Rural Land Rural Towns Conference

2019
Connecticut

Indiana

6 counties
2246 sq miles
356,448 people
58 cities & towns

Community
Heart & Soul
The issues – not going to dwell on them

- Demography
- Business model of local government in New England (property taxes)
- General Connecticut economic conditions
- Others?
Rural Connecticut

One size won’t fit all
40% OF MILLENNIALS WOULD LIKE TO LIVE IN AN URBAN AREA IN THE FUTURE.

Viewed another way:

60% prefer not to

Fact: Only 13% live in downtowns (city reported analysis is often metro level data not urban center)

Fact: 22% are 1st or 2nd generation immigrants largely concentrated in urban centers
Be the best version of who you are

- Understand who you really are economically

- Listen to those (millennials) who chose to live here or stay here about why

Survey showing that 37 percent of millennials want to live in cities and 36 percent prefer the suburbs, while 23 percent say they do want to live in small towns or rural areas.
- University of Illinois Extension, 2017

In reality, just one quarter of Millennial homeowners live in an urban area. Nearly half of all Millennials live in suburban communities, with eight in 10 adults under 25 living outside an urban core.
- Zillow Housing Buyer Study, 2016

Change the narrative to an authentic positive storyline
Tourism? Think Wallet Share

Having amenities that members of the community want requires people

Two ways to do that:
- More housing
- Tourism

Wallet Share is the concept of trying to grab all potential expenditures associated with a trip: food, lodging, gifts, activities etc.

Think of it as an “experience”
Grow your own talent

- Tight labor market but aging pool of workers
- It’s easier to keep than recruit
  - Create stickiness as early as possible
- Help people create their own jobs
  - Rules around home-based businesses, access to broadband etc
Encourage creative solutions

- Start small
- It may be necessary to combine business ideas into one store for them to be viable
- Creative reuse with minimal improvements that are reflective of local economics
- Don’t let zoning & parking get in the way
Think regionally
(or maybe micropolitan-ly)

- Development expertise
  - Zoning
  - Workforce
  - Small business

- Linking regional town center or hub to broader area

- Others?