

Things to Know About Reasons for Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

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This Report and the Study

This report summarizes findings about reasons for moving in nonmetro Iowa. The goal is to better understand the decisions and thoughts of people who have moved and what they think about the communities and areas where they have lived. The objective of this project is to help community leaders better understand local household moving trends so they can develop actionable strategies to address the reasons why people come, why people leave, enhance the qualities that cause people to stay, and thus stabilize or increase their populations.

The research findings about reasons for moving included in this report are the major results described in a series of five, detailed earlier reports.¹ The findings are from a survey of nonmetropolitan movers in 19 selected counties in Iowa (Adams, Appanoose, Cherokee, Davis, Decatur, Dickinson, Floyd, Hamilton, Hardin, Henry, Howard, Jefferson, Page, Ringgold, Sioux, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Wayne).² People who had moved either into or out of these 19 counties were identified through a purchased database of new movers. The criteria to be included in the study were that both their new and past zip codes had to be known, at least one of the zip codes had to be from the selected 19 counties, and the zip codes had to be different, indicating a community move rather than just a move across the street or down the block.

The survey asked questions about the respondent's previous location as well as their current location, reasons for moving, satisfaction with multiple factors in their communities, as well as their demographic, social, and economic situation. The surveys were mailed in the fall of 2005 and 737 respondents who met the study criteria replied for a response rate of 35 percent. Most respondents had moved during 2003 through 2005.

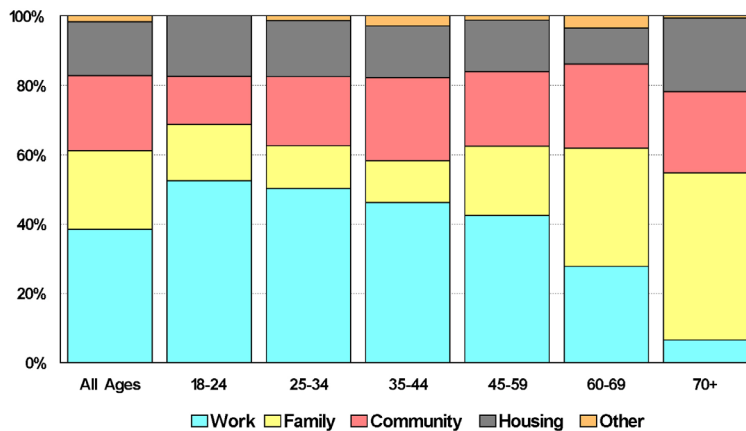
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Most Important Reasons for Moving

Reasons for moving vary from one individual to another. This report summarizes the findings from a study of people who have recently moved to or from 19 selected nonmetropolitan counties of Iowa to find trends and common themes in why they made their move. The purpose is to increase understanding about why people move so community leaders and citizens can develop actionable strategies for attracting and retaining population.

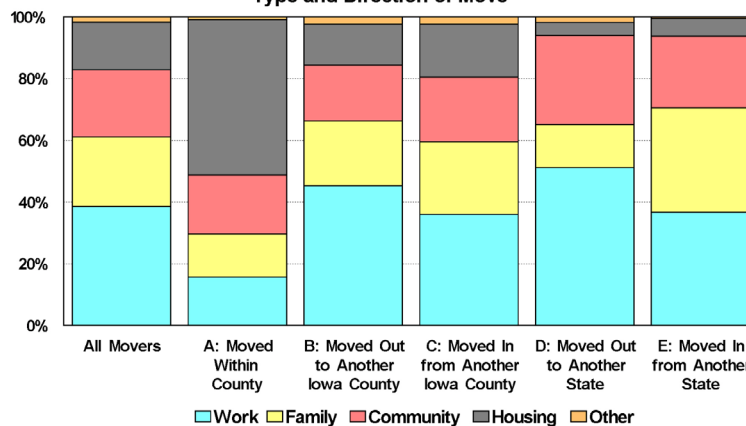
For many respondents in the study, more than one factor played a role in the moving decision, but when asked to state their *most* important reason for moving, several types of responses were more prevalent than others. The reasons the respondents gave for moving can be summarized by four main and broad categories. These categories are: work (including job, income, starting or finishing education, and retirement); family (including relationships, friends, and health); community (including lifestyle, services, and amenities); and housing (including ownership and affordability). For some factors, the importance was highly dependent on the age of the respondent, while the importance of other factors was significantly related to the type and direction of the move.

Figure 1: Most Important Reason for Leaving Previous Location by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 2: Most Important Reason for Leaving Previous Location by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

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Among all the movers, when asked for the most important reason for moving, work-related factors were cited more often than any other kind of reason. Work was especially important for the younger movers. Half of the respondents younger than age 35 said that work (or education) was their most important reason for making their move. In addition, work factors were generally cited more than any other category for respondents who were younger than 60 (Table 2, Figure 1).

Older respondents contrasted with those younger in that they were likely to note a family (or health) factor as most important in their moving decision. Nearly half of those 70 or older said family factors were the most important reason for their move. Respondents age 25 through 44 were least likely to mention family issues as the most important reasons for moving (Table 2, Figure 1).

The study included respondents who had moved between the study counties in Iowa and other states, between counties in Iowa, and within a county although changing zip code (Table 1). Differences in reasons for moving emerged in the findings based on the type and direction of the move.

Respondents who moved locally, staying in the same county although changing zip code, were much more likely to say they moved because of a housing factor than other respondents. Half of these localized movers said housing was their most important reason for the move. Respondents who moved longer distances, especially between Iowa and another state were very unlikely to note housing as their most important reason for moving (Table 3, Figure 2).

Persons moving out of Iowa to go to another state were heavily motivated by work factors as a primary reason, with community issues generally being mentioned second most often. For many of these movers, family factors were relatively unimportant as their most important reason for moving. In contrast, respondents coming into Iowa

Category	Number	Type and Direction of Move
A: <i>Within County, Changed Zipcode</i>	85	Moved within one of the 19 study counties but changed zip code.
B: <i>Out To Another Iowa County</i>	206	Moved out of one of the study counties to another county in Iowa.
C: <i>In From Another Iowa County</i>	207	Moved from another county in Iowa into one of the study counties.
D: <i>Out To Another State</i>	121	Moved out of one of the study counties to another state.
E: <i>In From Another State</i>	159	Moved from another state into one of the study counties.

had a pattern of moving decisions that was relatively balanced among the three factors of work, family, and community although work was noted most often. The movers entering the state were more likely to note family factors as most important than those leaving Iowa (Table 3, Figure 2).

Movers between counties in Iowa, whether into or out of the study counties, tended to note a work reason as most important, but family or community factors were of primary importance for many of these respondents. Housing was more important for respondents going

Figure 3: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Work-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age

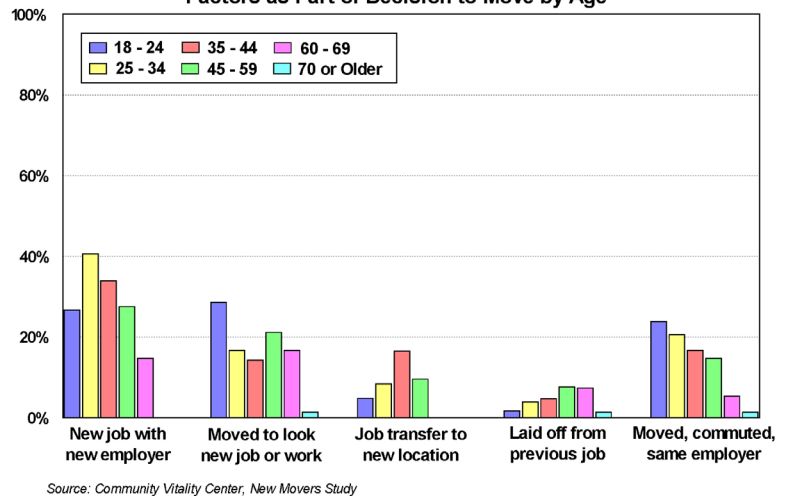


Figure 4: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Work-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age

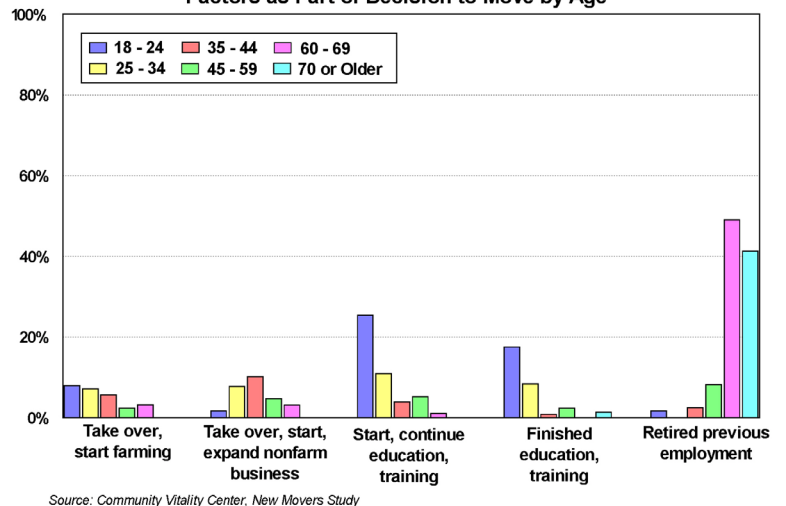
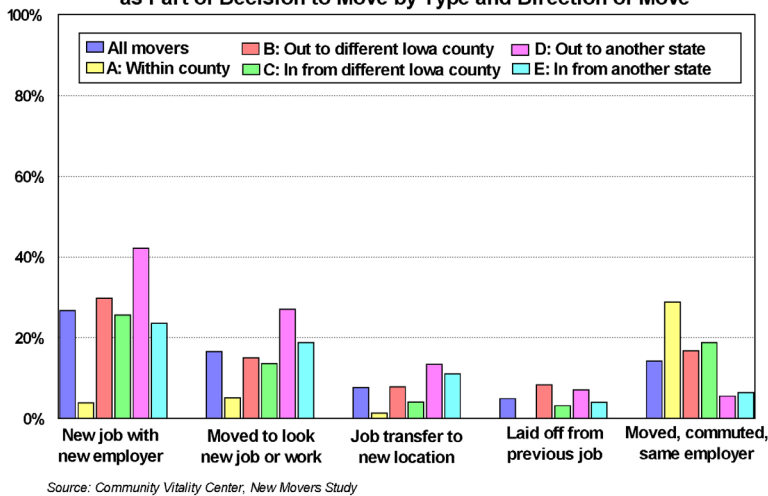


Table 2. Most Important Reason for Leaving Previous Location by Age.

Most Important Reason for Leaving	Age in Years						
	All Ages ^a	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 59	60 – 69	70 or Older
Number of Reasons ^b	997	80	211	175	250	144	137
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Work, income, retirement, education	38.5	52.5	50.2	46.3	42.4	27.8	6.6
Family, friends, health	22.6	16.3	12.3	12.0	20.0	34.0	48.2
Community, services, amenities	21.7	13.8	19.9	24.0	21.6	24.3	23.4
Housing	15.5	17.5	16.1	14.9	14.8	10.4	21.2
Other	1.7	0.0	1.4	2.9	1.2	3.5	0.7
Number of Respondents	728	64	157	129	177	104	97

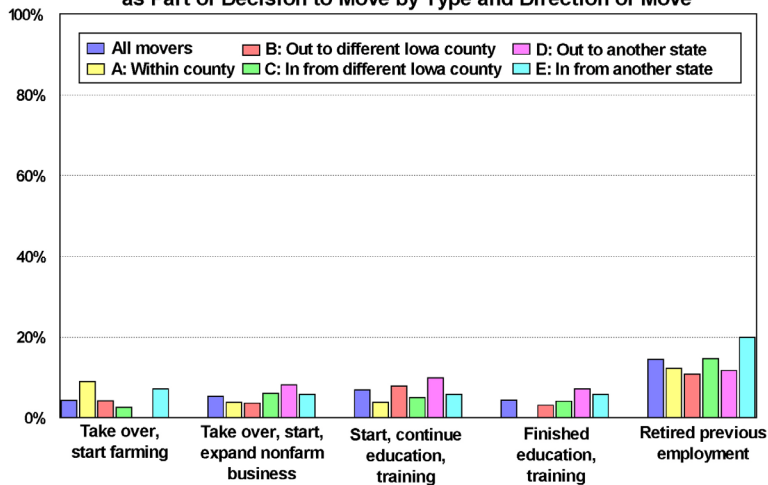
^abased on 728 respondents who completed the age question; ^bnumber of reasons exceeds number of respondents because many gave more than one reason to the open-ended question.

Figure 5: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Work-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 6: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Work-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

between counties than for those going between states, but much less likely to be the primary reason compared with those whose move was within a county.

The Role of Various Work Factors

The specific aspect of work that influenced the moving decision varied among the respondents. The survey included a series of questions that asked about the role of work-related factors such as accepting a new job with a new employer, a work layoff, farming, nonfarm businesses, starting or finishing education, and retirement that may have motivated their move (Table 4).¹ For each of the items, the respondent was asked to circle “yes” or “no” if the factor was involved in their decision to move. Respondents could respond “yes” to more than one of the items. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents in the study selected one or more of these work-related factors as playing a role their moving decision.

Moving to take a new job with a new employer was one of the work factors cited most frequently by respondents. This was most often noted by those age 25 – 34 and less often by those older. In addition, younger respondents were more likely than those older to say they moved to look for a new job, moved to start or finish education or training, moved to start farming, or moved while continuing to work for the same employer (Table 4, Figures 3 – 4).

Not surprisingly, retirement was noted as a factor in the moving decision of many of the respondents 60 or older. In

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Table 3. Most Important Reasons for Leaving Previous Location by Type and Direction of Move.

Most Important Reason	All Movers ^a	Type and Direction of Move				
		A: Within County, Changed Zipcode	B: Out To Different Iowa County	C: In From Different Iowa County	D: Out To Another State	E: In From Another State
Number of Reasons ^b	1,011	115	289	288	169	210
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Work, income, retirement, education	38.4	15.7	45.0	36.1	50.9	37.1
Family, friends, health	22.3	13.9	20.8	23.3	13.6	33.3
Community, services, amenities	22.0	19.1	18.0	21.2	29.0	22.9
Housing	15.7	50.4	13.8	17.0	4.7	6.2
Other	1.6	0.9	2.3	2.3	1.8	0.5
Number of Respondents	737	85	206	207	121	159

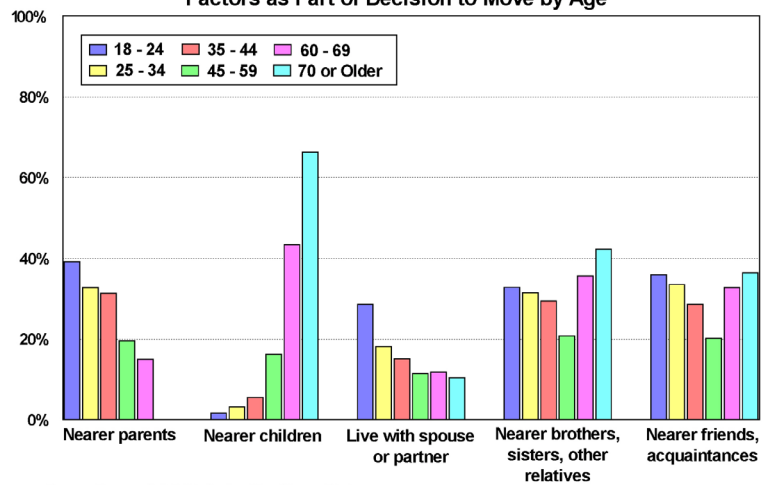
^abased on 737 total respondents; ^bnumber of reasons exceeds number of respondents because many respondents gave more than one reason to the open-ended question

addition, these older movers rarely cited education. Respondents 70 or older were the most likely to say they stopped farming or discontinued a nonfarm business (Table 4).

In the overall picture of work factors, job transfers, layoffs, or starting nonfarm businesses were noted much less frequently than new jobs or moving to look for work. These types of impacts on moving tended to be cited most often by respondents of a middle age, 35 – 60. Military transfers, regardless of age, played little role in the reasons for moving even though U.S. troops were involved in combat at the time of this study (Table 4, Figures 3 – 4).

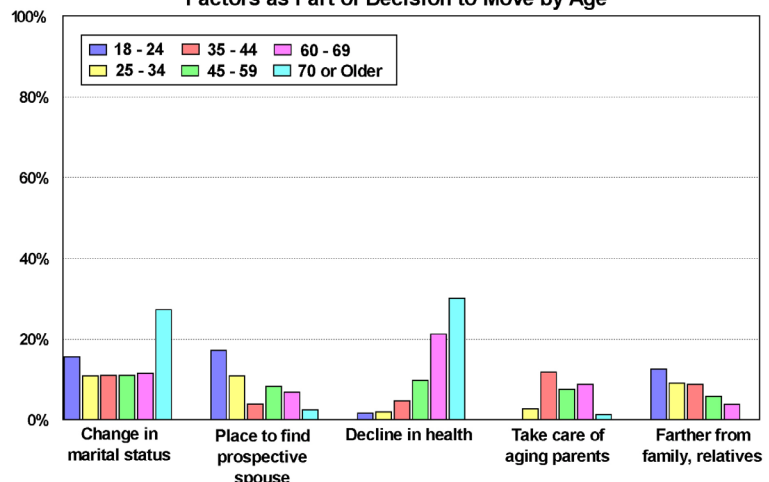
The geographic distance of the move resulted in several contrasts between those who moved within a county and those who moved between Iowa and another state. The respondents who had remained in the same county (but had changed zip code) were the most likely to say that, even though they moved, they continued to work for the same employer by commuting or long distance. Movers between states were the least likely to note that. In addition, the respondents who stayed within a county were relatively unlikely to say that they moved to take a new job or that they moved to look for work. In contrast, new jobs or moving to look for work were one of the most frequent factors selected by the other types of movers. The respondents who left the study counties to go to another state

Figure 7: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 8: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

were the most likely to say that a new job or moving to look for work was a factor in their moving decision (Table 5, Figure 5).

Job transfers were somewhat more common for between-state movers than for between-county movers and least likely for those staying within the same county. Retirement was cited relatively constantly across the mover types, although the respondents coming into Iowa were the most likely to note that as a reason for their move. Finally, starting farming was cited as a reason more often by within-county movers or by those

coming into Iowa from other states. None of the respondents who moved out of Iowa said they did so in order to start farming (Table 5, Figures 5 – 6).

The Role of Various Family Factors

Multiple aspects of family and relationships can impact a moving decision. The respondents were asked if being nearer parents, nearer children, nearer other relatives and friends, changes in marital status, or declines in health had played a role in their reasons for moving (Table 4).¹ Overall, sixty-nine percent of the respondents cited at least one of

the family, friend, or health factors as important in deciding to move.

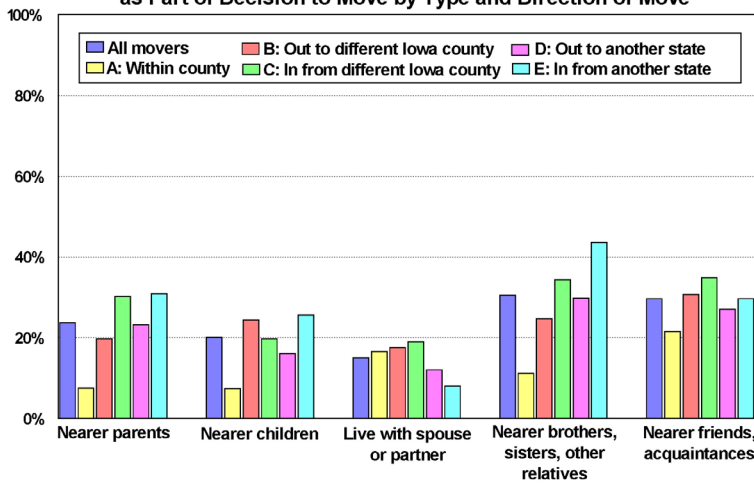
Some differences based on age emerged in the findings for these family factors. Younger respondents were much more likely than those middle aged or older to say they moved to be closer to parents. None of the oldest respondents reported this as a factor in their move, however, given that they were at least 70, they were much less likely to still have parents alive. In the response to a separate question, it was the respondents of middle age who most often said that moving to take care of aging parents was a factor in their decision (Table 4, Figures 7 – 8).

Moving to be nearer children was very prevalent for the older movers. Two-thirds of those 70 or older said this was a factor in deciding to move. In addition, the oldest group most often reported a decline in health, a change in marital status, or wanting to be nearer brothers or sisters as motivating their move. It was common for respondents across most age groups to report moving to be closer to brothers, sisters, or other relatives or friends and acquaintances, however, those age 45 – 59, which corresponds roughly to the “baby boom” generation, were the least likely to cite these reasons (Table 4, Figures 7 – 8).

Moving to be able to live with a spouse or partner was a factor for the youngest age group more than any other. In addition, this group most often said they moved to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner. Overall, many more respondents reported moving to be closer to various family members, relatives, or friends than said they moved to be farther away but it was the youngest group that was somewhat more likely to cite wanting to be farther from relatives than those of other ages (Table 4, Figures 7 – 8).

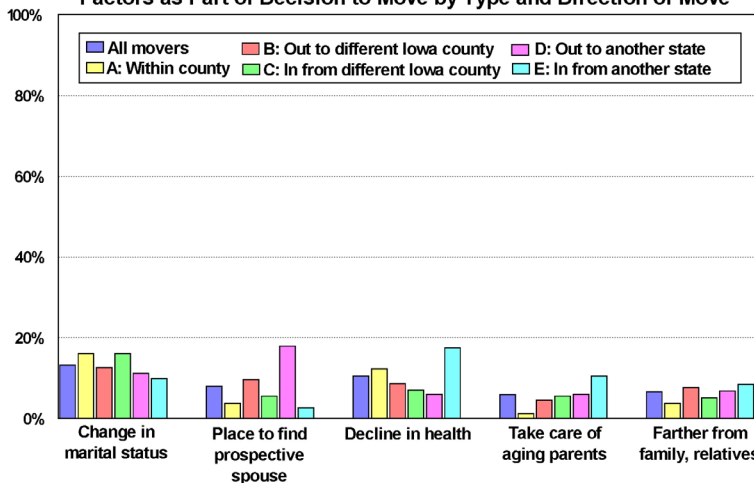
Although respondents tended to differ by age in the responses they gave regarding family factors, differences also emerged based on the type and direction of the move. Respondents coming into Iowa from other states tended to cite moving

Figure 9: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 10: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



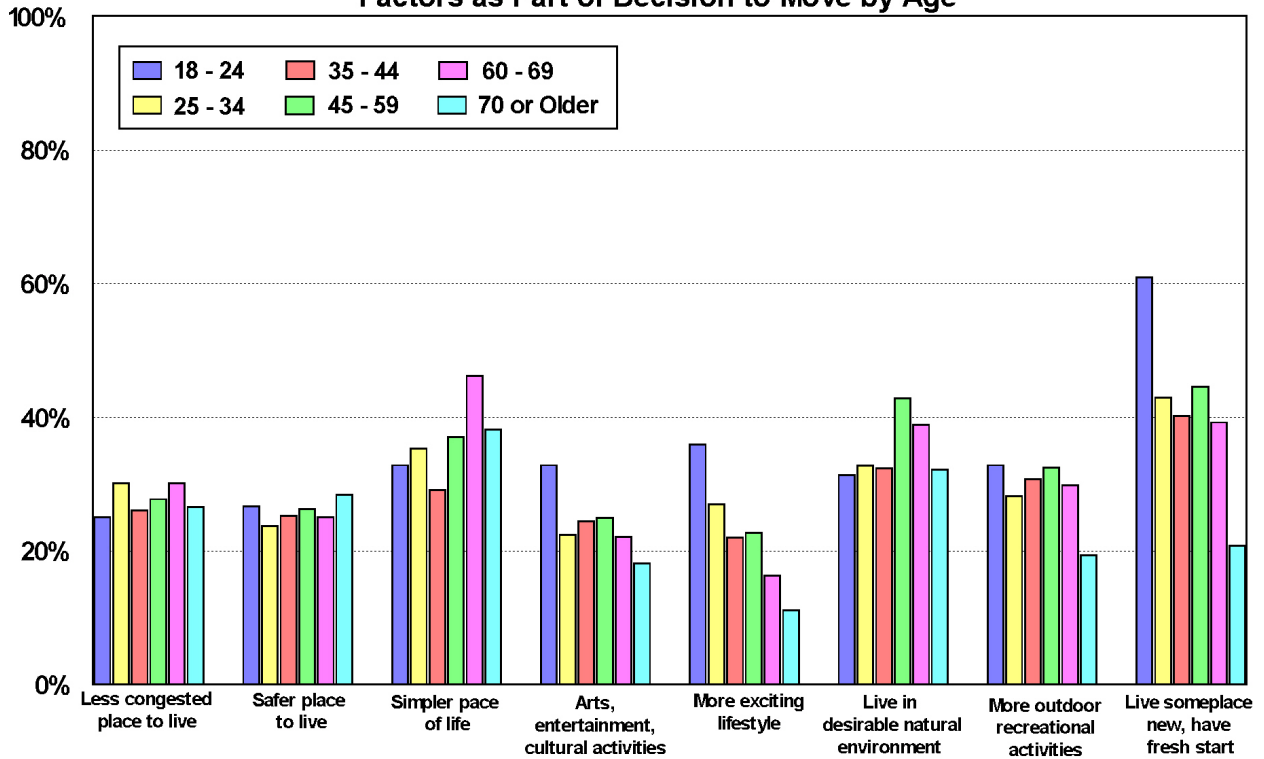
Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

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	All Ages ^b	Age in Years					
		18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 59	60 – 69	70 or Older
Work Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Moved to be closer to work location	36.1	42.2	49.7	48.0	34.7	21.9	7.3
Moved, commuted or worked long distance, same employer	14.3	23.8	20.5	16.7	14.6	5.3	1.3
Job transfer by employer to new location	7.7	4.8	8.3	16.5	9.5	0.0	0.0
Was laid off from previous job	4.9	1.6	3.9	4.7	7.6	7.3	1.3
Had accepted a new job with a new employer	26.6	26.6	40.6	33.9	27.5	14.6	0.0
Moved to look for a new job or work	16.6	28.6	16.7	14.2	21.1	16.7	1.3
Moved to take over or start a farming operation	4.3	7.9	7.1	5.6	2.3	3.2	0.0
Moved when discontinued a farming operation	3.7	0.0	0.0	3.9	1.7	8.2	12.3
Moved to take over, start, or expand a nonfarm business	5.3	1.6	7.7	10.2	4.7	3.1	0.0
Moved to lower cost of running a nonfarm business	2.3	0.0	1.9	5.5	2.9	1.0	0.0
Moved when discontinued a nonfarm business	1.7	0.0	0.0	3.1	1.2	2.1	4.9
Entered, left, or transferred by military	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.0
Moved to start or continue education or training	6.9	25.4	10.9	3.9	5.2	1.0	0.0
Moved when finished education or training	4.3	17.5	8.3	0.8	2.3	0.0	1.3
Retired from previous employment	14.2	1.6	0.0	2.4	8.1	49.0	41.3
Family Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To be nearer parents	23.6	39.1	32.7	31.3	19.5	14.9	0.0
To be nearer children	20.3	1.6	3.2	5.5	16.2	43.3	66.3
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	15.0	28.6	18.1	15.0	11.4	11.8	10.4
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	30.4	32.8	31.4	29.4	20.7	35.6	42.2
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	29.7	35.9	33.5	28.6	20.1	32.7	36.4
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	13.4	15.6	10.9	11.0	11.0	11.5	27.2
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	8.0	17.2	10.9	3.9	8.2	6.8	2.4
Decline in health of someone in household	10.5	1.6	1.9	4.7	9.8	21.2	30.1
To take care of aging parents	5.9	0.0	2.6	11.8	7.5	8.7	1.2
To be farther from family and relatives	6.7	12.5	9.0	8.7	5.8	3.8	0.0
Lifestyle Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To find a less congested place to live	27.9	25.0	30.1	26.0	27.7	30.1	26.5
To find a safer place to live	25.6	26.6	23.7	25.2	26.2	25.0	28.4
To live in desirable natural environment	35.8	31.3	32.7	32.3	42.8	38.8	32.1
To find more outdoor recreational activities	29.3	32.8	28.2	30.7	32.4	29.8	19.3
To find arts, entertainment, cultural activities	23.8	32.8	22.4	24.4	24.9	22.1	18.1
To find a simpler pace of life	36.3	32.8	35.3	29.1	37.0	46.2	38.1
To find a more exciting lifestyle	22.4	35.9	26.9	22.0	22.7	16.3	11.1
To live in someplace new or have a fresh start	41.3	60.9	42.9	40.2	44.5	39.2	20.7
Community Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To lower the cost of housing	31.5	31.3	29.5	24.4	34.9	37.5	31.8
To have lower taxes	25.2	25.0	18.6	22.8	30.0	32.0	23.5
To have better internet, TV, or phone access	8.2	18.8	7.7	9.4	7.6	4.8	4.9
To find available and affordable childcare	2.7	6.3	7.1	1.6	0.6	1.0	0.0
To find better quality local schools	13.5	17.2	24.5	20.5	9.9	2.9	0.0
To have greater opportunities for children to achieve	18.9	28.1	29.5	29.1	16.2	3.9	0.0
To have more ethnic diversity	10.2	20.6	12.2	7.9	11.0	5.9	6.1
To have less ethnic diversity	4.4	9.5	3.2	3.2	3.5	7.9	2.4
Number of Respondents	728	64	157	129	177	104	97

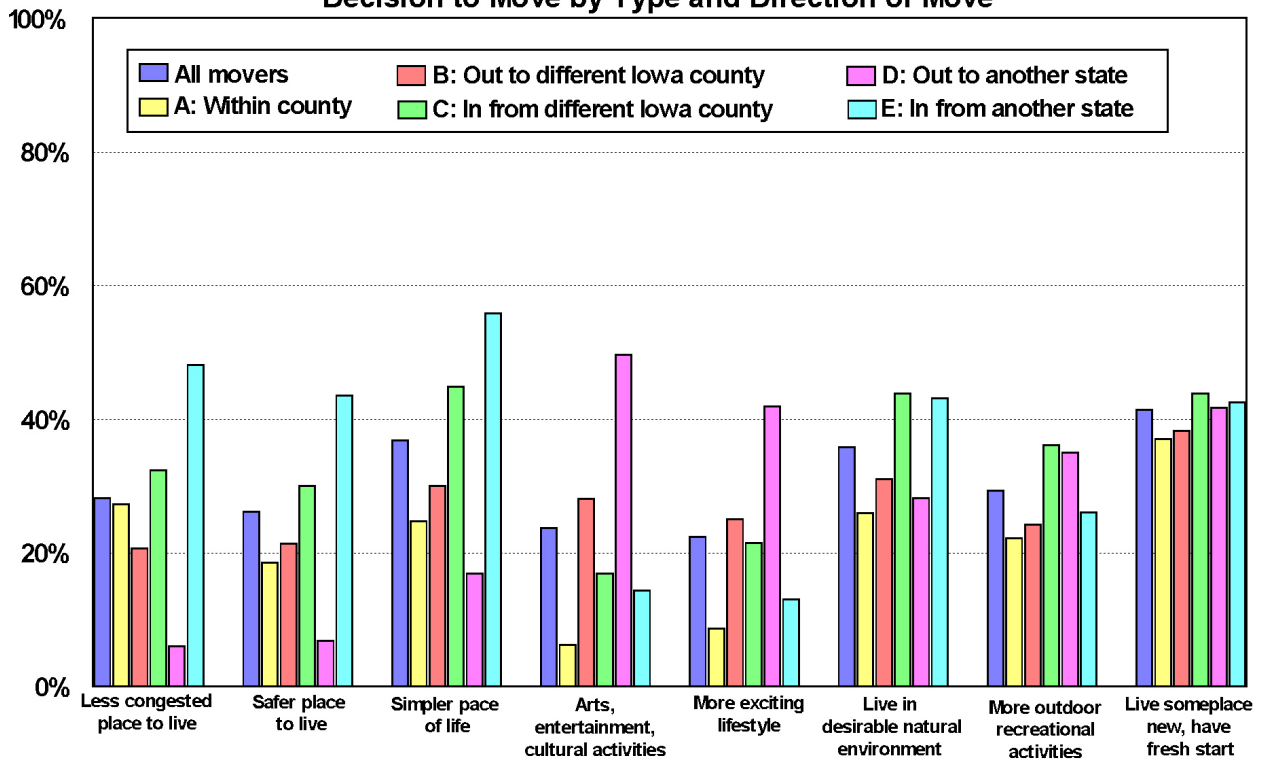
^arespondents could respond “Yes” to more than one question; ^bbased on 728 respondents who completed the age question.

Figure 11: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Lifestyle Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 12: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Lifestyle Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

to be nearer parents, children, various relatives, or friends more than those who left the state. In many cases, this pattern was echoed by the results for those moving between counties in Iowa in that respondents moving into the counties were more likely to cite wanting to be nearer relatives than those who moved out to other areas of Iowa. Within-county movers were the least likely to say they moved to be closer to relatives, indicating an impact of geographical distance of relatives on the moving decision (Table 5, Figure 9).

Other, perhaps surprising, contrasts emerged between movers to and from Iowa. The respondents leaving the state were much more likely than those coming in, and every other mover type as well, to say they moved to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse. On the other hand, it was the respondents coming into Iowa who were the most likely to say that a decline in health influenced their move, although there was some tendency for within-county movers to note health declines as well (Table 5, Figure 10).

The Role of Various Lifestyle Factors

Work and family are not the only factors that affect moving decisions. Lifestyle and other interests also play a role in why people decide to move. The survey included a number of questions that asked about finding a less congested or safer place to live, more arts or entertainment, a desirable natural environment, outdoor recreation, or living someplace new and having a fresh start (Table 4).¹ Seventy percent of the respondents in the study said that one or more of these issues was an influence on their decision to move.

The youngest respondents, age 18 – 24, were the most likely to say they moved to find arts, entertainment, or cultural activities; a more exciting lifestyle; more outdoor recreation; or to live someplace new and have a fresh start. The oldest respondents were the least likely to note these factors in their moving decision. Moving to find a simpler pace of life was cited most often by respondents age

60 – 69 while those age 45 through 59 most frequently noted that living in a desirable natural environment influenced their decision to move. Relatively little difference by age was noted in the responses to wanting a less congested place or a safer place to live (Table 4, Figure 11).

Although there were some differences in the lifestyle factors cited by the respondents based on their age, remarkable consistencies in the responses emerged based on the type of move. Respondents moving into the counties, whether from other states or other areas of Iowa, were more likely than those who moved out to say they moved to find a less congested place to live, a safer place to live, or a simpler pace of life. Especially dramatic differences in responses occurred between those who moved in from or out to other states (Table 5, Figure 12).

This pattern was reversed for the factors regarding arts, entertainment, or cultural activities and a more exciting life style. For these items, those leaving the counties were the most likely to note them as factors in their moving decision and, again, it was between those moving to or from other states and Iowa where the most pronounced differences occurred. The respondents who stayed in the same county in their move were the least likely to cite arts, entertainment, or an exciting lifestyle in their moving decision (Table 5, Figure 12).

The natural environment played a role in the moving decision for many respondents, but in a somewhat unexpected fashion, it was those coming into the counties who were more likely to note that living in a desirable natural environment influenced their decision than those who moved out of the counties. Although it was the youngest respondents who most often said that moving to live someplace new and have a fresh start influenced their moving decision, these aspects of moving were widespread as about forty percent of each mover type cited wanting a fresh start as a factor in their moving decision (Table 5, Figure 12).

The Role of Various Community Factors

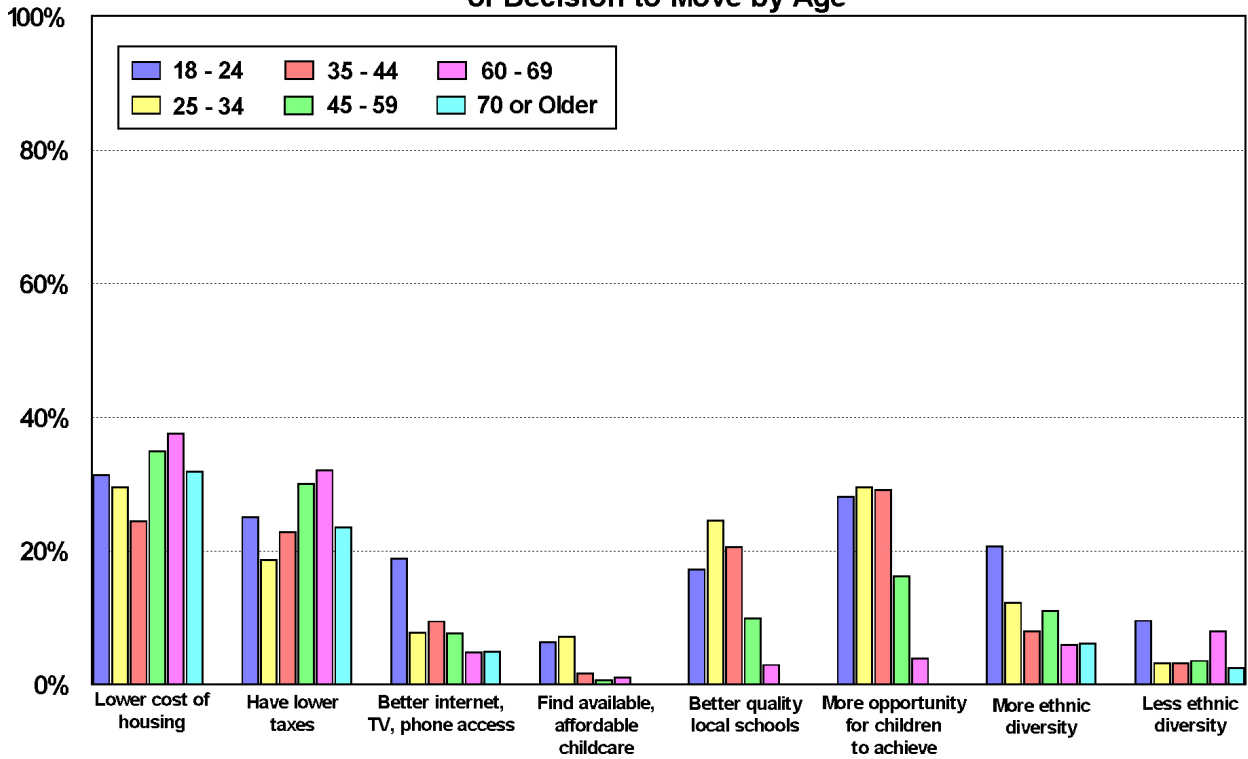
In addition to lifestyle factors, the survey asked about other aspects of communities including the cost of housing; taxes; quality of local schools; childcare; TV, phone and internet access; and ethnic diversity (Table 4).¹ At least one of these community issues was cited as part of the moving decision by fifty-three percent of the respondents in the study.

Age influenced the pattern of responses in that the youngest respondents, age 18 – 24, were the most likely to say they moved to find more ethnic diversity or better internet, phone, or TV access. Respondents younger than age 45 were the most likely to say that child-related issues, such as local schools, childcare, and opportunities for children to achieve, were a factor in their moving decision. Respondents in the middle-age range, 45 – 69 were the most likely to cite lowering housing costs or lowering taxes as part of their reason for moving (Table 4, Figure 13).

Although there were differences in the community factors cited by the respondents based on their age, several consistencies in the responses emerged based on the type of move. Respondents moving into the counties, whether from other states or other areas of Iowa, were more likely than those who moved out to say they moved to have lower housing costs or lower taxes. Especially large differences in responses to these issues occurred between those who moved in from or out to other states (Table 5, Figure 14).

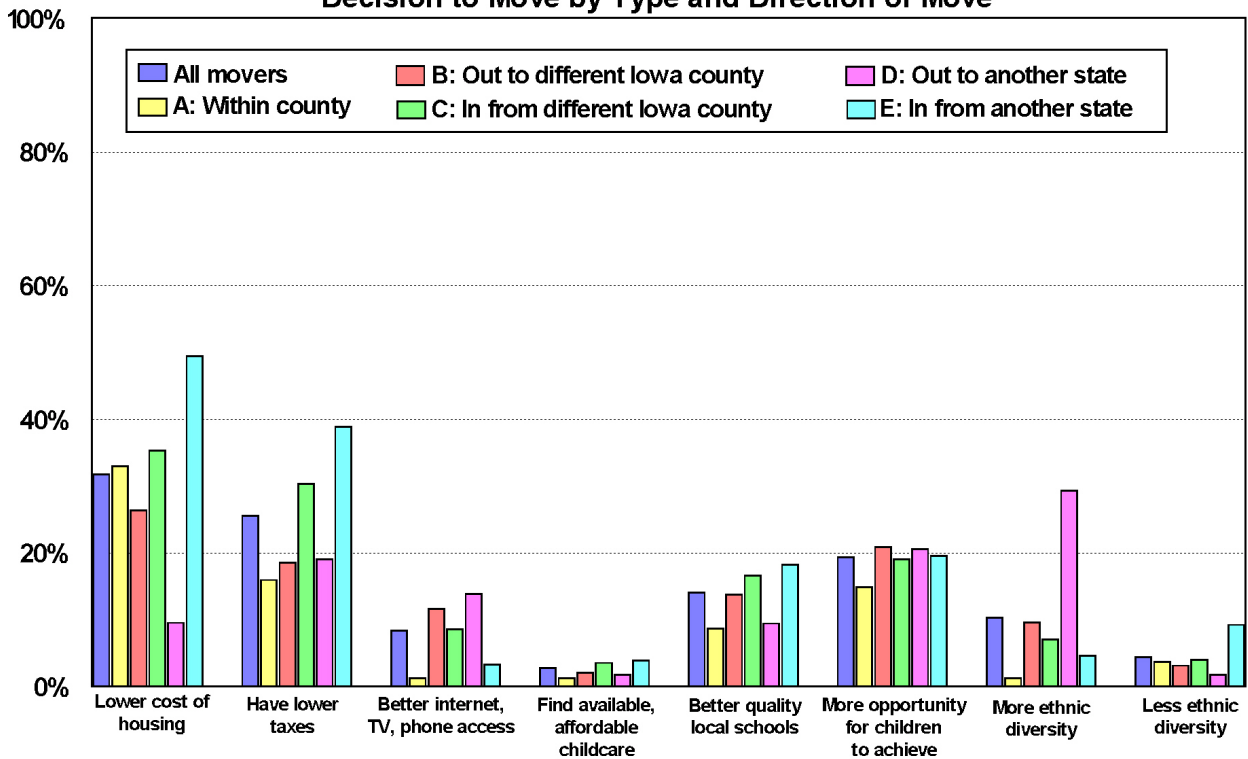
A different pattern emerged for the items regarding ethnic diversity. It was the respondents who were leaving the state who were much more likely than other mover types to say that wanting more ethnic diversity was a factor in their moving decision. In general, relatively few respondents said that wanting less ethnic diversity was a factor in their decision, but there was a tendency for these respondents to be those moving into Iowa from other states more than any other type (Table 5, Figure 14).

Figure 13: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Community Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 14: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Community Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

New Mover Studies: Things to Know About Reasons for Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

	Type and Direction of Move					
	All Movers ^b	A: Within County, Changed Zipcode	B: Out To Different Iowa County	C: In From Different Iowa County	D: Out To Another State	E: In From Another State
Work Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Moved to be closer to work location	36.4	31.3	46.7	37.2	37.5	26.0
Moved, commuted or worked long distance, same employer	14.2	28.8	16.7	18.8	5.5	6.4
Job transfer by employer to new location	7.6	1.3	7.8	4.0	13.4	11.0
Was laid off from previous job	4.9	0.0	8.3	3.1	7.1	3.9
Had accepted a new job with a new employer	26.7	3.8	29.7	25.6	42.1	23.5
Moved to look for a new job or work	16.5	5.0	15.0	13.6	27.0	18.8
Moved to take over or start a farming operation	4.3	8.9	4.2	2.5	0.0	7.1
Moved when discontinued a farming operation	3.7	11.1	2.1	3.0	1.8	4.5
Moved to take over, start, or expand a nonfarm business	5.3	3.8	3.6	6.0	8.1	5.8
Moved to lower cost of running a nonfarm business	2.3	1.3	2.6	3.0	0.9	3.8
Moved when discontinued a nonfarm business	1.7	3.8	2.6	2.5	0.0	1.3
Entered, left, or transferred by military	0.4	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
Moved to start or continue education or training	6.9	3.8	7.8	5.0	9.9	5.8
Moved when finished education or training	4.4	0.0	3.1	4.1	7.1	5.8
Retired from previous employment	14.4	12.2	10.8	14.6	11.7	19.9
Family Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To be nearer parents	23.7	7.5	19.7	30.2	23.1	30.9
To be nearer children	20.1	7.4	24.4	19.7	16.0	25.6
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	15.0	16.5	17.6	19.0	12.0	8.0
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	30.5	11.1	24.7	34.3	29.7	43.6
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	29.6	21.5	30.7	34.8	27.0	29.6
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	13.2	16.0	12.6	16.0	11.1	9.8
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	7.9	3.7	9.6	5.5	17.9	2.6
Decline in health of someone in household	10.4	12.3	8.6	7.0	6.0	17.4
To take care of aging parents	5.9	1.2	4.5	5.5	6.0	10.4
To be farther from family and relatives	6.6	3.7	7.6	5.0	6.8	8.4
Lifestyle Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To find a less congested place to live	28.2	27.2	20.6	32.3	6.0	48.1
To find a safer place to live	26.1	18.5	21.3	30.0	6.8	43.5
To live in desirable natural environment	35.8	25.9	31.0	43.8	28.2	43.1
To find more outdoor recreational activities	29.3	22.2	24.2	36.1	35.0	26.0
To find arts, entertainment, cultural activities	23.7	6.2	28.1	16.9	49.6	14.3
To find a simpler pace of life	36.8	24.7	30.0	44.8	16.9	55.8
To find a more exciting lifestyle	22.4	8.6	25.0	21.4	41.9	13.0
To live in someplace new or have a fresh start	41.4	37.0	38.2	43.8	41.7	42.5
Community Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To lower the cost of housing	31.7	32.9	26.3	35.3	9.5	49.4
To have lower taxes	25.5	15.9	18.5	30.3	19.0	38.8
To have better internet, TV, or phone access	8.3	1.2	11.6	8.5	13.8	3.3
To find available and affordable childcare	2.7	1.2	2.0	3.5	1.7	3.9
To find better quality local schools	14.0	8.6	13.7	16.6	9.4	18.2
To have greater opportunities for children to achieve	19.3	14.8	20.8	19.0	20.5	19.5
To have more ethnic diversity	10.3	1.2	9.6	7.0	29.3	4.6
To have less ethnic diversity	4.4	3.7	3.1	4.0	1.7	9.2
Number of Respondents	737	85	206	207	121	159

^arespondents could respond “Yes” to more than one question; ^bbased on 737 total respondents.

Relatively low proportions of respondents overall cited childcare issues as a factor in their moving decision, but many more said that wanting better quality local schools or opportunities for their children did play a role as they thought about moving. Although somewhat larger proportions of movers into the counties than those moving out cited wanting better quality local schools, the interest in more opportunities for children to succeed was similar across the mover types (Table 5, Figure 14).

Summary

Work, family, lifestyle, and community factors played a role in the decision to move for the nonmetropolitan respondents in this study. For some factors, there were variations by age. For other factors, significant variations emerged based on the type and direction of the move.

Work considerations were involved in the moving decision of many of these movers. Work was especially important for the younger respondents as they moved when they took new jobs, looked for work, or started or finished education. Not surprisingly, retirement, stopping farming, or discontinuing a business were most often cited by movers who were age 60 or older. Work opportunities, then, are crucial in retaining population. It is also important that Iowans can find information about current job offerings so that they don't think they have to leave the state in order to find work.

Family, marital, friend, and health factors also influenced the moving decisions of many respondents. Younger respondents were likely to cite moving to be nearer parents, to live with a spouse or partner, or to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner. The oldest movers were especially likely to say they moved to be nearer their children or

because of a decline in health. Respondents who moved to Iowa from other states were more likely to cite these various family factors than those who left the state to go elsewhere. These results imply that a focus on family and social relationships can be an important component in recruiting and retaining population.

Lifestyle factors played a role in the moving decision for many respondents. Although there were some differences in the role of these factors depending on the age of the respondents, there were significant and consistent differences between those who moved into the counties and those who moved out. Respondents moving into the counties were more likely than those who moved out to say they wanted to find a less congested place to live, a safer place to live, a simpler pace of life, or a desirable natural environment. In a reverse pattern, those who moved out were more likely than those who moved in to say they wanted more arts, entertainment, or cultural activities or a more exciting life style. These findings suggest that different strategies may be needed to appeal both to people looking for a simpler pace of life as well as those wanting a more exciting lifestyle.

Community factors that related to children were more important, as factors in moving, to younger respondents than to those who were older. The youngest movers were also the most likely to cite better internet, TV, or phone access and more ethnic diversity as having an impact on the decision to move. For other community factors, differences emerged between those who moved into the counties and those who moved out. Lowering the cost of housing and lowering taxes were cited more often by those moving into the counties than by those who left. Respondents going to other states were the most likely to note more ethnic diversity as a factor in their move. These findings imply that nonmetropolitan communities can represent a lower-cost area to live and can be attractive to new residents.

This study allows us to compare people who have moved into nonmetropolitan Iowa with those who have moved out as well as to compare younger movers with those who are older. Work, family, lifestyle, and community factors played a role in the decision to move for many of the respondents. For some, the decision was based on just one or two factors. For other respondents, several factors entered into their moving decision. There clearly are economic, family, community, and amenity factors at work as people decide whether to stay where they are or to move somewhere else, and overall, there may be a number of strategies that communities can undertake in order to attract and retain residents.

This Report and the Study

(Continued from page 1)

Five categories of movers are used to examine the results (Table 1). Among the respondents, 696 (94.4%) fit into just one of the five mover categories. The other 41 respondents (5.6%) had moved out of one of the study counties and into another of the 19 included counties. These 41 responses are included as both out-movers to another Iowa county and in-movers to a county in the study. However, in the results that follow, the category of *All Movers* includes only the 737 respondents without duplication.

Notes

1. Previous reports and the survey questionnaire are available on the Community Vitality Center web site at: www.cvcia.org. The previous reports include details examining reasons for moving by age and type of move that are not included in this summary report. In addition, the previous reports discuss implications and possible courses of action that could be pursued by community leaders.
2. The 19 counties were selected based on population, migration patterns from Census 2000, and geographic distribution across Iowa.

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... and justice for all

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