

# Hale County

Community Needs and Opportunities:  
A Conversation Opener



The Plainview Area Endowment and the Lubbock Area Foundation have embarked on a collaborative initiative to identify the region's best opportunities and most pressing needs, and to set bold goals to achieve over the coming years. This report is a product of that endeavor.

With support from the Endowment and the Foundation, this report was produced by a partnership team from two national organizations with expertise in regional and rural development: the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group.

August 2014



The **Plainview Area Endowment** was created in 2010 to be a resource for donors, a source of grants for worthy local causes, and a partner for local nonprofits in Hale County. Created by and for the people of the area, the Endowment is uniquely positioned to bring people from all walks of life together to create solutions and promote opportunities for betterment of the community and quality of life for all. The Endowment is an Affiliate of the Lubbock Area Foundation. This makes it possible for the Endowment's Advisory Board and volunteers to focus our efforts on the important work of building permanent community assets and putting the earnings to good work through grants to nonprofits in our area, while relying on the Lubbock Area Foundation to handle day-to-day administrative tasks and investments.

[www.plainviewareaendowment.org](http://www.plainviewareaendowment.org)



The **Center for Rural Entrepreneurship** helps community leaders build a prosperous future by supporting and empowering business, social and civic entrepreneurs. With its roots and hearts in rural America, the Center helps communities of all sizes and interests by bringing together research, community engagement and strategy development. The Center's Solution Area Teams empower communities to discover their own answers to the challenges and opportunities they face.

[www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org)

In the 100-year-old tradition of community foundations across the country, the **Lubbock Area Foundation** harnesses the collective generosity of thousands of West Texans to give to causes and concerns in the region. The Foundation stewards the gifts placed in its care with an eye toward permanence and growth, and from the investment earnings, awards over \$1 million in grants and scholarships in the region every year. As a philanthropic leader, the Lubbock Area Foundation seeks solutions and promotes innovation across a broad array of issue areas including arts and culture, education, civic and community development, health and human services. The Foundation believes that the success of this region requires visionary community leadership, innovation and a commitment to the common good.

[www.lubbockareafoundation.org](http://www.lubbockareafoundation.org)



The **Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group** helps rural, urban and suburban communities act together to create more vibrant regions that advance and sustain prosperity and wellbeing for local people, places and firms, including those on the economic margins. Aspen CSG connects community and economic development leaders across the nation to motivate each other, and equips them with good ideas, tools and strategies to improve results and prospects for their regions.

[www.aspenicsg.org](http://www.aspenicsg.org)

## Our Aim

What is it like living today in Hale County – and what opportunities and challenges face us as we forge a future together?

This is a conversation worth having. The facts and figures and perspective offered here are meant to help open that conversation.

## Table of Contents

Section Topic	In this section....
1 Who is living in Hale County?	Each of these four sections profiles recent data on five factors related to the topic of the section. It explains why each measure is important, and highlights a key point or two. The underlying facts and figures all come from publicly available sources, like the US Census, the State of Texas and other agencies that conduct research across the area.
2 How are Hale County's people doing?	
3 How is the Hale County's economy doing?	
4 How is Hale County, the place, doing?	
5 What is Hale County's Transfer of Wealth opportunity?	This special analysis by the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship was commissioned by the Lubbock Area Foundation for Hale County and the entire region.
6 What do we think about Hale County?	This final section features the responses to a 20-question public survey of residents of Hale County. The survey was open for anyone to answer from July 25th through August 10th, 2014.

## Using this Booklet as a Conversation Guide

Please use this booklet with local organizations, groups, family or neighbors to start a discussion about how the Slaton area is doing today, and what we might want to address together to make the area an even better place tomorrow – to live in, work and raise a family.

There are reflection questions at the end of each section – and some Overall Priority Questions on the back cover. We encourage you to work with local groups or neighbors to answer these questions individually, and then share your answers with each other before you answer the Overall Priority Questions.

The Plainview Area Endowment and the Lubbock Area Foundation both want to better target their grantmaking and action on priorities set by the community. So the Endowment is eager to hear from any group or individual who has used this guide. We would especially like to hear:

- When you used it – and with what group and how many people.
- Your group's answers to the Overall Priority Questions.
- Any other ideas you have about the top priorities people in our area should take on together that will build a better future for the Slaton area.
- Please send Plainview Area Endowment your ideas – contact information is on the back cover of this booklet.

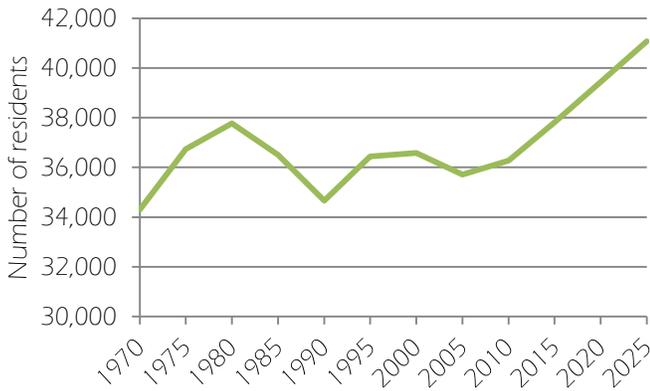
If you want someone to help organize or facilitate a group conversation or discussion, help is available! Please contact Tami Swoboda at 806-762-8061 or at [tami@lubbockareafoundation.org](mailto:tami@lubbockareafoundation.org).

# 1

## Who is living in Hale County?

Any examination or conversation about a county starts with a few key facts about who is living there now – and how that is different from the past and might soon change.

### a. Population



**Why it matters:** Changes in a county’s population can signal economic activity, expansion or contraction of sectors or institutions, and migration trends. Population shifts can also bring to light potential opportunities and challenges – like growth, decline, need for housing, schools and the like.

**How the county stacks up:** After recent periods of both growth and decline, the state demographer projects strong population growth through 2025. While this is positive news, managing growth can be challenging. It requires robust planning and regular investments in community amenities like schools, streets and housing.

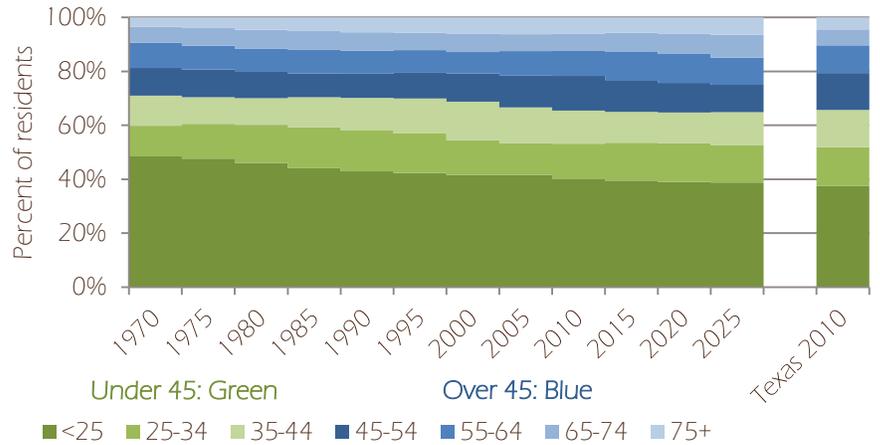
Source: Texas State Data Center, 2012

**Why it matters:** A population that balances age groups is an indicator of community health and vitality. Do families think this is a good place to have children? As young people grow up, do they find the education, amenities and employment to build a life? And as they age, do they have the support and community culture they need and want to stay there?

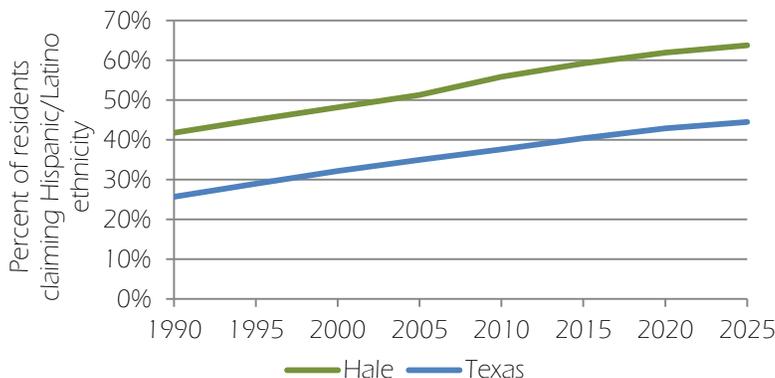
**How the county stacks up:** Unlike much of the region, Hale County has a younger population. It mirrors the age distribution of the State of Texas as a whole.

Source: Texas State Data Center, 2012

### b. Age composition



### c. Hispanic/Latino population

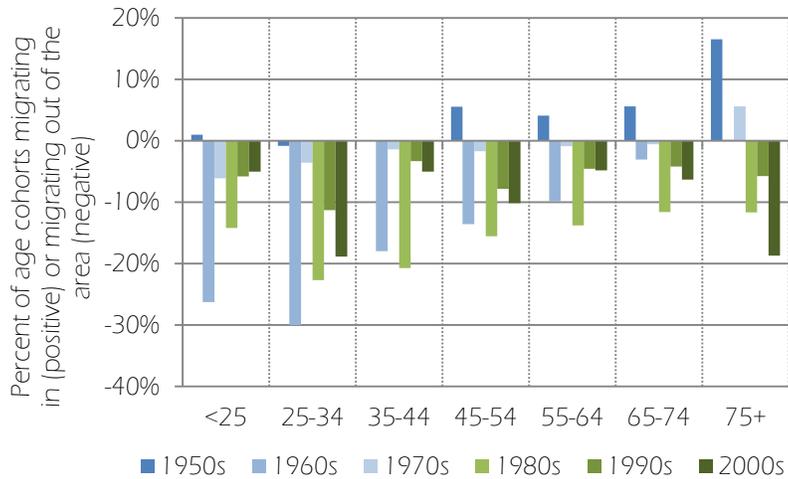


**Why it matters:** One dynamic demographic trend shaping America’s future is Hispanic/Latino population growth. America is becoming more diverse, and Hispanic/Latino population is driving this change in many regions.

**How the county stacks up:** Hale is now a majority minority county – when counting Hispanic/Latino, African, Asian and Native Americans. Compared to Texas, Hale’s Hispanic/Latino population grew earlier and will likely remain a larger percentage of the population in the coming decade.

Source: Texas State Data Center, 2012

## d. Net migration



**Why it matters:** Residents moving out of a region subtracted from new residents moving in define its net migration. Big changes in net migration for any age group can signal significant shifts in a county's future.

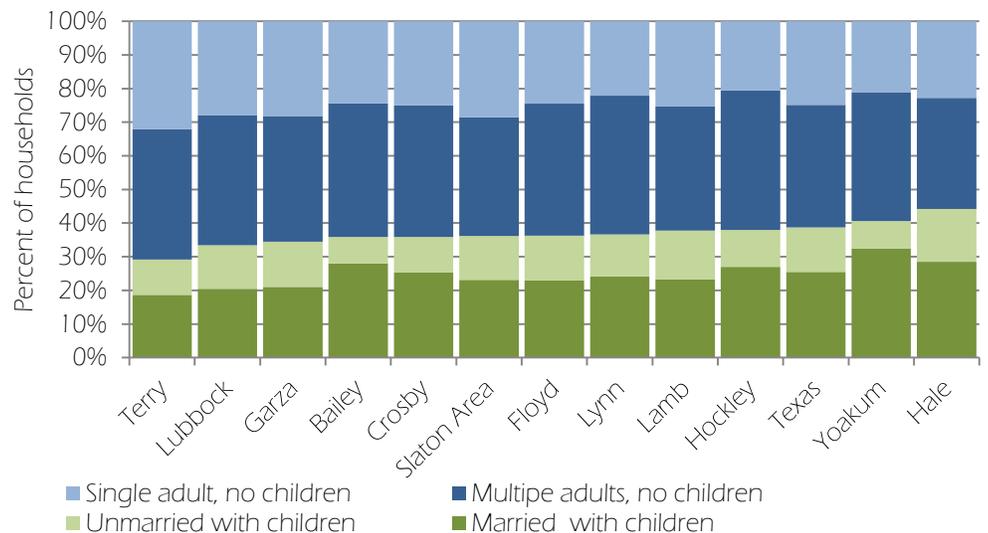
**How the county stacks up:** Net migration in Hale County is now negative for all groups. Outmigration is particularly striking for two groups: 25-34 year olds who leave and don't return and seniors who move closer to family or services elsewhere as they age.

Source: Applied Population Laboratory, University of Wisconsin- Madison, 2013

## e. Household structure

**Why it matters:** Today, the fact that there is a wide range of household types reflects emerging trends in American society: for example, fewer married couples with children and more single-adult households. Different household types may call for different services and signal future trends or changes in the community.

**How the county stacks up:** Compared to Texas and other counties in the region, Hale County has a greater proportion of households – both married and unmarried households – with children.



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

## Discussion Questions

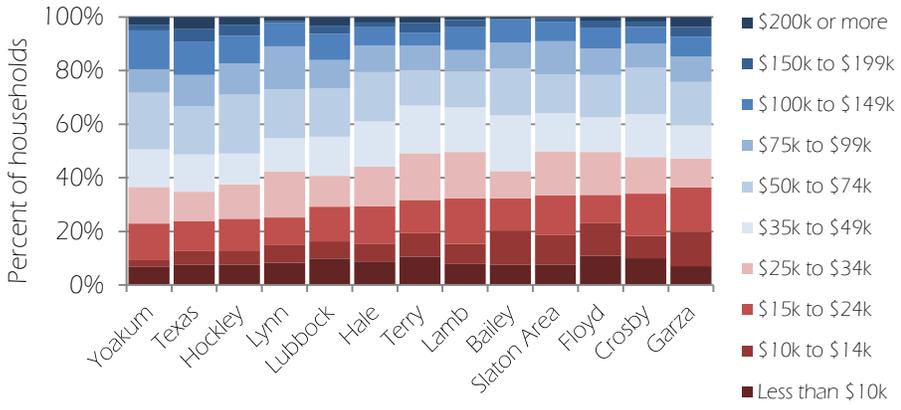
- 1.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about who is living in Hale County?
- 1.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most **hope** for Hale County?
- 1.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?
- 1.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to **change** – and why?

# 2

## How are Hale County's people doing?

Once you understand who lives in a region, the work of trying to help a region get ahead must consider and address how those people are doing.

### a. Household income distribution



**Why it matters:** Household Income provides a general indicator of wellbeing of its members. It correlates with health, educational outcomes and happiness.

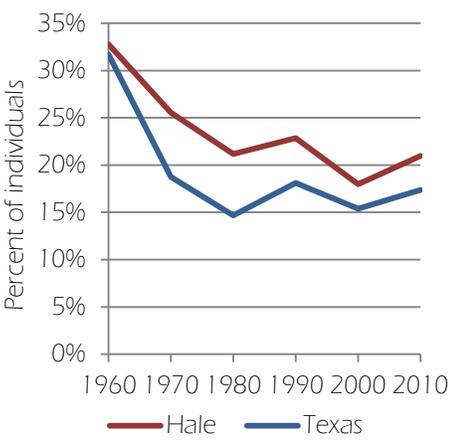
**How the county stacks up:** Compared to the region, Hale County's households earn average incomes. Compared to Texas, a smaller proportion make over \$50,000 and about 40% of all households earn less than \$25,000.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

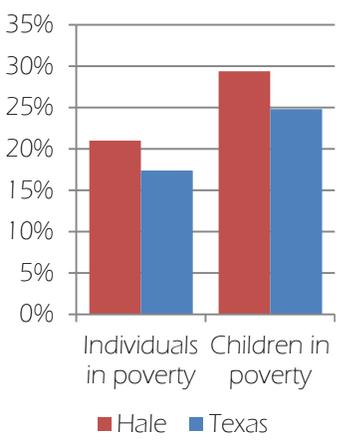
**Why it matters:** Poverty is a well-established benchmark of how a community's residents are doing economically. Rising or declining poverty rates can indicate changes in resident well-being as well as the extent to which the area's economy provides economic opportunity.

**How the county stacks up:** The poverty rates for both Hale County and Texas are lower than they were in 1960, although both increased during the recent recession. Hale County's poverty rate is higher for both individuals and children.

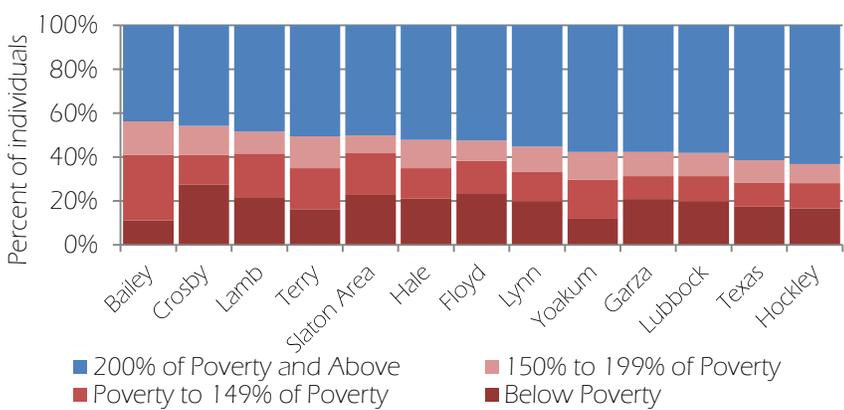
Source: Decennial Censuses and American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012 (indv & child poverty)



### b. Poverty rate



### c. Income and poverty

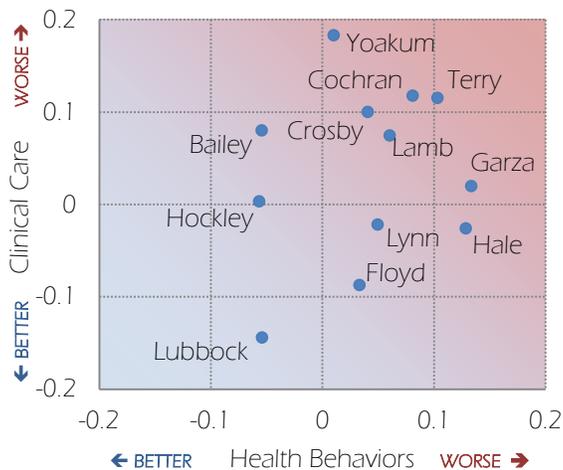


**Why it matters:** Many who track individual and family economic well being use 200% of the poverty rate as a better measure – which, today, amounts to annual income of \$47,700 for a family of four.

**How the county stacks up:** Nearly 50% of Hale County's residents live either near or below the 200%-of-poverty line. That means half the population faces significant economic challenges – a rate that exceeds Texas overall.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

## d. Health factors



**Why it matters:** Indicators like health status, happiness and attitude shed light on people’s current and future wellbeing. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation assigns counties a standardized health behavior score (the Texas average score is 0) taking into account factors such as obesity, smoking and sexually transmitted infection rates. It also assigns a clinical care score including factors such as the ratio of residents to doctors and dentists and rate of preventative care screenings.

**How the county stacks up:** Hale performs poorly on health behavior measures. Of particular concern are the county’s teen birth rate (98 for per 1,000 teen women), rate of alcohol-impaired driving deaths (31% of driving deaths), and rate of sexually transmitted infections (548 cases of Chlamydia per 100,000 residents). On clinical care, the county has lower than average access to doctors, dentists, and mental health providers.

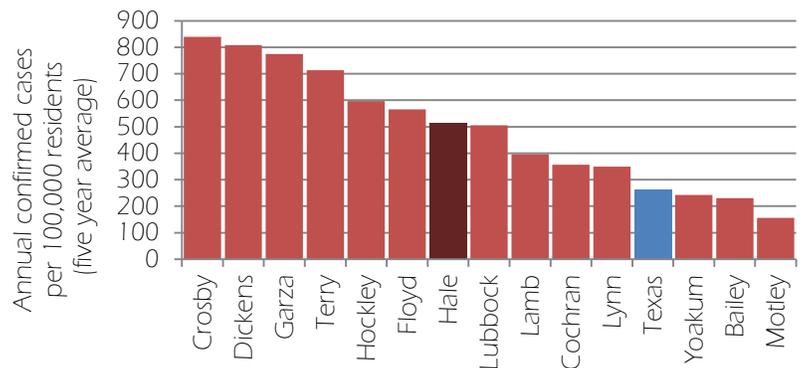
Source: Robert Wood Johnson’s County Health Rankings, 2013

**Why it matters:** Abuse and neglect of people are serious challenges confronting communities world-wide. High numbers can motivate a community to address underlying issues that tend to increase abuse and neglect. Note: Data can be affected by good, poor or inconsistent reporting.

**How the county stacks up:** From 2009 to 2013, Hale County had 932 confirmed cases of abuse and neglect. Its rate is average for the region, but it is double the state average.

Source: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 2009-2013

## e. Abuse and neglect



## Discussion Questions

- 2.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about how people are doing in Hale County?
- 2.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most **hope** for Hale County?
- 2.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?
- 2.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to **change** – and why?

# 3

## How is Hale County's economy doing?

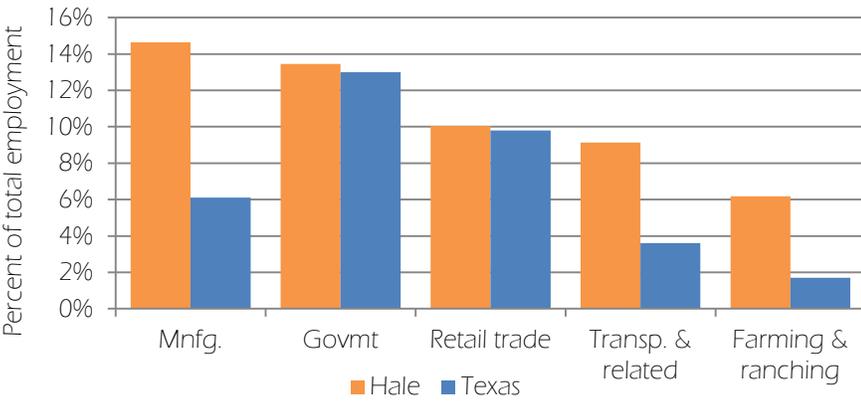
The factors that drive or drain a local economy – specific industry sectors, the education and skills of residents, the sources of the income people spend – all affect the future.

### a. Employment by sector

**Why it matters:** Every economy has a unique set of industry sectors. Rural areas typically have less diversity, relying on fewer sectors than metro economies to provide jobs. Understanding which sectors drive a local economy is essential.

**How the county stacks up:** A large percentage of Hale County's residents work in manufacturing, government, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, and farming and ranching. These numbers have likely changed since the closing of the Cargill plant.

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2012

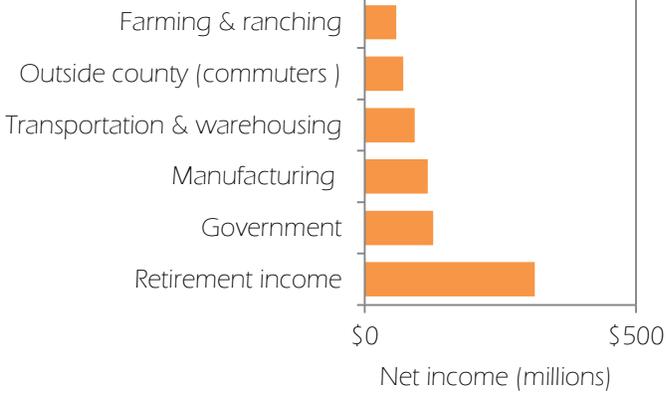


**Why it matters:** Another way to understand a county's economy is by looking at which sectors produce the most income for residents. Here we've included income sources not traditionally considered "sectors" – like retirement income and the wages of residents who live in Hale County but commute to jobs outside the county.

**How the county stacks up:** Retirement income is the largest economic driver in Hale County followed by income earned from the government, manufacturing, and transportation and warehousing sectors. Persons living in Hale County but working outside of the County are also a very important source of income. These numbers have likely changed since the closing of the Cargill plant.

Source: Headwaters Report, 2012

### b. Personal income by sector

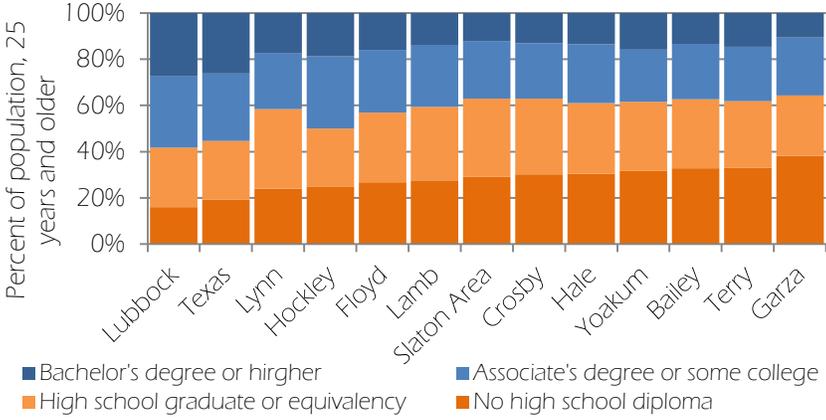


### c. Educational attainment

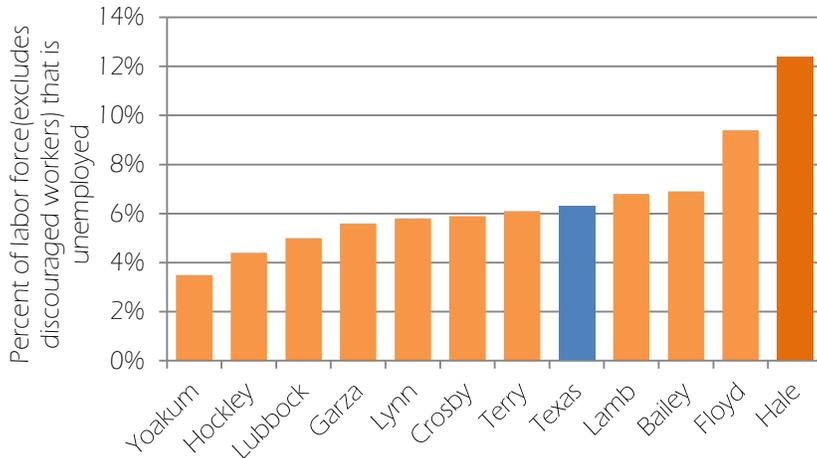
**Why it matters:** A leading factor shaping any economy is educational attainment. Higher education levels within a community typically result in higher incomes, more wealth formation and even healthier residents.

**How the county stacks up:** The educational attainment of Hale County's residents is similar to other counties in the region. Compared to Texas, it has a much higher share of residents who have no high school diploma.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012



## d. Labor force participation



**Why it matters:** Communities experiencing economic distress have higher unemployment rates. Conversely, communities that are growing, younger and doing better economically have lower unemployment rates.

**How the county stacks up:** Hale County's unemployment rate spiked following the Jan. 2013 closing of a meat processing plant. In 2013, Hale County had the highest average unemployment rate in the Lubbock region.

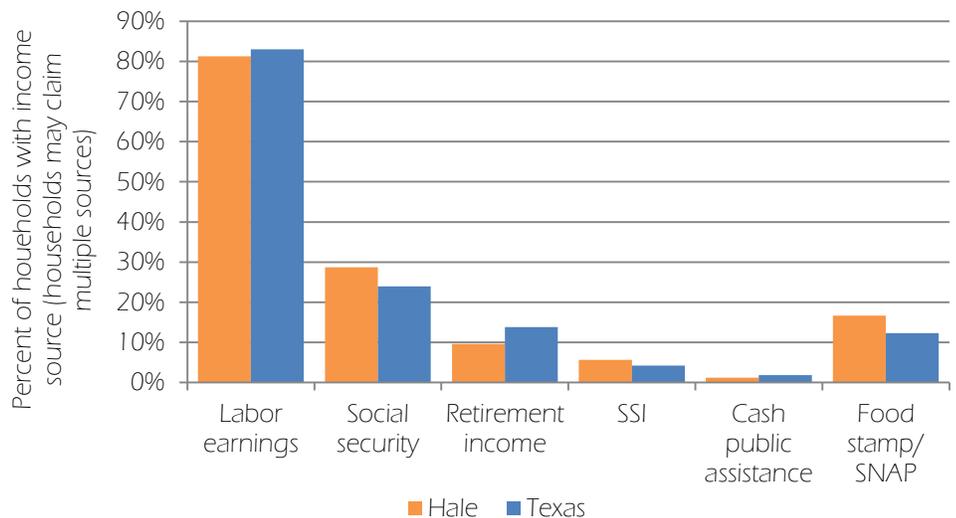
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2013 Annual Average

**Why it matters:** Labor earnings include income generated by working. Other forms of income represent retirement income from investments and transfer payments associated with social security, farm programs and those receiving help due to illness or unemployment.

**How the county stacks up:** Compared to Texas, Hale County has a higher percent of older residents who draw benefits from Social Security and SNAP. These numbers have likely changed since the closing of the Cargill plant.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

## e. Labor and non-labor earnings



## Discussion Questions

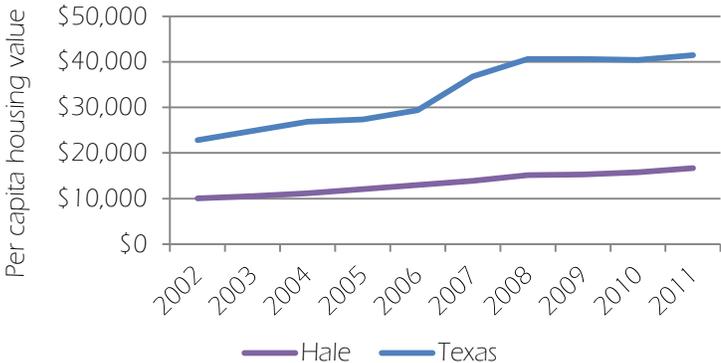
- 3.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about how the Hale County economy is doing?
- 3.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most **hope** for Hale County?
- 3.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?
- 3.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to **change** – and why?

# 4

## How is Hale County, the place, doing?

The natural resources and buildings and amenities in a place, as well as where people live and shop, make a difference in the quality of life.

### a. Value of housing



**Why it matters:** In America, home ownership is the single most important household asset. Consequently, housing values can be an important core indicator for both household and community well-being.

**How the county stacks up:** Housing values in Hale County are one-third those of Texas on average. Part of this difference reflects higher housing prices in urban areas (typically higher per square foot) and housing quality.

Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, Property Tax Survey Data and Reports

**Why it matters:** An adequate housing unit has complete plumbing, a kitchen, is not overcrowded, and is affordable for either its owner or renter. Housing adequacy rates highlight critical health and safety issues. High rates of poor housing stock can be a red flag.

**How the county stacks up:** One in four units in Hale County is inadequate. Underlying data show that Hale County's housing is generally not overcrowded and includes needed amenities. About 20% of renters or owners, however, have trouble affording their housing.

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

### b. Housing adequacy

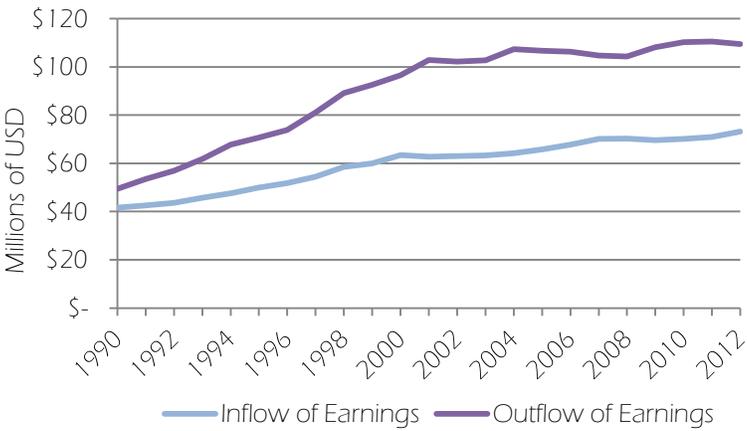


**Why it matters:** Many Americans commute to work, entertainment and shopping. People who work in Hale County but live in another county tend to spend more of their paycheck in the county where they live, creating an "outflow of earnings" – and vice versa.

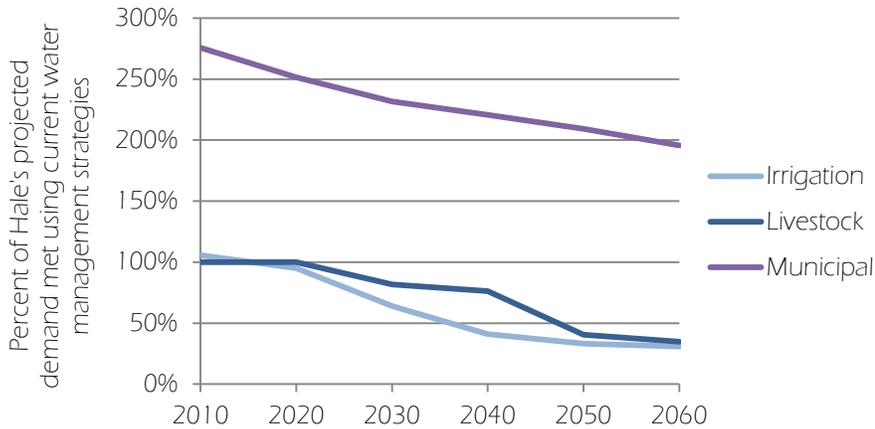
**How the county stacks up:** Hale County has a net-outflow of earnings – meaning many people earn a paycheck in Hale County but take it elsewhere to spend – hurting local businesses in Hale County.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. Multiple Years Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System. Tables CA30 & CA91.

### c. Commuting patterns



## d. Projected water availability



**Why it matters:** Water, like energy, is a critical natural resource. Texas produces a water plan every five years to project future supplies, demand and create water management strategies.

### How the county stacks up:

Hale County has adequate but decreasing water supplies for municipal uses, but large future deficits are projected for agricultural and ranching purposes.

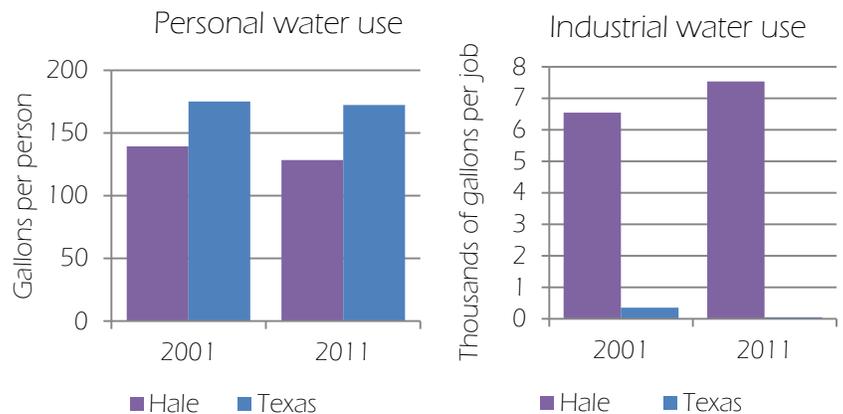
Source: 2012 State Water Plan, Texas Water Development Board

**Why it matters:** Measures of per capita consumption help assess efficient use of water. Household and business conservation are two of the lowest cost strategies for increasing water availability in the region.

**How the county stacks up:** Industrial use (e.g., manufacturing, mining, energy, irrigation, livestock, etc.) is high in Hale County, and per-job industrial use of water is increasing. Individual (per person) use of water is lower than the state average, and it is declining.

Source: Texas Water Development Board, 2011

## e. Daily water use



## Discussion Questions

- 4.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about how Hale County, the place, is doing?
- 4.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most **hope** for Hale County?
- 4.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?
- 4.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to **change** – and why?

# 5

## Hale County's Transfer of Wealth

As assets transfer from one generation to the next, families have a unique opportunity to create a lasting community impact. How big is that opportunity?

### What is a "Transfer of Wealth"?

Assets are passed from one generation to the next because of the natural process of aging and dying. In places where residents care deeply about the future of their community, like communities in West Texas, this transfer of wealth (TOW) is an important opportunity. Handing down from one generation to the next represents the largest under-developed financial resource in the area. Timing is also critical. For the communities of West Texas, the TOW opportunity begins sooner because of the aging demographics of the region.

If community members want to do something to keep their place great and make it even better, the experiences of other rural communities will show you, this is one of the best ways to achieve it. Starting today will help communities strategize to keep a portion of these transferring assets in your communities – and endowed and used for purposes you and your neighbors care about.

### Hale County's TOW Opportunity

**\$581,000,000**

will transfer between generations in Hale County in the next 10 years

**\$29,000,000**

is 5%, which, if captured, could generate \$1,500,000 annually for things the community needs and wants

**\$13,400,000**

is what the community could earn annually if it captures and endows just 5% of the 50-year TOW opportunity

### a. Average household net worth



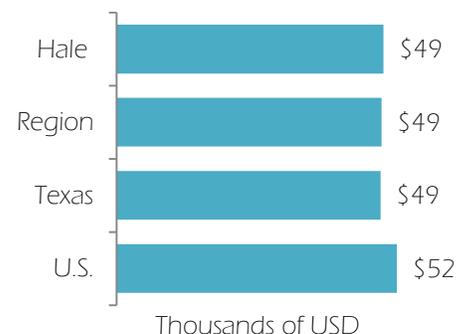
**Why it matters:** Most communities and community residents see themselves as poor. Many believe they don't have the financial means to make their place better. Understanding that every community—even your community—has wealth, can shift attitudes from "the glass is half empty" to "the glass is half full" and motivate action.

**How the county stacks up:** Dividing total household net worth in Hale County, \$1.6 billion, by the number of households allows us to compare Hale County's net worth to the U.S., Texas and its region. In Hale County, **per household net worth** (or average household net worth) is **\$134,800**. This is lower compared to the U.S. and Texas. However, there is still significant potential for residents to give to the community and its future.

### b. 10-year TOW Opportunity (per household)

**Why it matters:** Understanding how much wealth is likely to transfer in the short term is important to communities. This allows communities to set specific goals and work towards those goals. Communities with specific goals tend to do better in achieving or exceeding them.

**How the county stacks up:** Over the 10 years (2011-2020), residents of Hale County are estimated to transfer \$581 million (or \$49,000 per household). Although Hale County's per household TOW opportunity is slightly lower than the value for the U.S.



## c. 50-year TOW Opportunity (per household)



**Why it matters:** Understanding how much wealth will transfer in the long-term is important. It can encourage communities into a more proactive approach to economic development. This allows communities to envision where they want to be in the long-term and start building a pool of funding to achieve their vision.

**How the county stacks up:** Between 2011 and 2060, residents of Hale County are estimated to transfer \$5.4 billion (or \$452,000 per household). Although Hale County's per household TOW opportunity is lower than the values for Texas and the U.S., there is significant opportunity to "give back" and support community betterment projects.

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## Trends and Data of Note

- The transfer of wealth estimates for Hale County are conservative – because they reflect only measures of permanent resident household wealth, which do not include corporate or former resident wealth.
- For a county like Hale, former residents represent a significant donor pool. In other parts of the country, community "alumni" have demonstrated both capacity and desire to give back to their home towns.
- Other likely donors that would contribute to community endowments in Hale County include:
  - **Closely-Held Family Businesses.** Family-owned—or what are referred to as closely-held family businesses—are a big part of the economy of Hale County. Family business owners are often multi-generational and deeply rooted in their hometowns. These potential donors have both capacity to give, as well as motivation and a history of supporting their chosen communities.
  - **Land Wealth.** As is the case throughout this region of Texas, land wealth is significant. When land is transitioned from one generation to the next, or to a new land owner, the potential exists to give some or all of it (or proceeds from its sale) to the community. While such donations typically represent just a small portion of the land wealth being transitioned or sold, they can collectively be significant.
  - **Energy Royalty Wealth.** Mineral rights ownership and associated leasing payments and royalties are a potential source of wealth in parts of Hale County. Anticipated future and long-term energy production within the County will likely increase this source of wealth and potential sources of giving to the community.
  - **Thrifty Retirees.** For aging generational groups there is a culture of working hard, spending less than you make, saving for the future and often investing long and well. While most retirees are not wealthy, they do have assets. They are often very rooted in their home communities and have the capacity and desire to leave a legacy.
- Through the Plainview Area Endowment, Hale County already has an established a relationship with the Lubbock Area Foundation to support community giveback and endowment building.

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## Discussion Questions

- 5.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about the Transfer of Wealth in Hale County?
- 5.2 What one trend in this data or idea in this discussion gives you the most **hope** for Hale County?
- 5.3 What one trend or fact or idea in this data and discussion causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?



# What do we think about Hale County?

Everybody has thoughts and opinions about their community. Taken together, local opinions can offer a “reality check” on what is working and what is not.

From late July 25 to August 10, 2014 the Levelland Area Endowment and the Lubbock Area Foundation fielded a survey in several West Texas communities: Garza County, Hale County, Hockley County and the Slaton Area. The survey responses both identify regional trends and highlight opportunities and challenges in each specific community.

## Demographics of Hale County Responses

- 188 surveys were collected from Hale County, 117 were from women and 71 were from men.
- 22% of respondents have lived in the area less than 10 years; 24% have lived in the area 40 years or more.
- 82% of respondents were 35 or older (53% of the county’s population is younger than 35).
- 100% of surveys were completed in English (11% of the County’s population—almost entirely Spanish speakers—cannot speak English “very well”).

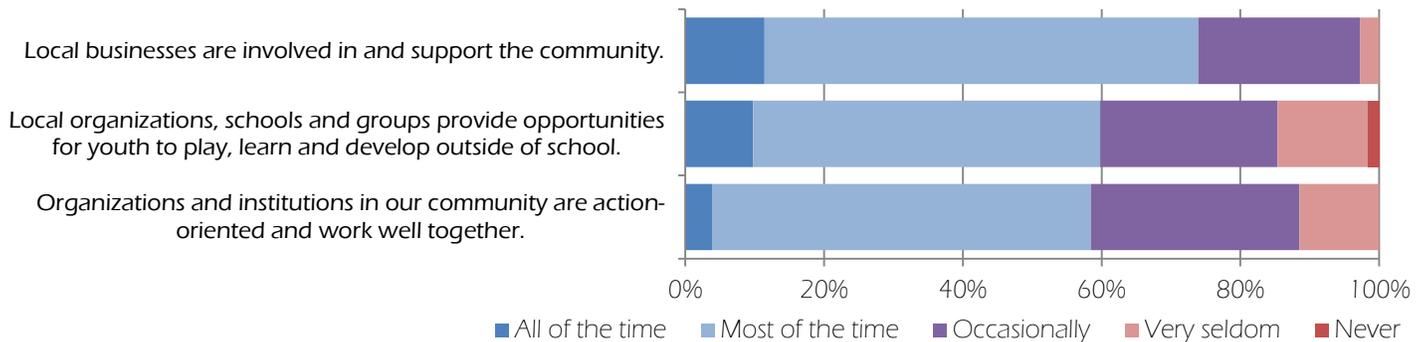
## Demographics of All Survey Responses

- 616 surveys were collected throughout the area, 386 were from women and 228 were from men.
- 19% of respondents have lived in the area less than 10 years; 29% have lived in the region 40 years or more.
- 87% of respondents were 35 or older (52% of the population is younger than 35).
- 99% of surveys were completed in English (10% of the survey area’s population—almost entirely Spanish speakers—cannot speak English “very well”).

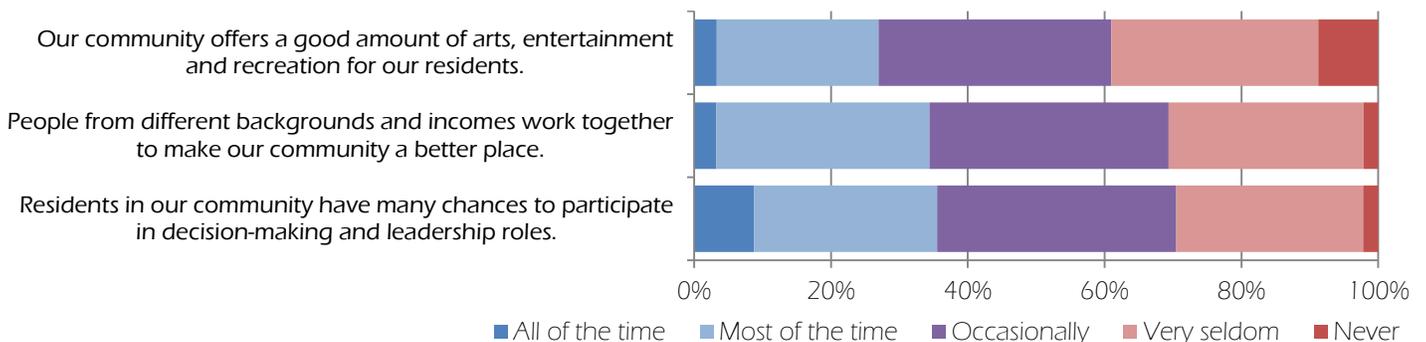
## a. Ranking community strengths and weaknesses

All survey takers were presented with the same 17 positive statements about their community and were asked if the statements were always, mostly, occasionally, very seldom, or never true.

### Statements respondents thought were most likely to be always or mostly true:



### Statements respondents thought were most likely to be occasionally, very seldom or never true:



## b. Open-ended reflections

**Based on your experience, what are the one or two very best things about living in your community?**

**The people (47%)**

Respondents listed "the people" - often with descriptors like "friendly".

**Size (34%)**

Respondents said that the "small size" or "small-town living/atmosphere" was one of the best things about their community.

**Convenience/amenity access (20%)**

Respondents said that their town has - or has easy access to - a variety of amenities, such as shopping/dining, medical services, entertainment and higher education institutions. Many said they liked living in a small town with convenient access to amenities in larger cities like Lubbock.

**Community character (14%)**

Respondents said that they have a close-knit, caring, and supportive community that is willing to help people in times of need. Some mentioned a strong sense of community pride.

**Schools/colleges (10%)**

Respondents listed public and private schools, as well as local colleges and universities as community strengths.

**What are the one or two most challenging things about living in your community?**

**Lack of amenities (38%)**

Respondents cited a lack of amenities, such as shopping, dining, family-oriented entertainment, and medical facilities as one of the most challenging things in their community. Many cited having to travel to find what they need.

**Jobs/economy (26%)**

Respondents cited a lack of jobs or "the economy" as the most challenging thing about their community. Many said that there are not enough "white-collar" or "professional" jobs available.

**Drought (6%)**

Respondents said that drought or water issues were a challenge.

**Demographics (6%)**

Respondents said that demographics (often citing the growing low-income population) were the most challenging things about their community.

**Run down (6%)**

Respondents said that their community was run-down, that there were a number of abandoned buildings, or that homes/yards were not maintained.

**If you could wave a magic wand to change just one thing in your community, what would it be?**

**Create jobs (24%)**

Respondents imagined an economy with diverse industries, more jobs, and higher wages.

**Grow and attract amenities (23%)**

Respondents wanted to bring more restaurants, shopping destinations, and entertainment venues to the community. Some mentioned specific chains that they hoped would open in the community while others were more general and expressed desire for a vibrant business district with activities for families.

**Nurture pride, civic engagement (13%)**

Respondents wrote about fixing a wide range of resident morale challenges they see hindering community advancement.

**Beautify, construct parks (11%)**

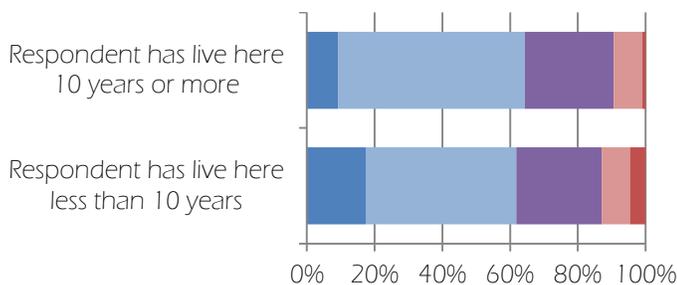
Respondents hoped to make the community more beautiful, to build more parks, plant more trees, and create more outdoor recreational spaces.

**Provide youth opportunities (7%)**

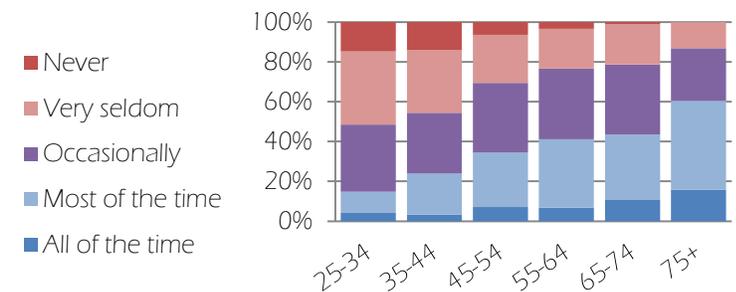
Respondents wrote about creating more opportunities and amenities for young people.

## c. Regional demographic trends of note

**New residents typically feel welcome in our community\***



**Our community offers a good amount of arts, entertainment and recreation for our residents (by age)\***



\*These graphs aggregate responses from Garza County, Hale County, Hockley County and the Slaton area.

## Discussion Questions

- 5.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about Hale County?
- 5.2 What one trend in this data or idea in this discussion gives you the most **hope** for Hale County?
- 5.3 What one trend or fact or idea in this data and discussion causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?

## Overall Priority Questions: Looking Forward

This Assessment is offered as a conversation opener – a tool that can help open a discussion about what is good and what is challenging today in the area, and what we want to work on to make a better future for our people, economy and place.

You may review this by yourself, or work with a local group or set of neighbors to answer the questions at the end of each of the six sections in the Assessment. Having done that, we recommend one final reflection.

Thinking across all six sections of this Assessment, and taking into account all your insights when you reviewed them, answer these final two Overall Priority questions:

- 5.4 What do this data – and your reflections – suggest should be the area's top two or three priorities for action over the next five years?
- 5.5 For each priority you listed, what other information or deeper data do you think would be very useful or critical to know before exploring and choosing a good strategy to address that priority?



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