

Community Development versus Economic Development

Nearly every community in America touts its 'great quality of life.' Some Fort Collins leaders contend that all the community needs to do is focus on being a great place (community development) and the economic part will simply take care of itself. On the contrary, for a community to be economically viable, it must make a concerted effort to work on both community development **and** economic development. They are interdependent and reinforce each other.

It is important to recognize that economic development and community development are not the same. Community development is a process for making a community a better place to live and work. Economic development is purely and simply the creation of wealth from which many community benefits result.

While important to creating a vibrant economy, community development does not factor in important business fundamentals necessary for the successful, sustained operation of businesses. Communities still must make a basic business case to desirable prospective employers.

The table below gives a summary overview of the difference between community development and economic development.

Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process of making the community a better place to live and work (quality of life)• Occurs primarily in the public sector
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process for creating wealth, from which many community benefits are created secondarily• Occurs in private sector