

Local Economy

We value a community that supports and nurtures local businesses and our downtown, provides quality jobs, and involves people in the local economy in order to improve the quality of life for all residents.

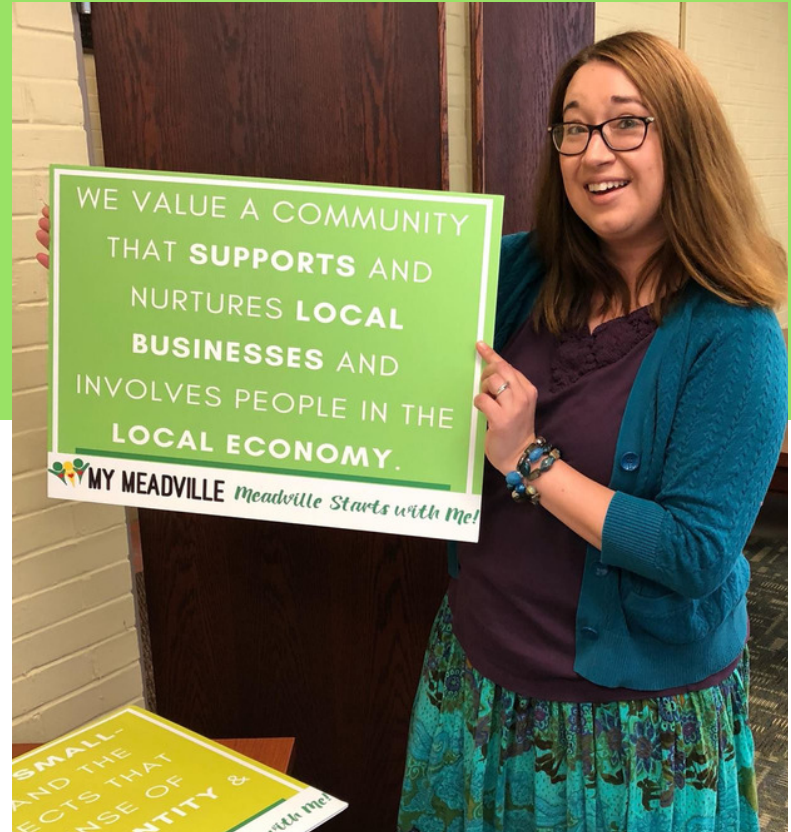
Subthemes

- Downtown revitalization & beautification
- Variety of well-paying, high quality jobs
- Infrastructure and building improvement
- Retail diversification
- Incentives for locally owned businesses downtown
- Relationship building

What's Underway

In the last few years, we've seen...

- the revival of the Meadville Independent Business Alliance, a group of independent business owners in downtown Meadville that offers peer support, hosts trainings for small business owners, and organizes First Fridays and other downtown events
- the launch of the Entrepreneur Accelerator Grant Program, a new project of the Redevelopment Authority that offers grants and business mentoring to emerging entrepreneurs
- the hiring of a Community Development Coordinator housed at the Redevelopment Authority who is responsible for supporting local business owners, assisting emerging entrepreneurs, and bringing people downtown
- the launch of the Northwest PA Investment Cooperative, established to cooperatively purchase commercial real estate in downtown Meadville, increasing community control over our buildings and our downtown
- the revamp of the Commercial Facade Improvement Program, a loan program of the Redevelopment Authority aiming to increase the curb appeal of downtown businesses
- the establishment of Foundry Cowork, a meeting space and shared workspace for creative professionals



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Action 1 Create a local brand

Overview

Establish a "brand" specific to Meadville which communicates the identity and pride of our community. The brand, once designed and created, will then be used on maps and signs downtown for direction to areas of interest.

Supporting Partners

- City of Meadville
- Redevelopment Authority
- Meadville Independent Business Alliance

Existing Resources

- Possible logo
- City signs
- Printed maps by Meadville Fine Arts

Community Values

- ✓ Small Town

Action 2 Implement Participatory Budgeting (PB)

Overview

As a way of meaningfully involving people in the local economy, community members would like to see a percentage of the City's budget set aside for projects determined directly by the consensus of Meadville residents. "Designed to re-engage citizens in the governance of their town, community, or region, (participatory budgeting) uses a community-focused process to gather input from residents about budget decisions, develop a set of priorities, vote on them, and then fund them...Typically, the municipality allocates a small part of their total budget to projects selected through PB, ranging from less than 1% to 20%." (*Building a Healthy Economy from the Bottom Up*).

Lead Solution Partner

- City of Meadville
- My Meadville

Existing Resources

- My Meadville process, data & Community Action Plan

Community Values

- ✓ Small Town
- ✓ Inclusion

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Action 3 Host a local vendor fair

Overview

Our anchor institutions and local businesses hold a great deal of purchasing power. In an effort to keep as much of that money as possible circulating within our local economy, we would like to hold a local vendor fair. This fair would showcase what is offered locally, encouraging institutions and businesses to source from local businesses and support a prosperous local economy.

Lead Solution Partner

- Chamber of Commerce

Community Values

✓ Small Town

