Economic Development Assessment

for the Johnson City, Tennessee, Metropolitan Statistical Area

Carter, Unicoi and Washington Counties

June 2015

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Power of Knowledge and Leadership

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U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

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A. Introduction

In February of 2015, the International Economic Development Council contracted to assist the Johnson City, Tenn., Metropolitan Statistical Area – Carter, Unicoi and Washington counties – with an assessment of economic development strengths, challenges and opportunities, and provide recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the region's economic development efforts.

Historically, the three counties have not planned and acted as a region for economic development. This report aims to provide guidance for improving regional cooperation and encouraging investment and job creation.

This technical assistance project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) focused on economic recovery and resiliency of FY2011 disaster-impacted communities and regions in the EDA Atlanta region. Washington County was affected by tornadoes in May of 2011. This project is intended to help the region become more economically diverse and resilient in the face of future disasters.

From April 19-22, an expert panel comprised of economic development professionals and two IEDC staff members visited the region for a three-day site visit. The economic development professionals include:

- **Mark Barbash** | Executive Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Finance Fund
- **Larry Burkhardt, CEcD** | Executive Vice President and Chief Economic Development Officer, Fox Cities Regional Partnership
- **Joy Wilkins, CEcD** | Consultant, Serving Communities

IEDC project staff include:

- **Louise Anderson** | Senior Associate, Managing Editor – Technical Assistance Lead
- **Mishka Parkins** | Economic Development Associate, IEDC

During the site visit, the panel interviewed dozens of economic development partners and allies, toured the region, and presented a verbal report of preliminary findings and recommendations. This report elaborates on those findings and recommendations and presents strategies and case examples to assist with implementation.

The primary point of contact in the region for this project is Mitch Miller, CEO of the Washington County Economic Development Council (www.thewcedc.com).

Throughout this report are quotes heard from the region's stakeholders during meetings with the IEDC team, highlighted in this style.

B. Why Now Is the Time for Regional Action

> ***"We have to make this community more known, more appealing, and more competitive."***
>
> ***"I'm concerned that we aren't growing. We are in our fifth year of no growth. We are just now coming to terms with the fact that the conditions we are dealing with we won't get over quickly or easily."***
>
> ***"We lose significant talent every year; we don't retain them. We need to address the brain drain. There is a circle between attracting young workers and attracting employers."***
>
> ***"For the region to have a victory, it can no longer be a Johnson City victory or a Kingsport victory."***

The data confirm that the region faces real challenges in regard to job growth, population growth, income growth and poverty levels. Many stakeholders who met with the IEDC team echoed what the data show: concern that the region's economy is stagnant. Without a commitment to do economic development differently, the region will continue on this path.

Appendix A, a summary of demographic information on the region compiled to provide background for this project, confirms some troubling trends. Some statistics to note include:

- From 2010-2014, **the MSA's population growth was less than two-thirds that of Tennessee and the United States** (2.0 percent, compared to 3.2 and 3.3 percent, respectively). Nearly all that growth was in Washington County (2.7 percent); Carter County grew by 0.6 percent, while Unicoi County's population declined by nearly 2 percent.

- **Income levels are lower and poverty rates higher in the MSA compared to both Tennessee and the United States.** The median household incomes in Carter and Unicoi counties are more than $20,000 lower than that for the U.S. and more than $10,000 lower than that for Tennessee.

- **Educational attainment in Washington County exceeds both state and national levels, but falls significantly short in Carter and Unicoi counties,** particularly among those with a bachelor's degree or higher (15.8 and 12.9 percent, respectively, compared to 28.8 percent for the U.S. as a whole).

A July 2014 report by Moody's noted that

> Payrolls have not risen much from the metro area's Great Recession trough… Drag on job creation is coming from both high-paying manufacturing and government, and hiring has been isolated to lower-paying industries such as leisure and hospitality.
>
> …Johnson City's bleak short-term outlook improves only slightly in the long term. A lack of high-wage job opportunities will persist over the next decade, weighing on income growth and demand for services. Moreover, the metro area risks net out-migration absent the arrival of new economic drivers, as it struggles to keep pace with the national expansion.

In addition, challenges with the region's workforce pipeline were mentioned in nearly every stakeholder meeting.

One of the structural challenges for the region is that the primary source of revenue to support government services is the sales tax. As a result, efforts that could be put toward recruiting, retaining and expanding other types of industries are focused on the attraction of new retail businesses. The challenge with this approach is that most retail jobs are typically lower-skilled, lower-wage, lower-benefit positions, even in the best of circumstances. Long-term economic growth, however, depends on attracting higher-wage, higher-skilled jobs that will raise the standard of living of the region's residents.

C. Strengths and Challenges

At the close of the site visit, the IEDC team presented its observations of the region's strengths and challenges related to economic development, based on input gathered through stakeholder meetings. Below is a summary of those observations.

Strengths

Many assets and elements exist in the area for an effective regional strategy. Both the Johnson City MSA, which was the focus of the IEDC panel's work, and the broader northeast Tennessee region have tremendous assets to offer existing and new residents and businesses.

In addition to a central location with excellent highway and rail access, the region has stunning scenic beauty and abundant recreation lands. Its business community includes strong homegrown firms (e.g., Eastman, NN), firms with deep roots in the region (e.g., Snap-On, Nuclear Fuel Services, Mullican Flooring), international firms (e.g., Nakatetsu, Koyo Corp.), and newer firms that have moved to or grown in the region and are succeeding. Based on the region's existing industry mix, assets, history and geography, **the region appears to be well-situated to attract and grow small- to medium-size industry.**

The region also is fortunate to be a hub for education and healthcare. East Tennessee State University, the VA, the two health systems and affiliated groups provide high-skill employment at good wages, and the opportunity for related growth.

The Johnson City MSA has **a loyal and hardworking workforce**, most stakeholders noted. As well, the IEDC team was impressed with the knowledge, dedication, and professionalism of the dozens of economic development partners and allies with whom they met. At the staff level particularly, and among many local elected officials as well, a culture of cooperation and interest in increased collaboration was apparent.

Opportunities exist (and are under way) for placemaking and higher density development. Elizabethton, Erwin and Johnson City all are engaged in projects to enhance their downtown areas. Making these urban areas into attractive, lively, multi-use centers of activity is an important investment priority that the IEDC team hopes will continue. The mobile nature of firms and workers today is likely only to increase. Growth-oriented firms and talented workers seek places that are vibrant, amenity-rich, and show pride of place. Quality downtowns are critical to attracting these businesses and people.

The team heard many times about **the attraction the region holds both for natives and non-natives alike**. Those who visit the area for the first time often end up visiting again, some eventually deciding to move to the region to work or retire. Many stakeholders who met with the team grew up in the region, worked elsewhere for a while, then chose to move back.

In addition, **the region is ripe for nurturing entrepreneurship.** It has a rich history of business starts and growth, starting with Henry Johnson and the railroad, continuing with Eastman, NN and others, and today, with a new craft brewery and the potential of the Mountain Harvest kitchen incubator, to name just a few. Several entrepreneurship support groups exist to foster this enterprising spirit.

The IEDC team also heard **significant support for a regional effort.** As noted throughout this report, there are many ways in which individuals, groups, and sectors currently are communicating and collaborating regionally. Even among stakeholders who have not operated regionally in the past, the team heard widespread recognition that the opportunity for more regional action is both there and needed.

> ***"There is an opportunity to present ourselves as a whole. People have to decide to work together."***
>
> ***"It takes a regional approach to compete with Chattanooga, Knoxville, etc."***
>
> ***"Forming a partnership gives us a better shot at having the resources to fund a professional team. The time is better now than it has ever been before. We thought we could do it effectively on our own, but we see that we can't."***
>
> ***"I don't think we have any choice but to do regional."***
>
> ***'If we marketed ourselves as part of a larger region, it would give us some opportunities."***

Over the years, the region's cities and people have come together to make key projects happen. Examples include the Tri-Cities airport, the 1999 "All-America City" award from the National Civic League, ETSU's privately funded College of Pharmacy, and most recently, the creation of the Tweetsie Trail between Johnson City and Elizabethton. In addition, the team heard about collaboration and communication within many of the sector groups they met (e.g., workforce, entrepreneurship, tourism, economic development, etc.). A game-changing event such as **the health system merger may provide major economic development opportunities to explore that will have regional impact.**

> ***"We have the capability of cooperating as counties and region…we have achieved many goals together."***
>
> ***"Tweetsie Trail is the best thing [we] ever did. Just get people rowing in the same direction on two or three things and create some sustainable energy to move on to the next thing and then the next thing."***

Challenges

The Johnson City MSA faces challenges as well. **No stated vision currently exists to direct the region**. Without a vision of how the region sees itself in the future and what it would like to accomplish, no clear path exists to get there, leaving both individuals and groups without a way to align efforts and investments. Many examples exist of communities that were able to accomplish major projects, land investments, and change the course of their communities' future once they had a vision to work toward and had identified ways each could contribute to get there.

As well, **there is little agreement on what constitutes "the region."** When asked "How would you define the region?," the IEDC panel heard few consistent answers. Responses ranged from a minimum of two counties to 12 or more, with groupings of three, five, and eight counties each mentioned multiple times in between. Of course, many of those answers depended on the speaker's perspective (as an elected official, a company representative, a banker, a regionally focused economic development partner, etc.). Without one dominant city in the region, as Nashville is in middle Tennessee, what constitutes "the region" is harder to define; yet agreement on "the region" is key to an effective economic development strategy.

Parochialism can get in the way of regional collaboration. Community pride is the critical driver for convening people to accomplish a big task, project or initiative. Stakeholders from the three counties demonstrated deep community pride, but acknowledged that pride can veer into parochialism that can be detrimental to the region's progress. These attitudes stunt collaboration and sometimes cause communities to work against each others' interests.

> ***"The hardest thing to overcome is when you have a community that has needs that aren't being met, seeing things go to a neighboring county."***
>
> ***"If a company comes into the area that benefits the entire area, it is still looked at as a defeat if it locates in another community."***
>
> ***"Economic development, to most people in the county, is something within our borders. We need to go back to our constituents about how a plant in another county will benefit our county."***

Among the region's specific challenges to economic development is **a lack of available land and buildings for industrial development.** Topographic challenges restrict the use of much land in the three counties. Land that does have development potential is further restricted by location, lack of infrastructure, ownership status or other challenges.

Though the region has a loyal and hardworking workforce, **it faces the same types of workforce challenges that exist elsewhere.** Many stakeholders stated that the region historically has had an adequately skilled labor with a strong work ethic. Just as many stakeholders, however, noted that the lack of soft skills, as well as drug problems, have become major problems in recent years. Employers are looking not necessarily for trained individuals, but for trainable people – those who show up for work, are drug-free, can take direction and respect authority.

Finally, for many of the reasons noted above, **the region lacks a coherent, consistent, uniform message with which to market itself.** Messaging that concisely articulates a region's business proposition is critical in today's highly competitive, information-rich economic development environment.

D. Recommendations

1. Lay the groundwork for regional action.

Stakeholders who met with the IEDC team frequently referred to the intra-regional competition in terms of high school football – the "Friday Night Lights" rivalry – particularly in regard to Washington and Sullivan counties, or at the city level, in regard to Johnson City, Kingsport and Bristol. More than one stakeholder acknowledged that many people would consider it a victory to recruit a company away from the community next door.

However, site location consultants, corporate real estate representatives, and existing and potential businesses not only don't care about jurisdictional boundaries, but are in fact wary of communities in the same region who can't or don't work together. They value certainty, consistency, and a culture of creative problem-solving. They want to know that a region's major players have similar goals and are working off the same playbook.

As one stakeholder noted, "Elected officials are in an awkward situation. They are the ones getting the votes." In other words, citizens – voters – often don't immediately see how decisions that benefit the region ultimately will benefit them as well, which is where education and visioning play an important role. Under this broad framework are several recommendations for building a greater sense of regional identity in the MSA.

1.1 Implement an education and community engagement process to help citizens, partners, elected officials and other stakeholders understand how economic development works and the value of a regional approach.

Because there is no commonly accepted definition of economic development, there are diverse understandings of its meaning. It is critical not to assume that everyone is operating from the same definition. For citizens, economic development partner organizations and elected officials to support a realistic, effective approach to economic development, they must have a firm grounding in the realities of how it works today.

For example, in communities that seek to accelerate their economic development efforts, it is common for stakeholders to hold the following beliefs:

- We're just a well-kept secret. All we need to do is better market ourselves.
- Our quality of life will attract companies. We just need to get their attention.

In truth, very few communities in the United States do not boast of their high quality of life. And though both quality of life and marketing matter, there is much more involved in successful economic development in general, and business attraction in particular.

As the IEDC team found in the Johnson City region (and as is typical elsewhere), regional collaboration is already happening extensively at the staff level. Somewhat tougher to bring along – though certainly not in every case – are elected officials and the broader public. Elected officials are, of course, accountable to their constituents, who ask, "Why did our neighbor get a new plant with 150 jobs and we didn't?" Part of elected officials' job, and the job of other economic development partners and allies, is to have a well-grounded understanding of the economic development process and share that knowledge consistently with the public. The benefits of regional cooperation have to be discussed, acknowledged, preached, and woven into the fabric of fiscal and policy decisions at all levels, in all ways.

The following subsections briefly explore how aspects of economic development practice and site selection have changed over the last 20, 10, or even five years, and the increased importance of a regional approach.

How economic development is different today. The practice of economic development has changed significantly over the years, and more so following the Great Recession. The era of the "big deal" is dead. Communities are finding that attention to small businesses, innovation and entrepreneurship, and business retention carries a higher priority. Further, there is a much stronger emphasis on collaboration with anchor institutions such as colleges and universities, and health care.

Cost issues are no longer the primary reason companies stay, expand or relocate in a community. Communities now are competing on other factors to retain and attract businesses, and talent retention and development is primary among these. Many companies are willing to be in higher-cost environment if means access to a better workforce. Communities that focus on skill development and quality of place are the most competitive; creating a desirable place for people are also creates a desired place for business.

How site selection is different today. IEDC's report "Knowledge Is Power: Working Effectively with Site Selectors" (PDF) notes some key ways in which the site selection process has changed over the last 20 years:

1. Rise in the use of the Internet and personal computing (emphasizing the importance of a strong, dynamic web presence and the use of GIS technology)
2. Increased speed of the site selection process
3. Increase in international searches
4. Expanded number and types of companies offering site selection services
5. Multiple, specialized consultants working a single project

6. Increase in size of incentive packages
7. Increased sophistication among EDOs

Site selectors – and companies – do not care about jurisdictional boundaries. They want to see communities and institutions within a region working together with an agreed-upon economic development strategy. They seek regional collaboration, not regional conflict. One of the greatest impediments to securing new investment is evidence that community leaders aren't getting along. It is much easier for them to work with one point of contact than with multiple points of contact.

Why a regional approach matters more now than ever. "The Role of Local Elected Officials in Economic Development," a report by IEDC in partnership with the National League of Cities Center for Research and Innovation, lays the foundation for why a regional approach matters.

> Understanding your local economy also means knowing how your community fits into the broader region. Although increased competition for jobs, tax base and private investment can put political pressure on elected officials to go toe-to-toe with neighboring jurisdictions, the reality is that local economic success depends on regional economic success.
>
> This is particularly true in the context of the global economy, where economic competition may not be with your neighbor, but with a city in China, India or Ireland. Firms engaged in global economic activity rely on a breadth of resources available in a region, including workers, transportation, housing, and amenities. In nearly all cases, one community does not have full capacity needed to support these activities. Cities that focus on competition within the region, instead of collaborating for economic development, are placing their economic future at risk.
>
> With a firmer grasp of your community's place in the region, you're better prepared to work with other jurisdictions to share responsibility for promoting regional economic success. Cities in the Denver region, for example, work together to draw businesses and other economic activity to the region while agreeing not to compete or offer incentives to firms to locate in their specific communities. Similarly, many cities work together on regional marketing efforts, typically via participation in a regional council. These collaborative efforts attract firms, investment, and employment that benefit the entire region.
>
> Participating in regional activities may present some political difficulties if the local economic benefits are not well understood by your constituents. **Local elected officials should be prepared with the facts about how regional economic success translates into improved employment opportunities, tax base, or amenities for your city and the people who live there** [emphasis added]. Local officials can work with their staff to craft a clear, accurate message about their involvement in regional activities, and communicate this message to community

through the media, neighborhood meetings or other public venues. It can serve as a starting point for a community dialogue about the importance of regional collaboration to local success.

From a site selector's perspective, Janet Ady of Ady Voltege Consulting shares several reasons why the increasing role of regions is a "megatrend" in site selection. First, regions reflect the pool of available labor more accurately than local or state data do. Second, the data are there, and Ady notes that "it's not really much more effort for us to evaluate all 381 MSAs in the U.S. than the 50 states." Third, it gives site selectors "one point of contact who is close enough to the local action to know what's going on, rather than multiple POCs each representing individual properties."[1]

In further exploration of the trend toward regionalism, Ady writes:

> With regionalism, it's here to stay. It means working together, communicating with neighboring communities and counties and rowing together when you can. Regionalism is not about homogeneity; in fact, it's about just the opposite. It's about having a strong regional story and unique differences among the communities and counties within the region. Sell the region, and the company will find the location within your region that is the best fit. Having unique communities provides choices and increases your chances of success.[2]

Take, for example, Florida's Great Northwest, the 16-county Panhandle's regional economic development organization. It markets a single product, rather than 16 separate products, to site selection consultants, C-level corporate executives, and media in their target industries. Many are unfamiliar with Northwest Florida, so a big part of the job is to educate them about the region's assets. As noted in a business publication,

> Within that regional asset portfolio it is far more likely that a company will find something that will attract their interest, whereas no single county or community can offer such a broad array of assets. At a time when the timeline for site selection has been compressed and site selectors are seeking to have fewer points of contact in the site selection process, Florida's Great Northwest allows for a central point of contact for information about our entire region, which is why our website, www.floridasgreatnorthwest.com, has seen traffic explode since its redesign.[3]

These trends in site selection and regionalism that apply elsewhere are no different for northeast Tennessee.

Suggested strategies for education and community engagement. The IEDC team recommends working first with elected officials to provide context for the economic development process – what it takes to

[1] https://adyvoltedge.wordpress.com/2014/10/07/as-i-see-it-megatrends-in-site-selection/
[2] https://adyvoltedge.wordpress.com/2015/03/02/as-i-see-it-trends-and-implications-for-rural-economic-developers/
[3] http://www.floridasgreatnorthwest.com/news/our-blog/march-2012/why-regionalism-

recruit, retain, expand and grow businesses. Brief trainings or workshops are a common way to do this. States, universities, and sometimes utilities offer these trainings on a regular basis. In Idaho, consulting firm Gilliam & Company worked with Idaho Power to design a training session for community leaders that was short, easy to digest, and even fun (see text box below for more information).[4] After such a session, attendees are operating from the same knowledge base and able to respond to constituents from a well-informed position.

Get the Details: Idaho's Workshop on Economic Development for Community Leaders

Objectives of the workshop:

- Get a brief history of economic development
- Gain awareness of the economic development process
- Better understand your role as local leaders and community members
- Discuss traits of successful economic development teams
- Learn about available resources from state departments of commerce, labor and others
- Become familiar with tools and trends

During the workshop, participants are given examples of key information, where to get it and how to use it. They also learn what it means to incorporate this knowledge into their daily activities as community leaders.

Top 5 Things Community Leaders Should Know:

- Know your local economic strengths and weaknesses
- Know your community's economic development vision and goals
- Know your community's economic development message
- Know the interdependencies within your community
- Know the players in your community

Top 5 Common Traits of Highly Successful ED Teams:

- Creative risk-takers
- Driven by their customer
- Build strong alliances and networks
- Have a strong strategic vision and plan
- Have excellent internal elements/processes

[4] http://www.iedconline.org/blog/2014/08/04/economic-development-organizations/ed-now-feature-short-focused-and-fun-effective-economic-development-training-for-community-leaders/

Leadership trips to communities where regional economic development is practiced effectively can be another strategy to get elected officials and community leaders on the same page.

In regard to the broader public, media and community meetings (as well as the visioning process, discussed in detail in the next section) are key elements of the education process. Possible strategies include:

- Having economic development professionals, partners, board members, or elected officials to speak at meetings of community groups (e.g., Rotary), clubs and churches on how economic development works and why a collaborative approach is needed. Critical to this strategy, however, is ensuring that the conversation is two-way, and that there is follow-through on any input received. Such meetings are an opportunity to update people on what's happening, but also to get their input and insight – essential to gaining buy-in for economic development initiatives.

- Publishing a blog, newspaper column or newsletter that discusses various aspects of economic development (best practices, current issues, news stories or resources) and how they impact or apply to the region.

- Organizing events – e.g., with a guest speaker or webinar, followed with a discussion on how to apply the takeaways to the region.

A good way to organize this outreach is to create a team of "ambassadors" who identify the key groups in the community, organize their outreach in a deliberate way, and do frequent "check-ins" with these groups to update community members on what's happening on economic development.

1.2 Develop a shared vision and direction for the region's future.

"Some communities allow the future to happen to them. Successful communities recognize the future is something they can create. These communities take the time to produce a vision of the future they desire and employ a process that helps them achieve their goals." The National Civic League's Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook

Community visioning is the process of developing consensus about what future the community wants, and then deciding what is necessary to achieve it. A vision statement captures what stakeholders value most about their community, the shared image of what they want their community to become, and inspires them to work together to achieve it. Community vision statements typically are crafted through a collaborative process that involves a wide variety of community residents, businesses, stakeholders and elected officials.[5]

In addition to the importance of a vision for guiding efforts, the *process* of developing a vision is important in itself for gathering stakeholder input, building a sense of ownership and buy-in, and setting clear and transparent goals.

A community vision statement is particularly important for Carter, Unicoi and Washington counties, considering their interdependence and shared future, and as they figure out how to work together in new ways.

Particularly from Carter and Unicoi counties, the IEDC team heard a range of statements from economic development partners and allies regarding how they would like to see their particular county develop. Some said they wanted more industry, while others said their county should focus on rooftops and retail, or tourism. A visioning process would help gain clarity on what is both desired and possible, given local assets.

Any successful community visioning effort should be led by strong champions who are highly regarded in the community. The visioning process could be led by one person or by co-chairs, but it is critical that this person(s) be a community leader who is highly regarded, known for integrity and ethical leadership, and has credibility beyond any one county. This leader(s) will have the clout to pull together other civic leaders and key influencers to help design and execute the visioning process.

"The Role of Local Elected Officials in Economic Development," cited earlier, explains the importance of visioning in more detail:

> A primary challenge in the practice of economic development is choosing among many competing priorities and various activities. A clear economic vision and goals are needed to provide a framework for strategically assessing and coordinating these efforts. The vision stems from the community's values, its collective sense of local economic strengths and weaknesses, and consensus on a desired future. Goals are more tangible expressions of the vision and provide specific direction for actions. …
>
> A sound economic vision and goals should:
>
> 1. Balance what the jurisdiction would like to achieve with what resources and public support the jurisdiction can realistically expect to muster in support of that vision.

[5] http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Management/Organizational-Leadership-and-Management/Creating-a-Community-Vision.aspx

2. Be consistent with the role of the jurisdiction's economy in the larger regional and state economies.

3. Be understandable to citizens without technical training or experience in economic development.

4. Be produced in a way that makes it possible to incorporate it in the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

> In cities that do not have an economic vision, local elected officials can help initiate a community visioning effort. A well-designed visioning process will surface an array of ideas, opinions and objectives from a diverse group of stakeholders. An important role for elected officials is to help bring people to consensus and agreement on a common purpose.[6]

There are multiple ways to undertake a visioning process. The National Civic League's Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook (PDF) is an excellent guide for undertaking a community visioning project, offering a sample outline for conducting a successful visioning project (see Appendix B).

Examples of community visioning and planning initiatives

Northeast Indiana: The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership was formed in 2006 to help "build a globally competitive economy" among 10 counties in Northeast Indiana. It is a public-private partnership focused on generating business leads and building regional capacity through product development and effective regional collaboration.

As of the early 2000s, per capita income in Northeast Indiana had been in decline for nearly 40 years. By 2009, it had fallen to 79.3 percent of the national average. So in 2010, the Partnership launched Vision 2020, a six-month visioning process that collected input from over 1,000 people in the region about their thoughts on the future of Northeast Indiana. As a result of these meetings and the benchmarking of successful regions across the country, it was determined that Northeast Indiana would focus on five key "pillars" that had the capability of producing the most significant economic impact on the region: 21st Century Talent, Competitive Business Climate, Entrepreneurship, Infrastructure, and Quality of Life. A slate of priorities was identified for each pillar.

A Regional Opportunities Council provides leadership for the initiative and champions strategies for each of the five pillars; staff support is provided by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership. While there

[6] http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/economic-development/the-role-of-local-elected-officials-in-economic-development/your-communitys-economic-development-vision-and-goals

are multiple pillars and strategies, there is one collective goal—to turn Northeast Indiana's declining per capita income around and create a globally competitive region.[7]

Des Moines: Leadership for *The Tomorrow Plan*, organized by the Des Moines Area MPO, includes a team of young professionals who help guide the planning process and plan "YP"-specific networking and discussion events.

Numerous open houses and small group conversations have been organized in conjunction with the plan. *The Tomorrow Plan* also uses an online presence to share ideas related to the planning topics and community priorities. Des Moines uses the Mind Mixer tool (www. mindmixer.com) to capture good ideas that are suggested by the community. Stakeholders can log on to share their thoughts, provide feedback on ideas submitted by others and vote on the proposals.[8]

New River Valley, Va.: New River Valley Planning District Commission engaged in an extensive planning process through a HUD Sustainable Communities grant, but many of its strategies are applicable to other visioning projects.

Stakeholder Working Groups developed strategies related to nine issue areas: housing, transportation, energy, agriculture and food, natural resources, Internet access, economic development, water resources, and cultural heritage.

They gathered input from stakeholders by keeping draft documents and communication with working group members online and accessible by the public; through online and paper surveys; and visits to meetings of other established community groups, such as church meetings and Rotary Club.

> They also worked with Virginia Tech's Department of Theater and Cinema and its Master's of Directing and Public Dialogue program to integrate storytelling into community meetings. Through these efforts, the Planning District Commission was able to gather much more robust feedback and perspectives on a range of topics, such as race, housing insecurity, isolation of older adults in rural places and substance abuse. Carol Davis, Community Outreach Coordinator, said that this approach was a way to root community decision-making in something very familiar to everyone.[9]

[7] http://www.neindiana.com/vision/about

[8] Strategic Visioning for Community and Economic Development: Keys to Engaging Stakeholders (NACO) www.naco.org%2Fnewsroom%2Fpubs%2FDocuments%2FEngaging-Stakeholders-2013.pdf

[9] www.naco.org%2Fnewsroom%2Fpubs%2FDocuments%2FEngaging-Stakeholders-2013.pdf

Ideas for Creative Community Engagement

Rather than town-hall style meetings, planners are organizing fun open houses, where games are used as a means to capture input.

Large open houses are often complemented with smaller working groups, where stakeholders can take an active role in developing specific strategies related to a given topic, such as the built environment, water quality or transportation.

Communication through social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs) can help organizers continue a dialogue after live events and engage a younger demographic that may not traditionally attend public meetings. Staff, as well as engaged stakeholders, can share outcomes of live event discussions, report on community happenings and post new ideas from other communities.[10]

Chula Vista, Calif.: The South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC) underwent an economic development visioning process that resulted in a five-year workplan (PDF). To ensure widespread public input, SCEDC developed a website for both collecting and disseminating information on the initiative, an outreach plan to solicit participation, and used a contractor to disseminate information to potential collaborators and the general public regarding process, participation and outcomes.

Chattanooga: In 1969, Chattanooga received the dubious distinction of being named the most polluted city in the nation. As visibility continued to deteriorate and respiratory illnesses mounted, Chattanooga found itself in trouble.

The intensity of the problem served as a powerful motivator toward action. Citizens, government, and industry came together to address the issue. Everyone agreed that clean air was desirable, but there was no consensus on how to achieve that goal without harming local industry and reducing the region's employment base. After a series of meetings, local leaders formed the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Board. The board set benchmarks and ensured that the city met them. On Earth Day 1990, Chattanooga was recognized as the "best turnaround story" in the nation.

But Chattanooga didn't stop with air quality. It implemented a community-wide visioning process in 1992 that by the year 2000 had produced 223 projects and programs that have served 1.5 million people; 1,400 new jobs and an additional 7,300 construction-related jobs; much-needed renovations to historical buildings and sites; a new river park, aquarium, and performance hall; and new and enhanced human services to serve public needs.

[10] www.naco.org%2Fnewsroom%2Fpubs%2FDocuments%2FEngaging-Stakeholders-2013.pdf

The investment raised amounted to $2,778 per person in Hamilton County – which breaks out to a private donation of $2,083.50 and $694.50 from taxes, per person.[11]

Mission, Kansas: Mission, a community less than three square miles in area, was at a crossroads when many large parcels of land became available for redevelopment. In response, the city began a planning process that involved all facets of the community, including residents, businesses, and shoppers, to create a vision that would serve as the framework for future development. The vision, which ultimately called for more compact, walkable, and sustainable development, was challenged when Mission was offered a lucrative deal by a big-box developer.

With a strong commitment to the vision, Mission denied the big-box store and has accepted an offer for a new mall from a developer who has embraced the city's vision for a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use destination. Although the developer typically works on retail projects only, his collaboration with the city and understanding of the community vision has led him to include residential, hotel, office and entertainment as potential project components.

The city's resolve to stick with its vision also resulted in overwhelming community support for the project. Instead of Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) opposition, city officials received acclamation from those attending its Planning and Zoning hearings. Among the most common questions the city received from residents: "When will the project be complete?"[12]

1.3 Establish regularly scheduled opportunities to share information and ideas among regional economic development partners and allies.

"We work well together and we know each other well."

Throughout the meetings, regional economic development stakeholders – at the staff level, in particular, but also many elected officials – noted that they are in regular, informal communication.

Co-location has been helpful in this regard (e.g., the First Tennessee Development District, the regional director for the state's Department of Economic and Community Development and NETVRIDA have offices in the same building). Some sectors communicate particularly well among themselves; cultural and tourism representatives, for example, appear to be well connected, talking regularly and serving on each other's boards and committees.

[11] http://www.communitybuilders.ro/library/manuals/the-community-visioning-and-strategic-planning-handbook-by-national-civic-league/view
[12] http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/economic-development/the-role-of-local-elected-officials-in-economic-development/your-communitys-economic-development-vision-and-goals

The bigger challenges are to 1) make sure that the partners meet to talk strategy (in addition to deals) and 2) to ensure regular communication among groups that typically have not worked together in the past (due to geographic or sectoral silos) and groups that have not traditionally been considered integral to economic development.

For economic development stakeholder groups to meet monthly, every two months, or even quarterly, would increase communication flow, the opportunity for collaboration, and cultivate a growing sense of regionalism. As noted above, it would also provide opportunities to talk about longer-term strategy, in addition to the projects of the moment. Groups can take turns hosting the meetings and use the time to share information regarding ongoing and new initiatives that contribute to the region's economic growth – whether in regard to workforce development, industrial support, entrepreneurial development, tourism, etcetera.

Meetings can be organized in any number of ways. As one example, a meeting could focus on one of the areas cited above (e.g., entrepreneurship, or workforce development), with one or several groups that work in that area presenting key elements of current initiatives that other stakeholders may be unaware of, noting problems and asking for ideas and support. It can be as simple as a breakfast meeting, or even happy hour, but should be regularly scheduled.

This enables partners and allies to build new relationships with each other and deepen existing ones, imagine and discover new ways to work together, and strengthen the region's ability to retain existing businesses and attract new ones.

Meetings should be inclusive and open. The invitation to participate in a regional economic development stakeholders group should cast a wide net (including relevant groups beyond the three-county MSA) and remain open to participation by future interested groups. This group would include representatives from most of the organizations who met with the IEDC team during the site visit, plus others. The following list of stakeholders is merely a place to start, by no means a complete list:

- Economic development groups (e.g., WCEDC, Unicoi County EDB, NETVRIDA)
- Workforce development groups (e.g., WIB, Northeast State Community College, ETSU)
- State departments' regional representatives (Dept. of Community and Economic Development; Dept. of Labor and Workforce)
- Utility representatives (e.g., TVA, Johnson City Power Board, Erwin Utilities)
- Entrepreneurship and small business support groups (e.g., AccelNow, TSBDC, Innovation Lab, Angel Round Table, chambers of commerce)
- Tourism groups (e.g., NETTA, CVB)
- Relevant local government staff

1.4 Develop and execute an intra-regional no poaching agreement/code of ethics.

When Communities A and B are located in the same functional economic region, and Community A works to lure an existing company from Community B, this is considered intra-regional job poaching.

Unless the alternative is for the company to leave the region altogether, job poaching is a zero-sum game for the region, and a negative-sum game if the company is offered financial incentives for the relocation.

Though job poaching has not been a problem to date in northeast Tennessee, this recommendation is significant both practically and symbolically. In practical terms, while job poaching may not be a problem historically, it is something that can happen for the first time (or second or third) at any point. Symbolically, a no-poaching agreement (or similar code of ethics) represents an acknowledgment that the region is interdependent – that one community's success *at the expense of another* harms the region as a whole. It signals to companies both outside and inside the region, as well as to elected officials and residents, that cooperation, trust, and fairness are core values. It is one of many building blocks along the path to creating a true culture of regional collaboration.

The Denver region is frequently cited and widely praised for its approach. The oil bust of the 1980s forced a change to the region's approach to economic development. That change began with a voluntary regional agreement, signed by the mayors of Denver and surrounding areas, which laid out shared economic principles.[13] The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC) brings together the interests of multiple groups and local governments to promote the Metro Denver area as a single economic entity. It explains its regional approach and code of ethics as follows:

> The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation is comprised of 70 counties, cities, and economic development groups from throughout Metro Denver and Northern Colorado. Member organizations operate under a Code of Ethics and serve as account representatives for the entire region. They tell clients and companies the benefits of the region first, and individual communities second. No matter whom you contact, the entire region is within your reach.[14]

According to a report on economic development regional cooperation by the National League of Cities,

> The response by prospective companies looking to do business in the Denver region has been tremendous. According to Laura Brandt of the MDEDC, Metro Denver's regional-centric approach to economic development "blows companies away." Companies and site selectors are consistently surprised that the region actually does operate regionally. They also appreciate

[13] http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/05/when-cities-and-suburbs-work-together/391979/
[14] http://www.metrodenver.org/about/partners/code-of-ethics/

> having a single point of contact – the MDEDC – which allows one unified message to be portrayed to any business interested in the region.[15]

Following Denver's lead, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, which includes local economic development partner organizations from 10 counties in Northeast Indiana, signed a similar code of ethics in 2011. They were inspired to do so in part by a visit to Denver by several dozen leaders from northeast Indiana, who witnessed a powerful collaborative culture that has grown up around the ethics code.[16]

Other communities see value in this approach as well, not just in terms of addressing poaching but also as a chance for multiple jurisdictions to agree how to work together on business attraction and retention. The 59 communities in Cuyahoga County, Ohio – one of which is Cleveland – all had signed on to the Cuyahoga County Business Attraction and Anti-Poaching Protocol (PDF) by early 2013, nearly 18 months after it was first proposed (see Appendix C for the full document). The policy asks municipalities to agree to not pursue businesses in other communities in the county. If a company makes the first move, cities are asked to notify the company's home community, unless the business demands confidentiality. The protocol describes its purpose as follows:

> (1) facilitate interactions between the county and the communities to promote economic development; (2) establish a county-based "one-stop shop" for businesses considering location or expansion in Cuyahoga County; (3) express the commitment of the participating communities that they will not actively pursue the re-location of a business that has not indicated that it is considering a move from its current location in another participating community; and (4) in instances where a business is exploring a possible move, establish procedures to balance the interests of the business' home community and other participating communities.

Examples continue to emerge. Earlier this year, the Detroit Regional Chamber and 11 economic development organizations representing Southeast Michigan signed an agreement outlining a protocol to collaborate on branding and business attraction efforts with the chamber staff and with each other. According to an announcement on the chamber's website, "[t]he protocol recognizes that regional messaging and coordinated outreach adds value and impact to business attraction efforts and strategies – ultimately creating more awareness, deal flow and investment."[17]

The newly formed Greater Sacramento Area Economic Council (Calif.) includes three counties and 12 cities which have developed and signed on to a Regional Cooperation Protocol Policy (PDF). The policy

[15] http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/economic-development/other-economic-development-topics/regional-cooperation-agreements-in-economic-development

[16] http://www.adamscountyedc.com/2011/11/regional-code-of-ethics/.

[17] http://www.detroitchamber.com/detroit-regional-chamber-and-county-partners-sign-agreement-to-collaborate-on-business-attraction-for-southeast-michigan/

describes processes for sharing information, handling leads, marketing, and cooperation on other aspects of business attraction.[18]

Ideally, this agreement/code of ethics would be developed and signed by all economic development and governmental entities in northeast Tennessee – the entire Johnson City-Kingsport-Bristol combined metropolitan statistical area (eight counties in Tennessee and three in Virginia).

[18] http://www.bizjournals.com/sacramento/news/2015/05/21/details-emerge-on-greater-sacramento-regional.html?ana=lnk

2. Develop an umbrella regional economic development partnership as a single point of contact for industry attraction, retention, expansion, and small business development.

> ***"A regional group could succeed with a very specified set of metrics. The [previous] partnership went away due to no results, not enough buy-in, not enough seats around the table. It has to be inclusive."***

This section incorporates two of the preliminary recommendations presented at the end of the IEDC site visit. The two recommendations are:

> **An umbrella regional economic development partnership with clear strategy and accountable metrics is needed to serve as a single point of contact for industry attraction, retention, expansion, and small business development.**
>
> and
>
> **The regional economic development partnership should cover Carter, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington counties, at a minimum, and include business, government, education and nonprofit partners at the table from day one.**

This report has, so far, discussed at length why a regional approach to economic development is important to northeast Tennessee's future. This section reviews some of the elements the IEDC team believes are critical to the success of any regional economic development partnership. The final part of this report – Section 3, Implement Proven Best Practices in Economic Development – addresses specific strategies that the IEDC team recommends a regional economic development initiative *and its partners* undertake to spur economic growth in the region.

First, however, the area must contend with the ghost of the former regional alliance. Based on stakeholder input, the IEDC team concludes that the alliance that existed from 2005 to 2011 was a good idea with good intentions but which failed in execution. It was an initiative that appears to have done little to foster a sense of regional collaboration; not surprisingly, many stakeholders are wary of anything that would replicate or resurrect the previous effort.

However, when stakeholders described their perceptions of the alliance's problems, those statements pointed clearly to characteristics necessary for the success of any future regional initiative.

The Regional Alliance: What Went Wrong, and How to Avoid It in the Future

The Problem (in stakeholders' words)	The Antidote (principles for future regional efforts)
"Not transparent" "Closed" "Elitist" "Big business only" "Powerful men around the table, but no women"	Transparency Openness Inclusiveness
"Didn't interface well with local economic development professionals" "Discredited existing efforts"	Respect
"Disconnect with elected officials" "Little coordination between the organization and counties and municipalities" "Not enough buy-in"	Communication Coordination
"Ran everything with other people's money" "No results" "Didn't have a good business plan"	Accountability Metrics
"Didn't understand the influence TVA had"	Professionalism

With care and caution, previous mistakes do not have to be duplicated in any regional efforts moving forward.

What geographies should be included in a regional partnership?

> ***"We don't see ourselves as a region, especially when you talk about Carter and Unicoi counties. There is more recognition of Washington and Sullivan as a region."***
>
> ***"We are the smallest fish in the sea. We wouldn't want to be overlooked or discounted. If this thing works, it truly has to be regional, and address our needs as well as Washington's and Carter's."***

"Sullivan is already married to Hawkins. So maybe marry this MSA first."

"The sell for Washington and Sullivan may be the harder sell at this point because of competition – not so much the people, but the politicians. The MSA is an easy sell/fix. Carter and Unicoi recognize that their fate is tied to Johnson City."

"The higher stuff that will take more work is Washington and Sullivan. The MSAs starting to work together are the low-hanging fruit."

The IEDC team heard many different takes from stakeholders on how to define the region. Washington and Sullivan counties, however, always were at the core. Washington and Sullivan together are the economic and population center of northeast Tennessee, with thousands of residents crossing from one to the other (and among them and many surrounding counties) to live, work, recreate, learn, see a doctor, shop, and more. Clearly, any regional economic development effort will be most effective if it includes both Washington and Sullivan counties, at a minimum.

Site selection consultants and corporate real estate executives typically define a region based on workforce commuting patterns – where the labor comes from to support business in a particular location. The definition is based on functionality, rather than jurisdictional lines, which mean very little to most firms (apart from the availability of incentives). As an illustration of the region's laborshed, the table below shows the top counties to which residents in Carter, Unicoi, Washington and Sullivan counties commute for work.

Residence County to Workplace County Flows, 2006-2010

Carter County residents		Unicoi County residents		Washington County residents		Sullivan County residents	
Workplace county	**Number**	**Workplace county**	**Number**	**Workplace county**	**Number**	**Workplace county**	**Number**
Carter County	10,419	Unicoi County	4,099	Washington County	39,538	Sullivan County	46,793
Washington County	8,175	Washington County	2,344	Sullivan County	7,595	Washington County	8,067
Sullivan County	2,538	Sullivan County	352	Greene County	1,448	Hawkins County	1,272
Unicoi County	455	Carter County	198	Unicoi County	1,328	Carter County	879
Johnson County	167	Greene County	103	Carter County	1,064	Greene County	319
Greene County	137	Hawkins County	60	Hawkins County	279	Knox County	214

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

In framing this recommendation, it is important to note several points, however. First, the IEDC panel's assessment included only the Johnson City MSA, so the panel did not have access to specific, in-depth information on Sullivan County, or on the regional dynamics among counties other than Washington, Carter and Unicoi.

Second, it is important to acknowledge that that what is most effective and efficient is not always considered possible initially. Stakeholder interviews indicated that a partnership that includes Sullivan and Washington counties might be a hard sell due to a historic, enduring sense of rivalry (attributed at least partly to high school football).

> ***"Parochialism makes it hard to get everyone in the same room to play well together."***
>
> ***"People have been ingrained that competition among the cities, the hospitals, etc., is good. The Friday night football games."***
>
> ***"We have to get over this Friday Night Lights thing. There's no forward thought; just what happened in the past."***

So, the IEDC panel recognizes that initial steps toward regional economic development may need to begin with the counties in the Johnson City MSA, with a standing open invitation for Sullivan County (and possibly other counties) to join at a later point. This path does include the risk of potentially losing momentum to expand further later. However, it's also important to pick a place to start, and what might be a hard sell now could become more feasible in the future.

Several stakeholders referred to collaboration within the Johnson City MSA as "low-hanging fruit," or noted that "Carter and Unicoi recognize that their fate is tied to Johnson City." And since the team's visit to the region, Washington and Carter counties have agreed to explore merging their economic development efforts. The IEDC team encourages Unicoi to join this group.

The team also encourages stakeholders to reach out to their peers in Sullivan County, keep them informed of what's happening in the Johnson City MSA, and ensure that the invitation to participate, collaborate and share information is always open.

Generally speaking, the more jurisdictions within a functional economic region that participate in a collaborative economic development group, the better. Costs of branding and marketing are shared; population is greater; a wider range of assets are showcased that have better chances at meeting the needs of a variety of companies; and regional initiatives on issues such as workforce development are more effectively addressed, to name just a few benefits.

Ideally, all eight counties in Northeast Tennessee should work together on economic development in some capacity – not just the Johnson City MSA, or Carter, Unicoi, Washington and Sullivan counties. Each of these four of these counties would benefit if they were joined by the remaining four counties in northeast Tennessee (Greene, Hancock, Hawkins and Johnson), and possibly two or three counties in southwest Virginia as well.

Beyond geographic considerations, two principles will be key to follow in the formation of any regional effort: *broad inclusion* and *fair representation*. The IEDC team referred to broad inclusion in its presentation when it noted that any regional initiative should "include business, government, education, and nonprofit partners at the table from day one." This inclusion is critical to gaining buy-in from economic development partners and allies and avoiding some of the problems that plagued the former regional alliance.

What constitutes "fair representation" can only be determined by the leaders involved, but it is critical to success. Different partnerships address this issue in different ways. Some allow a board seat for one representative from each local government. Others create a committee or council of elected officials, from which one or several representatives are chosen to serve on the larger board or leadership council (alongside a majority of private-sector investors). The amount of funding that each local government is required to provide is often determined on a per capita basis, or sometimes a tiered structure based on jurisdictions' population levels.

If now is not the time. Whether the political will exists to form an EDO as a single point of contact for business retention, expansion and attraction, and small business development among multiple counties can be determined only by county leaders. If the will does not exist today, however, there still are actions that partners interested in collaboration can take to move regional economic development forward. **A good first step may be to choose one or more small projects or initiatives on which to begin working together, building trust, a sense of regional cooperation and accomplishment.**

One example of a potential area for collaboration is **workforce development**. This issue was cited as a concern more frequently than any other during stakeholder meetings with the IEDC team, and across the country, economic developers are increasingly active in workforce development efforts. IEDC has produced two recent reports that discuss these roles and provide examples of various initiatives: "Shifting Workforce Development into High Gear: How Economic Developers Lead Workforce System Alignment" and "Raising the Bar Together: Successful Strategies for Workforce and Economic Development Collaboration" (both free downloads for IEDC members). Undoubtedly, multiple workforce development collaborations already are in place in the region, so it will be important to understand what those are first and seek to fill gaps, rather than duplicate existing efforts.

A second area of possible collaboration is in regard to **research into the region's strengths and attributes** – such as the development of a regional labor profile and identification of industry targets for recruitment. Industry targets for the region have already been identified by the state and NETVRIDA, and WCEDC has its own list of target markets/industries. There is overlap among many of these, but a deeper dive on these, such as a supply chain analysis or targeted marketing study, could be fruitful if it does not already exist.

A third possible step to greater regional collaboration is to **form a regional business retention and expansion group** similar to that of Cuyahoga County, Ohio's Business Retention and Expansion Advisory Council (BREAC, discussed above in the section on regional no-poaching agreements). Recognizing that Cuyahoga County's economy will be stronger if communities work together, BREAC is described as

> a virtual organization that facilitates the distribution of leads from economic development organizations and site selectors to participating communities. BREAC is also a source for accessing County economic development resources and programs. Membership in BREAC is limited to those communities that enter into this Agreement (the "participating communities") and is the County's first step towards establishing a "one-stop shop" for businesses considering location or expansion in Cuyahoga County. In furtherance of that effort, the participating communities further agree to:
>
> a. Designate one person to the County's "deal team network" as the community's point of contact for all economic development matters.
>
> b. Provide the community's updates to the County's "deal team database" of city resources, which provides information about participating communities' economic development programs and incentives.
>
> c. Provide the community's updates to a central "available property" database.
>
> d. Assist the County and economic development organizations, such as Team NEO and the Greater Cleveland Partnership, when economic development leads are identified.

Whatever the project or initiative chosen, it will be a step toward more effective and integrated economic development in the region.

3. Implement proven best practices in economic development.

This section of the report addresses selected best practices in economic development, along with specific strategies that the IEDC team recommends any regional economic development initiative *and its partners* undertake to spur economic growth. Some of these recommendations are applicable after the visioning process and after some organizational decisions have been made (discussed in section 2) about how the region will work together to further its economic development goals.

3.1 Develop a strategic plan with clear and accountable metrics.

An analysis of best practices in local and regional economic development conducted by consulting firm Taimerica emphasized the importance of visioning, strategic planning and metrics to effective economic development. Among other conclusions, the analysis found that best-practice EDOs:

1) Operate with a clear vision of how their organization will work toward the desired vision for the future of their community that is widely held by local leaders.
2) Have written strategic plans that guide their overall activities. These strategies keep leaders focused on actions that lead to long-term improvements.
3) Measure performance based on stakeholder and customer feedback rather than on announcements, jobs created, or other measures that can't be directly controlled by EDO executives.[19]

The visioning process described earlier (recommendation 1.2) should result in an agreed-upon direction for the community's future. The next step is to create an economic development strategy with specific goals in order to achieve that vision. Some of the following steps will have been accomplished as part of the visioning process, but in general, strategic planning should provide answers to the follow questions:

- What are the economic development needs and opportunities of the area?
- What are the development goals to meet those needs and opportunities?
- What are the available resources to achieve those goals?
- What strategies and projects best use the area's resources to meet development goals and garner public support?[20]

There are multiple approaches to strategic planning; no one size fits all. Some communities undertake a comprehensive process over many months with the help of a consultant. Others take information already gathered during the visioning process, along with other data sources (e.g., a regional labor profile and target industry analysis) and produce a plan in-house relatively quickly.

[19] http://ded.mo.gov/Content/Tiamerica,%20Best%20ED%20Practices,%209-25-09.pdf
[20] IEDC's "Strategic Planning for Economic Development" training manual

For example, the Great Falls (Montana) Development Authority undergoes a focused strategic planning process every two years. It begins with a survey, then conducts a series of focus groups followed by two facilitated workshop sessions of no more than three hours apiece. Staff develop a draft plan that is sent out to partners and investors for review. The process results in an intentionally broad, flexible and brief plan – under five pages in length. The Tulsa Metro Chamber, in contrast, uses a consultant to go through a formal strategic planning process every five years, resulting in a comprehensive, detailed plan that requires a three-ring binder.

In 2014, IEDC conducted a survey on successful approaches for developing and implementing a strategic plan. The survey focused on how EDOs generate engagement and ownership from stakeholders and the community at the onset and how they maintained that commitment throughout implementation.

Survey respondents identified ways to achieve momentum behind the strategic plan, the most important of which were:

- Strong leadership by the initiating organization;
- A sense of ownership among community stakeholders;
- A strong plan based on analysis of the economic base and policy alternatives, and
- A sense of urgency around the purpose and need.

Other aspects of a successful strategic plan noted by respondents include:

- Stakeholder involvement and buy-in to the final plan, along with agency(ies) follow-through is paramount to the plan's success.
- Implementation plans should be specific but leave room for creativity.
- Personal commitment to cooperate with other leaders to implement recommendations.
- The ability to measure success of the plan (benchmarks).
- Making sure that plan is always focused on the goals established.[21]

Much more detailed information about strategic planning can be found in IEDC’s training course and manual, “Strategic Planning for Economic Development.”

Critical to any strategic plan are metrics to measure progress. In fact, the existence of an organizational strategic plan is a key determining factor in whether an organization measures performance.

Performance measurement is more complex and difficult in economic development than in many other fields. While economic developers play critical roles in the health of their communities’ economies, the results of their efforts often are not immediate or may appear disconnected from their efforts. Much of

[21] http://www.iedconline.org/blog/2014/04/21/economic-development-organizations/ed-now-feature-successful-strategic-planning-and-implementation-what-your-peers-are-doing/

their high-value work involves building relationships and making connections, and this work may not pay off for months or even years. In addition, much of their impact is influenced by market, demographic, and other forces outside of their control.

Most EDOs in the U.S. use at least four variables that have emerged as the key metrics of measuring economic development success: job creation, capital investment, changes in tax base, and changes in personal income. These, however, often do not reflect the work that many EDOs do. Thus, many EDOs are beginning to adopt more nuanced metrics which are better aligned with their myriad functions, with the aim of measuring performance both qualitatively and quantitatively. These include metrics related to people- or place-based goals, such as job quality (e.g., wage levels, benefits) and type of investment (e.g., redevelopment versus greenfield development, or the revitalization of a distressed area), for example.

IEDC's recent research report, "Making It Count: Metrics for High-Performing EDOs," offers a comprehensive, easy-to-use "menu" of economic development metrics that EDOs can choose from based on their mission, functions and resources, along with a guidebook on EDO performance measurement.

From the "Making It Count" report, below are general recommendations for EDOs regarding performance measurement.

- **Start with a strategic plan.** Metrics can serve as road signs, but a strategic plan is the map. An economic development strategic plan can provide the impetus to establish a robust performance measurement system as well as guidance on how it should be implemented.

- **Start small.** Not all EDOs have the resources, both in staff time and budget, to track every single metric in this menu. Neither does it make sense to use a lot of metrics. What is important is to make sure that the metrics align closely with the EDO's work and to collect the right data and information for each of the selected metrics. Start with the core measures. Add more metrics over time as it becomes clearer how performance measurement fits in with the EDO's work.

- **Assign someone to each metric.** Assigning responsibility for specific metrics to EDO staff helps to establish an environment of shared accountability across the entire organization. It also helps to ensure that the tasks required to be completed for a particular metric get done.

- **Get buy-in from the top.** Whether it is a board of directors, city council, or other governing committee, it is important to have full leadership support in deciding how performance measurement should be done. This way, leadership will also be accountable for monitoring performance.

- **Make some metrics temporary.** EDOs may sometimes want to select a set of metrics only for a defined period of time, such as for special projects. It can also be a useful strategy to test a new metrics and understand the kind of insights they provide.

- **Do not just add to the list.** Just as metrics should be added over time if needed, make sure to remove metrics when they are no longer relevant. Unwieldy measurement systems require more resources to maintain and may prove to be a detriment to the overall health of an organization rather than a tool to improve performance.

- **Take credit responsibly.** EDOs should use sound judgment when taking credit for an activity. Metrics should reflect the work that EDOs actually do, not outcomes outside of their control.

How Are Best Practice EDOs Different?[22]

What distinguishes Best Practice EDOs from their counterparts? Best Practice EDOs excel because they:

1. Operate with a clear vision of how their organization will work toward the desired vision for the future of their community that is widely held by local leaders.
2. Have written strategic plans that guide their overall activities. These strategies keep leaders focused on actions that lead to long-term improvements.
3. Have a focused mission. For local EDOs, the mission includes real estate development as well as marketing and business retention.
4. Have a preponderance of private sector funding that gives leaders the flexibility of focusing on long-term goals.
5. Have state support and statutory authority that limits the level of time spent on fundraising by senior leaders.
6. Measure performance based on stakeholder and customer feedback rather than on announcements, jobs created, or other measures that can't be directly controlled by EDO executives.
7. For regional EDOs, have effective lead dissemination systems that are transparent, fair, and developed with input of the local EDOs. Effectiveness comes from the recognition by EDOs that they have to customize the process for their members rather than copy one used successfully in other regions.
8. Rely less on advertising and direct mail than their traditional counterparts.
9. Use widely accepted software and internal business processes.
10. Have a corporate culture that is focused on external conditions (customers and markets trends) rather than internal processes.

[22] http://ded.mo.gov/Content/Tiamerica,%20Best%20ED%20Practices,%209-25-09.pdf

11. Have a commitment to the extended use of training and innovation tools.
12. Are in a community environment that has the attitude supporting the need to acquire and maintain top talent, which is often less true for traditional EDOs.

Taimerica, "How Are Best Practice EDOs Different?"

3.2 Direct economic development resources toward higher-wage, economic-base jobs, such as those found in manufacturing and healthcare.

> ***"Sales tax is king. As long as it's that way, you can't cooperate on something that generates retail traffic. We don't chase retail hard enough."***
>
> ***"Sales tax drives our economy."***

Local governments in Tennessee rely heavily on sales taxes to fund their operation. In 2010, only Washington state received a higher proportion of its revenue from sales and gross receipt taxes (60 percent) than Tennessee (56.8 percent).[23] (The average among all states in 2010 was 34 percent.)

Retail attraction and development, therefore, plays a major role in local development efforts. The tax dollars, the local services, and to some extent the jobs that retailers provide, all are important to the region's communities.

The challenge with retail jobs, however, is that they tend to be largely low-skill, low-wage, with few benefits and few opportunities for advancement, meaning their ability to raise residents' standards of living is limited. In addition, retail jobs tend to fluctuate based upon the overall economy much more quickly than economic-base jobs (discussed further below); layoffs come faster, sooner and more frequently.

Further, retail businesses tend to be "followers" to economic-base industries. In other words, retail follows where residents and workers are located. Rarely does retail itself leverage additional jobs, other than other retail jobs. Additionally, at least one stakeholder noted that some retailers won't locate in the region because the median income is too low. All in all, retail strategies have significantly less long-term impact on economic growth.

In contrast, economic-base industries (also called "basic" industries) are those that export their product or service from a region and bring in wealth from outside. Basic industries such as manufacturing, processing, distribution, and professional services not only bring dollars into a local economy, but typically pay higher wages than businesses that serve primarily local clients, such as retail stores,

[23] http://taxfoundation.org/article/sources-state-and-local-tax-revenues

restaurants, grocery stores, hair salons, etc. These non-basic (or service) industries benefit from a high proportion of basic-industry jobs in a region, as those provide the income that residents need to purchase local goods and services. This is an important distinction to make in terms of decisions regarding economic development investment, and a complex one for EDOs in states that rely heavily on sales taxes, such as Tennessee.

During stakeholder meetings, the IEDC team heard that retail development in Washington County doubled over a 15-year period, far exceeding population growth. Yet if population and incomes aren't growing, the retail sector cannot sustain growth either. If the region focuses on retail development at the expense of basic jobs, the tax base will continue to grow to some extent, but the prosperity of citizens won't.

Despite these issues, the IEDC panel recognizes that local governments in the region must continue retail development efforts in order to fund operations. Therefore, the IEDC team recommends engaging in highly focused, strategic, data-informed retail development, to the extent that this is not already occurring.

Such an approach begins with a deep dive on the composition, leakage, and potential of retail in the region. In what sectors are retail dollars leaking from the region, and in what sectors is the region pulling dollars in from the outside? For example, businesses such as laundromats and dry cleaners are very local, but malls often draw dollars in from surrounding populations. Does the region have a niche in furniture, motor vehicles, or health and personal care stores? Which retail sectors are paying higher wages? How could a retail development strategy align with and leverage tourism development? In other words, retail strategies should pursue high-value retail that leverages existing assets. Faculty and students from ETSU could be a resource for conducting such a study.

Further, not all businesses that pay sales tax in Tennessee are strictly consumer-level retail – for example, sales taxes are applied to telecommunications services, as well as aviation and other fuels sold to or used by manufacturers. A further level of focus could be to identify higher-wage industries that pay sales tax and to include those types of businesses in the targeting strategy.

3.3 Identify, protect and prepare potential sites for industrial development.

> ***"How do we deliver the next generation of industrial sites? There are no easy solutions."***

Product – in the form of shovel-ready land and buildings available for sale or lease – is critical to successful business attraction. That means elected leaders must be willing to put money and political capital into securing and servicing potential sites.

The topography of the Johnson City MSA limits the potential supply of land for industrial development. Many sites that are sufficiently flat are further constrained by distance from key transportation corridors, cost, lack of infrastructure, or ownership status.

During stakeholder meetings, the IEDC team was told that Washington County has one industrial park with two sites left (25 acres and 45 acres). The team also heard that in Unicoi County, almost all the developable land has been developed (51 percent of the land in Unicoi County is owned by the state or federal government). Erwin does have a manufacturing facility it is trying to fill, and though the team heard that the county could assemble a parcel as large as 20-30 acres, nothing is currently fully served by infrastructure and ready to be marketed. Similarly, Carter County has very limited options in terms of land for industrial development, the most significant being the former Texas Instruments property.

Two sites have been identified as possible places for a regional business park – the Anderson farm property and another site in Washington County between Johnson City and Jonesborough – each of which comes with its own challenges (e.g., topography, road access, infrastructure expense).

Site development is a matter of preparedness. If a community isn’t ready before a client knocks on the door, it won’t win the project. Properties must be in place so that when the opportunity to recruit a prospect comes, there is a place to put them. This mindset of preparedness is needed among elected officials, developers and property owners.

Also important to consider is vision and feasibility. Any efforts to prepare industrial sites should align with the vision for regional economic development identified by stakeholders (discussed earlier in this report), and be something that can feasibly happen.

Though the IEDC team was not able to conduct a full, in-depth evaluation of the region’s existing and potential industrial real estate, following are recommended options and principles for regional economic development stakeholders to consider in regard to future industrial sites.

- **Develop a priority listing of potential industrial sites and a strategy to identify resources to improve them (access, infrastructure, etc.)** There should be agreement on where new jobs could be located within the region and a focus on meeting the needs of industry. It will be important that any sites identified as part of this process jibe with any future development maps that exists – in other words, that possible industrial sites identified are in line with the community’s vision for future land uses. This may include adjustments to current zoning and other regulations.
- **Pursue redevelopment of existing sites.** In Elizabethton, two former rayon plant buildings may be candidates to redevelop for industrial use. In addition, the IEDC team recommends that the region evaluate whether some larger tracts of vacant or underperforming retail would be suited to repurposing for industrial development (i.e., suited in regard to transportation access, surrounding

uses, etc.). Whether for industrial use or other uses, redevelopment is a strategy that will likely receive more attention in the future due to new state limitations on annexation.

- **If it makes sense, consider developing an intergovernmental agreement that would allow the benefits of business location to be spread within the region.** This will be appealing to site locators who will want to see that the communities are working together to find the right site for the industry, rather than competing against each other.

3.4 Focus and expand support for existing industry.

Over 86 percent of new jobs in Tennessee are created by existing industries, according to the Northeast Tennessee Regional Strategic Plan produced by the state Economic and Community Development Department in 2011.

The employers who met with the IEDC team had positive comments overall about operating in the Johnson City MSA. They mentioned the low cost of doing business (electricity and water rates specifically), loyal workers, training opportunities through Northeast State Community College, and feeling supported by state and local economic developers. The dominant challenge mentioned was the readiness of the workforce pipeline. Other challenges mentioned include assistance with exporting and navigating regulations, support for capital investment, and the difficulty of recruiting skilled foreign talent due to negative perceptions of the region.

Existing industry services can range from assistance with incentives, land or buildings to workforce training and recruitment; networking/industry roundtables; innovation and commercialization; exporting and more.

The region already offers much support to existing industry. For example, in terms of workforce development, Northeast State Community College and the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing offer training for existing industry, and ETSU more in-depth educational opportunities. Other groups involved in supporting workforce development efforts include the region's WIB and FTDD. In terms of industrial assistance, the UT Center for Industrial Services (the state's Manufacturing Extension Partnership) has a "solutions consultant" for northeast Tennessee – a critical service, but only one person serves eight counties.[24] And organizations such as the Washington County Economic

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[24] UT-CIS classifies its consulting services as "performance solutions" (Lean, Six Sigma, etc.); "sustainability solutions" (energy management, material recycling and reuse, etc.); "regulatory solutions" (health and safety, environmental compliance); and "growth solutions" (procurement technical assistance, manufacturing R&D assistance, SBIR/STTR). It also provides classes and trainings in different locations throughout the year on a variety of subjects.

Development Council, Carter County Tomorrow, and the Unicoi County EDB provide a range of services to existing business every day.

However, there are ways that this assistance can be focused and enhanced, to the extent that these already are not in place in the region.

Export assistance. All of the manufacturing firms who met with the IEDC team reported that they export their products overseas. A representative of electronics manufacturer IES discussed the difficulty of meeting the various standards required to export products to markets such as the European Union and China, as well as the challenge of meeting new ISO standards in 2015. Meeting attendees noted that the state has a good export assistance program in Nashville but that one doesn't exist in the region.

Additional support for exporting may be available through UT-CIS, the state, community colleges, ETSU, or TVA. FTDD may be able to help secure a grant to help in this regard. (The Fox Cities region of Wisconsin received a grant through its regional commission to set up a web-based resource that connects with the state economic development office to support exporting.) The Brookings Institution also has a wide range of resources available on exporting. In addition, IEDC is developing a new advanced training course and manual on exporting and attracting foreign direct investment.

A formal multi-county business retention and expansion program. This will include meeting on a regular basis with current employers to identify challenges and opportunities, and developing solutions. This was discussed as a possible first step toward regional action at the end of section 2 of this report.

A "manufacturers' roundtable" with quarterly events. These types of industry groups exist in many communities and present an opportunity for existing firms to discuss common problems and opportunities. Sometimes the meeting involve facility tours; other times they may be focused on a particular topic.

An international strategy. Many communities that have a number of foreign firms develop strategies to welcome international workers and help them get connected. The IEDC team heard that perceptions of Appalachia have hampered the recruitment of foreign talent in some cases. Eastman is currently addressing this issue by supporting an international club. New arrivals often need help accessing amenities, connecting with others, places to purchase familiar foods and places of worship. From these efforts, international marketing and recruitment opportunities sometimes arise.

Trailing spouse assistance. When a professional takes a job in a new location, he or she may bring a spouse or partner who also is a professional and would benefit from assistance to make connections and plug into the local job market.

Workforce development. Workforce development has come up numerous times in this report, as it did during the IEDC team's meetings with stakeholders. There is a distinct need for a long-term, collaborative approach to the region’s workforce issues. Given the concerns about soft skills, work ethic, and substance abuse, this collaboration should extend beyond educators, training providers, and workforce agencies and include community-based human service organizations focused on addressing these concerns.

Incentives. It’s important to ensure that incentives that are available for new businesses, such as support for capital investment, are also available to existing, expanding businesses as well.

3.5 Ensure that entrepreneurship support efforts are integrated and cover the full spectrum of needs through a no-wrong-door approach.

Entrepreneurship is one of three legs of the economic development stool (along with business retention/expansion and business attraction). In the past, entrepreneurship typically received the least attention or effort of the three foundational economic development strategies. That has changed in recent years as communities put more effort into “growing their own,” recognizing that this is both an important source of new jobs and also more likely to yield investments that stay in the region (as opposed to companies that expand from elsewhere).

As noted in the strengths and challenges section, the region is ripe for nurturing entrepreneurship and has a real brand to leverage in the statement “it started here.” It has a rich history of business starts and growth, starting with Henry Johnson’s railroad station in the 19th century, continuing with the Tennessee Eastman Corporation in 1920 to NN in 1980, with many more in between and since.

The region also has a range of resources to support entrepreneurs and to foster an entrepreneurial culture. They include:

- Two incubators – the Holston Business Development Center in Kingsport and ETSU’s Innovation Lab in Johnson City (focused on high-tech startups and also with a “soft landings” designation) – plus a third in Abingdon, Va.
- Two Small Business Development Center offices, one at ETSU and the Kingsport Office of Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship (KOSBE).
- Chambers of commerce in each county that support existing businesses with promotion, networking, advocacy, education and events.
- The Angel Roundtable, an angel capital network, serves the region (including southwest Va. and western N.C.) by providing capital investment, advice and mentoring to early-stage companies.

- The Northeast Tennessee Economic Development Corporation (NETEDC), hosted by FTDD, provides fixed asset and permanent working capital financing.
- AccelNow, one of nine Regional Entrepreneurial Accelerators in the state, serves eight counties in northeast Tennessee. It offers resources, mentoring expertise, and community to entrepreneurs at various stages of development, from concept to existing businesses that seek to grow.

AccelNow also hosts a range of trainings and events that are important to both helping entrepreneurs get started and to nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship, such as 3-D printing demonstrations, camps focused on coding and advanced manufacturing, a Mini Maker Faire, entrepreneur meet and greets, and events focused on entrepreneurship around art and farms. It also offers entrepreneur boot camps and accelerator services (office space, mentoring, coaching and support connecting with investors).

AccelNow aims to be a front door for new entrepreneurs and new concepts, a place where people can go to learn anything about entrepreneurship. It provides critical entrepreneur services to the region, but also is on its third director, experienced periods without a director, and has only two and a half staff members to serve eight counties.

In addition to the resources noted above, the region has opportunities to leverage. Research that comes out of the hospital merger may present opportunities for business startups and commercialization. Unicoi is building a regional kitchen incubator which will help food-based businesses grow. In addition, entrepreneurship and innovation are a focus of the state, one of the four strategies outlined in the Northeast Tennessee Regional Strategic Plan prepared by Tennessee ECD (implemented through AccelNow). The plan also notes that ECD will focus on opportunities that include "leveraging research, engineering, and technology resources from regional companies such as Eastman Chemical Company, Nuclear Fuel Services, and Nakatetsu Machining Technologies."

However, challenges exist as well. The IEDC panel heard that the region has many entrepreneurs, but many of those are young and experienced. A lack of deal flow is also an issue.

The goal of building an ecosystem for entrepreneurship came up during the meeting with small business and entrepreneurship stakeholders. This is an important concept that merits the attention of all economic development stakeholders. Though the IEDC panel was unable to do a deep dive on the state of entrepreneurship and related support efforts in the region, the team recommends economic development partners and allies follow the principles below in regard to building a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Integration of services. Regular communication among entrepreneur support groups and their allies are key to ensuring that services are integrated. Entrepreneur support groups should be connected through regular meetings with each other and also connect with other economic development stakeholders (ideally by participating in the economic development stakeholders group mentioned in the first section of this report). Many communities have established online portals and virtual entrepreneur support networks for this purpose.

Full spectrum of needs. Entrepreneurs have a wide range of needs, from business planning to financing, commercialization, exporting, marketing, etc., depending on their background and stage.

For example, in meeting with the IEDC team, the TSBDC director noted that 70 percent of his work is working with existing firms on growth and expansion, and the Innovation Lab focuses on tech-oriented businesses – both of which are vital services, but it was less clear which groups work extensively with new or aspiring entrepreneurs. In addition, the region lacks a SCORE chapter (Service Corps of Retired Executives), and the IEDC panel heard that SBA lending in the region is virtually non-existent.

A useful resource for ensuring that the full spectrum of entrepreneur needs is covered is IEDC's research report, "Unlocking Entrepreneurship: A Handbook for Economic Developers" (a free download for IEDC members). The report provides an extensive toolkit for economic development organizations to conduct a qualitative assessment of the community's entrepreneurship support services; a quantitative assessment of the entrepreneurship and business climate in the community; a survey to assess the needs of local entrepreneurs; and an innovation assessment for analyzing the dynamics of the innovation ecosystem and the level of community competitiveness. The report also includes an extensive overview of entrepreneurship in general, plus strategies, case studies and lessons learned.

(IEDC offers many additional resources on supporting entrepreneurs, including another in-depth report, "Accelerating Success: Strategies to Support Growth-Oriented Companies," plus journal and newsletter articles – all available free on the web for IEDC members – as well as webinars and training courses.)

No-wrong-door approach. This approach ensures that no matter how potential entrepreneurs come in contact with the existing entrepreneur support system, their needs will be met. This means working with entrepreneurship support partners to ensure that if the services they provide are the not the right ones for an aspiring entrepreneur, the service partner knows the right place to send that person.

As noted in an article by Don Macke of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship,

> "No wrong door" starts with the idea that whenever entrepreneurs do reach out for help, every available door leads to your entrepreneur support system.
>
> Every community and every region has an entrepreneur support system even if you do not recognize it or have a name for it. Every day entrepreneurs come into contact with county zoning offices, local bankers, attorneys, CPAs, radio stations, newspapers, computer stores, municipal building permit offices, chambers, main street programs, development corporations, mayor's offices, office supply stories, other business owners and the list goes on and on.

> By engaging these "touch points" in your strategy they can become pathways to your services for entrepreneurs. Taking a bit of time to involve and educate these touch points can create a robust network that connects your resources with area entrepreneurs. This "no wrong door" approach can be supplemented with a robust entrepreneur resource website, like Giles County's [Tools for Business Success](), for those more likely to connect via the Web.[25]

One step that Asheville, N.C., took to help with this was to develop a Startup Resources Map (PDF) as a reference guide to help the area's entrepreneurs and small business owners find the resources to fit their needs. The flow chart offers three starting points – startup, networking, and funding – followed by clarifying questions that point to a range of resources, depending on the entrepreneur's need. (An expanded version of the image is included in Appendix F.)

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25 http://thevalleyworks.org/?p=1801

3.6 Examine specific economic development opportunities related to the hospital merger as an early priority.

> ***"Wellmont versus Mountain States made parochial rivalries worse. Something really big has to happen to be viewed as 'we are all in this together,' like after 9/11. The health care merger has real opportunity."***
>
> ***"The two CEOs involved understand they can make progress if they do it right."***

The two health systems that serve the region – Mountain States Health Alliance (MSHA), based in Johnson City, and Wellmont Health System, based in Kingsport – agreed in early 2015 to explore merging operations by the end of the year. MSHA operates 13 hospitals and numerous outpatient care sites across a 29-county, four-state region. Wellmont operates six hospitals and numerous outpatient care sites in northeast Tennessee and southwest Virginia.

Bart Hove, president and CEO of Wellmont, is slated to become CEO of the new system. Alan Levine, president and CEO of Mountain States, will become executive chairman and president of the combined system.

The region has disproportionately high rates of health problems such as cardiovascular disease, pulmonary disease, diabetes, addiction and untreated mental illness. The region also has higher hospitalization rates per thousand; at the same time, healthcare, overall, is headed in the direction of lower-cost home health and outpatient services. Public relations materials indicate that the merger is hoped to better address both these problems and problems faced by hospitals on a national level (e.g., reimbursement cuts, the decline of inpatient volumes, constrained revenue, the move of services to the outpatient setting, and the increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining physicians).

Many stakeholders believe that the merger of the health systems will be good for the region in multiple ways. Some of the opportunities mentioned include:

- Opportunities for research dollars to flow to ETSU
- Increased ability to recruit and retain more specialized doctors
- New training and education opportunities in the health sector
- A more comprehensive, integrated focus on the region's particular health problems (research and innovation)

ETSU will play a role in the merger and likely be involved in a range of opportunities with the new health system going forward, particularly in training and research. According to a press release from Wellmont, ETSU President Brian Noland will serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of the merged health system's board.[26]

The university's strengths are in translational research (applying findings from basic science to enhance human health and well-being). Several stakeholders noted that the health issues faced by the region's residents provide an opportunity to apply research and innovation to local problems. Audrey Depelteau, director of ETSU's Innovation Lab, noted that as new research opportunities come out of the hospital system to ETSU, there may be the opportunities for technology transfer and commercialization.

A biomedical research center at ETSU – the Center for Inflammation, Infectious Disease and Immunity – was approved by the board of regents. The center will include physicians, physician scientists and other scientists collaborating to develop new treatments together. A major objective of the center is to increase the university's competitiveness for extramural funding. New initiatives and collaborations like this could lead to successful grant pursuits from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

The region also has a strength in the fact that ETSU has a school for all the health sciences except dentistry (the most health sciences schools in one place, except for Ohio State). Health information technology, combined with access a wider array of data, could present research, application and commercialization opportunities. In addition, ETSU's digital media program could have opportunities regarding a rural medicine program.

However, caution is prudent on several counts. Some stakeholders mentioned that the merger's economic impact on the region could be negative; administrative jobs are likely to be lost. In addition, Tennessee declined to expand Medicaid, putting hospitals that were already doing a lot of uncompensated care in a difficult position. Finally, the region's economy is heavily weighted in healthcare, making it vulnerable to larger problems in the healthcare industry as a whole.

However, most stakeholders saw more opportunity than threat in the merger. At a minimum, it will present a regional healthcare system, a new set of opportunities and a different way of doing business.

A task force to explore opportunities around the merger could include, as one of the areas it explores, how to better leverage opportunities around the MedTech Corridor.

[26] http://www.wellmont.org/News/2015/Wellmont-Health-System-And-Mountain-States-Health-Alliance-Announce-Plans-To-Pursue-An-Integrated-Health-System.aspx

3.7 Develop a coordinated marketing campaign, including a regional brand and unified marketing message.

An important part of the regional economic development strategy is developing a regional brand and unified marketing message.

While the specific branding/marketing strategy is critical to both existing businesses in the region and to potential new businesses, the messaging needs flows from the strategic plan, rather than the other way around.

A regional brand is more than a slogan. It's a statement of the promise that the region's leaders are making to stakeholders. A brand should ring true to the community, not overpromise, and be aspirational without being overreaching. The brand doesn't stand alone; it is part of the overall marketing message from the community.

There are three levels of marketing messages. The first is the broad message of "why come to Northeast Tennessee." The second is the message to a business that is interested in expanding or moving to the area, and the third is the service delivery message – i.e., *we're here to help you and here's how*.

The process of developing a strong marketing campaign evolves from the economic development strategy and sponsoring organization. It evolves from identifying the assets of the region, the regional culture, the services available through the economic development organization, and the commitment of the organization to strong service delivery.

The marketing strategy flows from the answers to the following four questions:

- What types of businesses/industries make sense for the region based upon talent, infrastructure, and resources? (targeted industries)
- What are the specific reasons that a business should locate in Northeastern Tennessee? (i.e., talent availability, competitive wages, job training resources, quality of life, etc.)
- What is the "product" available for new/existing businesses? (i.e., existing buildings, new building development sites, access to rail and highway, etc.)
- How will the community help businesses to stay/locate in the region? (i.e., technical assistance, expedited permitting, available sites, financing, financial incentives)

The typical tools of a good marketing strategy may include (but are not limited to):

1. An easy-to-use, attractive website that provides basic information about the community itself, data that reflects the regions demographic, educational and cultural conditions, an up-to-date site database that is well maintained, and a method for connecting with the EDO;

2. Background demographic information on the community;

3. “Fam” tours scheduled for site selectors and other key stakeholders to educate them on the region’s assets, sites and hospitality;

4. Representation at industry conferences marketing the community, advertising in industry and/or site selector trade magazines; and

5. Targeted marketing to industry and trade association leaders through direct mail, personal contact, use of “ambassadors” (community leaders and area businesses who are part of the EDO).

The most important part of any marketing campaign or brand is to *not overpromise*. This means that the system is prepared to respond to inquiries quickly, that the data is accurate and current, and that the message is clear among all stakeholders.

Starting the branding/messaging discussion. A good starting point would be for the community to work with the state of Tennessee and the TVA to request their assistance in making available a marketing expert to be part of the regional strategy setting. At some later point, an economic development marketing consultant might be necessary, and could assist in the discussion around setting goals and objectives.

Appendices

Appendix A: Demographic Information on the Johnson City, Tenn., MSA

Population change

The Johnson City MSA's population grew at a rate comparable to the U.S. between 2000-2010, about two percentage points slower than Tennessee. From 2010-2014, the MSA's population growth was about two-thirds that of Tennessee and the United States. Washington County's population grew faster than Carter, Unicoi's, or the MSA's population between 2010-2014.

Table 1: Population Change, 2000-2014

	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	2014 estimate	Change 2010-2014
Carter County	56,742	57,424	1.2%	57,771	0.6%
Elizabethton	13,372	14,176	6.0%	14,156	
Unicoi County	17,667	18,313	3.7%	17,963	-1.9%
Erwin	5,610	6,097	8.7%	6,074	0.4%
Unicoi	3,519	3,632	3.2%		
Washington County	107,198	122,979	14.7%	126,242	2.7%
Johnson City	55,469	63,152	13.9%	64,317	1.8%
Jonesborough	4,168	5,975	43.4%		
MSA	181,607	198,716	9.4%	202,240	2.0%
Tennessee	5,689,262	6,346,105	11.5%	6,549,352	3.2%
U.S.	281,421,906	308,745,538	9.7%	318,857,056	3.3%

Sources: quickfacts.census.gov; ESRI

Race and ethnicity

The Johnson City MSA has a significantly higher percentage of whites compared to Tennessee and the United States as a whole. Washington County's population is the most diverse of the three.

Table 2: Race/ethnicity, 2013

	Carter	Unicoi	Wash.	Tenn.	U.S.
White alone	96.8%	98.0%	92.3%	79.1%	77.7%
Black or African American alone	1.5%	0.4%	4.3%	17.0%	13.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	1.2%
Asian alone	0.4%	0.2%	1.3%	1.6%	5.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Z	Z	Z	0.1%	0.2%
Two or More Races	1.2%	1.0%	1.7%	1.7%	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino	1.6%	4.2%	3.1%	4.9%	17.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	95.3%	94.0%	89.7%	74.9%	62.6%

Age distribution

The median age of Carter and Unicoi counties' populations in 2013 was 4.6 and 6.7 years older (respectively) than that of Tennessee. In Washington County, the median age is just 1.4 years older than that of Tennessee.

Table 3: Age distribution, 2013

	Tennessee		Carter County		Unicoi County		Washington County	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Total population	6,402,387		57,438		18,254		123,891	
Under 5 years	403,431	6.3%	2,916	5.1%	849	4.7%	6,594	5.3%
5 to 9 years	411,772	6.4%	3,198	5.6%	787	4.3%	6,171	5.0%
10 to 14 years	423,504	6.6%	3,128	5.4%	1,369	7.5%	7,885	6.4%
15 to 19 years	428,201	6.7%	3,412	5.9%	959	5.3%	8,270	6.7%
20 to 24 years	442,761	6.9%	4,108	7.2%	950	5.2%	10,732	8.7%
25 to 34 years	832,087	13.0%	6,303	11.0%	1,921	10.5%	15,347	12.4%
35 to 44 years	851,537	13.3%	7,422	12.9%	2,320	12.7%	16,363	13.2%
45 to 54 years	915,529	14.3%	8,520	14.8%	2,705	14.8%	17,122	13.8%
55 to 59 years	423,043	6.6%	4,152	7.2%	1,315	7.2%	8,557	6.9%
60 to 64 years	382,586	6.0%	3,951	6.9%	1,401	7.7%	7,557	6.1%
65 to 74 years	512,510	8.0%	6,050	10.5%	2,044	11.2%	11,001	8.9%
75 to 84 years	273,853	4.3%	3,341	5.8%	1,198	6.6%	5,973	4.8%
85 years +	101,573	1.6%	937	1.6%	436	2.4%	2,319	1.9%
Median age	**38.2**		**42.8**		**44.9**		**39.6**	
Median age, 2010	**37.6**		**41.4**		**44.1**		**38.9**	

Educational attainment

Residents of Washington County have the highest education levels in the region, just slightly above the U.S. for those with a high school education or higher and those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Washington County is nearly 6 percentage points above Tennessee for those with bachelor's degree or higher (29.3% versus 23.8%, respectively). For Carter and Unicoi counties, educational attainment rates are lower than Washington County, the state and the nation. The percent of those with a bachelor's degree or higher in Carter County is just over half that of the U.S. and Washington County. In Unicoi County, it is less than half that of the U.S. and Washington County.

Table 4: Educational attainment, 2014 population, 25 and older

	Carter	Unicoi	Washington	Tenn.	U.S.
Less than 9th Grade	8.9%	10.3%	5.5%		
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	12.3%	13.3%	8.7%		
High School Graduate	30.8%	32.5%	23.4%		
GED/Alternative Credential	7.2%	7.2%	5.4%		
Some College, No Degree	19.4%	18.7%	21.8%		
Associate Degree	5.8%	6.2%	5.9%		
Bachelor's Degree	10.1%	7.5%	18.0%		
Grad/Professional Degree	5.4%	4.3%	11.4%		
High school graduate or higher, 2009-2013	79.8%	76.1%	86.5%	84.4%	86.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, 2009-2013	15.8%	12.9%	29.3%	23.8%	28.8%

Source: ESRI market profiles & Census QuickFacts

Income and poverty levels

Income levels are lower and poverty rates higher in the MSA compared to both Tennessee and the United States. The median household incomes in Carter and Unicoi counties are more than $20,000 lower than that for the U.S. and more than $10,000 lower than that for Tennessee, and poverty rates are higher.

Table 5: Income & poverty levels, 2009-2013

	Carter	Unicoi	Washington	Tenn.	U.S.
Per capita money income*	$19,018	$20,152	$25,355	$24,409	$28,155
Median household income	$31,842	$32,292	$42,075	$44,298	$53,046
Persons below poverty level	22.9%	21.7%	18.3%	17.6%	15.4%

**In the past 12 months, 2013 dollars. Source: Census QuickFacts*

Employment and unemployment rates

The labor force in Carter and Unicoi counties has declined over the past 10 years, but in Washington County, has risen faster than the United States. Unemployment rates in Carter and Unicoi were 1.2 and 1.5 percent higher than the U.S., respectively, in 2013, while Washington County's unemployment was .1% lower than the United States.

Table 6: Employment and unemployment comparisons, 2013

	Carter			**Unicoi**			**Wash.**			**U.S.**		
	2013 total	5-yr change	10-yr change	2013 total	5-yr change	10-yr change	2013 total	5-yr change	10-yr change	2013 total	5-yr change	10-yr change
Total labor force	26,878	-9.6%	-6.2%	8,102	-4.0%	-1.7%	61,293	-1.5%	8.5%		0.7%	6.1%
Employed	24,569	-11.5%	-8.4%	7,379	-5.5%	-3.9%	56,841	-3.2%	6.2%		-1.0%	4.5%
Unemp'd	2,309	16.4%	26.0%	723	14.6%	29.3%	4,452	26.0%	50.1%		28.4%	30.6%
Unemp't rate	**8.6%**	28.4%	34.4%	**8.9%**	18.7%	30.9%	**7.3%**	28.1%	40.4%	**7.4%**	27.6%	23.3%

Source: StatsAmerica

Appendix B: Sample Outline for Undertaking a Community Visioning Project

Source: The National Civic League's Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook (PDF), pp. 9-10.

Successful visioning projects usually follow a number of concrete steps. Each of these components will be described in depth in the following chapters. The nuts and bolts of successful visioning projects follow.

THE INITIATING COMMITTEE

This preliminary phase brings together a team of project "champions," or initiators, to lay the foundation for the community visioning effort. This group of 10 to 15 individuals representing the broader community focuses on the process and logistics of the visioning project, not the content. Their participation on this Initiating Committee (IC) adds credibility to the project, because diverse interests and perspectives are represented from the beginning.

THE PROJECT KICKOFF

A kickoff event serves to promote understanding of the project and allows participants ("stakeholders") to get to know one another and begin developing into a high-performance team. Most important, it demonstrates why an inclusive approach is being used, why community members were chosen to participate, and what the desired outcomes are for the entire community.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

This exercise identifies external forces, pressures, and trends that are impacting the community from the global, national, and state levels. Though much of the planning will focus on the areas directly within the control of the community, it is nonetheless important to be aware of how actors outside its control may affect it and how such effects can be addressed.

THE COMMUNITY SCAN

Here participants evaluate the future their community is likely to face if no significant intervention occurs. Weighing this scenario against the desired future helps to define key areas where change must be effected. Secondary data and indicators are combined with subjective perceptions to develop a rough consensus of current circumstances (both positive and negative) in the community.

THE CIVIC INDEX

Communities use the Civic Index, a tool developed by the National Civic League, to measure their planning and problem-solving capacity. The stakeholders assess and then consider methods to enhance the community's civic capacity and build its civic infrastructure—the skills, processes, and relationships that a community needs to deal effectively with its specific and unique concerns.

The Community Vision Statement

A vision is a useful tool on which to focus the hopes and aspirations and to frame the project and set priorities. This vision describes where committee members would like the community to be in key quality-of-life areas 10, 20, or 30 years into the future. The vision statement must reflect the commonly held values of the community and guide stakeholders for the remainder of the visioning process.

Identifying Key Performance Areas

With a firm grasp on the desired future of the community, stakeholders focus their action planning by identifying Key Performance Areas (KPAs). If these are addressed effectively, they will "bend the trend" toward the desired future.

Action Plans

Participants must integrate their work and develop a strategy for implementation, monitoring, and follow-up. They must identify responsible parties, set timelines, estimate costs, and find sources of support to keep the project rolling.

The Community Celebration

Visioning projects should always conclude with a community celebration acknowledging the planning work of the stakeholders and various contributors, announcing the plan to the community, and commencing the implementation phase.

Shifting From Planning To Implementation

The transition from planning to action is crucial. The finalized action plans have articulated a "game plan" of specific projects and policy recommendations, and the lead implementers must build on these commitments and begin their work immediately. Responsible parties should capitalize on the momentum surrounding the celebration and publication of the final report to facilitate rapid movement.

The Implementation Committee

Successful visioning projects must have some kind of entity to oversee and support the implementation process. This committee, often made up of participants in the planning phase and other key players, ensures that plans remain on track, prioritizes key efforts, assists responsible parties with the action steps when necessary, and troubleshoots when unforeseen barriers arise.

CONCLUSION

In this initial chapter, we have articulated the value of collaborative community-based planning processes and consensus-based decision making. We also have provided an overview of community vision planning and implementation.

It is important to understand that visioning projects come in a variety of forms. Each community process is different in some way. Chattanooga's project maintained the crucial principles of community participation, yet the process they followed was far different than the cone we are suggesting. Visioning projects and pilot programs at the local, state, national, and international levels differ substantially in their focus and organization. However, all possess a goal of improving the quality of life and increasing the well-being of all members of the community. To succeed, community-based visioning projects must involve representatives from all parts of the community.

Appendix C: Anti-Poaching Protocols and Agreements: Cuyahoga County, Ohio; Sacramento, Calif.; Denver, Colo.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND ANTI-POACHING PROTOCOL

Purpose

The communities of Cuyahoga County wish to enter a new era of regional collaboration to promote economic development. To that end, they hope to work closely with the county to make their communities and the region more attractive to business. While these communities want to encourage businesses to locate within their boundaries, they prefer not to do so at the expense of their neighbors. Inevitably, some businesses, for their own reasons, will choose to explore re-location from one community in Cuyahoga County to another. In such instances, a balance should be struck to allow the first community the opportunity to retain the business and the second community or communities the opportunity to attract it. However, if a business has not expressed an interest in re-locating, most believe that communities should not actively pursue or "poach" that company to encourage it to move from its current location.

The purpose of this Business Attraction and Anti-Poaching Protocol is to: (1) facilitate interactions between the county and the communities to promote economic development; (2) establish a county-based "one-stop shop" for businesses considering location or expansion in Cuyahoga County; (3) express the commitment of the participating communities that they will not actively pursue the re-location of a business that has not indicated that it is considering a move from its current location in another participating community; and (4) in instances where a business is exploring a possible move, establish procedures to balance the interests of the business' home community and other participating communities.

Principles and Protocols

In the interest of promoting the economic well-being and growth of our communities, Cuyahoga County, and Northeast Ohio, we, the undersigned, agree to the following economic development actions, principles and protocols (the "Agreement"):

1. Business Retention and Expansion Advisory Council Established: The undersigned agree to participate in Cuyahoga County's Business Retention and Expansion Advisory Council (BREAC), a virtual organization that facilitates the distribution of leads from economic development organizations and site selectors to participating communities. BREAC is also a source for accessing County economic development resources and programs. Membership in BREAC is limited to those communities that enter into this Agreement (the "participating communities") and is the County's first step towards establishing a "one-stop shop" for businesses considering location or expansion in Cuyahoga County. In furtherance of that effort, the participating communities further agree to:

a. Designate one person to the County's "deal team network" as the community's point of contact for all economic development matters.

b. Provide the community's updates to the County's "deal team database" of city resources, which provides information about participating communities' economic development programs and incentives.

c. Provide the community's updates to a central "available property" database.

d. Assist the County and economic development organizations, such as Team NEO and the Greater Cleveland Partnership, when economic development leads are identified.

2. Business Attraction and Retention Principles: Cuyahoga County's economy will be stronger if its communities work together, rather than against each other. These communities should focus their economic development efforts on the attraction of new businesses, the retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the promotion of their communities as good places to do business. While some businesses will choose, for their own reasons, to re-locate within the county, the focus of economic development efforts should not be on encouraging companies to move from one community to another within the county.

3. Active Pursuit/"Poaching" of Businesses: In keeping with the above principle, we agree that, where a business has not indicated that it is considering a move from its current location in a participating community, we will not actively pursue that business to encourage it to re-locate. "Actively pursue" means to initiate contact with the business directly, with the intent of luring the business, through cold calls, visits, mail solicitations, or marketing directed specifically at that business. This does not preclude a community from generally marketing itself as a good place to do business or generally advising its residents about the benefits of locating their businesses in their home communities.

4. Protocol in the Event a Business Indicates That It Is Considering a Re-Location: The following protocol applies to businesses with 25 or more full-time employees. In the event such a business residing in a different participating community contacts the mayor, manager, trustee, or economic development director of the undersigned community, either directly or through a representative, to discuss a possible re-location, we agree to follow the following protocol:

a. We will advise the business that we want to assist the business so that they are successful .

b. We will ask the business whether it has advised the community in which it is currently located that it is considering a re-location and, if not, whether it objects to our advising the home community of the inquiry. If the home community has not been advised and the business does not object, we will promptly notify the mayor, manager, or trustees of the home community in writing of the inquiry.

c. We will not publicly propose or offer incentives to the business in support of a re-location until either the business verifies that it has notified the home community of the possible re-location or we have given that notice.

d. We will advise the business, if asked, that Cuyahoga County may condition the awarding of county incentives and assistance on the receipt of consent from the community in which the business is currently located.

e. We will agree to discuss the possible relocation with the mayor, manager, or trustees of the affected home community if asked by those officials.

f. Without making any commitment to revenue share and noting that some signatories do not favor revenue sharing, we will agree to have a discussion about the possibility of a revenue sharing agreement with the mayor, manager, or trustees of the affected home community if asked by those officials.

5. Protocol in the Event a Business is Considering a Consolidation: In the event a business with operations in one or more participating communities contacts a participating community to indicate that it is considering consolidating its operations in the contacted community, that community shall treat the situation as it would a potential re-location and follow the protocol outlined above.

6. Protocol in the Event the County Learns of a Re-Location or Consolidation from a Participating Community to a Non-Participating Community: In the event the County learns that a business is considering relocating or consolidating operations from one or more participating communities to a non-participating community or communities, the County shall have the responsibility to execute the protocols listed above.

7. Effect of Non-Participation: Cuyahoga County strongly encourages communities to participate in this Agreement. The County reserves the right to consider participation in this Agreement in evaluating applications under the proposed County Economic Development Fund and other programs.

8. Term: The Agreement shall remain in effect until December 31, 2014, unless terminated earlier in accordance with Section 9(A) below.

9. General Provisions

A. **Termination:** This Agreement may be terminated in its entirety by the mutual written agreement of all then-current participating communities. In the event a participating community wishes to terminate its participation, it shall provide notice of its intent to terminate to the county Executive and the other participating communities. Such termination shall be effective as of the date stated in such notice.

B. **Amendment or Modification**: This Agreement may be amended or modified by the participating communities, provided that any such modification or amendment shall become effective only upon the written agreement by the authorized authority of each participating community.

C. **Capacity to Execute**: The undersigned hereby certifies that all actions necessary to execute this Agreement were taken, and the person executing this Agreement is authorized to do so and has the power to bind the jurisdiction to the terms and conditions contained herein.

D. **No Cause of Action Created**: No cause of action (direct, derivative, taxpayer, third-party beneficiary, or any other kind) is created or intended to be created by this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the parties committing to the above principles and protocols has caused this Agreement to be executed by its duly-authorized representative as of the date indicated.

[Signature lines]

GREATER SACRAMENTO AREA ECONOMIC COUNCIL 400 Capitol Mall, Suite 2500, Sacramento, CA 95814 | 916.441.2144 PHONE | 916.441.2312 FAX | greater-sacramento.com

Regional Cooperation Protocol Policy

Greater Sacramento Area Economic Council and Economic Development Directors Taskforce
The foundation of this policy is built on trust and the spirit of regional cooperation among the entities involved. Greater Sacramento and the Economic Development Directors of its member communities agree and acknowledge that it is imperative that they work together as partners on projects involving the communities which Greater Sacramento represents, regardless of the source of the lead, as follows:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to the positive promotion of the 6-county Sacramento Region, as a globally competitive region.

2. Maintain the highest standards of economic development prospect handling, including confidentiality, without jeopardizing a prospect's trust to secure the probability of a successful regional location. Partners agree to respect the prospect's request for confidentiality but also agree to notify each other as to the existence of a project with a confidentiality requirement when able and shall make a good-faith effort to involve the appropriate state, regional, or local partners at the earliest possible time.

3. Unless otherwise restricted, agree to coordinate through Greater Sacramento for any prospect considering a project in the six-county Sacramento Region, or in any of the communities that Greater Sacramento represents, understanding that Greater Sacramento is in a unique position to represent and speak on regional economic development issues and on characteristics of the region's economy. Likewise, Greater Sacramento acknowledges that communities are in the best position to speak about local incentives and efforts surrounding the local economy.

4. For projects that originate with a Greater Sacramento member community, Greater Sacramento will be available for confidential research access, topical expertise, or as a service provider to add value to the community in securing the project. Additionally, Greater Sacramento will not publically release information about the project unless the community lead makes such a request to do so.

5. Provide accurate and timely information in response to specific requests by all prospects. When a client has narrowed sites to specific Greater Sacramento member communities, Greater Sacramento will make a good-faith effort to inform those affected EDDT members first. EDDT members agree to provide information solely on their own community when the information requested is site-specific (i.e., cost of land, taxes, development fees, utility availability and cost, zoning process timing, permit timing, and local incentives).

6. When site-specific information related to other Greater Sacramento communities is requested, EDDT members agree to (i) direct Greater Sacramento prospects back to Greater Sacramento or (ii) direct non-Greater Sacramento generated prospects to contact the affected communities directly, and as a courtesy, contact the affected communities.

7. Agree that regardless of the lead source, public attraction, retention, or expansion location announcements shall be coordinated among the company, Greater Sacramento member community, and

Greater Sacramento to reflect inclusiveness and cooperation of all partners (subject to any confidentiality requirements).

8. Discourage the proactive offering of local, municipal financial incentives for existing jobs to companies with current operations in another Greater Sacramento community. Any incentives being considered will be discuss with the EDDT members before offered to company.

9. Inform Greater Sacramento member community when a company tour or physical site visit within that community will occur. Economic Development Directors will be the primary point of contact for the company when community information is needed.

10. Agree that the consideration of a future community to Greater Sacramento's membership will be brought before EDDT for discussion in advance of any Board consideration. EDDT will make a recommendation on the addition of a new community to Greater Sacramento's President & CEO.

11. Formalize a process to convene Greater Sacramento and Economic Development Directors of Greater Sacramento member communities quarterly, and cooperate in the exchange of information and ideas reflecting practices, procedures, and policies relating to prospect handling and regional economic development. Weekly meetings will continue until EDDT members decide to move to a monthly conference call and quarterly meetings.

12. Work collectively to maintain a high level of trust and integrity by Greater Sacramento and the Economic Development Directors of Greater Sacramento member communities, utilizing differing views as an opportunity to learn.

13. When Greater Sacramento conducts a marketing objective (i.e domestic or foreign trade mission), Greater Sacramento staff will coordinate with EDDT to ensure coordination and communication.

14. When a RFP is issued by GO-Biz, Greater Sacramento will coordinate the region's response. All RFP submissions will be directed to Greater Sacramento's attention and Greater Sacramento will assemble the response and return to GO-Biz.

15. It is understood Greater Sacramento will or may host annual site selection professionals and/or other marketing familiarization tour(s) to promote the regional communities. Greater Sacramento will make every attempt to provide as much interaction time as possible between the site selectors and the EDDT. It is understood the EDDT members will inform and coordinate with Greater Sacramento of any upcoming site selectors and/or other marketing familiarization tour(s) scheduled by their offices.

16. Partners agree to enter into a mediation process if there is evidence that this Protocol has not been observed in a material respect or a professional conflict arises that cannot be settled. This mediation process will be convened by the EDDT Chair, who may, at his/her discretion, consult or involve Greater Sacramento's President & CEO in addition to others with topical expertise central to the conflict.

Name: ______________________________ Date: ___________________________
Organization: _______________________ Signature: _______________________

Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation Code of Ethics

INTRODUCTION

The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (Metro Denver EDC) is committed to the economic development and growth of the metro Denver region. The EDC brings together the interests of a broad range of public, private, and public/private groups to promote the metro Denver area as a single economic entity. The collaboration of such a variety of groups and interests requires that certain standards of conduct must be developed and adhered to for the Metro Denver EDC to meet its goal. This Code of Ethics represents the standards that each member of the Metro Denver EDC supports and practices in its daily conduct of business.

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Metro Denver EDC, set forth the following principles of behavior and standards of conduct to guide efforts in promoting the long-term economic health of the metro Denver community. We fully realize that no Code of Ethics is of value without an inherent level of trust in the integrity of one another and a commitment from each of us to conduct ourselves at the highest levels of professional conduct. The Metro Denver EDC was founded on the respect and trust of its members. In that spirit, we set forth this Code of Ethics.

- We are committed to the promotion of metro Denver as a desirable business location for new and expanding companies. When representing the Metro Denver EDC, we shall endeavor to sell "Metro Denver First" and our individual communities and projects second.
- We shall honor the confidentiality requested by both our fellow members of the Metro Denver EDC and our prospects. Information shared with our fellow members in confidence shall remain in confidence. Transactions are to be driven by the client. In the event a company chooses to relocate from one community to another, every effort will be made to contact the affected community to let them know of the potential move. Violation of this commitment shall be viewed as the single most serious breach of our membership pledge to the Metro Denver EDC.
- We are committed to the concept of competition for locations and expansions among our individual communities and projects, provided that the prospect has asked for specific proposals or has settled on a metro Denver location.
- At no time shall any member of the Metro Denver EDC solicit a fellow member's prospects.
- We are committed to working together with the real estate community and are in no way in direct competition with them. Economic developers are a resource and facilitator in the site selection process.
- We are committed to sharing among our membership as much information as is necessary and prudent on any activity undertaken by or in the name of the Metro Denver EDC. Our guiding principle shall be that "more information is better than less."
- At no time shall any economic development organization member of the Metro Denver EDC advertise or promote its respective area to companies within another member's geographic area in a manner that is derogatory or insulting to the other geographic area. "Selling against" another member of the Metro Denver EDC or another Colorado community, or direct solicitation of intrastate relocations, is strongly discouraged.
- We are committed to locating prospects in the metro Denver region. In the event that our local jurisdictions cannot meet the needs of a particular prospect we shall communicate with our fellow members in an effort to meet the company's needs elsewhere in the metro Denver area.

- Economic development organizations shall hold all site and building information provided to the Metro Denver EDC by member real estate brokerage firms in the strictest confidence. Said information shall not be printed, copied, and shown in any manner to any entity other than prospects or their direct representatives.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROSPECTS
In all instances members of the Metro Denver EDC shall honor the confidentiality of individual prospects. Whenever possible, specific information on particular transactions shall be shared within the realm of the Metro Denver EDC and the Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade. In those instances where prospects are dealing with individual communities, information will only be shared by Metro Denver EDC staff and the local ED representatives involved.

In instances, where a prospect wishes to remain completely confidential with an individual community, the remaining members of the Metro Denver EDC shall honor that confidentiality and shall in no way attempt to intervene in the relationship. The prospect will remain confidential until the prospect chooses to announce.

MARKETING
Any member of the Metro Denver EDC that develops a prospect generated from national advertising and tradeshows sponsored by the Metro Denver EDC shall utilize the "Prospect Tracking System" of the Metro Denver EDC in all contacts with the respective prospect.

Members are strongly discouraged from advertising in local media outside of their own market area.

(November 2004)

Appendix D: Article on Regionalism in Denver

"When Cities and Suburbs Work Together"

Source: The Atlantic

Metropolitan areas like Denver and New York are shunning competition and focusing on how entire regions can work together to reach economic goals.

By Nancy Cook, May 2, 2015

In the 1980s, the city of Denver, Colorado, was hardly a model for any type of economic development.

After the oil bust, the vacancy rate in Denver's downtown soared, with the city auctioning off office space for mere cents per foot, remembers Tom Clark, the chief executive officer of the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation. Residents cordoned themselves off in the nearby suburbs. And the state budget was in such dire circumstances that the government stopped funding prominent cultural institutions like the Denver Art Museum and Denver Botanic Gardens, write Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley in their book, *The Metropolitan Revolution*.

It's hard to square this portrait of Denver with the city today, which consistently ranks high on lists of the best places to live and work in the country. How did Denver go from an ailing city to a vibrant regional economy, connected by robust public transportation, thriving cultural institutions, and shared economic values? The city and its surrounding suburbs had to decide that working together was preferable to struggling separately. After some initial finger-pointing, localities joined forces in the mid-1980s to transform the Denver metropolitan area from a resource-based economy that was concentrated on oil to a vibrant, diverse one. The resulting collaboration has tackled everything from air quality to building a new train system. "It's a culture issue. It's the way they do business there," says Bradley, the director of the Center for Urban Innovation at the Aspen Institute.

Denver's turnaround began with a regional agreement, signed in January 1987, which laid out the region's shared economic principles. The mayors of Denver and surrounding areas still gather once a month to meet on economic plans. And, even though the original regional agreement remains voluntary, people stick to the core ideas. "It's an approach to regionalism that's about creating a culture instead of a legal structure," Clark adds. "People want to behave at the highest level of ethics, provided the guy next door does, too."

The success of Denver shows the value of cities, suburbs, and rural areas banding together to tackle economic development. Yet despite the benefits of this model, regional collaboration remains rare. Far more common is the example of cities and towns vying to undercut one another for the next big economic project—be it through tax breaks, government subsidies, or changes to zoning regulations. "It really is still so hard for people to look beyond the one big deal in the pipeline," Bradley says. (Case in point: Kansas and Missouri are famous for their "economic border war," where the two states fight over companies headquartered in the Kansas City area.)

Landing that one big deal, after all, is what has consumed local economic-development officials for decades. Every city, suburb, and town wants to tout a major corporate headquarters or new stadium or plant to employ hundreds of residents. Increasingly, this line of thinking appears outdated. "People are moving from, 'Let's build an industrial park and hope that somebody locates here' to 'What are our true competitive advantages and assets and how do we leverage them?'" says Matthew Chase, the executive director of the National Association of Counties.

In this increasingly global economy, cities, suburbs, and towns have to worry not just about competition from an adjacent city or state, but the competition from other countries with lower wages. That's why a handful of places, like Denver, have realized the benefits of regional work. "It's best to look at what makes sense to make the economy of the metropolitan region function effectively," says Christopher Jones, the vice president for research at the Regional Plan Association, an independent urban-research and advocacy group focused on the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut metro area. "If you're not doing that, you're just moving pieces across the table—they could just as easily move back in the other direction instead of creating lasting value and productivity."

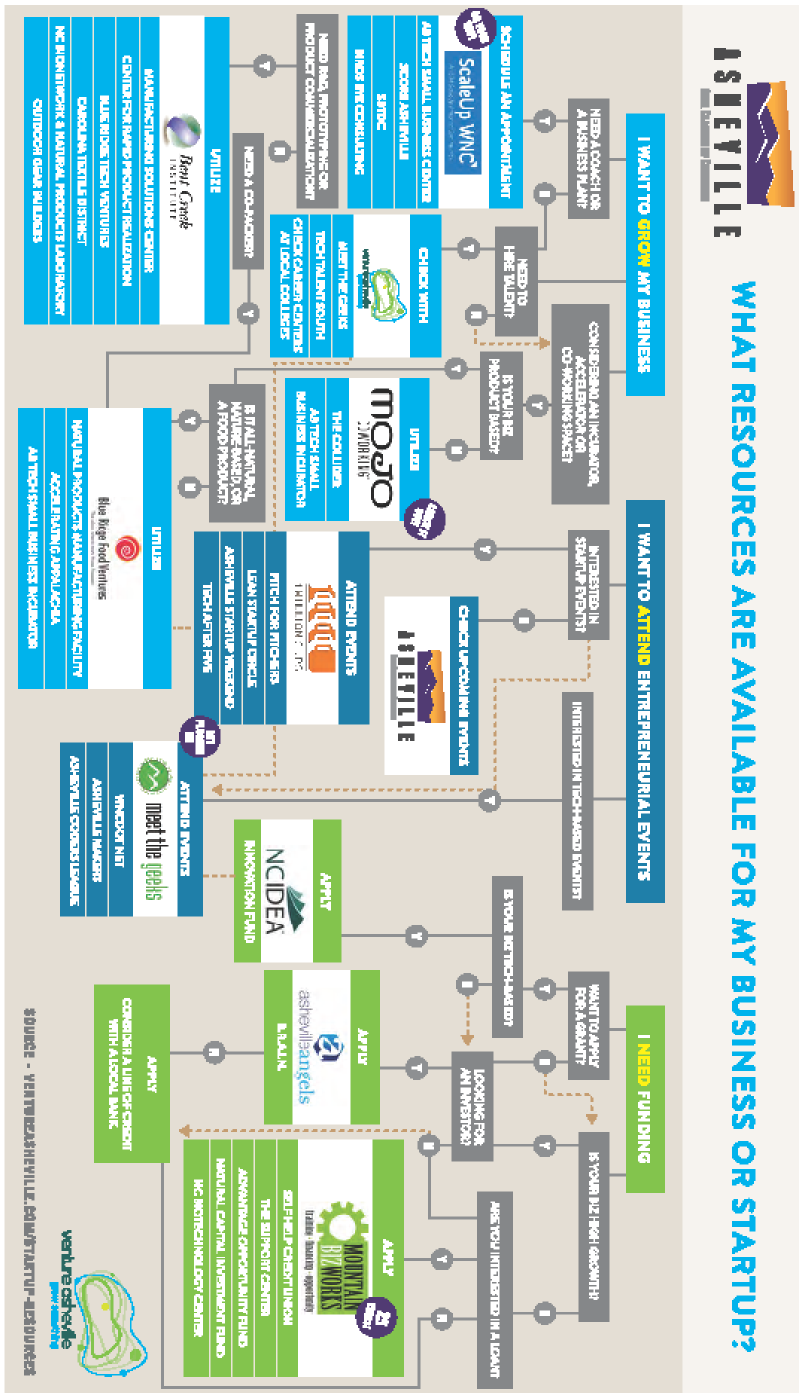
That's why regions from Denver to New York City and its surrounding suburbs to even rural communities in Iowa, Nebraska, and Kentucky are working together. Instead of just offering up the best or highest tax breaks, these locals governments, planning officials, private-sector business people, and real-estate developers are trying to think through what makes each region unique and authentic. Then, they build up the local economy around those attributes.

In New York, that may mean working to bring more tech companies and engineering firepower to the city, which, in turn, will help the surrounding areas by creating jobs. In a county of 100,000 residents in Iowa, it means banding together with neighboring rural areas to bolster local agriculture. "People are going to push for regional approaches because the economy is regional," says Amy Liu, co-director of the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program. "Even if you are a mayor in an urban core, your residents still need to find good-paying jobs wherever they are." That means traveling from one's home to an adjacent suburb, town, or county for work.

Part of the change, of course, has come about because many cities boast much brighter economic fortunes than they did throughout the 1970s and 1980s. New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., now offer their own infrastructure, cultural attractions, jobs, and nightlife, while suburbs across the country have started to encounter their own share of traditionally urban problems, like poverty and vacant storefronts. "Cities started to come back, while the suburbs are a mixed bag," Bradley says. "Cities stopped looking like dead weight."

Cities may not be as bad off as they once were, yet the collaboration between the cities and suburbs remains one of the most challenging impediments to regional economic development. Just look at the tension in Ferguson, Missouri, which suffers from poor economic fortunes and racial discrimination, while other areas of St. Louis prosper. "The city versus the suburbs is a difficult barrier to overcome," Jones says.

Appendix E: Asheville's Map of Startup Resources *(source: www.ventureasheville.com)*



Appendix F: Articles from IEDC's *Economic Development Now* Newsletter on Strategic Planning

"'Make This Your North Star:'" Creating and Executing an Effective Strategic Plan"

By Louise Anderson, September 2012

Strategic planning is critical to setting an organization's direction and keeping it on track. And though strategic plans should have common elements, there's no one right way to create one.

ED Now interviewed representatives from six Accredited Economic Development Organizations (AEDOs) about their strategic planning processes, the elements of an effective plan and tips for developing one. Having a strong strategic plan is one requirement for earning the AEDO designation, which recognizes the professional excellence of organizations in the field. Those interviewed for this article include:

- Brett Doney, CEcD, President and CEO, Great Falls (Mont.) Development Authority (11 staff serving 13 counties)
- Jim Fram, CEcD, FM, CCE, Senior Vice President - Economic Development, Tulsa (Okla.) Metro Chamber (12 economic development staff, 1 million population in 13 counties)
- Jerry Stewart, CEcD, Workforce Development Coordinator, Virginia Beach (Va.) Economic Development (16 staff, 435,000 population served)
- Katherine Long, DataMaster, Ponca City (Okla.) Development Authority (six staff; 25,000 population)
- John S. Cox, CEcD, CCE, President & CEO, and Ryan McDaniels,CEcD, Vice President of Economic Development, Cabarrus County (N.C.) Economic Development (three economic development staff, 183,000 population served)
- Jackie Wellington, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, St. Louis County Economic Council (45 staff serving just under 1 million population)

"Strategic planning is a process that can be used by an entity to look at its current situation and compare that situation to where it would like to be in a matter of time" (IEDC's *Introduction to Strategic Planning* manual).

An economic development organization strategic plan should include the following:

- Mission statement
- Achievable goals and objectives
- A realistic appraisal of available resources, constraints, and opportunities
- Project action plans to reach goals, including the identification of responsibility, timelines, and project or program prioritization.

The six groups have common elements to their processes and plans, and approach other aspects very differently. Read on to learn what they do, how and why.

Frequency of overall planning process and updates

Plan time periods range from two years to five, but each group revisits its plan regularly and makes updates as market conditions change. All groups revised their plans to some extent at the onset of the recession.

We study our strategic plan every 12 months because we have so many different stakeholders involved in our process. We don't want to lock ourselves into a five-year plan. …We really drill down every four years, when we go through [AEDO] accreditation. (Ryan McDaniels, Cabarrus County)

We start with a blank sheet of paper every two years. ..The downside of starting with a blank slate each time is you'd best be ready to be a dynamic organization. (Brett Doney, Great Falls)

Formally, every five years. Informally, we look at it on a very regular basis, tweaking it periodically based on things in the economy, situations in the region we serve. (Jim Fram, Tulsa)

It's a living, breathing document with a lot of flexibility to it. We get it out and look at it all the time. (Kat Long, Ponca City)

Use of a consultant

No: Great Falls, Virginia Beach, Ponca City
Yes: Tulsa, Cabarrus County, St. Louis County

Depth and length of the plan

A targeted industry study is important, but not the same thing. Some groups do a targeted industry study at the same time as a strategic plan, others at a different time (but each agreed that a periodic, in-depth study of targeted industries was critical). Nor is a strategic plan the same as a marketing plan. Jerry Stewart, as part of his work on the AEDO committee, has reviewed a number of plans that communities labeled as "strategic" but that he would classify as "marketing."

People confuse strategic planning with market analysis. We're doing market research on an ongoing basis. Strategic planning is how our organization is going to use our discretionary dollars, time and effort for the next couple of years. Because we keep it really focused, not covering everything we do, we end up with no more than three pages. That way we can live and breathe it and everyone understands what we're trying to do. (Brett Doney, Great Falls)

We adjust our targeted industry matrix based on adjustments at the state and regional [targets set by the N.C. Dept. of Commerce and the Charlotte Regional Partnership] and as local assets change. (Ryan McDaniels, Cabarrus County)

We keep it to 10 pages. The first two pages pretty much say it all. The rest is bullet point objectives. (Kat Long, Ponca City)

We believe brief is best. (John Cox, Cabarrus County)

Who's involved in the strategic planning process

Always the board and key stakeholders or investors; sometimes the broader public, sometimes not.

One of the most important roles of the board is to set strategic direction. This really empowers the board. If I've done a good job educating folks over time, there shouldn't be that many surprises, but every time I go through this, it ends up being different from what I would have put together. If you have a good board, trust them. If you want them to raise money for it, let them own it. (Brett Doney, Great Falls)

How priorities or areas of emphasis changed in the last few years

Every group revised its plans to reflect the new market realities brought on by the recession, typically to focus more on business retention and entrepreneurship.

The defense cluster is a big thing for us. We dropped that as one of our targeted industries because we know that's going to be cut back, and we have to diversify away from that. …We also realigned how we do our work. Up to this point, we had a couple of people doing business retention, other staff doing recruitment. Now all staff will have a target industry to serve for retention, expansion and recruitment…almost becoming an expert in that area. (Jerry Stewart, Virginia Beach)

In 2009, we completely threw out the plan we had adopted in 2007. …We shifted our emphasis to business retention and entrepreneurship and put less emphasis on business attraction. The biggest change was deciding to move forward with a couple of major projects to make us more competitive. We used that time to position ourselves for when businesses started investing again. We completely cut out areas that we didn't see producing a lot of return. We made some hard decisions to not do some things at all so that we could have adequate resources to do other things. (Brett Doney, Great Falls)

One of our key strategies this year is a small business and entrepreneurship plan, including a Young Entrepreneurs Academy. We now have a staff member primarily assigned to that. (John Cox, Cabarrus County)

Measuring progress and results

Each group reports the progress on its work back to its board at monthly meetings and at the end of the year. In 2010, Cabarrus County's board hired a consultant to vet its existing plan and the group's results against it; it also uses a balanced scorecard.

Our strategic plan basically has two goals – the first is to create 10,000 new primary jobs in a five-year period with salaries over $50,000 a year. The second goal is $1 billion in new capital investment in the region during that time frame. The only jobs we count are the ones we had something to do with. (Jim Fram, Tulsa)

Include targeted measures and designate a lead person [for various goals and objectives]. That way you have a point person who is a facilitator to make sure that everything stays on track. (Jackie Wellington, St. Louis County)

Tips for developing an effective strategic plan

Keep it simple. Really respect the time of your volunteers. (Brett Doney, Great Falls)

A very accurate SWOT analysis [strengths, weaknesses, unities, threats] is the first thing. Then if you have the budget to hire a consultant, it's been my experience that it's much more detailed, realistic, and better prepared by someone who has fresh eyes from outside the community. …In my opinion, the more comprehensive it is, the better. (Jim Fram, Tulsa)

You can't do it in a vacuum; you have to have business community input in some way. And, plans that have a lot of community input are a lot more in-depth. (Jerry Stewart, Virginia Beach)

Take a step back and look at who your partners are and their strengths. We have this saying that we are the sand, or the gray, that fills in the spots in between [other groups' projects and capabilities]. (Kat Long, Ponca City)

Talk to some AEDOs and have them walk you through what they went through to create theirs. (John Cox, Cabarrus County)

Get a cross-section of people to give you input. Formulate your mission and core values. Look out to the future with a vision statement. Make this your north star. (Jackie Wellington, St. Louis County)

* * *

"Successful Strategic Planning and Implementation: What Your Peers Are Doing"

By Louise Anderson, April 2014

When it comes to strategic planning, it seems there are two maxims: Get as much input as you can, and communicate, communicate, communicate, every step of the way.

Those are the clear messages resulting from a survey IEDC conducted in January on successful approaches for developing and implementing a strategic plan. The survey focused on how EDOs generate engagement and ownership from stakeholders and the community at the onset and how they maintained that commitment throughout implementation.

Survey respondents came from all over the U.S. and Canada, plus Mexico, Brazil, Germany and England. Here are some highlights of their responses.

Achieving momentum behind the plan

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of various elements in helping achieve momentum behind the strategic plan. Though all responses clustered close together (from 4.3 to 4.7 on a scale of 1 to 5), in descending order of importance they were: Strong leadership by the initiating organization; a sense of ownership among community stakeholders; a strong plan based on analysis of the economic base and policy alternatives, and a sense of urgency around the purpose and need. Other aspects of achieving momentum noted by respondents include:

- Stakeholder involvement and buy-in to the final plan, along with agency(ies) follow-through is paramount to the plan's success.
- Implementation plans should be specific but leave room for creativity.
- Personal commitment to cooperate with other leaders to implement recommendations.
- The ability to measure success of the plan (benchmarks).
- Making sure that plan is always focused on the goals established by the city leaders.

Engaging the community in identifying priorities

Respondents reported most commonly using the following methods to engage the community in identifying priorities and developing the plan:

Focus groups of businesses and/or residents	80%
One on one meetings with key groups	78%
Presentations to key groups	75%
Informal communication with the community	65%
Informal communication with key groups	57%
Surveys of local businesses	49%
Surveys of residents	26%

Additional comments noted the use of the media, charrettes, and professional facilitators.

Building a sense of urgency and ownership from community stakeholders

Respondents were asked how the initiating organization built leadership and a sense of urgency and ownership from community stakeholders. For some, a crisis (e.g., the loss of a major employer) sparked a sense of urgency. Others relied on data and numbers to convey the need. But the most common themes were outreach and engagement – of the general public, key decision-makers, business and community leaders, subject-matter experts, members, partners, and others affected by and involved in economic efforts. Those efforts typically took place via surveys, focus groups and meetings. Selected comments and advice offered further insight:

- People have to be involved in their plan – make every effort to do so.
- Hosted as many meetings, public input sessions and conversations as possible during the process and hosted a formal event to unveil the new plan.
- Key business leaders held one-on-one meetings with other business leaders, public officials and community leaders.
- Invited [groups] to be partners in solving the problems. Some of these were "customers" and they were engaged to help come up with solutions to the problems they identified.
- Establish a vision affirmed by a grassroots engagement, a date to achieve the vision and a clearly defined aspirational narrative describing in detail the outcomes if the vision is achieved. Include quantitative metrics based on the vision narrative that define progress in achieving it.
- We invited all agencies to participate and we gave them all the credit. We were behind the scenes building the relationships and securing resources and then we would ensure the agencies had sustainability plans in order to continue programs and initiatives.
- The team and community must have ownership. Individual components of the strategy were assigned to different groups (internal & external) for completion.

Others used strategies such as having the mayor chair the planning process, holding kickoff meetings, and developing a video to introduce the plan.

Also: 82 percent of respondents reported that the initiating organization identified agencies that would play lead and secondary implementation roles, and 54 percent of initiating organizations formed a separate committee to monitor implementation (46 percent did not).

Communicating with implementing groups and the public

Respondents reported using a wide range of communication methods to monitor progress among implementing groups, ranging from the personal and informal (phone calls, emails, one-on-one meetings) to joint board meetings with all county and city elected officials in a region. Other methods included monthly, quarterly and annual activity reports; regular task force or committee meetings; formal presentations to city council by EDC staff, and media coverage.

In terms of communicating with stakeholders and the public to solicit feedback, promote the plan or provide updates, common methods included press releases of major actions taken as part of the strategic plan, and resulting exposure in newspaper, radio and TV outlets; newsletter articles; targeted emails to partner organizations and their memberships; listening sessions and presentations to key groups; public meetings or events; social media engagement; briefings of elected officials and one-to-one outreach. Additional comments include:

- The executive director was the quarterback, keeping a clear and consistent dialogue going with all stakeholders – most importantly, the policy makers.
- There were no surprises because of regular updates throughout the process.
- Engagement of investors in implementation committees
- Public information sessions with information stations staffed by experts/team leaders, giving the ability for all to talk among themselves in small groups informally. Provide detail online and in the media. Listen to reactions.

Many of these same methods also were used to maintain partner support and commitment to the plan, along with “finding unique ways to package the work to granting organizations,” “working with the sector councils identified in the plan to provide support for specific initiatives,” and “making connections between what other groups are doing and how it supports the target industry clusters.”

Publicly recognizing the engagement and support of partners

Fifty-six percent of respondents reported holding events, celebrations or other activities to publicly recognize partners’ contributions and commitment to the plan. Ways of recognizing partners in the planning process include:

- Applying for regional, state or association awards
- Holding a celebration event when the plan is formally adopted or launched, or at the achievement of a milestone or implementation of a project or program
- Having elected officials formally recognize volunteers, project managers and others
- Recognition at an annual business breakfast
- Presentations to stakeholder groups and “thank you”/information meetings with investors
- Press releases, newspaper articles, e-newsletters, an annual report, scorecard, talks to community groups
- A special insert, supplement or magazine included in the region’s major newspaper highlighting efforts of partners, areas of focus and current status of metrics

Key takeaways

Asked to identify the *single most important component to sustaining commitment to a strategic plan from stakeholders during implementation*, several themes emerged. They are listed below, followed by respondents’ words of advice.

<u>Communicate, communicate, communicate</u>: Clear, timely and effective communication with stakeholders keeps them engaged with the work taking place. Leave plenty of time for community

meetings / engagement and vetting and keep the process open and transparent. Make the effort to get publicity. Let people know the results. Stay out in front of the audience. Engage the press in the process and remind them of the importance of the updates and celebrations. Periodic good news announcements are critical to setting the tone. Provide regular updates and ways to engage.

Generate measurable, accountable results (short-, medium- and long-term): Create a checklist with start and completion dates. "Never-ending" plans go on a shelf. Keep it in the forefront and reference how work relates to the plan at every opportunity. Show continuous progress on implementing the plan. Produce tangible results. Report back regularly on deliverables and the success or lack thereof.

Leadership: Top business leader commitment and engagement are crucial. Show that the mayor and other elected officials are committed to the program – the passion shown attracts followers. Make sure new leadership is aware of and buys into the existing plan.

Truly collaborate: Incorporate the feedback you receive. Have the community take ownership of the implementation. Recognize that it is truly a joint effort. Make it a shared vision of initiating and implementing groups. Don't let the planning entity presuppose the outcome of the process, but instead allow the community and stakeholders to voice their needs and priorities

Celebrate success: Share the "glory" with everyone who touched it. Continuously thank individuals for their active involvement and make progress visible to the public.

Focus: Make the case and keep making the case. Help people understand that planning is a process and that it takes time. Provide constant reminders of what they adopted for a formal strategy. When committees and board members creep outside of the adopted plan, bring everyone back to the strategy. It's about repetition and staying power. Each new initiative is tied back to the plan. Clarity and consistency.

Appendix G: IEDC Expert Panel Biographies

Mark Barbash

Mark Barbash is Executive Vice President / Strategic Initiatives for Finance Fund, a non-profit CDFI economic development corporation that provides financing for community and economic development projects throughout Ohio.

Mark has over 30 years of economic development experience, having served in the public sector at the local, state and federal levels, and in the private sector focusing on real estate and business development, and development financing. In his career, he has had senior-level policy and management responsibilities, served in national association leadership positions, created new development programs, as well as working "on the ground" to move projects forward to completion.

Between 2007 and 2011, Mark served as Chief Economic Development Officer for the Ohio Department of Development. From 2000 to 2007, Mark was Director of Development for Columbus, Ohio, under Mayor Michael B. Coleman. Prior to 2000, Mark served as Executive Director of Community Capital Development Corporation (a high-volume SBA lender), Vice President of Miller and Schroeder Financial (an investment banking firm specializing in business and municipal financing), Deputy Director for Business Financing for the Ohio Department of Development, and Vice President for the National Development Council, a New York based-nonprofit economic development consulting firm. His background also includes Congressional experience, having worked for a U.S. Senator, a member of the House of Representatives and the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Mark is a nationally recognized economic development practitioner and trainer, having developed and taught a wide range of professional development courses. He currently site on the board of the Ohio Economic Development Association, The CATCO Equity Theater Company (where he is currently Board President) and the Parsons Avenue Redevelopment Corporation. In the past, he has served on the board of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), TechColumbus, and others. He has been designated a "Fellow Member" of IEDC in recognition for career contributions to economic development. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is married to Mary Cartter Barbash. They have one daughter, Rachael Elizabeth Barbash.

Larry Burkhardt, CEcD

Larry Burkhardt, CEcD, has served as the first Executive VP and Chief Economic Development Officer of the public/private Fox Cities Regional Partnership since May of 2012. At the time, the Regional Partnership was a new economic development organization formed to serve a 2 ½ county region in east central Wisconsin.

His experience in economic development spans more than twenty years, and includes positions as President/CEO of Upstate Colorado Economic Development with offices in Greeley, Colorado; the first President/CEO of the Nevada County Economic Resource Council, located in Grass Valley, California; and President/CEO of the Economic Development Association of Longmont, Colorado.

In 2015, Larry was recognized as one of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers by Consultant Connect, a consulting agency designed to bridge the gap between economic developers and site consultants. Economic developers selected for the award were nominated by their colleagues in both the economic development industry and the site consultant community for excellent practices, innovation and success in building the communities they serve.

Larry earned a BA in philosophy from Duns Scotus College in Southfield, Michigan. His graduate work in theology was done at St. Leonard College in Centerville, Ohio.

Larry has published in excess of one hundred articles on economic development; has hosted weekly radio shows on economic development in Colorado and California; and has been retained as a speaker on economic development for many local, state and national audiences. He has served on many local and national boards, including terms on the National League of Cities Economic Development Committee, Comstock's Business Magazine's Editorial Board and President of the Rural Telecommunications Congress. He was elected to four terms on the Longmont, Colorado City Council, serving eleven years, including two years as mayor.

Larry is a member of the Fox Cities Morning Rotary Club, and a past president of the Greeley Redeye Rotary Club. He lives with his wife Linda and their two Newfoundland dogs in Dale, Wisconsin.

Joy Wilkins, CEcD

Joy Wilkins is an advisor, speaker, facilitator, instructor, and author on community development, economic development, and leadership development matters.

Joy loves to develop partnerships for working together across boundaries, lead high-performing teams, and engage with community leaders to help improve lives. She has served with the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, the Metro Atlanta Chamber, and a software development start-up; and has delivered research, planning, and consultation services for clients in the United States and Canada.

A Certified Economic Developer by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), Joy is also a registered mediator in the state of Georgia. She has a master's degree in city planning from Georgia Tech; a graduate certificate in real estate from Georgia State University; and a bachelor's degree, with majors in sociology and political science, from the State University of New York at Fredonia.

Joy is a member of the IEDC Board of Directors and has been actively involved in a number of other endeavors to serve and advance the profession since 1994.