

“With this book by your side, a happier life is just around the corner.” —GRETCHEN RUBIN, author of *THE HAPPINESS PROJECT*



# THIS IS WHERE YOU BELONG

*Finding Home Wherever You Are*

MELODY WARNICK

# PLACEMAKING FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

MELODY WARNICK




OPINION

# Small-Town America Is Dying. How Can We Save It?

Aging populations, unemployment, addiction: Readers talk about the obstacles to saving rural communities.

Dec. 22, 2018

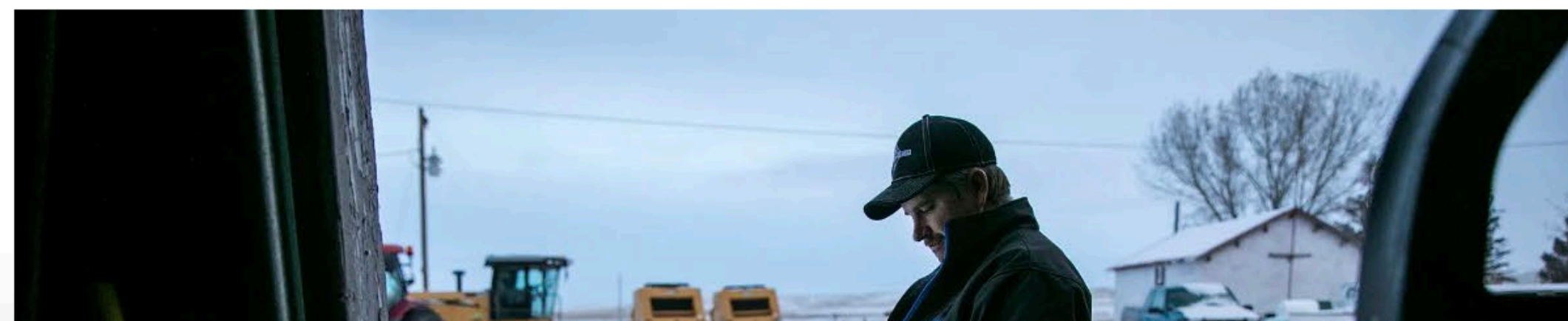
 Share full article



 295

**By Rachel L. Harris and Lisa Tarchak**

Ms. Harris and Ms. Tarchak are senior editorial assistants.



# Something Special Is Happening in Rural America

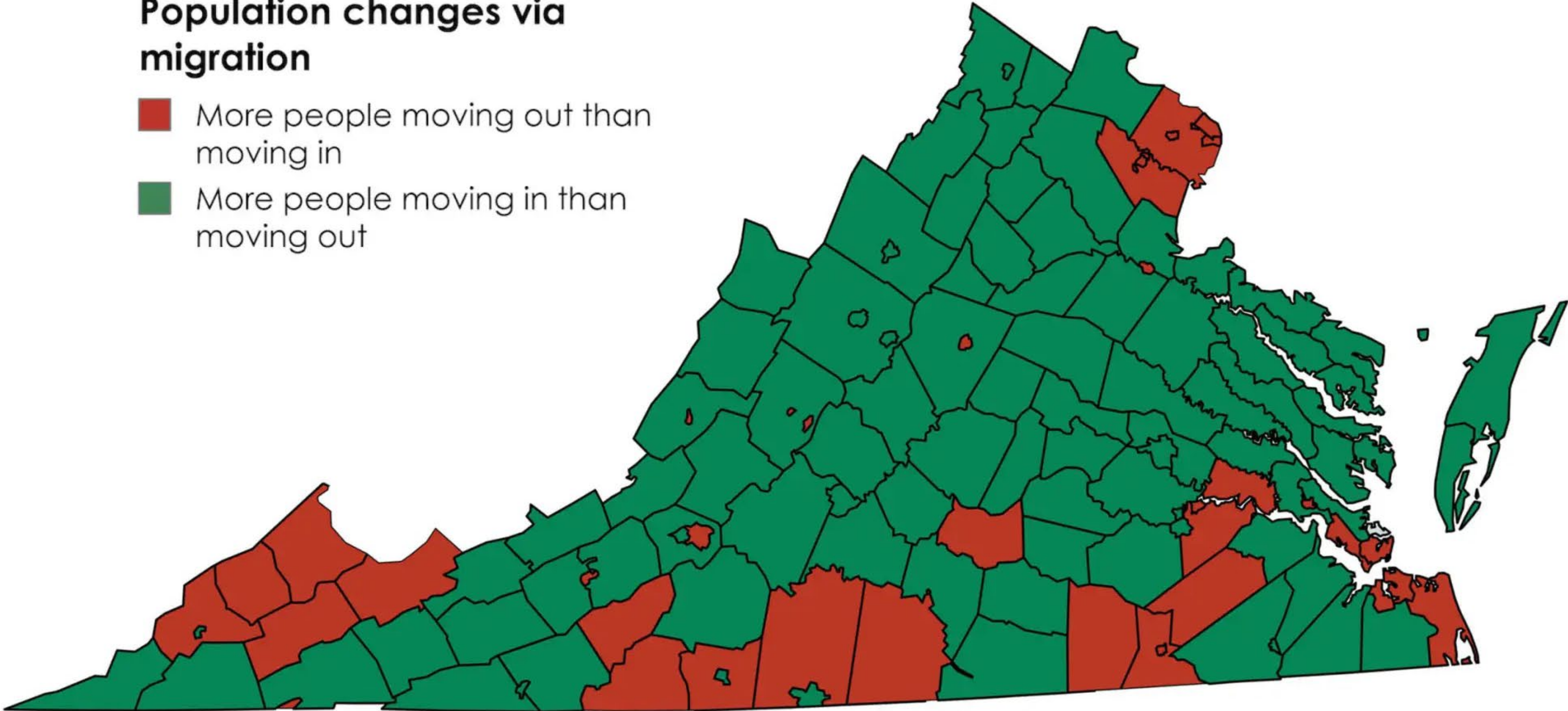
There is a “brain gain” afoot that suggests a national homecoming to less bustling spaces.

Sept. 17, 2019



# Population changes via migration

- More people moving out than moving in
- More people moving in than moving out



# ANYWHEREISTS

have the freedom  
to design their lives by  
choosing where they live







**22 MILLION**

Americans work  
remotely from  
home











 Recruiting Now

 New

Kentucky



## Move to Mayfield and Graves County

-  \$5,000 cash for relocation
-  50% off Y's Guys After School Childcare [↗](#)
-  Monthly gift of a dozen locally sourced eggs
-  Lunch with the Mayor of Mayfield [↗](#)
-  Community Tour and Lunch with Local Leadership
-  Tickets to the Purchase Players Performing Arts Theater [↗](#)
-  Family Pass for all Graves County High School home sporting events for the year [↗](#)
-  Family Pass to the fine arts season events at the Independence Bank Performing Arts Center [↗](#)

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood. The scene is dominated by lush green trees and well-maintained lawns. Several houses of varying styles are visible, including a prominent white house on the left and a larger brick house in the center. A paved road with yellow lane markings runs through the middle of the neighborhood. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and suburban.

# WHAT ANYWHEREISTS ARE LOOKING FOR

Affordable cost of living  
Good quality of life



A photograph of a coffee shop interior. The background is a white brick wall. Several wooden shelves are mounted on the wall, holding various items like coffee beans, bottles, and plants. A barista is visible behind the counter, which is equipped with coffee-making equipment. The lighting is warm, provided by several pendant lights with exposed bulbs. The overall atmosphere is cozy and modern.

**Your place needs to  
capture people's hearts**





# PLACE ATTACHMENT

The feeling of being deeply at home in a place,  
a sense of belonging in your community



# PLACE ATTACHMENT IMPROVES:

Well-being  
Social capital  
Self-esteem  
Physical health  
Life span

Place  
attachment

Local  
GDP





“

Our theory is that when a community's residents are highly attached, they will spend more time there, **spend more money**, they're more productive and tend to be **more entrepreneurial**.

+

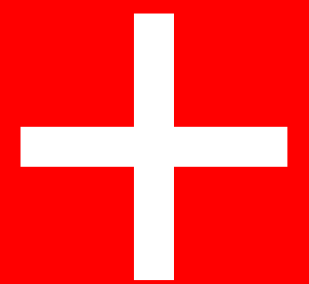
—Jon Clifton,  
Deputy World Director,  
Gallup Poll

# 10 BEHAVIORS THAT INCREASE PLACE ATTACHMENT

1. Walk and bike
2. Buy local
3. Build relationships
4. Enjoy local assets
5. Experience nature
6. Volunteer
7. Eat local food
8. Be civically engaged
9. Create something
10. Build resilience

# PLACEMAKING

a community-driven strategy  
for creating places people love







Public  
spaces

Arts and  
culture

Downtown  
revitalization

Economic  
development

# PLACEMAKING BUILDS PLACE ATTACHMENT

- Improves quality of life
- Creates social connections
- Encourages creativity
- Beautifies places
- Capitalizes on assets
- Tells a community's story
- Creates a sense of place





ELKIN, NC

# BE AN ELKIN EXPLORER

Elkin Explorers help provide significant funding to a wide range of Explore Elkin initiatives, including events like the Family Flotilla, Live at Five, Food Truck Fridays, and more! In addition, the Elkin Explorer program allows us to leverage significant individual support to increase corporate sponsorships for events and programs presented by Explore Elkin. With an investment of \$100 or more per couple, Explorers are able to receive many benefits throughout the community. Throughout the year there are many exclusive Elkin Explorer events, including EVTA guided hikes, socials and an Appreciation Dinner Theater. All Elkin Explorers will also receive an Explorer Discount Card which will provide discounts at local businesses throughout the Elkin area.

Invitation to Join  
Explore Elkin

[Click Here to Read](#)

Explore Elkin  
Executive Summary

[Click Here to Read](#)

Explore Elkin  
In The Press

[Click Here to Read](#)

## READY TO JOIN THE INITIATIVE?

*Be an Elkin Explorer*

**\$100**

[Donate](#)



*Be an Explore Elkin Leader*

**\$200**

[Donate](#)



*Donate to Explore Elkin*

**CUSTOM AMOUNT**

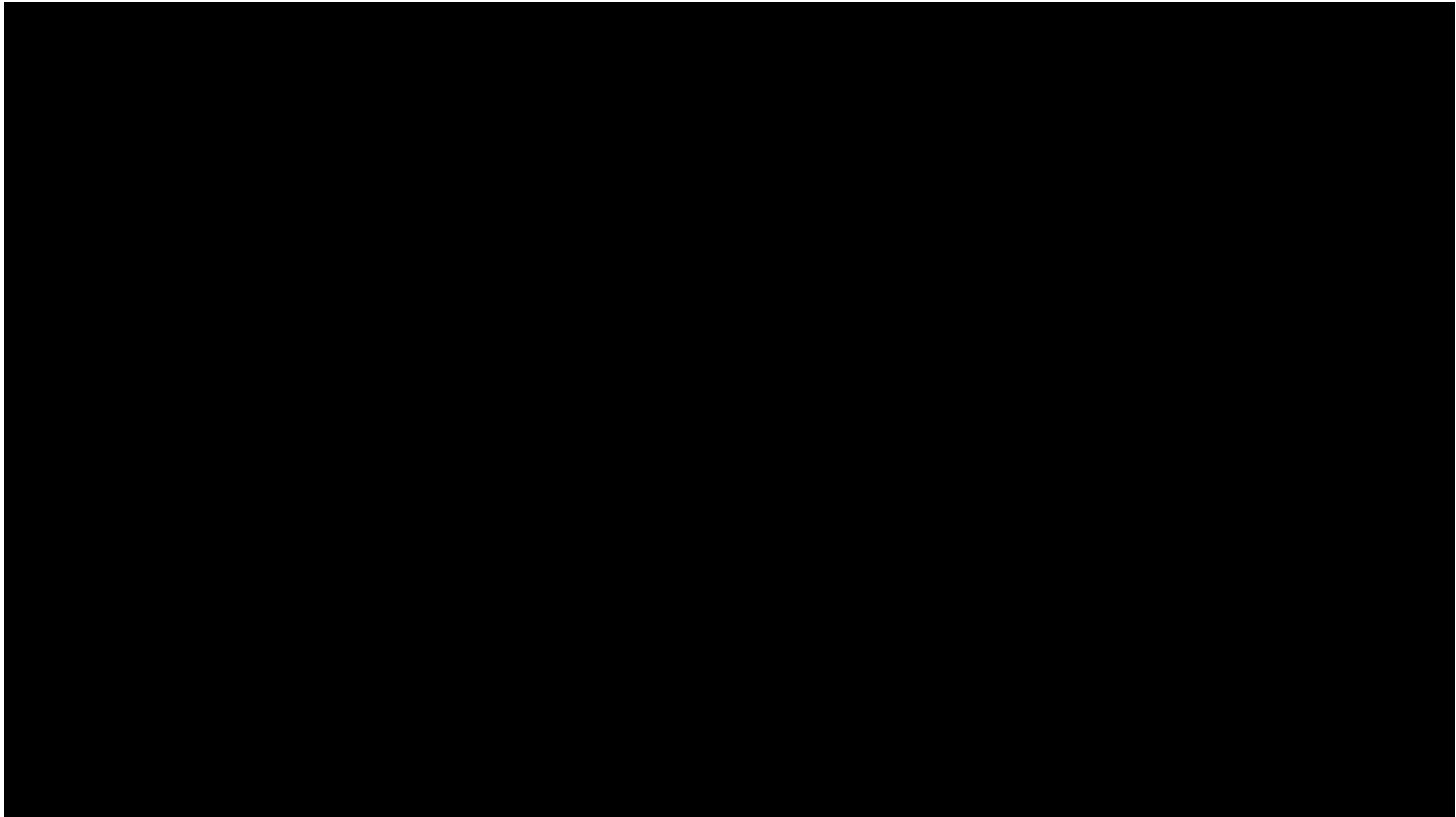
[Donate](#)



Questions?

[Contact Us](#)



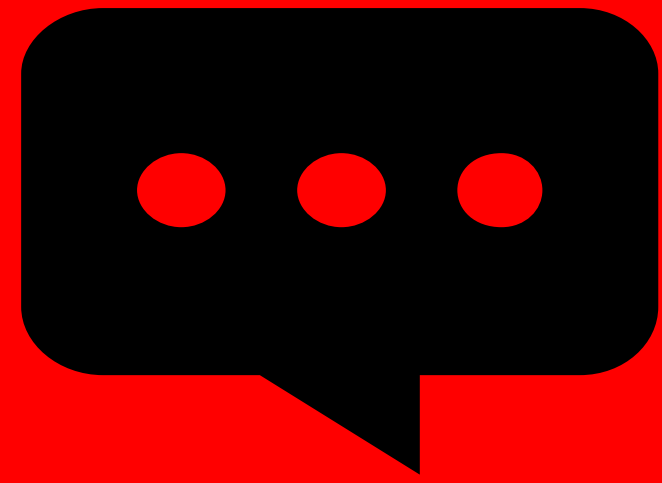


An aerial photograph of a town street, likely Elkin, showing a row of buildings on the left and a street with cars and trees on the right. The background shows rolling green hills under a clear sky. A dark grey semi-transparent box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing a quote and the name of the speaker.

“

“I TELL PEOPLE ABOUT ELKIN. HOPEFULLY THEY’LL THINK ABOUT COMING BACK. IF WE CAN GET 500 PEOPLE DOING THAT, WE’LL HAVE SOMETHING.”

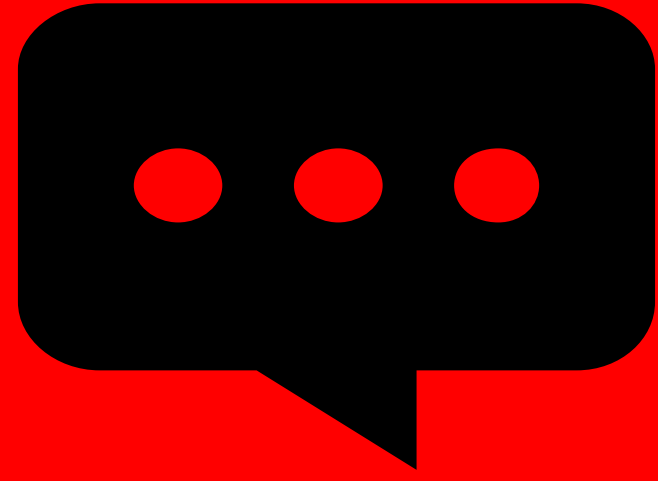
JEFF EIDSON



Tell the person next to you in  
60 seconds:

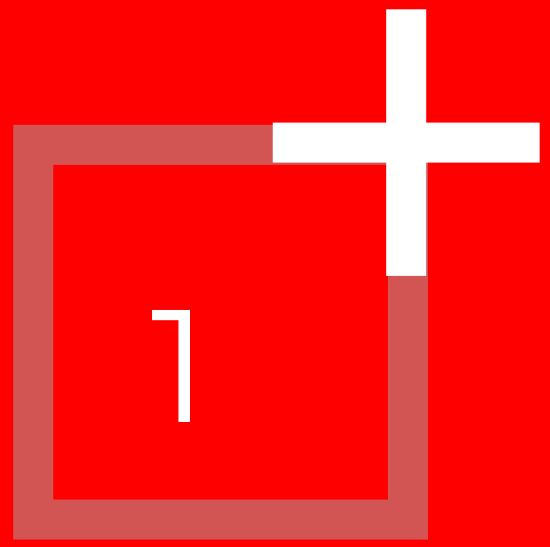
If you were taking someone  
on a tour of your community,  
what would you show them?  
What would you brag about?



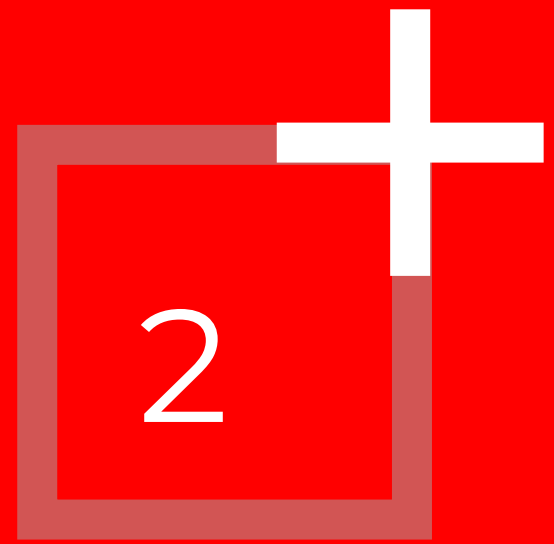


**How  
attached  
are you to  
where you  
live?**

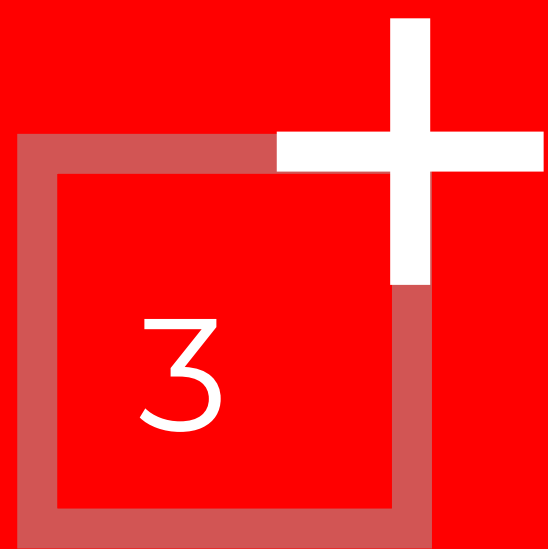




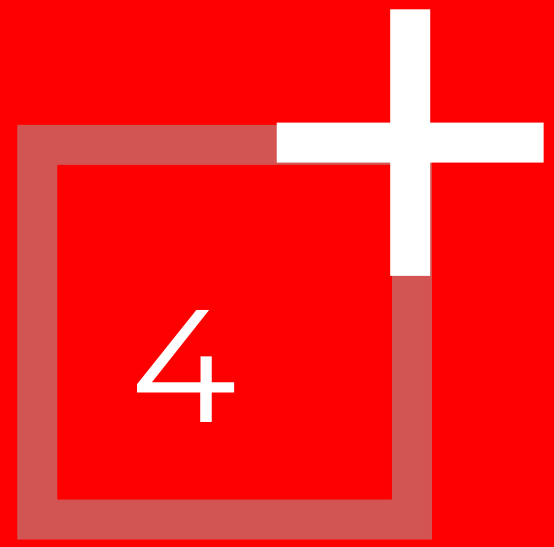
I FEEL  
COMFORTABLE  
HERE.



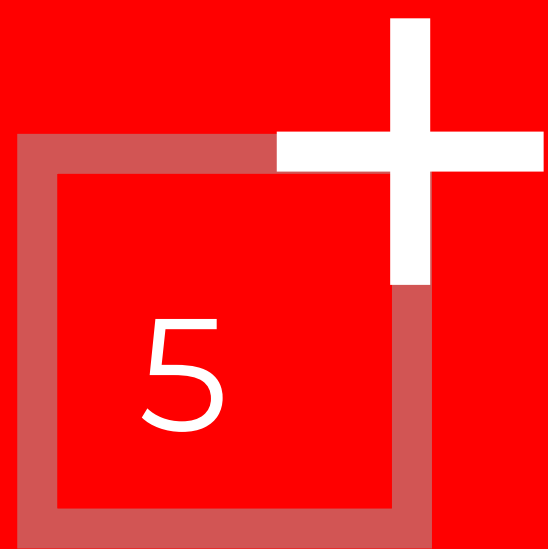
I KNOW MY WAY  
AROUND.



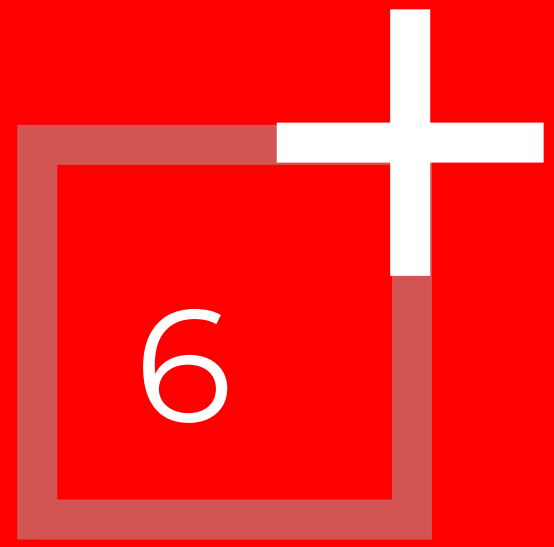
THE FRIENDSHIPS I  
HAVE WITH  
PEOPLE IN MY  
COMMUNITY MEAN  
A LOT TO ME.



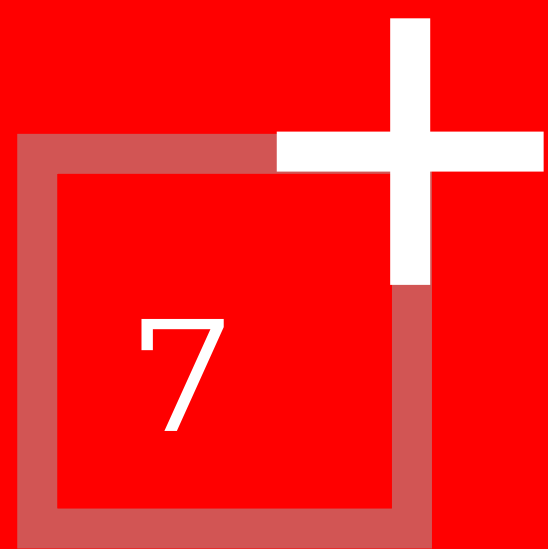
I LIKE TO TELL  
PEOPLE ABOUT  
WHERE I LIVE.



I'M REALLY  
INTERESTED IN  
KNOWING WHAT'S  
GOING ON HERE.

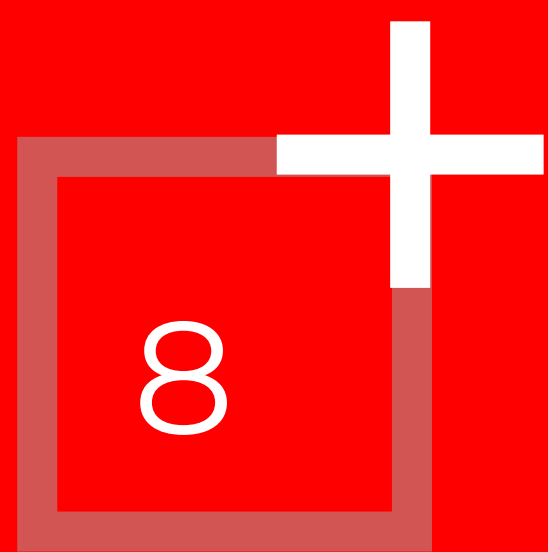


I CAN RELY ON  
PEOPLE IN THIS  
TOWN TO HELP  
ME.

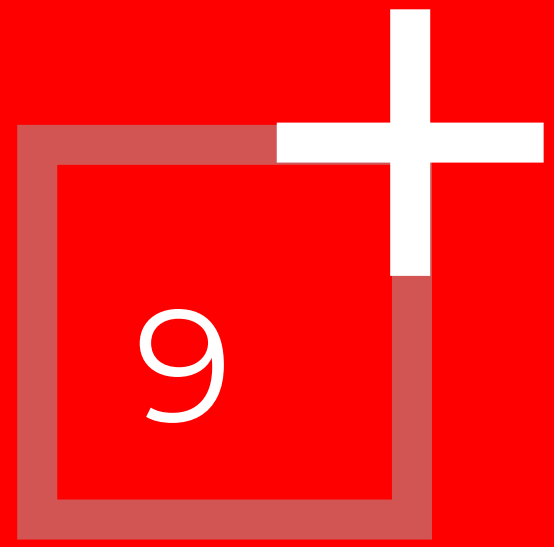


MY TOWN ISN'T  
PERFECT, BUT  
THERE ARE A LOT  
OF THINGS THAT  
MAKE ME LOVE IT.

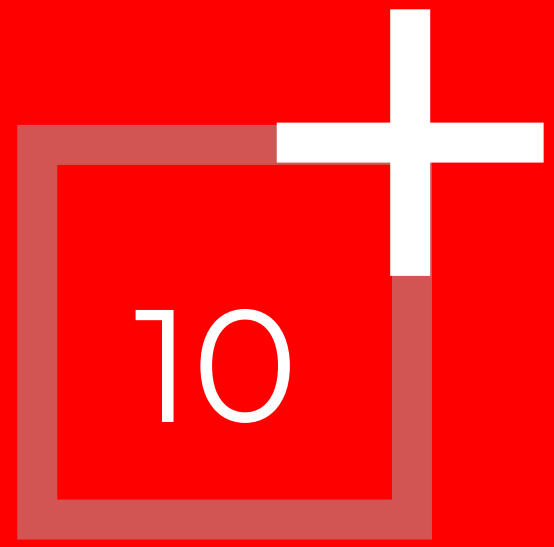




IF SOMETHING  
EXCITING WERE  
HAPPENING HERE,  
I'D WANT TO BE  
INVOLVED.



I CARE ABOUT THE  
FUTURE SUCCESS  
OF MY TOWN.



IT FEELS LIKE  
HOME.



**Place attachment is  
your why.**



**Placemaking is  
your how.**





PRATTSVILLE Art Center & Residency

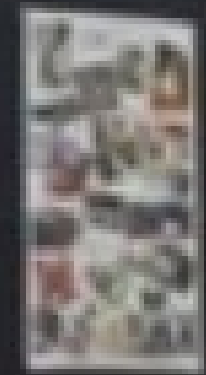
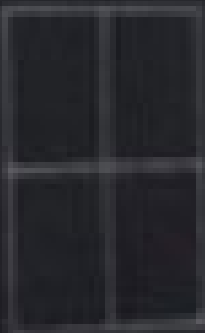
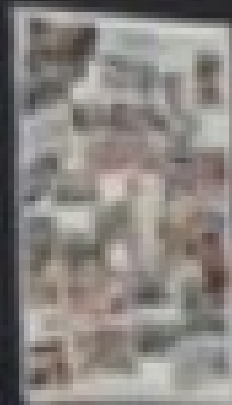


Art, Music  
and Coffee  
Sat-Sun  
1-5





This vacant lot could be...





ME!

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Design

207

WELCOME

205

203

DESIGN  
Main  
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Design

intert  
Back to back storage options

SKYJACK 1000-LR RENTS SUN 03/26

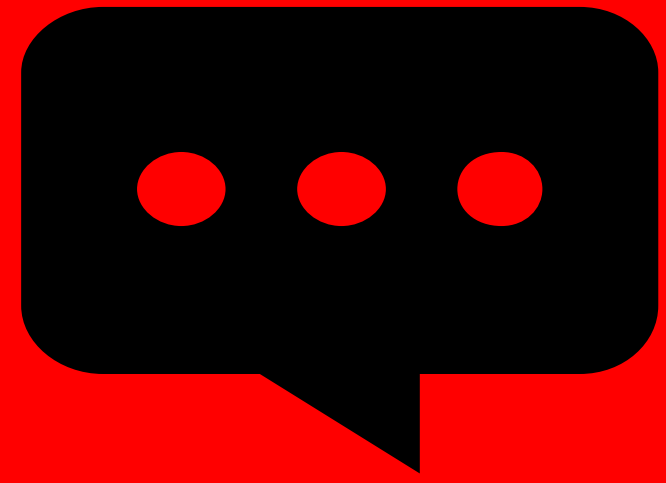
ACE

UNION NATIONAL BANK





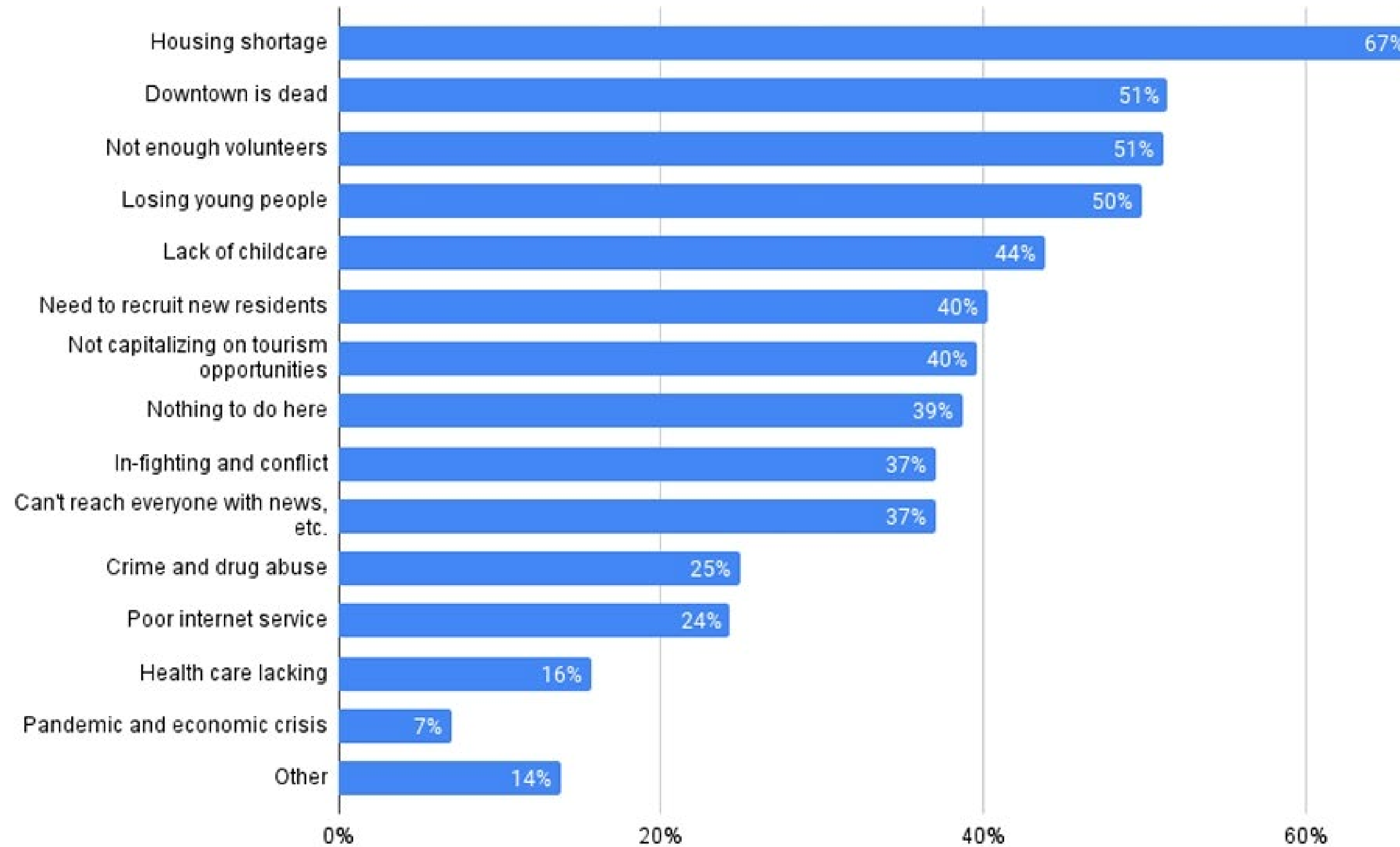




Are there other  
placemaking projects  
you've heard about or seen  
that you could share?

# Rural Community Challenges 2023

313 responses



An aerial photograph of a small town, likely in a rural or semi-rural area. The town features a prominent church with a tall, white steeple. The buildings are mostly brick and have a traditional, small-town appearance. The town is surrounded by lush green trees and rolling hills in the background. The sky is clear and blue. A dark, semi-transparent rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

Twice as many residents of small towns say they feel optimistic about their community's future.





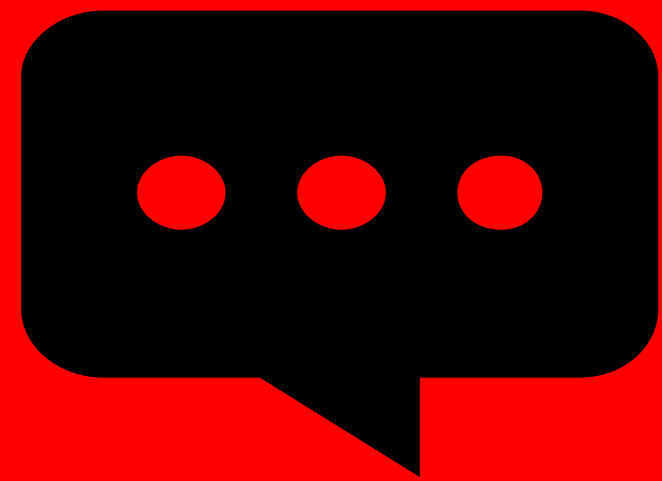
**You do not need breweries.  
You do not need loft apartments.  
You do not even need a mural.**











Brainstorm for the next 60 seconds:

What placemaking projects could make your town more loveable?



**Create a place that  
capture people's hearts**

The Surprising Importance of Place in a  
Work-From-Anywhere World

**IF YOU**



**COULD LIVE**

**ANYWHERE**



MELODY  
WARNICK

**THANK YOU!**

Melody Warnick

[www.MelodyWarnick.com](http://www.MelodyWarnick.com)