



## Media Release from Shamokin Dam Borough

10/02/12 – Mayor Releases Economic Survey Results

---

For additional information contact: Joe McGranaghan at 743-7704 or jamcg@ptd.net

Shamokin Dam Mayor Joe McGranaghan released the results of an economic development study and survey he conducted during August and September of this year. Borough Council authorized the mayor to conduct the survey of the Borough's business community earlier this year. A questionnaire was sent to all commercial, service, medical and hospitality businesses in the borough. The study focused on determining what the business community identifies as the borough's advantages and disadvantages, the percentage of business that comes from the area and from transients, and to assess the importance to the borough's business community of a number of proposed development projects and issues.

Major advantages of the borough identified included its central location, fire and police protection, access to banks and professional services, the eye appeal of Shamokin Dam's neighborhoods, the maintenance of borough roads and infrastructure and the street lighting provided on Routes 11 & 15. Major identified disadvantages included the traffic volume on Routes 11 & 15 and the borough's tax on business gross receipts. Other concerns included the availability and quality of the area workforce, the cost and availability of commercial space and water and sewer rates.

Overall the Shamokin Dam business community reported that 76% of its business came from within the area/region and 24% from transients. By business category the results ran from a high of 97% local from the medical and dental businesses to a low of 27% for hotels and motels. The survey also asked what type of business the borough should attempt to attract. Most often mentioned were a Red Lobster, Olive Garden or a business directed towards children.

When asked how important a number of projects and issues were to the business community they identified aggressive enforcement of traffic laws on Routes 11 & 15 and construction of the Susquehanna Valley Thruway project as being of major importance. Also considered to be important are maintaining a fire company within the borough, construction of the proposed fish ladder around the Adam T. Bower Memorial Dam and construction of the SEDA-COG proposal for a rowing center and rebuilding a portion of the old Pennsylvania Canal along vacant riverfront property just north of the Veterans Memorial Bridge.

The final question of the survey asked the business community what one thing they would change about Shamokin Dam to make it a better place to live and work and why they would change it. While most of those answering this question mentioned the need to reduce traffic on Routes 11 & 15 and the need to build the Susquehanna Valley Thruway project a number of other suggestions were made including better synchronization of the traffic signals on Routes 11 & 15.

In reporting the results to Borough Council, Mayor McGranaghan pointed out that while the business gross receipts tax appears to be unpopular it does help to provide some significant benefits to the business community. "We have a selling job here," the mayor said, "with the funding the borough provides for police and fire protection, street lighting and other municipal services, our business community gets a pretty good bang for its buck. We just need to better inform our business community about the benefits we provide from their tax dollars."

Borough Council is reviewing the survey results and the Mayor will make some specific recommendations based on the study at next month's meeting. The Borough Council and Mayor recognize the importance of the Shamokin Business community to the overall economic health of the borough and remain committed to making Shamokin Dam a great municipality in which to live and do business. A copy of the survey results is attached (as a pdf file) and will be posted on the Borough's web site.