



Western Kansas Community Foundation

2024 Community Benchmark Report

City of Lakin, KS

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Innovation Economy Partners
OUR FOCUS: IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

What Makes Our Community Special?

Residents of this community deeply value its foundational support systems, highlighting the importance of essential services such as water, food, and shelter. The presence of key facilities like hospitals and grocery stores is frequently mentioned, ensuring that basic physiological needs are met. Safety is another cornerstone, with many residents appreciating the strong police presence, personal security, and well-maintained public safety infrastructure. Beyond these essentials, the community's social fabric is highly cherished.

Churches, senior centers, and community gathering spots like coffee shops play a significant role in fostering social connections and a sense of belonging. Educational resources and cultural activities further contribute to residents' self-esteem and personal growth. The community's ability to offer a blend of practical support, safety, and opportunities for social and personal development is what residents feel truly makes it special, creating a place where individuals can thrive in a secure and connected environment.

The Leaders That Make Our Community Special



Executive Summary:

The community survey reveals a strong sense of belonging and commitment among residents, who value essential services, safety, and social connections. Economic confidence is cautiously optimistic, with hopes for future improvements in business conditions and employment opportunities. Key priorities include economic development, safety, and enhanced community engagement. The respondent profile shows a well-educated, stable population, predominantly long-term residents, with a strong interest in maintaining and improving community life.

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Local Assets Assessment

Residents value essential services, safety, and social connections, with key assets including hospitals, churches, police, and community gatherings. These elements contribute to a secure and supportive environment where individuals can thrive.

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Economic Confidence

Economic outlook is mixed, with current conditions seen as "normal" but future business conditions and employment opportunities expected to improve. Residents are hopeful for increased income and economic resilience.

pg **7, 8, 9**

Community Engagement Confidence

Community engagement is moderate, with most residents feeling a sense of belonging and pride. However, there's variability in engagement levels, indicating a need for more inclusive leadership and enhanced communication.

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Critical Community Priorities

Economic development, safety, and community engagement are top priorities. Residents focus on attracting new businesses, improving safety measures, and increasing participation in decision-making processes for a vibrant community.

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Survey Respondent Profile

Respondents are primarily long-term residents, aged 20-39, with a high level of education and homeownership. The demographic is largely female, reflecting a stable, well-educated population with strong ties to the community and a vested interest in its future.

The Community Benchmarking report has been commissioned by the Western Kansas Community Foundation to help local residents gain a better understanding of the most pressing opportunities that the local towns face. The annual reports that are generated will help leaders determine the extent to which the efforts are having an impact on the local residents. The reports are also a way for the the various towns in Western Kansas 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 the fellow residents are craving.**



Our Local Assets

Asset Summary:

The community's assets are well-regarded for supporting residents' basic needs, safety, and social well-being. For physiological needs, the grocery store, water supply, and Project Hope are frequently mentioned as crucial resources ensuring that residents have access to food, water, and essential services. The presence of these resources reflects the community's commitment to caring for all its members, particularly those facing difficulties. Safety needs are addressed through reliable institutions such as the police and fire departments, as well as the hospital and EMS services. These entities contribute significantly to a sense of personal security and community order. In terms of social, esteem, and self-needs, residents value spaces like churches, schools, and the local movie theater, where they can connect with others and participate in community life. However, there is an expressed need for more opportunities for social interaction and community engagement, indicating room for growth in creating a more vibrant social environment. Overall, the community's assets effectively meet essential needs and provide a foundation of safety, while the enhancement of social and recreational opportunities could further strengthen community ties and individual well-being.

Community's Best Assets: PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS:

- Bare necessities
- Public Health Facilities
- Housing
- Grocery store
- Food
- Health and Diet
- Stable Water
- Spirit Emotional Condolences
- Good job, good pay
- Electric Facilities
- Abundant food supply points
- Esteem
- Clothing, food, shelter, and means of traveling
- Assess specific physiological needs such as living conditions

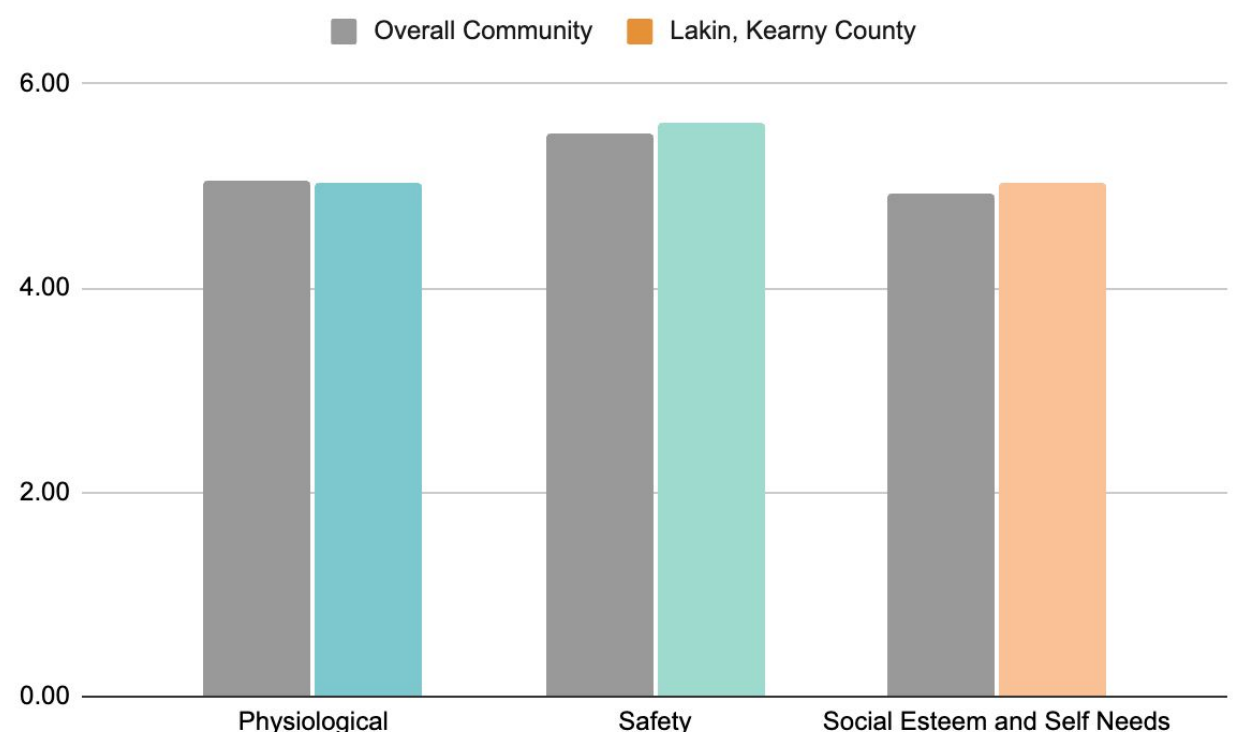
Community's Best Assets: SAFETY NEEDS:

- Police
- Personal security
- Hospital
- Structure
- Resources
- Police department
- Source of income
- Public security maintenance
- A secure defense facility
- Good police patrols and safe street lighting
- Personal safety
- Understanding community safety facilities and services
- Personal safety, social stability, income

Community's Best Assets: SOCIAL, SELF & ESTEEM NEEDS:

- Churches
- Senior center
- Coffee shop
- Friendships
- School
- Activity centers and rich community activities
- Encourage each other
- Be able to do what you want to do
- Educational resources and cultural activities
- Sense of belonging and friendship
- Active participation in community activities
- Freedom

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



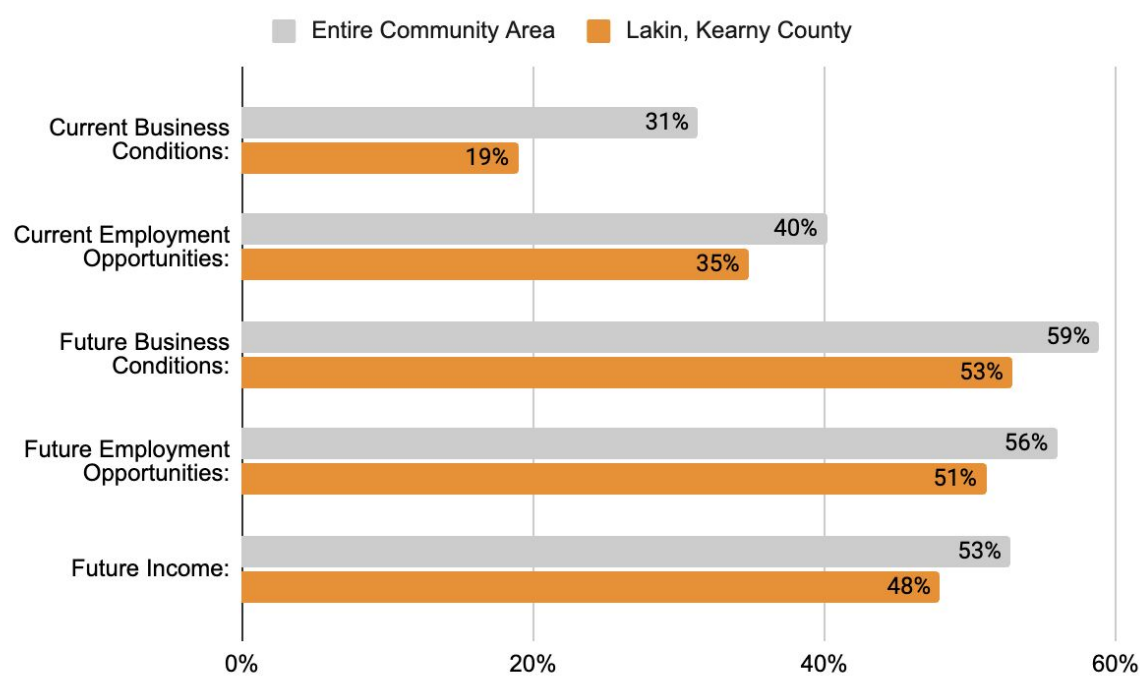
Confidence In Our Local Economy

Economic Summary:

The community's economic outlook is a blend of cautious optimism and concerns. Many residents feel that current business conditions are "normal," while employment opportunities are seen as "not so plentiful." However, there is a strong belief that the future will bring improvement, with "better" business conditions and increased income anticipated. Residents suggest that focusing on job creation and supporting local businesses should be key priorities moving forward. Strengthening economic resilience and expanding employment opportunities will be essential in ensuring sustainable growth and prosperity.

To support the anticipated economic growth, the community should focus on attracting diverse businesses and fostering entrepreneurship. Initiatives to upskill the workforce and enhance access to employment opportunities can help bridge the gap in job availability. Additionally, maintaining a supportive business environment will be crucial for long-term success.

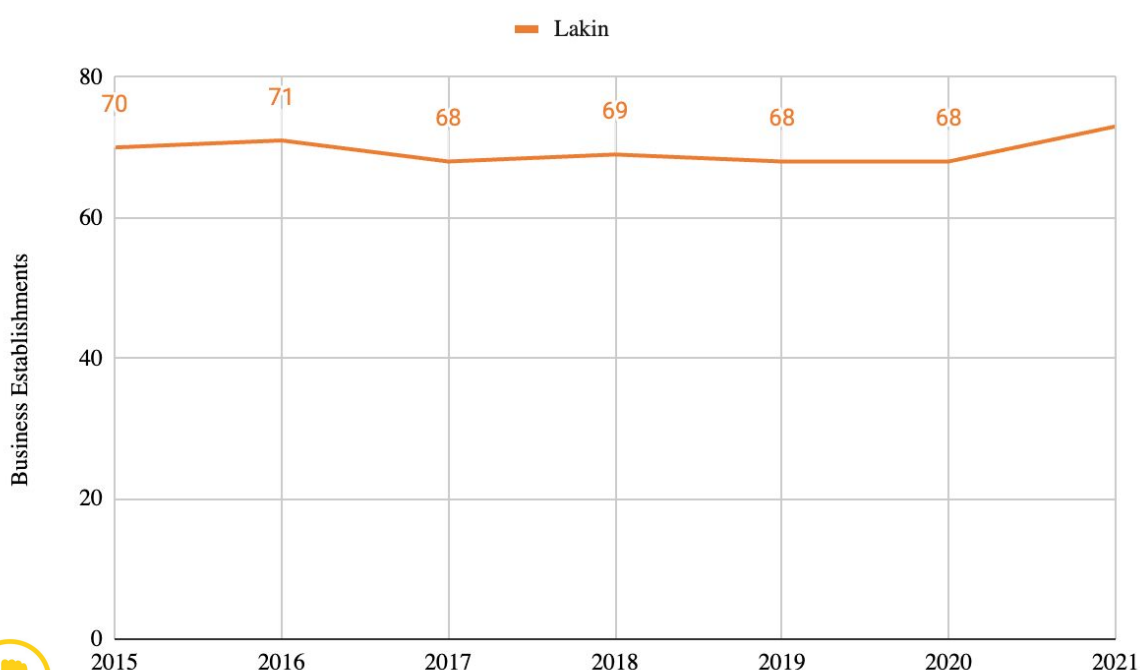
Our Economic Perceptions



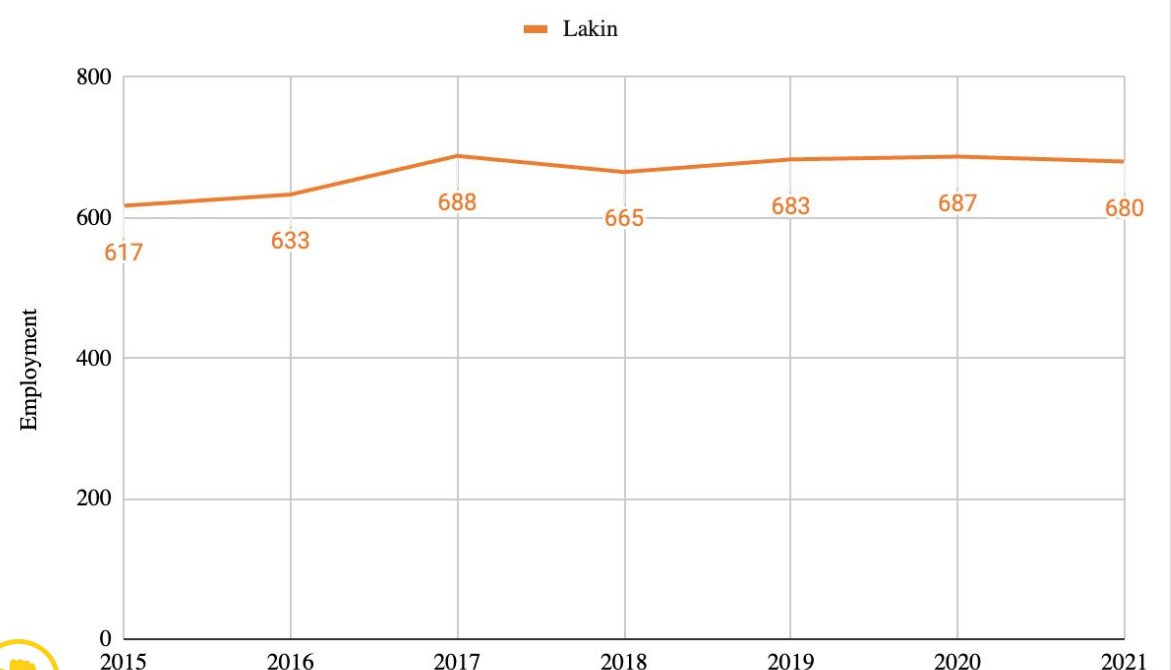
Businesses Needed In Our Town:

1. Restaurant
2. Schools
3. Roadside exercise facilities
4. Raising funds for economic development
5. Green industries and specialty agricultural product industries
6. Busy street (development)
7. Cultural and tourism resource development
8. Community service enhancement
9. Smart home stores
10. Pet comprehensive service centers

Businesses in Our Town

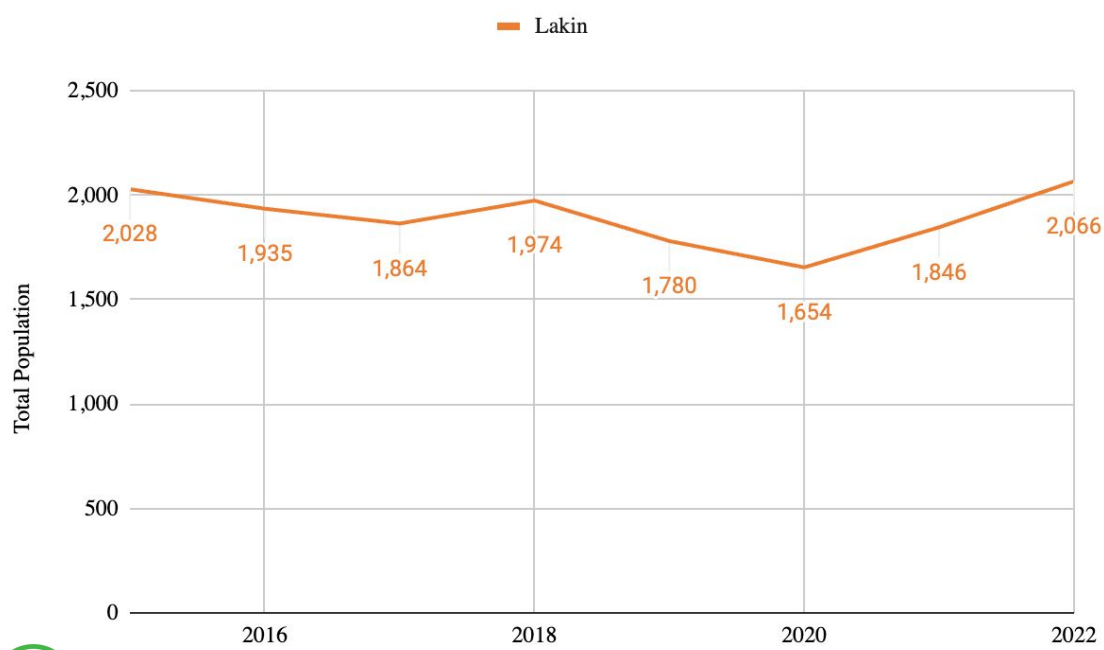


10 Year Shift in Local Jobs



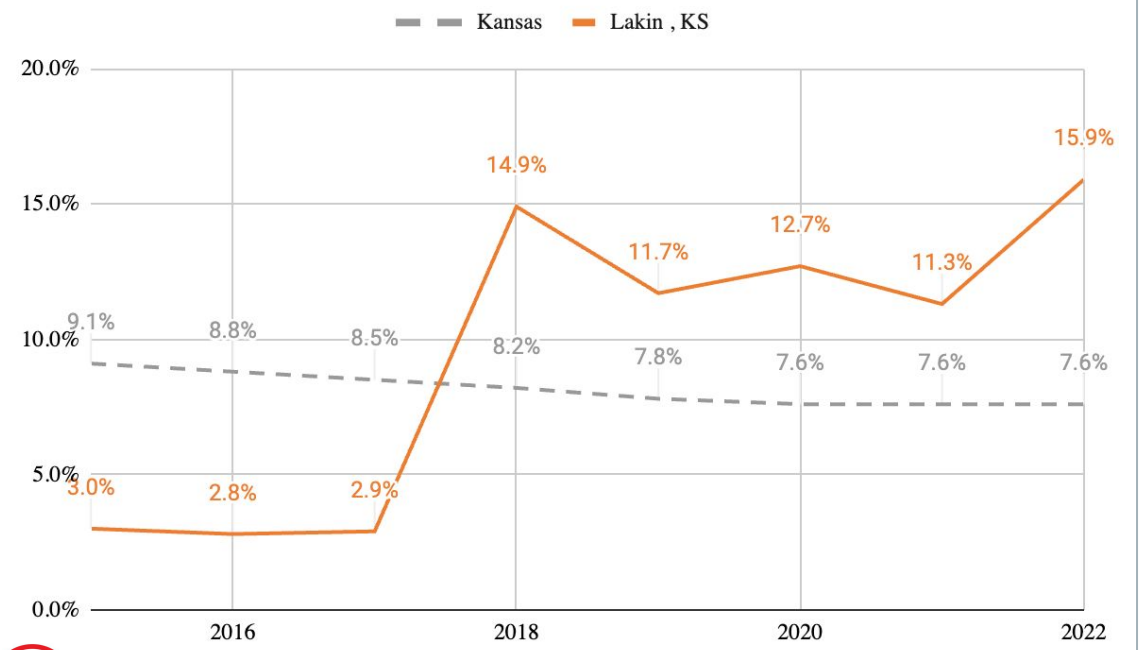
Local Economic Indicators

Overall Population Trend



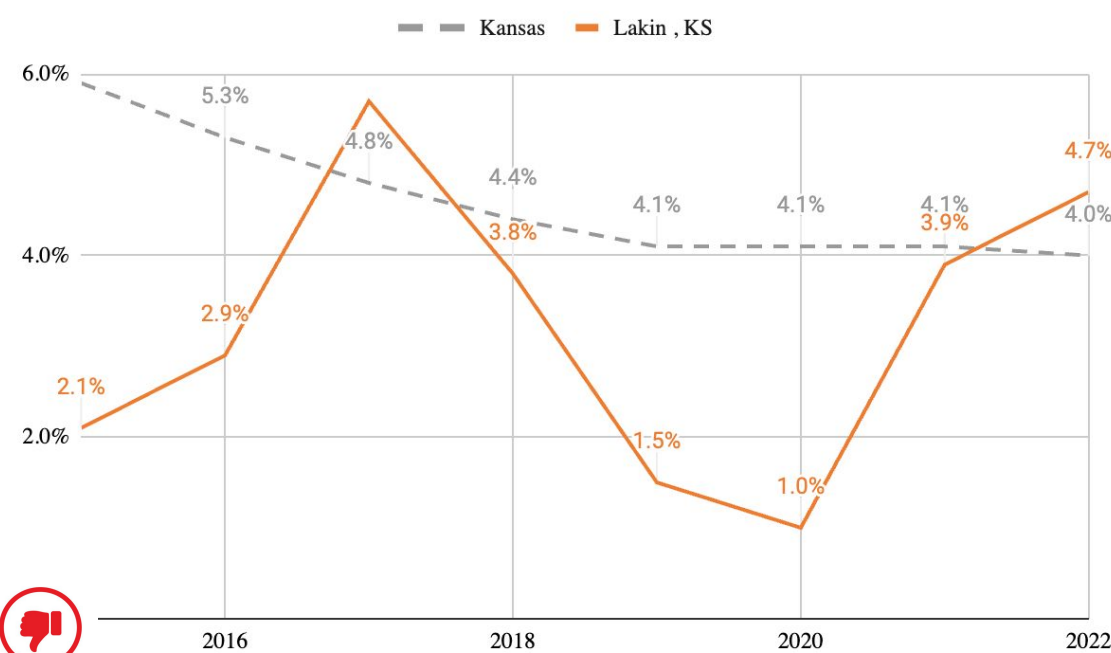
Data source:USCB, ACS 5-Yr Avg

Local Poverty Rate

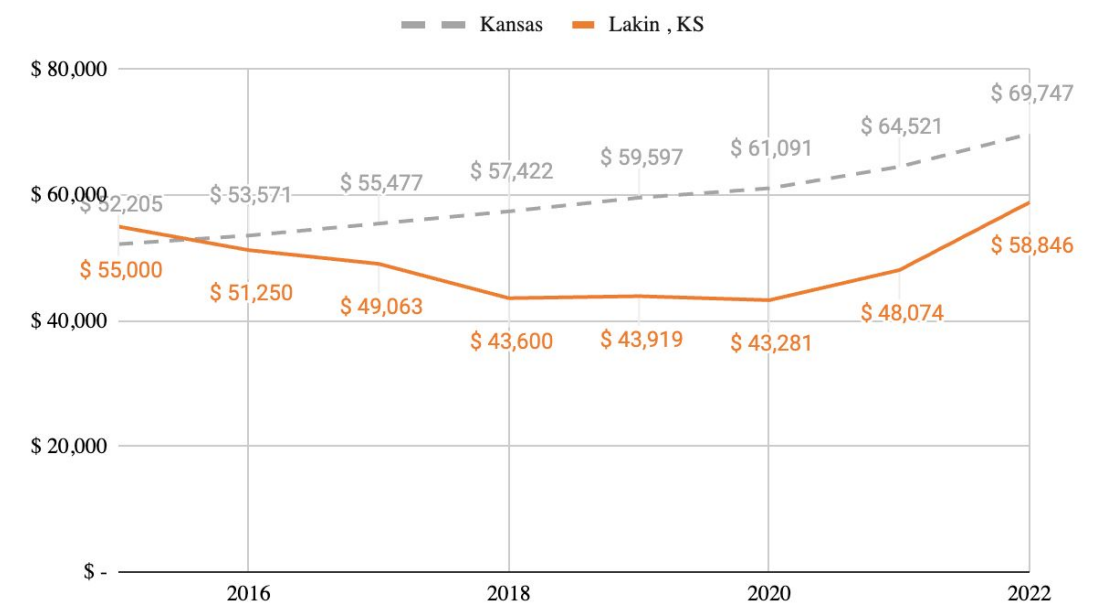


Data source:USCB, American Community Survey, 5-Yr Avg, DP03

Local Unemployment Rate

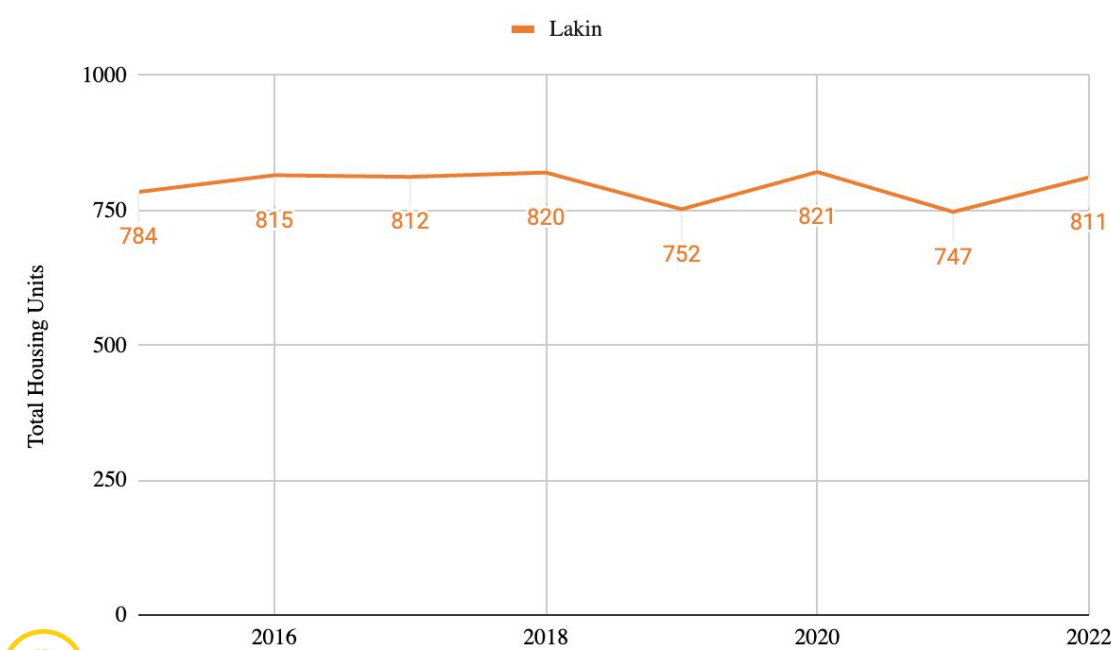


Median Household Income



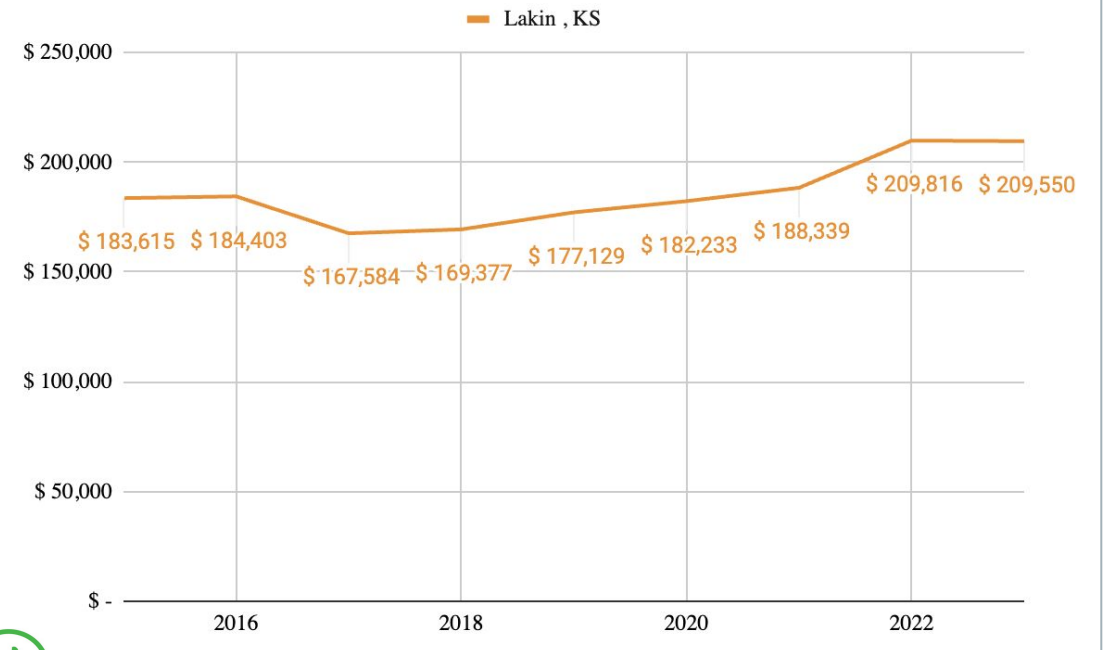
Data source:USCB, American Community Survey, 5-Yr Avg, DP03

Total Housing Units



Data source:USCB, ACS 5-Yr Avg

Annual Sales Tax Collection



Data source:Kansas Dept of Revenue

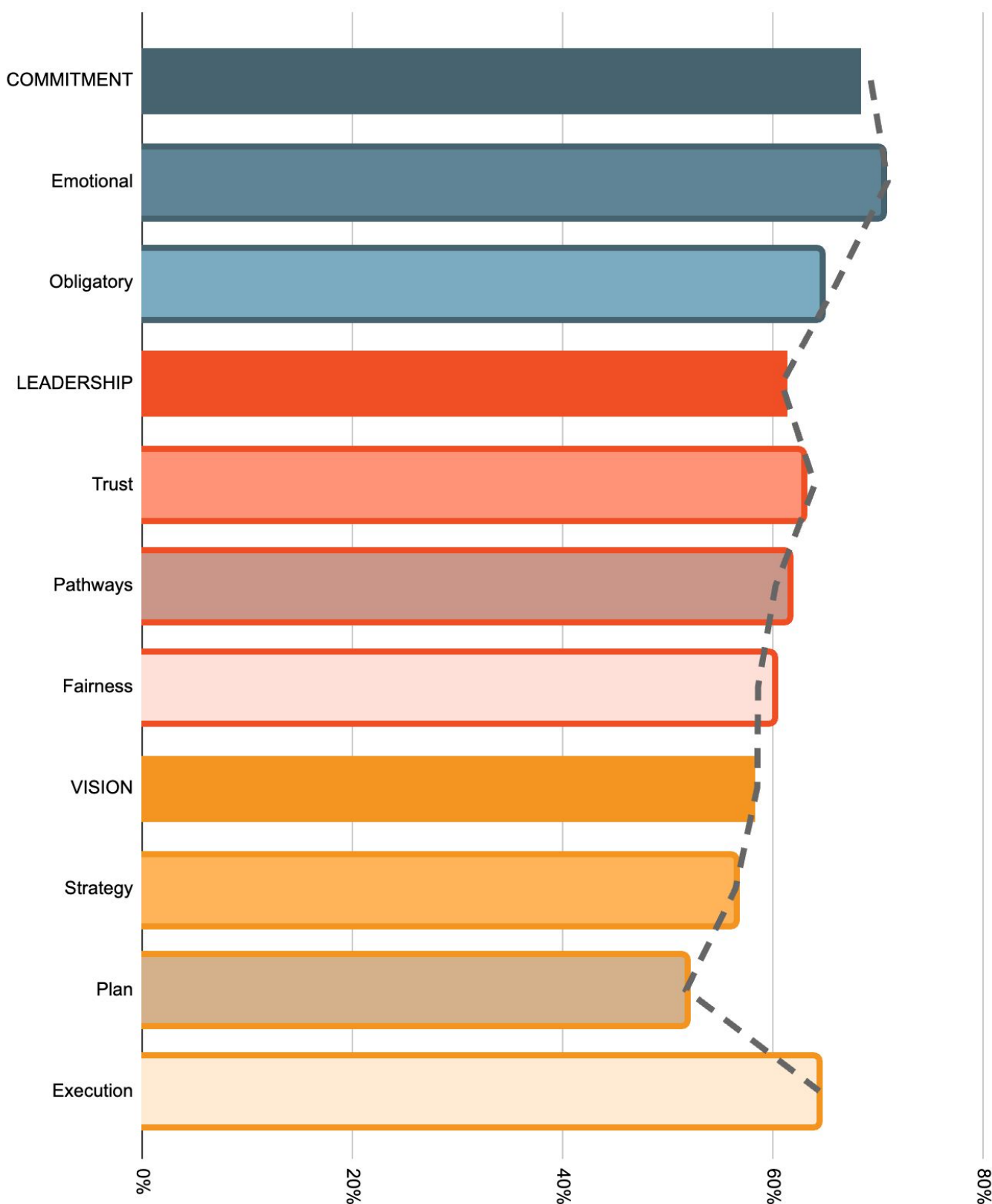
Confidence In Our Local Community

Engagement Summary:

The community shows strong loyalty and pride, with many residents feeling a deep sense of belonging and commitment. Most residents express a willingness to stay in the community long-term and are proud of its accomplishments. However, there's some variability in how connected residents feel to the community's challenges, with a portion feeling less engaged. Confidence in the community's future is mixed, highlighting the need for better communication and transparency from leadership. Strengthening inclusive leadership pathways and aligning decisions with broader resident needs could enhance overall engagement and unity.



How do our residents view our community?



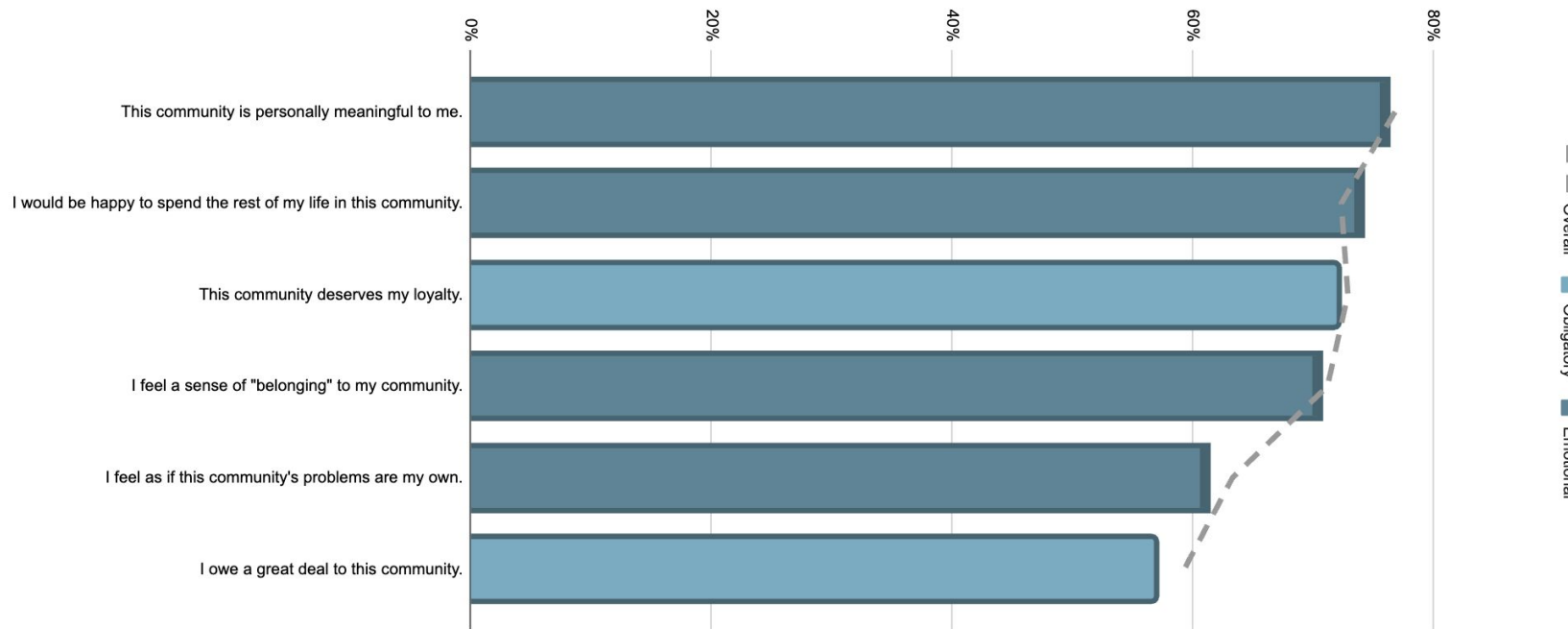
The biggest challenge in how residents view the community is the variability in their sense of connection and involvement. While many residents feel a strong sense of belonging and pride, a significant number feel less connected to the community's challenges and uncertain about its future direction. This disconnect poses a risk of disengagement, particularly if residents do not see their concerns reflected in leadership decisions. However, the greatest opportunity for growth lies in leveraging the strong loyalty and pride that many residents already have. By improving communication and ensuring that leadership decisions are inclusive and transparent, the community can foster a more unified sense of purpose and engagement.

1. How can we better include all residents in discussions about the community's future?
2. What steps can we take to ensure that all residents feel their concerns are being addressed?
3. How can we strengthen the sense of connection among residents who currently feel less engaged?



Confidence In Our Local Community

Community Confidence: Personal Commitment



The biggest challenge is fostering a stronger sense of reciprocity and responsibility among residents, ensuring they feel their contributions and connection to the community are valued and impactful.

How can we increase residents' sense of responsibility toward the community?

What actions can demonstrate the community's value to its residents?

How can we better connect individual success with community well-being?

Community Confidence: Local Leadership



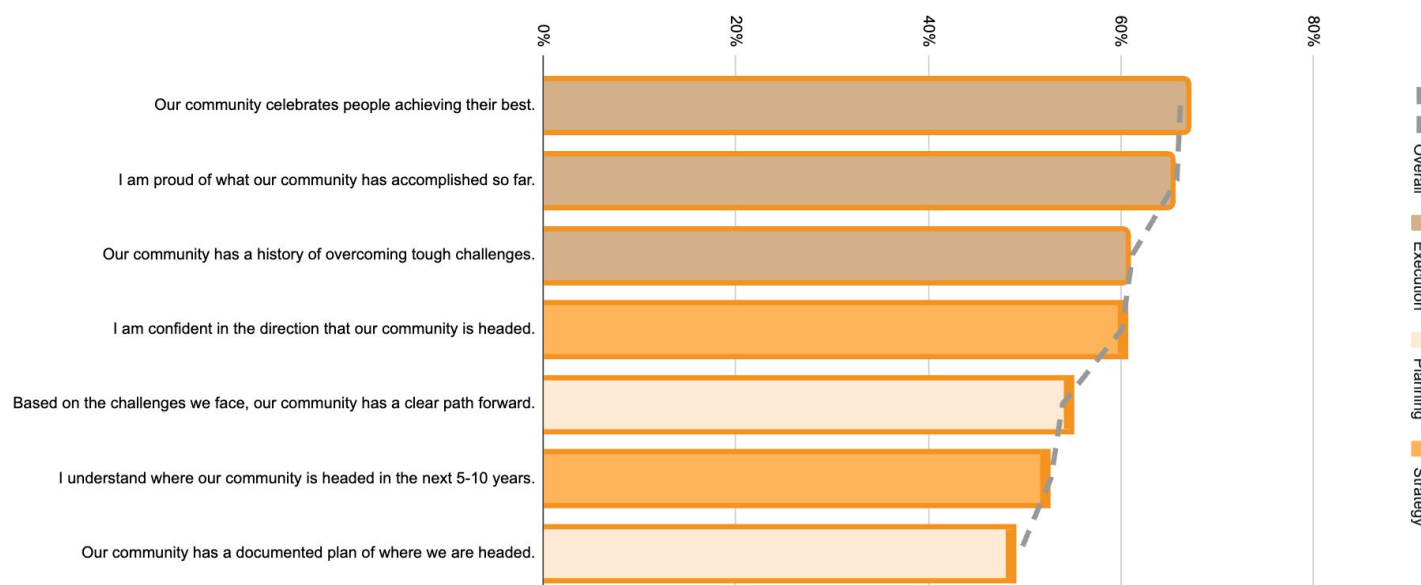
The biggest challenge in the Leadership category is the lack of clear pathways for residents to get involved in leadership. This gap can lead to feelings of exclusion and disconnect from decision-making. To build trust and engagement, it's crucial to create more accessible opportunities for residents to participate in leadership roles.

How can we make leadership pathways more accessible?

How can we involve more residents in decisions?

How can leadership better reflect community diversity?

Community Confidence: Vision



The biggest challenge in the Vision category is the perceived lack of a documented plan for the community's future. This absence can create uncertainty and hinder collective progress. To foster confidence and alignment, it's essential to develop and communicate a clear, inclusive plan that reflects the community's goals.

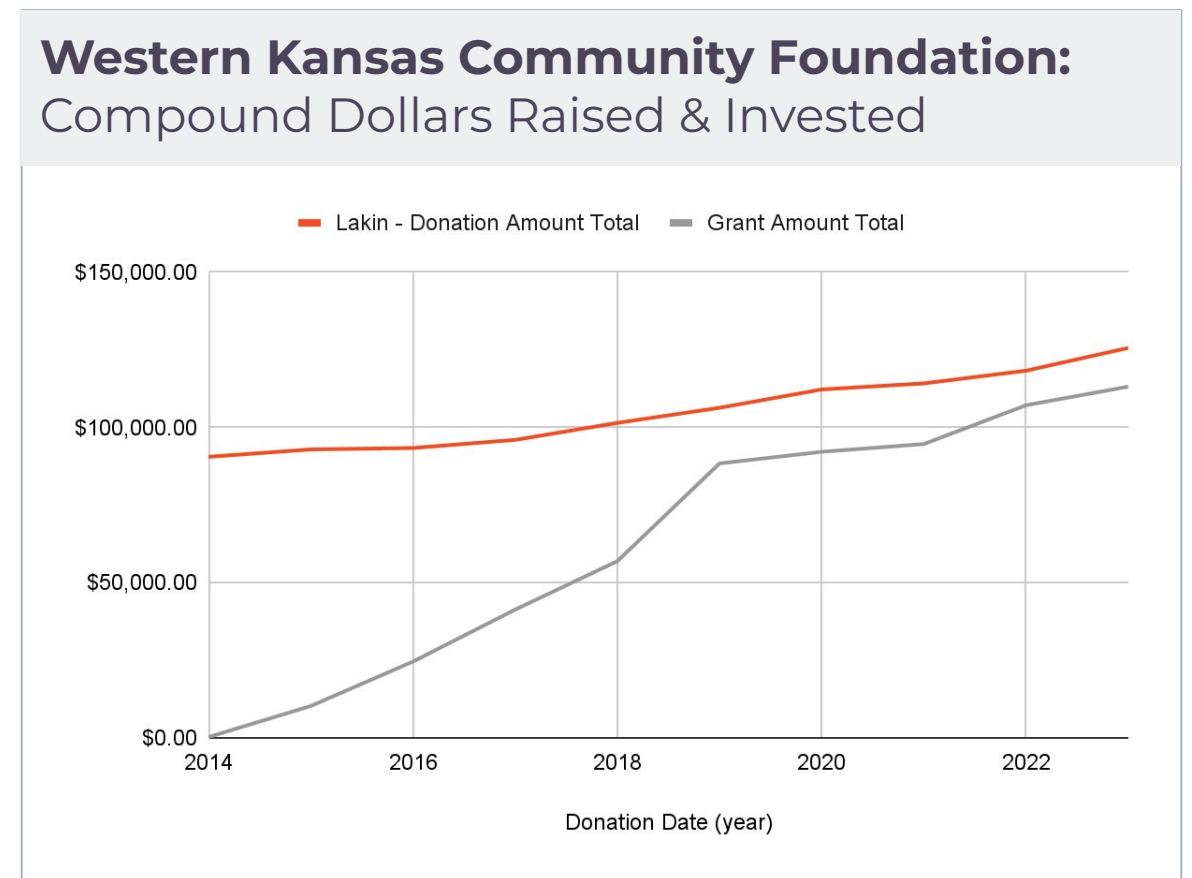
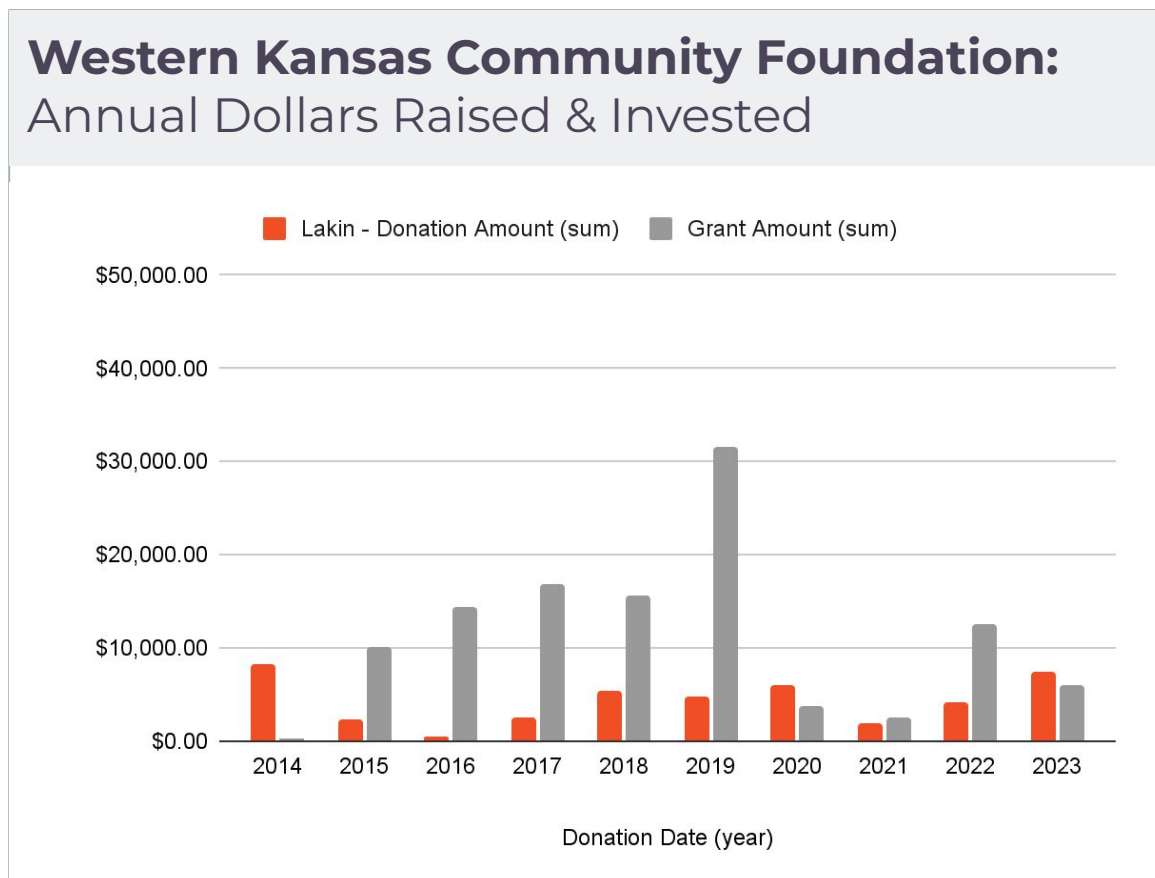
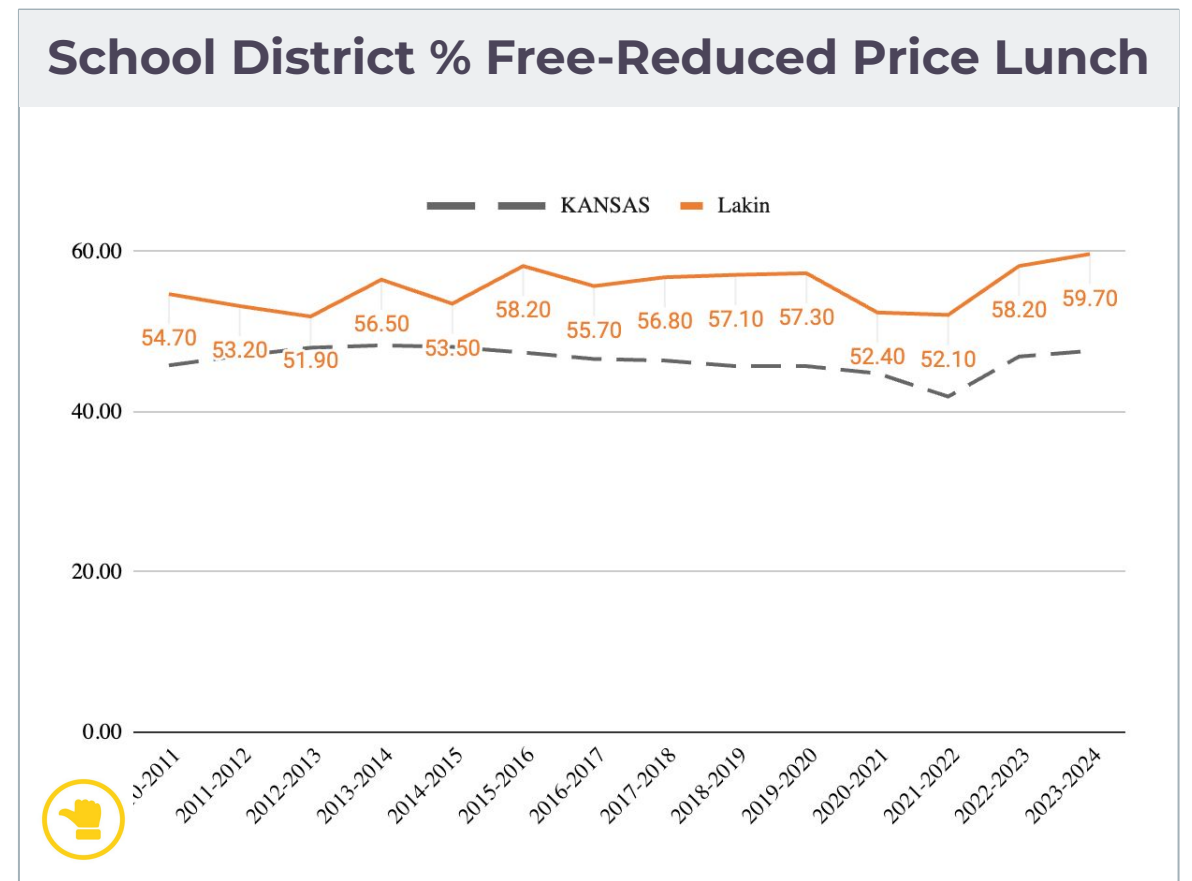
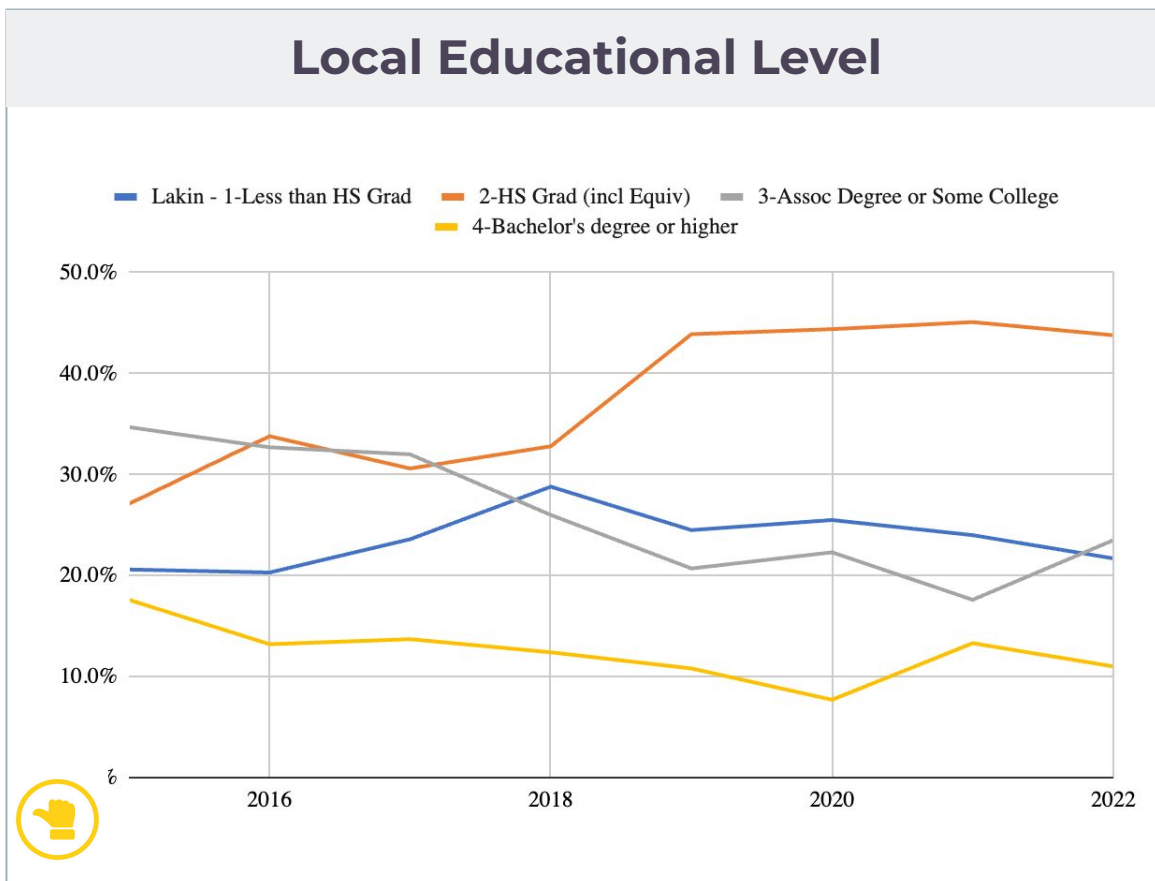
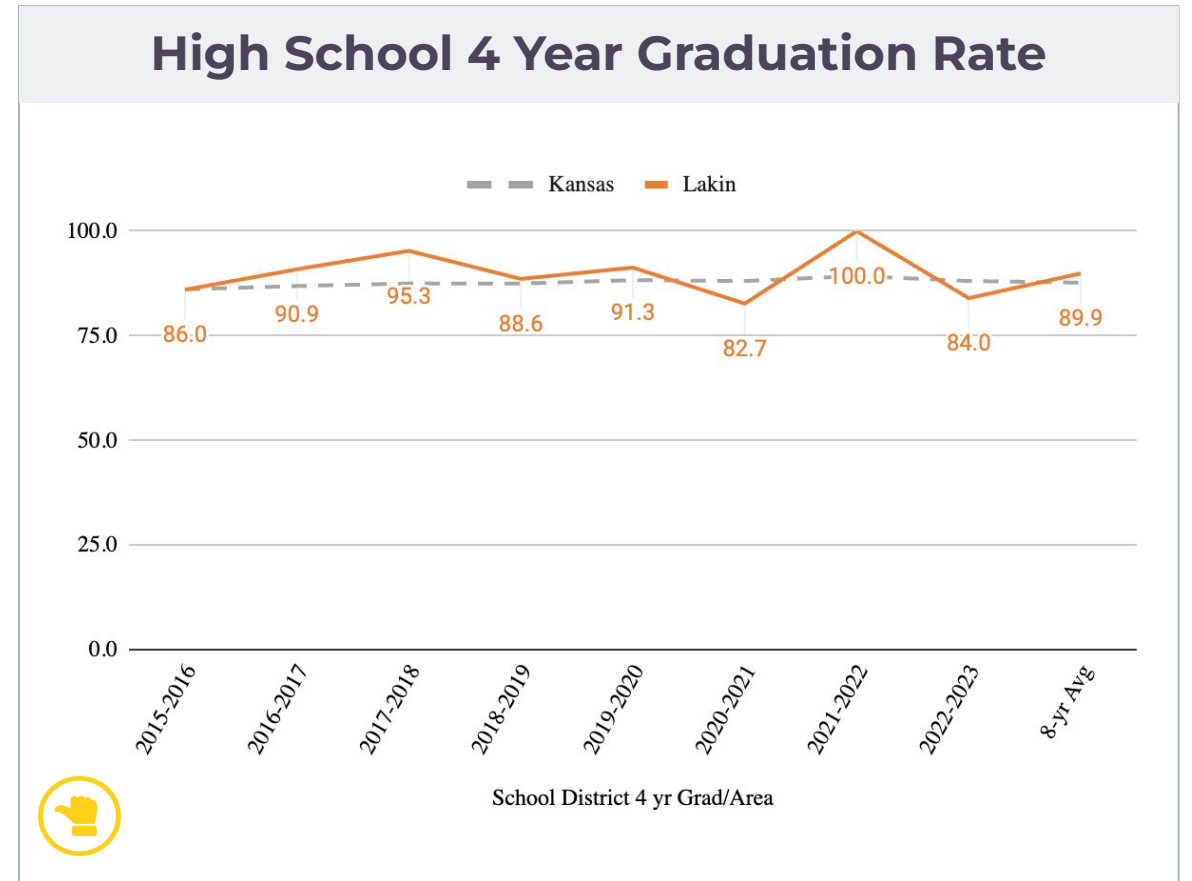
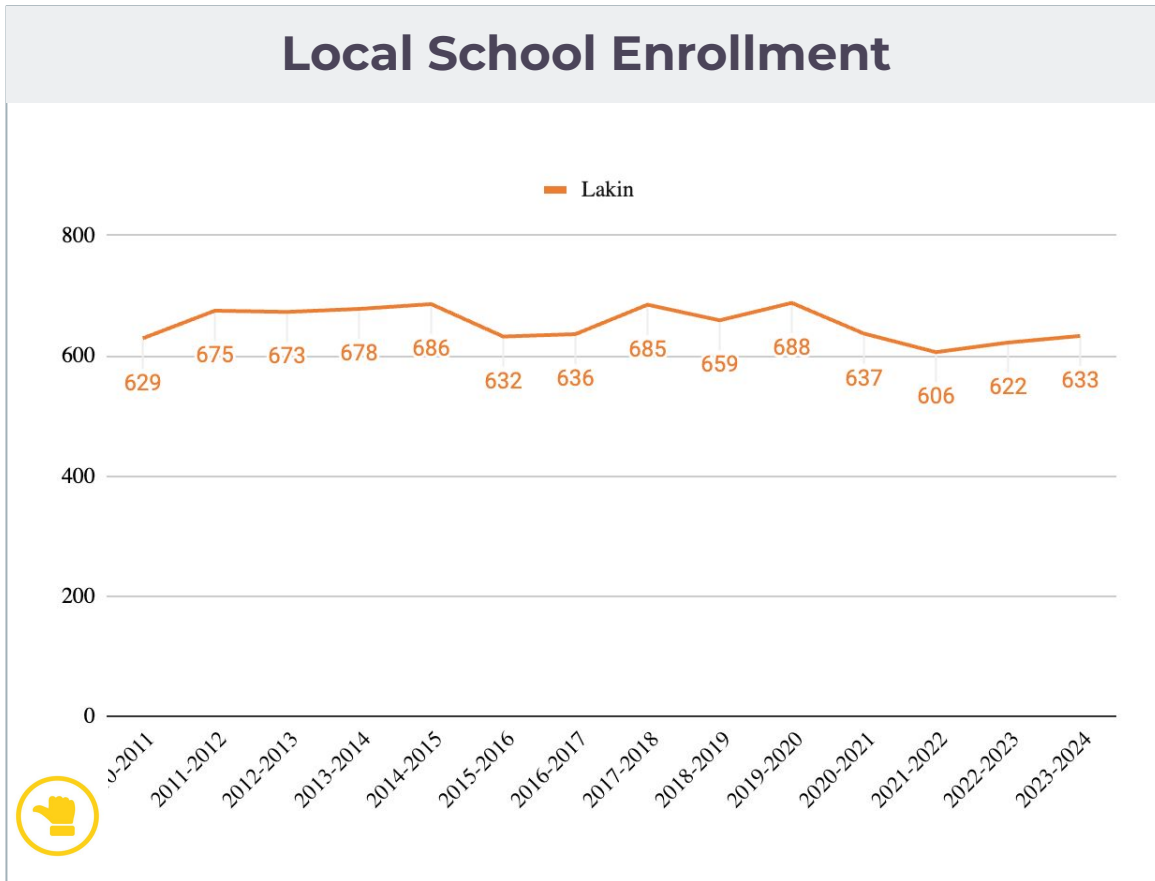
How can we create and share a clear community plan?

How can we ensure all voices are included in this plan?

What steps can we take to build trust in the community's future?

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

Local Community Indicators



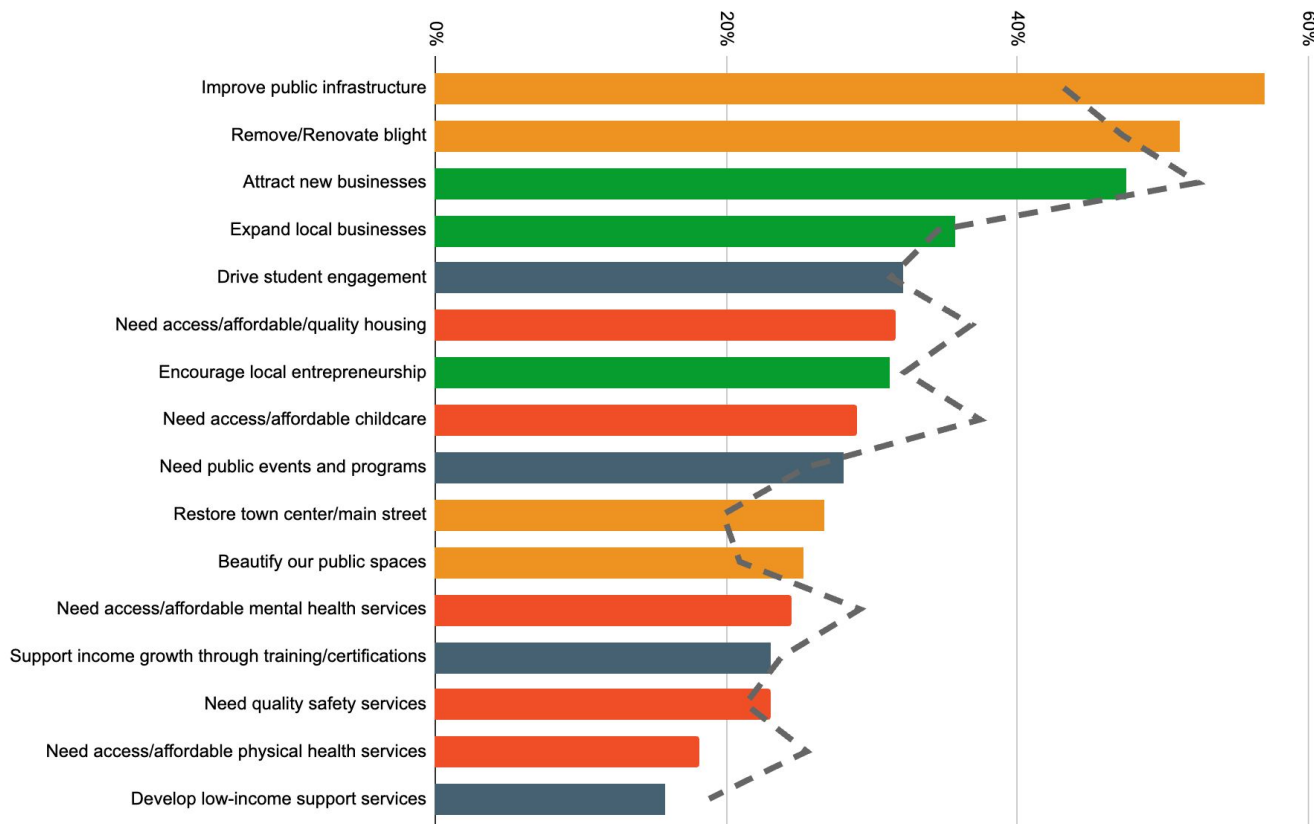
Community Priorities

Priorities Summary:

The community's top priorities focus on economic resilience, with strong emphasis on attracting and expanding local businesses and encouraging entrepreneurship. There is also a desire to improve public infrastructure and beautify public areas. In terms of metrics, residents prioritize the number of new businesses, household income, and the percentage of the population with healthcare coverage. These priorities and metrics reflect a community focused on economic growth, infrastructure improvement, and health.

■ Health
 ■ Placemaking
 ■ Economy
 ■ People
 ■ Average Western Kansas Score

2024 Program Priorities



Vibrant Place

Residents focus on improving public infrastructure, beautifying public areas, and renovating run-down properties. These efforts aim to create a more attractive environment, enhancing community pride and making the area more appealing to both residents and visitors.

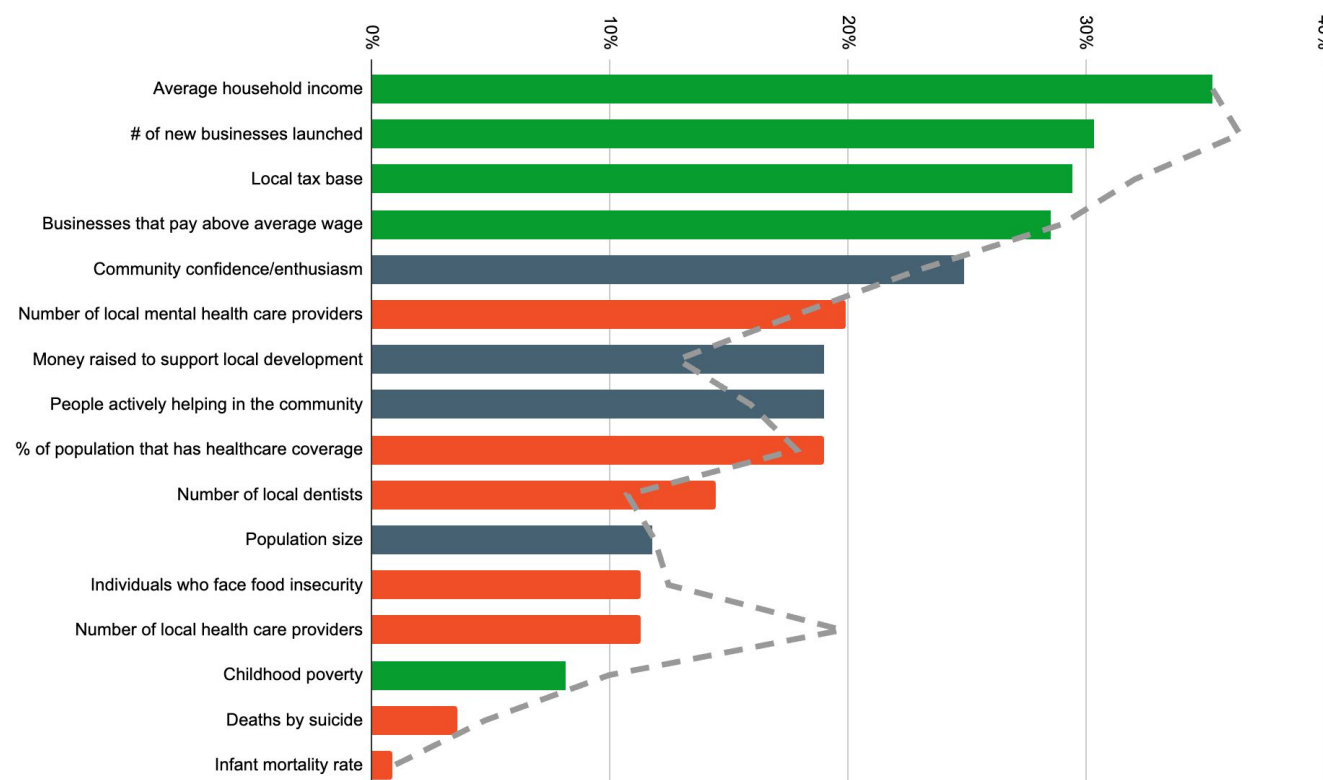
Resilient Economy

The community prioritizes attracting new businesses, expanding existing ones, and fostering local entrepreneurship. These actions are crucial for economic stability, providing job opportunities and higher incomes, and building a strong foundation for long-term growth.

Engaged Citizens

Residents emphasize building community pride through public events and programming. Engaged citizens are seen as key to the community's success, driving participation in local initiatives and ensuring that the community's values are reflected in decision-making.

2024 Priority Metrics



Economy

Residents focus on increasing the number of new businesses, particularly those offering above-average wages. Improving average household income is also a priority, reflecting the community's desire to strengthen its economic base and provide more financial stability for residents.

Community Engagement

The community emphasizes the importance of raising funds to support local development and initiatives. There is a strong focus on increasing participation in community events and decision-making processes, aiming to foster a more involved and cohesive community.

Health

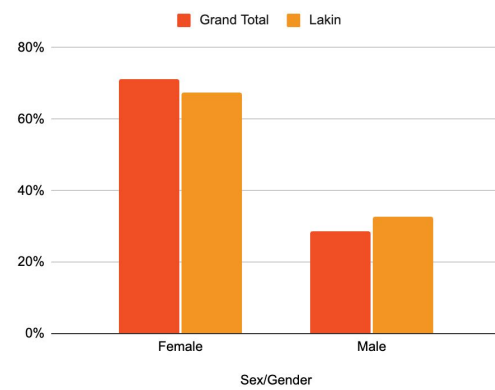
Health metrics prioritize expanding access to healthcare coverage and improving the percentage of the population with insurance. This focus reflects the community's commitment to ensuring that all residents have access to essential healthcare services, contributing to overall well-being.

Survey Respondents

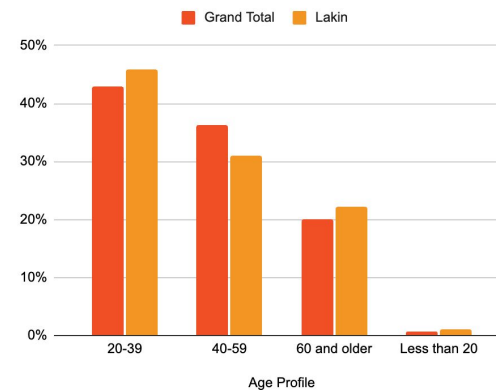
Number of Participants



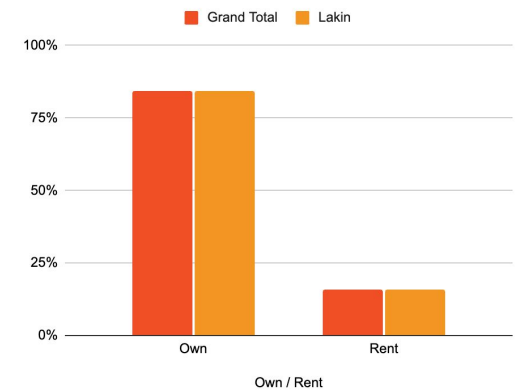
Gender



Age Profile



Residential Status



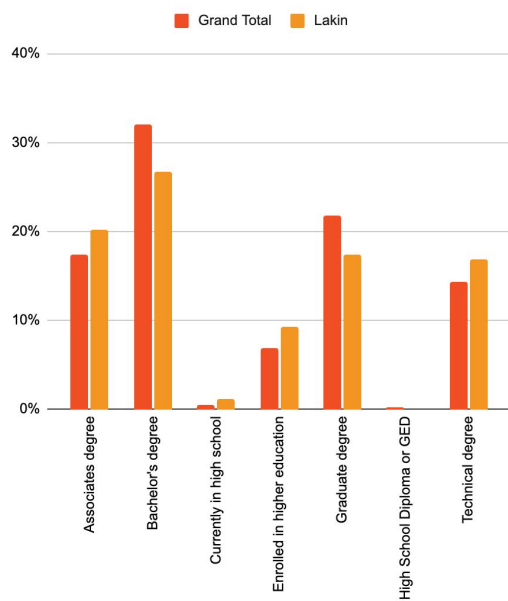
The biggest demographic captured in the survey is long-term residents who have lived in the community for 5 to 20 years, indicating a stable and established population base.

Female respondents outnumber males, suggesting that women are more engaged or willing to participate in the survey, reflecting their active involvement in community matters.

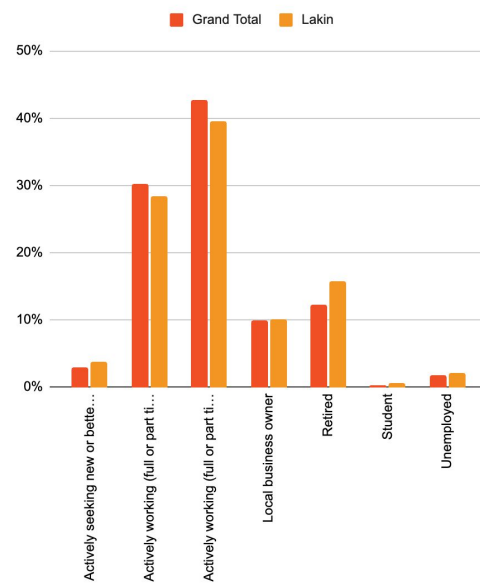
The majority of respondents are aged 20-39, indicating that the survey captured a younger, working-age demographic focused on current and future community development.

Homeowners make up the majority of respondents, showing a vested interest in long-term community development and stability, with renters being less represented in the survey.

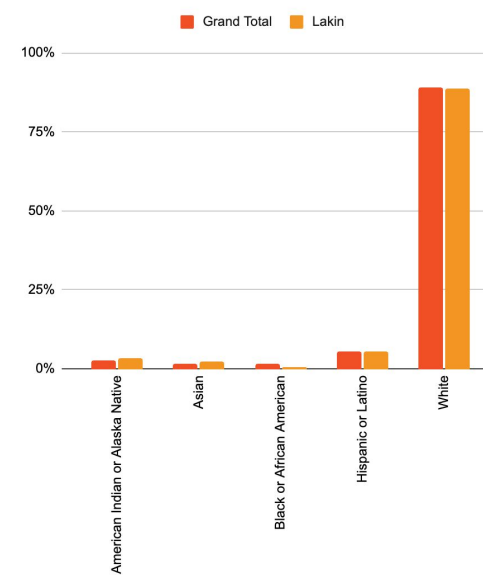
Education Level



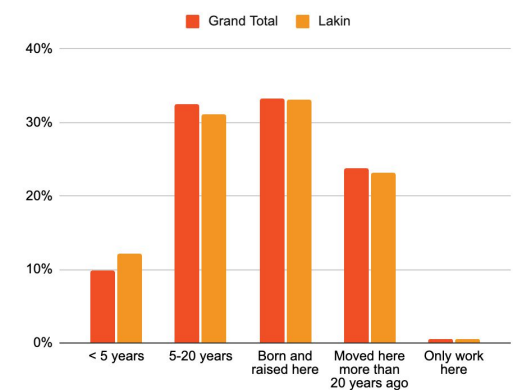
Employment Status



Ethnicity



Years lived in location



Most respondents hold a Bachelor's degree, indicating a well-educated population that may prioritize advanced economic development, leadership, and educational opportunities.

The majority of respondents are actively working, especially in public service roles, highlighting a community engaged in maintaining and improving local infrastructure and services.

Not enough data to analyze.

Most respondents have lived in the community for 5 to 20 years, reflecting a stable population with strong ties to the area, likely influencing their commitment to local issues.

Town Score
Average Overall Score

83

Number of people who expressed an interest in volunteering to better the community
83 of 254 (32%)