



DOWNTOWN JEFFERSON

JEFFERSON, IOWA

IN VIEW

Jefferson, a Main Street Iowa Community, is exploring and pursuing exciting opportunities for the future of the community's traditional downtown business district.

Jefferson Matters: Main Street spearheaded the downtown market analysis process to promote an in-depth understanding of local and regional market conditions and trends impacting the downtown district's current economic performance and opportunities for the future. Information and direction gained throughout the market analysis process will provide a sound basis for local decision-making processes and strategies aimed at enhancing the Jefferson downtown business district.

As Jefferson Matters: Main Street moves forward, we will continue to involve partners, community leaders, business persons and residents in efforts to analyze and interpret the information collected through the market analysis process in order to develop a complete understanding of the findings and results – and the implications for downtown. The process will “dig deep” into the results and their meanings and incorporate local knowledge into the analysis and interpretation of the study's findings. Such a process will serve to aid in the development and implementation of strategies that are both market-driven and intrinsic to our community's goals and aspirations for downtown Jefferson.

Now, and in the future, Jefferson Matters: Main Street and the entire community will be able to use these results for the betterment of Jefferson. It will serve as a useful and flexible tool for business recruitment and retention, as well as remain a “living and breathing” document. It will be able to change along with the times and trends of the community, and remain very useful in aiding Jefferson Matters: Main Street's enhancement of the downtown area.

DOWNTOWN JEFFERSON

2015 MARKET STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



JEFFERSON MATTERS: MAIN STREET

110 W. Lincoln Way
Jefferson, IA 50129
515.386.3585

 director@jeffersonmatters.org
 www.jeffersonmatters.org



Jefferson is part of a national phenomenon of people returning to the towns or neighborhood of their origins, or places similar. We have become home to a populace that wants quality-of life amenities within an authentic community. Those that have gone away and come back bring with them the latest trends and expectations. Jefferson has many more of these exciting returnees than most communities our size. Because of the presence of a long-time resident's privately held telecommunication company, we are within easy and constant reach of the wider world of Iowa, the nation and the world via state of the art equipment.

As the county seat and at the heart of a major farming community, we consider ourselves a prosperous and vigorous area. We have two large grain cooperatives, a large implement dealer, and expert agronomists and agricultural professionals. We tap into the sustainable agricultural movements with a thriving Farmers Market and Greene County GROWS, a local foods working group.

Jefferson's downtown district has experienced a transformation in the past five years with the completion of streetscape, landscape, lighting and an alley renovation. Several buildings in the downtown have undergone major renovation inside and out.

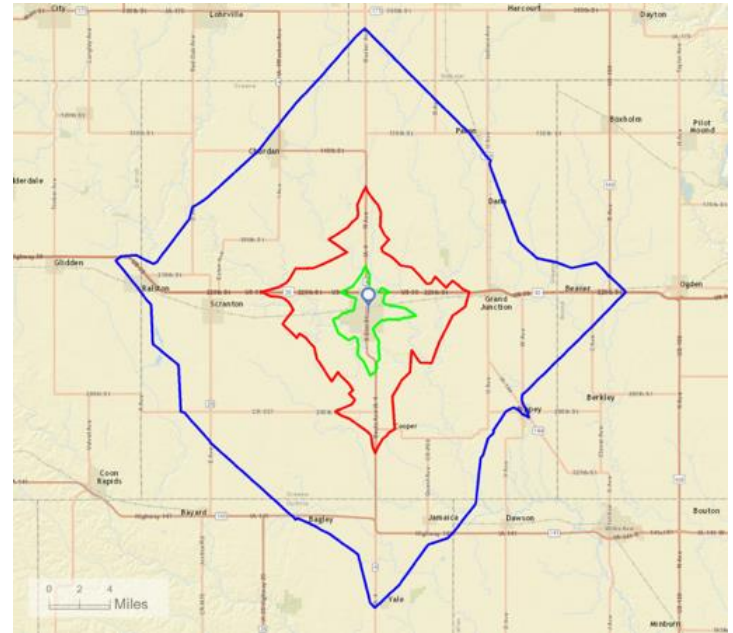
A new public garden has been planted with a nod to Thomas Jefferson, the namesake of our community. Along with a professional live theatre, an updated movie theatre, a live music venue, and an upgrade to a bowling alley, the downtown area is becoming a vital, interesting and unique destination that serves as a social and commercial center for the area.

The downtown district features an established mix of businesses ranging from retail, personal services and business services to office environments, to dining attractions, entertainment venues and cultural activity centers.

A new Hy-Vee grocery store lies just outside the downtown district, and Iowa's newest Wild Rose Casino and three-story hotel is located at the community's north edge. All of these things combine to position Jefferson as a destination city.

DOWNTOWN JEFFERSON DRIVE TIME MARKET

FAST FACTS



Population	5 MIN	10 MIN	20 MIN
2010 Census	4,355	4,781	9,237
2014 Estimate	4,250	4,666	9,055
2019 Projection	4,155	4,562	8,872
Change: 2014 – 2019	-2.2%	-2.2%	-2.0%

Households	5 MIN	10 MIN	20 MIN
2010 Census	1,910	2,081	3,969
2014 Estimate	1,874	2,043	3,913
2019 Projection	1,844	2,009	3,857
Change: 2014 – 2019	-1.6%	-1.7%	-1.4%

Median HH Income	5 MIN	10 MIN	20 MIN
2014 Estimate	\$46,511	\$46,771	\$49,882
2019 Projection	\$56,346	\$56,525	\$57,074
Change: 2014 – 2019	21.1%	20.9%	14.4%

Source: Esri



DOWNTOWN MARKETING

Consumer rankings of media preferences demonstrate the exceptionally strong presence of the local print publication and the growing influence of the Internet and social media applications as a resource for news, for researching products and services, and for communicating with clients.

The Internet can be a particularly valuable resource for businesses because it provides the potential for businesses to expand their trade area well beyond local or regional geographies. Businesses with collectible, specialty, and custom merchandise lines, in particular, can use the Internet, and sites such as Amazon, eBay and Etsy, to market to the entire United States or even globally. Even traditional retailers and businesses carrying “staple” products are reaping benefits as, more and more, consumers use the Internet to “shop and compare” products and services, and then use it – in much the same way previous generations of consumers used the Yellow Pages – as a resource to find a local outlet or vendor where they can make their purchase.

Downtown Jefferson’s promotion and collaborative marketing efforts should continue to consider how the Internet and various social media applications might be most effectively used to communicate with consumers and to further downtown promotional goals. The growing popularity of Facebook, Twitter and other social media applications is evident in consumer survey results that show 46% of all respondents selected Social Media and 29% selected Internet Websites as one of their top two sources for news and information.

Q: Of the following, which two (2) media and information sources do you most rely on for Jefferson area news and information?

Consumers Responses	Percentage
Newspaper	64.7%
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	45.8%
Internet Website(s)	28.6%
Radio	17.8%
Television	14.6%

Source: 2015 Downtown Jefferson Consumer Surveys. Top five responses shown.



HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Consumer online survey responses provide a preliminary indication of interest in downtown housing and various housing options. Living in Downtown Jefferson appears to be particularly attractive to a younger demographic, with 36 percent of those survey participants expressing interest falling within the 24 years or younger age group.

Q: Would you consider living in Downtown Jefferson?

Responses	
Yes	11.2%
Maybe	20.1%
I live downtown	11.6%

Source: 2015 Downtown Jefferson Consumer Online Survey.

Those indicating they would consider living in the downtown expressed interest in a variety of housing styles, and in both owner- and renter-occupied units.

Q: What kind of housing in Downtown Jefferson would you look for or consider?

Responses	
Loft	44.2%
Townhouse	44.2%
Condo	27.3%
Apartment	27.3%
Senior Housing	14.3%

Source: 2015 Downtown Jefferson Consumer Online Survey. Multiple responses allowed.

More than two-thirds of those indicating they would consider living in the downtown with a “yes” or “maybe” response would prefer to own housing in Downtown Jefferson. Loft and Townhouse style housing options were most favored by survey participants expressing interest, followed by Condo and Apartment styles.



VALUES AND PRIORITIES

Consumer and business survey participants place a high priority on business expansion and recruitment efforts—including proposals for creating incentives for new and expanding businesses in the downtown area. The ranking of other possible efforts was highly consistent among the consumer and business survey groups, though consumers were more likely to place a high priority designation on possible enhancement efforts – including efforts to restore and preserve the downtown’s historic character, to improve the streetscape, to develop housing in the downtown area, and to stage additional festivals and events.

Q: Would you place a high, moderate or low priority on possible downtown Jefferson enhancement efforts to:

Consumers (C) and Businesses (B) Rating as a “High Priority”

Enhancement Efforts	(C)	(B)
Create incentives for new and expanding downtown businesses	67.9% (1)	59.5% (1)
Restore and preserve the downtown’s historic character	43.5% (2)	27.8% (2)
Improve and/or create more housing in the downtown area	30.6% (3)	22.5% (3)
Improve the downtown’s streets, sidewalks, lighting, furnishings, green spaces, trails, etc.	30.5% (4)	15.6% (5)
Stage additional festival and special events in the downtown area	30.5% (4)	17.7% (4)

Source: 2015 Downtown Jefferson Consumer and Business Surveys.

Input regarding priorities for the downtown district generally aligns with suggestions offered by consumer and business survey respondents when asked, “What is the first thing you would do to improve Downtown Jefferson?” Economic restructuring initiatives, dominated by business recruitment, business enhancement and efforts to diversify the business mix, ranked highly, followed closely by design-oriented subjects and topics.

Consumers and businesses surveyed overwhelmingly identified features associated with the downtown’s environment, character and feel as the things they love most or would never change, showing a great affection for the small town atmosphere and friendly nature of downtown.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Market research findings provide general direction for various retail business types and merchandise lines that could be prime candidates and appropriate for expansion and recruitment in Downtown Jefferson. The implementation of economic development strategies is part of a comprehensive, long-term enhancement program that emphasizes business retention efforts and a series of initiatives that will make the downtown an even more attractive place to do business and invest.

Retail

Business types and lines that might be considered primary targets and candidates for expansion and recruitment, based on the existing business mix, trends in the marketplace, consumer and business survey findings and analysis of Esri retail data include:

- ▶ Clothing and clothing accessories (shoe store, younger women’s clothing, men’s and children’s clothing)
- ▶ Sporting goods (golf, tennis, workout equipment, sports apparel, bicycle parts and repair)
- ▶ Miscellaneous retail (gifts, pet supplies, repurposed clothing and goods, books, greeting cards, stationery)
- ▶ General merchandise (dime / dollar store)
- ▶ Higher-end antique stores

Businesses featuring unique local crafts, art and antiques would capture the interest of visitors coming from the bike trail, the casino/convention center and Lincoln Highway travelers, as well as local traffic to downtown.

Food and Beverage

Twenty percent of consumer survey respondents identified restaurants and drinking (alcohol) establishments as businesses or attractions that might make them visit the downtown more frequently, making it the second ranked category. An increased variety and quality of dining establishments is desired by the market and could signal opportunities for existing restaurants and new entrepreneurs. A craft brewery, a wine bar and a business-class restaurant would be welcome.

Office and Service Uses

Seventy-three percent of consumer survey participants indicated they visited the downtown at least twice a week, demonstrating the important role these uses play in generating consistent traffic to the downtown area. These uses should continue to be encouraged to locate within the downtown district and, where possible, these uses should be encouraged to locate in buildings and spaces that are conducive to creating and maintaining a strong sense of retail vibrancy throughout the district.

**JEFFERSON
MATTERS:**
MAIN STREET

For Information Contact
Jefferson Matters: Main Street
110 W. Lincoln Way
Jefferson, IA 50129
515.386.3585

 director@jeffersonmatters.org
 www.jeffersonmatters.org