

Community And Family Enterprises (CAFE): 12 Premises of Small Town Economic Development

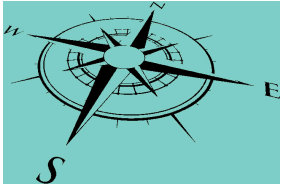
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Robert Tosterud (RT)

Description:

I ... taught economics at the University of South Dakota for twenty years. While I was born in Chicago and lived and worked in Washington DC and New York City, my love of small towns led me to my area of specialization, small town economic development. Over the years I created a program which I termed Community And Family Enterprises, CAFE. At the core of CAFE was the "12 Premises of Small Town Economic Development." I'll pass them on ... on the chance that they may in some small way be of use to my fellow ... citizens ...

Stakeholder(s):

Small Towns

Vision

Small towns survive and thrive

Mission

To offer premises for development in small towns

1. Potentials & Infrastructure

Identify and build upon community potentials and infrastructure.

A community must have “potential” and the necessary infrastructure and capacity to be successful. Some communities have limited economic potential and not every small town can (or should) be saved.

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2. Business/Community Relationships

Recognize the dependency and symbiotic relationship between the business establishment and the community.

Stakeholder(s)

Businesses

Communities

The relationship between the business establishment and the community is symbiotic, characterized by an extreme degree of mutual dependency. As goes the community, so goes business, and vice a versa.

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3. Development Opportunities

Create and discover development opportunities internally, based upon community values, institutions and traditions.

Development opportunities are created and discovered internally and are therefore supportive of and consistent with community values, institutions and traditions. They must be seen to strengthen the fabric of the town. Early successes are important. Also, opportunities cannot be defined and imposed by external or alien forces ... no matter how "expert."

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4. Priorities

Apply the “CASE” method to prioritize economic development spending.

Apply the “CASE” method of economic development. Prioritize economic development spending: First priority is Strengthening existing businesses (S), second, helping existing businesses Expand (E), third, stimulating the Creation of new businesses (C), and last, Acquiring or stealing businesses from other communities (A). In small town economic development, a business saved is a business earned.

4.1. Strengthening

Strengthen existing businesses (S)

4.2. Expansion

Help existing businesses Expand (E)

4.3. Creation

Stimulate the Creation of new businesses (C)

4.4. Acquisition

Acquiring or stealing businesses from other communities (A)

5. Jobs

Emphasize profit-centered job creation.

Stakeholder(s)

Employers

Employees

Economic development must emphasize profit-centered job creation.

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6. Opportunities for Youth

Consciously and continuously create opportunities for youth.

Stakeholder(s)

Youth

A successful community is one which consciously and continuously creates opportunities for its youth. Opportunities include social, cultural, and political, as well as economic.

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7. Uniqueness

Identify, appreciate and incorporate the uniqueness of the community into the development process.

The uniqueness of each community must be identified, appreciated and incorporated into the development process. Superficial, generic, one-size-fits-all development strategies don't work in the long term.

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8. Talents & Obligations

Help citizens discover and apply their talents and recognize their obligations.

Stakeholder(s)

Citizens

The process must assist citizens to discover and apply their talents and recognize their obligations.

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9. Testing, Interaction & Learning

Test ideas and learn through interactions.

Success is pursued through learning, and people learn primarily through their interactions with other people. Testing ideas is learning, taking positions is arguing.

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10. Burdens & Responsibilities

Accept the burden and responsibility for development outcomes.

Stakeholder(s)

Citizens

The burden and responsibility for development outcomes must clearly and squarely rest on the shoulders of the citizenry of the community. The best result is the belief on the part of the citizens that they could have achieved success without external development facilitators.

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11. Conflict Resolution

Institute a well-publicized and thought-out process of conflict resolution.

Citizen-versus-citizen conflict is guaranteed. A well-publicized and thought-out process of conflict resolution is required. An active, objective, constructive, and appreciated program critic is a necessary component to a successful development effort.

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12. Caring

Care about your neighbors, your town, and the future.

The first 11 don't matter if you don't care – care about your ... neighbors, the town ... and [the] future. AND....The development process must be FUN!

Administrative Information

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