2025 Northwest Missouri Resident and Alumni Survey

Northwest Region 2 Summary

Q1.2 - Please share your ties to Northwest Missouri

419 Responses

Field	I earned my high school diploma here	I earned a different degree/certificate here	I have lived and/or worked here 4 or more years
Andrew	0% 1	0% 0	0% 0
Atchison	6% 22	0% 1	6% 23
Buchanan	1% 5	5% 17	0% 0
Caldwell	1% 2	0% 0	0% 0
Clinton	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Daviess	1% 4	0% 0	0% 0
DeKalb	1% 3	0% 1	0% 0
Gentry	20% 78	4% 13	29% 121
Grundy	1% 3	4% 13	0% 0
Harrison	4% 14	1% 2	0% 0
Holt	1% 4	0% 0	1% 6
Linn	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Livingston	0% 0	0% 1	0% 0
Mercer	0% 1	0% 0	0% 0
Nodaway	6% 25	44% 146	13% 53
Putnam	0% 1	0% 0	0% 0
Sullivan	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Worth	42% 169	5% 16	48% 200
Somewhere else in Missouri	5% 21	18% 60	2% 8
Outside Missouri	12% 47	19% 62	1% 3
Total	400	332	414

Q1.3 - What did you value about the place you experienced in Northwest Missouri?

416 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Relationships with friends and family	330	79%
Safety	277	67%
Cost of living	274	66%
Size of town	254	61%
Community pride/Strong community identity	239	57%
A sense of belonging	204	49%
Scenic beauty (natural and architectural)	172	41%
Healthcare	89	21%
Access to food sources (restaurants/grocery stores/farms)	83	20%
Educational opportunities for myself and those I care about	79	19%
Access to stores in nearby urban areas	70	17%
Recreation opportunities	58	14%
Housing availability	38	9%
Job opportunities for talented workers	35	8%
Access to arts and cultural activities	19	5%

Q1.4 - What is the very best thing about living and/or working in the region?

351 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Relationships with friends and family	156	44%
Community pride/Strong community identity	48	14%
Safety	39	11%
A sense of belonging	24	7%
Size of town	24	7%
Cost of living	23	7%
Scenic beauty (natural and architectural)	17	5%
Educational opportunities for myself and those I care about	7	2%
Access to stores in nearby urban areas	4	1%
Healthcare	3	1%
Housing availability	3	1%

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities for talented workers	2	1%
Access to food sources (restaurants/grocery stores/farms)	1	0%
Recreation opportunities	0	0%
Access to arts and cultural activities	0	0%

Q1.5 - Have you ever moved into, moved out of, or moved back to Northwest Missouri?

408 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
I grew up here and still live in the same county where I graduated high school	130	32%
I did not grow up here, I moved in and currently live in Northwest Missouri	89	22%
I moved out of the region, but I have since moved back to Northwest Missouri	87	21%
I grew up here and have lived in multiple counties in Northwest Missouri	73	18%
I no longer live in Northwest Missouri	29	7%

Q2.1 - For Stayers: Which of the following reasons contributed to your decision to stay in the region?

196 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	161	82%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	108	55%
Always knew I wanted to stay	55	28%
Engagement in my community	48	24%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	41	21%
Support my spouse	40	20%
Support a family business	30	15%
Faith-based opportunities	15	8%
Business ownership opportunities	20	10%
Educational opportunities	14	7%
Climate and geography	11	6%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	1	1%

Q3.1 - For Returners: Which of the following reasons contributed to your decision to leave the region?

86 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities (incl. military)	59	69%
Educational opportunities	37	43%
Support my spouse	10	12%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	7	8%
Always knew I wanted to leave	6	7%
Climate and geography	3	3%
Provide a certain quality of life for my children	3	3%
Faith-based opportunities	2	2%
To be near/support family and friends	2	2%
Support a family business	1	1%
Business ownership opportunities	1	1%
Engagement in my community	0	0%

Q3.2 - For Returners: Which of the following reasons contributed to your decision to come back to the region?

83 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	65	78%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	40	48%
Always knew I wanted to come back	29	35%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	24	29%
Engagement in my community	16	19%
Support a family business	10	12%
Support my spouse	9	11%
Business ownership opportunities	5	6%
Climate and geography	3	4%
Faith-based opportunities	3	4%
Educational opportunities	2	2%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	0	0%

Q3.3 - For Returners: Which of the following reasons was the primary reason you moved back to the region?

76 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	35	46%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	11	14%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	11	14%
Always knew I wanted to come back	7	9%
Support a family business	6	8%
Support my spouse	3	4%
Engagement in my community	1	1%
Faith-based opportunities	1	1%
Business ownership opportunities	1	1%
Climate and geography	0	0%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	0	0%
Educational opportunities	0	0%

Q4.1 - For In-Migrants: Which of the following reasons contributed to your decision to move into the region?

88 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	35	40%
Support my spouse	28	32%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	26	30%
Educational opportunities	12	14%
Support a family business	9	10%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	8	9%
Engagement in my community	6	7%
Business ownership opportunities	5	6%
Faith-based opportunities	4	5%
Climate and geography	3	3%
Always knew I wanted to live here	2	2%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	1	1%

Q5.1 - For Leavers: Which of the following reasons contributed to your decision to leave the region?

29 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities (incl. military)	20	69%
Educational opportunities	10	34%
Support my spouse’s career	5	17%
Always knew I wanted to leave	4	14%
Provide a certain quality of life for my children	4	14%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	4	14%
To be near/support family and friends	4	14%
Business ownership opportunities	3	10%
Climate and geography	2	7%
Support a family business	1	3%
I wanted to be more engaged in community leadership	0	0%
Faith-based opportunities	0	0%

Q5.2 - For Leavers: Which of the following opportunities would make it easier for you to consider moving back?

28 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities	13	46%
Other:	11	39%
Community events	8	29%
Recreational amenities	7	25%
Network with other professionals	5	18%
Broadband access	4	14%
Engagement opportunities with a regional college	3	11%
Youth organizations	3	11%
Support for starting a business	2	7%
Leadership opportunities in the community	1	4%

Q5.2 - For Leavers: Which of the following opportunities would make it easier for you to consider moving back? *Other Responses*

8 Responses

Grandchildren are grown
Retirement
We live 3 miles from Missouri and still do a lot of business in worth county
A nearby National Park
Retirement
No plans to move back
Decent housing
I plan on moving back within the next 2 years

Q6.1 - How important are each of the following factors in your decision about where you will live in the next 5 years? *Counts*

394 Responses

Field	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Ties to area	31	80	274
Quality of local K-12 schools	54	65	268
Health care	12	123	252
Broadband or high-speed internet	37	123	228
Access to hardware, grocery, and other stores	26	147	212
Strong or growing local economy	31	164	190
Access to fresh produce	46	177	161
Easy commute	79	143	161
Available housing	88	140	152
Scenic beauty (natural or architectural)	53	214	119
Outdoor recreation	89	207	91
Access to local lawyer, accountant, and other professional services	91	221	71
Climate and geography	109	206	70
Arts and entertainment	180	167	37
Access to a coffee shop/bakery	216	133	36

Q6.1 - How important are each of the following factors in your decision about where you will live in the next 5 years? *Percentages*

394 Responses

Field	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Ties to area	8%	21%	71%
Quality of local K-12 schools	14%	17%	69%
Health care	3%	32%	65%
Broadband or high-speed internet	10%	32%	59%
Access to hardware, grocery, and other stores	7%	38%	55%
Strong or growing local economy	8%	43%	49%
Easy commute	21%	37%	42%
Access to fresh produce	12%	46%	42%

Field	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Available housing	23%	37%	40%
Scenic beauty (natural or architectural)	14%	55%	31%
Outdoor recreation	23%	53%	24%
Access to local lawyer, accountant, and other professional services	24%	58%	19%
Climate and geography	28%	54%	18%
Arts and entertainment	47%	43%	10%
Access to a coffee shop/bakery	56%	35%	9%

Q6.2 - Considering what you ranked as "very important" in the prior question, which factor is the most and least important in your decision about where you live in the next 5 years? *Percentages*

365 Responses

Field	Least important	Most important
Ties to area	14%	86%
Health care	17%	83%
Quality of local K-12 schools	27%	73%
Strong or growing local economy	31%	69%
Available housing	48%	52%
Access to hardware, grocery, and other stores	53%	47%
Broadband or high-speed internet	53%	47%
Climate and geography	63%	38%
Outdoor recreation	71%	29%
Scenic beauty (natural or architectural)	80%	20%
Easy commute	83%	17%
Access to fresh produce	86%	14%
Arts and entertainment	89%	11%
Access to local lawyer, accountant, and other professional services	100%	0%
Access to a coffee shop/bakery	100%	0%

Q6.3 - What efforts would you support in your community?

378 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Support new businesses	225	60%
Support local fundraising for local initiatives	147	39%
Build stronger youth organizations	146	39%
Build/maintain recreational gathering places	110	29%
Include a wider range of people and perspectives in local decision making	110	29%
Support local taxes for local initiatives	108	29%
Champion efforts of people trying new things	79	21%
Support regional events	57	15%
Involve new residents in groups and committees	41	11%

Q6.4 - Which activities did you do in your community in 2024?

378 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
I voted in an election	351	93%
Socialized with neighbors at least once	334	88%
Donated money, services, materials, or food to local organizations	309	82%
Volunteered time for a local organization (service, church, school, etc.)	249	66%
Helped raise money for a local cause	206	54%
Had a leadership role outside my work (public office, service, church, etc.)	168	44%
Attended a public hearing, community forum, or city council meeting	139	37%
Other:	9	2%

Q6.4 - Which activities did you do in your community in 2024? *Other Responses*

8 Responses

Local festivities
Lead and am on the board of multiple organizations because no one wants to do it
Traveled frequently to NW Missouri to see family, despite living very far away.
Patronized new businesses
Volunteer on main street
Local Markets

Involved in Main Street
Coached youth sports.

Q6.5 - If invited, would you try any of the previously listed activities you haven’t done before?

380 Responses

Field	Percentage
Yes	59%
Not Sure	36%
No	5%

Q6.6 - In my current community:

382 Responses

Field	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
People are willing to help their neighbors	4%	9%	87%
I trust my neighbors	4%	10%	86%
I feel like I belong	6%	17%	77%
People work together to address local concerns	12%	25%	63%
People in my community respect my values	7%	32%	61%
I have confidence in local government decisions	15%	42%	43%
I have confidence in state government decisions	33%	48%	19%

Q6.7 - My current community offers:

377 Responses

Field	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree
Voting locations and adequate hours	1%	6%	94%
Places to meet with friends and neighbors	14%	17%	69%
Ways to invest or give back to the community (e.g. community development fund)	7%	26%	67%
Places to access public information and lifelong learning resources	11%	28%	60%
Ways to celebrate and renew a sense of community	11%	30%	59%
Public discussions of important issues	17%	39%	44%
Recognition and inclusion of different perspectives in decision-making	22%	44%	33%

Q6.8 - Which of the following work characteristics are important to you?

374 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Salary growth	173	46%
An area with a low cost of living	155	41%
Easy commuting	142	38%
Flexible hours that allow me to work when I want to work	123	33%
Shifting my schedule to pick up my children from school	101	27%
Not applicable (e.g. retired)	100	27%
Remote work options	99	26%
Professional advancement opportunities	94	25%
Owning my own business/being my own boss	67	18%

Q6.9 - How likely are you to move in the next 5 years?

374 Responses

Field	Percentage
Extremely likely	6%
Somewhat likely	10%
Neither likely nor unlikely	16%
Somewhat unlikely	16%
Extremely unlikely	52%

Q6.10 - What will influence your likelihood to move or stay the most? *Open-ended responses categorized by major themes.*

269 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
Family Changes	45%
Job Changes	23%
Health Changes	15%
Not Moving	15%
Living Cost Rise	10%
School Quality	6%
Retirement Decisions	4%
Political Climate	3%
Safety Concerns	1%

Q6.11 - What changes are you most excited about for the future of Northwest Missouri? *Open-ended responses categorized by major themes.*

194 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
Economic Gains - Jobs and Businesses	47%
Community Improvements	29%
No Change/Unsure	23%
Recreation/Entertainment Options	10%
Education Improvements	4%
Maintaining Rural Lifestyle	3%
Healthcare Improvements	1%

Q6.12 - What changes most worry you about the future of Northwest Missouri? *Open-ended responses categorized by major themes.*

248 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
Economic Decline - Population and Jobs	35%
Political Climate	23%
Education Funds or Quality	10%
Living Cost Rising	8%

Healthcare Access	8%
Reduced Community Engagement or Funding	7%
No Worries/Unsure	7%
Safety Concerns	6%
Housing or Infrastructure Concerns	6%
Losing Rural Lifestyle	5%

Q6.13 - What is your age?

370 Responses

Field	Under 30	30-44 years old	45-60 years old	60+ years old
Count	20	119	82	149
Percentage	5%	32%	22%	40%

Q6.14 - What is the highest level of education you have completed?

372 Responses

Field	Less than high school degree	High school degree or equivalent (GED)	Some college but no degree	Associate's/Technical degree or apprenticeship	Bachelor's degree or above
Count	3	53	63	57	196
Percentage	1%	14%	17%	15%	53%

Q6.15 - Describe your household:

369 Responses

Field	I live by myself	I live with children under the age of 10	I live with children ages 10-18	I live with other adult(s) ages 19-64	I live with other adult(s) ages 65+
Count	64	76	98	146	100
Percentage	17%	21%	27%	40%	27%

Q6.16 - Describe your current employment status:

370 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Work as a paid employee	202	55%
Retired	109	29%
Self-employed business owner	51	14%
No paid work (care for others/in school/etc.)	6	2%
Not working but looking for a job	2	1%

Q6.17 - Describe your gender:

371 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Woman	264	71%
Man	90	24%
Prefer not to answer	14	4%
Prefer to self-identify	3	1%

Q6.18 - Where do you live now? Please enter your current zip code



Q6.19 - How many years have you lived at this zip code?

368 Responses

Field	Less than 5 years	5-19 years	More than 20 years
Count	36	121	211
Percentage	10%	33%	57%