

Many rural towns and communities struggle to maintain healthy and productive economic growth. This can cause migration of families and other groups out of rural communities and into more urban environments. Fortunately, there are many steps these communities can take to improve the opportunities and resources in their own towns.

Supporting small business is crucial to building up the local economy. State government can drive better access to low interest small business loans to help incent entrepreneurship and give special consideration to women-owned and minority-owned applications. It's important to attract creative people to start small businesses to give character and identity to the community. Most small towns provide a lower cost of living which drive operating costs down. Small businesses invest in their community and are key stakeholders and do their best to make the community a desirable place to live.

A high-quality education, starting with early childhood care all the way through public high school, is critical. Policies that keep schools up to the highest standard while also supporting them, ensure the community is raising hardworking, honest, and intelligent people. Once students move on to higher education and graduate, an incentive, partially funded by the State or County government, such as repayment of student loans can be used as a tool to recruit them back to invest in their community.

Sometimes in smaller communities it can be more difficult for families to find good childcare. Access to high quality childcare is important for working parents. It is crucial that Local governments support new home-based child-care businesses by providing easy access to start-up costs and licensing requirements. Reducing the initial license and permit fees is one way to incent more residents to consider starting this small business.

It's important to the Federal government that small businesses succeed. As a result, they have invested in several programs that assist small businesses located at these websites: Reducing Barriers to Entrepreneurship, Startup America Partnership, Energy Innovation Portal, SBIR.gov, Starting and Managing a Business, and Online Small Business Training.

All of these help counsel, mentor, train, and inspire the business owner.

Over time, small towns need retooling and planning. Small towns can't grow without access to the larger world. Using the best communication technology is essential for businesses to stay connected. In addition, it allows for families to stay and work for a non-local company via virtual office, while enjoying the quality of township life.

Wise and conscious development planning can help a rural community encourage growth in town. Creating new attractions and building enduring neighborhoods will encourage people, especially young people, to remain in their community. Policies that support fresh infrastructure like transportation also allow for new types of income and industries to be available for residents. Protecting the rural landscape, helping preserve unused space, ensuring clean air and water, and providing new recreation will bring new investments into the local economy.