

Creating and Sustaining Communities of Excellence



Stephanie Norling
Executive Director, Communities of Excellence 2026

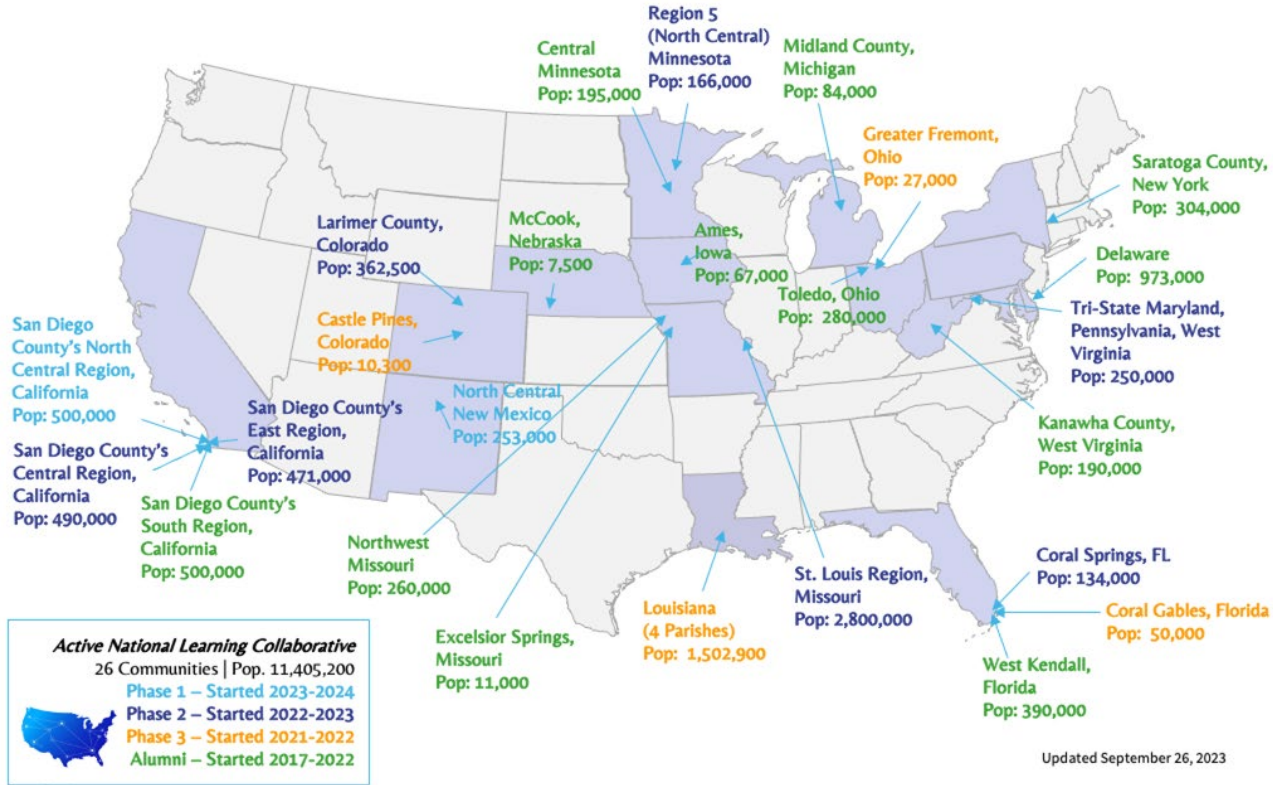
Who We Are

communitiesof*excellence*²⁰²⁶

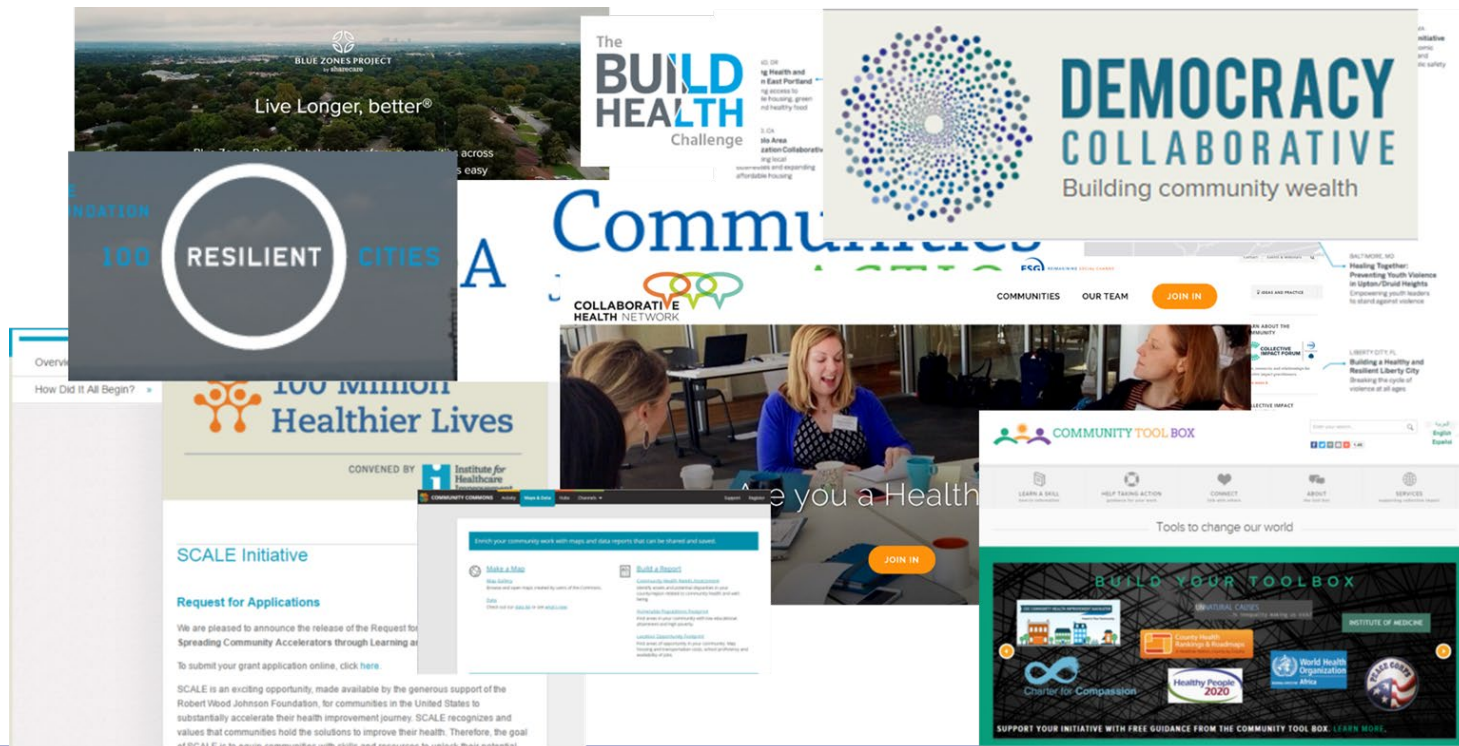
A US, non-governmental organization
committed to improving the quality of life for
residents at the community level

by assisting communities in implementing the Baldrige-based
Communities of Excellence Framework as a roadmap for addressing
the most pressing community challenges and opportunities with
systematic thinking and action, inclusivity, collaboration, and a
commitment to performance excellence.

Our Communities and Partners



What is Being Done to Address our Many Challenges?



Communities lack a systematic approach familiar to and used by all entities within the community to ensure that federal, state, local, and private sector efforts are aligned and integrated to maximize their benefit and impact.



Our Belief

That a **systems framework** proven to drive performance excellence in *companies and organizations* – the Baldrige Framework - can be modified to achieve performance excellence in *communities* to benefit the health and wellbeing of all residents.

Why Base this on Baldrige?



Three Important Questions:

- Are we doing as well as we could?
- How do we know?
- What and how could we improve or change?

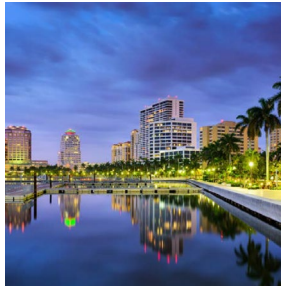


Our Guiding Question...

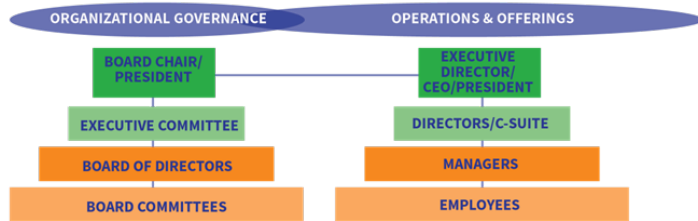
Could we envision a community that works like a **well-run organization**, that creates a **strategic plan**, has a disciplined decision-making **processes** with **clear** authority, and can **measure** and articulate **results** clearly and **continually**?

Communities are Collaborative Systems or Networks...

Every System
Within a Community
is Inter-Connected



Community Leadership is Different from Organizational Leadership



HIERARCHY STRUCTURE SAMPLE

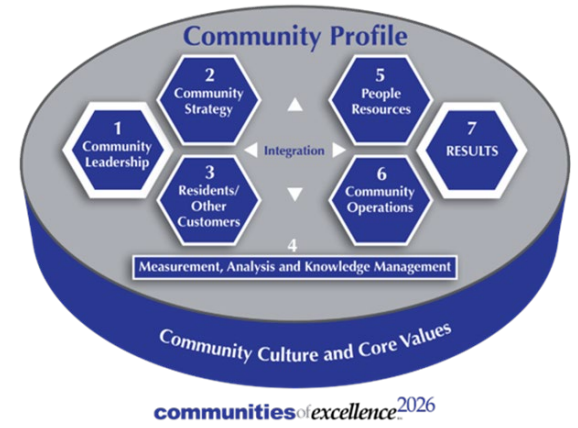
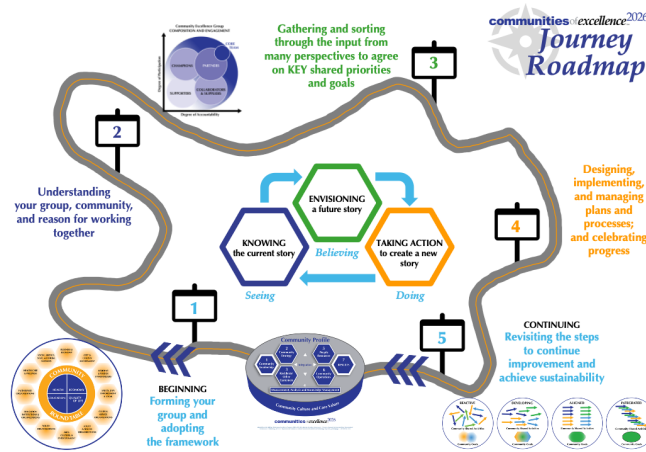
Key Roles:
 Board of Directors
 Executive Director/CEO/President
 Departments
 (Manager/Employees)



DISTRIBUTED STRUCTURE SAMPLE

Key Roles:
 Backbone
 Governance Council
 Leadership Council
 Task Groups

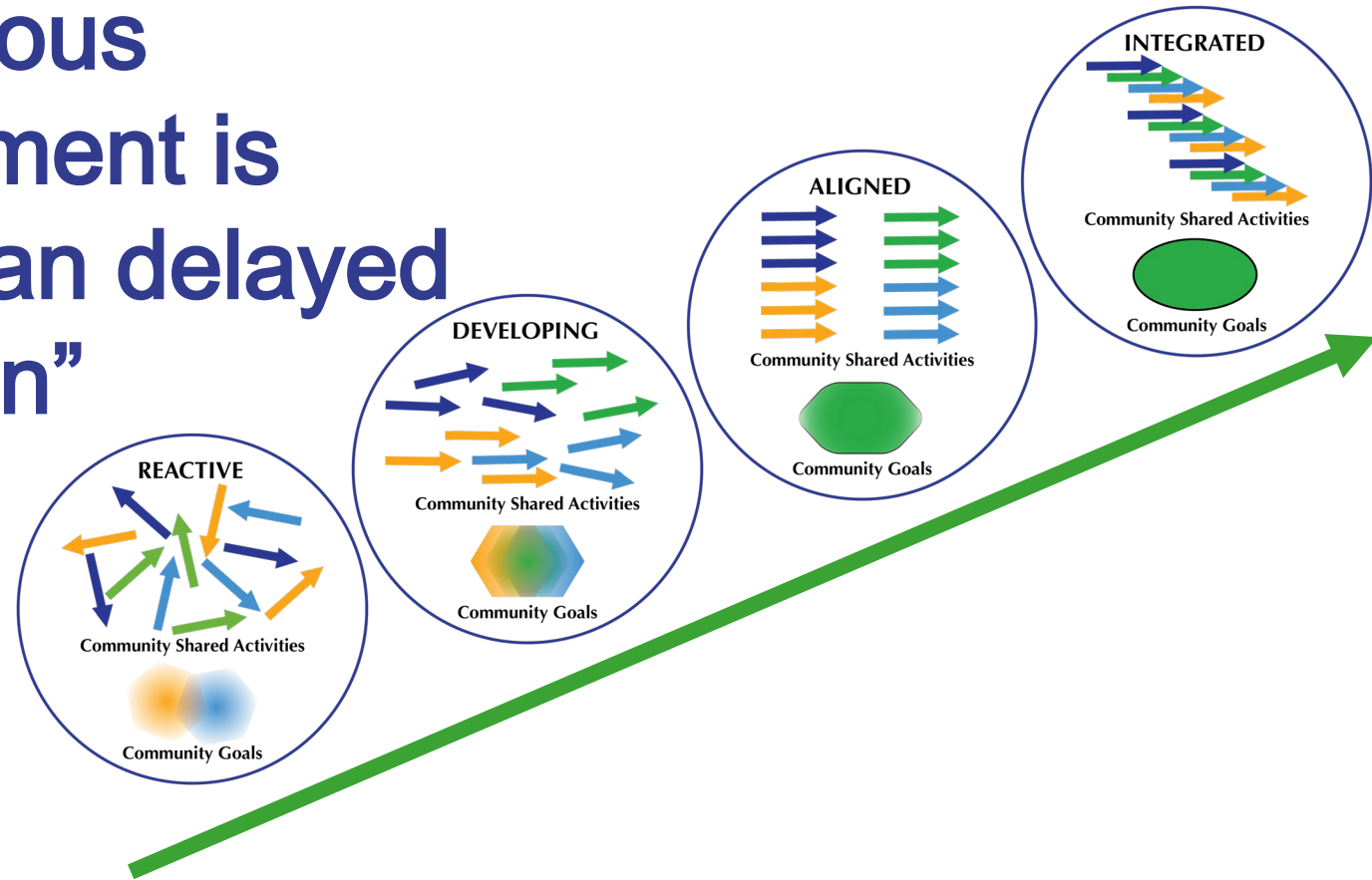
Communities, like Organizations, Need Support...



Adapted from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2015, 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework: A Systems Approach to Improving Your Organization's Performance. Gaithersburg, MD: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology. NIST/ITL 16-2019. © 2019

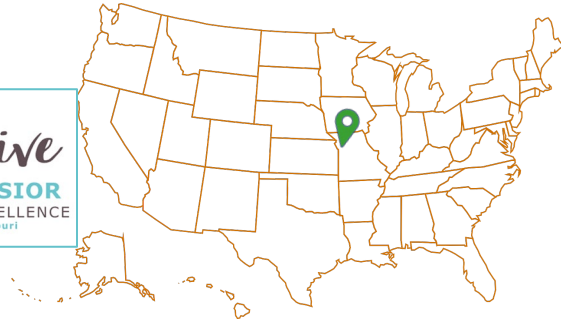
“Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection”

Mark Twain



Some Examples

Excelsior Springs, Missouri



City Government • Healthcare • Residents • Small Business Owners • Fitness & Recreation • Insurance • Finance • Real Estate • Tourism & Hospitality • Education • Historic Preservation • Public Safety • Public Housing • Nonprofits • Economic Development • Elected Officials • Public Health • Chamber of Commerce • Senior Services • Media



Why Communities of Excellence?

- Bring more perspectives to the table
- Not “us vs. them”
- Establish shared responsibility for community decisions
- Foster a culture of informed decision-making

Life expectancy in
Excelsior Springs is
8.3 years less
than nearby zip
codes

Engaging Leadership from All Sectors and Generations

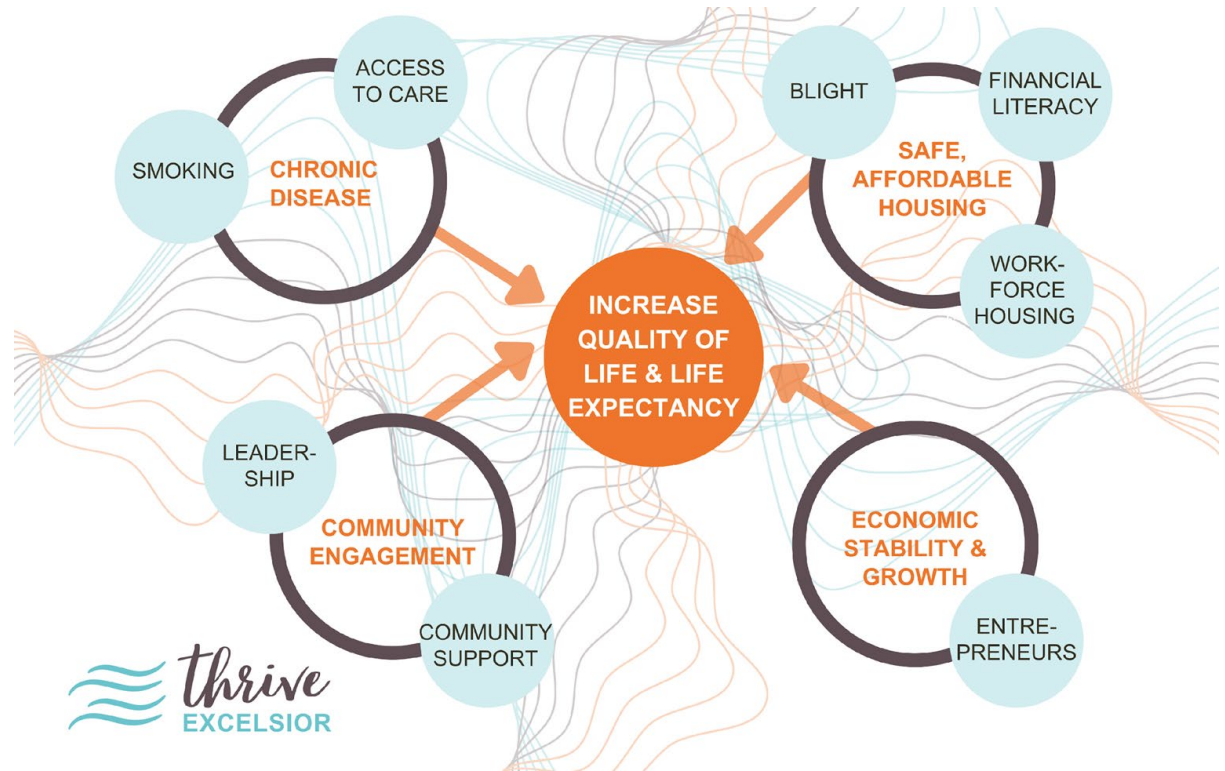


Mission

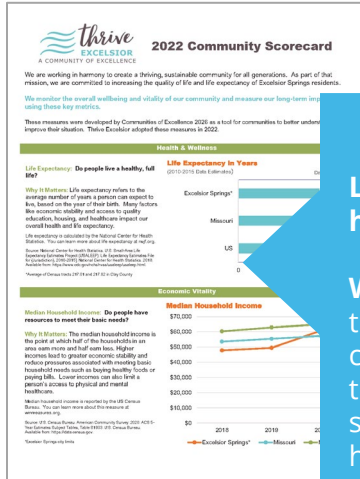
Working in harmony to create a thriving, sustainable community for all generations

Vision

To become your favorite place to live, work, learn, and play



Driving Dialogue and Decisions



Life Expectancy: Do people live a healthy, full life?

Why It Matters: Life expectancy refers to the average number of years a person can expect to live, based on the year of their birth. Many factors like economic stability and access to quality education, housing, and healthcare impact our overall health and life expectancy.

Life expectancy is calculated by the National Center for Health Statistics. You can learn more about life expectancy at rwjf.org.



Results



2022 Community Scorecard

We are working in harmony to create a thriving, sustainable community for all generations. As part of that mission, we are committed to increasing the quality of life and life expectancy of Excelsior Springs residents.

We monitor the overall wellbeing and vitality of our community and measure our long-term impact using these key metrics.

These measures were developed by Communities of Excellence 2026 as a tool for communities to better understand and improve their situation. Thrive Excelsior adopted these measures in 2022.

Health & Wellness

Life Expectancy: Do people live a healthy, full life?

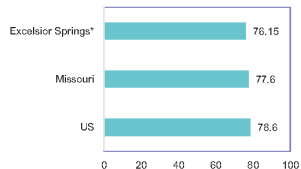
Why It Matters: Life expectancy refers to the average number of years a person can expect to live, based on the year of their birth. Many factors like economic stability and access to quality education, housing, and healthcare impact our overall health and life expectancy.

Life expectancy is calculated by the National Center for Health Statistics. You can learn more about life expectancy at ncl.org.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project (SLEELP), Life Expectancy Estimates File for Jurisdictions, 2010-2019; National Center for Health Statistics, 2018. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/leest/leest.html>.

*Average of Census tracts 217.01 and 217.02 in Clay County

Life Expectancy in Years
(2010-2015 Data Estimates)



Economic Vitality

Median Household Income: Do people have resources to meet their basic needs?

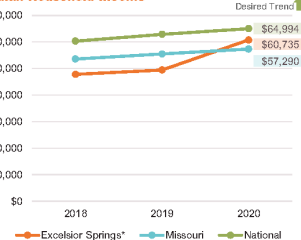
Why It Matters: The median household income is the point at which half of the households in an area earn more and half earn less. Higher incomes lead to greater economic stability and reduce pressures associated with meeting basic household needs such as buying healthy foods or paying bills. Lower incomes can also limit a person's access to physical and mental healthcare.

Median household income is reported by the US Census Bureau. You can learn more about this measure at www.census.gov.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table B07323, U.S. Census Bureau. Available from: <https://data.census.gov>.

*Excelsior Springs city limits

Median Household Income



Education

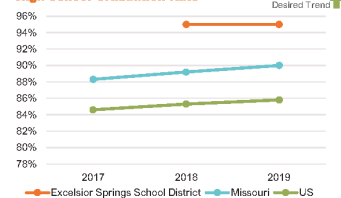
High School Graduation Rate: Are people prepared for a future in which they can thrive?

Why It Matters: A high school diploma increases a person's opportunities throughout their lifetime, impacting their income, lifestyle, health, and overall life expectancy. High school graduation rate measures the percentage of students who graduate with a regular diploma in 4 years or less.

High school graduation rate is reported by the U.S. Department of Education and may vary slightly from local data which is calculated using a different formula. Learn more about this metric at countyhealthrankings.org.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, EDData Data File: Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate School Level File, U.S. Department of Education. Available from: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/eddatafiles/healthdata.html>

High School Graduation Rate



Housing

Suboptimal Housing: Do people have a safe place to live?

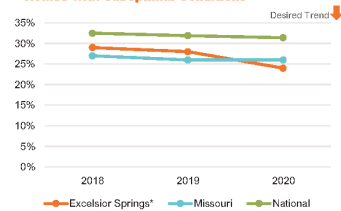
Why It Matters: Poor housing quality is linked to injuries, chronic disease, and childhood development. This measure includes homes that are overcrowded, may not have complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, OR cost its occupants more than 30% of their income.

This data calculated using information reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. You can learn more about this metric more at countyhealthrankings.org.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table B27123, U.S. Census Bureau. Available from: <https://data.census.gov>.

*Excelsior Springs city limits

Homes with Suboptimal Conditions



Wellbeing

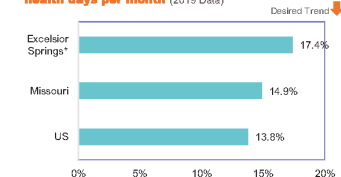
Mental Health: Are people resilient and healthy?

Why It Matters: Mental health is an important part of a person's overall health and well-being. It is impacted by many factors including a person's sense of belonging and connection in their community. Mental health is measured by calculating the number of adults who self-report 14+ days of "not good" mental health in a month.

Mental health not good statistics are reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Learn more about this measure at <https://health.gov/healthypeople>.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, Health Status Mental Health, 2019, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available from: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>

Adults with 14+ "not good" mental health days per month (2019 Data)



San Diego County, California



Demographics	
Hispanic	33.90%
White	44.90%
Black	4.60%
Asian	11.70%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.40%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.40%
Other	0.20%
Two or More Races	3.90%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2020 Data

Sustainable Leadership



LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO SOUTH REGION LEADERSHIP TEAM

General Oversight and Decision Making

Co-Chair: Barbara Jiménez
HHS Central and South Regions

Co-Chair: Kathryn Lembo
South Bay Community Services

ADVISORY GROUP

Overview of Strategic Planning, Communication and Strategy

Meetings facilitated by County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency staff. Attended by representatives from each Work Group and *Live Well San Diego* South Region Leadership Team members.

WORK GROUPS

Deployment of Strategic Objectives

HEALTH

Chronic Disease Prevention Work Group

Co-Chair: Dr. Ramón Hernandez
UCSD Center for Community Health

Co-Chair: Jessica Newmyer
American Heart Association

KNOWLEDGE

School Work Group

Co-Chair: Omar Calleros
San Ysidro School District

Co-Chair: Paloma Perez-Bertrand
San Diego Hunger Coalition

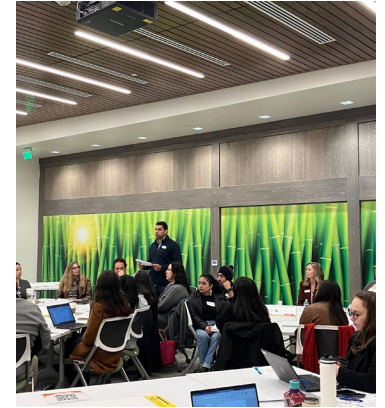
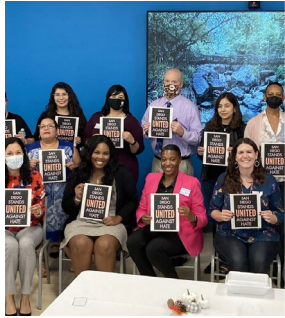
STANDARD OF LIVING

Economic Vitality Work Group

Co-Chair: Jacqueline Reynoso
National City Chamber of Commerce

Co-Chair: Cindy Gompper-Graves
South County Economic
Development Council

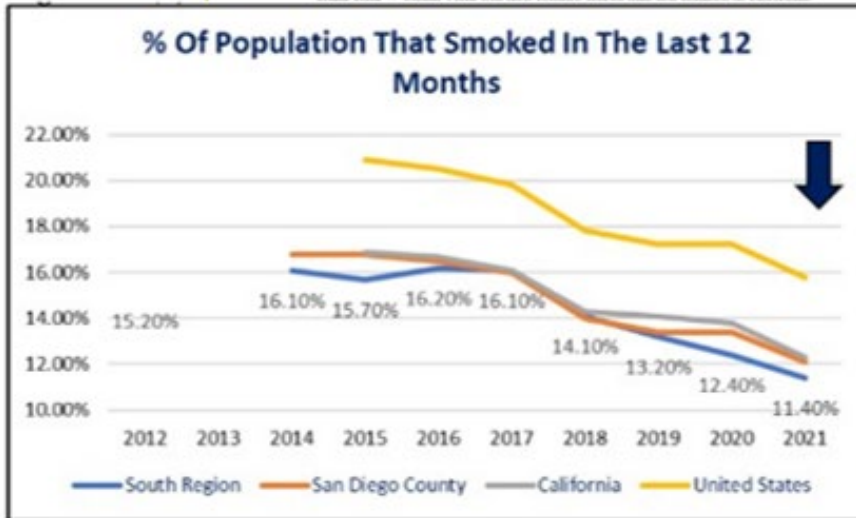
Defining a Shared Purpose



Homelessness Work Group

Objective	By December 2024, establish a collective coordination effort across all jurisdictions to ensure homeless outreach activities are provided comprehensively throughout the region, using consistent approaches to help access shelter and housing.			
Strategic Approach	Information Gathering & Systems Change			
Activities	Measure/Metric	Expected Outcome/Target	Partners/Collaborators	Live Well Indicator
Gather existing resource lists and personalize them for South and Identify missing organizations/resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · # of resources identified · # of partners providing resources · # of partners in the 2-1-1 San Diego Database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · % increase in the # of partners in the 2-1-1 San Diego database who provide resources to the South Region community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 2-1-1 San Diego · HHSA HSEC Office of Homeless Solutions 	Health: Quality of Life Rates Social: Vulnerable Population Rates
Enhance awareness of resources and promote collaboration among cross-jurisdictional organizations serving individuals at risk and/or experiencing homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · # of outreach events · # of partner presentations · # of participants at events/meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · % increase in the # of partners who report increased knowledge of resources for individuals at risk and/or experiencing homelessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · City of Chula Vista · San Diego Rescue Mission · City of National City · Salvation Army · SBCS Corporation · HHSA HSEC Office of Homeless Solutions · Regional Task Force on Homeless Solutions 	Health: Quality of Life Rates Social: Vulnerable Population Rates

Results



13 Communities Improved Their Grade from an "F" to an "A" in at Least One Policy Category in 2018

Alameda	Oakley
Chula Vista	Palm Springs
Citrus Heights	Sausalito
Clayton	Solvang
Half Moon Bay	Sutter County
Lemon Grove	Windsor
Mono County	

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

More Evidence of Impact



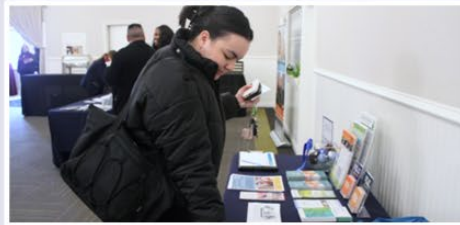
Systematic Strategic Planning Process



Data Driven Priorities



Replicable Key Process



Measurable Community Goals



Sustainability and Drivers of Engagement



MCCOOK ON THE MOVE

More Opportunities
AND A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR MCCOOK

September 12, 2023





Family Pillar

Overarching Goals							
1. Advance our Commitment of Excellence Partner							
2. Enhance Quality of Life in McCook							
3. Provide the necessary leadership efforts							
5-Year Strategy	Strategic Objectives	Strategic Challenge	Strategic Action	Strategic Initiative	Priority	Responsibility	
Family Pillar - Provide an affordable community with adequate activities and safety to attract and retain families	Maintain the safety of our community	SO1, SO3	SA1, SA2	1.2.3	Priority: Improving infrastructure	B	Mayor of McCook Police Dept Community Development Fire Department
	Ensure access to sufficient community activities	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4	SA1, SA2, SA3, SA4	1.2.3	Expand athletic facility opportunities in the community Enhance recreation for walking, trail, softball, pickleball, and BOEYSports	A	COMMUNITY
	Provide opportunities for families to build wealth	SA1, SA3, SA4	1.2.3	Improve the continuum of housing	B	Shirley McPherson	
	Strategic Challenge: Attracting, retaining, and moving necessary workforce GDP to a small town economy. McCook is currently facing a 4% population decline. McCook is currently facing a 4% population decline. McCook is currently facing a 4% population decline.						

5-Year Strategy	Strategic Objectives
Family Pillar - Provide an affordable community with adequate activities and safety to attract and retain families	Maintain the safety of our community
	Ensure access to sufficient community activities
	Provide opportunities for families to build wealth

5-Year Strategy	Strategic Objectives
Economic Vitality - Increasing capacity and growing opportunities to improve household wellbeing	Increase Housing Capacity
	Recruitment of Businesses and Individuals that Provide a Living Wage
	Connecting population to local opportunities



Economic Vitality Pillar

Overarching Goals							
1. Advance our Commitment of Excellence Partner							
2. Enhance Quality of Life in McCook							
3. Provide the necessary leadership efforts							
5-Year Strategy	Strategic Objectives	Strategic Challenge	Strategic Action	Strategic Initiative	Priority	Responsibility	
Economic Vitality - Increasing capacity and growing opportunities to improve household wellbeing	Increase Housing Capacity	SO1, SO3	SA1, SA2	1.2.3	Priority: Improving infrastructure	B	Mayor of McCook Police Dept Community Development Fire Department
	Recruitment of Businesses and Individuals that Provide a Living Wage	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4	SA1, SA2, SA3, SA4	1.2.3	Expand athletic facility opportunities in the community Enhance recreation for walking, trail, softball, pickleball, and BOEYSports	A	COMMUNITY
	Connecting population to local opportunities	SA1, SA3, SA4	1.2.3	Improve the continuum of housing	B	Shirley McPherson	
	Strategic Challenge: Attracting, retaining, and moving necessary workforce GDP to a small town economy. McCook is currently facing a 4% population decline. McCook is currently facing a 4% population decline. McCook is currently facing a 4% population decline.						

- **Mission:** *Enhancing the quality of life for our residents by collaborating to focus on education, family, economic vitality and health.*
- **Vision** *Moving toward excellence by evaluating and improving the quality of life in our community: McCook on the MOVE.*



Our Vision

"A community where everyone can thrive."



Our Mission

"To enhance the quality of life in our community by fostering collaboration across sectors to develop and retain a diverse, inclusive, top talent workforce and a holistic workforce strategy that encompasses the collaboration of education, health and well-being, arts, and culture."

Develop a successful, robust, right-skilled regional workforce by bolstering the region across several distinct but interconnected objectives

Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion across all of these areas, as a necessary condition for advancing our mission as a whole

1

Leverage the region's artistic, cultural, and recreational amenities to improve population retention.

2

Strengthen the regional workforce by using data to invest in education, training, and workforce development efforts.

3

Bolster economic and inclusive prosperity by better coordinating workforce initiatives and understanding their impacts on access.

4

Improve the health and well-being of residents by acknowledging and supporting efforts to address the Social Determinants of Health.



Through ongoing struggles with outward migration, business loss, infrastructure limitations, and lack of educational attainment, the Toledo Region is on the cusp of a renaissance, with an influx of young professionals, an abundance of natural, human, economic, and recreational assets, and a drive to become a truly exceptional community.

THE INITIATIVE

Community of Excellence 2026: Toledo Region

The Toledo Region already exists at the crossroads of small-town charm and economic opportunity—the Community of Excellence committee intends to build upon our existing assets to ensure a region that meets every person's needs and offers the quality of life we all deserve.

[READ THE FULL COE REPORT →](#)



TOLEDO REGION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY SUMMARY BACKGROUND

TOLEDO REGION
Includes Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood Counties



FORTUNE 500 COMPANY HQs
Owens Corning
Dana
Anderson
Welltower

HIGHER EDUCATION
Bowling Green State University
University of Toledo
Owens Community College
Lourdes University
Mary College of Ohio
Stautzenberger College
Ross College

POPULATION¹

2021 Estimate
598,854

2021 Projection
594,460

2021-2031 Change
-0.73%

2018 Net Migration¹
-772

Foreign Born¹
3.4%

Median Age¹
38



POPULATION GROWTH (Past 5 Years)



HOUSING²

Median House Value
\$129,885

Total Housing Units
286,771

Homeowner Vacancy Rate
1.5%

Rental Vacancy Rate
2.8%

% Units with No Vehicle Available
8.7%

ECONOMIC³

Median Household Income
\$22,282

Per Capita Income
\$38,279

Unemployment Participation
63.3%

Poverty Level
15.5%

Food Insecurity Rate⁴
13.3%

Households Receiving Food Stamps
15.4%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES⁵

Job Comparison	2016 / 2020	Change in Jobs	2020 Average Annual Wages (\$K)	2020 GRP ⁶ (\$M)
Health Care and Social Assistance	51,724 / 59,728	1%	\$54K	\$3,845
Manufacturing	39,641 / 39,770	1%	\$71K	\$11,820
Retail Trade	23,000 / 29,646	-16%	\$30K	\$1,928
Accommodation and Food Services	28,309 / 25,839	-9%	\$17K	\$865
Education Services	26,098 / 23,172	-4%	\$50K	\$249
Administrative and Support	18,088 / 16,644	-8%	\$18K	\$609
Construction	16,304 / 15,599	-4%	\$64K	\$1,759
Transportation and Warehousing	14,731 / 15,068	2%	\$49K	\$1,099
Other Services	13,734 / 12,436	-10%	\$29K	\$619
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	12,282 / 10,366	-15%	\$66K	\$1,416

Sources:
1. BLS
2. HUD and HUD
3. BLS
4. USDA
5. BLS
6. BLS



MISSION

Leading collaborative action that advances well-being for everyone in our community.



VISION

A Saratoga County where all residents can live well, be well and thrive.

VALUES

Collaborative, Collective, Equitable, Sustainable



KEY RESIDENTS

Data identifies the regions within our county in need of supportive programs

SERVICES

Designing and delivering programs that improve the lives of residents by addressing structural and social determinants of health



CORE MESSAGE

Listening and thinking together for innovative community solutions propels collective action. We are STRONGER TOGETHER.



Work Well

Creating opportunities for financial independence



Learn Well

Building systems that support learning environments



Live Well

Cultivating social connection and belonging



Be Well

Innovating collaborative programs that support health and well-being



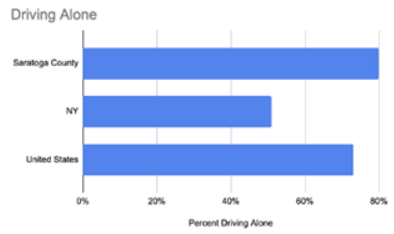
Our Work Well Strategy

Goal: Creating opportunities for financial independence

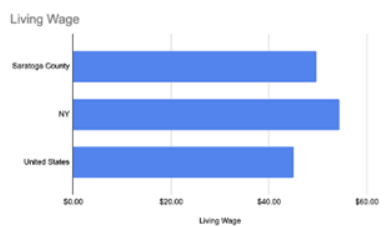
Objective: Building systems of collaboration for retention and entry into workforce

Work Well

Driving Alone to Work



Living Wage*




 Key Inputs

 Key Outputs

 Key Resources

 Timeframe

 Key Metrics

Transportation Navigation Network
 Building a network of transportation providers to increase transit across the county. Public (CTDA), non-profit partners, private

Education, Promotion and Utilization
 Network build, increased awareness and utilization of training programs

Transportation Taskforce & Workforce Workgroup
 Planning and building sustainable programs
 School partners for student training programs
 Collaborative funding

Immediate and Long Term
 Year 1-2: Network Build
 Year 3-10: Increased public transit routes and accessibility

Proxy Measures
 Number of transportation network partners
 Increased ridership through the transportation network



THANK YOU

For more information visit our website:
www.communitiesofexcellence2026.org

Or email Stephanie Norling
snorling@communitiesofexcellence2026.org