

All eyes on millennial movement

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The **millennial generation**, typically defined as those reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century, has different thoughts as to how it plans to live. Those ideas are causing cities and developers to think differently as well.

At the recent **Economic Alliance of Kankakee County** meeting, **Jane Grover**, an outreach principal with the **Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning**, explained research is finding this group is not interested in spending much time in a car.

“They want to be in **walkable communities**,” Grover explained. She said according to research, 60 percent of millennials do not want to rely on their own cars for transportation.

They are interested in nearby public transportation, nearby schools and employment opportunities that are accessible with this transportation option.

“They don’t want to rely on cars,” she said.

That desire means community planners must create towns which have education, entertainment and work options within reach.

And if your community doesn’t have these features, they will find areas which do provide these opportunities.

“Communities are being ranked on their walkability. Small towns are becoming more walkable,” she said.

The Kankakee region, of course, has the **River Valley Metro bus system**, a giant step toward satisfying this group. The region also is going big into biking.

Grover said some long-term trends are beginning to emerge. The two-car household might become less common and public transportation even more popular.

“They are making much different choices and those choices will have great impacts.”

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With ease of getting around at the top of the lists of young adults when seeking residential options, what is at the top of the list for business?

The answers might surprise some people.

The top options long had been dominated by inexpensive land and government incentives.

Those options now are much further down the list, said **Tim Nugent**, CEO and president of the Economic Alliance.

According to the January 2018 edition of Site Selection Magazine, the **top factor** now is an **available and highly skilled workforce**, followed by transportation infrastructure and available buildings and sites.

“They (companies) will pay for the right location if all other factors are good,” Nugent said.

Here is the list: 1. Available and highly skilled workforce; 2. Transportation infrastructure; 3. Available buildings and sites; 4. State and local taxes structure; 5. Incentives; 6. Utilities; 7. Regulatory environment; 8. University and college resources; 9. Cost of real estate.

The list is further proof of how important education and having a workforce ready to work have become.