



Survey shows similar tastes

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Public opinion on restaurant and retail preferences in Flower Mound reveals many similarities from the last time residents were polled.

The town recently compiled the results of its 2007 Retail and Restaurant Recruitment Survey and found that the community is hungry for many of the same places it was at the time of Flower Mound's last survey in 2003.

Topping the list for restaurants residents would most like to see in Flower Mound was P.F. Chang's, which had 377 people express interest. Pei Wei was the second-most desired restaurant with 301 voting for it. Those two were the top choices in the 2003 survey as well.

Cheesecake Factory, Outback Steakhouse and Romano's Macaroni Grill round out the top five votes.

In terms of retail, 452 residents voted Central Market as the store people would most like to see in town. Whole Foods (298), Gap (215), Pottery Barn (211) and The Container Store (201) followed.

Surveys were sent to 20,882 households in Flower Mound as an attachment to residents' utility bills in September. Of the surveys sent out, 2,033 (9.4 percent) responded either by mail, FAX or online. That was enough to give officials an idea of what the community wants to see in the town.

"It was pretty much what we were expecting to see," said Melissa Glasgow, the director of economic development. "It was pretty comparable to the last survey. Not much has changed as far as what people want to see in Flower Mound, but there is more variety. So moving forward, we want to make the developers aware of the results. We're going to market to the top 20 restaurants and retailers and the property owners so they can use this information in their marketing efforts."

Glasgow said it is difficult to attract some businesses if they already exist in Highland Village because of proximity but added developmental expansion westward could still bring those businesses in.

"We look at today's development on FMs 1171 and 2499, and we have some opportunities to attract businesses," Glasgow said. "But, we have an incredible opportunity in the future. We want companies to be aware of what we have available."

Mayor Jody Smith said the results were right on with what she hears from people throughout the community on a daily basis. She said one challenge of bringing some businesses to the town is population.

"Certain businesses look for a certain number of rooftops," Smith said. "Sometimes Flower Mound doesn't have that number of rooftops. We can do everything we can to market Flower Mound, but often times rooftops within a 5- to 10-mile radius is the biggest obstacle. But we'll be able to secure more restaurants as our lunchtime population increases as we get more businesses."

The survey also revealed residents' shopping and dining habits. According to the results, residents are willing to drive 14-15 miles to go to other shops and restaurants not found in Flower Mound.

"We want to bring to town what the residents want," Glasgow said. "So we're going to do our best to contact those businesses' representatives to let them know what the interests are."

AT A GLANCE

The 2007 Retail and Restaurant Recruitment Survey showed a desire for upscale options, many of which were among top-10 choices.

Retailer (responses)

Central Market (452)	Crate & Barrel (200)
Whole Foods (298)	Old Navy (184)
GAP (215)	Nordstrom's (150)
Pottery Barn (211)	Williams-Sonoma (149)
The Container Store (201)	Michael's (142)

Restaurants

P.F. Chang's (377)	Olive Garden (242)
Pei Wei (301)	La Madeleine (206)
Cheesecake Factory (272)	Saltgrass Steakhouse (185)
Outback Steakhouse (257)	Pappadeaux Seafood Kitchen (175)
Macaroni Grill (254)	Chipotle Mexican Grill (147)

And, with 52 percent of the town's married households having at least one child, voters want to see places that serve families with children. Such places were Children's Place, Gymboree, GAP Kids, Toys R Us/Babies R Us and Pottery Barn Kids.

While some favorites have yet to make its way to Flower Mound, others have opened up in town or nearby since the last survey. The town has welcomed four of the last survey's top-20 retail requests with Best Buy, PetsMart and Lowe's, and Old Navy has since taken steps to open at the Robertson Creek Development. Glasgow said Market Street has also expressed interest in coming to Flower Mound. Top-choice restaurants T.G.I. Friday's and Jason's Deli has also opened.

Barnes & Noble, Bath and Body Works and Banana Republic have all opened in Highland Village. Corner Bakery has also opened at the Shops in Highland Village.