

## 20 Clues to Rural Community Survival: An Annotated List

1. **Evidence of Community Pride** Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.
2. **Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life** People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.
3. **Willingness to Invest in the Future** In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.
4. **Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making** Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.
5. **Cooperative Community Spirit** The stress is on working together toward a common goal and the focus is on positive results.
6. **Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities** Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.
7. **Awareness of Competitive Positioning** Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities who know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.
8. **Knowledge of the Physical Environment** Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.
9. **Active Economic Development Program** There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.
10. **Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders** People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.
11. **Celebration of Diversity in Leadership** Women, minorities, youth and newcomers are welcomed into leadership circles where their ideas are treated as opportunities.
12. **Strong Belief in and Support for Education** Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.
13. **Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care** Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.
14. **Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation** The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.
15. **Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life** Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.
16. **Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure** Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.
17. **Careful Use of Fiscal Resources** Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.



18. **Sophisticated Use of Technology Resources** Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.
19. **Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside** People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.
20. **Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself** Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

<http://heartlandcenter.info/clues-to-rural-community-survival/>

