



AN INTRODUCTION TO HOMETOWN COMPETITIVENESS

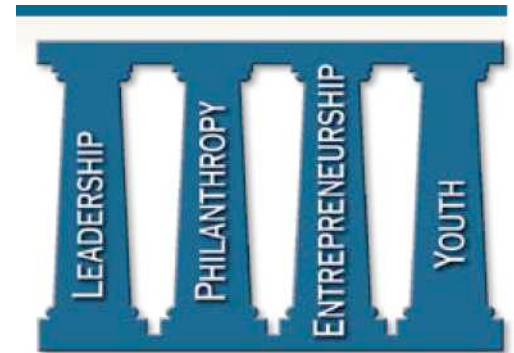
A Come-Back / Give-Back Approach to Rural Community Building

HOMETOWN COMPETITIVENESS BUILDS ON LOCAL ASSETS

HomeTown Competitiveness (HTC) is a comprehensive economic development strategy that builds on community assets and resources. HTC is a "come-back, give-back" approach that is designed to rekindle residents' belief in the future of their hometown, leading them to locally driven strategies that bear promise for revitalization and long-term sustainability.

The Four HTC Pillars:

- Building Local Leadership—to mobilize and organize diverse community capacity that can sustain community and economic development into the future.
- Expanding Community Philanthropy—to use charitable giving and endowment building, made possible through the intergenerational transfer of wealth, as a tool for sustaining homegrown community and economic development.
- Energizing Entrepreneurship—to nurture and network residents who want to start or expand a business, creating local wealth and jobs.
- Engaging Youth and Young Adults—to cultivate a sense of belonging, investment and community involvement so that remaining or returning home is seen as an attractive option, thereby stabilizing and growing the community into the future.



Growing from a statewide initiative with the Nebraska Community Foundation, HTC is supported nationally through a partnership of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and the Heartland Center for Leadership Development. Numerous other partners are also working with HTC to adapt the framework around the county.

A Case Study...

In Valley County, Nebraska, population 4,260 and the longest running HTC community beginning in 2002, the results have been impressive. After more than seven decades of decline, the county can now count:

- 73 new businesses
- 10 business expansions and 21 ownership transitions
- 332 new full-time jobs
- \$90 million in new investment

On top of that, retail sales are up 20% vs. 18% statewide, per capita income is growing at more than twice the state average, and population is increasing for the first time since 1930.

Success in Valley County and other HTC communities has captured the imagination of rural communities around the nation. No two HTC sites are exactly alike, but in each location, local leaders work through the HTC framework using the four "Pillars" to build on local assets and leverage regional resources to accomplish their development goals.