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SDSU Extension Fact Sheets

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Resource Development

Cooperative Extension, South Dakota State University

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Cooperative Extension Service

A Guide to Town and Country

Area Resource Development

Resource Development

Today the economic welfare of farm and ranch, town and city, is more closely interrelated than ever before.

Taxes to support needed educational facilities, roads, and local government; income to maintain churches, stores, and other essential community services; and jobs for our young people stem from the land, service businesses, and industry.

We can do nothing about the trends showing a declining town and country population in South Dakota, **or we can try to do something** about it through community action.

LET'S FACE FACTS

There is no easy solution. It's a big job for everyone, but some communities have proven the trends can be reversed.

A young farmer set up on a sound business basis builds the economic base of the community. The county agriculture agent, the banker and business man on main street, and other governmental agency representatives can all help him succeed.

The best estimates show that every tourist's car stopping in your town spends an average of \$30.

Studies estimate that each 10 new factory workers employed mean jobs for 4 more workers, 42 more people in town, 27,000 more bank deposits, 36,000 more retail sales yearly, and \$59,000 more personal annual income.

STEPS TOWARD GROWTH

If you and your community want to grow, here are some of the steps to take along the road to success.

Organize for community action. Set up a local development council or planning commission. An even dozen makes a good number if they are key people representing interests of the community.

Inventory your resources. Get as many people as possible involved. It generates interest and enthusiasm so important to any success. Before you go ahead, you need to know where you are. The facts you discover will be the basis of your action program; they will be the assets you have to sell and the liabilities you must strive to overcome.

Develop a community plan. This should take months because every bit of work towards the plan helps make the planning better and it builds acceptance by all the people. It must be their plan.

Go to work on the plan. Start with the highest priority improvements designed to make a good town

By John T. Stone, director, Cooperative Extension Service

and rural community a better one. Sell others on your community and encourage local expansion of employment with moral and financial support.

ACTIONS HELPFUL IN AREA DEVELOPMENT

Develop your community organization. Form a development council, planning commission, or coordinating group.

Form working groups. In so far as possible, use groups already organized and assign them specific responsibilities:

- Survey or fact gathering
- Finance
- Publicity
- Civic improvement
- Industrial development
- Agricultural development
- Small business

Draw up a community plan. This is the blueprint for the community's future. It encourages and stimulates investment in homes, farms, business, and industry.

It helps reduce costs and at the same time provides for better schools, parks, roads, and local government administration.

It normally results in higher property values and a healthier, more attractive place to live.

It builds toward a broader tax base and a reduction of individual tax burdens.

THREE STEPS IN COMMUNITY PLANNING

Survey what you have now. To do this it helps to have the following on land, people, and finance:

Land

- An accurate base map of the community.
- Maps showing topography, geology, soil, and water resources.
- A map showing present use of land.
- An inventory, with maps, of schools, parks, public buildings, and other public properties.
- A map of roads, streets, buildings, and transportation facilities.
- An aerial map of entire community.
- Maps of services such as schools, hospitals, parks, water lines, sewers, etc.

People

- Maps, charts, and data outlining population growth and characteristics.
- Studies of population distribution, age, education, employment, availability, and special skills.
- Analysis of school situation.
- Inventory of social, cultural, health, and welfare facilities and services.
- Map showing existing housing areas together with data giving supply, type, rate of construction, etc.
- Any other factors pertaining to the well-being of the community.

Finance

- Study of existing economic base, agriculture, recreation, manufacturing, commercial resources, etc.
- Information on employment and income.
- Study of service costs of education, welfare, roads, local government, and the tax structure.
- Outline of trade areas and market areas for the community.
- Program of capital improvements and bonded indebtedness.

Decide what you want. Make a plan.

- Show proposed new streets and roads.
- Show future land use pattern desirable.
- Suggest parking pattern for business area; traffic routing signs.
- Program future expansion of services in keeping with community's financial ability.
- Make proposals on the future of land, people, and finances. You should include:

Land

- Future locations for schools, parks, playgrounds, public buildings, recreational development, new business, and industrial sites.
- Supporting facts and figures.

People

- Data on the population living in the community.
- Future needs for social, cultural, and health and welfare facilities.
- Plan for future educational needs.
- Plans for adequate and pleasant residential areas.

Finance

- Estimate of future needs in business and industry to obtain a balanced community.
- Program for future expansion of public and private services in keeping with community's ability to finance, such as power and water.
- A program for future public improvements and capital expenditures.
- Suggestions as to probable future tax policies founded upon a well rounded economic base of town and country.

Get what you want from what you have. Incorporate the plan into a report on the community. Publish parts of it for use in selling both local people and outsiders on the community.

Set up a capital budget and improvement program over 5 or 6 years with the most needed items listed in order of priority.

Enact the needed ordinances to carry out proposals for new development including zoning a building code and sanitary code for the town.

Support a local economic development corporation with finances to actively cooperate with prospective employers in bringing new opportunities for jobs and income into the community.

Finally, in the last analysis, it's the interest and individual initiative of all the people that really puts a town and the surrounding area on the map.

In many South Dakota communities there are real opportunities to expand the local processing and servicing of a dynamic agriculture. Small industry using local raw materials or those easily transported have real possibilities. Often these are developed around the skill of residents when given community encouragement. Recreational and highway services have a great new future for many communities.

Irrigation holds a key to stabilizing agriculture and making it possible for the land to support more farm families in some areas. In others, dairy, poultry, more livestock feeding, and the production of specialty crops, such as sugar beets and vegetables, might profitably be encouraged.

Community growth is the product of working together, getting the facts, developing a plan, ideas, enthusiasm, hard work, and a pinch of luck.