



Heartland Center for Leadership Development

Clues to Rural Community Survival

Milan Wall
Co-Director
Heartland Center for
Leadership Development



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Myths about the Future of Small Towns



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Towns that are 'too small' have
no future



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A community's location is key to
its survival



Industrial recruitment is the best strategy for economic development



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Small towns can't compete in the global economy



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The 'best people' leave small towns as soon as they can



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Clues to Rural Community Survival



1. Evidence of Community Pride
2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life
3. Willingness to Invest in the Future
4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making



5. Cooperative Community Spirit
6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities
7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning
8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment



9. Active Economic Development Program
10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders
11. Celebration of Diversity in Leadership
12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education



13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care
14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation
15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life
16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure



17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources
18. Sophisticated Use of Technology Resources
19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside
20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself



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650 J Street, Suite 305-C

Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

www.heartlandcenter.info