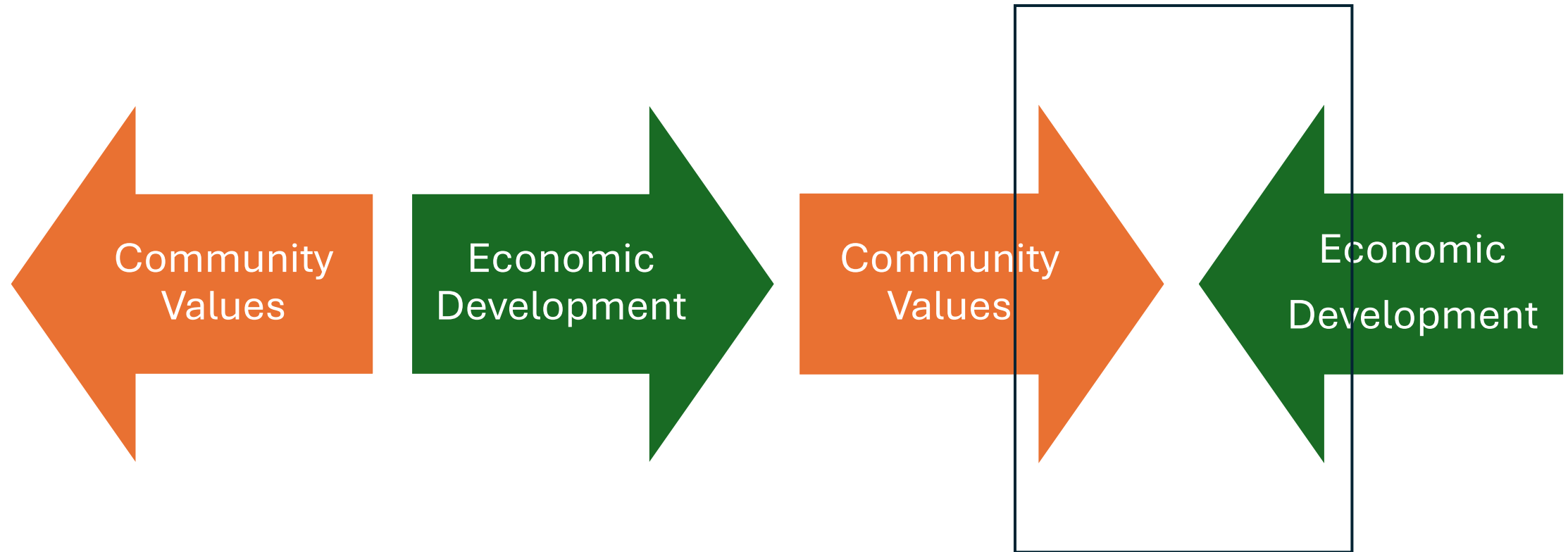


# El Dorado County SEED Committee

Ideas for Consideration  
Community-Centric Economic Development

“Sustainable Growth, Shared Success”

# Moving to a Community Centric ED Strategy



# Can we move to a community-centered approach to Economic Development?

A community-centric approach to economic development prioritizes the well-being, needs, and aspirations of the local community as the foundation of economic growth. This approach emphasizes collaboration with residents, businesses, and stakeholders to develop policies, projects, and strategies that:

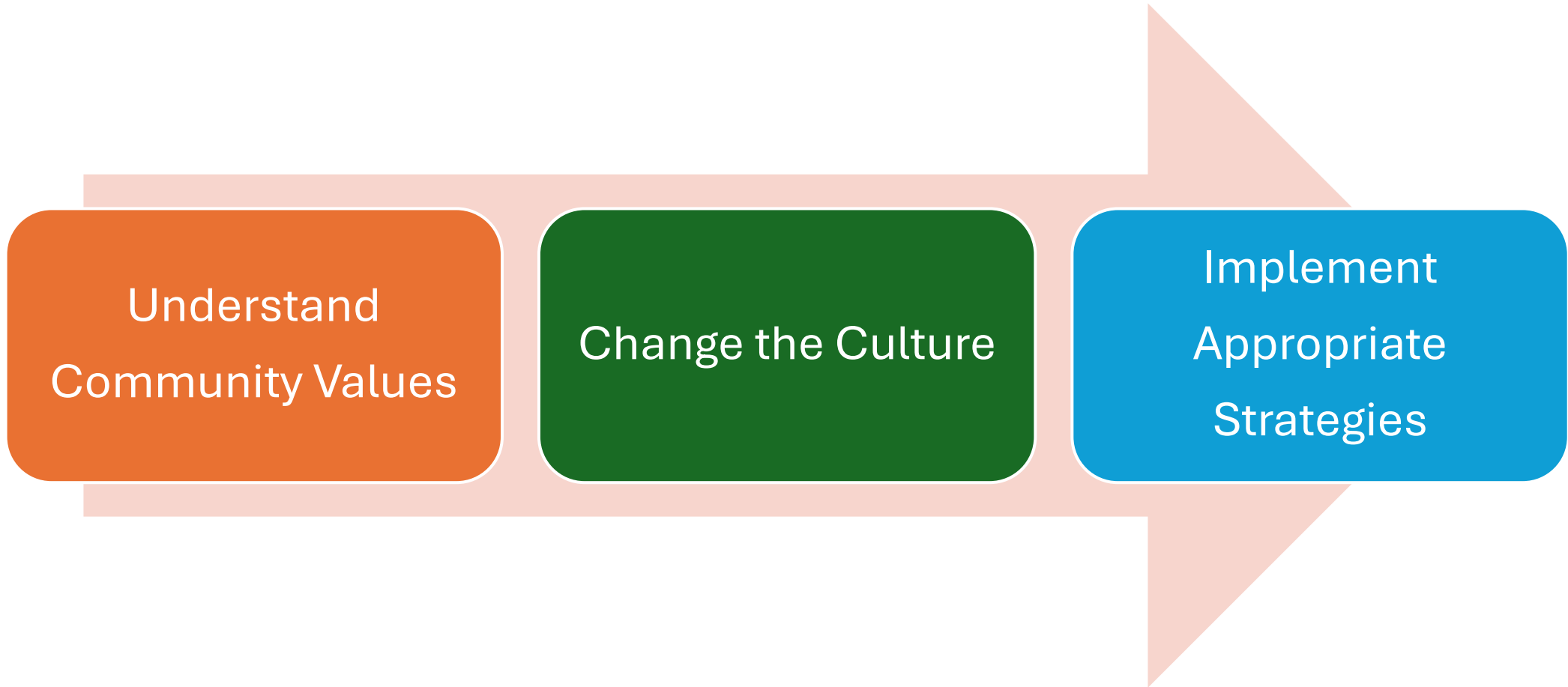
1. Align with community values and cultural identity.
2. Ensure equitable distribution of economic benefits.
3. Foster sustainable development by balancing economic, social, and environmental goals.
4. Enhance the quality of life for all community members.

**Rather than focusing solely on attracting outside investment or maximizing economic metrics like GDP, this approach seeks to empower local stakeholders, address systemic inequities, and build long-term resilience in the community.**

# Benefits of a Community-Centric Approach

- ✓ Increased Community Buy-In and Engagement
- ✓ Equity and Inclusion
- ✓ Resilience and Sustainability
- ✓ Stronger Local Identity and Culture
- ✓ Long-Term Economic Stability
- ✓ Improved Quality of Life
- ✓ Attractiveness to Businesses and Talent
- ✓ Better Environmental Stewardship

# Towards a Community-Centric EDC Approach



# EDC Community Values

1. **Community Engagement:** Residents value active participation in local governance and community events, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration.

2. **Environmental Stewardship:** Given the county's natural beauty, there is a strong emphasis on preserving the environment, promoting sustainability, and protecting natural resources.

3. **Quality of Life:** Many residents prioritize a high quality of life, which includes access to outdoor activities, safe neighborhoods, and a supportive community.

4. **Historical Appreciation:** The rich history of the Gold Rush era is celebrated, with a focus on preserving historical sites and cultural heritage.

5. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Residents often value a diverse community that embraces different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives.

6. **Education and Development:** There is support for quality education and opportunities for personal and professional growth within the community.

7. **Health and Well-being:** Access to healthcare services and promoting wellness are important aspects of community values.

# Changing the EDC Culture

- 1. Promote a Healthy Community Mindset:** Encourage a culture that views economic development as an opportunity for community improvement. This can be achieved through workshops, seminars, and community discussions highlighting the benefits of development.
- 2. Educate on Economic Benefits:** Share information about how economic development can enhance community services, infrastructure, and quality of life. Highlight success stories from other communities that have balanced growth with community values.
- 3. Celebrate Local Successes:** Recognize and celebrate local businesses and entrepreneurs who contribute positively to the community. This can help foster pride and demonstrate the potential benefits of economic development.
- 4. Build Trust and Transparency:** Create a culture of transparency by regularly communicating development plans and decisions. Engage openly with community members to build trust and demonstrate that their input is valued.
- 5. Encourage Collaboration:** Foster collaboration between economic development agencies, local businesses, and community groups. Create forums for dialogue where different perspectives can be shared, promoting a sense of shared ownership in the development process.

# Changing The EDC Culture

**6. Incorporate Community Values in Development Plans:** Ensure that development initiatives align with the community's values and priorities. Involve residents in the planning process to identify what is important to them, making it clear that development is not just about economic gain.

**7. Create Incentive Programs:** Develop programs that reward businesses and developers who prioritize community engagement and sustainable practices. This can encourage a shift in mindset towards responsible development.

**8. Leverage Local Leaders:** Engage local leaders and influencers to advocate for balanced development. Their support can help shift cultural perceptions and encourage community members to embrace new opportunities.

**9. Foster Innovation and Adaptability:** Encourage a culture that values innovation and is open to new ideas. Supporting creative solutions that balance economic growth with community needs can help shift the perception of development.

**10. Highlight Long-Term Benefits:** Emphasize the long-term benefits of balanced economic development, such as job creation, enhanced public services, and improved quality of life. This can help residents see the bigger picture beyond immediate concerns.



# Potential Strategies

- 1. Community Engagement:** Foster inclusivity by actively involving community members in the decision-making process. Conduct surveys, town hall meetings, and workshops to gather input and ensure that development aligns with community priorities.
- 2. Sustainable Development Practices:** Implement policies that promote environmentally sustainable practices in all development projects. This includes supporting green building standards, renewable energy initiatives, and conservation efforts to protect natural resources.
- 3. Zoning and Land Use Planning:** Review and revise zoning regulations to facilitate mixed-use developments that integrate residential, commercial, and recreational spaces. This can enhance community cohesion and reduce the need for long commutes.
- 4. Support Local Businesses:** Create programs that support and incentivize local businesses, such as grants, low-interest loans, and tax breaks. Encouraging entrepreneurship can stimulate the economy while fostering a sense of local identity.
- 5. Infrastructure Investment:** Prioritize infrastructure improvements, such as transportation, broadband internet, and public facilities, to support both economic growth and community needs. Efficient infrastructure can enhance accessibility and quality of life.

# Potential Strategies

**6. Cultural and Recreational Development:** Invest in cultural, recreational, and community facilities that reflect the values and interests of residents. This can strengthen community ties and attract visitors, benefiting local economies.

**7. Balanced Housing Development:** Ensure a diverse range of housing options that cater to different income levels and family sizes. Addressing housing affordability can help maintain community demographics and promote stability.

**8. Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish metrics to evaluate the impact of development initiatives on both the economy and community values. Regular assessments can help adapt strategies as needed to better align with community needs.

**9. Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Partner with local organizations, businesses, and government entities to create comprehensive economic development strategies that respect community values and address regional challenges.

**10. Education and Workforce Development:** Invest in education and vocational training programs that prepare residents for emerging job opportunities, ensuring that economic development aligns with community aspirations for employment and quality of life.

# Potential Outcomes

## 1. Enhanced Local Quality of Life

- Improved infrastructure, public services, and amenities tailored to the needs of residents.
- Greater access to affordable housing and healthcare solutions.
- Investments in recreational spaces and cultural facilities.

## 2. Economic Diversification and Resilience

- Growth in locally owned businesses and industries that align with the county's strengths, such as tourism, agriculture, and outdoor recreation.
- Reduced dependency on external economic forces, fostering stability during economic downturns.
- Creation of a more diverse job market that offers opportunities for various skill levels.

## 3. Stronger Community Engagement

- Empowered residents participating in decision-making processes, fostering trust and collaboration.
- Development initiatives that reflect the community's values and priorities, building long-term support for policies and projects.

# Potential Outcomes

## **4. Increased Equity and Inclusion**

- Initiatives to ensure all demographic groups, including underrepresented communities, benefit equitably from economic development.
- Targeted programs to address barriers to employment, education, and entrepreneurship.

## **5. Environmental Sustainability**

- Economic development projects designed with environmental stewardship in mind, protecting El Dorado County's natural beauty and resources.
- Promotion of sustainable tourism and agricultural practices that balance economic gains with ecological preservation.

## **6. Enhanced Regional Identity and Appeal**

- Strengthened sense of place through preservation of local culture, history, and heritage.
- Attraction of like-minded visitors and businesses that value community-centered principles, boosting the county's image as a desirable location.

# Potential Outcomes

## **7. Improved Educational and Workforce Development**

- Partnerships with schools, colleges, and vocational programs to prepare residents for jobs in emerging industries.
- Lifelong learning opportunities and training programs that adapt to the evolving economy.

## **8. Increased Economic Equity**

- Broader access to economic opportunities across urban and rural areas within the county.
- Support for small businesses, cooperatives, and local entrepreneurs through grants, mentorship, and resources.

## **9. Social Cohesion and Unity**

- Reduced disparities between community groups, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society.
- Strengthened trust between government, residents, and businesses.

## **10. Long-Term Economic Growth**

- Creating a sustainable economic model that consistently benefits residents and businesses.
- Positive feedback loops as community-focused investments attract further interest, capital, and talent to the county.