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## Results from the Community Asset Survey: Eureka County, Nevada

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# Results From the Community Asset Survey: Eureka County December 2020

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## 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 Eureka County was held in person with county officials and staff on Dec 9, 2020. 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 Eureka County Community Asset Survey are provided in this special publication to provide a snapshot of existing and desired assets as provided by Eureka County residents.

### Survey Results

Following the virtual community asset mapping workshop on Dec. 9, 2020, an online community asset survey was open in Survey Monkey from Dec. 10, 2020, until Jan. 5, 2021. Links to the survey were made available on the NEAP website and the Eureka County Website.

A total of four residents (n=4) completed the online community asset survey for Eureka County. Survey respondents were split half women and half men. Ages of respondents included were within two age categories, 25-34 years (50%) and 45 to 55 years (50%). The online survey is not intended to be a complete inventory of all assets in Eureka County, but rather a snapshot of assets identified by residents at this point in time.

Respondents who provided input into the survey were from one of the two zip codes in Eureka County (Table 1). All survey respondents (100%) were from Eureka County.

*Table 1. Eureka County Community Assets Respondent Zip Code Distribution, 2021*

<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Survey Responses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>89316</b>	Eureka	4	100%
<b>89821</b>	Crescent Valley	0	0%

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. Eureka 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. Table 2 outlines existing and desired assets of values as identified by workshop participants in Eureka County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 2 regarding values as assets.

Table 2. Eureka County Online Survey List of Assets: Values

Existing	Desired
Family Oriented, Self Reliant	Support Local Businesses and Controlled Growth (new blood)
tight community, safe place to live, outdoor activities	more retail/restaurants, day care center, rec facility for community to use
	Childcare, Community center and places for children to play, more food options, gym

*\*All data in this table 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. Table 3 outlines existing and desired assets of people as identified by workshop participants in Eureka County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 3 regarding people as assets.

Table 3. Eureka County Online Survey List of Assets: People

Existing	Desired
Work Ethic, Honest	Open to change
different trade skills, loyal employees, arts/crafts, different professions	more trade skills, more private business that specializes in other areas
	Leadership, friendlier atmosphere, holistic mentality, nutritionist, herbalist, gardeners,

*\*All data in this table 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. Table 4 outlines existing and desired assets of places as identified by workshop participants in Eureka County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 4 regarding places as assets.

Table 4. Eureka County Online Survey List of Assets: Places

Existing	Desired
Schools, Opera House, Jackson House	Community Center, Day Care
Opera House, Fairgrounds	Rec Facility, Bigger park that is not owned by school for kids to use, indoor area for large weddings
	Church, Community events, Independence Day celebrations, Community Fair, Rodeo

*\*All data in this table 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. Table 5 outlines existing and desired assets of play as identified by workshop participants in Eureka County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 5, regarding play as assets.

Table 5. Eureka County Online Survey List of Assets: Play

Existing	Desired
Vandal Athletic Center, Outdoor Recreation, School sponsored and club sports, Softball Fields,	Girls and Boys Club, Day Care, Community Center, Bowling Alley
hunting, outdoor activity, four-wheeler trails, swimming pool	fishing, more areas to enjoy outdoor sports, running trails
	A gym that is kid friendly, a Fun family ,community center with indoor fun

*\*All data in this table 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. Table 6 outlines existing and desired economic assets as identified by workshop participants in Eureka County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 6, regarding economic assets.

Table 6. Eureka County Online Survey List of Assets: Economic

Existing	Desired
County, Mines, Agriculture	Small Brick and Mortar support, Downtown renovation, Viable restaurants - the huge challenge is workforce with the downtown small businesses
restaurants, small retail, store, gas stations	more retails vendors, credit unions, more local artists selling goods, baked goods store
Raines	More restaurants, Clothing & essentials store that is not overpriced and break up the monopoly

*\*All data in this table 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 builds individual skills and increases involvement in community associations. Those involved in groups often help “fill the gaps” in a community and take on leadership roles. Table 7 outlines existing and desired groups as identified by workshop participants in Eureka County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 7, regarding groups as assets.

Table 7. Eureka County Online Survey List of Assets: Groups

Existing	Desired
Churches, Lions, Eureka Business Network, Volunteer Firemen	Historical Society
Lions club, fireman	quilting club would be nice, local artists sharing do-it-yourself projects
	Youth group, church group, community volunteer groups, moms group

*\*All data in this table 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 survey responses for each of the six asset categories. Participant comments, as listed in Tables 2-7, were reviewed and categorized into dominant themes based on similarity of responses.

Developing themes from qualitative survey 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 sequence of listing for each asset. A snapshot of assets for each category are summarized below.

### Values

*Table 8. Themes of Existing and Desired Values as Assets in Eureka County*

<i>Existing Values</i>	<i>Desired Values</i>
1. Community-Minded	1. Community Center (Brick and Mortar)
2. Outdoor Opportunities	2. Childcare Workers/Facilities
3. Self-Reliance	3. Diverse Retail/Restaurants

### People

*Table 9. Themes of Existing and Desired People Assets in Eureka County*

<i>Existing People</i>	<i>Desired People</i>
1. Honest/Hardworking	1. Diverse Skilled Workforce
2. Diverse Trades	2. More Open/Welcoming
3. Arts/Craft	3. Leadership Skills



## Places

Table 10. Themes of Existing and Desired Places as Assets in Eureka County

<i>Existing Places</i>	<i>Desired Places</i>
1. Opera House	1. Community Center
2. Schools	2. Childcare/Daycare
3. County Fairgrounds	4. More Community Events

## Play

Table 11. Themes of Existing and Desired Play Assets in Eureka County

<i>Existing Play</i>	<i>Desired Play</i>
1. Outdoor Opportunities	1. Community Center
2. Indoor Athletic Center	2. Outdoor Sports
3. Club/School Sports	3. Running/Walking Trails

## Economic

Table 12. Themes of Existing and Desired Economic Assets in Eureka County

<i>Existing Economic</i>	<i>Desired Economic</i>
1. Local Shops/Retail	1. More Support of Local Shops/Retail
2. Mining	2. Renovate Downtown Area
3. Agriculture	3. Local Credit Union

## Groups

Table 13. Themes of Existing and Desired Group Assets in Eureka County

<i>Existing Groups</i>	<i>Desired Groups</i>
1. Civic Groups	1. Local Artisan/Crafter Club
2. Volunteer Fire Department	2. Community Volunteer Group
3. Eureka Business Network	3. Youth Development Group

### Limitations

A few significant limitations need to be noted in this report. First, a very small percentage of residents completed the online community asset survey (n=4) out of a county population of 1,903 (U.S. Census 2021). Additional limitations include survey respondents represented only one of the two registered zip codes in Eureka County. Given these significant limitations to the community asset survey, 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 Eureka County Community Asset Survey, 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 residents value and desire in the community.

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