

RESOLUTION NO. 25-1667

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS, COCHISE COUNTY, ARIZONA, SUPPORTING ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION IN RURAL ARIZONA COMMUNITIES THROUGH TARGETED INVESTMENT, LOCAL EMPOWERMENT, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.**

**WHEREAS**, rural communities in Arizona, including Douglas and similar municipalities, face persistent challenges in economic development, including population decline, underutilized historic districts, and limited access to capital and infrastructure;

**WHEREAS**, the revitalization of historic downtown districts presents an opportunity to preserve cultural heritage while attracting tourism, small businesses, and local jobs;

**WHEREAS**, targeted support for industries such as historic and cultural tourism, sustainable manufacturing, border commerce, and sustainable farming can diversify and strengthen rural economies;

**WHEREAS**, many rural communities lack the necessary resources or legislative frameworks to implement economic development strategies tailored to their unique geographic and historical assets;

**WHEREAS**, the continued outmigration of youth from rural Arizona communities, due to limited job opportunities and a lack of clear career pathways, threatens the long-term sustainability and vitality of these towns;

**WHEREAS**, the speculative acquisition of historic properties by absentee or outside investors, who often leave these buildings vacant and deteriorating, undermines local revitalization efforts and leads to the irreversible loss of architectural and cultural heritage;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Douglas Mayor and Council encourages the League of Arizona Cities and Towns to adopt and advocate for a **Rural Economic Revitalization Policy Agenda** that includes:

1. **Establishment of a Rural Historic District Revitalization Grant Program**, supported at the state level, to assist with building restoration, adaptive reuse, and public infrastructure improvements.
2. **Creation of tax incentive packages and enterprise zone support** for rural areas investing in manufacturing, agribusiness, and cross-border trade.
3. **Increased investment in broadband infrastructure** and digital workforce training for rural communities.
4. **Support for local governments to adopt adaptive reuse and streamlined permitting policies**, enabling the productive use of vacant or aging commercial properties.
5. **Promotion of sustainable agriculture and food systems** through grants, partnerships with educational institutions, and marketing assistance for rural farm-based businesses.
6. **Youth Workforce Investment Initiatives**: Programs that partner with rural school districts, community colleges, and local businesses to create clear pathways to high-quality jobs in manufacturing, green energy, agribusiness, and tourism.
7. **Vacancy Mitigation & Anti-Speculation Measures**: Legislative options to empower municipalities to address absentee ownership, including vacancy taxes, restoration timelines, or the ability to enforce property improvement requirements in designated historic districts.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the League of Arizona Cities and Towns is encouraged to:

- Provide technical assistance, model policies, and grant navigation tools to rural municipalities;
- Host dedicated sessions on rural revitalization and economic innovation at its annual conference;
- Facilitate coalition-building among rural cities and towns to advance shared legislative goals.
- Support youth workforce investment initiatives, including partnerships with local school districts, community colleges, and employers to build clear career pipelines in rural-relevant industries;
- Develop and promote tools for vacancy mitigation and anti-speculation, such as enabling municipalities to enforce restoration timelines, implement vacancy fees, or establish penalties for prolonged neglect of historically significant properties.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Mayor and Council of the City of Douglas, Arizona, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May 2025.

Attest:

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Jose Grijalva, Mayor

Approved as to form:

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Alma Andrade, City Clerk

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Denis Fitzgibbons, City Attorney

Prepared by:  
Danya Acosta, Mayor Pro Tempore