

Wood River Community Needs Assessment Survey Conclusions

Demographics Opportunities

- More than 60% of population has received post-secondary education.
- Location and atmosphere are common reasons for moving to Wood River.
- Local newspaper is popular in community.
- Strong proportion (30%) of residents that have lived in Wood River less than 10 years.

Demographics Challenges

- Community is not eligible for certain federal and state grants.
- Five percent of respondents do not speak English (separation from rest of community).
- Vacancy rate of (47 houses) is borderline unhealthy.

Community & Infrastructure Opportunities

- Desire for new facilities, such as a swimming pool could be combined with the community's willingness to pass sales tax.
- Residents feel positive about the appearance of their neighborhoods.
- Majority of respondents feel positive about Wood River.

Community & Infrastructure Challenges

- Appearance of vacant lots & houses heavily weighted towards poor.
- Majority of respondents do not see progress in enforcing nuisance codes.
- Almost half of respondents relying on public transportation rated Hall County Bus Service as inadequate.

Business & Econ. Dev. Opportunities

- Strong support for more eating establishments could be combined with desire to recruit new businesses.
- Community believes that all types of economic development are important.
- Community demonstrated a strong desire to increase business/retail activity.

Business & Econ. Dev. Challenges

- Majority of respondents do not feel Wood River should adopt an LB 840 plan.
- Over 30% of respondents would like to see vacant buildings demolished on Main Street.

Child Care & Education Opportunities

- More than 160 children represented that are aged less than 12 years.
- Majority of families using childcare have found service in Wood River.
- Relationships could exist between respondents willing to become a mentor combined with strong desire to see career education improved.
- Strong support for establishing an agricultural program.
- Majority support potential levy increases to support Wood River Community Schools.

Child Care & Education Challenges

- Seventeen families leave town for childcare.
- Thirty-one families struggle to find childcare at varied times and days.
- Seventeen families leave town for childcare.

Housing & Neighborhoods Opportunities

- Over 30 households expressed interest in senior housing options.
- Forty households would be interested in renting a duplex.
- Over 10% of households are interested in purchasing a new townhome.
- Eligible homeowners are interested in applying for owner occupied housing rehabilitation programs.

Housing & Neighborhoods Challenges

- Weak mix of housing options.
- Forty percent of respondents spend more than 30% of income on housing.
- Available housing is main reason owners and renters (that prefer to) cannot upgrade their residence.
- Majority of people living in apartments and mobile homes do not have access to emergency shelter.

Health & Human Services Opportunities

- Over 100 families would be willing to switch to a local doctor.

Health & Human Services Challenges

- Some residents living in Wood River have feared they would run out of food.
- Some households within the community are not aware of food pantry.