Big Ideas, Small Towns:
Young Entrepreneurs and the Future of Rural America

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference
Denver, CO
February 14, 2014
Energizing Entrepreneurial Youth
revitalizing your community

Big Ideas, Small Towns
February 14, 2014

Craig Schroeder
Director of Youth Engagement
Youth Impact on Community Revitalization
Youth Impact on Critical Issues

- Historical Youth Out-Migration Trends
- Loss of Farms, Industry & Small Businesses
- Erosion of Leadership Capacity
- Generational Wealth Transfer
# Youth Attraction Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1990 Population</th>
<th>7,965</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 Population</td>
<td>7,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent change</td>
<td>-6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss Per Year in 1990s</td>
<td>51 Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Youth</td>
<td>2,169 Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth as a Percent of Total</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Graduating Class</td>
<td>121 Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Youth Attraction Goal</td>
<td>18 Persons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15% Youth Attraction Goal
The Urgency of Acting!

2000 Population: 7,452
2010 Population: 6,652
Percent change: -10.3%
Loss Per Year in 2000s: 80 Persons
Total Youth: 1,574 Persons
Youth as a Percent of Total: 23.7%
Average Graduating Class: 93 Persons
Annual Youth Attraction Goal: 27 Persons

29% Youth Attraction Goal
Youth Survey Highlights

Over 40,000 Youth from Across the United States
If you had 200 enterprising high school juniors and seniors in these seats, how many do you think would raise their hand when asked if they plan to move back to their hometown?

Would you believe this many?!!
Youth in your community may well represent your greatest resource for economic growth and community sustainability.

The challenge is to **engage** these youth, **equip** them with the skills and knowledge to be successful, **support** them and their enterprising ventures, and then **invite** them home!
Demographic Trends
Cohort Age 30-34, Percent Change 1990-2000
Cohort Age 30-34, Percent Change 2000-2010
Our Entrepreneurial Heritage...
Effective Youth Engagement
How communities engage youth...

- **Do *to* Youth**
  - Skateboard Zoning
  - Trash Cleanup
  - Focus on Stars and Ignore Other Youth

- **Do *for* Youth**
  - Teen Center
  - College Scholarships
  - Tell Youth the Right Way to Do Things

- **Do *with* Youth**
  - Youth Events
  - Decision Making
  - Listen and Support Youth Discovery
Key Strategy Elements

Youth Engagement Working Group

STEP 1
Assessment of Youth Engagement Opportunities and Local Development Resources

STEP 2
Development and Implementation of Youth Engagement Action Plan

STEP 3
Integration with Economic Development Program and Alumni-Newcomer Recruitment

Program Measurement and Evaluation
Thank You!

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BIG IDEAS, SMALL TOWNS

Reversing the Exodus:
Connecting and engaging those who are rural by Choice

Liz Sosa
Connecting and engaging 21-39 year olds who are rural by choice

Rural no longer means geographically isolated—young people are yearning for opportunities to become involved in their communities and participate in creating their preferred future.
## Philosophy

Identifying, connecting, & developing civic leaders who transform towns, cities, counties, & regions into thriving communities which nourish youth, engage citizens, and foster partnerships.

## Strategy

**In response to:**

- Declining populations, exodus of youth, and loss of aspiring leaders
- Growing fragmentation and incivility
- Decreasing engagement

**PSC...**

- Links citizens and leaders / networks and institutions
- Emphasizes asset-based, positive dialogue
Big Ideas: small towns

Young Entrepreneurs and the Future of Rural America

Burt Chojnowski

13th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth
February 14, 2014
Denver, Colorado
The 1,228 Foot Level View
Chicken Soup for Fairfield’s Soul

- Marci Shimoff - Co-Authors with Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen
- Franchised: 13 of co-Authors live in Fairfield
- Earl Kaplan and **Books Are Fun** buy it by the truckload and it goes to the top of the New York Times Best Seller List
- Books Are Fun Grows to $400 million in revenue and is acquired by Readers Digest for $300 million
Let’s Go to Alaska
Angoon Alaska

Troy Van Beek
Degree in Sustainable Living

Maharishi University of Management
GO GREEN guide

creating a healthy & prosperous living environment for all Fairfieldians through sustainability.

I am very pleased to present on behalf of the City of Fairfield and the Fairfield Go Green Commission the Household Guide to Sustainability. This practical guide to managing your household in a way that conserves resources, saves money and is good for the environment. I hope you find the tips and resources useful to making changes that will accomplish all of these things for your family.

The Guide was made possible from a grant from the Iowa Office of Energy Independence as part of a proposal to demonstrate a model community that focuses on a more sustainable future by reducing green house gases, conserving natural resources, reducing waste, creating energy from renewable sources, supporting local food production and grows a local economy through all these measures. The Fairfield Go Green Strategic Plan is a template for achieving those community goals and the Household Guide to Sustainability provides a way for everyone to participate.

I hope you find it useful and become inspired to do as much as you can in your own households. Together we can lead other Iowa City's in accomplishing our State's goal of achieving energy independence and a sustainable future.

Your browser may not support display of this image.

Mayor City of Fairfield
Abundance EcoVillage

Wind and Solar powered, Vedic Green Architecture
2012 Fairfield Entrepreneur of the Year
2013 Fairfield First Award

Meghan Dowd
Open Space Studios and Shaktea Komboucha
$250,000 Grant

Mission Main Street Grants

Only 1 of the 12 went to a rural community
How to Shift Money from Wall Street to Main Street to Achieve Real Prosperity
Celebrate Entrepreneurs
Nurturing the Entrepreneurial Class

✦ Faces
✦ Association
✦ News
✦ Awards
Economic Gardening Hot Spots

- Mentoring and Networking Programs
- Biz Bounces and Boot Camps
- Virtual Incubation
- On-demand Coaching
- Sales, Marketing and Networking Skills
Fairfield Metrics

- Population: 9,400

- Moved from No. 50 Iowa County to No. 18 in per capita Income

- No. 1 County in Iowa in per-capita giving

- 40% College Grads

- More Restaurants per capita than San Francisco
Impact & Results

- Nearly a $1 billion in new equity
- Four thousand new jobs in Fairfield - 12,000 globally
- Per capita income has tripled
- Headquarters for 60 companies
- Ranked #3 County in the nation in per capita giving
Power of the Entrepreneurial Class

- Social and Civic Entrepreneurs
- Jefferson County Trail System
- Sondheim Center for the Performing Arts
- 1st Fridays Art Walk
- Cultural and Entertainment District
- Go-Green Strategic Plan
Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Development

- Fairfield Entrepreneurs Association
- Downtown Revitalization Loans
- Local Economy Summit
- Iowa Micro Loan
- Fairfield First!
- Community Vitality Center
- FRED Conference
- Iowa Community Capital
Silicon Valley Wannabees

1) Silicon Alley  
   New York

2) Silicon Bog  
   Ireland

3) Silicon Glen  
   Scotland

4) Silicon Mesa  
   Albuquerque

5) Silicon Valais  
   Switzerland

6) Silicorn Valley  
   Fairfield, Iowa
Where do Entrepreneurs Come From?

- If you are unemployable...
- If you have been laid off...
- If you are an immigrant...
- If you have completed high school...
- If you are over 50....

You might be an entrepreneur!
Contact

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BrainBelt.com

Twitter - @BrainBelt

Economic Gardening Group on linkedin.com
For More Information

Send an email to Burt@BrainBelt.com or text me @ 641.919.2163

- Turning Fairfield into a Rural Renaissance City
- Link to The Best Thing Since Sliced Bread and Finding Fairfield
- 10 Things You Can Do Can to Support an Entrepreneurial Class
Burt Chojnowski

• Helped Found, Fund and Start a Dozen Iowa Companies
• 16 year career in Silicon Valley
• Raised $80 million of Private Equity For Iowa Companies
• Worked on Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Development with dozens of communities

kora-movie.com
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