

Results by age of respondents

Seven of the 26 survey statements show significant differences by age category of the respondents (see facing page). "Significant" is defined for the purposes of this analysis as having a difference of 10 percentage points or more agreement (agree strongly + agree somewhat) among the age groups or 40 total points (see p. 3). The age groups are "under 21," "21-40," "41-60," and "over 60." Only 16 responses are from people younger than 21 years old, a very small sample. Therefore, the percentages associated with the under-21-year-old respondents should be interpreted with caution; they were not used to determine the significance of age differences.

Four statements show a trend toward *greater* agreement the *older* the age group:

- Lack of jobs, especially for young people, is a problem in our area.
- Private property rights are more important than public interest when a development is proposed.
- Similar commercial development along U.S. 41 between Hancock and Calumet would benefit the area.
- The benefits of recent commercial development along M-26 and Sharon Avenue outweigh any disadvantages.

The "lack of jobs" result appears to reflect a belief—commonly expressed by some older residents at public meetings and in letters to the editor—that young people are forced to leave the area to find good jobs. The views of young people who have left the area, of course, are not represented by this survey. Young people who are living in the area but are not heads of households are also underrepresented.

People over 60 are the most supportive among the age groups of the following two statements, which lack clear trends with age:

- Developers should be allowed to develop with little or no restriction because it helps the local economy.
- Property owners should have absolute and final say about what happens on their property.

Only one statement with a range of total points greater than 40 or agreement percentage points greater than 10 among the age groups shows a trend of *decreasing* agreement the older the age group:

- More recreational opportunities are needed in my township/city/village.

Seven other statements show lesser trends with age of respondents. Five statements have *stronger* agreement the *younger* the age group: "Some open space and undeveloped land should be protected from future development," "Improvement of existing properties, especially those of historical significance, should be encouraged as an alternative to developing more land," "The natural environment, scenic beauty, and 'getting away from it all' are important to our quality of life," "Some roads should be designated as 'scenic' and should retain their natural character," and "Environmental impacts should be considered when creating new jobs." Two statements have *stronger* agreement the *older* the age group: "Property is becoming unaffordable for local residents," and "Public access to waterfront areas is becoming too limited." Complete results by age appear in Volume 2 (Appendix C).

Houghton County Responses by Age

Results ranked from largest to smallest range of total points* among age groups for each statement.

	Under 21 (16 responses)**	21-40 (465 responses)	41-60 (756 responses)	60 and over (584 responses)	Overall (1,936 responses)***	Range of Total Points*
Statement:						
↑ Largest Difference of Opinion						
Lack of jobs, especially for young people, is a problem in our area.	81	107	142	164	138	57
Private property rights are more important than public interest when a development is proposed.	75	68	70	124	86	57
Similar commercial development along US-41 between Hancock and Calumet would benefit the area.	-13	-2	10	54	20	56
Property owners should have absolute and final say about what happens on their property.	94	88	87	137	103	49
Developers should be allowed to develop with little or no restriction because it helps the local economy.	-63	-98	-108	-64	-91	44
The benefits of recent commercial development along M-26 and Sharon Ave. outweigh any disadvantages.	63	14	15	51	26	37
More recreational opportunities are needed in my township/city/village.	69	51	33	15	32	36
↓ Smallest Difference of Opinion						
Some open space and undeveloped land should be protected from future development.	169	145	123	116	127	30
I feel that I have a voice in shaping the future of my community/township/city.	-44	26	22	51	31	29
Property is becoming unaffordable for local residents.	6	103	116	131	117	28
Improvement of existing properties, especially those of historical significance, should be encouraged as an alternative to developing more land.	119	139	118	114	123	25
Public access to waterfront areas is becoming too limited.	75	87	98	108	98	21
The natural environment, scenic beauty, and "getting away from it all" are important to our quality of life.	188	178	168	159	168	20
Some roads should be designated as "scenic" and should retain their natural character.	169	133	121	114	123	20
Tax incentives associated with land trusts, conservation easements, and purchase of development rights should be encouraged to help landowners keep their land in its present use if they prefer not to sell to a developer.	125	111	104	123	113	19
Environmental impacts should be considered when creating new jobs.	169	151	134	133	139	18
New development would be acceptable to more people if it blended better with the historic buildings in the area.	88	92	77	79	83	16
"Big city" shopping and entertainment benefit the area.	81	34	45	38	41	11
Change brought by economic development should be balanced with actions to preserve community character.	125	139	129	140	136	11
Tax incentives, such as tax abatements, should be used to attract new businesses.	13	30	38	37	35	8
Long-range planning is needed to manage growth and to protect our environment and natural resources such as drinking water.	194	172	165	172	169	7
Public costs for new water, sewer, and other services should be considered when any development is proposed.	169	159	161	164	161	6
The design and appearance of new buildings and signs are important to the community.	131	135	131	136	135	5
We need to balance private property rights and public interest.	75	106	104	108	106	4
The small-town feeling of the area is worth preserving.	131	158	155	158	157	3
Neighboring townships, cities, and counties should identify and work together toward shared goals.	163	163	163	164	163	1

*200 points = unanimous strong agreement, -200 points = unanimous strong disagreement (see p.3).

Due to the small sample size, these results were **not used to measure differences among age groups.

***Overall response includes 115 respondents that did not specify their age group.