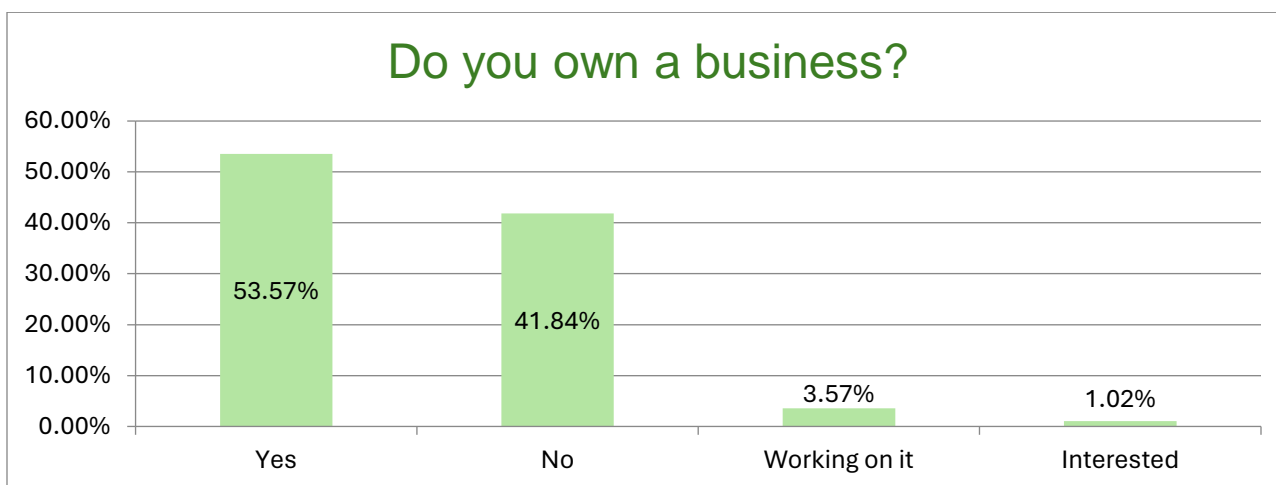
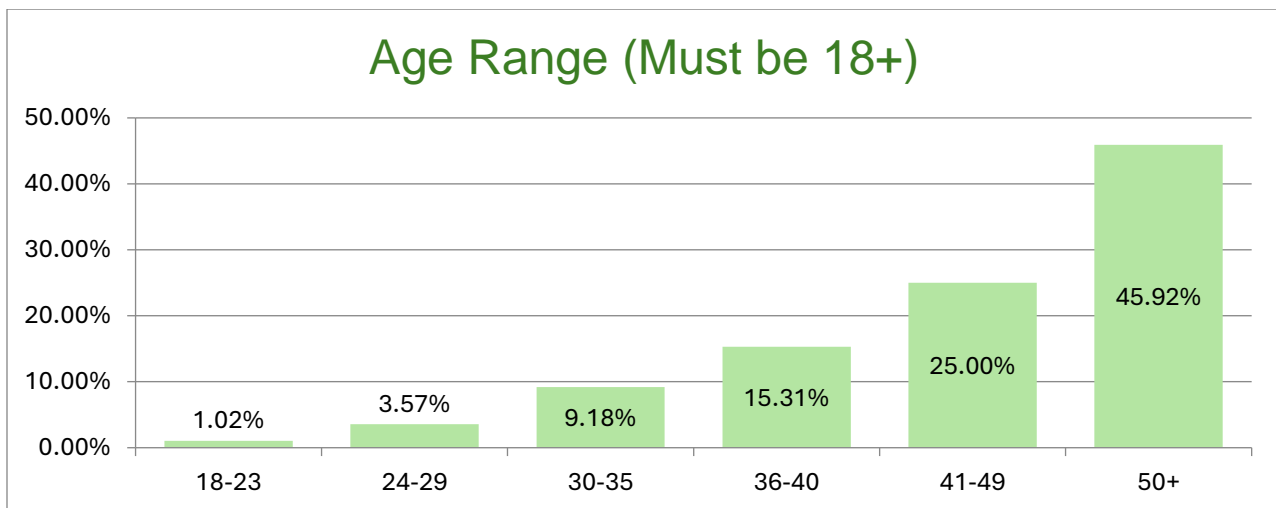
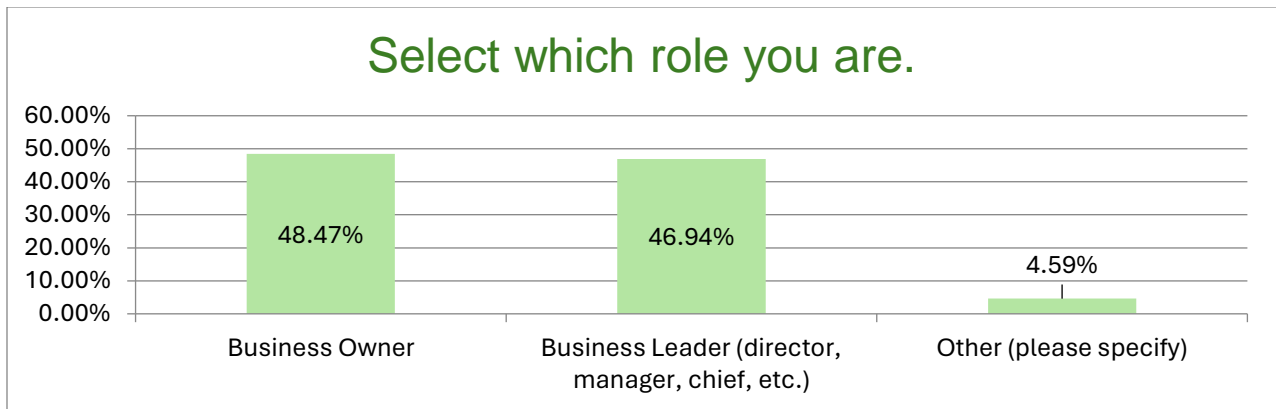
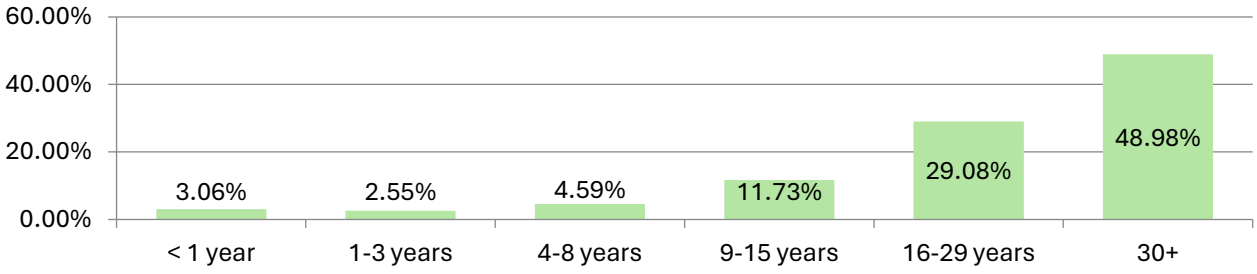


Aberdeen Business Survey Results – 196 Total Responses

SECTION 1 - Demographics



How long have you lived in Aberdeen or its surrounding areas?

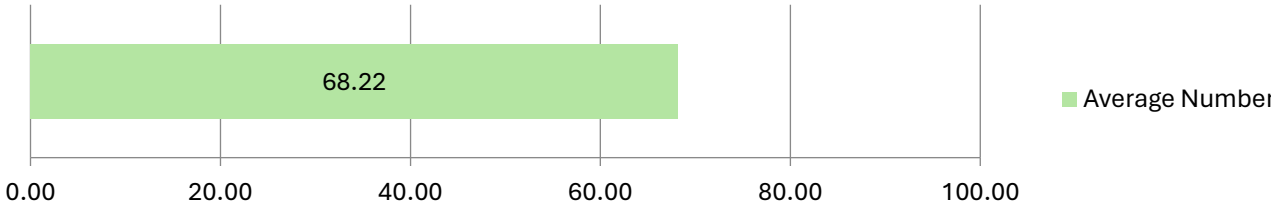


SECTION 2 – Business Economy Questions (Rating from 1 – 100)

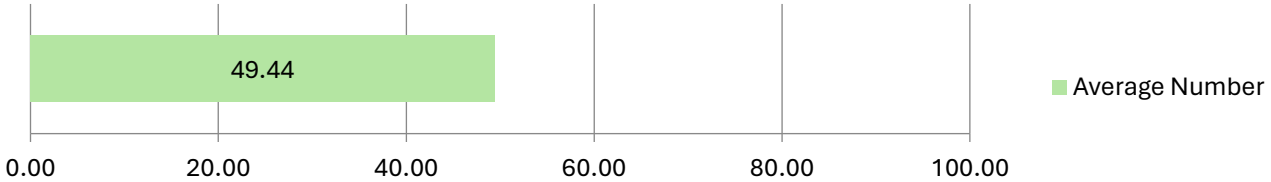
1. Aberdeen’s economic climate is thriving and growing at the right pace.



2. Aberdeen is a good place to do business.



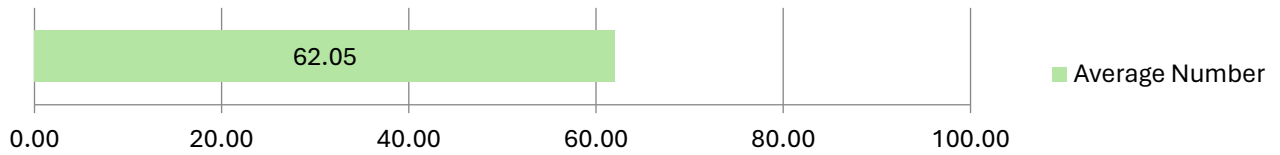
3. The mix of businesses in Aberdeen is properly balanced.



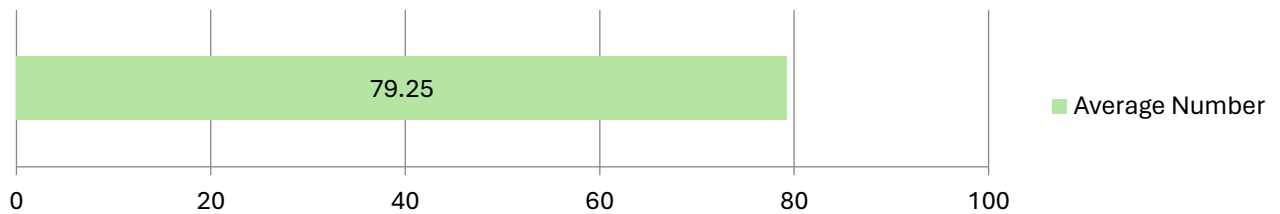
4. Aberdeen has enough housing to grow its workforce.



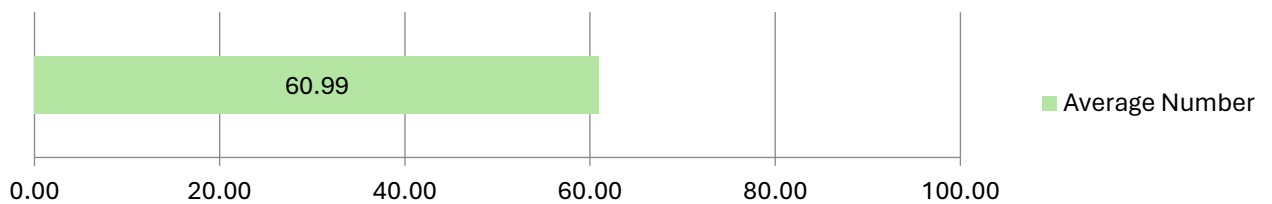
5. Aberdeen has the right educational opportunities available to grow its workforce.



6. There's room for new business in Aberdeen.



7. Aberdeen consumers support small businesses.



8. What business or type of business/workforce should Aberdeen focus on attracting in the next five years?

Response Summary: Overall, the responses underscored a desire for economic diversification, job creation, and improvements to the local business environment to ensure Aberdeen's long-term growth and prosperity.

Manufacturing and Industry:

Many respondents emphasized the need for attracting manufacturing companies, both to provide employment opportunities and to contribute to the local economy. There was a specific focus on retaining the existing workforce and replacing lost industrial jobs due to recent closures. Suggestions included skilled manufacturing, light industrial businesses, and ag-related manufacturing.

Retail and Restaurants:

Another prominent theme was the desire for a diverse retail landscape and a wider variety of dining options. Respondents expressed interest in attracting national retailers, department stores, grocery chains, and restaurants that offer unique cuisines and cater to different dietary preferences. Suggestions included clothing stores, grocery stores, and casual dining establishments.

Professional Services and Technology:

Many respondents highlighted the importance of attracting professional services and technology-based companies to Aberdeen. Suggestions included tech jobs, corporate headquarters, IT firms, and remote work opportunities. There was also a call for investment in higher-paying positions and stable career paths.

Education and Training:

Several respondents advocated for expanding educational opportunities, particularly in the form of vocational and technical training. Suggestions included establishing a satellite technical college, creating a hybrid educational program with Northern State University, and offering trade school opportunities in various fields such as plumbing, electrical work, and mechanics.

Quality of Life Enhancements:

Some respondents emphasized the need for investments in quality-of-life amenities and attractions to make Aberdeen more appealing to residents and potential newcomers. Suggestions included developing an events center, enhancing recreational activities, improving shopping opportunities, and fostering a vibrant downtown atmosphere.

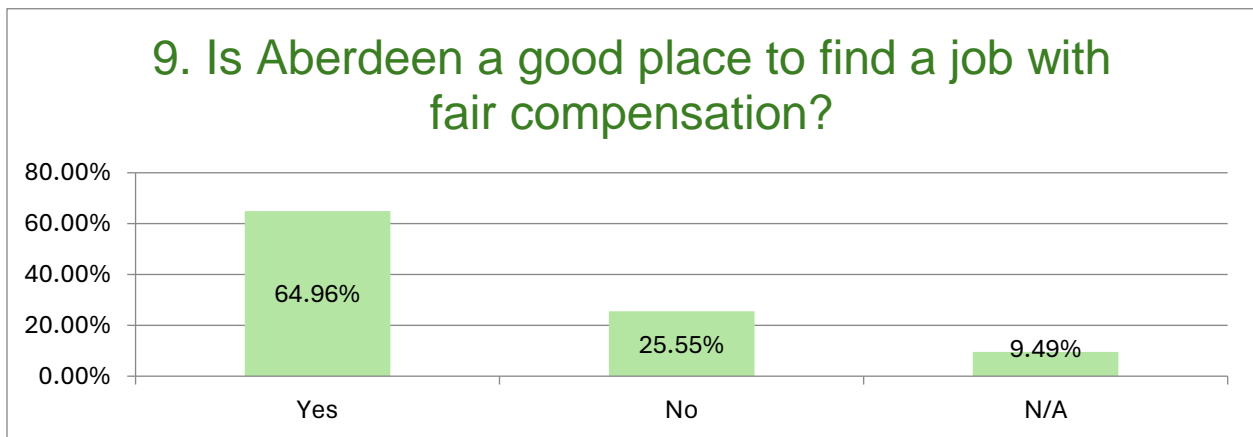
Comment Highlights:

- *“Aberdeen needs an event center/something to attract the age range 22-30 to stay in Aberdeen or to want to come here and start a family.”*
- *“For a higher skilled workforce, Aberdeen needs to continue to work on being an appealing place to live. To do that, Aberdeen needs to invest in quality of life and DT amenities. Truly, DT needs to be thriving to have much larger groups of young professionals consider moving*

there. Investing in other areas/businesses will make Aberdeen stable, but not grow dynamically long term.”

- “We need major manufacturers to replace those that have recently closed. We also need more upper management opportunities—not only at the manufacturing jobs but also at the manufacturing headquarters. We have to have opportunities for the educated students graduating from NSU to stay in Aberdeen - a college graduate may be too qualified to take a position on a manufacturing floor, but they would be more apt to seek a management role; we need to bring in industry also seeking those individuals.”
- “Industry to keep the workforce in place in the industrial park that has been lost. Restaurant/food service franchises that locals will frequent and out of town people will frequent as well”
- “Tech jobs. Manufacturers that pay more than 24 per hour and full benefits. We have lost over 700 jobs in the past 5 years. Poor roads and poor water quality are big reasons.”

SECTION 3 – People / Livability / Entertainment



If no, please specify:

Response Summary: It's evident from the responses that there is a widespread concern about the adequacy of wages relative to the cost of living in Aberdeen, with many expressing dissatisfaction with the compensation offered by local employers. Additionally, the loss of businesses and layoffs in the area have contributed to concerns about job availability and fair compensation.

Low wages and limited opportunities for fair compensation

e.g., "Jobs don't pay very well," "Wages are vastly lower than cost of living," "Low pay for most jobs,"

Concerns about the cost of living, particularly high housing costs

e.g., "Housing costs are too high," "Rent is unaffordable," etc.

Loss of businesses and layoffs affecting job availability and compensation

e.g., "Constantly losing businesses," "Loss of Banner, Molded Fiber Glass, 3M layoffs," etc.

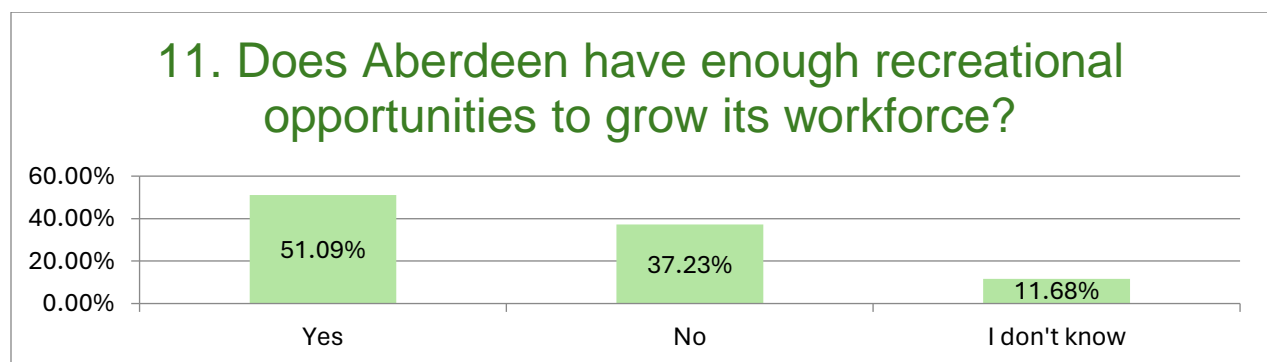
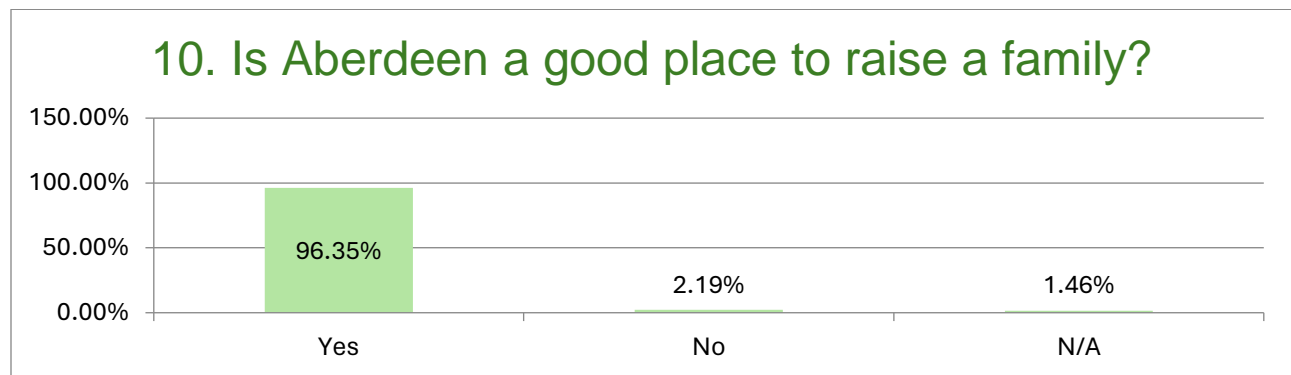
Mixed opinions depending on industry or expertise level

e.g., "Depends on your field," "Depends on your level of expertise and industry," etc.

General perception of limited opportunities or challenges in finding full-time positions with fair compensation: e.g., "Selection is limited," "Not enough full-time jobs that pay well," etc.

Comment Highlights:

- *“Difficult to find a full-time professional position that provides a salary/pay rate and benefits that allows an individual to support a family. Limited opportunities in Aberdeen.”*
- *“We constantly losing businesses that have a bigger number of employees causing people to leave.”*
- *“Very poor pay, very high cost of living as rent is way too high as there is no competition. And very little houses being built in the pay range of low pay.”*
- *“Given the turnover of many front-line workers, and the constant hiring efforts, it appears salaries are not enough to retain a workforce. And there's just a shortage of younger people who gravitate those jobs.”*
- *“Currently, wages are not supporting the escalating cost of housing.”*



If no, please specify:

Response Summary: It's evident from the responses that while Aberdeen offers some recreational opportunities, there is a perceived lack of diversity, particularly for adults and young professionals. Additionally, there are concerns about affordability, accessibility, and the need for better promotion of existing activities. Addressing these concerns could contribute to a more vibrant and attractive environment for the workforce in Aberdeen.

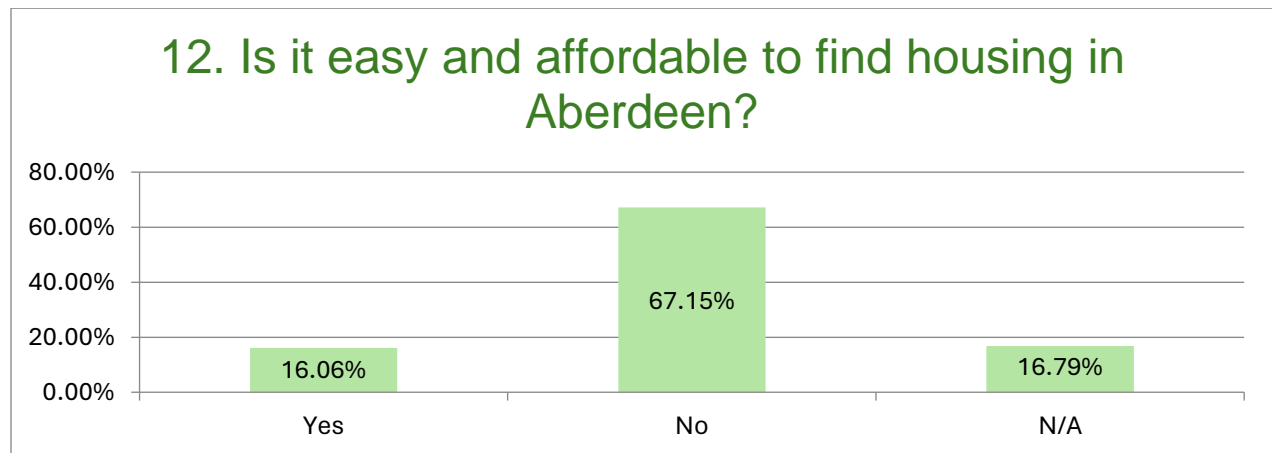
Need for more diverse recreational options, particularly for adults and young professionals:
e.g., "There really isn't anything for adults to do," "Not much for families with small children," "Not as many evening recreational opportunities," "it is difficult to attract young graduates who do not have kids yet to move and stay in Aberdeen when we don't have the nightlife, culture, socializing opportunities that exist in larger communities" etc.

Desire for more winter activities and longer seasons for existing facilities:
e.g., "Need more winter activities," "Many of our rec activities are timed for people who don't work day jobs," etc.

Call for better promotion and marketing of existing events and activities
e.g., "Better marketing for events," "NSU needs to promote activities more," etc.

Concerns about affordability and accessibility of existing recreational facilities
e.g., "Cost for things are out of control," "People can't support it" etc.

Emphasis on the importance of quality-of-life amenities for attracting and retaining a skilled workforce
e.g., "Quality of life amenities are the long game solution," "Continue to grow the young adult 21-30 and family recreational opportunities," etc.



If no, please specify:

Response Summary: Overall, the responses suggest that housing affordability is a significant concern in Aberdeen, with many expressing frustrations over high prices, limited inventory, and the quality of available options. Addressing these issues may be crucial for ensuring that housing remains accessible to residents and newcomers alike.

High housing costs and lack of affordability for both renters and potential homebuyers:
e.g., "home ownership is very expensive," "Rent is ridiculous," "Housing is very expensive," etc.

Limited inventory of housing options, particularly in certain price ranges

e.g., "There are minimal housing opportunities on the market," "Not much on the market for housing," etc.

Concerns about the quality of available housing relative to the price

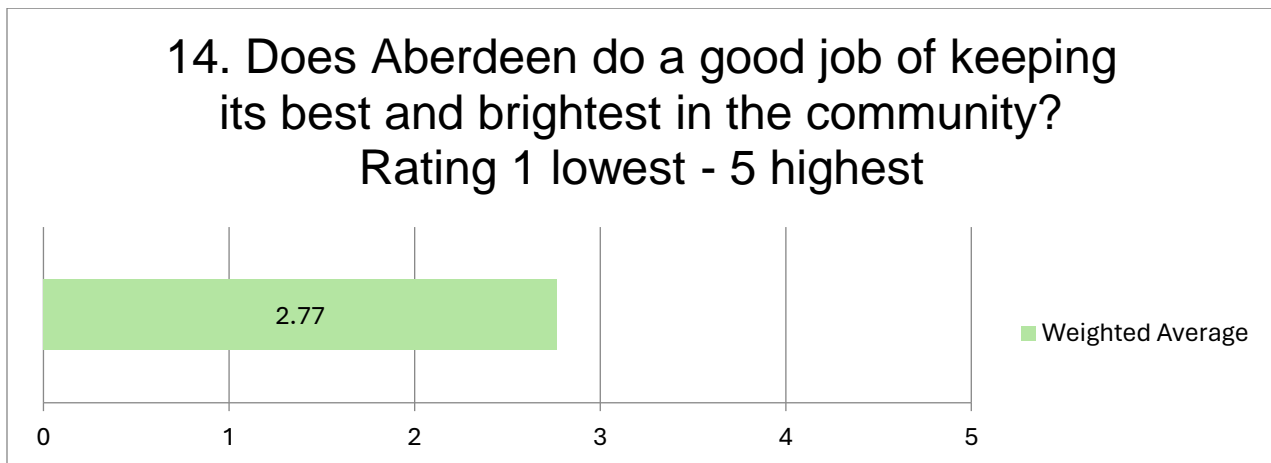
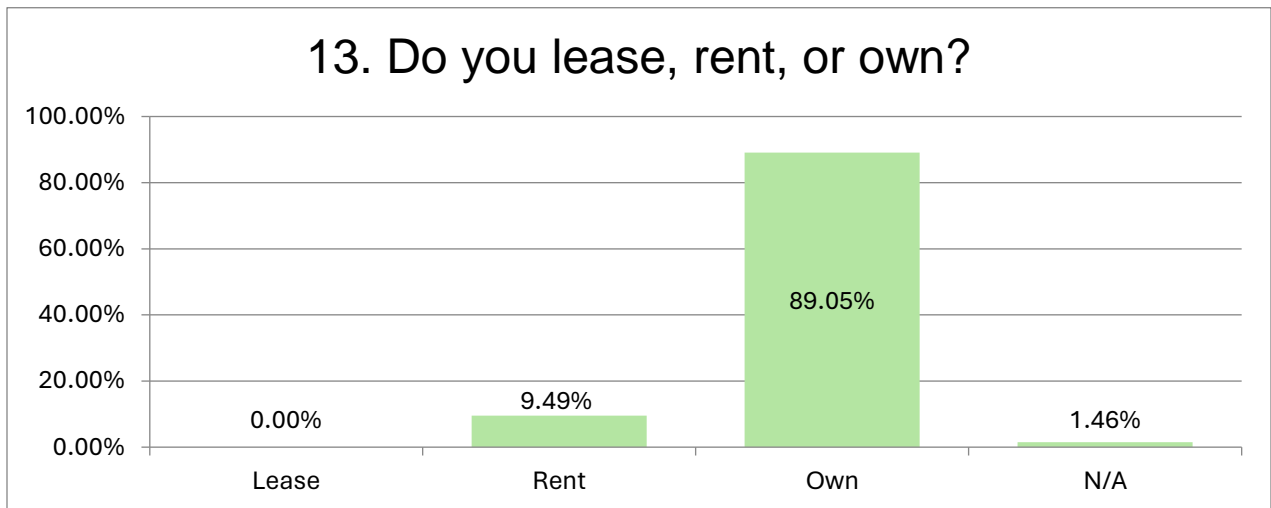
"Housing market is priced out for the town," "Quality of the home does not match the price," etc.

Impact of corporate buyers on housing market dynamics and affordability

e.g., "Too many corporate buyers of real estate," "a few number of business owners bought a lot of properties," etc.

Call for new land development and more affordable housing options

e.g., "New land development needs to take place," "We will need more [housing]," etc.



Comments:

Response Summary: These themes reflect the predominant concerns and perspectives regarding job opportunities and fair compensation in Aberdeen, with a significant emphasis on addressing the challenges associated with retaining the younger generation and fostering economic growth in the community.

Brain Drain/Youth Exodus:

Many respondents expressed concerns about a "brain drain" or exodus of young people leaving Aberdeen for better job opportunities elsewhere, particularly in larger cities like Sioux Falls.

Limited Job Opportunities and Professional Development:

Several comments highlighted the lack of good-paying jobs with benefits and the need for more professional-type positions to retain college graduates and professionals in the community.

Housing Affordability and Quality of Life:

Concerns were raised about the affordability of housing, along with the quality of life and amenities available for younger adults in the community.

Community Unity and Support:

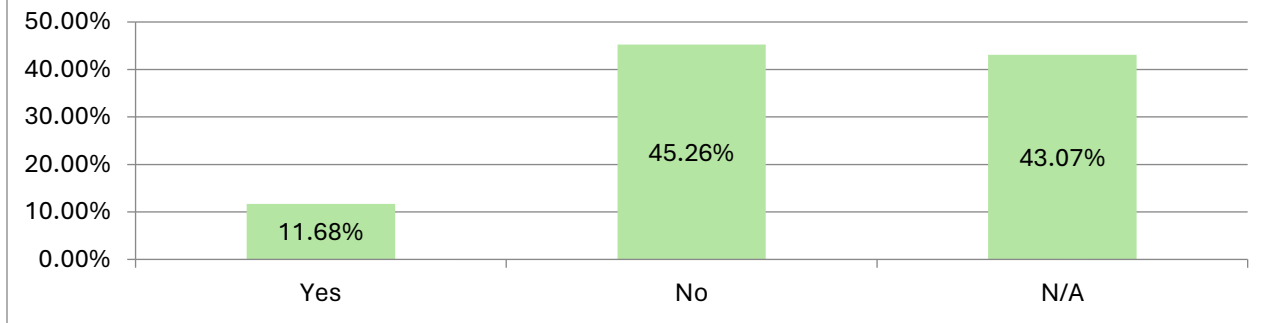
Some respondents mentioned a need for a more united and supportive community, as well as efforts to engage and retain young people through internships and job opportunities.

Economic Development and Retention Efforts: Comments focused on the need for local businesses to be active in economic development strategies and retention efforts to keep graduates in Aberdeen, including providing mid-level semi-professional positions.

Comment Highlights:

- *"We need to work with the youth that are attending school out of town and find spots for them BACK in Aberdeen when they graduate. Keeping in contact with them in some fashion."*
- *"Very limited opportunities when you get into leadership roles without looking outside Aberdeen if you don't own your own business."*
- *"Some return - but we need to promote the amenities Aberdeen has, so these young adults don't overlook the Aberdeen community."*
- *"As stated earlier, Aberdeen needs to create jobs that will keep NSU grads in the community. "There needs to be more professional type jobs created in the community."*
- *"Many graduates leave upon graduation - high school and college - whether to seek further education or more opportunities in a more metro area."*

15. Do you find public transportation to be readily available when needed?



If no, please specify:

Response Summary: These themes reflect the predominant concerns and challenges regarding public transportation in Aberdeen, including issues of accessibility, reliability, affordability, and the need for improvement to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Lack of Public Transportation:

Numerous respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of public transportation options in Aberdeen, including buses and other services, such as Lyft or taxis.

Reliability and Accessibility Concerns:

Many comments highlighted concerns about the reliability, accessibility, and convenience of available transportation options, such as Ride Line, taxis, Lyft, and Uber.

Need for Improvement and Additional Options:

Respondents emphasized the need for immediate improvements to public transportation and the introduction of more options, especially for low-income individuals, international students, and those without personal vehicles.

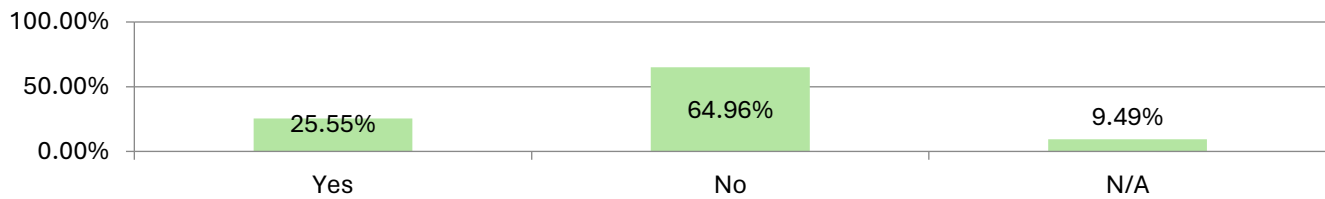
Impact on Work and Daily Life:

Several respondents mentioned how the lack of adequate public transportation affects people's ability to get to work, school, or other essential destinations, potentially leading to job loss or reduced opportunities.

Specific Criticisms of Existing Services:

Some respondents provided specific criticisms of existing transportation services, such as Ride Line being inconvenient or unreliable, taxis being dirty and unreliable, and Lyft and Uber being scarce.

16. Do you find the needed flights out of Aberdeen adequate without having to fly out of other areas?



If no, please specify:

Response Summary: These themes reflect the predominant concerns and challenges regarding flights out of Aberdeen, with a significant emphasis on cost, limited options, reliability, and comparison with nearby airports. Also echoed was a general support for the Aberdeen airport and it being a necessity for both businesses and those living in the region.

Cost and Affordability:

The most prevalent theme is the high cost of flights out of Aberdeen, with many respondents expressing that flights are too expensive compared to other airports or that they opt to fly out of alternative airports due to cost considerations.

Limited Options and Flights:

Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the limited flight options available out of Aberdeen, including the lack of direct flights to popular destinations and the limited number of flights per day.

Reliability and Convenience:

Several comments highlighted concerns about the reliability of flights and the inconvenience of flight schedules, particularly regarding connecting flights and layovers.

Comparison with Other Airports:

Respondents frequently compared the offerings and pricing of flights out of Aberdeen to those of other nearby airports, such as Sioux Falls, Fargo, and Watertown.

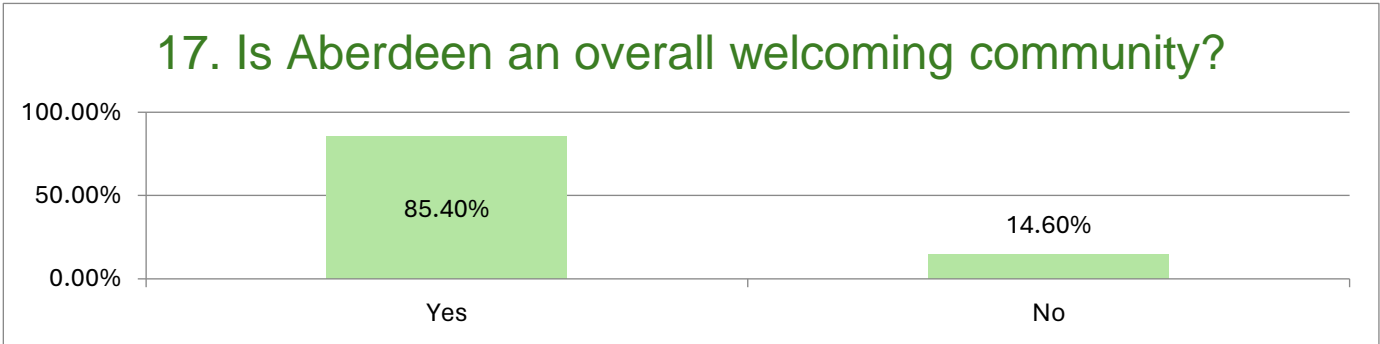
Desire for Additional Destinations and Carriers:

Some respondents expressed a desire for additional flight destinations and carriers, as well as direct flights to hubs like Denver or Chicago.

Comment Highlights:

- *“I fly over 1M miles a year, every flight departed from Aberdeen for years. Now 60% of my departures are out of Fargo or Sioux Falls due to the new time for the early flight we cannot make connections in MLPS for same day business. If I depart from Aberdeen, I always need to leave a day early to do the same business as past years. You would be shocked at the businesspeople from Aberdeen I visit with at the FAR & FSD airports. we ALL have the same complaint.”*
- *“I would prefer more flights, and maybe a second airline. Other than that, I'm pretty happy with what we have. I don't want service to decrease.”*

- “BUT - this is an area of most concern to me as a business owner in Aberdeen. Air travel is of critical importance to the future of my business. It is also very costly as compared to other mid-size cities. Other mid-size cities have more options and lower priced flights. I understand paying more BUT we pay a significant amount more to fly out Aberdeen. To date, I have refused to fly out to other cities because I want to fully support our airport. I will move to another city if I need to for my business. Air travel is essential to not only by business BUT also to sustain Aberdeen's economic and social standing.”*



If no, what would make us more welcoming?

Response Summary: These themes reflect the diversity of opinions regarding Aberdeen's overall welcoming community, with a notable emphasis on the challenges of fitting in and making connections, as well as concerns about diversity, inclusivity, and the role of local residents in fostering a welcoming atmosphere.

Mixed Perceptions of Welcoming Atmosphere: Many respondents expressed mixed feelings about Aberdeen's overall welcoming nature. While some described the community as friendly and welcoming, others noted challenges in fitting in, making connections, or feeling included.

Challenges with Fitting In and Making Connections: Numerous comments highlighted difficulties in fitting into the community or making lasting connections, with mentions of cliques, challenges in breaking into social circles, and a lack of organized outreach activities.

Concerns about Diversity and Inclusivity: Several respondents raised concerns about the lack of diversity and inclusivity in Aberdeen, mentioning issues such as racism, classism, and the need for more opportunities to engage with different cultures.

Opportunities for Improvement and Promotion: Some respondents suggested that Aberdeen could improve its welcoming atmosphere through programs to entice businesses and promote the city, while also encouraging more openness to different nationalities and fostering connections beyond existing social groups.

Role of Local Residents and Community Dynamics: A few comments highlighted the role of local residents in welcoming newcomers, with mentions of the need for people to reach out and get to know each other beyond small groups or cliques.

18. What types of programming and or events would you like to see in the Parks and Rec / Aberdeen Recreation & Cultural Center (ARCC) building?

Responses

Response Summary: These themes reflect the community's interest in a diverse range of programming and events, improvements to facilities and amenities, better marketing and awareness strategies, and a focus on community engagement and social activities. There's also a desire for specific activities and events to cater to different age groups and interests within the community.

Desire for More Diverse Programming:

Many respondents expressed a desire for a wider variety of programming and events, including activities for different age groups, such as adults, teenagers, and toddlers. There were suggestions for sports leagues, music events, cooking classes, arts and crafts, and educational programs.

Improvements to Facilities and Amenities:

Several comments mentioned the need for improvements to the facilities and amenities offered at the Parks and Rec / ARCC building. Suggestions included modernization, renovation of existing spaces, remodeling to be a concert venue like the Dacotah Bank Center in Brookings, full season ice, and the addition of new features like indoor soccer and tennis facilities, commercial kitchens for rent, and maker spaces.

Enhanced Marketing and Awareness:

Some respondents highlighted the importance of better marketing and awareness of the programs and events offered at the ARCC building. Suggestions included more effective promotion through survey blasts, social media, and other channels to reach both new and existing residents.

Focus on Community Engagement and Social Activities:

Many respondents emphasized the importance of programming and events that foster community engagement and social interaction. Suggestions included more concerts, festivals, outdoor activities, and events geared towards young professionals and families.

Requests for Specific Activities and Events: There were specific requests for certain types of activities and events, including outdoor pickleball courts, more music events, cooking/baking classes, English language classes.

Comment Highlights:

- *“More events for the 25-40 age group. It’s great that they are trying to bring in more entertainment, but we have no idea who anyone of the people or acts were for the ARTS council concert series.”*
- *“I think the ARCC does a nice job being rounded in many different activities.”*
- *“Great job with youth, but events targeted at retaining young professionals would be beneficial: concerts, night life, etc.”*
- *“Programs need to be offered year round - their current window of opportunity is very short and limited. Options are NOT sensitive to business hours and needs.”*

- *“There are tons of events that don't get widely announced so there's not awareness of them. You almost have to be "in the know.”*

19. What is one thing that would make Aberdeen’s downtown more appealing and competitive as a destination in South Dakota?

Responses

Response Summary: These themes reflect a common desire among respondents to make downtown Aberdeen more attractive, vibrant, and competitive as a destination in South Dakota. Key areas of focus include parking, dining and shopping options, streetscape improvements, downtown events, and community engagement.

Improved Parking:

Many respondents highlighted the need for better parking options downtown, including easier access to parking, more parking spaces, and longer parking times to encourage visitors to stay longer. Some also mentioned the need for parking garages or structures.

More Restaurants and Retail Shops:

There was a strong desire for more dining and nightlife options, including rooftop bars/restaurants, family-friendly establishments, and diverse culinary experiences. Additionally, respondents expressed a need for more retail stores and shopping opportunities downtown to attract visitors.

Attractive Streetscapes and Building Updates:

Several respondents mentioned the importance of improving the aesthetics of downtown Aberdeen, including updating storefronts, restoring historic buildings, and beautifying the streetscapes. There were also calls to address the issue of vacant or dilapidated buildings.

Enhanced Downtown Events and Activities:

Many respondents suggested organizing more events and activities downtown to create a vibrant atmosphere and attract visitors. Suggestions included parades, concerts, an event center, outdoor dining, and family-friendly events.

Two-Way Traffic and Street Design:

Some respondents advocated for converting Main Street to two-way traffic to improve traffic flow and accessibility downtown. Others suggested redesigning the streetscape to prioritize pedestrians and create a more walkable environment.

Community Engagement and Promotion:

Several respondents emphasized the importance of community engagement and promotion to make downtown Aberdeen more appealing. Suggestions included better marketing, promoting local businesses, and increasing awareness of downtown attractions.

20. What is one thing you feel would improve Aberdeen's livability for its residents and visitors?

Responses

Response Summary: Responses reflect a range of concerns and priorities identified by respondents for improving livability in Aberdeen. Key areas of focus include affordable housing, economic opportunities, infrastructure improvements, community engagement, downtown revitalization, water quality, transportation, cultural amenities, and retail/dining options.

Affordable Housing:

Many respondents emphasized the need for more affordable housing options in Aberdeen, expressing concerns about rising housing costs and rent prices.

Economic Opportunities and Jobs:

Respondents highlighted the importance of creating more job opportunities in Aberdeen to enhance livability for residents. Economic growth, job creation, and attracting businesses were mentioned as crucial factors for improving the city's livability.

Infrastructure and Utilities:

Several respondents mentioned the need for improvements in infrastructure, particularly regarding water quality, road maintenance, and snow removal. Better infrastructure was seen as essential for enhancing the overall quality of life in Aberdeen.

Community Engagement and Activities:

Many respondents expressed a desire for more community activities, events, and recreational opportunities in Aberdeen. Suggestions included expanding cultural events, offering more family-friendly activities, and increasing public transportation options.

Downtown Revitalization:

There were calls for revitalizing downtown Aberdeen by supporting local businesses, improving streetscapes, and creating a more vibrant downtown atmosphere. Downtown revitalization was seen as a way to enhance the city's appeal and livability.

Water Quality and Environmental Concerns:

Several respondents raised concerns about water quality issues in Aberdeen, advocating for improvements in water infrastructure and clean-up efforts, particularly regarding Moccasin Creek. Environmental concerns were cited as important for improving livability.

Transportation:

Respondents highlighted the need for better transportation options, including public transportation, bike lanes, and reduced traffic congestion. Improving transportation infrastructure was seen as essential for enhancing livability and accessibility.

Cultural and Entertainment Opportunities:

Many respondents emphasized the importance of expanding cultural and entertainment offerings

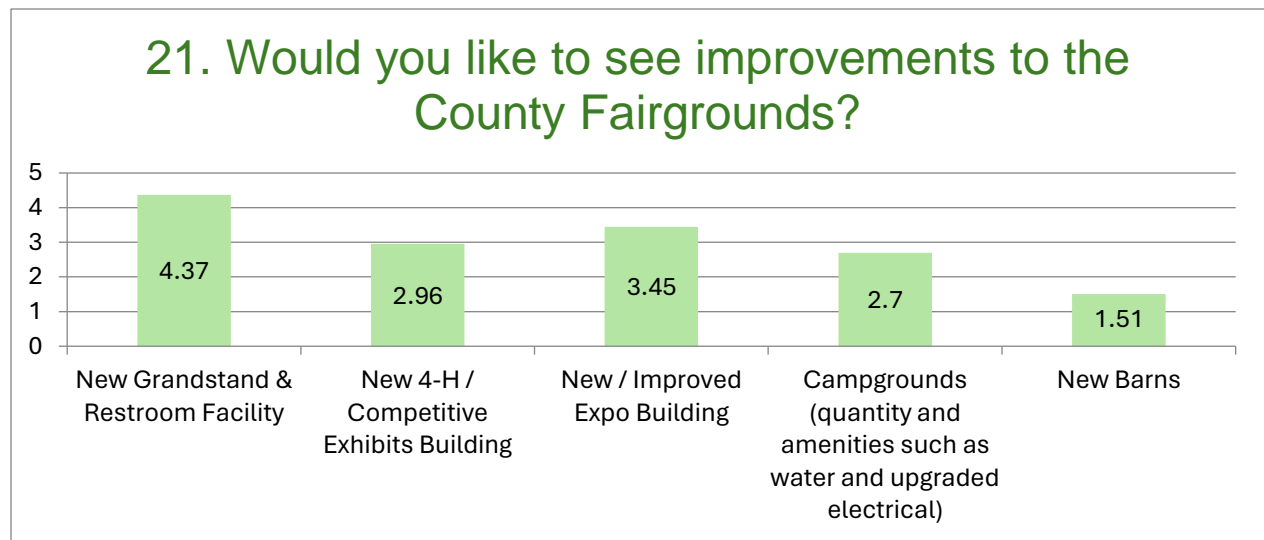
in Aberdeen, including concerts, events, and recreational activities. Enhancing cultural amenities was viewed as crucial for improving livability and attracting visitors.

Retail and Dining Options:

There were calls for more retail shopping and dining options in Aberdeen, with respondents expressing a desire for greater variety and affordability. Increasing retail and dining choices was seen as important for enhancing the city's livability and attractiveness.

Community Pride and Engagement:

Several respondents emphasized the importance of community pride and engagement in improving livability in Aberdeen. Building a sense of community, supporting local businesses, and fostering a welcoming environment were seen as essential for enhancing livability.



22. Is there any other improvement to the County Fairgrounds not listed in Question 21 that you would like to see?

61 respondents provided additional ideas and feedback on question 21.

Road Maintenance and Paving:

Many respondents emphasized the need for road maintenance and paving at the county fairgrounds. This includes repairing potholes, paving roads, and creating more paved parking areas to prevent mud and gravel issues.

Additional Events and Entertainment:

Several respondents expressed a desire for more events and entertainment options at the fairgrounds throughout the year, beyond just the county fair and hockey events. Suggestions included concerts, racing, and rodeos targeted at different age groups.

Infrastructure Improvements:

Respondents highlighted the need for various infrastructure improvements at the fairgrounds, including better restroom facilities, paved walkways, improved drainage systems, and upgraded fencing around the beer garden.

Campground Enhancements:

Many respondents suggested improvements to the campground facilities, such as adding more camping spots with electricity, paving roads within the campground, and providing better drainage to prevent mud issues.

Community Engagement and Livestock Exhibits:

Some respondents advocated for more community engagement initiatives, such as promoting the 4-H program and encouraging youth participation in agriculture-related activities. Suggestions included offering livestock exhibits and educational programs to involve youth in food production and agriculture.

Venue Upgrades:

Several respondents called for upgrades to existing venues at the fairgrounds, such as the Expo Building and Centennial Village. Suggestions included renovations, maintenance improvements, and landscaping enhancements.

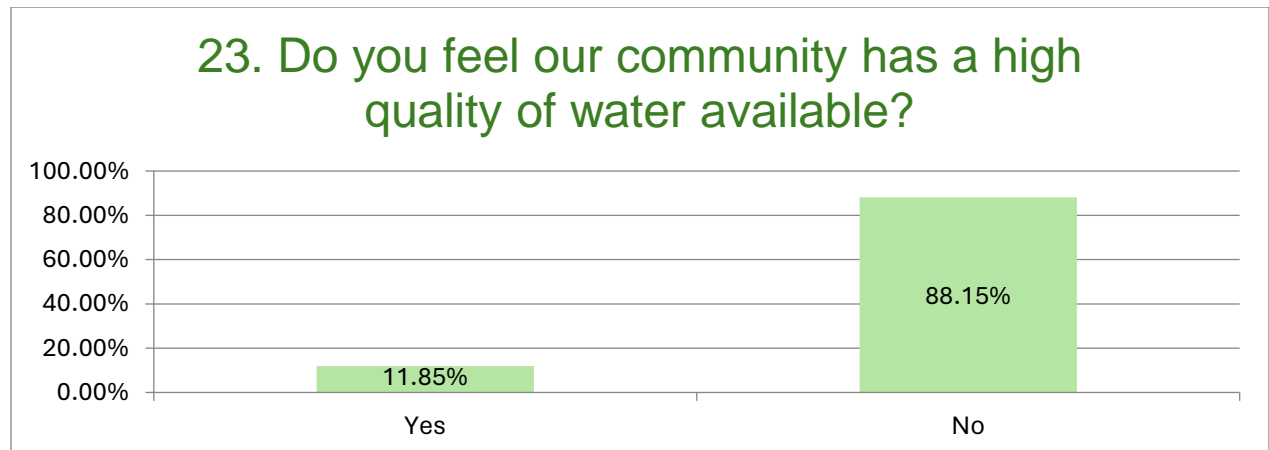
Parking and Traffic Management:

Many respondents highlighted the need for better parking facilities and traffic management at the fairgrounds. Suggestions included paving parking lots, improving access roads, and addressing safety concerns in parking areas.

Year-Round Utilization and Economic Impact:

Some respondents suggested maximizing the fairgrounds' potential for year-round utilization to generate more economic impact for the community. This includes hosting events, attracting visitors, and investing in facilities that can support various activities throughout the year.

SECTION 4 – Environment



If not, do you find yourself finding other sources of quality water? Ex. bottled or filtered water

Bottled Water Usage:

Many respondents expressed a reliance on bottled water due to concerns about the quality of Aberdeen's tap water.

Filtered Water Usage:

Similar to bottled water, filtered water usage was mentioned frequently as an alternative to tap water.

Desire for WEB Water:

Respondents expressed a desire for WEB Water, indicating dissatisfaction with the current water quality and suggesting WEB Water as a solution.

Concerns about Water Quality:

Numerous respondents raised concerns about the quality of Aberdeen's water, citing issues such as odor, taste, and potential health risks.

RO Filtration Systems:

Some respondents mentioned using reverse osmosis (RO) filtration systems for drinking and cooking water.

General Dissatisfaction with Tap Water:

Several respondents expressed general dissatisfaction with Aberdeen's tap water, stating that they avoid drinking it.

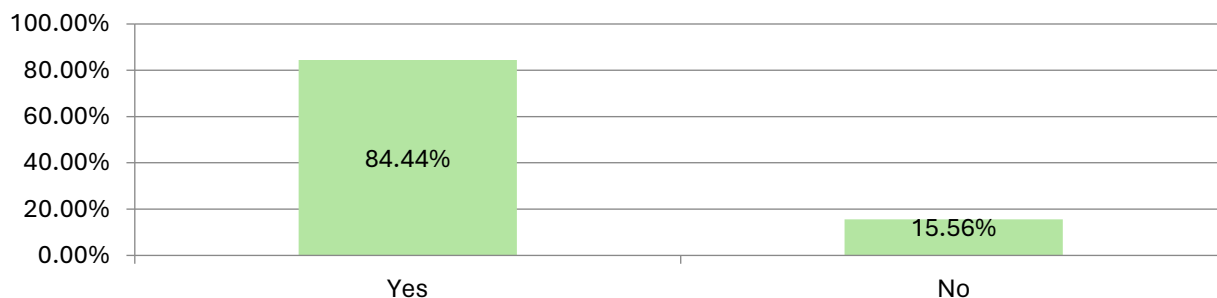
Impact on Appliances and Plumbing:

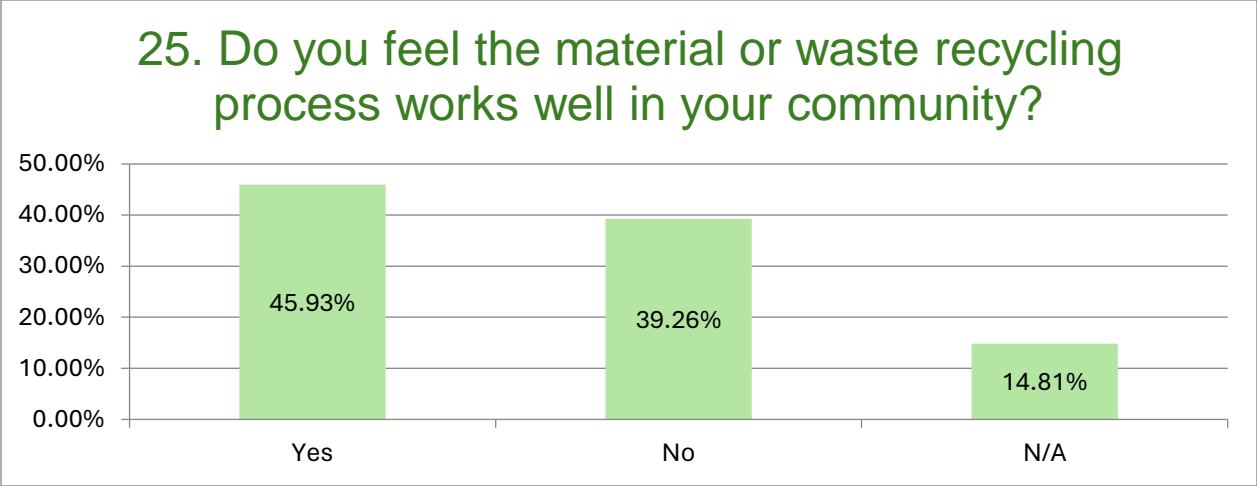
Concerns about the negative effects of Aberdeen's water on appliances and plumbing were mentioned, highlighting issues with hardness and corrosion.

Mixed Opinions and Awareness:

A small percentage of respondents expressed mixed opinions about Aberdeen's water quality, with some acknowledging issues but not taking action, while others stated they were unaware of any problems.

24. Would you pay a reasonable amount more to have quality water in your home?





If no, how could it be improved?

Limited Recycling Options and Desire for More:

Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the limited options for recycling in the community, including the lack of acceptance for certain materials like glass and plastic bags. They called for more recycling options, such as accepting a wider range of materials and simplifying the recycling process.

Dissatisfaction with Current Recycling System and Calls for Improvement:

A significant number of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the current recycling system, describing it as inadequate, minimal, or ineffective. They called for improvements to the recycling program, including modernizing it to align with practices in other communities and making recycling easier for residents.

Need for Glass Recycling and Concerns about Recycling Company:

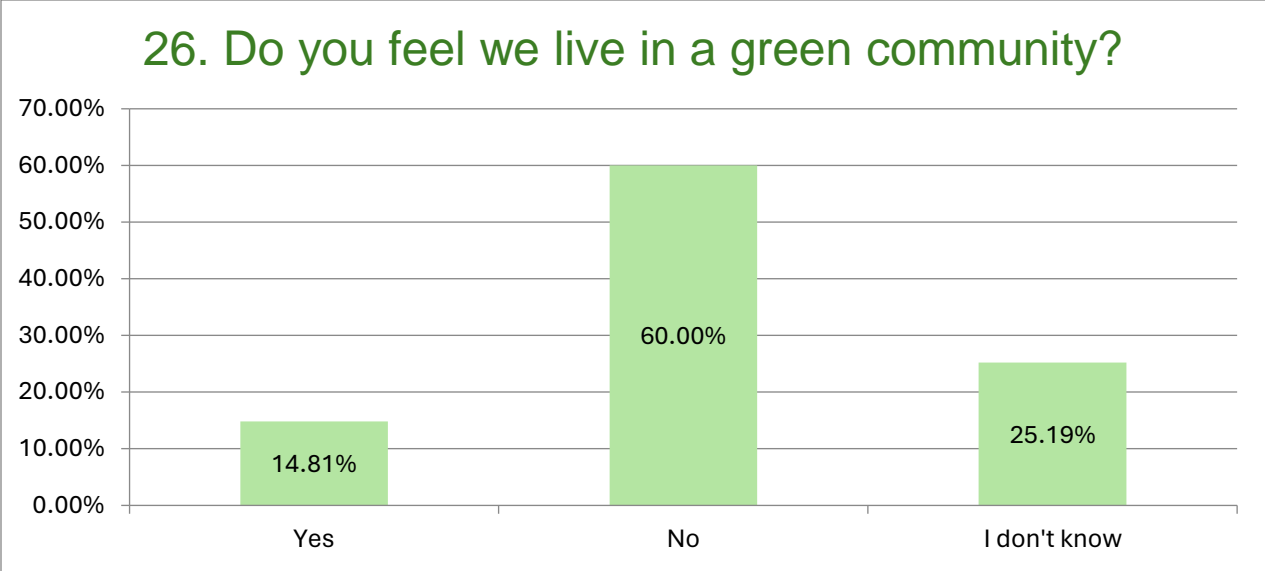
Many respondents specifically mentioned the need for glass recycling in the community, highlighting it as a material that should be recycled. Some expressed doubts or concerns about the effectiveness of the recycling company, questioning whether materials are actually recycled and criticizing the limited acceptance of recyclables.

Convenience and Accessibility:

Some respondents cited inconvenience and lack of accessibility as issues with the recycling process, including inconvenient drop-off locations and small recycling bins.

Community Engagement and Education:

A few respondents emphasized the importance of community engagement and education in promoting recycling and improving the recycling process.



If not, what would help Aberdeen to be more of a green community?

Desire for Improved Recycling Programs and Education:

Many respondents expressed a desire for improved recycling programs, including more recycling options, expanded education on recycling practices, and increased availability of recycling bins in public areas. Some also called for better communication and promotion of recycling initiatives to residents.

Lack of Priority or Action Towards Sustainability:

Several respondents indicated a perceived lack of priority or action towards sustainability and environmental conservation in the community. They highlighted the need for stronger efforts and initiatives to promote green practices, such as renewable energy projects and conservation efforts.

Concerns about Waste Management and Recycling Infrastructure:

Some respondents raised concerns about waste management practices, including outdated recycling methods, limited recycling options, and inadequate infrastructure for recycling. They emphasized the need for modernizing recycling systems and investing in better recycling facilities.

Desire for More Green Spaces and Sustainable Infrastructure:

Another common theme was the desire for more green spaces, sustainable infrastructure, and eco-friendly initiatives in the community. This included suggestions for creating incentives for green development, improving bike commuting infrastructure, and promoting green spaces within the city.

Call for Active Leadership and Community Engagement:

A number of respondents called for active leadership and community engagement in promoting green practices and sustainability initiatives. They highlighted the importance of proactive measures, such as enforcing landscape ordinances, promoting conservation efforts, and implementing policies to encourage recycling and sustainability.

SECTION 5 – Open Answer

27. What is Aberdeen's greatest strength? (Ex. Safety, Job Economy, etc.)

Responses

Response Summary: Respondents highlighted Aberdeen's greatest strengths as its safety, supportive community environment, educational opportunities, diverse job market, and family-friendly amenities, making it an appealing and resilient place to live and raise a family.

Safety and Community Security:

Many respondents highlighted safety as Aberdeen's greatest strength, emphasizing the community's overall safety, low crime rate, and supportive environment for families.

Educational Opportunities and Institutions:

Another common theme was the strength of Aberdeen's educational institutions, including schools, universities, and vocational training opportunities.

Community Support and Friendliness:

Several respondents praised Aberdeen for its friendly and supportive community, where neighbors help one another and there is a sense of belonging.

Economic Resilience and Diverse Economy:

Some respondents cited Aberdeen's economic stability, diverse job market, and resilient business community as its greatest strengths.

Recreation and Family-Friendly Environment:

A notable number of respondents mentioned Aberdeen's recreational opportunities, parks, and family-friendly atmosphere as key strengths of the community.

28. What one weakness should Aberdeen address that would make the most difference?

Responses

Response Summary: The responses to the question about Aberdeen's greatest weakness reflect diverse concerns, with notable emphasis on job opportunities, infrastructure improvement, and the need for better retail and shopping options. Community safety, education, and social issues also emerged as significant areas requiring attention.

Job Opportunities and Economic Growth:

Many respondents highlighted the need for better job opportunities, especially in terms of higher-paying professional jobs and manufacturing. Economic growth and attracting businesses to Aberdeen were also mentioned frequently.

Infrastructure Improvement:

Concerns about infrastructure were prominent, particularly regarding street maintenance, water

quality, and housing affordability. There were also mentions of the need for an event center and other recreational facilities.

Retail and Shopping Options:

Several respondents emphasized the desire for more diverse and better retail and shopping options in Aberdeen to attract residents and visitors.

Community Safety and Social Issues:

Some respondents expressed concerns about community safety, drug use (specifically methamphetamine), and social issues related to inclusivity and diversity.

Education and Workforce Development:

There were mentions of the need for improvements in education, including vocational training, and initiatives to retain and attract young talent to Aberdeen.

29. What's the main threat to Aberdeen's economic growth, and how can we address and improve the situation?

Responses

Job Creation and Retention:

Many responses highlighted the need for creating and retaining jobs, particularly in manufacturing and primary industries, with an emphasis on offering appropriate salaries to support families. Concerns were raised about the closure of larger industrial businesses and the need to attract more industry to supply jobs. There were also calls for incentives to keep large corporations in the industrial park.

Workforce Development:

Issues related to workforce development emerged as a significant concern. Responses indicated difficulties in attracting and retaining talent to Aberdeen, especially beyond a few key employers. Concerns were raised about the lack of work ethic among some individuals and the need for programs promoting hands-on working and skill development. Challenges in daycare availability were also highlighted, with suggestions for incentivizing new daycare facilities.

Infrastructure Challenges:

Infrastructure concerns, such as water quality and quantity, transportation, and housing affordability, were identified as barriers to economic growth. Specific issues included the need for stable water sources, improved road conditions, and addressing housing shortages. Suggestions were made for incentives to attract businesses with competitive wages and expand education programs geared toward higher-paying jobs.

Economic Diversification:

Respondents emphasized the importance of diversifying the economy to reduce dependence on agriculture and attract new industries. Concerns were raised about the closure of businesses and the need to attract diverse businesses to the area. Suggestions included creating incentives for new

businesses and industries and fostering collaboration between city government and economic development organizations.

Leadership Challenges:

Leadership-related issues, such as closed-mindedness, lack of collaboration, and political factors impacting economic development, were mentioned by some respondents. Concerns were raised about stagnant leadership and the need for a more proactive approach to economic growth. Suggestions included promoting diversity of thought and improving collaboration between stakeholders.

30. Additional Comments?

Responses

33 additional responses were provided in this section.

Economic Development and Business Environment:

Many respondents expressed concerns about the business environment in Aberdeen, particularly regarding regulations that make it difficult for small businesses to thrive. There were calls for more support and incentives for small and family-owned businesses, as well as efforts to attract larger businesses and industries to the area.

Community Engagement and Promotion:

Several comments focused on the importance of community engagement, promotion, and branding to attract newcomers and support local businesses. Suggestions included rebranding Aberdeen, promoting all shopping locations, and creating excitement for newcomers through strategic investments and events.

Infrastructure and Amenities:

Infrastructure-related concerns, such as housing availability, roads, parks, and community amenities, were highlighted by some respondents. There were calls for investment in infrastructure to support economic growth and improve quality of life for residents.

Education and Workforce Development:

Several respondents emphasized the importance of education and workforce development in attracting and retaining families and professionals in Aberdeen. Suggestions included offering technical education options and providing stable, well-paying careers for residents.

Water Availability and Business Hindrance:

The issue of water availability emerged as a concern, with respondents noting its impact on attracting new businesses to Aberdeen. Suggestions included addressing water-related challenges to support economic growth.