



Heart of Colorado Rural Philanthropy Days Issue Discussion Notes (September 27th, 2008)

Economic Development Group Discussion

Subtopics impacting economic development:

- Infrastructure
- Regional identity
- Regional resources
- Finance

Ongoing and emerging issues:

- Lack of accessible dollars in the region
- Changing use of land in the region
- Changing and fluctuating demographics
- Changing economic environment: regionally, statewide, and nationally

Promising opportunities and innovations:

- Defining regions: long & complicated process, but a huge impact on communities
- Regional inventories, pool resources and cross-market
- Creating more policy support for small businesses
- Regional land use strategy, direction

Collaborative action we will take:

- From a collaborative group to discuss and take regional actions regarding economic development
- Identify region & existing efforts
- Create listserv, teleconference
- Make it a part of another meeting

Why is this conversation about economic development important?

- Important issue in my county
- Meet basic needs
- To learn strategies
- Tourism
- Sustainable economic development
- Growth
- Resources available
- Market options
- New ideas
- Transportation

Four sub-topics for discussion:

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1. Infrastructure
2. Regional identity
3. Regional resources
4. Financing

Infrastructure

- Big business dev. Impacting small business
- Affordable housing is not keeping up with need
- Health care
- Communication issues
- Access to water
- Roads: transporting goods; access to commerce and cost of travel (gas prices); pros & cons
- Technology is developing but it has a way to go
- Impacting business in two ways
- Growth of second homes
- Land use changes (ranching vs. development)
- Education is not keeping up
- Growing costs reduced \$

Regional identity

- Resistance to change
- Changing geography (pine beetle)
- Sustain culture, not change it through economic development
- Attracts new people
- Changing scenery & loss of open space
- Interest in small over large business
- Changing demographics with different needs
- External emphasis on tourism in relation to heritage
- Resilient people
- Entrepreneurial aspect

Regional resources:

- Get part time people to support communities
- Changing population in and out
- Selling water out of region
- Mining opportunity and threat
- Food security: harder to be successful (transportation)
- Farm land is being lost: increase of recreation
- No longer using forest industry
- Alternative energy growth
- Attention being paid to resource management
- Changing affordability due to increases in value

Financing:

- Keeping money in the region is difficult
- Gallagher Amendment (property taxes)
- Emerging policies that further tax
- Inequitable tax incentives for business/residential
- Tabor and Amendment 23

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- Impact of home rule or not
- Poor local government, budgets declining
- State impact at regional level
- National financing problem
- Lack of local philanthropic organizations

Potential Actions:

- Inform policy
- Formalize regional definitions
- Citizens teach each other as to the need of taxes
- Reactivate the rail system
- Pooling resources and cross market
- Networking events in local communities and regionally
- Educate and inform community as to land use actions
- Form a uniform communication process regarding land use policies
- Form grassroots movement to demand regional strategies

Actions the attendees are willing to take:

1. Form a collaborative group to discuss and take regional actions regarding economic development
2. Identify region and existing efforts
3. Create a listserv
4. Teleconferences to further discuss potential actions

Health and Wellness Group Discussion

Final Action Items Identified:

Convening's:

- Regional and market-level collaboration
- Needs assessment to guide convening topics
- The topic of the first convening: Where are we? What do we need? Advocacy "plan", partnership with funders
- *Grantmakers expressed a commitment to participate and be supportive of these convenings and initiatives*

Areas for collaboration:

- Workforce issues
- Coordinated care, integrated across
- Greater utilization of resource directories

Investigate Peer Network Options:

- Build on Colorado Rural Health Center Model

Advocacy

- Better advocate for region to local funders regarding areas' healthcare needs
- Educate commissioners, legislators, and other lawmakers about healthcare needs in the region

Issues identified for discussion:

- Mental Health
- Care for under- and un-insured

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- Medical transportation
- Chronic disease
- Issues related to aging population
- Oral health

Mental Health:

Critical issues:

- Working professionals: under/uninsured
- Funding!
- Stigma
- Medications: need for ongoing care
- Availability of appropriate services (language, etc.)
- Cost of both meds and services
- Anonymity

Care for under- and un-insured

Critical issues:

- Access to insurance
- Costs for insured: copays, deductibles, etc.
- Communication, how do we get to hard-to-reach people
- Access to care you need: specialty, primary

Emerging issues:

- Reality of volume – not enough to support
- Different regulations – piecemeal approach
- Be successful in spite of systems

Medical transportation

Critical issues:

- Cost for patients & providers (transportation to appointments)
- Reimbursements
- Write offs
- Workforce – staffing – recruitment and retention
- Training & equipment
- “Way home from treatment” – can get there, but not back

Emerging issues:

- Population growth and age
- Limited access to primary care & limited emergency care
- Better communication between counties: training, resources

Chronic disease

- Critical Issues
 - Access, access, access!
 - Support groups – chronic disease
 - Primary care “medical home”
 - Screenings
 - Specialty care

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- Emerging issues
 - Educate and promote service to communities
 - Integrate services (technology)
 - Barriers to collaboration (key players? Resources? Avoid silos?)

Issues related to aging population

- Critical issues:
 - Adequate coverage
 - Transportation
 - Isolation
 - Low levels of awareness
- Emerging Issues
 - Wellness facilities
 - Senior centers
 - Keep them in their homes
 - Funding, coverage

Oral health

- Critical Issues:
 - Recruitment for dentists
 - Competitive salaries, etc.
 - Reimbursement issues
 - Uninsured...
 - Supply and demand issues
- Emerging issues:
 - Capital costs – technology
 - Lack of rural internships/trainings
 - Lack of understanding for children on importance of oral health

Other Critical Issues:

- Substance abuse, prevention & treatment
- Economic conditions and how it affects this conversation
- Technology & telemedicine
- Knowledge of resources
- Preventive care

Action Steps Identified by the Full Group (reduced to key action steps identified above):

- Facilitated quarterly meetings: regional/local to keep the momentum going
- Advocacy
- Mechanism for sharing best practices: peer network, advocacy
- Greater utilization of 211 directory through a collaborative effort
- Commit to regular healthcare convening sessions
- Be more intentional about sharing activities/funding within the region
- Support CRC in convening
- Teleconferences with providers/networks

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Nonprofits:

Promising/intriguing ideas

- Telemedicine
- Improving education (facebook for younger people)
- Increased funding for rural areas
- Collaboration
- Advocacy

How are we supporting these?

- More collaboration: funding on regional basis
- Advocacy: educate legislature, executive branch and funders
- Funding for collaborative efforts: specialty care, workforce issues

How could we be more effective?

- Better communication/ coordinated calendar
- Teleconferences: additional resources training
- Meeting as healthcare group: [unclear] teleconference
- More local communication with key partners
- Sharing success stories/lessons learned

Grantmakers/Resource Providers:

Promising/intriguing ideas

- Marketing about healthcare resources that exist (collaborative effort)
- Coordinate resources across county lines to leverage funds, cross-county convenings
- Mentoring opportunities (statewide, peer-network)
- Share successes and lessons learned
- Influence policy

How are we supporting these?

- Funding
- Leverage resources

How could we be more effective?

- More intentional convening
- Look at partnerships

Heart of Colorado Youth Development & Education

Top 2-3 Critical Ongoing Issues

1. Academic Success, especially how it relates to the CSAP standards
2. Behavioral and health issues. Lack of time spent outdoors away from technology. Activities for youth.

Top 2-3 Emerging Issues

1. Environmental Stewardship and Values

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2. Alternative opportunities and resources
3. Teacher education and integrating into curriculum and practice (systemic and local)

Make School More Interesting- Support Individuality

Top 2-3 most promising or intriguing opportunities/innovations

- Differentiated instruction – educate teachers and give them the ability to be creative
- Increase the level of trust across the board – allow teachers to be creative and not just teach to the CSAP.
- Vocational education – introduce youth to mainstream – real life applications and educational opportunities that utilize authentic tasks

How will we SUPPORT these opportunities/innovations?

- Kids and teachers interact at “camps” at beginning of year to build relationships
- Create teacher and student forums to find out how to integrate these strategies
 - a. Ask who was your favorite teacher and why? Then encourage these positive attributes to be replicated.
- Funding for innovation in teaching strategies and resources including “observation trips”

How can we collaborate with other sectors? What 2-3 Actions can we take?

- School, Community and Funders need to develop a structure that we can use
- Work with community organizations to find a way to collaborate with the school. Recognize that we are outside the “system.” We need to find out the best approach for sharing our desire to help with the schools.

Youth Leadership

Top 2-3 most promising or intriguing opportunities/innovations

- Community based leadership program (all 3 sectors) plus schools
- Engage your people demonstrating either traditional or nontraditional leadership traits and invite them to participate. Teach/hone their skills with peer mentoring.
- Hear from the students themselves. Let youth guide the discussion – get them involved with story-telling and other self-discovery activities to find similarities and celebrate differences

How will we SUPPORT these opportunities/innovations?

- Seek out community partnerships/involvement
- Keep eyes peeled for potential leaders who might be under the radar
- Honor youth people and what they bring to the table.

How can we collaborate with other sectors? What 2-3 Actions can we take?

- See above.
- Find other leadership programs (Leadership Denver, Chamber of Commerce) to learn what we can and adapt for our communities.

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After School Activities

Top 2-3 most promising or intriguing opportunities/innovations

- Awareness/create trust by emphasizing need. Only promise what you can deliver
- Find qualified mentors. Ask professionals, parents, whole community
- Address accessibility/affordability – fill need by developing community ambassadors
- Develop program diversity. Build from bottom up. Ask questions, try new things.

How will we SUPPORT these opportunities/innovations?

- Integration – ask people to help – look around for ideas – why not?
- Create programs for the weekends, vacation days and summer
- Back to basic parenting – encourage parent participation. Support other programs in positive faith based groups.

How can we collaborate with other sectors? What 2-3 Actions can we take?

- Dream, ask and recognize it is a two-way street

Nature's Role in Youth Development

Top 2-3 most promising or intriguing opportunities/innovations

- Self-sustaining PRODUCTS
- Self-sustaining PROJECTS
- Inter-sector collaborations – facilitate ownership outcomes

How will we SUPPORT these opportunities/innovations?

- Beg and plead or show return on investment for our funders
- Seek and create partnerships
- Six degrees of separation – spread the word, expand the ripple.

How can we collaborate with other sectors? What 2-3 Actions can we take?

- Youth oriented groups, state parks
- Seek other complimentary organizations with similar missions

Early Childhood is a Community Issue Not Just a Family Problem

Top 2-3 most promising or intriguing opportunities/innovations

- Need to “re-educate” policy makers
- Marketing Strategies: Find out what worked/not worked (example: mill levy passage in Summit)
- Start with local voters. Look at economic factors.
- Communicate what is important in our community with elected officials

How will we SUPPORT these opportunities/innovations?

- Parent/Family engagement

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- Develop marketing strategies
- Create partnerships.

How can we collaborate with other sectors? What 2-3 Actions can we take?

- Taking part in Town Council meetings
- Taking part in School Board meetings
- Taking part in Early Childhood Council meetings

Community Development

What does community development mean to us?

Starting definition that CRC uses: Community Development creates a framework for community sustainability that involves community participation and a collective decision making process that meets the social, cultural, and environmental needs of the community

- Cooperation to improve communities
- Partnerships, trust
- Includes all voices, such as new arrivals and long-timers
- An environment of possibilities around the past, present, and future
- Sustainability and replenishment
- Civic engagement
- Quality of life and well-being
- Infrastructure
- Convergence around a common interest
- Agreeing to disagree and to compromise
- Respect and flexibility
- Patience, change, diversity and inclusiveness
- Positive attitude necessary for success
- Neutral, facilitated process
- Habitat: humane-ness and safety of community
- Communication, community sharing, interconnectedness
- Families
- Heritage
- Common vision with goals and prioritized action items
- Long-term goals and big picture
- Opening silos

What are the challenges that we face in doing community development?

- Survival – financial and other needs are really critical
- Housing
- Schools
- Employment
- "More"-ness
- Manageable growth

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- Transportation /infrastructure
- Resource challenges (including electronic)
- Local economies: need to be viable and vibrant all over!
- Lack of awareness/duplication, lack of coordination between groups, especially where scarce \$ resources are an issue
- Widening economic gap affects our lives
- Small number of people in combination with the distance to resource/services
- Family support/safety
- Self-esteem as a community
- Building a sense of community despite distance and seasonal residents/different time here in the region
- Need for outside funding since we just cannot do it by ourselves
- Preserving our quality of life and our heritage
- Continued education of the person and the spirit (not just academics)
- Back-up or emergency planning, and preventative action to present crisis scenarios
- Personal barriers to people's own capacity to change things
- How to get commuting folks locally involved
- Volunteer continuity
- Drain of our kids/young people once they finish their education – are there jobs to come home to?
- Entrepreneurial partnerships and the importance of volunteerism
- Personal autonomy vs. the *need* to pull together
- Mental and spiritual health, and the skills for communities to identify and address it
- Support for religious groups and other strong community groups
- Class credits for young people to engage in work and gain experience
- Engaging in each others' issues
- "Labor – illiterate" youth

Major themes that have emerged:

1. Our cultural legacy, identity, and the pride/shame around those issues
2. Interconnectedness/common vision and communication
3. Engagement, volunteerism, leadership, and personal "education"
4. Economic development in tandem with community development
5. Equal access to and awareness of opportunities and resources

Discussion around these major themes/barriers:

- What are the top two most critical *ongoing* issues related to this major theme?
- What are the top two most critical *emerging* issues related to this major theme?

Top critical *ongoing* issues/opportunities related to these themes/barriers:

1. Lack of willing and able volunteers
2. Financial management (skills) and resource constraints
3. Multiple and complex barriers to involvement
4. "Old timers" and "newbies" valuing history

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5. Engage/inspire youth to return to the community
6. Sense of personal isolation
7. Mutually beneficial nonprofit/for-profit partnerships
8. Overly committed/exhausted volunteers ("the four fools")

Top critical *emerging* issues/opportunities related to these themes:

- A. Service learning in schools
- B. Businesses caring for employees
- C. Old/new demographics
- D. Heritage tourism
- E. Transient populations
- F. Fear about addressing issues, now and in the future
- G. Tax base (Gallagher Amendment & TABOR issues)
- H. Capacity building

Action items:

Lack of willing & able volunteers

- Build organization's capacities to train volunteers, build a strong volunteer program, and manage them well. We suspect that it is an issue of poor volunteer management, which has "turned people off" to volunteering or getting involved in their communities.
- Provide detailed trainings so that volunteers have the skills to be successful, and to be a good "fit" with the right organizations
- People who want to continue to be involved: Jacque Keller (Sangres Art Guild)

Sense of personal isolation

- Capitalize on downward trends through programs, outreach, forecasting trends – so that we realize we have to come together out of necessity, not just out of desire to collaborate
- Capitalize/be proactive around collaboration, to reach more people and organizations – knowing who is already doing which activities/programs within the communities
- People who want to continue to be involved: Community of Caring (Susan Core); Mark Platten

Service learning in schools

- Create a forum for service learning, to learn and share best practices through mechanisms such as: website, organization to facilitate, nonprofit/school volunteer fair

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- Job description for volunteers to ensure that the opportunity is mutually beneficial for both the volunteer and the organization
- People who want to continue to be involved: Jacque Keller (Sangres Art Guild), Casey Shea (El Pomar Foundation)

Heritage tourism

- Digital media presentations on websites and other marketing venues to pique people's interests
- Promote and duplicate successful models (South Park and Delta County, for example)
- People who want to continue to be involved: Helen Dyer, Andrew Zimmerman, Tag Fanning

Housing

Top 4 Sub-Topics Impacting Affordable Housing Development and Need

1. Without affordable housing to build and/or live in the regions workforce is moving out of the area
2. Children of longstanding families in the region are not able to find housing that they can afford and that is close to the community in which they were raised.
3. The cost of building affordable housing is soaring
4. The right to shelter and realizing the American Dream is out of reach for many first time home buyers

Top 3 On-Going Issues

1. Americans in general expect expensive homes with many amenities even in their first homes (expectation and reality are in conflict)
2. Most of the affordable housing stock is substandard and does not meet code. This causes stigma, little support from community members, reduction in civic engagement "Not in my back yard syndrome"
3. Gap between wages and the cost of housing is growing at an alarming rate

Top Emerging Issues

1. Breakdown in fabric of the community, family unit and businesses as children continue to move away due to a lack of affordable housing
2. Uncertain economic climate affects government programs and availability of volunteers to help improve the impact
3. Home financing to build or buy a home is becoming more and more difficult to secure

Top 2 Most Promising or Intriguing Opportunities/Innovations

1. Develop a national model that creates a comprehensive economic educational program from K-12 on the principles of banking and money management.

How Will We Support This Opportunity?

- Encourage financial institutions and educators to explore developing a curriculum starting with a very basic understanding of the value and uses of money to savings, balancing a checkbook, and understanding the cost of goods, to the complexities of borrowing money for education, cars, and home ownership
- Research to determine whether other communities have established a similar curriculum. If so, bring in a representative to share their experiences and strategies

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How Can We Collaborate With Other Sectors?

- Bring K-12 educational representatives together with the members of the banking community to develop a comprehensive K-12 curriculum
- Work with the boards of education and school principals in this region to consider such an undertaking in order to begin working together on the concept
- Seek funding on local, state, and national levels to implement this innovation pilot program in our region
- Generate community involvement through concurrent civic education as well

2. Create a master planning process to develop neighborhoods that are self-sustainable, with all necessary services in close proximity, and with housing that is suitable for all income levels.

How Will We Support This Opportunity?

- Bring together members of the RPD Steering Committee, members of this affordable housing group and other RPD groups that have identified the lack of affordable housing as a sub-topic to identify local officials, planners, private developers, designers, and influential community leaders to begin to establish interest and commitment in this strategic planning process.

How Can We Collaborate With Other Sectors?

- Bring representatives from the RPD Steering Committee, housing focus group, nonprofits, local officials, planners, private developers, designers, and influential community members to establish interest and commitment and begin this strategic planning process
- Encourage towns and cities to become more involved and to loosen building standards to reduce the cost of housing construction