

## The Role of Amenities and Quality of Life In Rural Economic Growth

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### Abstract

A structural model of regional economic growth is estimated using data for 2243 rural U.S. counties. Five indices designed to capture specific amenity and quality of life characteristics are constructed using fifty-four separate indicators. Results suggest that amenity characteristics can be organized into consistent and meaningful empirical measures that move beyond ad hoc descriptions of amenities. In addition to insights into the influence of local characteristics ranging from tax burdens to income distribution on regional economic growth, results suggest that predictable relationships between amenities, quality of life, and local economic performance exist.

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