



City of Smithville Community Insights™ At-a-Glance

Why Does the City of Smithville Need a Brand?

The brand development journey will help define key attributes of the City of Smithville.

Developing a new brand identity will allow the City to embrace the elements that make it unique, while differentiating itself from other communities.

Smithville must tell its own authentic story using words and phrases that uniquely describe the community experience.

Where the City of Smithville's Brand Has Been and Why

The community is divisive regarding the perception of itself. Some seem unwilling to make changes needed for progress, fueled by a preference to keep things the same, while others are seeking change and advancement in recreational amenities, retail, events and entertainment.

Both groups however, have unrealistic expectations about how to achieve desired goals.

This puts Smithville at a crossroads with its identity and future. With an energized City leadership that is looking forward, along with a new resident population, including many young families, the community is poised to overcome this challenge.

Today, Smithville does not have an identifiable brand of any kind, but the potential to build one is great.

Four Phases of In-Market Research



Composition of Smithville Residents

51.6% of Smithville's population is defined as Suburban Periphery which includes two groups:

1. **Soccer Mom (35.1%)**
 - Median Age is 36.6
 - 79% white, non-Hispanic
 - 37.7% college graduates more than 70% with some college
 - Median household income of \$84,000
2. **Midlife Constants (16.5%)**
 - Median age is 45.9
 - 86.9% are white, non-Hispanic
 - Education: 64% have a high school diploma or some college
 - Median household income of \$48,000

37.9% of Smithville's population is defined as Semirural, which includes the *Middleburg* group

- Median age is 35.3
- 80.7% white, non-Hispanic
- Education: 66% with a high school diploma or some college
- Household income of \$55,000

10.5% of Smithville's Population is defined as Rural, which includes the *Green Acres* group

- Median age is 43
- 91% are white, non-Hispanic
- Education: 60% are college educated
- Median household income of \$72,000

Economic Insights

100% leakage for two primary sectors:

1. Retail trade (specialty stores, pharmacies, food stores)
2. Food and drink (full and limited-service restaurants)

Smithville's demand for these sectors is \$110,959,467.00
The gap is \$40,001,998.00

Community Engagement and Participation

- **5%** of Smithville's population participated in the survey (voter turnout at the last Municipal General Election was less than 1%)
- **150** in-person/man-on-the-street resident conversations
- **19,970** people viewed www.visionsmithville.com
- **71%** of survey respondents selected, "Fear of Change/No Growth Attitude" as the top choice for the survey question, "What is the greatest challenge currently facing Smithville?"

Several key themes emerged:

- The attitudes from elected officials about growth needs to change
- There needs to be a focus on attracting mid-size retail and restaurants
- Park improvements and other recreational opportunities outside of the school are desired
- A general concern about the future funding of the school district to maintain and accommodate growth
- Leverage the lake as amenity to build a tax around
- Code enforcement and negative visual perception when entering Smithville from 169 Highway

SWOT Insights

Smithville cannot be everything to everyone.

There are two clear resident segments in Smithville – those who want growth and those who will do what they can to prevent it. This puts Smithville at a concerning crossroads.

Narrow the focus.

Intelligent economic development is a high priority for the community. The City must find a way to use existing partners and resources to initiate an economic development strategy that has a realistic view of what industry and business sectors fit the community.

Differentiate.

The majority of Smithville citizens surveyed want to find a way to balance the small-town value system with economic development progress.

Smithville has potential.

Many citizens believe the potential for Smithville is great only if there is change. The community believes there is potential to enhance quality of life factors like healthy lifestyle amenities and mid-sized retailers and restaurants.

Others view potential as leveraging the lake as a dynamic tourism asset for the City's tax benefit. Many see the potential of overcoming funding challenges to ensure the school district not only survives; but thrives.

The potential can only be realized if the community can unify.

Smithville residents are concerned about the future of the community.

The majority of citizens surveyed are primarily concerned and frustrated by the overall lack of economic development progress in Smithville. There is also a general concern about the lack of support to fund the school district appropriately, as well as limited code enforcement around the downtown area.

Other dominant concerns relate to City government and elected officials. Current and past attitudes by some on the Board of Aldermen and City Staff have sent a strong and clear message to the community that there is no desire for growth or change. Regardless of the validity of these concerns and frustrations, it is a general community view and perception shared by many.

The community brand will be part of a long-term strategy, and it will need strong champions to pioneer the effort. There are three killers to any community brand:

1. Local politics
2. Lack of champions
3. Lack of money, both public and private