The Summit Prosperity Initiative

Rural Economies: Left Behind or Poised for Resurgence? August 6, 2019
NCSL Legislative Summit
Key Issues:
Key issues:

Regional Migration by Age

Net Migration By Age

- Eagle
- Pitkin
- Summit
- Lake
- Garfield

Age
Key Issues and Challenges:

► Currently, not enough career path opportunities to raise the income of the majority of workers.
► One industry accounts for 70% of all jobs.
► Low wage jobs make up 46% of all jobs ($27,500 - $30,900).
► Housing costs comprise up to 70% of low earner’s monthly wages.
Who is this a problem for?

Community
Business
Government
Non-Profits
Tourists
...our future prosperity!
The Work of the Initiative

- Develop a long term framework to support county-wide collaboration to become a strong community prepared for the future.
- Engage local businesses, non-profits, residents and governments to support economic prosperity.
- Identify and support community projects that have regional economic significance.
- Considerably improve overall livability for the residents of Summit County.
Where We Are

- Created a Summit Prosperity Initiative county-wide task force.
- Gathered resources from similarly positioned communities - Gunnison, Lake Tahoe
- Conducted landscape assessment of current work underway; identified gaps and barriers
- Developed the “Prosperity Elements” Roadmap
The Summit Prosperity Initiative

- The goal of the Summit Prosperity Initiative is to improve the quality of life for all residents of Summit County while also supporting the businesses, industries and organizations providing services to visitors and residents.

- The Livability in Summit County is in Crisis impacted by the lack of affordable housing, the high costs of health care and child care, and the lack of career paths and education which would enable workers to envision and achieve a positive change in their life’s situation.

- By focusing on the 5 Prosperity Elements we believe can build a prosperous community achieving the delicate balance between providing for economic opportunity while protecting our other community values - the very reasons we love living here.
Prosperity Guiding Principles

Affordable Housing
- Ensure affordable housing choices for all residents.
- Workforce housing available to workers who support the economy.
- Development that complements local community values by being integrated into existing communities and connected to transportation and utility infrastructure.

Sustainable Tourism
- Create positive impacts on the communities, culture, and local values while minimizing impacts to local’s QOL.
- Provide visitors with an outstanding experience through information, education, infrastructure, friendly atmosphere, and a remarkable environment.
- Maintain high quality outdoor recreation, both to support a vital tourism sector and for the well-being and values of our residents.
- Create synergies that support other components of our economy.

Resilient Economy

A Resilient Economy incorporates the intersection of all other Prosperity Elements along with:
- A diverse, year-round economy.
- Opportunities for financial security and professional advancement throughout the community.
- Career path development between business, education (CMC, k-12), and the workforce.
- Quality jobs, building strong and vibrant local communities that support and attract entrepreneurship, and ensure long-term prosperity.

Community Health & Equity
- Address BASIC Needs - Must meet physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs.
- Encourage positive youth development and supporting healthcare access for all is critical for the development of a thriving and prosperous community.
- Advocate for Community Integration of all residents.

Infrastructure
- Ensure high quality internet access.
- Create robust cell access and availability.
- Build and maintain adequate transportation systems.
- Ensure roads are well maintained.
- Plan for upgraded utility systems.
The Summit County Chamber of Commerce has received one of 47 nationwide U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI) Awards to further the Summit Prosperity Initiative. The REDI award provides free technical assistance for up to two years to help rural towns and regions create and implement economic development plans.
Where We Are Going

- Build out organization infrastructure.
- Gain support from key stakeholders, local leaders and community members through extensive community engagement - focus groups, interviews, surveys, community forums, etc.
- Develop comprehensive strategic plan and project list
- Fundraising for strategic plan and project list
The Summit Prosperity Initiative

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