

Love WHERE YOU *Live*

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

2024 South Hutchinson Benchmark Report

Hutchinson 
community
FOUNDATION



Innovation Economy Partners
OUR FOCUS: IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

info@HutchCF.org | hutchcf.org

What Makes Our Community Special?

"Quietness and community feel."

Amanda Roberts

"Easy to get around town and the small town atmosphere."

Scott

"I would say that living in South Hutch always feels like a tight-knit community where everyone knows and helps each other."

Jaylee Harvey

"Small town living."

Anonymous

"It is quiet and close knit."

Anonymous

"Small community, great neighbors."

Anonymous

"I like living there because my neighborhood is peaceful and friendly."

Anonymous

"We are completely separate from the City of Hutch, which gives us a unique identity."

Anonymous

In June 2024, Hutchinson Community Foundation launched Love Where You Live, a three-year community empowerment initiative that centers resident perceptions, dialogue, and collaborative action. Alongside community partners, our goal is to provide Reno County communities (and the county as a whole) with data and a process that will empower residents to make positive change and boost community pride. Learn more at hutchcf.org.

Leaders That Make Our Community Special

lance hirt
darrin pickering
james dull
bob fee

Executive Summary:

The survey was conducted by only 19 local respondents, as such the responses should be seen as directionally insightful, but not statistically significant. South Hutchinson community respondents maintain a positive view of their future economic conditions, and hold a better than average view than the county of trust in local leadership. These are very positive dimensions that can be leveraged to engage more local citizens and help unleash the 'people power'. A great place to start will be to plan and communicate the local priorities and strategies to the residents.

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Economic Confidence

The community expresses mixed confidence in current employment and business conditions, with future prospects seen more positively. There's optimism for income growth and improved job opportunities in the long term.

pg **6, 7, 8**

Community Engagement Confidence

Community engagement shows strong personal commitment and trust in leadership, but residents are very concerned about future plans and strategies. Clearer communication and more pathways to leadership are needed.

pgs **9a-9b**

Critical Community Priorities

The community's top priorities include removing rundown properties, attracting new businesses, improving wages, and increasing community engagement and support for low-income families. A key metric that the town wants to see prioritized is the number of deaths by suicide.

pg **10**

Survey Respondent Profile

The majority of respondents are long-term residents (5-20 years), homeowners, predominantly female, aged 60 and older, well-educated, and actively working, mainly in public service roles.

The Community Benchmarking report has been commissioned by Hutchinson Community Foundation to help local residents gain a better understanding of the most pressing opportunities Reno County towns face. The annual reports that are generated will help leaders determine the extent to which community efforts are having an impact on local residents. The reports are also a way for towns in the area to pursue grants to help further their local efforts.

**Local leaders can use this framework to help inspire change.
This report provides the clues on what fellow residents are craving.**



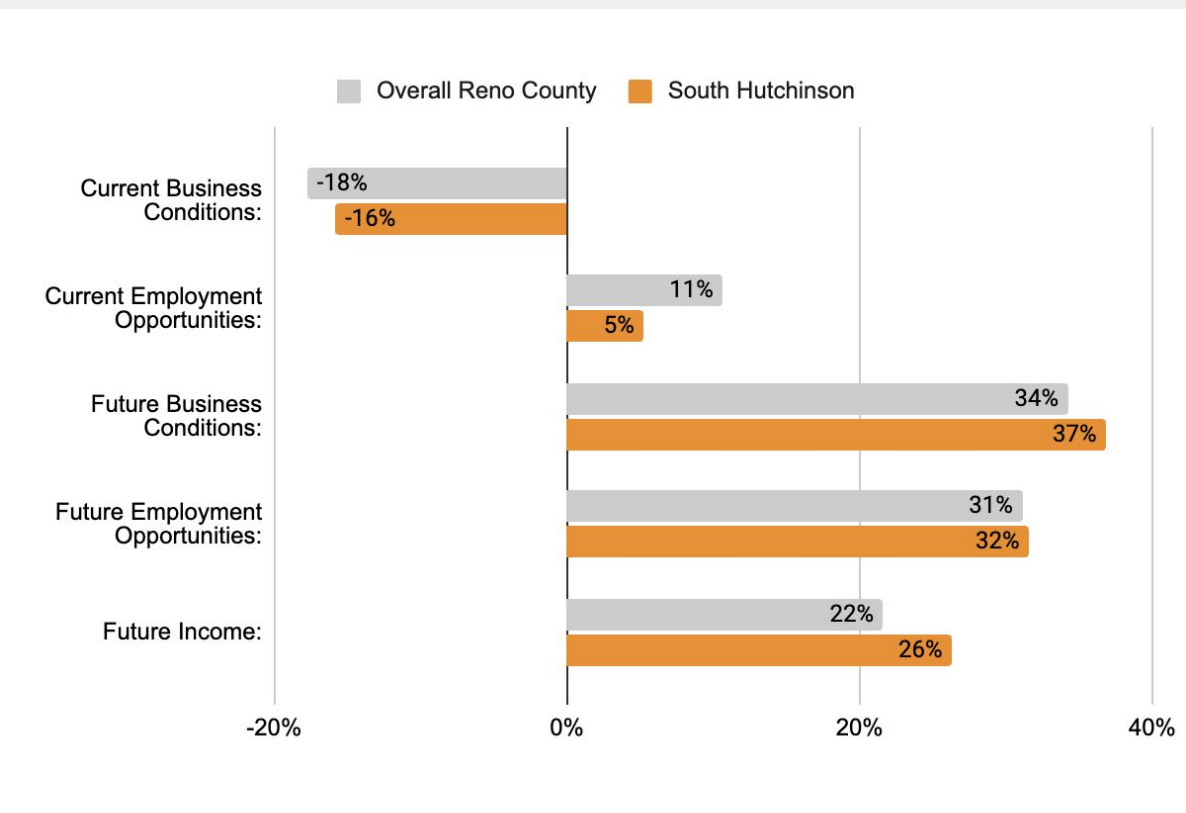
Confidence In Our Local Economy

Economic Summary:

The community's perceptions about current business conditions reflect a cautious but hopeful outlook. Residents acknowledge a shared sentiment that with the right focus on programs and metrics, the local economy can strengthen. Employment opportunities, though somewhat limited at present, are seen as a critical area where improvement could lead to broader prosperity. People believe that with targeted initiatives, such as promoting local enterprises or attracting new businesses, job availability could significantly increase. Looking to the future, there is an optimistic view that both business conditions and employment opportunities will improve.

Survey Responses

Our Economic Perceptions



Popular Ideas for the Town:

Retail and Grocery Stores

- There's a strong desire to have more options for everyday shopping without needing to travel far.

Business Growth

- Expanding current businesses, attracting new companies, and overall fostering economic growth that provides more services and employment opportunities for the town.

Activities for Teens and Kids

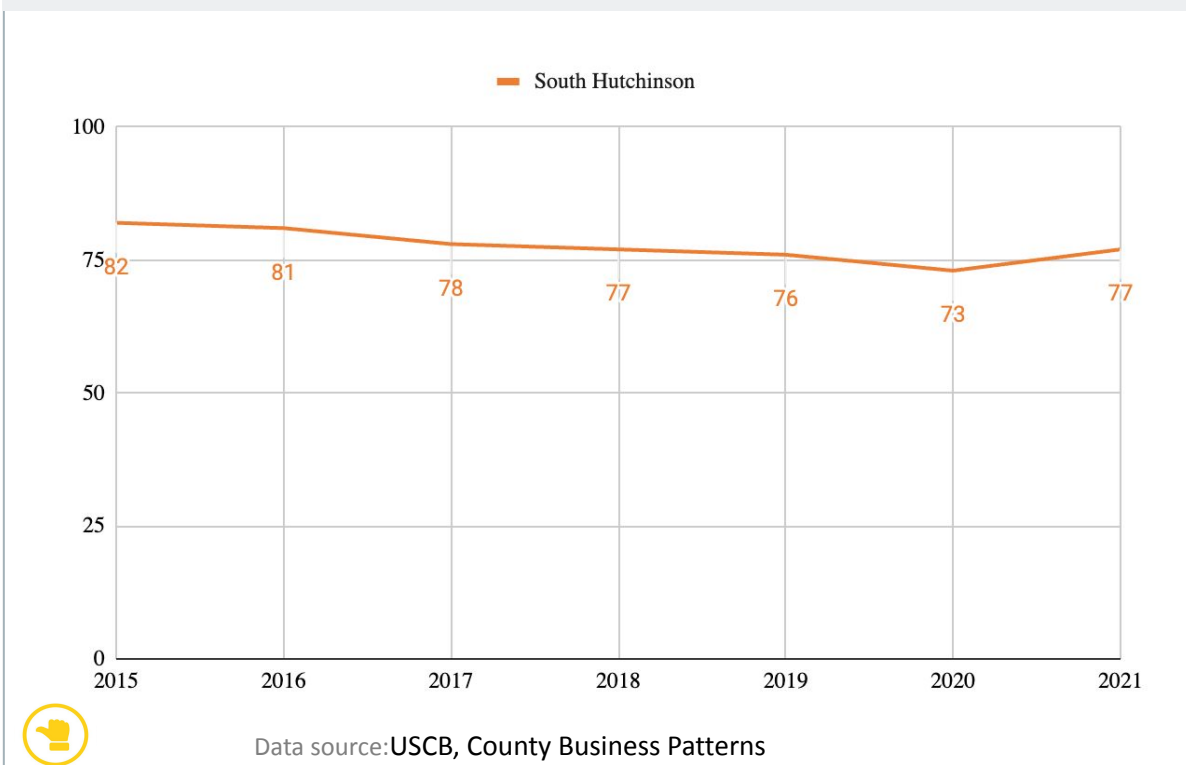
- More activities for young people, with suggestions like indoor recreation centers or sports complexes.

Infrastructure Improvements

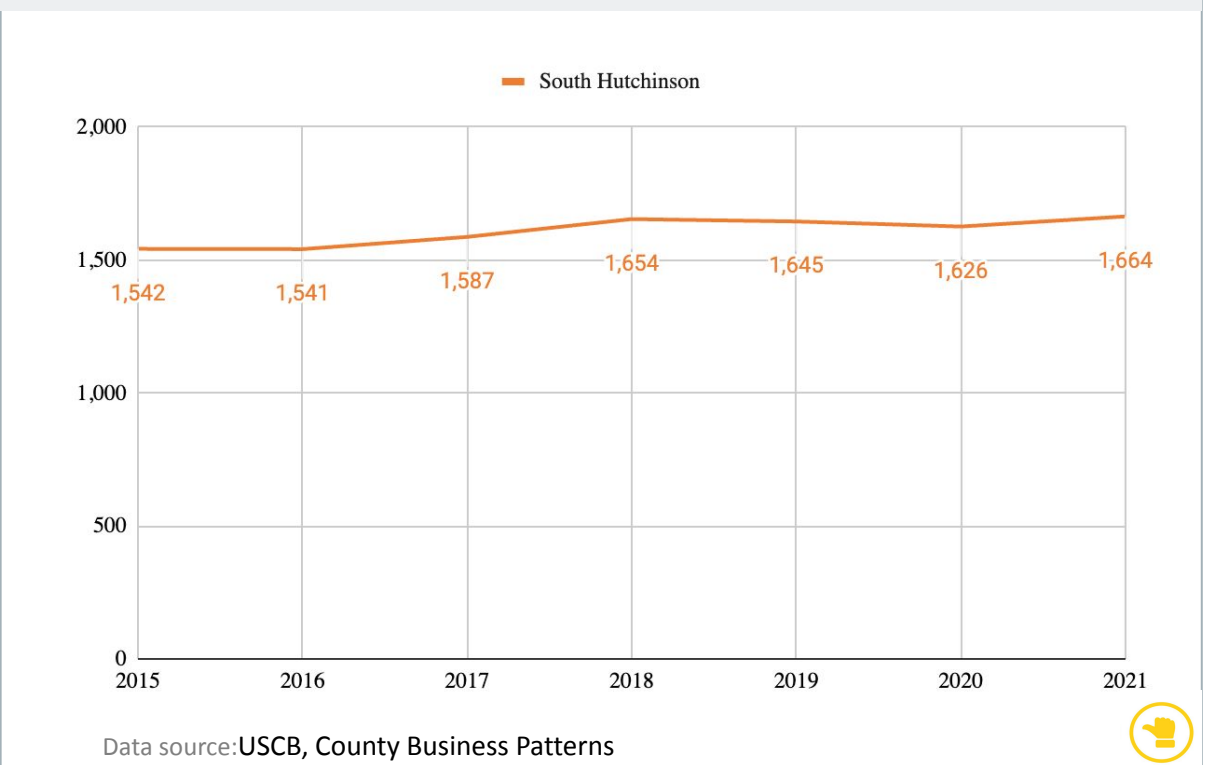
- Improved roads and infrastructure. They want the town to invest in better transportation systems, road maintenance, and upgrades to local facilities.

Local Economic Indicators

Total Businesses in Our Town

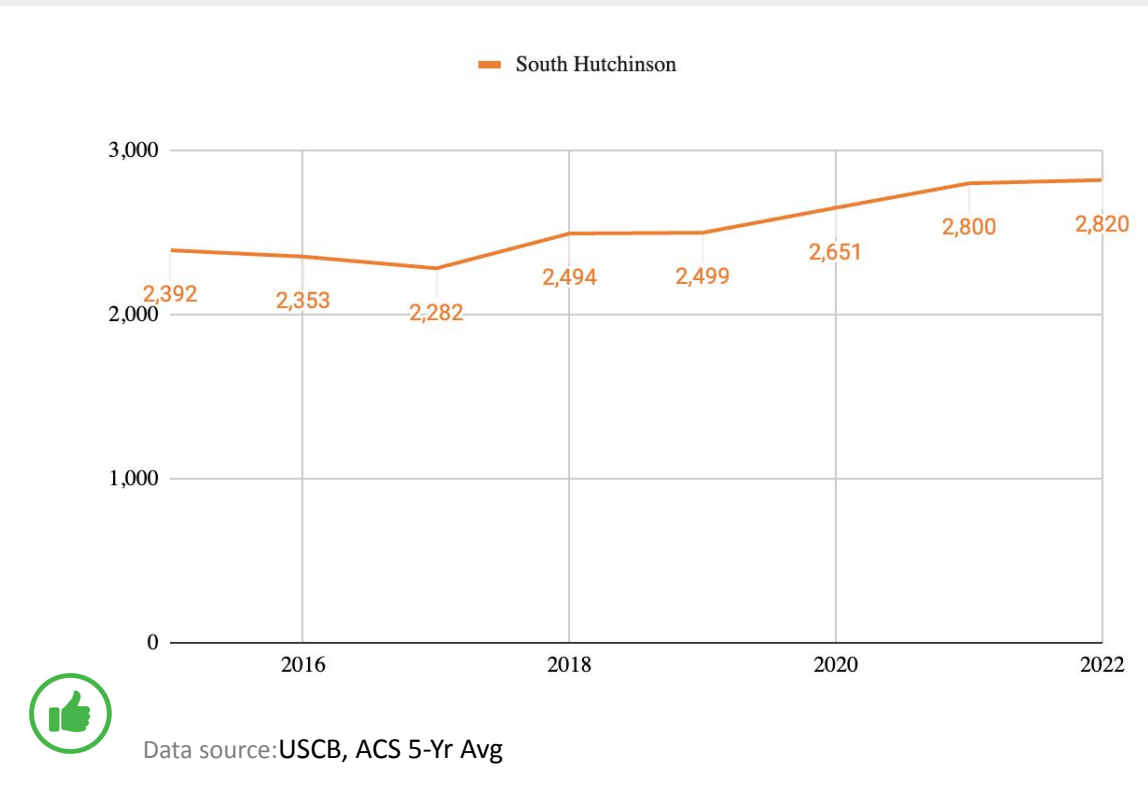


Employment in Our Town

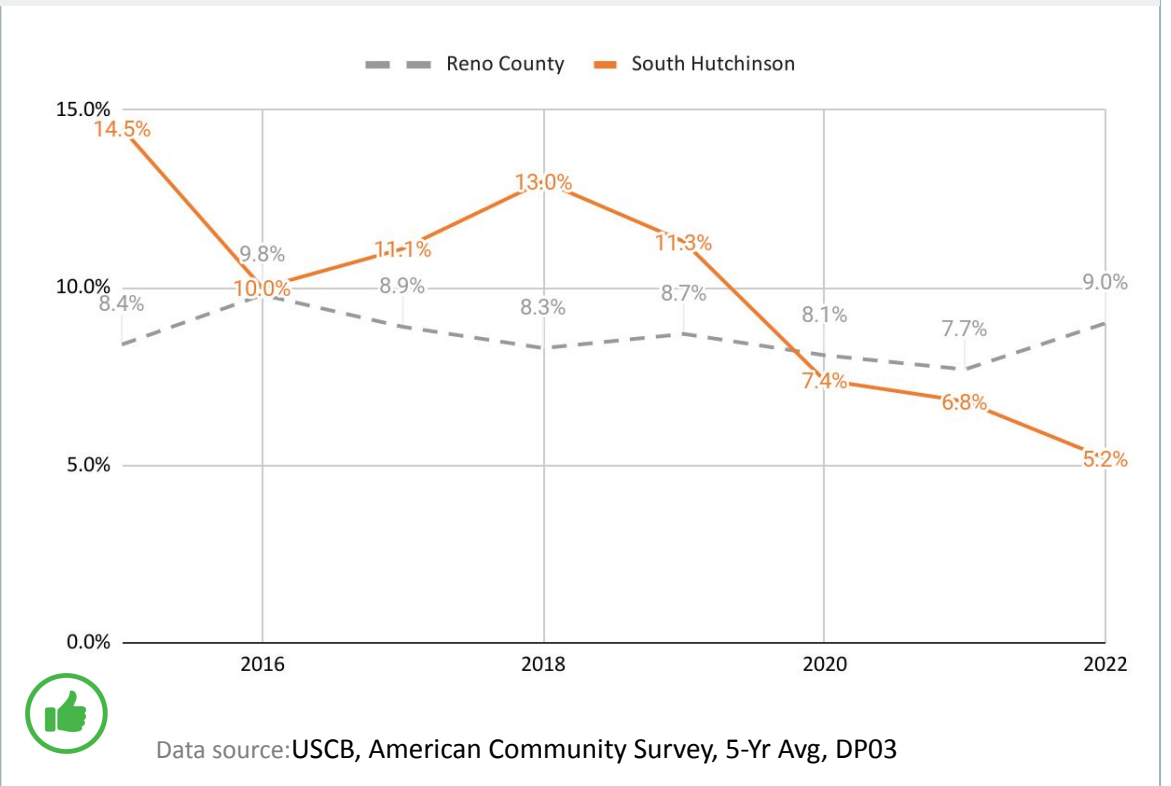


Local Economic Indicators (Cont'd)

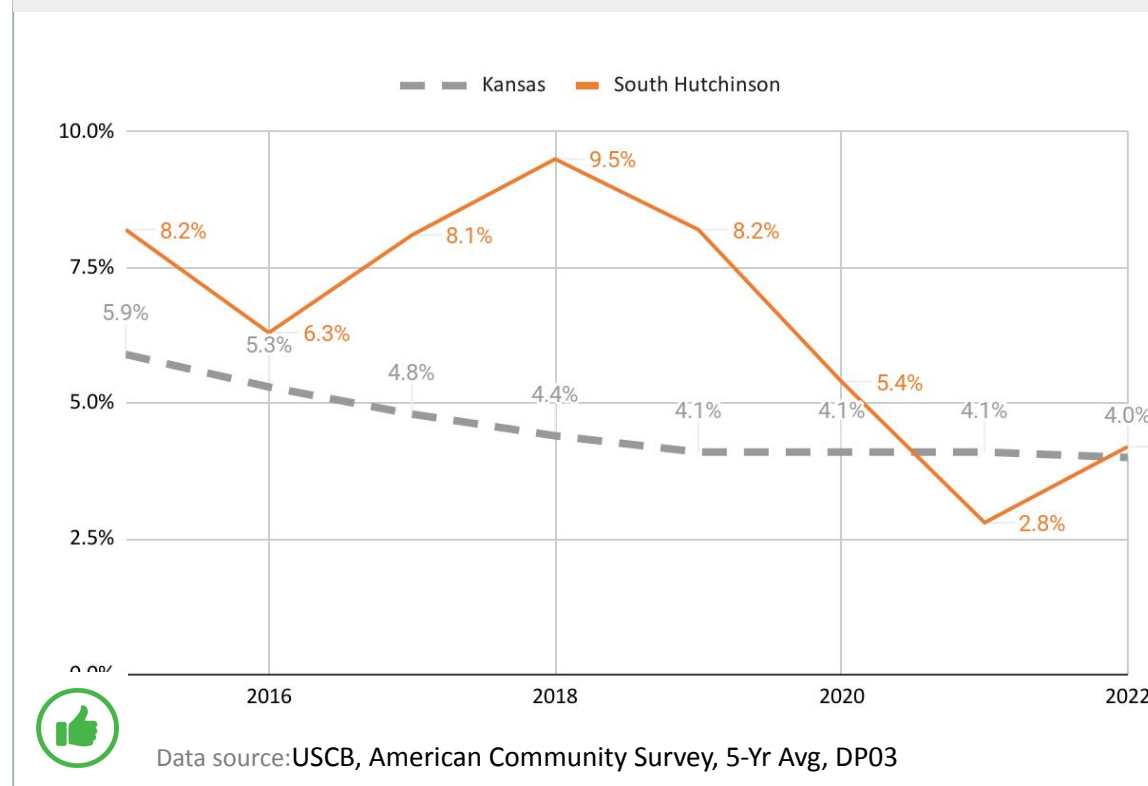
Overall Population Trend



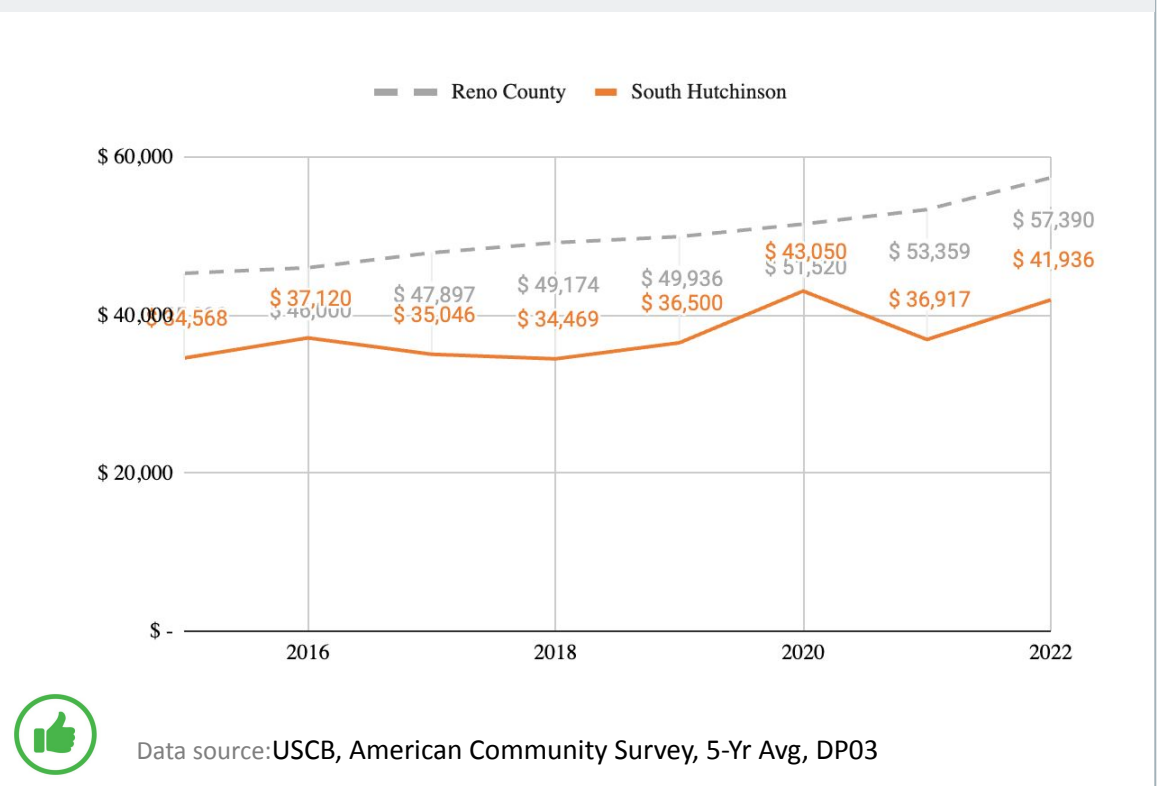
Local Poverty Rate



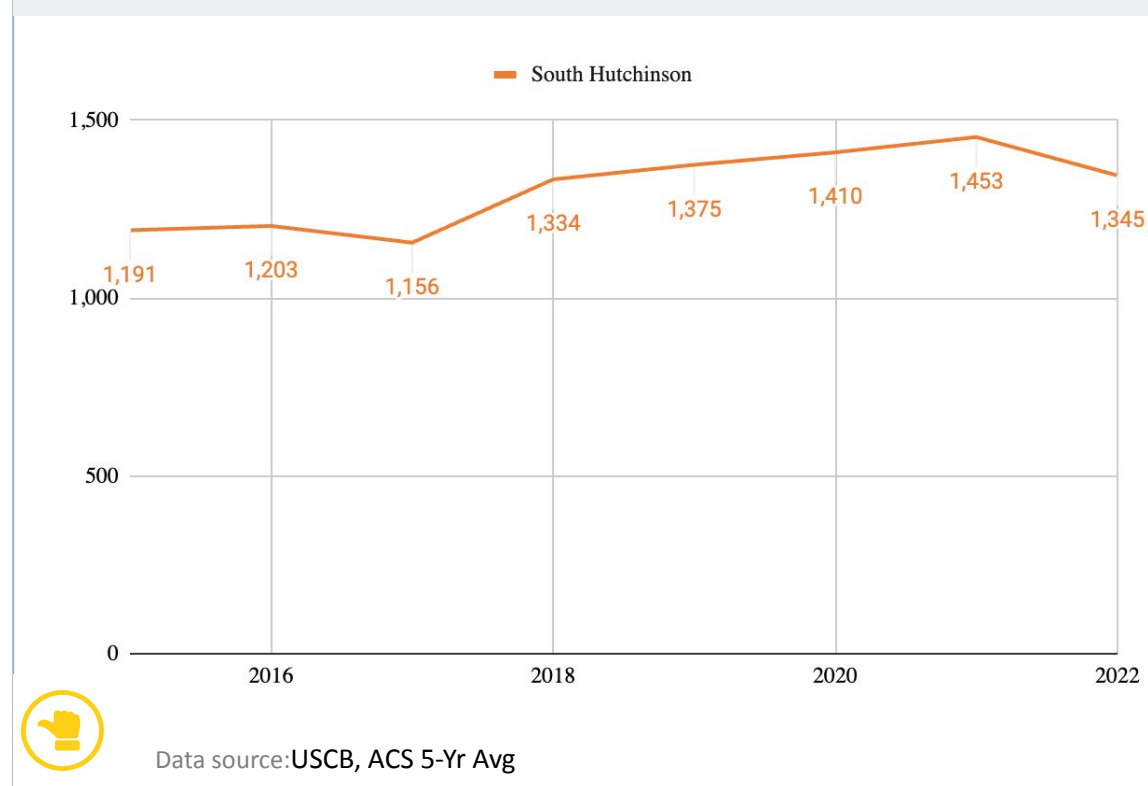
Local Unemployment Rate



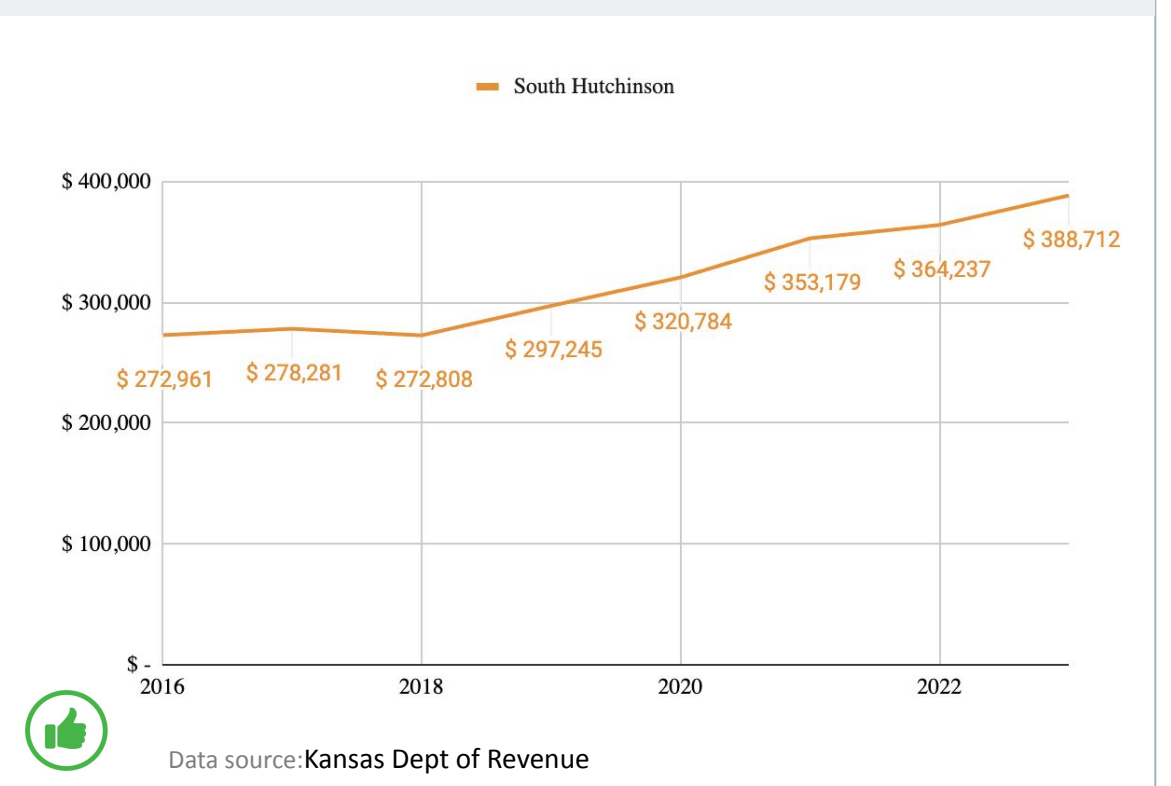
Median Household Income



Total Housing Units



Annual Sales Tax Collection



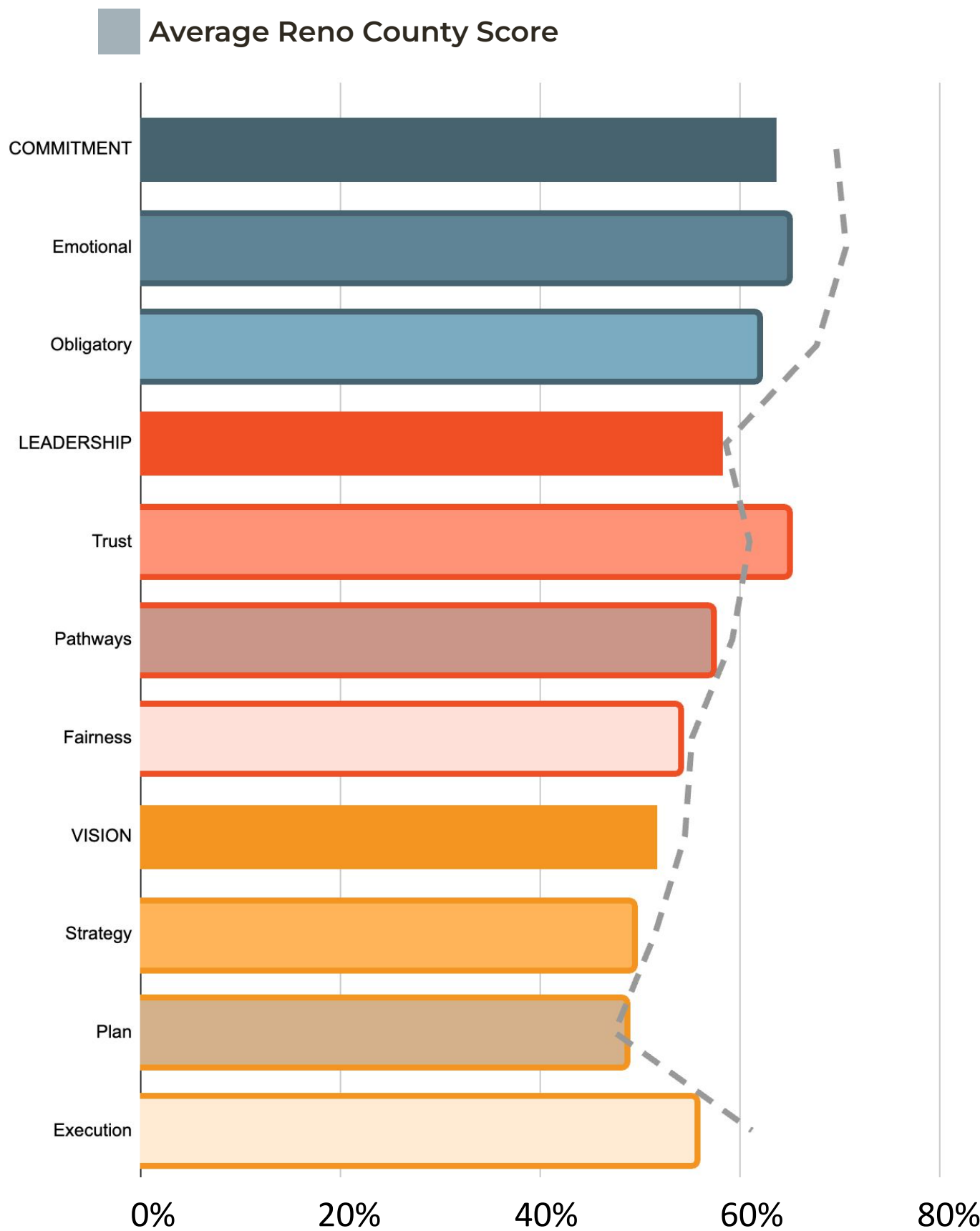
Confidence In Our Local Community

Engagement Summary:

The community ranked TRUST in local leaders very high; there is probably some correlation to this data point and why the community also maintains a higher sense of personal commitment to the community. On the other hand, the availability of future community PLANS is ranked the lowest. In fact, the entire category of VISIONING is ranked low. This area represents a major opportunity to help drive engagement and credibility amongst the local residents. Local leadership assessment is more positive when compared to the overall county.



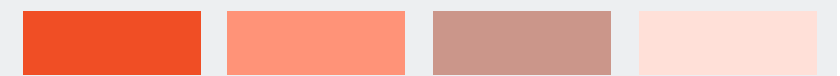
How do our residents view our community?



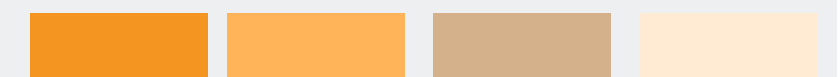
Commitment



Leadership



Vision



When compared to the overall county results, the areas where the community is doing the best is in the arena of local LEADERSHIP assessment and where the community is lacking is in the arena of 'GETTING STUFF DONE' and an 'EMOTIONAL COMMITMENT' to the community.

Why is it that South Hutchinson's rank is lower than the county average on the theme of local emotional and obligatory commitment?

What steps can be taken to help the local leaders better plan and strategize the efforts that they are envisioning for the community?

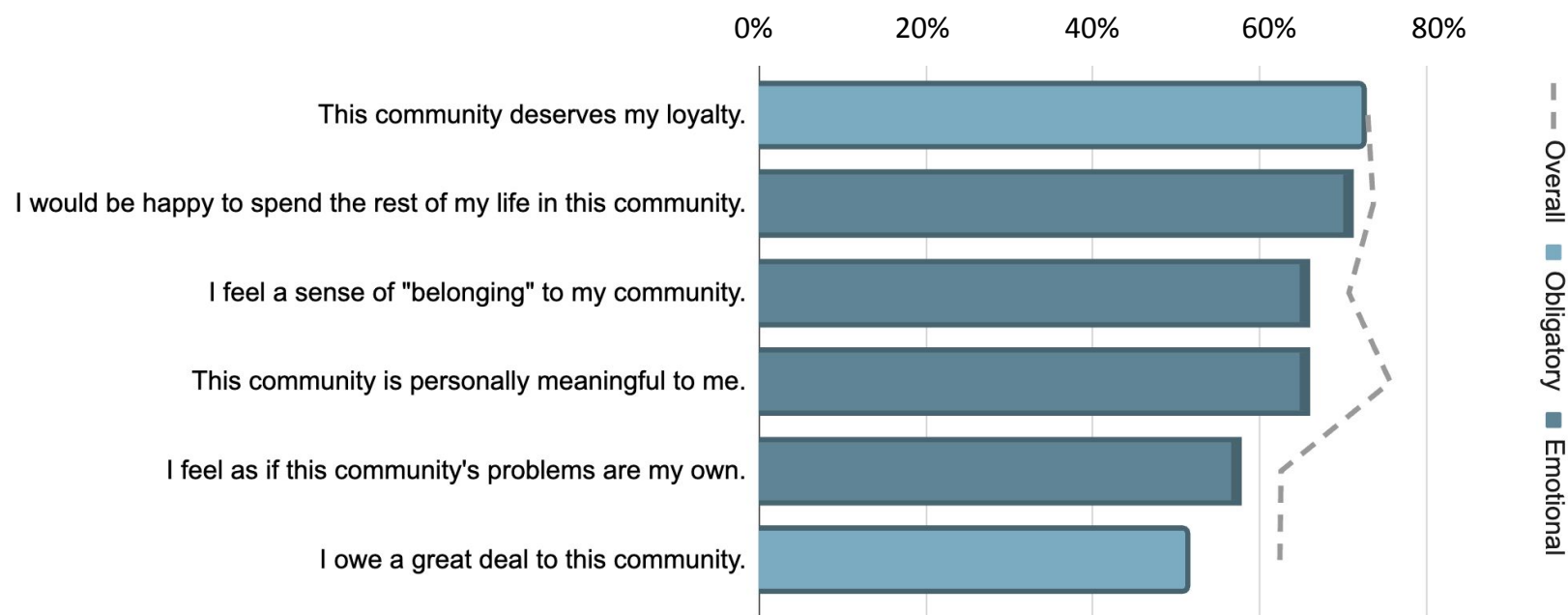
The local leaders are generally seen quite positively. How can the leaders use their influence to start to guide the future of the community in a more positive direction?

Confidence In Our Local Community

Average Reno County Score

Portion of the community that is highly confident on the listed community dimensions (Rating range: 0-7)

Community Confidence: Personal Commitment

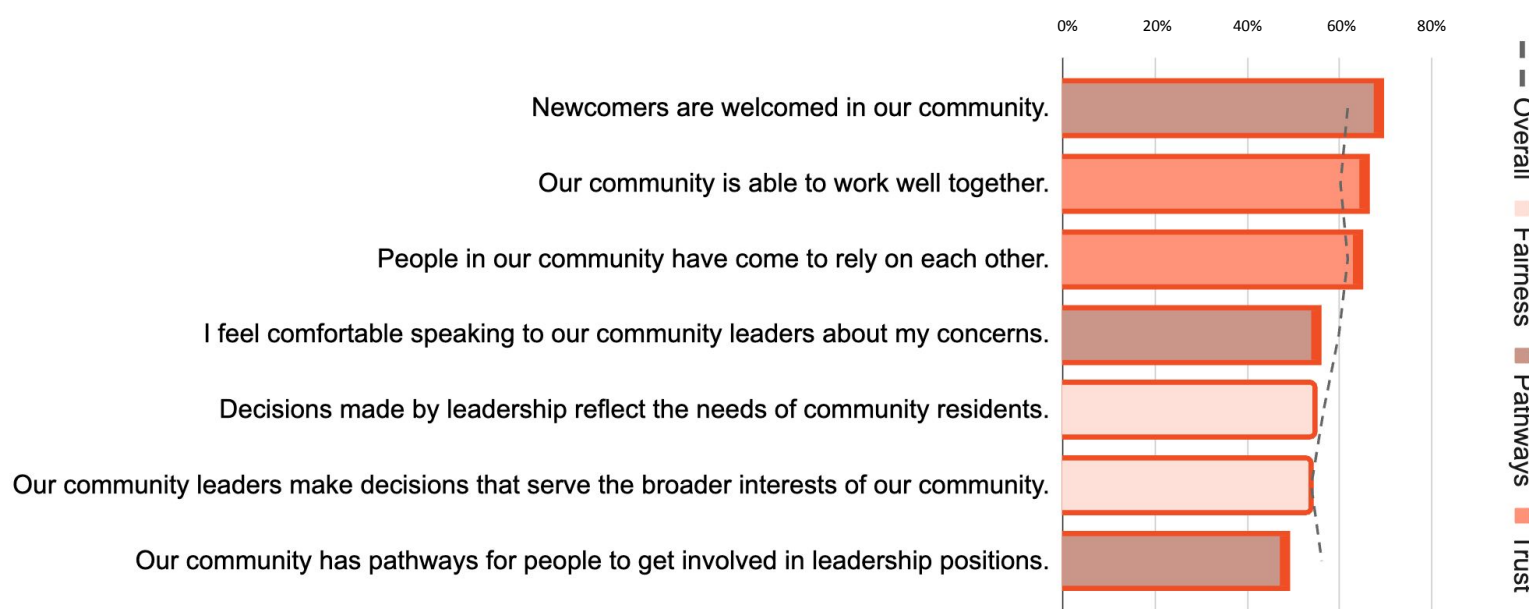


Generally, we see a lower personal commitment level than the residents across the county. It is interesting that while the ratings on the first factor are high, the residents did not feel that they owed a great deal to the community.

What would encourage a deeper sense of responsibility toward the community's success?

How can we invite the resident to become a more engaged member in the community?

Community Confidence: Local Leadership



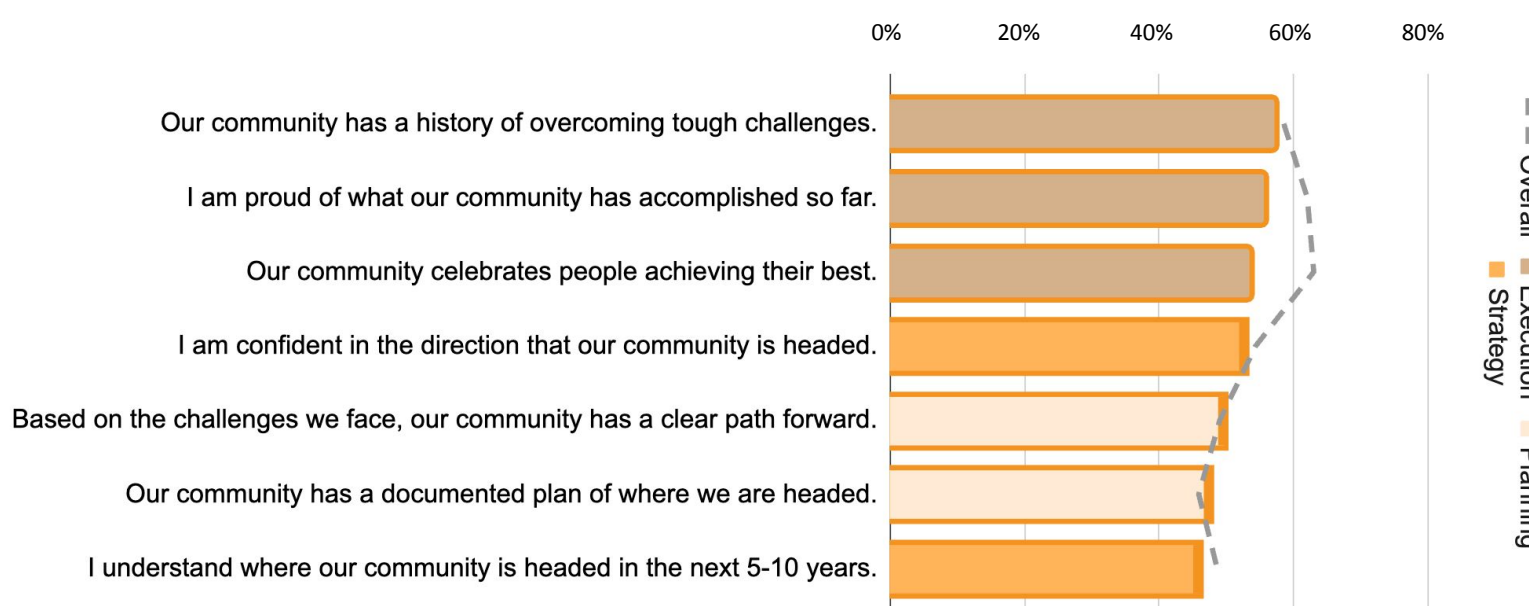
The biggest challenge is the perception that securing a role in community leadership is difficult to achieve. On a positive note, the level of welcoming to newcomers is over the county average.

How can leadership ensure transparency in decision-making?

What methods would improve communication between leaders and residents?

How can leadership better involve the community in key decisions?

Community Confidence: Vision



Residents feel uncertain about the lack of plans and strategies for the community's future direction. Although the execution of programs rated the highest in the Vision category, it still remained under the total county confidence level.

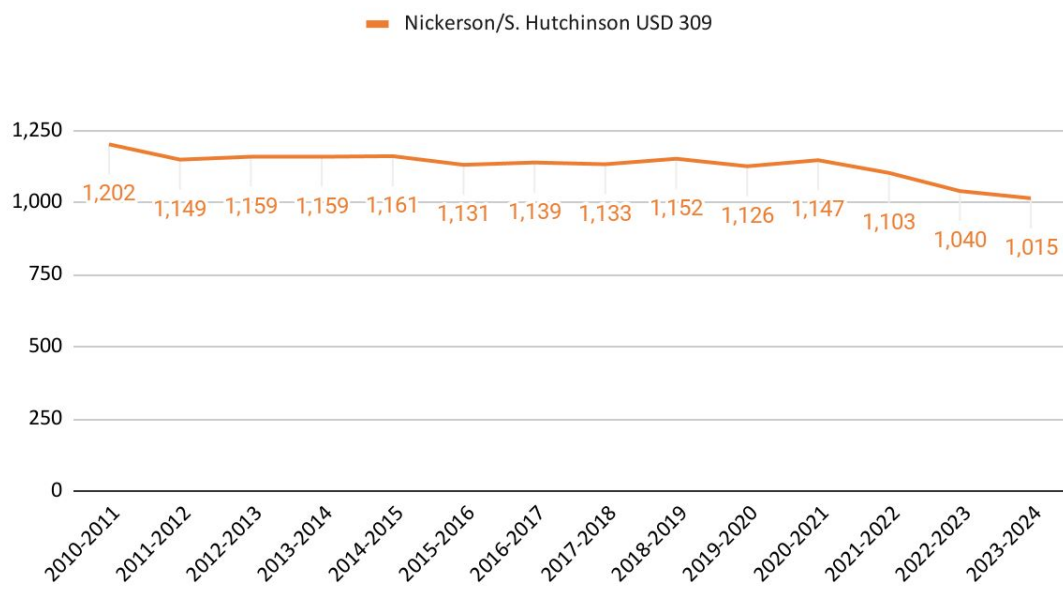
How can the community's long-term vision be more clearly communicated?

What initiatives would help align residents with the community's future goals?

How can the community foster more trust in its vision for the future?

Local Community Indicators

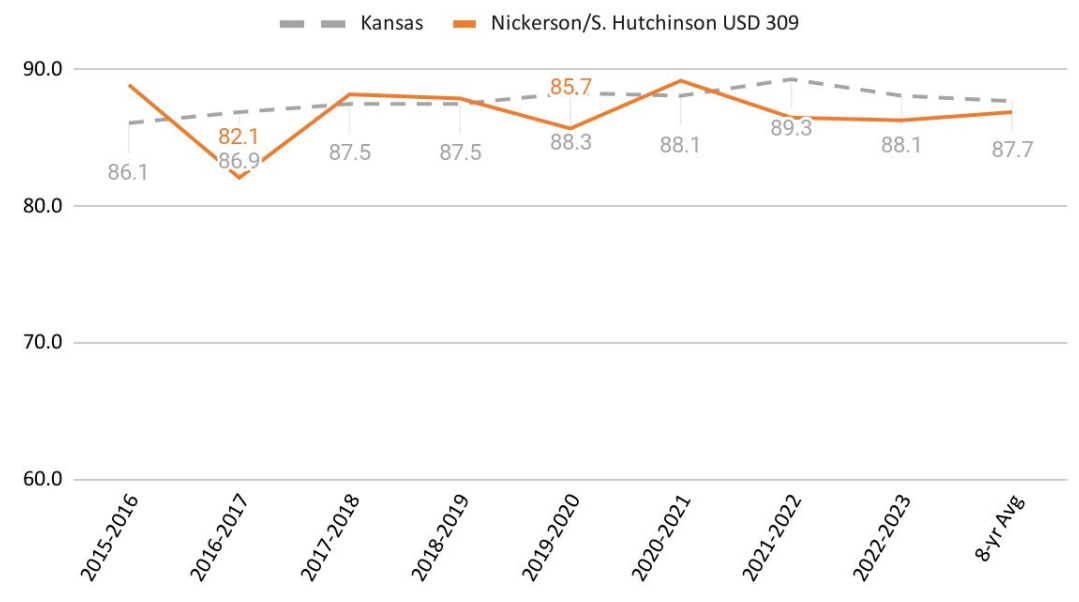
Local School Enrollment



Source: Kansas State Dept of Education, KSDE Data Central



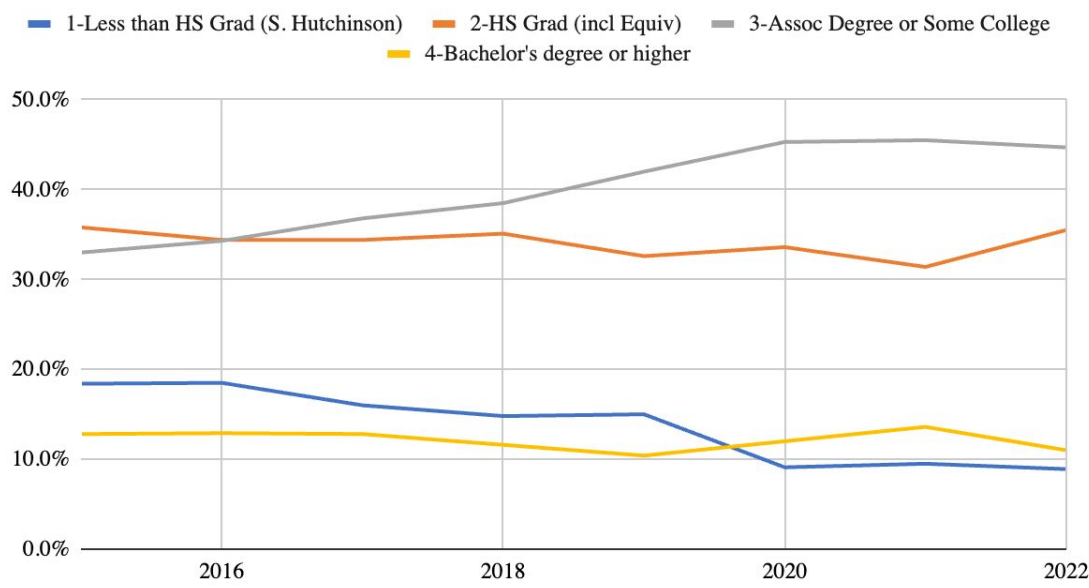
High School 4 Year Graduation Rate



Source: Kansas State Dept of Education, KSDE Data Central



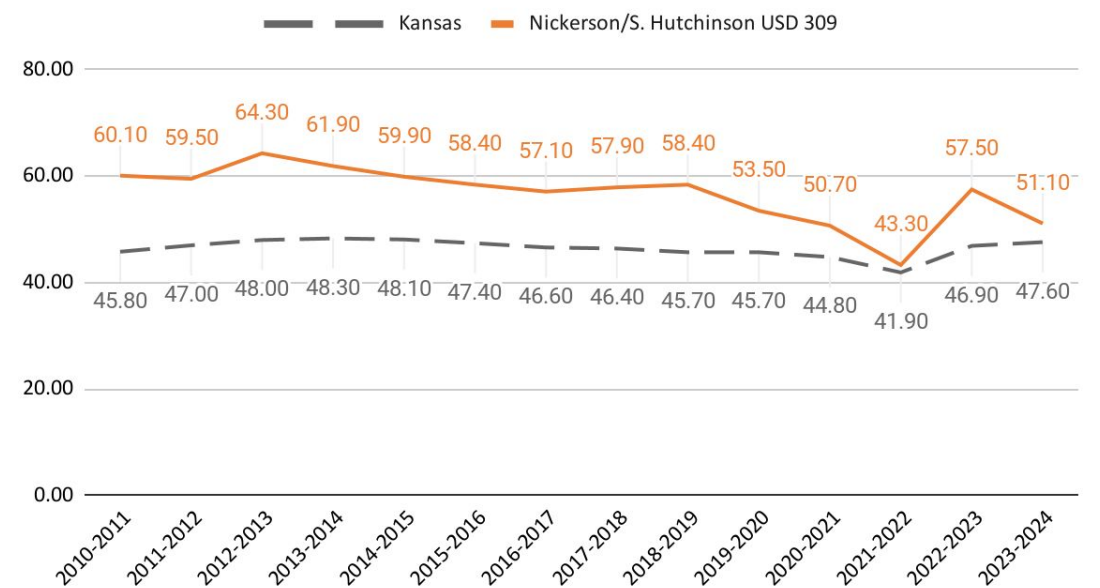
Local Educational Level



Source: Kansas State Dept of Education, KSDE Data Central



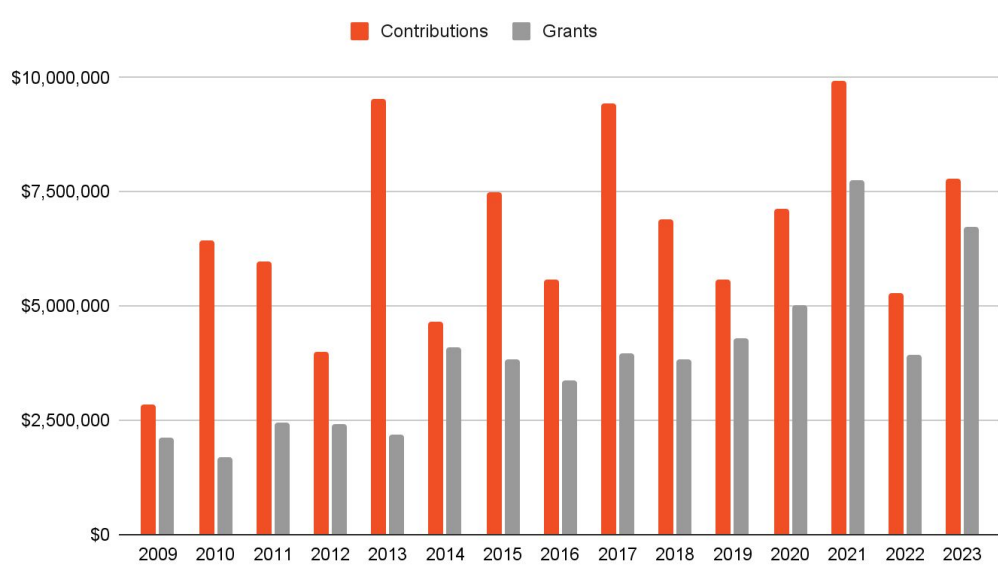
School District % Free-Reduced Price Lunch



Source: Kansas State Dept of Education, KSDE Data Central

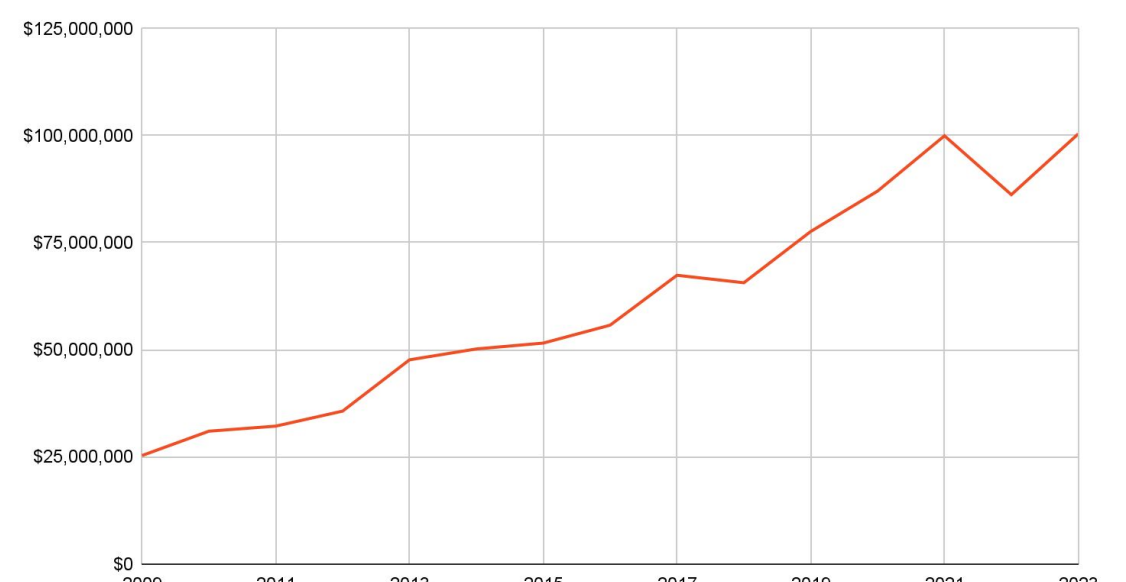


Hutchinson Community Foundation: Contributions & Grants



Hutchinson Community Foundation Data

Hutchinson Community Foundation: Total Assets



Hutchinson Community Foundation data

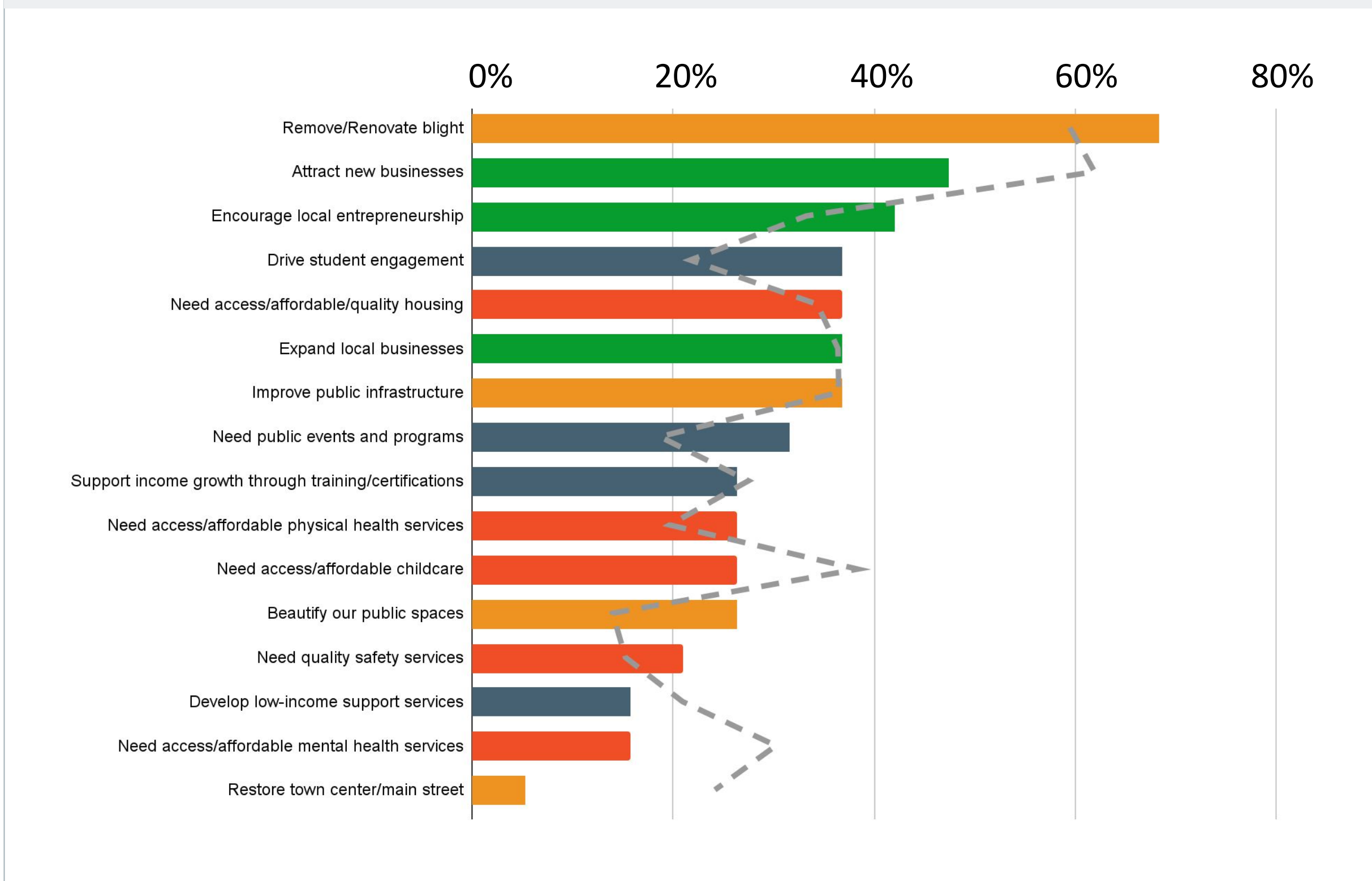
Community Program Priorities

Priorities Summary:

The local residents generally see economic development as a very high priority. Although, the area that jumps to the very top, and is significantly more important to local residents than that of other communities, is the need for **Removal of Blight**. Economic needs such as **Encouraging Local Entrepreneurship** and **Expanding Local Businesses** are at par with the perceptions of other community members, however the need to **Attract Business** is ranked lower than other communities. The need for more **Student Engagement** is ranked much higher than other communities.

■ Health
 ■ Placemaking
 ■ Economy
 ■ People
 ■ Average Reno County Score

2024 Economic and Community Development Priorities



Vibrant Place:

The top priority for this section is the removal and renovation of run-down properties, reflecting a strong desire to improve the town's aesthetics and infrastructure.

Resilient Economy:

The highest priority is attracting new businesses, signaling a need for economic expansion. Encouraging local entrepreneurship and expanding existing businesses are also key to the community residents..

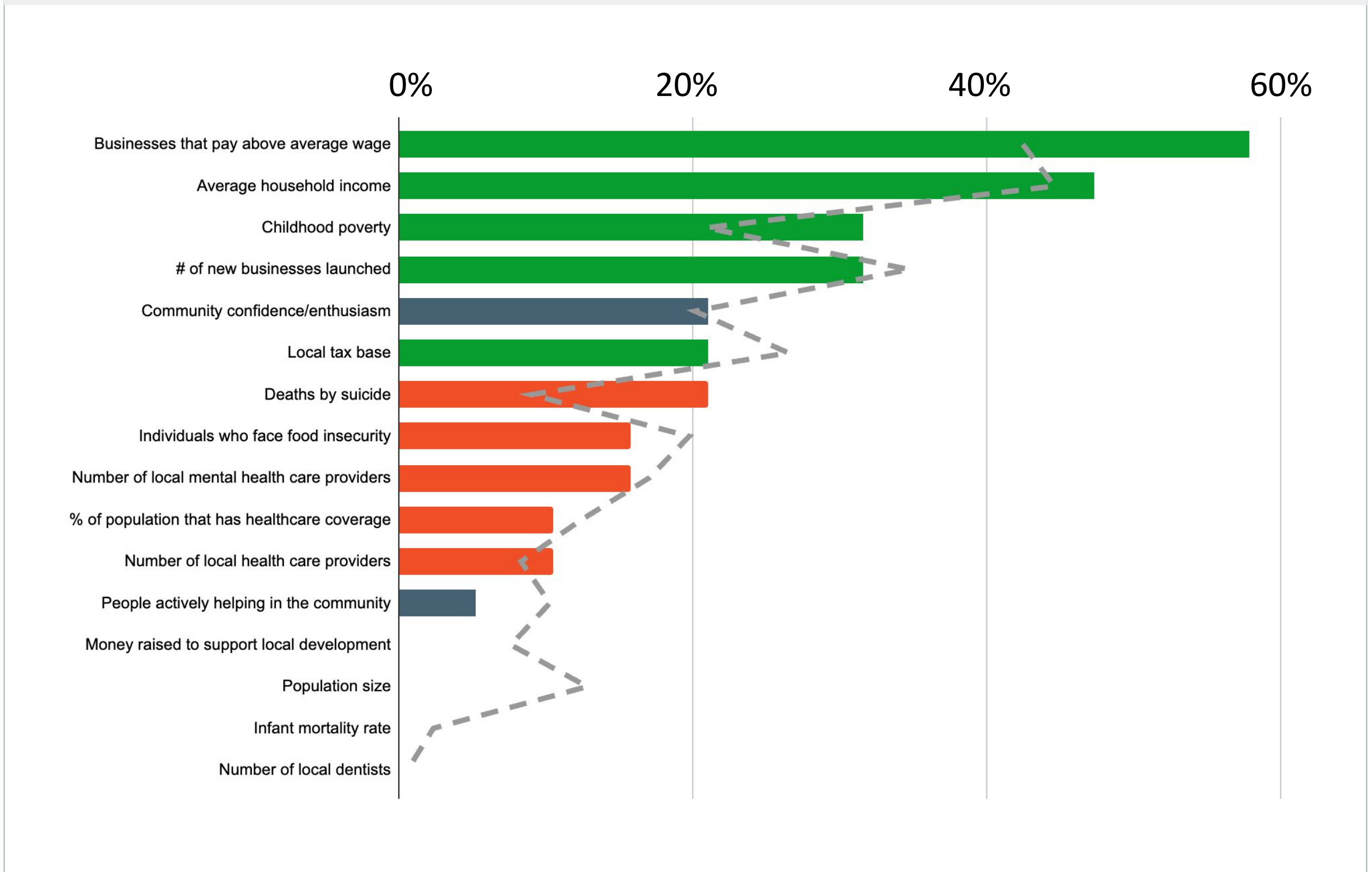
Healthy Citizens:

Access to affordable housing is a vital concern for residents., along with addressing student engagement.

Community Progress Indicators

Health Economy People Average Reno County Score

2024 Community Progress Indicators



Economy:

The top economic priority is increasing the number of new businesses that pay above-average wages. Respondents also seek improvements in household income, childhood poverty rates, and launching new businesses.

Community Engagement:

Community confidence and enthusiasm are central to improvement efforts, with a focus on engaging more people in development activities.

Health:

Respondents prioritize suicide prevention as a key issue for health improvement efforts. This is a much higher priority than the rest of the county residents responded.

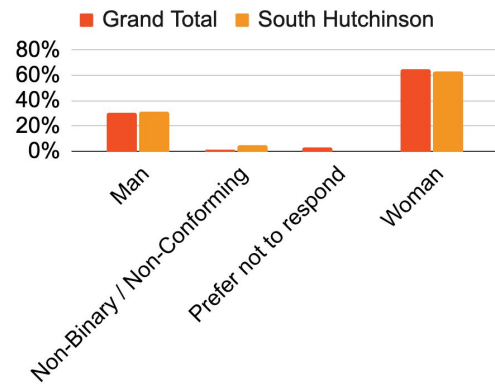
Survey Respondents

Number of Participants



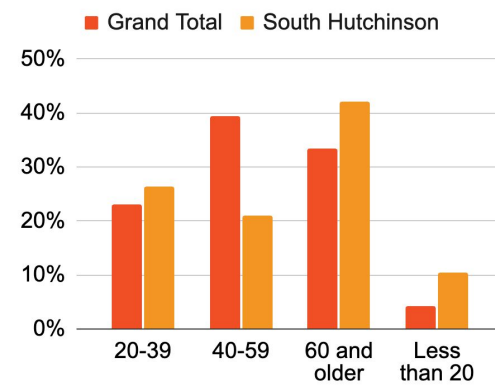
The largest group of respondents has lived in the community for 5-20 years, which shows a solid base of long-term residents.

Gender



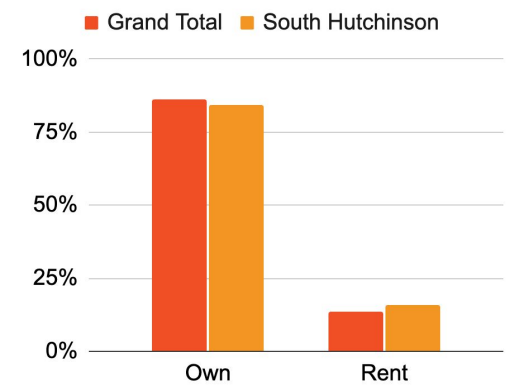
Women outnumber men in the responses, indicating female residents are more engaged in this survey than their male counterparts.

Age Profile



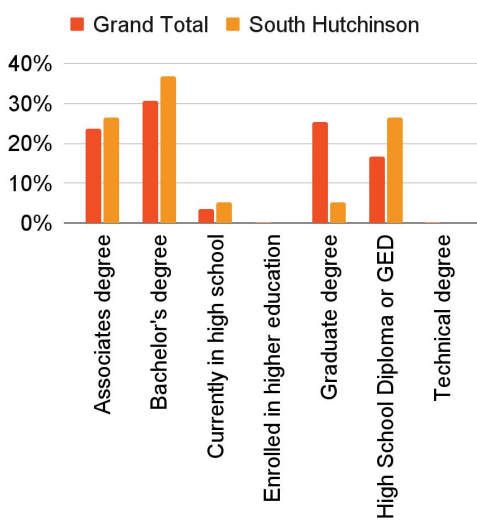
The majority of respondents are 60 and older, suggesting that older residents are more active in providing feedback on community issues.

Residential Status



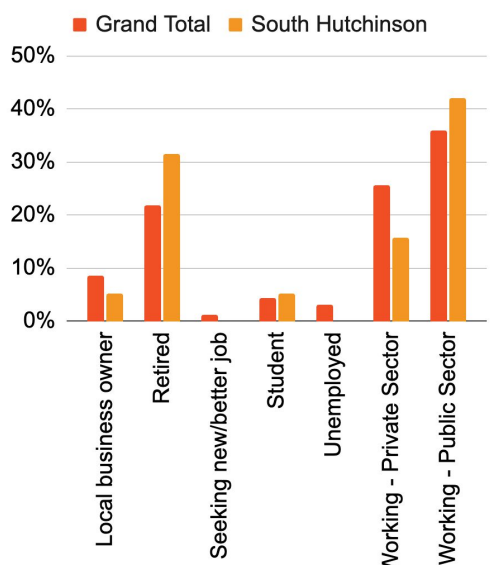
Most respondents are homeowners, reflecting a community where stability and long-term residence are common.

Education Level



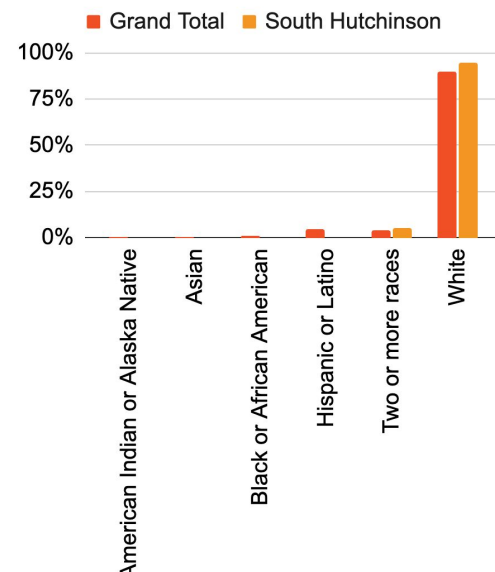
A significant portion of residents holds a bachelor's degree, which points to a relatively well-educated population.

Employment Status



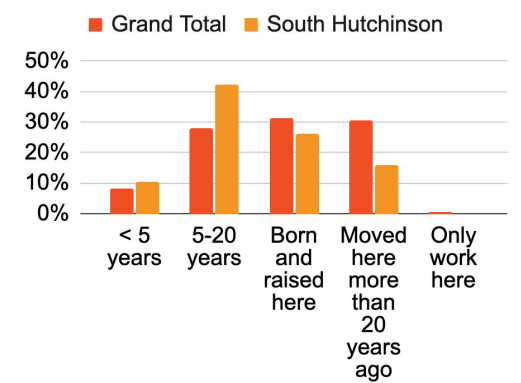
A significant number of respondents work in the public sector, but the survey also reflects a high number of retired respondents indicating a good mix of working class and those enjoying retirement.

Ethnicity



The respondents are predominantly white, but survey results may not fully reflect the ethnic percentage profile of the community. Some important voices may still need to be engaged.

Years lived in location



Most respondents have lived in the community for 5-20 years, highlighting a mix of both long-term commitment and relatively newer residents.

■ Town Score

■ Average Reno County Score

3

Number of people who expressed an interest in volunteering to better the community
3 of 19 (16%)