March 8, 2012 Scott High School
March 22, 2012 Notre Dame Academy

Highlights of discussions with students at Scott and Notre Dame (NDA) high schools provided a different view of the area from points heard at other public meetings and smaller groups. One question that was asked at public meetings and to all groups was which topic (shops and entertainment, outdoor recreation, employment and jobs, housing options, or education) needed the most improvement locally. Whereas employment and jobs were chosen by 42 percent of respondents in the four public meetings and 81 percent of respondents at City Heights, it was only chosen by 13 percent of students as being the most important. In fact, NDA students chose shops and entertainment at 78 percent and outdoor recreation at 22 percent as their top needs for improvement above employment and jobs. Scott students chose shops and entertainment at 48 percent and outdoor recreation at 35 percent.

Another interesting point that was raised at the schools revolved around student responses to the statement “when I get older I want to live in Northern Kentucky.” At Scott 47 percent of the students either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement; 22 percent agreed or strongly agreed and 31 percent were neutral. NDA’s responses ranged more in the neutral realm where 39 percent were neutral, 27 percent of the students either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, and 35 percent agreed with no one strongly agreeing.

Group discussions revealed that those who were interested in staying wanted to remain in the area because they felt rooted here because of family or friendship ties. Those who were interested in leaving mentioned that they liked aspects of bigger cities such as urban living, that the area isn’t very interesting for young adults, and that they wanted to move away to start a new life. Responses to the statement “Northern Kentucky has lots of interesting things for teens to do,” supported responses garnered in group discussion. At Scott 47 percent disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, 38 percent were neutral, and only 15 percent agreed or strongly agreed. NDA’s results were similar where 58 percent agreed or strongly disagreed, 31 percent neutral, and only 12 percent agreeing with no one strongly agreeing. Discussions with the students and polling responses seem to indicate our community needs to do more to help young people take an interest in the area or we could risk losing them to other metro areas around the country.

Open ended responses heard in discussions revealed more about what the students wanted. Students said they wanted more intimate, walkable communities to live in that have a more fast-paced urban style of living. They described wanting smaller, locally-owned retail stores to shop at, with unique, attractive architecture, convenient public transportation, and lots of things to do nearby.

Students mentioned the present-day community structure which revolved primarily around one point: there is nothing to do but live there. They described issues concerning transportation by saying if someone wants to go out to eat, go to a park, or join friends for a cup of coffee, they have to get in their car and drive miles to do it.