2025 Northwest Missouri Resident and Alumni Survey

Northwest Region 1 Summary

Q1.2 - Please share your ties to Northwest Missouri

338 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	9% 29	1% 3	12% 39
Atchison	1% 2	0% 1	0% 0
Buchanan	31% 99	39% 113	52% 176
Caldwell	2% 6	0% 0	0% 0
Clinton	12% 39	3% 9	25% 85
Daviess	0% 1	0% 0	0% 0
DeKalb	9% 28	1% 4	10% 34
Gentry	2% 8	0% 0	0% 0
Grundy	0% 1	0% 1	0% 0
Harrison	1% 2	0% 0	0% 0
Holt	1% 2	0% 0	0% 0
Linn	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Livingston	1% 4	0% 0	0% 0
Mercer	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Nodaway	1% 3	14% 42	0% 0
Putnam	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Sullivan	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Worth	0% 1	0% 0	0% 0
Somewhere else in Missouri	16% 52	25% 73	1% 2
Outside Missouri	15% 47	16% 47	0% 0
Total	324	293	336

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

336 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Relationships with friends and family	252	75%
Cost of living	203	60%
Size of town	176	52%
Safety	163	49%
Scenic beauty (natural and architectural)	140	42%
A sense of belonging	135	40%
Community pride/Strong community identity	132	39%
Access to stores in nearby urban areas	120	36%
Access to food sources (restaurants/grocery stores/farms)	85	25%
Educational opportunities for myself and those I care about	83	25%
Recreation opportunities	72	21%
Healthcare	62	18%
Access to arts and cultural activities	61	18%
Job opportunities for talented workers	58	17%
Housing availability	46	14%

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

283 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Relationships with friends and family	116	41%
Cost of living	55	19%
Safety	27	10%
Size of town	23	8%
Scenic beauty (natural and architectural)	14	5%
Community pride/Strong community identity	13	5%
A sense of belonging	10	4%
Educational opportunities for myself and those I care about	7	2%
Healthcare	6	2%
Recreation opportunities	4	1%
Access to food sources (restaurants/grocery stores/farms)	3	1%

Field	Count	Percentage
Access to stores in nearby urban areas	2	1%
Job opportunities for talented workers	2	1%
Access to arts and cultural activities	1	0%
Housing availability	0	0%

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

331 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
I grew up here and still live in the same county where I graduated high school	91	27%
I did not grow up here, I moved in and currently live in Northwest Missouri	95	29%
I moved out of the region, but I have since moved back to Northwest Missouri	73	22%
I grew up here and have lived in multiple counties in Northwest Missouri	59	18%
I no longer live in Northwest Missouri	13	4%

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

150 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	134	89%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	53	35%
Always knew I wanted to stay	28	19%
Engagement in my community	36	24%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	35	23%
Support my spouse	24	16%
Support a family business	15	10%
Faith-based opportunities	21	14%
Business ownership opportunities	14	9%
Educational opportunities	16	11%
Climate and geography	14	9%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	3	2%

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

71 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities (incl. military)	45	63%
Educational opportunities	33	46%
Support my spouse	12	17%
Always knew I wanted to leave	9	13%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	9	13%
Climate and geography	6	8%
To be near/support family and friends	5	7%
Provide a certain quality of life for my children	3	4%
Business ownership opportunities	2	3%
Faith-based opportunities	1	1%
Engagement in my community	0	0%
Support a family business	0	0%

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

72 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	55	76%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	20	28%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	20	28%
Support a family business	10	14%
Engagement in my community	9	13%
Support my spouse	8	11%
Always knew I wanted to come back	7	10%
Business ownership opportunities	6	8%
Faith-based opportunities	2	3%
Climate and geography	1	1%
Educational opportunities	1	1%
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?

59 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
To be near/support family and friends	37	63%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	6	10%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	6	10%
Support a family business	5	8%
Support my spouse	3	5%
Business ownership opportunities	2	3%
Climate and geography	0	0%
Engagement in my community	0	0%
Always knew I wanted to come back	0	0%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	0	0%
Faith-based opportunities	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?

91 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities (incl. military)	44	48%
To be near/support family and friends	24	26%
Support my spouse	24	26%
Engagement in my community	10	11%
Want my kids to grow up like I did	10	11%
Educational opportunities	10	11%
Climate and geography	8	9%
Business ownership opportunities	7	8%
Support a family business	6	7%
Always knew I wanted to live here	3	3%
Faith-based opportunities	3	3%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	2	2%

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

11 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Climate and geography	6	55%
Always knew I wanted to leave	5	45%
Job opportunities (incl. military)	4	36%
Provide a certain quality of life for my children	3	27%
Diversity and inclusiveness of many perspectives/people	3	27%
To be near/support family and friends	3	27%
Educational opportunities	3	27%
Support my spouse’s career	2	18%
Business ownership opportunities	1	9%
I wanted to be more engaged in community leadership	0	0%
Faith-based opportunities	0	0%
Support a family business	0	0%

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

7 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Job opportunities	3	43%
Other:	3	43%
Recreational amenities	2	29%
Network with other professionals	1	14%
Support for starting a business	1	14%
Engagement opportunities with a regional college	1	14%
Community events	1	14%
Broadband access	0	0%
Youth organizations	0	0%
Leadership opportunities in the community	0	0%

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

3 Responses

Nothing would make me move back

rural lifestyle

Upward trajectory of the community as a whole - instead of declining.

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

319 Responses

Field	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Health care	16	92	206
Quality of local K-12 schools	57	62	192
Ties to area	29	95	184
Broadband or high-speed internet	31	106	176
Strong or growing local economy	12	125	174
Easy commute	37	125	149
Access to hardware, grocery, and other stores	30	141	143
Available housing	52	117	137
Access to fresh produce	32	148	130
Scenic beauty (natural or architectural)	44	176	93
Climate and geography	62	175	75
Outdoor recreation	63	178	74
Access to local lawyer, accountant, and other professional services	77	173	60
Arts and entertainment	91	167	53
Access to a coffee shop/bakery	158	99	50

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

319 Responses

Field	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Health care	5%	29%	66%
Quality of local K-12 schools	18%	20%	62%
Ties to area	9%	31%	60%
Broadband or high-speed internet	10%	34%	56%
Strong or growing local economy	4%	40%	56%
Easy commute	12%	40%	48%
Access to hardware, grocery, and other stores	10%	45%	46%
Available housing	17%	38%	45%

Field	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Access to fresh produce	10%	48%	42%
Scenic beauty (natural or architectural)	14%	56%	30%
Climate and geography	20%	56%	24%
Outdoor recreation	20%	57%	23%
Access to local lawyer, accountant, and other professional services	25%	56%	19%
Arts and entertainment	29%	54%	17%
Access to a coffee shop/bakery	51%	32%	16%

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*

293 Responses

Field	Least important	Most important
Ties to area	11%	89%
Quality of local K-12 schools	21%	79%
Strong or growing local economy	24%	76%
Health care	30%	70%
Arts and entertainment	36%	64%
Available housing	48%	52%
Broadband or high-speed internet	54%	46%
Climate and geography	62%	38%
Outdoor recreation	67%	33%
Scenic beauty (natural or architectural)	68%	32%
Easy commute	70%	30%
Access to fresh produce	87%	13%
Access to hardware, grocery, and other stores	88%	13%
Access to local lawyer, accountant, and other professional services	92%	8%
Access to a coffee shop/bakery	100%	0%

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

304 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Support new businesses	162	53%
Support local taxes for local initiatives	111	37%
Build stronger youth organizations	111	37%
Include a wider range of people and perspectives in local decision making	104	34%
Build/maintain recreational gathering places	102	34%
Support local fundraising for local initiatives	88	29%
Support regional events	68	22%
Champion efforts of people trying new things	43	14%
Involve new residents in groups and committees	41	13%

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

305 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
I voted in an election	291	95%
Socialized with neighbors at least once	267	88%
Donated money, services, materials, or food to local organizations	266	87%
Volunteered time for a local organization (service, church, school, etc.)	241	79%
Helped raise money for a local cause	192	63%
Had a leadership role outside my work (public office, service, church, etc.)	174	57%
Attended a public hearing, community forum, or city council meeting	164	54%
Other:	9	3%

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

7 Responses

Coached youth sports.
Participated in the Census
Participated in protests
Start new business
President of fair
GARAGE SALES (HELD & ATTENDED)

Advocated for issues affecting residents

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

302 Responses

Field	Percentage
Yes	68%
Not Sure	29%
No	3%

Q6.6 - In my current community:

305 Responses

Field	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
I trust my neighbors	4%	18%	79%
People are willing to help their neighbors	7%	19%	74%
I feel like I belong	8%	18%	74%
People in my community respect my values	15%	35%	50%
People work together to address local concerns	24%	31%	45%
I have confidence in local government decisions	31%	44%	25%
I have confidence in state government decisions	44%	34%	21%

Q6.7 - My current community offers:

300 Responses

Field	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree
Voting locations and adequate hours	3%	4%	94%
Places to meet with friends and neighbors	18%	15%	67%
Ways to invest or give back to the community (e.g. community development fund)	11%	29%	61%
Ways to celebrate and renew a sense of community	18%	29%	53%
Places to access public information and lifelong learning resources	23%	27%	51%
Public discussions of important issues	20%	37%	43%
Recognition and inclusion of different perspectives in decision-making	31%	42%	27%

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

299 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Salary growth	185	62%
Easy commuting	150	50%
An area with a low cost of living	148	49%
Flexible hours that allow me to work when I want to work	130	43%
Professional advancement opportunities	130	43%
Remote work options	99	33%
Shifting my schedule to pick up my children from school	82	27%
Owning my own business/being my own boss	58	19%
Not applicable (e.g. retired)	46	15%

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

297 Responses

Field	Percentage
Extremely likely	8%
Somewhat likely	20%
Neither likely nor unlikely	20%
Somewhat unlikely	16%
Extremely unlikely	36%

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

242 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
Family Changes	40%
Job Changes	25%
School Quality	11%
Health Changes	10%
Living Cost Rise	10%
Not Moving	7%
Safety Concerns	6%
Political Climate	5%
Retirement Decisions	5%

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

191 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
Economic Gains - Jobs and Businesses	41%
Community Improvements	29%
No Change/Unsure	23%
Recreation/Entertainment Options	10%
Education Improvements	7%
Maintaining Rural Lifestyle	3%
Healthcare Improvements	2%

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

225 Responses

Field	Percentage of Responses
Political Climate	30%
Economic Decline - Population and Jobs	27%
Education Funds or Quality	18%
Safety Concerns	11%

Living Cost Rising	9%
Housing or Infrastructure Concerns	7%
Healthcare Access	7%
Losing Rural Lifestyle	6%
No Worries/Unsure	5%
Reduced Community Engagement or Funding	5%

Q6.13 - What is your age?

298 Responses

Field	Under 30	30-44 years old	45-60 years old	60+ years old
Count	13	70	121	94
Percentage	4%	23%	41%	32%

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

298 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	0	10	45	24	219
Percentage	0%	3%	15%	8%	73%

Q6.15 - Describe your household:

298 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	36	45	84	154	65
Percentage	12%	15%	28%	52%	22%

Q6.16 - Describe your current employment status:

298 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Work as a paid employee	201	67%
Retired	51	17%
Self-employed business owner	42	14%
Not working but looking for a job	2	1%
No paid work (care for others/in school/etc.)	2	1%

Q6.17 - Describe your gender:

298 Responses

Field	Count	Percentage
Woman	209	70%
Man	80	27%
Prefer not to answer	9	3%
Prefer to self-identify	0	0%

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?

298 Responses

Field	Less than 5 years	5-19 years	More than 20 years
Count	29	110	159
Percentage	10%	37%	53%