

**Question #21.** – While agricultural land uses have been identified in several earlier questions, they have not been the focus of a specific question concerning general policies regarding the possible conversion of agricultural land uses to other purposes. Specifically, the respondents were asked:

**PREFERRED POLICY TOWARD AGRICULTURAL REUSE**

Agricultural Policy	Yes	No	No Opinion	Missing
encourage the continuation of agriculture in the Town?	265	9	18	0
strive to preserve the rural nature of the Town?	232	20	40	0
encourage the conversion of farm land to residential use?	58	177	57	0
limit the conversion of farm land to commercial or industrial use?	170	87	33	2

Which of the following policies should the Town of Sharon follow regarding agricultural uses: Should the Town of Sharon: a. encourage the continuation of agriculture in the Town; b. strive to preserve the rural nature of the Town; c. encourage the conversion of farm land to residential use; or, limit the conversion of farm land to commercial or industrial use?

The pattern of responses shown on the Table shows a strong commitment to the preservation of the Town of Sharon’s agricultural lands. The table suggests that the preservation of agricultural land is an important part of the existing self image of the community and its agricultural routes. There was a clear opposition to the conversion of agricultural lands for either residential or commercial or industrial uses.

**Question #22.** – This was essentially an open ended question which limited the interpretation of the results because of the subtleties in individual stated responses. The question begins with a yes or no question concerning whether or not the Town should encourage alternative energy sources.

**SHOULD THE TOWN EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY**

	#	%
Yes	152	52.1%
No	83	28.4%
No Reply or Missing	57	19.5%

Are there alternative sources of energy that the Town should encourage? Yes; or No  
 [If yes, please describe what they are, where they should be located, and why]

As shown on the table about half of the respondents indicated that the Town should explore alternative energy sources. With 152 respondents indicating that the town should explore alternative sources there were a large number of alternative energy sources identified in the open ended portion. While grouping these many different responses is somewhat subjective it can be noted that both solar and wind energy were noted as part of more than thirty responses each. Much less frequently mentioned were biomass (ethanol production) and hydroelectric, each of which was mentioned about a half dozen times each.

**Question #23.** – This question asked about attitudes concerning historic preservation with a simple yes or no response solicited. This was then followed by an open ended question intended to identify such sites or locations.

**ARE THERE HISTORIC OR NATURAL SITES WHICH SHOULD BE PROTECTED**

	#	%
Yes	180	61.6%
No	62	21.2%
No Reply or Missing	50	17.1%

Are there historic sites, natural of unique environmental areas, or scenic views which should be protected in Sharon particular roads or areas in the Town of Sharon? Yes; or, NO (If yes, please describe where and why)

There were approximately a hundred responses to this question, all worded differently. The only repeated response was “other” which was checked by 36 respondents. Items which were mentioned with some frequency included the vistas throughout the Town, but especially along NYS Route 20; the creeks and gorges and the bathhouses in Sharon Springs; the “downtown” area of the Village with its businesses, hotels, and baths; and of course the mineral baths.

**AVAILABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT**

**Question #24.** – This question asked about the availability of employment in the Town and within 30 miles, or about a half hour’s drive. Respondents were given the opportunity to specify what type of employment opportunities they would like to see in the Town.

Concerning the availability of jobs that enable you to provide your expected quality of life... a. in your opinion, are there currently quality employment opportunities available IN the Town of Sharon; Yes; No b. in your opinion are there currently quality employment opportunities available AROUND (within 30 miles) the Town of Sharon? Yes; No c. If you answered “no” to the questions above, in your opinion, what types of jobs are needed in the Town of Sharon? (Write in)

	#	%
Are There Quality Employment Opportunities in Town		
Yes	68	23.3%
No	212	72.6%
No Opinion	12	4.1%
Are There Quality Employment Opportunities Within 30 Miles		
Yes	170	58.2%
No	115	39.4%
No Opinion	6	2.1%
No Reply	1	0.3%

The responses reported on the Table indicate that almost three-quarters of the respondents indicated that there were inadequate employment opportunities within the Town, but well over half felt that there were quality jobs within a half hour’s drive. As with the other “open-ended” questions, this one yielded close to a hundred unique responses which covered everything from retail clerk to professional positions. A repeated theme was the universal desire for high paying jobs which provided steady employment. Both blue and white collar jobs were identified. Manufacturing jobs and positions in service industries were noted.

A number of respondents noted the need for jobs for high school students and recent graduates.

**Question #25.**- This was a simple yes or no question which related to whether future cost of public improvement associated with a private development should be considered when development plans are under review.

**CONSIDER PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT WHEN REVIEWING PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

Should the cost of public improvements and services be considered by the Town when reviewing proposed developments? Yes; or No

	#	%
Yes	262	89.7%
No	14	4.8%
No Opinion	16	5.5%

As is reported on the Table just under 90% of all respondents indicated that they felt that local review should consider the impact of planned development when reviewing such plans.

**Question #26.** – This question specifically focused on scenic roads which had been touched on as part of an earlier question of historic preservation (question # 23). With this question respondents were asked to identify such scenic roads.

**ARE THERE ESPECIALLY SCENIC ROADS IN TOWN**

Are there particular roads or areas in the Town of Sharon that stand out in your mind as being especially attractive to the community? Yes; or, No (If yes, please describe where and why)

	#	%
Yes	126	43.2%
No	121	41.4%
No Opinion	45	15.4%

The responses to this question were almost evenly split – a difference of 5 responses with 45 questionnaires with no reply. As with other open ended questions there were more than a hundred different answers. There was a general consensus that Route 20 was a particularly scenic highway, especially between Sharon Springs and Cherry Valley. Route 10 was also cited as being particularly scenic. A number of other local roads were also mentioned but much less frequently. These included Beechwood Road, Engleville Road, Main Street, and the various streets in the Downtown Sharon Springs Historic District,

**Question # 27.** – This was a multiple part question which asked about the importance and the present quality of various community facilities and services.

The following is a list of features of the Town of Sharon. Please indicate how important these are to you and how you feel about their present quality by circling the appropriate letters.

**IMPORTANCE AND QUALITY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS (I)**

Features	IMPORTANCE				QUALITY			
	Very Important	Important	Not Important	No Reply	Excellent	Adequate or Average	Poor	No Reply
Water Quantity	205	57	12	18	68	144	32	48
Water Quality	208	49	11	24	44	131	71	46
Wastewater Disposal	152	102	18	20	24	185	20	63
Historic Preservation	121	127	32	12	29	175	40	48
Land Use Regulation	112	145	19	16	9	204	33	46
Code Enforcement	82	163	24	23	15	145	82	50
Access to Cable Television	94	105	80	13	22	99	121	50
Youth Programs	109	129	34	20	16	139	79	58
Recreational Facilities and Opportunities	89	144	41	18	4	117	119	52
Protection of Open Spaces	125	117	35	15	7	194	37	54
Protection of Steep Slopes	79	128	64	21	7	193	29	63
Protection of Floodplains and Wetlands	97	139	37	19	11	193	34	54

The summary Table which appears above reports the number of responses to each of the question elements. As shown on the table both water quantity and water quality had the highest ranked importance, with each being identified as “very important” by at least two-thirds of the respondents. However, both of these services received only average quality marks. In fact, the quality responses showed a significant number of “poor” ratings. The issues of wastewater disposal, protection of open spaces historic preservation, land use regulation, and youth programs were all rated “very important” by about a third of the respondents, and “important” by another third. None of the features was listed as “very important” by fewer than a quarter of the respondents. On the other hand, none of the listed issues were rated as “not important” by a large number of respondents; however, about a quarter of the respondents did indicate the access to cable television was not an important issue to them.

In terms of the current quality the features with the highest “poor” ratings involved access to cable television and recreational facilities and opportunities. About 40% of the respondents had a low opinion of the quality of these features, but at the same time relatively few respondents indicated that these features were very important to them.

It is also interesting to note that the number of “no replies” in the rating of current quality of the various features was usually twice the number not responding regarding their importance.

**Question #28.** – As with several other questions in this survey, this question focus on attitudes regarding a particularly controversial type of business or land use – in this case “adult uses. The question and response was fairly straight forward

**ADULT BOOK STORES OR ENTAINMENT VENUES**

	#	%
Encourage	13	4.5%
Discourage	201	68.8%
No Opinion	78	26.7%

**Should the Town encourage adult uses such as adult book stores or other adult entertainment? Encourage; Discourage; **OR** No opinion.**

It is not surprising that almost none of the respondents wanted to encourage adult entertainment venues, but it was somewhat surprising that more than a quarter of the respondents chose to express no opinion on this matter.

**Question #29.** – This question followed the same format as Question # 27, above – asking the importance and the quality of various community features and services. As with the earlier question, responses were on a 1 to 3 scale of importance and quality.

The following is a list of features of the Town of Sharon. Please indicate how important these are to you and how you feel about their present quality by circling the appropriate letters. You should respond to both importance and quality.

### IMPORTANCE AND QUALITY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS (II)

Feature	IMPORTANCE				QUALITY			
	Very Important	Important	Not Important	No Reply	Excellent	Adequate or Average	Poor	No Reply
Agriculture appearance of the area	126	139	17	10	36	195	38	23
Farming and agriculture as a business	146	126	12	8	19	188	63	22
Connection to the heritage of the town	97	143	37	15	23	203	33	33
Employment opportunities	135	117	28	12	1	90	172	29
Living close to my job	94	117	53	28	32	123	85	52
Police coverage	91	163	26	12	18	159	89	26
Fire protection and coverage	175	101	9	7	112	146	14	20
Ambulance coverage	159	111	9	13	89	151	28	24
Rural character of the Town	137	123	22	10	51	197	19	25
Close to family and friends	81	125	63	23	45	186	21	40
Quality of school district	153	104	22	13	50	160	59	23
Access to Internet	94	132	48	18	29	115	120	28

Among the community features or programs which were identified by at least half of the respondents as being “very important” were, in order of selection: Fire protection and coverage; Ambulance coverage; Quality of the school district; and, Farming and agriculture as a business. There were no features listed on the table which were not identified as being “very important” by at least a quarter of the respondents, or as “important” by a third of the respondents. Surprisingly given the long tenure of most of the respondents, the feature with the least number of respondents indicating that it was of no importance was closeness to family and friends.

Fire protection was the highest ranked feature in terms of importance and was also the highest rated feature in terms of quality; however, while more respondents cited fire protection as being of “excellent” quality, this was less than half of all respondents. For all features the quality ratings were lower than the rating of importance.

A major problem shown on the table is the fact that while the availability of jobs was among the more important features of the Town almost 60% of the respondents indicated that employment opportunities in the Town were poor.

**Question # 30.** In the background study of the community services it was noted that the Sharon Springs School District had an enrollment of only about 400 students for a K-12 program. Because of its size as one of the small school districts in the region, the question had been sometimes raised as to whether the district should be merged with a neighboring district. This question directly confronts this issue

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT MERGER ISSUE

	#	%
Should the School District Consider Merger		
Yes	118	40.4%
No	155	53.1%
No Reply or Missing	19	6.5%
If yes, at what level		
All grades	60	20.5%
High School Only	46	15.8%
Elementary School Only	0	0.0%
No Reply or Missing	186	63.7%

Should the School District consider a merger with one or more other districts? Yes; or No; (if Yes, respondents were ask to check one) All grades; High school only; or Elementary School only.

The Table shows that a little over half of the respondents felt that the School district should consider merging with another district, while about 40% indicated that it should. Roughly three out of five indicating that a merger should be considered favored a total merger while a somewhat small proportion preferred a merger only at the high school level. No one advocated a merger of just the elementary grades. This split is

interesting because the quality of the school district had been cited as “very important” by more than half the respondents in the earlier Question #29.

The survey respondents were also asked to please identify which neighboring district you would consider as a possible partner). The insert Table to the right shows that the most commonly identified potential merger partners were to the west (Cherry Valley – Springfield), south (Cobleskill-Richmondville), and north (Canajoharie). It is interesting to note that two of these possible partners are already consolidated systems. Four other districts were noted but usually by only a couple of respondents each. The three most commonly referenced systems were often included in a multiple response which suggested that the choice of a merger partner was very much still undecided and would probably turn on the detailed economics of any specific proposal.

**PREFERRED MERGER PARTNER**

School District	#	%
Ames	1	1.1%
Carlisle	2	2.3%
Canajoharie	23	26.4%
Cherry Valley-Springfield	30	34.5%
Cobleskill-Richmondville	27	31.0%
Fort Plain	3	3.4%
Seward	1	1.1%
<b>Multiple*</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12.0%</b>

\*The numbers presented for the individual School Districts Include all of the times that the district was included in one of the multiple response

In addition to these responses, approximately ten respondents indicated that the community had already lost its opportunity to join with a neighboring district.

**Question #31.** - This question is essentially the reverse of the earlier question (Question #26) regarding the most attractive roads. The question is a yes/no format with an open ended option to identify where the least attractive locations were.

**ARE THERE AREAS IN THE TOWN WHICH ARE PARTICULARLY UNATTRACTIVE**

	#	%
Yes	97	33.2%
No	153	52.4%
No Reply	42	14.4%

**Are there particular roads or areas in the Town of Sharon that stand out in your mind as being especially unattractive to the community? Yes; No**

As shown on the table, just under a hundred respondents, or about a third of all respondents, indicated that they knew of particularly unattractive areas in the Town. The open ended portion of this question yielded five pages of responses many of which refer to specific eyesores or problem areas. In attempting to go beyond the site specific complaints, the general issue appears to relate to poor upkeep of individual properties either involving junk on various land parcels or deteriorating structures. There are frequent referrals to trash in yards and partially destroyed structures. There were also some complaints relating to the lack of maintenance of properties owned by absentee land lords

**Question # 32.** – This question directly addresses the concept of the redevelopment of Sharon Springs as a tourist destination. While the question especially avoids any details concerning any particular development or proposal, it does try to get a general response concerning how new large scale development might be received.

**ATTITUDE TOWARD MAJOR REDEVELOPMENT OF SPAS AND HOTELS**

Attitude	#	%
Positive	204	69.9%
Negative	21	7.2%
Unsure	55	18.8%
No Reply or Missing	12	4.1%

**You may have heard that there are proposals being discussed for a major redevelopment of one or more spas or hotels in Sharon Springs. Without addressing any specific proposal, what in general is your attitude toward such tourist oriented redevelopment? Positive; Negative; or Unsure.**

As shown on the Table, just under 70% of the respondents reported a positive attitude toward the potential redevelopment of Sharon Springs. About one in five respondents indicated that they were unsure about major redevelopment projects, but fewer than one in ten indicated opposition to the concept of redevelopment of Sharon Springs as a tourist destination.

**MEASURES TO REDUCE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF  
SPA OR HOTEL DEVELOPMENT**

**Question #33.** – This question asked the respondent to indicate their preferences concerning land use policies which might be included in the update community plan concerning how to respond to large scale redevelopment in Sharon Springs. This was essentially a multiple choice question but was structured a series of nine “yes or no” questions

**What measures should the Town take to reduce any negative impacts that might result from spa or hotel redevelopment within the Village?**

Suggested Policy	Yes	No	No Opinion	No Reply or Missing
Nothing	36	152	104	0
Commercial development should take place around the Village	180	46	66	0
Residential development should take place around the Village	172	42	78	0
Reduce minimum lot size requirement around the Village	62	154	76	0
Encourage commercial development in existing commercial areas	238	7	47	0
Discourage further commercial development in vicinity of Village	43	178	71	0
Extend village utilities ( <i>water/sewer</i> ) into neighboring portions of Town	124	84	84	0
Provide incentives to develop in designated areas	179	53	59	1
Other	29	5	226	32

As reported on the Table showing the responses to this question, more than half of the survey respondents rejected the alternative of doing nothing. Regarding specific policies, more than three-quarters of the respondents indicated that they felt that new commercial development should be encouraged to locate in the vicinity of the existing commercial development. More than half of the respondents expressed the opinion that commercial development should take place around the existing village, that there should be incentives for development in designated areas, and that residential development should also be focused on the area around the Village. Over half of the respondents did not think it was a good idea to discourage future commercial development in the vicinity of the Village (essentially the reverse of an earlier statement) or to reduce minimum lot sizes around the Village.

The open ended question about other measures yielded about two dozen different responses with no particular pattern.

# TABULATION OF RESPONSES

## HOUSEHOLD OR BUSINESS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The 2008 Sharon Community Survey actually consisted of two parts. The first 33 question in the foregoing section of this analysis were asked of all respondents. In addition there was a “Part B” to the questionnaire which included baker’s dozen additional questions (Questions 34 to 47) which were specifically targeted to heads of households or business operators.

**Question #34.** This question asked for the respondent to indicate their reasons for living in the Town of Sharon by indicating the degree of importance of a dozen reasons. Like many other questions on this survey, this question asked for responses on a scale, but it also had an open-ended element.

### IMPORTANT REASONS FOR LIVING IN TOWN OF SHARON

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	No Reply or Missing
Affordable house or property	128	73	23	68
Near Job	55	58	99	80
Recreational opportunities	26	79	103	84
Rural Location	132	76	23	61
Low Taxes	123	70	17	82
Good School	91	81	39	81
Sense of Community	95	87	33	77
Low Crime Rate	146	66	9	71
Close to Capital District	41	96	82	73
Near Relatives and Friends	65	81	74	72
Good transportation access	35	89	86	82
Grew up Here	47	33	118	94

**What are the most important reasons you or your family choose to live in the Town of Sharon?**

**Question #35.** – This question asked the householder to characterize the property which they owned in the Town based upon a predetermined list of land uses. The respondent had the option of making multiple responses

### HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE PROPERTY YOU OWN OR OCCUPY

Type of Use	#	%
Residential	135	46.2%
Commercial	16	5.5%
Agricultural	45	15.4%
Rural Residential with livestock	26	8.9%
Rural Residential with vacant land	76	26.0%
Vacant or Woodland	17	5.8%
No Response or Missing	35	12.0%

**How would you characterize the property you own or occupy in the Town of Sharon? Residential;**

**Commercial; Agricultural (producing a significant farm income); Rural residential including incidental livestock (6 head or fewer) or minor cultivation (under 10 acres plowed) ; Rural residential with vacant or wooded land; Vacant/ wooded land.**

As shown on the Table more than half of the householder respondents indicated that they owned a residence in the Town, and an addition third of the responses were for rural residential properties where a residence was combined with either a small amount of livestock – fewer than 6 head – or with adjacent woodland or vacant land. About one in eight respondents in this group reported owning an operating farm while only about one in twenty reported owning commercial property.

**Question # 36.** – This is a descriptive question intended to identify the frequency with which various pre-selected types of residential structures are reported among the respondents.

### HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE YOUR RESIDENCE IN THE TOWN OF SHARON

	#	%
Do not reside in Sharon	21	7.2%
Single Family on own Lot	214	73.3%
Single Family Sharing a Lot with Another	7	2.4%
Two Family Residence	2	0.7%
Multi (3 or More) Family Residence	5	1.7%
No Reply or Missing	43	14.7%

**If you reside in the Town of Sharon:**

**a. how would you classify your residence? I do not reside in Sharon; Single family residence on its own lot; Single family residence sharing a lot with another; Two family residence; Multi-family residence (3 or more households in unit).**

### Summary Report on 2008 Sharon Community Survey

Prepared by the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board  
375 State Street – Binghamton, NY  
HD15:ORIGINALS/07ORIGINALS/SHARON SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT 2008

The table shows that almost all of the respondents indicated that they lived in single family homes located on single home lots. A few reported living in single family homes which shared a lot with another . There were almost no responses indicating residential structures with more than one residence in the structure. This is in part a reflection of the heavy representation of homeowners among the respondents, noted before. According to the 2000 Census just under 5% of the housing units in the Town of Sharon were in structures which had 5 or more units, and almost 12% of the housing units in the Town were mobile homes

A second part to this question went to the issue of the type of construction, with a differentiation between “stick built” construction and various types of manufactured housing.

**b. how would you describe the construction of your residence? I do not reside in Sharon; Traditional wood frame or masonry constructed on site; Factory built components, assembled on site; Modular construction on permanent foundation (including single and double wide); Mobile home on permanent foundation; Mobile home which retains capability for relocation.**

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CONSTRUCTION OF YOUR RESIDENCE IN THE TOWN OF SHARON**

	#	%
Do not reside in Sharon	14	4.8%
Traditional Wood Frame or Masonry	174	59.6%
Factory Built, Assembled on Site	12	4.1%
Modular Construction on Permanent Foundation	22	7.5%
Multi (3 or More) Family Residence	8	2.7%
Mobile Home on Permanent Foundation	8	2.7%
Mobile Home Capable of Relocation	11	3.8%
No Reply	51	17.5%

The summary Table shows that about 60% of the respondents indicated that they lived in a traditional wood frame or masonry structure. Again this table suggests that the respondents tended to be more representative of the more traditional home owners.

**Question #37.** – The next question focused on business owners, first by determining how long their businesses have been located in the Town and then by asking more specific questions concerning how the business is operated.

**If you operate a business within the Town of Sharon: a. for how long have you operated it at your current address? For the past year; For the past 1-3 years; For the past 4 to 8 years; For the past 9 to 12 years; or For more than a dozen years.**

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU OPERATED BUSINESS FROM CURRENT LOCATION**

	#	%
For past year	3	1.0%
For past 1-3 years	5	1.7%
For past 4-8 years	8	2.7%
For past 9-12 years	4	1.4%
For more than a dozen years	41	14.0%
No Reply	231	79.1%

As is shown in the tabulation, roughly two thirds of the 61 responding business owners or operators had done business in the Town for at least a dozen years. Only three of these respondents reported having been in business in the Town for less than a year.

Business owners and operators were then asked about the outdoor storage of merchandise and the number of signs on their property advertising their operations. This question called for multiple responses.

**b. which of the following best describes your place of business? My business is conducted entirely within a building; My business includes outdoor display of product awaiting sale; My business includes outdoor storage of product awaiting repair; My business has one or more unlit signs naming my business and or products; My business has one or more illuminated signs naming the business.**

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PLACE OF BUSINESS**

	#	%
Business Conducted Entirely within Building	22	7.5%
Business Includes Outdoor Display of Products	14	4.8%
Business Includes Outdoor Storage of Product Awaiting Repair	7	2.4%
Business has one or more Unlit Signs*	11	3.8%
Business has one or More Lit Signs*	6	2.1%
No Response	231	79.1%

\*See subsequent sub-tables for details regarding signs

Tabulation of responses to this question shows that about a third of responding business owners or operators indicated that their business was entirely contained within a building. One in four responding businesses in the Town relied upon outdoor display of products which were available for purchase; another one in ten involved the outdoor storage of products awaiting repair. The small number of businesses reporting signs was a little surprising, especially considering how few businesses reported multiple signs.

**Summary Report on 2008 Sharon Community Survey**

Prepared by the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board  
375 State Street – Binghamton, NY  
HD15:ORIGINALS/07ORIGINALS/SHARON SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT 2008

**NUMBER OF SIGNS GREATER THAN  
ONE SQUARE FOOT IN SIZE**

The accompanying table shows that there are some inconsistencies in response between the detailed and general responses. In the previous question 11 businesses reported unlit signs and 6 reported illuminated signs; this table reports 12 businesses with unlit signs and 8 with lit signs.

Number of Signs per Property	Unlit		Illuminated	
	#	%	#	%
None	4	1.4%	3	1.0%
1	5	1.7%	4	1.4%
2	2	0.7%	3	1.0%
3	3	1.0%	0	0.0%
4	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
5 or 6	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
7 to 9	2	0.7%	0	0.0%
10 or more	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No Response	281	96.2%	281	96.2%
MEAN	2.13		1.27	
MODE	1		1	

The Table shows that for the most part businesses had only one or two outdoor advertising signs; however, two businesses reported having between 7 and 9 signs on their property,

**Question #38.** - This question asked for information concerning the type of construction of the householder's residence and then of the business operator's facility . The portion of this question asking about the residential construction is somewhat of a repeat of an earlier question (part b of Question #36).

**TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION OF YOUR RESIDENCE**

	#	%
Wood Frame	175	59.9%
Mobile Home with Mobility	14	4.8%
Mobile Home on Foundation	28	9.6%
Masonry	11	3.8%
No Response or Missing	64	21.9%

**Please describe the type of construction for your residence and/or business: a. your residence Wood frame; Mobile home (retaining mobility capability); Mobile home or manufactured structure on permanent foundation; masonry; no residence, or not applicable; or**

Again there are small discrepancies when the report presented on this table is compared with the earlier one. For example this table reports one more frame residence, but more importantly the number of mobile homes shown on this table are roughly twice the number previously reported. Just as the number reported on the earlier table was too low when compared with the 2000 Census report; so the numbers for mobile homes reported on this table appears a little too low. However, obviously some units could have been moved into the Town during the past eight years.

The second half of this question asked about the construction of the place of business. The respondent was given a choice of building types from which to choose.

**TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION OF YOUR BUSINESS**

	#	%
Wood Frame	44	15.1%
Mobile Home with Mobility	1	0.3%
Manufactured Structure on Permanent Foundation	1	0.3%
Masonry	5	1.7%
Pole Building	4	1.4%
Steel Frame	1	0.3%
No Business or response	236	80.8%

**b. your place of business Wood frame; Trailer or mobile home (retaining mobility capability); Manufactured structure on permanent foundation; masonry; Pole building; Steel frame; no business, or not applicable.**

As reported on the Table about three quarters of the businesses were located in buildings of wood frame construction. About one business respondent in ten reported their business to be in a building of masonry construction. Four respondents reported pole barns which would primarily be used as shelters for equipment which otherwise could be stored outside. Almost none of the business respondents reported having a business located in a mobile home, manufactured building, or steel frame building.

**Question #39.** – This question asked the householder to report the number of employed people residing at the house. The question specifically focused on persons employed outside of the home. The respondents were asked to write-in the number of persons in each of three categories

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYED PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD**

Employees in Household	Employed Full Time		Employed Part Time		Not Employed Outside Home	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
None	40	13.7%	99	33.9%	96	32.9%
1	79	27.1%	42	14.4%	25	8.6%
2	62	21.2%	4	1.4%	39	13.4%
3	2	0.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
4	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
5	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
6	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
No Response	107	36.6%	147	50.3%	131	44.9%
MEAN	1.18		0.34		0.68	
MODE	1		0		0	

How many people in your household are employed outside of the home? a. Employed Full Time ; b. Employed Part Time; c. Not employed outside of home.

As shown on the Table the typical household had one or two persons who were employed full time, and one who was employed part-time. However, the average (mean) household had only one full-time employee.

**Question #40.** – This follow-up question was an effort to further define the characteristics of the responding households. The characteristics of the other members of the household were predefined.

**STATUS OF UNEMPLOYED**

	Number of Persons in Household						No Reply	MEAN	MODE
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
Work at Home for Money	94	15	9	0	0	0	174	0.28	0
Homemaker	85	38	2	0	0	0	167	0.34	0
Retired	65	50	34	1	0	0	142	0.81	1
Unemployed, Looking for Work	104	11	2	0	0	0	175	0.13	0
Students	69	29	20	0	3	1	170	0.70	0
Pre-school Children	104	3	2	0	0	0	183	0.06	0

Please indicate the number and status of persons in your household who are not employed outside of the home: a. Work at home for money; b. Homemaker; c. Retired; d. Unemployed but looking for work; e. Students; f. Pre-school Children.

The Table shows that when one of the various classifications of household members was identified it was usually a single individual, the exception being retired persons and students. In this context students could either be unrelated individuals or could be children of the household. The survey question does not provide an answer to that question.

**Question #41.** – The next series of questions relates to the households water supply. Household members were first asked about their source of drinking water, and then for those who reported being reliant upon private wells, questions were asked about well depth and yield.

**PRIMARY SOURCE OF WATER SUPPLY**

Source	#	%
Public System	67	22.9%
Private Well on Property	181	62.0%
Cistern	1	0.3%
Spring or Other Surface Supply	11	3.8%
No Response	32	11.0%

What is the source of your water supply? Public System; Private Well on My Property; Cistern; Spring or other Surface Water Supply (Pond, Creek, etc)

Based upon the data presented on the table, fewer than a quarter of the household respondents reported being connected to a public Water Supply system. The only water supply system in the Town is the one serving the Village of Sharon Springs. About two-thirds of the respondents reported relying upon private wells, while a small number reported relying upon a surface source such as a natural spring or stream.

The second part of this question asked whether the well was drilled or dug. A dug well will tend to be more shallow than a drilled well and when abandoned can represent a community hazard, especially for children. Because they are shallower, dug wells would logically be

**TYPE OF WELL**

Well Type	#	%
Drilled	156	53.4%
Dug	23	7.9%
No Response	113	38.7%

**Summary Report on 2008 Sharon Community Survey**

Prepared by the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board  
 375 State Street – Binghamton, NY  
 HD15:ORIGINALS/07ORIGINALS/SHARON SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT 2008

more sensitive to drought conditions, but in a shallow soil elevated terrain such as the Town of Sharon this might not always be the case.

**a. If you presently rely upon a private well for your water supply is it a drilled well, or a dug well?**

The table at the bottom of the previous page shows that the overwhelming choice of respondent householder's was the drilled well. There were more than six times as many drilled wells reported as there were dug wells. Follow-up questions asked about well depth and yield

**WELL YIELDS**

Estimated Well Yield in Gallons per Minute	#	%
0 to 4	13	4.5%
5 to 9	28	9.6%
10 to 19	17	5.8%
20 to 49	11	3.8%
50 to 99	4	1.4%
100 or more	2	0.7%
No Response or Missing	217	74.3%
MEAN	14.73	
MODE	5	

**DEPTH OF WELL**

Depth in Feet	#	%
10 feet or less	1	0.3%
10 to 19	1	0.3%
20 to 29	6	2.1%
30 to 49	6	2.1%
50 to 74	11	3.8%
75 to 99	16	5.5%
100 to 149	30	10.3%
150 to 199	24	8.2%
200 to 299	22	7.5%
300 to 499	14	4.8%
500 or more	0	0.0%
MEAN	155.24	
MODE	100	

**b. If you know, how deep is the well feet, and what is the well output in gallons per minute (gpm) .**

The first of the Table showing the responses to the second half of this question indicates that the average estimated yield of a well in the Town of Sharon is just under 15 gallons per minute, however the most commonly reported yield (the Mode) was only 5 gallons per minute. The estimated yield of these wells ranged from as little as a gallon per minute to as high as 100 gallons per minute.

The second of these tables indicates that the average well depth for the responding households was 155 feet, with the most frequently reported well depth being around 100 feet. The actual range of well depths was from 10 feet to 487 feet. The geology of the Town of Sharon is such that ground water tends to move along cracks and fractures in the sedimentary limestone formations so well yields could vary greatly from one site to even a close neighbor.

**WATER PROBLEMS**

**Question #42.-** This question asked for the responding householder to indicate his or her satisfaction with their water supply

	#	%
Quantity	18	6.2%
Quality	84	28.8%
No Problems	153	52.4%
No Response or Missing	41	14.0%

**Do you presently have a problem with your water supply in terms of : quantity, quality or , no problems.**

The Table which reports the survey results suggests that very few respondents had problems with the quantity of their water supply, but that larger portion had some problems with the water quality. More than half of the respondents reported no problems.

There should be a caution concerning this particular set of responses. At the time of this survey, the northeast in general and the Catskill region in particular was experiencing a period of high water surpluses which had gone on for perhaps as much as five years. Because of this water tables were high and stream flows were plentiful. Unfortunately from time-to-time the region experiences a drought, during which time the quantity available, especially from shallow wells is significantly reduced.

**Question #43.**- This question is directed toward determining the availability of broadband internet service. The question first asks whether or not the household has access to the internet and then asks what is the source of that service.

**CURRENTLY SERVED BY INTERNET**

	#	%
Yes	72	24.7%
No	179	61.3%
No Reply	41	14.0%
If yes, Source of Service		
Cable	58	19.9%
Satellite	26	8.9%
Telephone Dial-up	93	31.8%
Telephone DSL	9	3.1%
No Reply or Missing	106	36.3%

Do you currently have Internet service? **Yes; No.**

**If yes** What is the source of your service? **Cable; Satellite; Telephone Dial-up; Telephone DSL; Other**

As shown on the Table only about a quarter of the responding householders reported that they had internet access – three of every five responding householder reported no access. In terms of who provided this service, more than half of those indicating that they had internet access reported being reliant upon dial-up telephone service or what in the industry has been referred to as POTS (plain old telephone service). Typical POTS transmission speeds are 56 Kbs or slower. While the Federal standard for minimum broadband access is 200 Kbs, this is a woefully small fraction of the international standard, which begins at about 10 Mbs<sup>1</sup>, or about 50 times as fast. Cable internet service is typically about 1.4 Mbs, which is about twice the speed of DSL (Digital Subscriber Service) telephone service. FIOS (Fiber Optic Service) is another magnitude faster. While there was an “other” option it was not chosen.

As reported only about a quarter of the responding householders had more than rudimentary levels of internet service.

**Question #44.** – The next question was the first of two “scale” questions. In these questions the respondent is asked to indicate on a scale from low to high their level of satisfaction or feeling of importance concerning a particular community feature. For this question the respondent was asked to degree to which they felt an array of services was satisfactory.

On a scale from 1 to 5 how would you rate the following in the Town of Sharon?

**SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

Features	Unsatisfactory		3	Outstanding		No Response	MEAN	MODE
	5.	4	Average	2	1			
Water Supply	13	14	156	29	17	63	2.90	3
Wastewater Disposal	7	7	186	19	6	67	2.96	3
Historic Preservation	3	17	167	45	7	53	2.85	3
Fire Service	2	2	104	85	55	44	2.24	3
Ambulance Service	4	6	110	76	50	46	2.34	3
Access to Emergency Medical Services	6	19	146	50	23	48	2.73	3
Code Enforcement	18	40	158	18	5	53	3.20	3
Road Maintenance	11	31	132	52	24	42	2.81	3
Recreational Facilities	17	75	132	11	5	52	3.37	3
Snow Removal	9	8	122	74	38	41	2.51	3
Parking	6	30	172	23	10	51	3.00	3
Cable television service	65	41	99	27	6	54	3.55	3
Recreational Activities for Adults	39	81	110	8	2	52	3.61	3
Activities for Youth	35	49	107	8	5	88	3.50	3

As is shown on the table which appears above, the most common response to all of the features (the mode value) is 3 or average. Two services - the fire and ambulance services – have the most outstanding responses and the highest mean rating of above average (remember 1 is high and 5 is low on this scale). The average score for the fire service was 2.24 which was the highest reported on this table.

<sup>1</sup> For reference 56 Kbs means 56,000 bytes per second. One Mbs is equal to 1,000 Kbs

At the other end of the scale, the highest number of respondents indicating unsatisfactory service was cable television service which achieved a score of 3.55; however, the poorest score is the 3.61 reported for recreational activities for adults. Using the mean scale those services with score between 2.00 and 3.00 were rated slightly above average, while those rated 3.00 to 4.00 are slightly below average.

**Question #45.** – On this the second scaled question, the responding householder was asked to judge how important a particular feature was in their choice to live in the Town of Sharon.

On a scale from 1 to 5 how important are the following reasons that you or your family chose to live in the Town of Sharon?

**IMPORTANCE OF REASONS FOR CHOOSING TO LIVE IN SHARON**

	Unimportant	Less Important	Important	More Important	Most Important	No Response	MEAN	MODE
Affordable House or Property Home near Job	10	4	103	44	69	62	2.31	3
Available Recreation Facilities	46	39	80	33	21	73	3.26	3
Rural Location	34	71	95	15	4	73	3.53	3
Low Taxes	10	11	100	53	55	63	2.42	3
Good School	8	8	95	61	47	73	2.40	3
Sense of Community	24	16	107	41	38	66	2.77	3
Low Crime Rate	15	21	125	43	25	63	2.82	3
Close to Capital District	6	3	114	62	47	60	2.39	3
Near Relatives or Friends	43	41	97	32	14	65	3.30	3
Good Transportation	43	32	104	23	29	61	3.16	3
Grew Up Here	39	65	87	19	12	70	3.45	3
	82	39	34	20	29	88	3.61	5

The table of responses shows that the most frequent response for all categories, but one, was the same average mode of 3. The one exception was the last reason – basically indicating that having grown up in Sharon was the least important reason for living there. Having grown up in Sharon was the reason cited as least important most often and with a mean score of 3.61 it achieve the poorest score among the factors. Also ranked poorly in terms of low mean score were availability of recreation facilities and good transportation.

Among reasons with the largest number of “most important” ratings was housing affordability, rural location, low tax rates and low crime rates. Three out of the top four most important reasons were economic in nature, with the highest mean rating of 2.31 was for housing affordability.

**Question #46.** – This question asked about the amount of time spent commuting to work each day and related to several earlier questions which asked about job opportunities and transportation facilities.

**How far do the people in your household commute (one-way) to work? Work at home or on my own property; Drive less than 10 miles; Drive 10 – 29 miles; Drive 30 – 60 miles; Drive more than 60 miles**

**LENGTH OF COMMUTE TO WORK (ONE WAY)**

	#	%
Work at Home	43	14.7%
Drive Less Than 10 Miles	40	13.7%
Drive 10 to 29 miles	54	18.5%
Drive 30 to 60 miles	43	14.7%
Drive more than 60 miles	12	4.1%
No Response	100	34.2%

The table shows a surprising distribution of commuting distances; however, fully a third of the respondents did not reply to this question. It is sufficient to note that despite the earlier commentary about the lack of local employment opportunities, more than a quarter of the responding householders reported either working at home or driving fewer than ten miles to work. Most areas in the Capital District would be in the 30 to 60 mile radius from the Town of Sharon.

**Summary Report on 2008 Sharon Community Survey**

Prepared by the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board  
375 State Street – Binghamton, NY  
HD15:ORIGINALS/07ORIGINALS/SHARON SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT 2008

**Question #47.** – The last question on the survey was directed to responding businesses and therefore would have a very low rate of return. The question simply asks for the number of full and part time employees at the business.

**If you are a business owner or operator, during the last week, how many people (including yourself) were employed at your business in Sharon? a. Employed Full Time ; b. Employed Part Time .**

The most common response to this question was 1 full time employee and no part time employee. The mean suggests that in fact the average is 2 full time and 1 part time employees at local businesses. However, the Table shows that some businesses have as many as 6 to 9 employees (no respondent indicated 8 employees; hence it is deleted from the sequence).

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES**

Number of Employees	Full Time		Part Time	
	#	%	#	%
0	6	2.1%	9	3.1%
1	17	5.8%	7	2.4%
2	6	2.1%	6	2.1%
3	3	1.0%	1	0.3%
4	2	0.7%	0	0.0%
5	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
6	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
7	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
9	3	1.0%	0	0.0%
No Response	253	86.6%	268	91.8%
Median	2.21		1.13	
Mode	1		0	

The fact that most of the responding businesses had so few employees is reflective of the concerns previously noted about job opportunities. The size of employers shown on the Table does not reflect the Town's major employer the Wal-Mart Regional Distribution Center on Route 20 on the east side of the Village of Sharon Springs.

HD15:ORIGINAL/SHARONSPRINGSPROJECT/SHARON SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT 2008 (4/10/08)