

Reimagining Rural



Photo: Middle of Nowhere U.S.A. Glasgow MT

It can be hard to see past
what your town has lost.



Photo: rawpixel



Community meeting on Branding, Cut Bank

Photo: Kari Lewis

What is a good thing that has happened in your town lately?

Ask people in the room.

Type their responses in the chat for all to see.



Rural towns run by volunteers.



Photo: Community Project Connection Worden

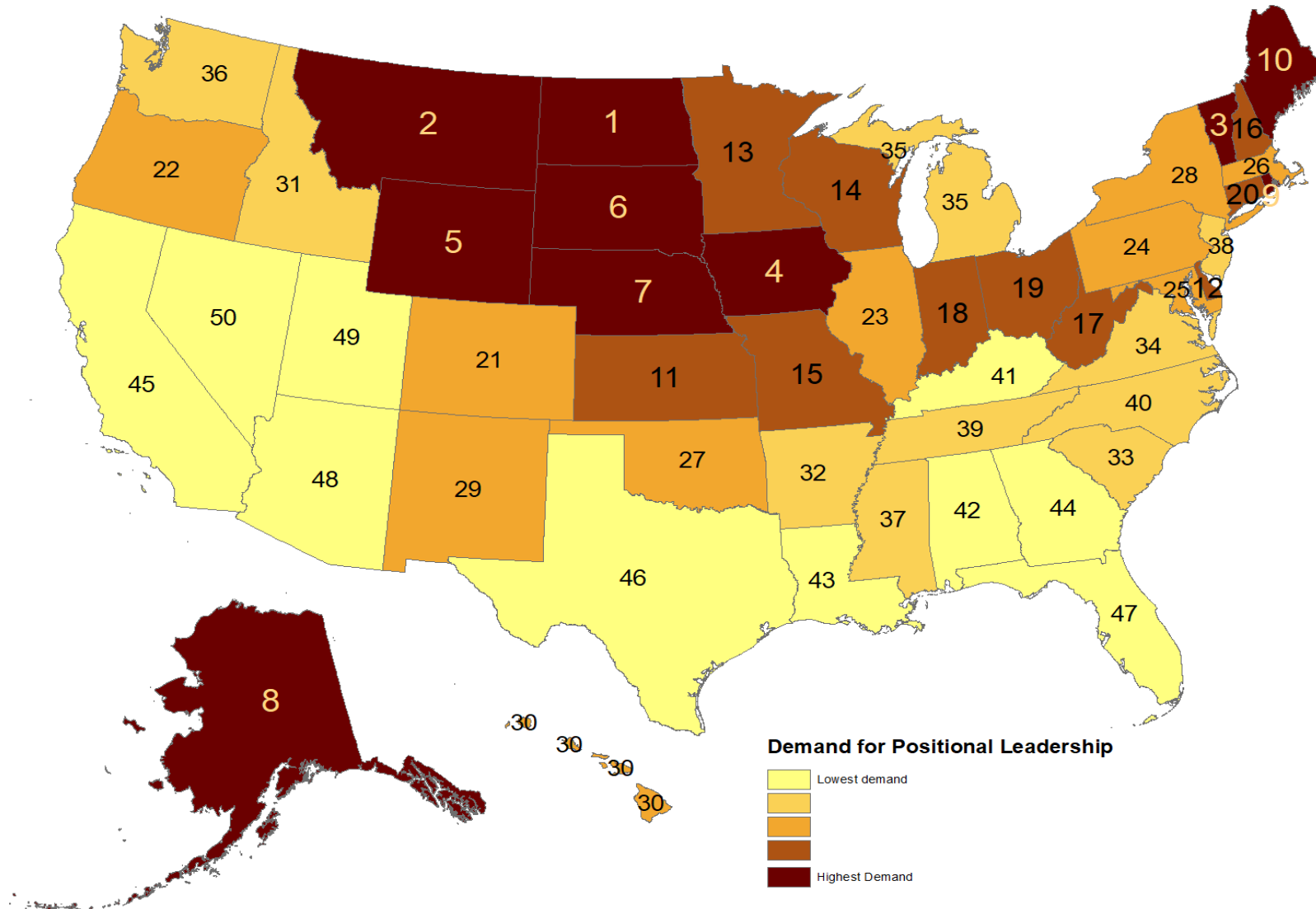


Rural is run by
those that show
up.



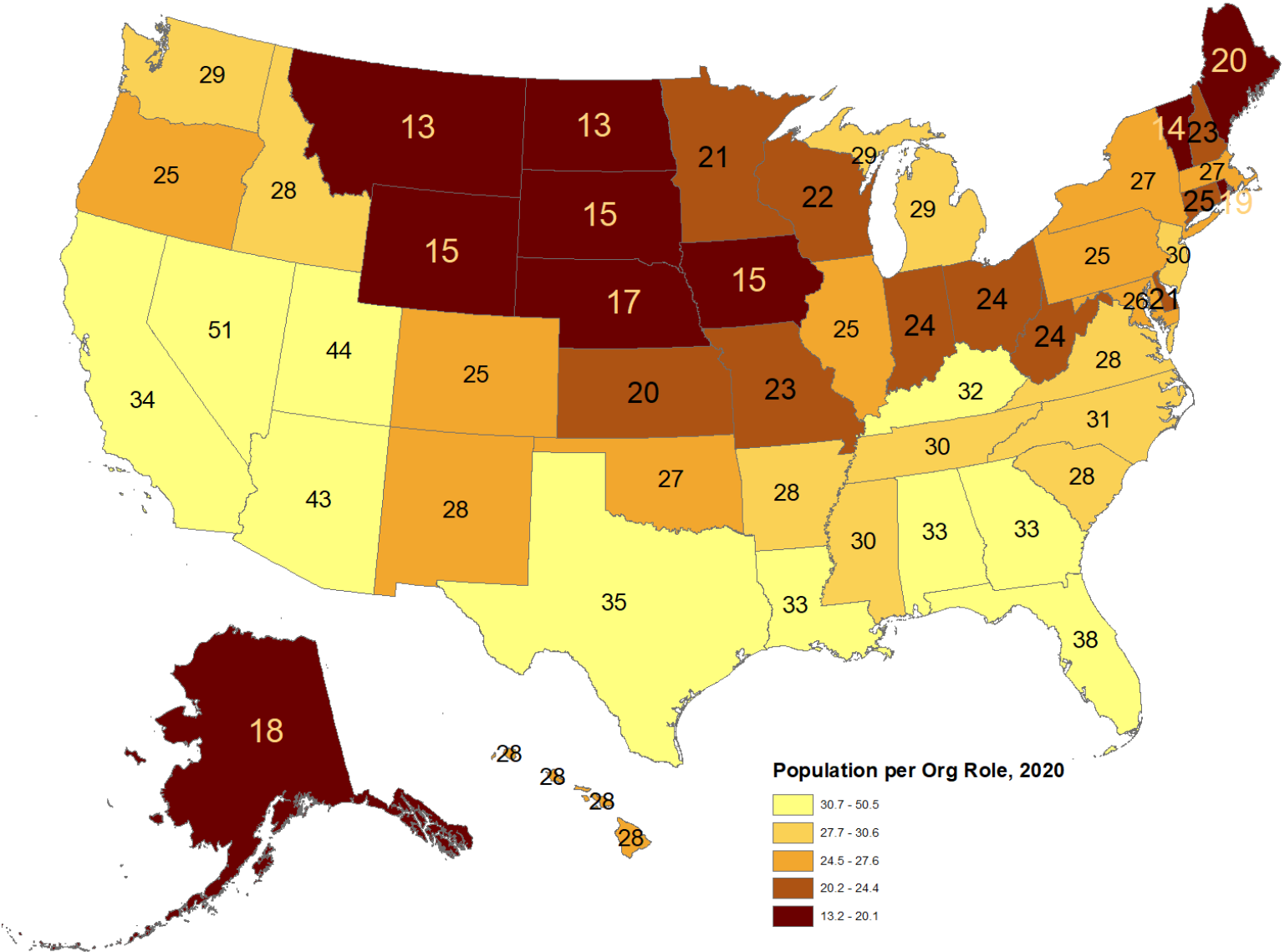
Photo: Jennifer Anderson. Community Project Connection
idea generation session in Worden

Rank of Organizational Demands, 2020



Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics. Compiled and analyzed by Benjamin Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.

Population per Organizational Role, 2020



Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics. Compiled and analyzed by Benjamin Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.

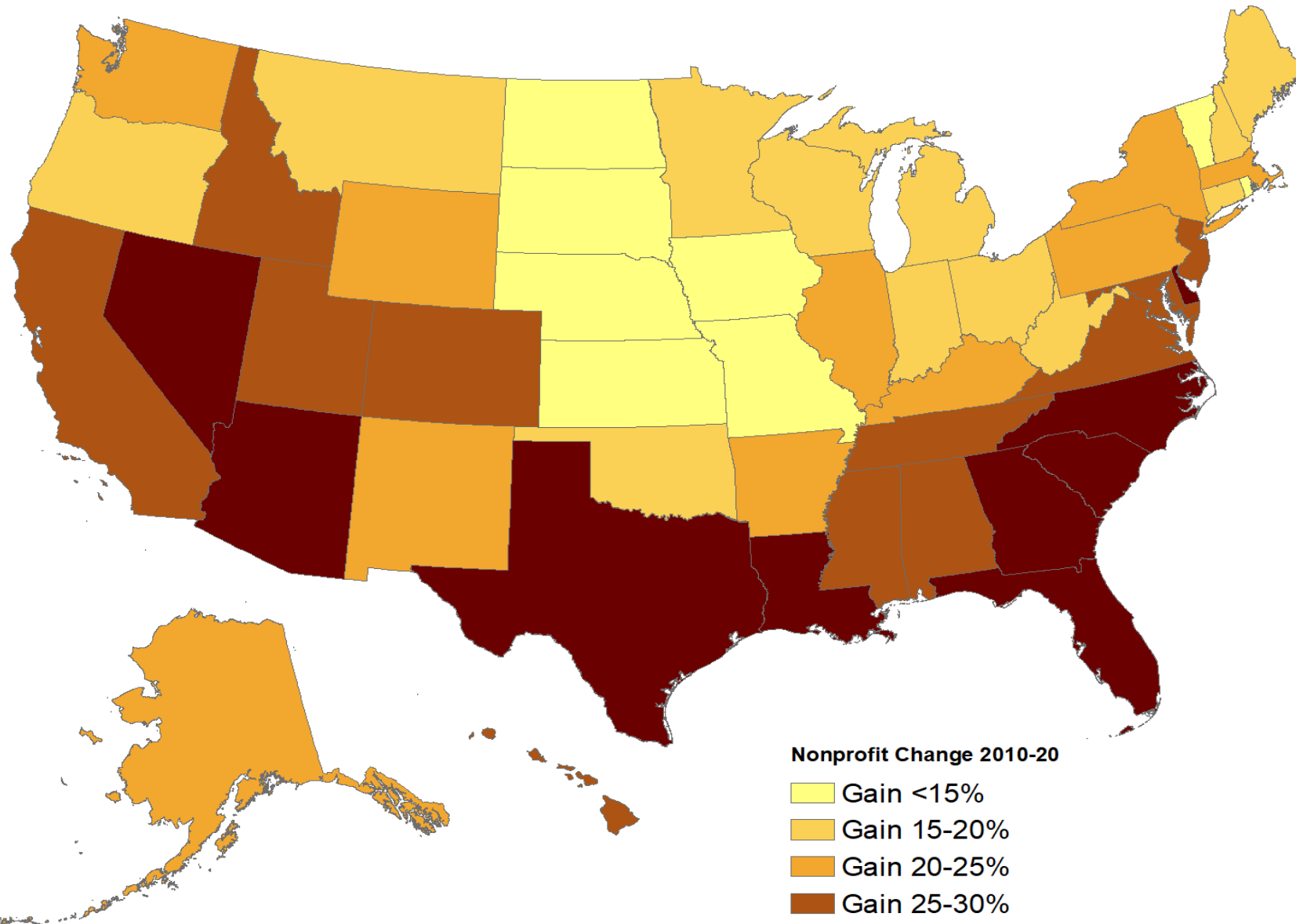
Leadership Demand in *Your* Community

1 in 13 people
must lead in Montana*

* Assumes 6 people per government or nonprofit organization

County	Leadership Demand
Sweet Grass	1 in 11
Jefferson	1 in 12
Teton	1 in 7
Custer	1 in 11
Carter	1 in 9
Madison	1 in 9
Rosebud	1 in 10
Glacier	1 in 18
Gallatin	1 in 19
Petroleum	1 in 10
Beaverhead	1 in 9

Nonprofit Change: 2010-2020



Slide credit: Benjamin Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension.



Social Life is Not Dying

Nonprofit Growth: 2010-2020 (incl. revocations)

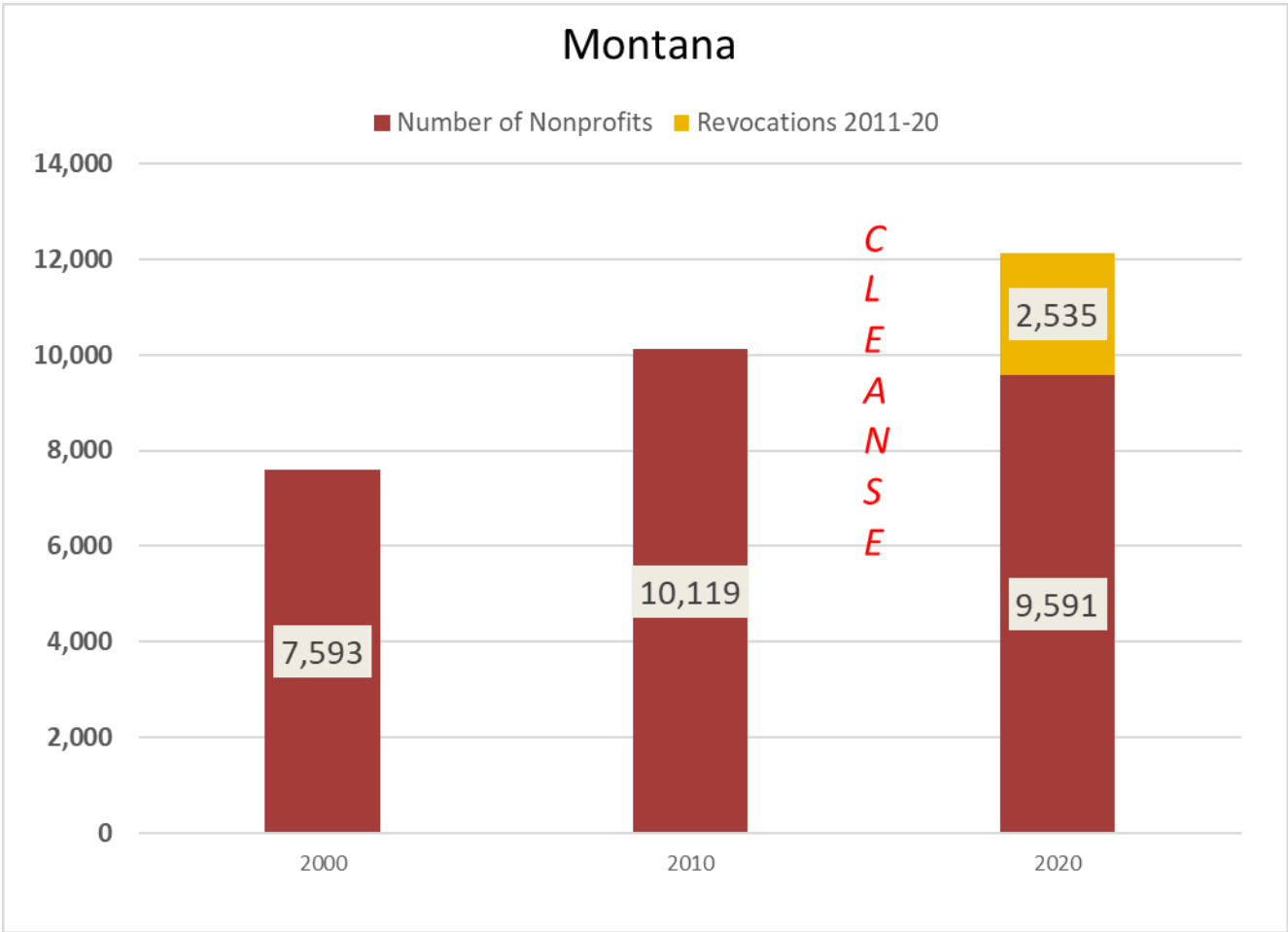
	<i>% Pop Change</i>	<i>% Nonprofit Change</i>
Iowa	6%	7%
Kansas	5%	7%
Minnesota	9%	16%
Montana	11%	20%
Nebraska	8%	15%
North Dakota	14%	13%
South Dakota	8%	9%
Wisconsin	6%	15%

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by Ben Winchester.



Change in nonprofit organizations

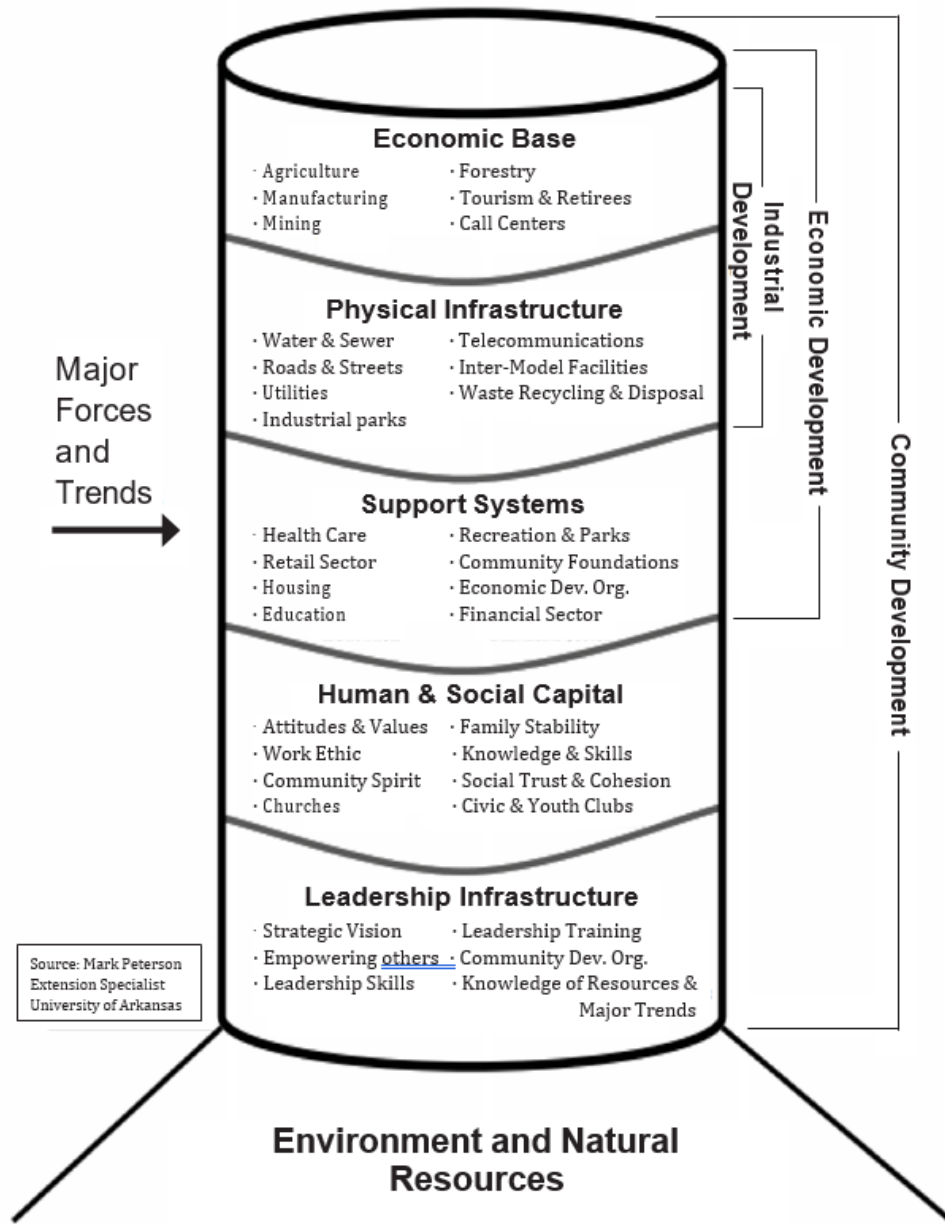
Nonprofit Growth: 2000-2020



Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics. Compiled by Ben Winchester.

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

The Layer Cake Model



Strong leaders and ability to work with others at the base of a strong community

A photograph of a family walking away from the camera in a grassy field during sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. A young girl in a blue jacket and white tutu is in the center, holding hands with two adults. The text 'Census Data on Movers' is overlaid in white in the center of the image.

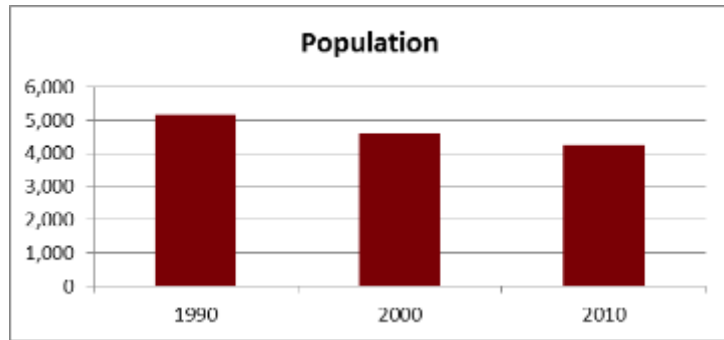
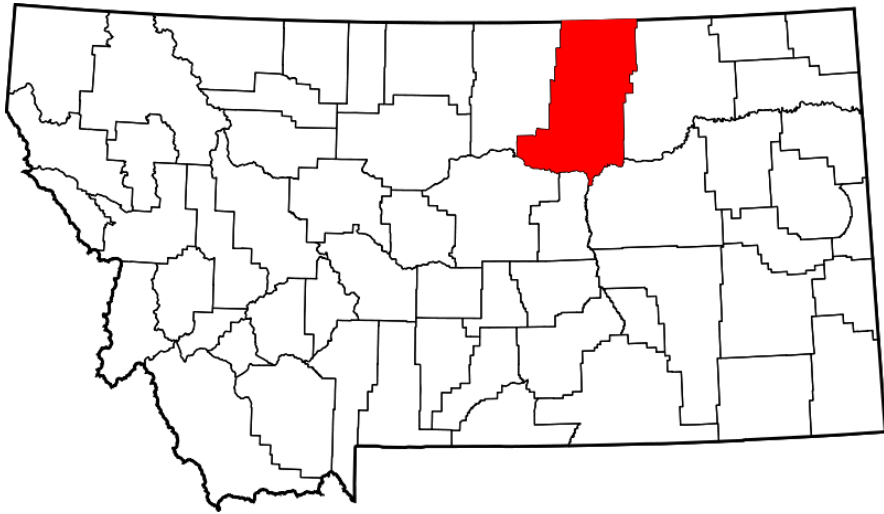
Census Data on Movers



People move frequently

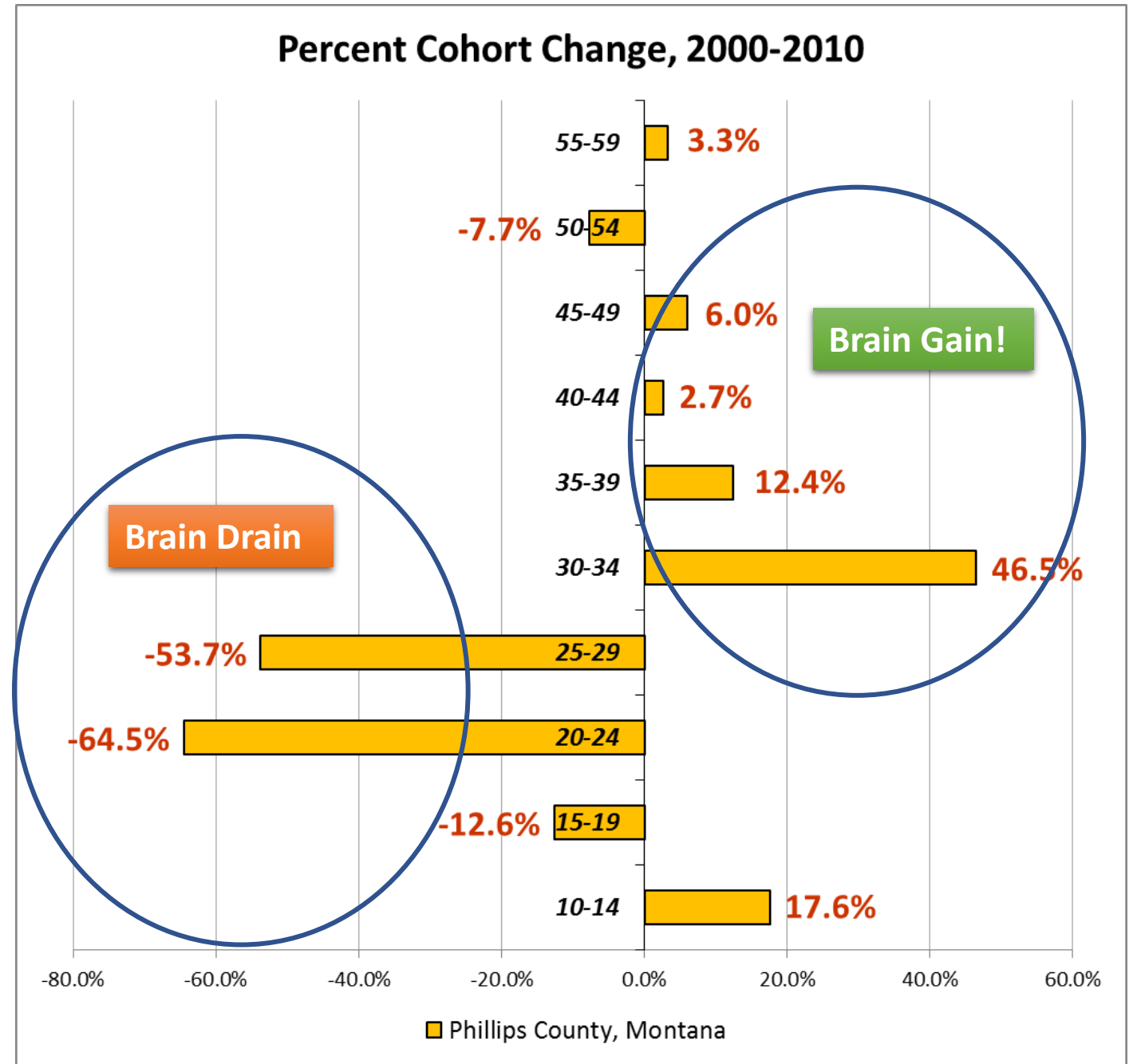
Households moving every 5 years:

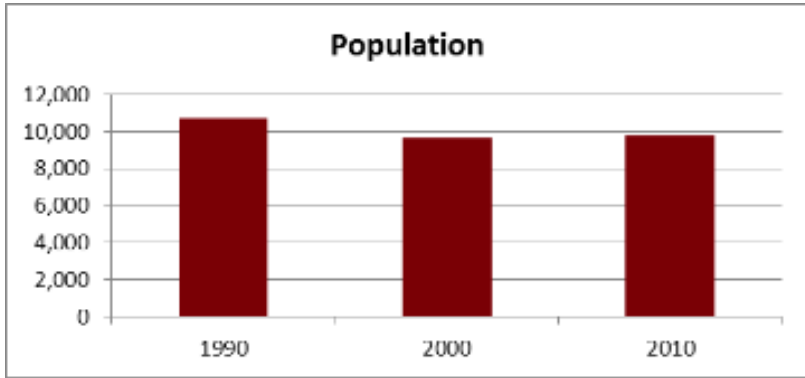
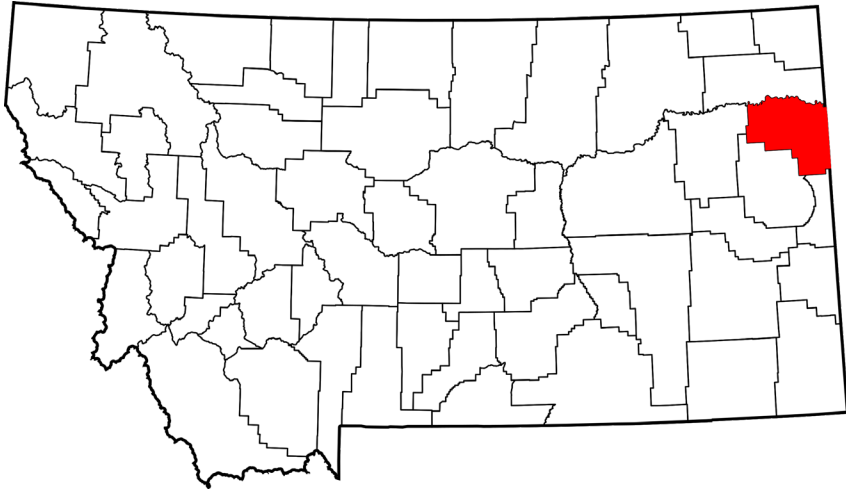
44%	Iowa
46%	Minnesota, North Dakota & Wisconsin
47%	Nebraska
49%	Montana
49%	United States



Typical migration pattern in rural county

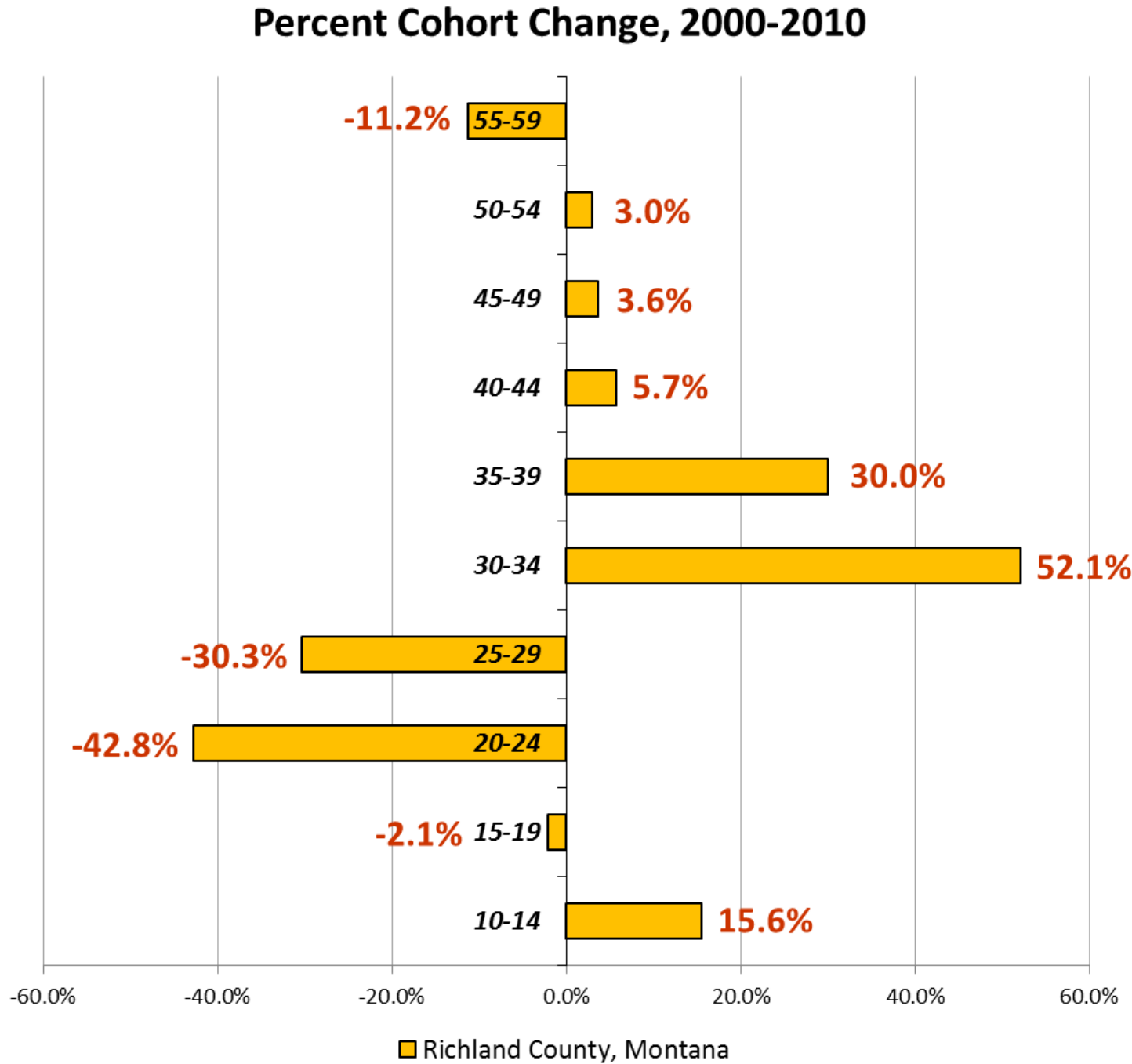
Source: U.S. Census. Compiled and analyzed by Benjamin Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.

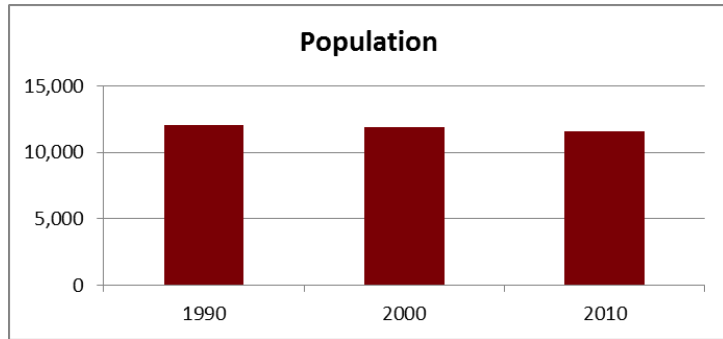
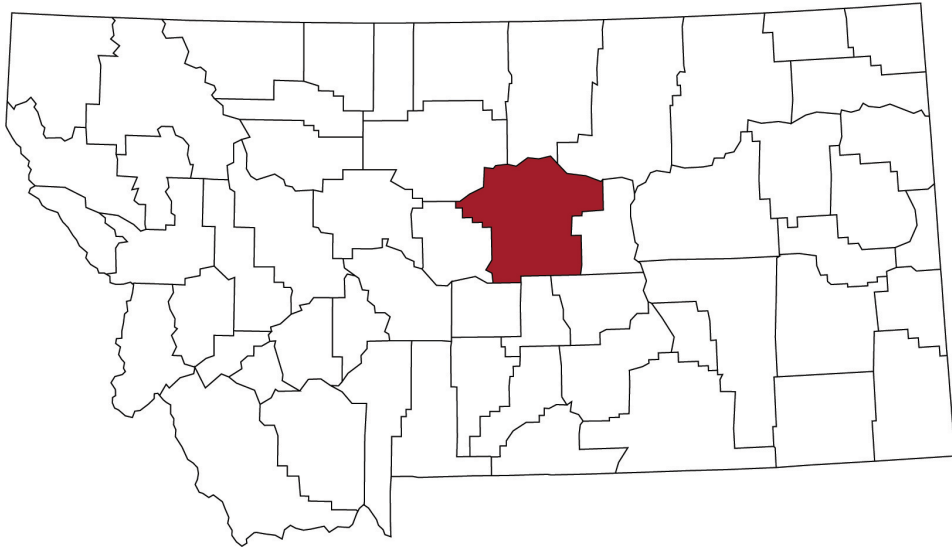




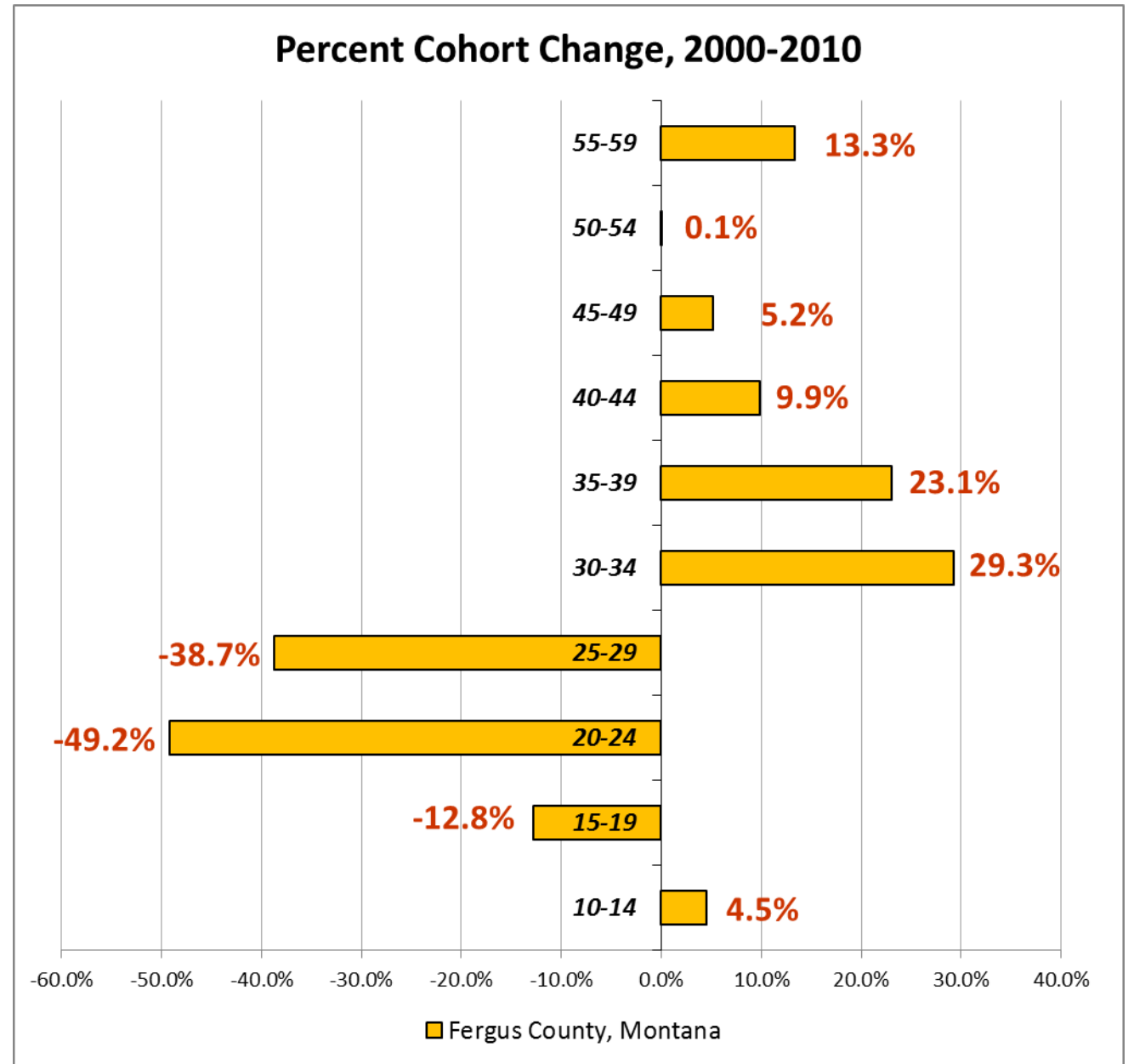
Typical migration pattern in rural county

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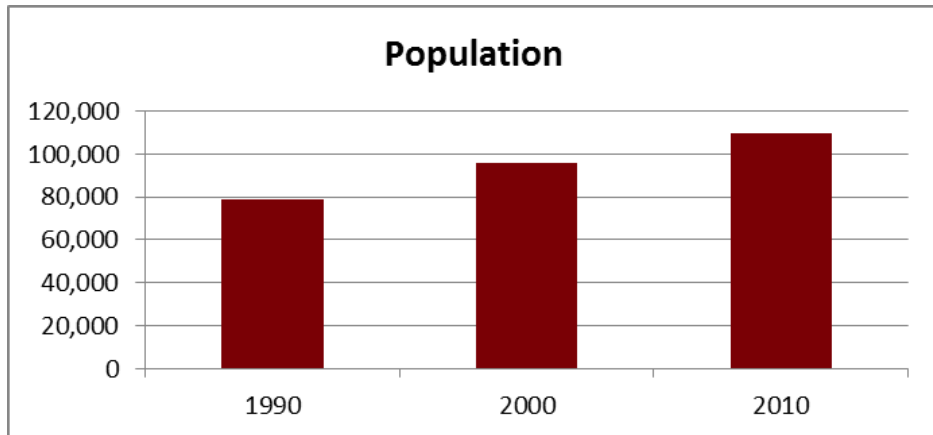
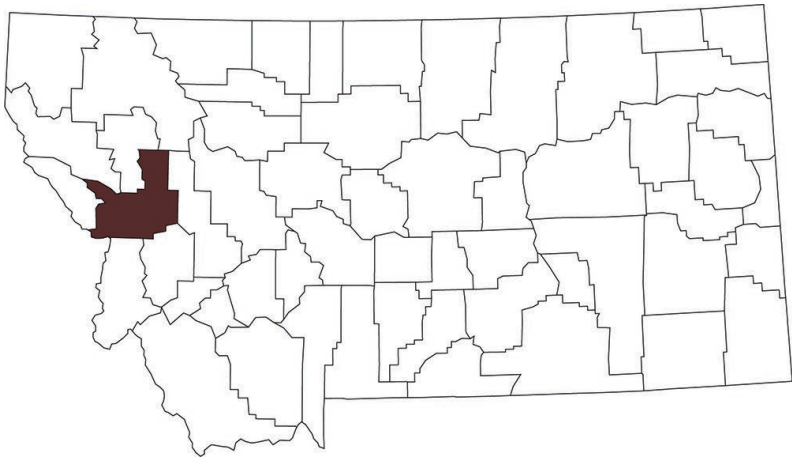




Typical migration pattern in rural county

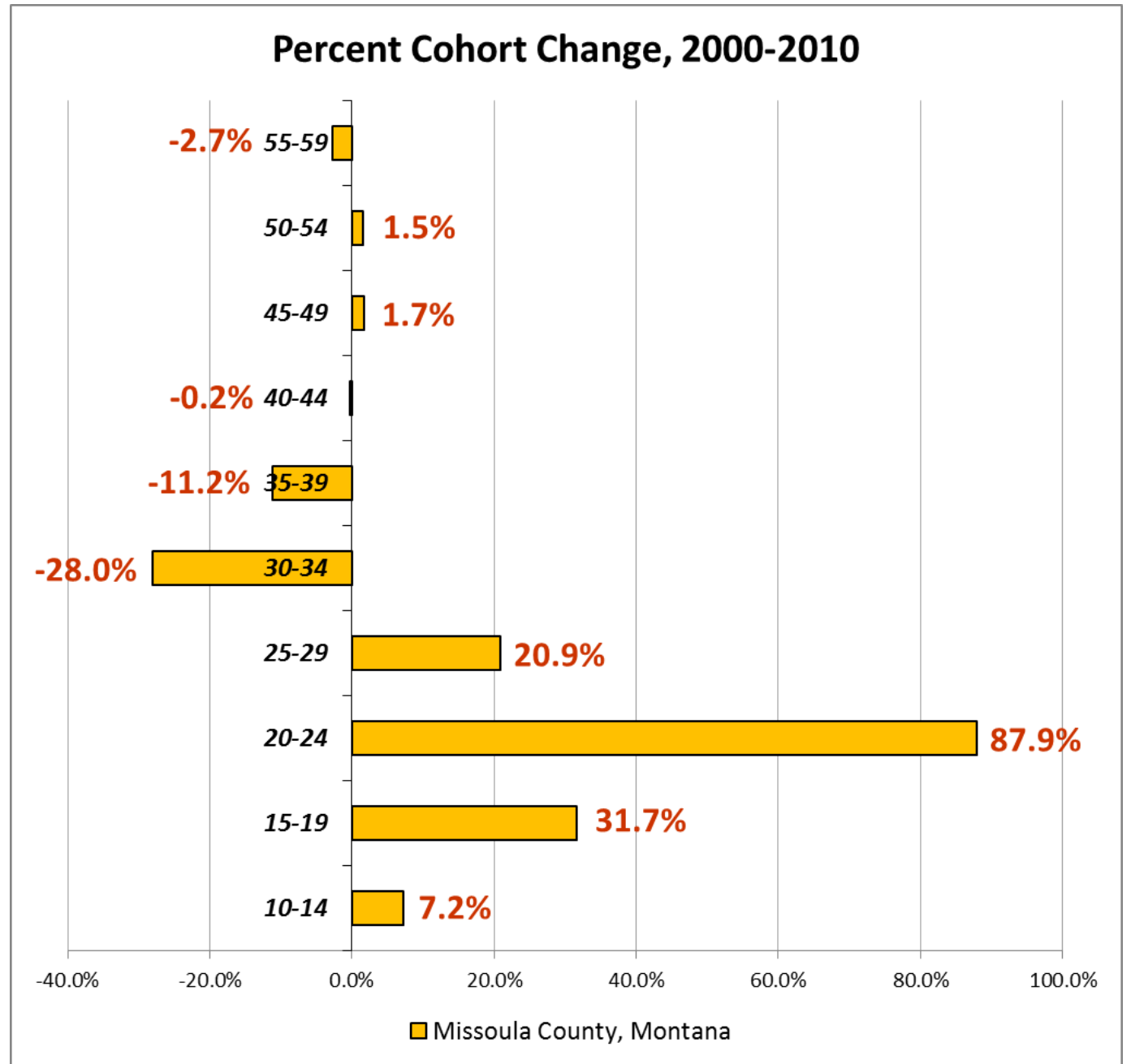


Source: U.S. Census. Compiled and analyzed by Benjamin Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.



Typical migration pattern in “urban” county

Source: U.S. Census. Compiled and analyzed by Benjamin Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.





People are choosing rural.

For decades. Why?

Nebraska Buffalo Commons Research 2012

Workforce Movers University of Minnesota, 2012, 2020



Montana Movers Study, 2021



The Team



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Research objective



Who is moving into Montana communities,



Why they are choosing these places and



What they think once they get there.

The background of the slide features a dark grey background with a pattern of white dots in the upper left and lower left corners. The right side of the slide is dominated by a large, semi-transparent image of architectural blueprints, showing various lines, dimensions, and room layouts. The blueprints are oriented vertically and slightly rotated.

Who are newcomers?

- 35% moved primarily for a job
- 34% lived there before
- 9% work remotely (6% of spouses do)
- 23% own a business
- 41% attended religious services
- 78% have income over \$50,000

Top 5 reasons for moving

1. Better access to outdoors
2. A less congested place to live
3. Slower pace of life
4. Smaller community
5. Safer place to live





People are happy with move

- High ratings of community
- High use of amenities

Newcomers engage

55% volunteered

37% attended a public meeting

83% exchanged small favors with neighbor



Where are the volunteers?

Not the usual suspects

Younger adults

New residents

Why do people get involved?

- Make new friends
- Help others
- Achieve a goal
- Sense of well-being and belonging
- Work toward a cause they believe in
- Share skills and experiences
- Contribute to community





A Recap

- We love our towns
- Good things are happening thanks to volunteers
- Its not just your town that is short volunteers
- People are moving in to all parts of the state
- We love the same things about our communities
- Many are unaffiliated
- They want to get involved

What can we do?





Look beyond the
“same ten
people”

Offer a seat at the table.

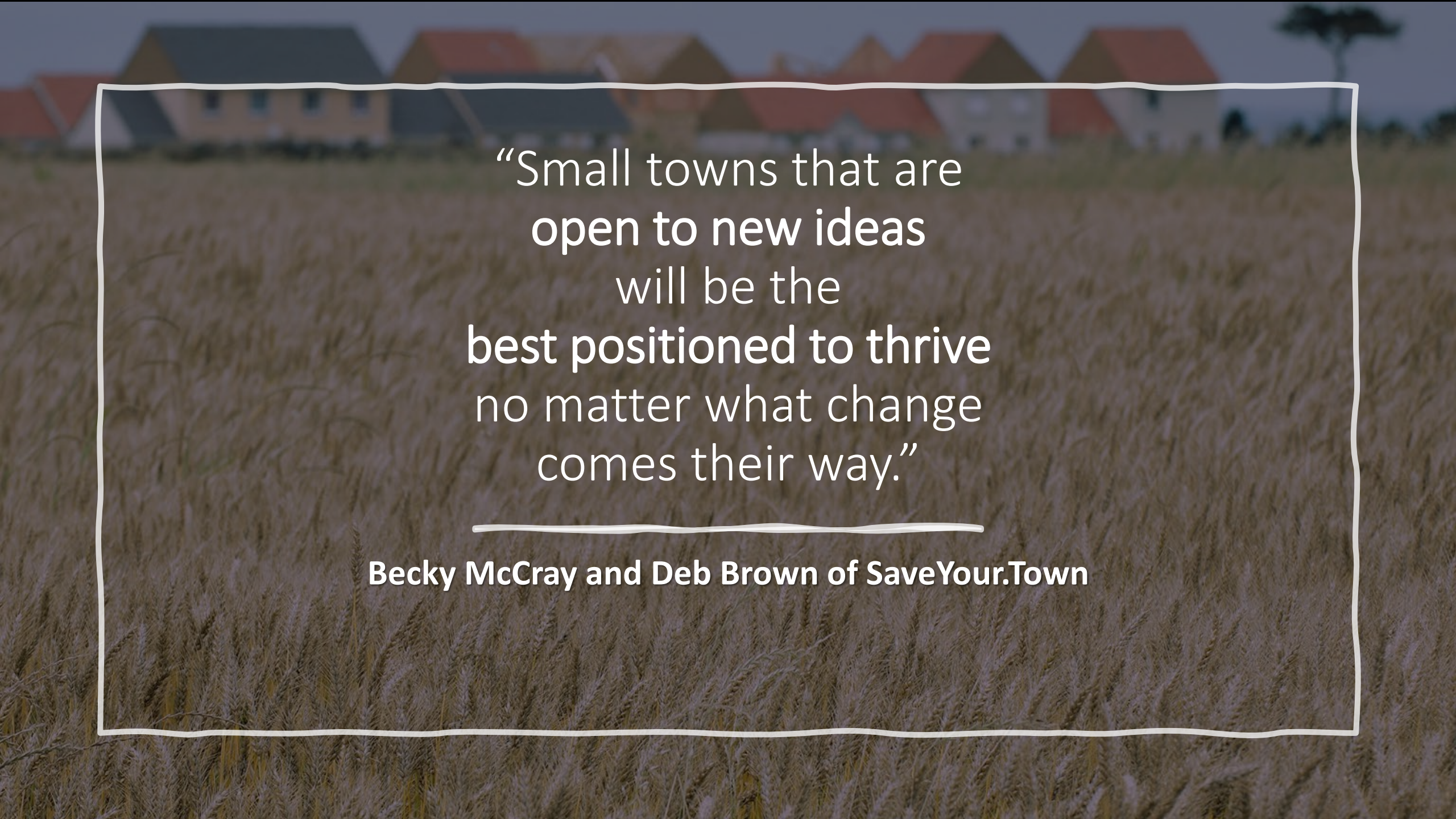


“Be curious, not judgmental”

Ted Lasso

- What if....?
- What else....?
- How could we....?
- What about....?
- What’s next....?



A photograph of a field of tall, golden-brown grass in the foreground. In the background, a row of houses with red roofs is visible under a clear sky. The entire image is framed by a white, hand-drawn style border.

“Small towns that are
open to new ideas
will be the
best positioned to thrive
no matter what change
comes their way.”

Becky McCray and Deb Brown of SaveYour.Town

Thank You

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