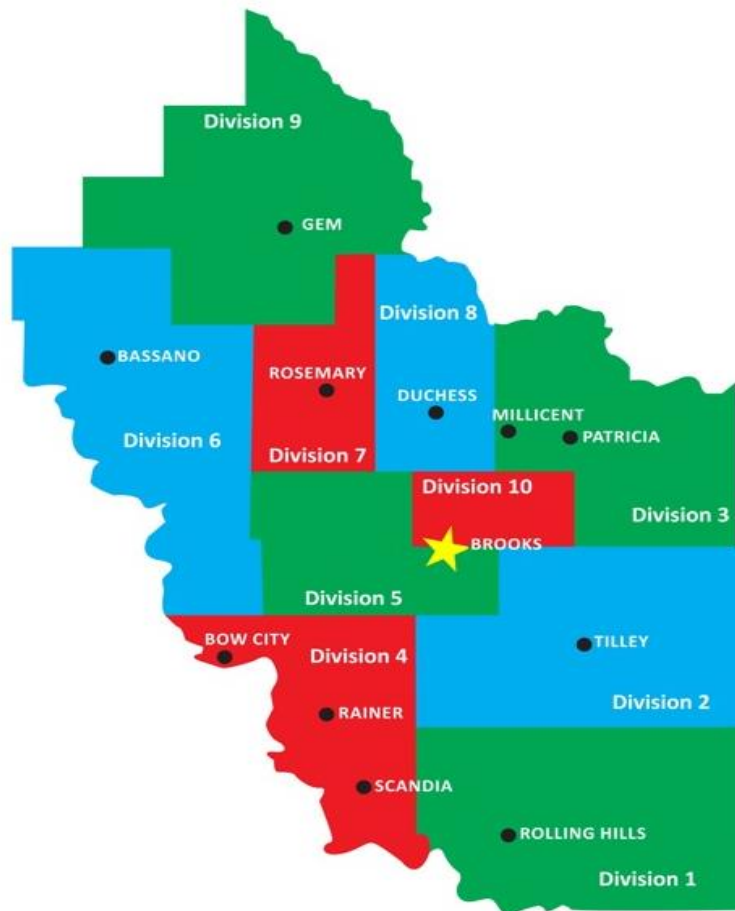


Grasslands Regional FCSS



QUALITY OF LIFE #3

CITY OF BROOKS 2023



For a copy of the Quality of Life Full Reports and Snapshots for communities within the Brooks-Newell Region visit:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Quality of Life project began in the fall of 2011 seeking a means to increase understanding of communities within the Brooks-Newell Region, including the City of Brooks. The intent of the research was to determine a Quality of Life model or matrix that could be applied to the Brooks-Newell Region.

After conducting a literature review of existing academic research, it was discovered that other Quality of Life Survey models would not provide the detailed level of analysis required when using a multi-sector (Business; Public; Social) approach to measuring the quality of life within this blended urban and rural region. The literature review also determined the nine factors most relevant to the quality of life in the Brooks-Newell Region. Frequency analysis was conducted to choose potential variables within each of the nine factors – feedback from residents was obtained through pre-testing surveys and community forums held throughout 2011 and 2012 to determine variables most relevant to the Brooks-Newell Region. Thus, Grasslands Regional FCSS created a new quality of life survey with the capacity to collect information useful to a broad variety of key stakeholders. The result was the first *Grasslands Regional FCSS Quality of Life Survey #1* administered throughout the Brooks-Newell Region in the summer of 2013, Survey #2 administered in the spring and summer, 2017, and Survey #3 in the Winter and Spring, 2022. Survey design, data collection and analyses establish clear linkages between the business, public and social sectors.

This Quality of Life Report blends objective and subjective research to provide an analysis for decision and policy makers, funders and service providers in all sectors and as information for residents in our communities.

In 2022, 746 surveys were returned representing 5% of the population ages 15 years and older. With the sample size of 746 Brooks respondents, the required sample size of 375 is more than exceeded for the current test of measurement. During the development of the program, it was hoped that a Confidence Interval of 95% with a margin of error of plus or minus five percent could be achieved. According to the calculations, a Confidence level of 99% with a margin of error at 4.6% was calculated ensuring that the plus or minus 5% confidence interval is a met requirement of this project. We are confident these statistics represent the real opinions of the residents of the City of Brooks at a 99% confidence level with opinions differing as low as 94% and as high as 104% of the collected information about Quality of Life.

This compares to 796 surveys returned in 2017 representing 5.5% of the population ages 14 and older. In 2017, we were confident that these statistics represented the real opinions of the residents of the City of Brooks at a 99% confidence level with opinions differing as low as 94% and as high as 104% of the collected information about Quality of Life.

This also compares to 665 surveys returned in 2013 representing 6.5% of the population ages 14 years and older. In 2013, we were confident that these statistics represented the real opinions of the residents of the City of Brooks at a 99% confidence level with opinions differing as low as 94% and as high as 104% of the collected information about Quality of Life.

The City of Brooks Quality of Life Survey provided the opportunity to determine gaps between factors of Importance and factors of Satisfaction as well as gathered information to measure levels of Satisfaction with programs, services and conditions for City of Brooks residents in all sectors. External Data was derived primarily from the 2021 Federal Census and supplemented with other sources.

Quality of Life Gap Analysis

To complete the Gap Analysis, nine Importance Factors were first identified and then ranked by residents within the three sectors: (1) Health; (2) Education; (3) Personal Well-Being; (4) Physical Environment; (5) Economy and Employment; (6) Sense of Community; (7) Political Rights and General Values; (8) Social Programs and Conditions; and (9) Government. The Rank of Importance was compared to the Rank of Satisfaction within these nine categories to form the basis of the Gap Analysis.

When conducting a Gap Analysis, in a perfect scenario there would be a Match in responses between the perceived Rank of Satisfaction and Rank of Importance - for example, Personal Well-Being would be the same ranking for both the Rank of Satisfaction and the Rank of Importance. When addressing these gaps, there are three possible responses results: (i) Positive Gaps (Rank of Satisfaction is higher than Rank of Importance); (ii) Match Gaps (Rank of Satisfaction and Rank of Importance are equal); and (iii) Negative Gaps (Rank of Satisfaction is lower than Rank of Importance).

Results of the City of Brooks Quality of Life 2022 Survey identified three Negative Gaps: (i) Health; (ii) Economy and Employment; and (iii) Political Rights and General Values. The two Match scenario identified were: (i) Personal Well-Being; (ii) Sense of Community. The four Positive Gaps indicated were: (i) Education System; (ii) Physical Environment; (iv) Social Program/Social Conditions; and (v) Government.

We compared this study's Gap Analysis and the one conducted in 2017. There are noticeable changes among categories for Rank of Importance since the last Quality of Life Study: Health has decreased in Rank of Satisfaction (#3 to #4), Education System has decreased in Rank of Importance (#2 to #3), increased in Rank of Satisfaction (#2 to #1) and is now a Positive Gap (it was a Match Gap in 2017); Personal Well-Being increased in Rank of Importance (#3 to #2) and decreased in Rank of Satisfaction (#1 to #2) and is now a Match Gap (it was a Positive Gap in 2017); Economy and Employment increased in Rank of Satisfaction (#9 to #8); Physical Environment has increase in Rank of Satisfaction (#4 to #3); and Political Rights and General Values has decreased in Rank of Satisfaction (#8 to #9).

Results of the City of Brooks Quality of Life 2017 Survey identified three Negative Gaps: (i) Health; (ii) Economy and Employment; and (iii) Political Rights and General Values. The two Match scenario identified were: (i) Education System; (ii) Sense of Community. The four Positive Gaps indicated were: (i) Personal Well-being; (ii) Physical Environment; (iv) Social Program/Social Conditions; and (v) Government.

We compared this study's Gap Analysis and the one conducted in 2013. There are noticeable changes among categories for Rank of Importance since the last Quality of Life Study. Economy and Employment has increased in Rank of Importance (from 5th to 4th), Physical Environment has decreased (from #4 to #6) and Sense of Community has increased (from #6 to #5).

There were also noticeable changes among categories for Rank of Satisfaction; Health has increased from 6th to 3rd, Sense of Community has decreased from #4 to #5, Economy and Employment has decreased from #7 to #9, Social Programs/Social Conditions has decreased from #5 to #7, Physical Environment has decreased from #3 to #4, and Government has increased from #9 to #6.

There had been some changes in Gaps as well. Sense of Community now has a Match Gap (it was Positive for the 2014 study), and Government has a Positive Gap (it was Match for the 2013 study). The changes in rankings may indicate more information is required to fully understand the reasons as to why there was a gap between the Rank of Importance and the Rank of Satisfaction by survey respondents in these areas.

All Factors witnessed a decrease in Satisfaction between 2017 and 2022 (with many receding to 2013 levels), except for Economy and Employment. Satisfaction with Economy and Employment increased from 57.9% in 2017 to 64.7% in 2022. Within this factor, the only variable to increase in Satisfaction was Employment (44.3% in 2017 to 46.9% in 2022). All but one variable (Employment) saw an increase in Overall Dissatisfaction. It is interesting that the Economy and Employment factor experienced an increase in Satisfaction between 2017 and 2022, but two-thirds of its variables experienced decreases in Satisfaction and increases in Dissatisfaction. Economy and Employment has become an even bigger issues since 2017 since the views have become more polarized with neutral responses being about the same.

Overall, socio-economic demographics for the City of Brooks continue to be good with levels of low income and unemployment at or below the Alberta rates, however, there are questions regarding the causes for the discrepancy in the variables which indicated gaps in services including affordable housing and community access to transportation for residents who do not have a private vehicle available. It should be noted, however, that Overall Satisfaction with Public Transportation decreased and Overall Dissatisfaction increased since 2017 despite increased services in public transportation in the Brooks-Newell Region.

Overall Satisfaction with Health Services decreased from 80.2% in 2017 to 71.8% in 2022, which is roughly equivalent to the 2013 level. In 2017, there was a drastic increase in Satisfaction for Access to Physicians (59% in 2013 to 77.3% in 2017). However, in 2022, the Satisfaction level dropped to 56.5%. The increase in Satisfaction between 2013 and 2017 most likely reflects the active and focused effort to by the City of Brooks and County of Newell recruit and retain physicians in this area which resulted in a rise in the number of physicians available to residents.¹ There was also a drastic increase in Overall Dissatisfaction from 10.8% in 2017 to 34.4% in 2022. The levels for 2022 are worse than results from the 2013 survey. Without a more detailed survey focused on Access to Physicians there is no way to determine, at this point, what caused the drastic change between 2017 and 2022. However, during the pandemic, access to physicians was extremely limited due to COVID-19 restrictions put in place to protect patients and staff in clinics from the virus. It can be assumed that since that normal access to physicians was severely limited, that residents had increased dissatisfaction with accessing physician services in the City of Brooks.

There are variations in how different Age Groups responded to the Rank of Importance and Rank of Satisfaction with the nine factors. Health Services was ranked #1 for Importance and Local/Municipal Government was ranked #9 for Importance across all age groups. In 2017, Economy and Employment was ranked #4 in Importance and #9 for Satisfaction across all age groups (except for 70 plus), but the ranges varied for 2022. Education ranks #2 for Importance for age groups 15 to 19 and 20 to 39, but #3 for age groups 40 to 59, 60 to 69 and 70 plus. Satisfaction for Education never ranged above #4; which was the case for Personal Well-Being and Physical Environment. Political Rights and General Values ranked #9 for Satisfaction among all age groups, except for 70 plus. Overall, there was greater consistency across all Age Groups for Rank of Importance of all nine factors than for Rank of Satisfaction. The difference and similarities in ranking by the various Age Groups of the nine factors indicates the value of the public, social and business sectors being aware of the demographics

¹ As part of the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RhPaP), a joint effort by the City of Brooks and County of Newell to maintain an accessible health workforce close to home was honoured as the recipient of the 2017 RhPAP Alberta Rural Community Physician Attraction and Retention Award at a recent conference held in Brooks. The Rural Community Award, presented annually, is co-sponsored by the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (AWNA), and the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP).

and differing opinions of Age Groups within their community in order to provide programs and services which match the needs and interests of the various Age Groups.

Quality of Place Variable Analysis

Quality of Place may be defined as “the physical characteristics of a community –the way it is planned, designed, developed and maintained – that affect the quality of life of people living and working in it, and those visiting it, both now and into the future”².

Quality of Place data was collected to further determine the Satisfaction levels within the community using the following World Class Places Quality of Place variables: (i) Building Maintenance; (ii) Retail and Shopping; (iii) Accessible Public Services; (iv) Sports and Leisure Facilities; (v) Green Spaces; (vi) Heritage Structures; (vii) Maintained Streets; (viii) Neighborhood Design; (ix) Transport Routes; and (x) Accessible Arts and Culture. Overall Satisfaction levels were higher than Overall Dissatisfaction. As in 2013 and 2017, numbers of Neutral responses varied.

Sports and Leisure Facilities received the highest satisfaction responses across the age groups with the exception of Ages 40-59 and Ages 70+ (those age groups were most Satisfied with Green Spaces). Green spaces and Maintained Streets were in the top three most Satisfied categories among all age groups, except for Ages 15-19. That age group ranked Neighbourhood Design second, and Accessible Public Services third. Heritage Structures received the highest percentage of Neutral answers.

There were different responses depending on Age Group in the Quality of Place responses. Ages 10-39 and 60-69 had the highest level of Satisfaction with the Sport and Leisure Facilities. Ages 40-59 and 70 Plus was most Satisfied with Green Spaces. However, Ages 20 to 70 plus had Sport and Leisure Facilities, Maintained Streets and Green Spaces in their top three in reference to Satisfaction.

As in 2013 and 2017, Retail and Shopping received the most negative response to the Quality of Place categories with a high percentage of Dissatisfied answers and the lowest percentage of Neutral or Satisfied responses in all Age Groups. When considering age groups, ages 20-59 years were the most dissatisfied (which was the case in 2017 as well) with retail and shopping consistent with the ages when households acquire most of their assets and when they are shopping for both themselves and their children.

Individual and Household Health and Social Conditions

Respondents were asked if they had one or more Personal or Household Health Condition and/or a Household Social Condition which negatively impacted them.

Mental Health has been identified as a priority across the sectors and local Initiatives are occurring to respond to the issue of Mental Health in our communities. Of the 285 respondents, 31.9% (27.4% in 2017) responded they have mental health issues. 40.9% (27% in 2017) of 264 respondents are negatively impacted by a mental health issue in their household. A significant number of the 207 respondents were negatively impacted by a Social Condition in their Household: Housing Costs (48.8%; 52.1% in 2017); Lack of Transportation (19.8% 26% in 2017); Poverty (15%; 19% in 2017); Language Barriers (13.5% 15.8% in 2017); Discrimination (17.9% 15.8% in 2017); Addictions (15.9%; 8.4% in 2017) and Crime (6.8%; 8.4% in 2017). Local initiatives are underway to help

² HM Government. 2009. World class places: The Government's strategy for improving quality of place.

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20120919161225mp_/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1229344.pdf (accessed 5 April 2023).

alleviate social conditions which have consistently been identified as barriers to a positive quality of life for residents

COVID-19 Pandemic

This research sought feedback regarding the impact of the pandemic on local residents. Results indicate that the pandemic has had a multi-faceted and complex impact on survey respondents, which provides a snapshot into the impact of the pandemic on our population more broadly.

The negative impacts on physical health in the City of Brooks is lower than the national level data provided by Angus Reid (43.5% versus 48%).³ Approximately 46% of City of Brooks' respondents experienced No Impact in regards to physical health during the pandemic, and approximately 11% experienced a positive impact. Overall, the impact on mental health by the pandemic in the City of Brooks has been higher than the national average as indicated by the poll. Approximately 64% of City of Brooks' respondents indicated that their mental health has worsened, compared to the Angus Reid poll (54%). Approximately 11% of all respondents experienced a positive impact during the pandemic, which is slightly lower than the national averaged identified by the Angus Reid poll (12%). The Angus Reid poll also identified that 33% of Canadians experience no impact on their mental health, while approximately 25% of City of Brooks' respondents identified the same.

Although the pandemic has had a negative impact on the economy at the national level, Alberta and locally in our region 50.6% and 47.3% of respondents identified experiencing No Impact regarding financial stability and work/employment, respectively. However, 37.7% of respondents identified experiencing a negative impact regarding financial stability, and 40.4% of respondents enduring a negative experience regarding work/employment.

When examining the results of Education/School, 56.7% of respondents identified No Impact with that category, but when school-aged individuals are taken into account that percentage decreases to 11.8%. The pandemic was hard on school-aged individuals in the City of Brooks, with 58.5% of that cohort identified experiencing a negative impact. However, 29.4% of that cohort identified having a positive experience during the pandemic. A good percentage of this cohort benefitted from non-classroom instruction during the pandemic.

The aforementioned results demonstrate that it is important to not draw assumptions on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on individuals. Although the pandemic has impacted the world negatively across the board, certain cohorts of individuals may have experienced positive outcomes or no impact over the past three years.

Overall Satisfaction with Community

Respondents were asked the question "Overall, how satisfied are you with your community?" 75.8% of 691 City of Brooks Respondents expressed Overall Satisfaction with the Services, Programs, Conditions and Physical Spaces in their communities compared to 73.6% in 2017 and 72.8% in 2013.⁴ There were only a small percentage of Neutral responses (9.3%; 11.3% in 2017) which indicates a high level of interest in the quality of life in the community. 7% (9.8% in 2017) were Very Satisfied, 43.1% (39.3% in 2017) were Satisfied, and 25.8% (24.5% in 2017) were Somewhat Satisfied.

³ <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-pandemic-anniversary-mental-health/>

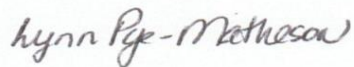
⁴ There were 746 total Brooks' respondents in 2022, but only 691 of them answered this question.

Conclusion

The analysis of the Quality of Life Survey provides information on the Social Sector, Business Sector and Public Sector in the Brooks-Newell Region . The areas in which survey residents were not satisfied cannot be easily resolved by one level of government, one business or one community agency. A multi-sector approach would be helpful when working with the community to identify and resolve outstanding issues that lead to dissatisfaction. There is a role for all sectors to continue building services and programs in the areas that are working well and to examine potential community solutions in areas of concern identified by residents.

The difference in ranking by the various Age Groups of the 9 factors demonstrates the value of governments, non-profits and businesses in being aware of the demographics and residents' opinions within their communities in order to adapt programs, services and activities to match the needs and interest of these Age Groups. Competing interests are often present in community because various Age Groups have different interests or priorities.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the Brooks-Newell Region Municipal Councils and Staff, Survey Respondents, Brooks-Newell Region High Schools and the organizations and businesses who helped distribute and collect surveys and who also provided additional information contained in the report.



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Survey Distribution and/or Collection 2022:

- Municipal Offices: Brooks; County of Newell; Duchess; Rosemary; Bassano
- Alcoma School
- Grasslands Public Schools Office
- Newbrook Lodge
- Newell Housing
- Playfair Lodge
- Tilley School
- L'Ecole Le Ruisseau
- Brooks Composite High School
- St. Josephs Academy
- Patricia Hotel
- Rolling Hills Post Office
- Global Village Centre
- SPEC Association for Children and Families
- Bassano FCSS
- Seniors Outreach
- Grasslands Regional FCSS

Grasslands Regional FCSS Board of Directors 2023



Top Left to Right: County of Newell: Councillor Holly Johnson; Clarence Amulung (Chair); Village of Rosemary: Mayor Yoko Fujimoto; Danealle Reinke

Bottom Left to Right: Village of Duchess: Councillor Tina Preston (Vice Chair); Vienna Dahl; City of Brooks: Councillor Marissa Wardrop; Cindy Wolfer

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Grasslands Regional FCSS Board of Directors and Staff, I am pleased to release the County of Newell Quality of Life #3 Snapshot in 2023. It is our hope that the information will help further understand our communities and also prove useful for planning, funding and working together.

FCSS will also be releasing full reports for the City of Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region and Community Snapshots for the Town of Bassano, Village of Rosemary, the City of Brooks, the Brooks-Newell Region and the Village of Duchess.

Clarence Amulung, Chair, Grasslands Regional FCSS

Copies available for download or viewing on www.grasslandsregionalfcss.com

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INTRODUCTION

The Quality of Life project began in the fall of 2011 seeking a means to increase understanding of communities within the Brooks-Newell Region . The intent of the research was to determine a Quality of Life model or matrix that could be applied to the Brooks-Newell Region . After conducting a literature review of existing academic research, it was discovered that other Quality of Life Survey models would not provide the detailed level of analysis required when using a multi-sector (Business; Public; Social) approach to measuring the quality of life within this blended urban and rural region. The literature review also determined the nine factors most important to the quality of life in the region. Pre-testing through surveys and community forums was conducted in 2011 and 2012 to determine variables most relevant to residents within the Brooks-Newell Region . Thus, Grasslands Regional FCSS created a new quality of life survey with the capacity to collect information useful to a broad variety of key stakeholders. The result was the Grasslands Regional FCSS Quality of Life Survey administered throughout the Brooks-Newell Region in the spring and summer of 2013. Survey design, data collection and analyses established clear linkages between the business, public and social sectors.

The latest Quality of Life Survey (#3) was administered throughout the City of Brooks in the winter and spring of 2022. 746 surveys were returned representing 5% of the population ages 15 years and older. With the sample size of 746 Brooks respondents, the required sample size of 375 is more than exceeded for the current test of measurement. During the development of the program, it was hoped that a Confidence Interval of 95% with a margin of error of plus or minus five percent could be achieved. According to the calculations, a Confidence level of 99% with a margin of error at 4.6% was calculated ensuring that the plus or minus 5% confidence interval is a met requirement of this project.

We are confident these statistics represent the real opinions of the residents of the City of Brooks at a 99% confidence level with opinions differing as low as 94% and as high as 104% of the collected information about Quality of Life.

This Quality of Life Report blends objective and subjective research to provide a holistic community analysis for decision and policy makers, funders and service providers in all sectors and as information for residents in our communities.

The Quality of Life Report: City of Brooks is a summary of the analysis completed to determine how residents ranked the Importance of the nine quality of life factors compared to the ranking of Satisfaction. The analysis also includes Quality of Place results which measured level of Satisfaction with programs, services and conditions for City of Brooks' residents.

The Quality of Life Report is not intended to be an academic report but is designed to provide information to a wide variety of stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

One of the most defining characteristics of this project was the creation of a multi-sector Quality of Life instrument designed to focus on the nature of a holistic community system, providing information to all community areas. Three sectors were identified as having a substantial impact on the Quality of Life of the Brooks-Newell Region : (i) Business (ii) Public; and (iii) Social.

The Quality of Life Survey created for the Brooks-Newell Region is unique in that it combines two aspects: Quality of Life and Quality of Place. While these two concepts may be similar in process, they are completely different in their function, analysis, and interpretation. The Quality of Life Survey is a combination of these two

processes. The Quality of Life segment is a tool designed to test and measure residents’ opinions on factors important to the region whereas the Quality of Place segment is a tool designed to test and measure the Satisfaction with the conditions/ programs and services impacting the quality of life for residents in our communities. Knowing which factors are important to regional residents and measuring levels of Satisfaction with services and programs provides information on what is working well and changes needed to improve the quality of life for residents.

Four primary sections in the Quality of Life Survey served different and complementary functions for measuring the quality of life for residents in the Brooks-Newell Region . The Quality of Life section was designed to rank the level of Importance and levels of Satisfaction residents attach to the nine primary factors detailed below. The Gap Scenarios utilized three gap scenarios (Negative; Match; and Positive) to determine which of the nine factors were issues within the community. The Quality of Place measured the levels of Satisfaction with each of the Quality of Life factors and the variables related to conditions, programs and services. The Respondent Characteristics and Household Characteristics sections painted a demographic picture of survey respondents and their households.

DEFINING QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of Life is a difficult concept to research, measure and report due to the subjective nature of the factors which individuals consider most important to their quality of life. This has proven true for the Brooks-Newell Region communities. From 2011 to 2013, methodologies to determine the variables included a literature review, frequency analysis and local community identification. After determining 1,300 potential variables through the literature review, several local pre-tests were required to determine the factors within the three sectors most frequently identified by Brooks-Newell Region residents.

SOCIAL SECTOR	BUSINESS SECTOR	PUBLIC SECTOR
Health	Economy & Employment	Government
Education	Physical Environment	Political Rights & General Values
Personal Well-Being		
Social Programs & Social Conditions		
Sense of Community		

Within each of these nine broad categories a frequency analysis identified the key important variables within each category to collect further information regarding levels of Satisfaction with services, programs and conditions within the Brooks-Newell Region . Where this was inconclusive, local residents were surveyed to identify the

most important variables within the broad categories; a Pilot Quality of Life Survey was administered to 200 people at the Brooks & District Trade Show (2012) and to persons attending various Grasslands Regional FCSS Community Forums held in 2013 throughout the region.

The analysis was framed within the three sectors: Social Sector, Business Sector and Public Sector.

SOCIAL SECTOR

The Social Sector⁵ is the sphere within federal transfers to provinces which support policy areas such as health care, post-secondary education, social assistance and social services, early childhood development and childcare. The Social Sector is the first and most extensive of the three sectors of the Brooks-Newell Region Quality of Life. Social items of interest from the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) Factors of Quality of Life in Canada include: (i) Personal Wellbeing; (ii) Social Programs and Social Conditions; (iii) Community; (iv) Health, and (v) Education. Each of these categories has roots in the Overall social structure of the province or community. It is important to note that the political and economic sectors have a substantial impact on the following social factors, interconnecting with the social sector to determine the quality of life for residents.

SOCIAL SECTOR FACTORS

Personal Well-Being

For the purposes of this report, *Personal Well-Being* is identified as being of active interest within the Social Sector. Personal Well-Being is recognized as being subjective, meaning different things to different people and often determines life satisfaction, happiness and life fulfillment⁶. According to the CPRN “In reflecting upon the quality of life in Canada, Canadians often emphasize the importance of enhancing their sense of Personal Well-Being... most people recognize these factors, which directly describe their personal circumstances as intertwined with and contributing to Overall quality of life”⁷. The variables identified as most important to Personal Well-Being were: (i) Personal Health; (ii) Family; (iii) Friends; (iv) Personal Safety; and (v) Spiritual and Religious Acceptance. It is important to note that this factor required local community analysis, as the chosen factors of Quality of Life from academic analysis did not meet Brooks-Newell Region residents’ perception of Personal Wellbeing. This factor has been custom developed for the region as a result.

Social Programs and Conditions

The CPRN states that Social Programs/Conditions are the “social support systems adequate to respond to and meet basic human needs”⁸. High frequency items selected from the CPRN Social Programs and Conditions section included: (i) Accessing Transportation, (ii) Availability of Public Housing; (iii) Availability of Social Assistance and Programs, (iv) Community Homelessness; and (v) Community Centers for Arts and Cultural Events.

⁵ The *Social Sector* is sometimes called the *Voluntary Sector* or the *Non-for-Profit Sector* or the *Non-Profit Sector*

⁶ A Survey of Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being, July 22, 1999 Page 1

⁷ Quality of Life in Canada; A Citizens’ Report Card Background Report, July 2002 Page 60

⁸ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 7

Sense of Community

Community is a central component to the social sector. The CPRN states that “... healthy communities include notions of social cohesion, of stable sets of relationships, where individuals had a shared sense of belonging, and where people experience a sense of security.”⁹ Variables identified as most important to *Sense of Community* were: (i) Knowing Neighbors; (ii) Working Together; (iii) Helping Others; (iv) Community Safety; and (v) Sense of Belonging. It is important to note that this factor required local community analysis, as the chosen factors of Quality of Life from academic analysis did not meet the Brooks-Newell Region residents’ perception of Community. This factor has been custom developed for the region as a result.

Health

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”¹⁰ The five community Health variables identified were: (i) Community Suicide Rates; (ii) Mental Health; (iii) Physical Activity; (iv) Lifestyle; and (v) Rates of Disease.

Education

Education is an important Factor of quality of life in a community and is acquired formally or informally. The CPRN describes Education as critical to quality of life and states “Quality of Education equals quality of life”¹¹. Variables within the Education category included: (i) Personal Educational Attainment; (ii) Education; (iii) Adult Literacy; (iv) Community High School Dropout Rate; and (v) Community Literacy Rate.

BUSINESS SECTOR

The Business sector is a Subset of the domestic economy in which businesses produce raw materials, carry out manufacturing, and provide sales and services for profit.¹² This sector excludes general government, private households, and non-profit organizations serving individuals.

One of the more unique areas of Quality of Life is looking at how business affects quality of life. There were two major categories that affected this category: (i) Physical Environment; and (ii) Economy and Employment.

BUSINESS SECTOR FACTORS

Economy and Employment

Regarding Economy and Employment, the CPRN states “Economic security was another key quality of life issue raised which included sub-themes such as job security, employment opportunities, and rates of compensation or concerns about the minimum wage”¹³. There was a very broad collection of research on the effects of Economy and Employment on Quality of Life. The five variables identified were: (i) Community Unemployment Rates; (ii) Community Employment Rates; (iii) Level of Income; (iv) Community Rate of Bankruptcies; and (v) Financial Effects of Crime.

Physical Environment

Regarding Physical Environment, the CPRN states “... A Clean environment is essential to Quality of Life...”¹⁴. Physical Environment frequently occurs in Quality of Life research. Variables in the Physical Environment included: (i) Water Quality; (ii) Air Quality; (iii) Noise Pollution; (iv) Greenhouse Gas Emissions; and (v) Land Pollution.

⁹ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 8

¹⁰ <https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution#:~:text=Health%20is%20a%20state%20of,absence%20of%20disease%20or%20infirmity.>

¹¹ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 5

¹² <https://www.bls.gov/bls/glossary.htm>

¹³ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 9

¹⁴ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 6



PUBLIC SECTOR

The Public Sector is the portion of the economy composed of all levels of government and government controlled enterprises.¹⁵ It consists of national, provincial and local governments, their agencies and their chartered bodies. The public sector is one of the largest sectors of any economy. Items relevant to the Public Sector are: (i) Political Rights and General Values; and (ii) Government.

PUBLIC SECTOR FACTORS

Political Rights and General Values

The CPRN defines Political Rights and General Values as “... the importance of human or civil rights, democracy, autonomy or choice, and freedom as core elements of quality of life”¹⁶. Variables occurring in Government research and frequency analysis included: (i) Respect; (ii) Honesty; (iii) Integrity; (iv) Freedom of Speech; and (v) Sharing. It is important to note that this factor required local community analysis, as the chosen factors of Quality of Life from academic analysis did not meet the residents’ perception of Political Rights and General Values. This factor has been custom developed for the region as a result.

Government

The CPRN states that Government must be “...viewed as integral to the Quality of Life in Canada or at least in helping to maintain important systems of protection and service delivery.”¹⁷ Government variables selected included: (i) Level of Trust in Government; (ii) Maintained Roads; (iii) Government Water Policies; (iv) Barriers to Entrepreneurship; and (v) Community Taxes.

THE QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

RESPONDENTS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The Quality of Life Survey (2022) was mailed to 4,516 households within the City of Brooks in January, 2022. In addition to mail-outs, a number of organizations/municipalities/businesses assisted by distributing and collecting surveys, and/or assisted in translation. These organizations included the SPEC Association for Children and Families, Brooks’ City Hall, Newbrook Lodge, Francophone Association, Brooks Community Adult Learning

¹⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/public-sector>

¹⁶ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 3

¹⁷ Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A citizens’ Prototype, April 2001 Page 10

Centre, and Pioneer Villas. The Quality of Life Survey was also available online. Each paper survey had instructions on how to complete the survey online, and the link was posted to Grasslands Regional FCSS and the Live Brooks Newell websites. 746 surveys were completed representing 5% of the population ages 15 years and older.

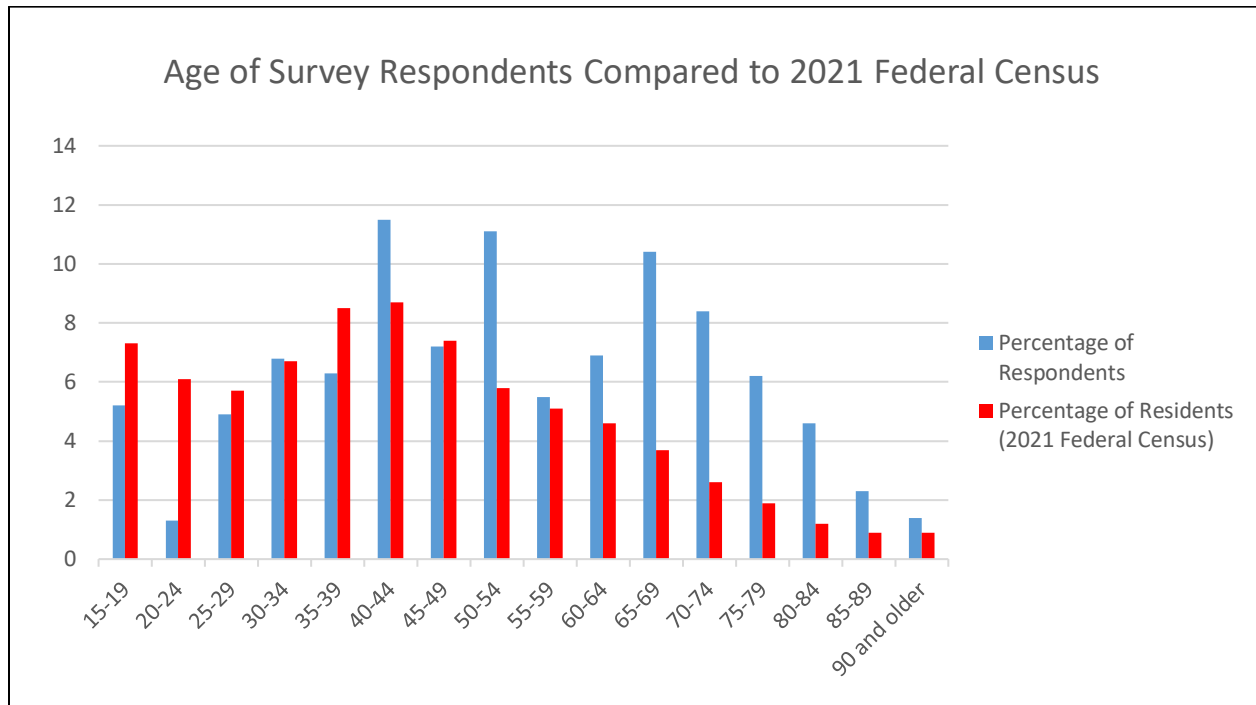
SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Age Range

The Brooks census population is comparable to the age distribution of survey respondents with the exception of responses being significantly higher compared to the census for 65 and over. Like the previous Quality of Life studies, the higher percentage of responses for persons aged 65 and over may be related to survey distribution and collection at Newbrook Lodge and Pioneer Villas.

Survey Respondents by Age Group Compared to Census Population by Age Group

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Percentage of Residents (2021 Federal Census)
15-19	36	5.2	7.3
20-24	9	1.3	6.1
25-29	34	4.9	5.7
30-34	47	6.8	6.7
35-39	44	6.3	8.5
40-44	80	11.5	8.7
45-49	50	7.2	7.4
50-54	77	11.1	5.8
55-59	38	5.5	5.1
60-64	48	6.9	4.6
65-69	72	10.4	3.7
70-74	58	8.4	2.6
75-79	43	6.2	1.9
80-84	32	4.6	1.2
85-89	16	2.3	0.9
90 and older	10	1.4	0.9



Length of Residence

82.3% of respondents identified living in Brooks for six years or more, 5.7% for 4-5 years, 5.8% for 2-3 years, 2.3% for 1 year and 3.5% for less than one year. This compares to the 2021 Federal Census statistic of 77.5% of Brooks residents that have not moved from their homes/community within the last five years.¹⁸

Employment

Of the respondents that provided employment information on the survey 36.6% worked full time, 17.9% worked part-time and 31.6% were retired. Of those not currently employed, 4.1% were looking for work while 3.1% were not looking for work. Disabled (not able to work) persons represented 2.6% and 4.1% identified as being a student.

Income Distribution

It should be noted that 12.7% of respondents did not answer the question on individual income, and 13.8% did not answer for household income.¹⁹

Individual income

- 55.1% of respondents made less than \$50,000 per year.
- 2.8% of respondents made more than \$150,000 per year.

When comparing Individual Income survey results with the 2021 Federal Census, 2.8% of respondents identified making greater than \$150,000 per year while only 1.6% of individuals had this income according to the census. 55.1% of survey respondents identified making less than \$50,000 per year, the Federal Census identified that 51.9% of Brooks residents make that amount. This result could be skewed since 22.9% of survey respondents were seniors, who have a higher proportion in the lower income categories.

¹⁸ Two 2021 Federal Census statistics were used to calculate this percentage: non-movers and non-migrant movers. Non-movers refers to persons who have not moved, and non-migrant movers refers to persons who did move but remained in the same city, town, township, village, or Indian reserve.

¹⁹ Income data reported on surveys in general are recognized to have a low level of accuracy.

<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/1997/adrm/sm97-05.pdf>

Individual Income of Survey Respondents by Age (%)

Income	Ages 15 to 19	Ages 20 to 39	Ages 40 to 59	Ages 60 to 69	Ages 70 Plus
Less than \$10,000	92.9	6.1	7.2	2.7	2.8
\$10,000 - \$19,999	7.1	3.0	6.4	16.8	12.1
\$20,000 - \$29,999	0.0	5.3	7.7	14.2	20.6
\$30,000 - \$39,999	0.0	11.4	12.3	13.3	21.3
\$40,000 - \$49,999	0.0	15.9	15.3	13.3	8.5
\$50,000 - \$59,999	0.0	6.1	11.9	8.0	9.9
\$60,000 - \$69,999	0.0	9.8	8.5	7.1	7.8
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0.0	3.8	4.3	8.8	8.5
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0.0	6.8	8.9	4.4	2.1
\$90,000 - \$99,999	0.0	9.1	3.0	6.2	2.1
\$100,000 - \$149,999	0.0	17.4	11.1	4.4	2.8
More than \$150,000	0.0	5.3	3.4	0.9	1.4
<i>N</i>	28	132	235	113	141

- Generally, there is consistency between the Quality of Life Survey and Canadian Census for income brackets in Brooks. However, there is a noticeable discrepancy in the Less than \$10,000 and \$50,000 to \$59,000 bracket.

Comparison of Individual Income for the City of Brooks

Income	2022 Quality of Life Survey		2021 Canadian Census	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than \$10,000	58	8.9	915	8.1
\$10,000 - \$19,999	57	8.8	915	8.1
\$20,000 - \$29,999	71	10.9	1395	12.4
\$30,000 - \$39,999	89	13.7	1290	11.5
\$40,000 - \$49,999	84	12.9	1315	11.7
\$50,000 - \$59,999	59	9.1	1760	15.7
\$60,000 - \$69,999	53	8.1	900	8.0
\$70,000 - \$79,999	37	5.7	555	4.9
\$80,000 - \$89,999	38	5.8	375	3.3
\$90,000 - \$99,999	29	4.5	360	3.2
\$100,000 - \$149,999	58	8.9	565	5.0
More than \$150,000	18	2.8	175	1.6
<i>N</i>	651		11,230	

Household Income

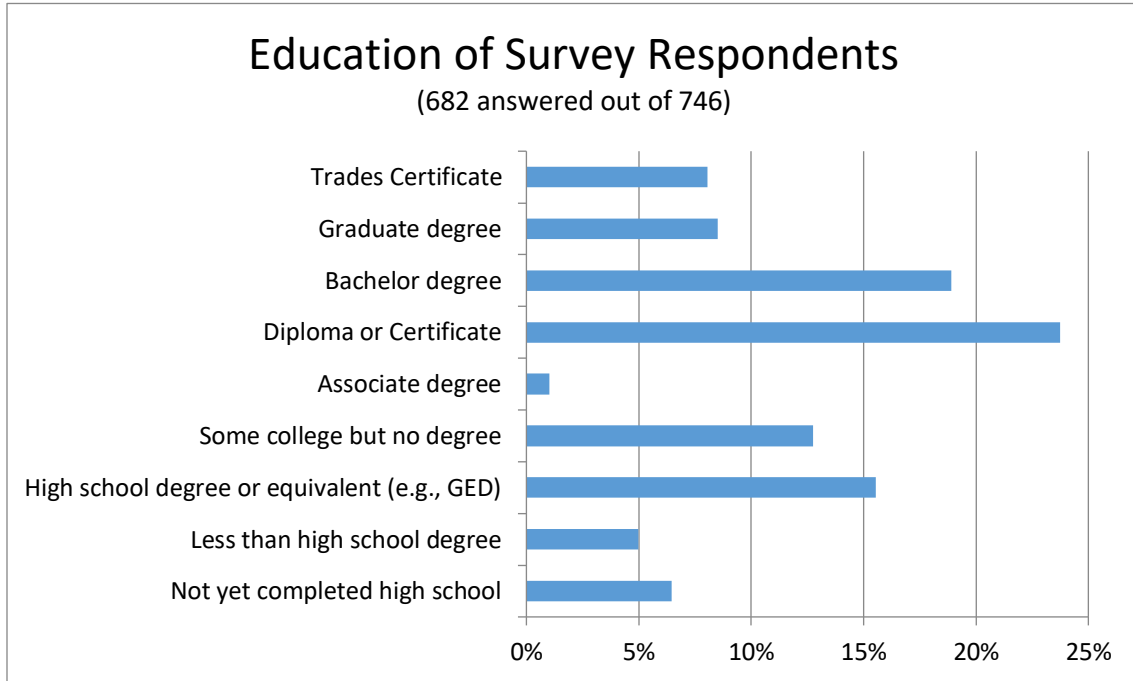
- 2.2% of respondents indicated that their Household Income was less than \$10,000 per year
- 8.1% reported a Household Income between \$30,000 and \$39,000 per year.
- 47.8% reported a Household Income greater than \$80,000 per year.
- Household Income Distribution survey responses are relatively consistent with the 2021 Federal Census data. 1.1% households made less than \$10,00 per year, 5.7% of households had an income between \$30,000 and \$39,000, and 57.7% made \$80,000 and greater.

Home Ownership

78.5% of survey respondents own their home, while 21.5% live in rental housing. This compares to the 2021 Federal Census statistics of 64.8% who owned their home and 35.2% who rented. 75.4% of survey respondents identified living in a detached home, however, according to the 2021 Federal Census, 54.5% of Brooks’ residents reside in a detached home.

Brooks has a large number of modular homes, and 4.3% identified living in this type of residence.

Level of Education



According to the 2021 Federal Census, 36.3% of the Brooks population (aged 15 years and older) had at least a high school diploma or equivalent, and 35% had at least a post-secondary certificate (diploma or degree). Approximately 29% had no certificate (diploma or degree). 8.9% of the population had a Bachelor’s degree and 3% had an education above Bachelor level.

Ethnic Background

Survey Respondents by Population Group

Population Group	Percentage
Caucasian	82.2
Chinese	2.0
South Asian	1.2
Black/African	5.8
Filipino	3.8
Latin American	2.6
Southeast Asian	0.1
Arab	0.7
West Asian	0.0
Korean	0.6
Japanese	0.4
Indigenous	0.4
Other Ethnicity	0.7

82.2% of survey respondents identified themselves as Caucasians with the next highest category at 5.8% for Black/African, and 3.8% for Filipino. According to the 2021 Federal Census, 48.6% of the Brooks population belong to a visible minority group. 36.8% of the Brooks population identified belonging to a visible minority in 2016.²⁰

Citizenship

91.6% of respondents identified as being Canadian Citizens with 8% as Landed Immigrants or Permanent Residents, and 0.3% as Temporary Foreign Workers. According to the 2021 Federal Census, 78% of Brooks' residents were Canadian Citizens.



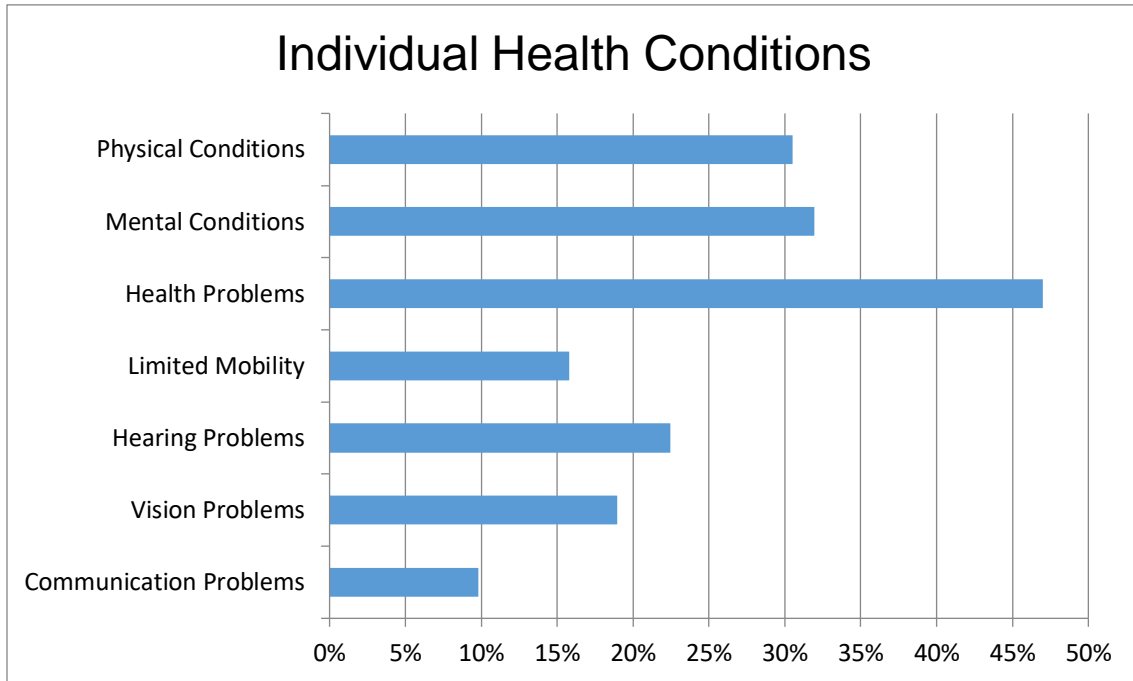
Taste of Nations 2022

²⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

HEALTH CONDITIONS

Negative Impact of Individual Health Conditions:

285 (38.2%) respondents stated that they had one or more personal Health Conditions which negatively impacted them.

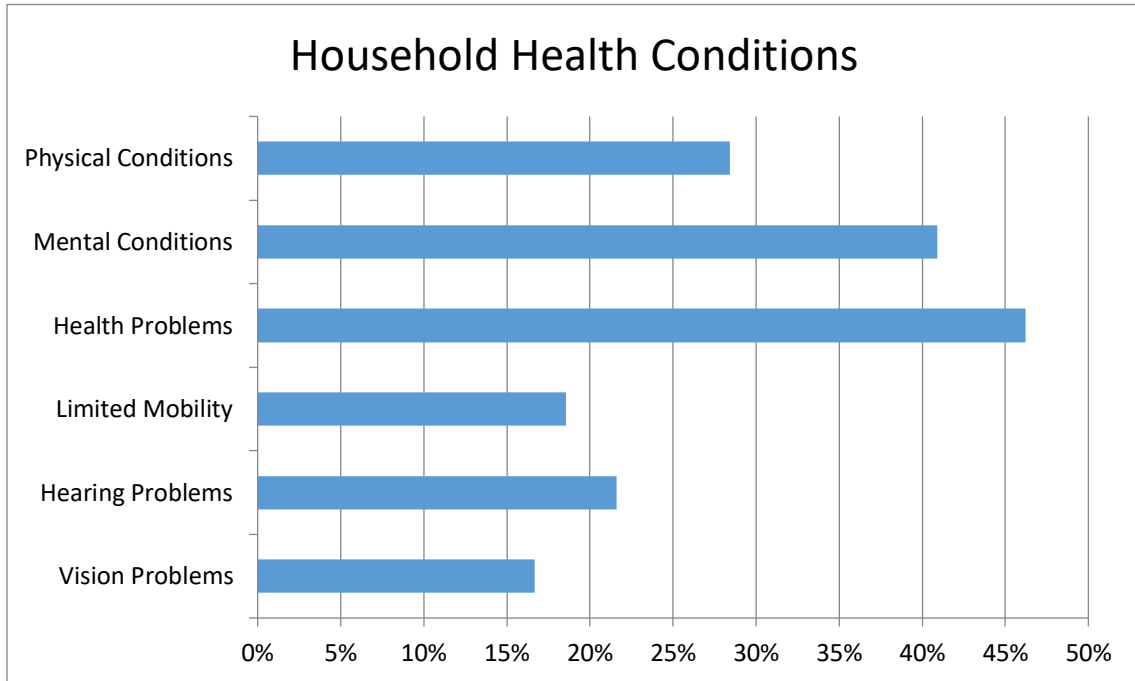


Individual Health Conditions (n=285):

- 87 persons were impacted by Physical Conditions
- 91 persons were impacted by Mental Conditions
- 134 persons were impacted by Health Problems
- 45 persons were impacted by Limited Mobility
- 64 persons were impacted by Hearing Problems
- 54 persons were impacted by Vision Problems
- 28 persons were impacted by Communication Problems

Negative Impact of Household Health Conditions

264 (35.4%) respondents stated that they were negatively impacted by one or more Household Health Conditions.



Household Health Conditions (n=264)

- 75 households were impacted by Physical Conditions
- 108 households were impacted by Mental Conditions
- 122 households were impacted by Health Problems
- 49 households were impacted by Limited Mobility
- 57 households were impacted by Hearing Problems
- 44 households were impacted by Vision Problems
- 29 households were impacted by Communication Problems

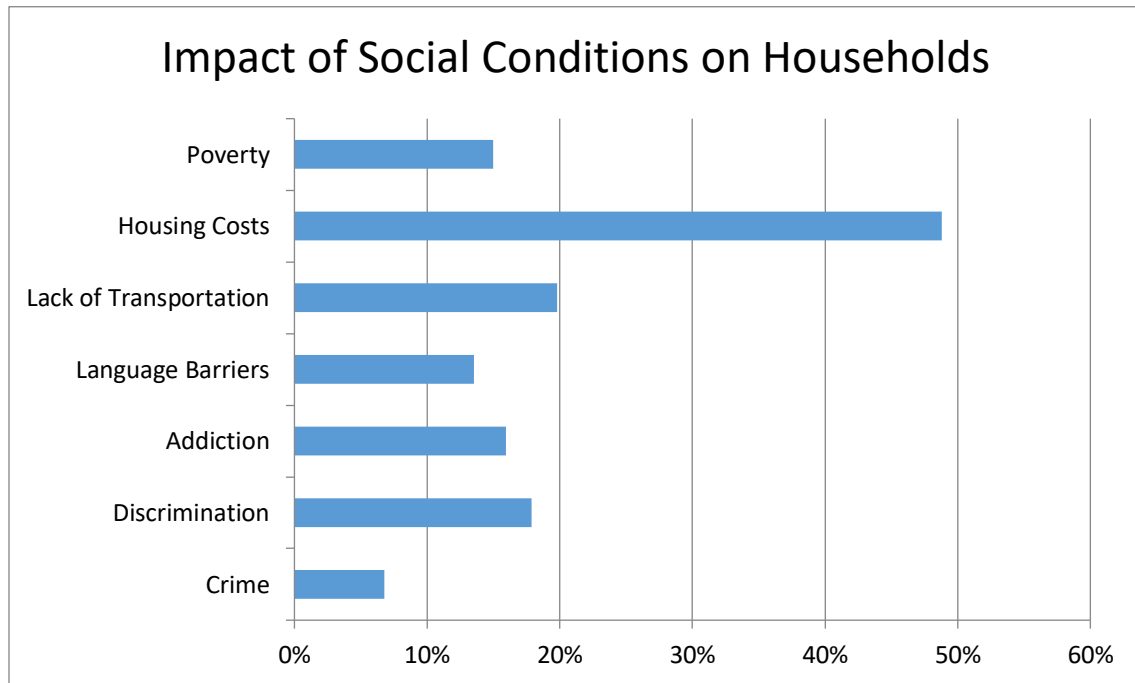
There is more detailed analysis on Health later in the report.



HOUSEHOLD SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Negative Impact of Household Social Conditions

207 (27.7%) respondents stated that they were negatively impacted by one or more Household Social Conditions.



Social Conditions in Households (n=207)

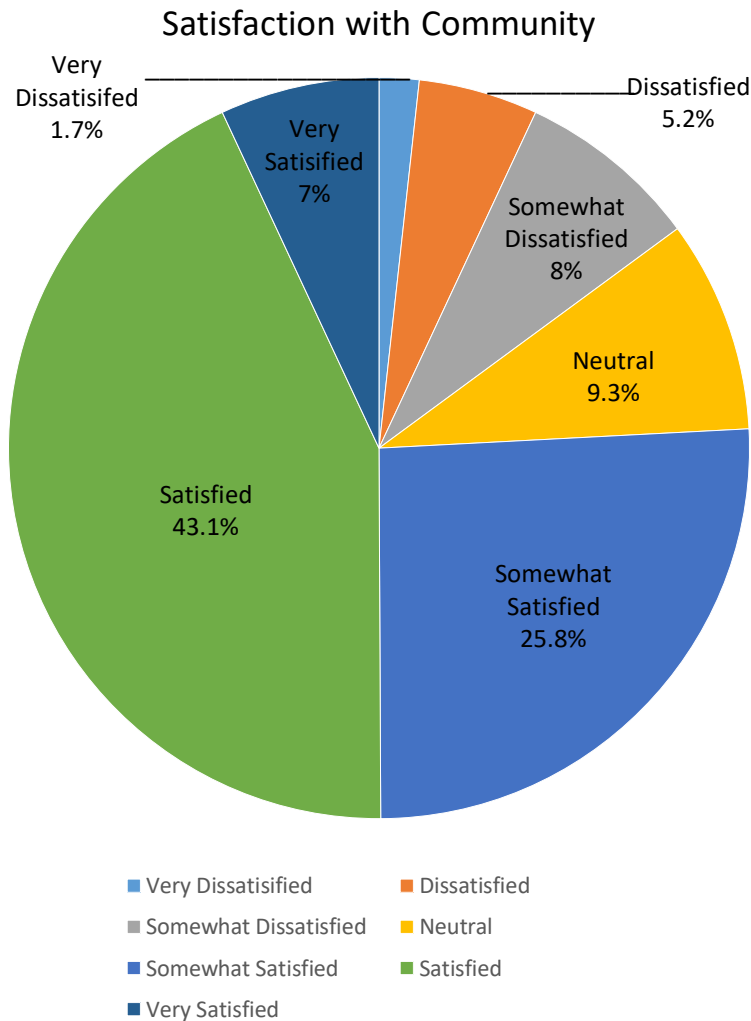
- 31 households were impacted by Poverty
- 101 households were impacted by Housing Costs
- 41 households were impacted by Lack of Transportation
- 28 households were impacted by Language Barriers
- 33 households were impacted by Addiction
- 37 households were impacted by Discrimination
- 14 households were impacted by Crime

There is a more detailed analysis of Social Conditions later in the report.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE COMMUNITY

Overall, how satisfied are you with your community

75.8% of 691 respondents expressed Overall Satisfaction with their Community (2017: 73.6%, 2013: 72.8%)



Findings

- **Most respondents were Satisfied (Overall) with their community (n=691)**
- 7% of respondents were Very Satisfied (48 respondents)
- 43.1% of respondents were Satisfied (298)
- 25.8% of respondents were Somewhat Satisfied (178)
- 9.3% of respondents were Neutral (64)
- 8% of respondents were Somewhat Dissatisfied (55)
- 5.2% of respondents were Dissatisfied (36)
- 1.7% of respondents were Very Dissatisfied (12)

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

GENERAL NOTE ON DATA SOURCES FOR THE CITY OF BROOKS

Data was derived primarily from the 2011, 2016 and 2021 Federal Censuses and the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). Changes to the Federal Census Legislation meant that the Census Long Form was not mandatory for the 2011 Federal Census, which resulted in a marked decrease in completed forms. This had severe negative consequences regarding the accuracy and availability of the 2011 data that is available for communities including those within the Brooks-Newell Region.²¹ Data for the 2011 Federal Census and National Household Survey availability for smaller communities was very limited and less accurate even though they remained the most reliable and comprehensive sources available in Canada.²² Some data, notably 2011 income data (which was based on 2010 income tax returns), was still quite accurate. The Auditor General of Canada's Performance Audit of Statistics Canada (Spring 2014) concluded that the needs of data users from small geographic areas and subpopulations were not being met.²³ The Canadian Government reinstated the mandatory Census long form in 2015. With this change back from voluntary to mandatory, the statistical data for the 2016 Federal Census was more accurate and better data was available for the smaller communities.²⁴

It should be noted that, a direct comparison to the 2016 and 2021 Federal Censuses will not always be possible due to the unreliability of the 2011 National Household Survey.

2011 Census and National Household Survey data was retrieved from:

Statistics Canada. 2012. *Focus on Geography Series, 2011 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-310-XWE2011004. Ottawa, Ontario. Analytical products, 2011 Census. Last updated October 24, 2012.

Statistics Canada. 2013. Brooks, CA, Alberta (Code 806) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013.
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 29, 2014).

2016 Census data was retrieved from:

Statistics Canada. 2017. *Bassano, T [Census subdivision], Alberta and Division No. 2, CDR [Census division], Alberta* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Release November 29, 2017.
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed December 05, 2017).

Statistics Canada. 2017. *Brooks, CY [Census subdivision], Alberta and Division No. 2, CDR [Census division], Alberta* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Release November 29, 2017.
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed December 05, 2017).

Statistics Canada. 2017. *Duchess, VL [Census subdivision], Alberta and Division No. 2, CDR [Census division], Alberta* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Release November 29, 2017.
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed December 05, 2017).

Statistics Canada. 2017. *Rosemary, VL [Census subdivision], Alberta and Division No. 2, CDR [Census division], Alberta* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Release November 29, 2017.
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed December 05, 2017).

Statistics Canada. 2017. *Newell County, MD [Census subdivision], Alberta and Division No. 2, CDR [Census division], Alberta* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Release November 29, 2017.
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed December 05, 2017).

²¹ Response rate was 45.1% for the National Household Survey.

²² Statistics Canada. Evaluation of the Census of Population Program (2009/2010 to 2014/2015).

²³ Auditor General of Canada. Statistics Canada Performance Audit, Spring 2014.

²⁴ <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/98-304/chap10-eng.cfm>

2021 Census Data was retrieved from:

Statistics Canada. 2023. *Bassano, Town (T) Alberta [Census subdivision]. Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released February 8, 2023.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 13, 2023).

Statistics Canada. 2023. *Brooks, City (CY) Alberta [Census subdivision]. Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released February 8, 2023.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 13, 2023).

Statistics Canada. 2023. *Duchess, Village (VL) Alberta [Census subdivision]. Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released February 8, 2023.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 13, 2023).

Statistics Canada. 2023. *Newell County, Municipal District (MD) Alberta [Census subdivision]. Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released February 8, 2023.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 13, 2023).

Statistics Canada. 2023. *Rosemary, Village (VL) Alberta [Census subdivision]. Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released February 8, 2023.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 13, 2023).

CITY OF BROOKS SOCIOECONOMIC SUMMARY

Brooks gained city status in 2005 and currently has a population of 14,924²⁵, having grown by approximately 87 percent since the early 1980s.²⁶ The City has seen continuous growth, constant change and increased ethnic diversity. The population increased 17% between 2001 and 2006, 9.3 % between 2006 and 2011, 5.7% between 2011 and 2016, and 3.3% between 2016 and 2021.

Brooks has a youthful, educated population, with approximately 40% of the population having earned a secondary degree or diploma. The median age is 36 years with 77.1% of residents being 15 years and older. Approximately 30% of the population is between the ages of 25 and 44, a group which also includes a significant number of newcomer residents (2,555 or 47% of newcomers).

The majority of Brooks' residents are married or common law (57.6%). Approximately 60% of couple families have children at home. The average size of census families in Brooks is 3.2, which is similar to Alberta and Canada.

The three most frequently reported ethnic origins in Brooks, for people reporting either one or multiple ethnic origins, were Canadian, Filipino and English. The results for Alberta were English, German and Scottish.

According to the 2021 Federal Census, 5,435 (37.1%) of the population of Brooks were immigrants compared to 30.9% for Alberta.²⁷ In addition, 2.4% of Brooks' population were non-permanent residents compared to 1.6% in Alberta. Of the immigrants living in Brooks, 1,850 (12.6%) moved to Canada between 2016 and 2021.

The 2021 Federal Census documented that 7,110 (48.6%) individuals in Brooks belonged to a visible minority group, compared to 27.8% of Alberta's population. The top three largest visible minority groups in Brooks were Black (22.3%), Filipino (13.4%) and Latin America (4.4%). In Alberta, the three largest visible minority groups

²⁵ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²⁶ The population of Brooks was approximately 8,000 in the early 1980s. <https://www.brooks.ca/241/History>

²⁷ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

were South Asian (7.1%), Filipino (5.2%) and Black (4.3%). Very few persons of Indigenous background live in Brooks (2.4%), and not a single person identified speaking an Indigenous language.²⁸

In Brooks, 70.3% of the population spoke Canada's two official languages (English and French) most often at home. The top languages spoken most often at home were English (69.3%), Tagalog (4.5%) and Somali (3.8%). Only 0.9% of Brooks' residents spoke French most often at home.²⁹

Immigrants to Canada generally choose to obtain Canadian Citizenship as soon as they have remained in Canada for the required number of years.³⁰ Prior to 2017, Citizenship regulations increased requirements that made it more challenging for newer immigrants to obtain citizenship. For example, the processing fee increased from \$100 to \$530 (with an added \$100 right of citizenship fee) in 2014-2015³¹, and the physical presence requirement changed (in 2015) so that all applicants must be physically present in Canada for a minimum of 1,460 days (four years) out of six years prior to the submission of the citizenship application.³² Applicants also had to be physically present 183 days for each of the four calendar years that were within that six year span time. These changes saw a significant drop in citizenship applications between the first nine months of 2016 (56,446) and the same period the year prior (111,993), which was nearly a 50% drop.³³ Starting in 2017, new Citizenship Act rules came into effect that have made the path of citizenship less cumbersome for immigrants, although the processing and right of citizenship fees have remained \$630 in total.³⁴ According to the 2021 Federal Census, 77.9% of Brooks' residents are Canadian Citizens.³⁵ In 2016, there were 11,070 Canadian Citizens living in Brooks, and in 2021 there 11,410.³⁶

According to the 2021 Federal Census, 70.5% of the population in Brooks reported a religious affiliation, while 29.5% identified following no religious practice. For Alberta as a whole, 59.9% of the population reported a religious affiliation, 40.1% while had no religion.

The most frequently reported religious affiliation in Brooks was Catholic, reported by 3,330 (22.7%) of the population.³⁷ Other frequently reported religions include Christian (not otherwise specified) (13.7%) and Muslim (12.7%).

According to the 2021 Federal Census, 7,030 individuals were employed and 675 were unemployed in Brooks for a total workforce of 7,705 in May 2021.³⁸ The employment rate was 62.6% and the unemployment rate was 8.8%. In 2016, the employment rate was 67.7% and the unemployment rate was 9.2%.³⁹ In May, 2023 the unemployment rate for the Lethbridge-Medicine Hat region was 5.7%, the same as Alberta⁴⁰

Agriculture continues to be an important industry for Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region. The expansion of one of the industries, JBS Foods Canada, has created increased employment opportunities and some social

²⁸ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²⁹ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁰ DeVoretz, D.J. and S. Pivnenko. Self-selection, Immigrant Public Finance Performance and Canadian Citizenship. RIMM, January 2005.

³¹ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-citizenship-applications-decrease-1.3976140>

³² <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/canadian-citizenship/grant/residence/physical-presence-intent-reside-requirements.html#s02>

³³ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-citizenship-applications-decrease-1.3976140>

³⁴ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/canadian-citizenship/act-changes/requirements-2017-2018.html>

³⁵ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁶ 2016 and 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁷ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁸ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁹ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

⁴⁰ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/2d875f91-c500-4779-b772-756819f6cc92/resource/671033aa-b180-4d25-8366-f7ddf6b3895/download/jend-lfs-package-2023-05.pdf>

challenges due to the constantly changing demographics, particularly in the City of Brooks. Employing over 2,800 workers, JBS creates a market for local farmers and ranchers and is one of Canada's largest beef packing and processing plants.⁴¹ Currently, the facility provides more than 10.4 million daily 4 ounce servings.⁴² There are 66 different languages spoken at the facility and 80 dialects.⁴³ Until 2009, the Oil & Gas Industry also continued to drive much of the economic growth with over 3000 oil and gas wells within the boundaries of the Brooks-Newell Region.⁴⁴ Beginning in 2014, The Brooks-Newell Region experienced the negative, far-reaching impact when the Alberta economy began to experience a dramatic downturn in the oil and gas industry.

As in all communities, income varies greatly between households. In 2020, the median household income for Brooks was \$91,000. The median household income in 2020 for Alberta in 2020 was \$96,000 and \$84,000 for Canada.

The 2021 Federal Census identified 1,810 (35.2%) renter households in Brooks, which is higher than Alberta (28.5%). There were 3,330 (64.8%) owner households in Brooks, which is less than Alberta (70.9%). The average value of a dwelling (non-farm, non-reserve private dwelling) in Brooks was \$269,600 in 2021, and the average Monthly shelter costs for rental was \$1,074⁴⁵. The vacancy rates in Brooks were 6.5% in 2015, 8.2% in 2017 and 3.6 in 2021⁴⁶.

See Appendix for *Detailed Brooks Demographics (Statistics Canada)*.

FINDINGS FROM THE QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

GAP ANALYSIS

Comparing Rank of Importance and Satisfaction (Gap Analysis) from the Region creates an interesting set of results. In a perfect scenario there would be a match between these two subjective measurements. For example, Sense of Community would be the same level of Importance as is its rank of Satisfaction. When addressing these gaps, there are three possible results: (i) Positive Gaps (Rank of Satisfaction is higher than Rank of Importance), (ii) Match Gap (Ranks of Satisfaction and Importance are equal), and (iii) Negative Gap (Rank of Satisfaction is lower than Rank of Importance).

A Positive Gap may arise if community members are more satisfied with a factor than they ranked the factor's Importance. While this is a positive outcome and demonstrates that the community is satisfied with that factor, it then creates inequality, as it is impossible to have all nine factors responses as Positive Gaps.

CITY OF BROOKS GAP ANALYSIS

Comparison of Gap Analyses (2022, 2017 and 2013)

The tables below represent a comparison between this study's Gap Analysis and the ones conducted in 2017 and 2013.

We compared this study's Gap Analysis and the one conducted in 2017. There are noticeable changes among categories for Rank of Importance since the last Quality of Life Study: Health has decreased in Rank of

⁴¹ <https://jbsfoodsgroup.com/locations/canada>

⁴² <https://jbsfoodsgroup.com/locations/canada>.

⁴³ Email: Yonathan Negussie, Operations, JBS Canada, April 12, 2023

⁴⁴ 2003 County of Newell No.4 50 Years of Growth Publication.

⁴⁵ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

⁴⁶ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3410012901>

Satisfaction (#3 to #4), Education System has decreased in Rank of Importance (#2 to #3), increased in Rank of Satisfaction (#2 to #1) and is now a Positive Gap (it was a Match Gap in 2017); Personal Well-Being increased in Rank of Importance (#3 to #2) and decreased in Rank of Satisfaction (#1 to #2) and is now a Match Gap (it was a Positive Gap in 2017); Economy and Employment increased in Rank of Satisfaction (#9 to #8); Physical Environment has increase in Rank of Satisfaction (#4 to #3); and Political Rights and General Values has decreased in Rank of Satisfaction (#8 to #9).

Results of the City of Brooks Quality of Life 2017 Survey identified three Negative Gaps: (i) Health; (ii) Economy and Employment; and (iii) Political Rights and General Values. The two Match scenario identified were: (i) Education System; (ii) Sense of Community. The four Positive Gaps indicated were: (i) Personal Well-being; (ii) Physical Environment; (iv) Social Program/Social Conditions; and (v) Government.

When compared the study in 2013, there are noticeable changes among categories for Rank of Importance since the last Quality of Life Study. Economy and Employment increased in Rank of Importance (from 5th to 4th), Physical Environment decreased (from #4 to #6) and Sense of Community increased (from #6 to #5).

There were also noticeable changes among categories for Rank of Satisfaction; Health increased from 6th to 3rd, Sense of Community decreased from #4 to #5, Economy and Employment decreased from #7 to #9, Social Programs/Social Conditions decreased from #5 to #7, Physical Environment decreased from #3 to #4, and Government increased from #9 to #6.

There had been some changes in Gaps as well. Sense of Community became a Match Gap (it was Positive Gap in 2013), and Government became a Positive Gap (it was Match Gap in 2013). The changes in rankings may indicate more information is required to fully understand the reasons as to why there were gaps between the Rank of Importance and the Rank of Satisfaction by survey respondents in these areas.

Quality of Life Gap Analysis (2022)			
	Rank of Importance	Rank of Satisfaction	Gap
Health	1	4	Negative
Personal Well-Being	2	2	Match
Education System	3	1	Positive
Economy and Employment	4	8	Negative
Sense of Community	5	5	Match
Physical Environment	6	3	Positive
Political Rights and General Values	7	9	Negative
Social Programs/Social Conditions	8	7	Positive
Government	9	6	Positive

Quality of Life Gap Analysis (2017)			
	Rank of Importance	Rank of Satisfaction	Gap
Health	1	3	Negative
Education System	2	2	Match
Personal Well-being	3	1	Positive
Economy and Employment	4	9	Negative
Sense of Community	5	5	Match
Physical Environment	6	4	Positive
Political Rights and General Values	7	8	Negative
Social Programs/ Social Conditions	8	7	Positive
Government	9	6	Positive

Quality of Life Gap Analysis (2013)			
	Rank of Importance	Rank of Satisfaction	Gap
Health	1	6	Negative
Education System	2	2	Match
Personal Well-being	3	1	Positive
Physical Environment	4	3	Positive
Economy and Employment	5	7	Negative
Sense of Community	6	4	Positive
Political Rights and General Values	7	8	Negative
Social Programs/ Social Conditions	8	5	Positive
Government	9	9	Match

Importance Factors and Variables

A number of variables were identified within each Factor of Importance to gather further information.

SECTOR	FACTORS OF IMPORTANCE	RANK	VARIABLES OF IMPORTANCE WITHIN EACH FACTOR
SOCIAL SECTOR	Health ⁴⁷	1	Community Suicide Rates; Mental Health; Physical Activity; Lifestyle; Rates of Disease ⁴⁸
	Personal Well-Being	2	Personal Health; Family; Friends; Personal Safety; and Spiritual and Religious Acceptance
	Education System	3	Personal Educational Attainment; Education; Adult Literacy; Community High School Dropout Rate; and Community Literacy Rate
	Sense of Community	5	Knowing Neighbors; Working Together; Helping Others; Community Safety; and Sense of Belonging
	Social Programs/Social Conditions	8	Accessing Transportation; Availability of Public Housing; Availability of Social Assistance and Programs; Community Homelessness; and Community Centers for Arts and Cultural Events
BUSINESS SECTOR	Physical Environment	6	Water Quality, Air Quality; Noise Pollution; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; and Land Pollution.
	Economy and Employment	4	Community Unemployment Rates; Community Employment Rates; Level of Income; Community Rate of Bankruptcies; and Financial Effects of Crime.
POLITICAL SECTOR	Political Rights & General Values	7	Honesty; Respect; Integrity; Freedom of Speech; and Sharing
	Government	9	Level of Trust in Government; Maintained Roads; Government Water Policies; Barriers to Entrepreneurship; and Community Taxes

Note: The variables of levels of Importance and Satisfaction are interrelated components to the study of Quality of Life.

⁴⁷ Two variables of Health, Community Life and Expectancy, were removed from the 2017 study due to low statistical significance in 2014.

⁴⁸ Rates of Disease was added as a variable of Health for the 2017 study.

Key Findings: Rank of Importance

For the 2017 and 2013 Quality of Life studies, when ranking the factors Important to the Quality of Life in the City of Brooks respondents ranked Health as #1, Education as #2, and Personal Well-Being as #3. For 2022, Personal Well-Being was ranked #2 and Education #3, while Health remained #1.

Respondents were asked to rate from Not At All Important to Very Important the chosen questions regarding variables that impact their Quality of Life in a number of general areas.

As with the 2013 and 2017 study, there was a high rate of Important to Very Important responses for the Rate of Importance variables, and a lower percentage of Neutral Responses. This also contrasted with the higher number of neutral responses for Rate of Satisfaction; much like the 2014 and 2017 Quality of Life study. Generally, very few respondents answered Not Very Important or Not Important, which was somewhat lower than the number of respondents who answered Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied. The numbers for the latter two were generally low.



City of Brooks JBS Canada Centre

Satisfaction Factors and Variables

A number of variables of most significance were identified within each Satisfaction Factor to gather further information

SECTOR	FACTORS TO MEASURE SATISFACTION	RANK	VARIABLES OF SATISFACTION WITHIN EACH FACTOR
SOCIAL SECTOR	Education System	1	Post-Secondary Education; Adult/Continuing Education Job Training Programs
	Personal Well-Being	2	Community Gathering Places Personal Development Free Time Activities
	Health	4	Addictions Persons with Disabilities Access to Physicians (Doctors)
	Sense of Community	5	Domestic Violence Community Safety Social Inclusion
	Social Programs/Social Conditions	7	Public Transportation Homelessness Access to Childcare
BUSINESS SECTOR	Physical Environment	3	Environmental Awareness Recycling Waste Management
	Economy and Employment	8	Poverty Affordable Housing Employment
POLITICAL SECTOR	Political Rights & General Values	9	English as a Second Language Discrimination Immigration
	Government	6	Local Population Growth Emergency Services Utilities

Key Findings: Rank of Satisfaction

Respondents from Brooks indicated that their five highest Rank of Satisfaction Factors were: #1 Education System, #2 Personal Well-Being #3 Physical Environment, #4 Health and #5 Sense of Community. There were two changes for the top two rankings since 2017; Education moved to #1 and Personal Well-Being dropped to #2, and Physical Environment moved up to #3 and Health dropped to #4. Economy and Employment moved to #8 and Political Rights & General Values dropped to #9. Government remained the same at #6.

Most importance was placed on Health #1, while the Rank of Satisfaction with Health was #4, creating a Negative Gap. That gap has increased since 2017 because Health decreased by one for Rank of Satisfaction; this indicates that levels of satisfaction in the area of Health have worsened over the past few years, according to Brooks’ respondents. Results indicates that while Health is still Very Important to residents, their rank of Satisfaction with the services is lower. The COVID-19 Pandemic could be influencing this change.

A notable Negative Gap that has decreased since 2017 is Economy and Employment. In 2017, Brooks residents ranked Economy and Employment higher for Importance, #4, and gave it a Rank of Satisfaction of 9. In 2022, its level of satisfaction was ranked #8, which is an increase. Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region were hit hard by the recent economic downturn, which helps explain the five-point gap 2017, but the area has rebounded slightly leading to an increase in levels of satisfaction.

The Rank of Importance for Physical Environment remained #6 while its Rank of Satisfaction increased by one (#4 to #3), which means it still has a positive gap. While Brooks’ respondents became more satisfied with Physical Environment, they still view it with the same importance.

Although Rank of Importance for Government of 9 has not changed since 2013, its Rank of Satisfaction has increased over that time from #9 in 2013 to #6 in 2017 and 2022. While it had a Match Gap in 2013, it now has a Positive Gap. While it is difficult to determine factors driving this increase, potential influences may be continued high satisfaction with emergency services, more access to physicians and the municipal government assistance made available to those oil and gas residents negatively impacted by the economic downturn.

Respondents were asked to rate from Very Satisfied to Very Dissatisfied questions on variables within the nine aspects of Quality of Place. This section was designed to provide more detailed units of measurement (variables) of the scope of Satisfaction within the nine factors.

There is a wide diversity of Satisfaction levels for each variable under the nine factors. Respondents used the Neutral option a high percentage of the time except for variables such as Emergency Services, Access to Physicians and Recycling where there were clear expressions of Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction.



Rotary Club Youth Leadership

In March 2023, Grade 10 Students from all the high schools in the Area attended a leadership day at BCHS to learn more about developing their leadership skills. On Friday, A group of about 30 students met with community leaders from the city and county to discuss their hopes and needs for youth in the community.

The Brooks Rotary Club sponsored this two day event and students and community leaders were pleased with an opportunity to hear from young people in direct conversation about the community.

NEGATIVE GAP ANALYSIS

The 2022 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis identified three Negative Gaps for the City of Brooks. Negative Gaps occur when the Rank of Importance is higher than the Rank of Satisfaction within the nine broad categories.

1. Health
2. Economy and Employment
3. Political Rights and General Values

The 2013 and 2017 Quality of Life gap analyses also identified three Negative Gaps in the City of Brooks, and they were for same categories.

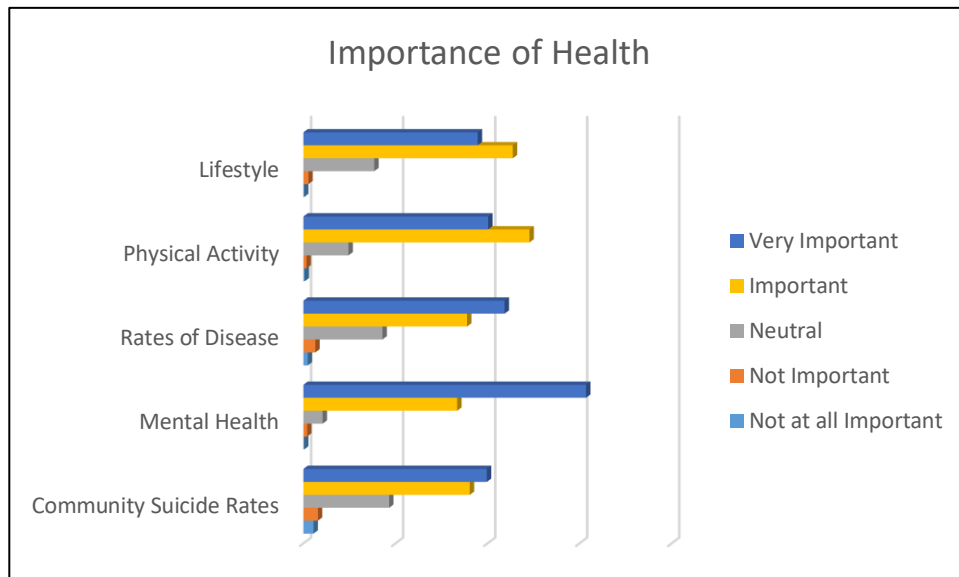
NEGATIVE GAP: HEALTH Factor

Ranked #1 for Level of Importance and #4 for Level of Satisfaction

This Factor was defined with the following variables

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Lifestyle	Addictions
Physical Activity	Persons with Disabilities
Rates of Disease	Access to Physicians (Doctors)
Mental Health	
Community Suicide Rates	

Importance of Health Variables

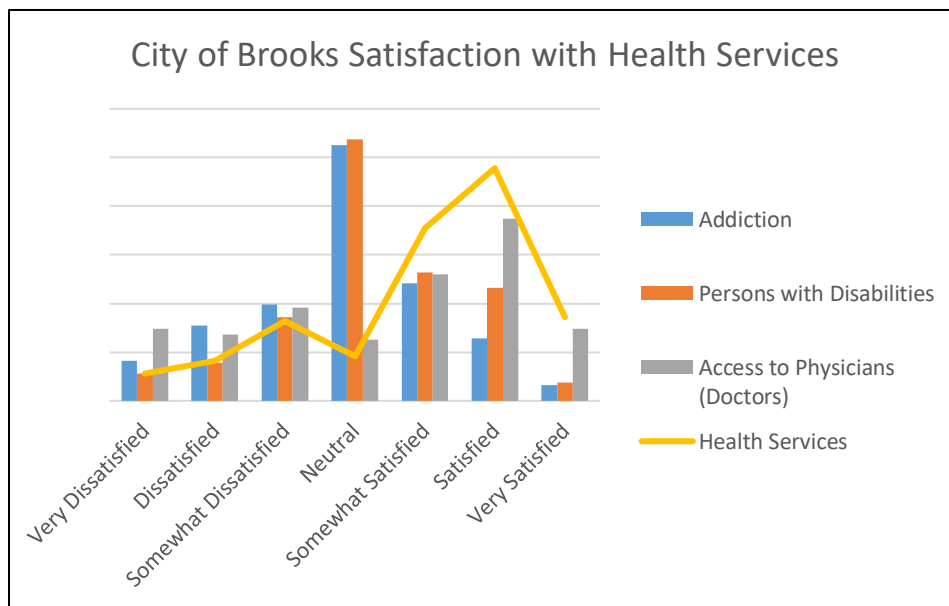


FINDINGS:

- There was a high neutral response for the Health Importance variable **Community Suicide Rates** (18.6%), which was a drop of 2% since 2017.
- 94.6% of respondents thought that **Mental Health** was Important to Very Important, 4.2% were Neutral and only 1% thought **Mental Health** was Not Important to Not at all Important.
- 83.4% of respondents thought **Lifestyle** was Important to Very Important, while 15.4% were Neutral and 1.2% were Not Important to Not at all Important.
- 89.3% of respondents thought that **Physical Activity** was Important to Very Important (it was 88.3% in 2017), while 9.8% were neutral and 1% responded Not Important to Not at all Important.
- 79.3% of respondents thought that **Rates of Disease** was Important to Very important, while 17.2% thought it was neutral and 3.5% thought it was Not Important to Not at all Important.

Overall Satisfaction with *Health Services* was 71.8% (2017: 80.2%; 2013: 77.2%)

Health Services Satisfaction Variables



FINDINGS:

- **Addictions** had an Overall Satisfaction level of 29.5% (201); 1.4% (16) were Very Satisfied, 9.4% (64) were Satisfied, and 17.8% (121) were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 38.6% (263), 14.5% (99) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 11.3% (77) were Dissatisfied, and 6% (41) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, addictions had an Overall Satisfaction level of 36.7% (272); 3.1% (23) were Very Satisfied, 15.5% (115) were Satisfied, and 18.1% (134) were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 42.4% (314), 11.7% (87) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 6.2% (46) were Dissatisfied, and 3% (22) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013 Overall Satisfaction was 36.6%; Satisfaction percentages were 3.8 (Very Satisfied), 16.7 (Satisfied), 16.2 (Somewhat Satisfied), 34.3 (Neutral), 11.7 (Somewhat Dissatisfied), 10.6 (Dissatisfied) and 6.8 (Very Dissatisfied).

- **Persons with Disabilities** had Overall Satisfaction of 38.8% (267), which was a decrease from 2017. 2.8% (19) were Very Satisfied, 16.8% (116) were Satisfied and 19.2% (132) were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 39%, 12.5% (86) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 5.7% (39) were Dissatisfied and 4.1% (28) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, the Overall Satisfaction level was 46.3% (347), 3.1% (23) were Very Satisfied, 21.1% (158) were Satisfied, and 20% (150) were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 39.9% (299), 8.8% (66) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.2% (24) were Dissatisfied, and 1.7% (13) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013, Satisfaction percentages were 45.8 (Overall Satisfaction), 7.2 (Very Satisfied), 19.4 (Satisfied), and 19.3 (Somewhat Satisfied). 36.7% were Neutral, 7.5% were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 5.6% were Dissatisfied and 4.4% were Very Dissatisfied.
- **Access to Physicians (Doctors)** had an Overall Satisfaction level of 30.2% (207), which is a significant drop from 2017. 3.9% (27) were Very Satisfied, 14.3% (98) were Satisfied and 12% (82) were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 54.5% (373), 8% (55) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.7% (32) were Dissatisfied and 2.6% (18) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, the Overall Satisfaction level was 77.3% (584), 21.2% (160) were Very Satisfied, 35.9% (271) were Satisfied and 20.2% (153) were Somewhat Satisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 59, 14.2, 25.4 and 19.3 respectively. 2017 Neutral responses were 11.9% (90), 6.5% (49) for Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2.5% (19) for Dissatisfied, and 1.9% (14) for Very Dissatisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 9.7, 13.6, 9.7 and 8 respectively.

Addictions Services

According to research on Employment Assistance Programs in the Oil and Gas Industry⁴⁹, the nature of employment available in the region that include long working days/weeks, namely the oil and gas sector (plus often away from family) and involve repetitive tasks at places of employment provides conditions that may lead to addictive behavior. Significantly, the oil and gas industry and the meat processing plant are two of the three primary employment industries in the Brooks-Newell Region . Brooks is home to a local office of Alberta Health Services (AHS), Addictions and Mental Health Community Services⁵⁰ with addiction services (youth and adult) and community organizations that provide help and support to those seeking treatment. There are also a number of drug and alcohol self-help groups in the region such as Al-Anon and Alateen.⁵¹

In 2022, there was no arrests for the production of drugs, which was the same as the year prior.⁵² There were four arrests for drug possession (13 the year prior) and 7 arrests for drug trafficking (there were 15 in 2021).

Access to Services for Persons with Disabilities

39% of respondents were neutral regarding the **Access to Services for Persons with Disabilities** variable. While access to Services for Persons with Disabilities does not concern all respondents, it is a challenging issue for those seeking specialized services or diagnosis (particularly for individuals living in rural areas). The Provincial Government has prioritized access for special services for special needs individuals, such as the Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) Program⁵³, but wait lists exist and there could be various costs that may not be covered. Families raising children with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities must also be able to travel to

⁴⁹ Health and Wellness Trends in the Oil and Gas Sector Shepell.fgi Research Group 2009

⁵⁰ <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/Service.aspx?id=3746&serviceAtFacilityID=1120197>

⁵¹ <http://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/find-an-al-anon-meeting/>

⁵² Email: Kendra Sieben, Safe Communities Coordinator, Brooks RCMP – Community Policing Unit, March 20, 2023

⁵³ <https://www.alberta.ca/fscd.aspx>

Brooks, and most likely to other urban centers, such as Calgary or Medicine Hat (which are two hours and one hour, respectively, from Brooks by automobile) for assessments and services.⁵⁴

Within the Brooks-Newell Region, in-region transportation services for persons with disabilities are provided by the County of Newell Mini Bus, the City of Brooks Access Transit and Grasslands Public School Division. The County of Newell Mini Bus provides transportation services for all residents outside the City of Brooks including persons with disabilities of any age and residents who don't drive and/or lack their own forms of transportation.⁵⁵ The County's Mini Bus also provides door-to-door service for any Brooks-Newell Region residents to any appointments (doctor, dentist, shopping, visiting relatives, etc.) in Brooks. Brooks' residents may also use the Mini Bus service to visit friends or relatives that live in other areas of the Region. This service requires a one-time registration fee of \$10, and a round trip fee of \$16 each time you use the Mini Bus. The City of Brooks' Access Transit primarily serves City of Brooks residents living with disabilities and residents 65 years of age or older.⁵⁶ Visitors from outside communities that fit the ridership criteria are also able to use the Access Transit for transportation in Brooks. A one-way trip within the City of Brooks is \$4, and exact change or 1 bus pass punch must be used.⁵⁷ School Divisions provides services for children and youth living with disabilities through transportation to and from school and to special activities and school-related activities.

The *Newell Transportation Networks Exploratory Study October 2013* outlined some of the challenges which persons with disabilities face in terms of accessing community activities and services both in-region and out-of-region due to the limitation of the existing transportation services for persons with disabilities.⁵⁸

Often, Brooks and Brooks-Newell Region residents must travel to major centers, namely Medicine Hat, to receive specialized services, such as dialysis. In order to offer transportation for residents seeking these specialized services, the municipalities in the Brooks-Newell Region collaborated on and started a regional transportation service in February, 2019.^{59,60,61} Although this transportation service is not restrictive (residents may use it to access shopping centres, for example), priority is given for residents in need of medical services in Medicine Hat.⁶² The Regional Transportation Service's services hours are Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's from 7:00AM to 4:00PM (excluding statutory holidays). The one-way fare from the City of Brooks to Medicine Hat is \$20.00, and \$40.00 for a round trip. Exact change only or service voucher must be used. Please read the Regional Transportation Service guide book for more information at

<https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/4060/Guidebook---Medical-Transportation-Services-FINAL-DOCUMENT-2020?bidId=>

There are non-municipal agencies located in Brooks that serve youth and adults with disabilities including Next Steps Residential Services Ltd.⁶³ Next Steps also serves children. An individual and/or their family is able to choose which service they want to access after receiving confirmation of provincial funding through the Persons with Disabilities Program.⁶⁴ Both groups have a variety of programs including:

⁵⁴ <https://southernalberta.com/business/documents/TransportationReportFinalOctober2013.pdf>

⁵⁵ <http://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/mini-bus-service>

⁵⁶ <https://www.brooks.ca/278/Access-Transit>

⁵⁷ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/5249/City-of-Brooks-Access-Transit-Service-FINAL-DOCUMENT-MARCH-2023?bidId=>

⁵⁸ <https://southernalberta.com/business/documents/TransportationReportFinalOctober2013.pdf>

⁵⁹ <https://www.brooks.ca/650/Brooks-Regional-Transportation-Service>

⁶⁰ <https://medicinehatnews.com/news/local-news/2019/05/15/brooks-to-mh-transit-service-a-success-so-far/>

⁶¹ <https://chatnewstoday.ca/2020/11/05/brooks-launches-campaign-to-continue-medicine-hat-shuttle/>

⁶² <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/4060/Guidebook---Medical-Transportation-Services-FINAL-DOCUMENT-2020?bidId=>

⁶³ <http://nextstepltd.ca/>

⁶⁴ <https://www.alberta.ca/disability-supports.aspx>

1. **Community Living Supports** – staff to help in a home. Includes overnight staff residents, support homes, supported independent living, and respite care.
2. **Employment Supports** – staff to help a person gain and maintain employment. Includes Employment Preparation and Employment Placement.
3. **Community Access Supports** – staff to help a person fully participate in a community. Focusing on personal development, alternatives to employment and community inclusion.

Children as young as 2 years 8 months can benefit from Early Childhood Services (ECS), which includes Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and other education programming. A child who is 4 years 8 months old by August 31 and Less than 6 years by September 1 of the year they started Kindergarten may be provided with Base Instruction Funding (BIF), through a board or approved school authority, to attend kindergarten in the year prior to Grade One.⁶⁵ The early learning experiences children receive seek to meet their diverse needs, which will then in turn help them to become a contributing, caring and responsible member of society.

Program Unit Funding (PUF), in addition to BIF, can be provided to approved ECS operators (preschools, daycares or Kindergarten), such as Brooks Early Learning Academy (BELA) in Brooks⁶⁶, and school boards for children aged 2 years 8 months to 6 years who have been identified as having a severe disability/delay.⁶⁷

⁶⁸Children who fit the criteria are eligible for up three years of ECS funded programming.⁶⁹ Preschool programs such as the Brooks Pre-School may receive Inclusive Support Funding through Children’s Services, Early Learning Program for qualifying children with Special Needs.

Services for Persons with Disabilities are also available through the provincial government ministries such as Alberta Health Services^{70,71} and Alberta Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services⁷². The federal government also has a variety of programs and services available for persons with disabilities⁷³

Due to Alberta’s recovering economy, the Alberta Government instituted the Affordability Action plan to help with the costs of inflation⁷⁴. The additional \$2.8 billion in new relief measures will be directed at seniors, parents and vulnerable populations for their daily living costs⁷⁵. It would also recognize increases to the cost of living by providing increased Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) payments (6% increase for 2023) and income support⁷⁶. In future years, AISH benefits will be indexed to inflation.

⁶⁵ https://www.alberta.ca/early-childhood-education.aspx?utm_source=redirector

⁶⁶ <https://belabrooks.ca/>

⁶⁷ https://www.alberta.ca/early-childhood-education.aspx?utm_source=redirector

⁶⁸ [https://centreforautism.ab.ca/age/early-childhood-services-puf/#:~:text=Early%20Childhood%20Services%20\(Program%20Unit,preschools%2C%20daycares%2C%20or%20Kindergarten.](https://centreforautism.ab.ca/age/early-childhood-services-puf/#:~:text=Early%20Childhood%20Services%20(Program%20Unit,preschools%2C%20daycares%2C%20or%20Kindergarten.)

⁶⁹ https://www.alberta.ca/early-childhood-education.aspx?utm_source=redirector

⁷⁰ <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca>

⁷¹ <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page9213.aspx>

⁷² <https://www.alberta.ca/seniors-community-and-social-services.aspx>

⁷³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/disability.html>

⁷⁴ <https://www.alberta.ca/affordability-action-plan.aspx>

⁷⁵ <https://www.alberta.ca/affordability-action-plan.aspx>

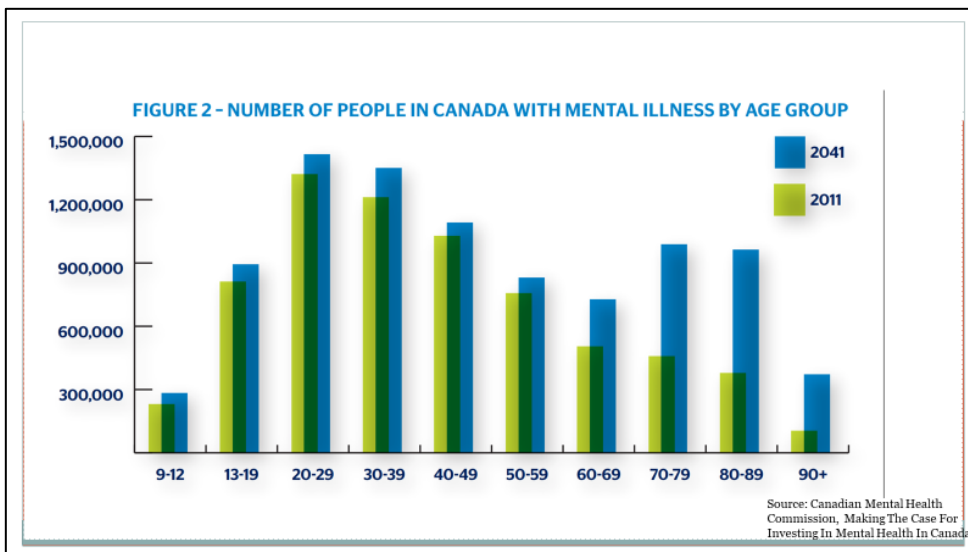
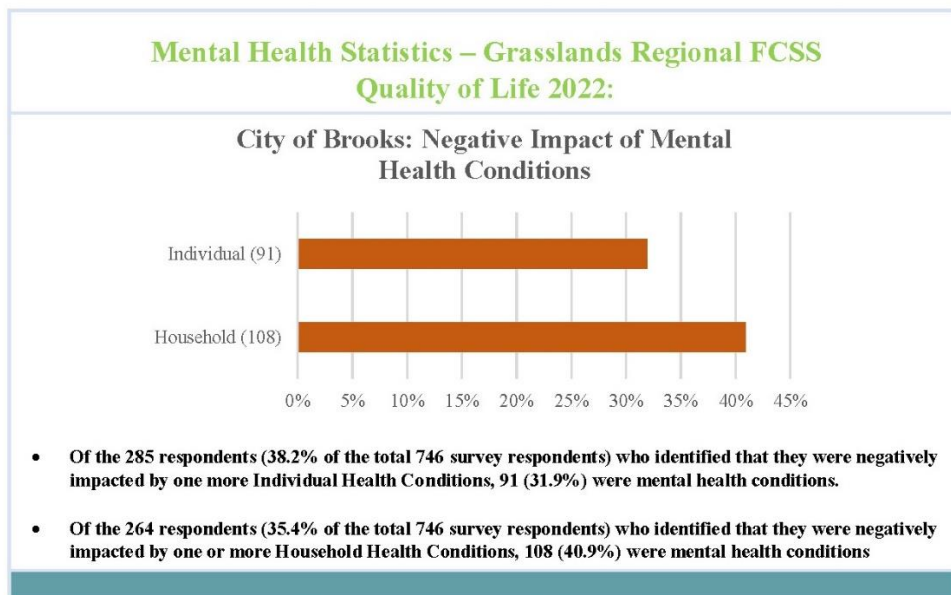
⁷⁶ <https://www.alberta.ca/aish.aspx>

Mental Health

Respondents were asked if they had one or more Personal or Household Health Condition and/or a Household Social Condition which negatively impacted them.

Mental Health has been identified as a priority across the sectors and local Initiatives are occurring to respond to the issue of Mental Health in our communities.

Of the 285 respondents, 31.9% responded they have mental health issues; 40.9% of 264 respondents are negatively impacted by a mental health issue in their household. A significant number of the 215 respondents were negatively impacted by a Social Condition in their Household, the top three social conditions being Housing Costs (48.8%), Lack of Transportation (19.8%) and Discrimination (17.9%). Local initiatives are underway to help alleviate these three social conditions which have consistently been identified as barriers to a positive quality of life for residents.



The above chart reflects projections of future mental illness trends in Canada to 2041

Healing Path Wellness Centre

Brooks & Newell Region

Incidence of Immigrant PTSD

Research Results

A collaborative research project between

Medicine Hat College Brooks Campus
Global Village Centre
Dr. Kadima of South Shore Clinic

Objectives included

- Describing the diversity of the immigrant and refugee population in rural southern Alberta
- Assessing the prevalence and severity of PTSD among the immigrant and refugee population
- Identifying the types of stressful encounters that may have contributed to the experience of PTSD symptoms by those immigrants and refugees

Data Collection

- The study occurred from December 2017 through March 2018
- The study consisted of 193 participants who volunteered their time
- Interviews were conducted between Medicine Hat College Brooks Campus and South Shore Clinic, with a few sessions being held at SPEC and The Adult Learning Centre

Results

Anecdotal results

- People's Openness
- Difficult Stories to share
- Kidnapping, Rape, Violence, Loss of family member from war
- Civil War, Tribal conflict, Terrorism by Al-Shabab, Boko Haram
- Female Genital Mutilation known as FGM
- Corruption

37% of the population of the City of Brooks is a visible minority as per 2016 Statistics Canada census

Preliminary Results PTSD Symptoms

- Severe PTSD ----- 44%
- Moderate PTSD ----- 18%
- Mild PTSD ----- 3%

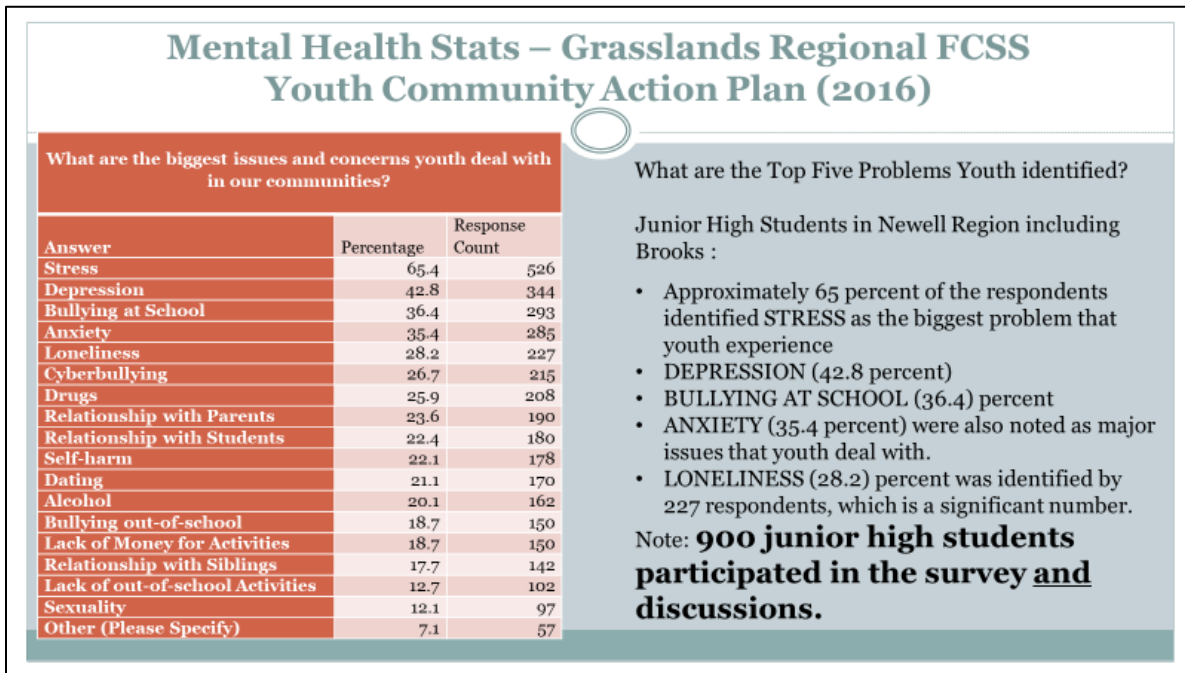
Incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the Rural Southern Alberta Immigrant Population with a Focus on Brooks and County of Newell (2018). Snapshot of Incidence of Immigrant PTSD with 189 Immigrants.⁷⁷

This is partnership between the Global Village Centre and Medicine Hat College. Following the collaborative research project highlighted above, Global Village Centre created the Healing Path Wellness Centre to address the concerns identified with high prevalence of PTSD symptoms among immigrants participating in the study. Phase II of the research project is currently underway. The Global Village Centre’s Healing Path “helps bridge the gap between the newcomer population and appropriate support services by providing assessment, referrals, and cultural supports.”⁷⁸ They provide a wide variety of therapy and education supports, such as refugee and immigrant focused therapy and cultural training for both immigrants and service providers.

⁷⁷ Pennefather-O’Brien, E. & Burnett, N. & Kadima, m F. & Hussen, A. 2018. Incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the Rural Southern Alberta Immigrant Population with a Focus on Brooks and County of Newell; Medicine Hat: Medicine Hat College..

⁷⁸ <https://www.globalvillagecentre.ca/copy-of-research-1>

Brooks & Region MakerSpace



Following the closure of Ashton’s Place (youth centre) in Brooks in 2015, there was no longer any after-school programming available in the Brooks area. An *Out of School Activities Survey* and follow up discussions with 900 Junior High students was conducted in 2016, which then identified the biggest issues and concerns youth deal with in communities.⁷⁹ The above chart reflects the responses. In order to address these mental health concerns for youth, Grasslands Regional FCSS completed the Youth Community Action Plan (YCAP), which in the end culminated in the SPEC Association for Children & Families’ Brooks & Region MakerSpace. “Makerspace offers a variety of learning opportunities, programs, workshops and competitions where youth learn to integrate STEM activities while developing meaningful relationships which will assist them in dealing with life’s challenges by building on existing strengths and increasing personal resilience. The capacity for youth to acquire and apply knowledge and skills to real world circumstances under one roof with their peers and volunteer mentors builds comradery and motivation to help prevent and/or alleviate mental health issues that are common to you today”⁸⁰. The Brooks & Region Makerspace has received much community support and funding (from Grasslands Regional FCSS, for example), has been successful and remains in place today.



Brooks & Area Makerspace
Youth Project.

⁷⁹ Grasslands Regional FCSS. Brooks-Newell Region Youth Community Action Plan 2016

⁸⁰ <https://brooksmaker.space/mission-index-impact>

Access to Physicians (Doctors)

The City of Brooks, like many other rural municipalities in Alberta, had struggled over the years to attract enough family doctors. Focussed efforts have been made locally and by the Province to provide incentives to doctors (newly graduated or foreign trained) to settle in rural areas.

After a physician shortage in 2009-2010 left the Brooks-Newell Region without access to obstetrics services, City of Brooks' then Mayor Martin Shields and County of Newell Reeve spearheaded a project to maintain an accessible workforce close to home. The results for Access to Physicians from the 2017 Quality of Life Survey highlighted the success of the physician retention project. Overall Satisfaction increased to 77.3% from 59% in 2013, which is a 31% change over the past four years. In 2013, the Overall Dissatisfaction with Access to Physicians for City of Brooks was 31.4% (the second highest in the Region), but the level of Dissatisfaction dropped significantly to 10.8% (the lowest in the Region).

However, for 2022, there was a significant drop in Overall Satisfaction for Access to Physicians from 2017 (77.3% to 56.5%). There was also a drastic increase in Overall Dissatisfaction from 10.8% in 2017 to 34.4% in 2021. The levels for 2022 are worse than results from the 2013 survey. However, during the pandemic, access to physicians was extremely limited due to COVID-19 restrictions put in place to protect patients and staff in clinics from the virus. It can be assumed that since that normal access to physicians was severely limited residents had increased dissatisfaction with accessing physician services in the City of Brooks.

Highlighted in the 2013 Grasslands Regional FCSS study on Transportation Networks⁸¹, access to medical care due to the lack of transportation and the operating hours of the medical clinics was an issue that was raised by respondents. Since then, medical clinics in the Region have expanded their operating hours, which has alleviated some of the access issues in the Region. Out of region access to physicians, particularly specialists, was identified as a major issue which continues today although shuttle services servicing the area have somewhat mitigated out of town travel to medical appointments. People travelling to appointments still often need companions.

In fiscal year 2020/2021, 38.2% of all ambulatory care visits made by local area residents were to facilities located outside of the Brooks-Newell Region . Inpatient separations were higher (57.7%) in facilities outside of the region rather than in, which signifies that most of those trips by local area residents were for outpatient services.



⁸¹ <https://southernalberta.com/business/documents/TransportationReportFinalOctober2013.pdf>

Ambulatory Care Visits and Inpatient Separations for the Local Geographic Area Residents to Facilities Located In and Out of the Local Geographic Area, Fiscal Year 2020/2021⁸²				
Ambulatory Care Visits				
Visits Within Local Area of Residence (IN)	Visits Outside Local Area of Residence (OUT)	Total Visits	Percent IN	Percent OUT
32,904	20,354	53,258	61.8%	38.2%
Inpatient Separations (IP Sep)				
Seps Within Local Area of Residence	Seps Outside Local Area of Residence	Total IP Sep	Percent IN	Percent OUT
929	1,267	2,196	42.3%	57.7%

Most of the visits to facilities outside of the Brooks-Newell Region were to Medicine Hat Regional Hospital in Medicine Hat, Alberta, which is approximately 100 kilometres southeast of Brooks. The majority of external inpatient separations (50.5%) also occurred at Medicine Hat Regional Hospital in Fiscal Year 2020/2021⁸³.

Top 3 Non-Local Ambulatory Care Facilities/Acute Care Hospitals Accessed by Local Residents During Fiscal Year 2020/2021⁸⁴			
Facility Name	Municipality	Number of OUT Visits	% of Total OUT Visits
Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	Medicine Hat	8,521	41.9%
Foothills Medical Centre	Calgary	2,977	14.6%
Alberta Children's Hospital	Calgary	2,549	12.5%

Beginning on February 13, 2019, the City of Brooks and County of Newell began a transportation project that provided direct round-trip shuttle service from Brooks to Medicine Hat.⁸⁵ The primary purpose of this regional transportation service is to provide access to medical and other services in Medicine Hat for Brooks' area residents.⁸⁶ Currently, the cost for one way service is \$20, and round trip is \$40.

RhPAP

"For over three decades, the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) has supported the efforts of rural Albertans to maintain an accessible health workforce close to home. RhPAP is committed to fostering and building relationships with rural communities, stakeholders, partners, learners and each other to encourage better access to rural health.

Established in 1991 by the Government of Alberta as the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan, and originally focused on supporting practising rural physicians, RhPAP has grown to be a broader rural community health

⁸² <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

⁸³ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

⁸⁴ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

⁸⁵ <https://chatnewstoday.ca/2019/01/25/brooks-announces-regional-transportation-pilot-project/>

⁸⁶ <https://www.brooks.ca/650/Brooks-Regional-Transportation-Service>

workforce attraction and retention resource, an ally with Alberta’s medical schools, as well as a trusted, collaborative partner for rural Alberta communities trying to achieve greater access to health care.

Our Vision

Rural Albertan communities have the appropriate health workforce to effectively deliver the health services they need to thrive.

Our Mission

Support rural Alberta communities in their efforts to keep health care close to home.

Our Promise

RhPAP is committed to fostering and building relationships with rural communities, stakeholders, partners, learners, and each other to encourage better access to rural health care.”⁸⁷

The highly successful efforts of all municipalities in the region to recruit and retain physicians was recognized by RhPAP. The Joint Services Committee, representing all Brooks-Newell Region municipalities, was selected as the recipient of the 2017 RhPAP Alberta Rural Community Physician Attraction and Retention Award. The Rural Community Award, presented annually, is co-sponsored by the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (AWNA), and the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP). (<https://www.rhpap.ca/news>).

General Health Statistics

Note: The City of Brooks is in the South Zone and the information listed below is the most current available data. Where possible, data has been accessed for the South Zone.

Community Mental Health

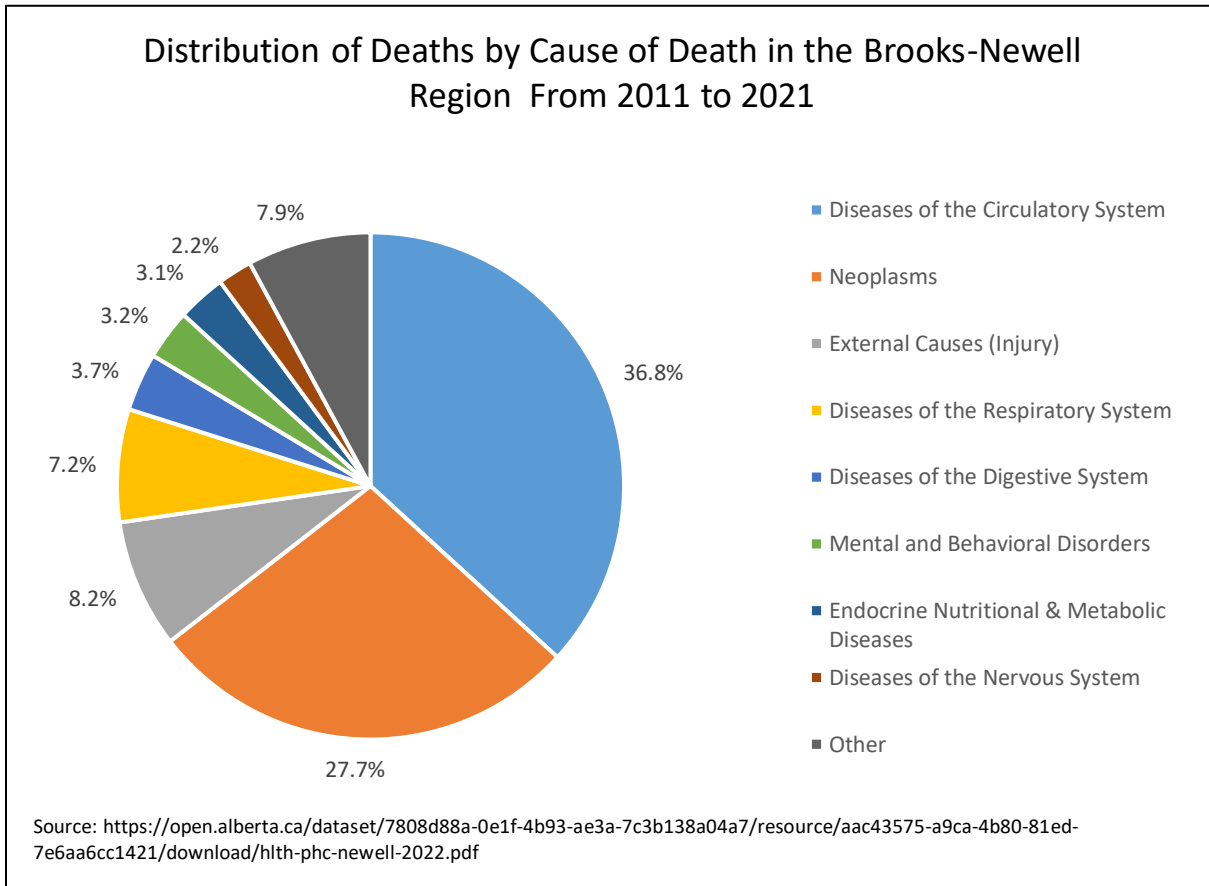
Community Mental Health Access by Age Group and Gender for the South Zone and Alberta⁸⁸						
Age Group	South Zone			Alberta		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
1-17	10.9%	8.0%	18.9%	11.4%	9.6%	21.1%
18-34	20.3%	14.4%	34.8%	18.2%	14.5%	32.8%
35-64	21.3%	18.0%	39.3%	19.5%	17.4%	36.9%
65+	4.4%	2.6%	7.0%	5.6%	3.7%	9.3%
Total Number of Distinct Individuals Accessing Community Mental Health⁸⁹	5,171	3,906	9,077	65,341	54,147	119,488

⁸⁷ <https://rhpap.ca/>

⁸⁸ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

⁸⁹ Distinct Individuals: patients who access Community Mental Health services during the fiscal year are counted only once regardless of how many services they accessed during this time.

Distribution of Deaths by Causes of Death

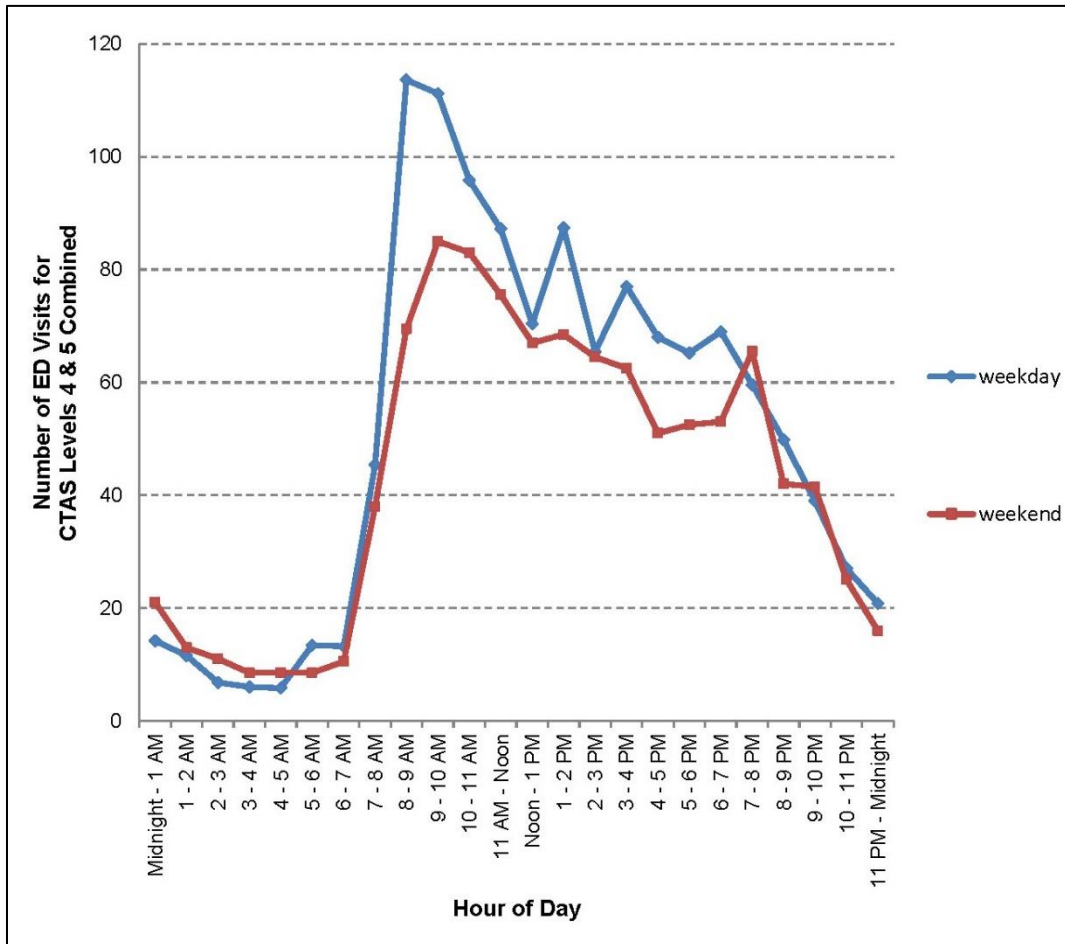


Emergency Visits

Emergency Visits for Patients Residing in the Brooks-Newell Region by Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) Level for Fiscal Years 2018/2019 to 2020/2021⁹⁰						
CTAS Level	2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Resuscitation (1) and Emergency (2) Combined	1,250	5.7	1,508	7.3	1,274	8.7
Urgent (3)	5,838	26.5	6,089	29.3	4,990	34.0
Semi-Urgent (4)	11,565	52.4	10,566	50.8	6,357	43.4
Non-Urgent (5)	3,146	14.3	2,398	11.5	1,839	12.5
Unknown	268	1.2	233	1.1	200	1.4
Total	22,067	100.0	20,794	100.0	14,660	100.0

⁹⁰ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

Total Hourly Number of Emergency Visits for Patients Residing in the Brooks-Newell Region for CTAS Levels 4 and 5 Combined (Fiscal Year 2020/2021)⁹¹



Brooks Health Centre



⁹¹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

Emergency Visit Rates

Age-Standardize Emergency Visit Rates (Per 100,000 Population) for Selected Conditions in 2020 ⁹²		
Conditions	Brooks-Newell Region	Alberta
Acute Upper Respiratory Infections	2,556.9	1,424.1
Influenza	762.9	334.1
Diseases of Middle Ear and Mastoid	601.8	266.8
Other Acute Lower Respiratory Infections	395.1	174.1
Mental and Behavioural Disorders Due to Psychoactive Substance Abuse	357.9	791.3
Diabetes Mellitus	287.2	261.0
Emphysema and Chronic Bronchitis	286.8	95.1
Asthma	194.0	193.5
Stroke	155.8	162.3
Renal Failure	110.4	95.7
Arthritis	8.1	11.1

Health Status Indicators

Health Status Indicators for South Zone and Alberta Residents for 2019 and 2020 ⁹³							
Category	Year	South Zone			Alberta		
		Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
<i>Mental Health Before (2019) and during (2020) COVID</i>							
Good, Very Good or Excellent	2019	86.6%	89.1%	87.7%	87.3%	90.4%	88.7%
	2020	70.2%	79.0%	74.6%	67.3%	77.5%	72.1%
Poor or Fair	2019	13.4%	10.9%	12.3%	12.7%	9.6%	11.3%
	2020	29.8%	21.0%	25.4%	32.7%	22.5%	27.9%
<i>Self-Perceived Stress Tolerance</i>							
Excellent or Very Good	2019	55.0%	71.9%	62.9%	62.6%	65.3%	63.5%
	2020	62.2%	58.6%	60.2%	61.2%	67.4%	63.8%
Poor or Fair	2019	45.0%	28.1%	37.1%	37.4%	34.7%	36.5%
	2020	37.8%	41.4%	39.8%	38.8%	32.6%	36.2%

⁹² <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

⁹³ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7808d88a-0e1f-4b93-ae3a-7c3b138a04a7/resource/aac43575-a9ca-4b80-81ed-7e6aa6cc1421/download/hlth-phc-newell-2022.pdf>

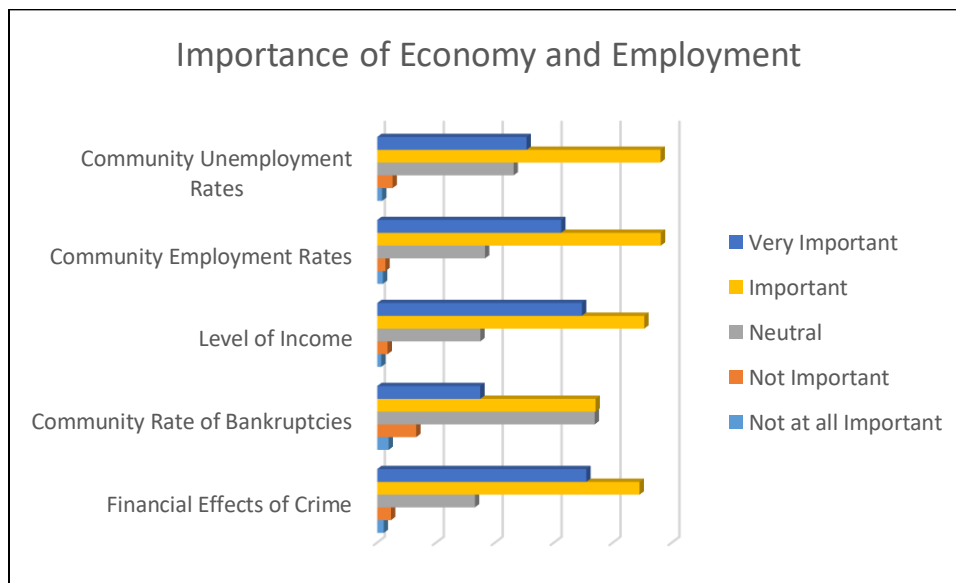
NEGATIVE GAP: ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT Factor

Ranked #4 for Level of Importance and #8 for Level of Satisfaction

This Factor was defined with the following variables:

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Community Unemployment Rate	Poverty
Community Employment Rate	Affordable Housing
Level of Income	Employment
Community Rate of Bankruptcies	
Financial Effect of Crime	

Importance of Economy and Employment Variables



FINDINGS:

- In 2022 all Importance variables (**Level of Income, Community Rate of Bankruptcies, Community Unemployment Rates and Community Employment Rate**) except the **Financial Effects of Crime** decreased in importance.
- The Financial Effects of Crime increased in importance from 2017 by 3.9%.
- The **Financial Effects of Crime** importance had the lowest level of Neutral responses at 16.6% in comparison to the 2017 survey where the **Level of Income** had the lowest level of Neutral responses at 14.1% and the highest level of important responses at 82.8%.
- The highest level of important response was for **Level of Income** in both surveys. In 2022 was Level of Income received at 80.1% importance ranking compared to 82.8% in 2017.
- **Unemployment Rates** Importance obtained 73.4% of Very Important or Important responses down from 76.8% in 2017. This is significant as The Unemployment Rate for Alberta during the

time of the survey in 2022 was lower (6.2%) than when the survey was completed in 2017(8.6%). However, it was significantly lower than the high unemployment rate (15.3%) reached in May of 2020 at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Importance of Community Rate of Bankruptcies** was the least importance variable in both 2017 and 2022. receiving 36.91% of Neutral responses, and 54.54% of Important or Very important responses. These findings are similar to the 2017 Study.

Changes from 2017 – 2022:

There was little change between the two tests from that in 2017. Economy and Employment was ranked #4 for Level of Importance in both 2017 and 2022. The level of Satisfaction was ranked 1 level higher at #8 in 2022 compared to #9 in 2017, creating a -4 Gap. In 2017, it ranked #4 for importance and #9 for satisfaction, a -5 Gap. This small change from the previous study suggests that Overall, the importance and satisfaction of the Economy and Employment to individuals within the City of Brooks has remained reasonably stable since the last study. There was a more significant change between 2013 and 2018 when the Economy and Unemployment were less important (ranked #5) but had a higher satisfaction level (ranked #7) resulting in only a -2 negative gap.

Level of Income

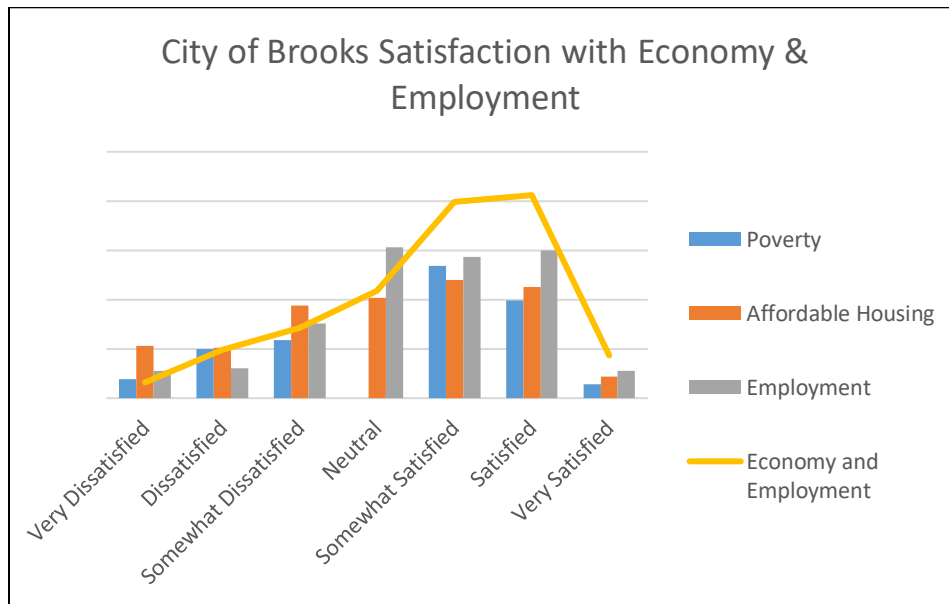
- 2022 finds that the Level of Income continues to be the most important variable but was considered less important than it was in 2017. 80.1% of respondents said it was important or very important compared to 82.8% in 2017.
- The median after-tax income of economic families in 2022 in the City of Brooks was \$90,000, the third highest in the region. This level is comparable to that for Canada \$(91,000), but less than that for Alberta (\$99,000). The median after-tax income for couples without children was considerably lower than for couples with children). The median after-tax income for couples with children is considerably below that for Canada and Alberta.

Median after-tax income of economic families in 2020 (\$)					
	Economic Families	Couples with Children	One-Parent Families	Couples with No Children	Single Person
Brooks	\$90,000	\$104,000	\$59,600	\$81,000	\$41,200
Alberta	\$99,000	\$141,000	\$72,000	\$89,000	\$43,600
Canada	\$91,000	\$136,000	\$70,000	\$79,000	\$38,400

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Overall Satisfaction with *Economy and Employment* was 64.7% (2017: 57.9%; 2013: 74.6%)

Economy and Employment Satisfaction Variables



Findings

- **Poverty** had an Overall Satisfaction level of only 35.69% compared to 40.32% in the previous survey. 2.02% were Very Satisfied, 14.31% were Satisfied and 19.36% were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 45.81%, 8.53% were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7.23% were Dissatisfied and 2.75% were Very Dissatisfied.
- **Affordable Housing** had an Overall Satisfaction level of 36.96% compared to 44.92% in 2017. 3.19% were Very Satisfied, 16.38% were Satisfied and 17.39% were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 34.35%, 13.62% were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7.39% were Dissatisfied and 7.68% were Very Dissatisfied.
- **Employment** had an Overall Satisfaction level of 46.87% compared to 44.28% in 2017. 4.09% were Very Satisfied, 21.90% were Satisfied and 20.88% were Somewhat Satisfied. Neutral responses were 33.58%, 11.09% were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.38% were Dissatisfied and 4.09% were Very Dissatisfied.

Changes 2017 – 2022

There are a few changes regarding the satisfaction of the Economy between the 2017 – 2022 reports. Though Employment satisfaction improved slightly from that in 2017, the satisfaction levels for both Poverty and Affordable Housing declined. Overall, in 2022, 28.69% of respondents were somewhat to very dissatisfied with affordable housing compared to 19.21% in 2017. There was also a decline in the satisfaction level of Poverty by 4.63%. Yet, the Overall satisfaction level of employment increased by 2.59%. This suggests that even though employment opportunities in the region have improved, it has not brought residents increased income opportunities.

Poverty

According to the 2021 Canadian Census, there were 1,285 households in the City of Brooks living in low income-based thresholds based on the Low-Income Measure; After Tax (LIM-AT) compared to 1,430 households in 2016. Though this is a slight decrease (1.4%) in the prevalence counts for all ages, there was an increase in prevalence for seniors of 1.5%. This Overall decrease in prevalence for 2021 is in line with decrease in Alberta and Canada. In comparison to 10 years ago, the low-income measure for Brooks has declined by 1.6% for all ages.

The 2021 Census Profile identified that the prevalence of low income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT) in the City of Brooks for children is higher than in Alberta, but slightly lower than that for Canada. For children aged 0-5 the prevalence for Brooks was higher than for Alberta and Canada.

The Prevalence of Low Income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LIM-AT)[1]						
	Brooks 2016	%	Alberta 2016	%	Canada 2016	%
All Ages	1430	10.2	363890	9.3	4809940	14.2
0 to 17 years (%)	625	16	114215	12.8	1163830	17
0 to 5 years (%)	255	18.6	41755	13.5	396095	17.8
18 to 64 years (%)	695	7.8	210870	8.2	2855290	13.2
65 years and over (%)	115	10	38800	8.6	790825	14.5

The Prevalence of Low Income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LIM-AT)[1]						
	Brooks 2021	%	Alberta 2021	%	Canada 2021	%
All Ages	1285	8.8	382820	9.2	4016065	11.1
0 to 17 years (%)	475	11.5	107130	11.2	854565	11.9
0 to 5 years (%)	185	14.8	36250	12	282315	12.7
18 to 64 years (%)	650	7.1	213795	8.1	2175755	9.7
65 years and over (%)	165	11.5	618190	10.6	985745	15

Source: 2016 and 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

With the Newell Region, the City of Brooks had the third highest median after-tax income for economic families, with only the County of Newell and Village of Duchess with higher incomes at \$91,000. Compared to Alberta, Brooks has a lower after-tax income for all categories of economic families, except for single persons who made \$2000 more in after tax income.

Median after-tax income of economic families in 2020 (\$)					
	Economic Families	Couples with Children	One-Parent Families	Couples with No Children	Single Person
Brooks	\$90,000	\$104,000	\$59,600	\$81,000	\$41,200
Alberta	\$99,000	\$120,000	\$66,000	\$89,000	\$39,200
Canada	\$91,000	\$116,000	\$64,000	\$79,000	\$34,800

Source: Statistics Canada - Census 2021

By income category, there is generally a reduction in the number of households with after tax income below \$49,999 and an increase in the number of households making more than \$80,000. This does not necessarily measure that families are better-off, but perhaps a measure of increased wages over time and a loss of lower income households moving out of the city to other opportunities. For 2021, these households made up 17.7% of all households in comparison to 23.1% in 2016.

Over 1/3 of households in the city have an after-tax income between \$100,000 and \$149,000. 14.7% of households have an after-tax income above \$125,000.

Household After-Tax Income Groups for Private Households in the City of Brooks				
	2016	2021	Percentage change	% of total in 2021
Under \$5,000	30	40	33.3%	0.6%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	50	20	-60.0%	0.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	70	35	-50.0%	0.5%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	120	40	-66.7%	0.6%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	180	130	-27.8%	1.9%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	145	180	24.1%	2.6%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	170	155	-8.8%	2.3%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	235	190	-19.1%	2.8%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	245	205	-16.3%	3.0%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	235	205	-12.8%	3.0%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	415	440	6.0%	6.4%
\$60,000 to \$69,999	480	445	-7.3%	6.5%
\$70,000 to \$79,999	510	460	-9.8%	6.7%
\$80,000 to \$89,999	430	440	2.3%	6.4%
\$90,000 to \$99,999	355	400	12.7%	5.8%
\$100,000 and over	1375	1740	26.5%	25.4%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	655	720	9.9%	10.5%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	340	480	41.2%	7.0%
\$150,000 and over	375	530	41.3%	7.7%

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

In 2016 1.9% of total income came from Employment Insurance benefits in the City of Brooks. Since 2020 was the start of the COVID-19 pandemic many individuals became unemployed when businesses shut down or reduced staffing. As a result, 6.5% of total income in 2020 was from COVID-19 income support and benefits and another 5.5% from Emergency and recovery benefits.⁹⁴

Government Benefits and Transfers in the City of Brooks in 2020		
	Number of recipients	Median \$ received
Number of government transfers recipients aged 15 years and over in private households in 2020	9400	7950
Number of employment insurance benefits recipients aged 15 years and over in private households in 2020	1345	5680
Number of COVID-19 emergency and recovery benefits recipients aged 15 years and over in private households in 2020	3900	6000

Unlike many upfront characteristics of poverty, there are many different groups who are affected by the problem. In the 2016 Canadian Census, Dissemination Area data for the City of Brooks revealed that a 5 areas within the City of Brooks were of interest for poverty concerns.⁹⁵

Dissemination data was not available for the 2021 census. Only 1 of these DAs had a substantially larger population of visible minorities than other groups. Hence, there was no correlation between poverty and the newcomer population. However, arriving immigrants into the City whether primary or secondary migrants often come with minimal financial resources or English skills, creating a risk for unemployment or only low-income opportunities.

The provincial government has attempted to alleviate some of the issues facing poverty. However, to date, the Alberta Minimum wage has not increased since October 1st, 2017 when it was set at \$15/hour, \$598/ Week for salespersons, and \$2,848/month for domestic employees (living in their employer's home).^{96, 97}

A general issue that is increasingly impacting minimum wage earners is the lack of finding full time employment and benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted poverty significantly in recent years, as many people lost their jobs due to the pandemic and its effects. The Government of Canada provided subsidies of \$2,000 every four weeks for a maximum of \$14,000 with the CERB program from 2020 to 2022. However, with layoffs continuing in many sectors and the increasing concern of a potential recession, life is still financially difficult for many Canadians.

The Government of Canada recently provided a 2022 update on their program Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy introduced in 2018 and the session in 2022 involved many conversations with

⁹⁴ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

⁹⁵ Grasslands Regional FCSS. 2018 Quality of Life #2 Report, City of Brooks

⁹⁶ Alberta Minimum Wage Guide: <https://www.alberta.ca/minimum-wage.aspx>

⁹⁷ Vibrant Communities Calgary Report, June 2017 - http://livingwagecanada.ca/files/2715/0718/6032/LivingWageBrief_062117.pdf

Canadians about the effects of poverty and what can be done. The original Bill proposed to entrench into legislation: (i) concrete poverty reduction targets (a 20 % reduction in poverty by 2020 and a 50 % reduction in poverty by 2030, relative to 2015 levels).⁹⁸ Based on the new Low Income Measure after tax data (LIM -AT) increases for not only the Newell Region, but for Alberta and Canada, these targets were not reached.

While the Government of Canada has been working hard to combat poverty, there is much that can still be done both structurally and individually to decrease poverty numbers across Canada and reduce the stigma surrounding poverty.

2017-2022 Poverty Comparison

With structural changes to the Oil and Gas industry and the COVID pandemic in 2020, Overall, poverty in a broader comparison has seemed to increase. Higher unemployment rates in 2020, business closures and recent inflation have contributed to less disposable incomes and rising costs.

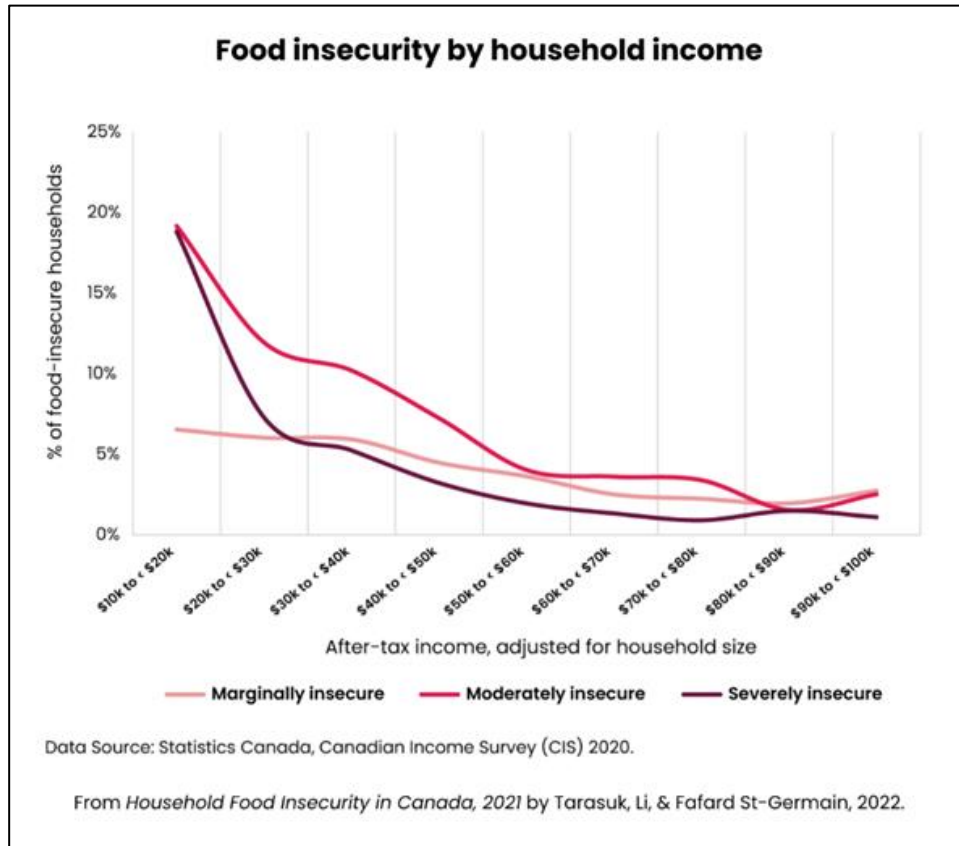
Only 35.69% of City of Brooks survey respondents were satisfied with the level of poverty and services available to them. This is slightly higher than 34.81% for the Newell Region. A larger percentage (45.81%) provided a neutral response rate. In addition, there was a 4.63% greater dissatisfaction of poverty in the current survey compared to that in 2018, a possible indication that poverty has impacted more households in recent years.

Like the previous Quality of Life study, such a high response rate for neutral satisfaction rates may indicate many respondents are not impacted by poverty or are unaware of programs and services in place to help those living in poverty. This could be further investigated with community groups to determine if a potential poverty awareness campaign might be useful to increase responsiveness to the condition of poverty within the city.

Food Insecurity

According to Proof Food Insecurity Policy Research Program, **Food insecurity** is a serious public health issue and may be defined as *the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints which negatively impacts physical, mental, and social health, and costs our healthcare system considerably. Statistics Canada began monitoring food insecurity in 2005 through the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). Since then, food insecurity has persisted across Canada, with over 5.8 million Canadians living in food insecure households⁹⁴. This high rate of household food insecurity has persisted through the past three years, with little change from 2019 to 2021.*

⁹⁸ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html>



Brooks & District Food Bank Use:

Food Bank Usage 2012 to October, 2022

Over the past 10 years, the Brooks & District Food Bank Foundation, which serves the Brooks-Newell Region has seen a fluctuation in the number of hampers and users.^{99,100}

Year	Hampers	Adults	Children
2012	2,160	1,818	1,531
2013	4,607	2,698	2,155
2014	1,111	738	610
2015	939	831	367
2016	1,595	1,259	668
2017	1,779	1,278	810
2018	1,008	716	386
2019	557	718	335
2020	656	1025	582
2021	525	680	444
2022	772	1014	758

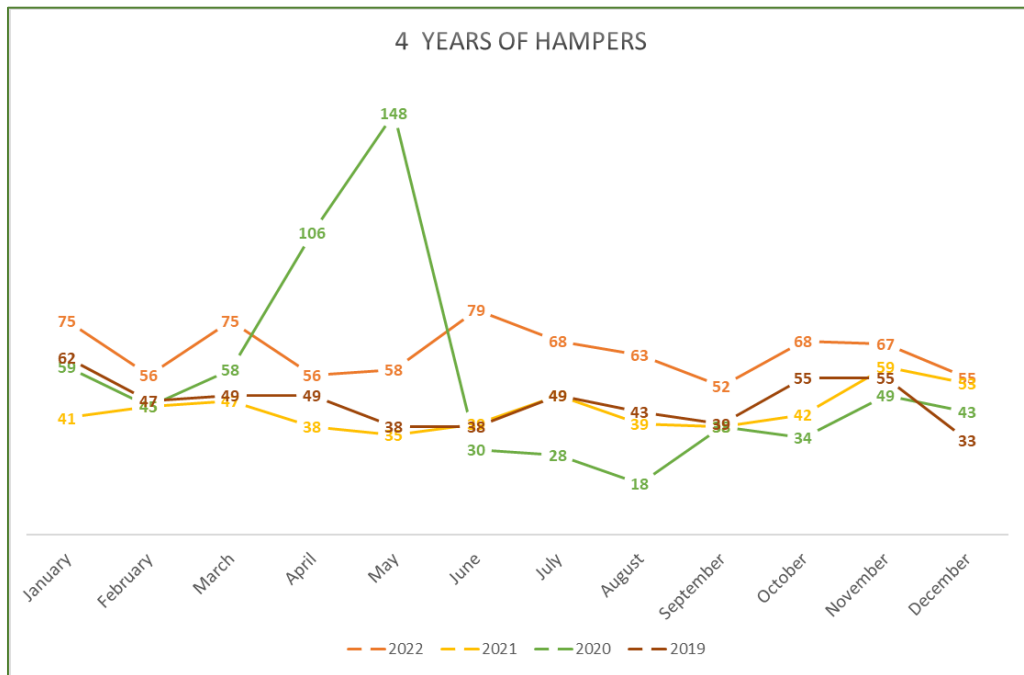
Food Bank Usage by Households type 2022	
Household Breakdown	
Single Parent w Children	27%
Two-Parent w Children	15%
Couple w No Children	8%
Non-Traditional	5%
Single	45%
Total	100%

Groups of concern in 2022 Percentages	
Women	43%
Post-Secondary Students	2%
Newcomers	12%
FNs	4%
Visible Minorities	29%
Disabled People	17%
Seniors	7%
Recently Unemployed	8%
Unhoused	11%

⁹⁹ Email: Gwen Cameron, Manager of Brooks Food Bank Foundation, November 02, 2018 Data for 2012 to 2017

¹⁰⁰ Email: Aurora Champlone, Manager of Brooks Food Bank Foundation, February 1, 2023 Data for 2018 to 2022

- A significant number of residents continue to access food bank services to help meet their basic needs:
- Single parents with children are the primary users of food bank hampers.
- Women comprise about 43% of users.
- 29% of users in 2022 were visible minorities.
- The increase in hampers distributed in Brooks was up 47% in 2022 compared to a year earlier. This is in comparison to a 34% increase for the province.¹⁰¹
- In Alberta about 45% of food bank users are families.¹⁰² In Brooks 42% of users are either single-parent or two parent families.



As seen in the chart above, there was a significant increase in the number of hampers distributed when the 2020 COVID pandemic affected local employment increasing the demand for hampers.

Affordable Housing

692 respondents answered the Affordable housing questionnaire. 233 respondents (33.8%) responded that they were Somewhat Satisfied or Satisfied with the levels of affordable housing. This is down from 40.1% in the 2017 survey. In 2022, 3.2% were very satisfied in comparison to 4.9% in 2017.

28.7% of respondents indicated they were somewhat to very dissatisfied with affordable housing in Brooks, significantly higher than the 19.2% in 2017. This suggests that even with efforts to provide affordable housing, increases with income have not kept pace with rising housing costs despite low interest rates during this time.

¹⁰¹ <https://foodbanksalberta.ca/release-food-insecurity-in-alberta-highest-in-canada/>, accessed February 5, 2023

¹⁰² <https://foodbanksalberta.ca/release-food-insecurity-in-alberta-highest-in-canada/>, accessed February 5, 2023

Over 50% of all housing in the City of Brooks are single-detached houses, followed by apartments in buildings with less than 5 stories. Of these dwellings 64.8% are owned by the occupants, leaving approximately 1/3 of units being rented within the City of Brooks.¹⁰³ This compares to 72% ownership for the Newell Region and up to 85% ownership in the County of Newell and the Village of Duchess.

Occupied private dwellings by structural type of dwelling in the City of Brooks				
	Brooks	Percent of Total	Brooks Newell Region	Brooks as a % of the Region
Total - Occupied private dwellings by structural type of dwelling - 100% data	5140		8600	59.8%
Single-detached house	2800	54.5%	5705	49.1%
Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys	0	0.00%	0	
Other attached dwelling	1945	37.8%	2065	94.2%
Semi-detached house	405	7.9%	415	97.6%
Row house	560	10.9%	630	88.9%
Apartment or flat in a duplex	180	3.5%	190	94.7%
Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys	800	15.6%	815	98.2%
Other single-attached house	0	0.00%	15	0.0%
Movable dwelling	395	7.7%	830	47.6%

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Affordable housing is subject to the major industry players within the community as the economics of rental housing often fall into a supply and demand paradox. Rental properties, particularly single-family dwellings, are often priced according to the Oil and Gas industry which has a large disposable income. Other industries like food processing, hospitality, retail, and agriculture, to name a few, are often not as freely able to pay what renters are looking for because of the disparity in disposable income. Residents most affected by the affordability of housing are newcomers, temporary foreign workers, seniors (especially single seniors), single parents and persons on Alberta Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) or social assistance.

Thus, the requirement for more affordable housing continues to be discussed by community organizations. The City of Brooks identified affordable housing as a priority in 2018 and spearheaded, an Affordable Housing Strategy with the belief it is important to consider housing needs affordable and accessible for all residents of all socio-economic and demographic backgrounds.¹⁰⁴

The average monthly shelter cost in the City was the highest for the region, but is below the average for both Alberta and Canada. In general renting costs are about 80% of that for the monthly cost of owning a home. Home owners however, are more likely to spend less than 30% of their income on shelter compared to renters.

¹⁰³ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/2525/Brooks-Affordable-Housing-Strategy-2019-Final-Report?bidId=>

Average Monthly Shelter Costs by Community			% of households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter	
	Owned Dwellings	Rented Dwellings	Owner Households	Tenant Households
Brooks	\$1,336	\$1,074	11.7%	21.6%
Alberta	\$1,678	\$1,332	16.0%	34.0%
Canada	\$1,498	\$1,209	14.8%	33.2%

Source: Statistics Canada - Census 2021

Affordable and Subsidized Housing

In 2021, The Brooks Housing Society and the Newell Housing Association amalgamated to become the Newell Housing Foundation.¹⁰⁵ The organization manages subsidized housing for low-income individuals and administers the provincial Rental Assistance Benefit to tenants in need for all communities. There are a total of 190 senior supportive living units, 41 subsidized family housing units and 133 senior self-contained apartments located throughout the Newell Region. The majority of these are located in the City of Brooks but some are available within the smaller communities of Bassano, Rosemary, Duchess and Tilley.

Seniors' Self-contained apartments

- 110 seniors self-contained apartments in Brooks
- 6 seniors self-contained apartments in Rosemary
- 6 seniors self-contained apartments in Tilley
- 4 seniors self-contained apartments in Duchess
- 8 seniors self-contained apartments in Bassano¹⁰⁶

One measure of affordable housing is the average monthly cost of rented dwellings, along with the percentage of tenant households in Subsidized Housing and the cost of that housing as a percentage of income. Tenants in Brooks spend an average of \$1074 per month on rent. 15.7% of these households are subsidized housing. Compared to Alberta and Canada, Brooks has a higher percentage of tenants in subsidized housing. However, the percentage of tenants spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs in Brooks is 21.6% significantly less than that for Alberta (34%) and for Canada (33.2%). This suggests, that though tenants are subsidized, the Overall cost of shelter is more affordable than in other locations across the country.

¹⁰⁵ <https://newhf.ca/about/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://newhf.ca/about/>

Subsidized Housing - City of Brooks			
	Average Monthly Costs for Rented Dwellings	Percentage of tenant households in Subsidized Housing	% of Subsidized tenant households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter
Brooks	\$1,074	15.7%	21.6%
Alberta	\$1,332	9.1%	34.0%
Canada	\$1,209	11.7%	33.2%

Source: Statistics Canada - Census 2021

Brooks Affordable Housing Income Thresholds Comparatives ¹⁰⁷				
Unit Size	2018	2022	2023	Change Between 2018 and 2023
Bachelor	\$28,500	\$28,500	\$33,500	\$5,000 +
One Bedroom	\$34,000	\$35,500	\$39,000	\$5,000 +
Two Bedroom	\$38,000	\$41,000	\$45,500	\$7,500 +
Three Bedroom	\$49,500	\$48,000	\$52,000	\$2,500 +
Four Bedroom	\$57,000	\$56,000	\$56,000	\$1,000 -

City of Brooks Affordable Housing Strategy

In 2018, the City of Brooks began working with an outside consultant to develop a housing study, which will assess current needs and develop a City of Brooks Affordable Housing Strategy to help all residents attain affordable housing. The City of Brooks identified housing as a priority in 2017 and approved of the study in the 2018 budget. City residents provided their input through an online survey (September, 2018) and/or Open House (held on October 11, 2018). The City of Brooks Affordable Housing Strategy was then released in 2019.¹⁰⁸

The City of Brooks Affordable Housing Strategy 2019 examined closely the current supply of affordable housing and/or below-market housing, what the needs were and developed short, medium and long-term solutions to addressing affordable housing in Brooks. These solutions are as follows:

- “Short-Term Recommendations: 1-2 Years
 - Adopt a Clear, Consistent and Usable Definition of Affordable Housing (as follows):
 - Affordable Housing: is housing that costs no more than 30% of a household’s before-tax income and meets recognized safety (adequacy) and suitability standards. For planning and regulation purposes, housing is deemed to be:
 - Affordable: if it falls within 30% of the Government of Alberta’s Income Thresholds for Brooks (published annually);

¹⁰⁷ <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/income-thresholds>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/2525/Brooks-Affordable-Housing-Strategy-2019-Final-Report?bidId=>

- Adequate: if it does not require any major repairs or upgrades to address structural issues (as defined by the Alberta Building Code) that would compromise the health and safety of the occupants; and,
- Suitable: if it is large enough to avoid overcrowding (as defined by National Occupancy Standards).
- Engage in Municipal Capacity Building re: Affordable Housing Tools and Best Practices
- Establish a Special Implementation/Advisory Committee
- Develop and Implement a Community-Based Education and Awareness Program
- Conduct a Non-Profit Land Inventory Review
- Encourage Innovative Housing Solutions for Seniors
- Promote “Housing First”
- Contribute Municipal Land for Affordable Housing
- Investigate and Pursue a Full Range of Potential Funding Sources
- Support Mechanisms to Minimize/Distribute Risk and Share Resources Promote Labour and Trades Training Programs
- Medium-Term Recommendations: 3-5 Years
 - Promote Social Enterprises
 - Explore the Creation of a Home Share Program
 - Consider Providing Additional Municipal Funding and Supports
 - Assist Local Non-Profits in Accessing Preferred-Rate Financing
 - Promote Mutual Self-Help Homeownership
 - Develop Preferred Location Criteria and Neighbourhood Thresholds Create a Package of Development Incentives
- Long-Term Recommendations: 6-10 Years
 - Explore First-Time Homeownership Assistance
 - Explore Innovative Financing Models
- Ongoing Recommendations: No Fixed Timeframe
 - Continue to Strengthen Community, Regional and Provincial Networks
 - Continue to Explore Innovative Land Use Zoning
 - Develop an Age-Friendly Community Plan
 - Develop a “Community Guide to Affordable Housing Options and Priorities”
 - Additional examples to promote (including those contained within the preceding recommendations):
 - Universal/Barrier-Free Design
 - Flexible Housing Design
 - Environmentally-Friendly/Sustainable Housing Model
 - Congregate/Shared Living Spaces¹⁰⁹

As of 2019, “Brooks currently has an estimated 800+ units/spaces of affordable, supportive and/or below-market housing serving a range of housing needs and household groups (which, when combined, represents approximately 15% of the total housing stock in Brooks), including:

- 21 family violence shelter beds/spaces operated by the Brooks & District Women’s Safe Shelter Society;

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/2525/Brooks-Affordable-Housing-Strategy-2019-Final-Report?bidId=>

- 18 supported living beds/spaces for persons with disabilities (including 10 group home spaces operated by The Champion’s Centre and 8 adults receiving in-house staffing and supports through the Newell Community Action Group);
- 41 Community Housing units for low-income families with children operated by the Newell Housing Association;
- 200+ private households receiving rent subsidies offered through the Newell Housing Association supporting a range of low- and modest-income households;
- 87 near- and below-market rental units provided by the Brooks Housing Society supporting a range of low- and modest- income households;
- 11 perpetually affordable/resale restricted homes for low-income families with children provided by Habitat for Humanity (9 homes currently with an additional 2 homes pending);
- 8 student housing units (for up to 32 students or a combination of students, staff and tenants from the broader community) owned and operated by Medicine Hat College – Brooks Campus; and,
- 409 units/spaces of affordable and/or supportive seniors’ housing in Brooks, including:
 - 137 Independent Living units operated by the Newell Housing Association (110 units) and AgeCare (27 units);
 - 148 Supportive Living – Level 2 (Lodge) spaces operated by the Newell Foundation;
 - 109 Supportive Living – Level 3, Level 4 and Level 4D spaces operated by AgeCare; and,
 - 15 Long-Term Care spaces (with nine more spaces pending) operated by Alberta Health Services.¹¹⁰

In 2023, the City of Brooks has been discussing strategies to increase affordable and attainable housing. In June, 2023, the City of Brooks announced a *New Residential New Build Incentive Policy* to encourage development of housing in Brooks.

An excerpt from a statement by Mayor John Petrie captures the issue:

The current state of housing availability in Brooks is not ideal with extremely low inventory of homes for sale and a rental vacancy rate well below the provincial average at 2% (the lowest it has been in over two decades). City Council is well aware of this issue as we have had multiple discussions with potential developers, local property owners and local businesses trying to find solutions for the short, medium and long term. There is an immediate need for more dwelling units of every type – apartments, condos, townhouses and detached homes for both rent and purchase. Looking ahead to the next two- to three-years, there are a number of development applications that have been approved and will relieve some of the pressures on the housing market. There is a 100+ unit townhouse development, a 43-unit apartment building, a 4-plex of rental suites and 20 new single-family detached homes. However, there is a risk that not all of these projects will be completed and the timeline for the units to become available may not be immediate. Access to safe and stable housing helps create inclusive communities and makes our City an amazing place to live and work for citizens while allowing employers to sustain business activities. It needs no emphasis that attracting and retaining workers has been a continuous struggle for rural communities.¹¹¹.

The Brooks Housing Society is also currently pursuing a plan to build additional affordable housing units to accommodate larger families to expand their current affordable housing stock. This will also help meet a major housing shortfall in the community.

¹¹⁰ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/2525/Brooks-Affordable-Housing-Strategy-2019-Final-Report?bidId=>

¹¹¹ Email: Lisa Tiffin, Manager, Community Development, City of Brooks, May 31, 2023

Employment

699 respondents answered the Employment satisfaction question. 293 respondents (46.9%) responded that they were Somewhat to very Satisfied with employment. This is up from 44.3% in the 2017 survey. However, about one third of respondents (35.6%) answered with a neutral response. Only 19.6% of respondents were somewhat to very dissatisfied with employment compared to 25.2% in 2017. This may be due to the timing of the survey as employment was improving in 2021 after the shutting down of business and laying off of employees a year earlier.

At the time of the survey and the Canadian Census, Brooks had an unemployment rate of 8.8% with no significant difference for men or women.¹¹² Of all the municipalities in the region, only the County of Newell had a lower rate. Five years earlier, the unemployment rate in Brooks was 9.3%. At that time, the unemployment rate for men was 2.7% higher for men than women.¹¹³

Since spring 2021, the Alberta unemployment rate has continued to decline to just under 6% in February 2023. Similarly, though not recorded separately, the local unemployment rate has also declined.

According to the Canada Census, The City of Brooks workforce participation rate, the percent of individuals in the work force was 68.6% in 2021, is down from 74.6% in 2016, but at almost an identical rate for Alberta (68%). In addition, the employment rate measure of 62.6% is down from 67.7% five years earlier, but 2% better than that for Alberta (2.4%). A smaller percentage of the population are engaged in employment in comparison to five years earlier whether due to less available employment or voluntarily not participating in the labour force.

Due to the pandemic and the changing industry environment in Brooks, the number of government transfer recipients has increased by over 30% in the past 5 years. In 2021, there were 9400 recipients (15.2% of total market income) compared to 6205 recipients in 2015 which comprised only 8.8% of market income. The other measures of employment insurance and COVID19 benefits were not recorded in the previous census.

Government Benefits and Transfers in the City of Brooks in 2020		
	Number of recipients	Median \$ received
Number of government transfers recipients aged 15 years and over in private households in 2020	9400	7950
Number of employment insurance benefits recipients aged 15 years and over in private households in 2020	1345	5680
Number of COVID-19 emergency and recovery benefits recipients aged 15 years and over in private households in 2020	3900	6000

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹¹² 2016 and 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹¹³ 2016 and 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Type of Work

With the pandemic came changes in much of the province with the location of work for individuals. In Alberta 22% of the labour force worked at home in 2021. In comparison, the labour force in Brooks “worked at usual place”. Only 5.4% of the labour force worked from home, just 1.8% greater than in 2016.

City of Brooks Place of work status for the employed labour force aged 15 years and over in private households - 25% sample data					Alberta	
	# of employed		% of labour force		% of labour force	2020
	2016	2020	2016	2020		
Total Labour Force	7245	7030				
Worked at home	250	375	3.5%	5.3%		22.0%
Worked outside Canada	0	30	0.0%	0.4%		0.3%
No fixed workplace address	930	1000	12.8%	14.2%		15.7%
Worked at usual place	6060	5630	83.6%	80.1%		62.0%

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

There are 655 individuals self-employed in the City of Brooks or about 8.7% of the total labour force aged 15 and over below that for Alberta at 15.5% and Canada at 14.4%. This is relatively unchanged from 5 years ago when 9% of the labour force was self-employed.

Top Occupations

Employment in the City of Brooks is concentrated in three National Occupation categories. These occupations – Manufacturing and Utilities, Trades and Transport, Sales and Services require a labour force that generally needs to work away from home. Nearly two thirds (65.5%) of occupations in the city can be found in Manufacturing and Utilities (27.2%), Trades, transport and equipment operators (16.8%) and related occupations and Sales and Service occupations (21.5%). For Alberta as a whole, these occupations account for only 46.5% of all occupations.

Manufacturing and Utilities, which includes food processing, is the number one occupation category for Brooks residents. Many of these occupations are at JBS Canada, the Region’s largest employer. Though the facility is located in the County of Newell, the employees generally reside in the City of Brooks.

Top Occupations for the Employed Labour Force (2016)						
National Occupation Category	City of Brooks			Alberta		
	# of jobs	% of total labour	Rank	# of jobs	% of total labour	Rank
6. Sales and service occupations	1665	20.8%	1	491495	21.3%	1
9. Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	1635	20.5%	2	73070	3.2%	8
7. Trades; transport and equipment operators and related occupations	1280	16.0%	3	406495	18.0%	2

Top Occupations for the Employed Labour Force (2021)						
National Occupation Category	City of Brooks			Alberta		
	# of jobs	% of total labour	Rank	# of jobs	% of total labour	Rank
9. Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	2040	27.2%	1	83895	3.7%	8
6. Sales and service occupations	1610	21.5%	2	538930	23.5%	1
7. Trades; transport and equipment operators and related occupations	1260	16.8%	3	441955	19.3%	2

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Top Industries

The tables below show the change in the employed labour force engaged in the City of Brooks over the past 5 years. Overall, the employed labour force has been reduced by 290 jobs or 3.7%. Except for Manufacturing, Retail Trade and Health Care, all other industries have had a reduction in the number of the employed.

Manufacturing continues to be the main industry in Brooks. In fact, its dominance has increased from 22.6% to 31.4% of the employed labour force. That is, nearly one third of all jobs in the region are in one industry.

As the largest municipality by population in the region, Brooks acts as the service and health center for its surrounding population. Retail Trade continues to be the second largest industry with 10.9% of the employed, up 1.3% from 2016. In 2021, Health Care and Social Assistance became the third top industry with 735 employed or 9.8% of the labour force, up 2.4% from 5 years ago.

Employment in Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction declined by 20.1%, employing only 555 people in 2021 compared to 695 in 2016. A more significant change occurred the previous five years. Brooks has only 41.6% of the employment it had 10 years earlier for this industry. In 2011, this industry employed 1335 people compared to the 555 people employed in the industry today primarily due to structural and technological changes within the industry.

It appears that employment lost due to industry changes and due to the COVID-19 pandemic have not returned by early 2021 when the Canadian Census occurred.



Although the JBS Food Canada meatpacking plant is located in the County of Newell, most of the personnel live in the City of Brooks. JBS brings tremendous economic and social benefit to the City of Brooks.

City of Brooks - Top Industries for the Employed Labour Force North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)				
	2021		2016	
	Number	%	Number	%
31-33 Manufacturing	2355	31.4%	1760	22.6%
44-45 Retail trade	815	10.9%	750	9.6%
62 Health care and social assistance	735	9.8%	575	7.4%
21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	555	7.4%	690	8.9%
61 Educational services	450	6.0%	480	6.2%
72 Accommodation and food services	400	5.3%	555	7.1%
23 Construction	390	5.2%	480	6.2%
81 Other services (except public administration)	330	4.4%	370	4.7%
56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	235	3.1%	290	3.7%
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	230	3.1%	275	3.5%
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	200	2.7%	255	3.3%
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	190	2.5%	340	4.4%
91 Public administration	170	2.3%	335	4.3%
41 Wholesale trade	135	1.8%	200	2.6%
52 Finance and insurance	120	1.6%	140	1.8%
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	70	0.9%	100	1.3%
22 Utilities	50	0.7%	55	0.7%
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	50	0.7%	95	1.2%
51 Information and cultural industries	20	0.3%	35	0.4%
55 Management of companies and enterprises	0	0.0%	10	0.1%
Total - Labour force aged 15 years and over	7500		7790	

Source: 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)



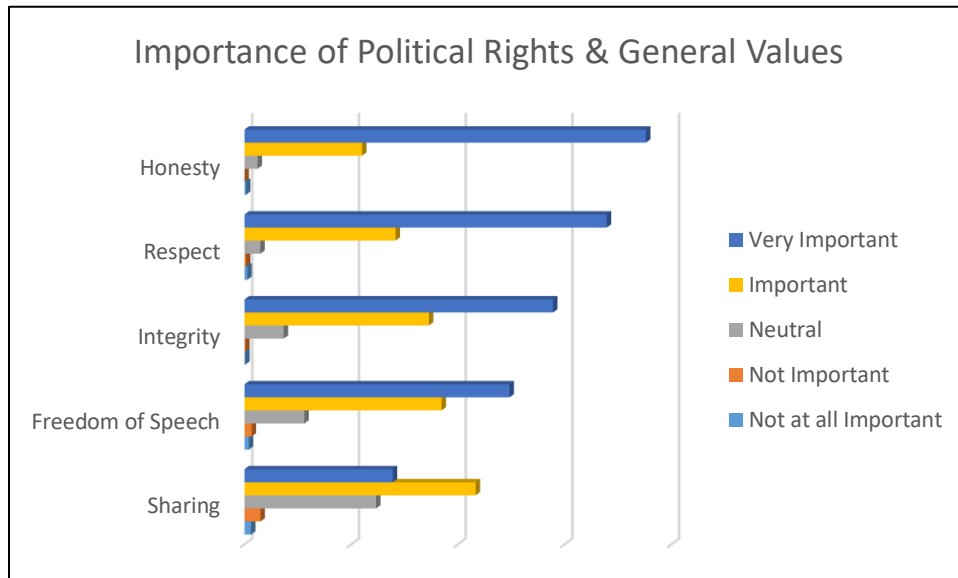
NEGATIVE GAP: POLITICAL RIGHTS AND GENERAL VALUES Factor

Ranked #7 for Level of Importance and #9 for Level of Satisfaction

This Factor was defined with the following variables:

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Honesty	English as a Second Language
Respect	Discrimination
Integrity	Immigration
Freedom of Speech	
Sharing	

Importance of Political Rights and General Values Variables



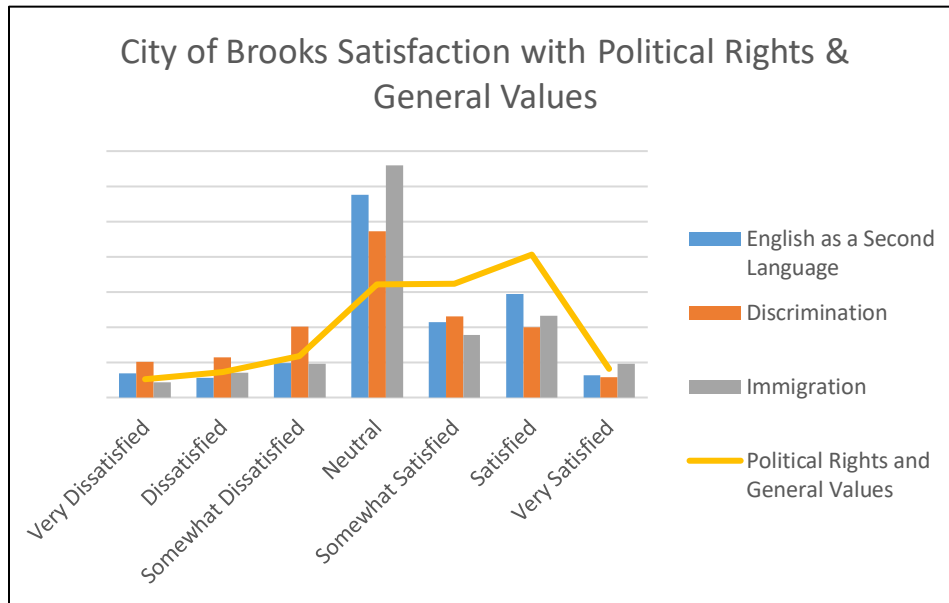
FINDINGS:

- Respondents were nearly 100% in agreement that **Honesty** (97.3%) and **Respect** (96.2%) were Very Important to Important.
- **Integrity** had an Overall Importance of 92.4% for this study, which is an increase from 87.7% in 2017.
- The Importance of **Sharing** had significantly more Neutral responses (24.7%) and Not Important to Not at all Important responses (4.2%) than the other variables, which is similar to 2013 and 2017.
- **Honesty** had the most Very Important responses at 75.2%, which is an increase from 72.2% in 2017. While high, this response is still a decrease from the 2013 response of 81.8%.
- 67.9% of respondents thought **Respect** was Very Important, compared to 68.5% in 2017 and 71.9% in 2013.
- 57.8% of respondents thought **Integrity** was Very Important, compared to 52.1% in 2017 and 55.4% in 2013.

- 49.7% of respondents thought **Freedom of Speech** was Very Important, compared to 55.8% in 2017 and 54.4% in 2013.
- 27.8% of respondents thought **Sharing** was Very Important, compared to 28.4% in 2017 and 34.3% in 2013.

Overall Satisfaction with Political Rights and General Values was 59%. (2017: 68%; 2013: 67%).

Satisfaction with Political Rights and General Values Variables



FINDINGS:

- **English as a Second Language** had an Overall Satisfaction level of 41.8% (286), which is a decrease from 2017. 4.7% (32) were Very Satisfied, 21.5% (147) were Satisfied, and 15.6% (107) were Somewhat Satisfied. 42% (288) were Neutral, 7.2% (49) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.1% (28) were Dissatisfied, and 5% (34) were Very Dissatisfied. English as a Second Language had an Overall Satisfaction level of 44.9% (339) in 2017, which was a slight increase from 43.9% for 2013. 9.1% (68) were Very Satisfied, 20.5% (153) were Satisfied, and 15.3% (114) were Somewhat Satisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 8.4%, 19.2% and 16.4%, respectively. In 2017, 37.3% (278) were Neutral, 7.6% (57) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 6.4% (48) were Dissatisfied, and 3.8% (28) were Very Dissatisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 32.9%, 8.4%, 6.6% and 8.4%, respectively.
- **Discrimination** had an Overall Satisfaction level of 35.4% (244), which is a decrease from 2017. 4.2% (39) were Very Satisfied, 14.5% (100) were Satisfied, and 16.7% (115) were Somewhat Satisfied. 34.3% (236) were Neutral, 14.7% (101) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 8.3% (57) were Dissatisfied and 7.4% (51) were Very Dissatisfied. Discrimination had an Overall Satisfaction level of 39.8% (295) in 2017, which is a slight decrease from 39.9% for the 2013. 5.8% (43) were Very Satisfied, 17.8% (132) were Satisfied, and 16.2% (120) were Somewhat Satisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 5.9%, 16.6% and 17.3%, respectively. In 2017, 33.2% (246) were Neutral, 13.5% (100) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 8% (59) were Dissatisfied, and 5.7% (42) were Very Dissatisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 32.6%, 14.3%, 5.9% and 7.3%, respectively.

- **Immigration** had an Overall Satisfaction level 36.8% (253), which is a decrease from 2017. 7% (48) were Very Satisfied, 16.9% (116) were Satisfied, and 12.9% (89) were Somewhat Satisfied. 48% (330) were Neutral, 7% (48) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 5.1% (35) were Dissatisfied and 3.2% (22) were Very Dissatisfied. Immigration had an Overall Satisfaction level of 43.6% (325) in 2017, which is an increase from 37.4% for 2013. 7% (52) were Very Satisfied, 22.3% (166) were Satisfied, and 14.4% (107) were Somewhat Satisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 7%, 16.4% and 14.1%, respectively. In 2017, 40.5% (302) were Neutral, 8.1% (60) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.9% (29) were Dissatisfied, and 3.9% (29) were Very Dissatisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 42.5%, 5.8%, 7% and 7.3%, respectively.
- Although most respondents expressed some Satisfaction with English as a Second Language, Discrimination and Immigration, between 105 and 209 respondents expressed a level of Dissatisfaction. 34 (28 in 2017) were Very Dissatisfied with English as a Second Language, 51 (42 in 2017) were Very Dissatisfied with Discrimination, and 22 (29 in 2017) were Very Dissatisfied with Immigration. The numbers for 2013 were 51, 44 and 45 respectively. Although there has been improvement in the Very Dissatisfied category Overall since 2013, these results still suggest that some residents may be experiencing some difficulty in their community.

English as a Second Language Programs

Respondents were generally Very Satisfied to Satisfied (26.1%) or Neutral (42%) with **English as a Second Language** Programs. There has been a slight decrease of respondents that were general Very Satisfied to Somewhat Satisfied (41.8%), which was 44.6% in 2017 and 43.9% in 2013. Respondents that were Neutral increased from 37.3% in 2017 and 32.9% in 2013 to 42% in 2022.

Medicine Hat College (MHC) – Brooks Campus offers an English as a Second Language for New Canadians (ESLC) program and LINC program. The ESLC program offers CLBs 4 through 6, and the LINC program offers CLBs 5-8.^{114,115}

Employment opportunities are very limited for immigrants who do not speak English and French (to a lesser degree) in the City of Brooks. The Federal Government requires language proficiency in English or French, which amounts to taking a language test or other options, as part of the requirement for permanent residency and citizenship. The Family Sponsorship route to permanent residency (sponsoring a spouse, for example), however, does not require a language test for newcomers.^{116,117} Eligible individuals aged 18 to 54 applying for citizenship must also provide evidence of language proficiency in English or French (unless it is waived due to a medical condition, such as a hearing impairment), but there are a variety of avenues for which this can be completed.¹¹⁸ You must either show that you passed a third party language test, provide evidence that you attended or are currently attending a secondary or post-secondary English or French-speaking institution (either in Canada or abroad), or show that you were enrolled in a government-funded language training program and passed a CLB4 or higher. Some immigrants arrive in Canada with very little prior schooling due to certain circumstances (family responsibilities, conflict, poverty, etc.), and this may create challenges for them to obtain a level of English that

¹¹⁴ <https://www.mhc.ab.ca/ProgramsandCourses/Academic-Programs/Programs-of-Study/English-as-a-Second-Language-for-New-Canadians>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.mhc.ab.ca/ProgramsandCourses/Academic-Programs/Programs-of-Study/LINC>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/family-sponsorship.html>

¹¹⁷ To be a sponsor you must be at least 18 years old and a: Canadian citizen, registered in Canada as an Indian under the Canadian Indian Act, or a permanent resident of Canada living in Canada. If you are a Canadian citizen living outside Canada, you must show proof that you plan to live in Canada when person(s) you sponsor become a permanent resident.

¹¹⁸ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/guide-0002-application-canadian-citizenship-under-subsection-5-1-adults-18-years-older.html#Step1>

gives access to better paying employment.¹¹⁹ This may explain why the jobs available at the meat processing plant in Brooks are attractive to many immigrants due to the requirement of Basic English language skills rather than more advanced English required in other fields of employment.

The Brooks Community Adult Learning Council (BCALC) offers a variety of language programs. Their Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is available for newcomers who are permanent residents (not Canadian citizens) and refugees who want English language instruction.¹²⁰ To qualify for LINC, applicants must be at least 16 years of age and have a Canadian Level Benchmarks (CLB) referral to determine placement into the most appropriate class.¹²¹ The CLB levels offered by BCALC are pre-benchmark to level 4. There are currently 24 LINC classes, which are staggered three times a day to accommodate shift workers and focuses on a variety of themes and skills. BCALC also provides English Language Learning (ELL) classes for Temporary Foreign Workers, Permanent Residents and Canadian Citizens. On top of language programs, BCALC provides adult literacy courses (such as Canadian History for Newcomers to Canada and Numeracy Math Skills), technology courses and youth courses (such as babysitting and home alone).¹²²



A Success Story!
BCALC English Language Learning Students

2022 Unemployment Rates for Immigrants aged 25 to 54 in Canada (All Education Levels):

- Landed immigrants – 5.3%
- Immigrants, landed 5 or less years earlier – 7.7%
- Immigrants, landed more than 5 to 10 years earlier – 4.9%
- Immigrants, landed more than 10 years earlier – 4.6%
- Born in Canada – 3.9%¹²³

Discrimination

Respondents were generally Neutral (34.5%) or Very Satisfied to Somewhat Satisfied (35.4%) with the **Discrimination** variable. The percentage for Neutral responses in 2017 was 33.2% (32.6% in 2013), and 39.8% for Very Satisfied to Somewhat Satisfied in 2017 (39.9% in 2013). The percentage of respondents who were

¹¹⁹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/immigrants-refugees-literacy-programs-calgary-1.4586908>
¹²⁰ <http://brooksllearning.ca/linc/>
¹²¹ <http://brooksllearning.ca/linc/>
¹²² <http://brooksllearning.ca/>
¹²³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410008701>

Somewhat Dissatisfied to Very Dissatisfied was relatively high at 30.3%, which is an increase from 27.1% in 2017. The percentage in 2013 was 27.5%.

Incidents of discrimination are a challenge to quantify in any community, but one accepted measure is the number of hate crimes reported by the police. "Police-reported hate crime is defined as a criminal violation against a person or property motivated by hate, based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor. In addition to police-reported incidents that involve a hate crime motivation, there are four specific offences listed as hate propaganda and hate crimes in the *Criminal Code* of Canada: advocating genocide; incitement of hatred in a public place that is likely to lead to a breach of the peace [public incitement of hatred]; wilful promotion of hatred, all when directed against an identifiable group, and; mischief motivated by hate in relation to property primarily used for religious worship that, in late 2017, was expanded to include certain other kinds of property primarily used by an identifiable group. In addition, subparagraph 718.2(a)(i) of the *Criminal Code* allows for increased penalties when sentencing any criminal offence, such as assault or mischief, where there is evidence that the offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hatred based on various criteria as set out in that subparagraph. These are also considered hate crimes."¹²⁴

Hate Crime Rates in Canada (2020)

A rate of hate crime for selected groups was calculated to estimate the number of police-reported hate crime incidents per 100,000 individuals in the target population. This rate should not be interpreted as a victimization rate, as it also includes crimes where no direct victim was involved (e.g. public graffiti). Instead, it takes into account the fact that hate crimes not only affect their immediate victims, but also have an impact on the populations they target. Even a 'victimless' crime, such as hate graffiti written in a public place, may have a broad effect on the population it targets¹²⁵.

According to the 2021 Federal Census, 23% of Canada's population (more than 8.3 million people) reported that they are currently, or were at one time, a landed immigrant or permanent resident.¹²⁶ This ethnocultural diversity is near the highest level ever recorded since Confederation, which was 22.3% in 1921. With changing demographics, the potential can arise for acts of discrimination between individuals or groups. When a criminal act is motivated by hate, it is considered a hate crime. Hate crimes can be either violent or non-violent in nature, and affect not only the individual victims of the crime but also the groups targeted. Hate crimes are a focus of social concern in Canada and around the world.¹²⁷

Canadian police reported 2,669 hate-motivated criminal incidents in 2020, which was the largest number recorded since comparable data was first made available in 2009.¹²⁸ There was a 37% increase (or 718 more incidents) in police-reported hate crimes during the first year of the COVID-19 Pandemic, as compared to the previous year. Between 2019 and 2020, police reported an 80% increase (up 1,594 from 884) of crimes motivated by hatred of a race or ethnicity.¹²⁹ Specifically, four populations witnessed the greatest increase in police-reported hate crimes: the Black population (+318 incidents), the East or Southeast Asian population (+202), the Indigenous population (+44 incidents) and the South Asian population (+38 incidents). For the third consecutive year, hate crimes targeting religion decreased; specifically between 2019 and 2020 hate crimes targeting religion declined 16% (613 incidents to 515 incidents). This decrease was due to fewer hate crimes

¹²⁴ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

¹²⁵ <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/14832-eng.htm>

¹²⁶ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026a-eng.htm>

¹²⁷ <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/14832-eng.htm>

¹²⁸ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

¹²⁹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

targeted at Muslim population, which decreased from 182 to 82 incidents (-55%).¹³⁰ Police-reported hate crimes against the Jewish population increased in 2020 from 306 to 321 incidents (+5%). The provinces with the largest increase in police-reported hate crimes were: Ontario (+316 incidents), British Columbia (+198 incidents), Quebec (+86 incidents), and Alberta (+84 incidents). When accounting provinces' population sizes, hate crime rates per 100,000 population increased the most in Nova Scotia (+70%), British Columbia (+60%), Saskatchewan (+60%), Alberta (+39%) and Ontario (+35%).¹³¹ Among Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), the largest volume of hate crime increased occurred in Canada's five most populous cities (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, and Ottawa). However, when taking into consideration population size among CMAs with, at minimum, 10 police-reported hate crimes in 2019 and 2020, the rates increased most Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo (+253%), Peterborough (+126%), Victoria (+97%), Guelph (+80%) and Calgary (+75%).¹³² Both non-violent hate crimes and violent hate crimes increased by 41% and 32%, respectively, with non-violent hate crimes accounting for the majority of the incidents (57%) in 2020.

Since 2018, there have been two hate crimes reported in the City of Brooks; one in 2018 and one in 2022.¹³³

Police-Reported Hate Crimes, by Type of Motivation, Number of Incidents, Province or Territory, 2019 to 2020¹³⁴

Region	Race or Ethnicity		Religion		Sexual Orientation		Other ¹³⁵		Total	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	3	0	1	1	4	2	0	6	8
Prince Edward Island	4	4	0	0	4	2	0	1	8	7
Nova Scotia	20	41	5	7	4	4	3	2	32	55
New Brunswick	11	7	8	5	9	3	2	3	30	19
Quebec	157	204	137	89	29	35	61	91	399	485
Ontario	376	697	312	290	119	115	32	41	848	1164
Manitoba	28	30	22	15	4	6	1	4	55	55
Saskatchewan	15	28	9	9	7	10	1	3	33	53
Alberta	106	211	53	30	36	39	12	11	207	291
British Columbia	161	357	66	69	47	40	36	33	321	519
Yukon	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	4
Northwest Territories	3	3	0	0	3	1	0	0	6	4
Nunavut	2	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	5
Canada	884	1594	613	515	265	259	150	189	1951	2669

Note: Hate crime counts from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey include both confirmed and suspected hate crime incidents. Information in this table reflects data reported by police services covering 99.7% of the population of Canada. The total includes hate crimes where the motivation was unknown.

¹³⁰ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

¹³¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

¹³² <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

¹³³ Email: Kendra Sieben, Safe Communities Coordinator, Brooks RCMP – Community Policing Unit, March 20, 2023

¹³⁴ Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (3302).

¹³⁵ Includes mental or physical disability, language, sex or gender, age and other similar factors (e.g., occupation or political beliefs).

Immigration

Respondents had a high level of Neutral responses at 48%, which is an increase from 2017 (40.5%) and 2013 (42.5%). Overall Satisfaction levels were at 36.8%, which is higher than the Overall Dissatisfaction level at 15.3%. Overall Satisfaction in 2017 was 43.6%, which was higher than the Overall Dissatisfied responses at 15.8%. Overall Satisfaction was 37.4% in 2013, and Overall Dissatisfaction was 20.1%. Immigration is very important for the local labour market so it is still quite surprising that so many respondents were Neutral on the issue. Dissatisfied responses in 2022 were close to the previous study and they have decreased even further since 2013, which may suggest that residents have become even more comfortable with the changes in Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region brought about by immigration.

Immigration is a public policy preoccupation at all levels of government in terms of finding the right balance between meeting humanitarian obligations, meeting Canadian economic needs with qualified immigrants and ensuring gainful employment for Canadian citizens. Currently, municipal governments have not had a great deal of input into immigration policies. The Province of Alberta currently has the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP), which is an economic program that nominates people for Canadian Permanent Residency in Alberta.¹³⁶ Many Temporary Foreign Workers hope that their employers will sponsor them to be Provincial Nominees and gain permanent residency in Canada. As discussed in the section on Economy and Employment, the labour required in the region, particularly in food processing (Manufacturing), is largely dependent upon and immigrant workforce. JBS Canada, the area's largest employer, recruits employees from around the world regularly to maintain its workforce. Other food facilities, such as local honey processors, the hospitality industries (food service and hotels) also rely on temporary foreign workers to fulfill labour demands.

The variables specific to Quality of Place questions are relevant to the labour market demands and demographic changes the City of Brooks. According to the 2021 Federal Census, visible minorities make up 48.6% of the Brooks' population, and 37.1% are immigrants.¹³⁷ In 2016, visible minorities made up 36.8% of the Brooks' population, and 30.1% were immigrants.¹³⁸ In 2011, the percentages were 26.7% and 20.1%, respectively.¹³⁹ Brooks has a higher proportion of visible minorities (48.6) and immigrants (37.1%) than the Brooks-Newell Region (31.3% and 26.7%, respectively) as a whole.¹⁴⁰

For the first time, the 2016 Census collected data on the admission category by which immigrants entered Canada. 47% of immigrants living in Brooks entered Canada as economic immigrants, 36% came as refugees and 17% were sponsored by a family member.¹⁴¹ In 2021, these percentages were 41.8%, 41.5% and 16.4%, respectively.

Newcomers to the City of Brooks require specialized services such as English as a Second Language classes, settlement and information programs and support as they learn to live in their new community. Many of the newcomers arrive from countries with very different cultures/traditions than Canada and both newcomers and longer-term residents have had to adapt. Local businesses have expanded their product lines and new businesses have been opened to accommodate newcomers¹⁴². The Region has been enriched with new "ethnic" restaurants, friendships across cultures and the diversity of viewpoints and cultures.

¹³⁶ <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-advantage-immigration-program.aspx>

¹³⁷ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹³⁸ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹³⁹ 2011 NHS Survey (Statistics Canada)

¹⁴⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁴¹ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁴² Example; Sam's Oriental Market catering to newcomers from Asia, Africa and Latin America

According to the 2021 Federal Census,¹⁴³ 5,435 (37.1%) of the population of the City of Brooks were immigrants,¹⁴⁴ 8,860 (60.5%) are non-immigrants (Canadian citizens by birth), and 350 (2.4%) were non-permanent residents. Non-permanent residents include Temporary Foreign Workers, international students, visitors who were here when the census was taken, or refugee claimants; and since the Brooks-Newell Region does not have many of the last three categories, non-permanent residents are primarily Temporary Foreign Workers.¹⁴⁵¹⁴⁶ Brooks & County Immigration Services served 172 Temporary Foreign Workers in 2022, which reinforces the notion that there are approximately 350 to 400 Temporary Foreign Workers in the Brooks-Newell Region. Studies show that about half of eligible clients access services in settlement agencies.¹⁴⁷ The aforementioned numbers and percentages in 2016 were 4,215 (30.1%), 9,440 (67.5%) and 340 (2.4%), respectively.¹⁴⁸ The numbers and percentages in 2011 were 2,680 (20.1%), 10,140 (76.1%), and 505 (3.8%) respectively.¹⁴⁹ Of the immigrants living in the City of Brooks in 2021, 1,850 (34%) came to Canada between 2016 and 2021.

In 2021, the most common countries of birth of immigrants were: Philippines (accounting for 28.2% of the immigrant population), Other places of birth in Africa (13.5%) and Ethiopia (10.8%).¹⁵⁰ In 2016, the most common countries of birth of immigrants living in the City of Brooks were: Philippines (accounting for 28.5% of the immigrant population), Other places of birth in Africa (13.9%) and Mexico (11.9%).¹⁵¹ Immigrants from the African continent accounted for 39.9% of the entire immigrant population. In 2011, Philippines and Other places of birth in Africa accounted for 3.7% (each) of the immigrant population in the City of Brooks (which were the highest) and Ethiopia for 2% (second highest).¹⁵²¹⁵³ In comparison, the top countries of birth of immigrants living in Alberta in 2021 were: Philippines (30.5%), India (22.2%) and China (11.2%). For 2016, Philippines accounted for 14.7% of the immigrant population, India (10.8%) and United Kingdom (7.0%). For 2011, Philippines accounted for 14.7% of the immigrant population in Alberta (which was the highest) and India for 9.2% (second highest). The majority of immigrants live in the City of Brooks (5,435 or 85.5% in 2021).

The City of Brooks and Brooks-Newell Region have benefited from the settlement of many different groups of immigrants. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) first arrived in 1887 near Taber from the United States and settled in the area developing a major irrigation system and introducing the sugar beet industry. Mennonites and Hutterites from different parts of Europe settled and were influential in developing many of the hamlets and Villages. Japanese immigrants worked in the farms and more settled in the Region after the forceful resettlement of Canadians of Japanese ancestry during the Second World War. Immigrants from Scandinavia (Scandia), Netherland also settled in the area. In more recent times, the Region benefited from the migration of people from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Persons displaced by ethnic violence in their home countries have also moved to Brooks, many arriving to work at the meat processing plant. More

¹⁴³ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁴⁴ 'Immigrants' includes persons who are or who have ever been landed immigrants or permanent residents. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this category. In the 2021 Census of Population, 'Immigrants' includes immigrants who were admitted to Canada on or prior to May 11, 2021.

¹⁴⁵ It difficult to determine the exact number of Temporary Foreign Workers in a specific geographical area so you must use other measure to obtain an estimate.

¹⁴⁶ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), April 3,2023

¹⁴⁷ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), April 3,2023

¹⁴⁸ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁴⁹ 2011 NHS Survey (Statistics Canada)

¹⁵⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁵¹ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁵² 2011 NHS Survey (Statistics Canada)

¹⁵³ Changes to the Federal Census Legislation meant that the Census Long Form was not mandatory for the 2011 Federal Census, which resulted in a marked decrease in completed forms. This had severe negative consequences regarding the accuracy and availability of the 2011 data that is available for communities including those within the Brooks-Newell Region. The response rate was 45.1% for the 2011 National Household Survey.

recently economic migrants from the Philippines and various countries in Central America have come to the Region to fill vacant jobs in the Region's major employers such as JBS.

In February 2016, the City of Brooks was chosen by the Government of Canada as a Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) receiving community. This was done to accommodate the influx of refugees from the Syrian Refugee operation. Since then, the Brooks-Newell Region has directly received 540 GAR's.¹⁵⁴ The top countries that these refugees have arrived from are Syria, Somalia, Congo, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. Due to employment availability in the Brooks-Newell Region there is a high retention rate; although some do leave because they have family elsewhere in Canada, for medical needs or post-secondary education for their children.¹⁵⁵ Some privately sponsored refugees end up making Brooks their home, and other refugees that land in other places in Canada sometimes move to Brooks (or secondary migrants). These refugees primarily arrive from Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and Ethiopic, but the numbers aren't as easy to track as GARs.¹⁵⁶

Due to the conflict in Ukraine, refugees have made Alberta their home. In the last year, 16 Ukrainian families relocated to Brooks, but communities such as Medicine Hat and Taber saw a great influx. When the conflict started, a group of organizations and volunteers came together and created a service plan to be ready for any anticipated Ukrainian arrivals.¹⁵⁷ Although the numbers were lower than expected in Brooks, the plan did prove useful for those who arrived.

In 2046, the population of Alberta is expected to be over 6.4 million people, which is an increase of approximately 2 million people from 2021.¹⁵⁸ The population is expected to be older with an average age of 41.7 years, up from 38.9 years in 2021. The population is expected to become more diverse, as arrivals from other countries will account for 55% of the expected growth by 2046.¹⁵⁹ The population is also expected to be more urban, with 80% of Albertans living along the Edmonton-Calgary corridor by 2046.



¹⁵⁴ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

¹⁵⁵ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

¹⁵⁶ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

¹⁵⁷ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.alberta.ca/population-statistics.aspx>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.alberta.ca/population-statistics.aspx>

MATCH GAP ANALYSIS

The 2022 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis identified two Match Gaps for the City of Brooks. Match Gaps occur when the Rank of Importance is the same as the Rank of Satisfaction within the nine broad factors.

1. Personal Well-Being
2. Sense of Community

The 2017 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis also identified Sense of Community as a Match Gap, but Personal Well-Being was a Positive Gap. Education was a Match Gap, but is now a Positive Gap.

The 2013 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis identified Education System and Government as a Match Gaps.

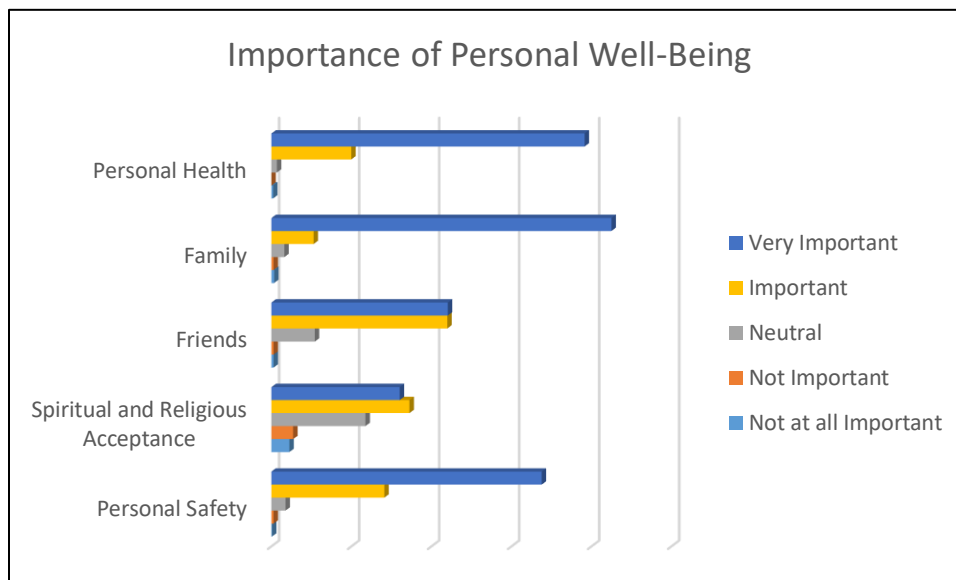
MATCH GAP: PERSONAL WELL-BEING Factor

Ranked #2 for Level of Importance and #2 for Level of Satisfaction

Personal Well-Being was a Positive Gap in 2013 and 2017. This Factor was defined with the following variables

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Personal Health	Community Gathering Places
Family	Personal Development
Friends	Free Time Activities
Spiritual and Religious Acceptance	
Personal Safety	

Importance of Personal Well-Being Variables



FINDINGS:

- 98.2% of respondents rated **Personal Health** as Very Important to Important, 78.3% as Very Important and 20% as Important. In 2017, 96.8% of respondents rated **Personal Health** as Very Important or

Important, 77.7 as Very Important and 19.1% as Important. In 2013, 98.5% of respondents rated **Personal Health** as Very Important or Important, 80.4% as Very Important and 18% as Important.

- 95.5% of respondents rated **Family** as Very important or Important, which is a decrease from 2017. 85% of respondents rated it Very Important and 10.5% for Important. In 2017, 95.7% of respondents rated **Family** as Very Important or Important, which was a decrease from 97.4% in 2013. 85.6% rated **Family** as Very important (which was the highest Overall Very Important response), and 10.1% as Important. The percentages for 2013 were 86.9% (which was the highest for Very Important in 2013) and 10.6%, respectively.
- 88.1% of respondents rated **Friends** as Very Important to Important, which is a decrease from 2017. 44.1% rated it Very Important and 44% for Important. In 2017, 89.6% of respondents rated **Friends** as Very Important or Important, which was a slight decrease from 90.6% in 2013. 50.2% rated **Friends** as Very Important and 39.4% rated it as Important. The ratings for 2013 were 56.2% and 34.5%, respectively.
- 95.8% of respondents rated **Personal Safety** as Very Important to Important, with 67.6% ranking it as Very important and 28.2% as Important. In 2017, 95.3% rated **Personal Safety** as Very Important or Important, which is a slight decrease from 95.5% in 2013. 69.9% rated **Personal Safety** as Very Important and 25.4% rated it as Important. The ratings for 2013 were 70.8% and 24.7%, respectively.
- 66.6% of respondents rated **Spiritual and Religious Acceptance** as Very Important to Important, with 32.1% ranking it as Very Important and 34.5% as Important. In 2017, 66.6% of respondents rated **Spiritual and Religious Acceptance** as Very Important or Important, which is a decrease from 68% in 2013. 35.7% rated **Spiritual and Religious Acceptance** as Very Important, and 31% as Important. The ratings for 2013 were 37.2% and 31% respectively.
- **Spiritual and Religious Acceptance** had a high Neutral rating of 23.5% (174 persons) which is a decrease from 2017 (25.8%, 204 persons). This result is an increase from 22.8% in 2013. 9.9% of respondents rated Spiritual and Religious Acceptance as Not Important or Not at all Important, which is an increase since 2017 (7.6%) and 2013 (9%).
- The neutral rating in **Spiritual and Religious** identity in the City of Brooks is lower than the national level; approximately 35%, or about 12.6 million people, had no religious affiliation according to the 2021 Canadian Census.¹⁶⁰ This is up from 23.9% in 2011 and 16.5% in 2001.^{161, 162}

Family

Alberta has celebrated Family Day in February since 1989 as many believed it is important to recognize the need for families to spend more time together¹⁶³. The February 2012 *Parkland Institute Fact Sheet* indicates families are at risk of too much stress due to long work hours, little leisure time, and challenges in finding childcare.¹⁶⁴

Most respondents indicated that Family was Very Important or Important (95.6%). It should be noted that family structures in the City of Brooks, as elsewhere, are very diverse and may include single parents (male or female), same sex couples, heterosexual couples, grandparents raising their grandchildren, blended families, and foster parents. The parents may be married or living common law.¹⁶⁵ Common to all family structures is the need for community family- centred activities.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁶¹ 2011 NHS Survey (Statistics Canada)

¹⁶² 2001 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁶³ <http://www.statutoryholidays.com/family-day.php>

¹⁶⁴ http://www.parklandinstitute.ca/family_day_on_the_treadmill

¹⁶⁵ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁶⁶ https://thehub.swa.govt.nz/assets/documents/Family-Centred-Communities_FC_09.pdf

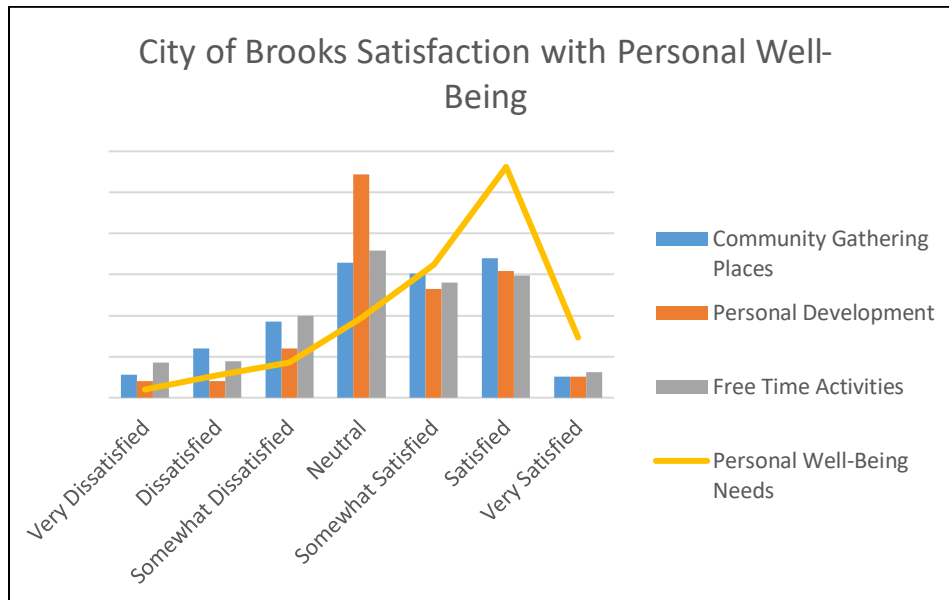
Spiritual and Religions Acceptance

It is interesting there were very few Neutral responses for the Importance of the Personal Well-Being variables with the exception of **Spiritual and Religious Acceptance** at 23.5%, which is a decrease from 25.8% in 2017. The rate was 22.8% in 2013. This variable was also rated as Not Important or Not at All Important by 9.9% of respondents which is an increase from 7.6% in 2017 and 9% in 2013.

The Brooks-Newell Region is home to over 20 formal faith congregations from various Christian denominations (many of which are in Brooks) and followers of Islam who worship at the Mosque located in Brooks. There are also a number of faith-based institutions and organizations such as schools and social service agencies. As noted in the immigration section, the Brooks-Newell Region has benefitted by the migration to the Region of a number of religious and ethnic groups who have contributed to the religious diversity of the Region. There are now 1,855 Muslims in the City of Brooks (an increase from 965 Muslims 2011) and 295 Buddhists (a decrease from 320 in 2011).^{167, 168} People’s spiritual and religious beliefs influence what they wear, what they eat, when they worship, what community activities they participate in and what values are important to them. At times there may be conflict in values between persons with a particular religious/spiritual conviction and others in the community¹⁶⁹. City of Brooks’ residents and institutions have worked hard to accommodate and incorporate various religious and spiritual practices; examples would be the number of Mennonite children in the public-school system and the Hutterian Brethren Colony schools, the ability of Muslim children to wear clothing appropriate to their faith and the community celebrations of many religious holidays.

Overall Satisfaction with Personal Well-Being: 74.5% (2017: 79.7%; 2013: 78.8%)

Satisfaction with Personal Well-Being Variables



¹⁶⁷ National Household Survey 2011

¹⁶⁸ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

¹⁶⁹ https://theewc.org/content/uploads/2020/02/Religious_diversity-1.pdf

FINDINGS:

- Community Gathering Places** had an Overall Satisfaction rating of 50.2% (347), 56.2% (419) in 2017 and 52% in 2013. 3.8% (26) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 24.6% (170) were Satisfied and 21.8% (151) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 6% (45) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 24.8% (185) were Satisfied and 25.4% (189) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2013, 6.5% were Very Satisfied, 21.8% were Satisfied and 24% were Somewhat Satisfied. 23.7 (164) of respondents were Neutral, 13.4% (93) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 8.7% (60) were Dissatisfied and 4.1% (28) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 20.3% (151) of respondents were Neutral with **Community Gathering Places**, 14.5% (108) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 6.2% (46) were Dissatisfied, and 2.8% (21) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013, 20.5% were Neutral, 15% were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7.8% were Dissatisfied, and 4.6% were Very Dissatisfied.
- Personal Development** had an Overall Satisfaction rating 45.6% (312), of 55.1% (409) in 2017 and 51.6% in 2013. This variable had the most Neutral responses at 39.8% (272), which is an increase from 34.1% (253) in 2017. The Neutral rating was 36.7% in 2013. 3.8% (26) were Very Satisfied, 22.5% (154) were Satisfied and 19.3% (132) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 6.3% (47) were Very Satisfied, 24.4% (181) were Satisfied, and 24.4% (181) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 6%, 25.5% and 20%, respectively. 8.8% (60) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2.9% (20) were Dissatisfied, and 2.9% (20) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 7.4% (55) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2.6% (19) were Dissatisfied, and 0.9% (7) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 7.8%, 2.8% and 2% respectively.
- Free Time Activities** had an Overall Satisfaction rating of 46.7% (320), which is a decrease from 51.7% (386) in 2017 and 51% in 2013. 4.5% (31) were Very Satisfied, 21.7% (149) were Satisfied and 20.4% (140) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 7.8% (58) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 23% (172) were Satisfied and 20.9% (156) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for the 2013 study were 7.6%, 22.5% and 21%, respectively. **Free Time Activities** had 26.1% (179) Neutral responses, 14.6% (100) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 6.4% (44) were Dissatisfied and 6.3% (43) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, there were 24.1% (180) Neutral responses, 13.1% (98) of respondents were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7.5% (56) were Dissatisfied and 3.6% (27) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 24%, 12.5%, 7.3% and 5.2%, respectively.

Community Gathering Places

Community Gathering Places had 23.7% Neutral responses, which is an increase from 20.3% in 2017 and 20.5% in 2013. It had an Overall Satisfaction rating of 50.2%, which is a decrease from 2017 (56.2%) but an increase from 2013 (52%). This may indicate that while there are a number of options for Community Gathering Places in the City of Brooks (seniors centres for example) there still may be a need for more options or better access to existing facilities (there was only a slight increase). The City of Brooks is the only community in the region without a community hall with a commercial kitchen and stage. Community halls serve as the hub for community gatherings, such as weddings, community dinners and fundraisers, family reunions and many other events. The JBS Canada Centre in Brooks serves some of the functions of a Community Hall, although use is limited because of lack of an industrial kitchen for the public.



Free Time Activities

According to the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Canadians are spending less time on leisure and culture. “The average portion of total time that Canadians spent on the previous day on social leisure activities dropped every year from 16.1% in 1998 to 13.2% in 2014. While an almost 3% drop in time might seem small, it represents almost three-quarters of an hour on a typical day.” Between 1994 and 2014, the Overall change in leisure and culture was -9.3%. Since the new report will be released in 2023, current data cannot be added at this time.

Overall Satisfaction with Free Time Activities among respondents was 46.7%, which is slightly more than the Brooks-Newell Region (46.6%).

According to the Canadian Leisure & Reading Study 2021, 45% of Canadians identified that they had enough leisure time, 35% said that ample amounts of leisure time, and 20% said they didn't have enough.¹⁷⁰ 98% of Canadians spent at least some time shopping; 98% watching movies, TV or videos; 95% listening to music; and 94% spending time with family. 78% of Canadians watched TV and 72% cooked at least once a day. 74% of Canadians also browsed social media or the web at least once a day.

Leisure and Recreational Activities Done by Canadians in 2021 ¹⁷¹				
Rank	At Least Daily		At Least Weekly	
1	Watching Movies/TV/Videos	78%	Watching Movies/TV/Videos	91%
2	Browsing Social Media/Web	74%	Cooking	89%
3	Cooking	72%	Listening to Music	85%
4	Listening to Music	64%	Browsing Social Media/Web	84%
5	Spending Time with Family	50%	Spending Time with Family	70%
6	Exercising/Working Out	35%	Shopping	67%
7	Reading or Listening to Books	33%	Exercising/Working Out	62%
8	Listening to Radio Shows	30%	Reading or Listening to Books	50%
9	Playing Video Games	28%	Listening to Radio Shows	48%
10	Listening to Podcasts	14%	Playing Video Games	43%



Leisure can be something you do with other people or on your own. If it's something healthy you like to do and it makes you feel good, it's leisure.

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/what-is-leisure.aspx>

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.booknetcanada.ca/canadian-leisure-and-reading-study-2021>

¹⁷¹ <https://www.booknetcanada.ca/canadian-leisure-and-reading-study-2021>

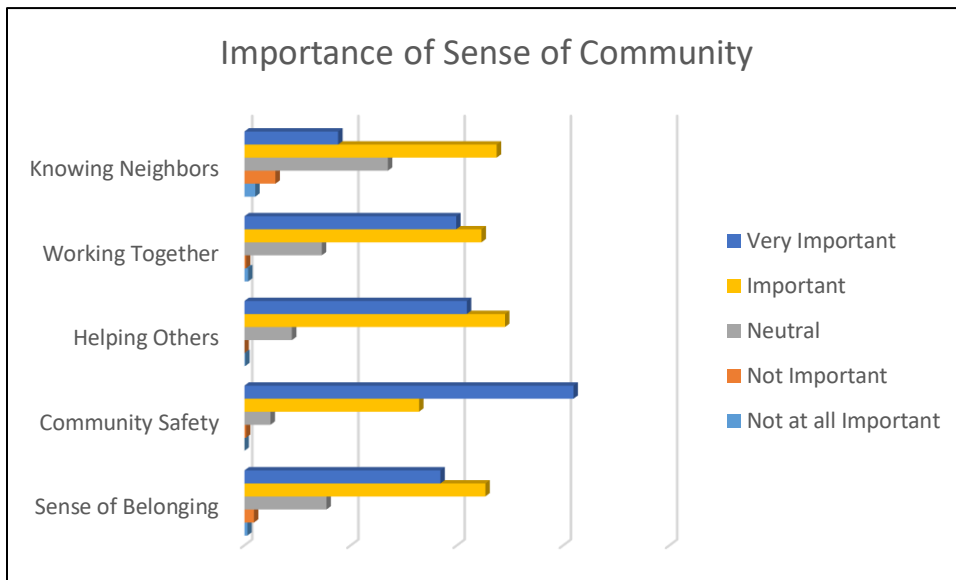
MATCH GAP: SENSE OF COMMUNITY Factor

Ranked #5 for Level of Importance and #5 for Level of Satisfaction

Sense of Community was a Positive Gap in 2013, but a Match Gap in 2017. This Factor was defined with the following variables:

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Knowing Neighbours	Domestic Violence
Working Together	Community Safety
Helping Others	Social Inclusion
Community Safety	
Sense of Belonging	

Importance of Sense of Community Variables



FINDINGS:

- The Overall Importance for **Knowing Neighbours** was 65.1%, which is an increase from 60.5% in 2017. The rating was 72.8% in 2013. This variable also had the highest rate of Neutral responses at 31.8%.
- **Working Together**'s Overall Importance was 84.5%, which is a slight decrease from 85% in 2017. The rating was 87.8% in 2013.
- **Helping Others**' Overall Importance was 90.9%, which is an increased from 88.6% in 2017. The rating was 92% in 2013.
- **Community Safety** had the highest Overall Importance out of the variables with 94.8%, which is an increase from 94.5% and 94% in 2013.

- **Sense of Belonging's** Overall Importance was 82.3%, which is an increase from 81.7% in 2017. The rating was 82.3% in 2013. This variable had the second highest Neutral responses at 15.4%, which is an increase from 15.3% in 2017. This variable had a Neutral response rate of 16% in 2013.

Most respondents indicated that the **Sense of Community** variables were Very Important or Important. There were very few Neutral responses with only **Knowing your Neighbours** having a significant number of Neutral responses (27%). It is interesting that **Community Safety** had most respondents indicating that it is Very Important or Important. This report has highlighted significant Community findings.

Helping Others

Brooks has a large number of volunteers who help communities, local organizations, sports clubs, faith groups, and are the backbone of ensuring that there are activities/recreational facilities and a good quality of life for residents in the communities. Volunteers often run the local Hockey, Curling and Soccer Associations, organize community festivals and events, ensure that historical artifacts are preserved and keep young people informed about the history of the Region, and raise funds for community projects. Grasslands Regional FCSS Annual Report (2022) reported their Funded Partners organizations' volunteers contributed nearly 7,000 hours to their communities and the annual FCSS Citizen of the Year and Junior Citizen of the Year honours volunteers in the area.¹⁷² Grasslands Regional FCSS' Funded Partner organizations also served 2,284 clients in the County of Newell, and 12,751 in the City of Brooks.¹⁷³



FCSS Summer Youth Volunteer Program 2022
Volunteering at Brooks Animal Protection Society (BAPS)

¹⁷² Grasslands Regional FCSS. Annual Report 2022.

¹⁷³ Grasslands Regional FCSS. Annual Report 2022.

According to the 2018 General Social Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (GSS GVP), over 24 million, or 79%, of Canadians aged 15 and older volunteered.¹⁷⁴, ¹⁷⁵ These volunteers dedicated approximately 5 billion hours volunteering, which is equivalent to over 2.5 million full-time year-round jobs. Mature volunteers (born between 1918 and 1945) had the lowest volunteer rate, but volunteered the most average hours per year at 222.¹⁷⁶ Volunteers born in 1996 and later gave on average 82 hours of their time. iGens (78%) and Millennials (77%) were primarily informal volunteers (volunteering not mediated by organizations), compared to older generations of Baby Boomers (73%) and Matures (58%). Informal volunteering differed by generation. Matures and Baby Boomers were more likely to participate in public meetings, while younger generations were more likely to disseminate information to raise awareness of specific issues. The province with the highest percentage of formal volunteers was Saskatchewan (55%) and the lowest was Quebec (33%).¹⁷⁷ Saskatchewan also had the highest rate of informal volunteering with 80% as compared to Quebec with 71%.

The COVID-19 Pandemic greatly affected volunteering, and organizations had to adapt to keep it going after they suspended their volunteer activities. In Canada, the period between June and October 2022, 49% of organizations restarted some suspended programs, 48% had developed new programs or services, 43% began re-engaging volunteers for in-person responsibilities, and 38% for virtual volunteering.¹⁷⁸ Approximately half of the organizations had or were developing new volunteer roles, and 31% assigned existing volunteers to new roles. Although 28% of organizations reported reduced roles for volunteers, 12% of them expanded due to increased demand. One of the most common adaptations has been the shift to virtual volunteering, and approximately 60% of organizations identified that they are now offering virtual volunteering roles. However, the shift to virtual formats is not accessible to all organizations with 30% identifying that they are unable to make the change.¹⁷⁹



Habitat for Humanity helped 2 families succeed in their dream of home ownership!

¹⁷⁴ Hahmann, T. Volunteering Counts: Formal and Informal Contributions of Canadians in 2018. April 23, 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00002-eng.htm>

¹⁷⁵ The GSS GVP was conducted every three years until 2013, but beginning in 2018 it will be on a five year cycle.

<https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=4430>

¹⁷⁶ Hahmann, T. Volunteering Counts: Formal and Informal Contributions of Canadians in 2018. April 23, 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00002-eng.htm>

¹⁷⁷ Hahmann, T. Volunteering Counts: Formal and Informal Contributions of Canadians in 2018. April 23, 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00002-eng.htm>

¹⁷⁸ Volunteer Canada. 2020. The Volunteering Lens of COVID-19: Fall 2020 Survey. <https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuItemID=433&lang=en>

¹⁷⁹ Volunteer Canada. 2020. The Volunteering Lens of COVID-19: Fall 2020 Survey. <https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuItemID=433&lang=en>

Charitable Giving

The table below compares the charitable donation of tax filers in the City of Brooks to those of Alberta and the rest of Canada. The data in the table reflects only the amount of charitable donations for which a tax filer received a tax donation and claimed on an income tax return; it does not reflect charitable donations when no tax receipt was issued. For the 2019 Tax Year, 15.5% of tax filers in the City of Brooks declared that they made a charitable donation. This percentage dropped for the 2021 Tax Year (12.9%), which is not too surprising due to the decline in giving (country-wide) during the COVID-19 Pandemic.¹⁸⁰ The percentages for Canada and Alberta in 2019 were 18.6% and 19% (respectively), and 2021 they were 17.1% and 17.7%. The average age of donors for the City of Brooks was 54 in 2019 and 56 in 2021. This compares to 55 in 2019 and 56 in 2021 for Canada. The average age of donors for Alberta in 2019 was 53 and 54 in 2021. The older City of Brooks residents make more in charitable donations, which is similar to Alberta and Canada. The median donation from the City of Brooks in 2019 was \$630 and \$610 in 2021. This compares to Canada (\$310 in 2019 and \$360 in 2021) and Alberta (\$500 in 2019 and \$550 in 2021).



Grasslands Regional FCSS
 Citizen (Ross Annett) and Junior (Selma Abdulkadir) of the Year 2023

National Volunteer Week
Celebrates Volunteers in
Canada each April.

Volunteering weaves us together, strengthening the fabric of our community by sharing our time, talent and energy to support one another.

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/canadian-charities-unprecedented-strain-giving-report-2022-1.6408393>

Charitable Donors ¹⁸¹						
Donors and Donations	Brooks		Alberta		Canada	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
Number of tax filers	18,340	12,880	3,020,670	3,096,250	27,171,990	28,104,130
Number of donors	2,840	1,620	560,600	528,270	5,164,900	4,967,050
Average age of donors	54	56	53	54	55	56
Average donations, donors aged 0 to 24 years (\$)	1,080	1,880	910	1,100	390	450
Average donations, donors aged 25 to 34 years (\$)	1,450	1,470	1,340	1,510	910	1,040
Average donations, donors aged 35 to 44 years (\$)	2,120	1,570	1,990	2,270	1,390	1,850
Average donations, donors aged 45 to 54 years (\$)	2,420	2,020	2,400	2,620	1,820	2,230
Average donations, donors aged 55 to 64 years (\$)	2,760	2,650	3,480	3,690	2,130	2,360
Average donations, donors aged 65 years and over (\$)	3,500	3,550	4,330	4,630	2,840	3,310
Total charitable donation (\$ x 1,000)	7,340	4,035	1,611,620	1,679,795	10,309,315	11,804,435
Median donations (\$)	630	610	500	550	310	360
Median total income of donors (\$)	54,780	60,230	72,880	74,150	63,360	67,410
75th percentile total income of donors (\$)	86,890	90,490	113,320	114,880	97,700	103,600

Sense of Belonging

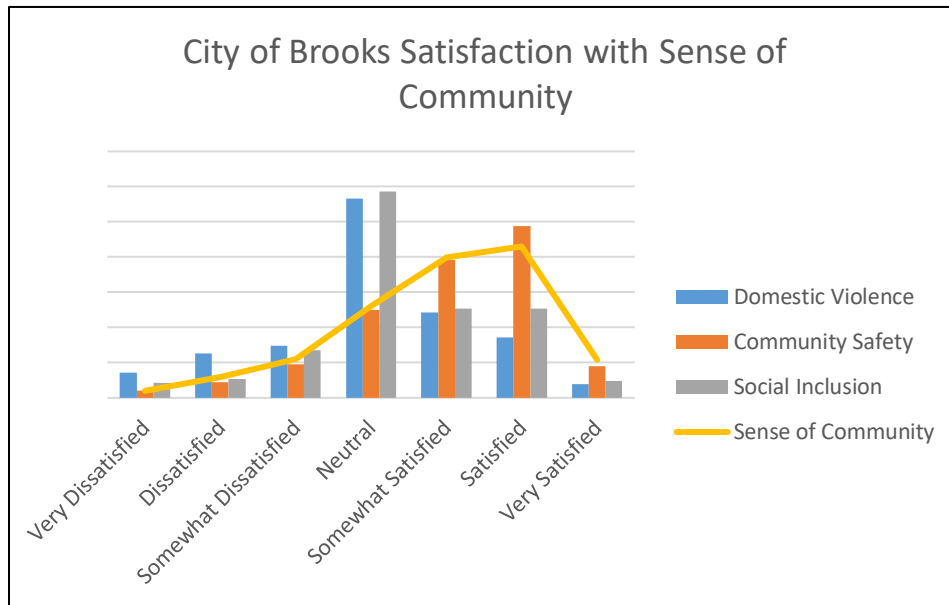
Albertans rank among the lowest in the nation for Sense of Belonging to Local Community at 68.3 percent in 2021 (Only Quebec is lower with 66%).¹⁸² While no Canadian Census data exists for individual communities in Alberta, respondents in the 2022 Quality of Life Survey responded that **Sense of Belonging** was Important (45.4%) and Very Important (36.9%). The Neutral response rate among respondents was 15.4%.

¹⁸¹ Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0130-01 Summary of charitable donors

¹⁸² Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0096-01 Canadian health characteristics, annual estimates

Overall Satisfaction with *Sense of Community* was 67.3% (2017: 70.5%; 2013: 72.7%)

Satisfaction with Sense of Community Variables



FINDINGS:

- Domestic Violence** had an Overall Satisfaction of 33.1% (226), and a high Neutral Response rate of 41.5% (283). In 2017, it had an Overall Satisfaction rating of 43.3% (318), and a Neutral Response rate of 39.1% (512 responses). In 2013, the Overall Satisfaction rating was 46% and the Neutral response rate was 31.6%. 2.8% (19) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 12.6% (86) were Satisfied, and 17.7% (121) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 4.8% (35) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 19.3% (142) were Satisfied, and 19.2% (141) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2013, the percentages were 6%, 20.5% and 20%, respectively. 10.9% (74) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 9.2% (63) were Dissatisfied, and 5.3% (36) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 9.4% (69) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 5.3% (39) were Dissatisfied, and 3% (22) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013, the percentages were 9.6%, 8.3% and 4.5%, respectively.
- Community Safety** had an Overall Satisfaction of 70.3% (485), which is a slight decrease from 70.8% (527) in 2017. In 2013, the rating was 67.5%. 6.5% (45) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 35.4% (244) were Satisfied, and 28.4% (196) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 8.6% (64) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 32.8% (244) were Satisfied, and 29.4% (219) were Somewhat Satisfied. The percentages in 2013 were 8%, 31.3%, and 28.3%, respectively. 18.1% (125) of respondents were Neutral, 7% (48) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.2% (22) were Dissatisfied, and 1.5% (10) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 18.4% (137) of respondents were Neutral, 7.1% (53) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 2% (15) were Dissatisfied, and 1.6% (12) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013, the percentages were 14.8%, 10.2%, 5.5% and 3.4% respectively.
- Social Inclusion** had an Overall Satisfaction rating of 40.1% (278), and a high Neutral response rate of 42.7% (293). In 2017, it had an Overall Satisfaction rating of 45.3% (355), and a high Neutral response rate of 43% (318). In 2013, the Overall Satisfaction rating was 44.4%, and the Neutral response rate of 42%. 4.5% (33) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 21.5% (159) were Satisfied, and 19.4% (143) were

Somewhat Satisfied. The percentages in 2013 were 6.4%, 18%, and 20%, respectively. 9.9% (68) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.9% (27) were Dissatisfied, and 3.1% (21) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 7% (52) of respondents were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.1% (23) were Dissatisfied, and 1.5% (11) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013, the percentages were 6.9%, 4.4%, and 2.3%, respectively.

- As in 2017 and 2013, results suggest that respondents were satisfied with services, programs and conditions related to **Community Safety**, **Domestic Violence** and **Social Inclusion** but that public awareness could be an area for further exploration as indicated by the high numbers of Neutral answers in the areas of **Domestic Violence** and **Social Inclusion**.

Domestic Violence

Over the past few years, community agencies, community groups, the City of Brooks, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and provincial government departments identified **Domestic Violence** as one of the community priorities. Collaborative efforts have been made to explore the issues around domestic violence in the Brooks-Newell Region and to implement community solutions through education, training and a variety of programs and services. It should be noted that most services (Counselling, safe house, legal, etc.) are located in Brooks. There are outreach programs available outside of Brooks but transportation to needed services may be a problem for persons who face domestic violence situation.

The **Domestic Violence Intervention Team (DVIT)** was formed in 2012 to serve the Brooks-Newell Region and is managed through the RCMP Brooks Detachment in partnership with Cantara House and Victim's Assistance. "This award-winning practice is led by the RCMP to ensure families have the appropriate supports required to maintain safety. By using a "swift response model", a specialized team will engage clients, assess individual client needs, make referrals, case manage and ensure clients are following through with agreed upon service plans. This approach allows clients to receive the support on an ongoing basis and has drastically reduced the rate of repeat offences. With the intent to provide support to the entire family, support is provided to men, women and children regardless of who is identified as victim or aggressor. These services and supports are provided independently or simultaneously to involvement with the Justice System. The community provides engaged involvement and leadership by accepting referrals, engaging in a case management process and participating in the management of the team."¹⁸³ The COVID-19 Pandemic forced DVIT to scale back operations since its members could not meet person, but it remained intact and still provides services.¹⁸⁴ It is difficult to determine the number of client served, since DVIT is one of the many outreach programs that Cantara House oversees. However, the total number of clients that **Cantara House** served from 2022 to 2023 (March) was 553 (includes women, men and children).¹⁸⁵ **Cantara House** provides domestic violence services to individuals and families impacted by domestic abuse through their programming: In shelter; Crisis, Outreach and Safe Youth Outreach program. Cantara also provides domestic violence education and awareness in communities throughout the area.

Community Safety

Research has shown that the level of Satisfaction with **Community Safety** is an important component on how residents view their community.¹⁸⁶ The Very Satisfied and Satisfied rating among Respondents for **Community Safety** was 41.9%,¹⁸⁷ and given that this is a growth in Satisfaction (41.4% in 2017 and 39.3% in 2013) it indicates an improved level of support for the efforts of Public Safety Agencies to work with the community in increasing their level of safety. Overall Dissatisfaction among respondents was 11.6%, which is a slight increase from 10.6%

¹⁸³ <https://www.brooks.ca/568/Public-Safety>

¹⁸⁴ Email: Shauna Bell, Executive Director, Cantara House, March 22, 2023

¹⁸⁵ Email: Shauna Bell, Executive Director, Cantara House, March 22, 2023

¹⁸⁶ CPRN Quality of Life in Canada: A Citizen's Report Card Background Report, July 2002

¹⁸⁷ Overall Satisfaction (Very Satisfied, Satisfied and Somewhat Satisfied) for Community Safety was 70.3%, which is still quite high (70.8% in 2017)

in 2017. However, most Brooks residents still feel safer in their community than they did in 2013 when the Overall Dissatisfaction rating was 19.1%.

The high Overall Satisfaction with Community Safety is in line with results from a recent survey conducted by the Angus Reid Institute. They found that 89% of Canadians feel that they live in a safe country, while 43% have the same opinion of the United States.¹⁸⁸ Interestingly enough, 64% of Americans feel that Canada is a safe country, while only 43% hold the same opinion of the United States.¹⁸⁹

The Brooks RCMP Detachment also serves rural areas in the Brooks-Newell Region.¹⁹⁰ There are 28 RCMP members, two Community Peace Officers (employed by the City of Brooks), one By-Law Officer (employed by the City of Brooks), and two Community Peace Officers (employed by the County of Newell).

The Police Reported Crime Severity Index (PRCSI) provides a comparison of the amount of criminal code offenses and their severity. The Index has fluctuated for Canada, Alberta, Brooks (municipal), and Brooks (rural) from 2012 to 2016.

Police-Reported Crime Severity Index^{191,192,193}

Jurisdiction	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change
Brooks (Municipal)	81.26	-1.85	83.98	3.35	88.1	4.91	82.88	-5.93	89.56	8.06
Brooks (Rural)	42.21	4.87	44.23	4.79	59.62	34.8	45.42	-23.82	48.47	6.72
Alberta	112.06	5.73	113.65	1.42	120.14	5.71	108.7	-9.52	101.36	-6.75
Canada	73.6	2.21	75.61	2.73	79.75	5.48	73.9	-7.34	73.68	-0.3

Between 2016 and 2017, Brooks (Municipal) witnessed a decrease of 1.85% to an index of 81.26. It then witnessed an increase of 3.35% to 83.98 in 2018 and 4.91% to 88.1 in 2019, but then dropped 5.93% to 82.88 in 2020. In 2021, there was an increase of 8.06% to 89.56. Brooks (Rural) increased 4.87% to 42.21 in 2017 and 4.79% to 44.23 in 2018, but there was a drastic increase of 34.8% to 59.62 in 2019. The index dropped 23.82% to 45.42 in 2020, but then increased 6.72% to 48.47 in 2021. The index for Alberta and Canada steadily increased from 2017 to 2019 reaching 79.75 and 120.14, respectively, but decreased in 2020 and 2021. Brooks (Rural) has less severe crime than the averages for Canada and Alberta. Brooks (Municipal) has higher averages than Canada, but less than Alberta.

Between 2013 and 2017, total persons crime has remained largely unchanged, total property crime has increased and total criminal code violations have increased.¹⁹⁴ It should be noted that crimes may be committed by persons who are not local residents.

¹⁸⁸ <https://angusreid.org/us-canada-border-crossing-customs/>

¹⁸⁹ <https://angusreid.org/us-canada-border-crossing-customs/>

¹⁹⁰ The Brooks RCMP detachment serves: Antelope Creek, Bantry, Bow City, Brooks, Cassils, Cecil, Cessford, Duchess, Howie, Idlesleigh, Jenner, Kininvie, Kitsim, Lake Newell, Millicent, One Tree, Patricia, Princess, Rainier, Rolling Hills, Scandia, Southesk, Tide Lake, Tilley and Wardlow. (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/detach/en/d/443>)

¹⁹¹ PRCSI measures changes in the level of severity of crime in Canada from year to year. In the index, all crimes are assigned a weight based on their seriousness. The level of seriousness is based on actual sentences handed down by the courts in all provinces and territories. More serious crimes are assigned higher weights, less serious offences lower weights. As a result, more serious offences have a greater impact on changes in the index.

¹⁹² For Canada and Alberta: Statistics Canada. [Table 35-10-0026-01 Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates, Canada, provinces, territories and Census Metropolitan Areas](#)

¹⁹³ For Brooks (Municipal and Rural): Statistics Canada. [Table 35-10-0190-01 Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates, police services in Alberta](#)

¹⁹⁴ Brooks Municipal Detachment Statistical Comparison January to December: 2013 – 2017. April 04, 2018.

Brooks Municipal Detachment RCMP Statistics 2018-2022

Brooks Municipal Detachment Br Statistics ¹⁹⁵						
Category		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Criminal Code Offenses - Persons	Robbery	2	4	4	4	5
	Assault	241	203	188	185	189
Criminal Code Offenses - Property	Break and Enter	61	45	66	55	53
	Theft of Motor Vehicle	32	29	28	40	47
	Theft Over \$5000	11	7	11	4	3
	Theft Under \$5000	201	147	117	151	192
	Possession of Stolen Goods	30	29	32	27	52
	Fraud	107	117	100	85	96
Drug Enforcement	Production	2	0	0	0	0
	Possession	30	12	12	13	4
	Trafficking	17	7	7	15	7
	Other	4	1	0	0	0

Between 2018 and 2022, total persons crime has decreased by 13%, total property crime has increased, and total criminal code violations have decreased. It should be noted that crimes, such as property crimes may be committed by persons who are not local residents.¹⁹⁶

Additionally, it is worth noting that between 2018 and 2022, drug possession has decreased by 87% and drug trafficking has decreased by 59%.¹⁹⁷

Brooks & County Victims Services Unit are called out at any time day or night after RCMP members respond to a crime, accident or death to support victims in their hour of crisis.¹⁹⁸ This is an invaluable service for victims who may be overwhelmed and unsure how to react to what just occurred.

The Safe Communities Committee (comprised of community members and staff members from the City of Brooks and RCMP Detachment) was created to foster a safe and secure community in the Brooks-Newell Region.¹⁹⁹ The committee provides safety and educational programming to residents of the region. RCMP strategies and priorities are also established each year with input from City of Brooks and County of Newell Councils.

¹⁹⁵ Email: Kendra Sieben, Safe Communities Coordinator, Brooks RCMP – Community Policing Unit, March 20, 2023

¹⁹⁶ Email: Kendra Sieben, Safe Communities Coordinator, Brooks RCMP – Community Policing Unit, March 22, 2023

¹⁹⁷ Email: Kendra Sieben, Safe Communities Coordinator, Brooks RCMP – Community Policing Unit, March 22, 2023

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.brooks.ca/568/Public-Safety>

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.brooks.ca/568/Public-Safety>



Pancake Breakfast 2023: Safe Communities and the Brooks RCMP Detachment hosted their annual free pancake breakfast for the community members of Brooks and Newell. This year, they fed over 1200 people!

Source: email Kendra Siebens, Safe Communities Coordinator, June 19, 2023

Social Inclusion

Social Inclusion received a response rate for Overall Satisfaction of 40.5% (a decrease from 45.3% in 2017 and 42% in 2013) and an Overall Dissatisfaction response of 16.9% (it was 7% in 2017). **Social Inclusion** has had a high Neutral response rate for 2022 (42.7%), 2017 (43%) and 2013 (42%).

Social inclusion is defined as “a function of active social networks and public spaces and services that support the inclusion of all residents in city life”.²⁰⁰ A second dimension of social inclusion is the importance of promoting meaningful interaction among an increasingly diverse and potentially divided population. This interaction is necessary to avoid social isolation among groups like single seniors and single parents as well as social divisions between the “mainstream” population and the rapidly growing ethnic, cultural, and linguistic minorities.²⁰¹

In Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region , there have been many community initiatives to build a Sense of Community and increase social inclusion. Community residents and all sectors have made concerted efforts to welcome newcomers and provide employment and services and programs which reflect the changing demographics of the community²⁰²

The **City of Brooks Municipal Sustainability Plan**²⁰³ and **Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) Partnership Plan (2017-2020 and 2021-2024)**^{204, 205} are a response to efforts to attract and accommodate an increasingly diverse population. The City of Brooks works closely with both the Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD) and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) for the 2017-2021 plan in order to help promote Brooks as a welcoming and inclusive community. The City of Brooks has customized AUMA’s Welcoming & Inclusive toolkit and areas of focus to meet the needs of its residents, as

²⁰⁰ Highlight Report Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2004

²⁰¹ Highlight Report Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2004

²⁰² Brooks-Newell Region al Expo Final Report 2012

²⁰³ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/238>

²⁰⁴ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/1029>

²⁰⁵ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/4102>

reflected in the WIC Partnership Plan.²⁰⁶ The WIC Partnership Plan Action Plan is designed to bolster CMARD's ten Common Commitments.²⁰⁷ While these initiatives have been led by the City of Brooks Welcoming & Inclusive Committee, they have had participation from residents of Brooks, the Brooks-Newell Region and beyond. This dedicated work was then rolled into the new WIC Partnership plan for 2021-2024. With the help of AUMA's WIC toolkit and working with local community groups, the City will adopt multiple methods to reduce racism and discrimination, and promote equity and inclusion.²⁰⁸ The action plan has 10 priorities:

1. Equitable Hiring & Selection
2. Retention & Succession Planning
3. Measure Workplace Diversity
4. Respectful & Inclusive Work Environment
5. Building Workplace Capacity
6. Community Education and Awareness
7. Developing Inclusive Events
8. Community Access to Information
9. Community Development
10. A Mentally Healthy Workplace & Community

The City of Brooks joined the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, and as such has signed a declaration that binds the municipality to the following ten commitments:²⁰⁹

1. Increasing vigilance against systemic and individual discrimination.
2. Monitoring discrimination in the municipality and taking action to address it.
3. Supporting individuals who experience discrimination.
4. Providing police services that are exemplary institutions for fighting discrimination.
5. Providing equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider, and contractor.
6. Supporting measures that promote equity in the labour market.
7. Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in housing.
8. Involving citizens by giving them a voice in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.
9. Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in education and other forms of learning.
10. Promoting the respect, knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Indigenous and racialized communities in the cultural fabric of the municipality.



The City of Brooks Taste of Nations Event reflects the City's commitment to building a Welcoming & Inclusive Community.

²⁰⁶ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/1029>

²⁰⁷ <http://www.brooks.ca/288/Welcoming-Inclusive-Community>

²⁰⁸ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/4102>

²⁰⁹ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/4102>

At a regional level, the **Newell Regional Expo Society** began in 2008 to develop strategies to encourage welcoming and inclusive communities within healthy economic and social systems by promoting, honoring and increasing community involvement and awareness in all sectors in all our communities. Since 2009, the Brooks-Newell Regional Expo Board of Directors has partnered with Brooks-Newell Region communities to promote, honour and celebrate the spirit of the Brooks-Newell Region by hosting events and community capacity building projects. Regional Tours, Annual Honouring a Community Dinner and the Expo Taste of Nations have shared, showcased and celebrated the cultures and histories of Brooks-Newell Region residents and communities. As a result of Expo initiatives, the City of Brooks hired an Inclusion Coordinator in 2010 and took over hosting the Taste of Nations in 2016. The final Annual Honouring a Community Dinner took place in June 02, 2023 with Cassils honouring the Brooks-Newell Region at the Cassils Community Centre. Another Expo spin-off is the Global Village television program²¹⁰ which was created and began airing in 2014, designed to showcase public figures and provide information for newcomers and community at large. Today, the **Global Village Centre** works with newcomers at the grassroots level and partners with others to build cultural capacity, to conduct immigrant research and to build cultural bridges.²¹¹



Left to Right: Gary Hankins, Cassils Community
Crystal Mulvey: Cassils Community
Tina Preston: Chair, Newell Regional Expo.

Newell Regional Expo
Honouring a Community Dinner 2023
Cassils Community Honouring the Brooks-
Newell Region



²¹⁰ <http://www.shaw.ca>

²¹¹ <http://www.globalvillagecentre.ca>

POSITIVE GAP ANALYSIS

The 2022 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis identified four Positive Gaps in the City of Brooks. Positive Gaps occur when the Rank of Importance is lower than the Rank of Satisfaction within the nine broad categories.

1. Education System
2. Physical Environment
3. Social Programs/Social Conditions
4. Government

The 2017 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis identified the same Positive Gaps in three out of four factors, but Education System was a Match Gap in the previous study.

The 2013 Quality of Life Survey gap analysis identified Physical Environment and Social Programs/Social Conditions as Positive Gaps. Education System and Government were Match Gaps in 2013

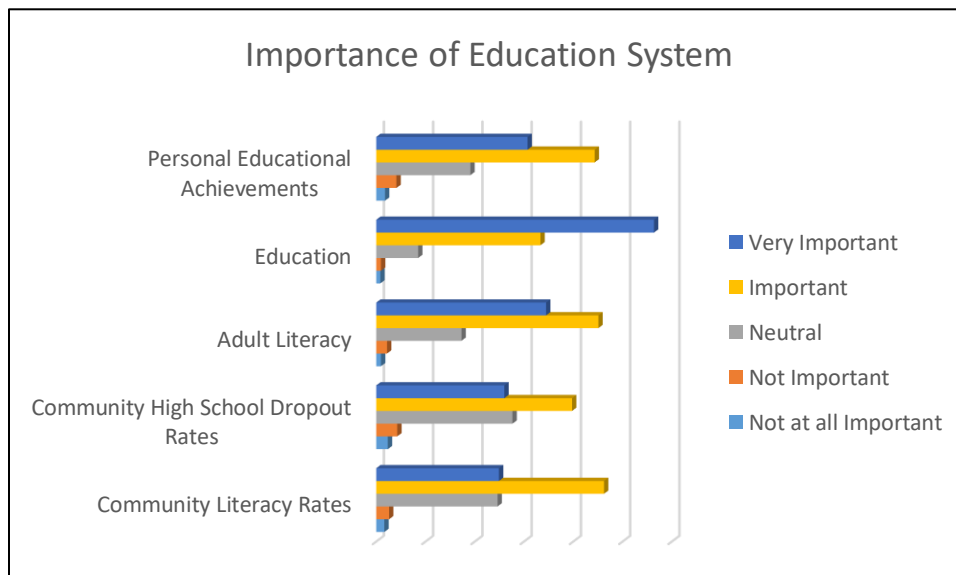
POSITIVE GAP: EDUCATION SYSTEM Factor

Ranked #3 for Level of Importance and #1 for Level of Satisfaction

Education was a Match Gap in 2013 and 2017. This Factor was defined with the following variables

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Personal Education Achievements	Post-Secondary Education
Education	Adult/Continuing Education
Adult Literacy	Job Training Programs
Community High School Dropout Rates	
Community Literacy Rate	

Importance of Education System Variables

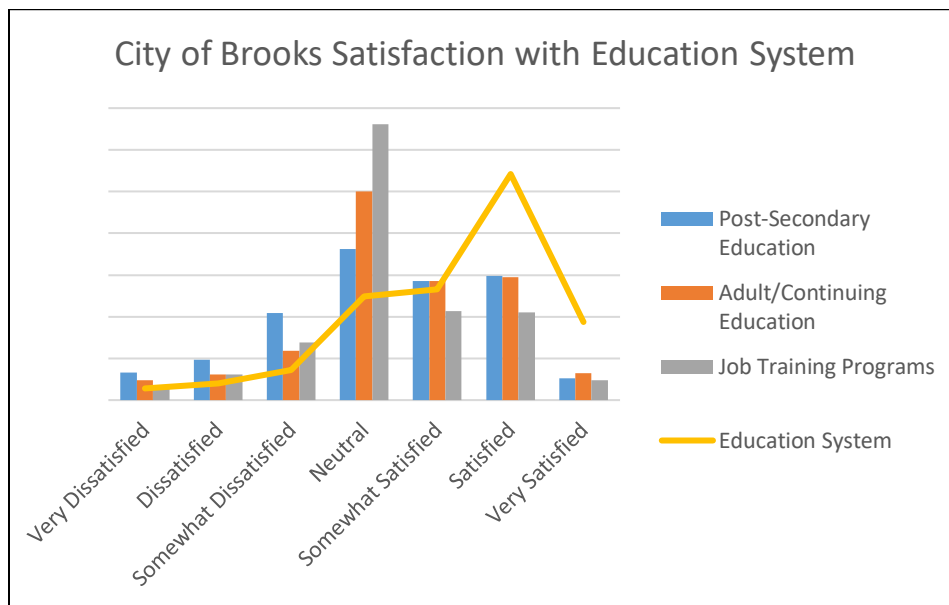


FINDINGS:

- **Personal Education Achievements** received 75.0% of Very Important or Important responses, which is a decrease from 83.2% in 2017 and 81.9% in 2013. 19.1% were Neutral, which is an increase from 13.5% in 2017 and 17.2% in 2013.
- **Education** received 89.7% of Very Important or Important responses, which is a decrease from 93.1% in 2017 and 93% in 2013. 8.5% were Neutral, which is an increase from 5.9% in 2017 and 6.1% in 2013.
- **Adult Literacy** received 79.6% of Very Important or Important responses, which is an increase from 78% in 2017 (the rate was 80% in 2013). 17.3% were Neutral, which is a decrease from 19.4% in 2017 (the rate was 16.4% in 2013).
- **Community High School Dropout Rates** received 65.8% of Very Important or Important responses, which is a decrease from 66.5% in 2017 and 71% in 2013. 27.7% were Neutral, which is an increase from 26.2% in 2017 and from 22.6% in 2013.
- **Community Literacy Rate** received 71.1% of the Very Important or Important responses, which is an increase from 70.2% in 2017 and 70% in 2013. 24.6% were Neutral, which is a slight increase from 24.5% in 2017, and a slight decrease from 25% in 2013.

Overall Satisfaction with Education System: 72% (2017: 74.5%; 2013: 74.7%)

Satisfaction with Education System Variables



FINDINGS:

- **Post-Secondary Education** had an Overall Satisfaction rate of 46.5% (318), which is a decrease from of 51.9% (385) in 2017 and 54% in 2013. 3.8% (26) were Very Satisfied, 21.8% (149) were Satisfied, and 20.9% (143) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 5.4% (40) were Very Satisfied, 22.6% (168) were Satisfied and 23.9% (177) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 5.9%, 24.2% and 24% respectively. 26.5% (181) were Neutral, 15.2% (104) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7% (48) were Dissatisfied and 4.8% (33) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 26.4% (196) were Neutral, 12.1% (90) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 5.9% (44) were Dissatisfied and 3.6% (27) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 24.6%, 12.5%, 5.1% and 3.5%, respectively.

- **Adult/Continuing Education** had an Overall Satisfaction rate of 46.9% (322), which is a decrease from 53.9% (399) in 2017 and 50.6% in 2013. 4.7% (32) were Very Satisfied, 21.4% (147) were Satisfied and 20.9% (143) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 7% (52) were Very Satisfied, 24.6% (182) were Satisfied and 22.3% (165) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 7.5%, 20.4% and 22.8% respectively. 36.4% (250) were Neutral, 8.6% (59) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.5% (31) were Dissatisfied and 3.5% (24) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 32.5% (241) were Neutral, 7.3% (54) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.9% (36) were Dissatisfied and 1.5% (11) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 33.4%, 8.3%, 4.7% and 2.9%, respectively.
- **Job Training** had an Overall Satisfaction rate 34.5% (236), which is a decrease from of 43% in 2017 and 41.7% in 2013. 3.5% (24) were Very Satisfied, 15.3% (105) were Satisfied and 15.6 (107) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 4.7% (35) were Very Satisfied, 19.1% (142) were Satisfied and 19.2% (143) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 5.7%, 20.1% and 15.9%, respectively. **Job Training** had the highest level of Neutral responses at 48.3% (331), which is an increase from 42.6% in 2017 and 42.5% in 2013 (also the highest level of Neutral responses). 10.1% (69) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.5% (31) were Dissatisfied and 2.6% (18) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 7.8% (58) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.6% (34) were Dissatisfied and 2% (15) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 8.1%, 4.7% and 2.9%, respectively.

Post-Secondary Education

Brooks is home to the Brooks Campus of Medicine Hat College, Brooks Community Adult Learning Council and two private colleges that offer job-training programs. It should be noted that the High School completion rate within three years of entering Grade 10 in 2021 was 82.8% (78.2 percent in 2017),²¹² and post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering grade 10 was 49.1% in 2019 (56.9% in 2017).²¹³ Most students seek post-secondary opportunities in the larger centres such as Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Calgary. The availability of high paying oil and gas sector jobs are thought to discourage young people, particularly young males, from attending post-secondary institutions immediately following high school graduation.²¹⁴



Brooks Campus
Medicine Hat College

²¹² Grasslands Public Schools. Annual Education Results Report 2021-2022.

²¹³ Grasslands Public Schools. Combined 3 Year Education Plan 2020-2023 and Annual Education Results Report 2019-2020.

²¹⁴ The Daily January 13, 2014: Study: Wages, youth employment and school enrolment, 2001 to 2008 Statistics Canada

Medicine Hat College at the Brooks Campus offers a variety of credit and non-credit programming. Some examples include:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Automotive Service Technician
UofCalgary) | Information Technology | Nursing (in partnership with the |
| Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) | English Language Learning | Business Administration |
| Hospital Unit Clerk | Trades Pre-Employment | |
| Information Technology | | |
| Paramedic | | |
| Early Learning and Child Care | | |
| Data Analytics | | |
| Registered Social Work Diploma | | |
| Health Care Aide | | |
| Pre-Employment: Welding, Plumbing and Electrical | | |
| Dual Credit Offerings (Varies by High School) | | |
| CTS/CTF Welding and Electrical | | |
| Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) | | |
| Continuing Education workshops | | |

Academic courses are also offered in a number of disciplines on the Brooks Campus or through Distance Education. Consult <https://www.mhc.ab.ca/ProgramsandCourses> for more information.

Private Colleges in Brooks-Newell Region include: The **Academy of Learning** and **Cypress College**. Information on their programs can be found on their respective websites:

- http://www.academyoflearning.com/locations_alberta_brooks.html
- <http://www.cypresscollege.ca/>



In 2021, the high school completion rate in Brooks was 82.8%,²¹⁵ and post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10 was 49.1% in 2019.²¹⁶



Adult/Continuing Education and Job Training Programs

In the City of Brooks, a substantial percentage of the population, 28.6% (which is an increase from 27.4% in 2016 and 24.6% in 2011), does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent.^{217, 218, 219} These demographics create the need for the delivery of **Job Training Programs** and **Adult/Continuing Education**.²²⁰

²¹⁵ Grasslands Public Schools. Annual Education Results Report 2021-2022.

²¹⁶ Grasslands Public Schools. Combined 3 Year Education Plan 2020-2023 and Annual Education Results Report 2019-2020.

²¹⁷ 2011 NHS Survey (Statistics Canada)

²¹⁸ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²¹⁹ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²²⁰ Government of Alberta. Living Literacy: A Literacy Framework for Alberta's Next Generation Economy: The Report 2009-2013. Edmonton, AB: Government of Alberta.

Brooks Campus of Medicine Hat College²²¹ offers the ABLE Program in Brooks which allows students to obtain a high school equivalency to pursue further education. For more information: 403-362-1677 or brooksinfo@mhc.ab.ca

ABLE (Adult Basic Literacy Education) program is a volunteer tutor program created to help adults with literacy needs at all levels, and basic digital skills.²²² They provide one-on-one and small group tutoring in the cities of Brooks and Medicine Hat.

Newell Further Education is a non-profit organization funded by Alberta Advanced Education and Technologies Community Programs, and provide adult education classes. They are responsible for all the communities in the County of Newell - Bassano, Gem, Rosemary, Duchess, Patricia, Millicent, Cassils, Bow City, Tilley, Rolling Hills, Scandia and Rainier.

As well as one-on-one volunteer tutoring Newell Further Education also offers small group tutoring if numbers allow. It offers ESL classes in those communities. Anyone interested in tutoring or receiving literacy help may contact the office at 403-641-3444 or email furthered@telus.net.²²³

YMCA Employment Centre. Employment advisors at the YMCA Employment Centre at Medicine Hat College – Brooks Campus can connect Albertans to jobs by providing services that respond to Albertan's and employers' current and future needs. Office hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm from Monday to Friday. Appointments are preferred. YMCA Employment Services provides a wide range of support, services and programs to Albertans who are seeking to improve their employment status – including identifying job opportunities, enhancing employability and life skills and gaining experience and confidence through placement programs. For more information call 403-362-1483 or visit <https://medicinehatymca.ca/employment-services>²²⁴

Brooks Community Adult Learning Council (BCALC) is a non-profit organization, which provides ESL instruction to immigrants, refugees and Temporary Foreign Workers as well Employability Enhancement Skills and General interest courses to the wider community. As a partner in the delivery of Community Adult Learning Program (CALP). BCALC has over 20 years of experience in delivering a high-quality English as Second Language (ESL) program which prides itself in delivering services in a warm, caring, and professional environment to a multicultural and multilingual clientele. BCALC's student population number is over 500 annually. Students originate from countries such as Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Mexico, Somalia, Sudan, China, Columbia, Congo, El Salvador, Ukraine etc. BCALC offers 24 classes of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and 4 ESL classes each day and 11 online ELL classes in each of 3 terms taught by capable and experienced instructors.²²⁵ For more information call 403-362-5372 or email bcalc@telusplanet.net

Outcome Facilitation & Project Development Ltd. provides employment services up to six months to unemployed New Canadians: Newcomers, Temporary Residents, Refugees, or Canadian Citizens not born in Canada, that currently reside in Brooks and surrounding areas.²²⁶

Global Village Centre Society offers the **John Ware Youth Empowerment Program**, designed to help young adults to make a positive transition into life opportunities and careers. The three components are: Lifeskills; Intercultural Communications and Mentorship. For more information call 403-793-3946 or website: www.globalvillage.com²²⁷

²²¹https://www.mhc.ab.ca/ContinuingStudies/Brooks_Courses

²²² <https://www.adultliteracyeducation.com/>

²²³ <https://www.facebook.com/NewellFurtherEd/>

²²⁴ <https://medicinehatymca.ca/>

²²⁵ Email: Michelle Gietz, Executive Director, Brooks Community Adult Learning Council (BCALC), March 23, 2023

²²⁶<https://www.facebook.com/Outcome-Facilitation-Project-Development-ltd-688486524890088/>

²²⁷<https://www.globalvillagecentre.ca/>

Education Level of City of Brooks Residents for 2011, 2016 and 2021^{228, 229, 230}

Education Level	2011		2016		2021	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Total population aged 15 years and over	10,355	100	10,710	100	11230	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	2,545	24.6	2,935	27.4	3215	28.6
High school diploma or equivalent	3,390	32.7	3,685	34.4	4080	36.3
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	4,420	42.7	4,090	38.2	3935	35.0
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	1,410	13.6	995	9.3	875	7.8
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	1,570	15.2	1,510	14.1	1485	13.2
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	250	2.4	275	2.6	240	2.1
University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	1,185	11.4	1,320	12.3	1335	11.9
Bachelor's degree	875	8.5	985	9.2	1000	8.9
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	315	3	90	0.8	100	0.9

- City of Brooks residents are highly educated with 35% of the population having a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree. 36.3% of the population has a high school diploma or equivalent
- 7.8% of the residents have an Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate of Diploma. 11.9% of the population has a university certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above.



The John Ware Youth Empowerment & Engagement Program operates through the Global Village Centre Society

²²⁸ 2011 NHS Survey (Statistics Canada)

²²⁹ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²³⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

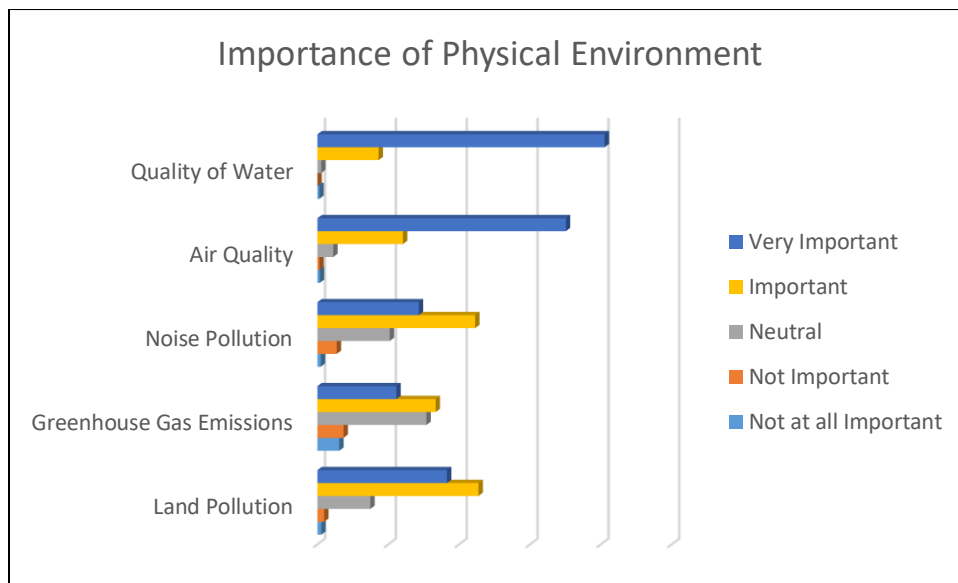
POSITIVE GAP: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT Factor

Ranked #6 for Level of Importance and #3 for Level of Satisfaction

This Factor was defined with the following variables

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Quality of Water	Environment Awareness
Air Quality	Recycling
Noise Pollution	Waste Management
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	
Land Pollution	

Importance of Physical Environment Variables



FINDINGS:

- **Quality of Water** was Very Important 81.1% of respondents (98.4% of respondents identified it as Very Important or Important). The rating in 2017 was 80.3% (97.2% of respondents identified it as Very Important or Important), and 79.8% in 2013.
- **Air Quality** was Very Important or Important to 94.3%, which is a decrease from 96.6% in 2017 and 95.7% in 2013.
- **Noise Pollution** was Very Important or Important to 73.2% of respondents, which is an increase from 69.6% in 2017. The rating was 75.3% in 2013. **Noise Pollution** also had a significant Neutral rating of 20.4% (23.2% in 2017).

- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** had the most Neutral responses with 30.8%. This variable also had the most Neutral responses in 2017 with 24.4% and 2013 with 22%. Like in 2017 and 2013, **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** had the most Not Important or Not at all Important responses with 13.55% (it was 8.9% in 2017 and 8.7% in 2013).
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** was Very Important or Important to 55.7% of respondents, which is a decrease from 66.7% in 2017 and 69.3% in 2013. The concern over **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** among City of Brooks residents has steadily declined.
- **Land Pollution** was Very Important or Important to 82.1% of respondents, which is a slight increase from 81.3% in 2017. The rate in 2013 was 84.6%. **Land Pollution** had 14.9% Neutral response rate, which is a decrease from 16.1% in 2017. The response rate was 12.5% in 2013. Like in 2013 and 2017, less than 3% of respondents thought Land Pollution was Not Important (1.9%, 2022).

Noise Pollution, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Land Pollution

Like in 2013 and 2017, respondents indicated much less Importance with **Noise Pollution, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Land Pollution**. **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** had the highest Neutral responses for both studies, and in fact increased to 30.8% in 2022. **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** also had the highest Not Important or Not at all Important responses with 13.55%, which is a substantial increase from 8.9% in 2017 and 8.7% in 2013.

Residents of the City of Brooks have access to some information about their water, air, noise quality and Green House Gas Emissions.

Quality of Water

Quality of Water was Very Important or Important to 98.4% of respondents (97.2% of respondents in 2017); 81.1% thought it was Very Important 80.3% (the rate was 80.3% in 2017 and 79.8% in 2013).

Water Quality: The Brooks-Newell Regional Services Corporation monitors water regularly. Information on water quality is available monthly from <http://www.nrs.c.ca/monitoring-and-assessment-water-quality.php>

Air Quality: There is no information on Air Quality available for the City of Brooks. The closest monitoring station is Medicine Hat. Information on the Air Quality Health Index can be found at https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/abaq-008_e.html

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: There is no information available for the City of Brooks.

The Eastern Irrigation District (EID), one of thirteen irrigation districts in southern Alberta operates under the authority of the Alberta Irrigation Districts Act [RSA 2000 c. 1-11]. The administrative boundaries of the EID, bounded by the Bow River in the south and the Red Deer River in the north, encompass approximately 1.5 million acres of land.

The EID is farmer owned and operated. The District’s primary business is the management of an extensive water distribution network in support of irrigated agriculture. In addition to conveying water to approximately 300,000 acres of irrigated farmland owned by private families and corporations, the EID also conveys water through their distribution network to benefit municipal, industrial, wildlife habitat and recreational purposes. The EID also owns an expanse of native and improved grassland (approximately 600,000 acres), managed for the benefit of the irrigators and primarily supporting the local cattle industry.²³¹

²³¹ <https://www.eid.ca/about.html>

Regional Water

Brooks-Newell Regional Services Corporation (NRSC)

The NRSC was spearheaded by the County of Newell and formed by partnership of all Urban Municipalities in the Brooks-Newell Region to manage the installation of water pipelines throughout the region. The City of Brooks has been instrumental in providing the funds and services to get this project going. Potable water through the pipelines is now available to all rural and urban residents in the region.

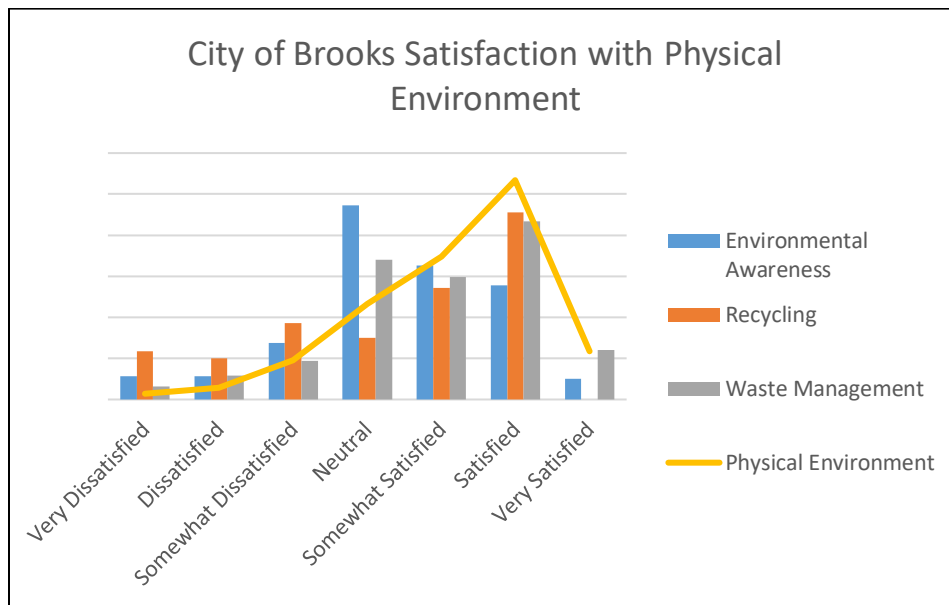
For more Information <http://www.nrsc.ca/>²³²

County of Newell Water Project (CNWP)

The CNWP is an initiative to provide potable water service to all businesses and rural homes in the County of Newell.²³³ Water is supplied via a trickle type system at a rate of 300 gallons per day. Landowners will then be required to have a cistern or other storage tank system for the water to be delivered.²³⁴ From there they will be required to re-pressurize it for home and business use. So far, a total of 440 locations have been registered with the program, with an additional 132 locations being added by spring 2023 and 314 locations by spring 2024.²³⁵ Syncore Directional Drilling was awarded the contract for this extension. In order to operate the County of Newell Water and Sewer systems effectively, the County retained the professional services of the NRSC.²³⁶

Overall Satisfaction with Physical Environment: 73% (2017: 76%; 2013: 74.8%)

Satisfaction with Physical Environment Variables



²³² <http://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/regional-water>

²³³ <https://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/county-of-newell-water-project>

²³⁴ <https://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/county-of-newell-water-project>

²³⁵ <https://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/county-of-newell-water-project>

²³⁶ <https://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/utilities>

- **Environmental Awareness** had a 34.4% (236) Neutral response rate (the highest among the three variables), which is an increase from 29.5% (218) in 2017 and 24.7% in 2013. The Overall Satisfaction rate for **Environmental Awareness** was 47.5 (327), which is a decrease from 53.4% (395) in 2017 and 54% in 2013. 3.6% (25) were Very Satisfied, 20.2% (139) were Satisfied and 23.7% (163) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 4.1% (30) were Very Satisfied, 23.1% (171) were Satisfied and 26.2% (194) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 6.3%, 21% and 26.5% respectively. 10.3% (69) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.1% (28) were Dissatisfied and 4.1% (28) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 10.7% (79) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.9% (36) were Dissatisfied and 1.6% (12) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 9.7%, 7.2% and 4.7%, respectively.
- **Recycling** is the area in which respondents were the least Neutral at 10.9% (75). The Neutral rating was also low in 2017 at 11.9% (89), and 10.7% in 2013. The Overall Satisfaction rate for **Recycling** was 59.2% (414) and 64.7% (484) in 2017. These ratings are both an increase from 54.8% in 2013. 7.2% (50) were Very Satisfied, 33% (228) were Satisfied and 19.7% (136) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 11.9% (89) were Very Satisfied, 28.3% (212) were Satisfied and 24.5% (183) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 10.2%, 25.4% and 19.2%, respectively. Overall Dissatisfaction with **Recycling** decreased from 34.3% in 2013 to 23.4% (175) in 2017, but increased to 29.2% (202) in 2022. 13.5% (93) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7.2% (50) were Dissatisfied and 8.5% (59) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 11.1% (83) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 7.6% were Dissatisfied and 4.7% were Somewhat Dissatisfied. The percentages for 2013 were 13.4%, 10% and 11%, respectively.
- **Waste Management** had an Overall Satisfaction rate of 61.9% (426), which is an increase from 61.7% (463) in 2017 and 51% in 2013. 8.7% (60) were Very Satisfied, 31.5% (217) were Satisfied and 21.7% (149) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 7.6% (57) were Very Satisfied, 29.9% (224) were Satisfied and 24.3% (182) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 7.5%, 27.6% and 20.2% respectively. 24.7% (170) of respondents were Neutral, which is an increase from 22.7% (295) in 2017 and 23.3% in 2013. 13.4% (92) expressed some Dissatisfaction with **Waste Management**, which is a decrease from 13.5% (101) in 2017 and 25% in 2013. 6.8% (47) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.2% (29) were Dissatisfied and 2.3% (16) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 8.1% (61) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.1% (23) were Dissatisfied and 2.3% (17) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2013, the percentages were 13%, 7.7% and 4.4%, respectively.

Environmental Awareness

Approximately 48% (327) of respondents expressed some level of Satisfaction with **Environmental Awareness**. This is a decrease from approximately 53% (395) in 2017 and 54% in 2013.

The **EcoBrooks Committee** was created in the Spring of 2009 and acted as a Citizen's Advisory Groups steering the Municipal Sustainability Planning project.²³⁷ Its mandate is to explore policies, programs and procedures which would lead to the long-term and short-term enhancement, preservation and protection of the environment in both local and global contexts.

²³⁷ <https://www.brooks.ca/310/EcoBrooks-Committee>

The committee consists of 12 members:²³⁸

- 1 City of Brooks Councillor
- 1 representative of Grasslands School Division
- 1 representative of Christ the Redeemer School Division
- 1 Commercial/Industry representative
- 1 Youth member
- 7 Members-at-Large

Focus areas of the Committee include:²³⁹

- **Water Conservation** – The preservation, control, and development of water resources, both surface and groundwater, and prevention of pollution.
- **Energy Sustainability** – The provision of *energy* such that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. *Sustainable Energy* has two key components: *renewable energy* and *energy efficiency*.
- **Waste Management** – The processes involved in dealing with waste, including minimization, handling, processing, storage, recycling, transport, and final disposal.
- **Ecological Sustainability** – The conservation of productivity of water, soil, and ecosystems; retaining their essential functions and processes over the long term.

The City of Brooks promotes recycling through education and programs/services which encourage environmentally friendly practices and through the City of Brooks **EcoBrooks Committee**.²⁴⁰ The Community Benefit Grant Program is a prime example of an environmentally friendly program sponsored by the City of Brooks.²⁴¹



City of Brooks Composting Site, 279 Veiner Road, Brooks.

²³⁸ <https://www.brooks.ca/310/EcoBrooks-Committee>

²³⁹ <https://www.brooks.ca/310/EcoBrooks-Committee>

²⁴⁰ <https://www.brooks.ca/310/EcoBrooks-Committee>

²⁴¹ <https://www.brooks.ca/829/Community-Benefit-Grant-Program>

Waste Management

Approximately 61.9% (426) of respondents expressed some level of Satisfaction with Waste Management. The level of Satisfaction was slightly more in 2017 with 62% (463), but significantly less in in 2013 (51%).

Newell Solid Regional Solid Waste Management Authority operates the Transfer Stations throughout the Brooks-Newell Region and the Brooks-Newell Regional Landfill outside of Brooks at the junction of Highway #1 and #36.²⁴² Efforts are made to inform and encourage residents to recycle and divert waste from the landfill.



Newell Solid Regional Solid Waste Management Authority operates the Transfer Stations throughout the Brooks-Newell Region and the Brooks-Newell Regional Landfill is located outside of Brooks at the junction of Highway #1 and #36.

Newell Recycling Depot supports recycling in the City of Brooks and throughout the Brooks-Newell Region . Located at 279 Veiner Road, Brooks.

Recycling

Approximately 60% of respondents expressed some level of Satisfaction with Recycling, which is a decrease from 65% (484) in 2017. The response rate was 54.8% in 2013. Recycling had the least amount of Neutral responses with 10.9%, which was the case in 2017 and 2013 (11.9% and 10.7%, respectively) as well.

Newell Recycling Association They accept clean paper & cardboard, clean metal, oil (and related materials), electronics (E-waste), confidential shredding, florescent lightbulbs, paint & specific household hazardous waste.²⁴³

The **Brooks Bottle Depot** accepts commonly purchased beverage containers.

²⁴² <http://www.newellwastemanagement.com/>

²⁴³ <https://newellrecycling.ca/>

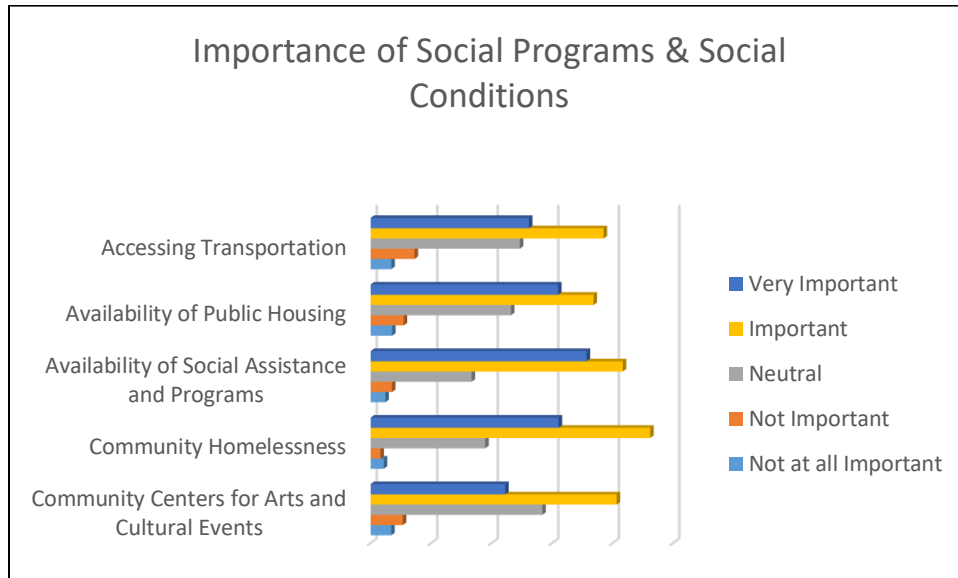
POSITIVE GAP: SOCIAL PROGRAMS/SOCIAL CONDITIONS Factor

Ranked #8 for Level of Importance and #7 for Level of Satisfaction

This Factor was defined with the following variables:

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Accessing Transportation	Public Transportation
Availability of Public Housing	Homelessness
Availability of Social Assistance	Access to Childcare
Community Homelessness	
Community Centres for Arts and Culture	

Importance of Social Programs/Social Conditions Variables



FINDINGS:

- **Accessing Transportation** was Very Important or Important to 64.7% of respondents, which is a decrease from 70.7% in 2017. It was Very Important to 26.2% of respondents, and Important to 38.5% of respondents. In 2017, it was Very Important to 27.3% of respondents, and Important to 43.4% of respondents. The ratings in 2013 were 25% and 40.6% respectively. 24.7% of respondents were Neutral, and 10.7% of thought **Accessing Transportation** was Not Important or Not at all Important. In 2017, 22.1% of respondents were Neutral, 7.3% thought **Accessing Transportation** was Not Important or Not at all Important. The ratings in 2013 were 26.5% and 7.9% respectively.
- **Availability of Public Housing** was Very Important or Important to 67.8% of respondents, which is a slight increase from 67.1% in 2017. The rating was 68.4% in 2013. 23.2% of respondents were Neutral, and 9% were Not Important or Not at all Important. In 2017, 25.5% of respondents were Neutral, and

7.4% were Not Important or Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 23.8% and 7.8% respectively.

- **Availability of Social Assistance** was Very Important or Important to 77.4% of respondents, which is an increase from 73.4% in 2017 and 72.5% in 2013. 16.7% of respondents were Neutral, and 6% were Not Important or Not at all Important. In 2017, 21.4% of respondents were Neutral, and 5.2% were Not Important or Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 23% and 4.6% respectively.
- **Community Homelessness** was Very Important or Important to 77.3% of respondents, which is an increase from 76.4% in 2017 and 73.8% in 2013. 18.9% of respondents were Neutral, and 3.8% were Not Important or Not at all Important. In 2017, 19.4% of respondents were Neutral, and 4.2% were Not Important or Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 20.6% and 5.7% respectively.
- **Community Centres for Arts and Culture** was Very Important or Important to 62.9% of respondents, which is a decrease from 67% in 2017 and 65.7% in 2013. 28.4% of respondents were Neutral, and 8.7% were Not Important or Not at all Important. In 2017, 25.5% of respondents were Neutral, and 7.5% were Not Important or Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 26.5% and 7.9% respectively.

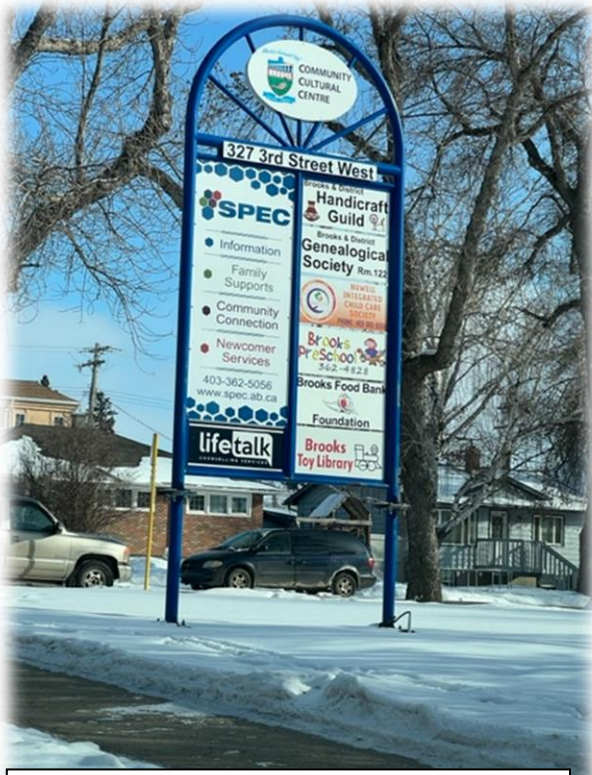
Note: The rating of Importance for the Social Programs/Social Conditions factor may mean that Social Programs/Social Conditions does not rank high in respondent interest, or that those who responded to the survey generally do not need access to social supports or respondents were unclear as to the definition of Social Programs which is often perceived as relevant only to government income assistance rather than the broader range of services/programs that cater to very diverse needs.

Arts, Culture and Heritage Board, City of Brooks:

The City of Brooks Arts, Culture & Heritage Board consists of seven public members appointed by City Council, one City Councillor and six citizens at large. The board is responsible to provide advice to Council on arts, cultural and heritage items and to work with community to identify and recommend steps toward building the arts, cultural and heritage programs and space in Brooks and area. The Board operates the Medium, which is a City of Brooks owned building/space that can host Board approved art and cultural events. In 2018, the Board was provided space (in the photos below photo) to build capacity regard community arts, culture and heritage.²⁴⁴ This space, named The Medium, is located at 511 2nd Street West, owned by the City of Brooks and can host Board approved arts, cultural and heritage events.

The City of Brooks Arts, Cultural & Heritage Committee creates, promotes and supports many arts and cultural activities throughout the year.

²⁴⁴ <https://www.brooks.ca/598/Arts-Culture-Heritage-Board>



The Community Cultural Centre is the location of several Non-Profit Organizations offering a wide variety of programs and services.

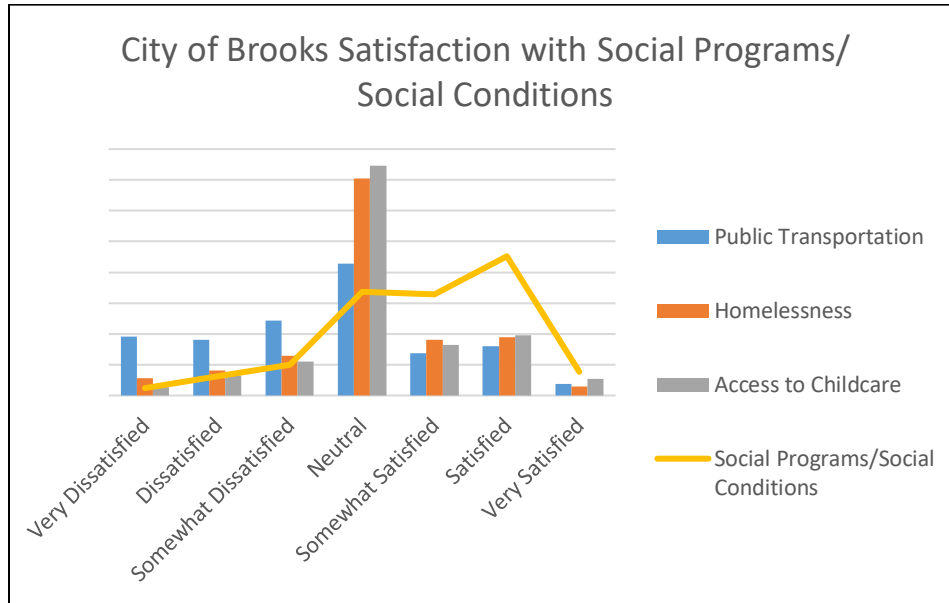


Seniors Villas owned and operated through the Newell Housing Foundation offers affordable housing options for Seniors.



Overall Satisfaction with Social Programs/Social Conditions: 62.1% (2017: 67.3%; 2013: 71%)

Satisfaction with Social Programs/Social Conditions Variables



FINDINGS:

- There was a high Neutral response to all of the Satisfaction variables: **Public Transportation** (31%) (214), **Homelessness** (51.4%) (352) and **Access to Childcare** (54.5%) (373). The ratings in 2017 were 31.7%, 50% and 47.3%, respectively, and in 2013 they were 32.6%, 51% and 50.7% respectively.
- **Public Transportation** had an Overall Satisfaction rate of 24.3% (168) which is a decrease from 28.6% (212) in 2017 and 24.7% in 2013. 2.8% (19) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 11.6% (80) were Satisfied and 10% (69) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 3.2% (24) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 12.4% (92) were Satisfied and 13% (96) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 5%, 10.2% and 9.5% respectively. 17.7% (122) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 13% (90) were Dissatisfied and 13.9% (96) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 16.5% (122) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 13.1% (97) were Dissatisfied, and 10.1% (75) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 14.6%, 12.8% and 15.4% respectively. The Overall Dissatisfaction rate was 44.6% (308), which is an increase from 39.7% (294) in 2017 and 42.8% in 2013.
- **Homelessness** had an Overall Satisfaction rate of 29.2% (200), which is a decrease from 35.9% (265) in 2017 and 34.5% in 2013. 2.2% (15) respondents were Very Satisfied, 13.9% (95) were Satisfied and 13.1% (90) were Somewhat Satisfied, In 2017, 3.7% (27) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 16.1% (119) were Satisfied and 16.1% (119) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 5.4%, 12.8% and 13.4%, respectively. 9.3% (64) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 6% (41) were Dissatisfied and 4.1% (28) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 8.7% (64) of respondents were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.5% (26) were Dissatisfied and 1.9% (14) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 9%, 4% and 4.4%, respectively.
- **Access to Childcare** had an Overall Satisfaction rate of 30.2%, which is a decrease from 37.9% (281) in 2017 and from 31% in 2013. 3.9% (27) were Very Satisfied, 14.3% (98) were Satisfied and 12% (82) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 5.9% (44) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 18.6% (138) were Satisfied and 13.3% (99) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 6%, 13.3% and 11.8%, respectively. 8% (55) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.7% (32) were Dissatisfied and 2.6% (18) were very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 8.2% (61) of respondents were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.5% (33) were Dissatisfied and 2.2% (16) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 8.5%, 7% and 4%, respectively.

There is no universal access to public transportation²⁴⁹ in the City of Brooks. The County of Newell operates the Newell Mini Bus, which is dedicated to providing door-to-door service to residents within the County so they may travel to Brooks for any appointments they may have (doctor, dentist, hospital, shopping, visiting friends and family, etc.).²⁵⁰ Brooks' residents may also use the Mini Bus service to visit friends or relatives that live in other areas in the Region. This service requires a one-time registration fee of \$10, and a round trip fee of \$18 each time you use the Mini Bus.²⁵¹ The Mini Bus operates Monday through Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm, and please call 403-363-7890 to schedule your ride.

The formerly named Brooks Handibus service was previously provided by the Newell Community Action Group society under contract by the City of Brooks, but beginning on August 04, 2015 the City began providing the transportation service directly.²⁵² The City of Brooks renamed the Handibus to *Access Transit Service (ATS)* on February 23, 2023.²⁵³ The City of Brooks' ATS primarily serves City of Brooks' residents and focuses on seniors and those with cognitive and physical disabilities as well as anyone in the community with short-term disabilities that requires the service.²⁵⁴ Visitors from outside communities that fit the ridership criteria are also able to use the ATS for transportation in Brooks. This service costs \$4 for each one-way trip within the City of Brooks, and there is also a group chart option for \$55 per hour.²⁵⁵ Individual bus passes are \$40 each and have 10 trips. Packs of five bus passes are sold for \$180 at a 10% discount. This service runs from Monday to Friday between 8:00am and 4:00pm (excluding statutory holidays).

On April 12, 2021, The City of Brooks began what is called the Ambulatory Transportation Subsidy Program (ATSP). This program provides service to those individuals who are registered riders of ATS, aged 65 years and older and who DO NOT utilize a wheelchair, walker or cane for assistance, or an individual who is neither physically or cognitively disabled.²⁵⁶ The ATSP program is only available for those riders registered with the City of Brooks. All approved riders will be issued 10 passes annually, and each pass is for a one-way trip valued at \$4.00.²⁵⁷ All riders may purchase passes at City Hall or the Fire Hall, and Newbrook Lodge residents may purchase them from staff. All ATSP trips must be completed within the municipal boundary of the City of Brooks.²⁵⁸

The City's ATS and ATSP ridership has increased. Between January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021, there were 3,938 ATS pick-ups and drop-offs, and between January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022 there were 5,031 pick-ups and drop-offs.²⁵⁹ There are currently 261 registered riders for the program. Between January 1 and December 31, 2021 there were 60 ATSP pick-ups and drop-offs (2 registered ATSP participants utilized the service), and between January 1 and December 31, 2020 there were 195 pick-ups and drop-offs (7 registered ATSP participants).²⁶⁰

Beginning in February, 2019, in an effort to provide transportation for residents seeking medical and other services in Medicine Hat, the municipalities in the Brooks-Newell Region collaborated on a regional transportation pilot project (now called **Brooks Regional Transportation Service**).^{261, 262} Transportation to and

²⁴⁹ A system of vehicles such as buses and trains that operate at regular times on fixed routes and are used by the public.

²⁵⁰ <https://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/mini-bus-service>

²⁵¹ <https://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/mini-bus-service>

²⁵² <https://www.brooks.ca/278/Access-Transit>

²⁵³ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 27, 2027

²⁵⁴ <https://www.brooks.ca/278/Access-Transit>

²⁵⁵ <https://www.brooks.ca/DocumentCenter/View/387>

²⁵⁶ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

²⁵⁷ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

²⁵⁸ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

²⁵⁹ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

²⁶⁰ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

²⁶¹ <https://medicinehatnews.com/news/local-news/2019/05/15/brooks-to-mh-transit-service-a-success-so-far/>

²⁶² <https://www.brooks.ca/650/Brooks-Regional-Transportation-Service>

from Medicine Hat are not limited to medical services, but medical appointments will take a priority. The project is funded through a Government of Alberta Regional Collaboration Grant. The weekly schedule will be arranged with local physicians to ensure coordination occurs between service dates and patient appointments. Riders must pre-book the service, and revisions in the schedule will depend on demand. The Regional Transportation Service runs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for residents of the Brooks-Newell Region (statutory holidays are excluded). The cost for a one-way trip is \$20 and round trip, \$40.²⁶³ You may book your trip by calling 403-362-6190.

Service numbers for the Regional Transportation Service has decreased over the past two years. Between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021 the service ran for 153 days, and 559 individuals utilized the service; and between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022 the service ran for 76 days, and 153 individuals utilized the service.²⁶⁴ There are currently 229 registered riders for this program.



Homelessness

Homelessness did not illicit a strong response from survey respondents (51.4% of respondents were Neutral). There are limited services for homeless individuals in the City of Brooks. Currently, organizations/facilities which serve persons who are homeless include Cantara House and faith-based services such as the Champion's Centre, the Salvation Army and other church groups who provide short term help for emergency shelter.²⁶⁵ The Medicine Hat Community Housing Society provides similar services in Medicine Hat.²⁶⁶ The local youth shelter closed in February 2014 due to lack of funding. The Newell Housing Foundation, which is an amalgamation of the Brooks Housing Society and Newell Housing Association, provides rent subsidies and manages affordable housing units for residents throughout the Brooks-Newell Region who qualify.²⁶⁷ The foundation also owns and operates affordable housing units.²⁶⁸

²⁶³ <https://www.brooks.ca/650/Brooks-Regional-Transportation-Service>

²⁶⁴ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

²⁶⁵ <https://www.thechampionscentre.net/>

²⁶⁶ <https://mhchs.ca/>

²⁶⁷ <https://newhf.ca/>

²⁶⁸ <https://www.brookshousingsociety.com/>

Homelessness in the City of Brooks is difficult to measure as there have not been specific studies on the extent of homeless in the area, creating difficulties in identifying the number of individuals or families who might be couch surfing or have inadequate shelter.²⁶⁹ Since 2013, local programs and services have expressed concerns regarding insecure housing for both youth and adults;²⁷⁰ consistent with the Affordable Housing responses in the Quality of Life #3 survey, which saw a decrease in Satisfaction and increase in Dissatisfaction with availability of affordable housing in the Brooks-Newell Region .

The Housing First in Rural Canada Report (2014)²⁷¹ and the Rural Homelessness in Canada Report (2015)²⁷² explored the dynamics of rural homelessness, which is seen as different from urban homelessness due to its more hidden nature, and the lack of infrastructure (shelters, supportive housing, addiction programs etc.) to support homeless individuals. The reports point out the challenges of rural living that makes housing for persons on limited income more difficult such as the need to have access to a reliable vehicle, and the cost of utilities and access to support services often located a distance from home.

The Rural Homelessness in Canada Report also discusses more fully the issue of affordable housing relevant to the City of Brooks. However, as an indication of the conditions that may lead to homelessness, as mentioned earlier in the report, the 2021 Federal Census identified that 33.2% of renters in Canada pay 30% or more of their income on shelter costs (It was 25% in 2016), which is considered to exceed what is a reasonable cost for housing.²⁷³ In 2011, the percentage was 31.4 so there has been an increase. According to the 2021 Federal Census, 21.6% of renters in Brooks pay 30% or more of their income on shelter costs, which is a decrease from 28.9% in 2016 and 32.2% in 2011.

67.8% of respondents felt that the **Availability of Public Housing** (housing supported by municipal, provincial or federal funds) was Important or Very Important (2017, 67.1%; 2013, 68.4%). Although there was a slight decrease in Importance between 2013 and 2017 and slight increase between 2017 and 2022, there is still an understanding in the community of the vital role that Public Housing has in supporting vulnerable populations.

According to the Government of Canada, almost 1.5 million, or 1 in 10, households were in core housing need in 2021.²⁷⁴ Core housing need is “defined as living in an unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable dwelling and not able to afford alternative housing in their community.”²⁷⁵ Recently, the federal government instituted a 10-year National Housing Strategy (NHS) with the goal of ensuring that Canadians across the country can access housing that meets their needs and that they can afford.²⁷⁶

²⁶⁹ <http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHhomelessdefinition.pdf>. Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household’s financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful and distressing.

²⁷⁰ Community Response Committee: XL Foods Crisis Report. Grasslands Regional FCSS. February 2013.

²⁷¹ Waegemakers Schiff J. & Turner A. Housing First in Rural Canada May 2014

²⁷² Waegemakers Schiff, J., Schiff, R., Turner, A. and Bernard, K. Rural Homelessness in Canada: Directions for Planning and Research 2015.

²⁷³ This is the measure used by CMHC and other groups to identify the percentage of a population at risk due to the high proportion of their income going to shelter.

²⁷⁴ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921b-eng.htm>

²⁷⁵ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921b-eng.htm>

²⁷⁶ <https://www.placetocallhome.ca/>

Access to Childcare

Childcare is sometimes seen as only an issue for young parents;²⁷⁷ however, accessible, affordable, quality childcare brings long-term returns to society.²⁷⁸ Child care and early education are both an economic and social infrastructure issue. When childcare and early education received public investment it creates a jobs-and-growth hat trick.²⁷⁹ It provides jobs for workers, mostly women; it enables parents, notably mothers, to reach their full economic potential; and it creates a generation of well prepared and engaged young learners.²⁸⁰ There are a range of studies that have shown that for every dollar spent on early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.²⁸¹ Early learning and child care can be more expensive than university tuition, and in some urban centres it can be as much as rent or mortgage payments (essentially a tax on a section of the population that Canada requires to drive economic growth).²⁸² Childcare can also be a concern for employers who may have problems in retaining employees or have employees leaving work or calling in sick and taking unplanned time off due to the difficulties in finding affordable, quality childcare.

The Satisfaction with childcare to the community as a whole may not be reflected in the Satisfaction responses, as 54.5% of respondents were Neutral on **Access to Childcare**. The same was the case in in 2017 when 47.3% of respondents and 2013 when 50.7% of respondents were Neutral.

As discussed in other sections of this document, **Access to Childcare** is compounded by the lack of public transportation, employment that consists of 12-hour shifts²⁸³, or outside the normal operating hours of childcare facilities of 6:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday. A *Brooks-Newell Region Childcare and Early Childhood Education Report* released by Grasslands Regional FCSS in January 2014²⁸⁴ detailed the number of licensed childcare spaces in the Brooks-Newell Region . Since that report was released, new daycares and day homes have opened in the Region. Currently, in the Brooks-Newell Region , there are six licensed daycares and fifteen licensed day homes.²⁸⁵ Another daycare is scheduled to open in Duchess in May 2023, which will increase the number of licensed daycares to seven.

It is difficult to interpret the 15.3% Overall Dissatisfaction rate (14.8% in 2017 and 19.5% in 2013) of **Access to Childcare** and 30.2% Overall Satisfaction rate (37.9% in 2017 and 31% in 2013) without an understanding of whether or not the respondents were parents, grandparents, caregivers, employers or had any involvement in childcare. With that being said, Overall Satisfaction and Overall Dissatisfaction with **Access to Childcare** has fluctuated over time between the three Quality of Life Studies.

Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care System

Understanding that all families in Canada should have access to high-quality, flexible, inclusive and affordable childcare and early learning, the Canadian Government instituted in 2021 the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system with the provinces, territories and Indigenous partners.²⁸⁶ The federal government will invest \$30 billion over the next five years (from 2021), with a minimum of \$9.2 billion per year ongoing.²⁸⁷ Two overarching goals of this program are to reduce daycare fees by 50% on average by the end of 2022, and bring

²⁷⁷ http://www.parklandinstitute.ca/family_day_on_the_treadmill

²⁷⁸ Vanier Institute July 2013 Issue 55 Fascinating Families It Takes a Village: A Snapshot of Child Care in Canada

²⁷⁹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/04/budget-2021-a-canada-wide-early-learning-and-child-care-plan.html>

²⁸⁰ <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/04/budget-2021-a-canada-wide-early-learning-and-child-care-plan.html>

²⁸¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/04/budget-2021-a-canada-wide-early-learning-and-child-care-plan.html>

²⁸² <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/04/budget-2021-a-canada-wide-early-learning-and-child-care-plan.html>

²⁸³ Health and Wellness Trends in the Oil and Gas Sector Shepell.fgi Research Group 2009

²⁸⁴ http://www.grasslandsregionalfcss.com.com/bus_detail.asp?bPageID=1204

²⁸⁵ Email: Anita Bruce, Teacher/Administrator, Brooks Preschool, and Executive Director, Brooks and County of Newell Early Childhood Development Coalition, March 29, 2023.

²⁸⁶ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/child-care.html>

²⁸⁷ <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2021/04/21/10-day-child-care-canadian-families>

fees down to \$10 a day on average by 2026.²⁸⁸ When it was announced, the estimated annual average savings per child at \$10-a-day compared to 2019 child care fees was in multiple thousands of dollars (\$8,610 in Alberta, for example). In less than a year, the federal government reached Canada-wide early learning and child care agreements with all 13 provinces and territories. Through these agreements, the Government of Canada aims to create 250,000 more day care spaces by March 2026 to increase options for families, and build a community-based child care system that is inclusive from the very beginning ensuring that every Canadian child will have the best possible start in life.²⁸⁹

Beginning in January 2022, child care in Alberta became more affordable under this program. Eligible families can apply for child care subsidies if they have children aged 0 to Grade 6 enrolled in a:

- Licensed facility –based program (daycare, out-of-school care and preschool)
- Family day home program overseen by a licensed family day home agency
- Group family childcare centre²⁹⁰

Subsidy rates vary based on the child’s age, family income, the child care program and the number of hours a child attends each month. Types of subsidy include:

- subsidy for children 0 to kindergarten-age (in kindergarten and also attending child care during regular school hours)
- subsidy for children in kindergarten to grade 6 enrolled in a licensed program outside of regular school hours
- preschool subsidy for children enrolled in a licensed preschool program
- extended hours subsidy for children who require care outside regular hours²⁹¹

Fees have been lowered in two ways – expanded subsidy and affordability grants.²⁹² Subsidy for children from age 0 to kindergarten-age (in kindergarten and also attending child care during regular school hours) has been expanded to included families with a gross household income of \$180,000 or less.²⁹³ Subsidy for children in kindergarten to grade 6 enrolled in a licensed program outside of regular school hours remains available to families with a household income of up to \$90,000.²⁹⁴ Affordability grants will also be provided directly to child care operators so they can further lower fees for families. Parents do not need to apply to benefit from the grant fee reduction.²⁹⁵ Please visit <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx> in order to determine your eligibility and to apply for the subsidy.

Childcare in the Brooks-Newell Region

Currently, in the Brooks-Newell Region, there are six licensed daycares and fifteen licensed day homes.²⁹⁶ Another daycare is scheduled to open in Duchess in May 2023, which will increase the number of licensed daycares to seven.

²⁸⁸ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/child-care.html>

²⁸⁹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/child-care.html>

²⁹⁰ <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx>

²⁹¹ <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx>

²⁹² <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx>

²⁹³ <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx>

²⁹⁴ <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx>

²⁹⁵ <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx>

²⁹⁶ Email: Anita Bruce, Teacher/Administrator, Brooks Preschool, and Executive Director, Brooks and County of Newell Early Childhood Development Coalition, March 29, 2023.

Brooks & County of Newell Early Childhood Development (ECD) Committee

The ECD Committee promotes early childhood development with communities, services and families, to understand and respond to early childhood development needs through information gathering, interpretation and dissemination and healthy developmental activities. It gets funding support from Grasslands Regional FCSS. Activities to increase public awareness are held throughout the year. The ECD Committee is also dedicated to supporting and providing ongoing training and networking opportunities for Early Learning Professionals. such as the Annual Circle of Ideas Workshop.



In January, 2022, Alberta entered into the Federal-Provincial Child Care Agreement, which worked to expand childcare services and lower costs for Albertans.

<https://www.alberta.ca/federal-provincial-child-care-agreement.aspx>

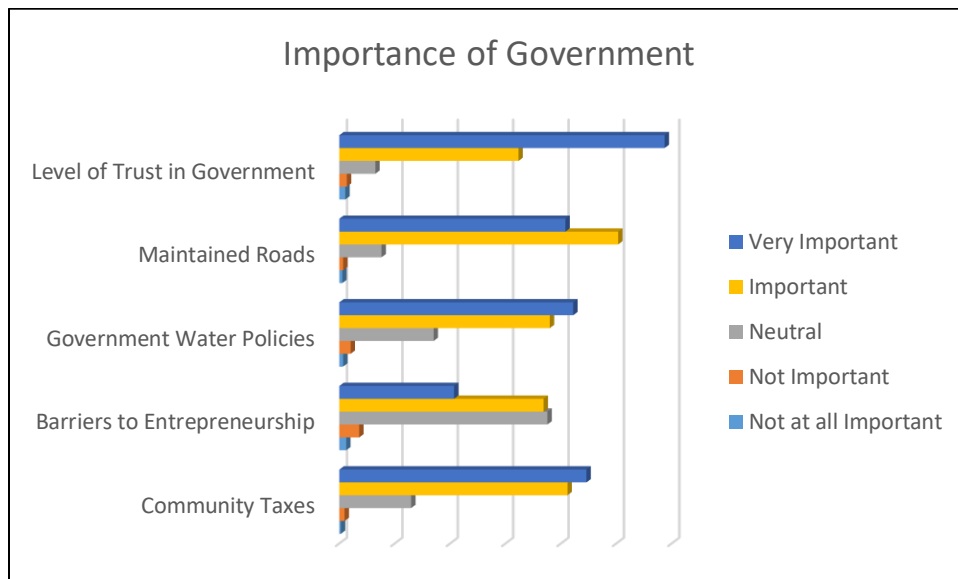
POSITIVE GAP: GOVERNMENT Factor

Ranked #9 for Level of Importance and #6 for Level of Satisfaction

Government was a Match Gap in 2013, but a Positive Gap in 2017. This Factor was defined with the following variables:

QUALITY OF LIFE	QUALITY OF PLACE
Importance Variables	Satisfaction Variables
Level of Trust in Government	Local Population Growth
Maintained Roads	Emergency Services
Government Water Policies	Utilities
Barriers to Entrepreneurship	
Community Taxes	

Importance of Government Variables



FINDINGS:

- **Level of Trust in Government** was Very Important or Important to 91.1% of respondents; 58.7% were Very Important and 32.3% were Important. In 2017, 87.8% of respondents; 53% were Very Important and 34.9% were Important. The ratings in 2013 were 85%, 47.1% and 37.7%, respectively. 6.5% of respondents were Neutral, 1.4% were Not Important and 1.1% were Not at all Important. In 2017, 10.1% of respondents were Neutral, 1.3% were Not Important and 0.8% were Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 11.3%, 3.1% and 0.8%, respectively.
- **Level of Trust in Government** received the highest percentage for Very Important responses in 2017 and 2013, but dropped to second most in 2022. It was surpassed by Maintained Roads.
- **Maintained Roads** was Very Important or Important to 91.2%; 40.8% of respondents were Very Important and 50.3% were Important. In 2017, 87.7% of respondents; 37.5% were Very Important and 50.2% were Important. The ratings for 2013 were 92.4%, 41.6% and 50.8%, respectively. 7.6% of respondents were Neutral, 0.7% were Not Important and 0.5% were Not at all Important. In 2017, 10.8%

of respondents were Neutral, 1% were Not Important and 0.5% were Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 6.4%, 1.1% and 0.2%, respectively.

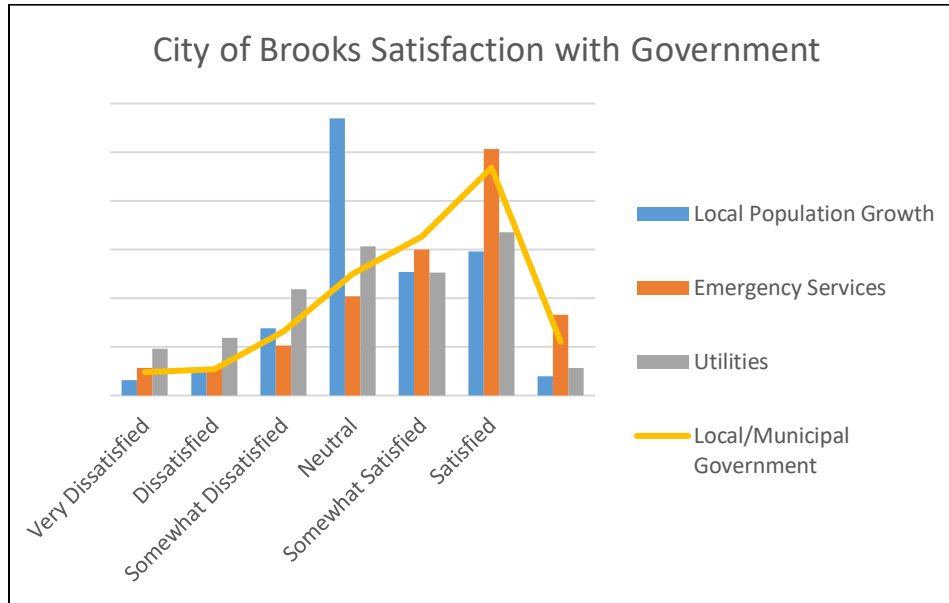
- **Government Water Policies** was Very Important or Important to 80.2% of respondents; 42.2% were Very Important and 38% were Important. In 2017, 81.1% of respondents; 40% were Very Important and 41.1% were Important. The ratings for 2013 were 80.3%, 43% and 37.2% respectively. 17% of respondents were Neutral, 2% were Not Important and 0.7% were Not at all Important. In 2017, 16.8% of respondents were Neutral, 1.3% were Not Important and 0.8% were Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 16.9%, 2.3% and 0.6%, respectively.
- **Barriers to Entrepreneurship** received the most Neutral responses at 37.6%, which is an increase from 37.1% in 2017 and 35.8% in 2013 (both also the highest). This might indicate that the role that Government(s) play in encouraging Entrepreneurship is not well known.
- **Barriers to Entrepreneurship** was Very Important or Important to 57.6% of respondents, which is an increase from 56.4% in 2017 and 56.6% in 2013. 20.7% were Very Important and 36.9% were Important. In 2017, 18.5% were Very Important and 38% were Important. The ratings for 2013 were 20.2% and 36.4% respectively. 3.7% of respondents were Not Important and 1.2% were Not at all Important. In 2017, 4.7% of respondents were Not Important and 1.8% were Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 5.3% and 2.3% respectively.
- **Community Taxes** was Very Important or Important to 85.8% of respondents; 44.6% were Very Important and 41.2% were Important. In 2017, 80% of respondents; 35.9% were Very Important and 44.2% were Not Important. The ratings for 2013 were 82.3%, 38.2% and 44.2% respectively. 13% of respondents were Neutral, 1% were Not Important and 0.3% were Not at all Important. In 2017, 17.6% of respondents were Neutral, 1.3% were Not Important and 1.2% were Not at all Important. The ratings for 2013 were 14.9%, 2% and 0.8% respectively.

Residents may not always be fully aware which level of government is responsible for regulations/policies which affect them, and responsibilities for various services and programs. For example, water policies in rural areas may be a function of local water associations while being legislated through provincial regulations. While municipalities/County set the mill rate or property tax, the provincial government is involved in setting and collecting education tax levies. Municipal governments provide a wide range of programs and services such as Emergency Services, Utilities, Parks and Recreation, Building and Maintaining Roads, Community By-laws, Municipal Development, Development Permits, Business Licenses, Community Committees and Engineering.

The Rank of Importance given to Government indicated respondents considered as Important or Very Important the Government variables of: (i) Trust in Government; (ii) Maintained Roads; (iii) Water Policies; and (iv) and Community Taxes. The respondents were more Neutral on Barriers to Entrepreneurship, which may reflect less knowledge as to the role that different levels of government play in the development of business/entrepreneurship.

Overall Satisfaction with Local/Municipal Government was 65.1% (2017:69%; 2013: 58.3%)

Satisfaction with Local/Municipal Government Variables



- Respondents expressed Overall Satisfaction with **Local Population Growth** at 42.8% (295); which is an increase from 41.7% (307) in 2017, but a decrease from 44.6% in 2013. 2.9% (20) were Very Satisfied, 21.5% (148) were Satisfied and 18.4% (127) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 4.8% (35) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 18.1% (133) were Satisfied and 18.9% (139) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 5.4%, 19.2% and 20% respectively. 41.3% (285) of respondents were Neutral, 10% (69) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3.6% (25) were Dissatisfied and 2.3% (16) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 42.5% (313) of respondents were Neutral, 9% (66) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 4.1% (30) were Dissatisfied and 2.9% (21) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 38.7%, 7%, 5.7% and 3.7%, respectively.
- Respondents do not appear to have an issue with the impact of growth or how the City of Brooks has grown, which was the case in 2017 and 2013 as well.
- Respondents expressed Overall Satisfaction with **Emergency Services** at 69.9% (486), which is a decrease from 77.5% (578) in 2017 and 75.4% in 2013. 11.9% (83) were Very Satisfied, 36.4% (253) were Satisfied and 21.6% (150) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 17.3% (129) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 39.8% (297) were Satisfied and 20.4% (152) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 17%, 40% and 18.1% respectively. 7.3% (51) were Somewhat Satisfied, 4% (28) were Dissatisfied and 4% (28) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 3.6% (27) of respondents were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 1.3% (10) were Dissatisfied and 1.9% (14) were Very Dissatisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 3.6%, 2.6% and 3.9% respectively.
- **Emergency Services** had the lowest Neutral response rate at 14.7% (102). It was also the lowest in 2017 with 15.7% and 2013 with 14.6%. Although **Emergency Services** still has a high Overall Satisfaction rate, it decreased significantly since 2017. This could be a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Utilities** was 46.6% (322), which is a significant drop from 54.6% (401) in 2017 and 53.4% in 2013. 4.1% (28) were Very Satisfied, 24.3% (168) were Satisfied and 18.2% (126) were Somewhat Satisfied. In 2017, 6.1% (45) of respondents were Very Satisfied, 26.9% (198) were Satisfied and 21.5% (158) were Somewhat Satisfied. The ratings for 2013 were 8.4%, 23% and 21.6% respectively. 22.1% (153) of respondents were Neutral, 15.8% (109) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 8.5% (59) were

Dissatisfied and 7% (48) were Very Dissatisfied. In 2017, 25% (184) of respondents were Neutral, 11.3% (83) were Somewhat Dissatisfied, 6% (44) were Dissatisfied and 3.1% (23) were Very dissatisfied. The ratings in 2013 were 24%, 11.9%, 6.4% and 4.5% respectively.

- With the high rate of Satisfaction and Importance in specific factors, it is interesting that government rated #9 Importance and #6 for Satisfaction. It may mean that respondents see Government as less directly impacting their daily quality of life and, while still important, of less direct impact than other Quality of Life Factors. A concern in recent years is the decrease voter participation in elections

Election Statistics:

2021 City of Brooks Municipal Election:

1 Mayor and 6 Councillors elected, 4 incumbents and 3 newly elected. 2 candidates ran for Mayor, and 14 candidates ran for 6 Councillor Positions.

Number of Voters: 2,793

Number of Eligible Voters: 11,365

Rate of Voting for 2021 Municipal Election: 24.6%

Rate of Voting for Provincial Elections: 52.6% for Strathmore Brooks in 2012 and 49.7% in 2015.
65.6% for Brooks-Medicine Hat in 2019





Brooks City Council

Back Row from Left to Right: Councillors Joel Goodnough, Melissa Wardrop, Mohammed Idriss and Ray Juska
 Front Row from Left to Right: Councillor Bill Prentice, Mayor John Petrie and Councillor Jon Nesbitt

Local Population Growth

Local population growth is largely impacted by the availability of employment. City and County Councils make decisions in terms of planning and development (i.e. what type of housing density to allow and what kind of industry to attract). Population growth in the communities means that local government must plan for services such as housing developments, recreation, EMS Services, increased traffic, infrastructure and retail needs. The local education services have to plan for increased numbers of students and local non-profit organizations have to adapt programs and services. 41.3% of the respondents were Neutral on local population growth and the level of Overall Dissatisfaction was a low 15.9%. Respondents do not appear to have an issue with how the community has grown or the impact of growth.

According to the 2021 Federal Census, the City of Brooks had 3.3% population growth between 2016 (14,451) and 2021 (14,924).²⁹⁷ The population growth between 2011 and 2016 was 5.7%, and between 2006 and 2011 it was 9.3%.^{298,299}

²⁹⁷ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²⁹⁸ 2011 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

²⁹⁹ 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Emergency Services

Emergency Services

Emergency Services generally include Fire Services, Emergency Medical Services, and Police (RCMP and local Peace Officers).

The 69.9% Overall Satisfaction rate for Emergency Services is a decrease from 77.5% in 2017 and 75.4% in 2013. Although there was a decrease in Overall Satisfaction over the three study periods, respondents still appear to be satisfied with **Emergency Services** in the City of Brooks. **Emergency Services** had the lowest number of respondents who indicated that they were Neutral (14.7%) in terms of their Satisfaction. Emergency Services had an Overall Dissatisfaction rate of 15.4% (6.8% in 2017), which was still the lowest of all the variables for this factor. The COVID-19 Pandemic is most likely the cause of the decrease in Overall Satisfaction and increase of Overall Dissatisfaction with Emergency Services.

Fire Services:

The City of Brooks Fire Department operates with 2 full-time employees and 32 volunteers who are also trained in Emergency First Aid. The Fire Department responded to 485 emergency calls in 2022. 65% of these calls were in the City of Brooks, 35% were in the County of Newell Div. 5 and 10. Volunteer firefighters have an average of 7.6 years of service and in 2022 participated in 3,258 hours of training. Beyond responding to emergencies, the firefighters conduct fire safety inspection of public buildings. They conducted a total of 286 inspections in 2022 and found a total of 32 infractions.³⁰⁰



³⁰⁰ Email from Kevin Swanson, Fire Chief, City of Brooks. March 28, 2023.

THE BROOKS FIRE DEPARTMENT



Emergency Medical Services:

Alberta Health Services EMS Brooks provides Advanced Life Support services to the City of Brooks, surrounding towns, villages, hamlets and rural areas and is staffed by EMT's and EMT-Paramedics. Brooks ambulance (EMS) service offers a number of services such as emergency response, inter-facility transfers, and non-emergency transfer and community event standbys. Staff also supplies first aid training and instruction within the community.³⁰¹

Police Services:

Policing Services in the City of Brooks are provided by the RCMP through the Brooks Detachment. To enforce By-Laws, the City of Brooks employs two Peace Officers and one By-Law Officer. Overall, 70.3% (485) of respondents expressed a high level of Satisfaction with Community Safety; 6.5% (45) were Very Satisfied, 35.4% (244) were Satisfied and 28.4% (196) were Somewhat Satisfied. Further analysis on Community Safety was provided in the *Sense of Community* Factor, which was a prior section of this report.

³⁰¹ www.brooks.ca

Utilities

Utilities usually include water, sewage, garbage and recycling fee. The charge for these services is billed bi-monthly directly from City Hall. Electricity and Natural Gas services are usually not municipal services. The Overall Satisfaction rate was 46.6%, Neutral response was 22.1%, and Overall Dissatisfaction Rate was 31.3%. Overall Satisfaction has decreased since 2017, and Overall Dissatisfaction has increased during that time. Further research would be needed to determine the reasons behind this change.

City of Brooks Property Taxes/Mill Rates and Utility Rates³⁰²

Residential Property Taxes/Mill Rates 2022

Municipal 8.5999%, Provincial School Program 2.6298% Newell Foundation 0.1048% Total Residential Mill Rate: 11.3345%

Utility Rates 2022

Water Rates: First 13.65 m³ or less \$56.82., for every m³ in excess of first 13.65 m³ \$1.27

Sewer Rates: Residential - \$39.79 (bi-monthly) Recycling fee: \$7.08 (bi-monthly)

Waste Management: \$28.90 (bi-monthly) with a discount for seniors (65 and older) to \$19.90 (bi-monthly)



Veterans Centennial Park located beside the City of Brooks Municipal Building is the site of many community activities throughout the year.

³⁰² <http://www.brooks.ca/>

CITY OF BROOKS GAP ANALYSIS: AGE GROUPS

Rank of Importance and Rank of Satisfaction by Age Groups

There are variations in Gaps when survey responses are sorted out by age range. For all ages, except 20 to 39 (it was a Match Gap), **Economy and Employment** was a Negative Gap. **Health Services** was a Negative Gap for all ages, except for 70 Plus (it was a Match Gap). **Health Services** ranked #1 in Importance for all age categories. **Local/Municipal Government** had Positive Gaps and ranked #9 in Importance in all age categories. Satisfaction in **Local/Municipal Government** wavered between 5 and 7 in all age categories as well. No single factor had Negative Gaps in every age category.

Quality of Life Factors	15 to 19		20 to 39		40 to 59		60 to 69		70 Plus	
	Importance	Satisfaction	Importance	Satisfaction	Importance	Satisfaction	Importance	Satisfaction	Importance	Satisfaction
Health Services	1	8	1	8	1	5	1	5	1	1
Education System	2	1	2	2	3	1	3	1	3	4
Personal Well-Being	3	3	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	2
Economy and Employment	5	9	4	4	4	6	4	9	7	9
Political Rights and General Values	7	6	8	9	8	9	7	8	6	8
Physical Environment	4	4	7	3	6	3	5	2	5	3
Sense of Community	6	7	5	6	5	4	6	4	4	7
Social Programs/Social Conditions	8	2	6	7	7	8	8	7	8	6
Local/Municipal Government	9	5	9	5	9	7	9	6	9	5

FINDINGS:

- There are variations in how different Age Groups responded to the Rank of Importance and Rank of Satisfaction with the nine factors.
- **Local/Municipal Government** ranked #9 for Importance across all Age Groups, and was ranked #5, #6, or #7 in Satisfaction.
- **Health Services** was ranked #1 for Importance across all Age Groups. It was a Negative Gap across all age groups except for 70 plus (it was a Match Gap).
- Ages 60 to 69 did not have a Match Gap for any factor.
- Overall, there was greater consistency across all Age Groups for Rank of Importance of all nine factors than for Rank of Satisfaction.

The difference in ranking by the various Age Groups of the nine factors indicates the value of the public, social and business sectors being aware of the demographics and differing opinions of Age Groups within their community in order to provide programs and services which match the needs and interests of the Age Groups. For example, Ages 70+ Satisfaction level with **Health Services** was much lower than all other Age Groups.

Ages 15-19

Negative Gaps

- Health Services (Rank of Importance 1; Rank of Satisfaction 8)
- Economy and Employment (Rank of Importance 5; Rank of Satisfaction 9)
- Sense of Community (Rank of Importance 6; Rank of Satisfaction 7)

Match Gaps

- Personal Well-Being (Rank of Importance 3. Rank of Satisfaction 3)
- Physical Environment (Ranks of Importance 4; Rank of Satisfaction 4)

Positive Gaps

- Education System (Rank of Importance 2; Rank of Satisfaction 1)
- Political Rights and General Values (Ranks of Importance 7; Rank of Satisfaction 6)
- Social Programs/Social Conditions (Rank of Importance 8; Rank of Satisfaction 2)
- Local/Municipal Government (Rank of Importance 9; Rank of Satisfaction 5)

Ages 20-39

Negative Gaps

- Health Services (Rank of Importance 1; Rank of Satisfaction 8)
- Political Rights and General Values (Ranks of Importance 8; Rank of Satisfaction 9)
- Sense of Community (Rank of Importance 5; Rank of Satisfaction 6)
- Social Programs/Social Conditions (Rank of Importance 6; Rank of Satisfaction 7)

Match Gaps

- Education System (Rank of Importance 2; Rank of Satisfaction 2)
- Economy and Employment (Rank of Importance 4; Rank of Satisfaction 4)

Positive Gaps

- Personal Well-Being (Rank of Importance 3; Rank of Satisfaction 1)
- Physical Environment (Rank of Importance 7; Rank of Satisfaction 3)
- Local/Municipal Government (Rank of Importance 9; Rank of Satisfaction 5)

Ages 40-59

Negative Gaps

- Health Services (Rank of Importance 1; Rank of Satisfaction 5)
- Economy and Employment (Rank of Importance 4; Rank of Satisfaction 6)
- Political Rights and General Values (Rank of Importance 8; Rank of Satisfaction 9)
- Social Programs/Social Conditions (Rank of Importance 7; Rank of Satisfaction 8)

Match Gaps

- Personal Well-Being (Rank of Importance 2; Rank of Satisfaction 2)

Positive Gaps

- Education System (Rank of Importance 3; Rank of Satisfaction 1)
- Physical Environment (Rank of Importance 6; Rank of Satisfaction 3)
- Sense of Community (Rank of Importance 5; Rank of Satisfaction 4)
- Local/Municipal Government (Rank of Importance 9; Rank of Satisfaction 7)

Ages 60-69

Negative Gaps

- Health Services (Rank of Importance 1; Rank of Satisfaction 5)
- Personal Well-Being (Rank of Importance 2; Rank of Satisfaction 3)
- Economy and Employment (Rank of Importance 4; Rank of Satisfaction 9)
- Political Rights and General Values (Rank of Importance 7; Rank of Satisfaction 8)

Positive Gaps

- Education System (Rank of Importance 3; Rank of Satisfaction 1)
- Physical Environment (Rank of Importance 5; Rank of Satisfaction 2)
- Sense of Community (Rank of Importance 6; Rank of Satisfaction 4)
- Social Programs/Social Conditions (Rank of Importance 8; Rank of Satisfaction 7)
- Local/Municipal Government (Rank of Importance 9; Rank of Satisfaction 6)

Ages 70 Plus

Negative Gaps

- Education System (Rank of Importance 3; Rank of Satisfaction 4)
- Economy and Employment (Rank of Importance 7; Rank of Satisfaction 9)
- Political Rights and General Values (Rank of Importance 6; Rank of Satisfaction 8)
- Sense of Community (Rank of Importance 4; Rank of Satisfaction 7)

Match Gaps

- Health Services (Rank of Importance 1; Rank of Satisfaction 1)
- Personal Well-Being (Rank of Importance 2; Rank of Satisfaction 2)

Positive Gaps

- Physical Environment (Rank of Importance 5; Rank of Satisfaction 3)
- Social Programs/Social Conditions (Rank of Importance 8; Rank of Satisfaction 6)
- Local/Municipal Government (Rank of Importance 9; Rank of Satisfaction 5)

GAP COMPARISON: CITY OF BROOKS & BROOKS-NEWELL REGION

The City of Brooks has approximately 60% of the population of the Brooks-Newell Region . Therefore, it is interesting to note the similarities and/or differences in the responses for the City of Brooks' respondents compared to the Brooks-Newell Region as a whole. The Brooks-Newell Region has three Negative Gaps, two Match Gaps and four Positive Gaps compared to the City of Brooks with the same sequence (although the Gaps don't align perfectly for the factors).

Both the City of Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region ranked **Health** as #1 for Rank of Importance and in the mid-ranking for Satisfaction (#4 and #5 respectively). Both the City of Brooks and Brooks-Newell Region ranked **Economy and Employment** as #4 for Importance and #8 for Satisfaction, **Political Rights and General Values** as #7 for Importance and #9 for Satisfaction, **Social Programs/Social Conditions** as #8 for Importance and #7 for Satisfaction, and **Government** as #9 for Importance and #6 for Satisfaction. **Education System** was a Match Gap for both the City of Brooks (#2 Importance and #2 Satisfaction) and Brooks-Newell Region (#3 Importance and #3 Satisfaction).

Comparison of the Rank of Importance and Rank of Satisfaction for the City of Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region in 2022

	City of Brooks		Brooks-Newell Region	
	Rank of Importance	Rank of Satisfaction	Rank of Importance	Rank of Satisfaction
Health	1	4	1	5
Education System	2	2	3	3
Personal Well-being	3	1	2	2
Economy and Employment	4	8	4	8
Sense of Community	5	5	5	4
Physical Environment	6	3	6	1
Political Rights and General Values	7	9	7	9
Social Programs/Social Conditions	8	7	8	7
Government	9	6	9	6

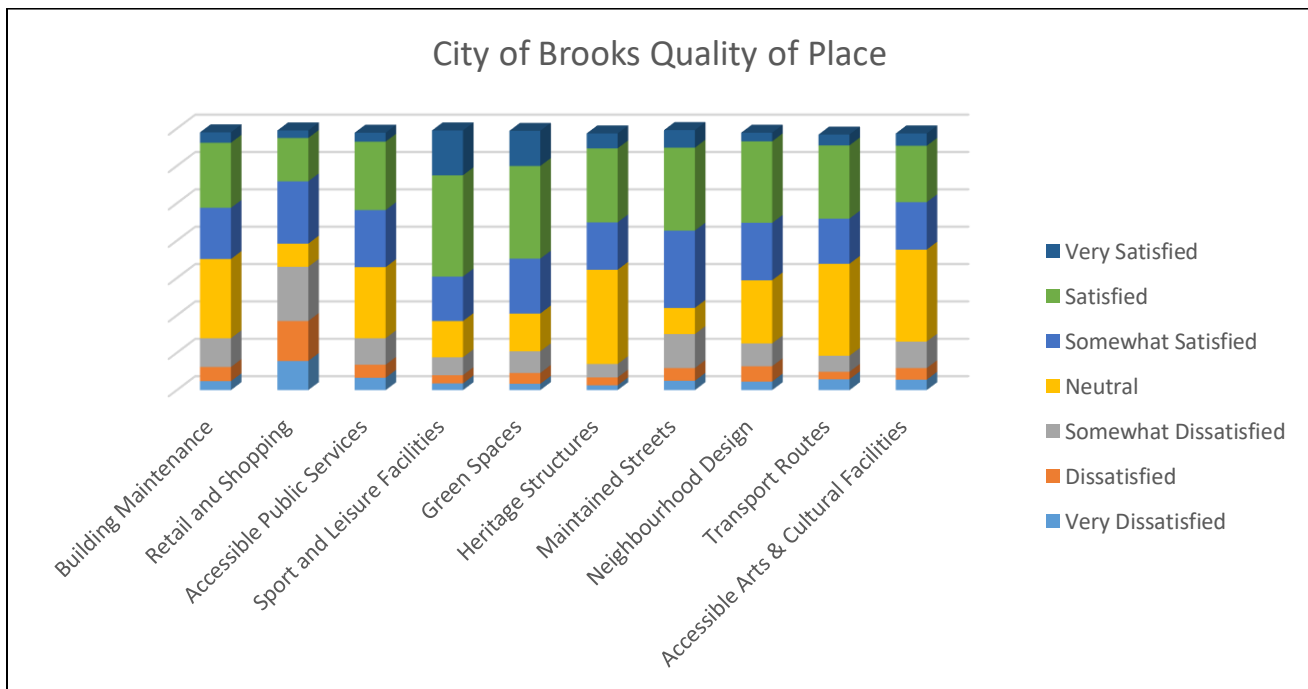
QUALITY OF PLACE

Quality of Place may be defined as “the physical characteristics of a community –the way it is planned, designed, developed and maintained – that affect the quality of life of people living and working in it, and those visiting it, both now and into the future”³⁰³.

Based on prior ‘World Class Places’ Quality of Place studies, a number of variables were chosen to measure the Quality of Place and these variables included:

- Building Maintenance
- Retail and Shopping
- Accessible Public Services
- Sports and Leisure Facilities
- Green Spaces
- Heritage Structure
- Maintained Streets
- Neighborhood Design
- Transport Routes
- Accessible Arts and Culture Facilities.

The chart below shows respondents’ levels of Satisfaction with Quality of Place variables"



³⁰³ HM Government. (2009). World Class Places: The Government Strategy for Improving Quality of Place. London: HM Government.

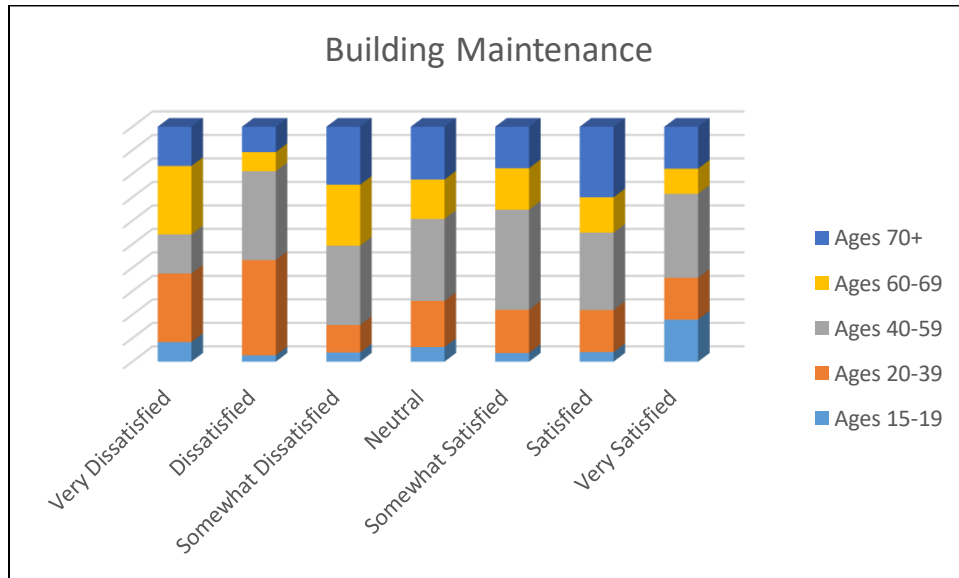
Satisfaction with Quality of Place

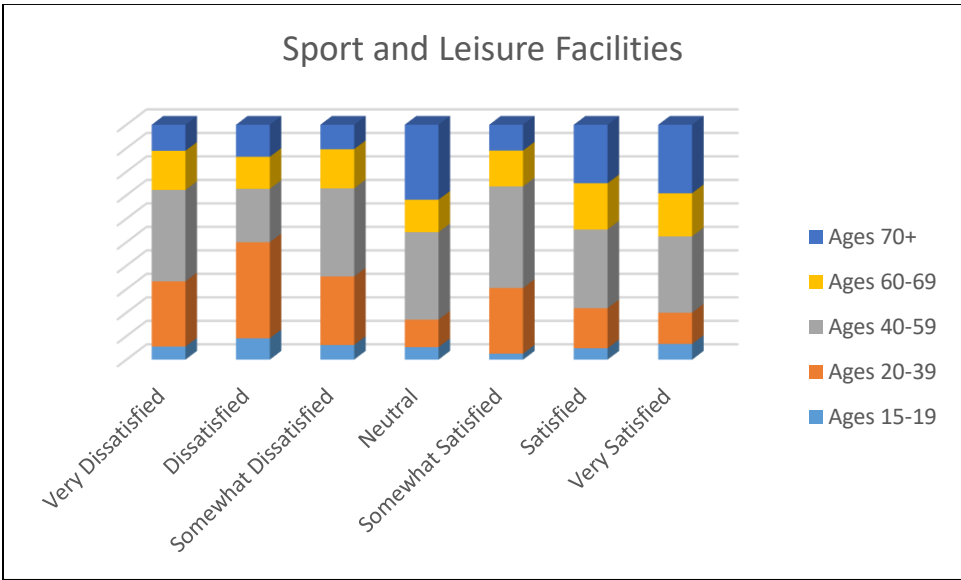
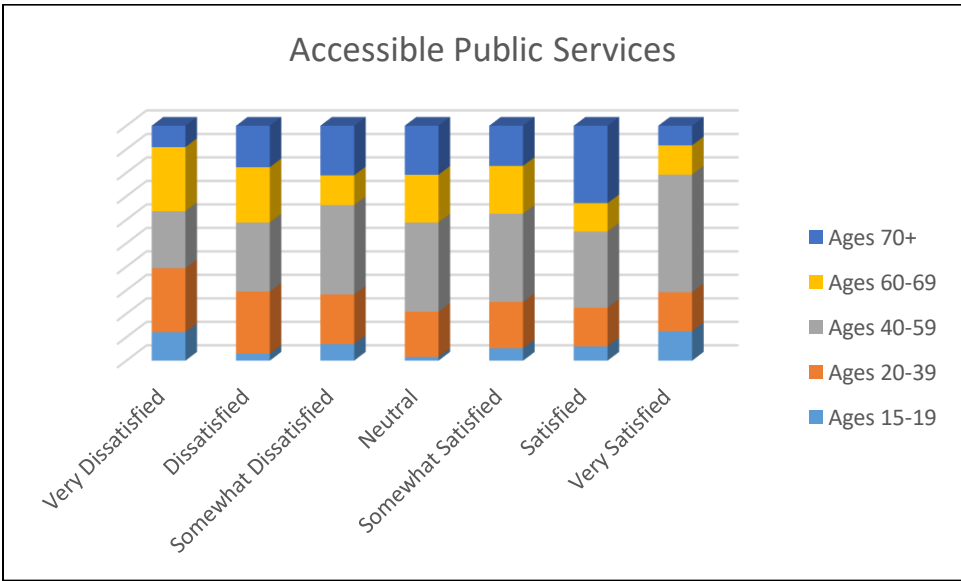
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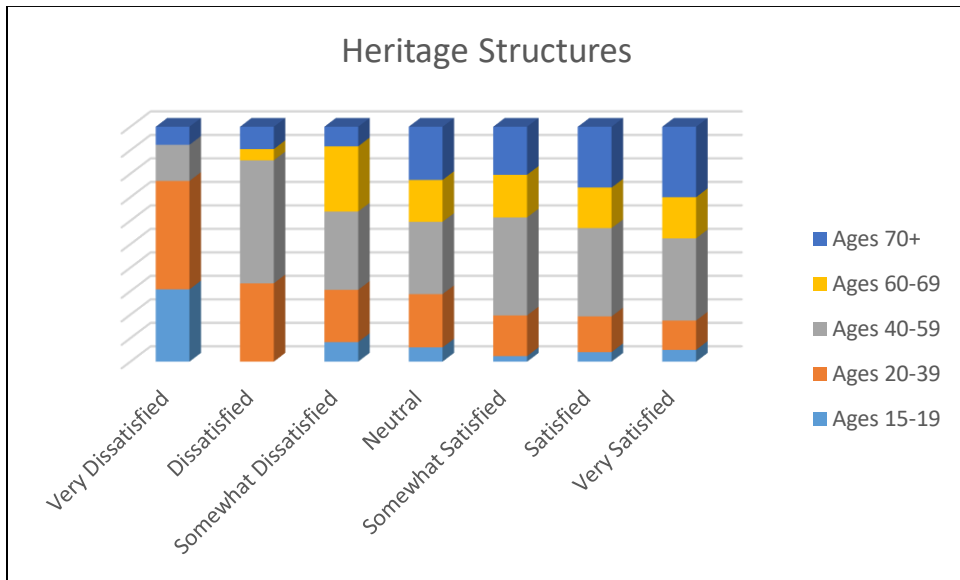
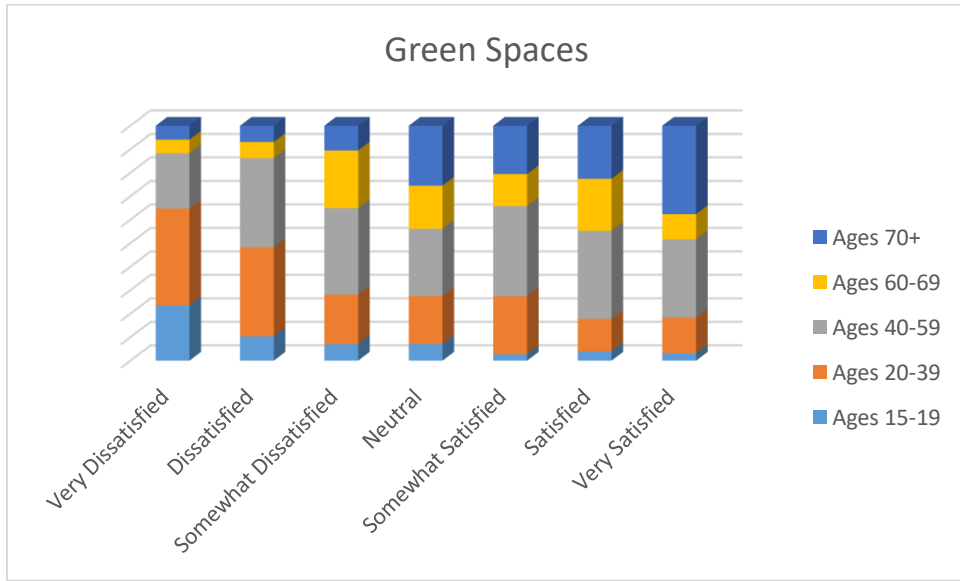
- Overall Satisfaction with **Building Maintenance** was 49.1%, Neutral response was 30.7% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 20.2%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Retail and Shopping** was 43.6%, Neutral response was 8.9% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 47.5%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Accessible Public Services** was 52.3%, Neutral response was 27.6% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 20.2%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Sport and Leisure Facilities** was 73.4%, Neutral response was 14% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 12.7%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Green Spaces** was 70.5%, Neutral response was 14.6% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 15%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Heritage Structures** was 53.1%, Neutral response was 36.7% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 10.2%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Maintained Streets** was 68.4%, Neutral response was 10.1% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 21.6%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Neighbourhood Design** was 57.3%, Neutral response was 24.5% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 18.1%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Transport Routes** was 50.6%, Neutral response was 36% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 13.5%.
- Overall Satisfaction with **Accessible Arts & Cultural Facilities** was 45.2%, Neutral response was 35.8% and Overall Dissatisfaction was 18.9%.

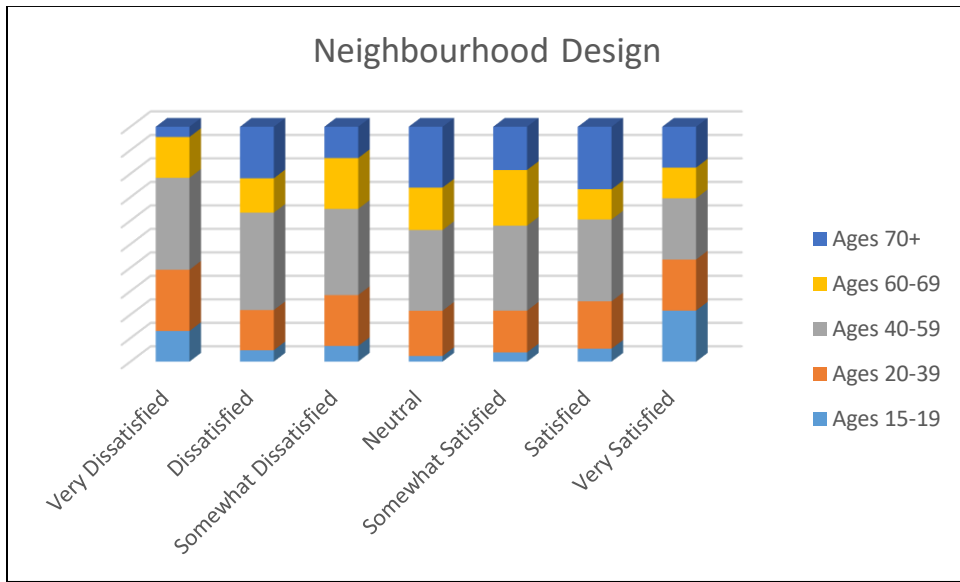


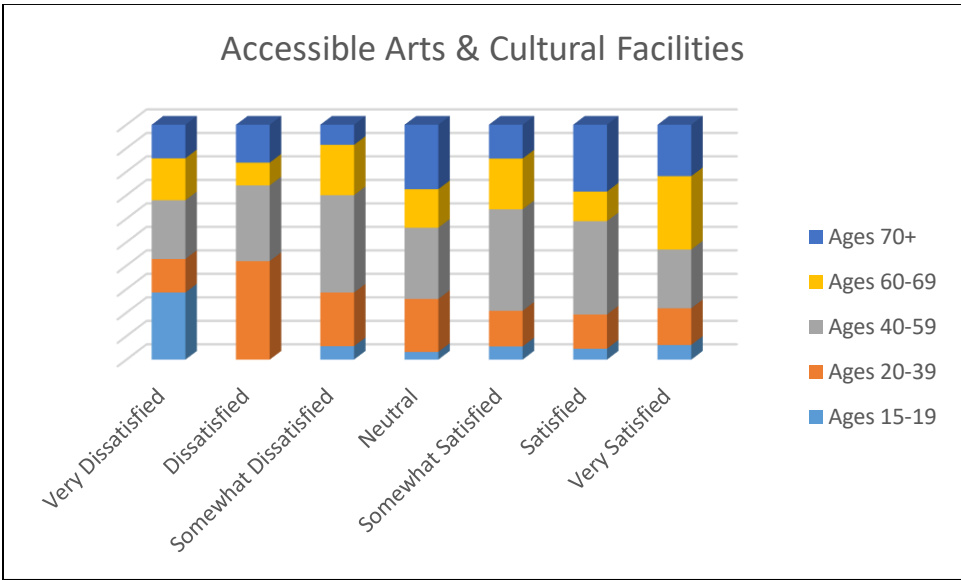
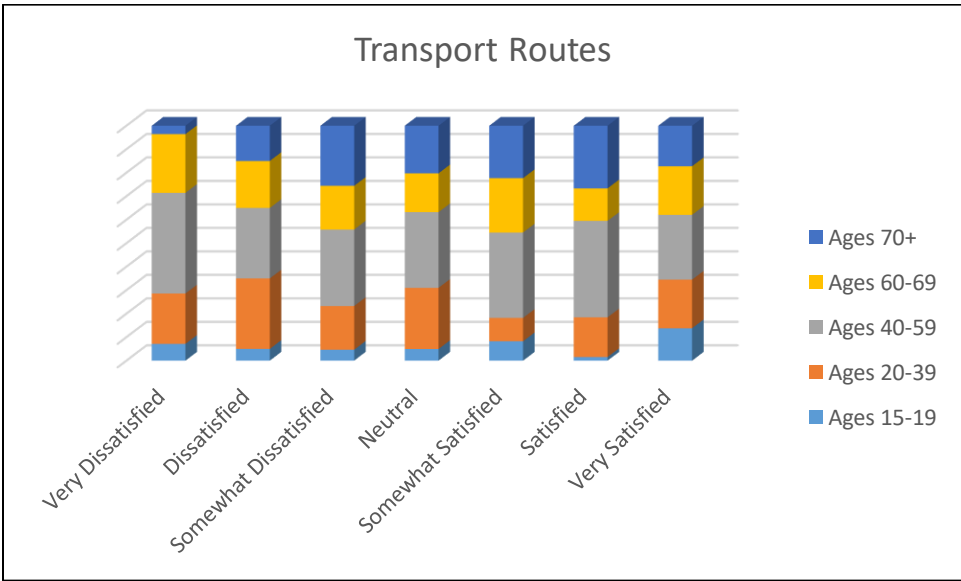
QUALITY OF PLACE BY AGE GROUPS











Quality of Place Satisfaction Responses by Age Groups

Within the Age Groups, there are interesting variations when considering the Quality of Place Variables within the City of Brooks.

Most Satisfaction by Age Groups

Age Group	Top Three Factors
Ages 15-19	1. Sport and Leisure Facilities
	2. Neighbourhood Design
	3. Accessible Public Services
Ages 20-39	1. Sport and Leisure Facilities
	2. Maintained Streets
	3. Green Spaces
Ages 40-59	1. Green Spaces
	2. Sport and Leisure Facilities
	3. Maintained Streets
Ages 60-69	1. Sport and Leisure Facilities
	2. Green Spaces
	3. Maintained Streets
Ages 70+	1. Green Spaces
	2. Maintained Streets
	3. Sport and Leisure Facilities

Most Dissatisfaction by Age Groups

Age Group	Top Three Factors
Ages 15-19	1. Retail and Shopping
	2. Maintained Streets
	3. Green Spaces
Ages 20-39	1. Retail and Shopping
	2. Accessible Public Services
	3. Accessible Arts & Cultural Facilities
Ages 40-59	1. Retail and Shopping
	2. Maintained Streets
	3. Neighbourhood Design
Ages 60-69	1. Retail and Shopping
	2. Building Maintenance
	3. Maintained Streets
Ages 70+	1. Retail and Shopping
	2. Building Maintenance
	3. Maintained Streets

The City of Brooks JBS Canada Centre, a Sport and Leisure Facility, has a child-friendly pool, fitness centre, public library, meeting rooms and space for a variety of sports and community events, including hockey, curling, basketball and soccer



Retail and Shopping

It is not possible to be certain as to why over 40% of respondents (all Age Groups) were either Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied and Somewhat Dissatisfied.

Brooks is the retail and services center for the Brooks-Newell Region and is also centrally located for travel to Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Calgary. Residents within the region come into Brooks for their shopping and program/services needs, but may also choose to leave the community to shop at the larger centres.

The diversity of retail shops in Brooks reflects the needs of the population and the diversity of income. Two major retailers No Frills (Loblaw's) and Walmart cater to shoppers who have limited incomes, and compete with other retailers such as Canadian Tire and Safeway. The cultural and religious diversity of the community has influenced major retailers change their stock to reflect the newcomers' needs and also the establishment of entrepreneurial retailers focused on meeting the needs of the multicultural community. New independent business, namely small grocery stores, have opened that accommodate the needs and wants of newcomers.

A partial answer may be due to the dependence of Brooks on a few industries such as the feedlots, the meat processing plant and oil and gas servicing companies. As was seen in 2012, the shut-down of the Lakeside Meat Processing Plant (now JBS Foods Canada) affected the economic well-being of the community and resulted in approximately 200 of the 2,200 workers leaving the community.³⁰⁴

The Impact of Remittances

A remittance is a transfer of money by a foreign worker or an immigrant to an individual /family in his or her home country. Money sent home by migrants competes with international aid as some of the largest financial inflows to developing countries. The World Bank estimates that officially recorded remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached \$626 billion in 2022, an increase of 5% since the previous year.³⁰⁵ The Russian invasion of Ukraine caused the amount of money sent home by Ukrainians living abroad to rise sharply, and thus pushed the total worldwide remittances to \$794 billion.³⁰⁶

The economy of Brooks-Newell Region and in particular the retail sector is impacted by the challenges of recruiting staff for some of its industry such as the meat processing plant, fast food and convenience stores and agricultural processing operations. There are approximately 350 Temporary Foreign Workers in the Brooks-Newell Region³⁰⁷ who come to the community on temporary employment contracts with some hopes of obtaining permanent immigrant status, and who send a large proportion of their salaries as remittance to their family in their home countries as they are the primary wage earner. This limits their ability to accumulate assets in Canada and to spend their income in the community.

While it is not easily possible to quantify the amount of remittances that employees of Brooks and Brooks-Newell Region businesses sent "home" to their family, there have been studies that explore the obligations of immigrants and how that impacts their wealth accumulation and disposable income.

³⁰⁴ XL Foods. Community Response Committee Final Report. March 22, 2013. Grasslands Regional FCSS.

³⁰⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/11/30/remittances-grow-5-percent-2022>

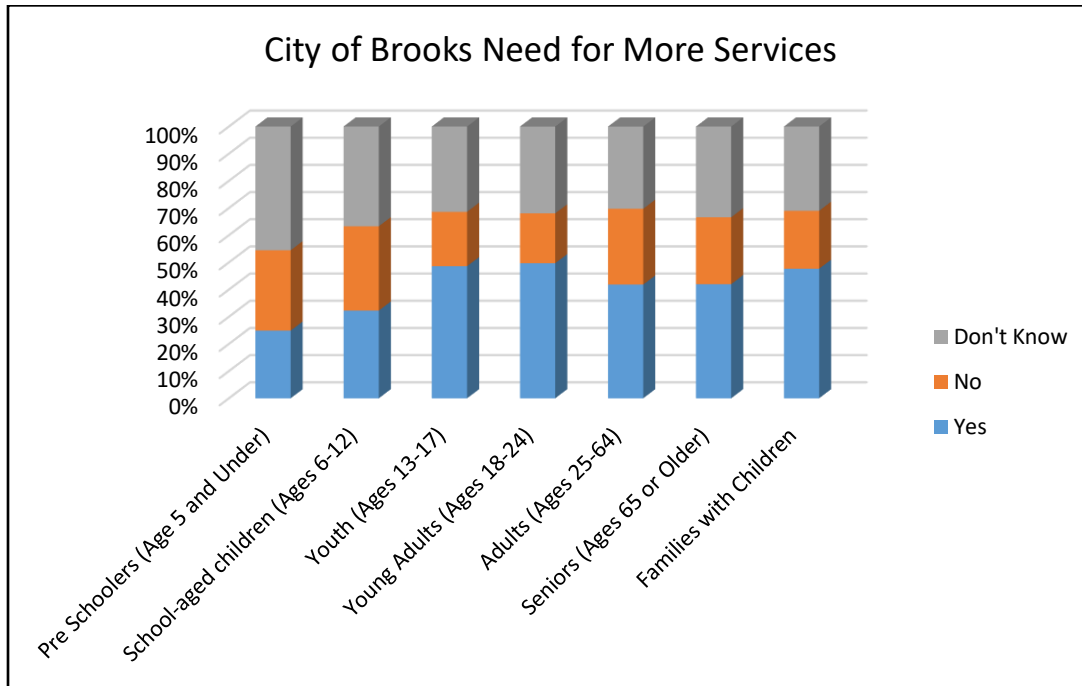
³⁰⁶ https://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/migration_and_development_brief_37_nov_2022.pdf

³⁰⁷ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), April 3, 2023

CITY OF BROOKS NEED FOR MORE SERVICES

Need for More Services: All Respondents

Number of Respondents ranged from 717 to 732

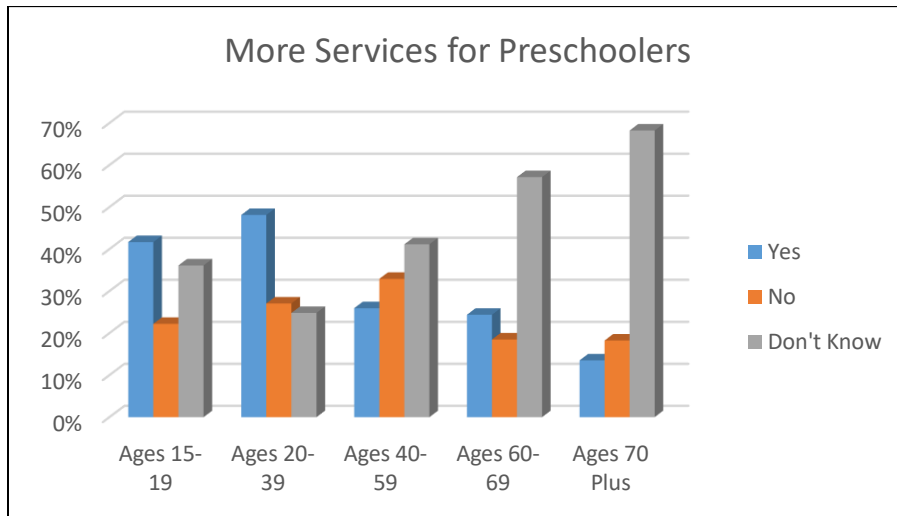


The graph above gives an indication of the services that respondents would like to see expanded in the City of Brooks.

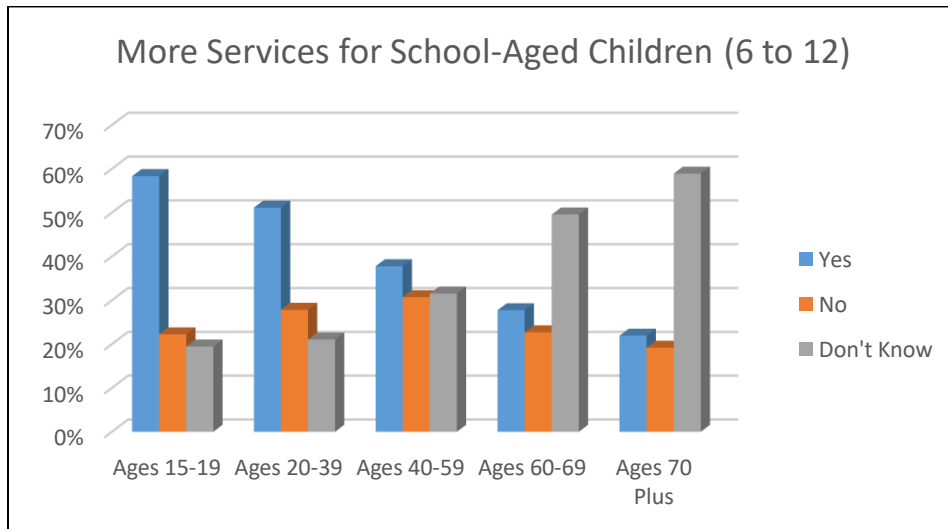
FINDINGS:

- 50% (340) of respondents felt that more services were needed for **Families with Children**, and 19.6% (133) responded with *No*.
- 48.9% (333) of respondents felt that more services were needed for **Youth** (ages 13-17), and 17.9% (122) responded with *No*.
- 48.5% (329) of respondents believed that more services were needed for **Young Adults** (ages 18-24), and 19% (129) responded with *No*.
- 49.8% (343) of respondents identified that more services were needed for **Seniors** (ages 65 and older), and 21.3% (147) responded with *No*.
- 46.1% (311) of respondents believed that more services were needed for **Adults** (ages 25-64), and 24% (162) responded with *No*.
- 36.3% (247) of respondents felt that more services were needed for **School-Aged Children** (ages 6-12), and 25.7% (175) responded with *No*.
- 28.2% (193) of respondents felt that more services were needed for **Preschoolers** (age 5 and under), and 25.4% (174) responded with *No*.

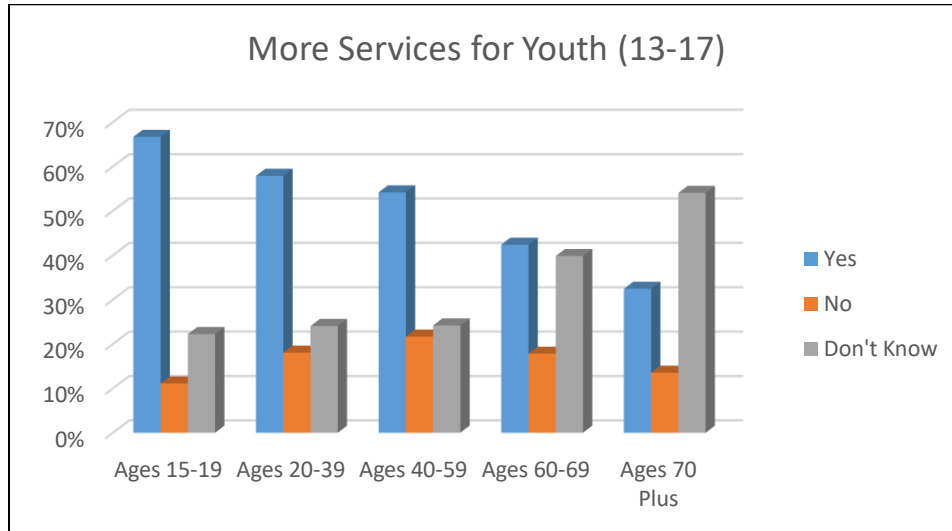
Need for More Services Breakdown:



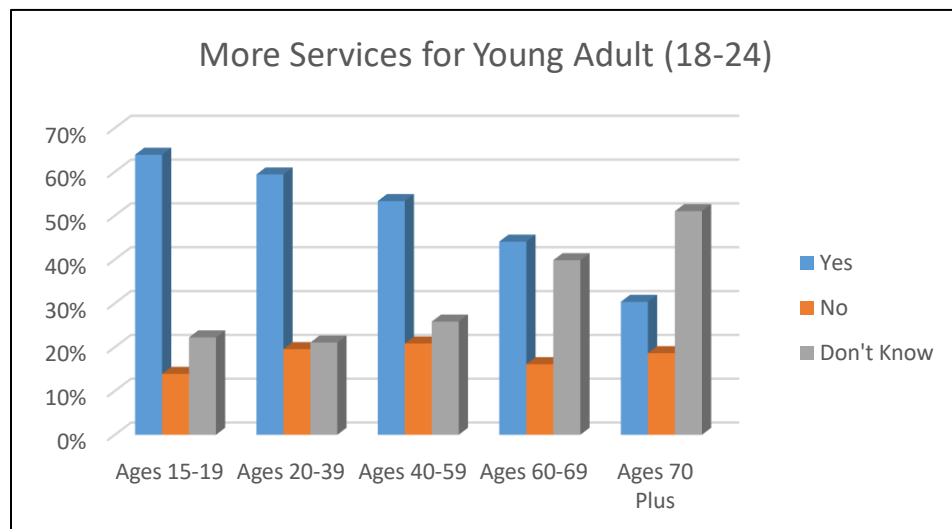
The only age groups that were in favour of more services for preschoolers were 15-19 year olds (41.7%) and 20-39 year olds (48.1%), which is not surprising because individuals within the 20-39 age category tend to have younger children. Individuals aged 15-19 are young enough to relate to younger children, and would most likely want better services for them. Age groups 20-39, and 40-59 had between 27% and 30% of individuals indicating that no more services for preschoolers is needed, which might be a testament to the institutions already in place. The far majority of individuals in the ages 60-69 (57.1%) and 70 plus (68.2%) groups didn't know if more services for preschoolers were needed.



Approximately 58% of individuals aged 15-19 and approximately 51% of individuals aged 20-39 indicated that more services are needed for school-aged children (6-12), while 22% and 28% of the same groups, respectively, noted that no more services are needed. A higher percentage of individuals aged 40-59 (37.1%) also indicated that more services for school-aged children is needed, but the “no’s” were 30.7%. Like with more services for preschoolers, a high percentage of age groups 60-69 (49.6%) and 70 plus (58.9%) didn't know if more services for school-aged children was needed. Ages 40-59 had the highest percentage (30.7%) of individuals indicating that no more services for school-aged children are needed. This is not entirely surprising given that these services are, for the most part, not directly affecting them.

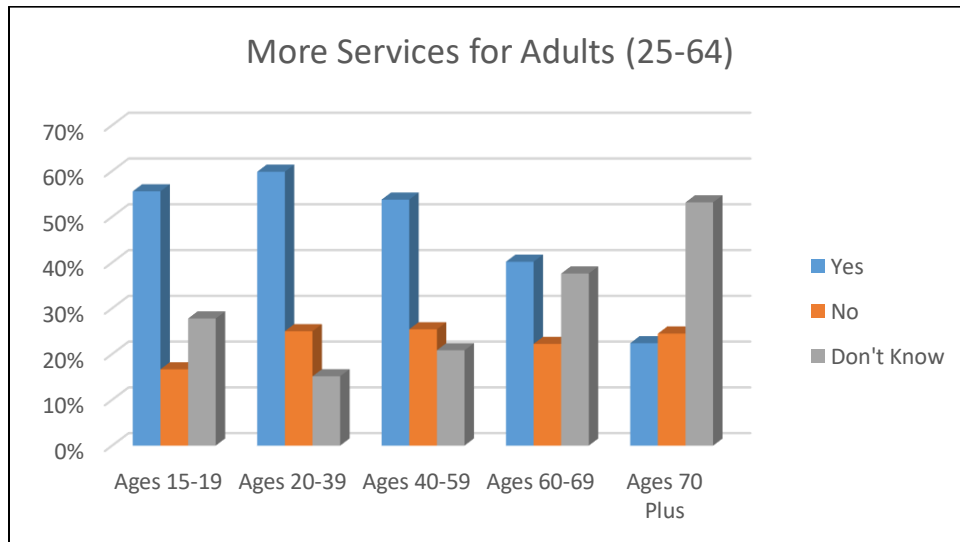


Individuals in age groups 15-19, 20-39 and 40-59 overwhelmingly agreed that more services for youth (13-17) are needed in the City of Brooks (66.7%, 57.9% and 54.2%, respectively). These results support the findings coming out of Grasslands Regional FCSS' youth survey and YCAP.³⁰⁸ 42.4% of individuals aged 60-69 indicated that more services for youth (13-17) are needed, but this group along with individuals aged 70 and older had high percentages of respondents that don't know if more services for youth (13-17) are needed in the City (39.8% and 54.1%, respectively).

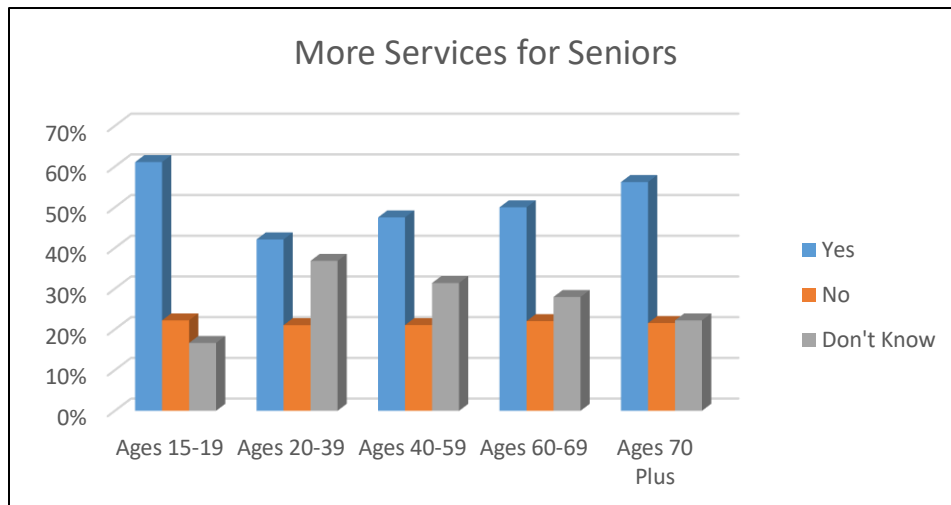


Individuals in age groups 15-19, 20-39 and 40-49 were also overwhelmingly in favour of more services for young adults (18-24) (63.9%, 59.4% and 53.3%, respectively). This result is not surprising given that these age groups are either directly affected or indirectly affected by these services.

³⁰⁸ http://216.119.96.229/business/documents/YCAPReportFinal-May2016_1.pdf



The majority (59.9%) of individuals aged 20-39 indicated that more services for adults (25-64) are needed in the City of Brooks, and 53.8% of the age group 40-59 also agreed. The “don’t know” responses were highest among 60-69 (37.6%) and ages 70 plus (53.2%). Ages 40-59 had the highest “no” responses with 25.4%.

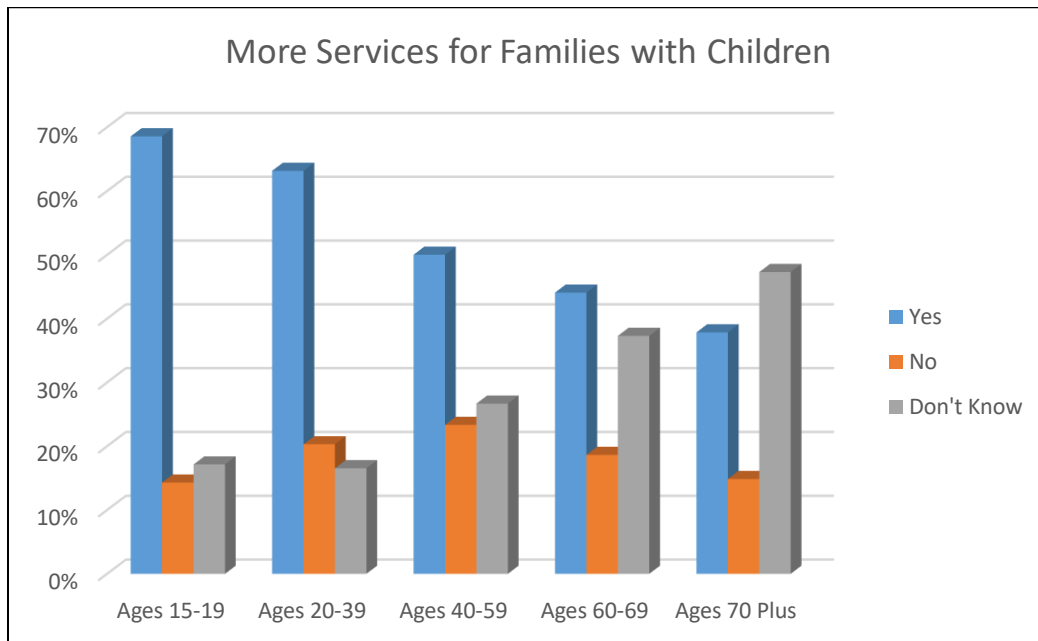


More than 42% of all age groups indicated that the City of Brooks needs more services for seniors; the highest being ages 15-19 (61.1%) and ages 70 plus (56.2%). Although 56.2% of individuals aged 70 plus indicated a need for more services for seniors, 22.2% said that no more services are needed (21.6% didn’t know). Approximately 60% of survey respondents aged 70 plus reside in Brooks, where the majority of services in for seniors are available in the Region. This might help explain why the “no” responses were lower for the City of Brooks (21.6%) than the Brooks-Newell Region (27.6%).

Seniors in the Brooks-Newell Region have access to Seniors Programs and Clubs, which provide a variety of opportunities for socializing, sharing knowledge and skills, and access to Alberta Health Services. Most communities have seniors' groups which provide opportunities for socializing, learning about government services and accessing some health services. Seniors are instrumental in the sustainability of the communities through active community mentor and volunteer involvement in planning, organizing and participating in community organizations, clubs and events.

Brooks & District Seniors Outreach Society provides a wide variety of seniors' programs and services to residents of Brooks-Newell Region . This includes help with Government Forms, Income Tax Program, Meals on Wheels Program, Home Cleaning Program and opportunities to socialize through monthly wellness teas, bus trips, scrapbooking, and community dinners.

Located at 403 2nd Street West in Brooks. They may be reached at 403-362-4131.



Age group 15-19 overwhelmingly identified a need for more services for families with children with 68.6% of individuals responding with “yes.” Age groups 20-39 and 40-59 also had high “yes” responses with 63.2% and 50%, respectively. These age groups are directly affected by these services, or lack thereof, so it is not surprising that they had high “yes” responses. Age groups 60-69 and 70 plus both had high “don’t know” responses with 37.3% and 47.3%, respectively. All age groups had between 14% and 24% of individuals indicating that no more services for families with children are needed.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The World Health Organization (WHO) first learned of COVID-19, which is the disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, on December 31, 2019 following a report on a cluster of “viral pneumonia” cases occurring in Wuhan, People’s Republic of China³⁰⁹. The WHO declared it a pandemic on March 11, 2020 after there were more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries³¹⁰. On March 16, 2020, the Canadian Government barred entry into the country for travelers who were not Canadian, permanent residents or U.S. citizens, and on March 18, 2020 the U.S./Canada border was closed to all non-essential travel.^{311,312} As of January 19, 2023, there have been 663,248,631 confirmed cases world-wide, and 6,709,387 people have lost their lives due to the virus³¹³. In Canada, there have been 4,524,782 total cases (as of January 16, 2023) and 49,871 people have lost their lives³¹⁴. As of January 18, 2023, there have been 625,948 total cases and 5,470 total deaths in Alberta³¹⁵. There is no question that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had significant impact on everyone in the world, let alone on lives at the local level.

On March 7, 2020, former City of Brooks Mayor, Barry Morishita, called a meeting together of service providers regarding COVID-19. Dr. van der Linde and Dr. Currin provided critical information on the emergence of COVID-19 as a pandemic of concern. As a result, local Emergency Operations Centres and the Community Response Committee ramped up efforts to respond to the needs in our communities relevant to the pandemic. In mid-April, 2020, three employees at JBS Foods were diagnosed with COVID-19; by month’s end more than 300 employees tested positive and there were nearly 900 cases recorded throughout the city³¹⁶. Approximately 1,100 cases (and seven deaths) were linked to this particular outbreak with more than 500 linked directly to JBS³¹⁷. The majority of cases, however, were due to community spread. Although, at that time, Brooks had 0.3% of Alberta’s population, it had 26% of the province’s active cases, and one of the highest per capita outbreaks in the country³¹⁸. Through swift action and coordination through local Emergency Operations Centres and the Community Response Committee, crisis mediation was very successful.

Country-wide, approximately 50% of the population have had a family member or close friend who was infected with COVID-19 during the first two years of the pandemic.³¹⁹ The pandemic has caused significant disruption in the lives of well over 50% of Canadians. Approximately 25% of Canadians have had to postpone a serious medical procedure or surgery, and approximately 70% have postponed travel. According to the Angus Reid Institute (2022b), 54% of Canadians said their mental health has worsened during the pandemic, and women under age 55 have been hit the hardest.³²⁰ However, 33% of Canadians identified having no real impact to their mental health, and 12% said their mental health improved during the pandemic. The physical health of Canadians have worsened, with 48% identifying a negative impact. However, 17% noted an improvement in their physical health. Canadians identified the pandemic had “pulled people apart” with 82% identifying this to be the case, but 18% believe that it “brought people together.”³²¹ Approximately 80% of Canadians identified

³⁰⁹ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

³¹⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/museum/timeline/covid19.html>

³¹¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/cbsa-border-airports-screening-trudeau-covid19-coronavirus-1.5498866>

³¹² <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-us-border-deal-1.5501289>

³¹³ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

³¹⁴ <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

³¹⁵ <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

³¹⁶ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-covid-19-outbreak-brooks-speed-of-spread-1.5552359>

³¹⁷ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/brooks-alberta-covid-19-1.5576873>

³¹⁸ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-covid-19-outbreak-brooks-speed-of-spread-1.5552359>

³¹⁹ <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-two-year-anniversary/>

³²⁰ <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-pandemic-anniversary-mental-health/>

³²¹ <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-two-year-anniversary/>

that the pandemic had “brought out the worst in people,” and 65% believe the compassion for others has decreased.

Given the disruption that the COVID-19 Pandemic has caused in the world, we were curious how it has affected residents living in the City of Brooks. On the 2022 Quality of Life #3 Survey we asked respondents to identify how the pandemic affected the following:

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Financial stability
- Family relationships
- Community involvement
- Social life/connection with others
- Work/employment
- Ability to help others
- Education/school

Please see the results for the City of Brooks below.

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals in the City of Brooks

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals in the City of Brooks										
Factor	No Impact		Somewhat Negative		Very Negative		Somewhat Positive		Very Positive	
Physical Health	45.9%	299	35.4%	231	8.1%	53	6.8%	44	3.8%	25
Mental Health	24.7%	162	44.6%	293	19.5%	128	6.7%	44	4.6%	30
Financial Stability	50.6%	332	25.6%	168	12.0%	79	8.2%	54	3.5%	23
Family Relationships	37.7%	247	34.0%	223	12.8%	84	8.7%	57	6.9%	45
Community Involvement	17.8%	119	40.0%	267	31.0%	207	6.6%	44	4.6%	31
Social Life/Connection with Others	12.0%	81	39.4%	267	34.4%	233	7.5%	51	6.7%	45
Work/Employment	47.3%	308	27.0%	176	13.4%	87	7.5%	49	4.8%	31
Ability to Help Others	30.2%	199	36.6%	241	20.1%	132	7.8%	51	5.3%	35
Education/Schooling	56.7%	370	18.8%	123	14.9%	97	5.1%	33	4.6%	30
Total Number of Respondents										690

- Physical Health
 - 45.2% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 43.5% reported a Negative range response and 10.6% reported a Positive range response.
- Mental Health
 - 24.7% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 64.1% reported a Negative range response and 11.3% reported a Positive range response.
- Financial Stability
 - 50.6% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 37.6% reported a Negative range response and 11.7% reported a Positive range response.

- Family Relationships
 - 37.7% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 46.8% reported a Negative range response and 15.6% reported a Positive range response.
- Community Involvement
 - 17.8% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 71% reported a Negative range response and 11.2% reported a Positive range response.
- Social Life/Connection with Others
 - 12% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 73.8% reported a Negative range response and 14.2% reported a Positive range response.
- Work/Employment
 - 47.3% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 40.4% reported a Negative range response and 12.3% reported a Positive range response.
- Ability to Help Others
 - 30.2% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 56.7% reported a Negative range response and 13.1% reported a Positive range response.
- Education/Schooling
 - 56.7% of respondents reported No Impact on their lives, while 33.7% reported a Negative range response and 9.7% reported a Positive range response.

By Age

- Individuals aged 15-19 had the largest positive impact percentages of all age groups, especially under the Family Relationships category with 39.4% reporting a positive experience. They also noted high positive experiences under Community Involvement (26.5%), Social Life/Connection to Others (29.4%) and Education/Schooling (29.4%) categories.
- Individuals aged 15-19 experienced the greatest negative impact on Education/Schooling, with 58.8% of the demographic reporting a negative experience during the pandemic.
- Individuals aged 40-59 experience the greatest negative impact on Physical Health, with 52.3% of the demographic reporting a negative experience in that category. This demographic also had the highest negative experience in the Mental Health category with 71.1%.
- In regards to Financial Stability, 30% and above of all demographics experienced No Impact during the pandemic, but individuals aged 40-59 reported the worst financial hardship with 48.5%. Individuals aged 70 plus experience the lowest impact, with 74.1% of the demographic identifying No Impact.
- The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a great effect on the social lives of individuals, and all demographics identified low percentages of No Impact. Individuals aged 60-69 experienced the greatest negative experience of all demographics with 80.8%.

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals by Age in the City of Brooks									
Ages	Physical Health			Mental Health			Financial Stability		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	45.9%	43.6%	10.6%	24.7%	64.1%	11.3%	50.6%	37.7%	11.7%
Ages 15 - 19	41.2%	41.2%	17.6%	17.1%	51.4%	31.4%	30.3%	45.5%	24.2%
Ages 20 - 39	43.1%	47.7%	9.2%	18.5%	68.5%	13.1%	47.3%	38.9%	13.7%
Ages 40 - 59	39.2%	52.3%	8.5%	20.5%	71.1%	8.4%	38.5%	48.5%	13.0%
Ages 60 - 69	49.1%	39.1%	11.8%	25.9%	62.5%	11.6%	55.9%	35.1%	9.0%
Ages 70 Plus	57.9%	30.0%	12.2%	38.4%	52.9%	8.7%	74.1%	18.7%	7.2%
	Family Relationships			Community Involvement			Social Life/Connections with Others		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	37.7%	46.8%	15.6%	17.8%	71.0%	11.2%	12.0%	73.9%	14.2%
Ages 15 - 19	39.4%	21.2%	39.4%	26.5%	47.1%	26.5%	20.6%	50.0%	29.4%
Ages 20 - 39	38.9%	46.6%	14.5%	20.0%	68.5%	11.5%	16.8%	71.8%	11.5%
Ages 40 - 59	36.9%	45.8%	17.4%	15.9%	74.1%	10.0%	10.9%	76.2%	13.0%
Ages 60 - 69	35.1%	57.9%	7.0%	19.7%	73.5%	6.8%	9.2%	80.8%	10.0%
Ages 70 Plus	38.9%	46.0%	15.1%	15.2%	71.7%	13.1%	10.1%	71.8%	18.1%
	Work/Employment			Ability to Help Others			Education/Schooling		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	47.3%	73.9%	14.2%	30.2%	56.7%	13.1%	56.7%	33.7%	9.6%
Ages 15 - 19	35.3%	44.1%	20.6%	29.4%	47.1%	23.5%	11.8%	58.8%	29.4%
Ages 20 - 39	35.6%	49.2%	15.2%	30.8%	57.7%	11.5%	44.6%	44.6%	10.8%
Ages 40 - 59	32.5%	51.7%	15.8%	28.0%	57.7%	14.2%	44.2%	45.0%	10.8%
Ages 60 - 69	51.3%	40.7%	8.0%	31.3%	60.0%	8.7%	73.5%	19.5%	7.1%
Ages 70 Plus	86.1%	71.8%	18.1%	32.9%	53.3%	13.9%	88.0%	8.3%	3.8%

All respondents	690
Respondents Aged 15 - 19	35
Respondents Aged 20 - 39	132
Respondents Aged 40 - 59	243
Respondents Aged 60 - 69	120
Respondents Aged 70 Plus	156

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals by Gender in the City of Brooks									
Gender	Physical Health			Mental Health			Financial Stability		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	45.9%	43.6%	10.6%	24.7%	64.1%	11.3%	50.6%	37.7%	11.7%
Female	45.2%	44.5%	10.3%	21.6%	66.9%	11.5%	46.6%	41.6%	11.8%
Male	47.5%	40.5%	12.0%	32.3%	57.1%	10.6%	59.4%	28.2%	12.4%
Individuals who do not Identify as Male or Female, or Prefer not to Say	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
	Family Relationships			Community Involvement			Social Life/Connections with Others		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	37.7%	46.8%	15.6%	17.8%	71.0%	11.2%	12.0%	73.9%	14.2%
Female	33.8%	48.9%	17.3%	16.4%	70.6%	13.1%	11.4%	73.0%	15.6%
Male	45.0%	43.9%	11.1%	20.8%	71.8%	7.4%	13.0%	75.4%	11.6%
Individuals who do not Identify as Male or Female, or Prefer not to Say	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
	Work/Employment			Ability to Help Others			Education/Schooling		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	47.3%	73.9%	14.2%	30.2%	56.7%	13.1%	56.7%	33.7%	9.6%
Female	42.7%	43.4%	13.9%	27.8%	57.9%	14.4%	52.6%	36.1%	11.3%
Male	57.4%	33.0%	9.6%	34.9%	54.0%	11.1%	67.9%	25.5%	6.6%
Individuals who do not Identify as Male or Female, or Prefer not to Say	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%

	All respondents	690
	Female	465
	Male	210
	Individuals who do not Identify as Male or Female, or Prefer not to Say	4

By Gender:

- Females, Overall, experienced a greater impact (negatively and mostly positively) with the COVID-19 Pandemic than males, with the male demographic reporting higher experiences of No Impact in each category than their female counterparts.
- Females reported the highest Overall positive impact for Family Relationships (17.3%) and Social Life/Connection with Others (15.6%). The male demographic reported positive experience rates of 11.1% and 11.6%, respectively.
- The number of Individuals who do not Identify as Male or Female, or Prefer not to Say was very low (4) for the City of Brooks so those results cannot be compared statistically to the other two genders.

By Relationship Status:

- Widowed individuals experienced the highest No Impact with Work/Employment, with 84.4% of the demographic reporting a no impact experience rating.
- Married or Common-Law individuals experienced the highest Overall Negative impact with Community Involvement and Social Life/Connection to Others, with the demographic reporting a negative experience rating of 74.0% and 77.2% respectively.
- Never Been Married individuals experienced the highest Overall Positive impact with Family Relationships, with 29.1% of the demographic reporting a positive experience rating.

By Income

- The highest Negative impact experiences per category and income earned brackets:
 - Physical Health - \$100,000 and Over (53.5%)
 - Mental Health - \$60,000 - \$79,000 (72.4%)
 - Financial Stability – Less than \$10,000 (55.6%)
 - Family Relationships - \$20,000 - \$39,000 (55.3%)
 - Community Involvement - \$100,000 and Over (78.7%)
 - Social Life/Connections with Others - \$100,000 and Over (82.7%)
 - Work Employment - \$60,000 - \$79,000 (80%)
 - Ability to Help Others – \$80,000 - \$99,000 (71.2%)
 - Education/Schooling – Less than \$10,000 (57.9%)
 - Individuals who earn \$100,000 and over experienced the highest Negative impact in three of the nine categories. Individuals earning less than \$10,000 and \$60,000 - \$79,000 experienced the highest Negative impact (individually) in two of the nine categories. **This is a perfect example of why we should not make assumptions on the impacts of the pandemic on individuals by class.**
- Individuals who earn Less than \$10,000, and who in theory have less access to resources due to lower income, experienced the highest positive experience rating with Mental Health at 24.6%. This cohort also had the second lowest negative experience rating in that category with 57.9%.
- Individuals who earn Less than \$10,000 also experienced the highest positive experience rating with Financial Stability (18.5%), Family Relationships (25.0%), and Ability to Help Others (23.2%). They had higher-than-average positive experience ratings in all categories, which means they experienced more positive impact than the other demographics.

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals by Relationship Status in the City of Brooks									
Relationship Status	Physical Health			Mental Health			Financial Stability		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	45.9%	43.6%	10.6%	24.7%	64.1%	11.3%	50.6%	37.7%	11.7%
Married or Common-Law	45.3%	44.6%	10.1%	23.4%	65.9%	10.7%	52.6%	35.4%	12.0%
Divorced or Separated	55.3%	36.5%	8.2%	33.0%	56.8%	10.2%	41.9%	48.8%	9.3%
Never Been Married	37.5%	50.0%	12.5%	18.5%	66.7%	14.8%	40.0%	45.0%	15.0%
Widowed	47.3%	36.4%	16.4%	32.1%	56.6%	11.3%	66.7%	25.5%	7.8%
	Family Relationships			Community Involvement			Social Life/Connections with Others		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	37.7%	46.8%	15.6%	17.8%	71.0%	11.2%	12.0%	73.9%	14.2%
Married or Common-Law	39.4%	47.7%	13.0%	16.4%	74.0%	9.6%	10.4%	77.2%	12.4%
Divorced or Separated	36.1%	51.2%	12.8%	19.1%	69.7%	11.2%	17.8%	65.6%	16.7%
Never Been Married	35.4%	35.4%	29.1%	22.2%	59.3%	18.5%	17.1%	65.9%	17.1%
Widowed	30.9%	50.9%	18.2%	19.6%	66.1%	14.3%	7.0%	75.4%	17.5%
	Work/Employment			Ability to Help Others			Education/Schooling		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	47.3%	73.9%	14.2%	30.2%	56.7%	13.1%	56.7%	33.7%	9.6%
Married or Common-Law	45.9%	41.9%	12.2%	29.9%	57.4%	12.7%	57.2%	34.5%	8.3%
Divorced or Separated	51.7%	37.9%	10.4%	30.0%	55.6%	14.5%	62.1%	27.6%	10.4%
Never Been Married	30.9%	50.6%	18.5%	35.0%	51.3%	13.8%	34.2%	49.4%	16.5%
Widowed	84.4%	11.1%	4.4%	25.0%	63.5%	11.5%	78.4%	13.7%	7.8%

All respondents	690
Married or Common-Law	450
Divorced or Separated	91
Never Been Married	83
Widowed	61

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals by Income in the City of Brooks									
Income Cohorts	Physical Health			Mental Health			Financial Stability		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	45.9%	43.6%	10.6%	24.7%	64.1%	11.3%	50.6%	37.7%	11.7%
Less than \$10,000	39.3%	44.6%	16.1%	17.5%	57.9%	24.6%	25.9%	55.6%	18.5%
\$10,000 - \$19,000	31.9%	46.8%	21.3%	23.5%	58.8%	17.6%	35.4%	52.1%	12.5%
\$20,000 - \$39,000	49.0%	43.5%	7.5%	27.5%	67.1%	5.4%	44.7%	47.3%	8.0%
\$40,000 - \$59,000	54.9%	33.1%	12.0%	29.3%	55.6%	15.0%	52.2%	30.9%	16.9%
\$60,000 - \$79,000	43.2%	44.3%	12.5%	13.8%	72.4%	13.8%	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%
\$80,000 - \$99,000	42.4%	50.0%	7.6%	23.1%	69.2%	7.7%	58.5%	35.4%	6.2%
\$100,000 and Over	45.3%	53.3%	1.3%	26.7%	70.7%	2.7%	61.3%	28.0%	10.7%
	Family Relationships			Community Involvement			Social Life/Connections with Others		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	37.7%	46.8%	15.6%	17.8%	71.0%	11.2%	12.0%	73.9%	14.2%
Less than \$10,000	41.1%	33.9%	25.0%	26.3%	57.9%	15.8%	17.9%	62.5%	19.6%
\$10,000 - \$19,000	22.0%	54.0%	24.0%	9.8%	74.5%	15.7%	7.6%	77.4%	15.1%
\$20,000 - \$39,000	33.3%	55.3%	11.3%	19.0%	72.6%	8.5%	13.9%	72.2%	13.9%
\$40,000 - \$59,000	44.8%	39.6%	15.7%	16.9%	66.2%	16.9%	14.0%	66.2%	19.9%
\$60,000 - \$79,000	32.1%	52.4%	15.5%	15.7%	76.4%	7.9%	6.7%	80.0%	13.3%
\$80,000 - \$99,000	31.8%	53.0%	15.2%	13.9%	75.4%	10.8%	10.6%	80.3%	9.1%
\$100,000 and Over	48.0%	41.3%	10.7%	18.7%	78.7%	2.7%	13.3%	82.7%	4.0%
	Work/Employment			Ability to Help Others			Education/Schooling		
	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive	No Impact	Negative	Positive
All Respondents	47.3%	73.9%	14.2%	30.2%	56.7%	13.1%	56.7%	33.7%	9.6%
Less than \$10,000	28.1%	57.9%	14.0%	26.8%	50.0%	23.2%	24.6%	57.9%	17.6%
\$10,000 - \$19,000	40.9%	43.2%	15.9%	30.6%	49.0%	20.4%	44.7%	36.2%	19.2%
\$20,000 - \$39,000	46.2%	44.8%	9.0%	34.5%	56.8%	8.8%	69.0%	24.1%	6.9%
\$40,000 - \$59,000	56.0%	29.1%	14.9%	27.2%	54.4%	18.4%	60.0%	29.6%	10.4%
\$60,000 - \$79,000	50.6%	80.0%	13.3%	27.3%	58.0%	14.8%	63.6%	27.3%	9.1%
\$80,000 - \$99,000	47.8%	43.3%	9.0%	22.7%	71.2%	6.1%	55.4%	38.5%	6.2%
\$100,000 and Over	44.0%	48.0%	8.0%	33.3%	61.3%	5.3%	52.0%	42.7%	5.3%

All respondents	690
Respondents Earning Less than \$10,000	58
Respondents Earning Between \$10,000 - \$19,000	56
Respondents Earning Between \$20,000 - \$39,000	159
Respondents Earning Between \$40,000 - \$59,000	141
Respondents Earning Between \$60,000 - \$79,000	90
Respondents Earning Between \$80,000 - \$99,000	67
Respondents Earning \$100,000 and Over	75

COVID-19 Summary

This section of this report provides a snapshot of the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on individuals in the City of Brooks, examining feedback from All Respondents as well as a breakdown of responses based on age, gender, relationship status and income categories. The look at responses from all survey respondents provides a snapshot of the impact Overall. The breakdown can be useful to explore since responses may be different on the demographic you are examining. For example, an individual that earns less than \$10,000 a year may experience a greater negative impact financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic than an individual making \$100,000 and over. It's also important to note the percentages of respondents which indicated no impact in the categories.

The negative impacts on physical health in the City of Brooks is lower than the national level data provided by Angus Reid (43.5% versus 48%).³²² Approximately 46% of City of Brooks' respondents experienced No Impact in regards to physical health during the pandemic, and approximately 11% experienced a positive impact.

Overall, the impact on mental health by the pandemic in the City of Brooks has been higher than the national average as indicated by the Angus Reid poll. Approximately 64% of City of Brooks' respondents indicated that their mental health has worsened, compared to the Angus Reid poll (54%). Respondents aged 40-49 experienced the greatest negative impact with 71.1%, and Females also experienced a greater negative impact with 66.9%.³²³ Approximately 11% of all respondents experienced a positive impact during the pandemic, which is slightly lower than the national averaged identified by the Angus Reid poll (12%). The Angus Reid poll also identified that 33% of Canadians experience no impact on their mental health, while approximately 25% of City of Brooks' respondents identified the same.

Although the pandemic has had a negative impact on the economy at the national level, Alberta and locally in our region 50.6% and 47.3% of respondents identified experiencing No Impact regarding financial stability and work/employment, respectively. However, 37.7% of respondents identified experiencing a negative impact regarding financial stability, and 40.4% of respondents enduring a negative experience regarding work/employment.

The Angus Reid poll identified that the pandemic has "pulled people apart" with 72.0% of Canadians experiencing a negative impact in community involvement, and 77.1% having their social connections being negatively impacted.³²⁴ At the local level, the negative impact was close to the national level with 71.0% of respondents experiencing a negative impact with Community Involvement and 73.9% with Social Life/Connection to Others. Community Involvement and Social Life/Connection to Others as had the lowest percentages of No Impact experiences with 17.8% and 12.0%, respectively.

When examining the results of Education/School, 56.7% of respondents identified No Impact with that category, but when you account for school-aged individuals that percentage decreases to 11.8%. The pandemic was hard on school-aged individuals in the City of Brooks, with 58.5% of that cohort identified experiencing a negative impact. However, 29.4% of that cohort identified having a positive experience during the pandemic. A good percentage of this cohort benefitted from non-classroom instruction during the pandemic.

The aforementioned results demonstrate that it is important to not draw assumptions on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on individuals. Although the pandemic has impacted the world negatively across the board, certain cohorts of individuals may have experienced positive outcomes or no impact over the past three years. For example, we are well aware how education/schooling has been negatively affected by the pandemic and

³²² <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-pandemic-anniversary-mental-health/>

³²³ <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-two-year-anniversary/>

³²⁴ <https://angusreid.org/covid-19-two-year-anniversary/>

would assume that a large percentage of school-aged individuals had a negative experience with their education during that time; however results at the local level demonstrate that a good percentage of these individuals actually prospered quite well regarding school during the pandemic.

When looking at the general population as a whole, there were far higher negative impacts of the pandemic reported by respondents than no impact or positive, although Financial Stability had a 50.6% No Impact result.

The Overall results, and similarities and differences in responses demonstrates the value of governments, non-profits and businesses in being aware of the demographics and residents' opinions on the pandemic within their communities in order to adapt programs, services and activities to match the needs and interests of residents. Competing interests are often present in community, because different groups may have experienced different impacts. The areas of concern regarding negative impacts of the pandemic which this survey question raised cannot be easily resolved by one level of government, business, and community agency or individual themselves. A multi-sector approach would be helpful and there is a role for all sectors to continue building services and programs in the areas that are working well, and to examine potential community solutions in areas of concern identified by the residents who responded to this Quality of Life #3 question on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on individuals in our region.

FUTURE TRENDS

Population Growth:

The Province of Alberta Population Projections (2021-2046) estimates that the province will post long-term steady growth.³²⁵ By 2046, Alberta's population is expected to reach about 6.4 million people, which is an increase of around 1.9 million from 2020. Alberta's population in 2046 will be older, with an average age of 41.5 years, and increasingly diverse; arrivals from other countries will account for about 54% of expected growth by 2046.³²⁶ Migration to Alberta is dependent on a number of factors, namely its economic conditions compared to the other provinces. Due to the economic downturn, Alberta saw a net outflow of interprovincial migrants in 2016. Although Alberta was starting to recover, the dual shock of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the collapse in oil prices led an unprecedented contraction, and thus stalling the recovery. Due to this, net migration is expected to be lower than in the past, but is expected to increase over time. The Province's future population will mostly be concentrated in urban areas, specifically the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor (almost 80% are expected to live in this region).³²⁷

Alberta's total fertility rate (TFR) has fluctuated over the past two decades. In 1994, the TFR was 1.81 but declined over the following seven years to 1.65 in 2001.³²⁸ It then increased continually over the next seven years to 1.89 in 2008. From 2008 to 2013 it declined to 1.71, but started to increase in 2014 with 1.72. However, in 2021 the total fertility rate in Alberta was 1.55.³²⁹ Natural increase (birth minus deaths) will continue to have a positive impact on Alberta's growth over the projection period; adding approximately 600,000 people by

³²⁵ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/90a09f08-c52c-43bd-b48a-fda5187273b9/resource/9b48e997-92b0-4b74-82d2-017443049790/download/2021-2046-alberta-population-projections.pdf>

³²⁶ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/90a09f08-c52c-43bd-b48a-fda5187273b9/resource/9b48e997-92b0-4b74-82d2-017443049790/download/2021-2046-alberta-population-projections.pdf>

³²⁷ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/90a09f08-c52c-43bd-b48a-fda5187273b9/resource/9b48e997-92b0-4b74-82d2-017443049790/download/2021-2046-alberta-population-projections.pdf>

³²⁸ <https://open.alberta.ca/opendata/total-fertility-rate-alberta-and-alberta-health-services-continuum-zones>

³²⁹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2022003-eng.htm>

2046.³³⁰ Natural increase's contribution to Alberta's growth is directly tied to migration, since the majority of migrants set to arrive over the next 26 years will be young adults aged 18-34. However, natural increase's impact on Alberta's growth will diminish overtime due to that advanced aging of the baby boom generation.

Seniors:

- As the Baby Boomer generation gets older the Brooks-Newell Region the rest of Canada will see its population age
- Service providers will need to plan for increased demand for access to specialized services including accessible transportation, assisted living spaces, Meals on Wheels, Home Cleaning and extended health care beds and Home Care.
- In 2021, the senior population (65 years and older) in Brooks was 1,670 or 11.2% of the population.
- Many seniors live on fixed pensions and this may impact the need for more subsidized services in all areas. Access to transportation may also be a consideration as the senior population increases.
- Increased demand for service is already evident in the Meals on Wheels Program Statistics for Brooks.

**Number of Meals on Wheels Clients:
(Excluding Bassano)³³¹**

Year	Meals Served	Brooks Clients	County of Newell Clients
2022	4,053	268	12
2021	4,775	330	0
2020	3,664	239	5
2019	4,156	268	9
2018	6,644	385	12
2017	5,608	322	12
2016	5,350	264	40
2015	4,448	251	15
2014	4,517	240	28

- Seniors living in poverty is a looming crisis
 - As Canadians age, more of them are heading into their senior years financially ill-equipped to support themselves when they retire.
 - Senior poverty in Canada has increased due to two key shifts: continued decline in workplace pension coverage and demographics.³³²
 - Life expectancy has increased (79.8 years for men and 84.1 years for women)³³³
 - Approximately 50% of Canadian families aged 55-64 have no accrued employer pension benefits.³³⁴
 - A majority of Canadians (55%) have savings that represent less than one year's worth of resources they need to supplement government old age security and pension plans.³³⁵
 - Fewer than 20% have savings to supplement at least five years.

³³⁰ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/90a09f08-c52c-43bd-b48a-fda5187273b9/resource/9b48e997-92b0-4b74-82d2-017443049790/download/2021-2046-alberta-population-projections.pdf>

³³¹ Grasslands Regional FCSS Meals on Wheels Report (2022)

³³² <https://hoopp.com/docs/default-source/newsroom-library/research/hoopp-research-article---senior-poverty---canada-next-crises.pdf>

³³³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1310011401>

³³⁴ <https://ipolitics.ca/2016/02/17/were-facing-a-wave-of-seniors-living-in-poverty-and-were-not-ready/>

³³⁵ <https://ipolitics.ca/2016/02/17/were-facing-a-wave-of-seniors-living-in-poverty-and-were-not-ready/>

- “For those with annual incomes in the range of \$25,000–\$50,000, the median value of their retirement assets is close to just \$250. For those with incomes in the \$50,000–\$100,000 range, the median value is only \$21,000.”³³⁶
- For those Canadians retiring without an employee pension program, less than 20% have saved enough for retirement.
- Canada’s saving rate (for Canada Pension Plan, for example) of 6.6% is among the lowest in the OECD.³³⁷

- In 2021, the median age in Canada was 41.6 (it was 41.2 in 2016, and 39.9 in 2011), meaning that half of the population was older than that age and half was younger. In 1971, the median age was 26.2 years. The median age for the City of Brooks in 2021 was 36, which is an increase from 35 in 2016 and 33.8 in 2011.
- People 65 years and older are the country’s fastest growing age group, and the trend will continue for decades in the future due to lower fertility rates, increased life expectancy and the aging Baby Boom generation.³³⁸ In 2021, approximately 7 million (19%) Canadians were 65 years and older, and by 2068 the proportion of seniors is expected to grow to between 21.6% (slow-aging scenario) and 29.8% (fast-aging scenario) of the population.³³⁹ The number of older seniors (85 years and older) will continue to increase rapidly, mostly between 2031 and 2050 due to the aging Baby Boomer population. This age group will grow from 871,400 in 2021 to between 2.8 million and 3.6 million Canadians.³⁴⁰

Labour Market and Immigration:

- There will be a continued need for immigration to meet labour market needs. The ability of the City of Brooks to meet its labour market demands in a number of industries is linked in part to the newcomers who have made their home in the community.
- It would be beneficial to have continued consideration of the need for English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes and coordination of services. Research indicates that Immigrants are more likely to settle and stay in a community if they have adequate access to English as a Second Language classes in order to advance their employment prospects, feel welcome, are recognized as part of the community and have a broad range of opportunities for employment³⁴¹. With that being said, there has been an increase in English language programming in the last few years with BCALC and Medicine Hat College offering more opportunities.
- Some of the Brooks and Brooks-Newell Region employers are dependent on the Temporary Foreign Workers Programs and any changes in government legislation will impact them. Should the federal government choose to make it easier for Temporary Foreign Workers to obtain Canadian Permanent Resident status, this would have implication for Schools, English as a Second Language programs and community services as these temporary workers become permanent residents (and citizens) and begin to bring their families.

³³⁶ <https://ipolitics.ca/2016/02/17/were-facing-a-wave-of-seniors-living-in-poverty-and-were-not-ready/>

³³⁷ <https://data.oecd.org/natincome/saving-rate.htm>

³³⁸ <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/corporate/publications/chief-public-health-officer-reports-state-public-health-canada/chief-public-health-officer-report-on-state-public-health-canada-2014-public-health-future/changing-demographics.html>

³³⁹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91-520-x/91-520-x2022001-eng.htm>

³⁴⁰ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91-520-x/91-520-x2022001-eng.htm>

³⁴¹ <http://p2pcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Characteristics-of-a-Welcoming-Community-11.pdf>

Housing:

- Affordable housing will become an even larger issue and priority in the coming years.
- The Alberta Government has adopted the Stronger Foundations affordable housing strategy, which is a 10-year plan to improve and expand affordable housing in the province.³⁴²
- Aging in place for seniors is part of the affordable housing strategy.³⁴³
- The City of Brooks adopted an Affordable Housing Strategy in 2019, which is “designed to identify current and affordable housing needs in the community and to develop a strategy that directs future action and success.”³⁴⁴

Transportation:

- Building a regional transportation network is complex and multi-faceted as transportation needs exist for travel both in and out of the region and the available resources and needs may differ from one community to another. For the Brooks-Newell Region, the work is ongoing and has involved several years and different ways of identifying transportation needs, how the needs are being met and what more can be done. The pursuit of effective solutions will require an ongoing commitment from all levels of government, to continued collaboration and the provision of resources required to meet current and future transportation needs in Rural Alberta.³⁴⁵
- Transportation remains a major concern within Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region. Travel to health and government related services in Calgary, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge remains an issue for residents who do not have access to a reliable personal vehicle or who are unable to drive themselves to services. Although, the City of Brooks Regional Transportation Service has alleviated some of that concern.³⁴⁶ With impending demographic changes in the Region, this issue will become more pressing in the coming years.
- The municipalities and Grasslands Regional FCSS continue to work toward increasing transportation capacity for local and out-of-area transportation.
- Expanded transportation services are now being offered by the City of Brooks and County of Newell:
 - The City of Brooks Access Transit Service (ATS) primarily serves City of Brooks residents living with disabilities and seniors (aged 65 years and older). Visitors from outside the City of Brooks who fit the ridership may use the ATS for transportation in Brooks. The service runs from Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays).
 - The Ambulatory Transportation Subsidy Program (ATSP) provides service to those individuals who are registered riders of Access Transit, aged 65 years and older and who **DO NOT** utilize a wheelchair, walker or cane for assistance, or an individual who is neither physically or cognitively disabled.³⁴⁷ The ATSP program is only available for those riders registered with the City of Brooks.
 - The County of Newell Mini Bus provides transportation services for all residents outside the City of Brooks including persons with disabilities of any age and residents who don't drive and/or lack their own forms of transportation.³⁴⁸ The County's Mini Bus also provides door-to-door service for any Brooks-Newell Region residents to any appointments (doctor, dentist, shopping,

³⁴² <https://www.alberta.ca/stronger-foundations-affordable-housing-strategy.aspx>

³⁴³ <http://www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/documents/Provincial%20Affordable%20Housing%20Strategy.pdf>

³⁴⁴ <https://www.brooks.ca/738/Affordable-Housing>

³⁴⁵ Pye-Matheson, Lynn (May, 2018): *Building a Regional Rural Transportation Network: Why focus on regional rural transportation?* Building Rural Transportation News. Alberta 2018. No. 1

³⁴⁶ <https://www.brooks.ca/650/Brooks-Regional-Transportation-Service>

³⁴⁷ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

³⁴⁸ <http://www.countyofnewell.ab.ca/p/mini-bus-service>

visiting relatives, etc.) in Brooks. Brooks' residents may also use the Mini Bus service to visit friends or relatives that live in other areas of the Region.

- The City's ATS and ATSP ridership has increased. Between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021, there were 3,938 ATS pick-ups and drop-offs, and between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022 there were 5,031 pick-ups and drop-offs.³⁴⁹ There are currently 261 registered riders for the program. Between January 1 – December 31, 2021 there were 60 ATSP pick-ups and drop-offs (2 registered ATSP participants utilized the service), and between January 1 – December 31, 2020 there were 195 pick-ups and drop-offs (7 registered ATSP participants).³⁵⁰
- Particular attention could be paid to the diversity of mode of transportation and encourage safe use of bicycles and long boards, encourage carpooling, taxi sharing and mobile health and other services.

Young Adults:

- In 2020, the employment rates for young adults between 14 and 24 declined the most out of all age groups, but each age group also saw a decline in employment.³⁵¹
- Poverty is a result of under/unemployment due to the changing workforce and rising cost of living
- Anxiety and types of mental illness are major concerns
- Young adults need access to post-secondary education and employment that offers the possibility of career exploration and job training programs.
- Rural communities often find it difficult to retain young people due to the lack of employment and training opportunities.
- If the current trend continues, while some Young Adults will remain or return to their home communities to raise their family or be closer to aging parents, the majority will settle in other communities.
- In an attempt to address and alleviate the aforementioned issues, the SPEC' Brooks and Region Makerspace was founded. "Makerspace offers a variety of learning opportunities, programs, workshops and competitions where youth learn to integrate STEM activities while developing meaningful relationships which will assist them in dealing with life's challenges by building on existing strengths and increasing personal resilience. The capacity for youth to acquire and apply knowledge and skills to real world circumstances, under one roof with their peers and volunteer mentors, builds comradery and motivation to help prevent and/or alleviate mental health issues that are common to youth today."³⁵² It has support from all municipal governments in the region, receives funding from Grasslands Regional and has been a great success.

Young Families:

- Young families are attracted to rural communities that provide easy access to schools, a safe environment, affordable housing and a quick commute between work and home.
- Survey responses reflected satisfaction with programs and services relevant to young families.
- However, parents need access to stable employment with long-term prospects to encourage settlement in rural communities.

³⁴⁹ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

³⁵⁰ Email: Amanda Peterson, Deputy Chief Administration Officer, City of Brooks, March 24, 2023

³⁵¹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/591795c0-ac54-4692-81c4-9f1ee0f1bd27/resource/5c4d7151-5703-4b20-baab-1843a5dc3eeb/download/lbr-alberta-labour-market-review-2020-annual-review.pdf>

³⁵² <https://brooksmaker.space/>

Childcare:

- Access to Childcare is compounded by the lack of public transportation, employment that consists of 12 hour shifts³⁵³, or outside the normal operating hours of childcare facilities of 6:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday.
- Currently, in the Brooks-Newell Region, there are six licensed daycares and fifteen licensed day homes.³⁵⁴ Another daycare is scheduled to open in Duchess in May 2023, which will increase the number of licensed daycares to seven.
- It is difficult to interpret the 15.3% Overall Dissatisfaction rate (14.8% in 2017 and 19.5% in 2013) of Access to Childcare and 30.2% Overall Satisfaction rate (37.9% in 2017 and 31% in 2013) without an understanding of whether or not the respondents were parents, grandparents, caregivers, employers or had any involvement in childcare. With that being said, Overall Satisfaction with Access to Childcare has increased and decreased, and Overall Dissatisfaction has decreased and increased in the time between the two Quality of Life Studies.

Poverty:

- Lack of sufficient income continues to be a concern for seniors, single parents and persons living with disabilities.
- A significant number of residents continue to access food bank services to help meet their basic needs:
 - Single parents with children are the primary users of food bank hampers.³⁵⁵
 - Women comprise about 43% of users.³⁵⁶
 - 29% of users in 2022 were visible minorities.³⁵⁷
 - The increase in hampers distributed in Brooks was up 47% in 2022 compared to a year earlier.³⁵⁸ This is in comparison to a 34% increase for the province.³⁵⁹
 - In Alberta about 45% of food bank users are families.³⁶⁰ In Brooks, 42% of users are either Single parent or two parent families.

The Future of Work

- Work is changing rapidly. Research conducted by Harmonics and the *Future of Work: OIGP Global Research Study* released in 2017 explored the skills employees must have to be competitive today, the most significant people challenges currently facing organizations, the most effective ways to develop talent in today's economy and jobs most at risk.³⁶¹ The same situation exists today.
- Top skills required for employees have changed. In 2017, the top skills for employees were communication skill; Leadership agility; Eagerness to learn; Emotional intelligence; and Understanding analytics were most sought after. In 2019, employees that have strong collaboration skills, can embrace

³⁵³ Health and Wellness Trends in the Oil and Gas Sector Shepell.fgi Research Group 2009

³⁵⁴ Email: Anita Bruce, Teacher/Administrator, Brooks Preschool, and Executive Director, Brooks and County of Newell Early Childhood Development Coalition, March 29, 2023.

³⁵⁵ Email from Aurora Champlone, Manager of Brooks Food Bank Foundation, February 1, 2023

³⁵⁶ Email from Aurora Champlone, Manager of Brooks Food Bank Foundation, February 1, 2023

³⁵⁷ Email from Aurora Champlone, Manager of Brooks Food Bank Foundation, February 1, 2023

³⁵⁸ Email from Aurora Champlone, Manager of Brooks Food Bank Foundation, February 1, 2023

³⁵⁹ <https://foodbanksalberta.ca/release-food-insecurity-in-alberta-highest-in-canada/>

³⁶⁰ <https://foodbanksalberta.ca/release-food-insecurity-in-alberta-highest-in-canada/>

³⁶¹ <https://www.harmonics.ie/future-work-global-research-study-2017/>

change, have leadership agility, strong communication skills, creativity, can think critically are the most sought after.³⁶²

- A significant number of jobs have some potential for automation in the future which may mean a shift from repetitive physical labour to higher skilled positions, rather than absolute numbers of job losses.
- The Canadian technology sector is a rapidly expanding area of the economy and a promising source for employment growth. It is increasingly recognized as a global leader with a vibrant and flourishing tech community, thanks in no small part to the highly skilled and highly educated talent pool readily available in Canada. The Canadian tech sector had strong growth in 2021 despite the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, especially in the ICT sector, and outperformed the Overall economy in terms of output, employment and innovation growth.³⁶³ Every job in the ICT sector supports 1.3 jobs in the Canadian economy and every \$1 million of direct GDP generated within the sector contributes an additional \$862,000 in GDP generated for Canada.³⁶⁴

SUMMARY

Overall Community Satisfaction: 75.8%

75.8% of 691 City of Brooks Respondents expressed Overall Satisfaction with the Services, Programs, Conditions and Physical Spaces in their communities compared to 73.6% in 2017 and 72.8% in 2013.³⁶⁵ 7% were Very Satisfied, 43.1% were Satisfied, and 25.8% were Somewhat Satisfied. Overall Community Satisfaction was 73.6% in 2017 72.8% in 2013.

General Comment

- There is some variation in the Gap Analysis responses between Age Groups in terms of rankings of Importance and Satisfaction. This may be useful information for planning services and programs.

Health

- Overall Satisfaction with **Health Services** was 71.8, which is a decrease from 80% in 2017. Health was ranked #1 for level of Importance and #4 for level of Satisfaction. Health was ranked #3 in Satisfaction in 2017. This increased gap suggests that there is an increased level of Dissatisfaction with Health Services in the City of Brooks. However, satisfaction with Health was ranked #6 in 2013 so there still has been an Overall improvement with Health Services in Brooks and area.
- The 2014 Quality of Life report noted that additional Physicians had set up practice since the first Quality of Life survey had been administered. New services had also been added at the Brooks Health Centre. There has been a successful Physician recruitment strategy in place in the Region, and it is reflected in the results from the 2017 Quality of Life survey. Overall Satisfaction with **Access to Physicians** increased from 58.9% in 2013 to 77.3% in 2017, and Overall Dissatisfaction decreased from 31.4% to 10.8%. However, in 2022, Overall Satisfaction decreased to 30.2%, which is a significant drop. Neutral responses, although, were 54.5% (it was 11.9% in 2017), which means that City of Brooks residents are content, for the most part, with accessing physicians in Brooks. The COVID-19 Pandemic could have had an effect on satisfaction with **Access to Physicians**.

³⁶² https://prosource.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Future-of-Work-Report_2019.pdf

³⁶³ <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/digital-technologies-ict/en/canadian-ict-sector-profile>

³⁶⁴ <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/digital-technologies-ict/en/canadian-ict-sector-profile>

³⁶⁵ There were 746 total Brooks' respondents in 2022, but only 691 of them answered this question.

- **Access to Physicians** still remains a challenge for rural communities, particularly for residents that do not have access to their own transportation. Challenges also exist with recruitment of other medical professionals and retention of physicians.
- Further research could be completed to ascertain the reasons why respondents were Dissatisfied with Health Services. For example, are people dissatisfied due to the difficulty of accessing transportation for out of town medical appointments? Are residents dissatisfied with mental health services?
- This report examined the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Brooks' residents as a whole and through demographic profiles. For example, an individual that earns less than \$10,000 a year may experience a greater negative impact financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic than an individual making \$100,000 and Over. It's also important to note the percentages of respondents which indicated no impact in the categories. Some key highlights are:
 - The negative impacts on physical health in the City of Brooks is lower than the national level data provided by Angus Reid (43.5% versus 48%). Approximately 46% of City of Brooks' respondents experienced No Impact in regards to physical health during the pandemic, and approximately 11% experienced a positive impact.
 - Although the pandemic has had a negative impact on the economy at the national level, Alberta and locally in our region 50.6% and 47.3% of respondents identified experiencing No Impact regarding financial stability and work/employment, respectively. However, 37.7% of respondents identified experiencing a negative impact regarding financial stability, and 40.4% of respondents enduring a negative experience regarding work/employment.
 - The Angus Reid poll identified that the pandemic has "pulled people apart" with 72.0% of Canadians experiencing a negative impact in community involvement, and 77.1% having their social connections being negatively impacted. At the local level, the negative impact was close to the national level with 71.0% of respondents experiencing a negative impact with Community Involvement and 73.9% with Social Life/Connection to Others. Community Involvement and Social Life/Connection to Others as had the lowest percentages of No Impact experiences with 17.8% and 12.0%, respectively.

Economy and Employment

- Overall Satisfaction with **Economy and Employment** was 64.7%, which is an increase from 57.9% in 2017, but still a decrease from 74.6% in 2013. It ranked #4 for Level of Importance and Level #8 for Satisfaction.
- In 2013, **Economy and Employment** was ranked #5 for Level of Importance and #7 for Level of Satisfaction creating a minus-2 Gap. In 2017, it was ranked #4 for Level of Importance and #9 for Level of Satisfaction, a minus-5 Gap. This resulting Gap was minus 3 points higher than the previous study suggesting that Overall Satisfaction with **Economy and Employment** within the City of Brooks decreased substantially since the last study. However, in 2022, it was ranked #4 for Level of Importance and #8 for Level of Satisfaction, so the Overall Satisfaction has increased since the last study.
- In 2021, Overall Satisfaction with the **Employment** variable was 46.9%, which is an increase from 44.3% in 2017. However, Overall Satisfaction with this variable is not as high as it was in 2013 (58%). This is strong indicator that employment services in the City of Brooks, although improving, may still not be as strongly adequate as in years prior.

Political Rights & General Values

- The Overall Level of Satisfaction for **Political Rights and General Values** decreased to 59% from 68% in 2017 and 67.1% in 2013. This factor was ranked rather low for both Level of Importance and Level of Satisfaction: #7 and #9, respectively. The ranking for Importance and Satisfaction was #7 and #8, respectively, in 2017.
- Respondents were nearly 100% in agreement that **Honesty** (97.3%) and **Respect** (96.2%) were Very Important to Important.
- The Importance of **Sharing** had significantly more Neutral responses (24.7%) and Not Important to Not at all Important responses (4.2%) than the other variables, which is similar to 2013 and 2017.
- Although the majority of respondents were Neutral or Overall Satisfied on the **Discrimination** variable, 30.3% of respondents were Overall Dissatisfied (which is relatively high). As the number of visible minorities, immigrants and persons who practice other faiths continues to rise in the City of Brooks, it will become important to ensure that policies and practices are inclusive of all residents.
- Although most respondents expressed some Satisfaction with English as a Second Language, Discrimination and Immigration, between 105 and 209 respondents expressed a level of Dissatisfaction. 34 (28 in 2017) were Very Dissatisfied with English as a Second Language, 51 (42 in 2017) were Very Dissatisfied with Discrimination, and 22 (29 in 2017) were Very Dissatisfied with Immigration. The numbers for 2013 were 51, 44 and 45 respectively. Although there has been improvement in the Very Dissatisfied category Overall since 2013, these results still suggest that some residents may be experiencing some difficulty in their community.

Personal Well-Being

- Overall Satisfaction with Personal Well-Being was 74.5%, which is a decrease from 79.7% in 2017 and 78.8% in 2013. Personal Well-Being was ranked #2 for Level of Importance and #2 for Level of Satisfaction, which means it was a Match Gap. In 2017, it was a Positive Gap ranked #3 for Level of Importance and #1 for Level of Satisfaction.
- **Community Gathering Places** had 23.7% Neutral responses, which is an increase from 20.3% in 2017 and 20.5% in 2013 and an Overall Satisfaction rating of 50.2%, which is a decrease from 56.2% in 2017 and 52% in 2013. This may indicate that while there are a number of options for **Community Gathering Places** in the City of Brooks (seniors centres for example) there still may be a need for more options or better access to existing facilities. The City of Brooks is the only community in the region without a community hall with a commercial kitchen and stage. The JBS Canada Centre in Brooks serves some of the functions of a community hall, although use is limited because of lack of an industrial kitchen for the public.
- **Free time Activities** also had significant and increased Neutral and Overall Dissatisfaction ratings of 26.1% and 27.3%, respectively.

Sense of Community

- Overall Satisfaction with **Sense of Community** was 67.3%, which is a decrease from 70.5% in 2017. This factor was ranked #5 for Level of Importance and #5 for Level of Satisfaction, which is the same as 2017.
- Similar to other small cities, with a population of 14,924 residents, Brooks prides itself on its **Sense of Community** and the friendliness of its residents.³⁶⁶ As a community, Brooks has welcomed 1,850 newcomers between 2016 and 2021.³⁶⁷
- For the 2019 Tax Year, 15.5% of tax filers in the City of Brooks declared that they made a charitable donation. This percentage dropped for the 2021 Tax Year (12.9%), which is not too surprising due to the decline in giving (country-wide) during the COVID-19 Pandemic.³⁶⁸ The percentages for Canada and Alberta in 2019 were 18.6% and 19% (respectively), and 2021 they were 17.1% and 17.7%. The average age of donors for the City of Brooks was 54 in 2019 and 56 in 2021. This compares to 55 in 2019 and 56 in 2021 for Canada. The average age of donors for Alberta in 2019 was 53 and 54 in 2021. The older City of Brooks residents make more in charitable donations, which is similar to Alberta and Canada. The median donation from the City of Brooks in 2019 was \$630 and \$610 in 2021. This compares to Canada (\$310 in 2019 and \$360 in 2021) and Alberta (\$500 in 2019 and \$550 in 2021).
- Overall Satisfaction among Respondents for **Community Safety** was 70.3% (a slight decrease from 70.8% in 2017), and given that this is still an increase in Satisfaction from 2013 (67.5%) it indicates a high level of support for the efforts of Public Safety Agencies to work with the community in increasing their level of safety.

Education System

- Overall Satisfaction with **Education System** was 72%, which is a decrease from 74.5% in 2017. It was ranked #3 for Level of Importance and #1 for Level of Satisfaction, which makes it a Positive Gap. It was a Match Gap in 2013 and 2017. It ranked #2 for Level of Importance and #2 for Level of Satisfaction in 2017.
- Post-Secondary Education has consistently decreased in Overall Satisfaction from 54% in 2013, 51.9% in 2017 and 46.5% in 2022. This is a significant drop since the Quality of Life project began.
- **Job Training**, like in 2013, had a high Neutral response rate (48.3%). It was 42.6% in 2017 and 42.5% in 2013. Respondents might have a lack of knowledge of current opportunities in the City of Brooks.
- Since Young Adults who study outside of the Region (Calgary, Lethbridge, Edmonton, etc.) may find opportunities more attractive and stay in their college or university town after graduation, it is important to offer Post-Secondary education alternatives within the Region.
- The K-12 School System (three different public-school boards) offer a wide choice of programs and have been able to retain rural schools (Grasslands Regional Public-School Board) which is an asset for rural hamlets and villages.

³⁶⁶ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁶⁷ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁶⁸ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/canadian-charities-unprecedented-strain-giving-report-2022-1.6408393>

Physical Environment

- Overall Satisfaction with **Physical Environment** was 73%, which is a decrease from 76% in 2017. It was ranked #6 for Level of Importance and #3 for Level of Satisfaction (#4 in 2017).
- According to respondents, **Recycling** has worsened in the City since the previous study. Overall Satisfaction with Recycling was 59.2%; which is a decrease 64.7% in 2017, but still an increase from 54.8% in 2013. Overall Dissatisfaction decreased from 34.3% in 2013 to 23.4% in 2017, but increased since the previous study to 29.2% in 2022.

Social Problems/Social Conditions

- Overall Satisfaction with **Social Programs/Social Conditions** was 62.1%, which is a decrease from 67.3% in 2017. It ranked #8 for Level of Importance and #7 for Level of Satisfaction.
- **Public Transportation** had a decrease in Overall Satisfaction to 24.3% from 28.7% in 2017 and 24.7% in 2013. **Accessing Transportation** was Very Important or Important to 64.7% of respondents, which is a decrease from 70.7% in 2017 (it was 65.7% in 2013). Transportation options have increased in Brooks due to the City providing Access Transit and Regional Transportation services, and the County of Newell expanding their mini bus service. It is surprising to see a decrease in Satisfaction to lower than 2013 levels despite an increase in transportation service in the Brooks-Newell Region
- Respondents may have perceived Social Programs as relevant only to government income assistance rather than the broader range of services/programs that cater to very diverse needs (Low-Income Assistance, Child Benefits, Pensions, Subsidies Assistance, Child Care Subsidies, Government Family Benefit programs, Health and Education etc.).
- There are a substantial percentage of persons impacted by a **Household Social Condition** (27.7 %).

Government

- Overall Satisfaction with Local/Municipal **Government** was 65.1%, which is a decrease from 69% in 2017. Government ranked #9 for Level of Importance and #6 for Level of Satisfaction (the same in 2017)
- Respondents were satisfied with most municipal services, particularly Emergency Services (69.9%).
- **Emergency Services** had the lowest Neutral response rate at 14.7% (102). It was also the lowest in 2017 with 15.7% and 2013 with 14.6%. Although **Emergency Services** still has a high Overall Satisfaction rate, it decreased significantly since 2017. This could be a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- **Local Population growth** had a high Neutral response rate (41.3%), which means that respondents do not appear to have an issue with the impact of growth or how the City of Brooks has grown.
- Residents may not always be fully aware which level of government is responsible for regulations/policies which affect them and responsibilities for various services and programs.
- The low level of voter participation in municipal elections (It was 24.6% for the 2021 Municipal Election) means that there is a concern with voter engagement with municipal government. This is reflected in the Rank given to Government by survey respondents for both Importance and Satisfaction. It is important to determine the reason for low voter turnout and to develop strategies to encourage public engagement

Quality of Place

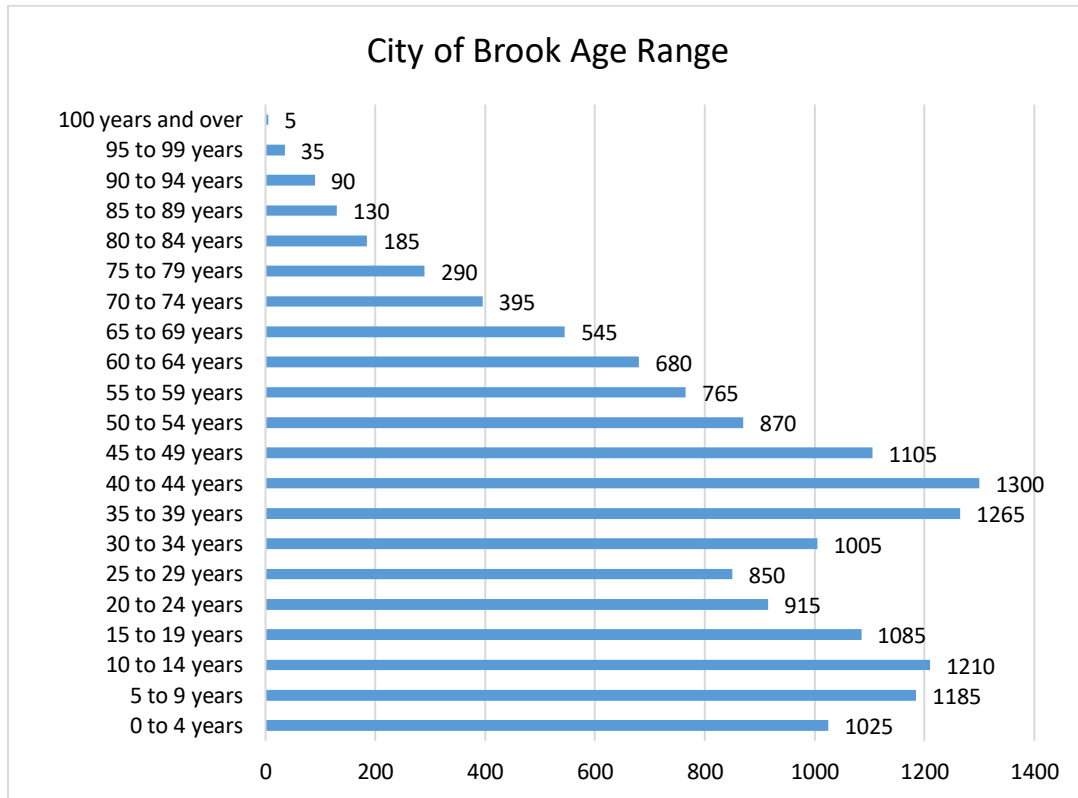
- **Retail and Shopping** had the highest Overall Dissatisfaction (47.5%; 51.2% in 2017) responses as well as the lowest Neutral (8.9%; 11.8% in 2017) and Overall Satisfaction (43.7%; 37% in 2017) responses. Overall Dissatisfaction and Neutral response have decreased, while Overall Satisfaction has increased. The variables with the next highest number of Overall Dissatisfied responses were with **Maintained Streets** (21.6%), and **Accessible Public Services** and **Building Maintenance** (both 20.2%).
- It's impossible to determine with absolute certainty (from this study) why 47.5% of respondents were so Dissatisfied with **Retail and Shopping**.
- The most significant Negative Quality of Place variable identified in the City of Brooks **was Retail and Shopping**, with the most Dissatisfaction among all Age Groups (this was the same in 2017)
- Respondents were the most Satisfied with **Sport and Leisure Facilities**, except for the Ages 40-59 and Ages 70 Plus Age groups, which were the most Satisfied with **Green Spaces**. The Ages 40-59 ranked **Sport and Leisure Facilities** second behind **Green Spaces** for most Satisfaction, but Ages 70+ ranked **Maintained Streets** second.
- There is some variation in the Quality of Place levels of Satisfaction responses between the Age Groups. This is a consideration when planning for the future.



Appendix

CITY OF BROOKS: DETAILED SOCIOECONOMIC DEMOGRAPHICS

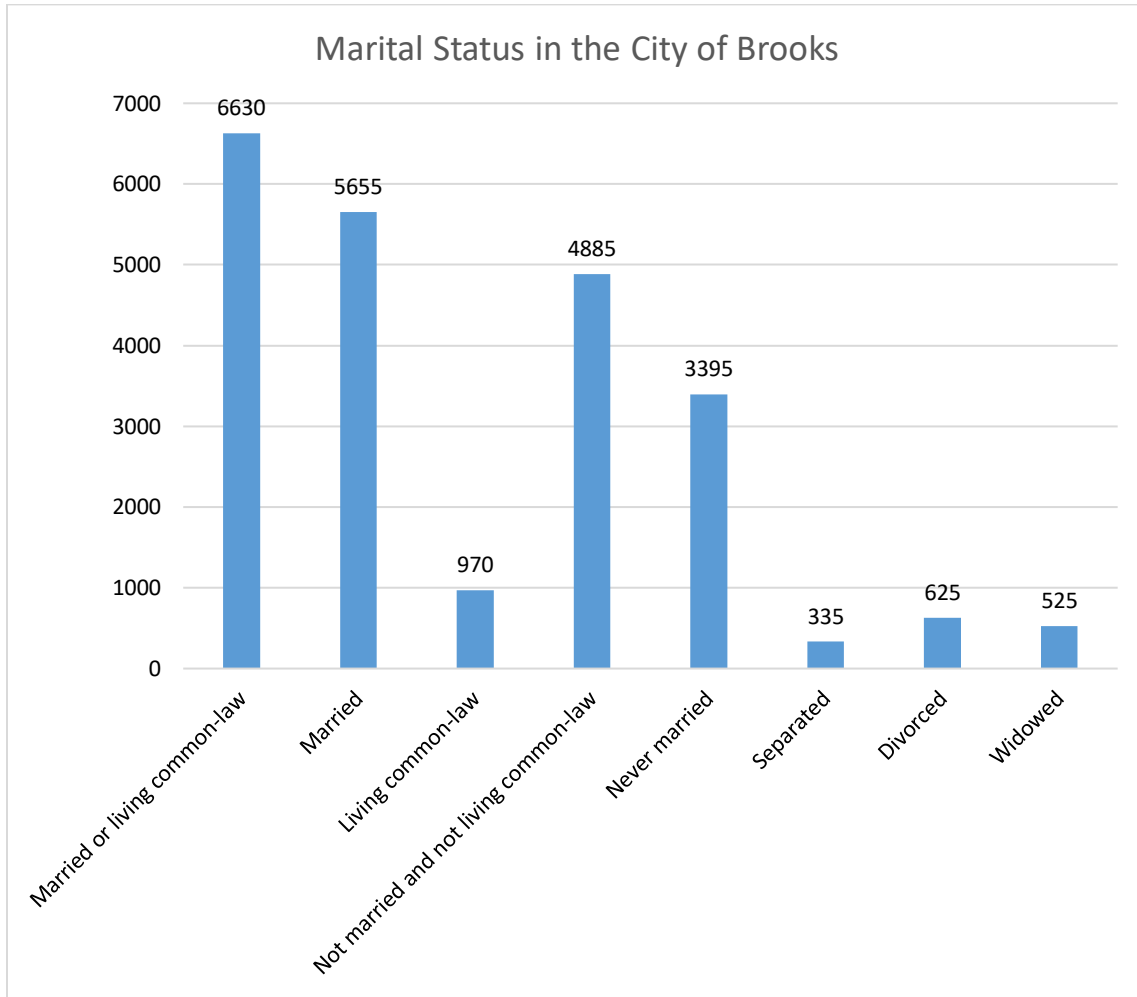
Age Demographics



In 2021, The City of Brooks had a total population of 14,924. The median age was 36 years with 77.1% of residents being 15 years of age and older. In 2016, the median age was 35 years and 77.2% of residents were 15 years of age and older. In 2011, the median age was 33.8 years and 78.5% of residents were 15 years of age and older. There was an 8.1% increase in the numbers of persons aged 65 and older between 2016 and 2021. There was a 21.2% increase in the number of persons aged 65 and older between 2011 and 2016. The percentage increase between 2006 and 2011 was 17.5%.

Marital Status in the City of Brooks

The majority of Brooks residents are married or living common law. However, it should be noted that there are approximately 4,900 individuals in Brooks aged 15 years and over who are not married, separated, divorced or widowed.



Family Structure in the City of Brooks

Data on family characteristics for the City of Brooks illustrates a diversity of family units. There are a total of 3,050 couple families and 715 one-parent families. The majority of couple families are married, and lone-parent families are headed by a female parent.

Family Characteristics in the City of Brooks

<i>Total Census families in Private Households by Family Size</i>	3765
2 persons	1595
3 persons	780
4 persons	785
5 or more persons	605
<i>Average Size of Census Families</i>	3.2
<i>Average number of children in census families with children</i>	2.1
<i>Total number of census families in private households</i>	3760
Total couple families	3050
Married couples	2565
With children	1580
Without children	980
Common-law couples	485
With children	250
Without children	240
<i>Total one-parent families</i>	715
in which the parent is a woman+	565
in which the parent is a man+	150
<i>Total - Persons in private households</i>	14640
Total - Persons in census families	12080
Married spouses or common-law partners	6100
Parents in one-parent families	715
Children	5265
In a two-parent family	3985
In a one-parent family	1285
<i>Total - Persons not in census families in private households</i>	2565
Living alone	1135
Living with other relatives	415
Living with non-relatives only	1015

Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment in the City of Brooks

Education	Population	Percentage
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree for the population aged 15 years and over in private households	11230	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	3215	28.6
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	4080	36.3
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	3935	35.0
Postsecondary certificate or diploma below bachelor level	2605	23.2
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	875	7.8
Non-apprenticeship trades certificate or diploma	335	3.0
Apprenticeship certificate	535	4.8
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	1485	13.2
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	240	2.1
Bachelor's degree or higher	1335	11.9
Bachelor's degree	1000	8.9
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	100	0.9
Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	40	0.4
Master's degree	170	1.5
Earned doctorate	25	0.2

Ethnic Background

According to the 2021 Canadian Census, 5,435 (37.1%) of the population of the City of Brooks were foreign-born (immigrants), 8,860 (60.5%) were Canadian-born (non-immigrants) and 350 (2.4%) were non-permanent residents.³⁶⁹ Of the immigrants living in the City of Brooks, 1,850 (34%) came to Canada between 2011 and 2016.

In 2021, among the City of Brooks immigrant population, the most common countries of birth of immigrants were: Philippines (1,530 or 28.2%), "Other places of birth in Africa" (735 or 13.5%) and Ethiopia (585 or 10.8%).³⁷⁰ In comparison, the top countries of birth of immigrants living in Alberta were: Philippines (17.3%), India (12.6%) and China (6%). The majority of immigrants in the Brooks-Newell Region live in the City of Brooks (85.5%).

Among the City of Brooks population in 2021, 69.3% spoke English at home most often and 0.9% spoke French. In Alberta, 82.5% of the population speaks English at home while 0.5% speak French. The three most frequently reported non-official languages spoken at home were Tagalog (4%), Somali (both 3.8%), Spanish (3.7%). In Alberta, the top five non-official languages spoken at home are Punjabi (1.8%), Tagalog (1.6%), Mandarin (0.9),

³⁶⁹ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁷⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Cantonese (0.9%) and Spanish (0.9%). Tagalog, the most frequent non-official language spoken at home, is spoken by immigrants or Temporary Foreign Workers who come to Canada from the Philippines.

The jobs available in the City of Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region in general are a large influence of the background and immigration status of newcomers to the Region. For example, the largest community employer, JBS Foods Canada periodically recruits workers from different parts of the world such as Europe, Central America or Asia.

In February 2016, the City of Brooks was chosen by the Government of Canada as a Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) receiving community. This was done to accommodate the influx of refugees from the Syrian Refugee operation. Since then, the Brooks-Newell Region has directly received 540 GAR's.³⁷¹ The top countries that these refugees have arrived from are Syria, Somalia, Congo, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. Due to employment availability in the Brooks-Newell Region there is a high retention rate; although some do leave because they have family elsewhere in Canada, for medical needs or post-secondary education for their children.³⁷² Some privately sponsored refugees end up making Brooks their home, and other refugees that land in other places in Canada sometimes move to Brooks (or secondary migrants). These refugees primarily arrive from Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and Ethiopic, but the numbers aren't as easy to track as GARs.³⁷³

Due to the conflict in Ukraine, refugees have made Alberta their home. In the last year, 16 Ukrainian families relocated to Brooks, but communities such as Medicine Hat and Taber saw a great influx. When the conflict started, a group of organizations and volunteers came together and created a service plan to be ready for any anticipated Ukrainian arrivals.³⁷⁴ Although the numbers were lower than expected in Brooks, the plan did prove useful for those who arrived.

According to the 2021 Canadian Census, 7,119 individuals in the City of Brooks belonged to a visible minority group; accounting for 48.6% of its total population. In comparison, visible minorities comprised 27.8% of Alberta's population. The largest visible minority groups living in Brooks were Black (3,270), Filipino (1,960) and Latin American (650). In Alberta, the largest minority groups were South Asian (297,650), Filipino (216,710) and Black (177,940). The three most frequently reported ethnic origins in the City of Brooks, for people reporting one or multiple ethnic origins, were Canadian, Filipino and English. The top three in Alberta were English, German and Scottish.

³⁷¹ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

³⁷² Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

³⁷³ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

³⁷⁴ Email: Mohammed Idriss, Service Manager, Brooks & County Immigration Services (BCIS), March 20, 2023

Ethnic Origin

Predominant Ethnic Origins Declared by City of Brooks Residents

Canadian	1905	Ethiopian	415
Filipino	1865	Dutch	400
English	1700	Chinese	385
German	1660	Norwegian	360
Scottish	1280	Mexican	295
Irish	1200	Eritrean	295
Somali	890	Métis	265
French, n.o.s.	690	Hungarian	265
African, n.o.s.	690	Russian	235
Ukrainian	450	Swedish	235

Note: The abbreviation "n.o.s." means "not otherwise specified"

There are many visible signs of the ethnic diversity of in Brooks and the Brooks-Newell Region . For example, Brooks has a number of “ethnic” restaurants including Cambodian, Thai, Indian and Chinese, and Cambodian and Latin grocery stores. There are also businesses which cater to the need for sending remittances overseas. Grasslands Public School Board provides German instruction to children from Mennonite homes in rural areas. There is a Francophone Association (L’Association Francophone de Brooks) in Brooks and a French language school (L’Ecole le Ruisseau) that caters to the Francophone community. There are also eight Hutterite Colony Schools (grade 1 to 9) in the Region.

Indigenous Population

In 2021, 2.4% (345) of the population of the City of Brooks had an Indigenous identity. Out of the Indigenous groups, 58.2% (195) identified as being Metis, 41.8% (140) were First Nations, and 0% were Inuit. Five people reported an Indigenous language as a mother tongue.

Mother Tongue

According to the 2021 Canadian Census, 60.7% of Brooks residents indicated that English was their first official language spoken, and only 1.2% indicated that French was their mother tongue.

Approximately 30% of Brooks residents have a mother tongue that is not one of Canada's two official languages. The top three non-official mother tongue languages spoken in the City of Brooks were Tagalog (905 or 6.1%), Somali (670 or 4.5%) and Spanish (635 or 4.3%).

Mother Tongue	Number	Percentage
English	9000	60.69
French	180	1.21
Non-Official Languages	4900	33.04
Indigenous Languages	5	0.03
Non-Indigenous Languages	4895	33.01

Top Non-Official Mother Tongue Languages Spoken in the City of Brooks

Mother Tongue	Number	Percentage
Tagalog	905	6.1
Somali	670	4.5
Spanish	635	4.3
Oromo	415	2.8
Tigrigna	345	2.3
Arabic	210	1.4
Mandarin	195	1.3
Amharic	140	0.9
German	115	0.8
Cebuano	95	0.6

Citizenship and Immigration

Immigrants to Canada generally choose to obtain Canadian Citizenship as soon as they have remained in Canada for the required number of years.³⁷⁵ Over the past several years (until 2017), changes in Citizenship regulations increased requirements that made it more challenging for newer immigrants to obtain citizenship. For example, the processing fee increased from \$100 to \$530 (with an added \$100 right of citizenship fee) in 2014-2015³⁷⁶, and the physical presence requirement changed (in 2015) so that all applicants must be physically present in Canada for a minimum of 1,460 days (four years) out of six years prior to the submission of the citizenship application.³⁷⁷ Applicants also had to be physically present 183 days for each of the four calendar years that were within that six year span time. These changes saw a significant drop in citizenship applications between the first nine months of 2016 (56,446) and the same period the year prior (111,993), which was nearly a 50% drop.³⁷⁸ Starting in 2017, new Citizenship Act rules came into effect that have made the path of citizenship less cumbersome for immigrants, although the processing and right of citizenship fees have remained \$630 in total (although fees for permanent residency increased on April 30, 2022).³⁷⁹ According to the 2021 Federal Census, 77.9% of City of Brooks' residents are Canadian Citizens. The recent citizenship rule changes could result in an increase in citizenship applications from immigrants living in the City of Brooks.

Obtaining citizenship allows immigrants to vote for all levels of government, run as a candidate for public office (all levels of government), and travel to countries such as the United States with a Canadian Passport without visa requirements.

Citizenship	Number	Percentage
Canadian Citizens	11410	77.9
Not Canadian Citizens	3235	22.1

Population in Private Households by Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration in the City of Brooks

Total Population	14645
Non-Immigrants	8860
Immigrants	5435
Before 1980	190
1980 to 1990	190
1991 to 2000	330
2001 to 2010	1065
2011 to 2021	3660
2011 to 2015	1810
2016 to 2021	1850
Non-Permanent residents	350

³⁷⁵ DeVoretz, D.J. and S. Pivnenko. Self-selection, Immigrant Public Finance Performance and Canadian Citizenship. RIMM, January 2005.

³⁷⁶ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-citizenship-applications-decrease-1.3976140>

³⁷⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/canadian-citizenship/grant/residence/physical-presence-intent-reside-requirements.html#s02>

³⁷⁸ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-citizenship-applications-decrease-1.3976140>

³⁷⁹ <https://ircc.canada.ca/english/information/fees/fees.asp#citizenship>

Top Recent Immigration by Selected Places of Birth

Total Population	1850
Philippines	505
Ethiopia	275
Eritrea	270
Other Places of Birth in Africa	190
Somalia	160
Mexico	85
Syria	65
Sudan	55
Other Places of Birth in Americas	45
Democratic Republic of the Congo	45

Visible Minorities**Visible Minorities in the City of Brooks**

Total Population	14640
Total Visible Minority Population	7110
South Asian	205
Chinese	320
Black	3270
Filipino	1960
Arab	75
Latin American	650
Southeast Asian	415
West Asian	15
Korean	40
Japanese	55
Visible Minority, n.i.e.	45
Multiple Visible Minorities	60

Note: The abbreviation "n.i.e." means "not included elsewhere."

The Brooks-Newell Region has been home to a number of families of Japanese Ancestry since Japanese persons were forcefully relocated from the Pacific Coast and settled in Camps around Taber during World War II. These families continue to reside in the Brooks-Newell Region, many around Rosemary, Scandia and Gem. More recent immigrants from Africa and Asia have added to the diversity of persons living in the Region.³⁸⁰

³⁸⁰ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Religion**Followers of Religious Denominations**

Total Population	14640
Buddhist	295
Christian	8010
Christian, n.o.s.	2010
Anabaptist	35
Anglican	435
Baptist	85
Catholic	3330
Christian Orthodox	245
Jehovah's Witness	10
Latter Day Saints	105
Lutheran	365
Methodist and Wesleyan (Holiness)	20
Pentecostal and other Charismatic	230
Presbyterian	25
Reformed	45
United Church	630
Other Christian and Christian-related traditions	445
Hindu	70
Jewish	0
Muslim	1855
Sikh	15
Traditional (North American Indigenous) spirituality	0
Other Religions and Spiritual Traditions	65
No Religion and Secular Perspectives	4325

The abbreviation "n.o.s." means "not otherwise specified."

Income Levels for Different Households

The median after-tax income for all economic families in the City of Brooks in 2020 was \$90,000, which is lower than in Canada (\$91,000) and Alberta (\$99,000).³⁸¹ The median after-tax income for Couple-Only Families in the City of Brooks was \$81,000, Couple-with-Children Economic Families was \$104,000 and One-Parent Economic Families was \$59,600. The median after-tax incomes for Alberta under these categories were \$89,000, \$120,000 and \$66,000.

Comparison of Median After-Tax Income for All Economic Families in 2020

It should be noted that this is the most current federal income data available.

Economic Family Structure	City of Brooks		Alberta	Canada
	Number	Median After-Tax Income (\$)	Median After-Tax Income (\$)	Median After-Tax Income (\$)
All Economic Families	3,745	90,000	99,000	91,000
Couple-Only Economic Families	1,125	81,000	89,000	79,000
Couple-with-Children Economic Families	1,835	104,000	120,000	116,000
One-Parent Economic Families	660	59,600	66,000	64,000
Persons not in Economic Families	2,150	41,200	39,200	34,800

³⁸¹ 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

Employment Rate

In the City of Brooks, 7,030 individuals were employed and 675 were unemployed for a total labour force of 7,985 from May 02, 2021 to May 08, 2021.³⁸² Brooks has a highly skilled labour force in the areas of agriculture, manufacturing construction, wholesale and retail trade, finance and real estate, health and education, business/community services, and public administration.

Employment and Unemployment Rate in May 2021

	City of Brooks	Alberta
Employment Rate (%)	62.6	60.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.8	9

Low-Income Persons

The Overall percentage of low-income persons, as well as for individuals 18-64 years of age, in 2021 is lower than Alberta and Canada. The 2011 NHS and 2016 Census tables for low-income persons have been included for a comparison.

In Low Income Based on the Low-Income Measure; After Tax (LIM-AT) (2021)³⁸³

Age Groups	City of Brooks		Alberta		Canada	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All Ages	1285	8.8	382820	9.2	4016065	11.1
0 to 17 years	475	11.5	107130	11.2	854565	11.9
0 to 5 years	185	14.8	36250	12	282315	12.7
18 to 64 years	650	7.1	213795	8.1	2175755	9.7
65 years and over	165	11.5	61890	10.6	985745	15

In Low Income Based on the Low-Income Measure; After Tax (LIM-AT) (2016)

Age Groups	City of Brooks		Alberta		Canada	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All Ages	1430	10.2	363890	9.3	4809940	14.2
0 to 17 years	625	16	114215	12.8	1163830	17
0 to 5 years	255	18.6	41755	13.5	396095	17.8
18 to 64 years	695	7.8	210870	8.2	2855290	13.2
65 years and over	115	10	38800	8.6	790825	14.5

³⁸² 2021 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada)

³⁸³ LIM-AT refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median-adjusted after-tax income of private households.

In Low Income Based on the Low-Income Measure; After Tax (LIM-AT) (2011)

Age Groups	City of Brooks		Alberta		Canada	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All Ages	1390	10.4	376820	10.7	4812120	14.9
0 to 17 years	475	13.8	107535	13.4	1162785	17.3
0 to 5 years	200	14.5	39715	14.1	394595	18.1
18 to 64 years	805	9	241025	10.2	3044390	14.4
65 years and over	110	11.6	28260	7.8	604940	13.4

Household Income Distribution**2020 Household Income Distribution in the City of Brooks**

Household Income	Number	Percentage
Under \$5,000	35	0.7
\$5,000 to \$9,999	20	0.4
\$10,000 to \$14,999	35	0.7
\$15,000 to \$19,999	40	0.8
\$20,000 to \$24,999	120	2.3
\$25,000 to \$29,999	150	2.9
\$30,000 to \$34,999	130	2.5
\$35,000 to \$39,999	165	3.2
\$40,000 to \$44,999	170	3.3
\$45,000 to \$49,999	165	3.2
\$50,000 to \$59,999	415	8.1
\$60,000 to \$69,999	355	6.9
\$70,000 to \$79,999	365	7.1
\$80,000 to \$89,999	360	7.0
\$90,000 to \$99,999	350	6.8
\$100,000 to \$124,999	780	15.2
\$125,000 to \$149,999	535	10.4
\$150,000 to \$199,999	600	11.7
\$200,000 and over	345	6.7

Housing Tenure

Housing tenure refers to “the arrangements under which the household occupies all or part of a housing unit”.³⁸⁴ The most frequent forms are tenancy, in which rent is paid to a landlord, and owner occupancy. The City of Brooks has a lower percentage of owner households than Canada and Alberta. In 2011 and 2016, Brooks had a higher percentage of owner households than Canada, but lower than Alberta. It should be noted that Brooks has a higher percentage of renter households than the Brooks-Newell Region . In Brooks, there are 35.2% renter households compared to 28% in the region. This is due to the nature of the employment mix in Brooks where there are a number of relatively new immigrants who may not have the financial ability to buy a home. Unemployment/under-employment, low income residents and the transient nature of some of the work in the Oil and Gas Sector results in the need for a large number of rental units in Brooks.

Housing Tenure	City of Brooks		Alberta	Canada
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Total Households	5140	100	100	100
Owner	3330	64.8	70.9	66.5
Renter	1810	35.2	28.5	33.1

Housing Types in the City of Brooks

Housing Type	Number
Total Occupied Private Dwellings	5140
Single-Detached House	2800
Semi-Detached House	400
Row House	565
Apartment or Flat in a Duplex	185
Apartment in a Building that has Fewer than Five Storeys	795
Apartment in a Building that has Five or More Storeys	0
Other Single-Attached House	0
Movable Dwelling	395

³⁸⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/HM1-3-Housing-tenures.pdf>

Housing Affordability

Housing Affordability Comparisons

Housing Indicator	Housing Tenure	City of Brooks	Brooks-Newell Region	Alberta	Canada
Percentage of Households Spending 30% or more of its Income on Shelter Costs	Total	12.7	12.2	18.6	18.2
	Owner	11.7	9.5	16	14.8
	Renter	21.6	15	34	33.2
Median Monthly Shelter Costs (\$)	Owner	1,300	1,064	1,600	1,240
	Renter	1,050	1,060	1,280	1,070
Average Monthly Shelter Costs (\$)	Owner	1,336	1,168	1,678	1,498
	Renter	1,074	1,029	1,332	1,209

The average value of dwellings in the City of Brooks was \$269,600, compared to \$258,880 for the Brooks-Newell Region . The Average value of dwellings in Alberta was \$448,800.

Housing Suitability

Housing Suitability Comparisons

Housing Indicator	City of Brooks	Brooks-Newell Region	Alberta	Canada
Percentage of Households living in Unsuitable Dwellings	6.8	5.3	3.6	4.0
Percentage of Dwellings Needing Major Repairs	4.2	4.5	3.8	4.3

According to the 2021 Canadian Census, 6.8% of households in Brooks and 5.3% in the Brooks-Newell Region were living in unsuitable dwellings. This means that these households were living in dwellings that were crowded due to the lack of bedrooms (based on the National Occupancy Standard).³⁸⁵ The proportion of households living in unsuitable dwellings was higher than the rest of Alberta (3.6%) and Canada (4.0%). The 2021 Canadian Census did not distinguish between renters and owners in these results; so it is impossible to determine, from this data, the challenges faced by renters in finding accommodations large enough for their families. Approximately 4% of dwellings in the City of Brooks was in need of major repairs, which compares to 4.5% for the Brooks-Newell Region .³⁸⁶ The proportion of dwellings needing major repairs in Alberta is 3.8% and 4.3% in Canada.

³⁸⁵ Housing suitability - Refers to whether a private household is living in suitable accommodations according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS); that is whether the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household. A household is deemed to be living in suitable accommodations if its dwelling has enough bedrooms as calculated using the NOS. Housing suitability and the National Occupancy Standard (NOS) on which it is based were developed by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) through consultations with provincial housing agencies.

³⁸⁶ Dwelling condition - Refers to whether the dwelling is in need of repairs. This does not include desirable remodelling or additions.

Rental Market

The following rental market data for the City of Brooks was obtained from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (Alberta Highlights).³⁸⁷ Information was not available for the rural areas of the Brooks-Newell Region .

Vacancy Rates for Private Apartments

Bedroom Type	City of Brooks		Alberta	
	October 2021	October 2022	October 2021	October 2022
Bachelor	0.0	0.0	7.2	5.3
One Bedroom	6.2	4	6.7	4.2
Two Bedrooms	3.6	2.4	6.9	3.5
Three Bedrooms Plus	**	1.6	6.7	2.8
Total	4.0	2.8	6.8	3.8

Average Rent (\$) for Private Apartments

Bedroom Type	City of Brooks		Alberta	
	October 2021	October 2022	October 2021	October 2022
Bachelor	671	770	877	916
One Bedroom	820	874	1,050	1,116
Two Bedrooms	916	990	1,256	1,319
Three Bedrooms Plus	993	1,052	1,357	1,428
Total	900	968	1,157	1,223

Number of Private Apartment Units

Bedroom Type	City of Brooks		Alberta	
	October 2021	October 2022	October 2021	October 2022
Bachelor	7	7	6,550	6,691
One Bedroom	148	155	59,719	62,560
Two Bedrooms	478	471	71,230	74,672
Three Bedrooms Plus	61	66	6,128	6,754
Total	694	699	143,627	150,677

³⁸⁷ <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/housing-data/data-tables/rental-market/rental-market-report-data-tables>

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