

# MEMO

**TO:** Cristina Sheppard-Decius November 16, 2009  
**FR:** Daniel Grove, The Lakota Group  
**RE:** **Ferndale Heritage Tourism & Wayfinding Planning – Online Survey Summary**  
**CC:** Nicholas Kalogeresis, Lakota  
 Brian Wirth, Lakota  
 Wendy Christie, Quill Communications  
 Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting

The Lakota Group and Ferndale DDA adapted the stakeholder survey into two web-based formats to reach a wider stakeholder group. The first format was an eleven question web-based survey made up of five multiple-choice questions and six open-ended questions. The second format presented five open-ended questions on Facebook to “Fans of the Downtown Ferndale.”

The online survey received 149 responses. The following are the results of the multiple-choice questions (the most popular answer to each question has been highlighted):

## 1. What is your interest in Ferndale?

I live here.	95	63.7%
I work here.	39	26.1%
I play here.	72	48.3%
Other	31	20.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 2. What is your experience navigating Ferndale via the following modes of transportation?

### a. Motorized Vehicle (Automobile, Motorcycle, Scooter)

Very Good	45	30%
Good	82	55%
Neutral/No Opinion	18	12%
Poor	4	3%
Very Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100%</b>

### b. Public Transit (Bus)

Very Good	7	6%
Good	2	2%
Neutral/No Opinion	97	81%
Poor	9	8%
Very Poor	5	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

c. Non-motorized Vehicle (Bike, Skateboard)

Very Good	24	19%
Good	42	34%
Neutral/No Opinion	48	38%
Poor	8	6%
Very Poor	3	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100%</b>

d. Human Power (Walking)

Very Good	74	52%
Good	60	42%
Neutral/No Opinion	4	3%
Poor	3	2%
Very Poor	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. How would you rate the usefulness of the existing directional signs to key destinations and attractions in Ferndale (City Hall, Library, Parking Lots)?**

Very Good	17	12%
Good	66	45%
Neutral/No Opinion	43	29%
Poor	20	14%
Very Poor	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100%</b>

**4. What is your experience with finding parking in Ferndale?**

Very Good	15	10%
Good	80	56%
Neutral/No Opinion	13	9%
Poor	34	24%
Very Poor	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100%</b>

**5. What do you think of the character of existing signs, historic plaques and gateways in Ferndale?**

Very Good	15	10%
Good	66	45%
Neutral/No Opinion	48	32%
Poor	17	11%
Very Poor	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following are summaries of the responses received on the open-ended questions:

**6. What attracts you to Ferndale?**

Common answers included the diversity of the population, the sense of community, the unique character of the community, the range of stores and restaurants, the walkability, and the independent spirit of the town.

**7. What is Ferndale's greatest strength?**

Similar to the answers to Question 6, responses cited the downtown character and shops, the diversity of the populations, the progressive character of Ferndale, and the sense of community.

**8. What is Ferndale's greatest weakness?**

Responses to this question varied more than the previous two questions. There was a wide range of answers such as vacant storefronts, borderline businesses, parking issues, proximity of Ferndale to Detroit, and need for additional parks/green spaces.

**9. What are your favorite places in Ferndale (restaurants, shops, library, parks, etc.)? Be specific.**

Responses heavily favored businesses, with over 60 individual shops or restaurants getting mention.. Furthermore, almost 40 of those businesses were mentioned by more than one person. The top five mentioned businesses were Emory, Woodward Avenue Brewery, Rosie O'Grady's, Anita's Kitchen, and the Western Market.

As for public attractions, the public library, Geary Park, Martin Road Park, and the Kulick Center were the most frequently mentioned.

**10. What are your favorite places to take an out-of-town guest in Ferndale?**

The answers to question 10 are very similar to 9 with some differences. Many of the top mentioned businesses from the previous question were also frequently cited, with some restaurants like Anita's Kitchen and Howe's Bayou being mentioned more often. Entertainment venues like the Magic Bag, The Ringwald Theater, and Go Comedy appear to be more popular for taking guests. The Downtown as an entity was mentioned in more responses for this question and many of the accompanying comments indicated pride in the Downtown. Also, the variety of Downtown events was mentioned in several responses.

**11. What is special about Ferndale that should receive more attention?**

Responses to this question mostly addressed many of the intangibles and character-based elements, and were similar to the responses to Question 6. Again, the diversity of the community, the character of the neighborhoods, the range of businesses and restaurants in the Downtown, and the many different events were often mentioned. Other elements and locations were identified, such as the Hilton and Livernois "Districts," the Historical Society Museum, the parks, bike routes, historic auto heritage sites, the Ringwald Theater, and Affirmations.

The questions that were posted on Facebook overlapped with several of the on-line questions. Most questions received about 10 to 30 answers. The Facebook format allowed for more of a discussion, with new comments reacting to and responding to previous comments. The five questions were:

1. What are your favorite places in Ferndale (restaurants, shops, library)?
2. What are your favorite places in Ferndale to take your out-of-town guests?
3. What are your favorite historic buildings/resources/events/stories in or about Ferndale?
4. What is special about Ferndale that should receive more attention?
5. What are your favorite cultural buildings/resources/events/stories in or about Ferndale?

The responses to questions 1, 2, and 4 were similar to the answers received from the on-line survey. Questions 3 and 5 focused on concepts that were discussed at the stakeholder meetings but were thought to be too detailed to include in the on-line survey.

Responses to Question 3 included the Dream Cruise, the Public Library, Ferndale Pharmacy's soda fountain, Wen-R Bun, F&M, Kresge's, Gotham City Café's original Woodward location, the Rialto Restaurant, parking in the Woodward median, the trolley tracks in the Woodward median, the story of the "Walk Right" bird's nest, and AJ's Guinness Record.

The responses to Question 5 had some overlap with Question 3, which indicates there is some gray area between the historic and cultural elements. Many of the festivals received recognition in responses to the question, including Fido Does Ferndale, the DIY Art Festival, Pride Fest, the Ice Festival, Blues Festival, Pimp Your Pot, Memorial Day Parade, and Tour of the Town. Additionally, the responses highlighted a few of the community's churches, including St. Luke's Episcopal and Jefferies Baptist Church. One unique answer mentioned the Brooks raid on the old theater at the site of the Magic Bag.

The responses to these questions will be used, along with the feedback from the stakeholder interviews, to inform the next phases of work, including the self-guided tours and interpretive markers. Additionally, these answers and discussions are helpful in identifying the character of the community the wayfinding program should embody in terms of establishing a character or brand for the City of Ferndale.