



Heartland Center for Leadership Development

January 9, 2014 from 10 am to 4 pm with lunch provided

January 16, 2014 from 6 – 9 pm, following a light meal

At Audubon County Economic Development

800 Market St, Audubon, IA

Home Town Competitiveness (HTC) is a “come-back/give-back” approach to rural community building based on local assets that can be found in nearly every rural community, no matter how small or isolated. Community and regional task forces of community volunteers are organized around four HTC Pillars:

- **Leadership – to mobilize communities with a long-term vision for prosperity**
- **Entrepreneurship – to support innovation and economic growth**
- **Youth Engagement – to cultivate a sense of belonging and opportunity**
- **Philanthropy – to capture local and regional financial resources for community development**

Step 1: Discover or Investigate

In this step, planning participants share stories of community successes or achievements that people can appreciate as real and practical high points in the community’s history or experience. From those stories, participants are challenged to derive the lessons that are represented: What was happening that led to the success? Who was involved? Who provided leadership? What was done to celebrate that achievement?

Step 2: Dream or Imagine

In this step, participants review or create a statement of values, vision or mission to project the community in an ideal or preferred state. This step answers the question, “What type of community do we want to be?” The statement reflects the participants’ fondest hopes for what might be possible, if the community imagines itself as offering residents an opportunity to enjoy community prosperity and significant quality of life.

Step 3: Design or Innovate

In this step, participants are challenged to reflect on the organizational structures and capacities that will be necessary to make the dream into reality. What type of organizational realignment or restructuring might be required to move from vision into action? Participants consider whether they have the resources, or assets, to move from where they are to where they want to be.

Step 4: Deliver or Implement

In this step, attention turns toward answering how to put the wheels in motion to get priorities accomplished, answering the question, “Who needs to do what by when?” Assignments are made or accepted by the individuals, volunteer groups or agencies that are in the right position to get things done.

In sum, fully functioning communities are capable of making great strides if they follow simple, common sense approaches to projecting possibilities, setting priorities and following through with responsibilities and timelines. Appreciative Inquiry follows a positive approach to do just that.

The Exira Community Club appreciates the financial support from Audubon Economic Development Corporation, Audubon City Council, Mid-American Energy, and Audubon County Board of Supervisors, the Exira City Council, Marne Elk Horn Telephone, and City of Atlantic & Duane Deist. Their generosity has made it possible for us to bring the expertise of Heartland Center for Leadership Development to Audubon County. This is an opportunity to help define the future of our communities and our county.

Please register by calling the Audubon County Economic Development office at 712-563-2742 and leave your name, phone number and number of people attending.