The Slaton Area

Community Needs and Opportunities:
A Conversation Opener
The Mercy Ministries Slaton Area Endowment and the Lubbock Area Foundation have embarked on a collaborative initiative to identify the region’s best opportunities and most pressing needs, and to set bold goals to achieve over the coming years. This report is a product of that endeavor.

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

August 2014

MERCY MINISTRIES
SLATON AREA ENDOWMENT

The Mercy Ministries Slaton Area Endowment was created in 2013 to be a resource for donors, a source of grants for worthy local causes, and a partner for local nonprofits in Slaton and the surrounding area. Created by and for the people of the area, the Endowment is uniquely positioned to bring people from all walks of life together to create solutions and promote opportunities for betterment of the community and quality of life for all. The Endowment is an Affiliate of the Lubbock Area Foundation. This makes it possible for the Endowment’s Advisory Board and volunteers to focus our efforts on the important work of building permanent community assets and putting the earnings to good work through grants to nonprofits in our area, while relying on the Lubbock Area Foundation to handle day-to-day administrative tasks and investments.

www.mercyslatonendowment.org

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

www.lubbockareafoundation.org

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

www.energizingentrepreneurs.org

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

www.aspencsg.org
Our Aim

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

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

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<td>Each of these four sections profiles recent data on five factors related to the topic of the section. It explains why each measure is important, and highlights a key point or two. The underlying facts and figures all come from publicly available sources, like the US Census, the State of Texas and other agencies that conduct research across the area.</td>
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<td>2 How are area’s people doing?</td>
<td>This special analysis by the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship was commissioned by the Lubbock Area Foundation for the Slaton Area and the entire region.</td>
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Using this Booklet as a Conversation Guide

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

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

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

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

If you want someone to help organize or facilitate a group conversation or discussion, help is available! Please contact Tami Swoboda at 806-762-8061 or at tami@lubbockareafoundation.org.
1. Who is living in the area?

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

a. Population

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

How the area stacks up: The Slaton Area’s population has been steady back to 2000. Over the coming decade, however, gradual population increase is predicted.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship estimates

b. Age composition

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

How the area stacks up: The Slaton Area population, like the region, is aging. More than 40% of the population is 45 or older.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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c. Race and ethnicity

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

How the area stacks up: The Slaton Area has a greater percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents than Texas as a whole. Proportionally, it has fewer non-White, non-Hispanic residents.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012
d. Net migration

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

How the area stacks up: Unlike neighboring rural areas, young adult net migration is positive into the Slaton Area (people are moving in).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship estimates

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e. Household structure

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

How the area stacks up: The Slaton Area has proportionally fewer households with children than Texas as a whole. It also has more single adults with no children.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

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Discussion Questions

1.1 What one or two things most surprised you in this data about who is living in the Slaton Area?

1.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most hope for the Slaton Area?

1.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most concern – for any reason?

1.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to change – and why?
How are the area’s people doing?

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

a. Household income distribution

**Why it matters:** Household income provides a general indicator of well-being of its members. It correlates with health, educational outcomes and happiness.

**How the area stacks up:** The area has a larger concentration of lower income households than Texas and most counties in the region. Nearly 50% of households earn less than $35,000.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

b. Poverty rate

**Why it matters:** Poverty is a well-established benchmark of how a community’s residents are doing economically. Child poverty rates provide information about a community’s safety net and its capacity to care for residents who have no capacity to care for themselves.

**How the area stacks up:** The general poverty rate and the child poverty rate are higher in the Slaton Area than for Texas and most of the region.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

c. Income and poverty

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

**How the area stacks up:** More than 45% of the area’s residents live either near or below the 200%-of-poverty line. That means a large percentage of the population faces significant economic challenges.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012
d. Lack of health insurance

**Why it matters:** An important tool to prevent families from falling into poverty is affordable and high quality health insurance. Insurance keeps families healthy by covering preventative services, and, if family members get sick, it keeps hospital visits from triggering financial ruin. Although data from the Census Bureau is a lagging indicator (it doesn’t tell us what’s changed since the health exchanges opened) it provides useful insights into potential coverage gaps and general accessibility of healthcare in a region.

**How the area stacks up:** The Slaton Area has higher uninsured rates, especially for children. It has slightly higher coverage rates for lower income households and households at or near poverty.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

![Percent Uninsured](chart)

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<tr>
<th>Garza</th>
<th>Hale</th>
<th>Hockley</th>
<th>Lubbock</th>
<th>Slaton Area</th>
<th>Texas</th>
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<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>-120%</td>
<td>-90%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

![Civilian non-inst population, Non-inst population under 18 years old, Individuals in households earning $49k or less, Individuals in households under 200% of poverty](chart)

Why it matters: Crime can be a serious challenge for both urban and rural communities. High crime rates can motivate a community to address the underlying issues that tend to increase violence. Note: Data can be affected by good, poor or inconsistent reporting.

**How the area stacks up:** From 2002-2012, the Slaton Police Department reported fewer crimes per-capita. However, instances of rape were 74% more common in Slaton than elsewhere in the state.

Source: Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas Crime Report 2002-2012

![Slaton Police Department crime rate compared to Texas average, 2002-2012](chart)

![Slaton Police Department crime rate compared to Texas average, 2002-2012](chart)

**Discussion Questions**

2.1 What one or two things most surprised you in this data about how people are doing in the Slaton Area?

2.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most hope for the Slaton Area?

2.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most concern – for any reason?

2.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to change – and why?
How is the area’s economy doing?
The factors that drive or drain a local economy – specific industry sectors, the education and skills of residents, the sources of the income people spend – all affect the future.

a. Employment by sector

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

How the area stacks up: Slaton has significant employment in the “educational services, health care and social assistance” sector compared to other rural communities. Compared to Texas, the area has proportionally more jobs in construction.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

b. Personal income by sector

Why it matters: Another way to understand an area’s economy is by looking at which sectors produce the most income for residents.

How the area stacks up: Government salaries bring more income into Lubbock County than any other sector. Energy and mining, which is responsible for more income in other parts of the region and other parts of Texas, is less important for Lubbock County.

Source: Headwaters Report, 2012

c. Educational attainment

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

How the area stacks up: The Slaton Area fares worse than Lubbock and Texas when it comes to high school completion and college degrees.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012
d. Labor force

Why it matters: Aging communities and communities experiencing economic distress typically have lower labor force participation rates. Conversely, communities that are growing, younger and doing better economically have higher rates of employment and lower unemployment rates.

How the area stacks up: The Slaton Area has proportionally fewer residents in the labor force than Texas, Lubbock and Hockley because the area has older residents. Slaton residents may benefit from proximity to Lubbock and Lubbock employment opportunities.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

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e. Labor and non-labor earnings

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

How the area stacks up: It’s likely that because the area is older, it depends more on retirement and social security income. Its higher rate of poverty offers insight into why more households rely on food stamps.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2012

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Discussion Questions

3.1 What one or two things most surprised you in this data about how the area’s economy is doing?

3.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most hope for the Slaton Area?

3.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most concern – for any reason?

3.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to change – and why?
How is the place doing?
The natural resources and buildings and amenities in a place, as well as where people live and shop, make a difference in the quality of life.

**a. Value of housing**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of housing values in Slaton compared to Texas.](chart)

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

**How the area stacks up:** Housing values in the area are substantially lower than housing values in Texas. Part of this difference is due to higher housing prices in urban areas.

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

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**b. Housing adequacy**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of inadequate housing units in Slaton compared to other counties.](chart)

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

**How the area stacks up:** More than one in four units in the Slaton Area are inadequate. Underlying data show that 20% of homes in the area is either a financial burden for its owner or is too expensive for its renter. This reduces the area’s overall housing adequacy.

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

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**c. Commuting patterns**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of commuting times in Slaton and surrounding counties.](chart)

**Why it matters:** Many Americans commute to work, entertainment and shopping. Commuting might mean more access to jobs. It can also be a sign that economic activity is occurring elsewhere, taking dollars and resources to a neighboring community.

**How the area stacks up:** Slaton Area commuters are more likely than residents of surrounding counties to spend more than 30 minutes commuting to work.

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates
d. Projected water availability

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

**How the area stacks up:** Lubbock County has adequate but decreasing water supplies for municipal uses, but small future deficits are projected for irrigation and manufacturing.

Source: 2012 State Water Plan, Texas Water Development Board

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

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

Source: Texas Water Development Board, 2011

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**Discussion Questions**

4.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about how the place is doing?

4.2 What one trend in this data gives you the most **hope** for the Slaton Area?

4.3 What one trend in this data causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?

4.4 Which fact in this data would you most like to **change** – and why?
The Slaton Area Transfer of Wealth

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

What is a “Transfer of Wealth”?

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

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

The Area’s TOW Opportunity

$136,000,000 will transfer between generations in the Slaton Area in the next 10 years

$6,800,000 is 5%, which, if captured, could generate $340,000 annually for things the community needs and wants

$2,500,000 is what the community could earn annually if it captures and endows just 5% of the 50-year TOW opportunity

Why it matters:

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

How the county stacks up:

Dividing total household net worth in the Slaton Area, $536 million, by the number of households allows us to compare the area’s net worth to the U.S., Texas and its region. In the area, per household net worth (or average household net worth) is $179,000. This is lower compared to the U.S. and Texas. However, there is still significant potential for residents to give to the community and its future.

Why it matters:

Understanding how much wealth is likely to transfer in the short term is important to communities. This allows communities to set specific goals to work towards. Those communities with specific goals tend to do better in achieving or exceeding them.

How the county stacks up:

Over the 10 years (2011-2020), residents of the Slaton Area are estimated to transfer $136 million (or $45,000 per household). Although the area’s per household TOW opportunity is slightly lower than the value for the U.S. and Texas, there is still tremendous opportunity for community development through philanthropy.

a. Average household net worth

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

How the county stacks up:

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b. 10-year TOW Opportunity (per household)
c. 50-year TOW Opportunity (per household)

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

**How the county stacks up:** Between 2011 and 2060, residents of the area are estimated to transfer $1 billion (or $333,000 per household). Although the Slaton Area’s per household TOW opportunity is lower than the values for Texas and the U.S., there is opportunity to “give back” and support community betterment projects.

### Trends and Data of Note

- The transfer of wealth estimates for the Slaton Area are conservative – because they reflect only measures of permanent resident household wealth, which do not include corporate or former resident wealth.

- For a community like Slaton, former residents represent a significant donor pool. In other parts of the country, community “alumni” have demonstrated both capacity and desire to give back to their home towns.

- Other likely donors that would contribute to community endowments in the area include:

  - **Closely-Held Family Businesses.** Family-owned—or what are referred to as closely-held family businesses—are a big part of the economy of Slaton. Family business owners are often multi-generational and deeply rooted in their hometowns. These potential donors have both capacity to give, as well as motivation and a history of supporting their chosen communities.

  - **Land Wealth.** As is the case throughout this region of Texas, land wealth is significant. When land is transitioned from one generation to the next, or to a new land owner, the potential exists to give some or all of it (or proceeds from its sale) to the community. While such donations typically represent just a small portion of the land wealth being transitioned or sold, they can collectively be significant.

  - **Energy Royalty Wealth.** Mineral rights ownership and associated leasing payments and royalties are a potential source of wealth in parts of the area. Anticipated future and long-term energy production within the area will likely increase this source of wealth and potential sources of giving to the community.

  - **Thrifty Retirees.** For aging generational groups there is a culture of working hard, spending less than you make, saving for the future and often investing long and well. While most retirees are not wealthy, they do have assets. They are often very rooted in their home communities and have the capacity and desire to leave a legacy.

- Through the Mercy Ministries Slaton Area Endowment, the Slaton Area already has an established a relationship with the Lubbock Area Foundation to support community giveback and endowment building.

### Discussion Questions

5.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about the Transfer of Wealth in the area?

5.2 What one trend in this data or idea in this discussion gives you the most **hope** for the Slaton Area?

5.3 What one trend or fact or idea in this data and discussion causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?
What do we think about the Slaton area?

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

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

Demographics of Slaton Area Responses

- 122 surveys were collected from the Slaton Area, 71 were from women and 50 were from men.
- 19% of respondents have lived in the area less than 10 years; 40% have lived in the area 40 years or more.
- 98% of respondents were 35 or older (47% of the area’s population is younger than 35).
- 100% of surveys were completed in English (11% of the area’s population—almost entirely Spanish speakers—cannot speak English “very well”).

Demographics of All Survey Responses

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

a. Ranking community strengths and weaknesses

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

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

- Local businesses are involved in and support the community.
- Organizations and institutions in our community are action-oriented and work well together.
- The community supports and maintains a sound and well-maintained infrastructure.

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

- Our community offers a good amount of arts, entertainment and recreation for our residents.
- In our community, we see ourselves as part of a greater region and consider all the communities within that region when we do our planning.
- Residents in our community have many chances to participate in decision-making and leadership roles.
b. Open-ended reflections

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

The people (56%)
Respondents listed “the people” - often with descriptors like “friendly”.

Size (35%)
Respondents said that the “small size” or “small-town living/atmosphere” was one of the best things about their community.

Convenience/amenity access (30%)
Respondents said that their town has - or has easy access to - a variety of amenities, such as shopping/dining, medical services, entertainment and higher education institutions. Many said they liked living in a small town with convenient access to amenities in larger cities like Lubbock.

Community character (21%)
Respondents said that they have a close-knit, caring, and supportive community that is willing to help people in times of need. Some mentioned a strong sense of community pride.

Safety (7%)
Respondents said that they feel safe. Many said children were safe because others would watch out for them.

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

Lack of amenities (37%)
Respondents cited a lack of amenities, such as shopping, dining, family-oriented entertainment, and medical facilities as one of the most challenging things.

Housing/Infrastructure (11%)
Respondents said that falling infrastructure and a lack of housing (sometimes “affordable” housing) were the most challenging things.

Demographics (10%)
Respondents said that demographics (often citing the growing low-income population) were the most challenging things about their community.

Education opportunities (9%)
Respondents indicated that educational opportunities, including primary and secondary schools, were unavailable or inadequate. Some respondents felt that school teachers and administrators did not get enough support.

Community pride/engagement (7%)
Respondents said that a lack of community pride or unwillingness to engage in community efforts.

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

Grow and attract amenities (19%)
Respondents wanted to bring more restaurants, shopping destinations, and entertainment venues to the community. Some mentioned specific chains that they hoped would open in the community while others were more general and expressed desire for a vibrant business district with activities for families.

Beautify, construct parks (16%)
Respondents hoped to make the community more beautiful, to build more parks, plant more trees, and create more outdoor recreational spaces.

Nurture pride, civic engagement (13%)
Respondents wrote about fixing a wide range of resident morale challenges they see hindering community advancement.

Repair infrastructure (12%)
Respondents wanted to fix dilapidated buildings and improve roads (in some cases reroute them).

Improve education (9%)
Respondents sought a better system including better paid teachers, better school facilities, improved curriculum.

c. Regional demographic trends of note

New residents typically feel welcome in our community*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent has live here</th>
<th>10 years or more</th>
<th>Less than 10 years</th>
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<td>100%</td>
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Our community offers a good amount of arts, entertainment and recreation for our residents (by age)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Very seldom</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>All of the time</th>
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<td>25-34</td>
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Discussion Questions

5.1 What one or two things most **surprised** you in this data about the Slaton area?

5.2 What one trend in this data or idea in this discussion gives you the most **hope** for the area?

5.3 What one trend or fact or idea in this data and discussion causes you the most **concern** – for any reason?

*These graphs aggregate responses from Garza County, Hale County, Hockley County and the Slaton area.
Overall Priority Questions: Looking Forward

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

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

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

5.4 What do this data – and your reflections – suggest should be the area’s top two or three priorities for action over the next five years?

5.5 For each priority you listed, what other information or deeper data do you think would be very useful or critical to know before exploring and choosing a good strategy to address that priority?