

Appendix E

Hillsdale County High School Student Survey Results

What local school district are you in?

	Response Total
Hillsdale Community Schools	74
Jonesville Community Schools	31
Litchfield Community Schools	12
Reading Area Schools	41
Camden-Frontier Schools	14
Waldron Area Schools	2
Pittsford Area Schools	0
North Adams-Jerome Schools	23
Will Carleton Academy	8
Total Responses	205

This survey reached nearly all of the high school seniors in Hillsdale County. Most surveys were completed electronically.

After high school what are your plans as of right now?

	Response Total
<i>Find a local job</i>	13
<i>Go to a college in Michigan</i>	115
<i>Go to an out of state college</i>	23
<i>Go to a technical school</i>	14
<i>Military</i>	10
<i>Not Sure Yet</i>	14
<i>Other</i>	16

Most high school student are college-bound, primarily to in-state colleges.

Where do you see yourself living in 5-10 years?

	Response Total
<i>Hillsdale Area</i>	16
<i>Michigan</i>	48
<i>Somewhere else in the Midwest</i>	19
<i>Not Sure Yet</i>	87
<i>Other</i>	35

Perhaps understandably, most high school students are unsure as to where they will be living in the next 5-10 years. While few could indicate that they see themselves living in the Hillsdale area, a substantial number did not see them selves leaving the state.

If you could live anywhere in the world and still work in your chosen field where are you most likely to live?

	Response Total
<i>In the Hillsdale Area</i>	7
<i>In Michigan</i>	15
<i>Somewhere in the Great Lakes region</i>	14
<i>Somewhere in the U.S.</i>	125
<i>Somewhere in Canada or Mexico</i>	1
<i>Overseas or South America</i>	16
<i>Other</i>	27

Notably, if given open and unencumbered choice about where to live, Hillsdale, Michigan and the Great Lakes region in general are not popular choices among High School students.

What types of areas or neighborhoods would you be likely to choose?

	Response Total
In the downtown area of a large city	17
Neighborhood near the downtown of a large city	25
The suburbs of a large city	37
The downtown of a medium-sized city	10
Neighborhood near the downtown of a medium-sized city	35
A small town	29
In a rural area with lots of open spaces	44
Other	8

Interestingly, local high school students have very different views on what might be a desirable place to live. Students seem included to choose both urban and rural locations, although a relatively small percent of respondents selected places to live that are generally associated with the Hillsdale area.

What type of housing would you be most likely to choose when you are on your own?

	Response Total
A downtown loft	16
A suburban house on a large lot	71
An older house in town on a small lot	17
An apartment in a complex	22
A high rise apartment	11
A townhouse/duplex/condo	29
Other (please specify)	39

Consistent with the ideas on where to live, perceptions about what type of housing is desirable is also somewhat varied. However, it is interesting to note that a suburban house on a large lot was the most popular choice by a fairly wide margin.

If you relocate to someplace else after high school what kinds of things will you miss most about your hometown (besides family and friends)?

Some of the most popular responses were:

- Small town atmosphere
- The familiarity of the surroundings
- The small town atmosphere
- The scenery
- Various local “hang outs”

What other characteristics are important to you in the place you would most like to live?

Some of the most popular responses were:

- Friendly people
- Job availability
- Safety
- Weather

If you were offered your dream job where you could live in any community or city you preferred U.S. or Canada what would be your top 3 choices?

Some of the most common choices were:

- California
- Chicago
- Florida
- New York City

If you were offered your dream job and you could live in any community or city you preferred in Michigan what would be your top 3 choices?

Some of the most common choices were:

- Ann Arbor
- Detroit
- Grand Rapids
- Hillsdale
- Kalamazoo
- Lansing
- Traverse City

	Completely Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Completely Agree
I would prefer to live in a place that fits my lifestyle more than a place with a job that pays the most money	11	23	22	48	72	29
With my education and skills I can get a job in almost any place I want to live.	10	10	21	66	64	33
A good paying job is my highest priority	11	18	38	52	60	27

Many high school seniors are not likely to make decisions about relocation solely on how much money they will make. While income is important, lifestyle and other amenities also seem to be significant considerations in deciding where to live.

Do you think a majority of people your age are proud to call their community home?

	Response Total
<i>Yes</i>	69
<i>No</i>	86
<i>Not Sure</i>	55

Hometown pride suffers to some degree in many minds. While only about one person in three could indicate hometown pride, about 2 out of 3 were unsure, or could not indicate that the majority of people their age are proud to call Hillsdale County home. While, comparable data is not readily available, it is believed that this may be a somewhat common viewpoint of people in this age group.

People of high school age often complain that there is nothing to do in a small town. What kinds of activities attractions and things to do would you like to see in Hillsdale County to make it more attractive in this regard?

Respondents indicated interest in seeing many more forms of shopping and entertainment options. A mall was a common element of desired shopping desires, while entertainment options included establishments like arcades, theater, dance clubs, skate parks, paint ball, etc. A wider selection of restaurants was also frequently mentioned.

How inclined are you to someday start your own business?

	Response Total
Definitely	33
Somewhat likely	67
Not sure one way or the other	47
Somewhat unlikely	35
Would not	20

Interestingly, inclinations toward someday starting a business are relatively high among high school seniors. About half of the respondent suggested that they were “definitely” or “somewhat likely” to start their own business. The most popular response to this question was that of being somewhat likely to someday start a

business. Only a relatively few respondents provided negative responses to this question. These results reinforce the proposed economic development shift to increased emphasis on small business development.

Some people have noticed that young people sometimes leave the Hillsdale area after high school or college. What are the top reasons people your age would do this? (check all that apply)

	Response Total
To get better jobs	160
To be near more recreational opportunities	90
To live in an area with more night life (clubs, bars, restaurants, etc.)	128
To be in an area with cultural and social diversity (theater, arts, festivals, etc.)	96
To go to a different climate	106
To live in a more attractive natural environment elsewhere (i.e. one with oceans, mountains, etc.)	81
To generally explore and experience new places and see different things	124
Other (please specify)	30

Unfortunately, many of the reasons cited for why some young adults leave the Hillsdale area, can't be changed with local policies or initiatives. Specifically, the desire to explore new places, move to a different climate, or move to an area with mountains or an ocean, will likely always be factors that lure some younger residents elsewhere.

What is the one thing you have always hoped that someone would do to make Hillsdale County a better place to live for someone your age?

	Response Total
Provide better parks and recreation programs	25
Establish or develop a teen center and/or programs	19
Provide more indoor recreation such as arcades, bowling alleys, roller/ice rink, etc.	30
Bring more events / concerts to town	65
More places to shop	46
Other (please specify)	22

Consistent with results from an earlier question, more extensive indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, events, concerts and shopping opportunities would help make Hillsdale County a better place to live for younger residents.