

Headwaters Fund Public Forum – May 27, 2010
Summary of Public Input

What are the Economic Opportunities for Humboldt County?

Infrastructure

- Fisherman's port area improvements/terminal
- Improved local transportation
- Pipeline to sell water and power down south

Green Technology

- Renewable Energy/energy efficiency
- Greening
- Food digesters
- Plug digester (dairy)

Develop Entrepreneurs

- Entrepreneurship promotion – follow-up/take over Economic Fuel or build in their model

Management Innovation

- Resource conservation – jobs and business development – road decommission, environmental improvement
- Trends in economy – sustainability and innovation
- Job creation – technology
- Technical businesses – engineering etc

Export Opportunities

- Value added export – turning raw materials into valuable products
- Local businesses which can work outside Humboldt County
- On-line marketing for Humboldt County businesses to sell directly to consumers
- Humboldt Made – sell our quality of life to the outside world

Digital Media

- Develop media
- Digital Media – video production, global leader
- Leverage the opportunity of the completion of the second fiber optic line

Tourism

- Agri-tourism – income and education
- Theme based travel destination based on interest and length of stay
- Green demonstration community – green tourism
- Health wellness tourism
- Elder hostels
- Develop tourism opportunities

Workforce Development

- Youth programs – entrepreneurship, financial literacy, digital media
- Retrain our workforce – Digital Media

- Workforce Development
- Health care ancillary jobs

Specialty Agriculture

- Opportunities for Specialty Agriculture, food, beverages and flowers
- Aqua culture
- Marijuana
- Botany (HSU largest botany)
- Agricultural products
- Manufacturing – micro-brews

Other

- Leveraging opportunities
- Social enterprise

Are the Outcomes Consistent with our Community Values?

- Yes – from all tables
- Difficult to reduce regulatory bottlenecks given more and more regulations each year
- Business attraction is a waste of money, glad we don't do it
- Stay realistic about what is possible – avoid unrealistic comparisons
- Funds provide ability to leverage state and fed fund
- The evaluation framework meets the economic development needs and is consistent with the needs of the community

Should the Fund Focus on Some Outcomes More than Others?

- Infrastructure – it lasts longer and you can see the result
- Overdependence on retail in economy
- Assessing external markets, like for food exports – continue this – important!
- Sectors or types of areas of the economy that might be emphasized in RFP's:
- Address transition and appropriate retention of cannabis industry, expansion of aspects like tourism
- Renewable energy/energy efficiency cluster and leveraging
- Knowledge/information tech – like Stream Guys
- Strategic funds for startups linked to alternative use of HBMWD water
- Quality of life needs to be higher priority in balance with economy
- A balance of economic development and social development
- Youth and mentors
- Arts should not be minimized-creative industries are vital for healthy bodies, spirits and finances
- Reduce bottlenecks
- Barriers to quality of life
- Internal view of our quality of life
- Encourage collaboration
- Entrepreneurship

Recommended Changes/Additions

Headwaters Administration

- More public outreach – maybe every year to identify focus areas and priorities, share successes
- Marketing of economic programs available- adds transparency, avoids redundancy
- More up-front expectations and guidance in terms of desired outcomes
- Appreciate current framework of fund and categories
- Increase amount available in the grant fund

Programmatic Recommendations

- Entrepreneurship – Economic Fuel type program (mentioned twice)
- Broadband study too costly, didn't have an implementation plan
- Encourage and promote larger collaborations to accomplish larger vision and goals in addition to individual grants (mentioned twice)
- Headwaters Board and Funders Group share information re: grant topics and encourage collaboration (like regulatory streamlining)
- Instead of “reducing regulatory bottlenecks” look at leveraging public interest
- Reframe public sector private sector relationship
- If its just good for the economy and not quality of life, don't do it
- Integrate and reconnect relationship between economic health and community health
- Attention to community in place of profits
- Priorities above and beyond economic gains and profits – emphasis on quality of life
- Not everyone in the region is interested in making money
- New business development – “Red Carpet Treatment”
- Youth development focus in relation to innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, civic engagement
- Leadership
- IDA – expand for growing businesses
- Life skills in schools
- Youth development Indicators for quality of life – education, housing, jobs

Criteria Weighting

Industry Clusters/ Environment & Quality of Life (aggregated by table)

63.5/ 36.5

65/35

60/40

60/40

70/30

50/50

55/45

50/50

OVERALL: 60/40

Rationale

- Headwaters Fund was envisioned in large part to enhance the economy and create jobs our community values – help promote green jobs (63.5/36.5)
- Because the primary focus of the fund was established to promote economic development (65/35)
- Need for economic catalyst and support funds especially at this time of transition and opportunity (60/40)
- Its an economic development fund and Prosperity embraces an environmental logic (first do no harm) (70/30)
- Its been business focus, may need environment focus, jobs equal quality of life, allow more projects for the environment as long as there is an economic component (50/50)