



**EXTENSION**  
College of Agriculture,  
Biotechnology & Natural Resources

## **Results from the Community Asset Survey: Humboldt County, Nevada**

**Marlene Rebori**

**Joseph Lednicky**

**University of Nevada, Reno  
University of Nevada Extension**

This publication was produced under the **Nevada Economic Assessment Project (NEAP)**, which aims to provide county, state, and federal agencies, and their partners, with quantitative and qualitative baseline data and analyses to better understand trends in each county's demographic, social, economic, fiscal, and environmental characteristics.

More information on the NEAP can be found on our webpage: [Extension.unr.edu/NEAP](https://Extension.unr.edu/NEAP).

*Copyright © 2021, University of Nevada, Reno Extension*

*A partnership of Nevada counties; University of Nevada, Reno; and the U.S. Department of Agriculture*

*An EEO/AA Institution*

# **Results From the Community Asset Survey: Humboldt County November 2019**

Marlene Rebori, Community Development Specialist  
Joseph Lednicky, Economist II

## **Introduction**

The Nevada Economic Assessment Project (NEAP) is a statewide Extension program aimed at providing a baseline repository of socio-economic data for each county in Nevada. One component of NEAP includes a community asset mapping workshop conducted with community leaders and residents. The asset mapping component includes a community workshop, followed by an online community asset survey. The online survey is an opportunity to provide broader community participation, beyond the workshop participants, to help identify community assets.

As part of the NEAP process, the community asset workshop for Humboldt County was held in person with county officials and staff on Nov.04, 2019. The community asset mapping component of NEAP is a “snapshot of assets”. It is not a full inventory of every asset that exists or is desired in the county. A snapshot provides a broad overview of the key assets in the community, at this moment in time (hence a baseline). Asset mapping is a positive way to promote and think about one’s community and can typically serve as a starting point for further discussions of possible actions and initiatives.

Asset mapping is a process to create awareness of local resources. Its intended purpose is for community members to recognize what their community already has while noting desired additions to their community. Typically, when community members gather, people begin by listing all the problems or needs within the community. When members begin with identifying needs first, they see an endless list of problems. Funding often tends to go to outside service providers, and residents view themselves and their community as deficient. As a result, residents can feel as though they are victims who lack the capacity to make change happen within their own community (Kretzman and McKnight 1993).

However, if residents focus first on assets and strengths within the community, they are far more likely to be committed to investing in their communities and use existing strengths to address needs. Empirical evidence strongly suggests community economic development is more successful when people are willing to commit to investing in themselves and their resources (Burkett 2011; Underwood and Friesner 2017).

Communities that focus on assets first are more able to effectively address needs by partnering with outside entities to leverage the resources and assets within the community (Kretzman and McKnight 1993; Pitzer and Streeter 2015).

Hence, successful community development must begin within the community itself. Results from the Humboldt County Community Asset Survey are provided in this special publication to provide a snapshot of existing and desired assets as provided by Humboldt County residents.

## **Survey Results**

Following the in person community asset mapping workshop on Nov. 4, 2019, an online community asset survey was open in Survey Monkey from Nov. 10, 2019, to Nov. 18, 2019. Links to the survey were made available on the NEAP website and encouraged to be shared for broader distribution with workshop attendees.

No residents responded to the Humboldt County online community asset survey. The survey was available for one week and accessible on the NEAP webpage, and paper copies were also made available through Humboldt County offices. Due to a lack of interest in completing and marketing the survey, the survey was closed and themes to reflect a snapshot of assets are based solely on the asset maps completed by workshop participants.

Respondents were asked on the survey to share, “*In one word, what is something you would like to brag about your community?*” The following word cloud (Figure 1) reflects respondents’ one word to brag about their community. The larger the word in the word cloud, the more often the word was used from residents on the survey. Therefore, the more frequently it was cited, the larger the word appears.

The process used to identify assets was grouped into six categories. These six categories were provided to residents during the community workshop and in the online survey as a framework to think about assets. The six asset categories are based on the seven community capitals (Flora and Flora 2013). The seven community capitals (i.e., built, natural, political, social, natural, human and cultural) are commonly identified as the ecosystem of a healthy community. The community capitals approach builds on the notion that all communities have assets. These assets may be inactive, or they may be invested to create more assets or leveraged to help fill gaps in the community.

Figure 1. Humboldt County Community Asset Word Cloud, 2021



Respondents were asked to provide what assets exist currently and what assets they desire for each of the six categories. The six asset categories can be fluid, implying the categories themselves are not the focus, but rather it is the the identification of the asset itself that is most important. For example, residents may identify a desired asset to have “reliable broadband”. This asset can be identified under the category of *Play*, *Economic* or *Values*. The six categories of assets are identified as follows.

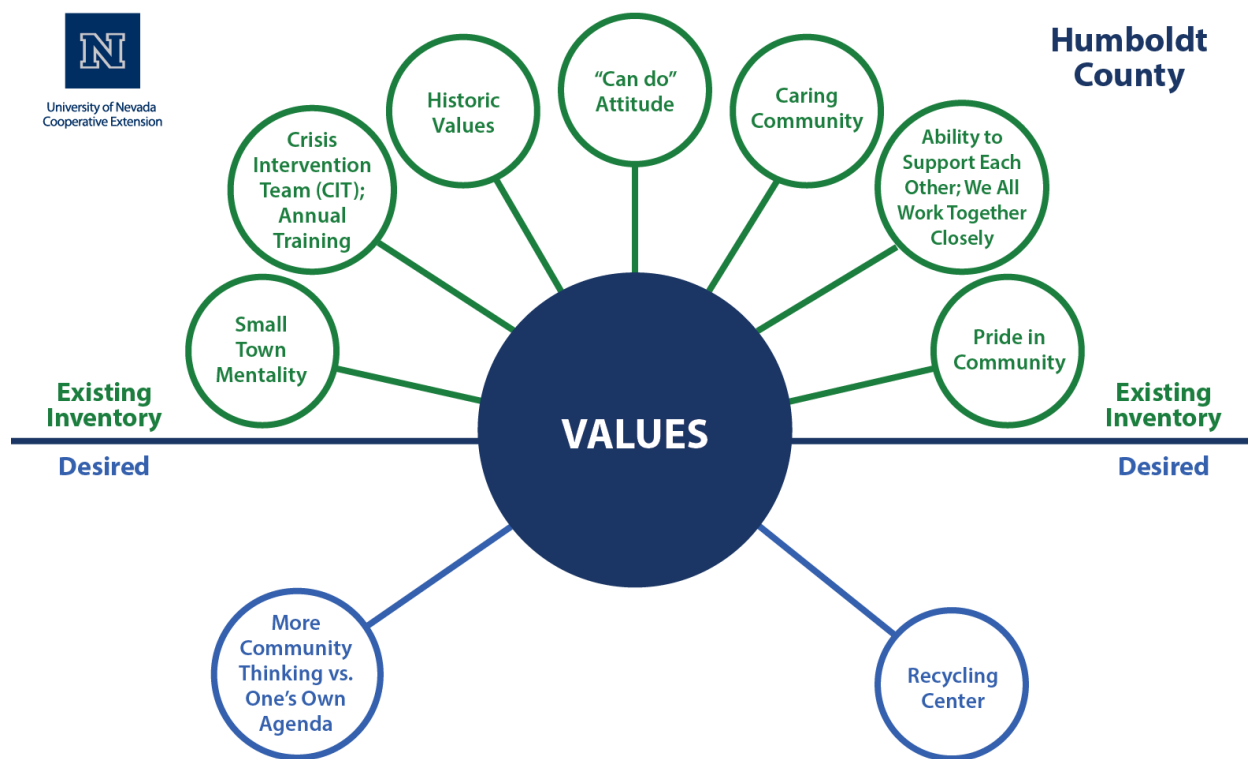
1. Values
2. People
3. Places
4. Play
5. Economic
6. Group

## Assets

### 1) Values:

Values are an intangible asset of a community; however, shared values add to the quality of life in a community. Examples of values may include “safe community,” “a small-town feel” or “rural values.” Community values are important because values are the foundation to a community, and local decisions often reflect these core values. Figure 2 outlines existing and desired assets of values as identified by workshop participants in Humboldt County. To be respectful of individuals who participated in the community asset mapping workshop, these maps are included in Figure 2, regarding values as assets.

Figure 2. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Map: Values



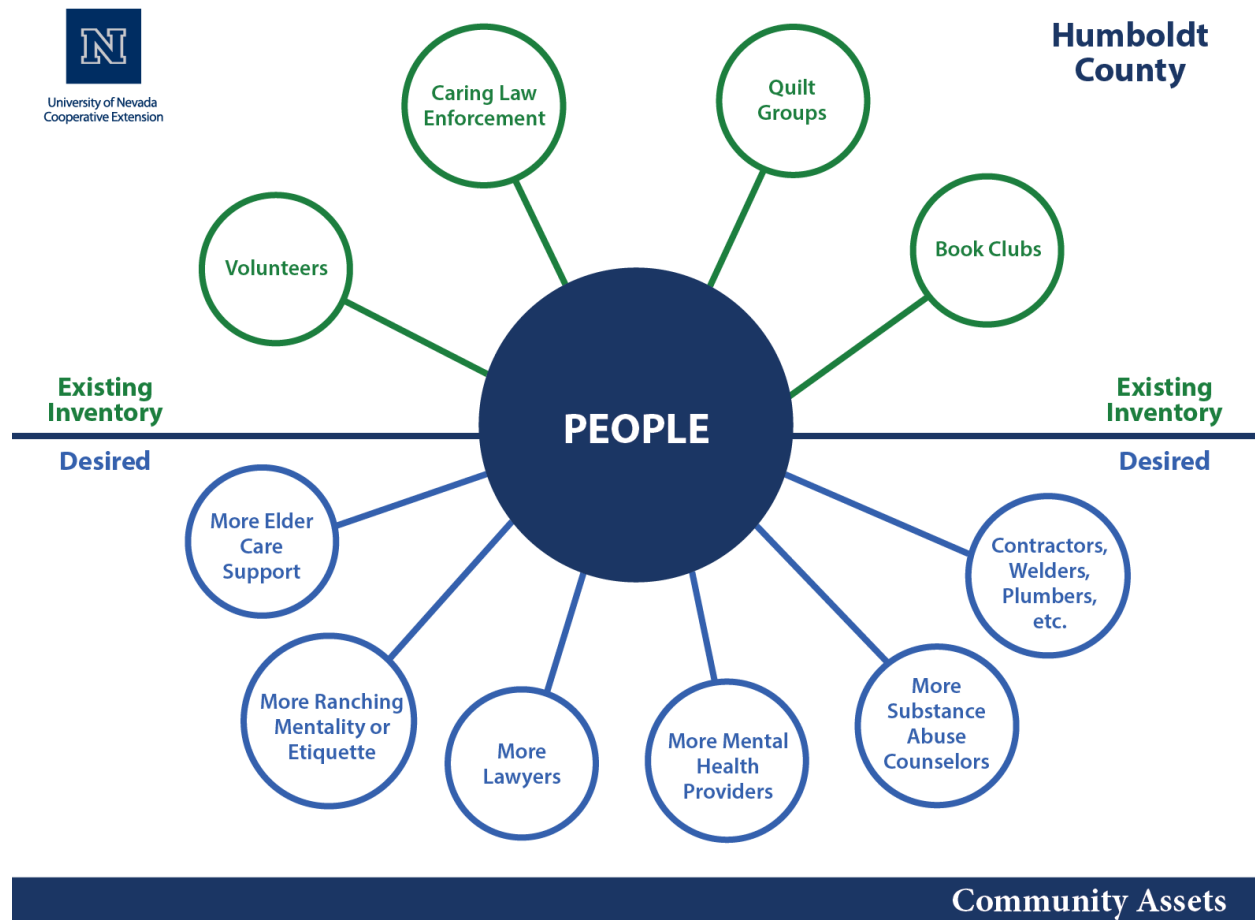
### Community Assets

*\*All data in this figure were submitted by residents and survey respondents. Please excuse any spelling, grammar, or other inconsistencies. These are not the views nor opinions of the authors of the report.*

## 2) People:

Everyone in a community has some gift or talent he/she can contribute to help strengthen the community. The core of community rests with the capacity of its residents, the individual members of the community and how individuals can contribute. When people use their skills and talents in the community, they make the community stronger. Figure 3 outlines existing and desired assets of people as identified by workshop participants in Humboldt County. To be respectful of individuals who participated in the community asset mapping workshop, these maps are included in Figure 3, regarding people as assets.

Figure 3. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Map: People



*\*All data in this figure were submitted by residents and survey respondents. Please excuse any spelling, grammar, or other inconsistencies. These are not the views nor opinions of the authors of the report.*

### 3) Places:

Every community has special places where people come together. Community is about coming together, and the places where people congregate are spaces for building community. These places may serve as a microcosm of community. Places can also add to a community's identity through a historic building or traditional stories about the community. Figure 4 outlines existing and desired assets of places as identified by workshop participants in Humboldt County. To be respectful of individuals who participated in the community asset mapping workshop, these maps are included in Figure 4, regarding places as assets.

Figure 4. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Map: Place



*\*All data in this figure were submitted by residents and survey respondents. Please excuse any spelling, grammar, or other inconsistencies. These are not the views nor opinions of the authors of the report.*

#### 4) Play:

Play is an important part of life for all of us, from children to adults. Play gives us the time and space to meet and socialize with others, and improves our physical and mental health and our overall quality of life. The evidence outlining the benefits of play in the development of young children is overwhelming. Likewise, the value of play from children to adults offers wide benefits for a community. Locations for play are often seen as a focal point for communities. They offer opportunities for social interaction for the wider community, support the development of a greater sense of community spirit and promote social cohesion. Figure 5 outlines existing and desired assets of play as identified by workshop participants in Humboldt County. To be respectful of individuals who participated in the community asset mapping workshop, these maps are included in Figure 5, regarding play as assets.

Figure 5. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Map: Play



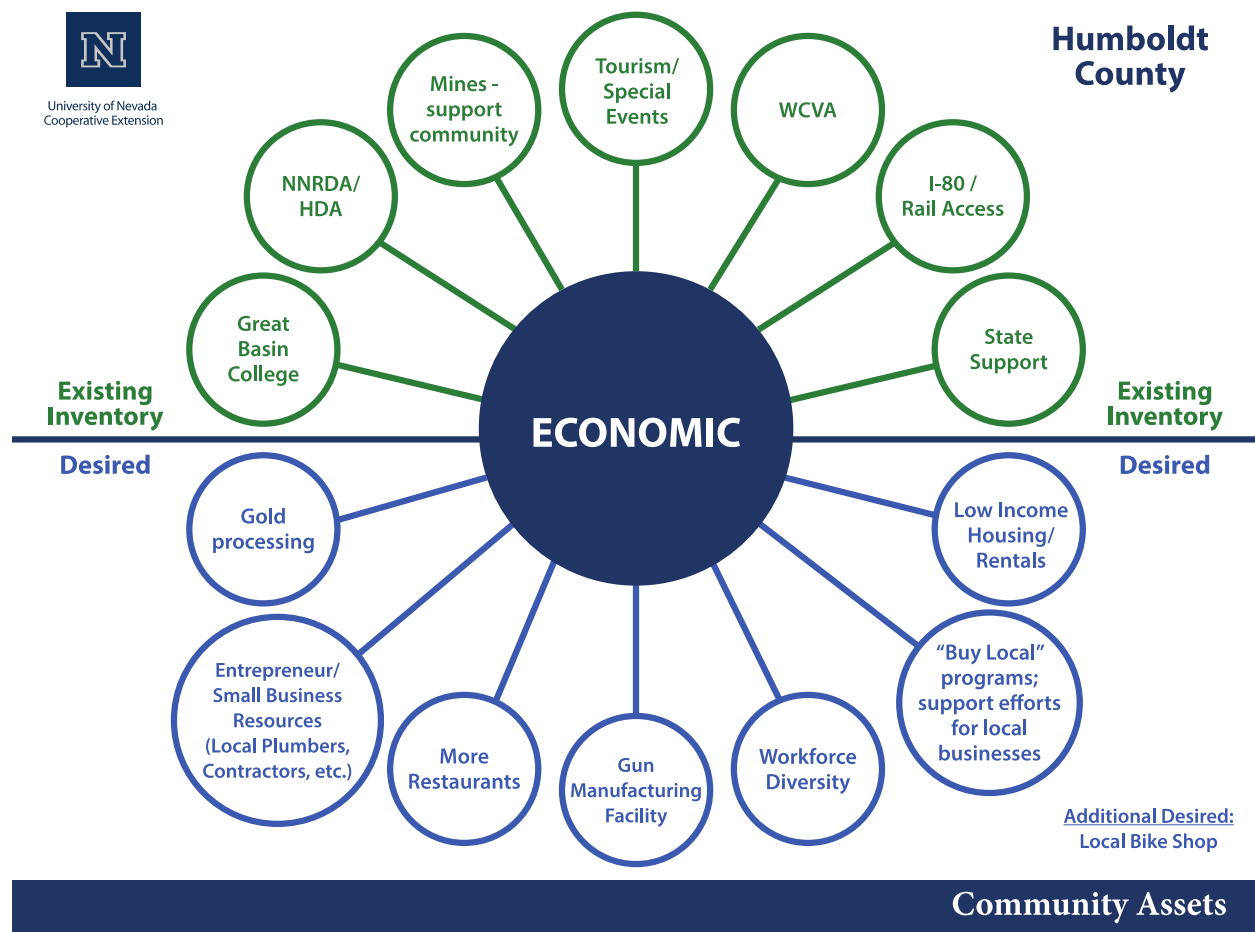
*\*All data in this figure were submitted by residents and survey respondents. Please excuse any spelling, grammar, or other inconsistencies. These are not the views nor opinions of the authors of the report.*



## 5) Economic:

Communities have economic power in local businesses. This power includes who they hire, what they purchase, what skills they teach and what resources they offer. Revitalizing a community's economic life is at the very center of local economic development. Communities have many steps to rebuilding the local economy, and it begins by recognizing the local institutions and organizations that exist. Figure 6 outlines existing and desired economic assets as identified by workshop participants in Humboldt County. To be respectful of individuals who participated in the community asset mapping workshop, these maps are included in Figure 6, regarding economic assets.

Figure 6. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Map: Economic

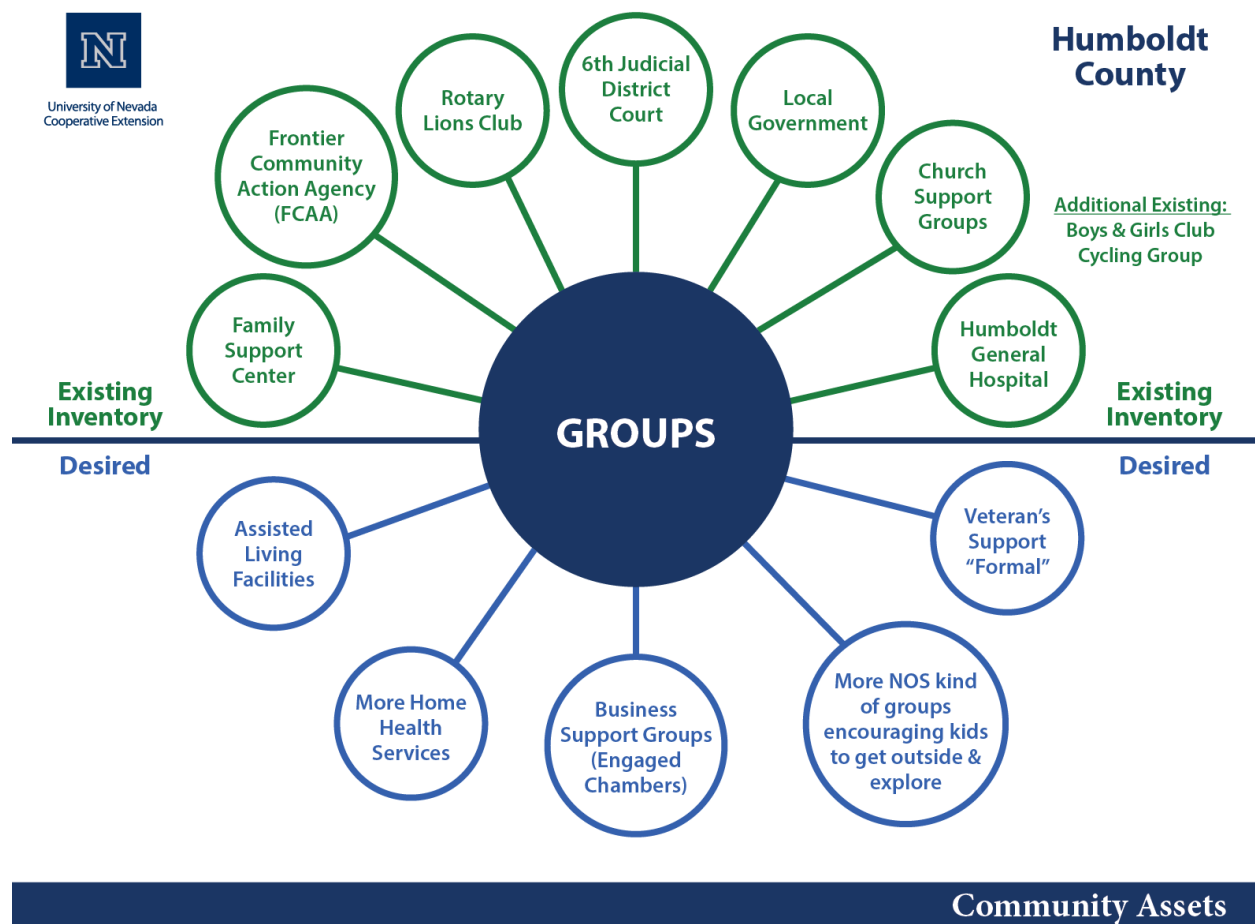


*\*All data in this figure were submitted by residents and survey respondents. Please excuse any spelling, grammar, or other inconsistencies. These are not the views nor opinions of the authors of the report.*

## 6) Groups:

Groups and organizations are the foundation to a community's social fabric. Linkages and networks among community groups create social capital. Community groups (whether formal or informal) can often serve as the avenue for creating social trust, build relationships, and connect networks among community members. Involvement in these groups build individual skills and increases involvement in community associations. Those involved in groups often who help “fill the gaps” in a community and take on leadership roles. Figure 7 outlines existing and desired groups as identified by workshop participants in Humboldt County. To be respectful of individuals who participated in the community asset mapping workshop, these maps are included in Figure 7, regarding groups as assets.

Figure 7. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Map: Groups



*\*All data in this figure were submitted by residents and survey respondents. Please excuse any spelling, grammar, or other inconsistencies. These are not the views nor opinions of the authors of the report.*

## Snapshot of Assets

As stated earlier in this document, asset mapping is a process to create awareness of local resources and strengths. Its intended purpose is for community members to recognize what their community already has while noting desired additions to their community. Identifying community assets is an important process in driving local economic development (Burkett 2011). To create a “snapshot of assets” across each category, comments were qualitatively grouped into key themes. Themes were identified based on asset mapping responses for each of the six asset categories. Asset maps, as listed in Figures 2-7, were reviewed and categorized into dominant themes based on similarity of responses.

Developing themes from qualitative responses required responses to be reviewed and coded. Similar coded responses were grouped together to create a theme (i.e., the individual responses of all the service and civic clubs listed were placed under a general theme of “Service/Civic Clubs” to reflect a broader theme). The higher frequency of coded response per theme is reflected by a higher ranking of the theme listed for each asset category. A snapshot of assets for each category are summarized below.

### Values

*Table 1. Themes of Existing and Desired Values as Assets in Humboldt County*

<i>Existing Values</i>	<i>Desired Values</i>
1. Community Pride	1. More Community Minded
2. Historic Values	2. Recycling Center
3. Crisis Intervention Team Training	

### People

*Table 2. Themes of Existing and Desired People Assets in Humboldt County*

<i>Existing People</i>	<i>Desired People</i>
1. Volunteers	1. Trades People
2. Caring Law Enforcement	2. Mental Health Providers
3. Social Clubs	3. Elder Care Support

## Places

Table 3. Themes of Existing and Desired Places as Assets in Humboldt County

<i>Existing Places</i>	<i>Desired Places</i>
1. Parks/Museums	1. Improve Health Care
2. Local Dining	2. Diverse Dining
3. Library	3. Public Transport

## Play

Table 4. Themes of Existing and Desired Play Assets in Humboldt County

<i>Existing Play</i>	<i>Desired Play</i>
1. Outdoor Opportunities	1. Biking/Walking Trails in Town
2. Indoor Sports Complex	2. Art/Theater Venue
	3. Aquatic Center

## Economic

Table 5. Themes of Existing and Desired Economic Assets in Humboldt County

<i>Existing Economic</i>	<i>Desired Economic</i>
1. I-80/Rail Access	1. Small Business Resources/Support
2. Tourism/Special Events	2. Diverse Workforce
3. NNRDA/HDA	3. Accessible Housing

## Groups

Table 6. Themes of Existing and Desired Group Assets in Humboldt County

<i>Existing Groups</i>	<i>Desired Groups</i>
1. Support Groups	1. Business Support/Engaged Chamber
2. Civic Clubs	2. Home Health Services
3. Humboldt General Hospital	3. Outdoor Groups for Youth

### Limitations

A few significant limitations need to be noted in this asset report. First, a very small percentage of residents participated in the community asset mapping workshop (n~15) out of a county population of 16,831 (U.S. Census 2019). Additional limitations include a majority of those who did participate in the workshop were Humboldt County employees and elected officials. Although an online survey was created to broaden participation, unfortunately the survey received no responses. Given these limitations to the community asset mapping process, the results are a first step in identifying existing and desired assets within the community. However, the snapshot of assets identified in this report can be used as a **starting point for discussion** among a more diverse set of residents with local decision-makers to explore how existing and desired assets can guide economic development decisions.

### Conclusion and Next Steps

Asset mapping is an important tool to assist communities in identifying resources and strengths that currently exist, and it can help reveal desired assets that residents believe should be improved upon to help drive local change in their community. The information provided in this report reflect results from the Humboldt County Community Asset Mapping workshop, in connection with the Nevada Economic Analysis Baseline Report. Both of these reports are tools that can be used to help inform and guide local decision-making for economic development and to understand what resident's value and desire in the community.

## References Cited

1. Akima, Y., Chapin, S. and Fairbrother P. (2013). "Role of social networks in community preparedness for bushfire." Conference paper *in* International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment, July 2013. DOI: 10.1108/IJDRBE-01-2014-0010.
2. Arewasikporn, A., Sturgeon, J. and Zautra, A. (2019). "Sharing Positive Experiences Boosts Resilient Thinking: Everyday benefits of social connection and positive Emotions in a community sample." *American Journal of Community Psychology* (2019) 63: 110-121. DOI: 10.10021/ajcp.122279.
3. Burket, I. (2011). "Appreciating Assets: A new report from the International Association for Community Development (IACD)." *Community Development Journal* 46 (4) October: 573-578. DOI: 01.1093/cdj/bsr054.
4. Flora, C.B. and Flora, J. (2013). Rural Communities: Legacy + Change fourth edition Westview Press. New York, NY.
5. Kretzman, J. and McKnight, J. (1993). Building Communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets, ACTA Publications, Chicago, IL.
6. Pitzer, K. and Streeter, C. (2015). "Mapping Community Capitals: A Potential Tool for Social Work." *Advances in Social Work* 16 (2): 358-371. Fall. Doi: 10.18060/17470.
7. Green, G. (2009). "Community Asset Mapping and Surveys" *in* An Introduction to Community Development, eds. Rhonda Phillips & Robert Pittman. pps. 156-165.
8. Green, G. and Haines, A. (2007). Asset Building and Community Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
9. Miller, J. and Taylor, A. (2020). "Seeking a new relationship with communities. How local elected officials want to bridge divides, distrust and doubts." Harwood Institute and Kettering Foundation.
10. South, J., Giuntoli, G. and Kinsella, K. (2017). "Getting Past the dual logic: findings from a pilot asset mapping exercise in Sheffield, UK. *Health and Social Care in the Community* 25 (1): 105-113. DOI:.
11. Underwood, D. and Friesner, D. (2017). "Asset Mapping, the Social Fabric Matrix, Economic Impact Analysis, and Criteria for Sustainability and Justice: Operational Elements for Holistic Policy Planning." *Journal of Economic Issues* 51 (3): 813-827. DOI: 10.1080/00213624.2017.1359051.

12. U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts. (2019). Humboldt County, NV.  
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/humboldtcountynevada> Accessed July 15, 2021

# Appendix A

Below are lists corresponding to Figures 2 through 7 in the main part of this publication, showing the existing and desired inventories as determined by the in-person community asset mapping session for the six asset categories.

*Table 7. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Table: Values*

Existing	Desired
Small Town Mentality	More Community Thinking vs. One's Own Agenda
Crisis Intervention Team, Annual Training	Recycling Center
Historic Values	
'Can Do' Attitude	
Caring Community	
Ability to Support Each Other We all Work Together Closely	
Pride in Community	

*Table 8. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Table: People*

Existing	Desired
Volunteers	More Elder Care Support
Caring Law Enforcement	More Ranching Mentality or Etiquette
Quilt Groups	More Lawyers
Book Clubs	More Mental Health providers
	More Substance Abuse Counselors
	Contractors, Welders, Plumbers, etc.

*Table 9. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Table: Places*

Existing	Desired
Paradise Bar	Rebuild Confidence in Local Hospital
Library (and Children's Program)	Women's Health Services Center
Bowling Alley	Dark Sky Reserve
Veteran's Memorial Park	Urgent Care
Lazy P Farm	Public Transport
Coffee Shops	Fun Places to Eat/Variety of Restaurants
Museum	Italian Restaurant
Sand Mountain	

---

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a place of work and learning free of discrimination on the basis of a person's age, disability, whether actual or perceived by others (including service-connected disabilities), gender (including pregnancy related conditions), military status or military obligations, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, national origin, race, or religion. Where discrimination is found to have occurred, the University will act to stop the discrimination, to prevent its recurrence, to remedy its effects, and to discipline those responsible.



Table 10. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Table: Play

Existing	Desired
Golf Course	Garden Activities
Water Canyon; Bloody Shins Bike Trail	Bike/Walking Trails in Town
B&G Club; Sports Complex	'Green Belt'
Hinkey Summit	Aquatic Center
Vesco Park; Skate Park	Nature program focused on local flora/fauna
Lazy P Farm	Venues for Art/Theater
Events Center; Rodeo, Fair	

Table 11. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Table: Economic

Existing	Desired
Great Basin College	Gold Processing
NNRDA/HDA	Entrepreneur/Small Business Resources
Mines-Support Community	More Restaurants
Tourism?Special Events	Gun Manufacturing Facility
WCVA	Workforce Diversity
I-80 and Rail Access	'Buy Local' programs; support efforts for local businesses
State Support	Low Income Housing/ Rentals

Table 12. Humboldt County Community Workshop Asset Table: Groups

Existing	Desired
Family Support Center	Assisted Living Facilities
Frontier Community Action Agency (FCAA)	More Home Health Services
Rotary Lions Club	Business Support Groups (Engaged Chambers)
6 <sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court	More NOS kind of groups encouraging kids to get outside and explore
Local Government	Veteran's Support 'Formal'
Church Support Groups	
Humboldt General Hospital	
Boys and Girls Club	
Cycling Group	

*The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a place of work and learning free of discrimination on the basis of a person's age, disability, whether actual or perceived by others (including service-connected disabilities), gender (including pregnancy related conditions), military status or military obligations, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, national origin, race, or religion. Where discrimination is found to have occurred, the University will act to stop the discrimination, to prevent its recurrence, to remedy its effects, and to discipline those responsible.*