

CHOOSE  COLORADO

Hayden Community Assessment



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Office of Economic Development
& International Trade

Assessment Team

- Clarke Becker, Director Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
- Elizabeth Garner, State Demographer, Department of Local Affairs
- Jeremy Rietman, Economic Development Director, Town of Gypsum
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- Greg Winkler, Northern Mountain Regional Manager, Department of Local Affairs

Assessment Process

- Review of all previous assessment
- Data & analytics review
- Three day on-site assessment
- Community asset tour
- Opening community meeting
- Focus group discussions

What We Heard...

- Strong desire for community gathering place to enhance community relationships
- Hayden is an affordable option for people living in the area
- Grounded small town community with longstanding traditions and still attracting new families

What Are You Doing Well?

- Commitment to volunteerism
- Babson Carpenter Career & Technical Education Center
- Beginnings of a community center (coffee shop, brewery, restaurants)
- Totally Kids
- Airport is a great community asset

Resiliency

- Quality of Life
- Industry Diversity
- Community Leadership
- Education and Healthcare
- Transportation Access

Observation: Strong Desire to Shape the Future of Hayden

- There is a general sense that the community is on the cusp of more change and there is a general desire to want to shape or direct that change to preserves the smaller town atmosphere and cohesiveness of Hayden.
- There is a general sense that the people and the community are some of the best assets.
- There is a general sense that people don't know each other as well or know all the community members and that there is a lack of community space to gather and share information.

Recommendation - Community Visioning

- ◆ Conduct a community visioning process to help discuss and formulate a plan for what Hayden wants to be. Should be inspirational.
- ◆ This would include components for both the community as well as the well as businesses or the economy.
- ◆ Link to Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Plan, Economic Development Plan and Communication Plan.

Recommendations - Image

- Create a “community center” by leveraging current natural meeting places like the brewery and coffee shop.
- Develop and implement a streetscape, signage, and wayfinding plan. This will have benefits for both the community as well as for business.
- Leverage the VO-TECH program to assist with signage, streetscape and potentially other main street improvements.
- Consider a Paint it, clean it, fix it grant program to help support improvements along main street. Matching grant - local investors

Recommendation: Develop a local communication plan

- Consider implementing a Neighbor to Neighbor program (similar to Eagle's program). Neighborhood captains assigned and they keep track of new residents, pull information from assessor's website on new housing units. Group meets to create baskets of local goods and information and welcomes new household to the community. Great way to meet people and share information on the local assets.
- Build communication and outreach - look at options through the community website or other local resources like the library, schools, shops, eating and drinking places.

Observation: Public Service Roles

Leadership in any community is critical to success!

Public service and leadership, both elected and volunteer, will be essential to the future success of the Town of Hayden.

There is strong, old and young and passionate energy that will guide the future implementation of the goals of the community.

Recommendation: Public Service Roles

Know your assets:

Votech Facility and Program

Heritage Center, River, State Park

Schools and BEST Grant Application:

Strategic considerations with and without the BEST Grant

Recommendation : Public Service Roles

Broadband Capacity: Opportunities for the Community,
Location Neutral businesses and entrepreneurs

Transportation

Housing

Recommendation : Public Service Roles

Strategic land use planning:

Access to the river and other open space and trails

Planning for the future - potential rec center/town center down the line?

Soft Scape Running/Biking Trail

Communication across jurisdictions - Steamboat, Craig, County, Chambers.(idea of Cross pollination)

Observation - Need for an economic development plan for the community

Hayden residents are motivated to chart their own destiny and responsibly direct growth to improve local economic results and opportunity. Residents also desire to maintain the ‘best of Hayden’ - it’s small-town feel, informal attitude and rural culture. In order to achieve this, there must be a strategic plan for economic development.

This plan should be based on data and have broad community support and buy-in.

Once developed - “the goal is to keep the goal the goal.”

Recommendation - Understand role in regional economy

Leaders must acknowledge and understand the role of Hayden in the regional economy including key economic drivers, dependencies and implications on the town - especially in the realm of public finance.

Recommendation - Cultivate Public/Private Leadership

Public and private leadership is needed to effectively pursue your economic development goals. The Town of Hayden can't do 'economic development' on its own.

Recommendation:

- Assemble an Economic Development Council made up of local residents (6-8), bullish on positive change in Hayden to develop your vision and goals and tactics.
- Shared responsibility helps maintain motivation and positive forward momentum.

Recommendation - Build Regional Relationships

- Relationships are crucial to making connections and seizing opportunities as they arise.
- It will pay dividends to Hayden to strengthen relationships with various regional entities including Routt County, Steamboat Springs, Steamboat Chamber & Resort Association, Yampa Valley Electric Association, the school district, CNCC & others.

Recommendation - Set the Table for Business Development

Be “Business Ready”

- Conduct an Economic Inventory to organize demographic, economic and infrastructure information about Hayden.
- Build a Community Profile for use as a sales tool and informational piece to provide at a moments notice.
- Develop a Rapid Response Team

“Luck is where preparation meets opportunity”

Recommendation - Understand and Leverage Your Key Assets

Key Assets:

- Central location within the region
- Airport, New FBO operator, adjacent lands
- Babson Center
- Fairgrounds
- Available/affordable land for development - much with infrastructure already in place
- Tourism opportunities: Heritage and cultural & Environmental and recreational

Recommendation - Be Smart About Land Use & Directing Development

- Maintain and acquire access to the river & other crucial natural amenities as opportunities arise.
- Understand how different development patterns impact public infrastructure maintenance costs.
- Promote land uses that enhance business cohesiveness and vibrancy

Recommendation: Develop a Business Retention Plan & Prioritize Succession Planning

- Hayden is home to several key businesses and organizations that provide out-sized benefits to community. Preserve them!
- Outreach to these businesses and have these (sometimes hard) conversations now - before anything happens to them.
- Ensure your key assets have a plan to maintain their viability beyond their current proprietors. The best legacy existing operators can leave to the community is a business that functions beyond their tenure.

Recommendation: Prioritize Broadband Development

- Quality internet services don't ensure economic success, but they do ensure that communities don't fall rapidly behind the broader economy - in business, education, healthcare etc.
- Quality Internet allows individuals to derive their income from sources outside the community - meaning they can invest their earnings locally, irrespective of connections to the local economy.
- Consider new lower-cost deployment technologies - seek private partners to construct and operate network.

Next Steps

- Town of Hayden will indicate to us which recommendations they intend to implement.
- The town will report to the Colorado Office of Economic Development quarterly for two years:
 - To track progress
 - To provide assistance
- We also plan on receiving feedback from you!
- Finally, we will provide a final strategy document to record this on-site assessment, and to provide a benchmark for measuring future success.



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