



MCPHERSON COUNTY
**Community
Foundation**

2024 Community Benchmark Report City of Canton, KS

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What Makes Our Community Special?

The family like atmosphere.

Brenda Jo Vogts

My family history makes Canton a special place in my heart.

Emmaretta McAlister

I like that it's a small town. I also live on the north end with a wheat field across the street. It's quiet.

Miretta Friesen

Lots of good people who are genuinely interested in making their hometown a source of pride for everyone who live there.

Anonymous

I've been here for my whole life and so have many others.

Jordyn Elliot

Everyone is very kind and welcoming!

Gracen

The town is so small everyone knows everyone and everyone in this town gets along together really good. We plan things whenever we need to do something. We plan things about a month before.

Bentley Deines

The tight knit relationships we form with one another. I find that everyone knows everyone and we all help each other where we can.

Anonymous

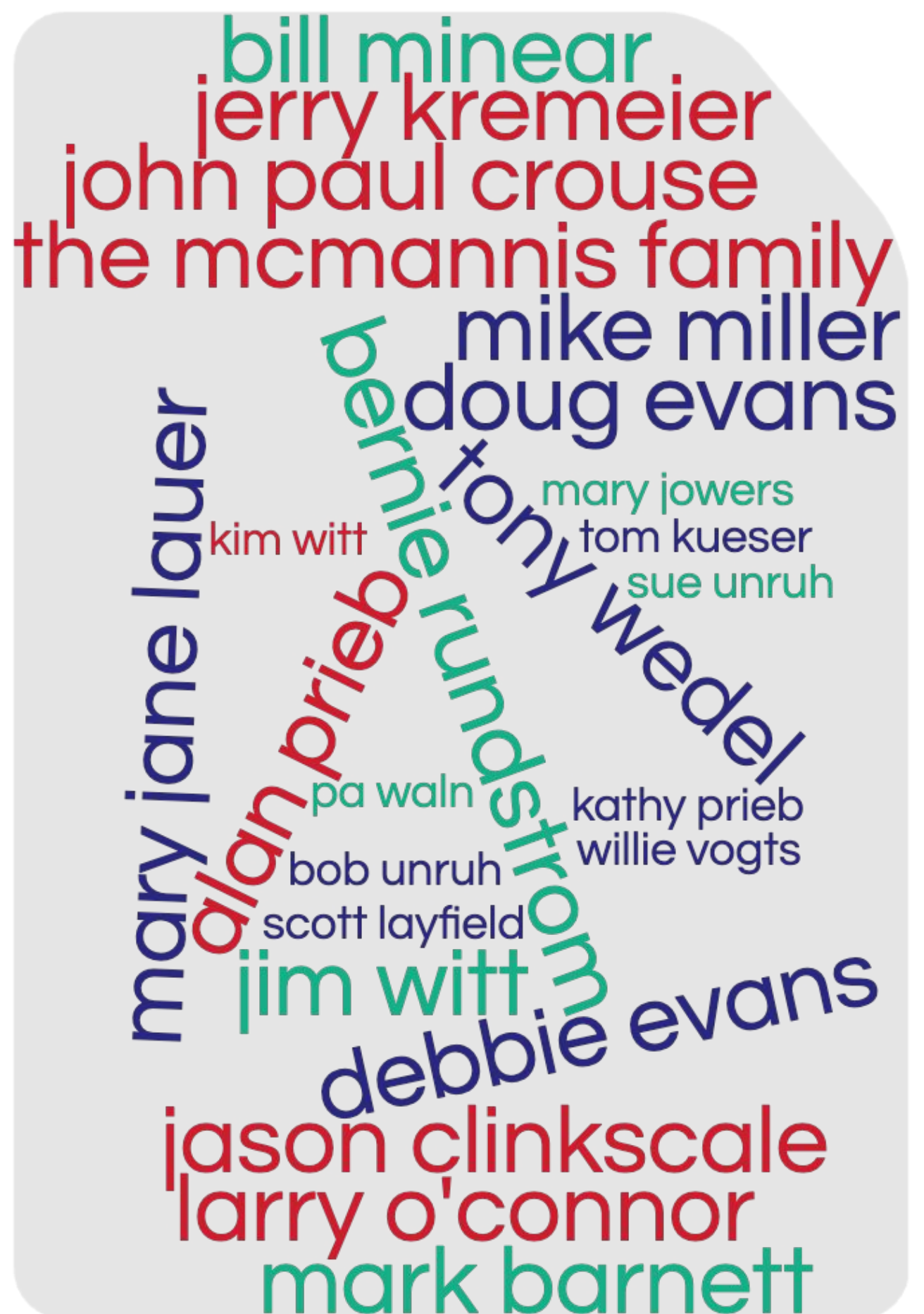
Our community is special because we stick together. Our community is small but mighty.

Emma Anderson

We have a great school system, several local churches and businesses. We have an amazing newly remodeled library. Maxwell Wildlife area and State Lake are attractions. The people in small towns make it special as well.

Anonymous

The Leaders That Make Our Community Special





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Executive Summary:

The most interesting economic trend in Canton is that the while local population is shrinking, the school enrollment is up. Local population shrinkage can be devastating for the community because of the ripple effects it has on the local tax base. This phenomenon can also be perceived in the local economic confidence, which is VERY low. The two priorities that are highlighted in the report are the need for placemaking initiatives that address blight and improve public infrastructure, in a manner that makes the community more attractive to businesses and residents.

pg **4, 5**

Economic Confidence

Economic confidence and the economic metrics of Canton are quite poor. The power that resides in a small town like Canton is that with one or two small wins, the residents confidence can once again blossom.

pg **6, 7, 8**

Community Engagement Confidence

The community confidence in Canton across the board is lower than that of residents in other McPherson towns. The big opportunity highlighted by the residents is that they would like to see a more proactive community plan that benefits more residents. Local leaders should consider how to best demonstrate this for the residents.

pg **9**

Critical Community Priorities

The biggest priority that the residents of Canton are highlighting are the need for improved public infrastructure. When compared to other communities, this is the one area that ranks higher in Canton than other parts of the county. The other critical issue that residents are highlighting is the need for growth in local population through better local jobs.

pg **10**

Survey Respondent Profile

Interesting differences lie between various demographics in town. Most interesting finding is that while the 'Students' generally have a lower commitment, their remaining feedback is aligned with the feedback of the other community members.

The Community Benchmarking report has been commissioned by McPherson 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 McPherson County 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.**





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Confidence In Our Local Economy

Economic Summary:

The local residents are expressing a lack of confidence in the economics of the town. The current economic confidence is low, and the future is generally seen as being 'average'. Furthermore, it is also worth noting that this perception is significantly lower than that of an average McPherson County resident towards their respective local town.

While year over year, the the economic confidence has remained steady, the current business conditions did decline. The positive area for the community is that while, the rest of the county saw a dip in the assessment of Current Employment Opportunities, the measurement in Canton stayed steady.

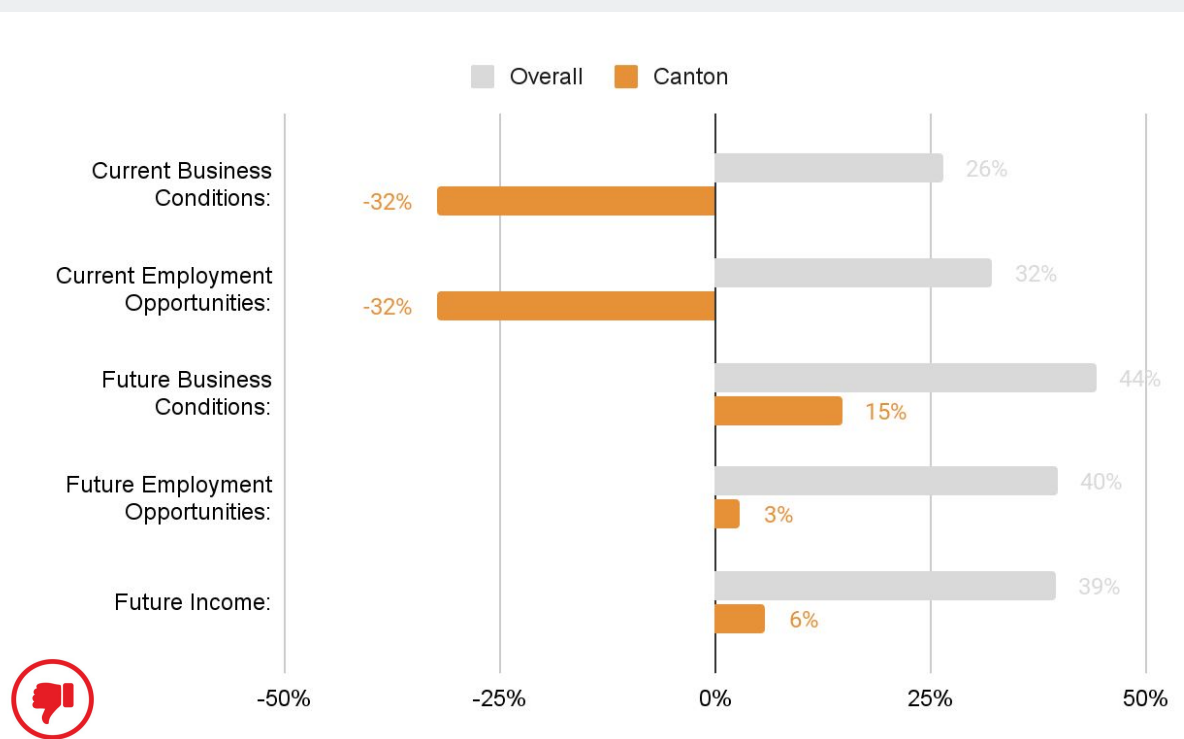
As we look at broader economic metrics, the ones that are concerning are the increased poverty and unemployment in town. At the same time the housing units, tax collections and population is down.

A good first step would be to ensure that local leaders understand these trends, so that they can more informed decisions.

Businesses Needed In Our Town:

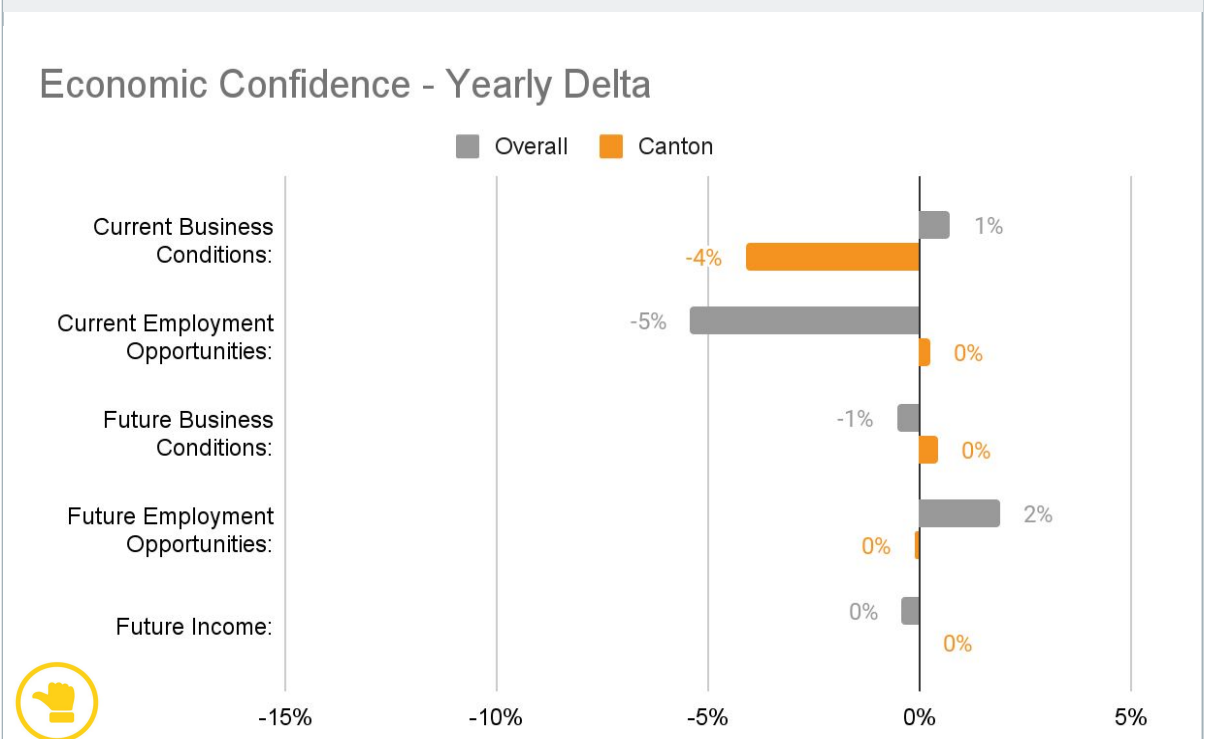
- 1. Restaurants:** Many respondents expressed a desire for new or better restaurants, including family restaurants, ethnic food options, breakfast/brunch spots, and sit-down dining.
 - 2. Childcare Centers:** There is a significant call for more childcare facilities, especially those with expanded hours to accommodate different work shifts.
 - 3. Affordable Housing:** Many comments focus on the need for more low-cost and affordable housing options, particularly for middle-income and retired individuals.
 - 4. Recreational Facilities:** Respondents mentioned a variety of recreational businesses, such as a rec center, trampoline park, climbing wall, and other indoor activity centers.
 - 5. Grocery Stores:** There is a demand for better grocery stores, with some specific mentions of chain stores like Aldi or improving existing local stores.
 - 6. Mental Health and Addiction Services:** Several comments highlight the need for better access to mental health services and addiction treatment facilities.
- The most repeated business types were restaurants and childcare centers, indicating strong community interest in these areas.

Our Economic Perceptions



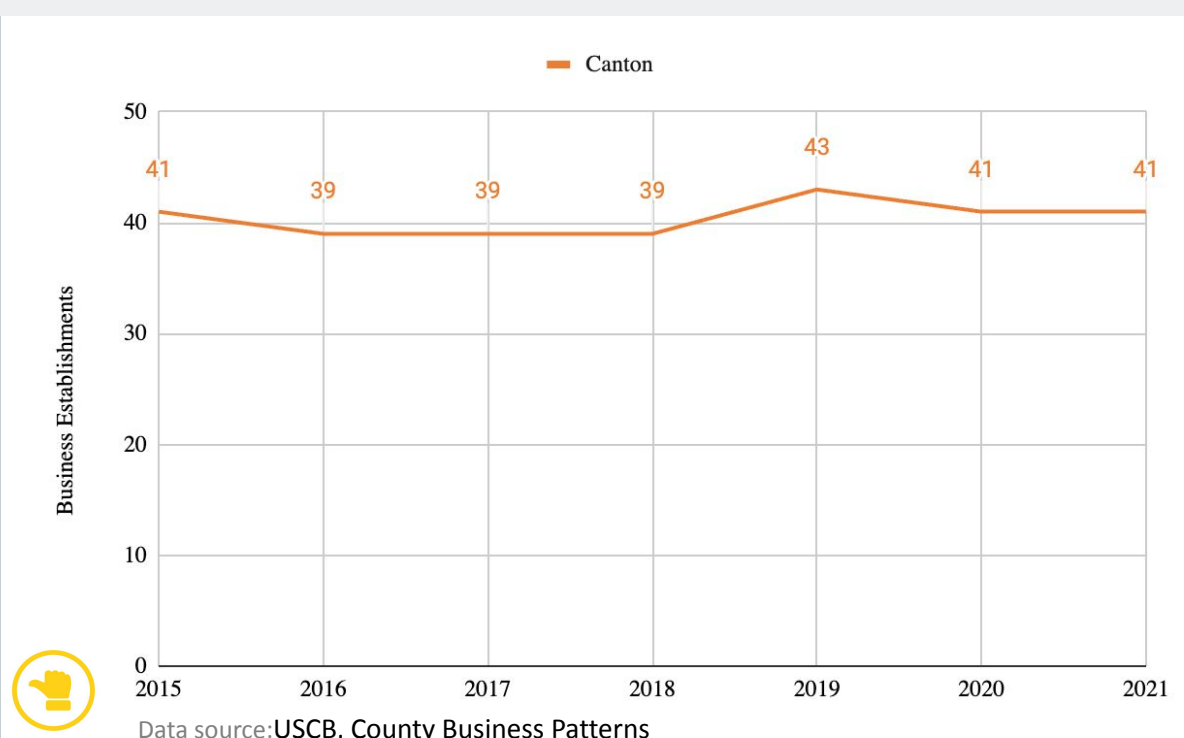
Residents have a poor perception of their local economy.

Year Over Year Change (2023 vs 2024)



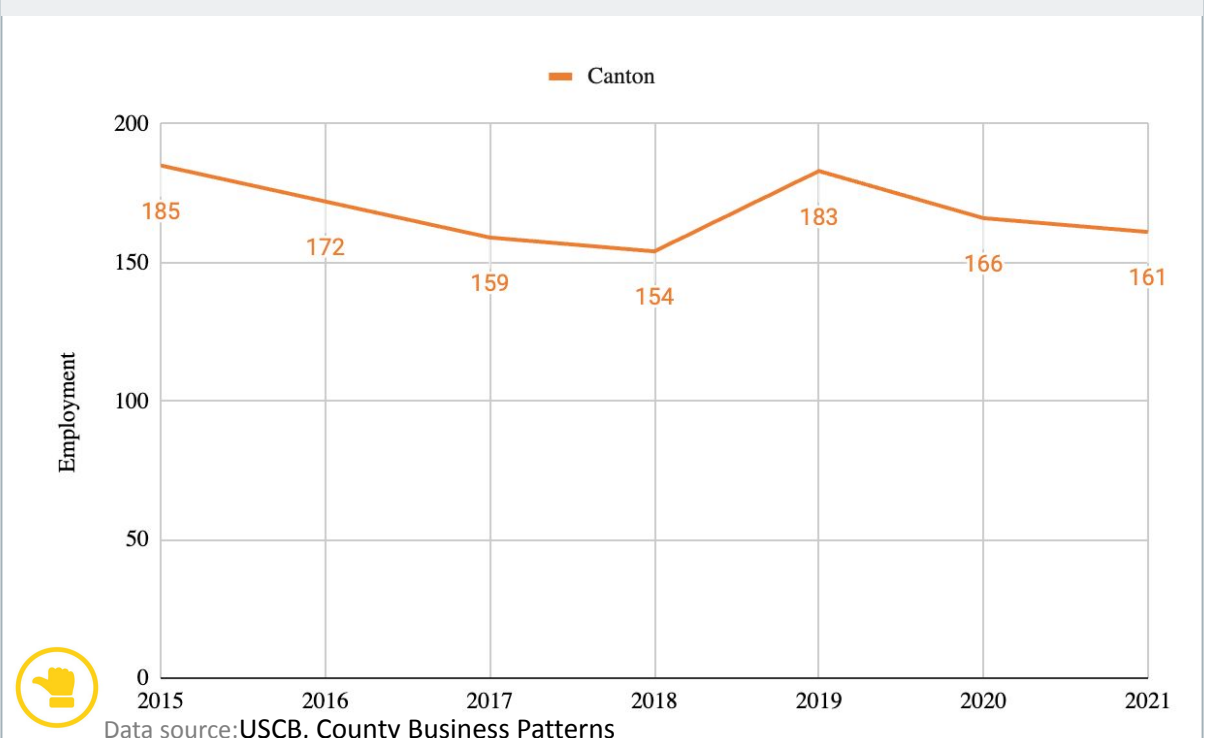
Generally the perceptions are similar to last year.

Businesses in Our Town



Number of business in town are steady.

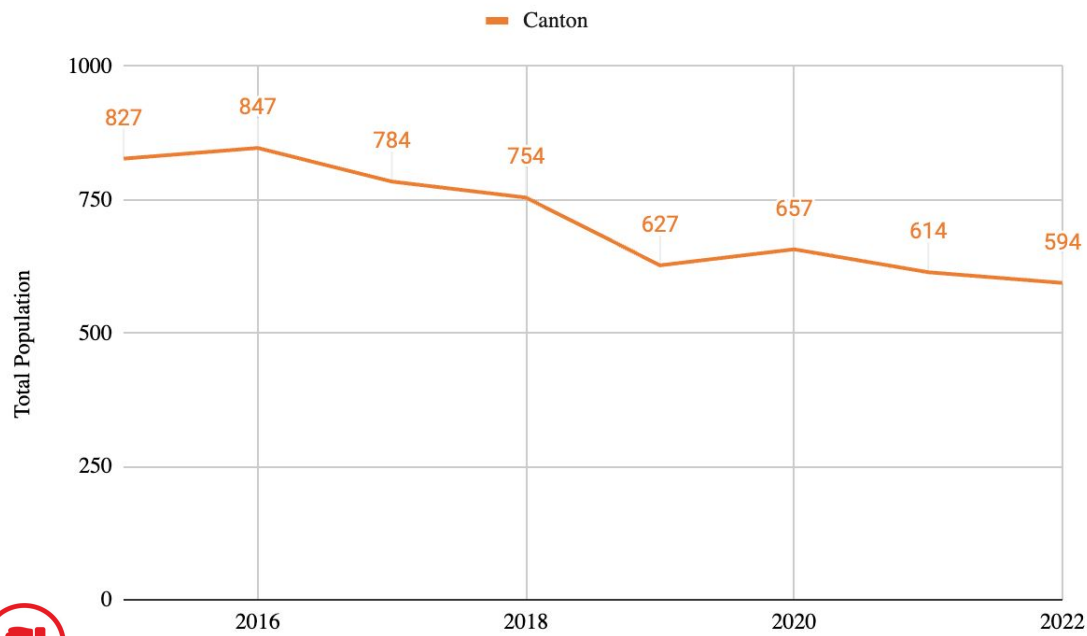
10 Year Shift in Local Jobs



Number of jobs in town are steady.

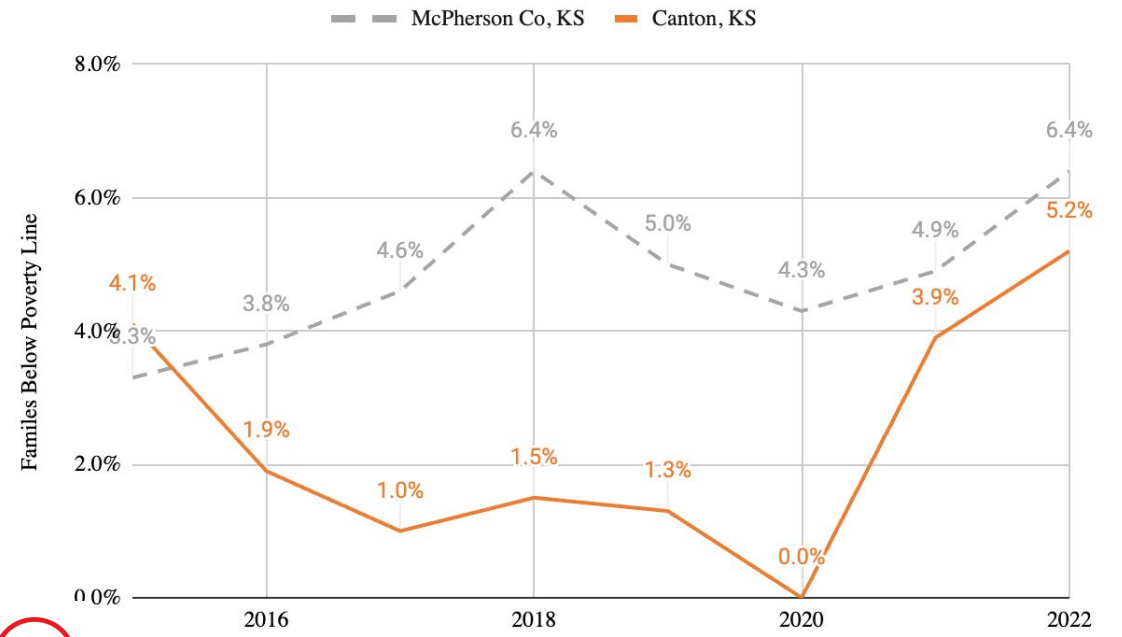
Local Economic Indicators

Overall Population Trend



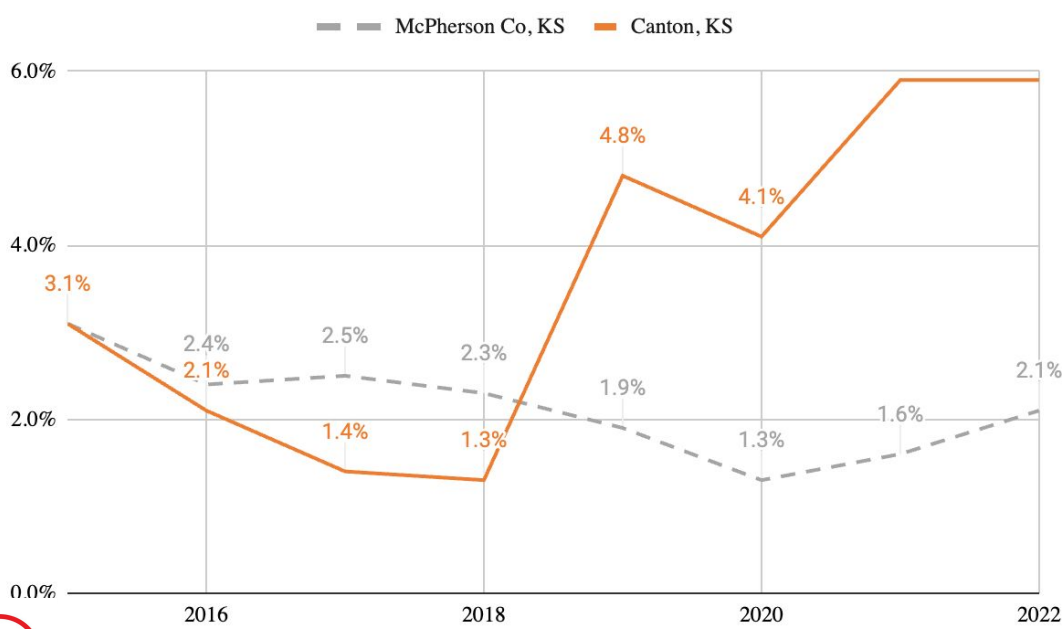
Data source:USCB, ACS 5-Yr Avg

Local Poverty Rate



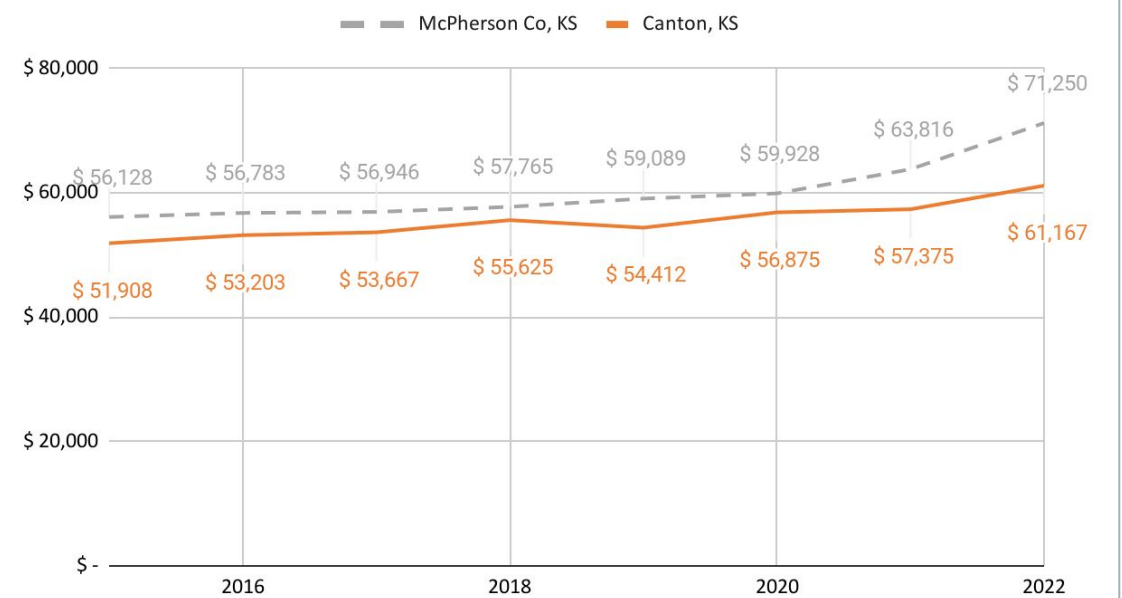
Data source:USCB, American Community Survey, 5-Yr Avg, DP03

Local Unemployment Rate



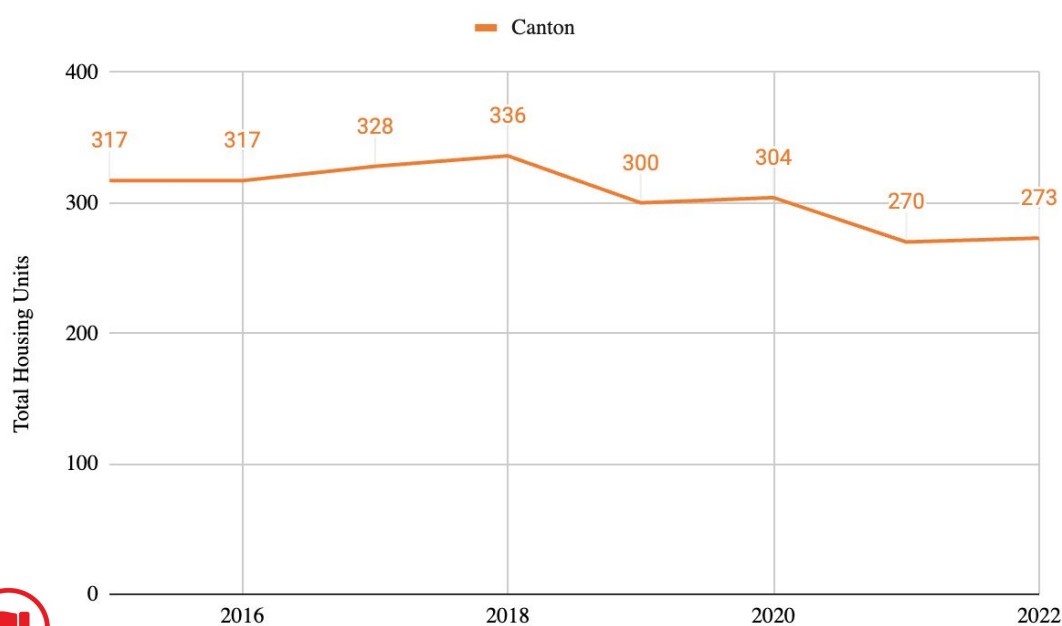
Data source:USCB, American Community Survey, 5-Yr Avg, DP03

Median Household Income



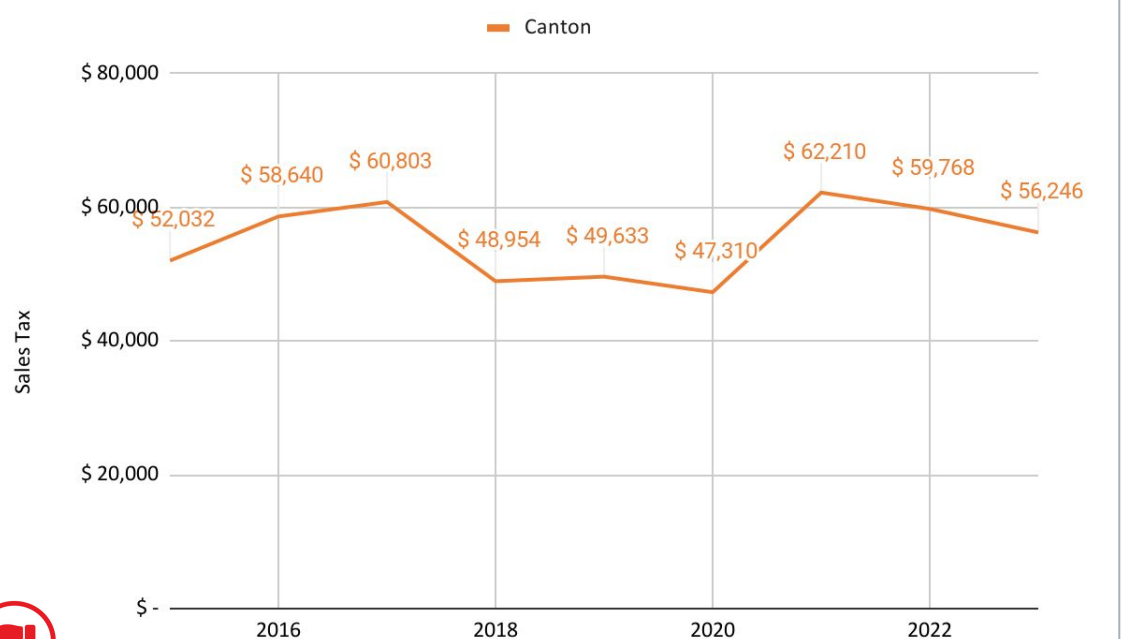
Data source:USCB, American Community Survey, 5-Yr Avg, DP03

Total Housing Units



Data source:USCB, ACS 5-Yr Avg

Annual Sales Tax Collection



Data source:Kansas Dept of Revenue



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Confidence In Our Local Community

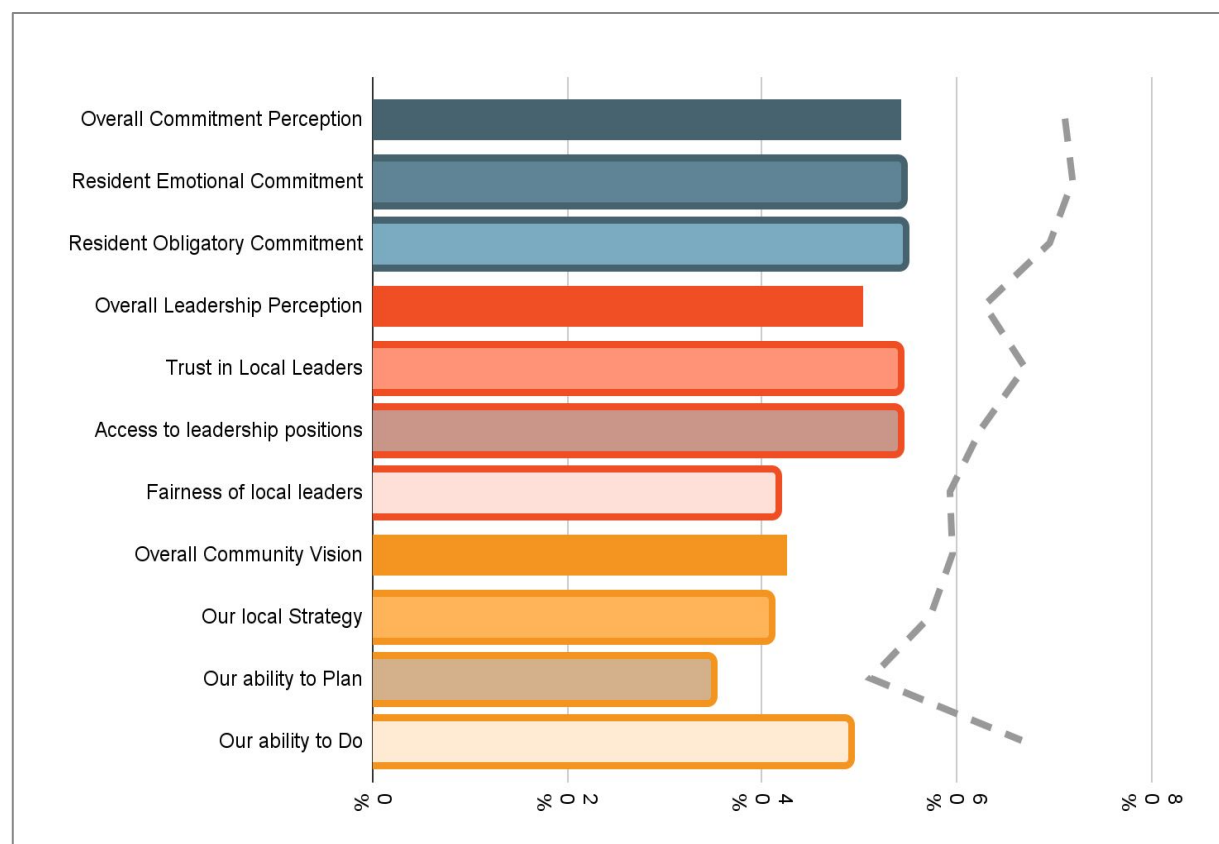
Engagement Summary:

The area where Canton residents come closest to aligning with the average McPherson County responder is on the question that 'Newcomers are welcomed in our community'. Unfortunately, across every category of assessment Canton residence assessment of their community is lower than the average McPherson county resident's assessment of their own community.

The trick for the City of Canton is to use its strengths and tackle its most pressing challenges. The biggest challenge we see for the community is that the residents aren't seeing the leaders create a cohesive community plan. This effort will also help address the other key challenge, that the residents don't see local leaders making decisions that are in line with community's best interests. Often the biggest opportunity is not to create new efforts, rather to better communicate to local citizens what effort is being planned.



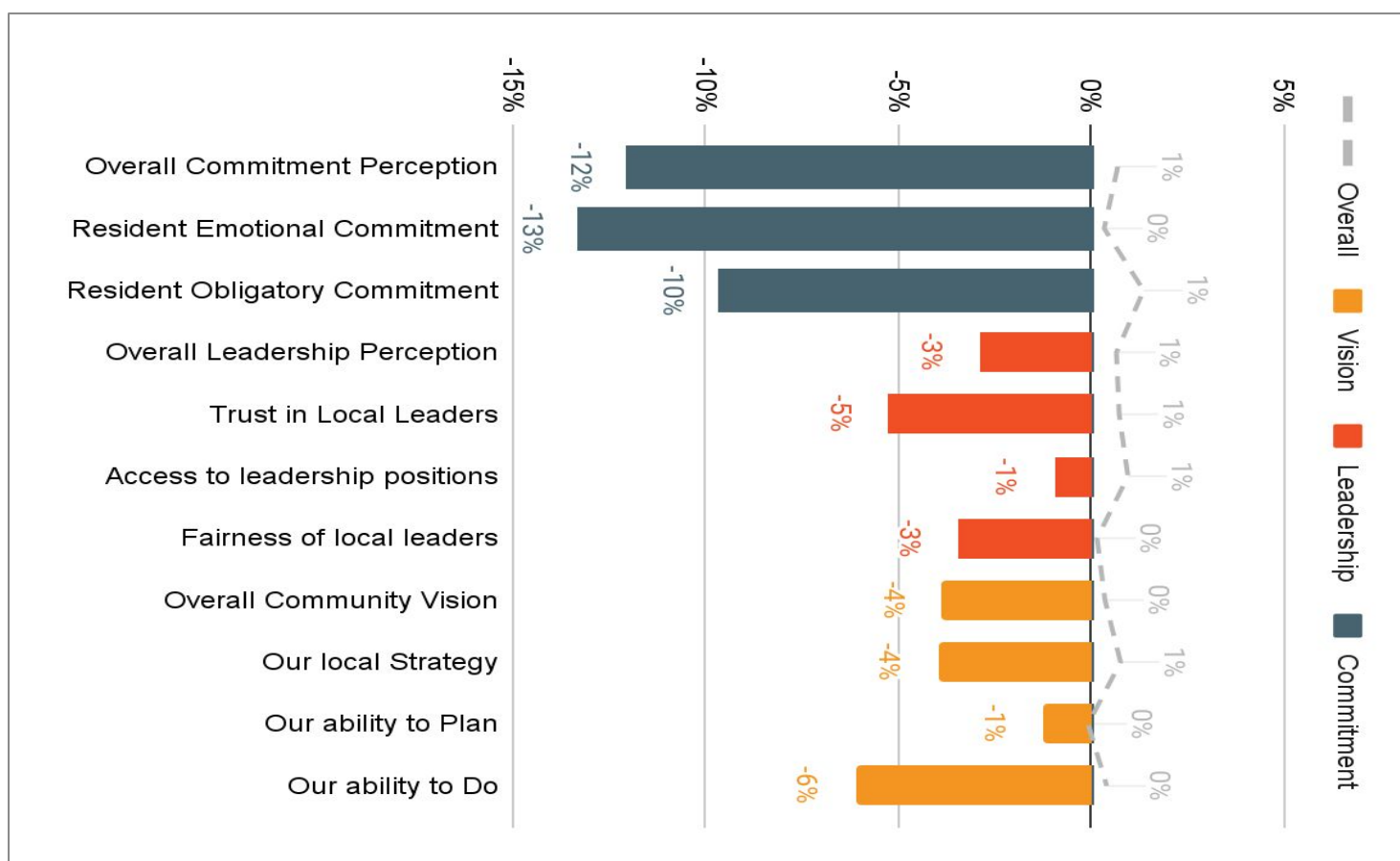
How do our residents view our community?



The overall assessment of Canton residents is that they are very committed to the community. This stems from both an emotional commitment and a sense of responsibility. They also have a similar level of confidence in the Trust of local leaders and the pathway to attain a local leadership position.

The two most acute opportunities for improvement are the ability for local leaders to demonstrate that the town has a thoughtful plan for its future; and secondly, across all categories, residents of Canton have a poorer view of their community than the average McPherson County resident of their respective community.

Year Over Year Change (2023 vs. 2024)



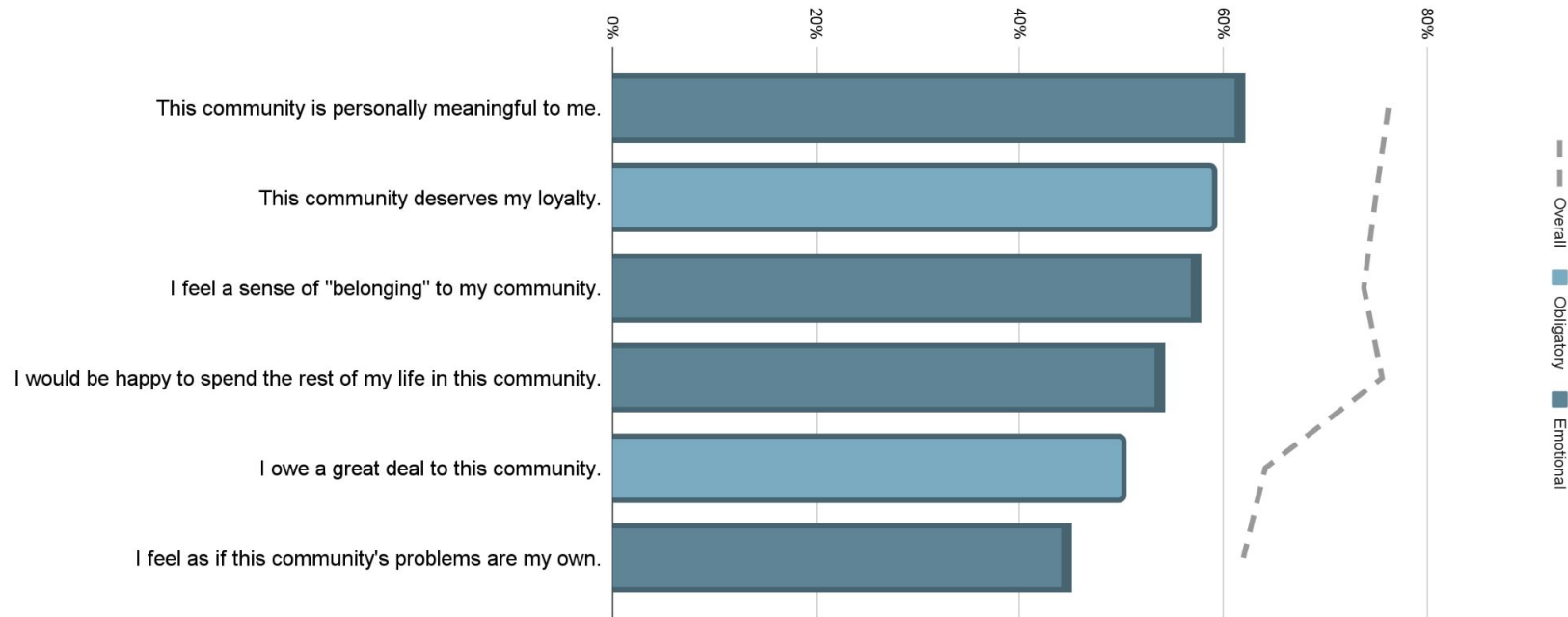
Across all the categories, we have seen a decline in the perceptions expressed by the Canton residents. Oddly the area where there was the biggest decline in perception was in the Commitment that residents felt towards Canton.

Considerations:
What can the community leaders do to help re-engage citizens' enthusiasm for the community? Residents that are not engaged in the community are most at risk of leaving.

We also notice that the Leadership reflections did drop extensively between the two years. Could the Canton resident be invited to serve in greater local leadership roles that will stoke the love of their community?

Confidence In Our Local Community

Community Confidence: Personal Commitment

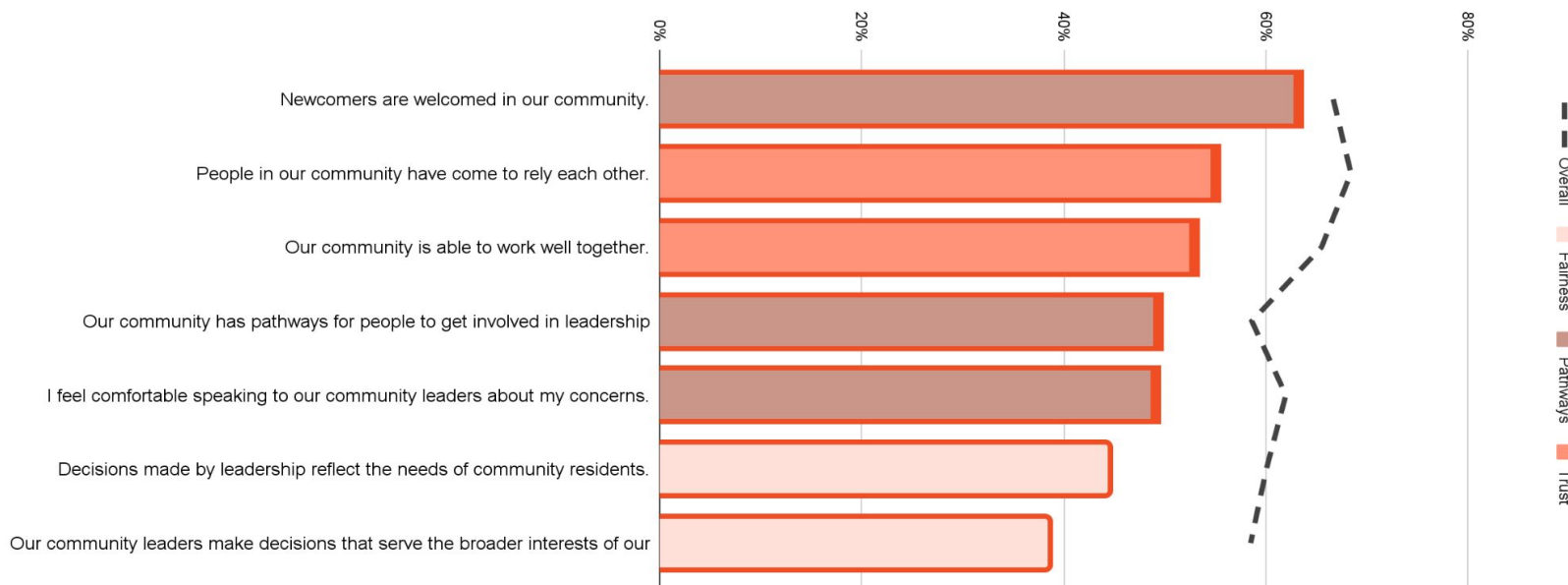


Interesting to note that Personal commitment across the categories of personal obligation and Emotional obligations is interspersed from high to low.

Discussion Questions:

- Does this data highlight an opportunity that the community should act on?
- What are some actions that the community leaders can take in 6 months to improve this feedback?

Community Confidence: Local Leadership

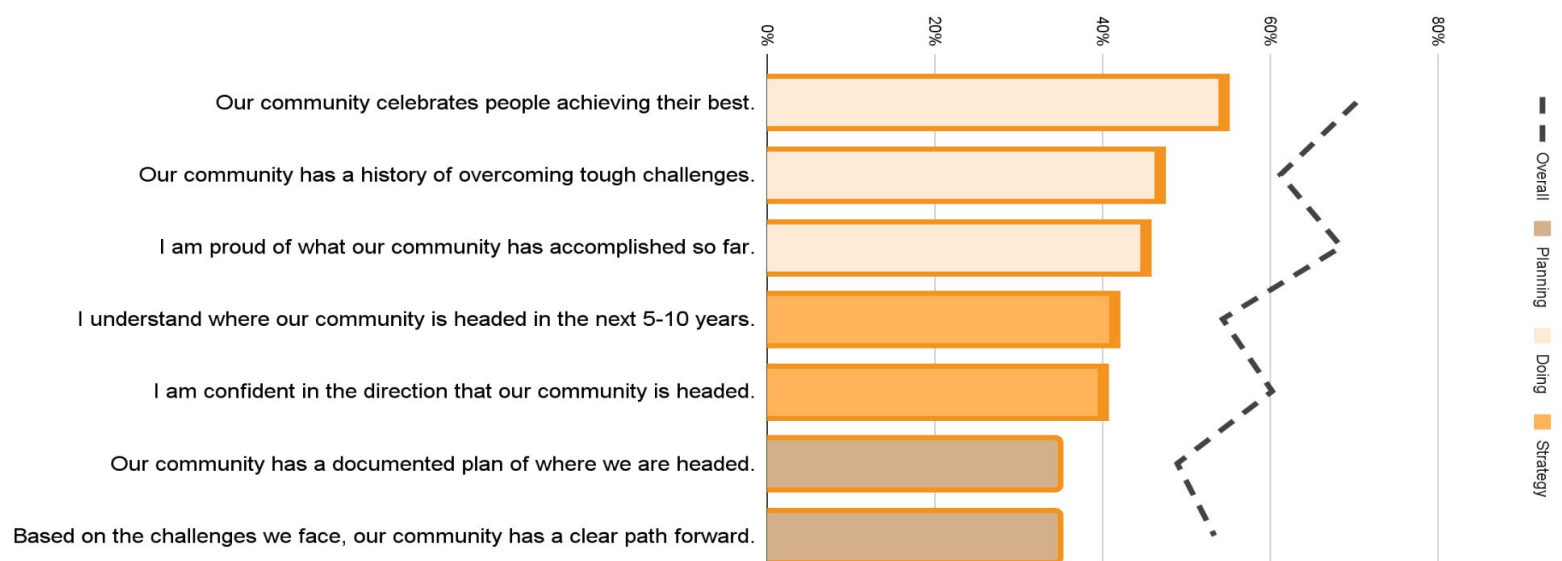


The data point that matches closest to the county average is in the category: "Newcomers are welcomed in our community."

Discussion Questions:

- Why are the Leadership Fairness assessment questions ranked poorly in Canton?
- Is this accurate or an anomaly? Do you agree with the data?
- What steps can be taken to improve this perception?

Community Confidence: Vision



Very interesting to note, that here, the three sub-categories lined up together in Canton. the category of 'Doing' is the best, then 'Strategy; and the worst rated category is 'Planning'

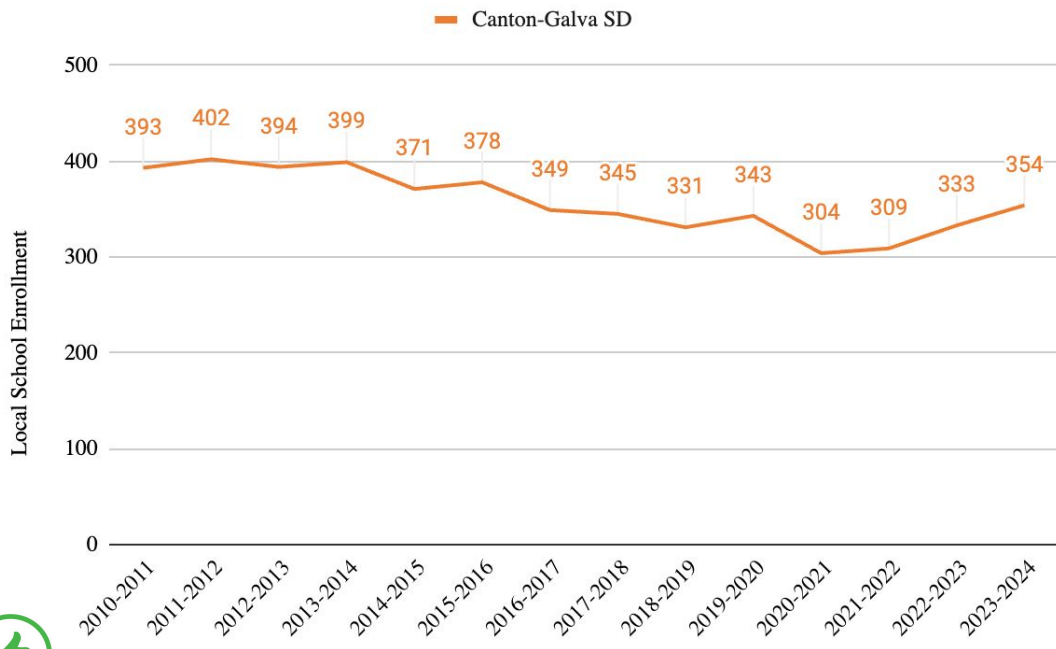
Discussion Questions:

- Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
- What are some actions that the community leaders can take in 6 months to improve this feedback?

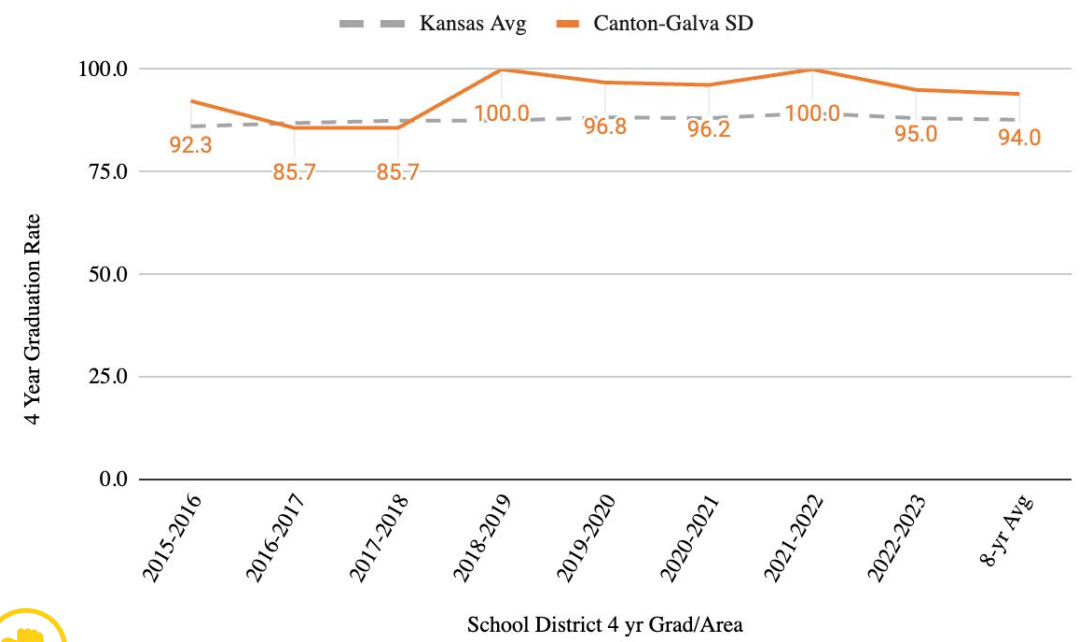
Portion of the community that is highly confident on the listed community dimensions (Rating range: 0-7)

Local Community Indicators

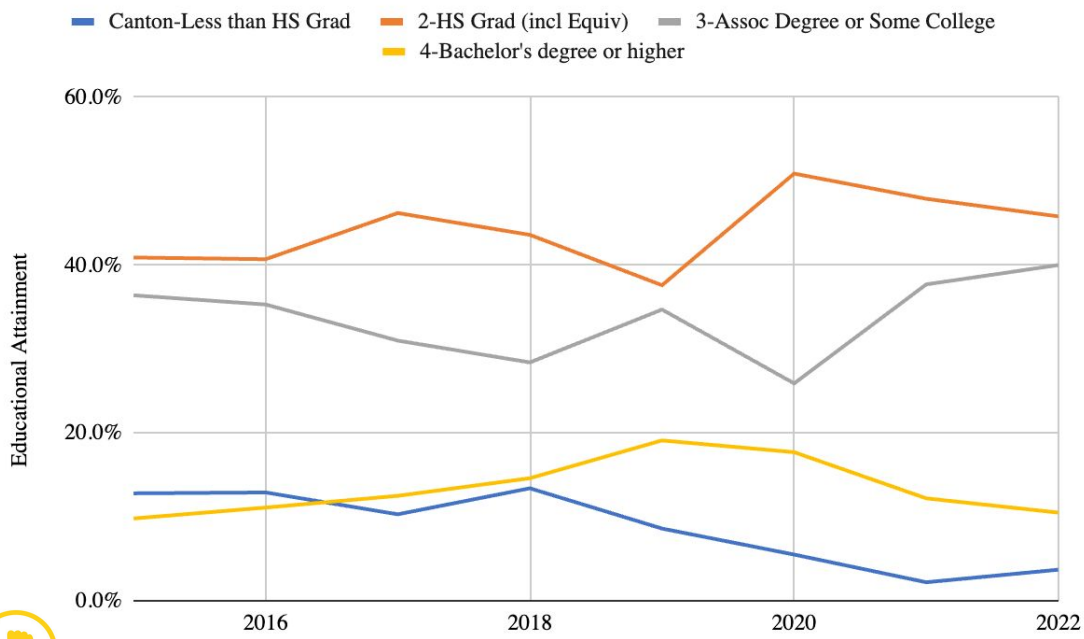
Local School Enrollment



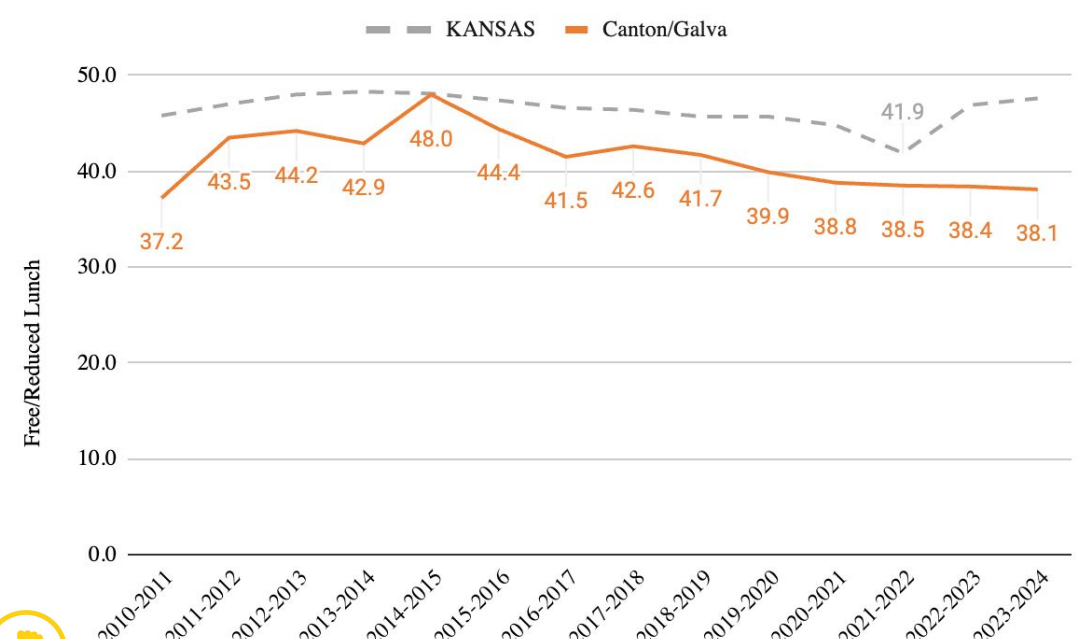
High School 4 Year Graduation Rate



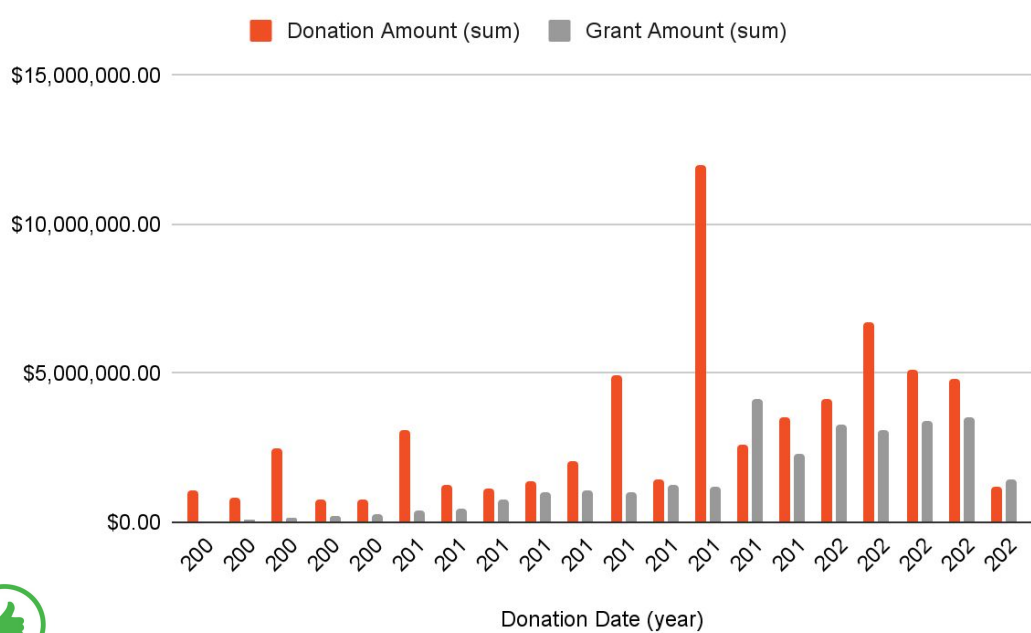
Local Educational Level



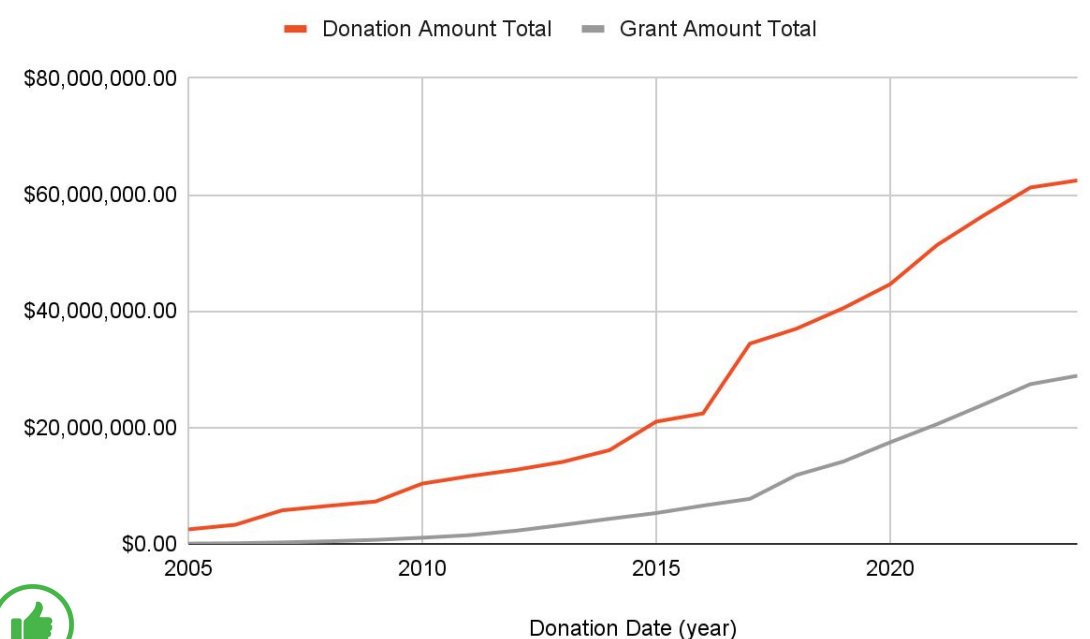
School District % Free-Reduced Price Lunch



McPherson Community Foundation: Annual Dollars Raised & Invested



McPherson Community Foundation: Compound Dollars Raised & Invested





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Community Priorities

Priorities Summary:

When interpreting this data, we are looking for areas of a town's unique strengths and challenges. What are the residents asking for that is significantly different than the rest of the region. Based on this assessment, we see the residents significantly highlighting the need for placemaking as a very critical effort that must be undertaken in the town. Consistently the local residents are highlighting this need much more than other communities. Year over year, we also see this need.

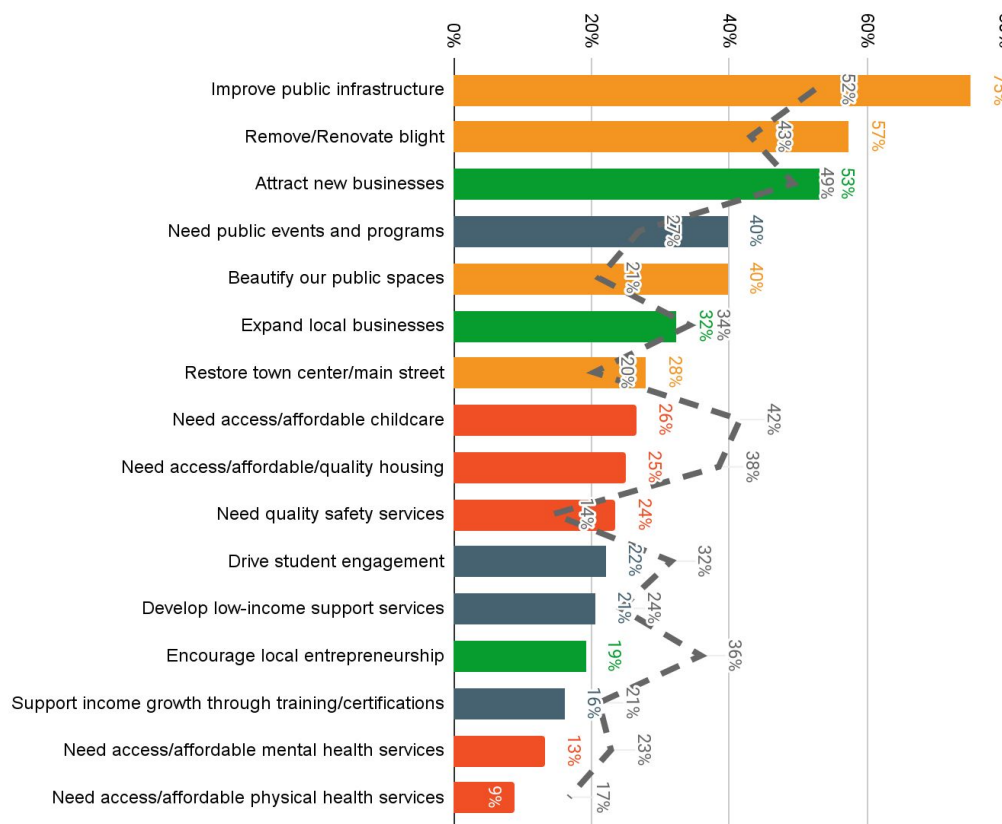
In terms of metrics the two that jump out are: The need to launch new businesses and help grow the local population.

Given that the town is currently losing population and its tax base, it will be difficult for city hall to lead extensive number of efforts. There is an opportunity in Canton for local residents and civic groups to fill the void that the formal organizations may not be able to fill.

What are some small steps that can be taken to address the issues highlighted below? How would you measure your progress?

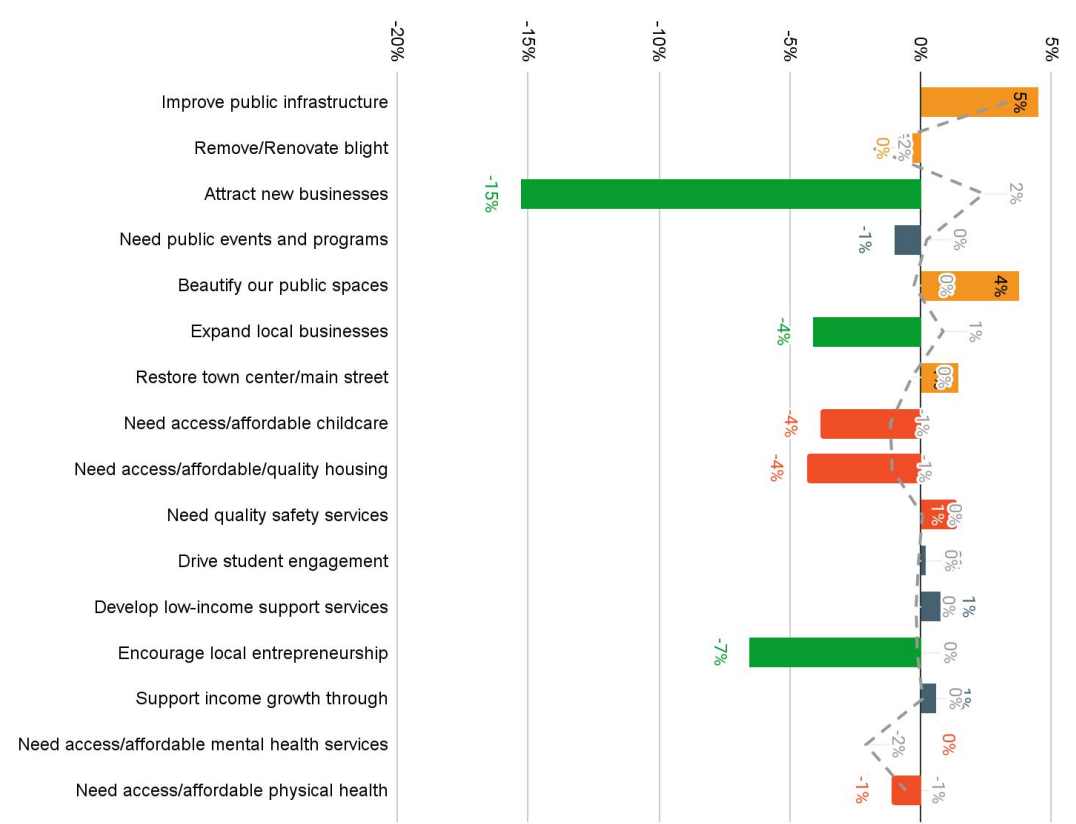
Health Placemaking Economy People Average McPherson Score

2024 Program Priorities



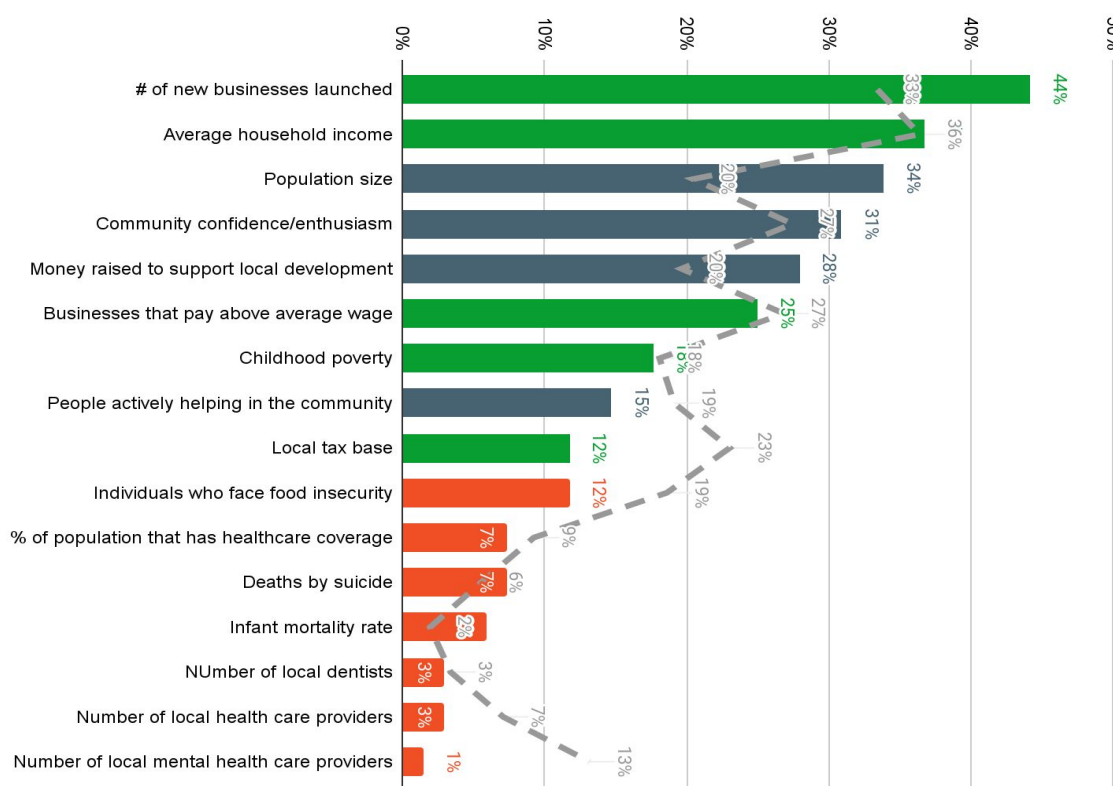
Critical: Residents want to see improvement in public infrastructure!

Priority Shift (2023 vs 2024)



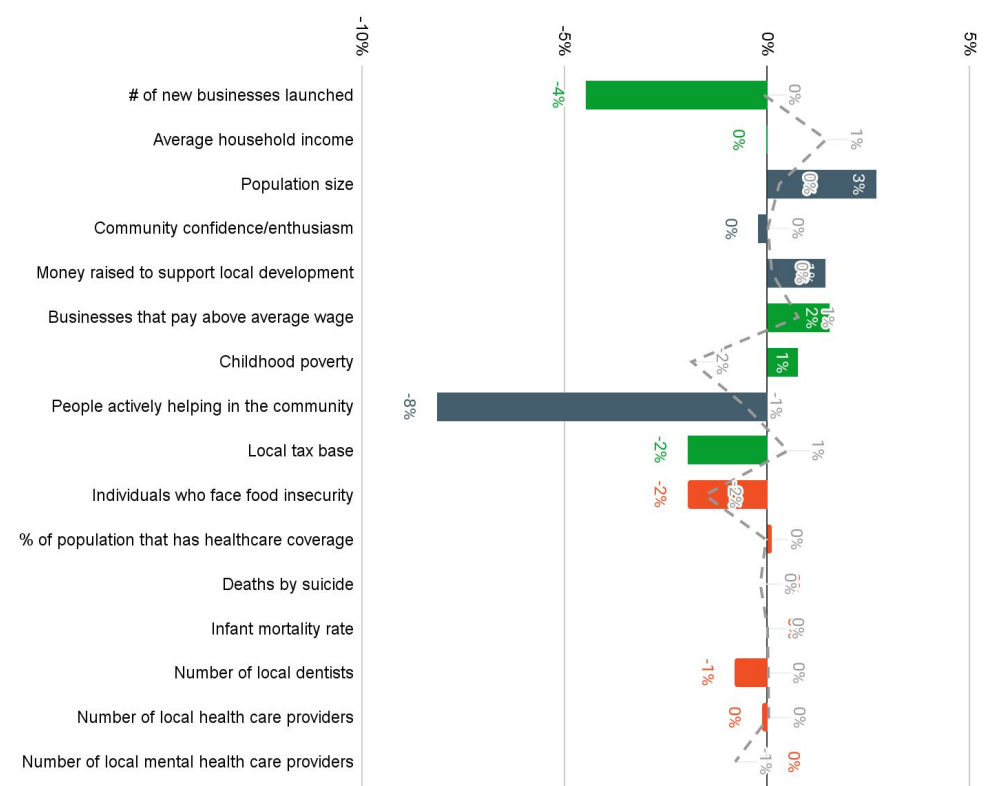
Residents have a poor perception of their local economy.

2024 Priority Metrics



Top two metrics that residents want to track related to local economy!

Priority Metrics Shift (2023 vs 2024)



Population size metric most increased in importance in 2024.

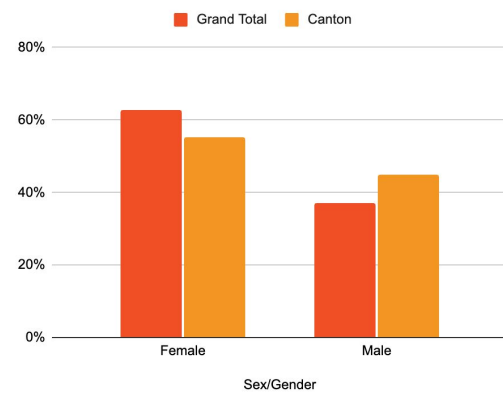
Survey Respondents

Number of Participants



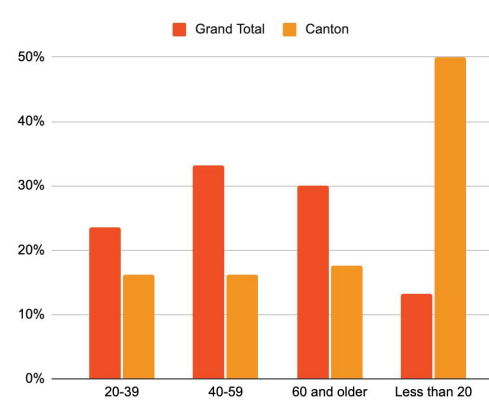
The community received 68 responses on the survey. Which was very close to the goal established for the survey.

Gender



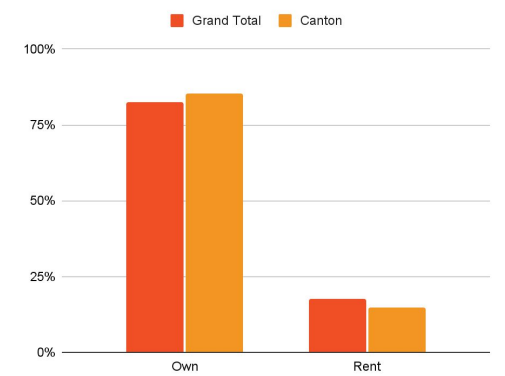
Both males and females have a very poor perception of the current community economic conditions. Females have a much more acute sensitivity to childhood poverty in the community. Males have a sensitivity to Household income.

Age Profile



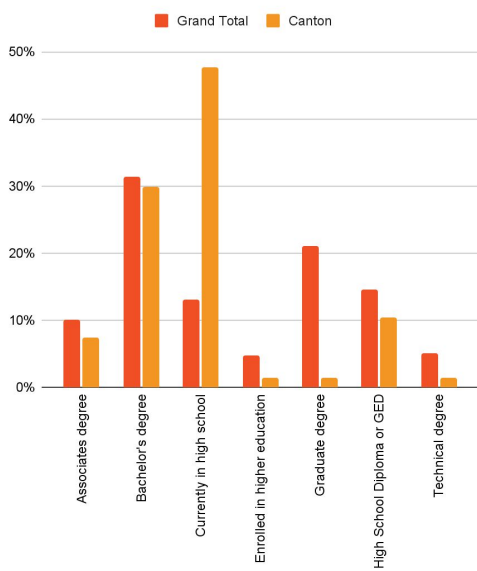
The economic confidence is the lowest in the 20-60 year olds. All age groups rated community visioning score poorly, but maintained a higher level of commitment for the community. All age groups would like to see the community beautified.

Residential Status



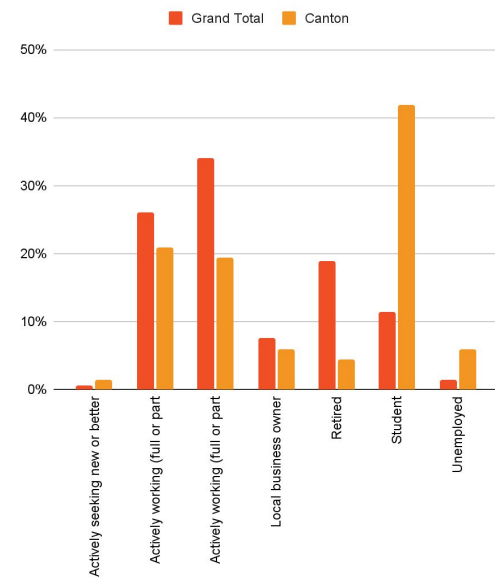
Renters perceive stronger community leadership. Renters would like to see more community events and also would like to see local businesses that pay above average wages.

Education Level



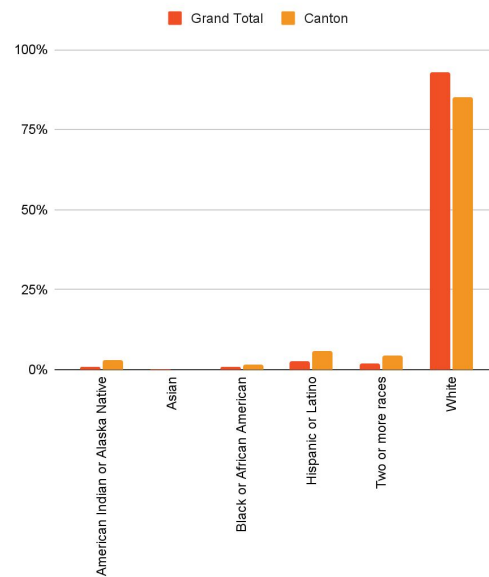
There was not sufficient data in each category to analyze this data. Individuals with Bachelor's Degree highlighted the need for greater focus on lifting Community Confidence and Enthusiasm.

Employment Status



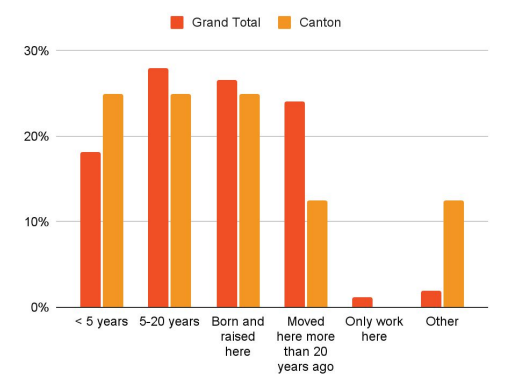
Surprisingly Students had the best perception of the economic conditions in the community. All groups prioritized improvement of public infrastructure and renovation of run down properties.

Ethnicity



Not enough data to analyze.

Years lived in location



Residents who recently moved to the community, have a poorer perception of the community. All residents would like to see a focus on improvement in the public infrastructure.

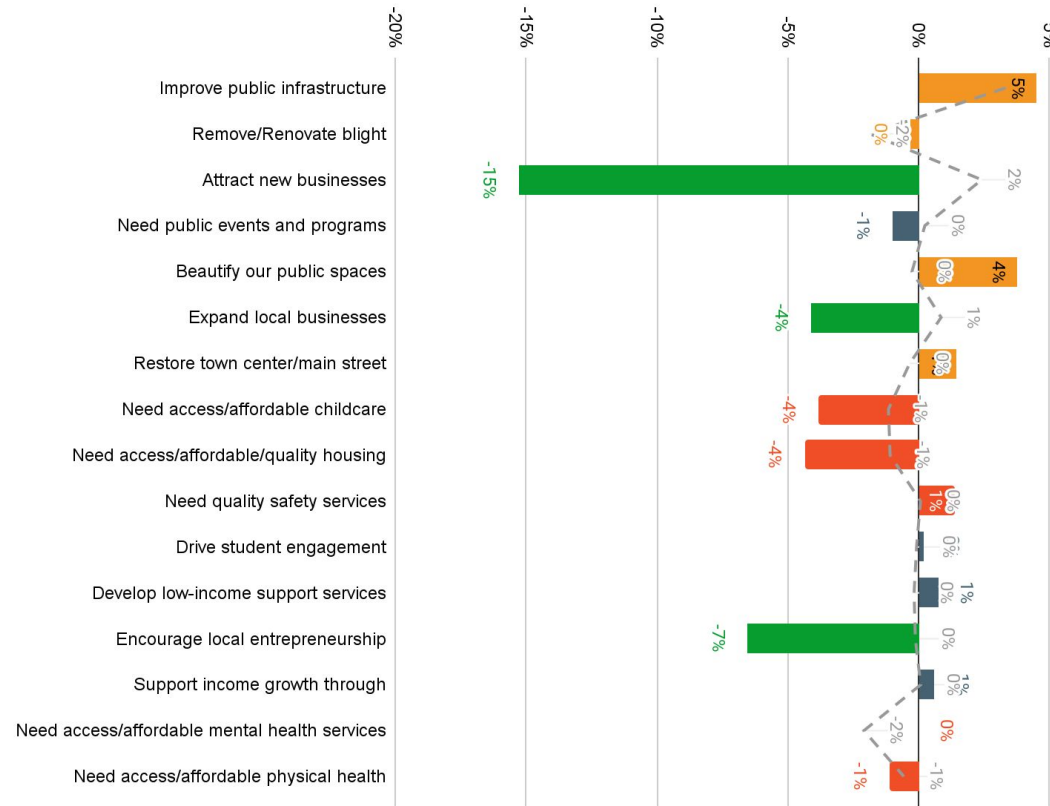
■ Town Score

■ Average McPherson County Score

25

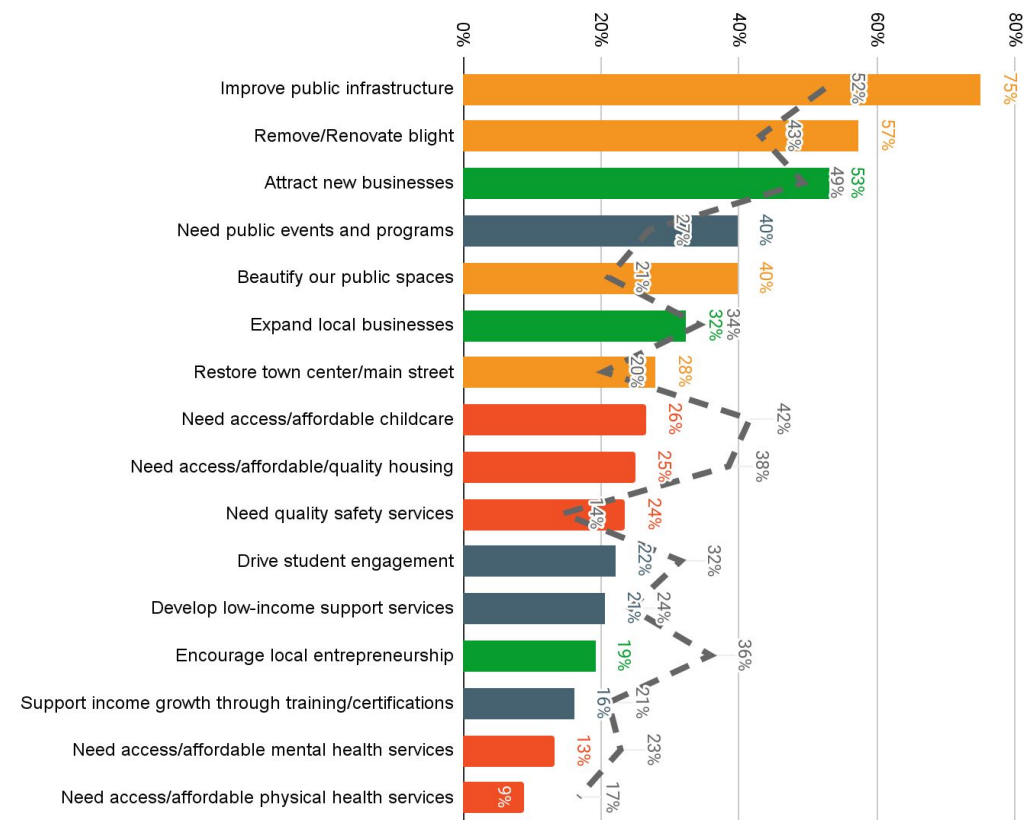
Number of people who expressed an interest in volunteering to better the community
25 of 68 (37%)

Priority Shift (2023 vs 2024)



Residents have a poor perception of their local economy.

2024 Program Priorities



Critical: Residents want to see improvement in public infrastructure!