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Results from the Community Asset Survey:
White Pine County, Nevada

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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 White Pine County was held in person with county officials and staff on December 11, 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 White Pine County Community Asset Survey are provided in this special publication to provide a snapshot of existing and desired assets as provided by White Pine County residents.

Survey Results
Following the virtual community asset mapping workshop on Dec. 11, 2020, an online community asset survey was open in Survey Monkey from Dec. 11, 2020, until Jan. 4, 2021. Links to the survey were made available on the NEAP website and the Pershing County Website.

A total of ten residents (n=10) completed the online community asset survey for White Pine County. A majority of survey respondents were women (90%) compared to men (10%). Ages of respondents included a cross-sampling of adults, with the highest responses, (30%) within two age categories 35-44 years and 65+ years. The online survey is not intended to be a complete inventory of all assets in White Pine County, but rather a snapshot of assets identified by residents at this point in time.

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

Table 1. White Pine County Community Assets Respondent Zip Code Distribution, 2021

Zip Code	City	Survey Responses	Percent
89301	Ely	8	80%
89311	Baker	2	20%
89314	Duckwater	0	0
89315	Ely	0	0
89317	Lund	0	0
89318	McGill	0	0
89319	Ruth	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. White Pine 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 White Pine 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. White Pine County Online Survey List of Assets: Values

Existing	Desired
White Pine's Dark Skies. There are very few places in the World that have our dark sky. we should try and keep them that way.	Better Housing Lack of Available Housing. We really need more Housing
Public lands and use	Keep water in white pine
Great Basin College	More affordable housing
Small Town, hospital	Save history and old buildings
Hunting, White Pine Horse Races, and Tourism	
Dark Skies, natural landscape, Nevada Northern Railway and other history based assets, ag as an employer, water availability	Balancing situation to promote jobs and housing without distroying the natural beauty and community values
Small town feel	Main street
Safe, small townness, kindness	More positivity

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 White Pine 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. White Pine County Online Survey List of Assets: People

Existing	Desired
I would like to see us have more of an artist culture	More Diverse people just more people There are a few people of different cultures but we could use a lot more
Ranchers	Ranchers
	Conservationists - not BLM
Nevada Northern Railway	more local support of assets
Caroline McIntosh, Kyle Horvath, Wayne Cameron	
Artists, writers, diverse thinkers, scientests and "-ologists," socially minded individuals.	Alturistic people willing to invest locally, economically, socially, physically
Ranchers, miners	Musicians

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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 particpants in White Pine 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. White Pine County Online Survey List of Assets: Places

Existing	Desired
Great Basin National Park is were we have our church picnic every year. That is as close as we get	
Camp success	Restore cave lake
Cave Lake	Hiking trails
Nevada Northern Railway	Dark sky's
Park, and County Fairgrounds	
Nevada Northern Railway depot and trackage, Renaissance Village, historical and recerational sites	Restoration and monitoring of recerational and outdoor activity areas, Financial and physical support of existing historic sites and discovery and developement of new sites.
Success loop	Nevada railroad

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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 White Pine 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. White Pine County Online Survey List of Assets: Play

Existing	Desired
Remote Places for Silence and quiet. We do have a lot of these places embrace what we have	Public restrooms' and places to stop are in great need
Fishing	Winter amenities
Dark skies	Astronomy clubs or groups
Not over crowed for any activity	out door dinning
Golf Course	
NNRy Depot and related rail based activities, night sky viewing, outdoor areas, astronomy, remote areas	Maintaining the dark skies, maintaining public wilderness assets, mainting or improving public lands recreation sites
Atv trails	Community parks with walking trails
Outdoor adventure year round	We really need a community center

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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 White Pine County. To be respectful of participants who completed the online survey, all comments (verbatim) are included in Table 6, regarding economic assets.

Table 6. White Pine County Online Survey List of Assets: Economic

Existing	Desired
Tourism is a big one for me. Most of Baker is only here because of tourism	we could use more people who work in trads
My wheeler power	Housing
	Housing
Mining & Nevada Northern Railway Historical Landmark, and good motels and hotels	more open stores downtown
Restaurants, and Social Events	
Mining, Mt. Wheeler [coop], Tourism, outdoor Rec,	Develope opportunity for new businesses, broadband availability, housing,
Mining	Housing
Credit union, chamber	More robust chamber

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 White Pine 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. White Pine County Online Survey List of Assets: Groups

Existing	Desired
White pine chamber is in need of a over hale	We wouldn't need a business network if the camber did it's job
4-H	Youth groups
Great Basin College	Astronomy groups
Many churches, many service groups	would like to see more people get involved in groups and volunteer more.
Rotary Club, Elks, Lions, WP Horse Races	
Nevada Northern Railway, Conservation Orgs, history oriented groups	Gardening groups, small farm subscription services, training and support for small family owned and remote work businesses
Church	Tourism
Elks, Lions, Rotary, chamber, VFW	More volunteers to what we already have

*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 White Pine County

Existing Values	Desired Values
1. Small-Town Feel	1. More (Affordable) Housing
2. Public Lands/Outdoor Opportunities	2. Balance Growth with Natural Beauty
3. Dark Skies	3. Maintain History

People

Table 9. Themes of Existing and Desired People Assets in White Pine County

Existing People	Desired People
1. Ranchers/Miners	1. More Diversity of People
2. Artists	2. More Artists/Musicians
3. Socially Minded Individuals	3. More People Willing to Invest Locally

Places

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

Existing Places	Desired Places
1. National park (Great Basin) and State Park (Cave Lake)	1. Restore and Monitor Recreational Areas
2. Northern Nevada Railway	2. Financially and Physically Support Existing Historical Sites
3. Historic and Recreation Sites	3. Develop New Sites for Historical and Recreational Visitation

Play

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

Existing Play	Desired Play
1. Remote Place for Quiet and Solitude	1. Maintain and Improe upon Public Assets (restrooms winter amenities)
2. Dark Skies/Astronomy	2. Community Parks/Walking
3. Outdoor Activities	3. Astronomy Club or Group

Economic

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

Existing Economic	Desired Economic
1. Tourism	1. Housingg: Affordable/Accessible
2. Mining	2. Development Opportunities
3. WPC Chamber of Commerce/Mt. Wheeler	3. Brodband/More Active Chamber

Groups

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

Existing Groups	Desired Groups
1. Civic Groups	1. More Youth Groups
2. Churches/Service Groups	2. Astronomy Groups
3. Great Basin College	3. Training and Support for Small and Remote Businesses

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=10) out of a county population of 9,182 (U.S. Census 2021). Additional limitations to the survey are a majority of those who did complete the survey were female (90%), and survey respondents represented only two of the seven registered zip codes in White Pine County. Given these 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 White Pine 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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