

The Small Town Comeback: 10 Reasons Citizens, Visitors, and Investors Love Small Town America

PENSACOLA, FL, UNITED STATES, August 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Small towns are making a comeback. What is it that makes small(er) town life so great? According to Quint Studer—whose travels take him to small and mid-sized cities and towns across the U.S.—there are many factors. But what really strikes him is a growing self-awareness around the richness and desirability of life in these smaller communities.

“More and more, I see this sense of pride emerge in leaders and citizens of small and mid-size cities and towns,” says Studer—a revitalization expert headlining the upcoming Civic Leader Summit in Pensacola, Florida Tuesday, September 23rd through Thursday, September 25th, alongside Strong Towns’ Chuck Marohn, and author of *Building a Vibrant Community: How Citizen-Powered Change Is Reshaping America* (Be the Bulb Publishing, ISBN: 978-0-9981311-1-5, \$24.95). “They’re realizing ‘Hey, our community has a lot to offer, whether you want to live here, work here, invest here, or start a business here.’”

By embracing who they are, Studer says smaller communities can identify and showcase their bright spots and tell their one-of-a-kind story in a compelling way.

“It’s all about coming from a place of confidence about who you are,” says Studer. “When you don’t try to compete with other cities and towns, and you play up your unique sense of place—quirks and all—people are drawn to you.”

Here, he identifies ten reasons why small town-living is capturing peoples’ hearts:

1. The cost of living is cheaper. People who would be priced out of the market in a big city can buy a house in a small town. Property taxes are lower, too.
2. Desirable downtowns. Small towns typically have quirky, well-developed, livable, walkable downtowns that exude a real sense of place. Quite often there are old buildings with lots of character to renovate—to perhaps turn into a craft brewery, a wine or olive oil shop, or apartments or office space.
3. Surprisingly great food. Many great chefs and entrepreneurs are setting up shop in trendy downtown areas in smaller towns—and finding they can prosper in these areas.
4. Attractive downtown programming. Many small towns work hard on farmer’s markets, festivals, and holiday-themed events. They do a great job of attracting residents downtown and

keeping them entertained.

5. Small town small businesses create appealing experiences for their customers. They have to in order to compete with the online and big box retailers. As a result, they earn fiercely loyal followers who come back again and again.
6. They are attracting young people. More and more young people are choosing small towns (for various reasons). This creates a great talent pool, which makes smaller towns attractive for entrepreneurs and all types of business investors.
7. There's a balance between work and life. This is one big reason driving young people to choose small towns. Some has to do with lower cost of living, but also, they want that slower pace and better balance so they can bike, surf or mountain climb, or whatever their free-time passion might be.
8. A strong sense of community. Social isolation is on the rise, and awareness is increasing around the very real issues it causes. Small town living may be a good remedy. There's a feeling that people know their neighbors and "belong" somewhere. People really long for this at a time when life has become more tech-driven, impersonal, and lonely.
9. More opportunity for meaningful civic engagement. In small towns, there's a lot of opportunity to be a part of something. There's room for people's voices to be heard and for their talents to shine.
10. An abundance of green spaces. Small towns often like to focus on their outdoor spaces—forests, lakes, rivers, bike trails, parks, etc. As more and more people embrace a more active, health-conscious lifestyle, this proximity to nature becomes ever more important.

"It's great to see communities of all sizes start to revitalize, reinvent themselves, and come back from the brink economically," says Studer. "But when it's a small town that turns itself around—when the young people who once couldn't wait to leave home suddenly realize they want to return to their roots—that's a really special feeling."

The Center for Civic Engagement will partner with Strong Towns to host the Civic Leader Summit from Tuesday, September 23, through Thursday, September 25, in Pensacola, Florida. The Summit will bring together community leaders, innovators, and stakeholders committed to building stronger, more resilient communities.

Participants will learn actionable strategies, receive practical tools and tactics, and make valuable connections to enhance their local impact. The agenda will be filled with people who are "in the trenches" doing the work right now and are committed to bringing tried-and-true strategies to help solve communities' toughest problems. The program will feature breakout sessions and presentations from Quint Studer, Chuck Marohn, and Pensacola Mayor D.C. Reeves, with many more speakers to be announced.

To register, please visit <https://www.civicleadersummit.com/>.

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About Quint Studer:

Quint Studer is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and leadership expert dedicated to helping organizations and communities thrive. He founded Studer Group, which improved education and healthcare outcomes and earned the Malcolm Baldrige Award before its acquisition in 2015. Studer's focus was also on community revitalization via the Studer Community Institute (SCI), which advances early brain development and leadership training. He also founded the Center for Civic Engagement. The Center brings in speakers to Pensacola on a wide range of topics aimed at educating citizens and raising civic IQ. His efforts helped revitalize Pensacola, Florida, driving significant growth and earning national recognition. He has authored 16 books, including *The Busy Leader's Handbook*, a Wall Street Journal bestseller, and *Building a Vibrant Community*, which is a blueprint for creating great places to live, work, and play. A passionate teacher and mentor, he continues to inspire leaders and communities nationwide.

About the Center for Civic Engagement:

The Center for Civic Engagement is a nonprofit organization with the goal of making Pensacola a better place to live, grow, work, and invest through smart planning and civic conversations. They attract national experts to the CivicCon speaker series that explores what "great" looks like and how others have overcome challenges in their communities.

About the Book:

Building a Vibrant Community: How Citizen-Powered Change Is Reshaping America (Be the Bulb Publishing, ISBN: 978-0-9981311-1-5, \$24.95) is available at Amazon.com.

About Chuck Marohn:

Charles ("Chuck") Marohn is the founder and president of Strong Towns. With decades of experience as a land use planner and civil engineer, Marohn is on a mission to help cities and towns become stronger and more prosperous. He has spoken nationally and internationally on how current U.S. development patterns are bankrupting cities and making them more fragile, and what cities can do to become more resilient through local action. His latest book, *Escaping the Housing Trap*, is a national bestseller. In recognition of his efforts and impact, Planetizen named him one of the 15 Most Influential Urbanists of all time in 2017 and 2023.

About Strong Towns:

Strong Towns is a national nonprofit, media organization, and member-powered movement for change that shifts conversations around North American development patterns. Through articles, podcasts, videos, live events, and professional coaching, it provides knowledge and tools to help people take the future of their neighborhoods, towns, and cities into their own hands.

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