



Grand Island
Children's Museum



FEASIBILITY STUDY

Grand Island Children's Museum
Steering Committee

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SECTION ONE

FEASIBILITY STUDY INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW



Acknowledgments

The Grand Island Children's Museum steering committee would like to acknowledge the community of Grand Island for their support and input to this feasibility study. The people who took time from their day to take a survey or to attend a community input session are invaluable to our discovery process. We would also like to thank the Psychology Department at Hastings College for their professional completion of this study, especially students Alondra Zapata-Gonzalez and Jasmine Mendoza for their assistance. The committee would also like to acknowledge Mayor Roger Steele and the City of Grand Island Administration. Their support in ensuring that community voice is a part of any programmed growth in our community is vital to sustainability and success. The study could not have been completed without the tremendous support of many nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and concerned citizens of our community. We are grateful for them. Finally, we would like to thank the Grand Island Community Foundation for their fiscal sponsorship and their resolve to ensure that this study was completed economically, accurately, and concisely.





Introductions

In the summer of 2018, a small group of interested citizens began embarking on the exciting endeavor of bringing a children's museum to Grand Island. This group banded together and developed a steering committee consisting of local funders, nonprofit and museum professionals, and community stakeholders. In early 2019, the steering committee partnered with Hastings College to complete a feasibility study to determine sustainability, garner community interest and support, and collect input for the project.

The mission of the Grand Island Children's Museum Steering Committee is to determine the viability and sustainability of a children's museum in our community.

Steering Committee

Audrey Rowley, Chair
Chris Hochstetler, Vice-Chair
Amy Price, Secretary
Melissa DeLaet, Treasurer

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Guiding Principles

- 1** Community Capacity Analysis – Cultural feasibility is based on local and regional need for a children’s museum project in Grand Island, Nebraska.
- 2** Site and Building Analysis – To locate a proposed site for the children’s museum project in Grand Island. To build a new stand-alone building or to use an existing structure.
- 3** Funding and Operations Analysis – Economic viability of funding the construction and ongoing operations for the proposed Grand Island Children’s Museum.

A feasibility study is an investigation into factors that contribute to the success of a proposed project.

A feasibility study is not a design exercise.

A feasibility study is not a planning process.

A feasibility study is not biased toward either direction of a proposed project’s feasibility.

Executive Summary

The Grand Island Children's Museum Steering Committee, in partnership with Hastings College, funded and completed this feasibility study in an effort to ascertain the viability and sustainability of a children's museum located in Grand Island, Nebraska. **The study determined that the establishment of a children's museum in Grand Island is feasible, providing substantial capital funding can be generated for the construction of a children's museum, coupled with sustainable and systemic operational fundraising.**

Grand Island is now recognized as one of only three Metropolitan Statistical Areas in Nebraska, joining Lincoln and Omaha in that distinction, as it passed 50,000 in population base. With Lincoln being about an hour and forty minute commute and Omaha farther, it is reasonable to assume that the services of a children's museum in Grand Island would be well-utilized. Kearney's children's museum, at just under an hour commute for most citizens of Grand Island, also presents a travel barrier for our community, especially in less than ideal weather conditions.

Based on a community survey and two community input sessions, the prevailing sentiment is that **the community is supportive of the establishment of a children's museum in Grand Island.** However, that support is accompanied by valid concerns. The chief concern raised in both the survey process and the community input sessions is availability of funding to establish a children's museum and availability of sustained funding for operations. The feasibility study reveals that there is a propensity to support a children's museum in Grand Island and there is also some capacity to do so. Nevertheless, pricing of the establishment of a children's museum must be done very carefully, as it will be undertaken in a community of limited resources. Additional thought must be given to the establishment of sound operational fundraising practices that will likely need to include sources of funding from outside of the community.



SECTION TWO

COMMUNITY CAPACITY ANALYSIS

Overview

The Community Capacity Analysis section of the Grand Island Children's Museum feasibility report is dedicated to understanding the current cultural environment and community perspective on the proposed project. Additionally, it seeks to understand what other facilities might exist in the local community and immediate region with similar missions or proposed missions.

Methods used to understand the needs of the community of Grand Island include:

- 1 An environmental scan of Grand Island, evaluating the political, economic, and social factors that relate to the children's museum concept.
- 2 Conduct a community engagement process to gauge the current usage of existing similar assets, potential market demand, funding direction, public sentiment, and perceived obstacles to the proposed project.
- 3 Research comparable and potentially competitive cultural facilities that meet the proposed children's museum programming needs available within the region.
- 4 Gather local and regional economic data to determine the money that comes into Grand Island and how it is spent to better understand the ability to support the children's museum project.

Questions that the Community Capacity Analysis is investigating

- 1 Is there a need for a children's museum in Grand Island?
- 2 Does the community of Grand Island support the concept of a children's museum?
- 3 Are there existing facilities that can meet the needs of the children's museum?
- 4 Are there existing facilities that the children's museum would duplicate?
- 5 What is the state of the local and regional economy?

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Economic Indicators

Grand Island is the fourth largest city in the state of Nebraska and is the county seat for Hall County. It has a population base of 50,895 (2016, Data USA). For the purpose of this scan, the Grand Island Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), includes Hall, Merrick, Howard, and Hamilton Counties, with a combined population base of 84,381 (2016, Data USA).

Population of Grand Island **grew by .62%** from 2015 to 2016, compared to Nebraska's overall **growth of .60%** during that same period.

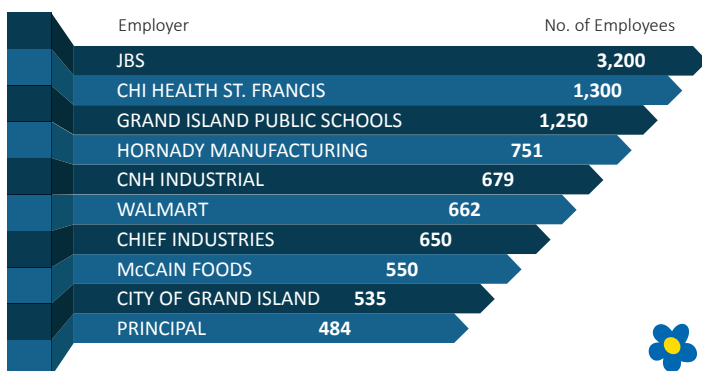
The rate of poverty in Grand Island is **16.4%**, compared to the Nebraska rate of poverty of **11.4%**.

The median age of an "Islander" is **34.8** and the median household income is **\$49,118**, compared with the state median household income of \$56,927. Nebraska's median household income grew by **4.88%** from 2015 to 2016 (Data USA).

Grand Island has a workforce of 25,985 employees and a workforce growth rate of **1.46%** from 2015 to 2016.

The median home property value in Grand Island has grown by **3.15%** from 2015 to 2016 and is **\$27,000** less than the state median (Data USA).

Top businesses in Grand Island, according to the Grand Island Economic Development Corporation's website:



(www.grandisland.org/workforce/top-employers.html)

Income inequality in Grand Island (measured using the Gini index) is **0.441**, which is lower than the national average.

The largest demographic living in poverty in Grand Island is **25-34-year-old females** (Data USA).



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Social Indicators

The population of Grand Island is very diverse. 64.8% are White, 29.6% Hispanic, and 2.46% are Black. 24.9% of the people of Grand Island speak a non-English language. 88.1% are U.S. citizens (Data USA).

The most common languages spoken in Grand Island, other than English, are Spanish at 19.2%, .74% African languages, .43% Laotian, and .3% Arabic (U.S. Census 2010).

According to Sperlings Best Places, 60.5% of the people in Grand Island identify as "religious." 21.2% identify as Catholic, 14.6% identify as Lutheran, 9.9% identify as Methodist, 2.9% identify as Pentecostal, 2.2% as Presbyterian, 2.2% as Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints, .6% as Baptist, .5% as Episcopalian, 6.4% as another Christian faith, less than .5% as Jewish, and less than .5% as Muslim.

There are two public school districts in Grand Island: Grand Island Public Schools and Grand Island Northwest Public Schools. High schools are Central Catholic High School, Grand Island Senior High School, Heartland Lutheran High School, and Northwest High School.

Grand Island Public Schools serves 9,800 students and Grand Island Northwest Public Schools serves 1,505 students. Grand Island Central Catholic serves 294 students and Heartland Lutheran serves 64 students. **Total K-12 student population of the city is 11,663.**

Central Community College and an outlet from Doane College are located in Grand Island. Hastings College is approximately 30 minutes away.

The 2012 Census revealed that **16.3%** of the population of Hall County held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 27.7% for the state of Nebraska.

According to a 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment completed by Catholic Health Initiatives Saint Francis Medical Center and the Heartland United Way, the number one health issue of Hall County is access to healthcare/health literacy. As of 2011, the numbers impacted by this issue were at least 80% of the adults with 20% of the population being uninsured. Compounding the problem was a 19.7% illiteracy rate. Gang violence was the number two health concern with an identified 200-250 gang members and 50-60 youth at risk by age 15, coupled with 817 juvenile arrests. Obesity was the third major health concern with 1 in 3 fourth graders overweight and 1 in 4 obese.



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Political Indicators

Grand Island's elected officials are, in large part, members of the Republican Party and conservative in nature. They include U.S. Senators Ben Sasse (R) and Deb Fischer (R), and 3rd Congressional District Representative Adrian Smith (R).

State Senator Curt Friesen (R) represents District 34 and State Senator Dan Quick (D) represents District 35 in the state Unicameral.

Mayor Roger Steele (NP) is the current mayor and his priorities include maintaining the City of Grand Island's financial stability, job creation, and increasing the Grand Island economic engine.

City Council members include Vaughn Minton, Jeremy Jones, Mark Stelk, Clay Schutz, Jason Conley, Julie Hehnke, Mike Paulick, Mitch Nickerson, Michelle Fitzke, and Chuck Haase.



Community Engagement Sessions

With the help of Hastings College Psychology Department, the Grand Island Children's Museum Steering Committee conducted two community input sessions: one on April 16, 2019 at the Grand Island Public Library and the other on May 5, 2019 at College Park in Grand Island.

Perceived challenges included sustainability and answers to the question, "How will the project be paid for and where does the funding come from?" There appeared to be support for annual membership fees, but accessibility was a theme. It was suggested that "subsidies" or "scholarships" may be provided for families who could not afford to attend otherwise.

There was a keen interest in the type of programming that may be conducted in such a place including static and rotating exhibitions.

The community asked that the committee consider location and transportation challenges presented in Grand Island.

Aspirations for such a place included imaginative exploration, art, music, poetry, career-based learning, play, and grade-school activities.

While the community present felt that duplication of services should be avoided, there was overwhelming support for a unique children's museum programming space that Grand Island can call its own.

Survey Questions and Responses

The Grand Island Children's Museum Steering Committee conducted a 30-day online survey in both English and Spanish to determine the needs, interest, and voice of the community. 549 valid responses were captured; 529 in English and 20 in Spanish. Results were obtained from **45 distinct zip codes**. Significant response is reflected in the chart below. Survey responses were solicited through social media and email promotion.

68803	266	Grand Island, NE
68801	155	Grand Island, NE
68818	12	Aurora, NE
68873	12	St. Paul, NE
68883	11	Wood River, NE
68901	11	Hastings, NE
68832	10	Doniphan, NE

QUESTION ONE What activities have you or your family participated in or attended in Grand Island this past year?

Answer Choices

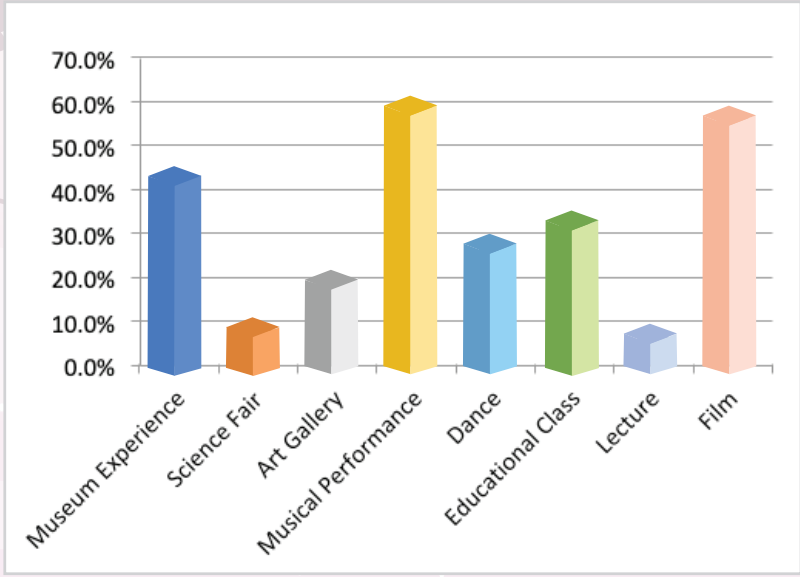
Responses

+	Museum experience	43.18%	209
+	Science fair	8.06%	39
+	Art gallery	19.21%	93
+	Musical performance	59.50%	288
+	Dance	27.69%	134
+	Educational class	33.26%	161
+	Lecture	7.23%	35
+	Film	56.82%	275

Answered 484
Skipped 45



QUESTION ONE What activities have you or your family participated in or attended in Grand Island this past year?



Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Experiencia en el museo	15.79%	3
+	Feria de ciencias	10.53%	2
+	Galería de arte	21.05%	4
+	Actuación musical	15.79%	3
+	Danza	10.53%	2
+	Clase educativa	21.05%	4
+	Conferencia	21.05%	4
+	Película	52.63%	10

Analysis

Answered 19
Skipped 1

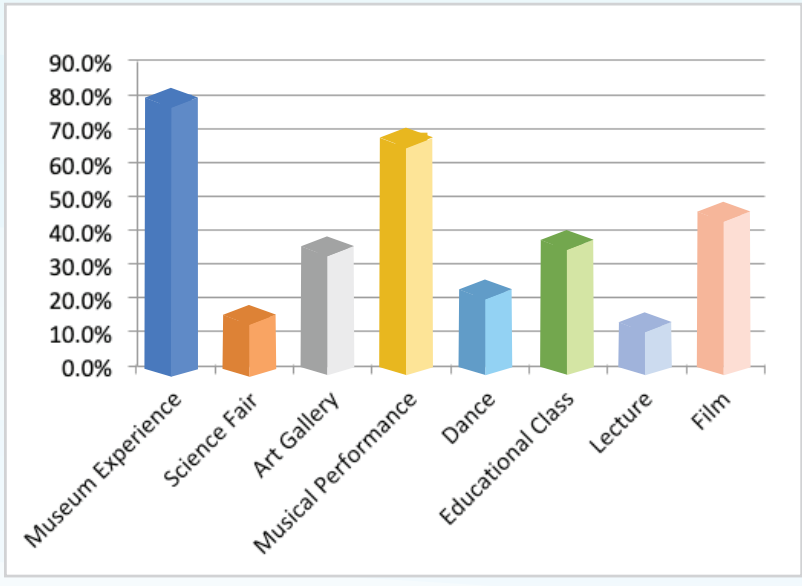
More than half of the 484 respondents to this question are attending museum experiences and musical performances in our community. When considered with the second question of the study, revealing nearly 80% of respondents attending museum experiences outside of our community, suggests that a consistent audience for attendance at a children’s museum in Grand Island exists. The Spanish results are consistent with the English survey results.

QUESTION TWO What activities have you or your family participated in or attended in other communities this past year?

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Museum experience	79.96%	399
+	Science fair	15.43%	77
+	Art gallery	35.87%	179
+	Musical performance	68.54%	342
+	Dance	22.65%	113
+	Educational class	37.07%	185
+	Lecture	13.43%	67
+	Film	46.09%	230
		Answered	499
		Skipped	30



QUESTION TWO What activities have you or your family participated in or attended in other communities this past year?



Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Experiencia en el museo	42.11%	8
+	Feria de ciencias	0.00%	0
+	Galería de arte	5.26%	1
+	Actuación musical	21.05%	4
+	Danza	15.79%	3
+	Clase educativa	15.79%	3
+	Conferencia	21.05%	4
+	Película	26.32%	5

Analysis

80% of the 499 respondents to this question are having a museum experience outside of our community. According to the American Association of Museums, there are 850 million visits each year to American museums, which is more than the attendance for all major-league sporting events and theme parks combined. The study is consistent with that finding and suggests an existing and consistent audience for a children’s museum in Grand Island. The Spanish survey results are consistent with the English survey results.

Answered 19
Skipped 1

QUESTION THREE

What activities would you or your family participate in, if available at the Grand Island Children's Museum? Select up to four.

Answer Choices	Responses
+ Family programming involving Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math	81.99% 428
+ Musical events	62.45% 326
+ Live theatre	49.62% 259
+ Guided tours of exhibitions	35.25% 184
+ Youth summer camps	64.18% 335
+ Day visits	80.84% 422
+ Multicultural events	45.98% 240

Answered 522

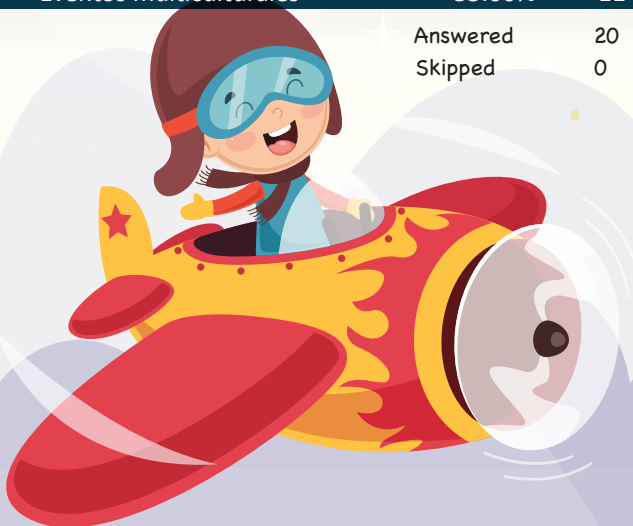
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Spanish Participant Results

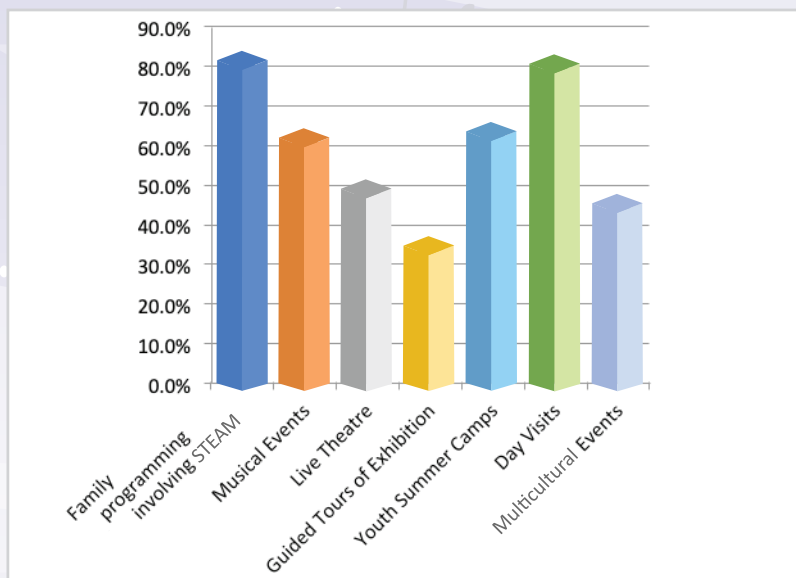
Answer Choices	Responses
+ Programación familiar en ciencias, tecnología, ingeniería, arte y matemáticas. Eventos musicales	65.00% 13
+ 60.00% 12	
+ Teatro en vivo	35.00% 7
+ Visitas guiadas de exposición	30.00% 6
+ Campamentos de verano para jóvenes	50.00% 10
+ Visitas de un día	60.00% 12
+ Eventos multiculturales	55.00% 11

Answered 20

Skipped 0



QUESTION THREE What activities would you or your family participate in, if available at the Grand Island Children's Museum? Select up to four.



Analysis

Question 3 of the study focused on types of programming that the community would support. Over 80% of the respondents selected STEAM-based programming and day visits as the predominant program motivators for attendance. Coupled with what is revealed by the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment, there appears to be an opportunity to explore science and health in a children's museum setting that could possibly serve as one approach to addressing health illiteracy and childhood obesity rates in the community.

The lowest rated potential programming included guided tours of exhibitions and multicultural events, indicating that community respondents do not view those programming efforts as the most important components of a children's museum.

Respondents to the Spanish survey were few, however, their responses to Question 3 differed from the English survey in that the respondents did see the importance of a children's museum as including a place for multicultural events.

QUESTION FOUR What additional amenities should be included at the children’s museum? Check all that apply.

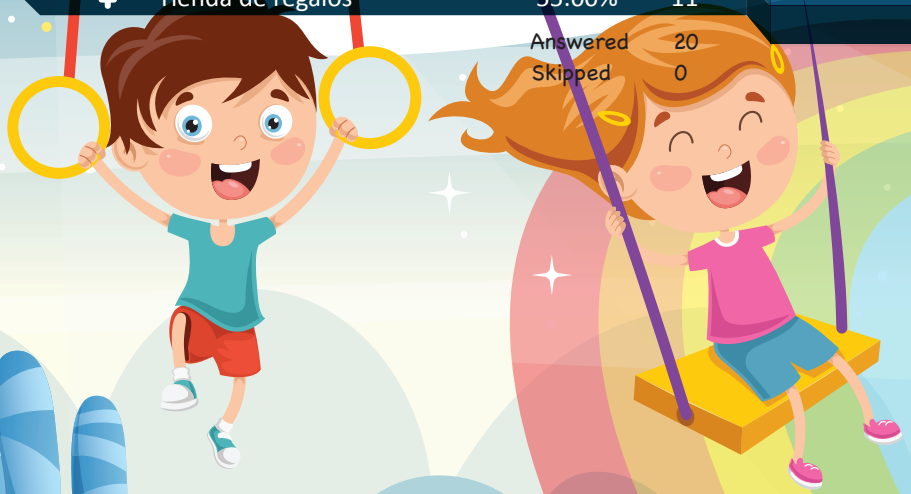
Answer Choices	Responses	
+ Outdoor entertainment & learning space	89.50%	469
+ Coffee/snack bar	70.80%	371
+ Meeting/conference rooms	40.27%	211
+ Classroom space	69.27%	363
+ Gift shop	42.75%	224

Answered 524
Skipped 5

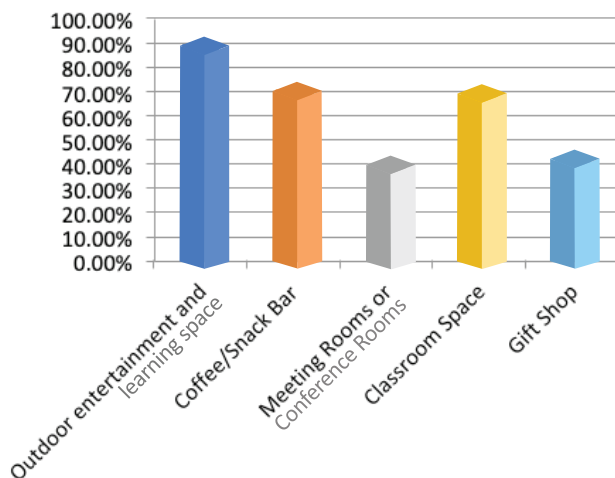
Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices	Responses	
+ Espacio de entretenimiento y aprendizaje al aire libre	75.00%	15
+ Cafetería / snack bar	60.00%	12
+ Salas de reuniones o espacio para conferencias	65.00%	13
+ Espacio de aula	35.00%	7
+ Tienda de regalos	55.00%	11

Answered 20
Skipped 0



QUESTION FOUR What additional amenities should be included at the children's museum? Check all that apply.



Analysis

Nearly 90% of the 524 Respondents to Question 4 feel the need to have an outdoor entertainment and learning space as part of a children's museum. This seems to be in keeping with the community history and environment. Many children's museums are exploring the idea of outdoor learning space, including Kearney Children's Museum that showcases an outdoor classroom. 70% of respondents indicated desire for a coffee shop and snack bar. The 25 Best American Children's Museums as rated by Education Zone require a coffee shop and snack bar to make the rating. This indicator is consistent with what families are desiring nationwide.

Consistent with the English survey, respondents to the Spanish survey saw an outdoor entertainment and learning space and a space for a coffee and snack bar as being dominant additional needs for a children's museum.

QUESTION FIVE Please check the two most important benefits the Grand Island Children’s Museum would offer the region.

Answer Choices

Responses

+	Provide a central location for families to explore art, science & learning	93.35%	491
+	Would act as a space for multicultural awareness & discovery	31.56%	166
+	Would add to the economic growth and vitality of Grand Island	70.53%	371
+	Would add no benefit to area	1.14%	6

Answered 526

Skipped 3

Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices

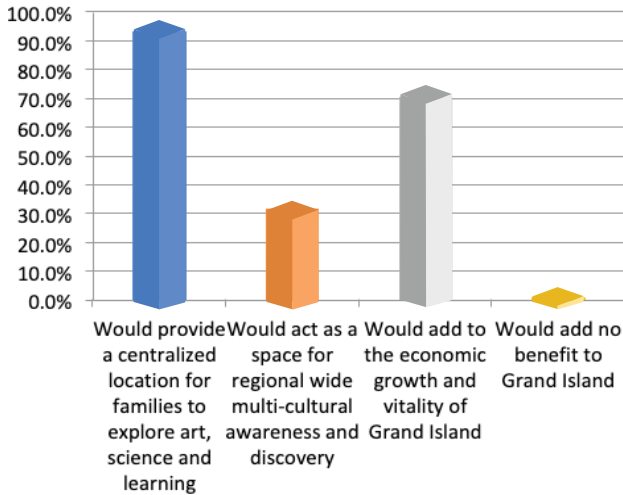
Responses

+	Proporcionaría un lugar centralizado para que las familias exploren el arte, la ciencia y el aprendizaje.	70.00%	14
+	Actuaría como un espacio para el conocimiento y descubrimiento multicultural a nivel regional.	80.00%	16
+	Se sumaría al crecimiento económico y la vitalidad de Grand Island.	70.00%	14
+	No añadiría ningún beneficio a Grand Island.	0.00%	0

Answered 20
Skipped 0



QUESTION FIVE Please check the two most important benefits the Grand Island Children's Museum would offer the region.



Analysis

93% of the 526 respondents to Question 5 viewed the top benefit of a potential children's museum as a centralized location for families to explore art, science, and learning. This definitive response speaks to the nature and level of programming that the community would like to see in the children's museum and is consistent with the community input sessions held in April 2019. Only 1% of respondents felt that there would be no benefit to our community. Once again, this question indicates a strong and positive community response to the potential of a children's museum in Grand Island. 70% of respondents viewed a children's museum as a driver for economic growth, **consistent with the mayor's platform and city administration priorities.**

QUESTION SIX What is your opinion on how construction of the Grand Island Children's Museum should be funded?
 Check all that apply.

Answer Choices

Responses

+	Through sales tax	27.05%	142
+	Through a lodging tax	27.81%	146
+	State or other funding	54.67%	287
+	Private donations/philanthropy	90.10%	473

Answered 525

Skipped 4

Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices

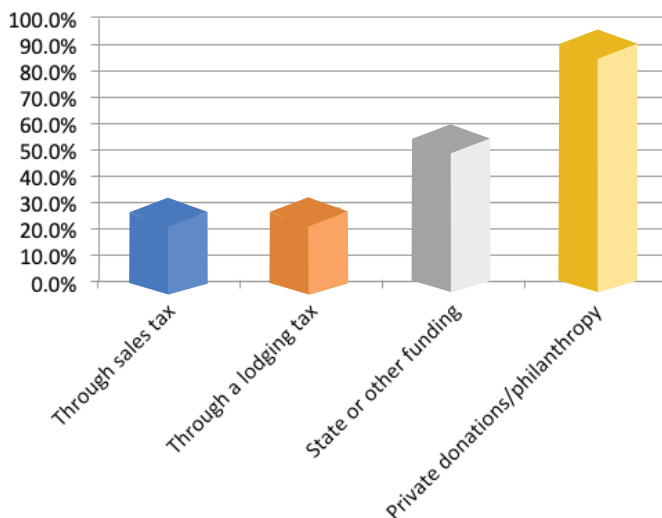
Responses

+	A través del impuesto a las ventas	42.11%	8
+	A través de un impuesto de alojamiento	21.05%	4
+	Fondos estatales u otros	73.68%	14
+	Donaciones privadas / filantropía	57.89%	11

Answered 19
 Skipped 1



QUESTION SIX What is your opinion on how construction of the Grand Island Children's Museum should be funded? Check all that apply.



Analysis

90% of respondents to Question 6 believe that a children's museum should be funded through private donations and philanthropy. This indicator is consistent with our community and region's sentiments on "getting things done." It also reveals an understanding that a nonprofit organization is what the community is looking for. Coupled with later questions on support, a consistent level of philanthropic support for a children's museum is indicated.

The 19 respondents to the Spanish survey believed that funding from the state and private donations should make up the bulk of the support for a children's museum.

QUESTION SEVEN From the list of perceived obstacles in the development of a children’s museum, please check what you believe would be the top three.

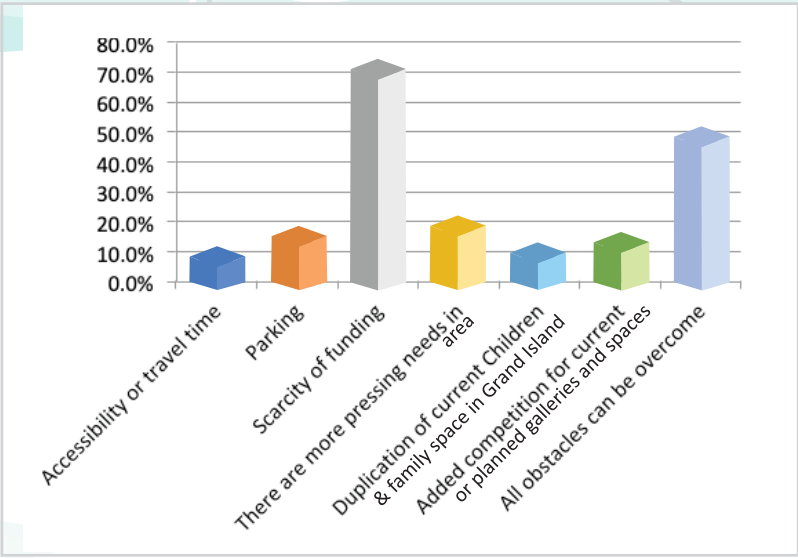
Answer Choices	Responses	
+ Accessibility or travel time	9.02%	47
+ Parking	15.16%	79
+ Scarcity of funding	71.59%	373
+ More Pressing Needs in area	18.62%	97
+ Duplication of current children & family space in Grand Island	9.40%	49
+ Added competition for current or planned galleries and spaces	12.86%	67
+ All obstacles can be overcome	48.75%	254

Answered 521

Skipped 8



QUESTION SEVEN From the list of perceived obstacles in the development of a children’s museum, please check what you believe would be the top three.



Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Accesibilidad o tiempo de viaje	30.00%	6
+	Estacionamiento	20.00%	4
+	Escasez de fondos	65.00%	13
+	Hay necesidades más urgentes en Grand Island	20.00%	4
+	Duplicación del espacio actual para niños y familias en Grand Island	20.00%	4
+	Sera competición para las galerías y espacios actuales o planificados.	15.00%	3
+	Todos los obstáculos se pueden superar.	55.00%	11

Analysis

Answered 20
Skipped 0

71% of 521 respondents viewed scarcity of funding as the number one obstacle to the establishment of a children’s museum. 49% of respondents felt that all obstacles could be overcome. This indicates a consistent concern that sustainability may be an issue. This is a caution for the committee and represents a valid and consistent community concern.

Spanish survey data is consistent with the English survey.

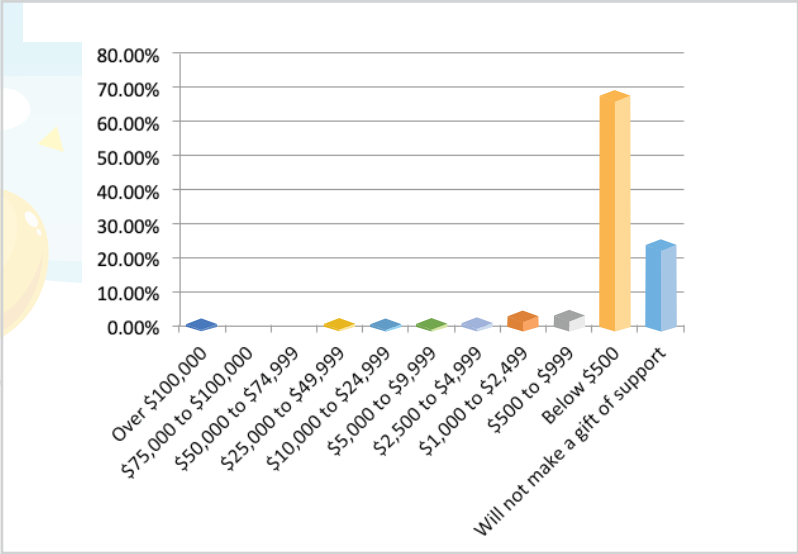
QUESTION EIGHT What level of personal gift would you consider making in order to establish the Grand Island Children’s Museum?

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Over \$100,000	0.38%	2
+	\$75,000 to \$100,000	0.00%	0
+	\$50,000 to \$74,999	0.00%	0
+	\$25,000 to \$49,999	0.19%	1
+	\$10,000 to \$24,999	0.38%	2
+	\$5,000 to \$9,999	0.38%	2
+	\$2,500 to \$4,999	0.96%	5
+	\$1,000 to \$2,499	3.07%	16
+	\$500 to \$999	2.87%	15
+	Below \$500	67.82%	354
+	Will not make a gift of support	23.95%	125

Answered 522
Skipped 7



QUESTION EIGHT What level of personal gift would you consider making in order to establish the Grand Island Children’s Museum?



Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Más de \$100,000	10.53%	2
+	\$75,000 a \$100,000	5.26%	1
+	\$50,000 a \$74,999	0.00%	0
+	\$25,000 a \$49,999	0.00%	0
+	\$10,000 a \$24,999	5.26%	1
+	\$5,000 a \$9,999	0.00%	0
+	\$2,500 a \$4,999	0.00%	0
+	\$1,000 a \$2,499	0.00%	0
+	\$500 a \$999	0.00%	0
+	Por debajo de \$500	52.63%	10
+	No hará un regalo de apoyo.	26.32%	5

Analysis Answered 19
Skipped 1

76% of respondents stated that they would support a capital campaign for a children’s museum with a gift, leaving 24% who stated that they would not. Two individuals indicated that they would give more than \$100,000 to such an effort. This early and positive response indicates a base of support that would be required to launch a sustained and cultivated capital campaign of some kind.

74% of Spanish-speaking respondents selected that they would support the capital project for a children’s museum at some level.

QUESTION NINE Would you consider an annual membership fee in support of the operating costs of the Grand Island Children’s Museum?



Answer Choices

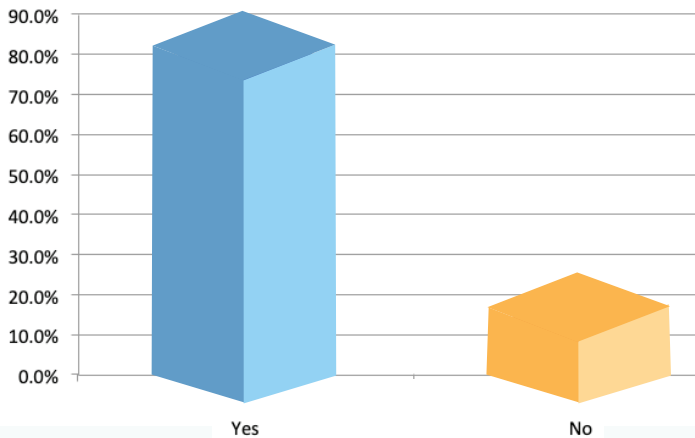
Responses

+	Yes	82.48%	433
+	No	17.52%	92

Answered 525
Skipped 4



QUESTION NINE Would you consider an annual membership fee in support of the operating costs of the Grand Island Children's Museum?



Spanish Participant Results

Answer Choices		Responses	
+	Si	50.00%	9
+	No	50.00%	9
Answered			18
Skipped			2

Analysis

82% of 525 respondents to Question 9 selected that they would support a children's museum with an annual membership to support its operating costs. This data, coupled with information garnered during the community input sessions suggests that there is a consistent volume of support for general operating expenses of a children's museum in our community. In point, the 433 respondents who stated that they would purchase an annual membership is larger than the membership base of some children's museums nationwide. The committee should carefully consider what that annual membership looks like, given the community's expression of concerns over accessibility and sustainability revealed in community input sessions and the surveys.

50% of the Spanish speaking respondents who answered Question 9 would support a children's museum with an annual membership.

QUESTION TEN

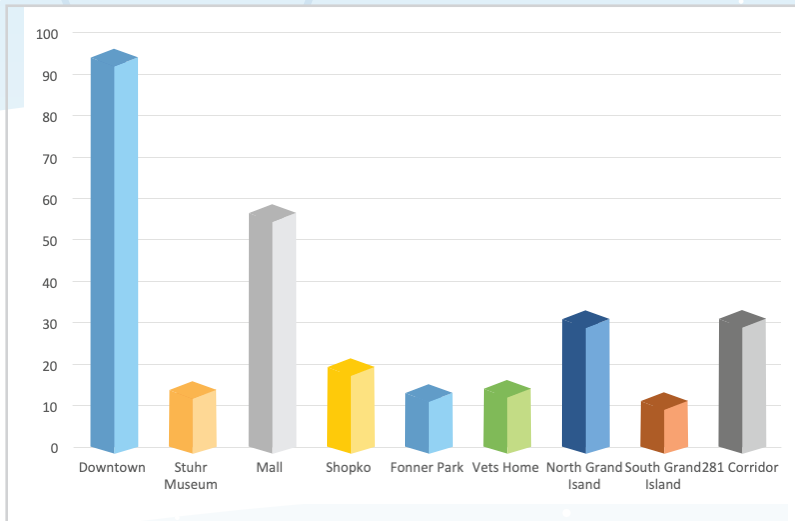
Please list locations in Grand Island that you believe would be more suitable for the children's museum.

+	Answered	332
+	Skipped	197

Question 10 was a free-flowing question that allowed participants to list places where they felt a children's museum would be best located in the community. Significant responses are reflected in the chart including dominant geographical areas like the "281 corridor," north Grand Island, and south Grand Island.



QUESTION TEN Please list locations in Grand Island that you believe would be more suitable for the children's museum.



Analysis

332 respondents to Question 10 believed that a downtown location and the mall were the dominant locations that a children's museum should be located. 28% believed it should be downtown, 17% of respondents felt it should be in the mall. Additional and more cardinal in nature, Northwest Grand Island and the "281 corridor" were noted as ideal places for the children's museum.

There were no Spanish survey responses to Question 10.

Competitive Cultural Organizations

An analysis of potentially competing cultural organizations with similar missions was conducted. That data was placed into chart comparison format and is presented here.

Community	Organization	Square Footage	Annual Revenue	Annual Expenses	Annual Attendance	Charity Navigator Rating
Kearney, NE	Kearney Children's Museum	20,000	\$278,954	\$290,264	8,000* *(2000 last reported data)	Not rated
Sioux City, IA	Launchpad	20,000	\$538,804	\$990,258		Not rated
Hastings, NE	Children's Museum of Central NE		\$64,856	\$68,999		Not rated
Iowa City, IA	Iowa Children's Museum	28,000	\$1,379,069	\$1,630,394		Not rated
Lincoln, NE	The Lincoln Children's Museum	23,000	\$1,304,417	\$1,486,257	80,000* *(2016 last reported data)	86%
Omaha, NE	The Omaha Children's Museum	40,000	\$4,003,883	\$4,404,287	316,915* *(2016 last reported data)	Not rated



Funding and Operations Analysis

The Funding and Operations Analysis section of the Grand Island Children's Museum feasibility study develops an understanding of the existing economic climate of Grand Island and its surrounding region, and forecasts the success of funding and operating the proposed children's museum.

The methodology of this analysis includes:

1. Develop an operational seven-year pro forma based on the planned programming for the museum.
2. Identify funding resources within the community of Grand Island and from the region.

Questions that the Funding and Operational Analysis is investigating:

1. What are the available funding streams for the initial development of the Grand Island Children's Museum?
2. What are the available funding streams for the ongoing operational and programming expenses of the Grand Island Children's Museum?
3. Is the local and regional economy of the capacity to sustain the operation of the Grand Island Children's Museum?
4. What is the City of Grand Island's current position and ability to assist in the development of the Grand Island Children's Museum with regard to infrastructure and access?



Community Capacity Analysis

Questions – Answers

1. Is there a need for a children's museum in Grand Island?

The feasibility study postulates that, based on the data gathered, there is a **valid need for a children's museum in Grand Island**. Grand Island citizens are currently traveling to surrounding communities and farther to avail themselves of children's museum activities. Additionally, Grand Island faces challenges that a children's museum could potentially address: programming for children from ages 2 – 15, for example, or addressing challenges as detailed in the 2012 Health Needs Assessment Study.

2. Does the community of Grand Island support the concept of a children's museum?

The feasibility study postulates that, based on the data gathered, **the community will support the concept of a children's museum**, through philanthropic capital funding as well as annual membership support for operations.

3. Are there existing facilities that can meet the needs of the children's museum?

The feasibility study postulates that, at the current time of this study, **there are no existing facilities that can meet the needs of the children's museum**. The study is aware that a distinct, additional, and ongoing effort to establish a children's museum exists in Grand Island, but absent existing programming to analyze, there can be no assumptions drawn as to whether the community's needs can be met through that effort.

4. Are there existing facilities that the Children's Museum would duplicate?

The feasibility study postulates that **there are existing facilities that the children's museum would likely duplicate**, not in the confines of the community of Grand Island, but within driving distance.

5. What is the state of the local and regional economy?

The feasibility study finds that the regional economy is stable and growing. Grand Island's population is growing faster than the state average; however, it lags behind in median income. Additionally, the poverty rate in Grand Island is higher than the state average. This suggests that new community initiatives may be slow to root and must be well planned with an eye for some type of sustainability plan.

Funding And Operational Analysis

Questions – Answers

1. What are the available funding streams for the initial development of the Grand Island Children's Museum?

The feasibility study suggests that **there is consistent philanthropic support to establish a capital campaign for a children's museum and consistent philanthropic support for general operating costs**, via annual memberships and donations. Nebraska has one of the stronger philanthropic private and corporate foundation bases in the nation. If any amount of successful fundraising can be done with these foundations, it seems reasonable to assume that a sustainable funding model could be constructed. Additionally, LB224 was signed into law by Governor Ricketts on March 21, 2019, authorizing cultural institutions to avail themselves of low-interest bond funding for capital projects. This may make funding for the establishment of a children's museum more accessible.

2. What are the available funding streams for the ongoing operational and programming expenses of the Grand Island Children's Museum?

The feasibility study suggests that available **funding streams include corporate sponsorship opportunities**, individual philanthropic support, annual membership fees, private and corporate foundation support, and fee for service activities.

3. Is the local and regional economy of the capacity to sustain the operation of the Grand Island Children's Museum?

Grand Island is a very unique community in many ways. The Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation reports that per capita income in Hall County is estimated at \$40,048 – considerably lower than that of the state. However, it also predicts a 14.5% rise in that per capita income to \$45,865 by this year, when ostensibly numbers can be collected. Grand Island's median income is higher, according to the same source at \$44,791 with an anticipated rise to \$55,326 by this year. This data is similar to the data provided by Data, USA's 2016 report and anticipates at least substantial growth in per capita income. The Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation shows substantially more employed workers than Data, USA, as it uses MSA or area data. The most common job groups in the Grand Island area are production occupations followed by office and administrative support occupations and sales and related occupations. It is safe to say that the economy of Grand Island is, in large part, still agriculturally based or, at least, support based of that. Therefore, agriculture market volatility could be key in the sustainability of community-based service organizations. **continue ->**

As is the case with most community-based organizations of this nature, diversified funding and resources will be the key to sustainability. The feasibility study finds that communities of similar nature and stature to Grand Island are sustaining children's museums. **Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Grand Island could do the same.**

4. What is the City of Grand Island's current position and ability to assist in the development of the children's museum with regard to infrastructure and access?

The steering committee has had multiple conversations with Mayor Steele and members of his city administration. It would appear that the City of Grand Island is, at a minimum, helpful and supportive in this process. Discerning the level of that support and help will be a process, but **it is fair to state that the city is supportive regarding infrastructure and access.**





SECTION THREE

CONCLUSION

The establishment of a community-supported children's museum in Grand Island, Nebraska is **feasible**. Considerable thought and development should be given to sustainable funding sources and quality of programming to support and maintain such an operation far into the future. It is likely that such a sustained children's museum would become a vital part of the community of Grand Island and to Central Nebraska.



Grand Island
Children's Museum