



Priorities

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Strategies

Community
and Economic
Development
Goal

Community and Economic Development Goal

- Reduce unemployment rate below national average in the next 10 years while preserving our rural character.

Priorities

Where we plan to focus our funding:

- **Small business development**

The majority of businesses in Newaygo County have less than 10 employees. We seek to encourage the growth of locally-owned small businesses in order to increase their ability to create jobs and hire unemployed and underemployed residents.

- **Entrepreneurship development**

Entrepreneurs present new opportunities for our local economy. We seek to support an entrepreneurial culture that encourages residents to explore their ideas and supports the establishment of new businesses that have local roots.

- **Workforce development**

Many people who are unemployed and underemployed are unable to fully participate in the workforce due to a gap between the skill they have acquired and the skill needed for good jobs. We seek to close this skills gap to strengthen households economically and increase the competitiveness of local companies through a stronger workforce.

- **Capacity of local community and economic development partners**

Local community and economic development organizations support the strengthening and growth of the local economy in many ways. We seek to increase the capacity of these organizations to work towards measurable outcomes and collaborate both locally and regionally.

- **Natural resources promotion and utilization**

With more than 230 natural lakes, 350 miles of rivers and streams, over 125,000 acres of farmland, and half of the county contained in the Manistee National Forest, Newaygo County clearly boasts a wealth of natural resources. The Community Foundation supports the promotion and utilization of these natural resources in ways that will positively impact the local economy while preserving our rural character.

Outcomes

Desired results:

- **Small business development**
 - Strengthened small business support systems
 - Increased business clusters around natural resources, e.g. agriculture, forestry, and tourism
 - Increased small business job creation
- **Entrepreneurship development**
 - Strengthened entrepreneurship support systems
 - Increased entrepreneurship curriculum taught in schools
 - Increased access to local and regional capital
- **Workforce development**
 - Improved career access for residents
 - Increased job training tailored to local employment opportunities
 - Increased connections between business and education sectors
- **Capacity of local community and economic development partners**
 - Improved community partners' ability to measure results
 - Strengthened local and regional community and economic development collaborations through value chains
 - Increased revenue diversity of community partners
- **Natural resources promotion and utilization**
 - Improved connection and coordination of tourism assets
 - Increased awareness of county's natural resources and recreational opportunities
 - Increased economic impact of tourism

Benchmarks

Possible indicators that our community is making progress:

- **Small business development**
 - Number of small businesses receiving technical assistance
 - Number of small businesses implementing best practices
 - Number of jobs created by small businesses
- **Entrepreneurship development**
 - Number of entrepreneurs receiving technical assistance
 - Number of students learning about entrepreneurship
 - Number of new businesses established
- **Workforce development**
 - Number of workers receiving job training
 - Number of workers earning industry certifications
 - Percentage of jobs in Newaygo County filled by residents
- **Capacity of local community and economic development partners**
 - Evaluative processes implemented by community partners
 - Number of community partners collaborating through value chains
 - Community partners' revenue diversity
- **Natural resources promotion and utilization**
 - Number of overnight tourist stays
 - Number of outdoor recreational events
 - Revenue from tourists

Strategies

Some suggestions for community partners:

- **Small business development**
 - Small business technical assistance
 - Best practice workshops and trainings
 - Affinity groups around natural resources business clusters, e.g. agriculture, forestry, and tourism
- **Entrepreneurship development**
 - Entrepreneurship wrap-around services
 - K-16 entrepreneurial curriculum/classes
 - Microfinance
- **Workforce development**
 - Job trainings
 - Industry certification programs
 - Collaborative projects between businesses and educational institutions
- **Capacity of local community and economic development partners**
 - Evaluation capacity building
 - Align collaborations around value chains
 - Implement fund development and financial management best practices
- **Natural resources promotion and utilization**
 - Link natural resources assets together
 - Cross-sector collaboration to create tourism packages
 - Collaborative and coordinated tourism marketing

Priorities

Where we plan to focus our funding:

- Small business development
- Entrepreneurship development
- Workforce development
- Capacity of local community and economic development partners
- Natural resources promotion and utilization

Outcomes

Desired results:

- Strengthened small business support systems
- Strengthened entrepreneurship support systems
- Improved career access for residents
- Improved community partners' ability to measure results
- Increased economic impact of tourism

Benchmarks

Possible indicators that our community is making progress:

- Number of jobs created by small businesses
- Number of new businesses established
- Number of workers earning industry certifications
- Evaluative processes implemented by community partners
- Number of overnight tourist stays

Strategies

Some suggestions for community partners:

- Small business technical assistance
- Entrepreneurship wrap-around services
- Industry certification programs
- Evaluation capacity building
- Cross-sector collaboration to create tourism packages

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