

# Winnemucca Futures Project

A landscape photograph of a desert. In the foreground, there are dark, scrubby bushes. The middle ground features rolling, brownish hills. In the background, a large, prominent mountain peak rises against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is a vast, open desert landscape.

Scenario Planning and  
A Shared Vision for 2030



# Winnemucca Futures Project



**The Winnemucca Futures Project** is designed to promote the public interest by encouraging community growth and sustainable development through communication and collaboration. The Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) and other local organizations initiated a county-wide planning and engagement process to explore future scenarios for the local area. This process gathers community input into a shared plan for local economic development and identifies key actions. The HDA contracted Innovative Leadership USA, Inc to assist with project design and implementation. This company has extensive experience in regional and community planning efforts across North America and rural settings worldwide.

**This project is supported by the Humboldt Development Authority** with additional funding from the City of Winnemucca, Humboldt County, Humboldt General Hospital, Winnemucca Convention and Visitors Authority, Humboldt County Chamber of Commerce, Newmont Mining Corporation, Barrick Gold Corporation, Recology Corporation, and a Community Development Block Grant from the Nevada Commission on Economic Development.

Steering committee: Patrick Gray, Mayor Di An Putnam, Mike Bell, Terry Boyle, Annie Drake, Brad Schultz, Carrie Stringham, Sue Hawkins, Bill Sims.

## Workshops designed and facilitated by Juliet Fox and David Beurle Innovative Leadership — June 2010

*Innovative Leadership is a global consultancy company that specializes in assisting communities, regions and organizations to plan and prepare for their future. With staff in the USA and Australia, this company aims to develop tools and approaches that allow regional communities to think about their future in a new way and to respond accordingly in a rapidly changing world. Innovative Leadership is a market leader in regional scenario planning and undertakes projects across the US, Australia, Canada, and Ireland.*

### About The Authors

**Juliet Fox** is the Executive Director of Innovative Leadership USA, Inc. Her graduate work in Human and Organizational Systems focused on rural economic development and regional resilience to change. In addition to her twenty years of experience, she served Dunn County Wisconsin as an elected board member.

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The Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) is a partnership of public and private entities formed by a cooperative agreement between the City of Winnemucca and Humboldt County, Nevada. HDA's mission is "to identify and develop economic improvement opportunities, provide recommendations concerning economic development and improvement to the governing bodies of the City of Winnemucca and Humboldt County, and to assist in the attraction, retention, expansion, and growth of business that is compatible with the interests and concerns of the residents of Winnemucca and Humboldt County."

To carry out this mission it is vital to periodically update the strategic plan to reflect changing circumstances. In 2010, the HDA determined that this process should be taken in a new innovative and collaborative direction. The rate of change globally and regionally presents exciting new opportunities and challenges that dramatically raise the stakes.

The Winnemucca Futures Project is a yearlong community project to develop a shared vision of the future, resulting in a comprehensive long-term strategic plan. This will determine what steps and actions need to be taken so that our children will have better opportunities to prosper here in Winnemucca and Humboldt County.

The *Stakeholder Invitational Scenario Planning Event* and the *Vision-to-Action* sessions described in this publication are integral parts of this larger process. The scenarios developed through this process will serve as a vehicle to foster a shared vision of Humboldt County's future.

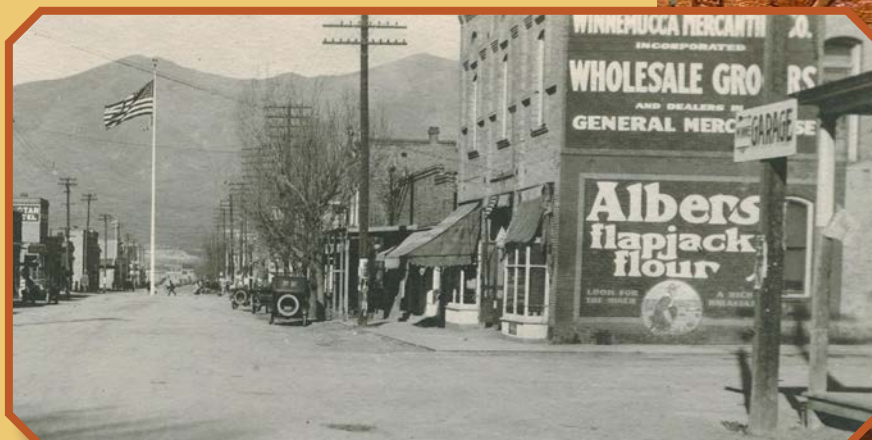
The objectives of these events:

- Provide understanding of how global events and conditions shape local decision-making.
- Identify and understand key influences, trends and consequences that will shape Winnemucca and Humboldt County over the next 20 years.
- Create and describe four plausible long-term scenarios for the region.
- Develop a shared vision.
- Build a framework for the development of a comprehensive economic and community development plans.

The Winnemucca Futures Project hopes to build networking and collaboration capacity across the region, and intends to identify specific community actions regarding how various groups such as the HDA may best contribute.

Thank you for your interest in the future of our community.

**Bill Sims, Coordinator  
Humboldt Development Authority  
Winnemucca, Nevada**





# The Stakeholder Invitational

This event, held on June 2 & 3, 2010, involved participants from across Humboldt County and outside stakeholders from State and Federal organizations. Participants were guided through a scenario planning process to develop four plausible scenarios for the future of Winnemucca and Humboldt County. This process has been successfully applied by Innovative Leadership in rural areas around the globe.

Scenario planning involves:

- Exploration and discussion of global, regional and local trends
- Identification and ranking of drivers and influences that will likely shape the future of Humboldt County
- Constructing a scenario matrix that defines four plausible futures
- Describing narratives of each scenario

The event concluded with discussion of future scenarios and their desirability. This is the first phase of an ongoing process that includes several months of public engagement about the implications of these scenarios, leading toward a strategic plan. This process aims to develop plausible scenarios for the future and identify how they may be turned into tangible actions.



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## Why Scenario Planning?

Scenario planning is a method used to develop plausible future scenarios for a region or organizations. Plausible scenarios represent realistic possibilities that are based on identifiable decisions over time. The scenarios are not predictions, but are a way to explore the future and learn from thinking about the future. This method differs from traditional strategic planning as it

allows for simultaneous exploration of multiple drivers of change. Local knowledge and expertise is used to produce a framework that evaluates decisions made over time.

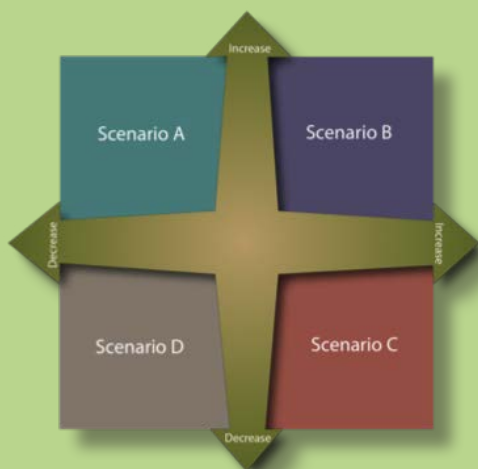
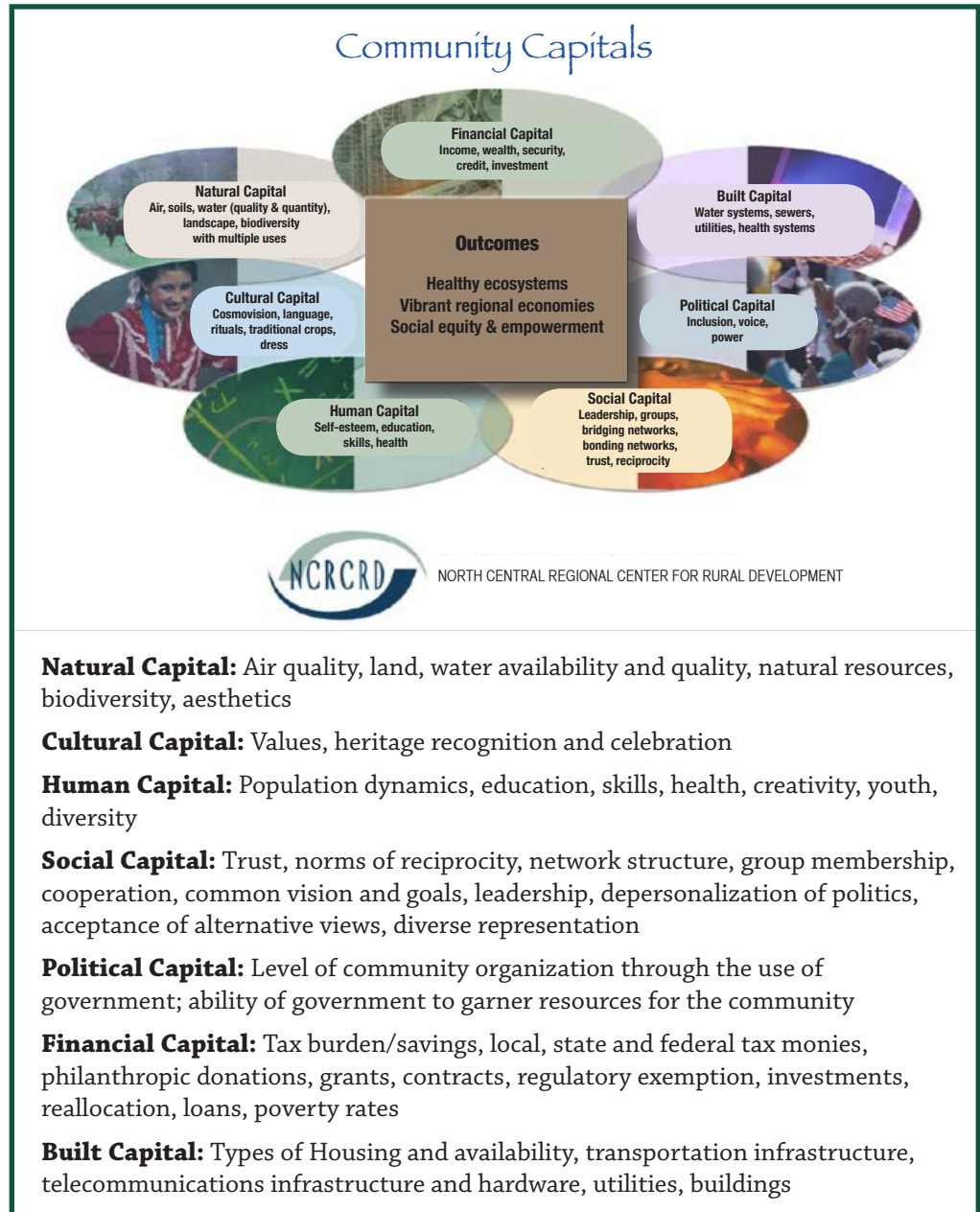
Scenario planning can take several days, weeks or even months to complete. A condensed form of scenario planning was developed by Innovative Leadership for this

project so it could be completed in two half-day sessions, allowing busy people to contribute and participate. This design relies on sufficient background information being presented to enable realistic and informed evaluation by participants. It also requires participants to think of key “drivers” for scenario development.

## Event Participants

The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, located at Michigan State University, has done extensive research on rural communities that have been successful in sustainability and economic development. One of their core findings was that these communities have paid particular attention to leveraging the resources and assets available in seven categories called “capitals”.

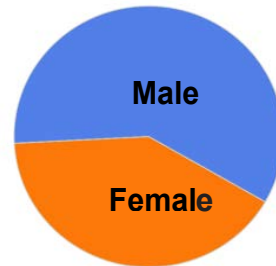
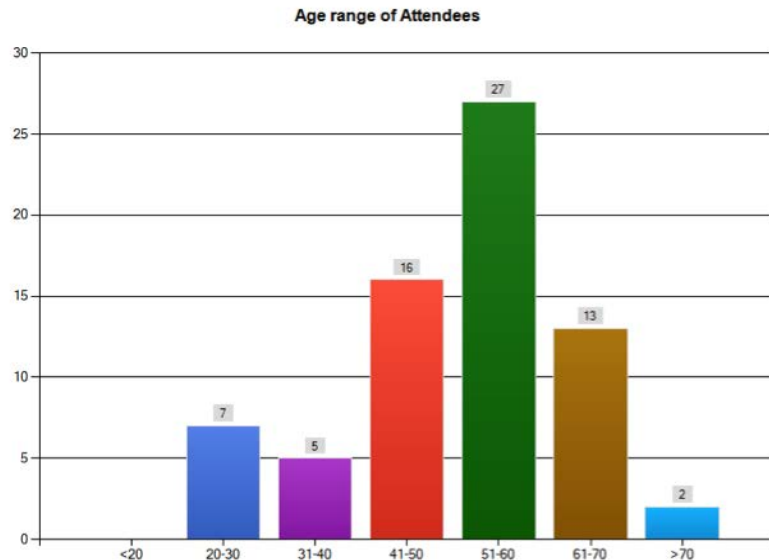
The Winnemucca Futures Project Steering Committee used these *Community Capitals* to identify and invite participants to the event. This ensured that each of these important sectors, all integral to long-term community success, were well represented.





# Participant Profile

The event was attended by 82 participants over two days. The age range was from 20 to over 70. The largest group was aged 51-60.

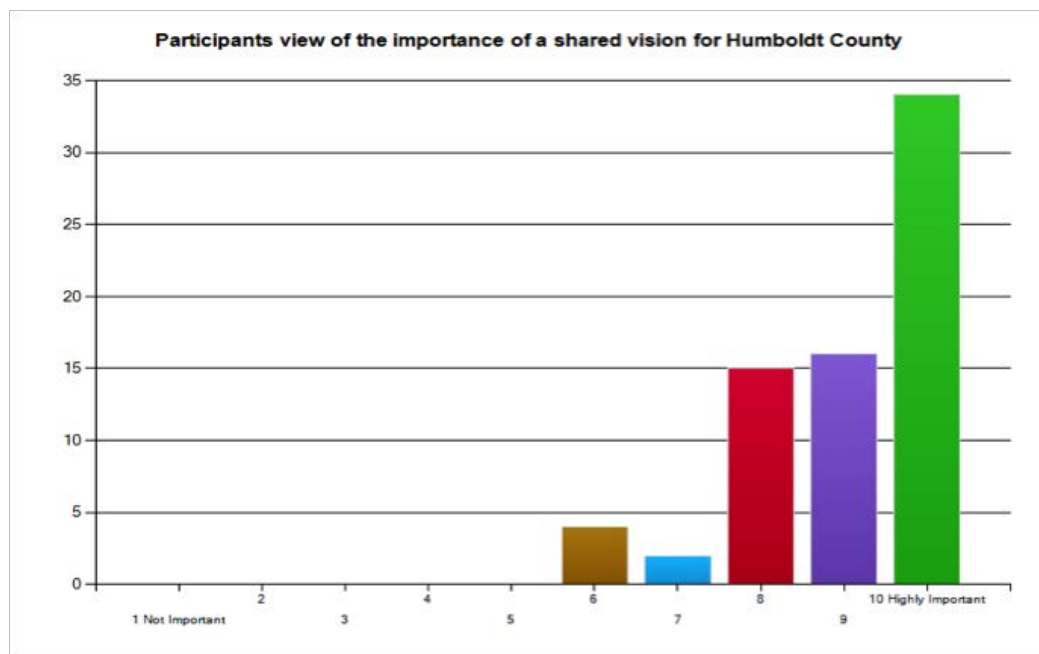


Age and Gender of participants



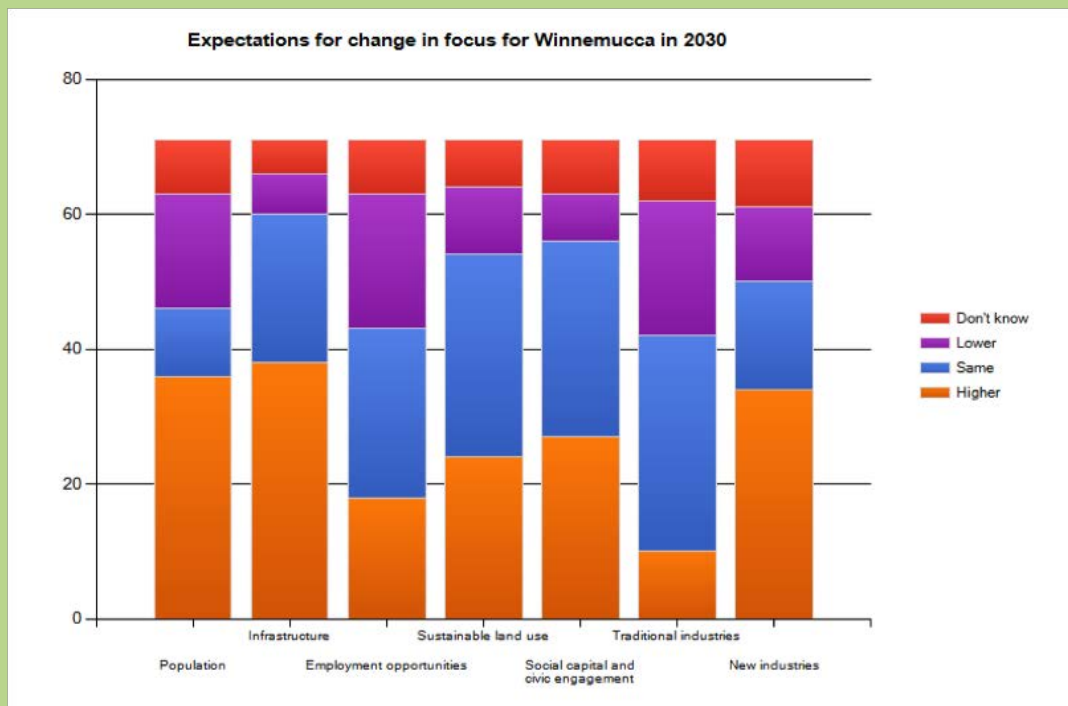
# Participants' View of the Future

As the event began, participants were surveyed on their perceptions of Humboldt County's future. Overall, participants viewed the importance of a shared vision in the community as highly important.



## Expectations for Change

Participants expressed their expectations of changes for Humboldt County in 2030. Most expected population, infrastructure and new industries to be a higher focus ... and employment opportunities, sustainable land use, social capital, and civic engagement to remain the same.



# Ten Attributes of Successful Communities

Participants individually evaluated the current status of the community based on *Ten Attributes of Successful Communities* (adapted from research done by the Heartland Centre for Leadership). Each person was given four blue adhesive dots, indicating strong attributes, and four red dots, indicating weak attributes. These dots could be allocated in any manner, i.e. spread over four attributes, concentrated on fewer than four, or not used at all.

## The Ten Attributes of Successful Communities

1. **Evidence of a strong inclusive culture**
2. **Invest in the future – built to last!**
3. **Participatory approach to community decision making**
4. **Creatively build new economic opportunities**
5. **Support local businesses**
6. **Deliberate transition of power to new leaders**
7. **Strong belief in and support for education**
8. **Strong presence of traditional institutions that are integral to community life**
9. **Willingness to seek help from the outside**
10. **Communities are self-reliant**

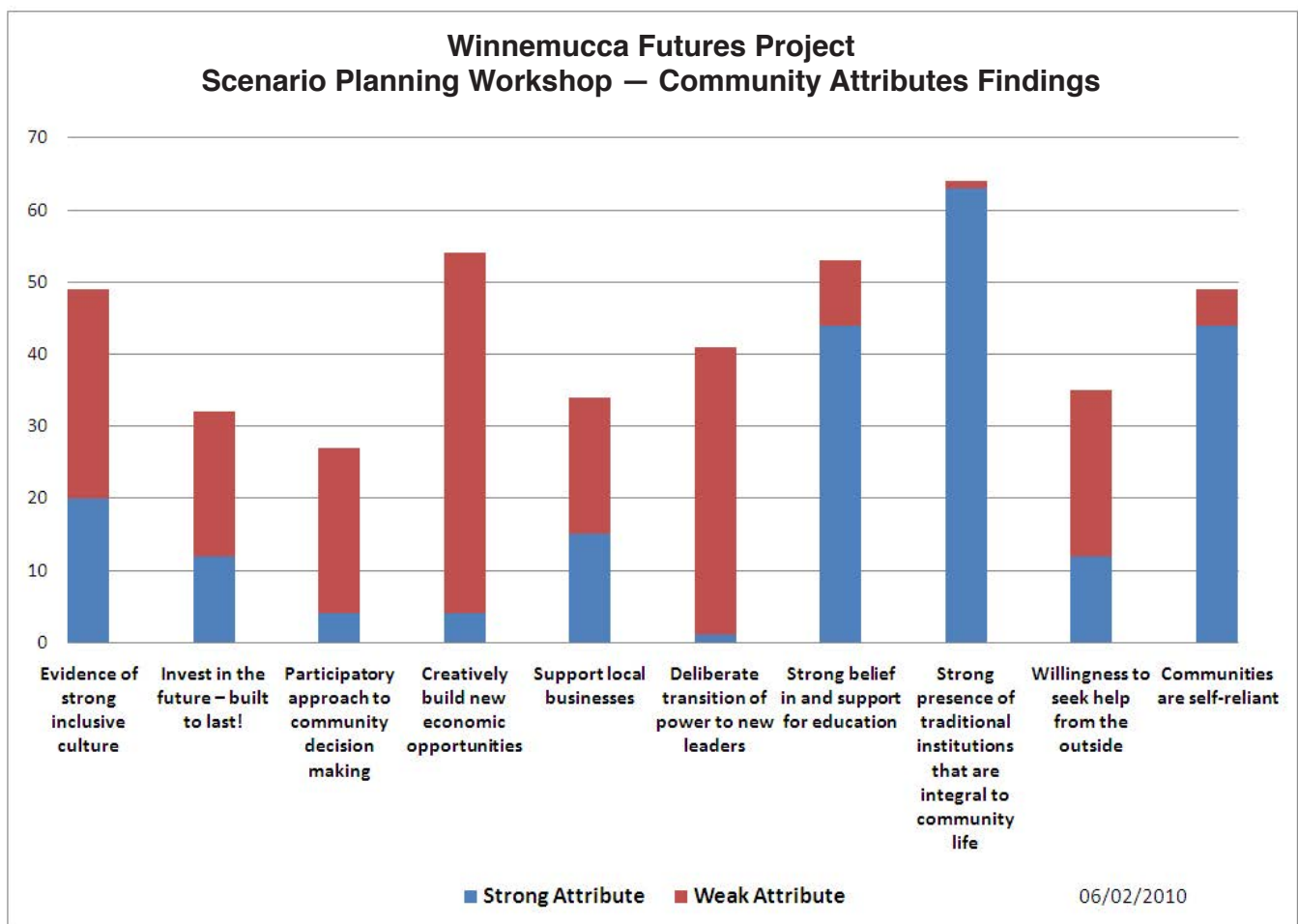




# Community Attributes Findings

Some of the observations and implications from this exercise include:

- Predictably, attributes that could be considered to represent “traditional rural values” like support for education and a culture of self reliance, scored well.
- Participants were less optimistic about attributes like building new economic opportunities and transition of power to new leaders. These could be considered important to building a sustainable and economically viable future.
- There was a perceived weakness in “Evidence of a strong inclusive culture”. This could be a critical issue due to rapidly changing demographics and ethnic make-up.



***In order to build a modern community that is able to adapt to a changing world and actively shape its own future, Winnemucca will have to consider building additional strength and capacity in these important attributes.***

# Scenario Planning Process — Developing

Stakeholders from Winnemucca and Humboldt County explored the future and developed plausible scenarios for their community through 2030. The two day workshop began with a discussion of global, national and regional forces that could impact our area. The facilitators presented an overview of trends in global power and wealth, Asia's growth, energy volatility, climate change, water availability, food security and technological advances. Participants reviewed and discussed each, considering how they could impact the future direction of their community.

## Drivers Shaping the Future

With understanding of global forces and how they may relate to this region, participants identified “drivers” that they considered most likely to affect the community's future. These were discussed and the scope of each driver was clarified. Similar drivers were grouped and new drivers were added until a list of key drivers was developed.



## Twenty key drivers shaping the future of Winnemucca & Humboldt County

- Mining longevity and stability
- Increasing Hispanic population
- Decreasing State tax revenues for education and social services
- 85% Federal land ownership
- Economic impact on community from tourism and gaming
- Aging population/becoming a retirement community/youth exodus
- Availability of water
- Lack of broadband infrastructure, connectivity and systems integration
- Community apathy and complacency with resistance to change
- Development of geothermal resources
- Vulnerability to energy price volatility / impact on local food security
- Checkerboard land ownership along railroad
- Lack of local government vision
- Recreation as an attraction
- Price of crops and cattle
- Success or failure of California's economy
- Influx of new industry
- Availability of local healthcare services and affordable housing
- Lack of cultural arts infrastructure
- Availability of transportation

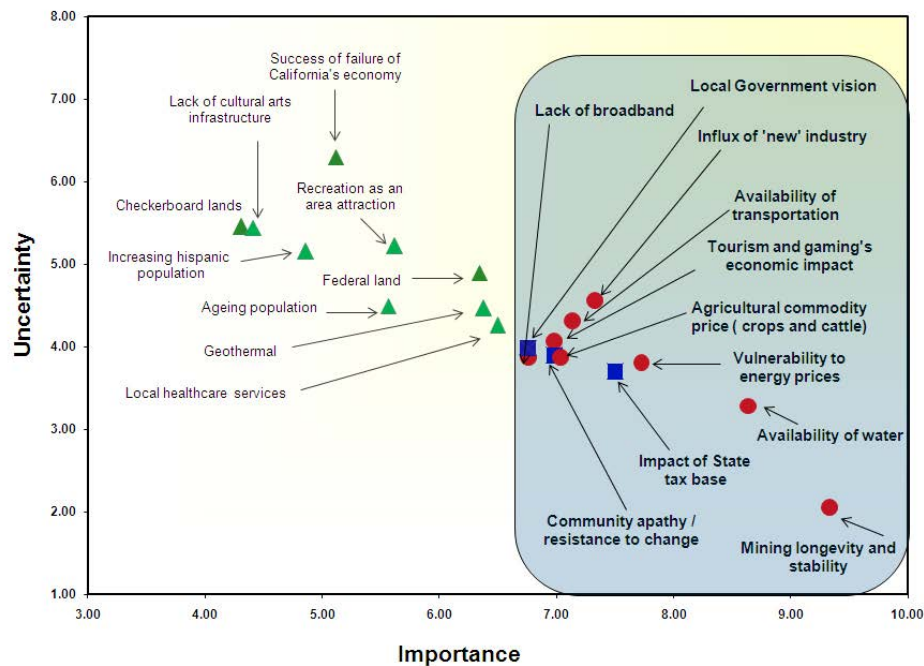


# Four Plausible Scenarios for the Future

## Identifying “Scenario Shaping Clusters of Drivers”

Each key driver was rated by participants according to its level of “importance” and “uncertainty”. Importance refers to how significant the participant considers the driver will be in shaping the future. Uncertainty refers to the degree of doubt associated with the driver in terms of its future level of impact. A scatter diagram based on importance and uncertainty, highlighted clusters of drivers that were viewed as crucially shaping the future. These clusters are termed “scenario shaping clusters of drivers”.

### SCENARIO SHAPING CLUSTERS OF DRIVERS



# Creating Scenario Spaces — Four Plausible

## Two Themes Based on the “Scenario Shaping Clusters of Drivers”

Based on the “scenario shaping clusters of drivers”, similar drivers were grouped into two categories, *Economic Resilience and Diversity* and *Community Adaptability and Responsiveness*. The two themes then became the two axes used to form the quadrant (see next page) of four plausible scenarios.

### **Economic resilience and diversity**

- Mining longevity and stability
- Influx of new industry
- Availability of transportation
- Economic impact of tourism and gaming
- Lack of broadband infrastructure, connectivity and systems integration
- Price of crops and cattle
- Vulnerability to energy price volatility/impact on local food security
- Availability of water

### **Community adaptability and responsiveness**

- Community apathy and complacency with resistance to change
- Decreasing State tax revenues for education and social services
- Lack of local government vision

The four quadrants are defined by increasing and decreasing directions of the two categories of “scenario shaping clusters of drivers”. Further discussion explored the drivers included in each cluster, the scope of each cluster, and how they formed the axes that defined the four scenarios. Participants were asked to consider our area’s attributes in each of the four future scenarios.

## Creating Detailed Narratives for Each Scenario Quadrant

Participants were randomly assigned to four groups. Each group was directed to describe Winnemucca in 2030 under the conditions of the scenario quadrant they had been assigned to based on social, economic, and environmental characteristics.

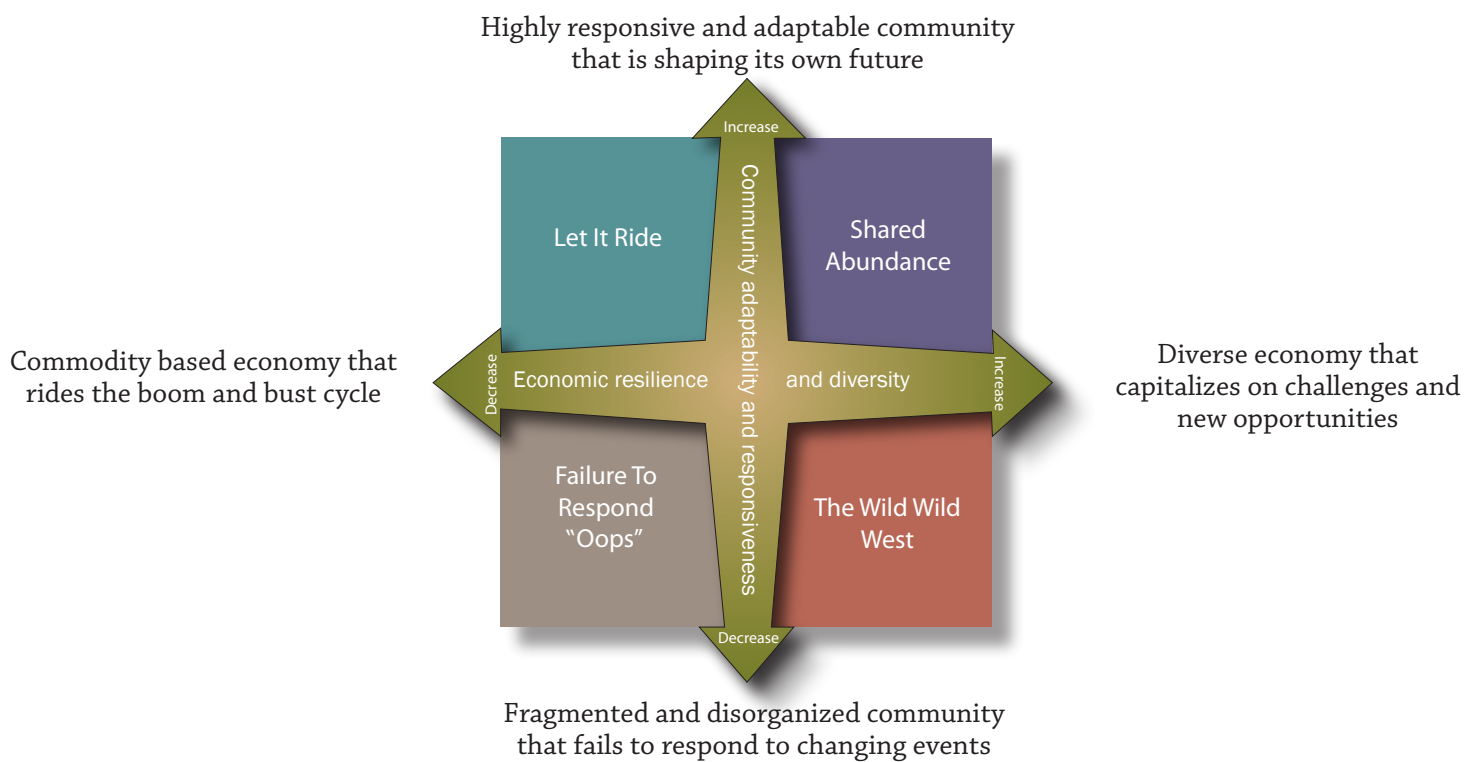




# Scenarios for the Future

Next, these groups were asked to describe the events and conditions that would define the community (still within the constraints of their specific scenario quadrant) in the years 2012, 2020, and 2030. These descriptions were developed and named and became the *Four Plausible Scenarios for the Future*. Each group presented its scenario to the entire assembly, providing for discussion, clarification, and plausibility assessment. The scenarios were then summarized into the detailed narratives presented in the next section of this report.

## **The scenario quadrants showing the Scenario Names created by the participants at the Winnemucca Futures Project Stakeholder Invitational**

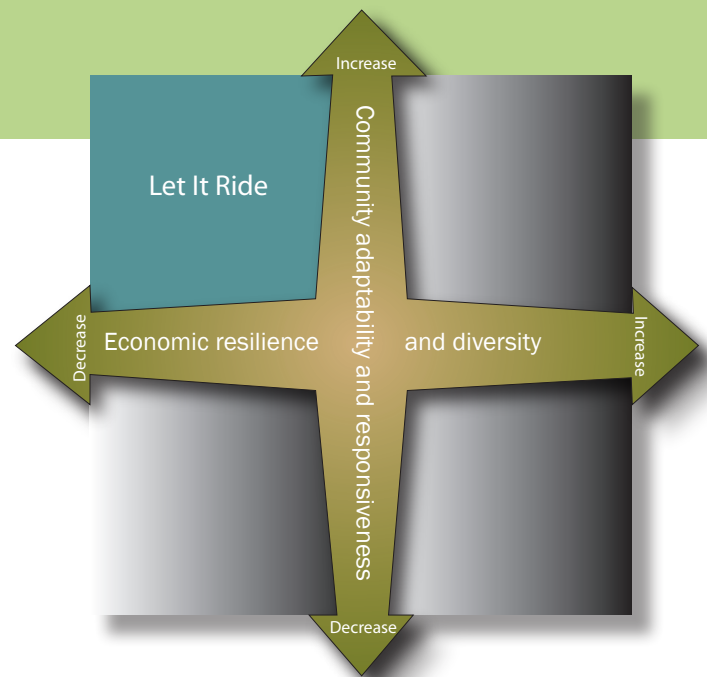


# Let It Ride

**The *Let it Ride* scenario views Humboldt County with declining economic resilience and diversity, but increased community adaptability and responsiveness. This scenario envisions a future with a strong and active community but an economy that is fully exposed to commodity boom and bust cycles.**

Most major employment is with large multinational companies that control the mineral assets of the surrounding landscape. Jobs come and go as mining activity follows commodity price fluctuations. There are some lucrative shifts in the type of minerals being mined as gold mining is complemented by rare mineral mines and ongoing exploration. The open and remote landscape becomes increasingly appealing to opportunistic businesses such as quasi-military training. There is ongoing local tension about land uses led by a small group of long-term residents that fight to protect the environment and landscape from development.

The community has continued to build a strong core of active long-term residents. Through their efforts, the community has grown and added amenities and services. It's a good place to live and people are proud of what they have accomplished. However, the area continues to struggle with a large transient population that follows mining cycles. This continues to frustrate local leaders and places extra demands on building a sustainable community base.



## **Social and Cultural Characteristics:**

- Primary Retirement Community
- Activities focused on the elder population
- Recreation for outdoor activities and sports
- Viable hospital and health care
- Strong non-profit and social organizations
- Added community recreation and arts opportunities
- A growing Hispanic population
- Large transient population

## **Economic Characteristics:**

- Follows a “Boom and Bust” trend
- Community remains relatively vital
- New businesses are created, but follow the current economic profile
- Increased export of local resource commodities
- Continued mining with good times when prices are up
- Gaming revenues more locally based
- Economic disparity is reinforced with a wide spread of high and low wage earners
- Outdoor recreation opportunities such as ATV trails

## **Environmental Characteristics:**

- Less attachment and value for environmental resources
- Decreased conservation of hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation resources
- Use farmland for renewable energy
- Net loss of water from increased usage and decreased recharge
- Decreased agriculture and livestock for more lucrative ventures
- Increased government land use regulations



# Timeline with Characteristics for the “Let It Ride” Scenario



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<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Affordable housing is established and geared for senior living. An endowment is created for use during “bust” times. New recreation trails for hiking and biking are started. There is an increase in membership for social, cultural and sports organizations.</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Big R and Dotty’s Casino are open for business. Additional small businesses are quickly established. Construction on Humboldt General Hospital’s addition has been started. Work on the Ruby Mountain Pipeline is in progress. Landfill is established providing jobs and increased tax revenue.</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>The status quo is kept with strong mining. There is more local oversight of environmental regulations. Waste management and poultry processing companies arrive. There is community awareness of participatory processes such as the Winnemucca Futures Project. Noxious weed control is a priority.</p>
<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>A housing area is created for transient populations. A new performing arts center has its grand opening and features national talent. Social services are in high demand and have strong funding and a positive presence in the community.</p>	<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>ATV, biking and hiking trails are created and maintained. Existing mines are expanding. New underground mines are established and the retail business is booming.</p>	<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>Gold mines are abandoned. New Lithium and Uranium mine explorations are taking place. A nuclear power plant is proposed. A Blackwater war-games facility has been established. Listings of new endangered species have been announced.</p>
<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>An 18-hole golf course is created and highly utilized by the community. An events center is expanded and has become a regional “go to” place. There is a strong social services center attentive to people’s needs.</p>	<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>18-hole Golf course expansion has spurred a new focus on recreational opportunities. Multi-mineral mining is encouraged and competitive. East Winnemucca Boulevard Development has been completed.</p>	<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Nuclear power plant is at full operation replacing abandoned mine sites. Importing water has become a financial drain on municipal government.</p>

# Failure to Respond — “Oops”

**The *Failure to Respond* — “Oops” scenario envisions Humboldt County with a narrowly focused economy at the mercy of commodity boom and bust cycles. Communities are fragmented and disillusioned. This scenario portrays a future characterized by economic uncertainty and volatility. It lurches from setback to windfall to setback, hoping someone will come and save them.**

The local economy is still dominated by mining, but more mining services are supplied from Reno and Elko. Winnemucca has become unattractive to the workforce and mining companies have moved toward automation and remote operations. Little effort has been made to diversify the local economy, resulting in a gradual decline in economic health. Employment levels fluctuate dramatically. Businesses begin to close and empty storefronts dot the retail district. Likewise, vacant housing and commercial properties in the surrounding area indicate a fading economy.

The community has lost its way. Hopes are pinned on the next mining boom, which doesn't come. There is a decline in young families and students. Social problems escalate as the economy declines, more people live below the poverty line, and transients make up a larger part of the population.



## **Social and Cultural Characteristics:**

- “Boom and Bust” atmosphere dominates and little or no planning occurs
- Police, fire, and medical jobs increase during “Boom” and decrease during “Bust”
- Social services are strained due to the inability to determine needs and respond accordingly
- Inability to create infrastructure that maintains or improves the quality of life
- Overall sense of complacency and the community acts only during emergencies
- Family ties are strong – everybody knows each other and doesn't welcome outsiders
- Living in a rural area becomes harder as transportation and essential services become more expensive

## **Economic Characteristics:**

- Little or no incentives to attract new businesses and business planning is short-term
- Housing and commercial property markets are volatile
- There is a reluctance to invest in the community
- Lower overall incomes continue to be more common
- Selfish business mentality exists in the local economy
- Local workforce is unskilled due to the lack of training opportunities

## **Environmental Characteristics:**

- Vulnerable to high energy prices and dependant on fossil fuels
- Technology is under-utilized
- Accepting of any business without considering the consequences
- Recreational, agricultural, and environmental assets are not supported
- Lack of concern for the environment as no organized groups attempt conservation



# Timeline with Characteristics for the “Failure to Respond — ‘Oops’” Scenario

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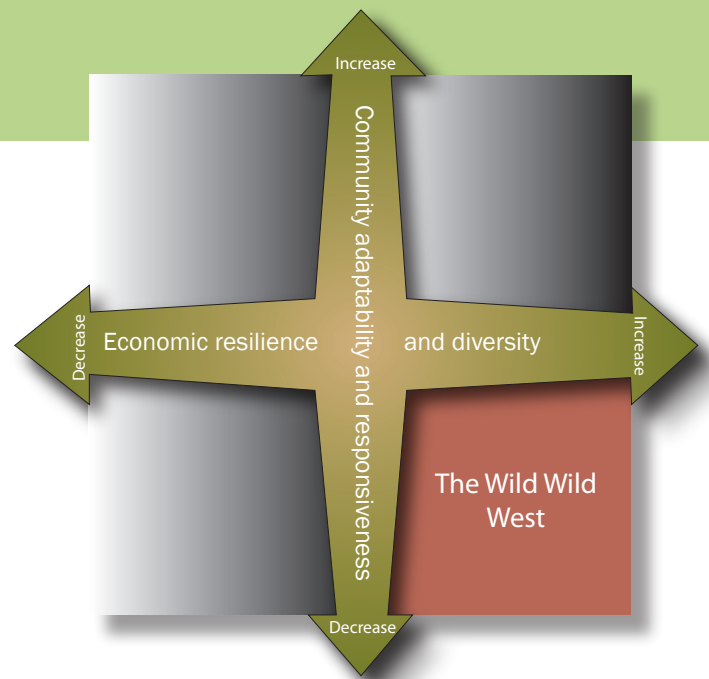
<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
<b>2012</b> Education and human service programs have declined. Important programs are not subsidized. Limited job loss and indigent services expenses decrease.	<b>2012</b> Local mine announces a predicted plan to mine until 2015. Local economy is shaken by global forces. State collects more taxes. Local government resorts to using reserve funds.	<b>2012</b> Environmental planning is not done. Competition for water rights is cut-throat. Agricultural commodities lose value.
<b>2020</b> Local gold mining has declined and mass layoffs have occurred. Homes and commercial buildings are empty and deteriorating. No large employers have moved in so people are overly dependant on what's left. Public safety is reduced. Overall population has declined and unemployment has increased.	<b>2020</b> Low wage industries have added some jobs. Community infrastructure begins to degrade rapidly. Storefronts are at 50% occupancy and look depressed. Municipal spending is based on current needs and has little impact. More homes are converted to affordable housing and rental options.	<b>2020</b> Air and land pollution increases as the cost of water increases. Haphazard zoning practices limit land access. Parks and open spaces are not maintained due to increased costs. City budget is burdened maintaining outdated infrastructure. Agriculture sector has no common plans for future uses.
<b>2030</b> Community polls indicate that people feel they are victims to a globalized marketplace. Demand for local resources has declined dramatically. Increased Federal and State welfare funding as the community cannot support the growing needs of a poor population.	<b>2030</b> Severe degradation of community infrastructure. Local surveys indicate that people feel the community is ugly. Mining businesses have moved on. Numerous low wage industries are struggling. Unemployment is high. Remaining social services are unable to meet the high demand.	<b>2030</b> Environment is considered mismanaged and unsalvageable. Costs of importing water drains already stressed municipal funds. Water rights are mostly held by outside companies and private individuals who have no vested interest in the area outside of profit.

# The Wild Wild West

**The Wild Wild West scenario views Humboldt County with a diverse economy that capitalizes on challenges and new opportunities. However, the community is also somewhat fragmented and disorganized, and struggles to respond appropriately to changing conditions. This scenario envisions a future characterized by opportunistic economic endeavors with an “every man for himself” culture. Money is made and lost, clearly defining winners and losers.**

The local economy is characterized by opportunistic investment and exploitative behavior. Because some remote areas have unique mineral resources, they attract businesses that are not welcome elsewhere. Toxic and low cost industries begin to replace traditional mining investments at the expense of the environment; pollution and health concerns are poorly addressed. Lack of a united vision allows undesirable businesses to establish themselves with little or no opposition. This wide open business climate does offer certain benefits to the local economy. There is money being made in certain sectors and within a limited slice of the populous.

Various groups attempt to rally the community around important issues or events, but repeatedly fail to gather any lasting momentum. There is a lack of vision and direction. Community resources are often squandered on self-interests, which cause social and physical infrastructure to decline. The quality of life is eroded and further perpetuates the area's decline.



## **Social and Cultural Characteristics:**

- Opportunities for recreation development are not acted upon
- Lack of volunteerism and social commitment
- Reduction in social services outreach to high need groups and emergency services are stressed
- Community attractiveness is not prioritized and outside funding sources are not applied for
- Transient lifestyle is accompanied by low home ownership rates

## **Economic Characteristics:**

- Tax revenues are distributed irresponsibly and the City and County are perceived to squander opportunities
- Local business makeup varies as there is no organized investment and zoning policies are inconsistent
- Minimum wage businesses are attracted to the area and create a greater need for social services.
- Retail properties are occupied but transient because they lack differentiation and ability to sustain clientele
- Declining community investment
- Competition for outside investment in resources is high and is routinely given to the highest bidder

## **Environmental Characteristics:**

- Lack of community awareness
- Environmental practices are at the mercy of volatile business interests
- No cohesive environmental vision
- Federal regulations cover federal lands but private lands are uncontrolled
- Funding for environmental programs is scarce





## Timeline with Characteristics for the “Wild Wild West” Scenario

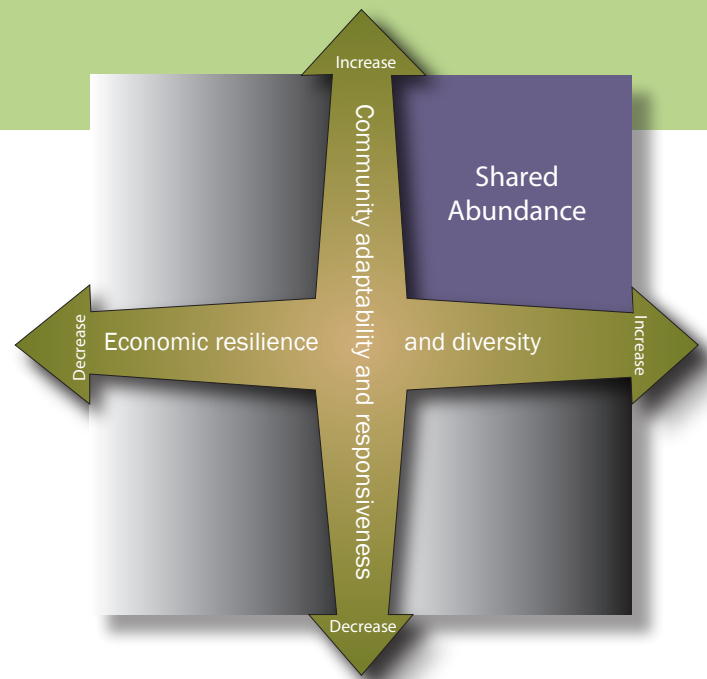
<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Non-profits are struggling with reduced funding and lack of community support. Community is youthful and transient. County jail is operating at full capacity.</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Reduction of jobs in education. Mining is still the top industry. No new industries have emerged. Local businesses are doing well overall. Tourism has decreased. Lower government efficiency and duplication of services continues. Investments for infrastructure decline.</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Various groups clash and are unable to further environmental planning. Revenues aren't used for environmental projects. Competition for water increases.</p>
<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>Non-profits are disappearing. Law enforcement is stronger and has a visible presence. Graduation rates and test scores are decreasing. Winnemucca has discontinued some services to outlying areas.</p>	<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>A significant number of jobs from new business have been added by low paying industries. Community infrastructure begins to degrade. Storefronts are full but lack aesthetic appeal. Public spending is based on current needs and has no impact beyond one election cycle. Affordable housing and rental options increase. Mining is still the most significant economic factor.</p>	<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>Increased air and land pollution with decreased availability of water rights. Haphazard use of green practices. Fallout of competition for natural resources. There is a lower quality of life and a degradation of open space and parks. City budget suffers from constraints on water and sewer costs.</p>
<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Parks are in disarray with no community supported youth sports. Civic meetings are disorganized and contentious. Chamber of Commerce is strong as business groups are the real organizers of the community. Aging population is now a majority.</p>	<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Severe degradation of community infrastructure has taken a toll. Surveys indicate that people believe the community is ugly. Mining business is now insignificant and new businesses are unsustainable. Former high-end homes are mostly vacant. Unemployment is high and wages are low. Social services are not funded and the homeless population substantially increased.</p>	<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Environment is considered wasted from lack of vision and corrective actions. The expense of importing water is overwhelming community resources. Ranchers with water rights are thriving.</p>

# Shared Abundance

**The *Shared Abundance* scenario views Humboldt County with a diverse economy that capitalizes on challenges and new opportunities, and is highly responsive. This scenario envisions a vibrant future with a strong capacity for sustainable growth and community development.**

The local economy has made an important shift away from over-dependence on mining. While mining is still an important backbone of the economy, it is now complemented by other industries involved in renewable energy, specialized manufacturing, value-added resources and services. This diversification has reduced exposure to the “boom and bust” nature of commodity mining. The region has become known for its ability to apply creative solutions and is now regarded as welcoming innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.

The community has pulled together in a cohesive way and shaped a shared future. The diverse economy has provided greater prosperity, and has reduced the gap between rich and poor. The community supports new ideas and aspiring businesses, with a vibrant small business sector. There is a sense of community cohesiveness and well-being, with active participation and good cooperation in civic affairs. This healthy community culture draws professionals who appreciate the quality of life and outdoor lifestyle opportunities. It also increases retention of young people, who see a positive future.



## **Social and Cultural Characteristics:**

- Diversified skills and knowledge in labor force
- Accessible on-site and online education programs
- Social services for citizens with expanded education and healthcare
- Retention of local talent and population with wide-ranging age distribution
- Performing arts venues and community endowment established
- Master planning for growth with many housing options is implemented
- Welcoming community that is full of pride

## **Economic Characteristics:**

- Relevant and diverse workforce training is available
- Knowledge based industry present with strong support systems for entrepreneurship
- New industries such as renewable energy and targeted land use with supporting infrastructure
- Expanded airport and other transportation systems with a focus on distribution support and infrastructure service
- Increased focus on providing amenities, professional and social services locally
- Increased access to broadband infrastructure
- Active ongoing economic development with continued support for mining, gaming and agriculture

## **Environmental Characteristics:**

- Federal rehabilitation and maintenance of land for industrial and recreational uses
- Renewable energy projects are supported by the community
- Proper zoning in place for residential construction with green spaces
- Continued land conservation while preserving responsible uses
- Local farms have diversified crops and increased efficiency by sharing best practices and leveraging technology
- Business and residential customers are consistently attentive to water conservation
- Grass Valley has developed appropriate sewer infrastructure, improving water quality



# Timeline with Characteristics for the “Shared Abundance” Scenario

© Lauren Davis

<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Community regularly identifies, engages and elects change advocates. Humboldt Development Authority is a resource for action oriented leaders. There is a culture of alignment around community priorities. A community arts center is under construction. Community financially supports smart choices for youth and there is a high rate of graduation. There is a residential and industrial master plan with partners planning together and sharing resources. Strong community buy-in to common goals.</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Small businesses are increasing and the community focuses on supporting business. An additional rail spur has been added and airport expansion planning is underway. Special events have increased and brought in more visitors. Broadband infrastructure and sustainability is a priority. Infrastructure expansion is in progress.</p>	<p><b>2012</b></p> <p>Increased efficiency in farming methods. Farming engaged in noxious weed control. Advertising of the area’s natural amenities to attract visitors is implemented. Planning for improvement of water quality in the Grass Valley area has begun. Interest is building for bio-fuel capabilities. Public awareness is raised for environmental issues. Interest in renewable energy increases.</p>
<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>Expanded social services for health-care, aging, youth and mental health needs. Vocational training has expanded to meet the needs of the community. Master plan has been followed for development and construction. Ongoing housing inventory allows the area to secure developers and investors. Strong partnerships with and sustained engagement of outlying County communities.</p>	<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>Green industries have become a primary goal. Government is serving population with expanded e-services. Lithium mining and manufacturing has been established. Increase in distance education and more educational options for workforce training are available. Private air traffic at the airport has significantly increased. There is continued support of new and existing small businesses. Proper land access and dual uses for mine sites has been adopted.</p>	<p><b>2020</b></p> <p>Diversification of local crops due to better planning. Renewable energy initiated along I-80 using existing infrastructure. Grass Valley infrastructure is expanded. Bio-fuel farming underway and a refinery is under construction. Changes to Federal land access supports local plans. Ranching fully supports noxious weed control measures.</p>
<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Airport Industrial Park is fully occupied. A cultural shift has occurred that focuses on achieving shared community goals and constructively addressing new challenges. The master community plan is utilized in decision-making and updated over time. A balanced and sustainable community is maintained.</p>	<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Airport fully serves area needs and is competitive within its market segment. Industrial parks are fully developed and have the infrastructure to attract and sustain businesses. The community has a proven history of supporting entrepreneurs and has established a regional reputation for success.</p>	<p><b>2030</b></p> <p>Environmental groups are working together to implement further sustainability measures with community partners. Former mine areas have been revitalized and are sites for new hiking and biking trails.</p>

# The Outcomes of the Winnemucca Futures Project

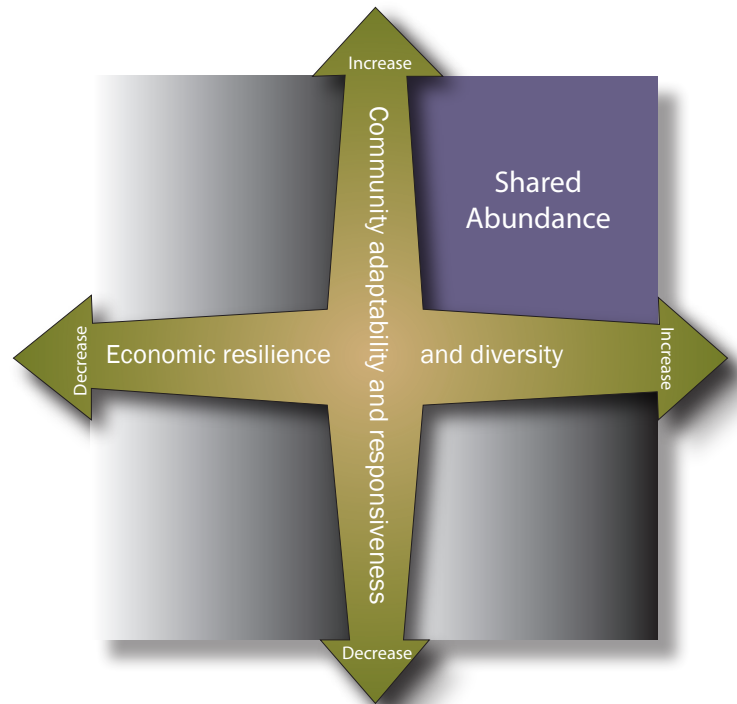
## Fostering A Shared Vision

Following the completion of scenario planning, the Steering Committee took the narratives on the road to introduce the scenarios to the community. During the period July-September, 2010, meetings were held with the following organizations:

- Rotary Club
- Lions Club
- Chamber of Commerce
- Family Stability Council
- Mining Foundation
- Ministerial Association
- Community Social Service Providers
- Leadership Classes at Lowry High School
- Philanthropic Educational Organization (P.E.O.)
- Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe

In addition to the meetings with organizations, several other vehicles for comment were provided. Four *Showcase Events*, open to the public, were held. Videos about the planning process and the scenarios were available online. Surveys were conducted, both in person and online.

On September 28 & 29, 2010, large community *Vision-to-Action* sessions were held to develop consensus for a *Preferred Vision for the Future*, and to determine what actions should be taken to steer the community toward that future.



## A Shared Vision for 2030

The ***Preferred Vision for the Future*** for Humboldt County is captured in the ***Shared Abundance*** scenario. While mining, agriculture, and tourism are still important backbones of the economy, they are now part of a **diverse economy** complemented by industries such as specialized manufacturing, value added resources, logistics services, and renewable energy. This diversification has reduced exposure to the “boom and bust” nature of commodity cycles. The region has become known for its ability to apply **creative entrepreneurial solutions** and **capitalizes on challenges and new opportunities**.

Winnemucca and surrounding areas have pulled together in a cohesive way to create a **vibrant and responsive regional community**. The diversified economy allows for greater community prosperity, and has reduced the gap between rich and poor. There is an **expanded sense of community** and Winnemucca has transitioned into a **cooperative adaptable community that is shaping its own future**. It is an inviting community that has **high levels of active participation, good community infrastructure and a healthy culture and spirit**. This makes the community attractive to young people and professionals who see a future for themselves in Humboldt County.





## Strategic Focus Areas

The many participants at the *Vision-to-Action* events agreed that in order to reach this future there are four strategic areas of focus that we must continue to nurture and develop.

### **Community Capacity**

Build leadership and education systems that stimulate new thinking and create opportunities.

### **Building the Foundation**

Identify and invest in critical infrastructure for future community and economic growth.

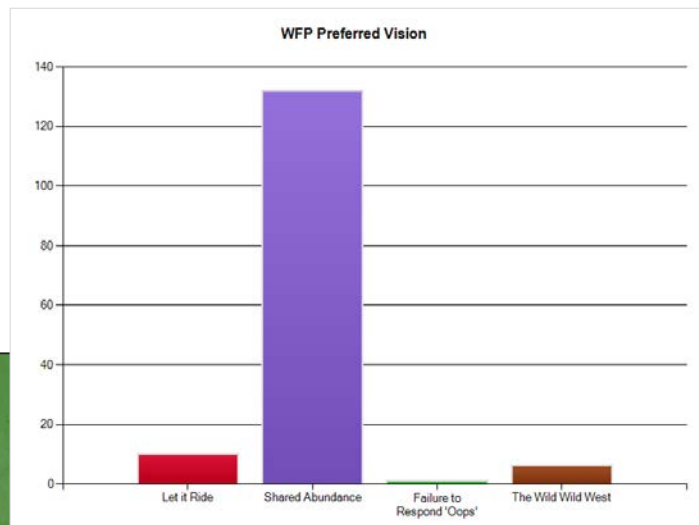
### **Collaborative Culture**

Create an engaged and collaborative community culture that focuses on a shared vision.

### **Economic Diversification**

Explore and develop innovative economic systems to capitalize on local strengths and embrace emerging industries.

Surveys completed during the Winnemucca Futures Project revealed strong consensus across the county that the *Humboldt County 2030 Shared Abundance Vision* for the Future accurately describes our collective aspirations.



# The Scenarios for Humboldt County

The complexities of a rapidly changing global society and economy present rural areas with new challenges *and* opportunities. This scenario planning process is intended to provide the leaders and residents in Humboldt County with tools to help meet those challenges and take advantage of those opportunities. The four scenarios, developed by local participants, become a benchmark and call-to-action for describing and improving our community's ability to respond to change.



Tracking key factors is a critical part of using scenarios to aide decision making. There is a tendency for people to choose the preferred scenario (usually the most positive one) or to attribute a greater likelihood to one scenario or another based on its appealing aspects. Honesty and objective thinking about the future encourages meaningful discussions about how to plan and react. What may be considered unlikely outcomes could easily come to fruition. Constructing plausible scenarios helps to prepare for such eventualities.

This summary is a first step toward extending these scenarios beyond the participants and their immediate sphere of influence. This resource will be used to prompt discussions in the wider community as to possible implications and impacts of various future events and strategic decisions.

For more information on the Winnemucca Futures Project, please contact:

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