

Rural Illinois: Looking Ahead and Applications in Other States

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Issues Facing Rural Illinois

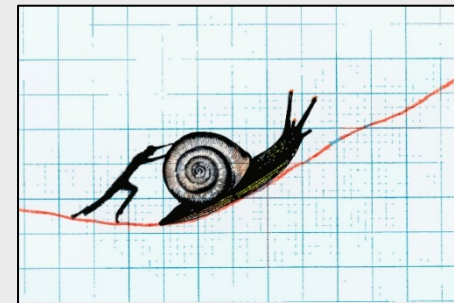
- Counties (53 of 66 rural) Expect Population Declines
- Large Number of Governments and 2nd Highest Property Taxes
- Shrinking Economies and Business Closures in Small Communities
- Pressures on Rural Hospitals and Health Care Facilities
- Lack of Coordination in Public Transportation Service Delivery
- Uneven Access to Broad Band Especially in Rural Areas
- Shrinking Workforce and Skill Levels in Rural Areas



Future Trends Affecting Rural Illinois



- Growth in Information and Service Industries
- Manufacturing Productivity Increases, Automation, Fewer Employees
- Rural has Lower Tech Industries
- Competition from Off-shore Locations for Routine Jobs
- New Technology Favors Large Centers with Business Agglomeration
- Graduates Trained in High Tech Skills Drawn to Large Centers
- Past Limited Investment in Broad Band Facilities
- Outmigration of Labor Force and Declining Labor Force Participation
- Growth in Retirement Age Population; Workforce Shrinks



Policymaking in Illinois

- Rural Revitalization Act (1986)
 - Joint Resolution of General Assembly
 - Executive Order by Governor
- Governor's Rural Affairs Council (1987) (chaired by Lt. Governor)
 - Coordinate Rural Programs by State Agencies
 - Assess Rural Conditions and Suggest Legislative Changes
 - Design & Recommend Programs not in State Agency Responsibilities
 - Issues Annual Report on Rural Issues
- Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (1989)
 - University-based Statewide Research Agency to Research Effective Practices
 - Host Annual Conference on Innovative Programs
 - Collaborate with GRAC on Annual Report
 - Deliver Local Technical Assistance and Other Support
- Rural Partners as State Coordinating Council (1989)
 - Formed as Non-governmental Partnership and Member-Driven Forum
 - Works with GRAC, IIRA, and Other Agencies on Implementation Practices
 - Represents Member Issues and Interests to Improve Rural Conditions



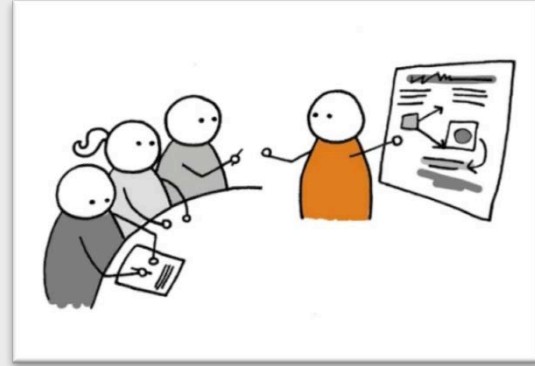
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Main Points in RP Briefing Paper

(RP Prepared for Incoming Administration)



- Respond to Changing Demographics with Shrink Smart Approaches
- Expand Local Economic Development and Job Creation Tools
- Slow the Growth, or Reduce, Property Taxes
 - Illinois ranks 2nd among states in effective property tax rates
 - Modernize and update public service delivery system
- Address Changing Public Transportation Needs
- Workforce Skills Gap and Child Care Issues
- Access Services Through Technology—Broadband
- Strengthen Access to Rural Health Care and Address Opioid Concerns

New Financing Approaches for Businesses

Preserve and Enhance Social Capital

- Population Aging Means Pending Retirements of Business Owners
- Retaining and Recruiting Populations Depend on Key Services
- Small Businesses Don't Receive Large Incentives
- Community Supported (or Owned) Businesses are Options
 - Extensive Use in England
 - Study of Successful Practices, e.g. Vermont, Wisconsin
 - Webinars in IL , MI, MN ...
 - Organizing Materials on Use in Canada, Scotland, Italy, Germany, Taiwan, No. Uganda, and US
- Redirect Investments to Local Businesses (Shuman)



Local Efficiency Assessment Program (LEAP)

- Modernize Current Delivery System of Local Services
 - IL had 6,918 independent governments in 2017, (8,500 by IOC count)
 - Recent statutory changes allowing dissolution and consolidation
 - Locally-driven and voluntary process needed
- Find Ways to Collaborate and Reduce Costs
- Electronic LEAP Guidebook and Data Base
 - Form LEAP team to find collaborations with cost-savings
 - Project populations to identify needs
 - Determine expenditures needed to serve projected populations
 - Project revenues likely to be available
 - Examine collaboration opportunities to reduce costs and/or *property taxes*
 - Design a LEAP action plan for next 5 years and beyond
- Annual Survey of Collaboration Efforts & Outcomes



Opportunities for Future in Illinois

- Statewide Econ Development Policy Being Revised
- Expand IIRA MAPPING Program with Shrink Smart Approach
- 2020 Budget has \$420 M for Broadband Expansion
- GRAC-IIRA-Rural Partners Set Agenda for Action-Oriented Program
- Raise Awareness and Potential for Investing in Rural
- Help In-coming Administration and General Assembly with Projects
- Use Annual Conference to Inform GRAC, & State Agencies
 - Design and Help Implement Policies
 - Build Capacity of Local Officials to Find & Implement Remedies (KS)
 - Prepare Place-sensitive Statewide Development Strategies (MI, NY)
 - Expand Regional Growth Hubs
 - Continue Technical Support for Local Groups Addressing Local Issues



Looking Ahead:

National Opportunities to Promote Rural?

- Active Rural-Focused Research Policy Discussions?
 - PRA member agencies coordinate and facilitate forum
- Host a Jointly-Sponsored Annual National Rural Conference?
 - Focus on best practices and document needs
 - Hold in broad Midwest region as easily accessible location
 - Form policy teams to research and document practices
- PRA Members Collaborate on Survey of Successful Practices?
- Webinars that Highlight Promising Practices in Rural Areas?
- Joint Sessions with NACo, NATAT, NLC on Rural Research/Practice?
- Unique Assets that PRA Member Agencies Could Bring?



Additional Reading

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For Further Information....



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Things to Do.....

Date
