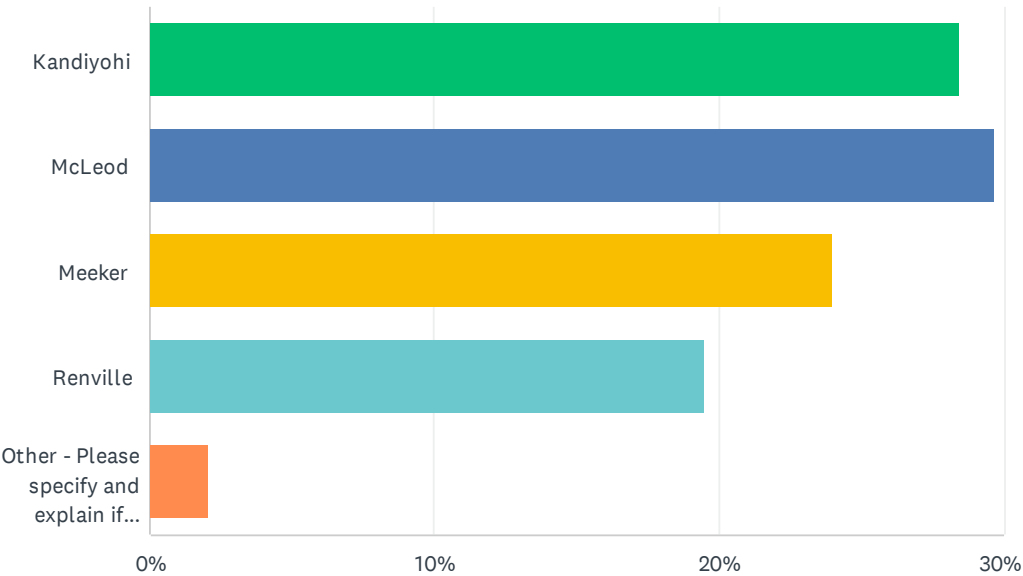


Q1 Which county are you from?

Answered: 246 Skipped: 0

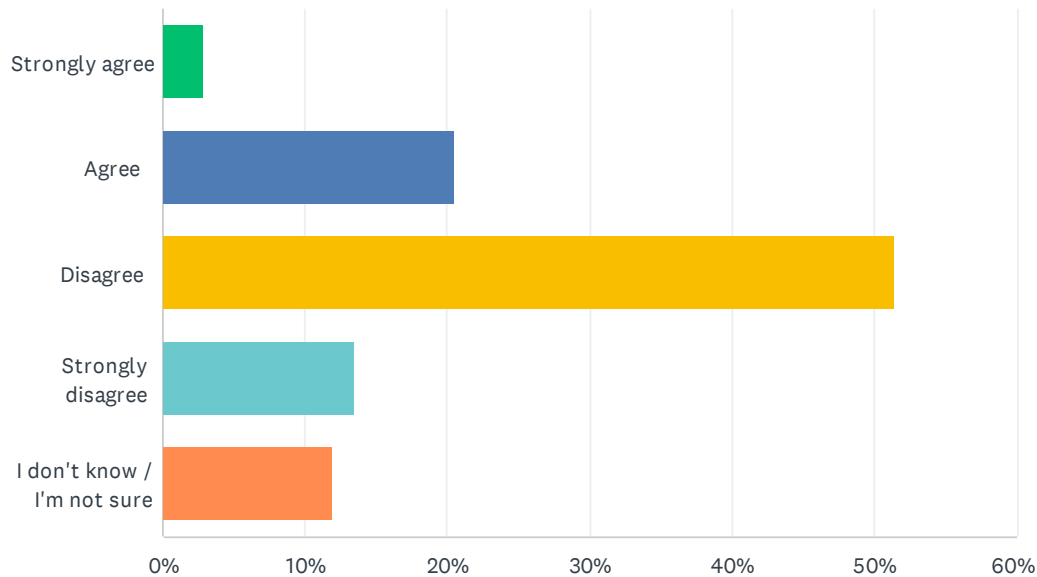


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Kandiyohi		28.46%	70
McLeod		29.67%	73
Meeker		23.98%	59
Renville		19.51%	48
Other - Please specify and explain if you've checked more than one county.		2.03%	5
Total Respondents: 246			

#	OTHER - PLEASE SPECIFY AND EXPLAIN IF YOU'VE CHECKED MORE THAN ONE COUNTY.	DATE
1	McLeod	7/2/2026 10:20 PM
2	Live in McLeod, work in Meeker	6/15/2026 12:14 PM
3	Own Business with Locations in Both Counties	6/1/2026 6:15 PM
4	Live in McLeod but work regionally	6/1/2026 11:50 AM
5	Reside in Meeker, own property in the other three	5/28/2026 3:43 PM

Q2 Our region has enough workers with the skills we need to meet the
needs of existing employers.

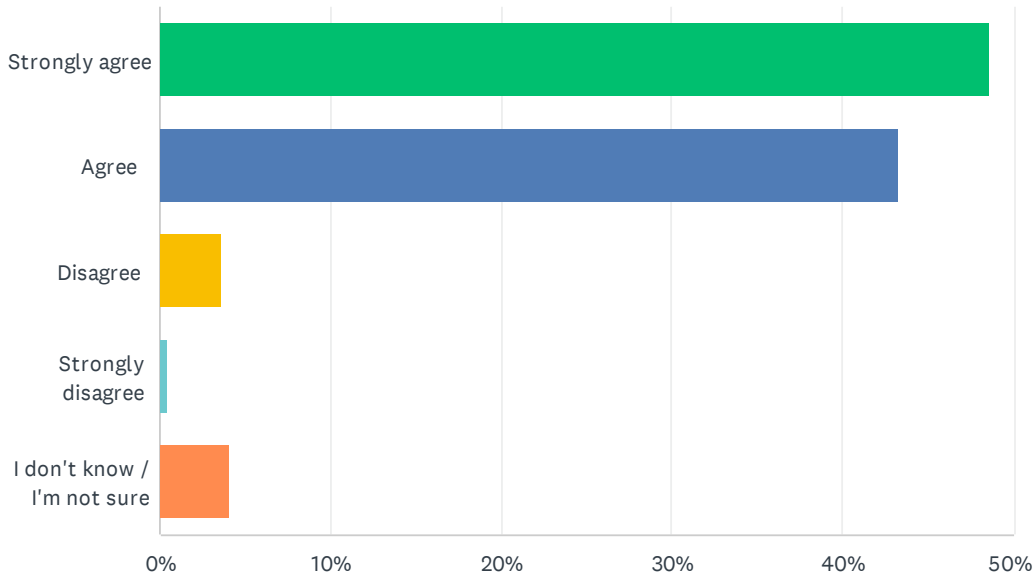
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.86%	7
Agree	20.41%	50
Disagree	51.43%	126
Strongly disagree	13.47%	33
I don't know / I'm not sure	11.84%	29
TOTAL		245

Q3 Our region should do more to retain our young people after graduation
(or college) to support our workforce.

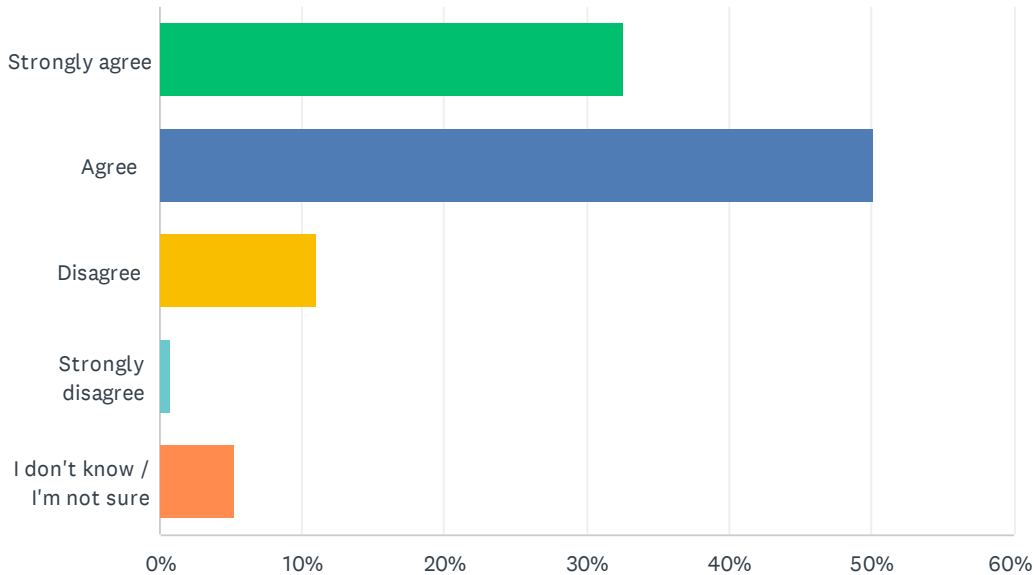
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	48.57%	119
Agree	43.27%	106
Disagree	3.67%	9
Strongly disagree	0.41%	1
I don't know / I'm not sure	4.08%	10
TOTAL		245

Q4 Our region should do more to attract new workers and residents from
other areas.

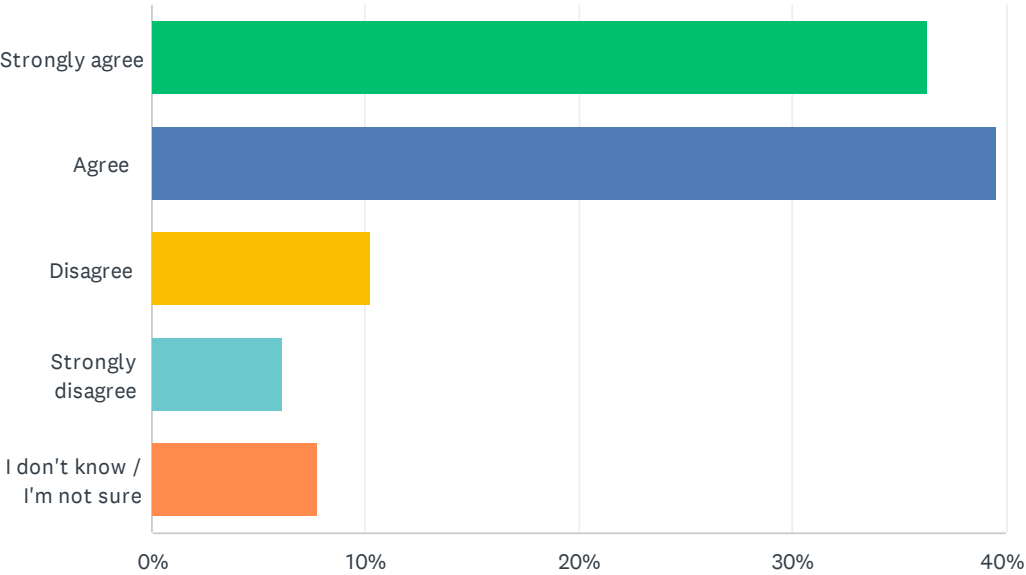
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	32.65%	80
Agree	50.20%	123
Disagree	11.02%	27
Strongly disagree	0.82%	2
I don't know / I'm not sure	5.31%	13
TOTAL		245

Q5 We need to do more to welcome and support new workers and their families, regardless of where they're from.

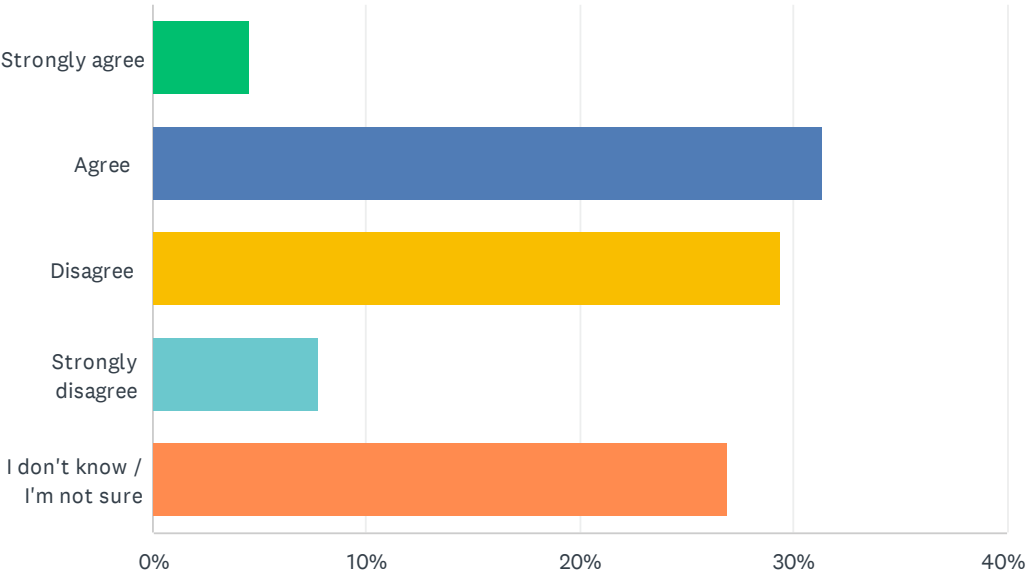
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	36.33%	89
Agree	39.59%	97
Disagree	10.20%	25
Strongly disagree	6.12%	15
I don't know / I'm not sure	7.76%	19
TOTAL		245

Q6 Our employers invest enough time and money in employee training to
advance the skills of current and future workers.

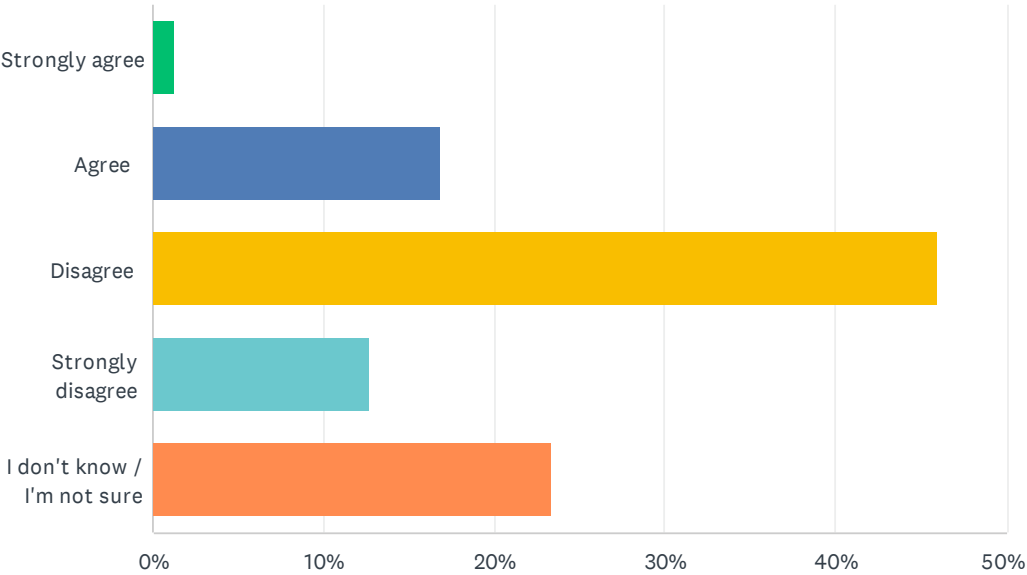
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	4.49%	11
Agree	31.43%	77
Disagree	29.39%	72
Strongly disagree	7.76%	19
I don't know / I'm not sure	26.94%	66
TOTAL		245

Q7 Our region is good at leveraging the knowledge and experience held by our retirees, in mentorship, training, and other workforce support roles.

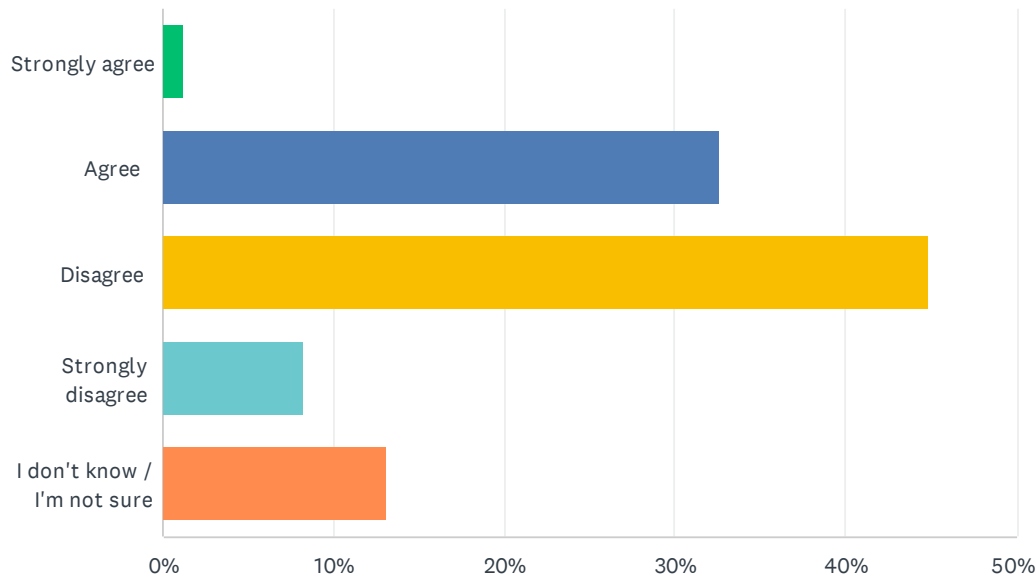
Answered: 244 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.23%	3
Agree	16.80%	41
Disagree	45.90%	112
Strongly disagree	12.70%	31
I don't know / I'm not sure	23.36%	57
TOTAL		244

Q8 Our region is good at promoting our positive attributes (i.e., marketing) to attract workers and their families.

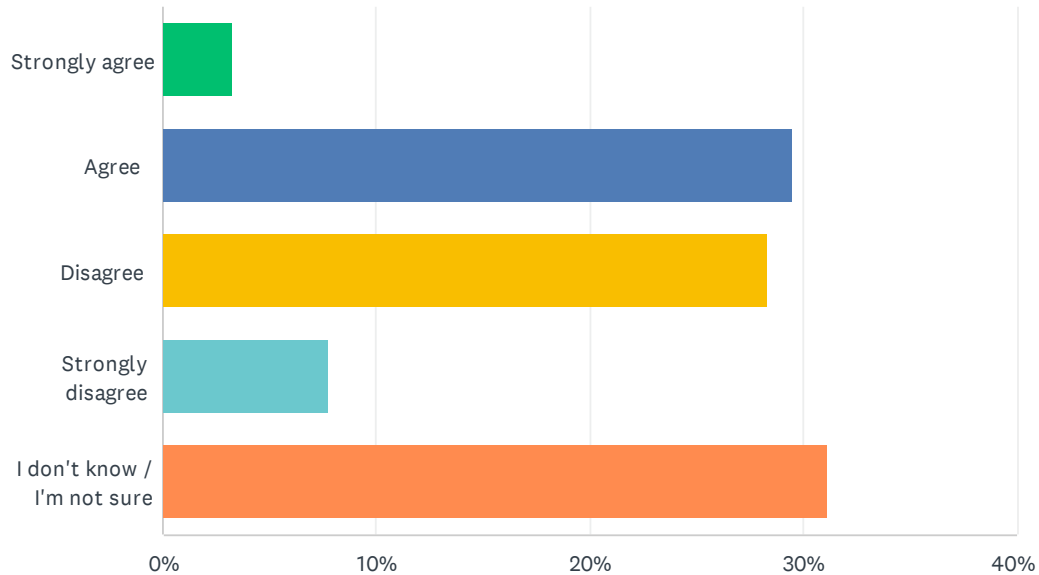
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.22%	3
Agree	32.65%	80
Disagree	44.90%	110
Strongly disagree	8.16%	20
I don't know / I'm not sure	13.06%	32
TOTAL		245

Q9 Our region does a good job of delivering business training to current and aspiring entrepreneurs/business owners.

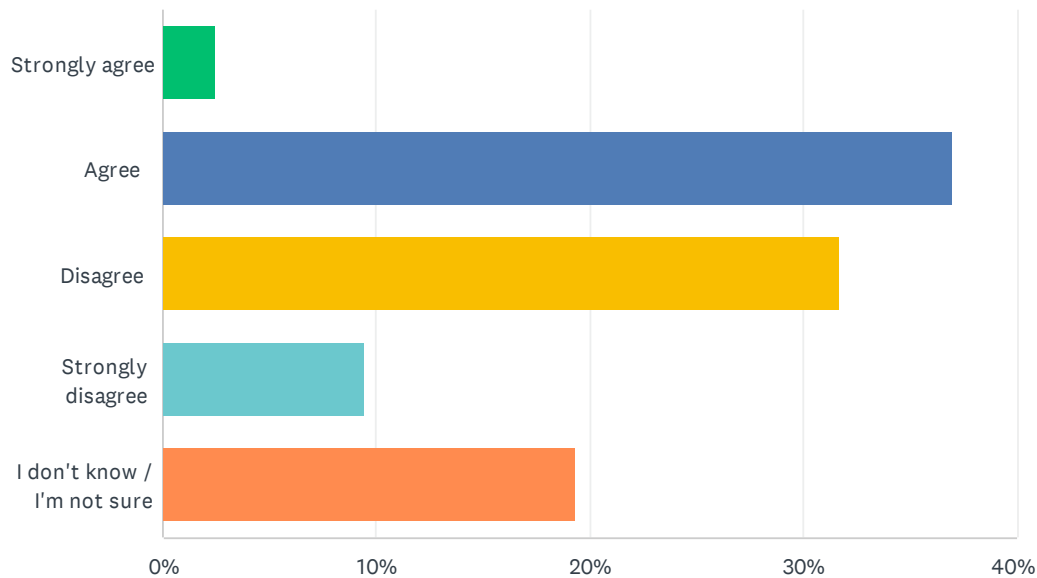
Answered: 244 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	3.28%	8
Agree	29.51%	72
Disagree	28.28%	69
Strongly disagree	7.79%	19
I don't know / I'm not sure	31.15%	76
TOTAL		244

Q10 Students and other job seekers have good access to quality,
affordable career training, for fields in which we have a demand for
workers.

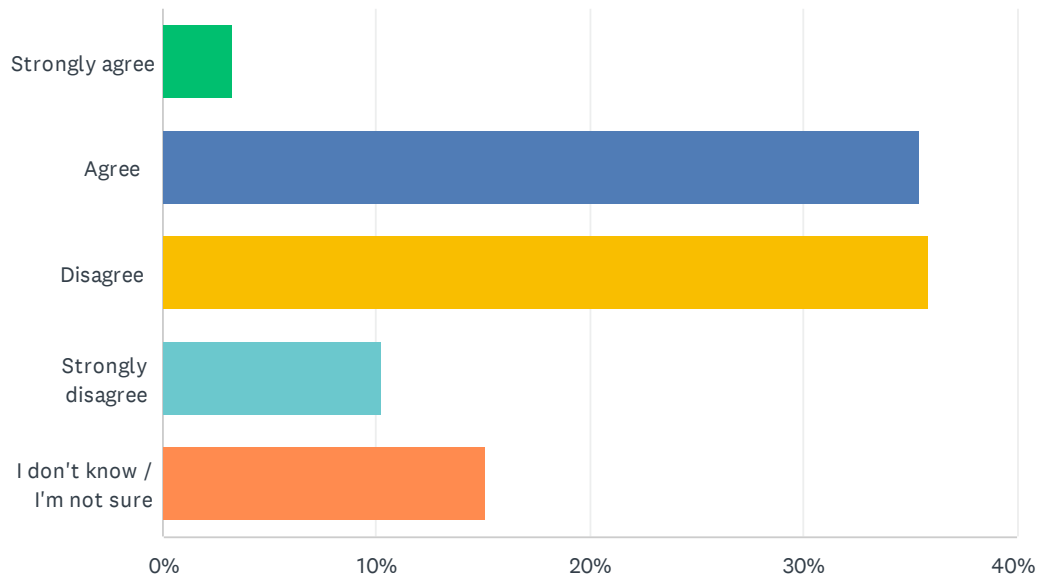
Answered: 243 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.47%	6
Agree	37.04%	90
Disagree	31.69%	77
Strongly disagree	9.47%	23
I don't know / I'm not sure	19.34%	47
TOTAL		243

Q11 Our schools (secondary and college) and employers are well-aligned.
to meet our workforce needs.

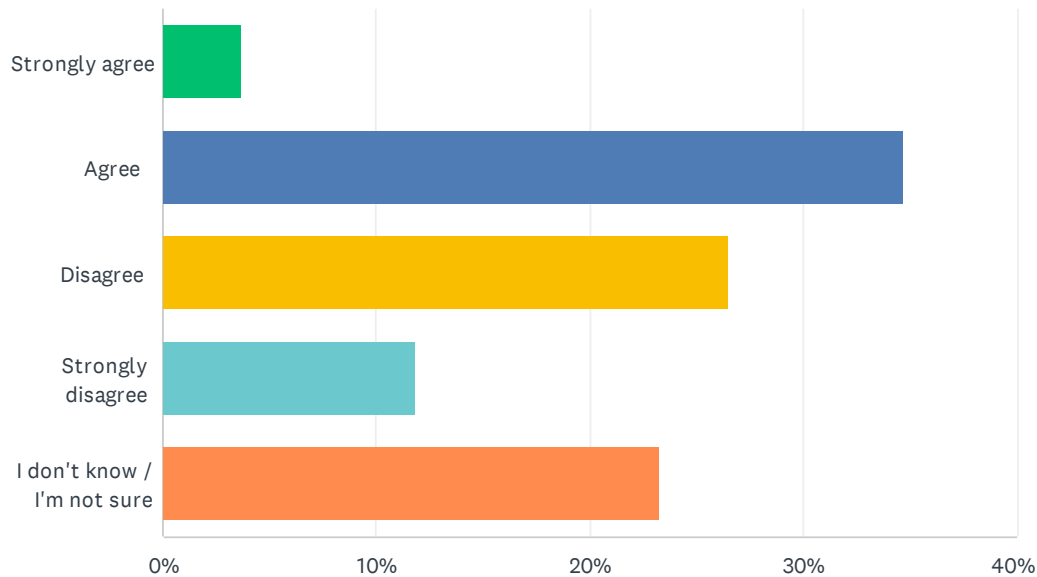
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	3.27%	8
Agree	35.51%	87
Disagree	35.92%	88
Strongly disagree	10.20%	25
I don't know / I'm not sure	15.10%	37
TOTAL		245

Q12 Our secondary schools provide enough hands-on learning opportunities for students, in a variety of career pathways.

Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	3.67%	9
Agree	34.69%	85
Disagree	26.53%	65
Strongly disagree	11.84%	29
I don't know / I'm not sure	23.27%	57
TOTAL		245

Q13 Do you have other thoughts that you'd like to share related to how our region attracts and supports our human capital (workers and their families)?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 185

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Do exactly the opposite of dakota and Hennepin County!	7/5/2026 7:39 PM
2	Worker wages have not kept up with the increase in cost of living. Workers struggle to find affordable housing and resources.	7/3/2026 1:09 PM
3	The workforce in the area tends to be biased. If you don't know the right people you tend to not get the opportunity to better work skills or train for better positions. This type of info is not easily accessible or promoted especially to people of other backgrounds or ethnicities. Help is considered a handout has been the mentality for people so that's been a major disadvantage to those that need it.	7/3/2026 9:18 AM
4	We welcome fast food but nothing to entice the professional growth. Our jobs are stagnant because of it and wages too. We focus too much on immigrants and forget about those that were already here. There's entirely too much taxes that pay for unnecessary things while the necessary things get ignored. Willmar area has declined severely within the last few years. Cost of living is way higher than the average wages and wages are low due to not bringing in new industry.	7/1/2026 9:49 PM
5	The political environment and negative attitude about immigrants, lgbtq+ia, and other marginalized identify holders is a major deficit to attracting workers. The twin cities isn't attracting workers due to job opportunity or cost of living but due to well established workplace attitudes for those who are marginalized.	6/29/2026 12:42 PM
6	More affordable housing would help bring people to the area and stay.	6/26/2026 10:15 AM
7	Low income, housing shortages, unwalkable city.	6/25/2026 9:44 PM
8	State taxation is the cause affecting most residents in my area. Examples gasoline/groceries/property to name a few of many examples, removing working family's income to fund failing programs helps no one.	6/24/2026 6:18 PM
9	Competitive wages matter, but so do the surrounding elements that shape daily experience: accessible childcare, strong schools, affordable housing, reliable broadband, and a sense of community belonging.	6/24/2026 2:17 PM
10	Not everyone wants to stay where they were raised or went to school.	6/23/2026 3:32 PM
11	Our region loses employees to higher wage paying regions regularly.	6/15/2026 12:14 PM
12	The thing I don't like about surveys is that they ask questions that force you to answer/score questions that mislead you from the real issues, but still give the surveyor the right answer needed to help justify their intent.	6/15/2026 8:30 AM
13	Give more grant money to native-born Minnesotans, even the white ones. Color shouldn't matter, so why do only BIPOC people get the support?	6/15/2026 8:24 AM
14	I think connections with higher education would be helpful as well as providing opportunities for living in a rural area.	6/4/2026 3:32 PM
15	Willmar in particular can be a great town however it does not invite new business (especially manufacturing) to come here. We are filled with empty buildings, broken roads and decaying parking lots. There needs to be a revitalization of the town and that isn't going to start until community leaders, business owners, and others come together and want to spend the time, the money, the resources to improve the state of this town.	6/4/2026 7:32 AM
16	NA	6/3/2026 11:37 AM

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update Survey

17	I think one danger we run into here is in prioritizing industry perspective too highly. People living in our communities deserve occupational choice, and we should encourage opportunities for folks that aren't just aligned with current business priorities. I realize this is a tough goal and I'm not discounting working with existing businesses, but I think more investment in populations of people usually locked out of entrepreneurial opportunities because of lack of capital is an important step towards addressing this issue,	6/2/2026 9:48 AM
18	Hiring qualified professionals is a challenge. The spouses and families in particular choose to not come to this area. We seem to do well with lower paying jobs but have had a huge exit of high level professionals.	6/2/2026 8:46 AM
19	Keep making sure that schools are promoting trades and not just college.	6/1/2026 1:43 PM
20	I believe that the schools need more career and technical Classes and more facs classes to help students w hands on real life experiences.	6/1/2026 1:42 PM
21	I have worked, not lived, in the Meeker County area for over 10 years and I've always felt like the community operates in a very siloed manner.	6/1/2026 12:40 PM
22	I believe we are doing a much better job of exposing students to career opportunities in the region, however we still have limitations in many areas for more in-depth experiences and connections that are likely to solidify their choice in pursuing a career/job in the region.	6/1/2026 11:50 AM
23	We need more housing and childcare options for our workers and families!	6/1/2026 9:12 AM
24	We dont need to force employment. Let it happen naturally and those businesses will compensate as needed. Not every square inch of the united states needs to be like New York City.	5/31/2026 9:16 PM
25	We need to stop encouraging illegal aliens to invade our state.	5/30/2026 4:40 PM
26	Shools would be better off removing classes that do not improve technical skills and practical life skills that that strengthen self responsibility with emphasis on, nothing is free and tax payers are not responsible for you.	5/29/2026 4:57 PM
27	too many silos with overlapping missions need to streamline (collaborate) efforts	5/29/2026 12:01 PM
28	Mn in general only focuses on the twin cities for anything.	5/29/2026 6:15 AM
29	Far too many jobs that should be available to local teens, AG in particular are being performed by migrant workers, which was not the norm before.	5/28/2026 5:36 PM
30	Good help is hard to find. Majority of businesses seem to be short staffed constantly so there is no time for proper training and feedback.	5/28/2026 5:32 PM
31	Residents in this county are very racist	5/28/2026 5:26 PM
32	We need to do more to attract workers and more to detract leeches of the system. Too many leeches causes higher taxes which causes actual workers to flee.	5/28/2026 3:03 PM
33	We need more childcare options for working parents, especially non-religious options	5/28/2026 2:00 PM
34	There's a push to get kids who graduate to stay. I think we should promote reasons to come back after they've had an opportunity for schooling and life-lessons, boomerang vs. ball-and-chain mentality.	5/28/2026 1:24 PM
35	We are working on providing market rate housing appropriate for young families, single people, and seniors. Upgrading our school district is a plus; but need to improve amenities for young people.	5/28/2026 1:02 PM
36	I've had several of my friends from all over the US come visit over the years, and they all say that the big turn offs are trump flags on businesses, and anti-abortion billboards and general religious stuff. It's really difficult to try and get educated professionals to move to the country when it's so blatantly hostile to them. I also feel like local leaders don't seem to realize that we're not competing for a local talent pool as much as we're competing with the Twin Cities. In my organization, we did a salary survey that excluded the metro and well-funded counties within an hour. And then we complain we can't find good candidates. Of course we can't; we need to pay a premium to get them to put up with all the cultural backwardness out here.	5/28/2026 10:07 AM
37	We have no affordable housing that would be available for workers and their families. All the	5/28/2026 9:11 AM

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update Survey

new apartments that were built are extremely overpriced and we don't have enough jobs that pay enough to meet the requirements to even rent those apartments. We don't have enough family homes available to rent that are not in awful condition or with the horrible landlords/corporations that own them. There doesn't seem to be any action being taken to address the housing crisis.

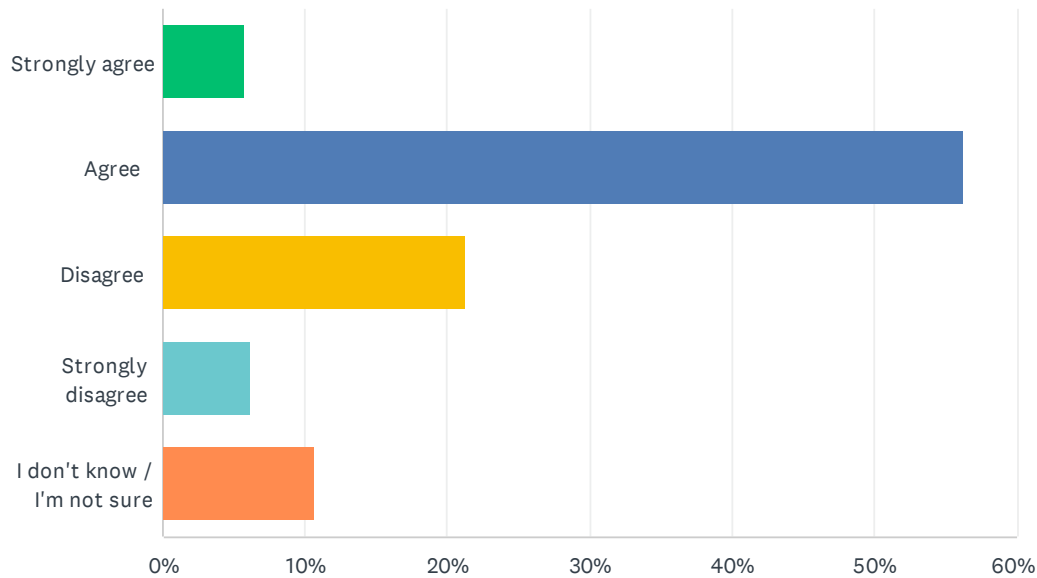
38	One of the biggest challenges our county faces is attracting and retaining skilled workers. Many young people leave rural areas for larger cities because wages are better, there are more career opportunities, and educational options are easier to access. Counties like Meeker struggle to compete, especially when young adults do not see a strong future for themselves locally. At the same time, I believe employers and local leaders rely too heavily on importing low-skilled immigrant or refugee labor instead of developing a stronger local workforce pipeline. While these workers help fill labor shortages, it can also discourage investment in training and retaining highly skilled workers and local young people. Too often the result is a "good enough" workforce instead of building a highly skilled, long-term workforce for the future. There is also a growing problem with entry-level jobs disappearing for local teenagers. Many starter jobs that once helped teens build soft skills, responsibility, and workforce experience are now being filled by adults competing for low-skill work, including immigrants, people with limited job skills, or individuals struggling to re-enter the workforce after incarceration, addiction, or other life challenges. While everyone deserves the opportunity to work, local youth are losing opportunities to gain early job experience and develop the habits needed for long-term success. My own 15-year-old wants to work, but I rarely see opportunities available for teens anymore. That should concern the community because those early jobs are often where young people first learn communication, punctuality, teamwork, and responsibility. More high school career placement and workforce development programs are needed, especially partnerships with major employers like Bobcat, Jennie-O, agriculture operations, and skilled trades. Students should be introduced earlier to apprenticeships, internships, technical careers, manufacturing, agriculture, and other career paths tied directly to local workforce needs as Baby Boomers retire. Access to training is another issue. Outside of the community colleges in Hutchinson and Willmar, there are limited opportunities nearby unless people are willing to drive 30 or more miles. Rural counties need more investment in technical education, trade training, transportation access, and local workforce development so young people can realistically stay, work, and build careers here instead of leaving permanently.	5/28/2026 8:17 AM
39	I think employers are getting better at reaching students earlier to get them interested in their career paths but can do more.	5/28/2026 7:39 AM
40	Supporting The visual arts.	5/27/2026 7:16 PM
41	I became self employed when I was 23 years old. I am Now 46 years old. I went to ridgewater college in willmar. If you have the right mindset to be successful it is possible, today's younger adults have the entitled attitude and that makes it hard to want to hire people like that. Nothing is ever good enuf for them. And they expect top dollar when they're not worth it.	5/27/2026 6:51 PM
42	We need to be kind to our seasonal and permanent immigrant population and protect them from being deported by ICE. They have always been an asset to our country, especially in agricultural areas. It hurts my heart that my Mexican friends are terrified to leave their homes, even though they have green cards.	5/27/2026 5:49 PM
43	Figure out a method to REDUCE property taxes rather than creating ways to increase them	5/27/2026 1:59 PM
44	Its is easy asking no brainer questions. The key to a county's workforce success is taxes, both home and business. The home for workers and the company who have business's are taxed way to high in the county. MAINLY SPICER - NEW LONDON. I like many others are looking to move out of State or other county area.	5/27/2026 1:52 PM
45	It all doesn't matter! Cost of living thru the roof and employers attitudes that their workers are a dime a dozen doesn't help, cutting staff, and over working us doesn't help our families at all	5/27/2026 12:53 PM
46	Ridgewater College is a tremendous asset in helping provide necessary skills/training/education, etc. for workers of all levels.	5/27/2026 12:34 PM
47	Absolutely NO Daya Centers. They aren't worth it.	5/27/2026 12:28 PM
48	The amenities and housing conditions required to attract human capital are below a standard they are looking for.	5/26/2026 2:09 PM
49	More affordable housing.	5/26/2026 12:34 PM

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50	There are a lot of programs available but there is a disconnect between employers and potential employees. Schools also seem to be resistant to working with employers and helping students who may not go the college route.	5/22/2026 6:50 PM
51	Need to promote businesses to take up the dying mall and the dying downtown. A small percentage of the demographics of the county want to go downtown Willmar.	5/22/2026 11:24 AM
52	Transportation access beyond cars. Sidewalks and safe biking paths. Encourage access biking to parks and family friendly locations.	5/21/2026 2:12 PM
53	Child care!	5/21/2026 9:56 AM
54	Affordable housing. Many want houses not apartments	5/19/2026 2:11 PM
55	We need to keep things affordable (housing being the biggest item), and places for people to work.	5/13/2026 12:57 PM
56	We need to put a focus on affordable entry housing for families in the area.	5/12/2026 8:41 PM
57	We don't need people who don't intend to assimilate, become citizens, or stay on welfare coming to our county. They take away the jobs of those who are currently residents in our county.	5/11/2026 12:01 PM
58	W	5/8/2026 5:46 AM
59	I think the County/Cities can do a better job at promoting the area as a bedroom community. In Olivia, we are withing driving distance to Willmar, Hutchinson and Redwood Falls where people (families) could live here (generally cheaper) and travel to another town to work	5/6/2026 10:53 AM
60	Some of my responses may be biased because I reside here in Hutchinson and I see regularly the benefits of the TigerPath program at the High School as well as the opportunities Ridgewater and manufacturing provides. I realize not every community in the region benefits from those resources.	5/6/2026 9:24 AM
61	The Stem program is misused to pull agriculture kids away from farming. Stem replaces good agriculture candidates with cheap foreign labor.	5/3/2026 3:34 AM

Q14 Our region is a good place to start and grow a business.

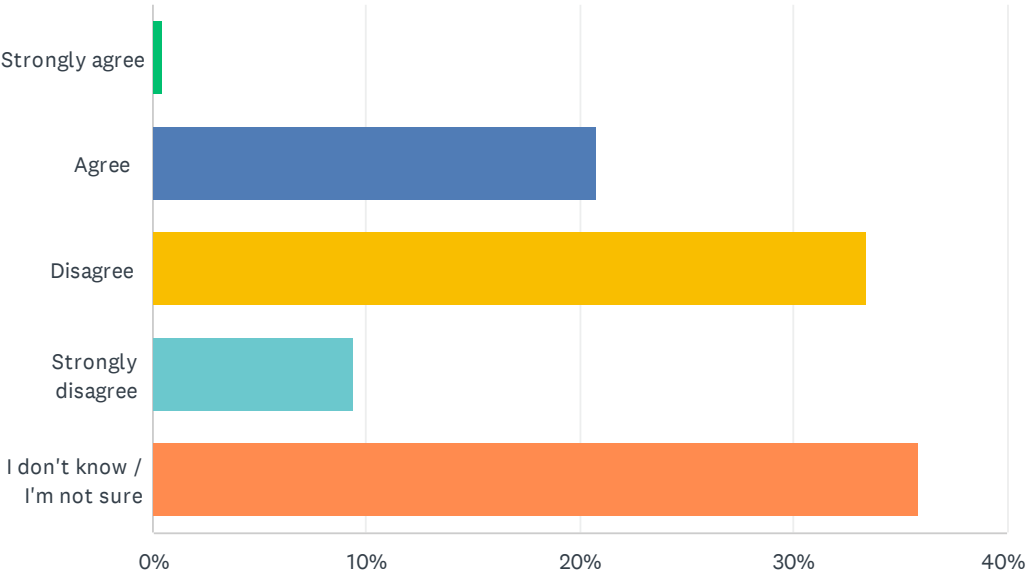
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	5.71%	14
Agree	56.33%	138
Disagree	21.22%	52
Strongly disagree	6.12%	15
I don't know / I'm not sure	10.61%	26
TOTAL		245

Q15 Regulatory processes are clear, efficient, and predictable for
businesses in our region.

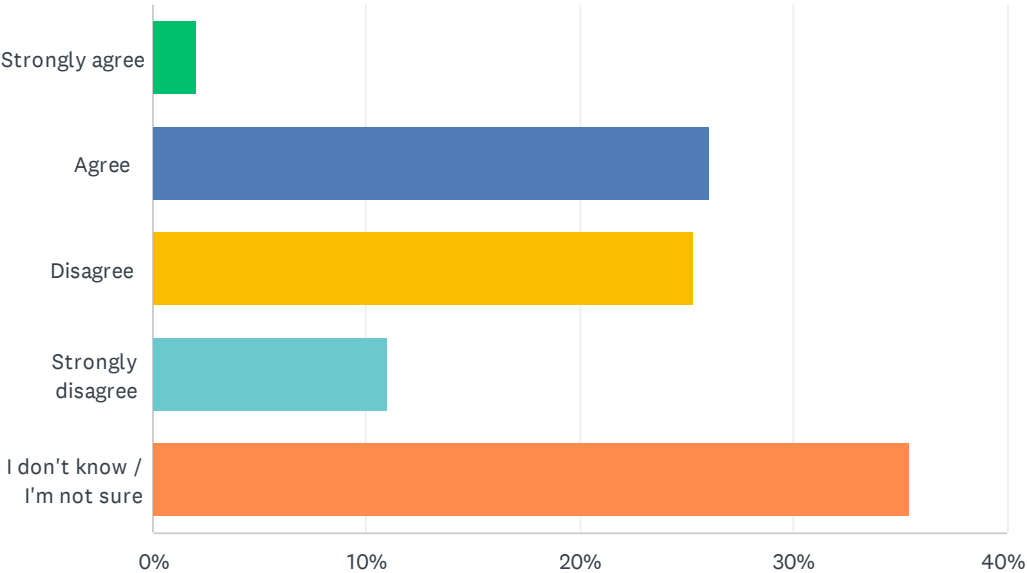
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.41%	1
Agree	20.82%	51
Disagree	33.47%	82
Strongly disagree	9.39%	23
I don't know / I'm not sure	35.92%	88
TOTAL		245

Q16 Taxes, fees, and permitting costs are comparable with those in competing regions.

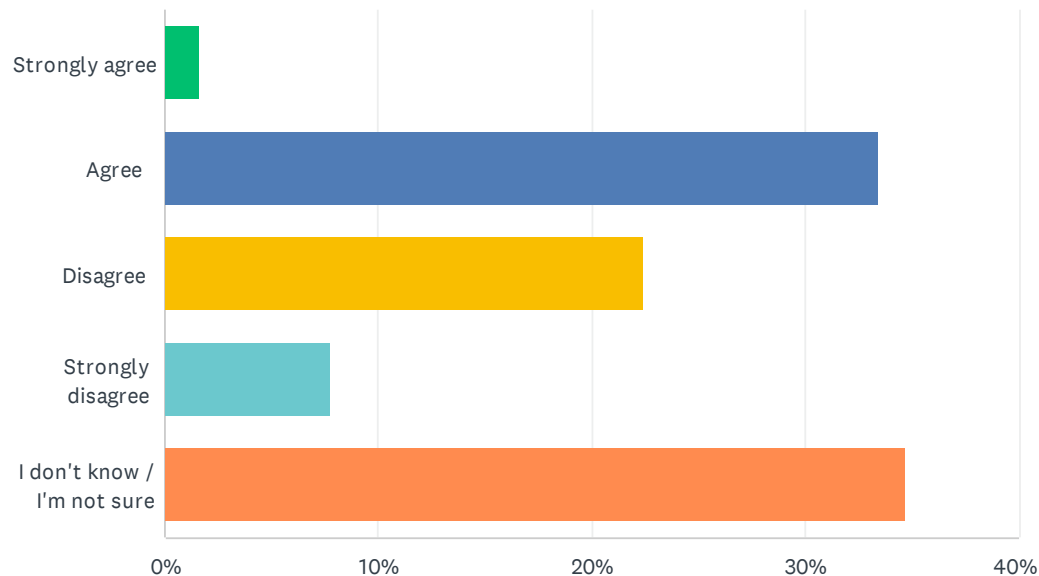
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.04%	5
Agree	26.12%	64
Disagree	25.31%	62
Strongly disagree	11.02%	27
I don't know / I'm not sure	35.51%	87
TOTAL		245

Q17 Businesses in our region have sufficient access to financial resources (e.g., financing, local grants and incentives) to offset startup and/or expansion costs.

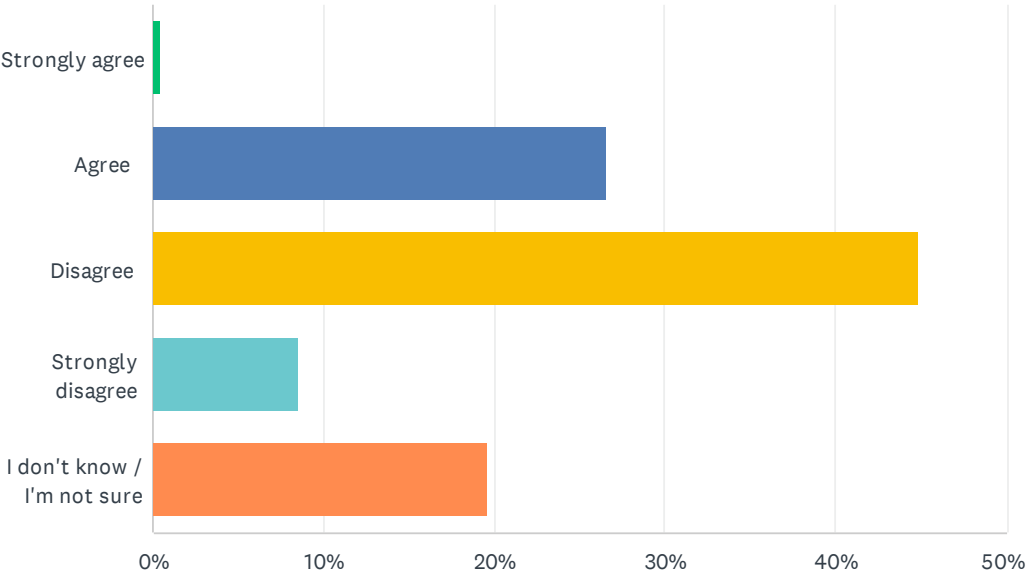
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.63%	4
Agree	33.47%	82
Disagree	22.45%	55
Strongly disagree	7.76%	19
I don't know / I'm not sure	34.69%	85
TOTAL		245

Q18 Our region is good at promoting the advantages of doing business in
our region.

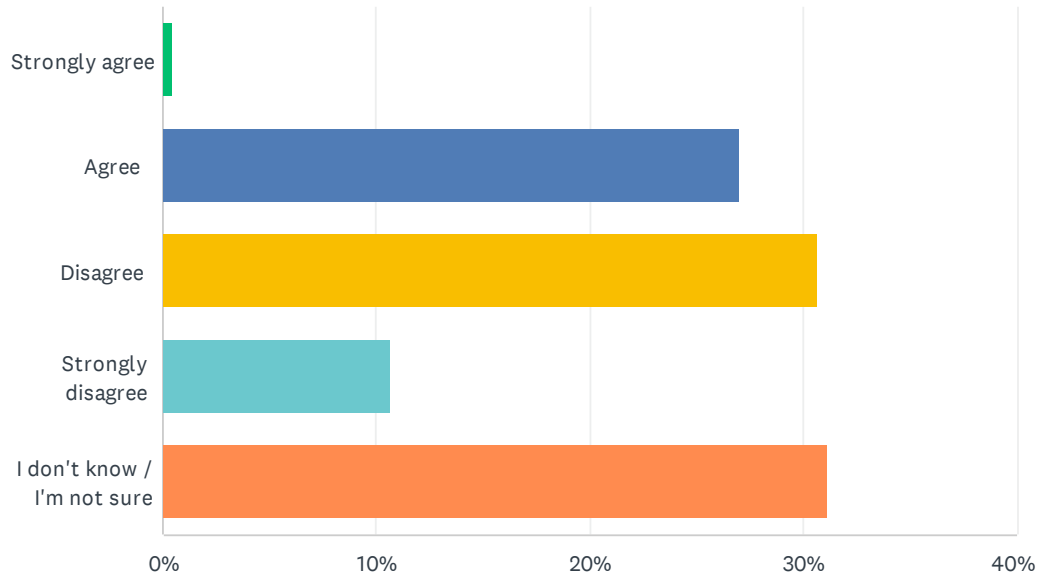
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.41%	1
Agree	26.53%	65
Disagree	44.90%	110
Strongly disagree	8.57%	21
I don't know / I'm not sure	19.59%	48
TOTAL		245

Q19 Our region supports, acknowledges, and rewards socially and environmentally responsible businesses.

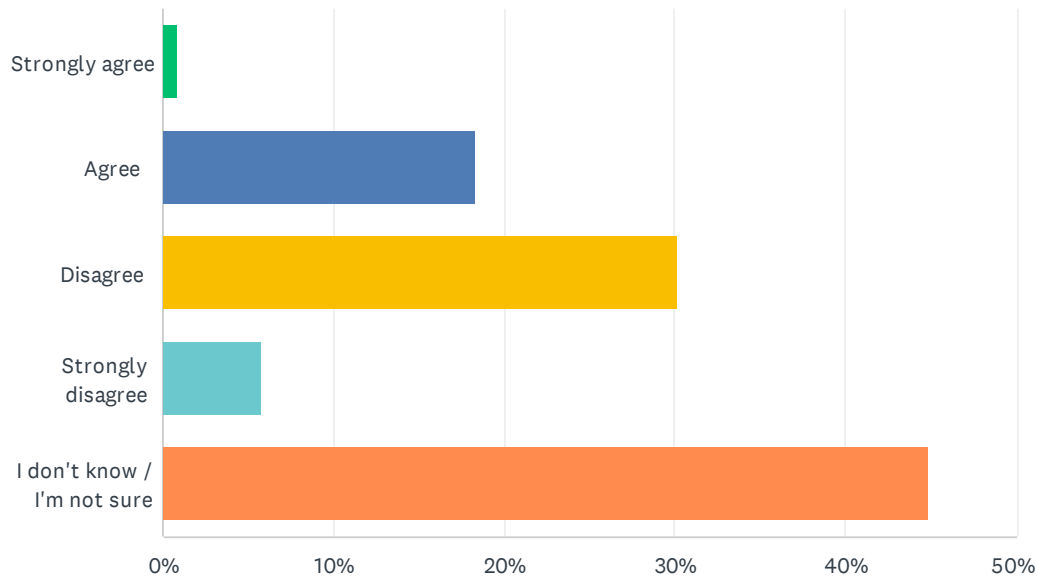
Answered: 244 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.41%	1
Agree	27.05%	66
Disagree	30.74%	75
Strongly disagree	10.66%	26
I don't know / I'm not sure	31.15%	76
TOTAL		244

Q20 Our region is good at actively pursuing trade and development opportunities with entities from outside our region.

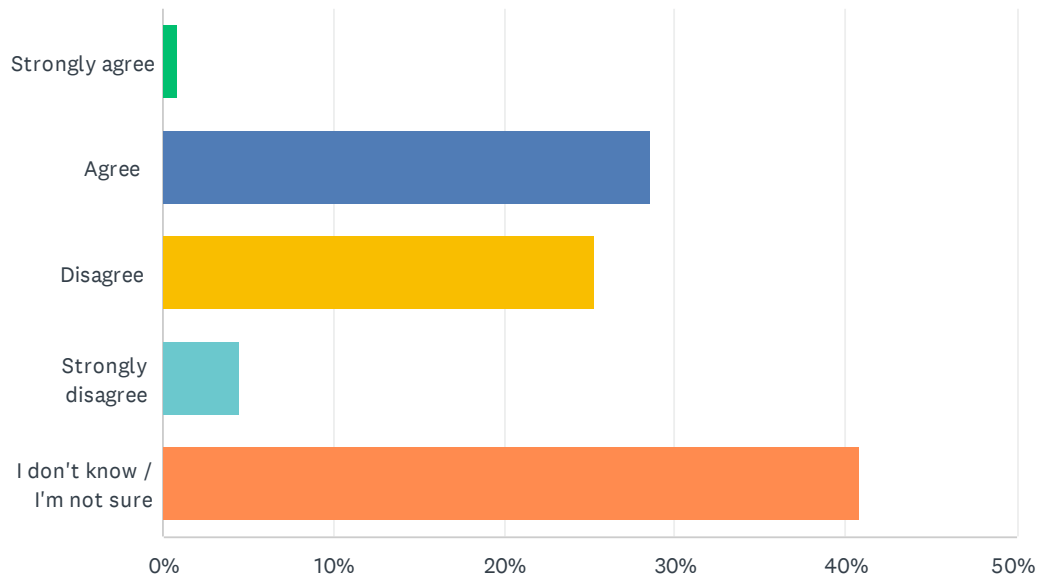
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.82%	2
Agree	18.37%	45
Disagree	30.20%	74
Strongly disagree	5.71%	14
I don't know / I'm not sure	44.90%	110
TOTAL		245

Q21 Bioenergy and other agricultural innovations are effectively leveraged
to create new business opportunities in our region.

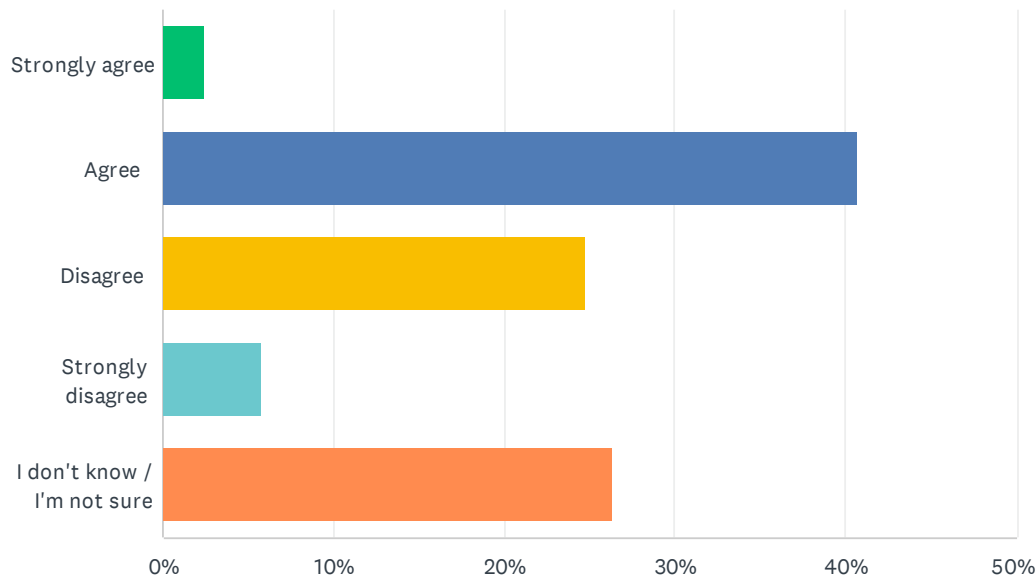
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.82%	2
Agree	28.57%	70
Disagree	25.31%	62
Strongly disagree	4.49%	11
I don't know / I'm not sure	40.82%	100
TOTAL		245

Q22 CareerForce locations, business incubators, chambers of commerce,
and other supporting organizations are well utilized by, and accessible for,
our region's businesses.

Answered: 243 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.47%	6
Agree	40.74%	99
Disagree	24.69%	60
Strongly disagree	5.76%	14
I don't know / I'm not sure	26.34%	64
TOTAL		243

Q23 Do you have other thoughts that you'd like to share related to how our region works to provide a good environment and resources for the business community?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 203

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Small business struggle to stay open in the area, unable to pay rent and other overhead costs, even when the business is well loved and attended.	7/3/2026 1:09 PM
2	We still have alot of racist ideology in our community especially by people in power which doesnt help. There is a lack of shared resources or even promoting of resources.	7/3/2026 9:18 AM
3	I don't think enough people use the resources that are available to them.	7/1/2026 9:15 PM
4	Again taxation is a key, the political activism of St Paul is also of no help to anyone.	6/24/2026 6:18 PM
5	we could do more to create amenities and activities that make the area feel vibrant. When there's more for people and families to do, it becomes easier for businesses to attract and keep talent.	6/24/2026 2:17 PM
6	My ratings here are generally more geared to how hostile the state is to business, and that trickles down into regional since counties need to comply with state policies/laws.	6/24/2026 2:08 PM
7	Unfortunately Willmar is filled with too many vacant buildings and there is no growth to say that we are working to provide a good environment and resources for businesses.	6/4/2026 7:32 AM
8	NA	6/3/2026 11:37 AM
9	I think more investigation into the demographic trends in business ownership in our area (who owns which kind of businesses, by gender, age, race, and class) would be valuable.	6/2/2026 9:48 AM
10	With the Southwest Initiative Foundation, our community colleges, and the SW MN Private Industry Council, I feel we have great resources available. Where we could improve is continued awareness and understanding of how to access and utilized these resources.	6/1/2026 11:50 AM
11	Seems like it is hard to have new businesses come to the area, seems like new businesses or franchises are turned down. I do not know the details, seems to be the word around town.	6/1/2026 10:58 AM
12	We dont need to force employment. Let it happen naturally and those businesses will compensate as needed. Not every square inch of the united states needs to be like New York City.	5/31/2026 9:16 PM
13	Less taxes and financial burdens on existing companies are needed.	5/31/2026 11:13 AM
14	Th activities listed in question #19 should be eliminated as they are not conducive to productive business.	5/30/2026 4:40 PM
15	It is not the tax payers responsibility to fund recruiting or training curriculum for business to increase profits, and the profits rarely going back to the workers while the CEO's pay goes up.	5/29/2026 4:57 PM
16	Companies will start here but leave because they say they get better/cheeper taxes in or around the cities or another state.	5/29/2026 6:15 AM
17	The community at large has no clue. They are not involved enough to understand that the city doesn't decide which businesses come here. They also don't like anything presented. Very frustrating.	5/28/2026 9:49 PM
18	we are over regulated, falsely led to consider social and environmental concerns are such a priority.	5/28/2026 5:36 PM
19	Businesses don't want to open in high tax, high crime, low income areas. More needs to be done to clean up our roads and parking lots. The Kandi Mall in Willmar could hold thriving businesses if the parking lots were repaired.	5/28/2026 3:03 PM

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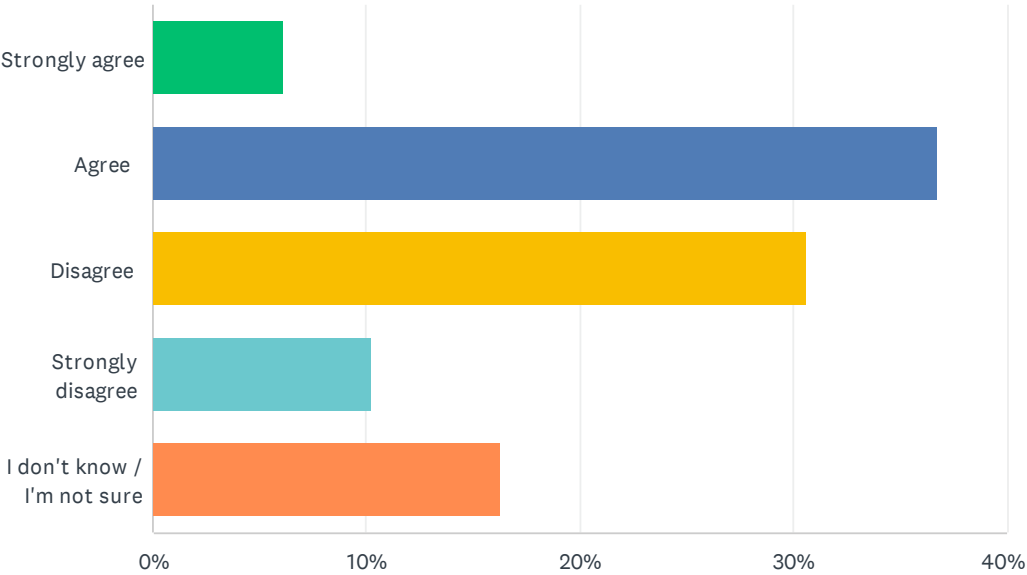
20	CareerForce is understaffed and at times nonresponsive. Chamber is membership based and unorganized at times. Local officials are not at all concerned about businesses other than the big industrial or manufacturing sector.	5/28/2026 1:24 PM
21	There continues to be barrier on how to support new businesses and new businesses not knowing what is available to be used in their benefit as many of them are not well versed in tax implications, benefits, etc.	5/28/2026 11:10 AM
22	Outside of a handful of farmers and legacy families that have been here forever, there simply isn't a lot of capital or disposable income. As our old folks die, their inheritances disappear to their kids in the Cities, and poorer folks move in that don't have the same purchasing power that the dead did.	5/28/2026 10:07 AM
23	I don't think there is nearly enough information shared about the opportunities for grants and financial leverage opportunities to new businesses in the area.	5/28/2026 9:11 AM
24	I have noticed a concerning pattern in our region where many businesses open and then close within only a year or two. I do not know all the reasons behind it, but seeing that level of turnover does not create confidence for entrepreneurship or long-term business investment in the area. It gives the impression that it is difficult for small businesses to survive here. At the same time, housing prices continue to rise while wages largely stay the same. For many younger families or working adults, it becomes harder to justify staying in the area when the cost of living increases but opportunities and amenities remain limited. Especially in counties like Meeker, there are not enough attractions, entertainment options, family activities, or professional opportunities that encourage young people and families to build long-term lives here. I have also known people who tried starting businesses locally and either struggled financially or eventually gave up and moved away. That suggests there may be barriers to success that should be examined more closely, whether related to local economic conditions, workforce issues, financing, regulations, or lack of community support for small businesses. Another major issue is the lack of career opportunities for college students and young professionals. My college-aged son has worked at McDonald's for the past three years because there are very few opportunities in his field locally. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in cybersecurity and regularly applies for jobs that match his skill level, but rarely even hears back from employers. This creates the perception that many posted jobs may already be intended for internal hires, are posted only for data or compliance purposes, or are not actively being filled. As a result, many young people feel stuck working unrelated jobs while trying to build careers. My son would gladly take a temporary position, internship, or paid entry-level opportunity related to cybersecurity or technology just to gain experience, but those opportunities simply do not seem to exist in this area. Because of that, he is already planning to leave after graduation. If the region wants to retain educated young adults, it needs to create clearer pathways between education and employment. More internships, apprenticeships, partnerships with local businesses, and entry-level professional opportunities are needed so students can begin building careers locally instead of feeling forced to move away. It would also help tremendously to have one centralized, well-maintained local job board, for actual jobs, for the region. Right now job seekers have to search across multiple websites, company pages, and social media platforms just to find openings. Many local jobs seem to be posted only on Facebook, but not everyone, especially younger professionals or college students, actively uses Facebook anymore. A centralized system for local employment opportunities would improve visibility for both employers and job seekers.	5/28/2026 8:17 AM
25	We need our city hall.	5/27/2026 7:16 PM
26	When I started being self employed and hired my first few workers, the city didn't have the, hey let's help him attitude. It was more of a jealous attitude. Someone is being successful and they are working a 8-5 job.	5/27/2026 6:51 PM
27	I'd love to see our downtown area thrive, but there's very little parking available so it's easier to just go to Walmart.	5/27/2026 5:49 PM
28	Meeker County needs more work in this area. Some cities are pretty ok progressive and others are not. Litchfield's EDA does not meet. Meeker County's is great.	5/27/2026 5:00 PM
29	Figure out a method to REDUCE property taxes rather than creating ways to increase them	5/27/2026 1:59 PM
30	YES lower home and business taxes Mine has gone up from 3,400 8 years ago to over 10,000. Thats completly Stupid	5/27/2026 1:52 PM

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31	Absolutely NO Data centers!	5/27/2026 12:28 PM
32	We could be better at incubators and other supports for new entrepreneurs.	5/26/2026 2:09 PM
33	I don't know of any resources for small business owners in the community for them to tap into for help. If there is it is not well advertised.	5/22/2026 1:48 PM
34	I think we have pockets of excellence and areas for growth	5/21/2026 2:50 PM
35	Connecting employers to transportation that currently exist but also listen to employers who need transportation so that they can retain employees and attract them through ridesharing/transit options.	5/21/2026 2:12 PM
36	Trailing spouses need attention	5/21/2026 9:56 AM
37	Very active Chamber of Commerce in the Willmar Lakes Area	5/19/2026 2:11 PM
38	We need to do something more with our current businesses and talk to them about how to grow their businesses, and how to attract other businesses to the area. I recommend a yearly business forum pulling in CEOs/business owners so they can provide feedback on the good, bad, and ugly.	5/13/2026 12:57 PM
39	Training and resources should be made available to local Chamber of Commerce Directors to improve local impact.	5/12/2026 8:41 PM
40	We don't need a data center in our area because it takes too much electricity and water to run it and is also noisy.	5/11/2026 12:01 PM
41	The biggest attraction to prospective employees is quality of life in the area in which they consider moving to. Marketing our unique qualities that lend to that quality of life would be good strategy.	5/8/2026 5:46 AM
42	I feel if you are a new business owner and know where to start (ex. bank, SBDC) it is easy to find resources. If you are maybe new to the area and don't know who to talk to or where to look it might be a challenge.	5/6/2026 10:53 AM
43	There are opportunities here to be explored, especially around sustainability themes.	5/6/2026 9:24 AM

Q24 Our region actively works to develop and support new community
leaders.

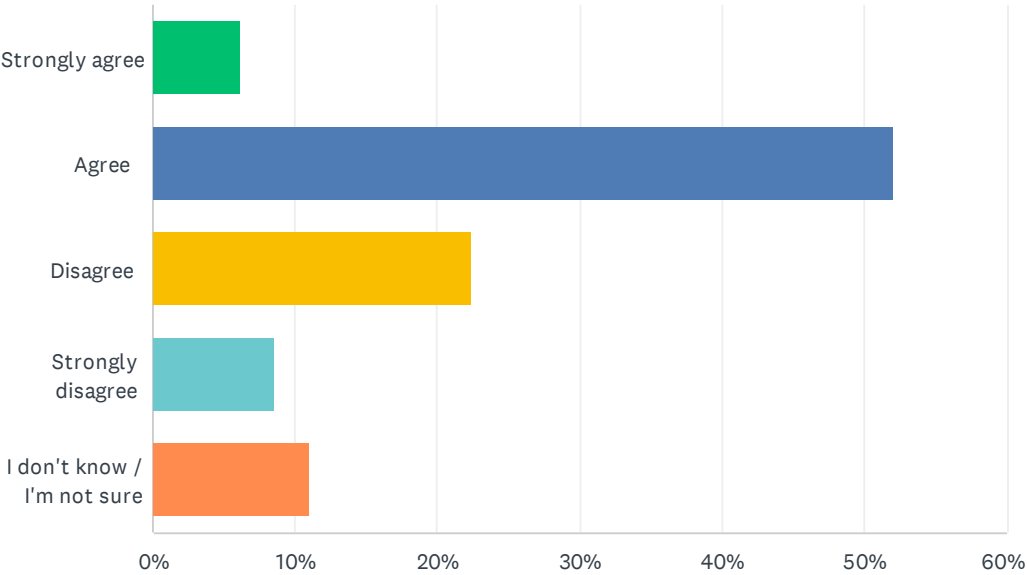
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	6.12%	15
Agree	36.73%	90
Disagree	30.61%	75
Strongly disagree	10.20%	25
I don't know / I'm not sure	16.33%	40
TOTAL		245

Q25 Arts and culture are supported and meaningfully contribute to our
region’s economic vitality.

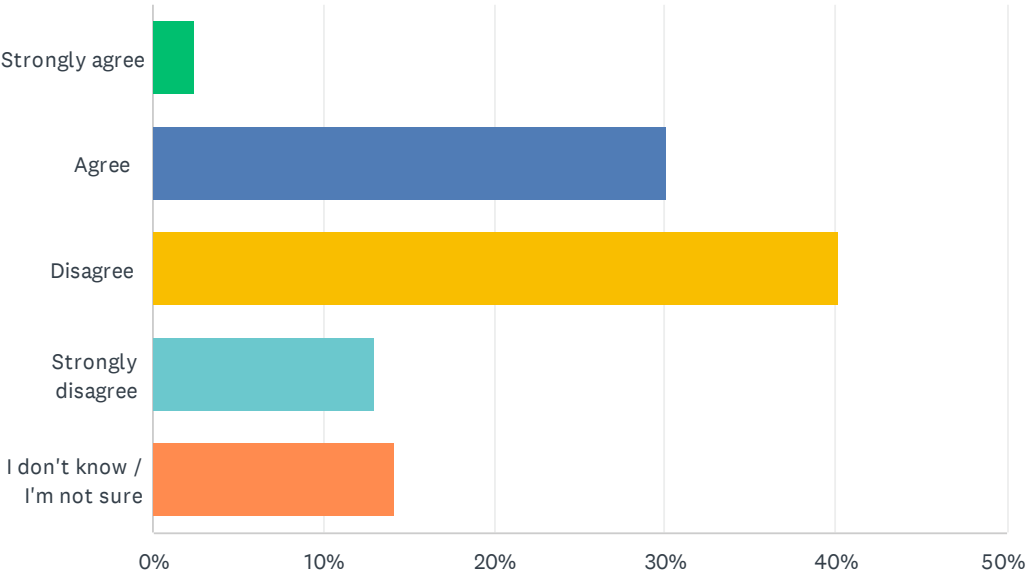
Answered: 246 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	6.10%	15
Agree	52.03%	128
Disagree	22.36%	55
Strongly disagree	8.54%	21
I don't know / I'm not sure	10.98%	27
TOTAL		246

Q26 Our region’s communities are good at effectively leveraging tourism to support our economy.

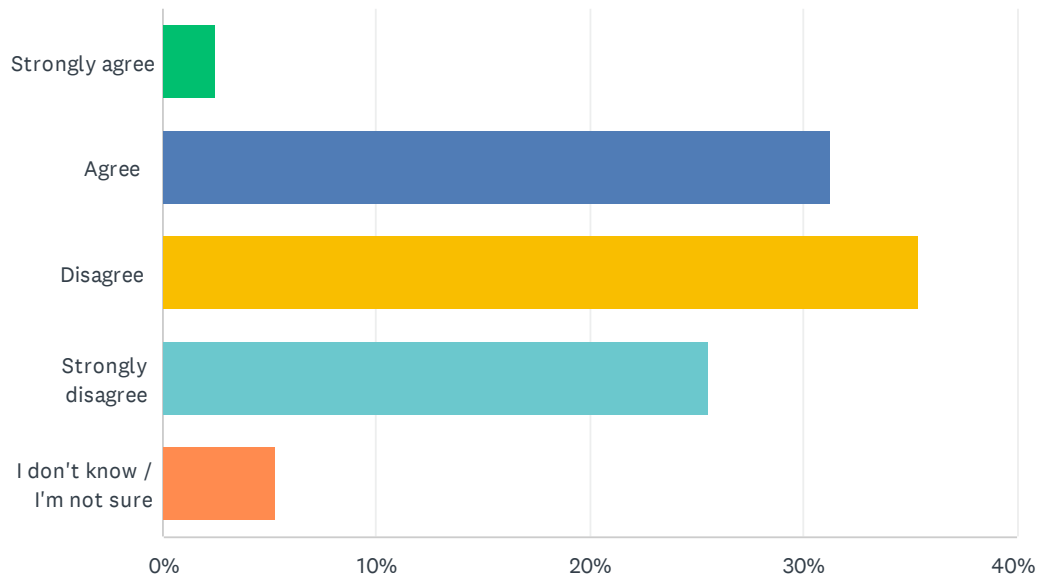
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.44%	6
Agree	30.08%	74
Disagree	40.24%	99
Strongly disagree	13.01%	32
I don't know / I'm not sure	14.23%	35
TOTAL		246

Q27 Our region’s downtowns/city centers and main streets are vibrant and welcoming places to live, work, and visit.

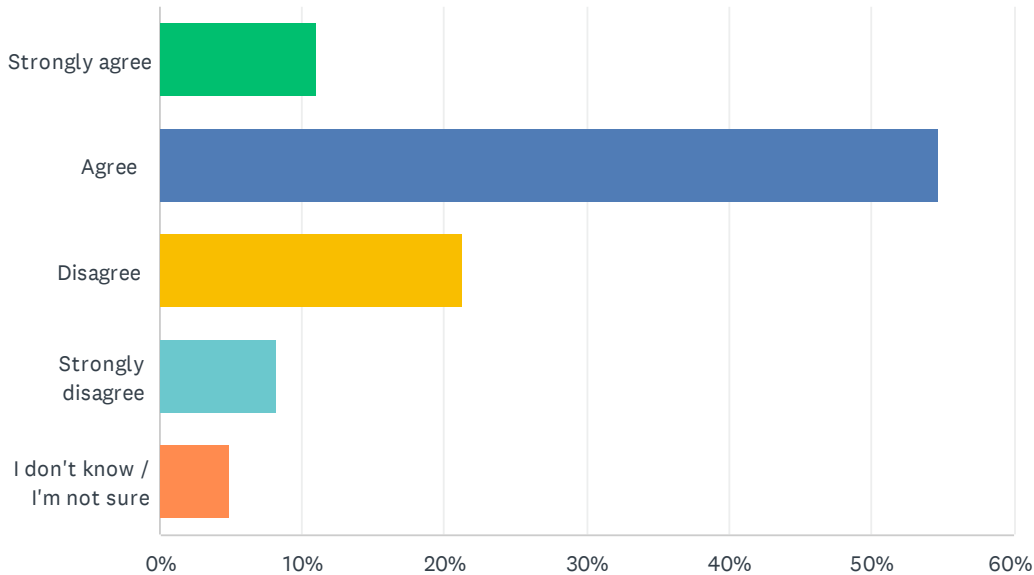
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.44%	6
Agree	31.30%	77
Disagree	35.37%	87
Strongly disagree	25.61%	63
I don't know / I'm not sure	5.28%	13
TOTAL		246

Q28 Our region’s public spaces enhance community identity and contribute
to a good quality of life.

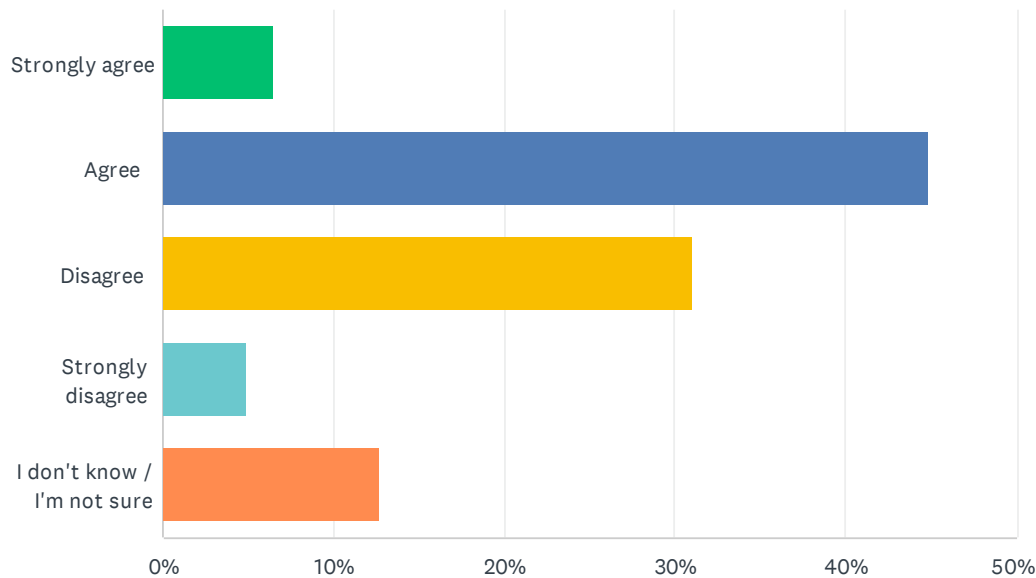
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	11.02%	27
Agree	54.69%	134
Disagree	21.22%	52
Strongly disagree	8.16%	20
I don't know / I'm not sure	4.90%	12
TOTAL		245

Q29 Our region’s historical and cultural assets are preserved, enhanced, and shared in ways that, along with providing enrichment, support our economy.

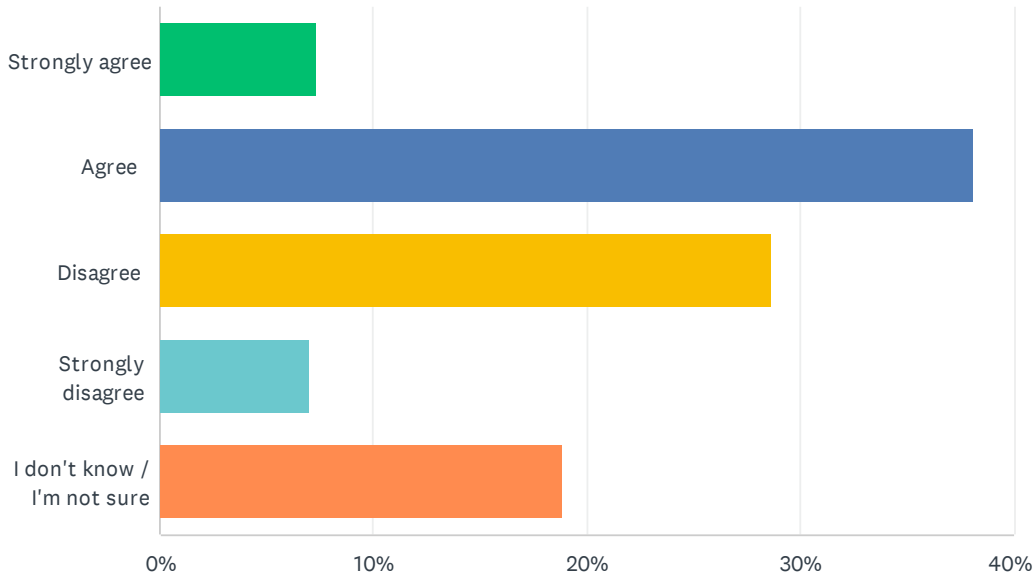
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	6.53%	16
Agree	44.90%	110
Disagree	31.02%	76
Strongly disagree	4.90%	12
I don't know / I'm not sure	12.65%	31
TOTAL		245

Q30 Collaboration among local governments, nonprofits, and civic organizations is strong in our region.

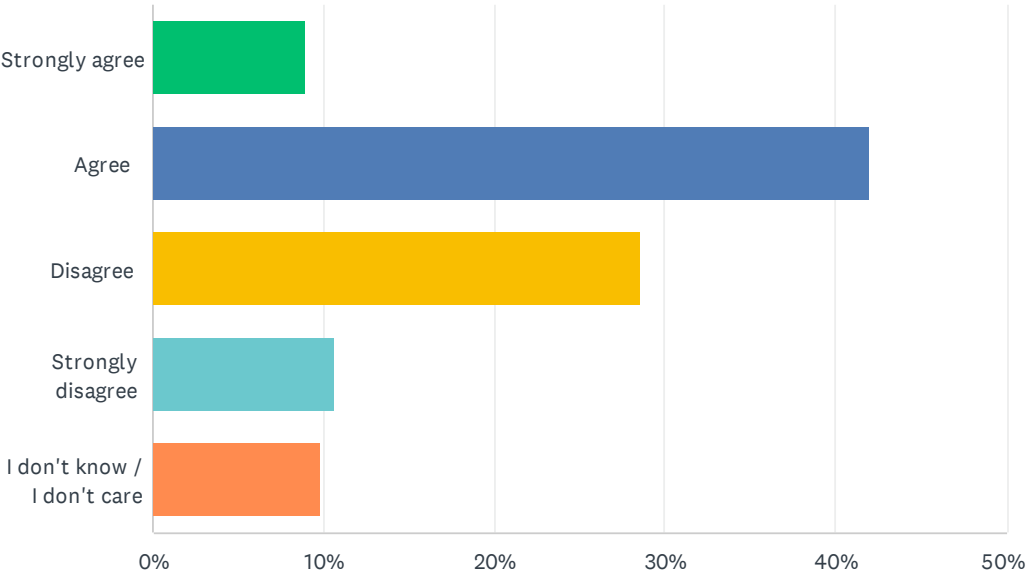
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	7.38%	18
Agree	38.11%	93
Disagree	28.69%	70
Strongly disagree	6.97%	17
I don't know / I'm not sure	18.85%	46
TOTAL		244

Q31 Community engagement is encouraged and valued by our local
decision-makers.

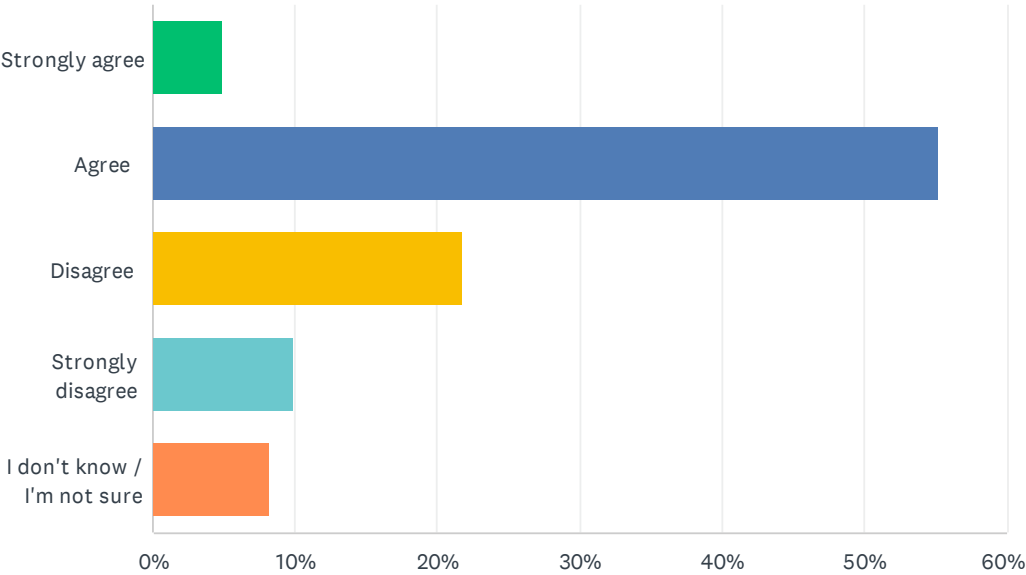
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	8.98%	22
Agree	42.04%	103
Disagree	28.57%	70
Strongly disagree	10.61%	26
I don't know / I don't care	9.80%	24
TOTAL		245

Q32 Our communities support healthy lifestyles and provide access to
quality health and health-related resources.

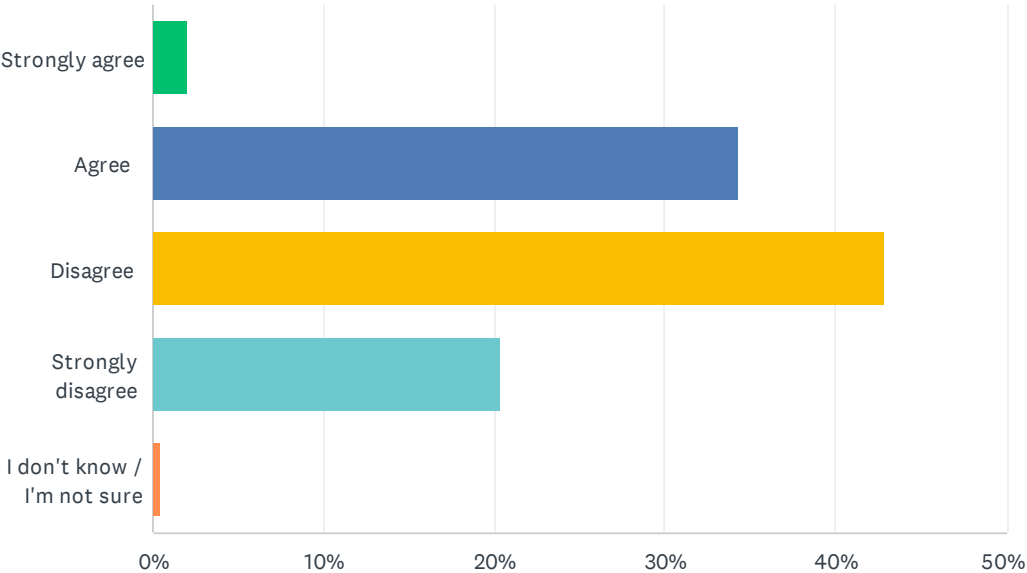
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	4.92%	12
Agree	55.33%	135
Disagree	21.72%	53
Strongly disagree	9.84%	24
I don't know / I'm not sure	8.20%	20
TOTAL		244

Q33 Our region offers a wide variety of opportunities for leisure time,
dining, shopping, and entertainment.

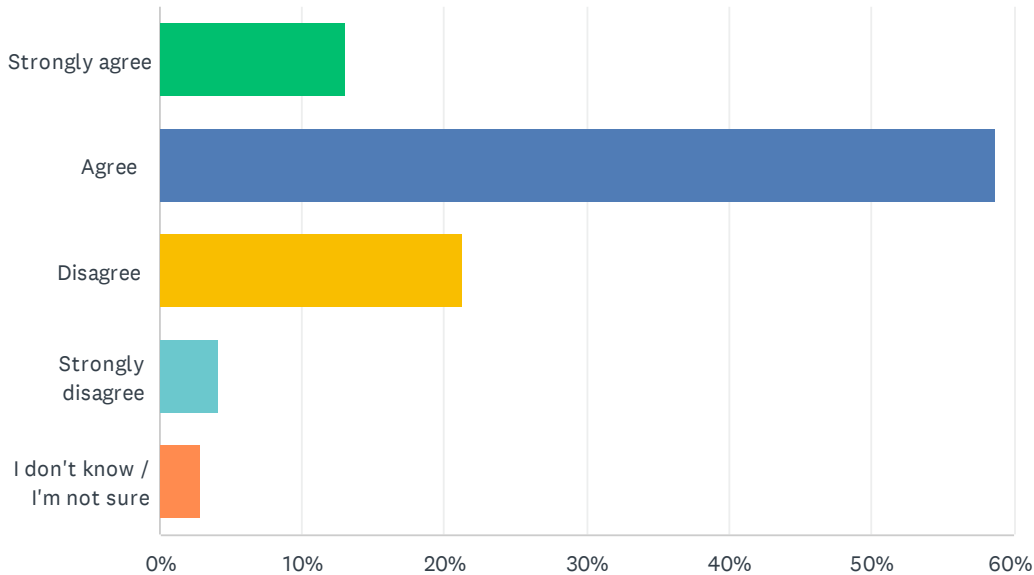
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ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Strongly agree		2.04%	5
Agree		34.29%	84
Disagree		42.86%	105
Strongly disagree		20.41%	50
I don't know / I'm not sure		0.41%	1
TOTAL			245

Q34 Our region’s parks, lakes, waterways, and natural resources are well
maintained and promoted.

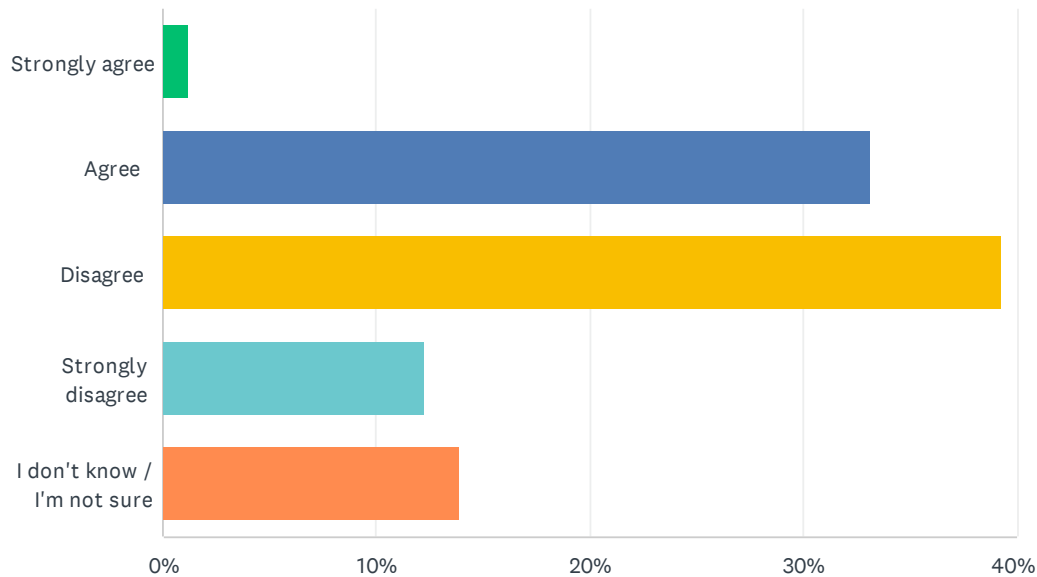
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	13.06%	32
Agree	58.78%	144
Disagree	21.22%	52
Strongly disagree	4.08%	10
I don't know / I'm not sure	2.86%	7
TOTAL		245

Q35 Our community investments reflect the needs of both current and future residents.

Answered: 244 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.23%	3
Agree	33.20%	81
Disagree	39.34%	96
Strongly disagree	12.30%	30
I don't know / I'm not sure	13.93%	34
TOTAL		244

Q36 Do you have other thoughts that you'd like to share on our region's community resources?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 188

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Would be nice to have some food waste spots to dispose of food waste so it does not wind up in landfills.	7/5/2026 7:39 PM
2	Community Leaders/Seats are unwelcoming to community members and fail to address concerning issues. Decisions are exclusionary. Positions of power are often held by the same families and social circles.	7/3/2026 1:09 PM
3	See previous comment	7/3/2026 9:18 AM
4	Downtowns need so much support - An idea would be to normalize going downtown through ongoing events and opportunities (ex. Downtown food tours or business professional networking in a downtown park/area). Zoning efforts are important too to keep up our Downtown.	7/1/2026 4:20 PM
5	It's always nice to have new businesses to shop at. Not many places to get craft supplies from like Hobby Lobby etc or many places to find clothes.	6/26/2026 5:31 PM
6	Health centers are non-existent in our area. We have sick care but minimal health care.	6/24/2026 7:04 PM
7	My region is strongly connected to it's history, and welcomes those willing to understand it's history, while not to reenvision that history.	6/24/2026 6:18 PM
8	it would be great to see more opportunities for residents and businesses to feel truly heard and valued by local decision makers. When people feel included and see their input reflected in decisions, the whole community becomes stronger and more connected. City's could offer all meetings to be attended virtually and not just in person	6/24/2026 2:17 PM
9	There could be more support/funding for parks/lakes/waterways, etc. - also, it has been challenging to get certain projects funded in our community (new schools, etc) and I believe that is because many people are short sighted and think that since they're kids are grown they don't need to support projects for schools or youth, when really that attracts more people and families and builds a stronger community.	6/16/2026 9:38 AM
10	you could have asked less questions and gotten better results... Now the questions are getting dragged out and somewhat repetitive, which is annoying.	6/15/2026 8:30 AM
11	We've sold our culture out in this region.	6/15/2026 8:24 AM
12	Litchfield's downtown could be so much more if there was willingness to accept change. The city council does not appear to want young people opinions and insight.	6/4/2026 3:32 PM
13	We are filled and surrounded by lakes and trails but no one is utilizing these resources. Foot lake for example is not cared for by the agencies whom should be caring for it. The area parks in Willmar are a shining example of what this community could be. But our lakes should be our showcase and they are severely neglected and underutilized. We can do better.	6/4/2026 7:32 AM
14	NA	6/3/2026 11:37 AM
15	I think we need to create longer-term visions that are nimble enough to adapt to changing social and environmental conditions (for example, challenges in finding affordable housing often result from a lack of a long-term strategic view on investment).	6/2/2026 9:48 AM
16	I would agree the areas parks, lakes, waterways and natural resources are well maintained, not sure of they are promoted fully.	6/1/2026 2:13 PM
17	Need event centers large enough to hold corporate meetings and meals	6/1/2026 1:39 PM
18	I believe the greatest opportunity for community resources is to expand awareness and	6/1/2026 11:50 AM

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promotion of existing assets.

19	The beach in Litchfield should be maintained weekly. Raked and sticks taken away. There is good dock access to Lake Ripley. Lots of people enjoy the splash pad park by the lake. Maybe adding some more activities in that area would be beneficial. Paved parking lot or more sports (pickleball court, basketball, bags, Horseshoes, etc - outside sports courses). The canoes/kayaks were a great addition!	6/1/2026 10:58 AM
20	Transportation options could be stronger	6/1/2026 9:12 AM
21	We dont need to force employment. Let it happen naturally and those businesses will compensate as needed. Not every square inch of the united states needs to be like New York City.	5/31/2026 9:16 PM
22	Need less tax money spent on community resources.	5/31/2026 11:13 AM
23	City leaders do not invite public opinion	5/29/2026 7:48 PM
24	It is not the tax payers responsibility to fund others entertainment such as bike and walking trails, parks, swimming pools, or anything else. We should not have to pay entry fees if being tax for these resourses that are not used by most people.	5/29/2026 4:57 PM
25	legacy vs. transformational thinking	5/29/2026 12:01 PM
26	Hutchinson likes to think it's a big city but we have no good sit down restaurants, good shopping. They like to say we have a great main street but the few shops they have are expensive. If you need good shoes, nice clothes you have to go to the cities or St. Cloud	5/29/2026 6:15 AM
27	Glencoe's bike/walking path is a great resource, but when it is not maintained, it is very underutilized. Many opportunities in Glencoe to fund maintenance of already existing attractions. The dog park and pickleball courts are a great addition, I just hope there is a plan in place to keep them that way, unlike the walking path.	5/28/2026 9:54 PM
28	We have great parks and trails but do not maintain them. It's embarrassing. We also have these craze trails they used to call sidewalks that are also shockingly not maintained. The grant money puts the trails in but doesn't maintain them.	5/28/2026 9:49 PM
29	Our elected officials from state, to county to city level are only out for themselves and the political climate in this county is scary at times	5/28/2026 5:26 PM
30	Community not involved in the data centers that we dont want here. We also need more low housing for those in need because of the high economy.	5/28/2026 5:16 PM
31	Spicer is great at promoting their community for its water resources. New London has a thriving downtown. Willmar, a former shopping hub for the entire west central MN area has been mostly abandoned due to its deteriorating conditions, dirty downtown and lack of shopping and eating options. The recent hunting/gun decision, made by Kandiyohi county shows a complete and total disregard for what the overwhelming majority wants and a total disregard for the decisions made by surrounding counties causing us to be unwelcoming to hunters many who will choose to hunt elsewhere.	5/28/2026 3:03 PM
32	Parks are well maintained but the waterways are not. We do a terrible job at promoting tourism. And our local public officials "say" they want input and then promptly put down and berate them when they show up to voice concerns and questions. And with a weakened local news outlet the community is under informed on many issues.	5/28/2026 1:24 PM
33	Renville County and its cities could do a better job of marketing and promoting our community resources.	5/28/2026 1:02 PM
34	I think we need more waling paths in our region. Use of bikes and walking trails would decrease the need for gas. If kids could travel safely between smaller cities then they would be able to take paths to parks, games, practice.	5/28/2026 12:50 PM
35	The same 10 people are pretty much involved in everything, and if you dislike any of those people it's hard to get involved. Too much focus on the past and not the future; a lot of cities and school districts have a hard time working together because of past slights that can't be forgiven. It's been getting a little better as leadership changes, but every year we drag our feet, we lose a little more ground.	5/28/2026 10:07 AM
36	We have some of the worst healthcare that me and many others have experienced. It is	5/28/2026 9:11 AM

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terrifying to get healthcare here and I know many people that travel away from the area in order to stay away from CentraCare. As for the downtown, there are many spaces that appear to be abandoned or rundown. There needs to be ordinances regarding the appearance of the outside of businesses, not just in downtown but all over. There needs to be accountability regarding the mall and the absolutely horrendous parking lot it comes with. The ordinances regarding maintaining lawns needs to be enforced.

37	One concern I have regarding community resources and development is that many changes in the region seem to be happening too quickly and from a top-down approach rather than through meaningful input from long-term residents and local communities. I understand the desire to make communities welcoming and inclusive, but there also needs to be balance and consideration for the values, culture, and needs of the people who have lived here for generations. Too often it feels like governments and organizations decide what communities should become instead of first asking residents what their biggest concerns and priorities actually are. Many people in rural communities value safety, stability, accountability, strong families, local traditions, and the small-town atmosphere that originally made these places desirable to live in. Those priorities should not be dismissed or treated as outdated simply because broader social trends are changing. I have noticed a significant difference between smaller towns like Litchfield and larger nearby communities like Hutchinson and especially Willmar. In smaller towns, there is still more of a sense of safety and community connection. In some larger areas, especially at night, many residents no longer feel as comfortable downtown as they once did. There are ongoing concerns within the community about crime, gang activity, repeat offenders, drug problems, and lack of law enforcement accountability. Whether every rumor is accurate or not, the perception itself matters because it affects whether families feel safe investing in and participating in the community. I believe more attention should be given to supporting people who actively contribute to the community, follow the law, work hard, raise families, volunteer, and want to build stable lives here long-term. Resources and opportunities should focus on strengthening communities overall, not creating division or making residents feel like one group is being prioritized over another. When policies appear to favor one population at the expense of others, it creates resentment and fractures community trust rather than improving unity. People choose small towns because they value the atmosphere, culture, virtues, and slower pace of life that those communities traditionally represent. Progress for the sake of appearing modern or socially current is not always beneficial if it comes at the cost of community identity, safety, or cohesion. Many long-time residents feel like their concerns are ignored or dismissed, and that ultimately pushes people away instead of making communities stronger. I believe the region would benefit from focusing more on practical community needs: public safety, affordable housing, strong schools, workforce development, local business growth, youth opportunities, infrastructure, and preserving the character of rural communities. Real inclusion should involve listening to all residents, not just the loudest voices or newest trends.	5/28/2026 8:17 AM
38	The Willmar City Council has spent a whole lot of money to build a city hall & all we have to show for it is bank accounts spending \$'s.	5/27/2026 7:16 PM
39	No	5/27/2026 6:51 PM
40	Litchfield has torn down many cultural relics that should have been saved. Short term is expensive, but long term saving these buildings would have been priceless.	5/27/2026 5:49 PM
41	We do not need any data centers, you'd be better to invest in some form of public transportation that allows people without the funds to aquire a car, to use public transportation instead, reducing traffic and helping keep places accessible to all.	5/27/2026 5:03 PM
42	Litchfield seems to lag behind on social fabric. There seems to be a few pet projects that continue while others are ignored.	5/27/2026 5:00 PM
43	Figure out a method to REDUCE property taxes rather than creating ways to increase them	5/27/2026 1:59 PM
44	Since you tax the heck out of Green Lake residents, maybe you should build the dam back so they have consistent water levels. This no dam rock what ever the DNR calls is usless. They pay to play on the lake, you better give them a reason to stay. Or soon you see a housing market crash and your cash cow will not be paying your taxes and leaving it just sit there for the bank as it was 12 /14 years ago.	5/27/2026 1:52 PM
45	Pertaining to Kandiyohi other then lakes and pickle ball courts is a joke	5/27/2026 12:53 PM
46	Incredible natural resources and amenities. We've done a good job of building them up. now we	5/27/2026 12:34 PM

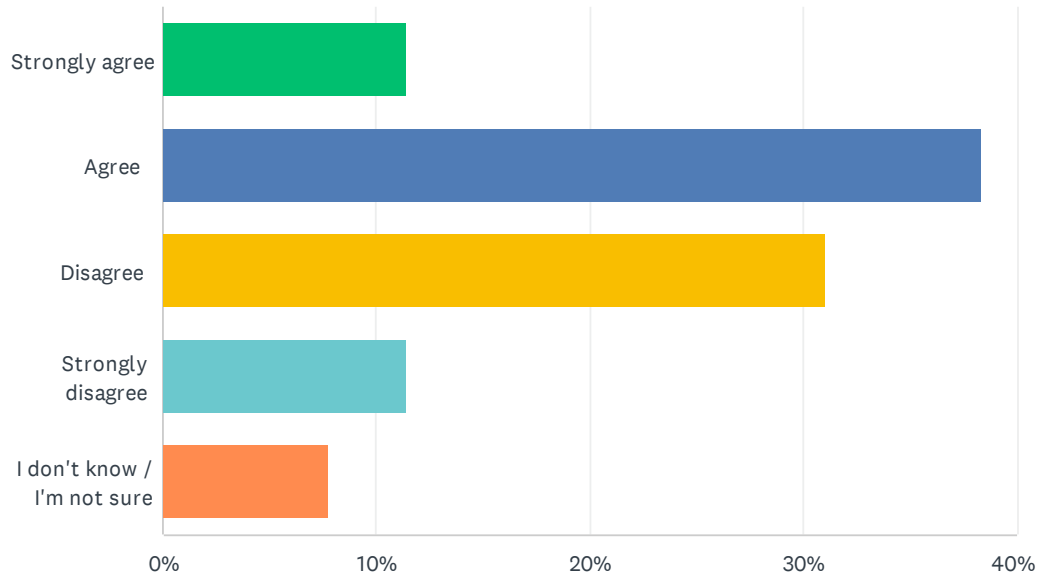
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need to keep them that way and promote them thoroughly and regularly. Public retail/business areas (in Willmar, specifically) need to work on their "curb appeal" to help drive retail activity and new business/economic development. Most of the prime retail area in Willmar is either looking shabby or the parking lots are horrendous. THIS STUFF IMPACTS IMPRESSIONS, which are critical for ED.

47	Absolutely NO Data centers!	5/27/2026 12:28 PM
48	Regarding specifically Willmar or Kandiyohi county, the dining and shopping experiences need to significantly improve...new restaurants would be great, a better variety and needless to say the shopping experience has declined significantly...hard to get good quality items that are needed. This is a very specific example and no one can do anything about this as the company went bankrupt but the loss of, for example, Herberger's and Herberger's home store....where to get good quality clothing for all ranges from leisure to suits or get household goods and a variety of/good quality is just missing and the large issue of the Willmar mall and the parking lot is just sad. More variety of restaurants and increased shopping experiences would be great in the area as Willmar is a main hub.	5/27/2026 11:52 AM
49	Although I may agree with how the community resources are currently being utilized there is much need for improvement as well.	5/26/2026 2:09 PM
50	Half the time our parks have trash or drug use happening within them. I have been at a park and had to leave due to drug users leaving needles at the park. There is not enough things for teenagers to do in this town. As well as for families to do. We have the Village for small children and half the toys are missing. Streets are not warm and welcoming when they are not maintained.	5/22/2026 1:48 PM
51	As a new resident to Willmar, I'd like to have information available to connect to resources quickly, not just through the internet but also city services. Knowing who can be called as central point of information is important to learn more about doctors and medical care, transportation, schools, etc. Many people may not focus on connecting with Chamber of Commerce or city website.	5/21/2026 2:12 PM
52	Nonprofit capacity is very stretched and needs support. More cross sector collaboration please!	5/21/2026 9:56 AM
53	I think we have alot of things to attract people to our area, but we need to do a better job of promoting it.	5/13/2026 12:57 PM
54	I don't think it was a good idea to let the cannabis retailers come into Hutchinson. Introducing marijuana in a supposedly innocent fashion can result in future addicts. Also having greenhouses growing marijuana in the rural areas doesn't speak well for our county.	5/11/2026 12:01 PM
55	In the state of 10,000 lakes, and in communities that are fortunate to have lakes and rivers, we must continue to work toward improving water quality. Work toward reducing the causes of impairment.	5/8/2026 5:46 AM
56	Overall Olivia/Renville County does a good job at promoting each town and what they have to offer. I think we can do a better job at reaching out to those outside our County in hopes to get people to move here.	5/6/2026 10:53 AM
57	Again my responses may be biased in that I think Hutchinson does a good job on a variety of these fronts.	5/6/2026 9:24 AM
58	Non-profits should have little to no say in the management of the region. They are non-elected. Stop the grants and partnerships with non-profits.	5/3/2026 3:34 AM

Q37 All of our residents and businesses have good, reasonably-priced access to broadband/high-speed internet services.

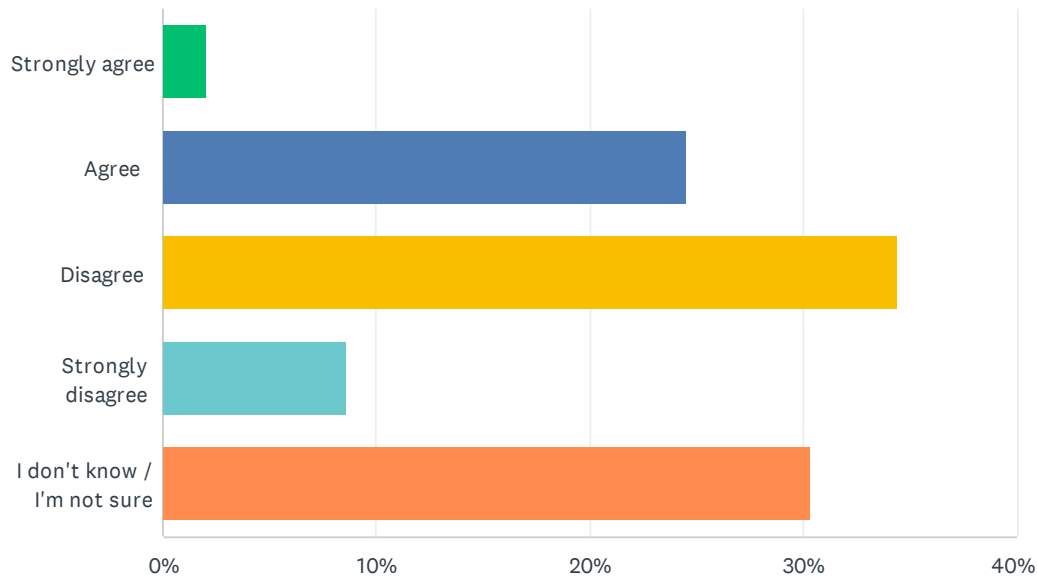
Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	11.43%	28
Agree	38.37%	94
Disagree	31.02%	76
Strongly disagree	11.43%	28
I don't know / I'm not sure	7.76%	19
TOTAL		245

Q38 Infrastructure investment is well-coordinated across jurisdictions to stretch dollars and/or maximize impact.

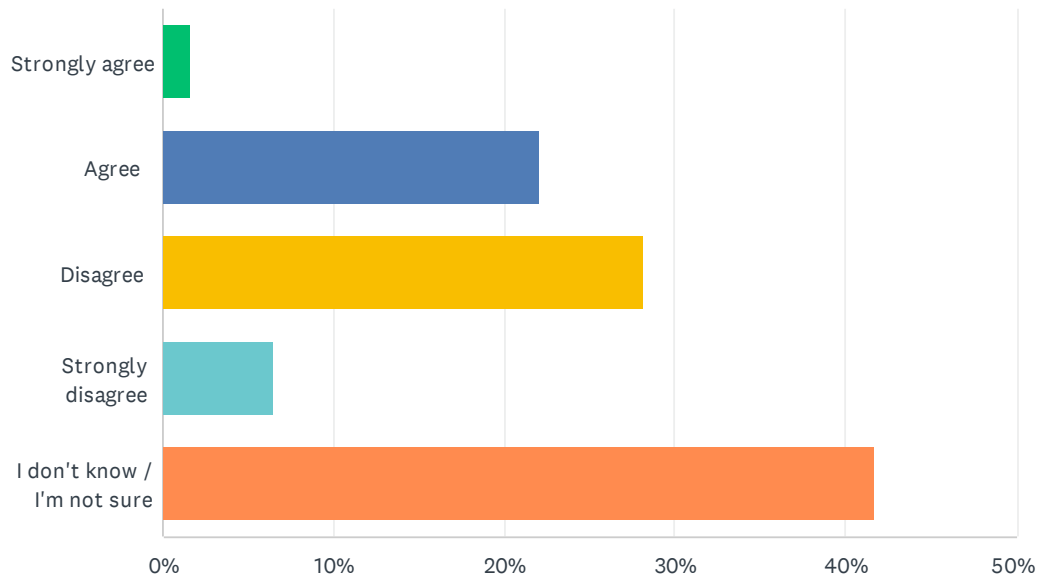
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.05%	5
Agree	24.59%	60
Disagree	34.43%	84
Strongly disagree	8.61%	21
I don't know / I'm not sure	30.33%	74
TOTAL		244

Q39 Public and private partners effectively collaborate on infrastructure projects.

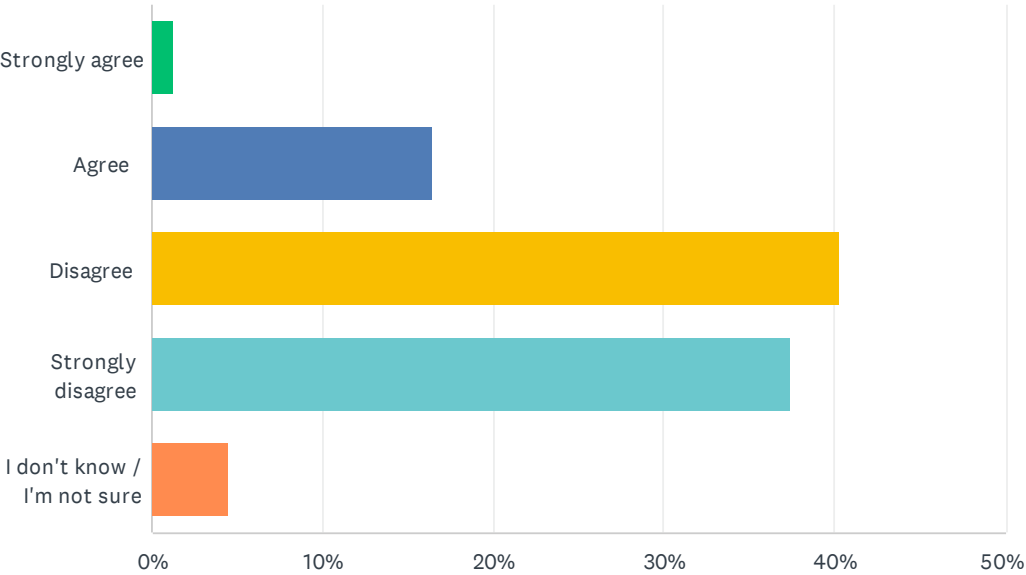
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.63%	4
Agree	22.04%	54
Disagree	28.16%	69
Strongly disagree	6.53%	16
I don't know / I'm not sure	41.63%	102
TOTAL		245

Q40 The region has an adequate supply of housing that our workers, and
the workers we want to attract, can comfortably afford.

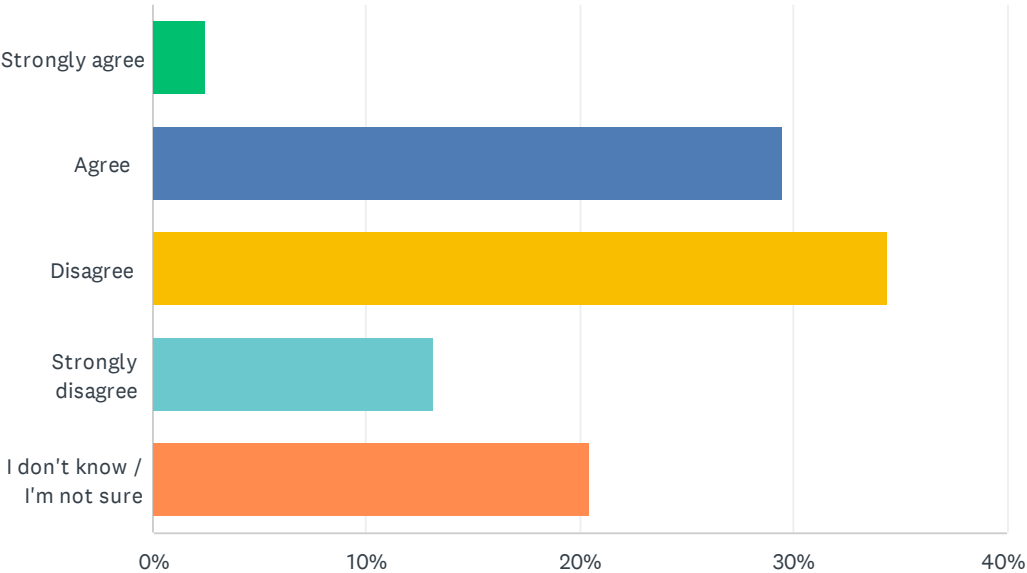
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.23%	3
Agree	16.46%	40
Disagree	40.33%	98
Strongly disagree	37.45%	91
I don't know / I'm not sure	4.53%	11
TOTAL		243

Q41 Our communities are taking an active role to increase their housing stock and address housing challenges.

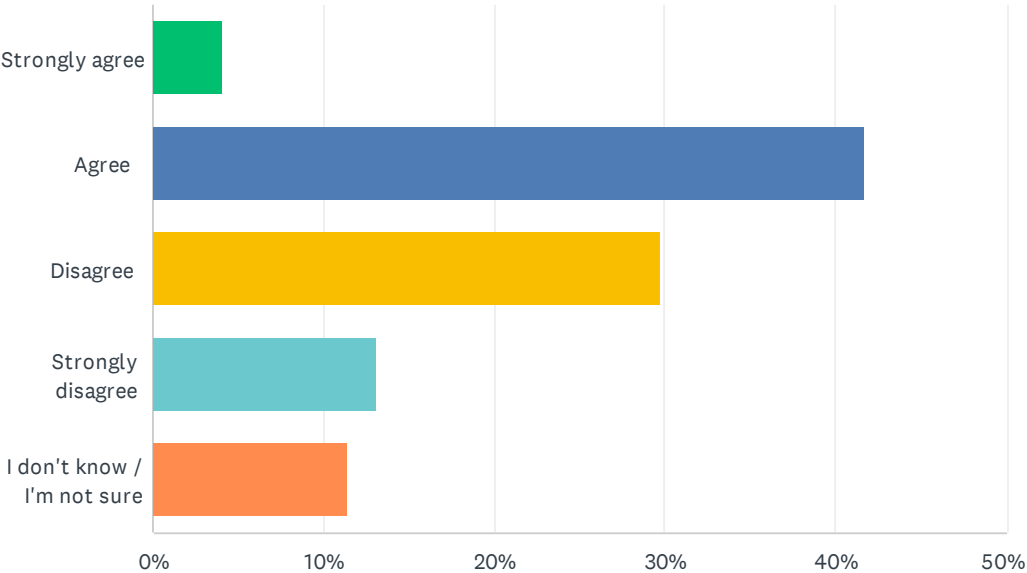
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.46%	6
Agree	29.51%	72
Disagree	34.43%	84
Strongly disagree	13.11%	32
I don't know / I'm not sure	20.49%	50
TOTAL		244

Q42 Our region’s transportation infrastructure supports workforce mobility
and business operations.

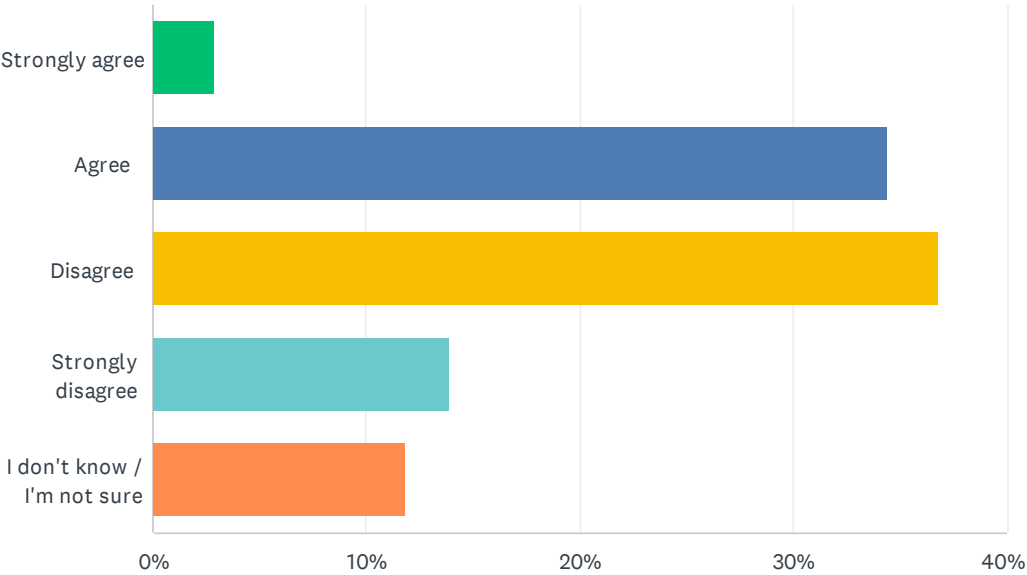
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	4.08%	10
Agree	41.63%	102
Disagree	29.80%	73
Strongly disagree	13.06%	32
I don't know / I'm not sure	11.43%	28
TOTAL		245

Q43 Our region’s transportation services are adequate to support
workforce mobility and business operations.

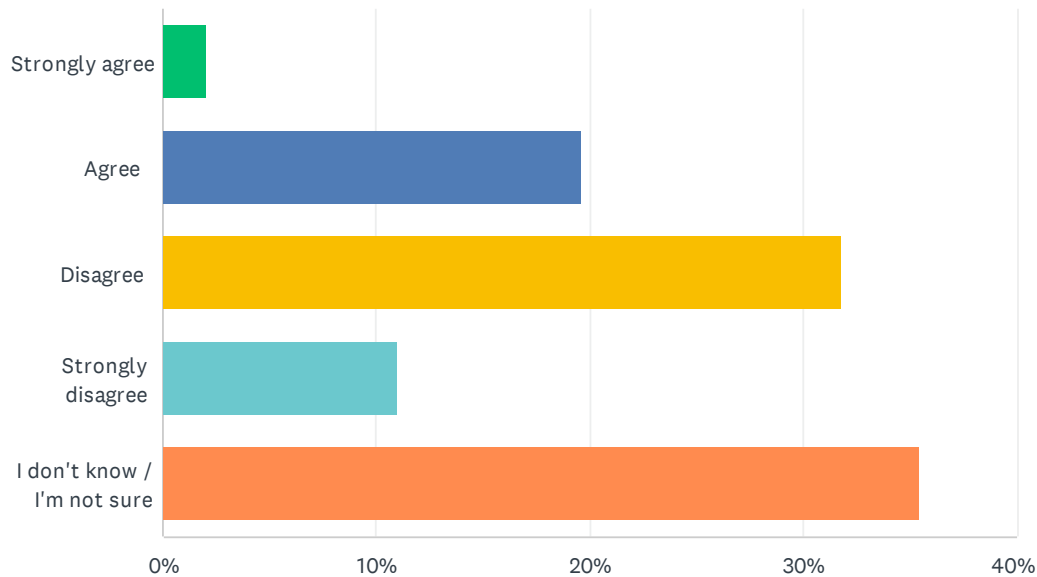
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.87%	7
Agree	34.43%	84
Disagree	36.89%	90
Strongly disagree	13.93%	34
I don't know / I'm not sure	11.89%	29
TOTAL		244

Q44 Cooperation and resource sharing are strategies effectively used by
our local government units to reduce local costs and improve efficiency.

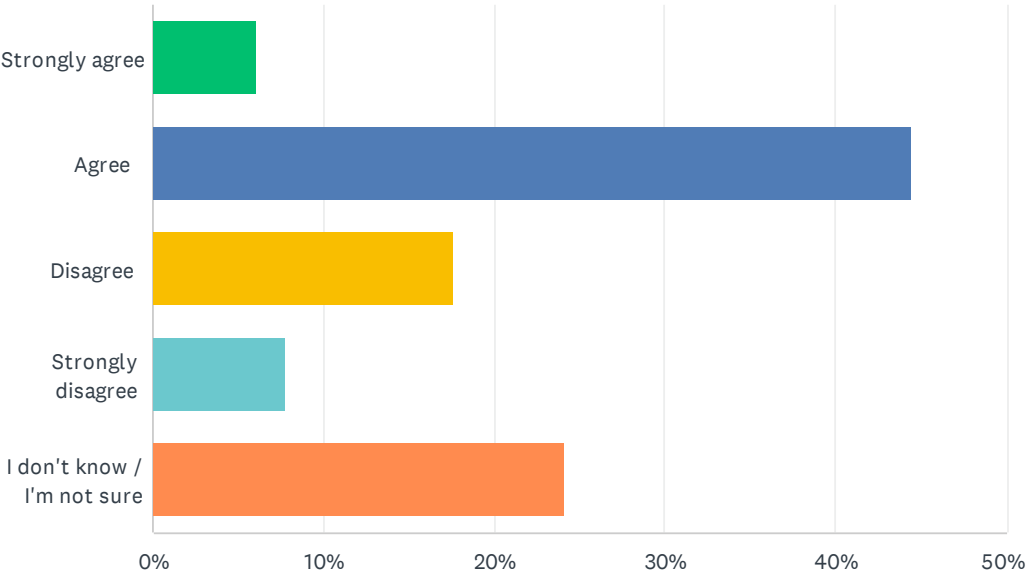
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	2.04%	5
Agree	19.59%	48
Disagree	31.84%	78
Strongly disagree	11.02%	27
I don't know / I'm not sure	35.51%	87
TOTAL		245

Q45 Our region’s utility infrastructure is reliable and will support future growth.

Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	6.12%	15
Agree	44.49%	109
Disagree	17.55%	43
Strongly disagree	7.76%	19
I don't know / I'm not sure	24.08%	59
TOTAL		245

Q46 Do you have other thoughts you'd like to share on our region's support of foundational assets?

Answered: 44 Skipped: 202

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Just moved to the area so I don't know a lot yet. Prices are kinda high for housing and food	7/5/2026 2:45 PM
2	The powers that be in our community will not work with locals who want to provide more housing because of who they are. But they will gladly throw money and investment at outsiders they know and fit their quality "white/ gentrified" ideas.	7/3/2026 9:18 AM
3	From personal experience in employment, both public & private utility providers are not capable of supporting the needs of my region. Especially after the forced closure of coal generating plants, wind and solar are susceptible not dependable.	6/24/2026 6:18 PM
4	Our region needs more 4 lane highways and easier access for business and industry.	6/24/2026 5:09 PM
5	Housing should be safe and decent quality. What little housing is available for most folks is very poor quality for the cost.	6/24/2026 3:22 PM
6	Make it make sense.	6/15/2026 8:24 AM
7	NA	6/3/2026 11:37 AM
8	We need to add childcare explicitly to this list and come up with creative transportation solutions to help expand access meaningfully for residents who struggle with the ability to navigate travel in our communities.	6/2/2026 9:48 AM
9	We need more housing!!!!	6/1/2026 4:03 PM
10	Internet is a problem. It is unreliable and the companies available in the area where my property lies is not competitive	6/1/2026 1:43 PM
11	I feel that some areas of the region are doing a good job with collaboration and engagement when it comes to foundational infrastructure (example, HWY 23 Coalition). Are there other areas of the region that might learn from this model?	6/1/2026 11:50 AM
12	Transportation can be an issue. We have local CCT buses, but really nothing else. Maybe E-bikes, E-scooter rentals. Lyft or Uber options may be helpful. A lot of things in Litchfield are walking distance, but if needed to go outside the town, transportation could be an issue.	6/1/2026 10:58 AM
13	We dont need to force employment. Let it happen naturally and those businesses will compensate as needed. Not every square inch of the united states needs to be like New York City.	5/31/2026 9:16 PM
14	Money spent on patch jobs is a complete waste of tax payer money. All roads need to be redone completely to be done correctly. The region needs to support quality over quantity in terms of fixing roads.	5/31/2026 11:13 AM
15	It is definitely not the government or tax payers responsibility to provide affordable housing or transportation to people. The government has never created any service that is profitable or efficient.	5/29/2026 4:57 PM
16	Utility prices in McLeod County are insane. The peak time charge from McLeod Power is crazy. Taking the one day that you use the most and that is the rate that you pay for peak rates all month.	5/29/2026 8:35 AM
17	The work force in Hutchinson is not here or the pay is too low for the cost of living here. Both my husband and I work in different towns because of this.	5/29/2026 6:15 AM
18	The hotel argument is frustrating. Why can't there be one downtown for events (maybe the empty SV lot?) and on 212? Dumb. Both are needed. So frustrating.	5/28/2026 9:49 PM

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19	Transportation and affordable housing are lacking in McLeod County	5/28/2026 5:26 PM
20	Utilities too high! What happens to those who cant pay it?	5/28/2026 5:16 PM
21	Housing is horrible in the Kandiyohi County area. It is certainly not for a lack of rental properties but the prices are far too high. Something needs to be done to lower housing costs. I know a single adult paying over \$1000 per month for a below average apartment who is making less than \$2000 total per month at a full time job. This was the lowest priced place she could find at the time 2 years ago but the price has increased by \$250 in the 2 years. She is spending 50% of her income just on rent!	5/28/2026 3:03 PM
22	Concern about data centers and how that will affect utility costs (water, electric) and environmental impact	5/28/2026 2:00 PM
23	There is little to no corporate resource sharing or investment. Our housing is not adequate. Our child care problems are deterrants for people to build their families in our communities. The majority of our community is living paycheck-to-paycheck and have no rainy day funds. We're on the brink of a financial catastrophe if one of the larger employers (manufacturing, hospital, education) made significant workforce reductions.	5/28/2026 1:24 PM
24	Out of all the places I've lived (and I've lived in several large metro areas), I have the best Internet here. Housing costs are pretty ridiculous compared to wages for the region. Still better than the Cities, but really, the housing market is just bonkers compared to 2018-2019.	5/28/2026 10:07 AM
25	The housing is an absolute crisis and I truly think it is the biggest thing holding Willmar/this entire area back from growing and becoming a flourishing community. Willmar has not focused enough on taking care of the roads/infrastructure we do have. They don't seem to have any interest in growing the infrastructure so more homes, NOT APARTMENTS, can be built. They need to stop bringing in corporations that duplicate the restaurants we already have here and start expanding out variety. There needs to be more support for childcare.	5/28/2026 9:11 AM
26	Regarding foundational assets such as housing, transportation, and infrastructure, there are both positives and negatives in our region. One major positive is rural broadband access. We live about 15 minutes outside the nearest larger town, basically surrounded by corn fields, yet we have fiber internet access. That has been excellent and is something the region should be proud of because reliable high-speed internet is critical for education, remote work, communication, and modern life in rural communities. The biggest challenge we face is transportation. In rural areas, people have to drive everywhere to access jobs, healthcare, shopping, and services. The nearest hospital for us is roughly 15–20 minutes away. If a family loses access to reliable transportation, daily life becomes extremely difficult very quickly. My 20-year-old son experienced this firsthand. He tried using the local public transportation service, CCT, but it is difficult to rely on consistently because rides must be scheduled ahead of time, availability is limited, and sometimes there is simply no room available. In some cases he had to arrive an hour or two early just to make sure he could get to work. Eventually he moved into town because he does not own a car and needed to be closer to employment. Car ownership itself has become increasingly expensive, and many young adults simply cannot afford reliable vehicles, insurance, fuel, repairs, and registration costs. As a result, they depend on walking, biking, public transportation, rides from friends, or expensive services like Uber. Traveling to larger regional centers like Willmar becomes a logistical challenge unless transportation is arranged well in advance. That discourages people from accessing jobs, education, healthcare, and other opportunities. Housing affordability and taxes are also major concerns. Property taxes have increased significantly, and many residents feel financially strained by rising taxes and fees overall, including recreational costs like fishing and hunting licenses. Many people feel constantly nickel-and-dimed, and high taxes make it harder to attract families, homeowners, and long-term residents to the area. I also have concerns about housing development priorities. I have not seen many new family housing developments, but I have seen a large increase in apartment construction. While apartments serve a purpose, there should also be more emphasis on affordable single-family housing and housing that encourages long-term community investment and stability. Communities grow stronger when people have incentives to put down roots, maintain properties, and invest in neighborhoods long-term. One area where the region does deserve credit is road maintenance, especially in Meeker County. The roads in our area are generally plowed and repaired well considering how harsh and long Minnesota winters can be. Because we travel frequently toward Willmar, we have noticed a difference in road quality and maintenance between counties, and Meeker County generally does a better job maintaining rural roads than Kandiyohi County. Overall, I believe the region's biggest infrastructure priorities should be reliable transportation access, affordable home ownership opportunities, reasonable taxation, rural healthcare access, and	5/28/2026 8:17 AM

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maintaining the strong infrastructure that already works well, such as broadband internet and rural road maintenance.

27	Willmar's water processing plant needs competent workers.	5/27/2026 7:16 PM
28	We have a need for more housing and the collaboration between local government and business just isn't there.	5/27/2026 5:00 PM
29	Figure out a method to REDUCE property taxes rather than creating ways to increase them	5/27/2026 1:59 PM
30	STOP funding the want a be's and start with who is here now so they can grow and then watch others come in. Lower home taxes in Spicer/ New London area and you see more people wanting to move into our area.	5/27/2026 1:52 PM
31	Need decent homes for 1st time homebuyers that are actually affordable.	5/27/2026 12:34 PM
32	Absolutely NO Data centers!	5/27/2026 12:28 PM
33	Bus system needs more hours in communities outside of Willmar that have availability for 2nd and 3rd shift workers. Cost of internet service is outrageous - cost of internet service needs to be improved.	5/27/2026 11:52 AM
34	As utilities become more and more important there is much needed for new capital investment. Self sustaining abilities for the future are more important than ever. Opening up small nuclear as an option will be critical for regional centers like ourselves.	5/26/2026 2:09 PM
35	Reliable public transportation for later shift workers is difficult to find.	5/22/2026 6:50 PM
36	The housing costs in our community is extremely high. It prevents new home owners looking to buy from moving here.	5/22/2026 1:48 PM
37	In terms of transportation, the infrastructure for driving is sufficient, but if we are considering public transit I think we're doing our best given the resources available, but the overall scope of service and availability is quite limited.	5/21/2026 2:50 PM
38	Sidewalks and non-motorized facilities and knowledge of transportation services that include transit, TNC, and other social agencies providing transportation to various communities and residents. Cross county connections for employment and healthcare that is better coordinated and communicated.	5/21/2026 2:12 PM
39	Student and affordable housing is critical	5/21/2026 9:56 AM
40	I think we need more statewide focus on roads and infrastructure outside the 494/694 loop and support roads/bridges in rural MN more. Additionally I think there is a good transport system, but it is utilized by a very small % of people in the area it is hard to tell if it is working or not.	5/13/2026 12:57 PM
41	We should continue to promote renewable energy, including small scale nuclear power. Start by lifting the moratorium.	5/8/2026 5:46 AM
42	I agree there is enough housing in the area but it is not "good" as in they'd need to do a lot of work to upgrade it. The cost to purchase the house is higher than it should be and stretching a buyers budget. But building a new house to sell is even more expensive for buyers.	5/6/2026 10:53 AM
43	We have some opportunities here to explore, especially around housing affordability and transportation options.	5/6/2026 9:24 AM
44	Private Public partnerships should be outlawed. Private NGO's are not an elected body to represent the people. It violates the Constitution of taxation without representation.	5/3/2026 3:34 AM