Percent
To do errands or for office and service-related purposes?	66.4%
For eating, drinking or entertainment?	54.4%
To shop?	34.1%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

Insights

- The varying nature of businesses and activities currently attracting people to the downtown area demonstrate the benefits of retaining and attracting a mix of uses—both retail and non-retail— in the district.
- Though the largest percentages of survey participants indicated they most often visit the downtown for dining (68%), findings show the most consistent traffic, on a daily or weekly basis, is related to those doing errands and visiting for office and service-related purposes.

Directions

Economic Vitality

- Continue to encourage office, service and other appropriate non-retail uses to locate or relocate in the downtown area, ideally in locations that maintain a sense of retail density (see page 20 for more insights).

Organization

- Continue efforts to engage community economic development partners and individuals representing different business sectors in the planning and implementation of downtown enhancement initiatives.

Promotion

- Facilitate and encourage collaborative marketing and cross-promotion efforts to heighten awareness for the full range of goods and services available from downtown area businesses.

Potential Activities

(E) Encourage non-retail uses to locate downtown
(O) Presentations/Updates to partners & community groups
(P) Encourage/Facilitate cross-promotion efforts
(P) Create a downtown businesses and services directory

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Market Insights and Directions

Anchors

The mix of businesses and places visited most frequently by consumers surveyed, led by The Coffee House, illustrates the importance of maintaining and promoting a mix of uses and business types that cater to the needs of the market and generate traffic to support specialty retailers and eating places.

14 PERCENT

Identified **The Coffee House** as the downtown business or place visited most often.

Table 3
Most Frequented Business or Places (Top 10)

1. The Coffee House (13.8%)	6. United Bank (4.8%)
2. Gather (10.7%)	7. Walmart (4.5%)
3. Philanthropic Seed (7.0%)	8. We Care Thrift Store (3.7%)
4. Gulf Winds Credit Union (4.8%)	9. First National Bank (3.1%)
5. Post Office (4.8%)	10. The Junky Pearl (2.5%)

The diverse nature of businesses and attractions included in the top ten demonstrates the existing and potential appeal of Downtown Atmore as a center for community life with a mix of businesses, uses and activities catering to a broad cross-section of the community and Atmore visitors. So, too, the results could provide direction for strategies and activities that:

- ► Capitalize on existing anchor businesses and activity generators, including complementary business and entrepreneurial opportunities; and
- ► Heighten awareness for the local and eclectic nature of the business mix and the full range of products, services and experiences offered in the district.

Insights

- ► Businesses and uses catering to the market's appetite, discerning tastes and everyday needs, like The Coffee House, Gather, Philanthropic Seed, the Post Office and financial institutions, are all important anchors for downtown, and could offer cues for entrepreneurs and complementary uses that could be a good "fit."

Directions

Design

- ► Incorporate design features (i.e. gateway and wayfinding signage, kiosks, etc.) in proximity to anchors to help users locate and navigate complementary businesses and amenities in the downtown area.

Economic Vitality

- ► Explore opportunities for existing businesses to expand or reposition themselves to capitalize on existing anchor businesses and activity generators, and for new, complementary business uses to join the mix.

Organization

- ► Identify and pursue possibilities to work with high traffic -generating businesses and attractions to disseminate information about Main Street Atmore, its work and progress, and opportunities to participate.

Promotion

- ► Target higher-traffic generating locations identified, both within and outside the district, for display and distribution of downtown promotional materials.

Potential Activities

(D) Downtown gateway and wayfinding signage/features

(O) MSA info displays and meet & greet events at anchors

(P) Downtown promo displays and materials at anchors

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Market Insights and Directions

93%

Of businesses surveyed would consider participating in a collaborative marketing campaign. Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey

Marketing and Communications Channels

The proliferation of social media and online shopping applications—and the climbing frequency of their use by consumers in the Downtown Atmore marketplace—demonstrate the importance and benefits of a strong online business presence.

86% **79%** **33%**

Consumers: Popular Apps and Shopping Sites

Table 4

Q: [Consumer Survey] **Which social media and online shopping sites or apps do you regularly use?**

Q: [Business Survey] **Which social media and online shopping sites or apps does your business use?**

Most Frequent Responses (Rank)	Consumers	Businesses
Amazon	85.5% (1)	26.7% (3)
Facebook	79.2% (2)	66.7% (1)
Pinterest	32.8% (3)	6.7% (4)
Instagram	32.5% (4)	46.7% (2)
YouTube	32.5% (5)	0.0% (--)
Etsy	25.4% (6)	0.0% (--)
Snapchat	23.4% (7)	6.7% (4)

77 PERCENT

Of consumers surveyed rely on **Social Media** for Atmore area news and information.

Table 5

Q: [Consumer Survey] **Which three do you most frequently rely on for Atmore area news and information?**

Q: [Business Survey] **Which three are most effective for marketing and promoting your business?**

Responses | Consumers Top 5	Consumers	Businesses
Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	76.5% (1)	33.3% (2)
Local Newspapers—Online	50.4% (2)	0.0% (--)
Local Newspapers—Print	31.4% (3)	6.7% (8)
Local TV Stations	17.3% (4)	13.3% (3)
Local Radio Stations	12.5% (5)	6.7% (8)

Source: 2021 Consumer and Business Surveys. Most frequent responses shown.

75 PERCENT

Of consumers surveyed said the amount of their regular shopping done online **increased** dramatically (36%) or somewhat (39%) during the past year.

53 PERCENT

Of Businesses surveyed have a website, but just 13% are transacting sales online.

Insights

- ► Consumer survey findings—and trends observed during the COVID-19 pandemic— illustrate the importance and benefits of a strong online business presence.
- ► Integrated website, social media and eCommerce apps that provide for a more personalized and robust online shopping experience could offer targeted channels and new, efficient ways for retailers, restaurants and certain service providers to enhance their presence in the local market—and beyond.

Directions

Economic Vitality

- ► Share survey results on local consumers' social media preferences with businesses as a business visitation topic and, possibly, as part of social media training series.

Promotion

- ► Develop and test concepts for district collaborative marketing programs and image enhancement campaigns via consumer-preferred social media apps.

Potential Activities

(E) Share consumer online preferences with businesses

(P) Develop and launch collaborative marketing concepts

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Market Insights and Directions

Downtown Traits and Trends

Survey respondents' level of agreement with ten different statements about Downtown Atmore help to identify both positive attributes and shortcomings, thereby lending direction for possible downtown marketing and enhancement strategies.

"Special events create vibrancy in the downtown."

Consumers: 4.14 Businesses: 4.56

"Downtown Atmore has things to do for many age groups."

Consumers: 2.28 Businesses: 2.38

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys.

Table 7

Q: Using a scale from 1 (Disagree Completely) to 5 (Agree Completely), please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about Downtown Atmore:

Consumers and Businesses Weighted Average Rating and (Rank)

Statements	Consumers		Businesses	
Special events create vibrancy in downtown.	4.14	(1)	4.56	(1)
Downtown is a good place to invest.	3.81	(2)	4.19	(2)
Customer service is exceptional in downtown	3.69	(3)	3.63	(5)
I feel safe downtown, even at night.	3.55	(4)	3.69	(4)
Downtown is clean and inviting.	3.40	(5)	3.00	(6)
I tell my friends and family to shop downtown.	3.34	(6)	4.00	(3)
Downtown is pedestrian-friendly.	3.33	(7)	2.88	(8)
Downtown presents a positive image to visitors.	3.27	(8)	3.00	(6)
Downtown is bicycle-friendly.	2.46	(9)	2.25	(10)
Downtown has things to do for many ages.	2.28	(10)	2.38	(9)

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys.

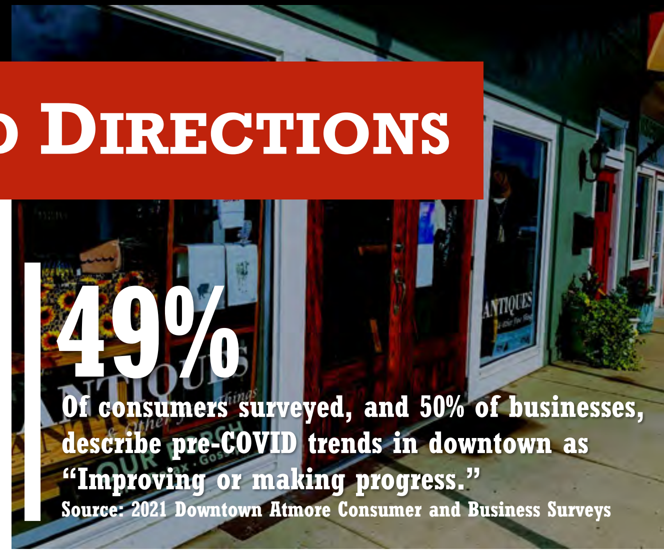
Trends

Table 8

Q: Which of the following best describes recent trends in Downtown Atmore?

Recent Trends	Consumers	Businesses
Improving or making progress	49.4%	50.0%
Steady or holding its own	30.1%	42.9%
Declining or losing ground	20.6%	7.1%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys.



67 PERCENT

Of consumers surveyed **agree** completely (39%) or somewhat (28%) with the statement "during the covid-19 pandemic, shopping in a small town environment is safer than shopping in a larger metropolitan area."

Insights

- ► Events staged downtown can help showcase the magic of a small town setting and "create vibrancy." Events should also be embraced as one way to address lower ratings ascribed to the statement, "Downtown has things to do for many age groups."

Directions

Design

- ► Work in partnership with the City and other groups and to address pedestrian and bicyclist safety concerns.
- ► Pursue placemaking initiatives and other improvements to enliven spaces, create year-round interest, and advance the downtown's image as an economically vibrant place, and a place for fun, recreation, and entertainment.

Economic Vitality

- ► Incorporate views on downtown as a "good place to invest" in messaging and materials to promote business, entrepreneur and investment opportunities.

Promotion

- ► Work with the Chamber of Commerce, Pride of Atmore and other partners to identify event components and programming that could be expanded or test-marketed to enhance the district's "entertainment factor."

Potential Activities

(D) Address pedestrian and bicyclist safety concerns

(D) Pursue placemaking activities to enliven spaces

(P) Use events to test market ideas (i.e. booths, pop-ups)

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Market Insights and Directions

Potential Business and Entertainment Opportunities

Q: Which of the following [types of businesses] would make you most likely to visit Downtown Atmore more often?

Eating and Drinking Places

37%

Selected **Steakhouse** as one of their top choices.

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

Table 9 **Eating and Drinking Places**	
Top 5 Selections	
Steakhouse	37.4%
Italian Restaurant	30.1%
Farm to Table Restaurant	26.3%
All-American/50's Diner	23.6%
Pizzeria	23.3%

Retail Establishments

32%

Selected **Specialty Foods Grocer, Deli & Wine** as one of their top choices.

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

Table 10 **Retail Establishments**	
Top 5 Selections	
Specialty Foods/Deli/Wine	31.5%
Arts, Crafts and Hobbies	28.7%
Sporting Goods/Outdoors	24.9%
Bookstore	24.6%
Jewelry Store	20.4%

Entertainment

Consumers surveyed identified **Live Music Venue** as the type of venue they would visit most frequently.

* The weighted average is based on cumulative responses for monthly expected frequency.

Scale:
1 = 0 times per month
2 = 1 to 3 times
3 = 4 to 6 times
4 = 7 to 9 times
5 = 10+ times.

Table 11
Entertainment Opportunities

Q: How many times each month would you visit or participate in the following entertainment venues or activities?

Expected Frequency	**Wt. Avg***
Live Music Venue	1.99
Sports Bar	1.87
Live Theater	1.70
Escape Room	1.51
Open Mic Nights	1.48
Adult Dancing	1.45

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

Insights

- Food service and retail establishments identified as candidates for growth could provide opportunities for prospects and entrepreneurs, or for existing businesses to reposition themselves in the market, to add complementary products or services, or to expand.
- Expected frequency rates for different types of entertainment could provide direction for venue programming (including the redeveloped Strand Theatre), for downtown events, and for in-house entertainment hosted by downtown businesses.
- Businesses and venues incorporating family-oriented entertainment and amenities, in-house events and activities, and locally-inspired décor also stand to benefit from consumers' affection for the district's environment, character and feel.

* *See pages 16—20 for more on business opportunities*

Directions

Economic Vitality

- Share survey results with existing businesses and discuss possibilities to add products or services, to reposition, or to expand to help fill gaps in the downtown mix.
- Share survey results with property owners and agents, and discuss business models that might be targeted for vacant properties, along with improvements that might be required to accommodate targeted tenants.
- Introduce a vacant storefront treatment program, such as a "This Space is Not Empty" poster program.
- Publicize survey results showing potential for business growth and expansion to heighten awareness, to appeal to local entrepreneurs, and to help generate leads.

Potential Activities

(E) Conduct business visits to share survey results

(E) Conduct vacant property visits to identify targeted uses

(E) Vacant property poster/storefront treatment program

(E) Publicize survey results and a list of "top prospects"

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Market Insights and Directions

Priorities

The consumer and business survey groups both place a high priority on efforts to, **"Create incentives for new and expanding downtown businesses."**

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys.

Table 12

Q: On a scale from 1 (Low) to 5 (High), what level of priority would you place on possible downtown enhancement efforts to:

Consumers and Businesses Avg. Rating and (Rank)

Enhancement Efforts	Consumers	Businesses
Create incentives for new and expanding Downtown Atmore businesses	4.43 (1)	4.69 (1t)
Improve streets, sidewalks, lighting, furnishings, green spaces, etc.	4.22 (2)	4.69 (1t)
Restore and preserve the downtown's historic character	3.88 (3)	4.38 (3t)
Stage additional festivals and special events in the downtown	3.86 (4)	4.38 (3t)

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys.

First Things

Question:

What is the first thing you would do to improve Downtown Atmore?

Consumers: First Things to Improve Downtown

28% Add/Recruit Businesses

27% Buildings/Appearances

10% Streets, Traffic & Trans

Table 13

Q: What is the first thing you would do to improve Downtown Atmore?

Categorized Topics—Top Five	Consumers	Businesses
Add/Recruit Businesses; Diversify Mix	27.5%	0.0%
Enhance Buildings and Appearances	27.1%	53.3%
Improve Streets, Traffic & Transportation	11.0%	6.7%
Improve/Increase Parking	7.3%	6.7%
Enhance Streetscape and Public Spaces	5.9%	6.7%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys. Most frequent categorized responses shown.

"What is the first thing you would do to improve Downtown Atmore?"

Cloud View | Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey

Directions

Design

- ► Continue efforts to restore and preserve the downtown's historic character, with an emphasis on beautification and building improvement efforts.
- ► Work with the City and other economic development partners to identify needs and to develop and promote building improvement tools and resources for property owners, businesses and investors.
- ► Work with the City and Alabama Department of Transportation to monitor traffic volume and flow, and advocate for pedestrian-focused enhancements.

Economic Vitality

- ► Continue to support businesses and local COVID-19 business recovery efforts.
- ► Engage local government, economic development partners, financial institutions, and other appropriate entities in efforts to identify, develop, and access incentives and technical assistance for entrepreneurs and for existing, new and expanding district businesses.
- ► Create a business assistance resources directory that maps the process for starting a business and includes contacts for business assistance.

Potential Activities

(D) Promote beautification and building improvements

(D) Promote tools and resources for building improvements

(D) Monitor traffic; advocate for pedestrian improvements

(E) Continue to support COVID-19 recovery efforts

(E) Incentives for buildings and new/expanding businesses

(E) Create business assistance resources guide/directory

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Market Insights and Directions

Like Most

The things people like most about Downtown Atmore can lend direction for creating and fine-tuning marketing, messaging and branding strategies that connect audiences with the district's most highly recognizable and distinguishable features.

39 PERCENT

OF CONSUMERS SURVEYED IDENTIFIED FEATURES RELATED TO THE DOWNTOWN'S **ENVIRONMENT, CHARACTER AND FEEL** AS THINGS THEY LIKE MOST.

"What is the one thing you like most about Downtown Atmore?"

Cloud View | Source: 2020 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey

Table 14

Q: What is the one thing you like most about Downtown Atmore?

Categorized Responses	Consumers	Businesses
Environment; Character and Feel	39.4%	33.3%
Business(es); Business Mix	24.0%	13.3%
General Appearances; Décor and "Look"	11.0%	13.3%
Location; Accessibility/Convenience	10.2%	6.7%
History/Historic Character; Buildings	8.3%	6.7%
Special Features	1.6%	20.0%
Festivals, Events and Entertainment	0.4%	6.7%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer and Business Surveys.
Most frequent categorized responses shown.

Directions

Design

- Work with the Promotion Committee to incorporate the to-be-developed Downtown Atmore branding system's graphics and elements in streetscape furnishings, seasonal banners and décor, gateway and wayfinding treatments and signage, interpretive elements, etc.

Promotion

- Work with Main Street Alabama to develop and implement a comprehensive Downtown Atmore branding system that includes logos, event graphics, corporate collaterals, signage, banner designs, etc.
- Work in concert with district businesses and community organizations to develop and deploy a customer-driven testimonial campaign that captures faces, images and quotes focused on the things consumers like most about Downtown Atmore—people, places and experiences that highlight the local, community-oriented nature of the downtown business mix, extraordinary customer service experiences, special features, favorite memories, and progress being made as part of the community's revitalization initiative.

Potential Activities

(D) Integrate branding extensions in the public realm

(P) Create a stock photo library as marketing resource

(P) Create Downtown Atmore branding system (w/ MS AL)

(P) Launch a customer-driven testimonial campaign

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Business Insights and Directions

Inside the Data

Sixteen Downtown Atmore businesses, operating in at least five different business sectors, participated in the survey.

Table 15

Q: Which of the following best describes your primary business type?

Primary Business Type	
Retail	25.0%
Service	43.8%
Eating and Drinking Places	6.3%
Professional/Office	18.8%
Other	6.3%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey.

Business Tenure

38 PERCENT

Of responding businesses have been located downtown **21 years or longer.**

Table 16

Q: How long has your business been located in Downtown Atmore?

Responses	
Less than 1 year	12.5%
1 to 4 years	31.3%
5 to 9 years	6.3%
10 to 20 years	12.5%
21+ years	37.5%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey.

Table 17

Q: Do you own or rent your business location?

Responses	
Own	62.5%
Rent	37.5%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey.

Insights

- The COVID-19 pandemic created extraordinary challenges to doing business and the impacts, for many, could be long-term. Main Street Atmore should continue to prioritize business support and retention efforts, acting as an advocate, promoter, facilitator and referral agent to connect businesses with technical assistance and resources.
- Investments and the level of new business activity seen prior to the COVID-19 pandemic was purportedly driving a heightened sense of the downtown as an emerging district—one conducive to investment and new ventures. That notion is supported by 44% of the business survey sample indicating they have been located in the downtown area for four years or less.
- Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicated their business has been located in downtown for twenty-one years or longer. The figure can be viewed as an indicator of stability, but it could also signal a need for help with business succession planning—a notion subsequently verified by 50% of respondents indicating interest in succession planning training topics.
- Succession planning needs for might also be more likely to involve a real estate transaction given that nearly two-thirds of survey respondents identified themselves as owner-occupants.

Directions

Economic Vitality

- Main Street Atmore and community partners should work to identify, promote and facilitate access to partners, resources and technical assistance to advance business retention and business succession planning efforts.

Potential Activities

(E) Assemble a business retention resources and contacts guide

(E) Showcase long-time and start-up business success stories

(E) Identify and promote succession planning resources

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Business Insights and Directions

Changes in the Making?

Business survey results provide insight on the nature and scope of possible changes that could occur in the district within the next two years—and areas where Main Street Atmore might channel its business support efforts.

56 PERCENT

Of responding businesses plan to **expand services or product lines** and to **start or complete building improvements.**

Table 18 **Q: In the next year or two, do you plan to change or modify your business in any of the following ways?**	
Expand services or product lines	56.3%
Start and/or complete building improvements	56.3%
Increase number of employees	50.0%
Increase marketing	37.5%
Expand hours of operation	31.3%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey. Most frequent responses shown.

Business Support Opportunities

The survey group identified higher levels of interest in building improvement and business expansion assistance, and in succession planning and social media topics.

Table 19 **Q: Would you be inclined to use any of the following technical assistance programs and incentives?**	
Free or low-cost building improvement design services	62.5%
Low interest building improvement loans	31.3%
Low interest business expansion loans	31.3%
One-on-one business counseling	25.0%
Assistance to sell your building and/or business	12.5%

Table 20 **Q: Of the following business seminar topics, which two would be of most interest and/or most useful to you?**	
Business Succession Planning	50.0%
Social Media for Small Businesses	43.8%
E-commerce (Selling Online) for Small Businesses	25.0%
Marketing for Small Businesses	25.0%
Customer Service and Hospitality Training	18.8%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey.

Insights

► The nature of changes and interest expressed by the business survey group suggest the timing could be opportune for Main Street Atmore to:
- Engage the downtown business community in collaborative marketing efforts, possibly packaged with social media, marketing and eCommerce training opportunities.
- Promote small business technical assistance and counseling resources, including succession planning resources.
- Work with area financial institutions, government and other economic development partners to identify, develop and promote sources for possible building improvement and business expansion loan programs.
- Share market study findings on business types, products and services that could offer opportunities for expansion.

Directions

Design

► Work with Main Street Alabama and local design professionals and partners to:
- Explore and promote options for targeted design assistance.
- Apply the Main Street Alabama Design Best Practices/ Guidelines document to help guide local review processes and to develop, review or fine-tune local design guidelines.

Economic Vitality

► Share market study findings on product lines showing potential for expansion with existing district businesses.

► Further explore interest for training, and preferred training formats, in the marketing, eCommerce and social media topics; and work with Main Street Alabama and area partners to identify and promote training opportunities.

► Work with property owners and realtors to inventory and promote business and investment opportunities via social media, window treatments, property tour events, etc.

Potential Activities

(D) Identify design assistance tools/resources for property owners

(E) Promote resources for business expansion and improvements

(E) Business training (survey results, social media, eCommerce, etc.)

(E) Promote business and property investment opportunities

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Business Insights and Directions

Business Financing and Financials

Information gathered via the business survey revealed:

- Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, 50% of businesses surveyed had applied for business financing or financial assistance from a bank or credit union, 19% from a private lender, and 13% from the Small Business Administration (SBA).
- Since the outbreak, 50% applied for SBA financing or assistance and 38% applied to a bank or credit union.
- Thirty-one percent have not applied for financing or assistance before or since the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Twenty-seven percent of respondents said they did not need assistance to apply, while 53% indicated they needed minimal or moderate assistance to apply.
- Respondents showed the highest level of comfort when working with a bank or credit union (measured at 4.53 on a scale of 5), followed by private lenders (3.60) and foundations/grants organizations (3.40).
- At least 20% of businesses surveyed indicated they have never prepared a pro forma or business plan.
- Forty percent prepare their own financial statements, and 60% use a CPA to prepare tax filings and returns.

Business Performance

40%

Said gross sales or revenues **increased in 2020** as compared to 2019.

81%

Expect gross sales or revenues **to increase in 2021** as compared to 2020.

Table 21

Q-A: Which of the following describes the change in your business' gross sales or revenues in 2020 as compared to 2019?

Q-B: In your best estimation, how do you expect your gross sales or revenues to change in 2021 as compared to 2020?

Year-over-Year (YoY) Comparison Range	Q-A. 2019-20 Estimated	Q-B. 2020-21 Projected
Increase: 1% to 5%	0.0%	25.0%
Increase: 6% to 10%	13.3%	31.3%
Increase: 11% or more	26.7%	25.0%
Decrease: 1% to 5%	0.0%	0.0%
Decrease: 6% to 10%	13.3%	0.0%
Decrease: 11% or more	26.7%	0.0%
Stay about the same	6.7%	12.5%
Not in business previous year	13.3%	6.3%

Insights

- ► Year-over-year increases in gross sales or revenues for 2020 reported by 40% of businesses surveyed, along with optimistic outlooks for 2021, would seem to support notions that the district is on an upward trajectory. The figures, though based on a limited sample, are nonetheless positive, especially when considering disruptions to commerce posed by COVID-19.
- ► At the other end of the spectrum, The same percentage of businesses (40%) reported 2020 year-over-year declines in gross revenues or sales—a finding reinforcing a need for the continued prioritization of business support and retention efforts.

Directions

Economic Vitality

- ► Repeat the business survey on an annual or biennial basis to track changes, and to stay in tune with the needs of businesses.
- ► Incorporate relevant tracking data into messaging and materials promoting downtown business and investment opportunities.
- ► Work with financial institutions and other development partners to gauge needs and possible resources to help new and existing businesses plan, access funding and financial assistance, and maintain strong financial and recordkeeping operations.

Organization

- ► Supplement market study data with tracking data reported to Main Street Alabama to measure progress, to build support for Main Street Atmore and new and ongoing revitalization initiatives, and to promote opportunities to join the cause.

Promotion

- ► Benchmark and track attendance estimates for downtown events to measure appeal and return on investment, and to incorporate into business recruitment messaging and materials.

Potential Activities

(E) Conduct a business survey on annual or biennial basis

(E) Create a recruitment fact sheet incorporating tracking data

(O) Produce an annual report with tracking data/progress updates

(P) Benchmark and track event attendance and impacts

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Opportunities and Targets

Eating and Drinking Establishments

Top 5 Profiles

Beyond identifying consumer preferences for new and expanded types of eating and drinking establishments, a breakdown of survey demographics by selection offers a starting point to better understand and profile the potential target market for different models, and the viability of different concepts with respect to price points, menu options, marketing and advertising strategies, merchandising, décor, and other important business considerations.

Following is a thumbnail profile of the potential target market for each of the five highest ranked prospects for eating and drinking establishments based on consumer survey results.

Steakhouse

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 37.4% (1)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	49%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	44%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	7%	(9%)

HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	30%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	37%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	17%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	9%	(9%)
$200K+	8%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	65%	(69%)
Male	32%	(28%)

Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	8%	(9%)
25 to 34	17%	(21%)
35 to 44	19%	(21%)
45 to 54	23%	(21%)
55 to 64	19%	(17%)
65+	13%	(11%)

Italian Restaurant

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 30.1% (2)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	51%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	39%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	10%	(9%)

HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	16%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	37%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	22%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	10%	(9%)
$200K+	15%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	77%	(69%)
Male	22%	(28%)

Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	10%	(9%)
25 to 34	26%	(21%)
35 to 44	16%	(21%)
45 to 54	21%	(21%)
55 to 64	18%	(17%)
65+	11%	(11%)

* Overall survey sample shown in parentheses
Source: 2020 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey

Data Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

Table 23

Q: Which of the following types of new or expanded Downtown Atmore eating and drinking establishments would you be most likely to frequent on a consistent basis?

Top Consumer Survey Responses	
Steakhouse	37.4%
Italian Restaurant	30.1%
Farm to Table Restaurant	26.3%
All-American/50's-themed Diner	23.6%
Pizzeria	23.3%
Deli/Sandwich Shop	21.1%
Breakfast/Brunch Restaurant	18.4%
Bakery	17.3%
Brewery or Brewpub	15.4%
Healthy Menu Eatery	15.4%
Asian Restaurant	11.4%
Mediterranean/Greek Restaurant	7.9%
Indian/Thai Restaurant	4.3%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey. Multiple responses allowed.

38%

Of all **Business Survey** responses cited **Eating and Drinking** uses when asked, "What type of new downtown businesses or attractions, located near you, would be complementary to your businesses?"

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey.

OPPORTUNITIES AND TARGETS

Eating and Drinking Establishments | Top 5 Profiles

Farm to Table Restaurant

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 26.3% (3)

Residence:	Pct.	✱
Atmore Resident	47%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	40%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	12%	(9%)
HH Income:	Pct.	✱
< $50K	24%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	28%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	22%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	8%	(9%)
$200K+	18%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	✱
Female	69%	(69%)
Male	25%	(28%)
Age:	Pct.	✱
< 25	2%	(9%)
25 to 34	25%	(21%)
35 to 44	21%	(21%)
45 to 54	19%	(21%)
55 to 64	22%	(17%)
65+	11%	(11%)

All-American/50's-themed Diner

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 23.6% (4)

Residence:	Pct.	✱
Atmore Resident	61%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	29%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	10%	(9%)
HH Income:	Pct.	✱
< $50K	33%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	39%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	16%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	5%	(9%)
$200K+	8%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	✱
Female	71%	(69%)
Male	27%	(28%)
Age:	Pct.	✱
< 25	13%	(9%)
25 to 34	14%	(21%)
35 to 44	21%	(21%)
45 to 54	24%	(21%)
55 to 64	12%	(17%)
65+	17%	(11%)

Pizzeria

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 23.3% (5)

Residence:	Pct.	✱
Atmore Resident	55%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	40%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	6%	(9%)
HH Income:	Pct.	✱
< $50K	23%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	33%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	26%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	8%	(9%)
$200K+	10%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	✱
Female	70%	(69%)
Male	28%	(28%)
Age:	Pct.	✱
< 25	10%	(9%)
25 to 34	30%	(21%)
35 to 44	29%	(21%)
45 to 54	19%	(21%)
55 to 64	10%	(17%)
65+	1%	(11%)

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey | ✱ Overall survey sample shown in parentheses

Different eating and drinking establishment models and concepts could incorporate one or more of the genres sampled in the consumer survey, and might also serve to address and benefit from an expressed desire by survey respondents for recreation and entertainment in the downtown area. For example, a pizzeria concept might also incorporate a select or rotating line of local or state brewery and winery selections or a limited soups, salads, wraps and sandwiches menu with a selection of healthy menu items; and the setting might provide for a children's play area, a student study bar, or periodic entertainment spilling into the evening hours.

Additional opportunities and concepts for both existing and new eating and drinking establishments might include menu options not currently offered in the downtown area or community; and the incorporation of various forms of entertainment, display or demonstration kitchens, tasting areas and events, and outdoor seating. Evening and nighttime establishments, in particular, might feature various genres of music and venues for local artists and storytellers to enhance the downtown's "fun & entertainment factor." Décor and themes might feature local art, history, culture and characters.

Note: The eating and drinking establishment targets described here should serve as a starting point. Main Street Atmore, downtown stakeholders, and community partners should infuse local knowledge and expertise into the process of analyzing market information to further develop profiles for business types and concepts that are a good fit for downtown, and that appear to have the very best chance to succeed. This will be an ongoing process, and the list of targets should be continuously reviewed, updated, and refined over time, and as conditions change.

Opportunities and Targets

Retail Establishments | Top 5 Profiles

Like the profiles created for top consumer survey-ranked eating and drinking establishments, profiles for top scoring retail establishments provide a starting point for better understanding local preferences—and potential target markets and the viability of different concepts with respect to price points, product and service lines, marketing and merchandising strategies, and other important business considerations.

Following is a thumbnail profile—or the potential target market—for each of the five highest ranked prospects for retail establishments based on results of the consumer survey.

Specialty Foods Grocer/Deli/Wine

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 31.5% (1)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	48%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	40%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	12%	(9%)

HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	18%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	38%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	19%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	7%	(9%)
$200K+	18%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	76%	(69%)
Male	20%	(28%)

Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	9%	(9%)
25 to 34	30%	(21%)
35 to 44	22%	(21%)
45 to 54	19%	(21%)
55 to 64	15%	(17%)
65+	5%	(11%)

Arts, Crafts and Hobbies

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 28.7% (2)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	52%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	40%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	8%	(9%)

HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	35%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	33%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	19%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	6%	(9%)
$200K+	8%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	80%	(69%)
Male	16%	(28%)

Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	10%	(9%)
25 to 34	24%	(21%)
35 to 44	16%	(21%)
45 to 54	21%	(21%)
55 to 64	22%	(17%)
65+	8%	(11%)

* Overall survey sample shown in parentheses
Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey

Data Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

Table 24

Q: Which of the following types of new or expanded Downtown Atmore retail establishments would you be most likely to frequent on a consistent basis?

Top Consumer Survey Responses	
Specialty Foods Grocer/Deli/Wine	31.5%
Arts, Crafts and Hobbies	28.7%
Sporting Goods/Outdoors	24.9%
Bookstore	24.6%
Jewelry Store	20.4%
Health and Beauty	19.9%
Men's Clothing	18.0%
Butcher/Meat Market	17.1%
Pet Supplies/Clothing Store	14.1%
Electronics Store	12.4%
Gifts and Cards	11.0%
Household Appliances	7.5%
Bike & Bike Repairs Shop	4.4%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

33%

Of all **Business Survey** responses cited **Retail** uses when asked, "What type of new downtown businesses or attractions, located near you, would be complementary to your businesses?"

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Business Survey.

Opportunities and Targets

Retail Establishments | Top 5 Profiles

Sporting Goods/Outdoors

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 24.9% (3)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	45%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	42%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	13%	(9%)
HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	19%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	39%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	20%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	10%	(9%)
$200K+	11%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	44%	(69%)
Male	54%	(28%)
Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	11%	(9%)
25 to 34	18%	(21%)
35 to 44	21%	(21%)
45 to 54	26%	(21%)
55 to 64	16%	(17%)
65+	8%	(11%)

Bookstore

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 24.6% (4)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	49%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	41%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	10%	(9%)
HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	35%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	33%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	17%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	9%	(9%)
$200K+	6%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	74%	(69%)
Male	24%	(28%)
Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	9%	(9%)
25 to 34	20%	(21%)
35 to 44	28%	(21%)
45 to 54	15%	(21%)
55 to 64	21%	(17%)
65+	7%	(11%)

Jewelry Store

Consumer Survey Percent | (Ranking): 20.4% (5)

Residence:	Pct.	*
Atmore Resident	54%	(54%)
Within 20 Miles	41%	(37%)
More than 20 Miles	5%	(9%)
HH Income:	Pct.	*
< $50K	19%	(26%)
$50K to $99K	32%	(34%)
$100K to $149K	22%	(19%)
$150 to $199K	9%	(9%)
$200K+	19%	(12%)

Gender:	Pct.	*
Female	90%	(69%)
Male	10%	(28%)
Age:	Pct.	*
< 25	7%	(9%)
25 to 34	15%	(21%)
35 to 44	18%	(21%)
45 to 54	23%	(21%)
55 to 64	20%	(17%)
65+	16%	(11%)

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey | * Overall survey sample shown in parentheses

Survey results could provide inspiration for crossover concepts; and for existing downtown businesses to reposition themselves in the market, to introduce complementary products and services, or to expand. For example, select crossover lines from the cards and gifts, home furnishings and health and beauty categories could be packaged together in a single space, or could offer existing businesses opportunities to add complementary product lines from these categories. Certain lines might also be conducive to Pop-up Shop and kiosk-style models, or might start as festival booths in order to experiment with and test-market various concepts, models and product lines.

Note: The retail establishment targets described here should serve as a starting point. Main Street Atmore, downtown stakeholders, and community partners should infuse local knowledge and expertise into the process of analyzing market information to further develop profiles for business types and concepts that are a good fit for downtown, and that appear to have the very best chance to succeed. This will be an ongoing process, and the list of targets should be continuously reviewed, updated, and refined over time, and as conditions change.

Opportunities and Targets

Office and Service Uses

National trends and more recent COVID-19-related implications point toward a continued transition to a more convenience- and service-oriented society. These trends, and the existence of civic, government, office, and service uses already present in Downtown Atmore, suggest demand for space to accommodate these and other non-retail uses in the downtown area could remain constant or even increase in the future. Other trends that could influence the market include:

- Potential for existing Downtown Atmore non-retail uses, office tenants and service providers to expand beyond their existing space or footprint.
- The downtown area's appeal to office, service, and residential uses that is likely to grow as success is realized from Main Street Atmore, Pride of Atmore and community downtown enhancement efforts – and the possibility that existing office and service uses currently located in other parts of the community and region will seek to relocate in the Downtown Atmore area.

The importance of, and opportunities for, new and expanding office and service uses in the downtown may best be demonstrated by:

- Sixty-six percent of consumer survey respondents indicated they visit Downtown Atmore on a daily or weekly basis to do errands or for office and service-related purposes.
- The redevelopment of the Strand Theatre and different uses proposed to be housed as part of the project promise to enhance the downtown experience and bring renewed focus and attention to the downtown area.
- The downtown's proximity in relation to the community's population concentrations make it a convenient location for service establishments and providers catering to the needs of the local population.
- The downtown's existing and evolving business mix is conducive to personal care and service uses.
- The level of interest expressed by consumer survey respondents regarding new housing that could be developed in the downtown and surrounding area.

Office, service, government and civic uses in the Downtown Atmore area have always played an important role in generating traffic to support the district's economy and sense of vitality. Predictably, office and service uses will continue to be important to the downtown area in the future. These uses should continue to be encouraged to locate in the downtown area and, where appropriate and applicable, Main Street Atmore and community development partners should work to locate these uses in buildings, spaces, and redevelopment sites that are conducive to creating and maintaining a strong sense of retail vibrancy throughout the downtown area.

Office, service, government and civic uses in Downtown Atmore have always played an important role in generating traffic to support the district's economy and sense of vitality.

Table 25

Q: How often do you visit Downtown Atmore...

Frequency—Daily or Weekly	Percent
To do errands or for office and service-related purposes?	66.4%
For eating, drinking or entertainment?	54.4%
To shop?	34.1%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

Opportunities and Targets

Housing

Consumers surveyed showed high levels of interest in downtown housing. The results lend support for the rehabilitation and development of a variety of housing styles in the downtown area.

41% Of consumers surveyed answered "**Yes**" or "**Maybe**" when asked, "Would you consider living in Downtown Atmore?

Table 26

Q: Would you consider living in Downtown Atmore?

Yes	18.3%
Maybe	22.8%

Table 27

Q: Would you prefer to own or rent housing in Downtown Atmore?

Own	77.2%
Rent	22.8%

Table 28

Q: What style of housing in Downtown Atmore would you look for or consider?

Townhouse	48.9%
Loft	45.8%
Apartment	29.0%
Condo	23.7%
Live/Work Unit	16.8%
7.6%	14.9%

Table 29

Q: What is the monthly mortgage payment or rent amount you would be willing to pay for your choice of downtown housing?

Less than $800	47.8%
$800 to $899	23.5%
$900 to $999	8.8%
$1,000 to $1,099	13.2%
$1,100 to $1,199	2.2%
$1,200 to $1,299	1.5%
$1,300 or more	2.9%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey.

49%	43%	31%
TOWNHOUSE	25 to 44	$100K+
Housing Style	Age	Household Income

Potential Downtown Housing Market Traits

Insights

- High levels of interest expressed by the consumer survey group bode well for the potential rehabilitation and development of a variety of housing concepts and styles in the downtown area.
- The benefits of housing in a traditional downtown district are multifold and align with strategies envisioning a traditional or historic downtown district as the center of community life.
- Possibilities for downtown housing could include a range of styles and price points catering to a variety of lifestyles and life stages including:
  - The rehabilitation of vacant and underutilized upper levels of existing downtown buildings for a range of housing styles, such as apartments, lofts, and live-work units, appealing to different segments of the market.
  - Mixed use development at potential downtown area redevelopment sites.
  - The development of urban housing styles (i.e. row homes, townhomes, etc.) at appropriate sites in areas immediately surrounding the core downtown district.

Opportunities and Targets

Housing

Survey demographics compiled for those indicating an interest in downtown housing points to possibilities for a range of styles and price points catering to different lifestyles and life stages.

Table 30
Potential Downtown Housing Market Profile

Age	Percent
24 or younger	11.2%
25 to 34	24.6%
35 to 44	18.7%
45 to 54	22.4%
55 to 64	12.7%
65 or older	10.4%

Household Size	Percent
1	10.4%
2	38.1%
3	18.7%
4 or more	32.8%

Household Income	Percent
Less than $25,000	12.7%
$25,000 to $49,999	21.6%
$50,000 to $74,999	17.9%
$75,000 to $99,999	17.2%
$100,000 to $149,999	14.9%
$150,000 and greater	15.7%

Source: 2021 Downtown Atmore Consumer Survey. Profile based on demographic characteristics of survey respondents who answered "Yes" or "Maybe" when asked, "Would you consider living in Downtown Atmore?"

Directions

Design

- ► Facilitate "Code Team" pre-project walk-throughs involving Design Committee members, building owners, building officials, and other relevant personnel to assess and troubleshoot potential challenges to the rehabilitation and development of downtown housing (and other downtown building rehabilitation and redevelopment projects), especially as it may apply to the upper levels of existing downtown structures.

Economic Vitality

- ► Work with local government and community development and housing interests to further explore feasibility and identify possible programs, technical assistance, and resources that might be appropriate to support downtown area housing development goals.

Promotion

- ► Host an annual "At Home Downtown" or "Living it Up Downtown" event to showcase downtown area housing units in the before, during, and after phases of rehabilitation or development.

Potential Activities

(D) Facilitate "Code Team" pre-project walk-throughs

(E) Inventory downtown housing units (existing & potential)

(E) Identify and promote housing development resources

(P) Organize downtown area housing showcase tours

(D) Design **(E)** Economic Vitality **(O)** Organization **(P)** Promotion

Moving Forward

> *Main Street Atmore's roles as partnership builder, resource locater, and publicity machine will continue to take on heightened significance as we navigate toward a post-COVID-19 world.*

Extraordinary Times

Surveys performed and providing a basis for many of the strategies and actions proposed as part of this study were conducted in the early weeks of 2021, just prior to the approval and early distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Now, in the early immunization and recovery stages, much remains uncertain. While better times and a return to something more closely resembling "normal" appear to be on the near horizon, the actual economic recovery timeline is still uncertain, and changes in lifestyles, consumer behavior and the way we do business are almost certain to be longer-lasting.

Strategies, Projects and Activities

Activities proposed in this document and displayed in a quick-look format on the following page serve as a good starting point and guide for moving forward—in time and as life returns to a more normal state. Still, the impacts of recent events are almost certain to affect lives, behavior, and the well-being of existing businesses for a much longer period. It will be important, then, to maintain a strong focus on the needs of existing businesses, including business retention and support activities outlined in this study. Other ideas and activities are likely to grow out of this study's findings, as implementation steps are taken, and as new opportunities emerge.

Supporting and Sustaining Activities

The ability to move forward with the ideas and opportunities advanced as part of this study, along with projects already in motion or planned for the future, will also hinge on a solid organizational foundation, strong partnerships, and supporting activities that, while not explicitly spelled out within the context of any market study, are absolutely essential to the success of Main Street Atmore and the community's downtown revitalization efforts.

Main Street Atmore's roles as partnership builder, resource locater, and publicity machine will continue to take on heightened significance as we navigate toward a post-COVID-19 world. In some cases this role may require the organization to locate or develop entirely new sources of funding to advance a new initiative, or it might require the organization to re-assess and shift priorities and budget allocations based on the findings of this study, as the human and economic impacts of recent events become more clear, and as conditions change in the future.

Examples

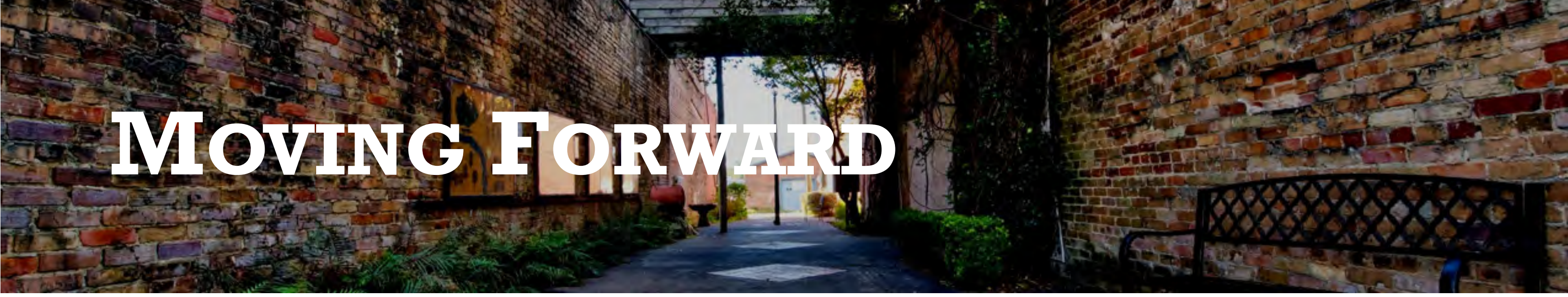
Supporting and Sustaining Activities

Board of Directors/Organization

- Fundraising and fund development activities to sustain the organization and implement projects and activities.
- Volunteer development activities including the recruitment, retention, and recognition of volunteers.
- Partnership and public participation efforts to involve a cross section of residents, business persons, elected officials, community leaders, and representatives from other community organizations.
- Monitoring and tracking progress, evaluating processes, measuring results, and taking appropriate action, where and when necessary, to refine operations or implement changes.
- Public relations to enhance awareness of the Main Street Atmore organization and the importance of its work to the community, and to publicize plans, projects and results.
- Monitoring and evaluating executive staff performance, needs for support staff, and budgeting accordingly.
- Leadership development, including the allocation of sufficient funds for board member, staff and volunteer leadership development and training.

Economic Vitality

- Building and Business Inventory to track occupancy, identify underutilized space, benchmark and track property values, develop a contacts database for building and business owners, create and update a downtown business directory, etc.
- "Hotlist" of downtown properties and spaces available for sale or lease to help facilitate matches between property owners/agents and prospective businesses, investors, developers and entrepreneurs.
- Business Resources Guide and Directory to help facilitate access to technical assistance and resources, and to help prospects navigate business start-up and property development processes.



Moving Forward

Potential Activities | Quick Look Guide

Economic Vitality

Ref	Potential Economic Vitality Activities	Pg.
1	Encourage non-retail uses to locate downtown	6
2	Share consumer online preferences with businesses	8
3	Conduct business visits to share survey results	10
4	Conduct vacant property visits to identify targeted uses	10
5	Vacant property poster/storefront treatment program	10
6	Publicize survey results and a list of "top prospects"	10
7	Continue to support COVID-19 recovery efforts	11
8	Incentives for buildings and new/expanding businesses	11
9	Create business assistance resources guide/directory	11
10	Assemble a business retention resources & contacts guide	13
11	Showcase long-time and start-up business success stories	13
12	Identify and promote succession planning resources	13
13	Promote resources for business expansion/improvements	14
14	Business training (survey results, social media, eCommerce)	14
15	Promote business and property investment opportunities	14
16	Conduct a business survey on annual or biennial basis	15
17	Create a recruitment fact sheet w/ tracking data	15
18	Inventory downtown housing units (existing & potential)	22
19	Identify and promote housing development resources	22

Promotion

Ref	Potential Economic Vitality Activities	Pg.
1	Encourage/Facilitate cross-promotion efforts	6
2	Create a downtown businesses and services directory	6
3	Downtown promo displays and materials at anchors	7
4	Develop and launch collaborative marketing concepts	8
5	Use events to test market ideas (i.e. booths, pop-ups)	9
6	Create a stock photo library as marketing resource	12
7	Create Downtown Atmore branding system (w/ MS AL)	12
8	Launch a customer-driven testimonial campaign	12
9	Benchmark and track event attendance and impacts	15
10	Organize downtown area housing showcase tours	22
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Design

Ref	Potential Economic Vitality Activities	Pg.
1	Downtown gateway and wayfinding signage/features	7
2	Address pedestrian and bicyclist safety concerns	9
3	Pursue placemaking activities to enliven spaces	9
4	Promote beautification and building improvements	11
5	Promote tools and resources for building improvements	11
6	Monitor traffic; advocate for pedestrian improvements	11
7	Integrate branding extensions in the public realm	12
8	ID design assistance tools/resources for property owners	14
9	Facilitate "Code Team" pre-project walk-throughs	22

Organization

Ref	Potential Economic Vitality Activities	Pg.
1	Presentations/Updates to partners & community groups	6
2	MSA info displays and meet & greet events at anchors	7
3	Annual report with tracking data and progress updates	15
4		
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7		
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9		

Moving Forward

Next Step: Transformation Strategies

The information, insights, directions and potential activities emanating from the Market Study and Strategies process provide solid groundwork for the design and execution of a holistic, market-driven revitalization strategy. Still, it will be important to maintain focus on the ultimate vision for Downtown Atmore and to prioritize efforts, accordingly.

Main Street Alabama's Transformation Strategies Development Service—the next step in the process—infuses locally-mined information and directions posed by the market study to help communities fine-tune strategies and prioritize projects and activities that incrementally create positive changes in the district's economy.

The Main Street Approach to Revitalization

Main Street Alabama works with member communities and organizations to adapt a time-tested and proven approach to revitalization developed and promoted by Main Street America™, a program of the National Main Street Center. The approach provides a framework for communities to rebuild, preserve, and reinvigorate their historic and older downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.

The Main Street Approach® consists of three essential and tightly integrated tools:

1. **Community Vision** that is informed by broad and inclusive community input *and* market understanding.
2. **Transformation Strategies** that incrementally create positive changes in the district's economy. These are implemented through simultaneous activity in four broad areas of work that, together, constitute the "Four Points." In brief:
   - **Design** encompasses improving all the physical and visual aspects of the district.
   - **Organization** involves cultivating partnerships and resources for the district.
   - **Promotion** is about marketing the district.
   - **Economic Vitality** focuses on capital, incentives and other economic and financial tools for business and property development.
3. **Impact measurement** includes monitoring quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

Transformation Strategies Explained

A *Transformation Strategy* articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district's economy. Grounded by both an understanding of the underlying drivers of the local and regional economy, as well as community feedback and engagement, a Transformation Strategy should describe a market position that the commercial district can successfully fulfill.

> *An effective Transformation Strategy serves a particular customer segment, responds to an underserved market demand, or creates a differentiated destination.*

Simply stated, a *Transformation Strategy* is a comprehensive strategy that guides the direction of the revitalization initiative and, over time, transforms the district. Each Transformation Strategy has several important characteristics:

- It is **rooted in the community's vision** for the district.
- It is **based on a solid analysis and understanding** of the district's economy and its best economic opportunities.
- **It is comprehensive,** in that it is implemented through a broad range of activities that span the four broad areas of work represented by the Four Points.
- **It is measurable,** making it possible to track progress.
- **It provides guidance for program activities for a two- to five-year period,** after which the revitalization program should examine progress and make adjustments, as needed.

In general, a revitalization organization should work with one or two Transformation Strategies at a time. In some exceptional circumstances, it might consider tackling three Transformation Strategies—but more than three would be challenging.