

NOURISHING THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF THE HEARTLAND

VISION PLAN



Grander Vision

Alda • Cairo • Doniphan
Grand Island • Wood River

NOVEMBER 2014

Acknowledgements

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DESIGNWORKSHOP

Vireo, LLC

Kansas City, Missouri &
Omaha Nebraska

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**The Grander Vision was made
possible by a generous donation by
the Nebraska State Fair in 2014**

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Introduction

Communities periodically must step back from routine business – taking care of day to day business, or planning for the next year – and take a longer view, of the future. Cities across America have repeatedly made grand plans based upon grand visions for what their community would eventually look like. While communities rarely achieve all of the goals outlined in their vision for the future, having a vision document is important because, “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.” (Lewis Carroll, Author)

Introduction

The communities of Hall County, including Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, Grand Island, and Wood River, have joined together to create a cohesive Vision and Action Plan. The goal of this effort was to create an overall “roadmap” for the area to use in the future, and to help steer the energies of the people toward a set of identifiable action steps and efforts to bring the vision to fruition. Communities around the country have regularly conducted “visioning sessions” in order to identify how they should evolve and change in the future. These visioning efforts often inform and guide a number of other community initiatives, including the creation of comprehensive plans, transportation and parks plans, and other more detailed planning or implementation documents.

The idea of “visioning” is not new to the Hall County area. Several thousand residents and stakeholders participated in the Heartland Vision effort from 1997 to 2002. The Heartland Vision and its subsequent implementation led to the completion of a number of key initiatives and projects in the local area. The top priority was the construction of a civic center, which broke ground in 2004. However, numerous other successes have occurred, including the expansions of hiking and biking trails and the construction of new soccer and softball fields. The community completed widening and beautification efforts, along South Locust and Second Street in Grand Island. Hall County as a whole

benefited from the completion of a second Grand Island interchange accessing Interstate 80. Several community agencies have massively upgraded their websites to improve communication. Developers have worked, through assistance from local agencies, to complete a number of affordable housing efforts in the area.

Seeking a refreshed vision for the entire Hall County area (including the various communities beyond Grand Island), a new group began meeting to discuss visioning in 2013. Mayor Jay Vavricek convened the group with the express purpose of creating a vision that was predicated on transparency and inclusiveness and without any predetermined result. The grass roots effort was to include all citizens of Hall County. Following a series of several meetings, a Steering Committee formed to guide the effort. The group moved forward with the selection of a consultant team to guide the community through the visioning process. Through the generosity of the Nebraska State Fair, a consultant team that consisted of Design Workshop, Inc. of Denver and Vireo of Kansas City was selected to coordinate the Grand Visioning process.

As the formal visioning process began, the group adopted a new name for the visioning effort – The Grand Vision. The effort also adopted an official tagline intended to reflect the overall spirit of the visioning process – “Your Voice. Your Plan. Our Future”. The visioning

Introduction

effort emphasized grass roots, comprehensive citizen engagement in order to help form a new Vision Statement and Action Plan for the Hall County area across five frameworks – Live, Work, Play, Learn, and Unite.

Live refers to the day to day activities and conditions that affect everyone in a community, including community health, housing, food and nutrition.

Work encompasses the economic development and growth of the Hall County communities, across a range of industries, and providing the necessary training and resources for the workforce of the local area.

Play addresses the resources and programs committed by communities in Hall County for recreational opportunities and amenities.

Learn refers to the community's commitment to educating children and adults of all ages including career training, life skills education, and traditional classroom classes and training offered in area schools.

Unite refers to the ability of the people in Hall County – Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, Grand Island, and Wood River – as well as the Hall County government, to join together and work collectively over time to make the Grander Vision a reality. This visioning effort represents a unique process, spanning several communities at one time, and Unite refers to how this coalition should move forward to make sure the Grander Vision comes into focus and reality.

The Grander Vision will help Hall County communities – including elected officials, the leaders of various community groups and non-profit organizations, and a variety of other interested community advocates and citizens in all walks of life – move forward with a cohesive view of how the area should evolve in the future and move forward with a wide range of projects and initiatives.

Where We Are Today

To better understand where the the community is today and to develop a solid vision for the future, Grander Vision participants discussed high level metrics that described the region's existing conditions from the Live, Work, Play, and Learn categories. They also discussed what it might mean to Unite as a region. The following highlights the key findings of where we are today.

Where We Are Today

Live

The “Live” category of planning addresses a variety of metrics tied to housing and home ownership, public health, crime, the cost of living, and overall community well-being.

Overall, the area enjoys a relatively affordable cost of living (compared to national averages) and a home ownership rate on par with national averages. Nearly one in every three adults in Hall County is considered obese. Nearly one in five children in Hall County do not have health insurance, and over half of the children in local schools are on free or reduced lunch programs. All of these metrics show the need for improvement in quality of life for residents.

COSTS OF LIVING INDEX*		ADULT OBESITY RATE***	
National	100.0	Hall County (2012)	31.0%
Hall County	81.3	Hall County (2007)	29.0%
Salina, KS	81.7	Nebraska (2012)	29.0%
St Joseph, MO	81.7	Nebraska (2007)	27.0%
Sioux City, IA	87.7		
Manhattan, KS	84.3	UNINSURED POPULATION RATE***	
Rapid City, SD	85.0	Hall County	17.0%
Ames, IA	93.7	Nebraska	13.0%
HOME OWNERSHIP RATE**		CHILDREN ON FREE OR REDUCED MEALS***	
Hall County	58.8%	Hall County	55.0%
Nebraska	58.9%	Nebraska	40.0%

Source: *city-data.com, **ESRI 2014, ***Hall County Report Card, Heartland United Way

In terms of a key metric of public safety, the overall crime index in the Grand Island area has fallen over the last decade from 414.4 (crimes per 100,000 residents) in 2000 to 337.8 in 2012, or 20% overall. These rates exceed the national average of 301 crimes per 100,000 residents. Violent crime is rare in Grand Island at a rate of 3.27 crimes per 1,000 residents. The national average is 3.9 and the state average is 2.59. Property crimes of theft and burglaries account for the majority of crimes in Hall County.

Where We Are Today

Work

The Grander Vision addressed questions concerning the economic strength of the local area, and the economic well-being of the full spectrum of local residents. In terms of key economic metrics, Hall County has median household incomes and per capita incomes (as of 2014) that are slightly below those of the state of Nebraska overall. The unemployment rate is relatively low compared to many places nationally or even in the state. Overall, some of the biggest issues the area faces (as identified during initial public outreach) concern building a job base that would allow young people to remain in the area, as opposed to moving to larger cities to find work after the completion of their studies. The local area is relatively heavily focused on manufacturing jobs and tends to lack a solid base of white collar jobs or jobs that pay wages sufficient to cover the cost of living. Given the area's low unemployment rate, some businesses have faced difficulty in filling certain positions, which can cause problems with business operations.

WORKFORCE*			PER CAPITA INCOME**	
Manufacturing	20.3%		Hall County	\$23,195
Social Services / Health / Education	18.4%		Nebraska	\$26,413
Retail	15.7%			
Other	45.6%			
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**			UNEMPLOYMENT RATE***	
Hall County	\$50,924		Hall County	3.2%
Nebraska	\$51,686		Nebraska	3.4%

Source: *city-data.com, 2014, **ESRI, 2014, ***Nebraska Department of Labor, 2014

Play

The Grander Vision effort examined the metrics across a few key categories that influence opportunities for recreation and entertainment.

The area acts as the gateway to the Sandhills, offering miles of prairie, river valleys, and reservoirs for exploration. During the early spring, the Platte River and its wetlands is a migratory stopover for Sandhill Cranes and waterfowl. Birding is a popular pastime throughout the year. The county is abutted by three scenic byways, notably the Lincoln Highway, which travels through Grand Island's downtown historic district. Popular destinations for entertainment include the restored Grand Theatre, the Stuhr Museum, and Fonner Park. The county also hosts a number of annual festivals throughout the year and two major regional events: the Annual Harvest of Harmony Parade and Husker Harvest Days, the worlds largest totally irrigated farm show. Grand Island is also home to the Nebraska State Fair.

Where We Are Today

The table below outlines some data concerning various recreational amenities for Hall County, compared to some similar areas around the Midwest. While each community is different and has its own tastes and desires, this review suggests that Hall County may have a need for additional movie theater screens, for example. Efforts should continue to monitor the wants and needs of residents as efforts to improve parks, open space, and entertainment facilities and resources move forward over time.

RECREATIONAL AMENITIES COMPARISON TABLE	HALL COUNTY, NE	ST JOSEPH, MO	SIOUX CITY, IA	SALINA, KS	MANHATTAN, KS	RAPID CITY, SD	AMES, IA	IOWA CITY, IA
Population	60,669	76,780	82,684	47,707	52,281	67,956	58,965	67,862
Skating Rinks	1	3	1	2	0	1	1	0
Golf Courses	6	4	7	3	4	7	3	10
Public swimming pools	4	3	5	2	3	8	3	5
Movie theater screens	7	12	30	10	12	17	17	12
Bowling alleys	3	3	3	1	1	2	2	1
Shooting ranges	1	0	7	0	2	3	5	2
County / state fairs	2	1	1	0	1	2	1	1
Museums	1	12	6	3	1	6	3	7
Nature centers	1	1	1	1	3	1	0	0
Conference centers / event facilities	6	4	2	4	5	1	2	3

Source: Design Workshop research

An important metric to monitor for the Hall County communities going forward will involve tracking the acreage, and types of parks, compared to the population of the area. Grand Island, for example compares favorably in terms of existing park acreage per 1,000 residents to its neighbors (Hastings and Kearney), but trails the park acreage totals for the City of Omaha. As the Hall County area continues to grow, the challenge is how it works together to ensure that recreational opportunities and amenities meet the needs of the population.

CITY	POPULATION	TOTAL ACRES OF PARKS	PARK ACREAGE / 1,000 RESIDENTS
Grand Island, NE	49,989	437 ac	13 ac
Hastings, NE	25,058	300 ac	10 ac
Kearney, NE	30,787	445 ac	17 ac
Omaha, NE	421,570	10,391 ac	25 ac

Source: Design Workshop research

Where We Are Today

Learn

As outlined in the table that follows, residents of Hall County have generally achieved lower levels of education (in terms of degrees) compared to the average for the state of Nebraska. However, the Hall County area boasts a number of technical and trade colleges and other non-four year degree options for local residents, as listed below.

As Hall County moves forward, the communities may wish to pursue strategies to increase the overall educational achievement level of the area and should ensure that training programs and post-secondary educational offerings match the needs and desires of residents (for learning, enrichment, and training) and the needs of current and prospective employers (who seek out graduates with certain skill sets for particular jobs).

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA / GED OR HIGHER	
Hall County	83.1%
Nebraska	90.6%
BACHELORS DEGREES OR HIGHER	
Hall County	17.0%
Nebraska	28.6%
MASTER'S DEGREES OR HIGHER	
Hall County	5.8%
Nebraska	9.3%

Source: ESRI, 2014

Higher Education Programs in Hall County

Adult Education Facilities: Joseph's College, Xenon International Academy, Nebraska National Guard, Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center

Post Secondary: Central Community College, Doane College, Bellevue College, College Park

Where We Are Today

Unite

Metrics are not available per se to determine the degree to which the various communities in Hall County are “united” and working together toward common goals. The degree to which they are working in a united way is a more subjective measurement. However, at the outset of the effort, the project team and the Steering Committee laid out the various reasons why working actively toward a united vision, regardless of the components of the particular vision, would pay dividends for the local area.

Communities that are more united in vision and in how to reach solutions tend to outperform other communities. Throughout the history of the U.S., cities that have had a clear plan of action for improvement of key drivers of growth, such as schools, roads, civic facilities, and the like, have tended to grow more quickly. Now, more than ever, as communities in Nebraska compete not only with their Midwestern neighbors, but also with communities across the country, and around the world, the local area could benefit from creating a united approach to the community’s growth and evolution. The following highlights key potential benefits of creating a united vision for the local area:

Education: A unified vision would help Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, Grand Island, and Wood River create a stronger educational foundation that would attract families, keep young people from moving away after graduation, and attract new companies and investors looking for an area with well-trained and well-educated people.

Agriculture: A united vision would allow the Hall County area to more clearly articulate its viewpoint in Lincoln, and in Washington, concerning vital issues concerning water, taxes, labor, and other key issues impacting the significant agri-business sector.

Senior Services: As the population of Hall County and the state continues to age, a united vision would help the local community adapt to and serve a larger number of senior citizens. Achieving the goals of a united vision may make the area more attractive to retirees from around Nebraska and the region.

Economic Development: An enthusiastic and clear vision for the area would create a more concise and appealing marketing message for the area, in attracting new investment, new companies, and new employment. The local area would outpace other regions that suffer from division or even infighting.

Recreation and Quality of Life: A united vision would help the local communities more effectively and strategically use the limited resources at hand to improve the quality of life for all residents, including parks, open space, and other amenities.

Developing a Vision

The Grander Vision employed a broad range of tools and strategies to gain input from the community throughout the process. The following outlines the various ways in which stakeholders and the public contributed ideas and input during the Grander Vision effort.

Developing a Vision

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from around the Hall County area from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines, helped guide the Grander Vision process. The group met to discuss initial goals for the effort, and helped the project team in vetting and refining the Vision Statement and associated Action Steps tied to the Grander Vision. Members of the Steering Committee also spread the word about the Grander Vision in their various organizations and through contacts they have in the broader community.



The Steering Committee played a test-run version of the “Make It Grander” card game in September 2014, in advance of the Community Open House in October.

Grander Vision Website: www.grander-vision.com

The Grander Vision website contained background information about the visioning effort, copies of exhibits from community open houses and meetings, links to online surveys, and updates concerning project activities and findings. The website allowed the community an opportunity to provide anonymous input regarding the vision statement and action steps.

Developing a Vision



The website had over 2,200 visits during the course of the planning effort.

Social Media

Information concerning the Grander Vision effort was shared across the community through City Facebook and Twitter posts. Social media tools helped spread the word about open houses, community surveys, project updates, and other activities.

Community-Wide Survey

The Grander Vision effort conducted a community-wide survey, available online through the project website and in hard copy at various locations in the area, in order to gain the broadest input possible concerning how the area is currently doing, across a variety of topics, and concerning a set of goals for the area in the future. This general input from the community helped the Steering Committee and the project team understand the hopes, dreams, fears, and goals of the community for the future, as the Grander Vision effort began. The community survey was available online for about six weeks during the Summer of 2014 and gained input from a total of 2,020 participants. The results of the Community Survey are summarized in the Appendix to this document for reference.

Developing a Vision

Focus Groups

In June 2014 the project team conducted a series of twelve focus groups, involving 74 people, in the Hall County area, in order to gain more specific input concerning the the goals for the regional vision, community aspirations, strengths, perceptions, key issues, and priority strategies for addressing issues.



The Grander Vision focus groups gave diverse voices in the community an opportunity to have a say in the vision.

Community Events

In July 2014 the project team conducted outreach at various community events in the Hall County area, ranging from the Hall County Fair to outreach efforts at the Public Library, Walmart, HyVee, and the Hall County Senior Centers, to spread the word about the Grander Vision effort and to have one-on-one discussion with the public concerning the key goals facing the community. These discussions, in particular, publicized the Community Survey to a general audience and allowed attendees at the community events to provide general comments on their preferred vision for the area. The presentations and discussions at various community events involved interactions with more than 350 residents in the area.

Developing a Vision



An informational booth for The Grander Vision at the Hall County Fair spread the word about the planning effort.

Presentations to Local Groups and Boards

Throughout the summer of 2014, members of the project team made short presentations concerning the Grander Vision effort to various boards in the five communities, and to various community and civic groups, in order to spread the word about the effort in general, to publicize the Community Survey, and to gain general input concerning the vision for the area. The presentations involved interactions with over 200 people.

Community Open Houses

The Grander Vision effort hosted a community open house August 6th to gain general input from participants concerning their key goals for the area and to help develop draft vision statements for each of the five planning frameworks – Live, Work, Play, Learn, and Unite. The group of 37 participants divided into “breakout groups” during the open house in order to work together on the creation of draft vision statements for each of the five planning frameworks.

At a second community open house October 20th, the consultant team unveiled the draft vision statement for The Grander Vision and led participants through a card game, dubbed “Make it Grander”. The objective of the card game, played in groups of eight ten to ten people per group, was to prioritize a set of action steps created to help implement The Grander Vision. The

Developing a Vision

outcomes of this prioritization exercise through the Make it Grander card game collectively helped to rank the action items for the Grander Vision, presented in this document. The open house October 20th attracted 80 attendees.



Participants at the October community open house met in groups to review the draft action steps for the Grander Vision

Vision Statement

Based upon input from the public at the variety of events and activities, and informed by input from the Steering Committee, the Grander Vision effort arrived at an overarching Vision Statement for the Hall County area, tied to each of the five planning frameworks.

Vision Statement

We, the five communities of Hall County, with respect to our pioneer heritage and future neighbors, pledge to:

LIVE

For all community members, throughout life, provide access to quality education, jobs, housing, and recreational opportunities, along with access to the proper and appropriate supportive services, so people enjoy a safe, healthy community experience.

WORK

Nurture growth through the expansion of the variety and number businesses and drawing from our strong work ethic to build upon our current assets and provide the kernels for future growth.

PLAY

Provide opportunities throughout the area where we can enjoy a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, as well as opportunities where we strive to enrich and appreciate the quality of life that makes Hall County a key recreational destination.

LEARN

Develop communities that value lifelong learning and provide the support to ensure opportunities for success for all.

UNITE

Seek and share information to build awareness, appreciation, and harmony; leverage transparency and communication to build a culture of active participation and working together.

TAGLINE: “Nourishing the Hopes & Dreams of the Heartland”

Action Items

Implementing the Grander Vision successfully will involve a broad series of Action Items across the planning frameworks (Live, Work, Play, Learn, and Unite). Based upon input from the Steering Committee and the results of nine “Make It Grander” card games, Action Items were prioritized as shown in the table on the following page. The highest ranked action items were prioritized from 1 to 12. Action items categorized as “Medium” or “Low” priority (but not ordered in terms of prioritization) then follow.

RANK (1-12, MEDIUM, OR LOW)	CATEGORY	ACTION ITEM
1	Unite	Create an ongoing coalition / organization to move the Grander Vision forward, including convening regular meetings between the communities and maintaining Grander Vision information online
2	Unite	Enhance the leadership component of the Grander Vision coalition to develop leaders, spokespeople, and supporters
3	Live	Provide economic development strategies and tools, such as tax abatement, tax increment financing, tax credits, and/or land banking to incentive the development of affordable housing units, senior housing development, and mixed use development projects
4	Live	Promote programs and standards to maintain and create “quality housing” in the communities
5	Learn	Create an early childhood education plan
6	Work	Further enhance marketing packages for targeting potential employers
7	Work	Develop economic development strategies for key areas
8	Live	Enforce existing regulations covering rental housing
9	Play	Develop entertainment strategies for all of the communities
10	Learn	Establish cultural engagement opportunities across all Hall County communities
11	Live	Create a regional transportation plan to serve the local communities and beyond
12	Play	Create a regional or county-wide parks and recreation system
Medium	Live	Provide public transportation for all
Medium	Live	Encourage neighborhood associations to enhance community safety, host community activities / festivals, and reduce crime
Medium	Live	Provide support for the region’s most vulnerable populations
Medium	Work	Develop a “culture of entrepreneurship” in the local communities to support small and emerging businesses
Medium	Play	Support the development of arts and humanities county-wide
Medium	Play	Support community beautification initiatives
Medium	Learn	Enhance cultural engagement and understanding
Medium	Learn	Further enhance the “21st Century Learning Model” and share across different communities
Medium	Learn	Develop a “lifelong learning plan” for the area
Medium	Learn	Further enhance career pathways and training programs with local and future education providers
Low	Live	Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan for the communities
Low	Live	Introduce stormwater management and irrigation best practices, as applied to all land use types, from agriculture and open space to industrial land uses
Low	Live	Guide the evolution of a healthy community through the use of Healthy Communities Metrics
Low	Live	Provide access to healthy foods

Priority 1: Create an ongoing coalition / organization to move the Grander Vision forward, including convening regular meetings between the communities and maintaining Grander Vision information online

Potential Key Players: Various community and business leaders

Timeline: Less than a year

Action Steps:

- Convene a program of regular meetings (at least one to two times per year) between the various communities, school districts, and non-profits to advance various issues (including elected and appointed officials and active organizations or special interest groups)
- Create an online app and website with information and a calendar of events
- Leverage webinars and online meetings across the communities



The Grander Vision is intended to set a road map for all of the Hall County communities, including nearby agricultural areas.

Priority 2: Enhance the leadership component of the Grander Vision coalition to develop leaders, spokespeople, and supporters

Potential Key Players: Various community leaders

Timeline: 1 - 2 years

Action Steps:

- Target the Grander Vision to youth, young adults and minority and ethnic groups
- Ensure that enthusiastic seniors and civic / community leaders from a variety of backgrounds 1) teach future leaders about the importance of the Grander Vision, 2) help future leaders develop personal leadership skills that can be leveraged to help advance the vision, and 3) assist future leaders with brainstorming activities that can be used to draw and engage younger populations and minority groups in Grander Vision efforts
- Ensure that leaders of the Grander Vision effort lead and organize Grander Vision-focused speaking opportunities, community events, and activities. They should also use advances in media and communications to further awareness and improve community support of top priority Grander Vision strategies.
- Ensure that the leadership component works hand-in-hand with the larger Grander Vision coalition while maintaining a focus on leadership development, engagement, and inclusion.



Participants in the Grander Vision effort may serve as key candidates to help lead the effort in the future.

Priority 3: Provide economic development tools, such as tax abatement, tax increment financing, tax credits, and/or land banking to incentivize the development of affordable housing units, senior housing development, and mixed use development projects

Potential Key Players: The chamber of commerce, economic development officials, the development community, and housing advocates

Timeline: 2 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Research examples of tools that have worked in similar communities in the Midwest and beyond
- Create a draft set of strategies and review with the development community and local government agencies and officials
- Once adopted, actively market and advertise these tools as part of the area's efforts to attract new business



The Copper Creek development in Grand Island is a notable example of a residential community serving the demand for housing in Hall County.

Priority 4: Promote programs and standards to maintain and create “quality housing” in the communities

Potential Key Players: Local governments, developers, and local and regional builders

Timeline: 1 – 5 years

Action Steps:

- Support the use of higher quality construction and materials; coordinate public walk-through demonstrations of projects that employ new techniques, approaches, or materials
- Streamline / simplify city codes into a “common language” to help promote quality across the communities
- Create an educational document that caters to the “do it yourselfer” in order to promote the re-development of older homes
- Continue to expand efforts to manage abandoned homes
- Provide grants and loans for weatherization and overall modernization
- Offer training on how to “do it yourself” and upgrade existing housing
- Provide guidance on universal design to help all populations create homes that are efficient, adaptable, and flexible, regardless of the residents’ age or ability
- Enhance code enforcement in the local communities, where needed



The Doniphan Community Center has served as a community gathering place in Doniphan.

Priority 5: Create an early childhood education plan

Potential Key Players: Local schools and education advocacy groups

Timeline: 1 – 5 years

Action Steps:

- Ensure that all the communities provide quality pre-K education for students of all backgrounds, so a combination of individual and group needs can begin to be identified and managed early in the educational process
- Examine the roster of programs for early childhood education in all of the communities; and, incorporate foreign language and cultural competency training for teachers and students into the program
- Evaluate available funding for pre-K education and expansion of pre-K programs



A number of early childhood education programs offer resources throughout Hall County.

Priority 6: Further enhance marketing packages for targeting potential employers

Potential Key Players: Local business leaders, economic development officials

Timeline: 3 – 5 years

Action Steps:

- Emphasize the area's diverse population of well-qualified workers
- Emphasize the application of agriculture technology and innovation
- Emphasize strong educational resources, such as the Career Pathways Institute, that produce job-ready and technically skilled high school graduates
- Emphasize that all employers should ideally become involved and engaged in the development of the community's future
- Market aggressively to major, non-local employers
- Market aggressively to national employers that also have the potential to become significant employers in the local community
- Tie marketing efforts to initiatives to enhance the local quality of life, and encourage employers to become long-term community partners



A variety of businesses in the local area provide for a varied job base in Hall County.

Priority 7: Develop economic development strategies for key areas

Potential Key Players: Local governments, downtown associations, and property owners and tenants in the vicinity of focus areas

Timeline: 1 – 5 years

Action Steps:

- Develop the front door to the area (such as along the I-80 interchanges) through targeted land use and transportation policy decisions that capitalize on the sanitary sewer investment made in the same area. These locations could become employment centers that are supported by retail and housing development.
- Strengthen the local downtowns / Main Street areas in the communities



Participants in the Grander Vision expressed support for continuing to work to redevelop downtown or Main Street areas in Hall County, including Downtown Grand Island.

Priority 8: Enforce existing regulations covering rental housing

Potential Key Players: Local governmental agencies, the board of realtors, and neighborhood groups

Timeline: 1 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Enhance code enforcement where applicable
- Encourage renters and rental property owners to get involved with their local neighborhood and homes associations



Rental housing exists throughout Hall County, including here in Doniphan, and maintaining the quality of rental housing is an important objective.

Priority 9: Develop entertainment strategies for all of the communities

Potential Key Players: Local governments, prospective developers, and existing entertainment providers

Timeline: 6 - 10 years

Action Steps:

- Develop family-oriented opportunities that capitalize upon and expand the existing recreational and aquatic facilities in a way that allows them to serve children, adults, and senior citizens
- Encourage the development of both indoor and outdoor recreational/entertainment options that are oriented to youth, young adults, and/or families.
- Encourage prospective recreation/entertainment providers to meet with local representatives of their target markets before they begin development or construction to ensure that the activities they plan to offer meet the needs of and are successful with local customers.
- Ensure that the interior and exterior spaces associated with recreation/entertainment venues are easily accessible and employ ADA best management practices so all users may enjoy them.
- Ensure that major event spaces that draw users from around the region and beyond include accommodations for vendors and users alike, such as WIFI and hospitality services or suites.
- Change the perception that recreational/entertainment options are limited in the region by strategically and continually marketing existing and newly arriving activities to the community members who will most likely be interested in them.
- Create a regional calendar of activities to keep community members informed of scheduled activities; encourage local governments and community groups to link to the calendar via their websites and provide them with an easy method of adding content to the calendar
- Create a community “app” for Android and iOS smartphones that includes info on community activities, entertainment, dining and more based on the geographic location of the user

Priority 10: Establish cultural engagement opportunities across all Hall County communities

Potential Key Players Local cultural organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, and local governments

Timeline: 3 - 5 years

Action Steps:

- Convene meetings with different cultural groups to explore opportunities to create different types of engagement opportunities across the area.
- Work with community groups to develop a calendar of annual engagement opportunities across the area
- Explore opportunities for funding of engagement opportunities (from both public and private sources)
- Work with the convention and visitors bureau to market and publicize engagement opportunities in the area



Restaurants featuring ethnic food provide opportunities for cultural enrichment across Hall County.

Priority 11: Create a regional transportation plan to serve the local communities and beyond

Potential Key Players Local and county governments, the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Hall County, and the airport authority

Timeline: 1 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Market local air service, to expand connections to new cities
- Ensure transportation planning ties with land use planning, along key corridors
- Establish plans for transit access for the various communities and various population segments (disabled, elderly, etc.)



Air transportation provided at Central Nebraska Regional Airport has helped provide unprecedented connectivity from Hall County to the rest of the nation.

Priority 12: Complete a regional or county-wide parks and recreation system

Potential Key Players: Local governments, health departments, and elected leaders

Timeline: 1 - 5 years

Action Steps:

- Designate current and future trail corridors for hiking / biking
- Determine natural resources (such as creeks, river areas, riparian areas, woodland) that the communities wish to preserve
- Ensure that the plan provides sufficient protection and facilities for the Sandhill Crane areas
- Ensure parks and recreational systems link the communities and provide amenities in each community
- Explore opportunities to enhance indoor / outdoor aquatic facilities across the communities
- Explore opportunities for additional outdoor concert facilities, outdoor amphitheaters, and outdoor sporting complexes
- Explore opportunities to introduce dog parks and related facilities across the community
- Ensure adequate teams and facilities for baseball, soccer, softball, pickle ball, and other sports and activities



Parks and recreation facilities in Hall County range from larger parks such as Stolley Park and Kids Kingdom in Grand Island (in this photo) to smaller neighborhood parks, county parks, and even a few state parks.

Medium Priority: Provide public transportation for all

Potential Key Players: The metropolitan planning organization (MPO), local governments, local schools, and senior service agencies

Timeline: 6 - 10 years

Action Steps:

- Develop a bus system that provides reliable access to residents and workers of all ages at a reasonable cost
- Provide educational information about transit services in the region's most commonly used languages: English, Spanish, and Arabic



Hall County Public Transportation currently provides service to the local communities.

Medium Priority: Encourage neighborhood associations to enhance community safety, host community activities /festivals, and reduce crime

Potential Key Players: Neighborhood associations and other local advocacy groups

Timeline: 1 - 5 years

Action Steps:

- Conduct neighborhood assessments to help communities identify their strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities
- Encourage follow-through and provide support for the implementation of action steps that develop as a result of the neighborhood assessments
- Train residents in the use of crime reduction strategies, such as the formation of neighborhood watch or block groups
- Strengthen the relationship between neighborhoods and emergency responders
- Develop a process by which neighborhood groups can help local governments prioritize local infrastructure projects, such as roadway improvements, sidewalk installations, upgrades to catch basins, and other items.



Participants in the Grander Vision supported efforts to strengthen existing neighborhoods, including this north side Grand Island neighborhood.

Medium Priority: Provide support for the region's most vulnerable populations

Potential Key Players: Social service agencies, the faith-based community, and other local advocacy groups

Timeline: 6 - 10 years

Action Steps:

- Broaden the range of supportive services that are available to the impoverished, low-income, homeless and recently rehabilitated to include not only food, but also clothing, housing, job training, and health care.



Faith-based organizations in Hall County already provide a number of resources for vulnerable populations, including the young, and lower income families.

Medium Priority: Develop a “culture of entrepreneurship” in the local communities to support small land and emerging businesses

Potential Key Players: The media, the chamber of commerce, economic development officials, and representatives from the business community

Timeline: 1 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Develop an “Entrepreneurial Academy” that would include training on business operations and funding, and available resources
- Develop a talent incubator for innovators and pioneers supported by an “entrepreneurial / small business fund”
- Promote small business development through incentives and marketing campaigns
- Establish mentor or “big brother / big sister” relationships to nurture younger business people
- Explore the idea of Entrepreneurial Organization (EO) forums in the community
- Provide resources to support the arts, crafts, and the “makers” movement



Small businesses, such as these along the 4th Street corridor in Grand Island, help support the overall economy in Hall County.

Medium Priority: Support the development of arts and humanities county-wide

Potential Key Players: Local arts organizations and the city councils of the five communities

Timeline: 1 - 5 years

Action Steps:

- Outline future local theater opportunities (including children's theater)
- Outline public art strategies for all of the communities



Arts and humanities includes a wide variety of activities in Hall County, ranging from formal classes to acoustic performances in local venues.

Medium Priority: Support community beautification initiatives

Potential Key Players: Local public works departments, Nebraska Department of Roads, the various cities, and neighborhood groups

Timeline: 1 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Expand adopt-a-highway or adopt a street campaigns (beyond just state highways)
- Develop aesthetics standards for the various streets and roads across the communities
- Develop a fund for community beautification, across the range of communities
- Create or develop a key welcoming monument or feature to welcome people to the Grander Vision area (for example, at I-80 interchanges)



The I-80 at US 34 / 281 interchange provides a key gateway to all of the communities in Hall County.

Medium Priority: Enhance cultural engagement and understanding

Potential Key Players: Local governments, cultural groups, employers, and schools

Timeline: 3 - 5 years

Action Steps:

- Provide an emphasis on bi-lingual or multi-cultural knowledge, learning and cultural competencies for everyone
- Promote opportunities for learning that reflect the current population, e.g. offer free, sponsored or low-cost Spanish and/or Arabic Immersion Workshops with open enrollment policies that target English-speaking employers and residents of all ages. Allow participants to experience engagement by participating in art, music, story-telling, cooking, language and other cultural activities.

Medium Priority: Further enhance the “21st Century Learning Model” and share across different communities

Potential Key Players: Local schools and post-secondary educational providers / organizations

Timeline: 6 – 10 years

Action Steps:

- Support an educational system that uses the latest teaching strategies
- Emphasize critical thinking skillsets, and the development of deep understanding
- Emphasize writing and public speaking education
- Emphasize life skills (financial and budgeting skills, etc.) and adaptability
- Emphasize information, media, and technology skills

Medium Priority: Develop “Life Long Learning” Plan for the Area

Potential Key Players: Local schools, senior citizen groups, agencies working with seniors, and the local communities

Timeline: 1 – 5 years

Action Steps:

- Create a roster of learning opportunities tied to the needs of the growing senior population
- Develop adult learning opportunities that would appeal to the entire spectrum of adults (including working age, as well as seniors)
- Leverage library resources for lifelong learning initiatives
- Develop learning opportunities for everyday life across a spectrum of topics (CPR, first aid, keyboarding, personal health, grocery shopping, cooking, car repair, etc.)



The Edith Abbott Memorial Library in Grand Island is a strong example of a learning resource for all of Hall County, for people of all ages.

Medium Priority: Further enhance career pathways and training programs with local and future education providers

Potential Key Players: Local school districts, local community colleges, technical schools, and area universities

Timeline: 6 – 10 years

Action Steps:

- Ensure that the programs offered tie to prospective local career opportunities; hold job fairs to demonstrate students' skills
- Establish a “cram school” to better prepare students to compete in the college entrance process, locally and beyond
- Explore options for local community colleges to offer four year programs in the local area
- Explore online educational options with career colleges, business schools, and other 4-year institutions
- Create interconnected, satellite campuses for the Career Pathways Institute across the region



College Park can be a means for providing future educational and vocational learning opportunities.

Low Priority: Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan for the communities

Potential Key Players: Local bicycle groups, neighborhood groups, local city governments, and the county government

Timeline: 2 - 4 years

Action Steps:

- Establish priority pedestrian / bike corridors within and connecting communities
- Establish design standards for future street / road expansions or renovations, to help accommodate biking and walking
- Explore funding and implementation strategies for the communities and the county



The communities have the opportunity to expand a number of existing bike paths to nearby lakes and recreational opportunities, like this one at Central Community College.

Low Priority: Introduce stormwater management and irrigation best practices as applied to all land use types, from agriculture and open space to industrial land uses

Potential Key Players: Local governments, the business community, and environmental groups

Timeline: 1 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Research best practices that have worked elsewhere in Nebraska and the Midwest
- Convene meetings with the agricultural community and the development community to explore solutions for stormwater management
- Coordinate any potential regulations across the various jurisdictions in the area



The Platte River is an important part of the region's stormwater management system.

Low Priority: Guide the evolution of a healthy community through the use of Healthy Communities Metrics

Potential Key Players: Local health departments and neighborhood and community representatives

Timeline: 1 - 2 years

Action Steps:

- Metrics across a variety of topics (obesity, disease rates, fitness, etc.)

Low Priority: Provide access to healthy foods

Potential Key Players: Existing farmers markets in the area, local schools, and neighborhood groups

Timeline: 1 - 3 years

Action Steps:

- Market the existing farmers markets within Hall County that provide healthy and culturally oriented foods and serve as spaces where residents, farmers, and shoppers can talk with one another, gather in plaza spaces, and learn more about healthier food options
- Educate community members on the benefits of healthy eating and where healthy, local, and/or cultural foods can be accessed; coordinate bi-annual community foods festivals to help with promotion.



Farmers markets, like this example, provide ample opportunities for residents to access healthy foods.

Where We Go from Here

The timeline and specific action steps for the Grander Vision going forward are not absolutely defined as a result of this process. Instead, now is the time for members of Hall County communities to come together as officials, community builders, and others to move the Grander Vision toward implementation.

Where We Go From Here

In terms of immediate next steps, the Grander Vision effort recommends the following:

- 1) Creation of a Grander Vision coalition with representation from both the City of Grand Island and Hall County, to serve as a leadership entity to guide the Grander Vision going forward. This group would meet on a regular basis (at least monthly) to organize various initiatives and projects stemming from the Grander Vision and would serve as the political champion of the effort going forward. The smaller communities of Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, and Wood River may choose to send representatives to this coalition group at the outset, or may elect to join the coalition as projects that affect their towns arise over the years.
- 2) Determination of a specific action plan for implementation near term (next 1 to 5 years). The coalition should meet and determine, from the set of action items outlined in this document as well as the identified prioritization of these items, a specific “action list” of a handful of key projects to complete within the next few years.
- 3) Execution of short term “action list”. The coalition leading the Grander Vision should then move forward to formally complete the set of action list items for the first few years. The coalition may need to form steering committees dedicated to the particular action items, if the size and magnitude of the efforts involved warrants a larger leadership component. The coalition and the steering committees would engage community stakeholder groups and various community segments as needed in order to move forward with the action list. For example, a project dedicated to expanding four-year degree options for students in Hall County would logically reach out to the local community colleges and trade schools and also engage groups of young people specifically. Representatives of local educational groups and colleges may serve on a steering committee for this type of effort. The group would develop a project plan to achieve the project’s goals and conduct typical project management activities during the course of the exercise (including coordinating meetings, coordinating publicity, integrating findings and content, and helping the group reach conclusions).

Where We Go From Here



The Steering Committee helped the project team arrive at a final set of action items for the Grander Vision. These action items will guide efforts going forward.

Over both the short term and the long term, the goal of the Grander Vision goes beyond the achievement of a set of specific “wish lists”, “action lists”, or “project lists”. The Grander Vision outlines a broad vision for the type of community and local area desired by current residents and stakeholders, and this overall view of the future should help inspire and inform a variety of community efforts across Hall County, ranging from those of non-profits, to those of the business community, the local schools, and the range of local governments. The Grander Vision is intended, beyond a specific set of actions, to inspire the community to reach for new heights and to, as the vision statement articulates, “nurture the hopes and dreams of the Heartland”. Now is the time for the local community to seize the day and make the Grander Vision a reality.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Focus Group Takeaways

The various Focus Group discussions held during June 2014 also informed the creation of the overall Vision Statement and Action Items for the Grander Vision. The following summarizes the key takeaways from these discussions.

- The community needs to provide a full range of educational opportunities (pre-K through college) to all students, and in some ways should think of itself as being in the “people developing” business
- The area needs more recreational offerings and things for young people to do in their spare time.
- The Hall County area needs to continue to engage people to make the region stronger. The Grander Vision effort is a good start.
- The community needs to continue to embrace, engage and accept other cultures.
- The community needs more higher paying jobs and a more diverse job base.
- Leaders in the community should make more contact with non-locally owned business owners in order to enhance the dialogue.
- The area very much needs more housing at all levels, and the various towns should make it more economically feasible to develop housing.
- The communities should work to re-establish pride in local neighborhoods, and work with local leaders to maintain neighborhoods before they fall apart.
- The area needs to make sure that young professionals can get a start and “make their mark” in Hall County
- The local area needs more public transportation offerings and other non-vehicular options
- The local cities should coordinate planning along the Highway 281 corridor and around the various I-80 interchanges.
- The community should explore potential railroad overpasses (over Broadwell and East Capital Avenue)
- The area needs to address water issues going forward.
- Hall County could capitalize on its agricultural focus by becoming an agri-business catalyst for economic development.
- Hall County should focus on becoming a healthier community (including an expansion of the Farmers Market, adding more green space, etc.)

Appendix 2: Community Open House Takeaways

August 2014 Community Open House

At the community open house on August 6th, participants provided input via a keypad polling survey concerning a range of questions concerning the overall vision of the Hall County area. Participants also met in smaller breakout groups to work together in formulating some draft “vision statements” for each of the planning frameworks – Live, Play, Work, Learn, and Unite. The following summarizes some of the key takeaways from the survey offered at this open house (and in an online version of the survey available for several days following the open house).

- Participants in particular would like to see the Grander Vision effort focus on Economic Development, Quality of Life, and Education.
- In terms of economic development specifically, participants would like to see the communities focus on promoting what the area has to offer, and increasing the number of higher paying jobs requiring higher levels of education.
- Participants would like the communities to focus on the full spectrum of education, but in particular focus on career and vocational training.
- In terms of housing, participants in particular would like to see the communities focus on revitalizing older neighborhood housing and expanding housing options for families.
- For recreational amenities, participants would like the Grander Vision to focus on hiking and biking trails, a children’s museum, indoor recreational facilities, and aquatic facilities.
- In terms of overall focus, participants would like the Hall County area to be known for several key themes, including:
 - Capitalizing on outdoor recreation and promoting healthy lifestyles
 - Having robust and distinctive downtowns
 - Celebrating diversity and heritage
 - Having strong and innovative K-12 education
 - Taking pride in neighborhoods
 - Creating partnerships to diversify the economy and attract new companies
- A total of nearly 80 percent of participants thought that carrying a joint vision forward for Hall County as part of the Grander Vision was either “highly important” or “somewhat important”.

Appendix 2: Community Open House Takeaways

October 2014 Community Open House

A total of 80 community members met during a set of two open house sessions on Monday, October 20th to play the “Make It Grander” card game. During this exercise, participants broke into groups and worked together to rank the various Action Items associated with the Grander Vision. This in-person input was invaluable and led directly to the ranking of the Action Items as outlined in this report. Participants in the open house also discussed how the effort could go forward, and this information helped to inform recommended “Next Steps” for the Grander Vision outlined in the main section of this document.

Appendix 3: Community Survey Takeaways

The following represents some key takeaways from the Community Survey conducted in the Hall County area over a six week period between late July and early August, 2014. A total of 2,020 participants provided input on this survey. These takeaways helped to inform the creation of the Vision Statement and Action Items for the Grander Vision later in the summer and early fall of 2014.

Quality of Life Goals: Participants in the Community Survey in particular supported decreasing taxes and fees in the area, increasing employment options, decreasing the crime rate, and increasing cultural amenities and facilities in Hall County.

Education Goals: Participants in the Community Survey in particular supported decreasing taxes and fees in the area, increasing employment options, decreasing the crime rate, and increasing cultural amenities and facilities in Hall County.

Housing Goals: Participants largely supported the construction of more housing for both renters and owners. The survey also supported initiatives to provide more lower cost housing options throughout the area. Finally, the survey supported efforts to continue revitalizing housing in older areas of the communities in Hall County.

Parks and Recreation Goals: Participants in the Community Survey supported, in particular, the construction of additional hiking and biking trails, the enhancement of aquatic facilities, the development of additional dog parks, enhancing fishing facilities, and exploring ideas to create an arboretum or botanical garden in the Hall County area.

Retail Goals: Participants supported attracting additional big box stores to the area, along with the development of additional boutiques, gift stores, and smaller retail outlets. The Community Survey also revealed support in particular for having more fine dining options in the Hall County area, for residents and visitors.

Entertainment Goals: Participants in the Community Survey supported enhancing the roster of concerts, developing options for children's theater, enhancing mini golf options, and providing more amusement places and arcades for young people in the community.

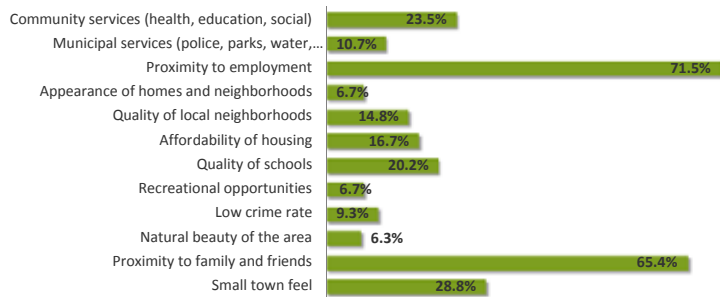
Cultural Harmony Goals: The Community Survey revealed support for including more cultural groups in larger organizations in the area, introducing more events in the local area to promote and showcase different cultures, and educating the community about various cultural differences in the area.

Ideas on How to Work Together: The results of the Community Survey supported having the communities work together to jointly market to outside companies and investors, jointly planning for development and land use, jointly planning for key services (such as police, fire, etc.), and planning proactively for future transportation needs.

Appendix 4: Community Survey Data

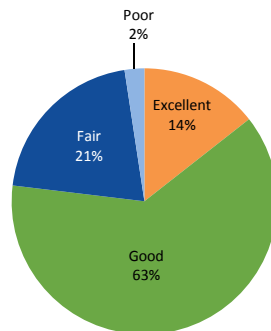
Q1. What are the three most important reasons you and/or your family choose to remain in Hall County? (Choose three)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Community services (health, education, social)	23.5%	473
Municipal services (police, parks, water, sewer)	10.7%	216
Proximity to employment	71.5%	1440
Appearance of homes and neighborhoods	6.7%	135
Quality of local neighborhoods	14.8%	298
Affordability of housing	16.7%	336
Quality of schools	20.2%	407
Recreational opportunities	6.7%	135
Low crime rate	9.3%	187
Natural beauty of the area	6.3%	126
Proximity to family and friends	65.4%	1318
Small town feel	28.8%	581
Other (please specify)	19.4%	390
<i>answered question</i>		2014
<i>skipped question</i>		4



Q2. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in the community in which you live? (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent	14.4%	288
Good	62.5%	1250
Fair	20.7%	415
Poor	2.4%	48
<i>answered question</i>		2001
<i>skipped question</i>		17



Q3. Please indicate four changes you think would improve the quality of life in the local area. (Choose four)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Improve pre-Kindergarten education (such as preschools)	5.4%	106
Improve K-12 education	18.2%	355
Provide more educational opportunities (for community college and beyond)	26.1%	509
Improve recreational / park facilities	32.2%	629
Provide different styles and types of housing	8.5%	166
Increase housing affordability	26.0%	507
Improve housing quality	10.9%	212
Decrease taxes and fees	48.4%	945
Improve roads	20.9%	408
Improve trails and sidewalks	19.8%	386
Improve public transportation	17.7%	345
Improve utility services (water, electricity, telecomm.)	5.4%	106
Increase employment opportunities	40.5%	790
Expand retail shopping options	20.2%	394
Improve police and fire services	11.7%	228
Decrease crime rate	37.6%	733
Increase cultural / arts opportunities / activities	37.0%	723
Other (please specify)	13.6%	266
<i>answered question</i>		1952
<i>skipped question</i>		66



Q4. How would you rate the following aspects of living in your community (Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, Grand Island, Wood River)?

	Don't Know	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Rating Average	Response Count
Parks and trails	82	169	712	848	109	2.38	1920
The various businesses and the services they provide	22	98	578	1110	112	2.62	1920
Noise control	38	277	676	827	102	2.35	1920
The design (including "look" and "feel") of new developments	44	147	661	952	116	2.49	1920
Property upkeep / cleanliness	19	398	862	611	30	2.12	1920
Odor control	50	481	762	571	56	2.05	1920
Downtown	24	428	868	561	39	2.08	1920
The safety of living and/or working in the community	16	187	633	953	131	2.52	1920
<i>answered question</i>							1920
<i>skipped question</i>							98



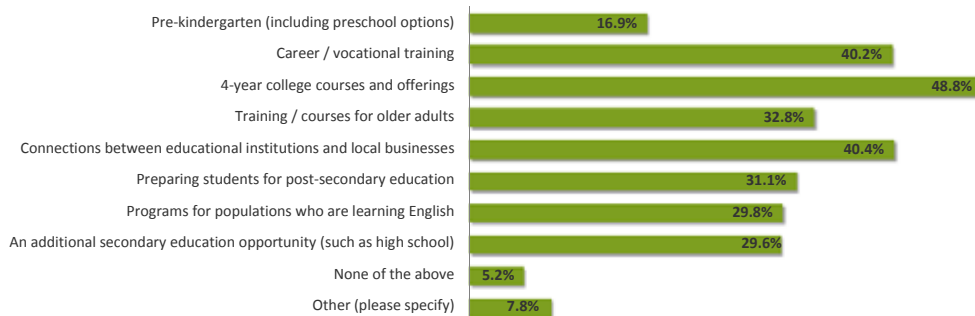
Q5. What focus should your community have in economic development efforts? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increasing the number of entry level jobs	18.9%	359
Increasing the number of higher paying jobs requiring higher levels of education	44.5%	848
Increasing the number and strength of small businesses	44.8%	853
Increasing the number and strength of larger businesses (including international companies)	28.4%	540
Training future workers	33.2%	632
Developing business leaders	24.4%	464
Promoting what your community has to offer	38.4%	732
All of the above	35.7%	680
answered question		1904
skipped question		114



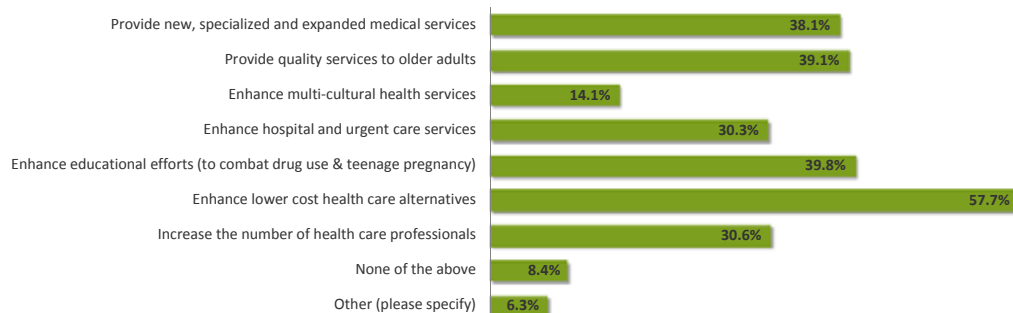
Q6. Which areas of education need to be improved the most? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Pre-kindergarten (including preschool options)	16.9%	321
Career / vocational training	40.2%	764
4-year college courses and offerings	48.8%	927
Training / courses for older adults	32.8%	623
Connections between educational institutions and local businesses	40.4%	767
Preparing students for post-secondary education	31.1%	590
Programs for populations who are learning English	29.8%	567
An additional secondary education opportunity (such as high school)	29.6%	563
None of the above	5.2%	99
Other (please specify)	7.8%	149
answered question		1900
skipped question		118



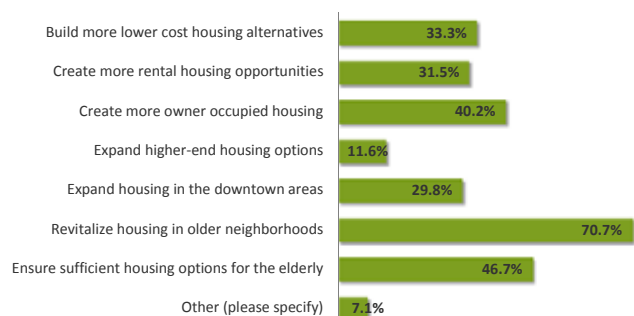
Q7. What goals do you have for health care in your community? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Provide new, specialized and expanded medical services	38.1%	717
Provide quality services to older adults	39.1%	737
Enhance multi-cultural health services	14.1%	265
Enhance hospital and urgent care services	30.3%	571
Enhance educational efforts (to combat drug use & teenage pregnancy)	39.8%	750
Enhance lower cost health care alternatives	57.7%	1087
Increase the number of health care professionals	30.6%	577
None of the above	8.4%	158
Other (please specify)	6.3%	119
answered question		1884
skipped question		134



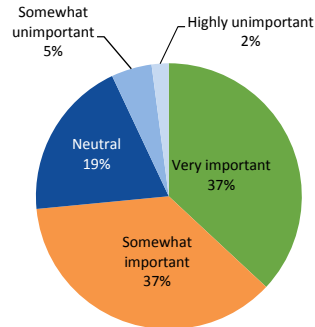
Q8. What vision do you have for the area in terms of housing? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Build more lower cost housing alternatives	33.3%	623
Create more rental housing opportunities	31.5%	590
Create more owner occupied housing	40.2%	753
Expand higher-end housing options	11.6%	217
Expand housing in the downtown areas	29.8%	557
Revitalize housing in older neighborhoods	70.7%	1323
Ensure sufficient housing options for the elderly	46.7%	874
Other (please specify)	7.1%	132
answered question		1872
skipped question		146



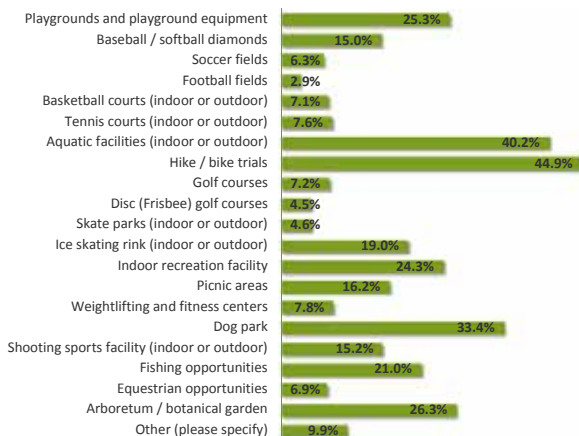
Q9. How important is it to better link the various communities in Hall County together in the future, in terms of day to day life and in developing an overall vision? (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Very important	36.9%	687
Somewhat important	36.5%	680
Neutral	19.5%	364
Somewhat unimportant	4.9%	92
Highly unimportant	2.1%	39
answered question		1862
skipped question		156



Q10. Please indicate up to four types of park / recreation amenities you would like to see expanded or improved in the local area. (Choose up to four)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Playgrounds and playground equipment	25.3%	460
Baseball / softball diamonds	15.0%	272
Soccer fields	6.3%	115
Football fields	2.9%	52
Basketball courts (indoor or outdoor)	7.1%	129
Tennis courts (indoor or outdoor)	7.6%	139
Aquatic facilities (indoor or outdoor)	40.2%	731
Hike / bike trails	44.9%	817
Golf courses	7.2%	130
Disc (Frisbee) golf courses	4.5%	82
Skate parks (indoor or outdoor)	4.6%	83
Ice skating rink (indoor or outdoor)	19.0%	346
Indoor recreation facility	24.3%	442
Picnic areas	16.2%	295
Weightlifting and fitness centers	7.8%	141
Dog park	33.4%	607
Shooting sports facility (indoor or outdoor)	15.2%	276
Fishing opportunities	21.0%	382
Equestrian opportunities	6.9%	125
Arboretum / botanical garden	26.3%	478
Other (please specify)	9.9%	180
answered question		1818
skipped question		200



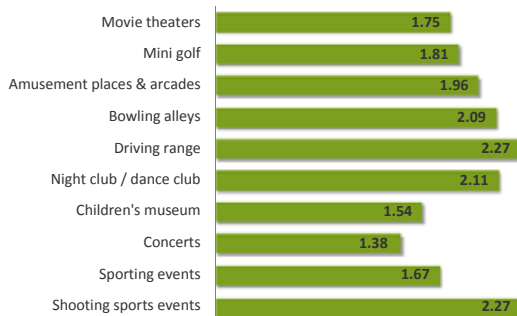
Q11. Please share your opinion about the supply of retail options in the area.

	Need more	Have enough	Have too many	Not sure	Rating Average	Response Count
Casual sit-down restaurants	614	1054	119	51	1.79	1838
Fine dining restaurants	1158	554	25	101	1.49	1838
Fast food restaurants	134	1068	582	54	2.30	1838
Boutiques / gift stores / small retail stores	996	642	41	159	1.65	1838
Big box stores (Wal-Mart, Target, etc.)	877	706	159	96	1.71	1838
Other (please specify)						290
answered question						1838
skipped question						180



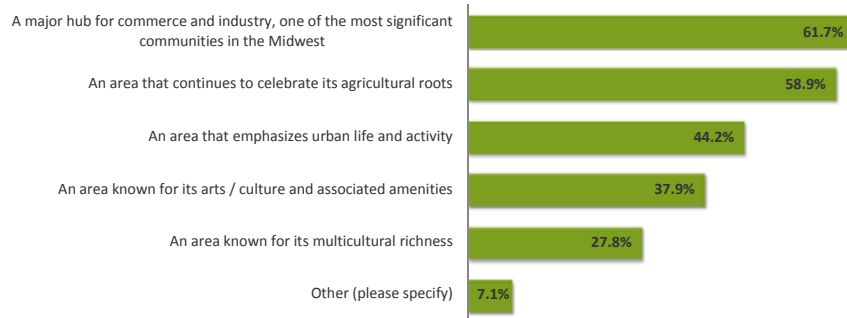
Q12. Please share your opinion about the supply of entertainment options in the area.

	Need more	Have enough	Have too many	Not sure	Rating Average	Response Count
Movie theaters	616	1127	9	73	1.75	1825
Mini golf	854	714	7	250	1.81	1825
Amusement places & arcades	786	667	26	346	1.96	1825
Bowling alleys	174	1472	19	160	2.09	1825
Driving range	263	1170	28	364	2.27	1825
Night club / dance club	682	652	95	396	2.11	1825
Children's museum	1345	226	8	246	1.54	1825
Concerts	1334	385	11	95	1.38	1825
Sporting events	976	641	35	173	1.67	1825
Shooting sports events	515	771	74	465	2.27	1825
Other (please specify)						114
answered question						1825
skipped question						193



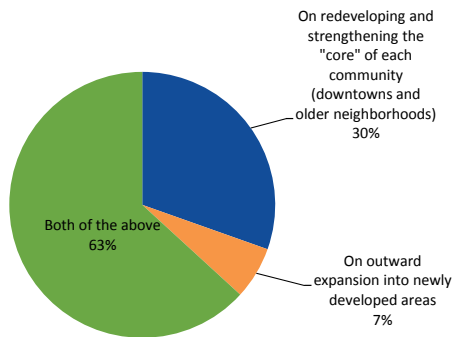
3. How would you like to see the local area evolve in the future? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
A major hub for commerce and industry, one of the most significant communities in the Midwest	61.7%	1122
An area that continues to celebrate its agricultural roots	58.9%	1070
An area that emphasizes urban life and activity	44.2%	804
An area known for its arts / culture and associated amenities	37.9%	689
An area known for its multicultural richness	27.8%	505
Other (please specify)	7.1%	129
answered question		1818
skipped question		200



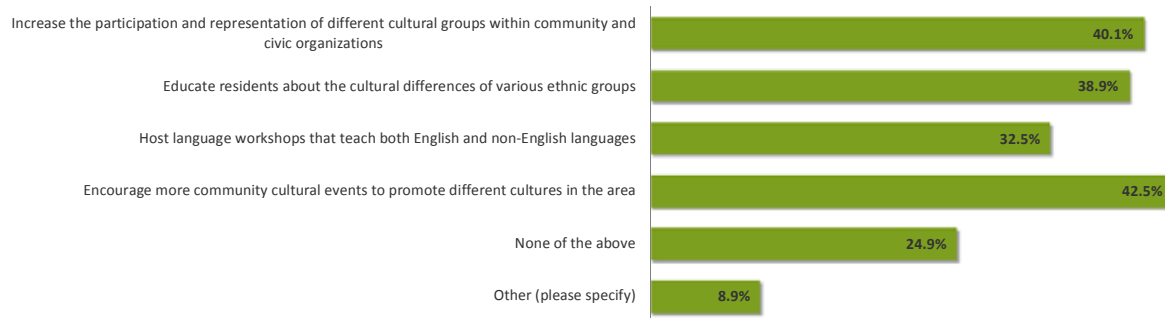
Q14. Where should local communities focus their efforts? (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
On redeveloping and strengthening the "core" of each community (downtowns and older neighborhoods)	30.4%	553
On outward expansion into newly developed areas	6.4%	116
Both of the above	63.2%	1149
answered question		1818
skipped question		200



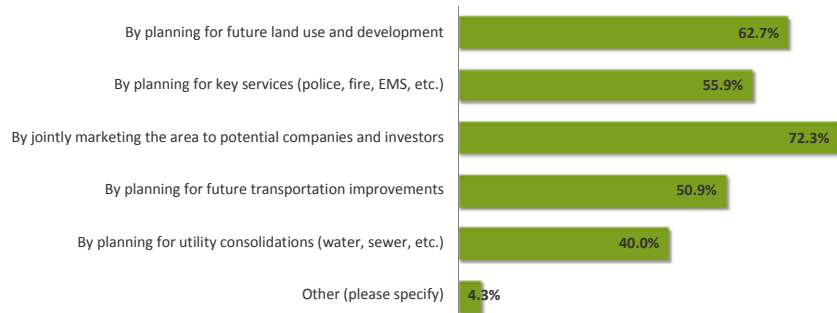
Q15. What goals or strategies would create greater cultural harmony in the local area? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increase the participation and representation of different cultural groups within community and	40.1%	727
Educate residents about the cultural differences of various ethnic groups	38.9%	704
Host language workshops that teach both English and non-English languages	32.5%	589
Encourage more community cultural events to promote different cultures in the area	42.5%	769
None of the above	24.9%	451
Other (please specify)	8.9%	162
<i>answered question</i>		1811
<i>skipped question</i>		207



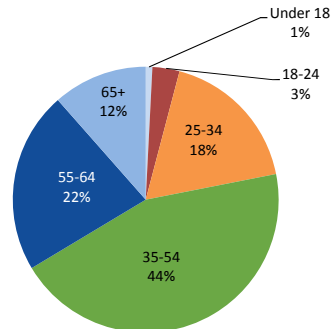
Q16. How should local communities in Hall County work together in the future? (Choose all that apply)

	Response Percent	Response Count
By planning for future land use and development	62.7%	1133
By planning for key services (police, fire, EMS, etc.)	55.9%	1011
By jointly marketing the area to potential companies and investors	72.3%	1306
By planning for future transportation improvements	50.9%	919
By planning for utility consolidations (water, sewer, etc.)	40.0%	722
Other (please specify)	4.3%	78
<i>answered question</i>		1807
<i>skipped question</i>		211



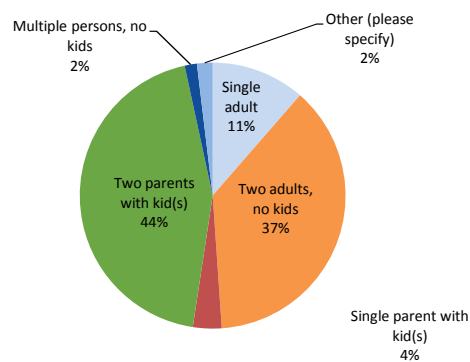
Q17. The following is my current age range (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18	0.8%	15
18-24	3.3%	60
25-34	17.8%	322
35-54	44.5%	804
55-64	22.1%	399
65+	11.5%	207
answered question		1807
skipped question		211



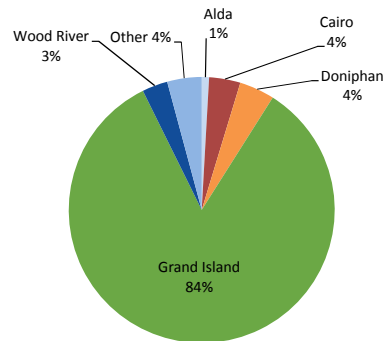
Q18. Please describe the current living situation in your household. (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Single adult	11.4%	205
Two adults, no kids	37.5%	678
Single parent with kid(s)	3.5%	63
Two parents with kid(s)	44.2%	799
Multiple persons, no kids	1.5%	27
Other (please specify)	1.9%	34
answered question		1806
skipped question		212



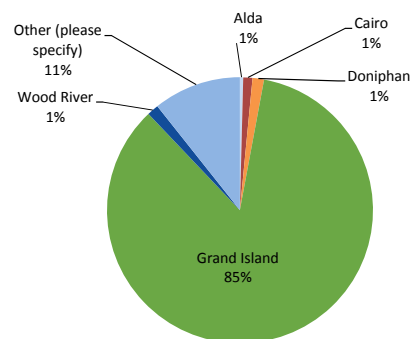
Q19. What part of the local area do you live in? (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Alda	0.9%	16
Cairo	3.8%	68
Doniphan	4.3%	77
Grand Island	83.8%	1512
Wood River	3.1%	56
Other (please specify)	4.2%	76
answered question		1805
skipped question		213



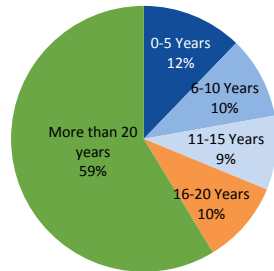
Q20. Where do you primarily work? (Choose one)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Alda	0.4%	7
Cairo	1.1%	20
Doniphan	1.4%	26
Grand Island	85.0%	1534
Wood River	1.4%	25
Other (please specify)	10.7%	193
answered question		1805
skipped question		213



Q21. How long have you lived in Hall County? (Choose one)

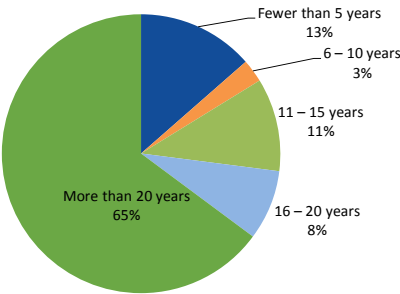
	Response Percent	Response Count
0-5 Years	12.2%	220
6-10 Years	10.0%	181
11-15 Years	9.0%	162
16-20 Years	10.1%	182
More than 20 years	58.7%	1057
answered question		1802
skipped question		216



Appendix 5: Keypad Polling Data 8/6 (In Person)

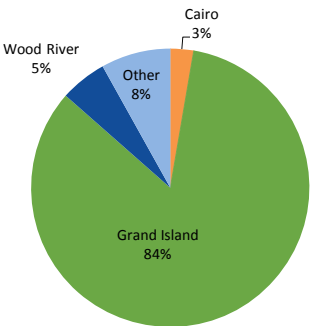
Q1. How long have you lived in Hall County? (Demographic Assignment)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Fewer than 5 years	13.51%	5
6 – 10 years	2.70%	1
11 – 15 years	10.81%	4
16 – 20 years	8.11%	3
More than 20 years	64.86%	24
Totals	100%	37



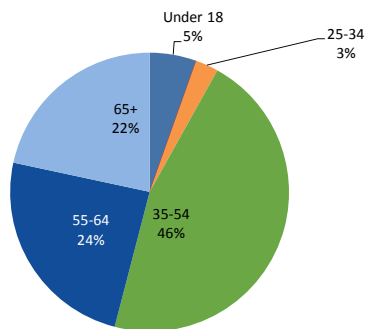
Q2. What part of the local area do you live in? (Multiple Choice)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Alda	0.00%	0
Cairo	2.70%	1
Doniphan	0.00%	0
Grand Island	83.78%	31
Wood River	5.41%	2
Other	8.11%	3
Totals	100%	37



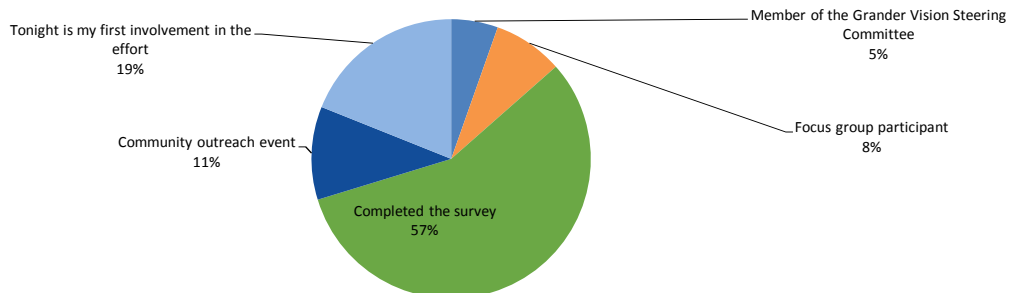
Q3. The following is my current age range (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Under 18	5.41%	2
18-24	0.00%	0
25-34	2.70%	1
35-54	45.95%	17
55-64	24.32%	9
65+	21.62%	8
Totals	100%	37



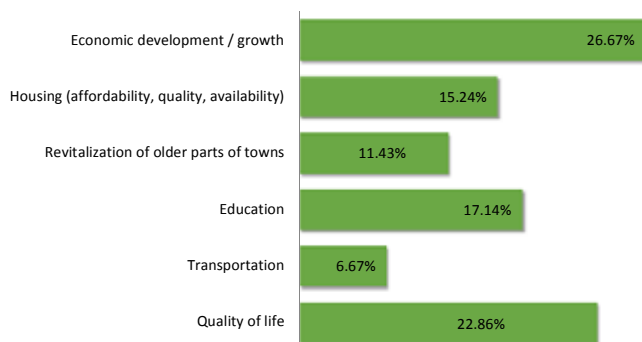
Q4. How have you participated in the Grander Vision so far? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Member of the Grander Vision Steering Committee	5.41%	2
Focus group participant	8.11%	3
Completed the survey	56.76%	21
Community outreach event	10.81%	4
Tonight is my first involvement in the effort	18.92%	7
Totals	100%	37



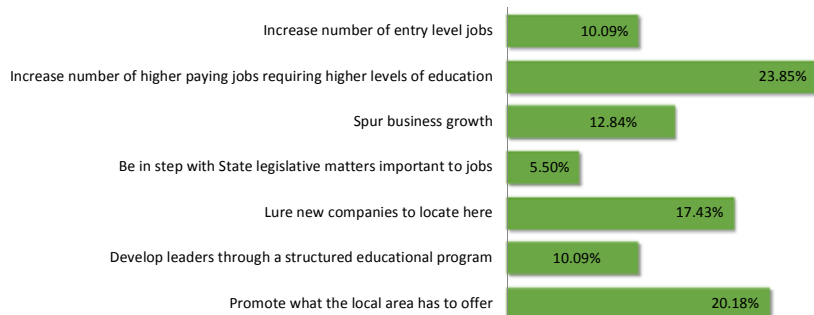
Q5. What are the most important topics/issues to address in the creation of the Vision for the area?
Please rank your top three. (Multiple Choice - Multiple Response)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Economic development / growth	26.67%	28
Housing (affordability, quality, availability)	15.24%	16
Revitalization of older parts of towns	11.43%	12
Education	17.14%	18
Transportation	6.67%	7
Quality of life	22.86%	24
Totals	100%	105



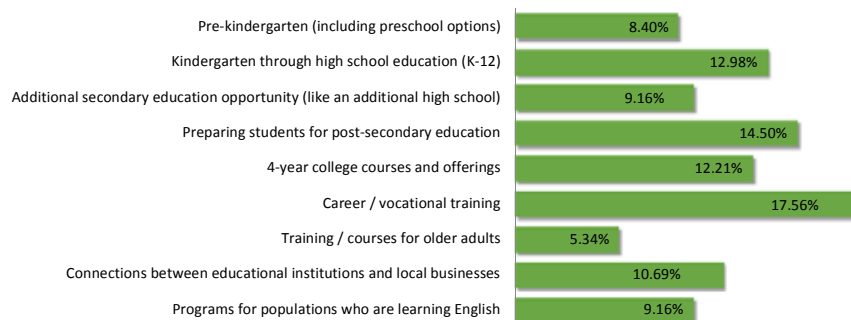
Q6. What focus should the local area have in economic development efforts? Choose all that apply. (Multiple Choice - Multiple Response)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Increase number of entry level jobs	10.09%	11
Increase number of higher paying jobs requiring higher levels of education	23.85%	26
Spur business growth	12.84%	14
Be in step with State legislative matters important to jobs	5.50%	6
Lure new companies to locate here	17.43%	19
Develop leaders through a structured educational program	10.09%	11
Promote what the local area has to offer	20.18%	22
Totals	100%	109



Q7. Areas of education focus should be which of the following? Choose all that apply. (Multiple Choice - Multiple Response)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Pre-kindergarten (including preschool options)	8.40%	11
Kindergarten through high school education (K-12)	12.98%	17
Additional secondary education opportunity (like an additional high school)	9.16%	12
Preparing students for post-secondary education	14.50%	19
4-year college courses and offerings	12.21%	16
Career / vocational training	17.56%	23
Training / courses for older adults	5.34%	7
Connections between educational institutions and local businesses	10.69%	14
Programs for populations who are learning English	9.16%	12
Totals	100%	131



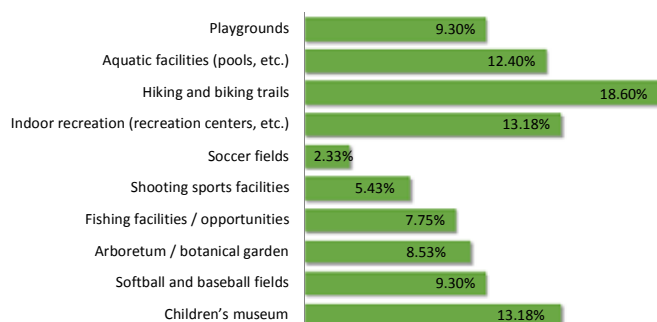
Q8. What vision do you have for the area in terms of housing? Choose all that apply. (Multiple Choice - Multiple Response)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Increase amount of lower cost housing alternatives	13.33%	16
Create more rental housing opportunities	5.83%	7
Create more owner occupied housing	14.17%	17
Expand higher-end housing options	5.00%	6
Expand housing in downtown areas	13.33%	16
Dedicate property/sales tax dollars to development of second story downtown housing	5.00%	6
Revitalize housing in older neighborhoods	19.17%	23
Expand housing options for families	15.00%	18
Ensure sufficient housing options for the elderly	9.17%	11
Totals	100%	120



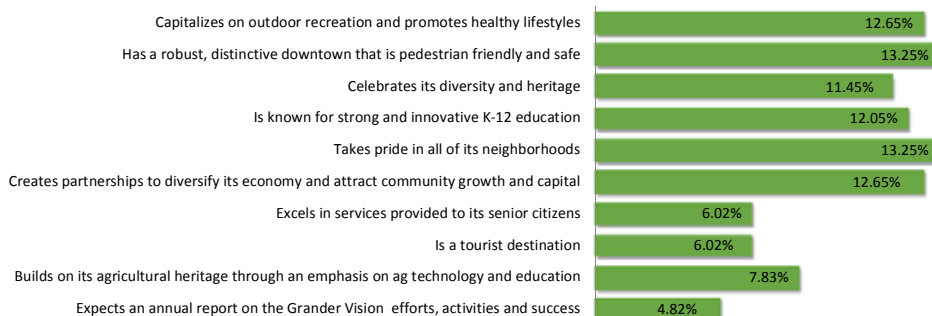
Q9. Which of the following recreational amenities would you like to see expanded or improved in the area? Choose all that apply. (Multiple Choice - Multiple Res)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Playgrounds	9.30%	12
Aquatic facilities (pools, etc.)	12.40%	16
Hiking and biking trails	18.60%	24
Indoor recreation (recreation centers, etc.)	13.18%	17
Soccer fields	2.33%	3
Shooting sports facilities	5.43%	7
Fishing facilities / opportunities	7.75%	10
Arboretum / botanical garden	8.53%	11
Softball and baseball fields	9.30%	12
Children's museum	13.18%	17
Totals	100%	129



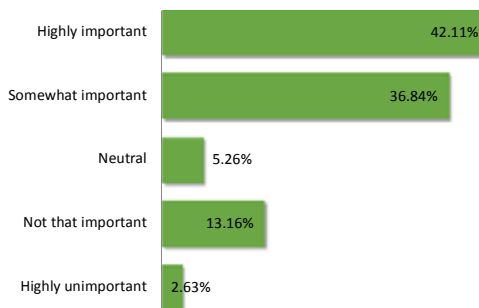
Q10. What do you want your community to be? Choose all that apply. An area that... (Multiple Choice - Multiple Response)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Capitalizes on outdoor recreation and promotes healthy lifestyles	12.65%	21
Has a robust, distinctive downtown that is pedestrian friendly and safe	13.25%	22
Celebrates its diversity and heritage	11.45%	19
Is known for strong and innovative K-12 education	12.05%	20
Takes pride in all of its neighborhoods	13.25%	22
Creates partnerships to diversify its economy and attract community growth and capital	12.65%	21
Excels in services provided to its senior citizens	6.02%	10
Is a tourist destination	6.02%	10
Builds on its agricultural heritage through an emphasis on ag technology and education	7.83%	13
Expects an annual report on the Grander Vision efforts, activities and success	4.82%	8
Totals	100%	166



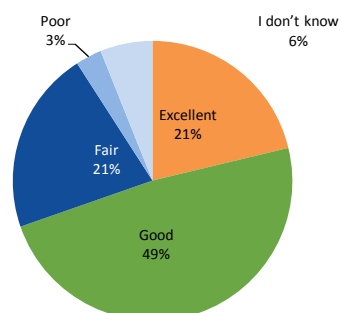
Q11. How important will it be for all of the communities involved to carry a joint vision forward for the future? Choose one. (Multiple Choice)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Highly important	42.11%	16
Somewhat important	36.84%	14
Neutral	5.26%	2
Not that important	13.16%	5
Highly unimportant	2.63%	1
Totals	100%	38



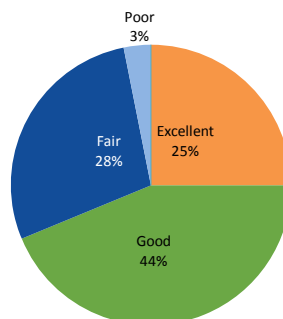
Q12. How would you rate the draft Vision Statement created by the “Live” group? (Multiple Choice)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Excellent	21.21%	7
Good	48.48%	16
Fair	21.21%	7
Poor	3.03%	1
I don't know	6.06%	2
Totals	100%	33



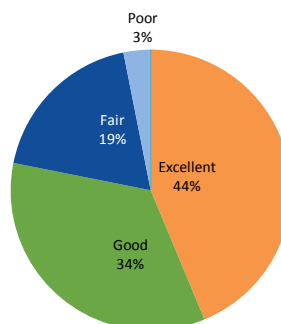
Q13. How would you rate the draft Vision Statement created by the “Work” group? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Excellent	25.00%	8
Good	43.75%	14
Fair	28.13%	9
Poor	3.13%	1
I don't know	0.00%	0
Totals	100%	32



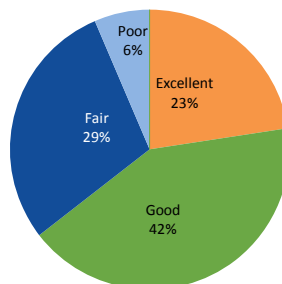
Q14. How would you rate the draft Vision Statement created by the “Play” group? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Excellent	43.75%	14
Good	34.38%	11
Fair	18.75%	6
Poor	3.13%	1
I don't know	0.00%	0
Totals	100%	32



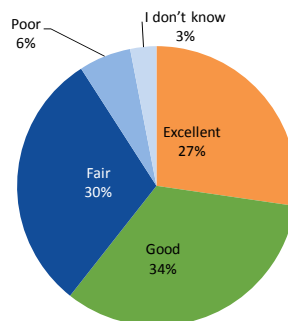
Q15. How would you rate the draft Vision Statement created by the “Learn” group? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Excellent	22.58%	7
Good	41.94%	13
Fair	29.03%	9
Poor	6.45%	2
I don't know	0.00%	0
Totals	100%	31



Q16. How would you rate the draft vision statement created by the “Unite” group? (Multiple Choice)

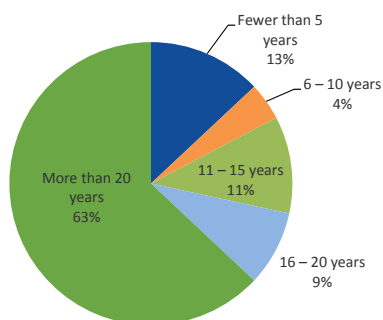
Responses		
	Percent	Count
Excellent	27.27%	9
Good	33.33%	11
Fair	30.30%	10
Poor	6.06%	2
I don't know	3.03%	1
Totals	100%	33



Appendix 6: Keypad Polling Data 8/6 (Online)

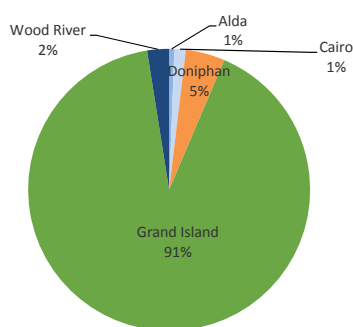
Q1. How long have you lived in Hall County?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Fewer than 5	13.0%	21
6 – 10 years	4.3%	7
11 – 15 years	11.1%	18
16 – 20 years	8.6%	14
More than 20	63.0%	102
<i>answered question</i>		162
<i>skipped question</i>		3



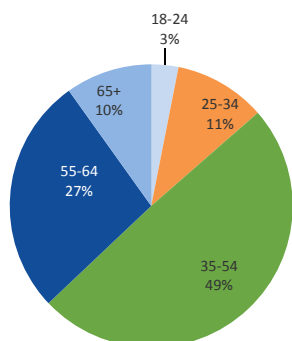
Q2. What part of the local area do you live in?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Alda	0.6%	1
Cairo	1.3%	2
Doniphan	4.5%	7
Grand Island	91.1%	143
Wood River	2.5%	4
Other		5
<i>answered question</i>		157
<i>skipped question</i>		8



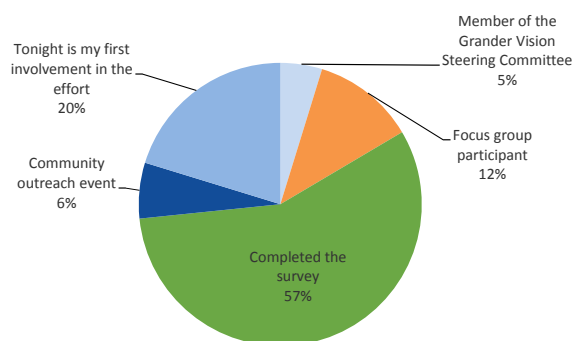
Q3. The following is my current age range

	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18	0.0%	0
18-24	3.1%	5
25-34	10.5%	17
35-54	49.4%	80
55-64	27.2%	44
65+	9.9%	16
<i>answered question</i>		162
<i>skipped question</i>		3



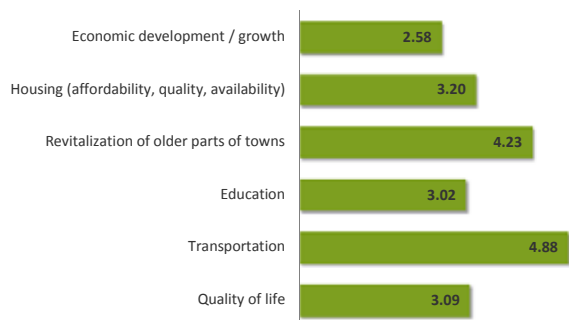
Q4. How have you participated in the Grander Vision so far?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Member of the Grander Vision Steering Committee	5.6%	9
Focus group participant	13.8%	22
Completed the survey	66.9%	107
Community outreach event	7.5%	12
Tonight is my first involvement in the effort	23.8%	38
<i>answered question</i>		160
<i>skipped question</i>		5



Q5. What are the most important topics/issues to address in the creation of the Vision for the area?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
Economic development / growth	43	38	27	18	15	5	2.58	146
Housing (affordability, quality, availability)	30	22	22	40	25	7	3.20	146
Revitalization of older parts of towns	7	15	18	32	46	28	4.23	146
Education	22	36	42	20	15	11	3.02	146
Transportation	6	10	10	18	27	75	4.88	146
Quality of life	38	25	27	18	18	20	3.09	146
<i>answered question</i>								146
<i>skipped question</i>								19



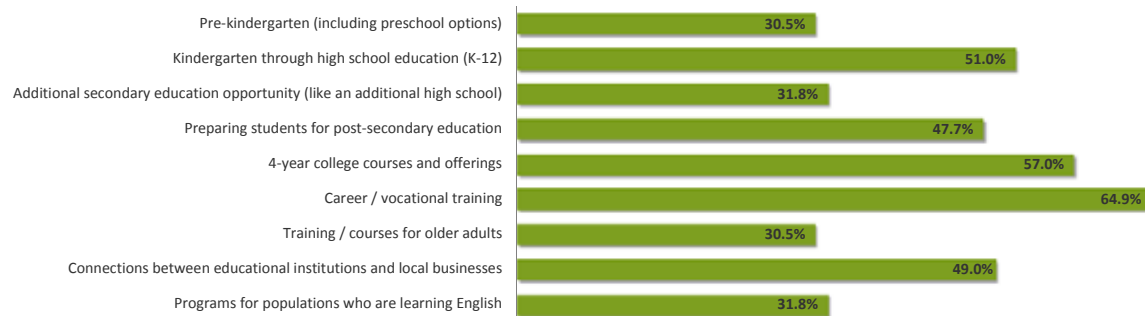
Q6. What focus should the local area have in economic development efforts? Choose all that apply.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increase number of entry level jobs	37.3%	56
Increase number of higher paying jobs requiring higher levels of education	69.3%	104
Spur business growth	60.0%	90
Be in step with State legislative matters important to jobs	25.3%	38
Lure new companies to locate here	75.3%	113
Develop leaders through a structured educational program	34.7%	52
Promote what the local area has to offer	64.0%	96
<i>answered question</i>		150
<i>skipped question</i>		15



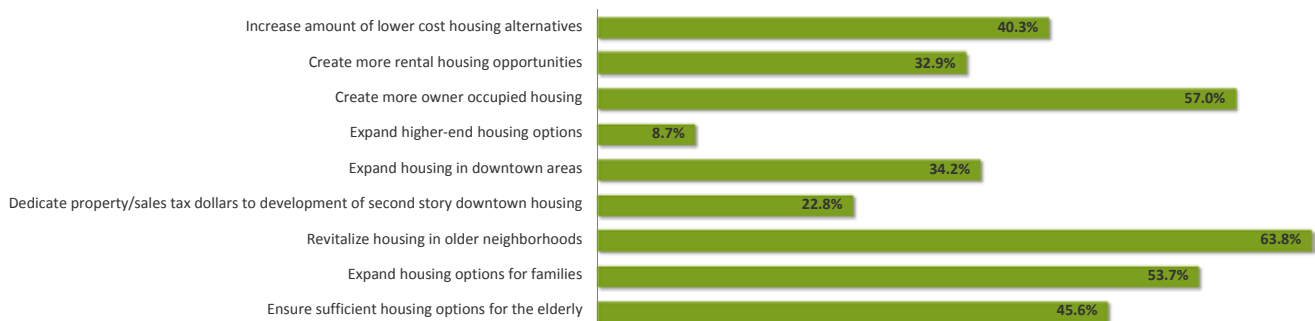
Q7. Areas of education focus should be which of the following? Choose all that apply.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Pre-kindergarten (including preschool options)	30.5%	46
Kindergarten through high school education (K-12)	51.0%	77
Additional secondary education opportunity (like an additional high school)	31.8%	48
Preparing students for post-secondary education	47.7%	72
4-year college courses and offerings	57.0%	86
Career / vocational training	64.9%	98
Training / courses for older adults	30.5%	46
Connections between educational institutions and local businesses	49.0%	74
Programs for populations who are learning English	31.8%	48
answered question		151
skipped question		14



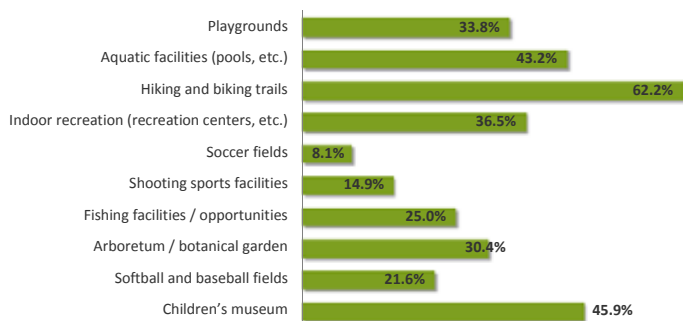
Q8. What vision do you have for the area in terms of housing? Choose all that apply.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increase amount of lower cost housing alternatives	40.3%	60
Create more rental housing opportunities	32.9%	49
Create more owner occupied housing	57.0%	85
Expand higher-end housing options	8.7%	13
Expand housing in downtown areas	34.2%	51
Dedicate property/sales tax dollars to development of second story downtown housing	22.8%	34
Revitalize housing in older neighborhoods	63.8%	95
Expand housing options for families	53.7%	80
Ensure sufficient housing options for the elderly	45.6%	68
answered question		149
skipped question		16



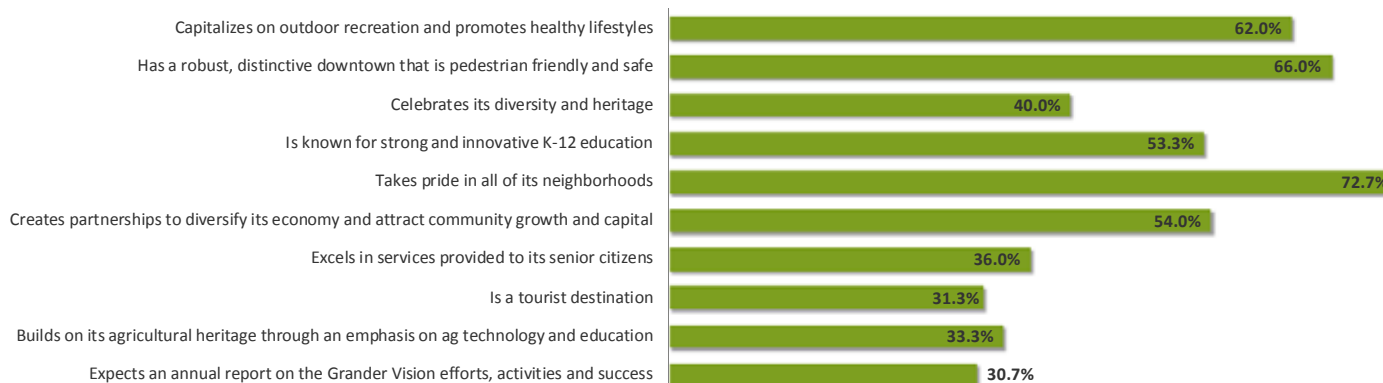
Q9. Which of the following recreational amenities would you like to see expanded or improved in the area? Choose all that apply.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Playgrounds	33.8%	50
Aquatic facilities (pools, etc.)	43.2%	64
Hiking and biking trails	62.2%	92
Indoor recreation (recreation centers, etc.)	36.5%	54
Soccer fields	8.1%	12
Shooting sports facilities	14.9%	22
Fishing facilities / opportunities	25.0%	37
Arboretum / botanical garden	30.4%	45
Softball and baseball fields	21.6%	32
Children's museum	45.9%	68
<i>answered question</i>		148
<i>skipped question</i>		17



Q10. What do you want your community to be? Choose all that apply. An area that...

	Response Percent	Response Count
Capitalizes on outdoor recreation and promotes healthy lifestyles	62.0%	93
Has a robust, distinctive downtown that is pedestrian friendly and safe	66.0%	99
Celebrates its diversity and heritage	40.0%	60
Is known for strong and innovative K-12 education	53.3%	80
Takes pride in all of its neighborhoods	72.7%	109
Creates partnerships to diversify its economy and attract community growth and capital	54.0%	81
Excels in services provided to its senior citizens	36.0%	54
Is a tourist destination	31.3%	47
Builds on its agricultural heritage through an emphasis on ag technology and education	33.3%	50
Expects an annual report on the Grander Vision efforts, activities and success	30.7%	46
<i>answered question</i>		150
<i>skipped question</i>		15



Q11. How important will it be for all of the communities involved to carry a joint vision forward for the future?
Choose one.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Highly important	49.0%	73
Somewhat important	34.9%	52
Neutral	12.1%	18
Not that important	3.4%	5
Highly unimportant	0.7%	1
answered question		149
skipped question		16

