



MELITA & AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

GENERAL PUBLIC REPORT

To be used for future projects, initiatives and strategic planning

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The information we received from our survey showed that roughly 87.5% of the responses came from people who have lived in the region for 10+ years. The region is defined as three municipalities; The Municipality of Two Borders, The Municipality of Brenda-Waskada and the Town of Melita. The majority of responses, 67.5%, came from participants who have lived in the region for 21+ years, respectively. The data suggested that for people who reside in the area, their most significant value, and what improves their quality of life, is healthcare. The comments included opinions such as more doctors and more dependable hours for Emergency rooms. The second contributor to value and quality of life was increasing jobs and job opportunities. People who commented want to see jobs that pay more than minimum wage and offer advancement opportunities.

The survey found that healthcare and decreasing job opportunities are believed to be the most significant contributors to people leaving the region since 1996. However, when asked what would be required to see an increase in population, the reverse was the most significant contributor; increase healthcare and job opportunities to the region.

The most substantial benefit to people who live in the region is the rural lifestyle that our area offers, such as the open spaces, the farm land, the grasslands, and Wildlife Management areas. These were all mentioned by participants in this open question.

The survey identified that the Banana Days event was favoured the most when survey participants could identify regional, provincial, or interprovincial events. Interestingly enough, there were enough events mentioned to host one event every other weekend in our region. Some of the events that survey participants noted no longer exist. Some of these events were Canoe Days or the New Years Pancake Breakfast and Skate.

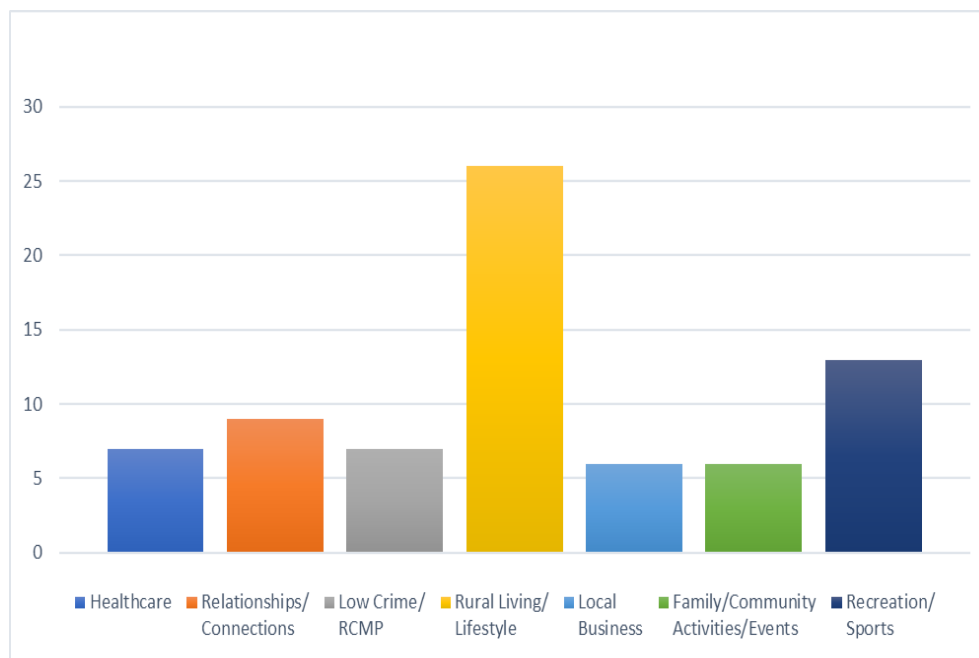
INTRODUCTION

Our General Population Questionnaire was introduced on September 21st, 2020, and was open until October 5th. In total, we had 43 participants who answered questions about how long they have lived in the area, what they value about the region, what they enjoy seeing outside of the region. This data is used as the first stepping stone to produce a strategic plan to respond to the questionnaire's direction.

The most significant input we received for our questionnaire is from residents who have lived within the region for 21+ years, which represented 67.5% of the respondents. 20% of the answers were coming from residents who have lived in the area for 10-20 years. People who have lived in the region for under ten years represented 12.5% of the respondents.

The second question in the survey asked participants, "What interests you about the region"? This question was asked to help us determine what it is about the region that draws people. Why do the participants like it here?

WHAT INTERESTS YOU ABOUT THE REGION?



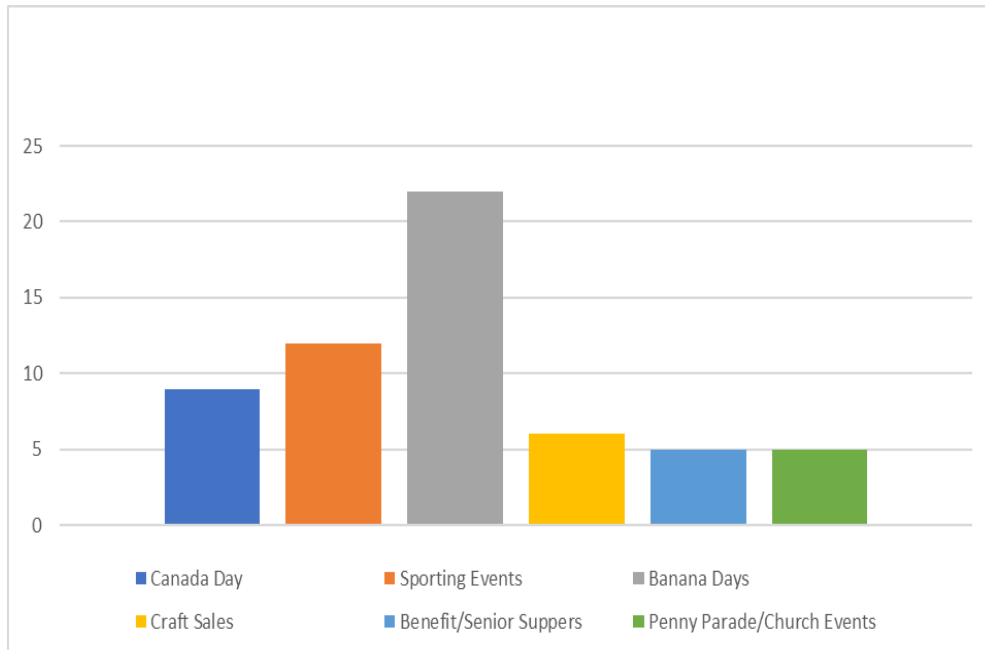
This question was open for participants to share their input and allowed the respondents to list any three things that they could suggest. Out of 35 respondents, roughly 26 participants commented about the lifestyle that rural living provides them. The comments made included safe communities, open spaces, an abundance of grassland, and the colours of the changing seasons.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quietness, low crime open spaces</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Openness of spaces Friendliness</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Country Living</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beautiful fall foliage, abundant grassland wildlife, small town business & community friendliness</i> |

Thirteen participants commented about Recreation/Sports, which includes hockey tournaments, curling tournaments, bowling alley. The third highest response to this question was about relationships and connections. People feel closer to their families living here and the quality of friendships here.

Our next question was to inquire about the events that respondents attend annually. These can be a variety of events, whether they are local events, national or international. We wanted to know what type of events the participants attended. What are the local events we could continue to support, or what events may be hosted here in the future.

WHAT ARE THREE EVENTS THAT YOU ATTEND ANNUALLY, OR HAVE ATTENDED ANNUALLY?



Our largest responses were in favour of events already hosted. Slightly over half of the respondents said Banana Days is an event they attend annually. Next came sporting events such as local sports tournaments, hockey, curling, and darts. Canada Day and the fireworks were the third events that people attended annually.

There was a total of 29 events that people had listed, with 18 of them being local events. Events outside the region named by the survey participants are 'Food Truck Wars' hosted annually in Brandon, Manitoba, Countryfest, an event sponsored in Dauphin, Manitoba, and live events; comedies or musicians hosted in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Two events mentioned in the survey are no longer running. These events are Canoe Days as well as the New Years' Day Arena Pancake Breakfast and Skate. These events could be re-established in the future if a committee wishes to take it on.

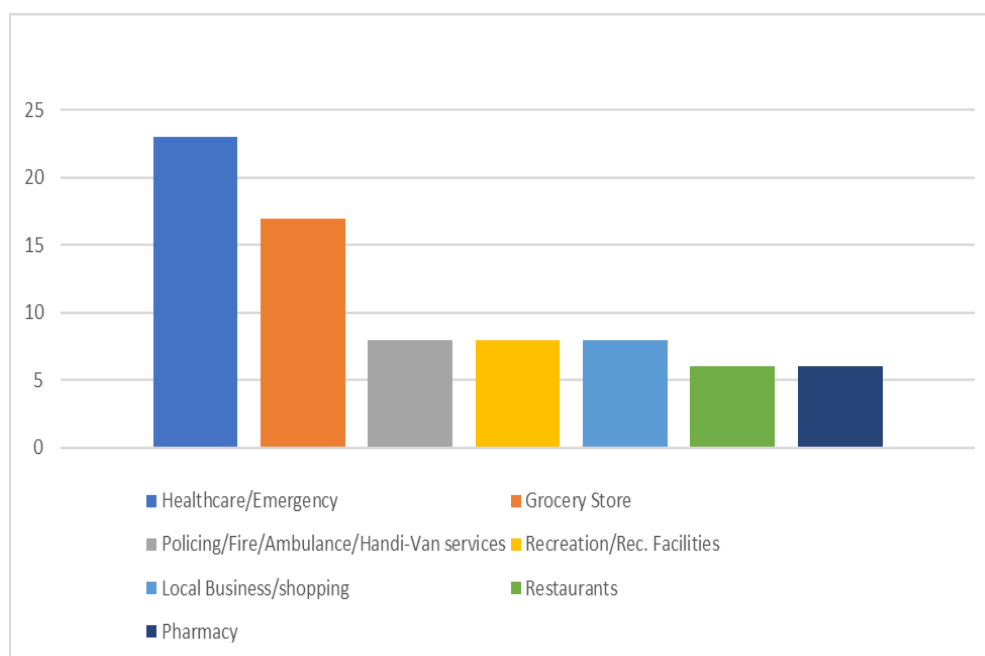
WHAT TYPES OF EVENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE REGION?

We posed the to determine the types of events people would like to see in the region. Respondents were able to answer one of three options.

Sports	28.57%
Art/Theatre	14.29%
Entertainment	57.14%

Some respondents were able to leave some comments that supported their choice, and some commented they liked all of the above. But this information shows that respondents value forms of entertainment above sports or art/theatre.

WHAT 3 SERVICES DO YOU VALUE HAVING?



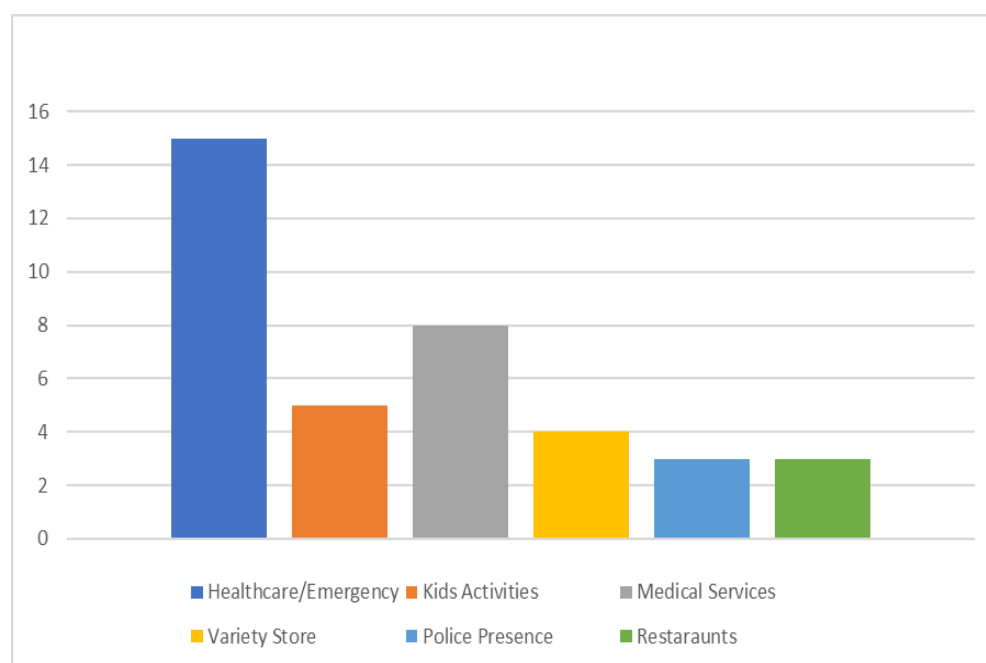
Remembering that most of our respondents have resided in the region for 21+ years, one could assume that the general age of the population that responded is roughly 40+ years of age.¹ The leading service that people value having in the region is healthcare. Participants commented on a desire for an

¹ Census Profile, 2016 Census Melita, Manitoba. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4605052&Geo2=PR&Code2=46&SearchText=Melita&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=4605052&TABID=1&type=0>

emergency room or at least dependable hours of operation. Respondents also wish to see more doctors in the region and an increase in the other services found at a healthcare facility. The second service people value having is a grocery store.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor service, Post office, Pharmacy being open • Drugstore food store HOSPITAL • Hospital Police Fire department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOSPITAL AND DOCTORS, HOSPITAL AND DOCTORS ON CALL • Policing, healthcare, recreational • Access to health care Local grocery store Access to golf course
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WHAT SERVICES WOULD YOU VALUE HAVING IN THE REGION?



We are beginning to see a consistency of healthcare as a service that people would like to see more of and what people value having in the region. Discussions that continue to arise is the desire for more doctors at the hospital, more health services available to people, and a consistent emergency room.

The second most valued service in the region is the need for Medical Services, which includes services such as a dentist or optometrist and massage or chiropractic work.

The third desirable service in the region is for Kids activities, mainly increasing outdoor kids' activities. This department is looked after by the Antler River Recreation Department, which is a shared service with the Town of Melita, Municipality of Two Borders as well the Municipality of Brenda-Waskada. This department maintains all indoor and outdoor activities for a range of ages in all of the municipalities.

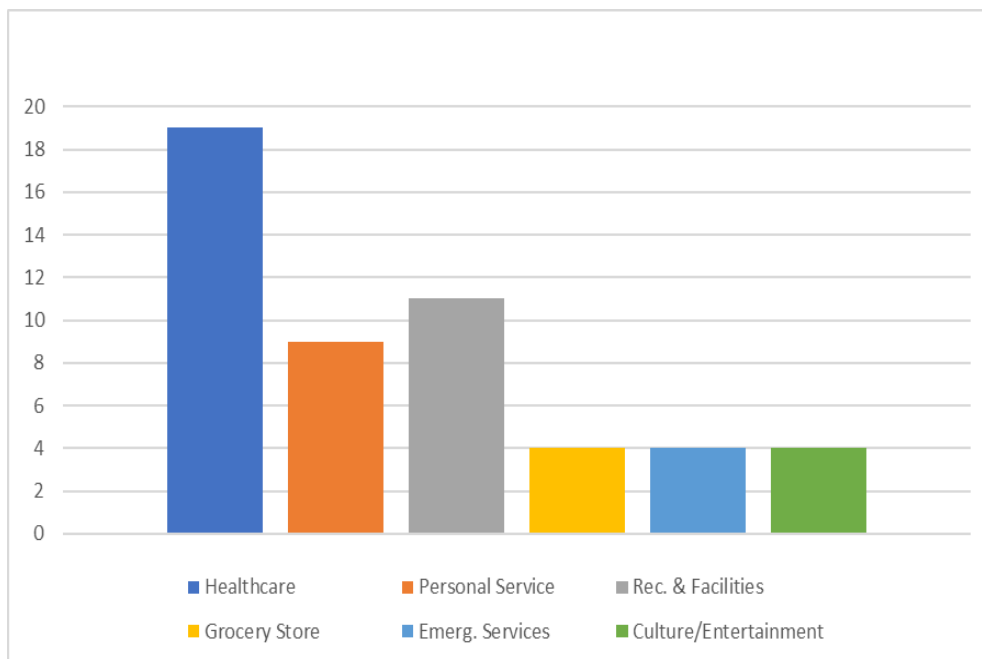
- *More Restaurant choices. Drug Store that's open on Saturday*

- *HOSPITALS AND DOCTORS*

- *Better healthcare and emergency services. Updated hospital and on call doctors. A bar*

- *Better healthcare , better police service*

WHAT THREE SERVICES IN THE REGION IMPROVE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE?



Out of 35 participants on these questions, 19 participants listed Healthcare as their most important service: recreation and Rec. Facilities had 11 participants say it was essential to them. Participants included such things as curling, hockey, bowling, swimming. It also took into account the services or opportunities that the local communiplex offered. Participants also valued personal services that would improve their quality of life, such things as Massage, Chiropractors. The next question, though, shows that what services improve their quality of life is what people require to keep them in the area.

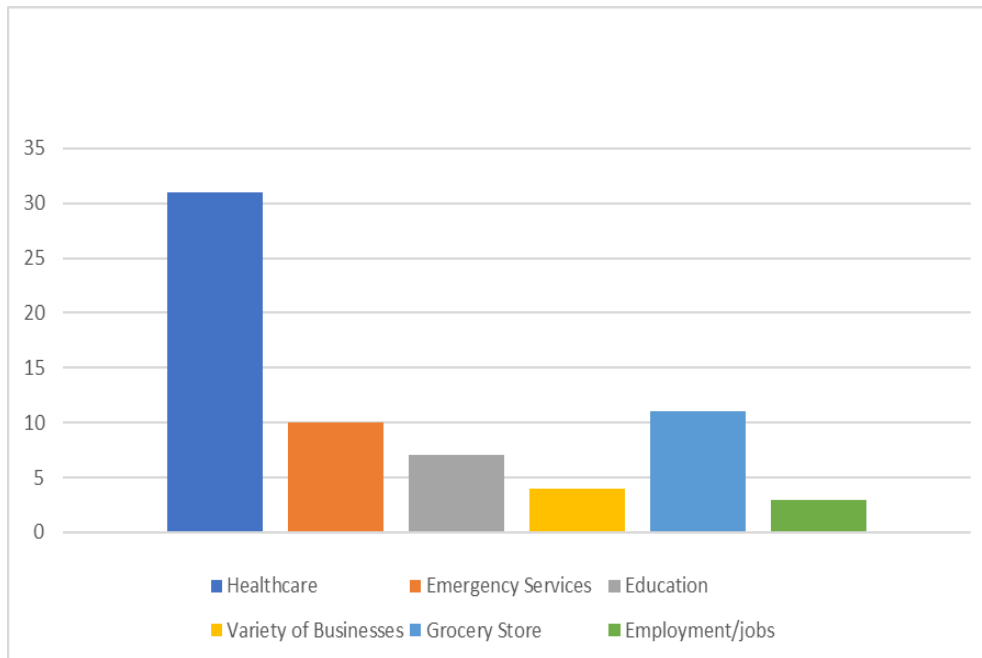
- *Hair Dressers, Massage Therapist*

- *Healthcare, police, recreation*

- *Hospital/ doctor Police Dentist / optometrist*

- *Access to physical activities such as golf, curling, exercise*

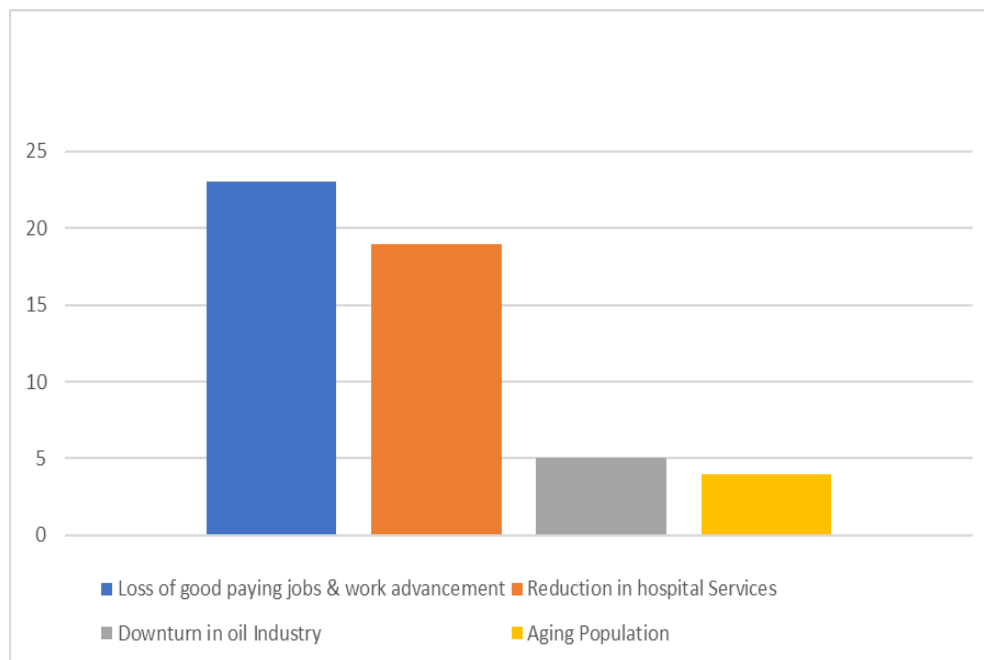
WHAT SERVICES DO YOU REQUIRE TO HAVE YOU KEEP LIVING IN THE AREA?



Out of 37 participants to this question, 31 responded to healthcare as the number one service required to have them remain in the area. The participants included dependable emergency room hours, more doctors, and more services available at our hospital. There was also one comment made about having a nursing station staffed at the hospital. The comments lead to a question to determine if people are unaware of the current services available at our hospital and clinic?

The next service people commented on emergency services, which included comments such as ambulance service and an increase in police services, or at least visibility of 'on patrol' officers. Question #9 discusses a bit of the past trend of our area. As the question infers, Statistics Canada has shown a 25.2% decrease in population in our region of the province. The problem is being asked, 'What do you think is the biggest contributor to people leaving the region?'

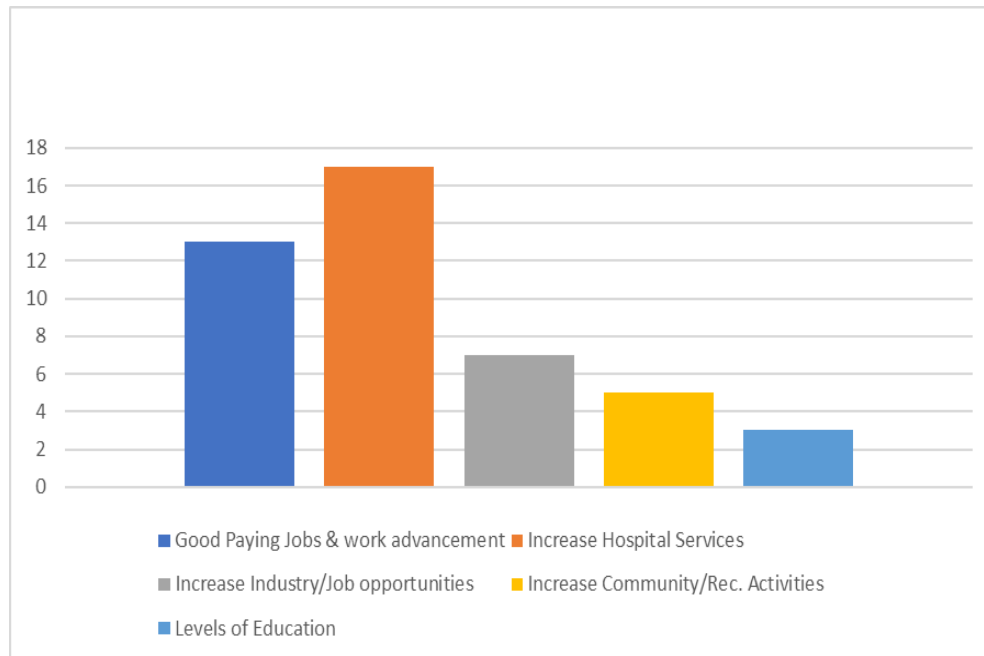
WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BIGGEST CONTRIBUTOR TO PEOPLE LEAVING THE REGION?



A total of 39 participants responded to this question. The largest contributor to people leaving the region is the loss of jobs that pay higher than minimum wage and offer work advancement within the organization. Respondents also identified the reduction in hospital services as a factor for the population decrease. These indicated the top two responses from participants, with the remainder of the reactions citing the downturn in the oil industry and the aging population.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good paved streets and sidewalks for walking, and riding bikes on, and driving cars on. Cool things to see and do in the town, like updated play equipment in the park. Outdoor Exercise equipment like in Reston park</i> • <i>Jobs Investment in infrastructure in community Quality education in rural schools</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More community activities. Like Reston making the outdoor lake. If we had a nice sports area (pickleball court, tennis court and skatepark) it would help the community Hospitals, emergency services, doctors</i> • <i>Health care and jobs Support for young farm families and services needed to support that</i> |
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WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD HELP TO BRING PEOPLE BACK TO OUR REGION?



The last question encourages people to be creative and offer their insights into what we can do to encourage people to relocate back to the region. The results of which are almost a mirrored image to the previous question. What contributed to people leaving is believed to bring people back when reversed.

The increase of hospital services, such as an Emergency Room and more doctors, is the most significant contributor to attract people back to our region. In a close second favoured option is for good-paying jobs as well as opportunities for work advancement. Good paying jobs would include positions that pay higher than minimum wage and benefits that would encourage people to find employment and be similar to the third favoured option of increasing industry and job opportunities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we see the immediate direction to move forward. The participants feel a lack of viable healthcare in the region and entry-level jobs, which makes our area challenging to attract and maintain citizens.

Our most significant advantage in the region is the 'Rural Lifestyle' that we garner in the prairies. A location and the feeling participants love so much that it is the most exciting thing about our region. Participants mentioned the closeness they feel with their neighbours and family and the supportive communities in which they live.

As mentioned throughout this survey, most of our participants are long term residents. I recommend a secondary survey for the views of those who have recently moved to the area or have lived here for no more than nine years. This demographic's insights will serve us well to learn what is desirable and valued by newcomers and help identify new opportunities.