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The EDRP Program is the “think tank” component of IEDC, designed to help economic development professionals weather the challenges and grab opportunities from economic changes affecting our communities. EDRP members are leaders in the field of economic development, working through this program to improve the knowledge and practice of the profession. IEDC would like to thank the Economic Development Research Partners program for providing the impetus and resources for this project.

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Executive Summary

Economic development is a noble calling. The opportunity to make a positive difference in a community and in people's lives makes for a personally fulfilling profession for many people.

Economic development is also complex, sensitive work, involving the high-profile balancing of multiple stakeholder interests. As such, economic developers must respond to questions about or challenges to their strategies and practices as part of the job.

Some of these challenges or issues are unique and some are perennial. Broadly speaking, common challenges include general misunderstanding of economic development, its purpose and impact; transparency and accountability; and ideological opposition.

In response, IEDC's [Economic Development Research Partners \(EDRP\)](#) program chose to examine the reasons behind various challenges to the profession and develop resources to help economic developers address them. This report is one piece of a larger initiative to elevate the profession and support economic developers in helping their investors, partners, clients and other stakeholders to better understand, support, and act on behalf of the work of the organization (EDO).

The paper is based on focus group input, survey results, interviews, prior IEDC publications and web research. Five recommendations came through as clear priorities to help economic developers champion their work and respond to challenges:

1. **Do good work.** This work is the foundation on which organizational and professional integrity are built. It means diligently executing your role as an economic development professional: planning the EDO's actions with the guidance of its governing body; executing the plan; measuring the results and reporting them.
2. **Listen. Engage. Adapt.** Economic developers must be willing to listen and evaluate criticism. Whether objections to economic development or an EDO come from a place of ideology or misinformation, or whether they raise valid questions, economic developers must be prepared to engage and respond accordingly.
3. **Make transparency a core tenet of your work.** Transparency fosters trust, which is the foundation on which economic development is built. EDOs that act transparently – e.g., in regard to their strategic plan, return on investment, compensation and expenditures, deal-making criteria and processes – foster trust in their community relationships.
4. **Communicate and connect.** Part of being an economic developer is to know that constant communication is a core function of the job. The audiences for these efforts to educate and engage are extensive – council and board members, state legislators, other governmental partners, local civic, neighborhood or special interest groups, service delivery partners, clients, the general public – nearly everyone.
5. **Build and enlist allies.** All successes in economic development are born of partnerships working in varying combinations. These partners are also an EDO's greatest allies. Doing good work in

the context of these partnerships means understanding the motivations, goals and needs of these partners as they work with the EDO, and being flexible and creative in finding win-win solutions.

Following the recommendations, the paper provides tools, strategies and examples economic developers can use to champion their work (through proactive communication), or respond in the face of higher scrutiny or challenges. It includes extensive sample documents, case studies, brochures, and more to help economic developers communicate, measure results, and respond effectively in a range of situations.

Ultimately, as they contribute to the economic vitality of their communities, economic developers must also embrace the role of educator. They must be prepared to explain, describe and build consensus for their work and for its impact, and constantly articulate its value and processes to others. This paper intends to provide economic developers with the tools, strategies and tactics they need to champion their work every day, as well as to manage and mitigate challenges that may arise.

I. Introduction

Economic development is complex, consequential work. Through economic cycles, changing political landscapes, catastrophic events, great challenges and great opportunities, the work of economic development organizations offers communities a stable, experienced, thoughtful and forward-looking hand on the wheel. It is high-profile work that attracts interest, support, and sometimes scrutiny from the public.

As such, scrutiny of economic development programs is rarely in the form of *why* a community is becoming more business friendly. Rather it is the *how* (i.e. methods employed in economic development) and *who* (big businesses vs. small businesses) that are hotly contested. More fundamental than differences in opinion or ideological challenges, however, is simply helping people understand what economic developers do and why, and the impact of that work.

Economic development touches everyone's life in a community. New jobs are available for neighbors. Vacant storefronts are filled. Blighted blocks becomes hubs of activity. New revenues save residents from tax increases. These are just a few of the everyday outcomes of economic development, apart from the outsize role that economic developers often play in a crisis such as a plant closure, or natural disaster.

The point is that economic development's stakeholders, and potential champions, are many.

So in addition to contributing to the economic vitality of their communities, economic developers must also embrace the role of educator. They must be prepared to explain, describe and build consensus for their work and for its impact on communities. They must act with accountability and transparency. The work requires building and sustaining the trust of the public and a variety of constituencies, whether an economic development organization is publicly funded or a private-sector organization working with government to support the business environment.

To earn that trust, economic developers must be credible, consistent and dedicated to the value of their work. They cannot assume that people know what they do and why, or that they act in the public interest; economic developers must constantly articulate their value and processes to others.

Economic development is worthy of respect. It is worthy of its champions. It is a noble practice and a profession, one that has real and lasting impact on people's lives and on communities' ability to succeed.

This paper intends to provide economic developers with the tools, strategies and tactics they need to champion their work every day and manage and mitigate challenges that may arise from their work.

Background, Scope and Methodology

A number of factors encouraged the creation of this paper. Some perennial challenges to the profession are discussed below. In addition, in recent years, several state legislatures have taken a skeptical view of economic development and pursued legislation to curtail it. Also significant was Amazon's widely publicized search for a second headquarters during 2017 and 2018. The public saw dozens of cities and

regions propose large, undisclosed incentive packages to a wealthy corporation, leading them to question not just Amazon's methods, but the economic development process itself.

Against this background, IEDC's [Economic Development Research Partners \(EDRP\)](#) program chose to examine the reasons behind various challenges to the profession and develop resources to help economic developers address them. This report is one piece of a larger initiative to elevate the profession and support economic developers in helping their investors, partners, clients and other stakeholders to better understand and act on behalf of the work of the EDO.

The report begins with an overview of common challenges faced by economic developers and their organizations. It then provides recommendations for actions that economic developers can take to champion their work (through proactive communication), or respond in the face of higher scrutiny or challenges. It includes extensive sample documents, case studies, brochures, and other tools to help economic developers communicate, measure results, and respond effectively in a range of situations.

This paper draws on a range of sources. Research began with four focus groups of practicing economic developers in January 2018. A survey of economic developers followed in summer 2018, in addition to interviews with IEDC members and a conference panel on the topic. EDRP members on the project task force provided invaluable input and direction. Additional source materials include past EDRP reports, IEDC course manuals, EDO websites, and material reprinted by permission from partners and member organizations.

II. Common Challenges

The last few years have seen a number of aggressive challenges to the economic development profession and to its values, strategies and tactics. Some of these challenges or issues are unique and some are perennial; either way, it is necessary to address them with clarity and conviction. Common challenges are described below, grouped into three broad themes: misunderstanding of economic development, its purpose and impact; transparency and accountability; and ideological opposition. Recognizing these challenges is the first step in avoiding, managing or mitigating them when they arise.

Misunderstanding of the role of economic development

We don't need economic development – our economy is in good shape.

Growth is too fast and it's ruining our quality of life.

Unemployment is so low that local firms can't find workers – why attract companies and bring in new jobs?

Community leaders might have a number of reasons for perceiving that economic development does or will have a negative impact on the community. They may seek to limit competition from other businesses. The community may be experiencing rapid growth that is threatening the quality of life. Or it may be a place where one company or industry has dominated the local economy for years and the community is content with that.

Lack of understanding of the role of an economic development organization

Economic development isn't doing what it should to foster equitable opportunities for people.

Economic equity (and lack thereof) has come into greater focus since the uneven recovery from the recession of 2008. Millennials, more so than previous generations, highly value and expect it.

Some believe that economic development should place greater priority on creating opportunities for marginalized people to participate in the economy. Others would say that all EDOs, by their very nature, create opportunities for all.

As there are all kinds of EDOs, some are more explicitly focused on disadvantaged areas or populations than others. For many, equity objectives have not previously or aren't currently a charge of their organization. Yet today, in communities where there aren't other organizations to take on this issue, stakeholders increasingly look to EDOs. With these changing expectations and the need for higher workforce participation rates, it is worth noting that many EDOs have become more intentional in addressing equity issues.

Economic development is mostly about helping big business.

Indeed, some economic development programs and organizations are structured in a way that provides benefits primarily to large employers. There is a reason many EDOs do this: Large firms often provide the bulk of jobs in a community. Retaining them and helping them grow is critical to the local economy, a job that EDOs are uniquely prepared to perform. Therefore, EDOs must constantly be telling the story of their role in maintaining these vital community assets.

Though many EDOs do assist small, local firms, the public simply hears less about it. In any case, the economic development organization and professional must execute the mission, work plan, and goals approved by the elected body or board of directors.

Transparency and accountability

What are we getting for our money?

Economic development is a closed-door club that benefits people with the right connections.

EDO budgets are too big and we don't like what they spend their money on.

Economic developers are paid too much.

How public funds are being used, and who benefits from using them, are at the heart of most concerns about transparency and accountability. Common objections or misperceptions are that tax dollars are being “wasted” on ineffective or unnecessary efforts, or that some people are benefitting improperly. For example, the focus may be executive pay, dollars spent on entertainment or travel, project incentives, or contract awardees. In good economic development practice, these issues are avoided by adhering to ethics guidelines (such as the [IEDC Code of Ethics](#)), using objective criteria for decision-making, and employing strong organizational oversight.

As long as EDOs work with businesses, there will be elements of their work that must remain confidential. Questions about transparency will always recur, so EDOs must be prepared to address them by proactively sharing the information they can, and being clear about what they can't share and why.

Ideological opposition

Government shouldn't get involved in the private market, picking winners and losers.

Incentives are corporate welfare.

Ideological opposition likely has roots in one or more of the concerns mentioned above – that economic development primarily benefits large corporations, or the wealthy and connected; or that the free market should determine the direction of the economy with little or no government intervention (including dollars).

Some elected officials and citizens will never support economic development efforts no matter what facts are presented. Sometimes, elected officials publicly oppose economic development to make a political statement; others just aren't interested in learning more.

However, none of this exempts economic developers from constantly communicating the value and impact of their work, and in fact, just shows why it's all the more important.

III. How economic developers can prepare for and respond to challenges to their work

Based on focus group input, survey results, interviews and additional research, five recommendations came through as clear priorities to help economic developers champion their work and respond to challenges: Do good work; listen and respond to questions and criticism; make transparency a core tenet of your work; communicate and connect; and build and enlist allies.

Following an overview of the recommendations is a section containing tools and strategies to apply them. Comments from economic developers who participated in this research are included throughout.

1. Do good work.

This means diligently executing your role as an economic development professional: planning the EDO's actions with the guidance of its governing body; executing the plan; measuring the results and reporting them. In other words, do what you say you are going to do, then show that you've done it.

One of the challenges for many EDOs, particularly smaller ones, is measuring impact. A survey conducted by IEDC in 2014 found that nearly 30 percent of economic development organizations do not measure their performance regularly or at all. IEDC published a paper, "Making it Count: Metrics for High Performing EDOs" in 2014 to provide guidance on this subject.

This work is economic development 101, the foundation on which organizational and professional integrity are built.

2. Listen. Engage. Adapt.

You need to meet people where they are. A lot of it is just listening.

Economic developers must be willing to listen and evaluate criticism. Sometimes, objections to economic development or an EDO come from a place of ideology or misinformation, and sometimes they raise valid questions. The question or challenge may be about something the EDO can change, or something it can't.

In good economic development practice, strong oversight and management, governing documents, and wisdom from affected stakeholders all help EDOs judge the reality of an issue and respond accordingly. Sometimes, an EDO's plan, or even mission, may need to be tweaked or overhauled to better match the priorities of the community or investors.

In response to various criticisms, our response has been to broaden the scope of what we do, adding inner-city revitalization and small business technical assistance to the original mission of industrial and office attraction/retention.

3. Make transparency a core tenet of your work.

Expectations of transparency have always been in place, particularly for public organizations and those that receive significant public funds. Yet transparency matters for private organizations as well.

Transparency fosters trust, and trust is the foundation on which economic development is built. We live in a time when so much information is not just *available* but easily *accessible* that the “digital natives” coming of age now have much higher expectations of transparency than previous generations. Therefore, transparency is critical in regard to the EDO’s mission, strategic plan, return on investment, compensation and expenditures, and deal-making criteria and processes.

Though an EDO may technically not be required to make certain information public (depending on its structure), if it will not jeopardize a deal or relationship, or impose an undue burden, the default response should be to provide the information. A willingness to be open demonstrates that an EDO has nothing to hide; it is a pre-emptive strike against accusations of secrecy or clubbiness. Refusing to provide information that won’t harm the EDO, a deal, or an individual runs the risk of further inflaming opponents. The first recommendation – do good work – is the groundwork for operating transparently.

It’s somewhat attitudinal about how you treat the questions – are you open and responsive, or defensive?

Never submit a receipt that you don’t want to see on the front page of the paper.

4. Communicate and connect.

Part of being an economic developer is to accept educating others as a core function of the job. It involves understanding the different stakeholders in the community, that each group wants to know something different, and that multiple media are needed to best convey the message. The job, therefore, involves constantly sharing information with stakeholders.

This is not news. Nearly all economic development organizations have newsletters, websites, other materials and events they use for educational purposes. Some are more strategic with this type of “educational” communication than others, and of course, different strategies fit different communities and constituencies.

The audiences for these educational efforts are extensive. Council and board members, state legislators, other governmental partners, local civic, neighborhood or special interest groups, service delivery partners, clients, the general public – nearly everyone.

We work with the media to make sure they understand what we do and why we do it. You have to spend time building trust and relationships with reporters.

5. Build and enlist allies.

An economic development organization can't be successful by itself. All successes in economic development are born of partnerships – among government, private enterprise, educational and financial institutions, utilities, social and faith-based organizations, neighborhood groups, and many other stakeholders and service providers – working in varying combinations on a particular project or to strengthen local business conditions.

If an EDO is doing good work, then these partners are also an EDO's greatest allies. Doing good work in the context of these partnerships means being a reliable, effective, discreet team player: understanding the motivations, goals and needs of these partners as they work with the EDO, and being flexible and creative in finding win-win solutions.

It's widely acknowledged that what others say about you carries more weight than what you say about yourself. Many economic developers acknowledged, in focus groups and survey results, that building vocal and visible ally support from key business leaders, elected officials and other stakeholders is critical to communicating an EDO's value proposition.

We invest significant effort in building partnerships because we believe it creates a competitive advantage for our region. It more than triples the size and capabilities of our economic development team.

IV. Tools and Strategies

This section elaborates on the recommendations above by drawing on best and promising practices identified by IEDC and by economic developers who participated in this research. It includes examples and supplemental materials that economic development professionals can use to improve their practice and communication efforts. IEDC has written extensively about several of these topics throughout the years; readers are invited to explore IEDC's archives to discover more materials.

1. Do Good Work

Planning, executing, and reporting are the basic tenets of any well-functioning program or organization. For EDOs, communication is an added layer at each step.

Strategic planning

Too many EDOs are charged with being all things to all people. A good strategic plan stops that.

High-performing EDOs operate with a strong strategic plan to inform their organizational direction, programmatic focus, and long-term economic development vision for their community. The strategic planning process sets goals and objectives; guides operations toward those outcomes; and accounts for the resources available to execute the plan. It should be grounded in reality, yet flexible and adaptable to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities and respond to challenges. Most EDOs revise strategic plans annually or bi-annually, and many have additional five-year plans (or sometimes longer) as well.

Communicating throughout the strategic planning process and after the plan's adoption are crucial to long-term success. People are more likely to support the plan's goals and actions if they are engaged in developing them. Public hearings, articles in local media outlets, social media, and focus group engagement are some commonly used avenues to solicit feedback and share information.

For additional information about organizational leadership and strategic planning, refer to IEDC's 2011 publication, [High Performing EDOs](#).

Execution

Organizational leadership can set apart successful EDOs from others at the execution phase. Engaged and effective leaders know whom to engage and at what point, how to build support for strategies to implement the plan, and – most importantly – when to stick with the plan and when it might be necessary to change course, based on community circumstances.

Two items are important here: accountability and ethics. Depending on the organizational structure and funding sources, EDOs may be accountable to a board of directors, elected officials, businesses and other investors, or some combination thereof. However, they also must be accountable to other groups in the community who are partners in their work. Therefore, EDOs must constantly communicate about their actions and progress. These efforts take time and resource, but are critical to maintaining relationships and securing buy-in for economic development.

Ethical conduct is central to successful execution, essential to building trust among partners and the public. Unethical conduct not only reflects badly on the individual, but also can harm the EDO's effectiveness, as well as perceptions of the profession overall. IEDC has developed a [Code of Ethics](#) (see appendix) that it encourages economic development professionals to follow, and offers complimentary training as well.

Measuring results

A survey conducted by IEDC in 2014 estimated that nearly 30 percent of economic development organizations do not measure their performance at all or regularly. The number went down to 20 percent in 2016, showing movement in the right direction but room for improvement.

Although most organizations that do not track performance are smaller in size and may not have the staff capacity to invest in such an activity, experts agree that basic performance monitoring is critical for long-term organizational performance and stability. It enables the organizational leadership to ensure it is meeting goals, and enables it to improve in areas where it is lagging. It is also a critical tool for communicating about the work and value of the organization to elected officials, partner organizations, and other stakeholders.

First coined in the 1980s, "S.M.A.R.T." metrics – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based – are still relevant almost four decades later.¹ Jobs and investment are the most common metrics that EDOs track. However, most EDOs measure a mix of quantitative and qualitative outcomes to reflect the breadth and depth of their work and convey their true value.

For additional information on performance measurement, see IEDC's 2014 publication, [Making It Count: Metrics for High Performing EDOs](#).

After a CEO who'd strayed from the mission, we communicated the successes the agency (and hence the business community) has enjoyed and the important role the EDO plays. We came through discussions to potentially dismantle the agency with a clear mandate to prove ourselves, and have done so through performance measures.

Reporting & communications

Clear, timely, and effective communication is essential to maintain and build support for economic development projects and organizations. Communication is as much about informing people as it is engaging with them to get honest feedback. Given the balancing act that economic development professionals must maintain among so many partners and stakeholders, the ability to communicate well distinguishes high-performing EDOs from others.

A comprehensive communications strategy identifies different stakeholder groups, critical communication points in a project (both in terms of seeking input and reporting out), and the different types of media best suited to accomplish the job. Social media can be an effective tool to spread the word about certain services and programs, but more traditional media and targeted communications

¹ Doran, G.T., "There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives" *Management Review*, Volume 70, Issue 11 (AMA FORUM, 1981), pp. 35-36.

are typically warranted for more insightful and deeper engagement with the stakeholders. The “Communicate and Connect” section below includes an in-depth discussion of communications tools and strategies.

We encounter some community leaders and elected officials that are not fully on board with investing in economic development. However, after educating them on how economic development works and its impact of creating primary or wealth generating jobs, they typically engage and become supportive.

We are change agents and our job is to make sure that we effectively communicate what needs to be done and how best to realize our goals.

2. Listen. Engage. Adapt.

Organizational management best practice suggests that an EDO must be willing to receive feedback (both positive and negative), self-evaluate, and make adjustments if necessary in order to stay relevant to its stakeholders and constituents. This is easier said than done. As discussed earlier, criticism of an EDO may stem from a variety of reasons, some of which the EDO may be able to address; some of which may not be appropriate to address; and some of which are outside of its sphere of influence. For most EDOs, the path forward is ascertained through a combination of leadership, transparency, diligent analysis, and communications.

The IEDC survey gathered several examples of EDOs that changed their strategic focus in response to feedback from their community.

My organization was nearly disbanded about four years ago because we were not meeting the needs of small businesses. Each of the communities we serve claimed that we were sending business to others in the region, and that we only worked with investors that spent a lot of money with us. Since then we have refocused our efforts and are working much better with community members.

We have completely shifted our approach from an attraction-based strategy (which wasn't effective in a rural, small town) to one based primarily on BR&E and entrepreneurship over the past year. We have also addressed one council person's specific concerns by implementing a main street facade grant program and have included this person in all of the planning and development of the program.

A good example is the issue of equity and inclusion. Responding to growing concerns that the recovery from the Great Recession has not translated to increased opportunity for many, some EDOs now focus on inclusion as a strategic priority. Programs that target disadvantaged populations, low-skilled or unskilled workers are becoming more prevalent, such as those to upgrade technology skills or soft skills, establish accessible career ladders, and facilitate entrepreneurship, among others.

Looking back at the evolution of economic development practice, it is clear that economic developers have long been agile in responding to changing priorities and circumstances. This trait is as relevant now as ever.

Being responsive starts with active listening. EDOs must understand and evaluate the reasons for the feedback and determine how best to respond. It is critical that the governing body be involved in considering any changes to an EDO's approach. EDOs must also communicate diligently and transparently with stakeholders about how it is responding to the issue.

Case Study: Changing Course

(Location kept confidential at the request of the EDO.)

A local EDO had a strong strategic plan in place for the small, rural community it served. It also had a dedicated funding stream for economic development programs and services through a local option sales tax, which generated approximately \$1 million annually.

In an effort to emulate practices common among much larger EDOs, the economic development director chose to focus efforts on business attraction, targeting industrial and retail businesses. It participated in several trade shows annually, both domestic and international. Due to limited resources, entrepreneurship and business retention programs received less attention.

The results were unsatisfactory. The EDO wasn't successful in attracting businesses due to a number of reasons, many of which are typical for small rural towns. Even when they offered incentives to close some deals – and following best practices around incentive design incorporated performance metrics into funds disbursement – the businesses mostly were not able to meet those requirements as they were mostly smaller operations. Support for the EDO from elected officials and the community started waning; the sentiment grew that the community was not getting what it should from its investment in the EDO.

Shortly after these concerns started to surface, the director abruptly left the position in 2017 without explanation. The new director has worked to turn things around, starting at the drawing board – the strategic plan. “We didn’t need a new strategy, we just needed to go back and read the one we already had in place,” said the new director. “Many rural areas try to follow the example of large metro area models of attraction, but we just didn’t have a strong product to sell (i.e., shovel-ready sites that were attractive to incoming businesses). A tight labor market also made it difficult. We had some homework to do on our end,” he said.

Over the past year, the EDO has worked to reestablish relationships with community stakeholders, elected officials and businesses. It is implementing a “Local First” strategy; developing a façade grant program in partnership with the Main Street program and the help of a councilmember; creating a housing program to address concerns around affordable housing for low-income workers; focusing more efforts and funds on entrepreneurship and business retention programs; and renewing relationships with the local chamber of commerce and elected officials. It is focused on listening to the concerns of its stakeholders and educating everyone about the role of the EDO.

3. Make transparency a core tenet in all areas of your work.

As agents for the public good, EDOs are expected to be transparent in their dealings. Although public-private partnerships (PPPs) have less stringent requirements to share information, best practice suggests that all EDOs should strive to be as transparent as possible.

Being transparent starts with honest and regular communication. By proactively providing information, EDOs can educate others about what they do, why they do it, and how. Over time, this builds trust in the leadership and workings of the EDO, and keeps misinformation and misunderstandings about economic development at bay. The appendix includes two brochures that EDOs can use for such purposes.

EDOs should be intentional about distinguishing what can be communicated easily and readily with the community versus more nuanced or confidential information that is shared only with selected audience, under special circumstances or at certain points in time (e.g. after a deal has been finalized). The EDO's mission, strategic plan, services offered, annual reports, and performance on certain projects are some examples of communication pieces that should be easily accessible, such as through the EDO or public partners' websites. (Depending on the local context, other communication pieces may be made available upon request, such as incentives policies, return on investment analyses, etc., though some EDOs share this information on their website). A third category of communication piece would be for a select audience such as a board of directors or elected officials, comprising of confidential information such as negotiations on specific deals or clients, and expenses.

In each of these communication pieces, it is important to tie the economic development approach, decision, or expense back to the EDO's mission and goals.

The Right Place, Inc., located in West Michigan, and Invest Atlanta are two examples of EDOs making transparency a core tenet of their work. Below are dashboards they use in websites, newsletters, and other outlets to convey the economic impacts of their work.

Why don't economic development organizations share information about a deal?

There are two key reasons why EDOs may be reluctant to share information about a prospective deal:

Business perspective: Businesses often require non-disclosure agreements ahead of revealing any information related to their business model or future plans. This could relate to cutting-edge technology, significant investments, or other proprietary information that could jeopardize the competitiveness of the business should such information become accessible to competitors. Employees and investors may also react negatively to uncertainty about future plans.

Community perspective: An EDO may not reveal what is being negotiated in order to safeguard the community's interests during the competitive process.

2018 Economic Development Projects

Company	Retained Jobs	New Jobs	Payroll	Investment
Axis Company LLC		50	\$4,248,400	\$4,000,000
Foremost Farms Greenville		33	\$1,621,620	\$57,952,000
MPH Trucking and Logistics		22	\$515,840	\$2,701,360
VNA Corporation		4	\$323,980	\$25,000
Jedco Inc		39	\$2,014,480	\$9,290,000
Parker Hannifin Corp		46	\$1,952,340	\$5,100,000
Agropur Nartel USA		62	\$2,554,396	\$21,300,000
HexArmor		50	\$2,473,900	\$8,750,000
Amazon		1,000	\$30,000,000	\$150,000,000
Grimm (SMFS, Inc.)		27	\$4,071,600	\$601,312
Ventra Ionia Main, LLC		109	\$6,201,000	\$4,850,000
Tech Defenders		115	\$3,516,240	\$2,709,000
ADAC Automotive		50	\$4,504,448	\$21,294,678
Auvsy GmbH & Co KG		3	\$312,624	\$154,980
Larry's Tire, Inc	30	10	\$962,000	\$1,000,000
Greenville Cabinet	9		\$277,056	\$850,000
Totals	39	1,620	\$65,549,924	\$290,578,330

NEW/RETAINED JOBS	2018 TOTAL: 1,659	ANNUAL GOAL: 1,400
	3-YEAR TOTAL: 3,091	3-YEAR GOAL: 4,200
NEW/RETAINED PAYROLL	2018 TOTAL: \$65,549,924	ANNUAL GOAL: \$50,000,000
	3-YEAR TOTAL: \$135,706,762	3-YEAR GOAL: \$150,000,000
NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT	2018 TOTAL: \$290,578,330	ANNUAL GOAL: \$167,000,000
	3-YEAR TOTAL: \$410,373,687	3-YEAR GOAL: \$500,000,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS COMPLETED:

16

ANNUAL GOAL: 17

MANUFACTURING SUPPORT CONTRACTS COMPLETED:

86

ANNUAL GOAL: 120

COMPANIES SERVED:

369

ANNUAL GOAL: 400

CUMULATIVE COMPANY ASSISTS:

964

ANNUAL GOAL: 1,333

WORK-READY TALENT ASSISTS:

247

ANNUAL GOAL: 525

EVENT ATTENDEES:

986

ANNUAL GOAL: 1,600

WORKING FOR A MORE THRIVING & EQUITABLE ATLANTA - 2018 YTD RESULTS

4,820
New Jobs
Created
Or Retained

\$855M
Total Capital
Investment

1,924
Affordable
Units Created

\$4.1M
Investment
Supported Through
Small Business Loans

122
Homeownership
Incentives
Provided

4. Communicate and Connect

The biggest issue seems to be a lack of information and awareness about what economic development is and what we do. We work hard to show how we create wealth in the community by making regular presentations to civic organizations, with reports and newsletter articles, and working with our board members to communicate our message to everyone they meet in the community.

Economic developers must use an array of communications to help the public understand what economic development is, how it works, and their role in it. They are constantly describing and telling stories about their EDOs' work, and sharing it via multiple media to reach an ever-broader constituency.

This section describes tools and strategies that EDOs commonly use to educate and communicate with the public, with examples. Storytelling tools include testimonials and success stories; communication tools include targeted media, local media, and web and social media.

The public does not understand the long-term nature of economic development. Many believe you just call someone up and they move to the area. We constantly try to inform people that our work is quite tedious and time consuming; however, this is difficult to convey.

Storytelling tools

○ Testimonials

Many economic developers, in the survey, focus groups and interviews, talked about the importance of the business community speaking on an EDO's behalf. There are always opportunities for business leaders to do this informally through networking and the course of daily life, or in a more structured way at press conferences or ribbon-cuttings, through ambassador programs, and by providing testimonials.

Testimonials are the most compelling and persuasive tool available to EDOs. They are simple to get and use – a matter of asking the appropriate executive at a company or organization to talk about the assistance an EDO provided and how it helped the company. They can be pulled out of a project success story, recorded on video, or written up for the web, press release or other use.

[Testimonials from business leaders on the website](#) of the Stephens County (Ga.) Development Authority show the breadth of assistance SCDA provides to both existing and new industry, small and large.



TESTIMONIALS

A couple of years ago, the Stephens County Development Authority informed us that we were located in an Opportunity Zone which qualified us for tax credits that were applied to our GA payroll taxes for adding new employees. We were able to realize these savings. We are thankful to our local development authority for making sure that we were taking advantage of all the tax credits available to us.

Nanette Donahue, Cope Closet Concepts

From the beginning of our interest in moving to Toccoa-Stephens County, the Stephens County Development Authority made regular trips to our office to make sure we are adjusting to our new home and acclimated to the community resources in Stephens County. They provided a wealth of information on Georgia Business Incentives and tax incentives specific to Stephens County. They introduced us to many connections in Stephens County. We now are well connected with the Department of Labor and attend their monthly meeting and after SCDA's help with some paperwork we have taken advantage of GDOL's Incumbent Worker Program. The Development Authority also shared their long list of local vendors with us and we were able to find our utilities provider, an insurance agent, a computer technician and research local CPAs. Basically, the SCDA is our go to. If we can't figure it out or just need some guidance on an issue we don't hesitate to pick up the phone and call. We definitely appreciate the Stephens County Development Authority's efforts to make Toccoa a great place to do business. They truly make us feel welcome and appreciated in Stephens County!

Jennifer Denard, Controller, Global Tank & Tower

When we began looking for a site in the Southeast...North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, the 'Peach State' represented the best value in terms of business climate, taxes, transportation costs, land values and standard of living. An added incentive was a building available for immediate use that suited our needs, but the clincher was the welcoming environment created by Stephens County and The City of Toccoa business and government officials and the Stephens County Development Authority. We feel at home here. We don't feel like strangers and we want to be a part of our communities and within our region, that's a very important principle to us.

Tolga Kaan Isik, Vice president Sark USA

Getting and Using Testimonials

Christine Logan, Community, Business & Rural Development Representative for the New Mexico Economic Development Department, shares her department's approach to creating and using testimonials.

We made gathering testimonials an intentional part of the business development process, rather than merely capitalizing on statements we happened to catch in the media.

Many of our testimonials are included on our economic development website. Not all are in video format but almost all have specific quotes about ["Why New Mexico,"](#) why this community, and how the state has been helpful. The video clips and quotes can be used as part of specific promotions and as background for events and displays. We capture the quotes when a business leader is here for an event. We have a [YouTube channel](#) and video on loops at legislative events.

For new programs, gathering testimonials has been incorporated into the application process (though we usually gather those as part of a press release, as part of follow up visits, or as part of closing out a project).

Sharing a positive statement is never a requirement of receiving economic development assistance, but is rather the natural outcome of building relationships with the businesses we help. Equally important is remembering to ask for a statement that helps us explain the value of our efforts to policymakers and funders.

'Here is what your constituents/neighbors/customers/ say about us/our programs/our business climate....' is a much stronger message than the economic developers saying the same thing on our own behalf.

Many organizations, such as the Mesilla Valley (N.M.) Economic Development Alliance, include [video testimonials](#) on their websites.

Hear directly from some of our recent clients why our region is one of the most competitive locations in the country to do business.



Example of video testimonial

Elected officials also can offer valuable testimonials to convey the impact of a project or to highlight community assets. The JAXUSA Partnership in Florida includes quotes from the mayor of Jacksonville in press releases on its website.

“We are delighted to welcome Wayfair to Jacksonville,” said Mayor Lenny Curry. “Their entry adds hundreds of jobs to our community, and contributes economic value that bolsters our statewide growth in job creation and demand.”

“It’s exciting to see a Jacksonville company thrive, grow and invest in our city,” said Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry. “Jacksonville is home to sound infrastructure, a skilled workforce and a strong business climate. We’ve worked hard to build a pro-jobs city and we’re very pleased to celebrate Rayonier Advanced Materials’ decisions to expand in Jacksonville.”

Proactively communicate good news and wins, and enlist people to share that news for you. If you have a local, highly respected company that you did a project for that is willing to say, ‘I love working with the EDC; they have been our partner for years; they have helped with everything from locating a building to finding employees to getting a permit; they have helped us grow and thrive here’ – it goes much further when someone is blowing your horn that is not you.

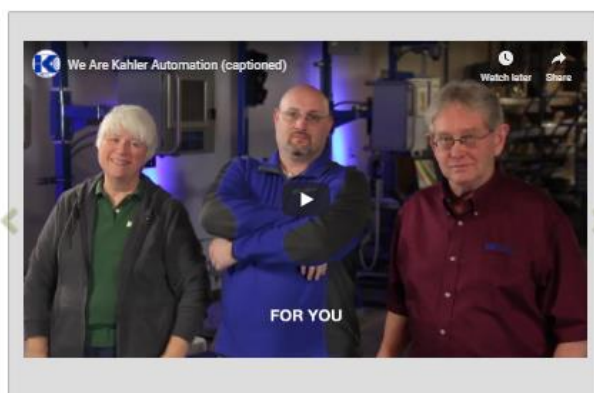
○ Success stories

“Success stories” is used here as an encompassing term to include any description of an EDO project, initiative, event, input or outcome – a retention or expansion announcement; a new partnership agreement; meetings held with elected officials; a forum, meeting or summit attended or held; et. al. Ideally it can be used in multiple ways and outlets depending on the type of story (e.g., newsletter, EDO website, social media, press release, annual report, etc.). Like testimonials, once written, they are another useful tool to have at hand to tell an EDO’s story.

They may be brief and factual, like this one from the Fairmont, Minn., Economic Development Authority website, which also includes a video.

EDOs can create a simple template for project case studies and include their creation as part of the project closeout process. Cases can include background on the project (how it initiated, what the company was looking for); how the EDO worked with the company; the results (a new or expanded investment, number of jobs, average wages, etc.), and testimonials from the client. This process helps EDOs create a library of cases for use on the web and social media, in newsletters and blog posts, and at other opportunities.

» SUCCESS STORIES



Kahler Automation initially outgrew a 9,200 square foot space when they began looking at expansion options which would assist in job creation as well as real estate development. In 2006, the City of Fairmont gave Kahler Automation 3.6 acres in order for them to build a new 20,000 square foot building which allowed for additional manufacturing and office space.

Not only that, the City also provided a low interest loan, the city's virtual building plans which saved architectural and engineering costs, and JOBZ (which Kahler Automation eventually rescinded due to prevailing wage requirements). This project allowed Kahler to expand from the 20 employees that moved into the new building.

In 2012, Kahler Automation, with 49 employees needed to expand again. This time, the addition would be 15,000 square feet. The City of Fairmont was able to use Tax Increment Financing to assist in the expansion.

Today, Kahler Automation has over 80 employees.

808 Timberlake Road
Fairmont, MN 56031
US

[VISIT THE WEBSITE](#)

Example of success story

More in-depth success stories provide detail about how a particular project worked or about its impact. The Arcata Economic Development Corporation, a community development financial institution in northern California, includes success stories on its website such as the one below about a boutique chocolate manufacturer that expanded with the help of an AEDC loan.

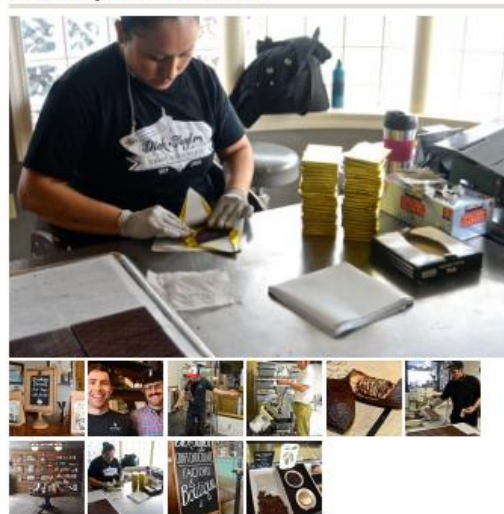
Success Story: Dick Taylor Chocolates

It isn't every day that a pair of HSU grads working as carpenters and musicians stumble upon and capture an up-and-coming specialty food market but that's exactly what's happened to Adam Dick and Dustin Taylor, founders of Dick Taylor Chocolates. "There were others in the industry that had paved the way by educating the public about craft chocolate," Taylor explained. "So when we started the company in 2010, the market was primed. We've been trying to keep up with demand ever since."

According to Taylor, the company uses only organic cacao and organic cane sugar in their chocolate and the production process takes more than a month to complete. "By not taking shortcuts in our process, we can leave out vanilla, additional cocoa butter or other emulsifiers, and capture and highlight the subtle flavor nuances in the cacao we source from around the world," he said.

The chocolate is wrapped in labels produced in-house featuring art created by Taylor's brother and the founders have drawn on the help and expertise of other family and friends as their business grew. They now have 9 part-time employees. "But we've been backordered 30 days. It is hard to complain about success but it is like we created a monster," Taylor mused. "And we have to keep feeding it chocolate."

Dick Taylor Chocolates



The company won their first Good Food Award for their 72% Belize, Toledo chocolate at the GFA in San Francisco, which has increased demand for the Arcata-made chocolate even more.

Fortunately, a recent AEDC loan used to purchase equipment should help. The conche, a vintage and fully restored machine from Italy, grinds and mills the chocolate and sugar until smooth and then aerates, heats and stirs the mixture for 48 hours to create a unique flavor profile. "We're suckers for old pieces of equipment," Taylor admitted, "And we'll be able to process about 900 pounds at a time."

Currently Dick Taylor Chocolates can be found locally, nationally and in Europe, Canada and Australia.

Source: <http://www.aedc1.org/stories/dick-taylor-chocolates>

Over the course of decades, Greenville, S.C., transformed its run-down downtown into a vibrant center of activity that today attracts visiting delegations to learn about its success. The city relays the in-depth history of that transformation effectively with a story map on its website.



Image of key development projects in downtown Greenville's revitalization, as shown in a story map on the City of Greenville, S.C.'s website. <https://gis.greenvillesc.gov/downtownreborn/index.html>

Communication tools

○ Local media: Newspaper columns, educational series, letters and op-eds

i. Newspaper columns

Economic developers who have the skill, interest, and a supportive media outlet sometimes author regular or semi-regular columns in a local or regional publication. Such an outlet is a great opportunity to maintain an ongoing conversation about economic development in the community and how it works. It allows the economic developer to both address many different facets of the practice and to end up with these one-page explanations at the ready to repurpose in newsletters, social media, educational materials, etc.

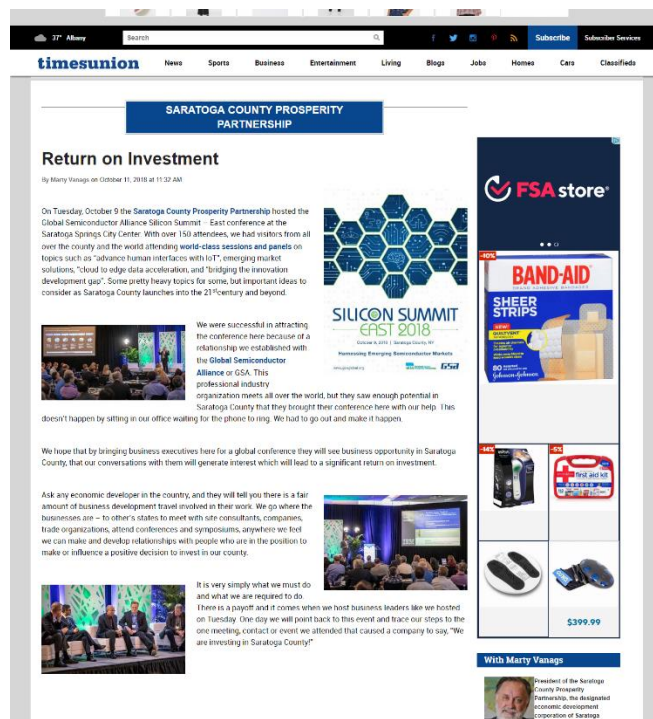
Amy Clickner, CEO of the Lake Superior Community Partnership in Marquette, Michigan, writes a twice-monthly column in local newspaper *The Mining Journal* that is billed as addressing “topics of interest to the local business community.” Clickner covers a broad range of economic development topics as shown in selected headlines:

- [Very little ‘typical’ about life at economic developer LSCP \(see appendix for full text\)](#)
- [Terms of economic development](#)
- [What the Partnership is and is not](#)
- [Supporting the growth of local businesses](#)
- [Most new jobs come from within community](#)
- [Staying engaged an important part of influencing public policy](#)
- [Rewards of economic development outweigh costs](#)

Marty Vanags, president of the Saratoga County (N.Y.) Prosperity Partnership (SCPP), writes a column in the *Albany Times-Union* that touches on topics such as the local real estate industry and how it affects economic development; the significance of hosting a



Example of newspaper column



Example of newspaper column

global semiconductor summit; SCPP's approach to creating an economic development strategy, and more (see appendix for full column; archive available [here](#)).

ii. Educational series

Many EDOs have developed series of articles (as paid advertorials, or, with a friendly local publication, a reporting or editorial series) to explain what they do. Such series may be tied to a particular event, such as a major milestone for an EDO, or not. The case study below describes the Marshall Economic Development Corporation's approach to telling its story in the local newspaper.

Telling an EDO's Story, One Installment at a Time

"It became apparent that there was a lack of understanding of what we do because a lot of what we do is behind the scenes."

That's how Donna Maisel, CEcD, executive director of the Marshall (Texas) Economic Development Corporation, summed up the problem that MEDCO wanted to solve. Not for any particular crisis, but after 28 years in existence, "It was time to sell ourselves to our community to keep going forward," as she put it.

Guided by a thoughtful strategy, the organization undertook a 10-week, full-page advertorial marketing campaign in the local newspaper. It accompanies the series with civic group presentations, radio appearances and other outreach in a coordinated effort to show the public what MEDCO does and how, and the return on investment.

"We thought deeply about how to maximize exposure," said Maisel. "One article is only good at one moment in time. But if you do multiple pieces over an extended period, you increase your readership; they look for other articles and you multiply your audience."

The local newspaper worked with MEDCO to provide an affordable rate. The ads appeared on page 3, every other Sunday, for almost three months. Written in the style of newspaper articles, the ads covered a wide range of angles to educate readers about economic development practice over 10 installments. Each piece had a different focus, e.g.:

- The cornerstones of the tax base and how to help them grow;
- Key sectors for the local economy, information about their performance, and the EDC's role in supporting their growth;
- Steps in the local incentives process, accountability to the community and return on investment, as well as non-monetary incentives, such as infrastructure, land or services;
- How the site selection process works, why sites are important, and how MEDCO connects with buyers and sellers;
- How MEDCO helps local small businesses;
- Why workforce is a critical site selection factor, the impact of full employment on the community, and local training initiatives;
- The higher level of education and expertise a certified economic developer brings to the table; and more.

Each ad also included a profile of a company helped by MEDCO, illustrating the different type of assistance provided and bringing a third-party testimonial.

The approach was smart in multiple ways. Detractors were sure to read the series, thereby learning what MEDCO really does and how it works. “Those that were critical in the community read every single one,” said Maisel. “Maybe they still don’t support us, but it took away the foundation to attack us. It gave us more credibility.”

The series also built awareness and support among those who just didn’t know much about MEDCO, Maisel said. “People tell us, ‘I didn’t know the work was at that level.’”

Three of MEDCO’s one-page advertorials. A PDF of the entire collection is available [here](#).

The series addressed misconceptions about how economic development decisions are made in Marshall. For example, perceptions that a select few are in charge of decision-making, secretive about it, and that favoritism is surely involved somewhere. One piece talked about how board members are selected and what they do. “It showed that our board members are very active, not figureheads. They show up and work as part of a team,” said Maisel.

Written primarily to provide basic information, the pieces won’t be dated quickly and can be reused in multiple ways. MEDCO has a collection of all the pieces bound together in a booklet format to hand out at events.

MEDCO’s stakeholders are so pleased with the results that they plan to run another series next year. Maisel thinks the series helps bring community players and the public together. “In the future, we will talk about the city’s commitment to economic development and appreciation of the county for its forward thinking, keeping all the players on the same team.

“It was a way to tell our story and justify what we do, but not from a defensive position,” said Maisel. “We showed that our organization is invested in the long-term future of the community and holds itself to the highest level of accountability.”

iii. Letters and opinion pieces (op-eds)

Letters to the editor and opinion pieces are additional tools for getting an EDO’s message out. They may be written by an economic developer, board member, or other partner or ally. They can be useful to shed light on a timely issue, to rally support for an initiative, to correct misconceptions, or to address criticism.

Below, a letter in the *Montana Standard* from the executive director of the Butte (Mont.) Local Development Corporation briefly explains the EDO and what it does, why a strong workforce is important to the local economy, and how education plays a role in attracting businesses to the region. The letter achieves several goals: It improves awareness and visibility of the EDO, advocates for improvements to the community and local business climate, and provides support for its key ally and partner, the local education system. (See the “Build and Enlist Allies” section later for more about building these supportive relationships.)

School bond vital

As Butte’s lead economic development organization, the Butte Local Development Corporation (BLDC) is tasked with helping grow the economy and workforce of Butte-Silver Bow and ensuring there are good jobs for all residents of Butte. There are many components to creating positive economic development and sustainable growth, and a thriving education system is paramount to all of our job creation efforts.

A strong workforce is critical to the success of our economy, and the best way to create great employees is to grow from within. When we invest in education we are investing in the future of our many great companies, entrepreneurs, and business-owners that make Butte’s economy so vibrant. As a community we need to support education so that Butte continues to grow and our kids have the opportunity to pursue a successful career in the community that they grew up in.

When we showcase our community to new businesses, education is always one of the first questions businesses looking to locate in Butte ask. If we want to be competitive as a community and attract new companies to Butte, as well as provide employees to our many amazing existing companies, we need to stand with our schools and support them with the Project Safe Schools Bond.

The Project Safe Schools Bond will ensure that we are offering our children the best learning environment possible and developing our education programs in a manner that will keep Butte in the forefront of Western Montana. We encourage you to support Butte’s schools and workforce by voting YES for the School Bond.

— Joseph Willauer, Executive Director, BLDC

Example of op-ed

An opinion piece serves a similar function, but the longer format allows the author to go into more depth on the issue. The op-ed (right) from Terrell Ellis, executive director of Advantage Valley Inc. in West Virginia, explains Advantage Valley's role in economic development; the importance of a major regional road project and infrastructure in general to the economy in the area it serves; and Advantage Valley's plans to help small businesses take advantage of related opportunities. (See appendix for the full text.)



Example of op-ed

○ Targeted media: Newsletters, press releases and fact sheets

i. Newsletters

Most EDOs have an electronic (and sometimes printed) newsletter. Newsletters don't need to be long or graphically slick, but they are an important tool for talking about varying aspects of an EDO's work and keeping it in front of stakeholders.

The Great Falls (Mont.) Development Authority uses a very simple text format with news items in numbered sentences or paragraphs called "GFDA Top Ten" (though there are often more than 10). Topics covered include new business openings, what GFDA is working on behind the scenes, support for a new economic development measure, a construction update on a long-term project, Great Falls in the national news, a list of upcoming business events, trainings, and resources.

GFDA Top 10

Here is our Top 16 for this week, celebrating work and successes to grow and strengthen our regional Great Falls economy.

- 1) [Ulla Beauty](#) opened its new store in the Westwood Plaza. Local entrepreneur Rebecca Hannant has opened [Bloom and Bean](#) at 1008 20th Street South. See more details on her new store in the [Tribune](#). I had the wonderful opportunity Friday evening to meet two young attorneys who have moved to Great Falls and opened a new law firm downtown, [Boland Aarab PLLP](#). [Big Bang Pizza](#) and [Burger Bunker](#) have opened their new shared location downtown at 24 5th Street South. [Falls Mechanical](#) started renovations on their future expanded location on 2nd Street South downtown. [Batteries and Bulbs](#) opened at their new location on 10th Avenue South.
- 2) [West Bank Landing](#) developers broke ground on a 33,468 square-foot retail and office building, another step forward in the \$65 million riverfront redevelopment.
- 3) Started work on response packages for two new industrial leads we secured this week. Both companies have short-listed Great Falls. Continued work on a primary sector professional services prospect.
- 4) "Wow, I haven't been to Great Falls in awhile and this is impressive!" was a comment this week from a participant at the 10th Annual Montana Downtown Conference. We hosted about 100 downtown and community leaders from across Montana. We also hosted commercial developers from Montana and Idaho to show them downtown and riverfront development opportunities. Great job team Great Falls! Thank you to everyone who helped!
- 5) Montana farmer and rancher earning were down 71% last year. We all know how important agriculture is to Great Falls and the entire region. We're stepping up our economic development efforts to expand and diversify our food and agri-processing industry. Please join us for a special announcement about increasing our economic development efforts in this critical industry sector this **Tuesday, October 24, 5:00 PM at Mighty Mo Brewing Co.**
- 6) Our efforts to help Montana Eggs expand were featured this week on a podcast by Development Counselors International (DCI), a leading economic development marketing firm headquartered in New York City. This episode of "The Project" is available on [iTunes](#) or [DCI's website](#). A transcript is available on [DCI's blog](#).
- 7) The City of Great Falls was awarded \$8,000 from the Montana Dept. of Commerce for the Business Improvement District and the Downtown Development Partnership to expand the very successful pedlet at Mighty Mo Brewing Co. to other businesses downtown. Look forward to more outside dining next season!
- 8) Want to help pass the YES for Cascade County Jobs mill levy to keep our economic momentum going? We need sign locations! Please email or call Jolene, 406.750.4481 or JSchalper@GFdevelopment.org.
- 9) Speaking of the economic development mill levy, we need you to share your support! We have a [logo](#) to post to Facebook, [flyer](#), talking points, and information. A

(Access this edition of GFDA Top Ten at <http://www.gfdevelopment.org/news.php?nid=413>)

Also in Montana, Big Sky Economic Development publishes its “Take3” e-newsletter weekly with appealing graphic design and images. BSED describes the newsletter as “designed specifically for our Member Investors, Board and Staff. Each Wednesday, Take3 will arrive at your inbox with the top three stories of the week, the next three events you need to know about, and a Member Investor spotlight.” (See appendix for full example)

ii. Press releases

A press release can be written about nearly anything – from a business expansion to a local training opportunity to the addition of a new staff member. Of course, economic developers must be discriminating about which topics will interest which stakeholders; too much information, or information that isn’t relevant can prompt audience members to tune out. Press releases should address who, what, when, where, why and how, provide contact information, and include quotes when relevant.



Example of weekly newsletter

The press release below, from the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, announces a groundbreaking new project, the project’s goals, the context for the investment, and includes contact information for the developer, the EDO, and the state economic development corporation. ([Access the press release at https://www.southwestindiana.org/southwest-indianas-largest-regional-cities-project-the-post-house-just-broke-ground/](https://www.southwestindiana.org/southwest-indianas-largest-regional-cities-project-the-post-house-just-broke-ground/))

SOUTHWEST INDIANA’S LARGEST REGIONAL CITIES PROJECT THE POST HOUSE JUST BROKE GROUND!

Monday, August 13, 2018

Evansville, IN August 13, 2018) – The Post House, a \$40 million mixed use development in downtown Evansville, officially broke ground and will move toward an early 2020 opening. [Scannell Properties](#), one of the country’s premier real estate developers, is spearheading the project. The Post House will provide real-time research for smart energy technologies and is being built on the remaining property adjacent to the historic Greyhound Bus Station, which is now home to the Bru Burger restaurant.

The Post House will be a “living laboratory” for [Vectren](#) Energy Delivery (Vectren) to test and utilize smart energy products, behavioral energy usage programs and clean energy generation technologies. These products will include rooftop solar panels, small-scale battery energy storage, various smart appliances and smart home automation features, electric vehicle charging stations and ultra-efficient heating and cooling systems.

The Post House defines a spirit of research, smart building technology, energy grid component, campus-like atmosphere and sense of place incorporated to fit within Evansville’s recently updated comprehensive downtown master plan. Intended to be a destination built on connectivity, convenience and sustainability, the livability and vibrancy of downtown Evansville is one of the project’s highest priorities along with incorporating a linear park or flexible open space to play, gather and host events. The Post House will serve as a design standard for future housing developments in Southwest Indiana.

Southwest Indiana was one of three Indiana regions selected to receive state funding through the [Regional Cities Initiative](#), which will allocate a total of \$126 million toward 100 quality-of-place projects totaling more than \$2 billion in combined state, local, and private investment in order to retain and attract top talent to the Hoosier state.



Example of press release

iii. Fact sheets

Fact sheets are a useful tool to address questions or issues that come regularly or sporadically. They can be used as handouts when appropriate, and given to board members, partners, or other allies to help them speak effectively about an issue. The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority in Virginia has dozens of fact sheets available on its website with information on everything from industry sector profiles to alternative office space to the impact of Hispanic-owned businesses in the community

Fairfax County Overviews

- » FCEDA Overview
- » FCEDA - Your Partner for Success Poster
- » Fairfax County Demographics
- » Fairfax County Facts: A Great Place to Work and Live
- » International Businesses: Business Success in the U.S.

Business Resources

- » [Alternative Office Space](#)
- » Chambers of Commerce and Business Advocacy
- » Fairfax County EDA: How We Can Help
- » Taxes
- » Venture Capital

Business Diversity

- » Business Diversity: Minority-Owned Businesses
- » Business Diversity: Veteran-Owned Businesses
- » Business Diversity: Woman-Owned Businesses
- » African-American-Owned Businesses
- » American Indian-, Alaska Native-, Hawaiian Native- and Pacific Islander-Owned Businesses
- » Asian-Owned Businesses
- » Hispanic/Latino-Owned Businesses

Education and Workforce

- » Colleges and Universities
- » Workforce
- » Workforce Resources for Employers

Business Lists

- » Associations
- » Corporate Headquarters
- » Largest Employers
- » Technology Businesses

Industry Sectors

- » Cybersecurity
- » Cybersecurity (with map)
- » Data Analytics
- » Defense and Aerospace
- » Digital Media
- » Federal Procurement
- » Federal Procurement for Small Businesses
- » Financial Services
- » Life Sciences, Technologies and Wellness

Example of fact sheet. Source:

<https://www.fairfaxcountyeda.org/media-center/fact-sheets>

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA Hispanic-/Latino-Owned Businesses

Hispanic/Latino-owned businesses make significant contributions and play an important role in Fairfax County's economic growth and prosperity.

Fairfax County Hispanic/Latino-Owned Business Statistics



Selected Hispanic/Latino-Owned Businesses Headquartered in Fairfax County

ALEXA Alternative Experts	www.alexanet.com
Altach International	www.altach.net
ATSG Corp.	www.atsgcorp.com
THE CINTEC GROUP Inc.	www.cintecgroup.com
Catich, Inc.	www.catich-solutions.com
Communications Resource, Inc.	www.cri-solutions.com
CDComputing Technologies, Inc.	www.cd-computing.com
Dynamic Animation Systems	www.d-a-s.com
Engineering Management & Integration	www.emi-usa.com
Forensic Drug & Alcohol Testing, LLC	www.fda-usa.com
Four Points Technology	www.fpoints.com
Franklin Maxwell Group	www.franklinmaxwell.com
Geologics Corporation	www.geologics.com
The Hago Company	www.hago.com
Indigol	www.indigol.com
Innovat	www.innovat.com
Innovation Enterprises, Inc.	www.innovation.com
KEMRON	www.kemron.com
Lifecare Management Partners	www.lifecare-usa.com
MAC Aerospace	www.macaerospace.com
MicroTech	www.microtech.net
NPR Consulting	www.nprconsulting.com
PAR Enterprises, Inc.	www.par-usa.com
Priority One Services, Inc.	www.priorityoneservices.com
Professional Scientific Associates	www.psa-usa.com
Sagres Construction	www.sagresconstruction.com
Seavanguard	www.seavanguard.com
SCI Consulting Services, Inc.	www.sciworld.com
TMA Construction	www.tma-construction.com
Triumph Enterprises, Inc.	www.triumph-enterprises.com

Sources: System for Award Management, Hispanic Business, Haver and PCGA

HISPANIC/LATINO BUSINESSES BY INDUSTRY SECTOR



*Note: "Other" includes Educational Services; Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Finance and Insurance; Information; Wholesale Trade; Manufacturing

HISPANIC/LATINO BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY SECTOR



*Note: "Other" includes Agriculture, Utilities, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Accommodation and Food Service; Retail Trade; Educational Services; Health Care and Social Assistance; Information; and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

Source: 2012 U.S. Census Bureau Survey of Business Owners

Continued >

Owned Media: An EDO's Website and Social Media Channels

An economic development organization's website and social media channels provide an exceptional opportunity to tell a community's story directly to key stakeholders.

The website should serve as a digital warehouse of the testimonials, success stories, and newsletters discussed previously. The website should also have up-to-date information and data to serve community members who are looking for facts and statistics (especially important for regional economic development organizations, whose role is to help smaller communities). In most cases, a separate media section of the website should provide press releases, fact sheets and other documents relevant to the news media.

If the website is the digital warehouse, an organization's social media channels should serve as highways to the warehouse. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn should be used to regularly communicate key messages to both internal and external audiences, driving visitor traffic to the EDO's website.

Feeding the "hungry beast" of social media can seem like a full-time job. Best practices suggest a minimum of one post per day on LinkedIn and Facebook and three or more times per day on Twitter. If communication resources are limited, it is better to focus on executing on one social media channel well.

Key performance indicators should be closely tracked on each social media channel. While there are dozens of metrics, the central measures including impressions/reach, engagement (i.e., clicks per post, comments, likes, retweets and shares) and month-to-month growth in followers.

5. Build and enlist allies

Partnerships and collaborations with other organizations build and extend capacity beyond what a single EDO could afford or sustain and allows for a broader and more impactful scope of work to be achieved.

Building and maintaining relationships and partnerships is at the core of economic development practice. An EDO needs the utility and water companies to build a new industrial park; banks to make loans; city government to issue permits and provide services; education partners to provide training; developers to build new offices or hotels; neighborhood partners to improve quality of life, and the list goes on. Through these collaborations, EDOs provide value to their partners in turn.

EDOs build allies among these partners, governing boards and clients by following the first four recommendations in this document – doing good work, acting transparently, listening and responding, and communicating effectively. They follow through on their obligations, add value, use discretion, negotiate in good faith, and look for win-win solutions.

This section discusses ways to build relationships and work with different groups of allies (or potential allies) such as board members, elected officials, the media, business leaders, and community partners. Their vocal and visible support of economic development is critical for securing the political, financial, and community support needed for an EDO to succeed.

Getting board members on board

An EDO's board of directors or other governing body should be its foremost ally and champion. However, these members rarely come to the role knowing how to do that from the start; they need help to be effective. Economic developers offered a number of suggestions for helping board members be vocal advocates for an EDO.

New board member orientations are key. Board members need to truly understand what an EDO does. In partnership with the National League of Cities, IEDC released a publication on [“The Role of Local Elected Officials in Economic Development”](#) (PDF) that includes a useful summary of the top 10 things elected officials and board members should know about economic development in order to be effective leaders. Board member orientations should include explanation of:

1. Your local economic strengths and weaknesses.
2. Your community's place in the broader regional economy.
3. Your community's economic development vision and goals.
4. Your community's strategy to attain its goals.
5. Connections between economic development and other city policies.
6. Your regulatory environment.
7. Your local economic development stakeholders and partners.
8. The needs of your local business community.
9. Your community's economic development message.
10. Your economic development staff.

The Mid-America Economic Development Council has a presentation for its board leadership orientation online ([access the PowerPoint](#)). It includes an overview of the EDC's mission, activities, leadership, committees, staff, and the roles and responsibilities of board members. A copy of the Greater Burlington (Iowa) Partnership's board orientation manual is available online ([access the PDF](#)). It covers, among other information, a list of directors' responsibilities, including to “serve as an Ambassador” for the organization, and a page on “Dealing with Criticism of the Partnership.”

Constantly educate your board and investors. Include educational components in each board meeting, such as walking them through the process of working a project. Ensure that they receive the educational materials that the EDO develops to help external partners understand their work. Invite them to participate in tours and partner events. Consider pairing experienced board members with new ones to serve as mentors.

Equip them with tools and opportunities to speak on behalf of EDO. Provide them with an “elevator pitch” that will help them communicate the EDO's key message consistently. Invite them to groundbreakings and other EDO events, and provide opportunities to speak to the media. Ask them to write guest columns or letters to the editor when particular issues arise, and to speak to groups (service clubs, community groups, etc.) about the EDO's work. Ideally, economic developers should be able to call on their board members to provide credible advocacy in a range of circumstances.

We spend a lot of time providing education and information to our investors; we want people talking about this in our community. We try to arm them with the tools they need.

We orient new board members in a way that educates not just them, but many who have been on for a long time. They often realize they are hearing something they haven't before. We make it about bringing a new group into the conversation, and ask them to share examples of how they have talked about economic development, or examples of projects they've participated in. We do it in a way that we aren't targeting anyone. The goal is to build understanding and engagement.

For communities that have actively antagonistic elected officials, EDOs need to find other key actors (donors, etc.) to do some education.

Building awareness and relationships with elected leaders

Today our legislators are our most important stakeholders. Individual and regular contact is key.

Elected officials at all levels of government – local, state and federal – are indispensable economic development partners. From infrastructure investments to education policy, incentive funds and beyond, they make decisions every day that affect the practice of economic development.

Ideally, elected officials see economic developers as trusted, expert resources they can turn to for information and perspective. Those trusted relationships, in turn, give economic developers a listening ear when policy issues arise that can help or hurt their work.

Of course, it doesn't always work out that way. Legislators have their own interests, priorities and agendas, and may be supportive on one issue but not on another. Or they may reject public support of economic development altogether, regardless of any data or arguments presented in favor.

A county council member has consistently questioned the value of economic development and termed it "corporate welfare." EDC leaders have met with the person to try to provide education. These efforts have had limited success, as the person's public campaign persona is very tied to these statements. Those statements reach a segment of the population that sees business and social programs as diametrically opposed.

Yet experienced economic developers know the value of outreach and redundant communication, particularly for multi-jurisdictional organizations and in areas where challenges are persistent. When faced with newly elected, part-time or full-time officials, introducing them to the complex work of an EDO is a smart strategy. Over the course of campaigning, they may have held or formed pre-conceived notions of how deals are made or what it takes to get a deal done. In the absence of an EDO prepared to inform and engage, their lack of understanding about economic development and its value to the community can easily take a negative turn and affect decision-making.

In interviews, several economic developers noted that building and maintaining relationships with state representatives has become much more difficult in states that have adopted term limits.

When our legislature went to term limits, relationships with the local economic developers disappeared. We are constantly having to reconnect with legislators, as every two years, half are gone. It has been a struggle to keep that connection.

Many survey respondents work in the public sector and therefore report directly or indirectly to local elected officials about their work. Other survey respondents reported that they work for public-private partnerships which include elected leaders on their boards, in voting or non-voting capacities. Survey respondents reported using many methods to build elected officials' knowledge and keep them informed, from email newsletters to events, monthly reports, ad hoc meetings and more, as shown in the following comments and advice.

<i>With state legislators, take groups to visit them during session, invite them to attend annual functions, add them to media and newsletter lists, and keep their staff informed and involved.</i>	<i>We provide monthly reports and updates through city manager's office. The more they know of what you do, the more they appreciate and understand your role.</i>	<i>We do an annual awards breakfast for businesses we have helped plus an annual dinner to highlight achievements.</i>
<i>We have a very good relationship with our local elected officials, great dialogue with our state elected officials and wonderful communication with the staffs of our federal elected officials. We meet with these individuals and we always prepare them in advance when they are speaking on our behalf. We also meet with them on a regular basis.</i>	<i>We have regular weekly, monthly, and ad hoc meetings with our elected officials. We keep them informed when we receive a lead, during the negotiation, and follow up updates. They feel they are included and so are more supportive when it comes to time for us to ask for their vote.</i>	<i>We provide training for municipal officials on the importance of economic development. We also provide our public officials a monthly report on activities and a quarterly performance summary.</i>

Relationship Building with elected officials

Gynii Gilliam, president and CEO of the Coeur d'Alene Area EDC-Jobs Plus, has been an economic developer in several regions across Idaho. She offers insights into how she builds and maintains relationships with elected officials.

When I am new to a community, I make it a point to connect with local, state, and federal officials. I set up quarterly meetings with county commissioners, city councils and mayors. We don't always have the meetings, but they are always set up. It keeps them engaged in what you're doing outside of the meetings.

At these meetings, I give information at the 40,000-foot level – x number of high-priority projects, these types of businesses coming from these types of places, how many jobs we have created, how much in cap ex – not about specific projects. Once I get the counties engaged and they realize they do really benefit, they tend to be more supportive. If you end up doing it twice a year for 30 to 60 minutes of their time, it's worth it.

I meet with state legislators twice a year, when they first come back into session and when I am at the state capital. I give them the same 40,000-foot information. I also talk about what isn't easily

quantifiable – what it’s doing for the diversity of our state’s economy. Using data, I show that because we bring in other industries, gross state product is now higher than it was 10 years ago. Promising industries that were 2 percent of our economy are growing.

I also try to strengthen partnerships across communities. A lot of economic developers work with several cities. When you first get there, it’s important to show mayors that you understand they want a project in their city, but that if it ends up anywhere else in the region, everyone still benefits. People will get jobs, and retail and following industries will come to each of your cities. If you can quantify that it does make a difference for *all* of them, it really helps.

To build relationships with state legislators and make the case for supportive policies, the New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD), with the state association of economic developers, began organizing “Job Creators Day” at the state capital. One day during each year’s legislative session, economic developers come to Santa Fe to meet with lawmakers individually, then invite them to a reception featuring representatives from companies in their communities that have succeeded with the help of state assistance.

Job Creators Day at the New Mexico State Capitol

Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 9:00am - 3:00pm
Job Creators Day at the New Mexico State Capitol
[Export Event To Personal Calendar \(.ICS\)](#)



Please RSVP: Job Creators Day

Thursday, January 24, 2019

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

New Mexico State Capitol Rotunda

Santa Fe, N.M.

Commit to participate!

Please RSVP to LeeA.Schilling@state.nm.us

9:00 a.m.: Attendees meet in the State Capitol Annex Building

2:00-3:00 p.m.: Rotunda Event with Representatives and Business Leaders

Business owners/employees, economic developers, and legislators come together to celebrate successful job creation in New Mexico.

Webpage to register for the 2019 Job Creators Day at the New Mexico State Capitol

from their district,” said Christine Logan, a regional representative for NMEDD.

Logan notes that in addition to building connections with legislators and giving companies the opportunity to promote themselves, the event also helps economic developers from across the state get to know each other.

Many EDOs use events such as workshops, trainings, luncheons, “boot camps” or other gatherings as tools to network and show elected officials how the economic development process works locally. It may be a Saturday morning breakfast and workshop, held once or twice a year, that features an

Economic developers organize into small groups (four to six) to visit each legislator’s office, where they talk about the impact of state incentive funds and other current policy issues, and leave them with a one-pager that makes the case for supporting economic development. The day culminates with an event in the capitol building in which businesses owners or executives speak about why they chose to expand or relocate to New Mexico and how they benefited from a state program. “It makes a big difference to legislators when they see a company

entertaining but informative “ED 101” class. Casual, non-threatening coaching opportunities such as these can help elected officials learn and stay current, and hopefully, encourage their support and advocacy. In designing the program economic developers can pull from IEDC source material and case studies to cover issues and scenarios elected officials may be familiar with and with which they may be faced. The workshop approach also has the added benefits for the EDO of serving as a platform for promotion, generating media, discussing tough issues of the day and creating an environment for problem-solving.

The Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Commission, for example, held a half-day “Economic Development Boot Camp” in 2018 for the Hillsborough County legislative delegation. The agenda included an overview of how the EDC works, and what economic development does and doesn’t do in the community; a “Meet the Projects” piece, featuring CEOs from two projects (one recruitment and one retention) to share their stories; and partners from the city and county to talk about local incentives, as well as how they work with the state. It closed with a luncheon panel in which legislators were asked to share their priorities.

‘Primary employment’ or ‘base employment’ is critical concept to communicate what our organization does in economic development. I believe we have a huge issue communicating with the public and elected officials (even board members) as to what economic development is and is not.

Cultivating relationships with media outlets

Working with the media is part of every economic developer’s job. They had many insights to offer from their extensive experience; the overarching theme that emerged is the importance of being a proactive, transparent partner. Their advice and comments are below.

- **Meet the reporters and editors who cover your EDO**, over a cup of coffee or a desk-side briefing in the newsroom. It’s best to know them and their interests before you ask anything of them.
- **Give them the facts about your EDO, its goals and how it works.** Build trust through transparency. Help them report with precision by using the strategies and materials discussed earlier in this paper to illustrate your work. The better they understand economic development and your work, they are less likely they are to view it through an adversarial lens.

I work hard to have partnerships with the paper, the local media. The publisher and editor need to understand the value of economic development, that it’s not just a scoop. I sit down and tell them, ‘If I have something to give you, I will give it to you.’ I explain that trying to beat me to the punch to put something in the paper could hurt the economy.

Help them do their jobs by being as transparent as possible. Reporters are very busy people. If they get a tip, they will run with it. If you provide facts in advance, you mitigate problems down the road.

Sometimes it’s helpful to bring along one of the EDO’s investors to a meeting, or the CEO of a company who can talk about how the EDO’s assistance helped them locate or expand in the

community and create new jobs. EDOs' many partners and allies can be called on to bring third-party credibility and possibly a story angle.

Such meetings are still valuable even if you know your media contacts well, or if they have been around for a long time. As one economic developer noted after a briefing, "there were editors who had been covering business in our market for 30 years who still asked questions that indicated that they did not know how local incentives worked."

- **Give them leads and story ideas.** Let them know when events, activities or successes happen. Prepare them ahead of a special event or announcement. Introduce them to businesses with interesting stories, or give them updates on companies the EDO has assisted and contacts to interview. Invite them to tours, openings and learning sessions. Share information and reports with them as proactively as possible.

By asking the media to come to me with questions, I have to give them something of value in exchange. At a groundbreaking, I can get them to the CEO or VP who made the decision. I can help them talk to the first person who got hired, who says 'I was working there, now I'm making more money with benefits here, I can feed my family and buy a house.'

- **Be prompt and responsive to their requests.** Answer their calls and emails promptly. Make yourself available as an accessible, reliable resource.

Engaging with citizen journalists

As the number of traditional print journalists and news outlets have decreased in the past two decades, the United States has seen a rise in the ranks of citizen journalists, bloggers and other digital influencers that have significant followings. Economic developers should engage with this audience, as they are a powerful new avenue to reach the home team. Some words of advice in working with this group:

- Study both the individual and his/her body of online work in advance of any interview or information exchange. Speak to others in the community that have contributed to or been quoted within an online outlet. It's important to have an understanding of the outlet's point of view.
- In the event that you have concerns about the outlet or its owner, you may want to audiotape an interview on your smartphone to make sure you are quoted correctly. At the start of the interview simply ask, "Would it be okay for me to record our discussion?"
- Come to any interview/discussion with suggestions of future story ideas. Citizen journalists have great independence in tackling new stories.

Finally, when you build a relationship with this new breed of journalist, follow their future work and when possible contribute to the comments section of their outlet. It demonstrates that you follow and value their contributions to the community.

Building allies among business leaders and community partners

Businesses leaders are natural allies for EDOs. When these relationships are well cultivated and maintained, they can be leveraged to promote a positive business climate, solve specific problems or help an EDO tackle a big challenge. Typically, public-private partnerships have business leaders and allies as investors, clients and board members. Knowing how to most effectively and strategically deploy these allies can extend an EDO's capacity and influence.

Most EDOs take inventory of their board members and investors to identify their strengths and circles of influence. This offers a map of who to call and when. Then, asking these allies to provide situational or general testimonials, speak to legislators, work with prospects, or advocate to the local business community is easier and more comfortable.

The working relationships that EDOs have with community partners (such as workforce development groups, community colleges and universities, religious organizations, incubators and others) are another important source of support. EDOs that are reliable partners in working toward shared goals with these organizations create trust and good will that makes them champions for economic development and resources that EDOs can call when needed.

In Louisiana, for example, in an effort to build support for city-led community and economic development programs, the city's mayor and his staff improved communication and interaction with the ministerial alliance and church leaders of all denominations. Those speaking from the pulpit have much influence, and improved communications with church leaders has proven beneficial in developing long-term relationships and encouraging community-wide support for economic development programs.

I talk to everyone who will listen about what our goals and objectives are. I talk to a lot of organizations in town – chambers, Rotary, Lions, etc. It's an hour here and there that makes my life so much easier because I don't end up fighting anyone. I talk to everyone who will talk to me. If they ask you to speak, go.

V. Applying tools to specific challenges

Many people and organizations external but necessary to economic development may not understand or appreciate the strategies and tactics necessary to conduct the work effectively. They may not know the nature and scope of the competitive environment, private sector expectations, or the value of actions employed to compellingly showcase a community for business attraction.

Recognizing common objections to economic development practice (due to real or perceived issues) enables EDOs to manage them more effectively. This section covers questions around travel expenditures, entertainment spending and executive pay, plus a case study about responding to a public relations problem not of an EDO's making.

Travel expenditures

For nearly as long as economic development has been practiced, some people have opposed (and some always will oppose) the practice of using public money to fund travel and entertainment.

In response to this perennial objection, communities and EDOs have become savvier – both in laying the groundwork to show why travel is a high-value activity for the EDO but also in neutralizing objections by using private funding (when possible) to do it. Many of the economic developers who responded to this survey question work for public-private partnerships that simply do not use public money to attend events or trade shows.

Objections to travel expenditures can arise in response to the destination (the perception of traveling on a trade mission or to a trade show any place remotely attractive as “a free vacation,” for example, with little or no benefit to the community). Or, in response to first-class or otherwise expensive modes of travel, accommodations, meals, etc., that can give the perception of poor stewardship of EDO funds. In an extreme example, a survey respondent wrote: “Attending a business recruiting mission in Chicago was deemed to be outrageously expensive and ultimately led to the termination of my entire board and me.”

Responding to these objections requires three steps: doing the homework; being selective, strategic, and transparent; and communicating the value. For example:

- **Doing the homework:** Have a strategic plan with goals and benchmarks, to which you can tie the activity directly and how it will advance the EDO's strategy.
- **Being selective, strategic, and transparent:** Plan and take the trips that are necessary to the effective conduct of your work. Conduct research that presents a clear and compelling rationale for the market, trip, mission, or trade show you are targeting. When possible, include business leaders in these decisions and leverage their support to explain the value. Conduct the activity cost-effectively and appropriately for the outcomes

We build a case for each marketing or lead-generating event we attend tied to our goals and targets, and make sure our expenses are reasonable and defensible.

When we travel, it has been supported by the public because we take existing businesses with us as part of our BRE strategy.

and results expected. If the issue of public funding is in question, use private funds when possible for some or all of the cost.

Follow your organization's policies regarding spending. If your organization does not have such policies, develop one that includes guidelines for staff when they travel and for documenting the travel expenses upon completion (who, what, when, where and why of each expense). In the meantime, show your good judgment by traveling as inexpensively as possible (within reason), so that you can justify it to a reasonable person who asks.

<i>It is important that there be no 'extras' at the trade show (i.e., lavish dinners for the 'team' or extra days for vacation at either end of the trip.</i>	<i>We have scaled back much of our travel to only two or three shows a year, which are within our target industry areas and enjoy broad political support at home.</i>	<i>We allocate part of fees for a service we provide for travel and training via a budget that is established annually. We cite the organizations we would like to send staff to training and travel. Deviations are discussed with the board committee.</i>
<i>I am cautious and diligent in deciding which events to attend.</i>	<i>We now use private or unrestricted funds for these purposes.</i>	<i>We use public funds to pay for event registration, and all travel from non-public funds.</i>

- **Communicating the value:** Explain exactly what you are going to do (and why), that you are doing it (and why), and that you have done it (and why).

We usually point to specific projects which were a direct result of us attending those events and the revenues those projects now bring in to the community.

We produce a weekly e-newsletter and we publicize every such trip in advance explaining what we are doing and why. Since doing this, there have been no instances of criticism. We focus very heavily in these descriptions on the industry, not the 'trip.'

Economic developers share why they travel

We have always said that I am in the 'relationship' business. And it's not who I know, but who knows me. So I attend these events to get known and promote sites in the city. I inform and bring city councilors to city site tours for businesses I have met at these events. I am very selective about the events I attend.

You cannot recruit new businesses from your own community. Trade shows are held in "nice locations" to, of course, attract more people. There is a complete lack of understanding of this process by elected officials.

The benefits of membership and networking within target market sectors is neither valued nor appreciated.

You have to go prospecting where the prospects are.

Sometimes, zealous scrutiny can result in a good outcome, as this survey respondent wrote:

Has your organization faced criticism for using public money to attend trade fairs and events?

Yes, and we had a series of hearings on the topic. It was politically motivated; but, after the hearings, everyone felt good about what we did and how we accomplished it. Furthermore, our legislature may consider funding some more marketing events in the future.

The Mobile (Ala.) Chamber of Commerce effectively communicated its experience at the Paris Air Show. On its blog, the chamber published a series of three posts, in which it included:

- Interviews with key delegation partners (including elected officials) about their objectives for attending the show;
- Details of the experience itself (including the unglamorous reality of security lines and traffic);
- Photos of groups and people met at the show, as well as aircraft;
- Anecdotes of connections the delegation made and meetings held: with prospects; with companies that already have operations in Mobile (to get insights into plans for future growth, and update them on relevant news from the community); and cold calls on potential suppliers; and

The screenshot shows a blog post from the Mobile Chamber of Commerce. The title is "More, More, More - Day 2 in Paris". The text describes the experience of attending the Paris Air Show, mentioning the challenges of security and the excitement of seeing various aircraft and meeting with industry professionals. It includes photos of the delegation and aircraft. The post is dated "Tuesday, November 10, 2014".

Example of blog posts

- Mention of the Mobile Bay Aerospace Reception at which attendees from 180 companies were expected.

(See [Mobile Bay Delegation in Paris, As the Air Show Opens, Team Mobile Scatters](#); and [More, More More – Day 2 in Paris](#))

The Tulsa Regional Chamber of Commerce took a more formal yet informative approach to discussing its experience at the Paris Air Show, using a press release. The release included information about:

- The importance of aerospace to Tulsa’s economy currently and in the region’s economic diversification;
- Why the show is such an important event for those with a stake in the aerospace industry;
- Who attended and why; and
- Meetings held with existing Tulsa companies and those exploring potential expansions to the region.

(See [Chamber Staff, Partners Attend Paris Air Show](#))

Entertainment spending

Questions about dollars spent to host and entertain occur more in regard to EDOs involved in business attraction and marketing than others. And for most of those organizations, entertainment spending is rarely an issue, but rather understood as a necessary and accepted practice. This is particularly true among private, nonprofit EDOs that operate using significant private funds and whose board members are primarily in the business sector. They understand that “our job is to host people,” in the words of one experienced economic developer.

Still, regardless of whether the money spent is public or private, spending on entertainment and promotional events – amateur sports sponsorships, parties or receptions, tickets or boxes for pro sports games or other performances, etc. – can draw fire due to perceptions that the cost is too high; the benefit unclear; or the beneficiaries exclusive, wealthy, and connected.

The response is similar to that for criticism around travel expenses: doing the homework; being selective, strategic and transparent; and communicating the value. For example:

- **Doing the homework:** The EDO has a strategic plan with goals and benchmarks, to which you can tie the activity directly and how it will advance the EDO’s strategy.
- **Being selective, strategic and transparent:** Find private sponsors for these events if appropriate and possible. Be careful about creating perceptions of extravagance (e.g., choice of venue or menu). Be prepared with examples of successful past experiences with these events, either in your own community or related to a community or project which critics view favorably. Choose event sponsorships, receptions and tours that are associated with a controversial activity or venue.
- **Communicating the value:** Be ready and able to explain why hosting and building relationships with site selectors and C-suite executives is a critical component of business attraction. Describe

the potential or real value of the targeted industry, event, or business for the community in terms of generated revenues, tax base, jobs, partnerships, and community engagement. Recruit business leaders, elected officials, and board members to support the activity.

People say government should act more like business. What business doesn't have a sales team? You have to spend money to make money.

Executive pay

Attracting and retaining competent professionals in any field requires offering competitive pay and benefits. According to IEDC's salary survey, the top factors that influence economic development professionals' salary adjustments include cost of living (39%), organization performance (38%), and personal performance (38%). In economic development, as in other fields, you get the talent you pay for. The salaries of top economic developers typically reflect their track record of success.

In IEDC's most recent salary survey, 89 percent of respondents reported receiving some formal training in economic development.

Most commonly, they have taken a basic economic development course (65 percent).

Though not licensed by government or required for practicing, certification and comprehensive training also influence an economic developer's pay. IEDC's salary survey has found that certified economic developers (CEcDs) are higher paid than those who aren't certified.

The many survey respondents who work for governments reported that their pay is determined by their city or county's salary schedule. Some wrote that their salary is aligned with those of other directors in their unit of government. Others noted that the top economic developer's compensation can't exceed that of the city or county manager, or the state governor.

Survey respondents whose EDOs take a more flexible approach to setting compensation reported using the following strategies:

- Benchmarking with the IEDC salary survey
- Annual pay review by a compensation committee or executive committee
- Studies of benchmark cities
- Regional market analysis
- Third party assessment (e.g., consultant)

We use IEDC's annual salary survey combined with evaluating comparable positions in our own market. We are cautious about our organization's public image, so our budget process pays close attention to the marketplace and what others in similar positions are making.

If the compensation of an economic development executive is questioned for being too generous, and assuming the compensation is defensible, then the response is similar to those above.

- **Doing the homework:** The compensation is benchmarked using a guide such as IEDC's salary survey and aligns with a compensation policy adopted by the governing body that accounts for experience, the local market, and other factors. The executive's past or expected performance can be tied directly to how it will advance the EDO's strategy.

- **Being selective, strategic, and transparent:** Be willing and ready to share the benchmarking data (and any other relevant factors) that went into determining the compensation scale. Consider community factors that could cast even a well-considered compensation plan in a bad light.
- **Communicating the value:** Many EDOs function essentially as consulting firms, providing professional services in lending, real estate development, marketing, and more. The competencies of an EDO's professional team must align with its strategic plan and the services it provides, just as a bank that wants to expand its portfolio would not hire a loan officer with no lending experience. In addition, EDOs frequently compete for talent against higher salaries offered for similar jobs in the private sector. If economic development is a high priority for the community, then it is critical to seek the best talent it can afford and pay talented professionals according to their value.

Dealing with Public Relations Problems (Not of Your Own Making)

The last few years have been challenging ones for economic developers in Florida, thanks – at least initially – to a tourism promotion campaign.

Florida's destination marketing organization, Visit Florida, paid South Florida rapper Pitbull \$1 million to promote the state as a tourism destination. The 2016 campaign, which leveraged the singer's hit "Sexy Beaches," showcased Florida's hotels and beaches with images that played off the song's title. The campaign was a hit with target audiences but criticized by some lawmakers, who sued to get the terms of the contract made public.

In the wake of the Pitbull incident, a powerful group of state legislators began questioning the value of spending tax dollars on tourism promotion, and shortly thereafter began questioning the value of economic development as well. Lawmakers began arguing against economic development incentives as "corporate welfare" and introduced two bills in the 2018 session that sought to cut marketing funds, eliminate incentives, and impose other requirements that would have hobbled many of Florida's economic development organizations and undermined the state's ability to compete for jobs and capital investment.

In response, the Florida Economic Development Council and its member organizations began working diligently to defend the practice of economic development and the positive impact it has on communities across the state.

Michelle Bauer, chief operating officer of the Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation (EDC), shared some of the steps her organization took to galvanize support from local business and government leaders in defense of economic development.

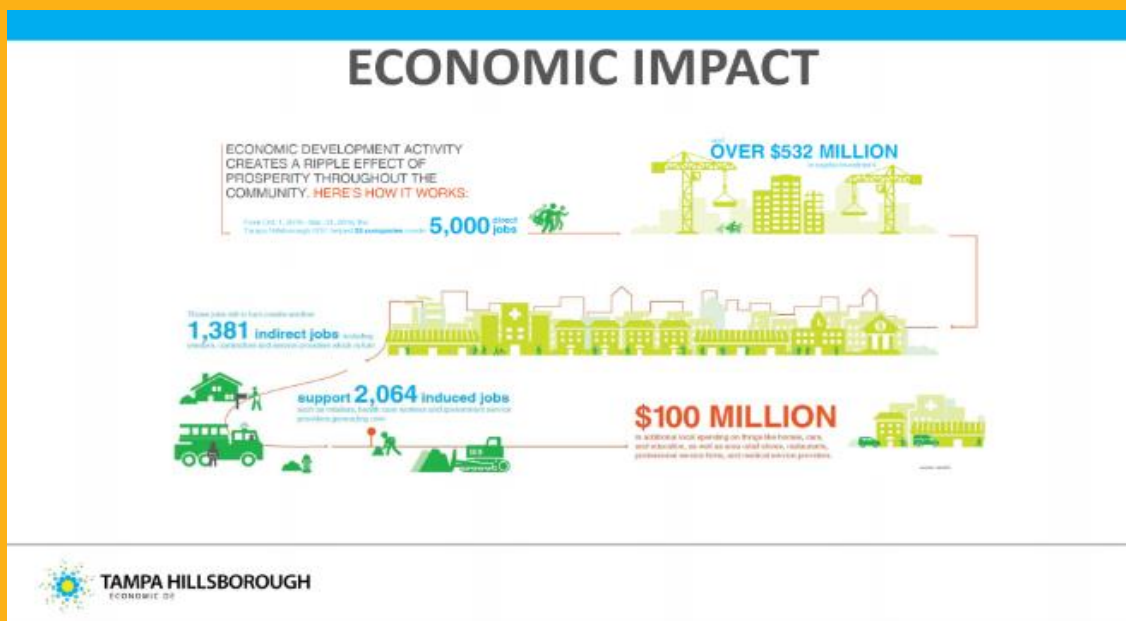
1. **They created a communications toolkit: Fact sheets, backgrounders, case studies, and lists of frequently asked questions.** The Tampa Hillsborough EDC drafted documents for its board, community partners and the media that explained what the proposed legislation would do and how

that legislation, if passed, would impact specific aspects of the organization's mission such as business recruitment and expansion efforts.

The materials answered some basic questions: How do economic development organizations assist local businesses? What incentive programs are offered at the state and local level? Who awards them? What conditions must a business satisfy to get them?

The EDC also used infographics to demonstrate the economic impact of direct jobs and capital investment that resulted from economic development efforts. It provided media with case studies and contact information for local business leaders willing to talk about how the EDC and its partners helped them to expand or remain in the market.

2. **They activated a communications campaign.** The EDC used a variety of tactics to educate business leaders and the general public about the value of economic development, and to correct misinformation that was circulating about the profession, incentives, etc. Those tactics included:
 - a. Newsletter articles and guest columns
 - b. Testimonial videos (to be shared on social media)
 - c. Editorial board meetings with major daily newspapers
 - d. Interviews in local business weeklies, television programs, and radio shows
 - e. Special events – panel discussions, open houses, etc.
3. **They met with, called, or emailed legislative representatives to urge them to vote against the objectionable bill.** During the 2018 legislative session, the EDC enlisted its board, members of the business community, and partners to engage with their elected representatives and share why economic development was so vitally important for the region's future prosperity. It joined other EDOs around the state, as well as the Florida Economic Development Council, in traveling to Tallahassee to attend committee meetings and hearings and pay calls on key members of the House and Senate.



Infographic used to demonstrate overall economic impact from direct jobs.

Florida's economic development and tourism community breathed a sigh of relief at the conclusion of the 2018 session when the companion bill required to pass the legislation died in committee. But no one felt like declaring victory. Economic development professionals around the state were left with the feeling that this struggle is far from over.

In the wake of the 2018 legislative session, the Tampa Hillsborough EDC's leadership decided to host an intensive "Boot Camp" to offer local legislative delegates and their aides a deep dive into how economic development is done in their region and at the state level, and have them meet and hear testimonials from leaders of companies that have been recruited to or expanded in the area as a result of working with the EDC. The event proved to be such a success in building or strengthening relationships between the legislators and the economic development community that the EDC plans to host the event annually.

VI. Incentives: A Special Case

Incentives never made a poor deal good, but they will help tip the balance between competing good deals. They can help persuade a non-resident board or management that a community is a good fit for a company. They also can fill a gap to make a project that builds jobs and makes capital investment happen.

Companies expect to receive some incentive even if the decision to locate in a community might be perfect for their project. Rarely is there enough of an incentive to change a bad location to a good one.

Incentives, in all their many forms, are an essential business retention and attraction tool for many communities. They are used every day, across the country, with no opposition, as a matter of course.

Until they aren't – when, for any number of reasons, a project becomes the focus of public ire, and few economic development tools stir passionate public opposition like the use of incentives. At the core of most objections is the belief that public money is being misused.

This section first addresses the proactive steps EDOs should take to develop an effective incentives policy, and the tools to communicate the value of incentivizing a project. It then discusses applying these and other tools to respond to the following common challenges:

- Objections regarding a particular bid or award package
 - Too generous
 - Targeting the wrong type of company, industry, or type of job
 - Secrecy in the negotiating process
- Philosophical objections
 - Corporate welfare
 - Government picking winners and losers
- High-profile deals

Before an EDO is able to justify the use of incentives, it has to have done the homework. In other words, the EDO is working with a defensible incentive policy – appropriately targeted, performance-based, accountable, and returning a certain level or type of benefit to the community – that the community's leaders have adopted, and the award package follows those parameters. (There are significant differences from state to state in terms of what is considered a defensible incentive and a reasonable return on investment.)

For EDOs that don't have an incentive policy in place and seek to develop one, the graphic below provides an overview of the process.² Not every community chooses to provide incentives to businesses, but for those that choose to do so, a policy is (ideally) more rational than acting on ad hoc basis.



Incentive Program Design

Working from this policy foundation, the EDO can develop materials (fact sheets, talking points, press releases, etc.) for projects that receive incentives, which cover:

- Project facts: the company (name and function), type and amount of anticipated investment and number of jobs,

² Based on *Seeding Growth: Maximizing the Return on Incentives*, International Economic Development Council, 2014

- The incentive program(s) under which the company qualifies and the amount of the incentive, time frame for receiving it (if relevant), and accountability measures
- The expected return on investment and any additional benefits to the community (e.g., infrastructure, workforce training, economic diversification, revitalization)

It also helps to have fact sheets or talking points prepared that explain that incentives are available to other companies in the community or state.

Most of the list above is standard fare for the hundreds of thousands of project announcements that happen each year. This is the proactive part and simply doing good work. These are useful materials to share with board members, elected officials and the media. Board members and other partners can use these as reference material when they talk about the work of the EDO.

A project announcement from the St. Tammany Corporation in Louisiana provides extensive context for the project, including:



Example of project announcement

- Jobs, payroll, and capital investment
- Incentives used (programs, amounts)
- Recognition of the roles of municipal, regional, and state project partners
- Quotes from elected officials and testimonials from company executives

(See the appendix for the full text, and examples of incentive program fact sheets)

Beyond the numbers, economic developers reported using combinations of the following talking points to communicate the value of public investment in a project:

- The “but-for” (the project would not have happened but for the incentive)
- The story – who the project impacts and how (e.g., a specific person, family, or type of person)
- Other ways the project benefits the community and impacts the local economy (e.g., brownfield redevelopment, economic diversification, new goods and services)
- Financial protections for the community (e.g., pay for performance; clawbacks)
- Statements in support of the investment made by other business and elected leaders
- The competitive nature of business attraction and the site selection process, and why incentives have a role to play

Each of these communication pieces will assist in supporting a particular deal or package against an array of common charges – that an award is too generous, or that it is targeting the wrong type of company (industry, size, homegrown or relocated), for example. They also help counter misinformation

– e.g., in regard to the total amount of the award, the timeframe for it, or lack of performance measures.

Different communication threads will be more useful in some situations than others, so it's good to be equipped with as many of them as apply. Ultimately, the element of success that an economic developer can control is being able to communicate that a deliberate and well-researched process has been followed; that professionals are competently executing the process; and that the ultimate authority rests with the elected body that enacted the policy.

There will always be people who actively oppose the use of incentives and are unlikely to ever change their minds. However, even more people will be supportive if they are given enough information to understand.

In the words of an expert

Deploying these strategies and talking points requires the ability to discern the objections. Economic developers will then know who to call on, among their reliable allies and partners, to help deliver and amplify the message.

Knowing what tactics to employ takes center stage. Identifying motivations is crucial. Identifying places and projects that elected officials and critics admire gives you an opportunity to draw a comparison and appeal to their aspirations. Distinguishing between the value of the project and the EDO's role is important to keep focus on the ultimate objective – getting the project over the goal line. The EDO's role in the community is almost always larger than business attraction.

If a group arises in opposition to the project, you have an opportunity to engage, inform, influence and persuade - speak to service clubs and community organizations – leverage those relationships you have cultivated with community leaders and ask for their support.

Coalition building and rallying people and organizations to advocate for a project is infinitely more time consuming but also infinitely more effective than a press release or a one-off presentation. Build coalitions of people and organizations that share common goals. Ask them to speak to the benefits of projects from which they will benefit. For example, expecting the destination marketing group or tourism organization to champion a hotel, which may be perceived as controversial, is preferable to the EDO standing alone. If it's a project creating higher wage jobs, then have union people or nonprofits or advocates speak on behalf of those populations, or have workers themselves there. If the project is going to provide jobs for homeless vets and those who complete the training are guaranteed an interview – make certain this message is highlighted throughout the advocacy process.

And what if you and your EDO are opposed to the project and the incentive? If you don't think it's a sound incentive package, express that to your governing body and be open to discussing and evaluating the project in terms of its short and long-range value and implications. Work through the details - what happens when you give an incentive to a company and it closes a few years later, or they create fewer jobs than anticipated, or the tax breaks are disproportionate to the benefits stated. Professional economic developers have a responsibility to the best interests of their city, county, state or region. And that includes responsible allocation of taxpayer dollars. The risk/benefit analysis and comprehensive evaluation of the project and the proposed incentive package require due diligence.

Once a decision is made to support or oppose, this decision must be communicated thoughtfully and honestly. Accept that things will never go exactly as planned. But, if you explain the benefits and risks, the process and incentive terms honestly, you will have acted with integrity, which better positions you for the outcome and the next deal. Remember, your opponent on one project could be your ally on the next. Veteran economic developers have learned that sometimes you must agree to disagree; never burn a bridge; treat people with respect; and don't vent your feelings or frustrations casually or over social media.

Talking points to support the decision to incent a project

Below are examples of different strategies economic developers use to communicate the value of a project to the community and the incentive to the project.

The "but-for" (the project would not have happened but for the incentive)

As noted in IEDC's paper "Seeding Growth: Maximizing the Return on Incentives,"

[A] public financial program can be described as an economic development *incentive* only when it induces a company to invest where it otherwise would not have....

Incentives should be designed to improve the attractiveness of the community by addressing the factors critical to these facilities and industries, and to incent companies to remain or relocate to the jurisdiction that would not have located in the jurisdiction **but for** the incentive.

Of course, this is often difficult to determine:

...Economic developers have difficulty designing incentives that are awarded only for projects that would not occur but for the incentive. Instead, practitioners should as carefully as possible target incentives around strategic goals and real business needs, and then estimate either the probability that any given corporate investment project is the result of the incentive, or the proportion of private investment in a given project attributable to the incentive.

Economic developers gave their perspectives on the but-for argument.

Incentives are vital in some areas (e.g., TIF districts) that have long-term vacancies, etc. The 'but for' argument is strong when you have long-term issues at a specific site in a specific area.

Incentives should help close project finance gaps – but for these dollars, the project wouldn't proceed.

While incentives aren't the only factor in new capital investment decisions, incentives add value to the decision.

There are some incentives – like low-interest loans – that truly seem to be the difference between something happening or not.

The story – who the project impacts and how (e.g., a specific person, family, or type of person)

In interviews, economic developers frequently talked about the importance of tying the outcome of their work back to people – how the job makes a difference to an individual, a family, and a community. Here's how economic developers said they talk about the human impact of their work.

If someone has a better wage, they don't need to have three jobs. If you don't have three jobs, you might have the time to read to your child at night. Then your child does better in school and you're helping the next generation. You do it for the whole world. You've made a difference.

We have to remember our meaning to people's lives. It isn't just how much we are bringing in taxes. It has a meaning in people's lives within the community that we can measure long-term, but day to day, we don't always make that link.

Our supporters need to personalize how economic development efforts affect them and their families. I have always found increased support from elected and business leaders when we bring our efforts down to a personal level. Point out that we are thinking of our kids and grandkids ALWAYS...and how economic development efforts will create good-paying jobs with good benefits that will allow our kids and grandkids to have a decent standard of living....own a home, raise a family, support their church, save money for their kids' education, have money to take their family on vacation, etc.

Make it personal. Everyone thinks we're all about helping businesses because that's what we tell them. How it affects the Smith family is personal, not the 25 jobs. Those who have been in the profession 10 years or longer are better at telling that story.

I love my job because it helps raise the average wages in the community. At around \$20 an hour, it's way better than it was four years ago. Sometimes we get stuck on 'we brought 100 jobs.' But maybe we really helped people move from \$8 to \$16 an hour.

Other ways the project benefits the community and impacts the local economy

Beyond the jobs and tax benefits, a new company often brings other benefits to the community and local economy. As noted above, a project may be used to spur activity in a disinvested neighborhood or on a problematic site (e.g., a brownfield), or to bring jobs closer to these places. Attracting a company in a particular industry may be part of an economic diversification strategy, or bring a type or level of job that is currently missing in the community. Incentives may provide workforce training or infrastructure that will strengthen the community and make it more competitive, in addition to helping the company.

The financial protections for the community

Of the survey respondents whose organizations provide incentives, 65 percent reported that their EDO uses performance-based incentives, in which companies are required to hit certain hiring or capital investment targets before receiving any benefit. A smaller number reported using clawbacks to recoup investments in companies that did not meet the benchmarks in the agreement. Emphasizing taxpayer protections such as these is part of making an effective case for using incentives. Below are some of the

ways that economic developers talk about performance measures their communities use to protect public funds.

<i>Every contract we write has to start with an economic impact analysis and has to include a clawback provision. We have to stop letting the naysayers run the narrative.</i>	<i>We reimburse, rather than granting money on the front end. Also, job incentives are paid at the end of the year, not the beginning.</i>	<i>There are clawback provisions in PILOTs, and deferred payment loans are not deferred if workforce, training, and other milestones are not met.</i>
<i>Incentives are based on hiring/job numbers as verified by quarterly unemployment insurance reports, and capital investment as verified by receipts.</i>		<i>Tax credits based on income tax are provided only to the extent the jobs and payroll are actually created</i>
<i>Incentives are paid out over a period of 5 years and verification of performance measurements are conducted by a third party annually before incentives are paid out.</i>		

The competitive nature of business attraction and the site selection process, and the role incentives play

In survey responses, many economic developers noted that a general lack of understanding that persists about why and how incentives are used, and shared reasons why they see incentives are a necessary tool in their communities.

<i>Incentives are not the reasons that business select a particular location, but they do show the interest of the local city and economic development organization to support theirs and other business opportunities.</i>	<i>The role of incentives for our area is mainly to level the playing field with other communities that either have land or buildings, which are less expensive to develop or to match incentives being provided by competing communities.</i>	<i>Incentives are not the main determining factor, but can help seal the deal.</i>
<i>Incentives never made a poor deal good, but they will help tip the balance between competing good deals. They can help persuade a non-resident board or management that a community is a good fit for a company. They also can fill a gap to make a project that builds jobs and capital investment happen.</i>		<i>In a weak-market community that also happens to be at the intersection of three competing states, they're essential.</i>
<i>It has been the deal closer for a new project and has been a great tool for BR&E as the investment has greatly assisted several local businesses in their expansions.</i>		<i>We feel that the use of incentives in our small, rural community is meant to offset additional risk involved with a business or investment locating here.</i>
		<i>Incentives are used to bridge a project gap, to show how important that business is to the community or to persuade a primary employer to locate in the community.</i>

Responding to specific objections

A particular award is too generous

First, consider whether there are perceptions to correct – e.g., does the audience believe that the company will get the award as cash up front, rather than over a period of years? Is the amount reported correctly, or does it include rebates of taxes that otherwise wouldn't be generated? Once the audience has the correct facts, then emphasize the following:

- The return on investment, or benefit to the community, that the research shows.

In addition to highlighting the number of jobs and amount of capital investment that the project will create, EDOs can talk about other ways the community benefits from the project, many of which were discussed above. Those will look different from project to project and community to community, but may include, e.g.:

- return on investment (which can be measured in different ways, but is typically expressed as ratio of private to public dollars invested in a project);
 - expected additional property, sales, or income tax receipts;
 - indirect and induced jobs and business activity;
 - infrastructure or quality of life improvements;
 - potential savings on public assistance dollars for entry-level jobs;
 - benefits of redeveloping a blighted brownfield;
 - etc.
- The performance protections built into the award.
 - The competitive nature of business attraction and the site selection process.

Targeting the wrong type of company, industry, or type of job

Depending on the community, public pushback can come from nearly any angle:

EDO action	Perception/criticism
Targeting companies that bring high-skill, high-paying jobs	Not providing opportunities for disadvantaged people (e.g., entry-level jobs for people with few skills)
Targeting companies that bring low-skill jobs	The community should be focused on high-skill, high-wage jobs
Targeting particular companies or industries	“Undesirable” industries (e.g., refining, animal processing, others that produce noise or pollution, those perceived as bad corporate citizens)

Responding to these charges starts with tying the EDO's work back to its strategic plan and the research and input that went into creating investment targets. Economic developers should be prepared to articulate this both succinctly and in greater depth, depending on audience, time, and place.

Economic developers who noted that their EDOs are sometimes criticized for focusing on attracting corporate headquarters (and other companies with high-wage, high-skill jobs) had these comments about their strategy:

We recruit primary jobs because they create secondary jobs. They are more stable, more economically diverse and stronger, more able to withstand disruption. Corporate headquarter tend to be stable, engaged in the community, and employ everyone from entry-level to senior executives. Secondary job creation follows. We are a regional organization, retail/non-primary, and jobs are best handled by local communities.

We don't want to be in the business of lowering our quality of life. We want to create opportunity for economic advancement. The notion that these jobs that pay at or above the median jobs are unattainable – that's not true. We recruit job opportunities for local people, opportunities to rise up the economic ladder.

On the other end of the spectrum, here's how one economic developer explains her EDO's work with projects that include low-skill jobs:

Our community has a high percentage of people living in poverty. Why did we attract a company with low-wage jobs? If you look at the poverty rate, we need those. We need those in generational poverty to have a place to start. Giving people the opportunity to come out of poverty and into the workforce, with future opportunities for growth – that's what it's all about.

Opposition to particular companies or industries may come from beliefs that they bring low-quality jobs (in regard to pay, benefits or skill levels). And some firms and industries do bring (or at least bring the perception of) pollution, noise, traffic, undesirable activity, or other nuisances. Again, the response to these concerns is tied back to the EDO's strategy, which is based on assets to determine which companies it can offer a strategic advantage and which it cannot. (In many places, market factors are at play that don't allow a community to be as selective as it would like in attracting new firms.)

If a pattern of objections persists (beyond a particular project, person or group), or if the EDO's strategic plan or execution thereof isn't widely supported, they may need to be revisited by the governing body.

Confidentiality in the negotiation process

By its very nature, the work of business attraction and incentives negotiation requires the utmost confidentiality. Oftentimes, relocating companies and location consultants don't want the communities they are working with to know who the competitors are. As well, a company must be confident that an EDO will protect the information it has provided as part of due diligence. If confidentiality is breached, it can both kill the deal and make the community look like a riskier bet to others.

The reason there are so many private EDOs is it's easy to work with us. We provide a comfort level that we will keep a company's info quiet until they are willing to move forward.

Laws vary from state to state in terms of what has to be made public and when. Some states do not allow for confidentiality during negotiations and some do; some require full disclosure after the award and others do not. In good practice, EDOs are forthcoming with as much information as they can be without jeopardizing competitive intelligence, and explain that a lack of confidentiality can empower competitors and erode the trust of (and even harm) a prospective investor.

Some listeners will be impervious to the information. Yet successful economic developers still make concepts like this part of a short- and long-term plan to educate elected officials, the media, board members and others. They use multiple opportunities and channels to get the same message out. They are prepared with one to two sentences of explanation when an issue comes up. They expand on those and constantly offer information about how economic development works – in newsletters, at events and other opportunities.

Everyone thinks economic development is all done in secrecy. There is truth that business and industry needs some secrecy – they don't want competitors to know their future plans.

You don't want to expose how you do business to the competition. We have to communicate to our leaders the competitive nature of the environment we work in.

You also don't want to take elected officials by surprise. We always brief any impacted elected officials as we finish structuring a deal.

The "deal" was not public until such time as the negotiations were completed and an agreement was brought to the Board of Director for a vote. The public vote provided a time for the public to review the deal and ask questions (not an official "public hearing" as that was not a requirement of the law. It did, in every way, act as a public hearing however).

After the deal is finalized and the lease or real estate commitment is signed, the offer package is publicized in the press release.

Responding to philosophical objections

Incentives are corporate welfare

Government shouldn't be picking winners and losers

Philosophical objections to the use of incentives are more difficult to address effectively than those that come from a lack of knowledge or misperceptions. They reflect deeply held (or politically expedient) values, which are not often changed by more information. Economic developers must continue their education mission regardless, though they may need to be selective about focusing their limited energy on more fertile ground. Many economic developers in focus groups and survey responses reported acknowledging that there are some minds that they will never change.

Economic developers have a responsibility to explain the logic behind the strategies they use, but beyond that, may need to agree to disagree with critics. Working in the public sphere requires respecting differing viewpoints. Tips to operate effectively in these situations include:

- Keep the project itself central to the discussion, not the incentives. The incentives are not the goal – the project is the goal.
- Try to find common ground in other areas that may advance a larger agenda, or allow the EDO to deliver something important for those who oppose the project.
- Pick battles widely, considering every project and incentive package within the context of the EDO’s overall strategic plan. Take a long view to the health and vitality of the EDO as well as the community you serve.
- Take care of relationships with the EDO team, the site consultant, partners, allies and elected officials to be well positioned for the next project.

Three commissioners are on my board. One is against everything. The two others outvote him on funding for our EDO. He likes that we bring jobs and taxes in. We show him all the stats and he loves the numbers we report. He still doesn’t think government has any role in economic development.

The Koch brothers have been strategic in replacing elected officials across Kansas. We ended up with commissioners clearly put there with that money. I spent a lot of time showing them great data and ROIs but finally had to stop putting so much energy into trying to educate them.

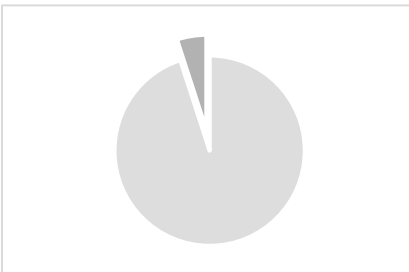
We used reverse psychology when people were questioning our attraction efforts. We proposed just doing BRE – then they said No, we don’t want to do that, we want you to bring new businesses in. We asked for double the money and got it.

This is the swing of the political spectrum.

If people don’t want the facts, you can’t do anything about it.

What economic developers think of incentives

Fifty-six percent of survey respondents work for EDOs that provide incentives.



Ninety-five percent of survey respondents believe that incentives somewhat or strongly support economic development activity.

When asked their opinion about the role of incentives in economic development, economic developers had many thoughtful insights. Selected comments are below.

Incentives, when based on an economic impact analysis, rarely become the #1 reason a company chooses to expand or relocate. There must be market reasons and bottom line reasons for the company to select a site. Otherwise, it won't work for the company in the long term. An incentive is simply icing on the cake.

But wage/job creation incentives seem to just be a necessary evil of the ED business - the jobs are going to get created in the U.S., and we states/communities are just competing against each other.

The unfortunate incentive war requires our incentives to enable us to level the playing field. If there were total incentive disarmament, we would all be better off.

Incentives that support the redevelopment of urban areas, brownfields, and declining areas make sense. Incentives that pit the tax revenues of one community against another community in order to recruit a company or business that is simply using incentives to obtain the best deal for the company do not.

In Canada, incentives are a far less common practice than in the US. We work to compete by providing a strong, stable, "business friendly" economic environment, good governance (transparent, accountable, receptive), and competitive mill (i.e. taxation) rates. We support new development by partnering on supporting infrastructure (as appropriate and legal), and by making the development process as quick and hassle-free as possible.

It can be utilized by entities that would have invested in the community regardless of incentives. Does not always meet the needs or the 'right' needs of some businesses so underutilized, leaving businesses with crucial unmet needs.

In my opinion, incentives are the dirty side of ED -- and the key driver is not the communities who have them but the companies who know expect/demand them.

Good for attraction, tricky for retention/expansion, which generate 80% of new jobs.

It is still a factor, but it seems to be less and less so. It's critical when we're one of two left as potential locations, but what seems to be playing a bigger role is the availability and quality of the workforce. The state incentives that play a big role are the ones that reduce taxes -- sales, corporate, property and other taxes that help keep operating costs down.

Beyond the competitive nature of economic development projects, the reason for incentives is a community investment to assist in managing the risk of a private venture. The return to the public sector is the creation of jobs and capital investment and the promise of future tax valuation all created by the private investment in the community. At the end of the day, incentives are statement of support by a community for a private enterprise. That statement is in effect saying to the private sector leader: we as a community will stand shoulder-to-shoulder to support (not assure) your success with you as you make this investment in our geographic community and we expect to realize the benefit of that investment in terms of employment and future community health and vibrancy. In every way, an incentive is a low cost way for a community to invest in its future health on behalf of all residents. Clearly, there is risk in incentives. But, there is certainty in decline when communities refuse to assume that risk.

Incentives have become so common that their ultimate value has diluted. Sometimes, the cost to the community is too high for the benefit.

Leveraging High-Profile Deals

Almost every community and state has been involved in some way with what is considered a high-profile deal. Amazon was the most recent company to launch an attention-grabbing site selection process. Other examples include sports teams; auto, electronics and aerospace manufacturers; and technology and other online companies.

These very public searches bring both challenges and opportunities. The projects are usually accompanied by an expectation, or willing offer, of an incentive package. Although not as common or as consequential as the Amazon deal might suggest, they are a reality, which must be managed.

Media coverage can turn public perception against the deal regardless of its benefits to the community. Generally, negative public sentiment stems from offering taxpayer dollars to a profit-making company. This can leave the public with the mistaken perception that such deals are at the core of economic development work, rather than a unique response to a major, competitive opportunity.

Assuming your community wasn't bidding on a high-profile project, these media frenzies can be "teachable moments" – opportunities to continually educate partners (media, elected officials, board members) and the general public about:

- The taxpayer protections your state or locality builds into any deals (e.g., policies on pay for performance, hiring, clawbacks, statutory versus discretionary dollars, and more)
- The sectors that drive the regional economy and the types of businesses for which the community is competitive (in its infrastructure, workforce, and existing businesses)
- The competitive nature of the site selection process, expectations and processes
- The long-term and short-term benefits of the "right" projects for your community (jobs, tax base, incremental economic impact, etc.)

Working as the public/community advocate for the Dallas Cowboys stadium deal was an opportunity to build community trust. Asking residents to pay ¼ cent more sales tax in return for a major investment was made easier once we shared the extent of that private investment and compared it to the city's capped investment. We were able to persuade voters that this was indeed a good deal.

If your community did compete unsuccessfully for a high-profile project, the EDO may find itself in the spotlight as a result. This can be an opportunity to responsibly and publicly evaluate the project (pros and cons); communicate a response to the public; and build greater understanding for such projects, thus leaving the community better positioned to compete in the future.

During and after Amazon's very public search, finalist communities faced local and national pressure to disclose their offers. Many EDOs declined to share this information, equating it with giving away competitive intelligence.

We wouldn't release our Amazon proposal because it contained information on 22 sites. Developers wanted it confidential in order to include it. Then [those requesting the information] would say, 'take the incentives information out, take the sites out and just give me the narrative.' But you don't want to expose how you do business to the

competition. We have to communicate to our leaders the competitive nature of the environment we work in.

Several communities took advantage of Amazon's site selection process to undertake a critical review of their value proposition, processes and areas for improvement. They reported coming through the process in a stronger position, based on the data and marketing materials developed, visibility gained, and new opportunities identified to address existing challenges.

The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, for example, developed a case study brochure that described its response to the Amazon search (see appendix for full brochure). Themes in the case include the private sector's role in the bid, inter-governmental cooperation, public involvement, and responsiveness.

A number of companies that are now considering our community are doing so because they saw us during the [Amazon site selection] process. It was a great exercise for us to go through. It reiterated that this really is a good place to be.

VII. Conclusion

Economic development is important work that has real impact on people's lives. Over the past several decades, the practice has evolved and become more nuanced – more data-driven and results-oriented, both broader and more specialized. To continue this growth and evolution in the profession, economic developers must examine their practices, continue trying new strategies, educate all stakeholders, and respond to feedback from partners and opponents alike – all with the end goal in mind of improving outcomes for more and more people.

This paper and toolkit aim to guide and equip economic developers with strategies to champion economic development – locally and nationally, for today, and the future.

VIII. Appendices



INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

*The Power of
Knowledge and Leadership*

CODE OF ETHICS

The following code of ethics was established by the professional economic developers in the International Economic Development Council to ensure a high ethical standard for those involved in economic development.

PROFESSIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS SHALL:

1. Carry out their responsibilities in a manner to bring respect to the profession, the economic developer and the economic developer's constituencies.
2. Practice with integrity, honesty, and adherence to the trust placed in them both in fact and in appearance.
3. Hold themselves free of any interest, influence, or relationship in respect to any professional activity when dealing with clients which could impair professional judgement or objectivity or which in the reasonable view of the observer, has that effect.
4. Be mindful that they are representatives of the community and shall represent the overall community interest.
5. Keep the community, elected officials, boards and other stakeholders informed about the progress and efforts of the area's economic development program.
6. Maintain in confidence the affairs of any client, colleague or organization and shall not disclose confidential information obtained in the course of professional activities.
7. Openly share information with the governing body according to protocols established by that body. Such protocols shall be disclosed to clients and the public.
8. Cooperate with peers to the betterment of economic development technique, ability, and practice, and to strive to perfect themselves in their professional abilities through training and educational opportunities.
9. Assure that all economic development activities are conducted with equality of opportunity for all segments of the community without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, disability, age, marital status, or socioeconomic status.
10. Refrain from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature.
11. Not exploit the misfortune of federally declared disaster-impacted regions. This includes actively recruiting businesses from an affected community.
12. Abide by the principles established in this code and comply with the rules of professional conduct as promulgated by IEDC.

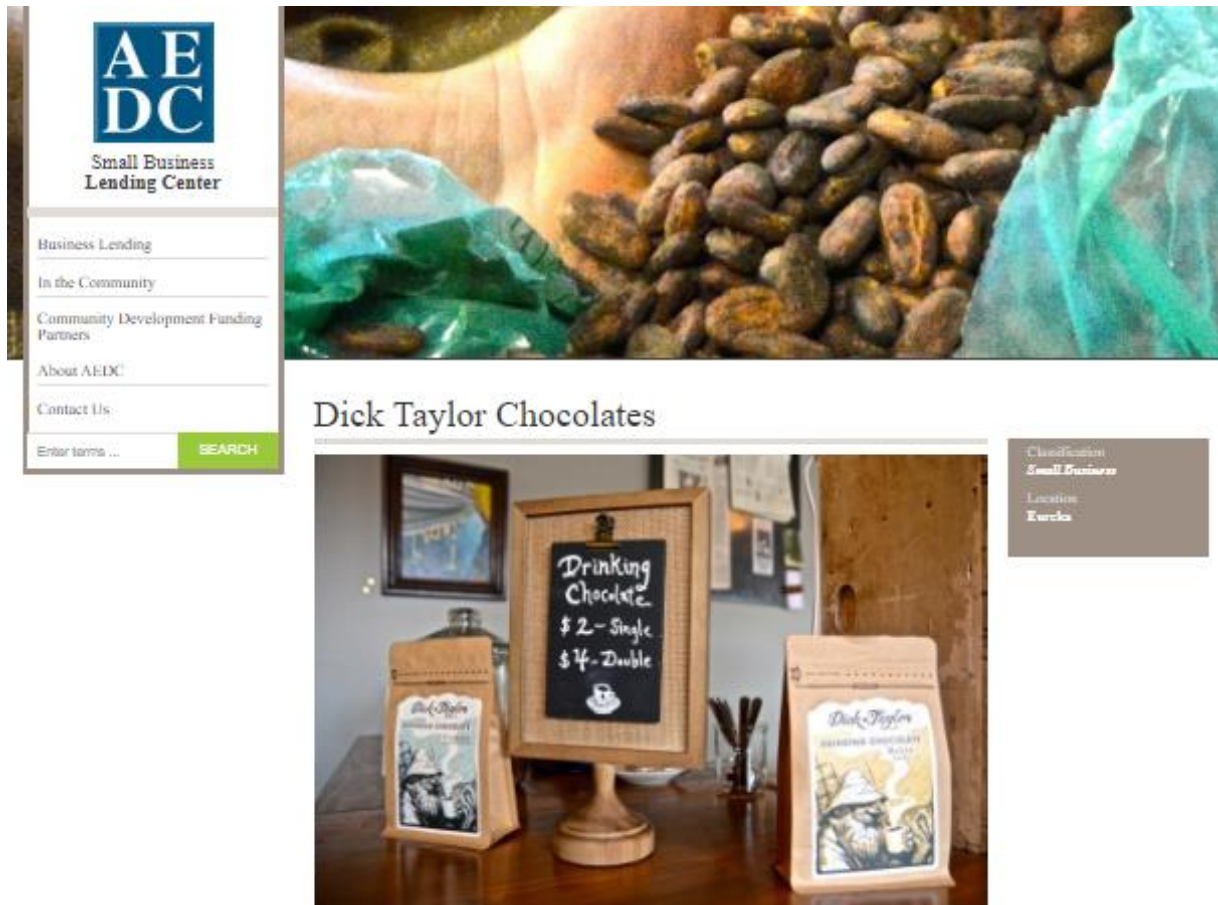
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

734 15th Street NW, Suite 900 • Washington, DC 20005 • www.iedconline.org • (202) 223-7800

Success Stories

Arcata Economic Development Corporation – Dick Taylor Chocolates

Source: <http://www.aedc1.org/stories/dick-taylor-chocolates>



It isn't every day that a pair of HSU grads working as carpenters and musicians stumble upon and capture an up-and-coming specialty food market but that's exactly what's happened to Adam Dick and Dustin Taylor, founders of Dick Taylor Chocolates. "There were others in the industry that had paved the way by educating the public about craft chocolate," Taylor explained. "So when we started the company in 2010, the market was primed. We've been trying to keep up with demand ever since."

According to Taylor, the company uses only organic cacao and organic cane sugar in their chocolate and the production process takes more than a month to complete. "By not taking shortcuts in our process, we can leave out vanilla, additional cocoa butter or other emulsifiers, and capture and highlight the subtle flavor nuances in the cacao we source from around the world," he said.

The chocolate is wrapped in labels produced in-house featuring art created by Taylor's brother and the founders have drawn on the help and expertise of other family and friends as their business grew. They

now have 9 part-time employees. "But we've been backordered 30 days. It is hard to complain about success but it is like we created a monster," Taylor mused. "And we have to keep feeding it chocolate."

The company won their first Good Food Award for their 72% Belize, Toledo chocolate at the GFA in San Francisco, which has increased demand for the Arcata-made chocolate even more.

Fortunately, a recent AEDC loan used to purchase equipment should help. The conche, a vintage and fully restored machine from Italy, grinds and mills the chocolate and sugar until smooth and then aerates, heats and stirs the mixture for 48 hours to create a unique flavor profile. "We're suckers for old pieces of equipment," Taylor admitted, " And we'll be able to process about 900 pounds at a time."

Currently Dick Taylor Chocolates can be found locally, nationally and in Europe, Canada and Australia.

Newspaper columns

Amy Clickner, CEO of the Lake Superior Community Partnership in Marquette, Michigan, writes a twice-monthly column in local newspaper *The Mining Journal*. This column was published Oct. 9, 2017.

Source: <http://www.miningjournal.net/life/2017/10/very-little-typical-about-life-at-economic-developer-lscp/>



typ.i.cal

adjective: having the distinctive qualities of a particular type of person or thing. “a typical day”

When we talk about economic development, it means many different things to many different stakeholders. But rather than debate what it is or isn't, I thought it might be interesting to share with you a typical week in the life of a local economic developer.

Let me start by saying there is absolutely no “typical” week in the life of an economic developer. This is, of course, is one of the most alluring qualities of the profession!

Economic developers are involved in a wide variety of projects, challenges and opportunities that encompass a wide variety of people, businesses and agencies.

For example, take into consideration all the components involved in economic development: transportation, education, infrastructure, workforce, community development, energy, regulatory, incentives, sites and buildings.

A single client may need you to assist with selecting a site, helping them navigate regulatory and licensing processes, introduce them to key stakeholders in the community and speak in favor of their project in a variety of public forums. Each client is different, each project is different, making how we respond each time different.

How about our efforts in marketing? Let's say you have a building or site that you want developed. We can help with that. In fact, our online site and properties software is connected to the MLS for such information.

However, if you are not currently listed with a realtor and have space, buildings, land or a business for lease or sale make sure you let us know. We want to know about all available inventory.

We also spend time marketing our region to others. Just last week I spent time at a conference meeting with a variety of developers and site selectors to familiarize them with the benefits of doing business here.

We communicate on a regular basis with these folks in hopes of staying in the forefront of their minds when an attraction project arises.

But where we spend a majority of our time (have you heard me mention that 80 percent of a community's job growth comes from within?) is in business retention and expansion.

That means making sure we build strong relationships with our local businesses, entrepreneurs and developers; letting them know we are available to assist in both the challenges and opportunities they face. We want them to be successful and grow in our region.

On the community asset side, we work hard to stay on top of issues that may affect our business climate. Several of our task forces include transportation, government relations, and energy, leverage the expertise of those in the sector to collectively create and implement strategies that are important to our community.

For example, our transportation task force has been extremely active as it relates to retaining and growing air service at Sawyer International Airport.

This is just a short list of examples of roles that a local economic developer plays. Can they all happen in a single week? Absolutely! That's what makes the job challenging and never boring. And as the LSCP will soon enter our 20th year in this business, I can honestly say that's an understatement!

Looking for assistance with your business or start up? Give our business development team a call at 906-226-6591 or visit our website www.marquette.org.

Editor's NOTE: Amy Clickner is CEO of the Lake Superior Community Partnership. Her twice-monthly column will address topics of interest to the local business community.

Marty Vanags, president of the Saratoga County (N.Y.) Prosperity Partnership (SCPP), writes a column in the *Albany Times-Union*. This column was published on Oct. 11, 2018.


Source: <https://blog.timesunion.com/saratogacountyprosperitypartnership/return-on-investment/96/>

SARATOGA COUNTY PROSPERITY
PARTNERSHIP

Return on Investment

By Marty Vanags on October 11, 2018 at 11:32 AM


On Tuesday, October 9 the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership hosted the Global Semiconductor Alliance Silicon Summit – East conference at the Saratoga Springs City Center. With over 150 attendees, we had visitors from all over the county and the world attending world-class sessions and panels on topics such as "advance human interfaces with IoT", emerging market solutions, "cloud to edge data acceleration, and "bridging the innovation development gap". Some pretty heavy topics for some, but important ideas to consider as Saratoga County launches into the 21st century and beyond.




We were successful in attracting the conference here because of a relationship we established with the Global Semiconductor Alliance or GSA. This professional industry organization meets all over the world, but they saw enough potential in Saratoga County that they brought their conference here with our help. This doesn't happen by sitting in our office waiting for the phone to ring. We had to go out and make it happen.


We hope that by bringing business executives here for a global conference they will see business opportunity in Saratoga County, that our conversations with them will generate interest which will lead to a significant return on investment.


Ask any economic developer in the country, and they will tell you there is a fair amount of business development travel involved in their work. We go where the businesses are – to other's states to meet with site consultants, companies, trade organizations, attend conferences and symposiums, anywhere we feel we can make and develop relationships with people who are in the position to make or influence a positive decision to invest in our county



It is very simply what we must do and what we are required to do. There is a payoff and it comes when we host business leaders like we hosted on Tuesday. One day we will point back to this event and trace our steps to the one meeting, contact or event we attended that caused a company to say, "We are investing in Saratoga County!"





**SILICON SUMMIT
EAST 2018**
October 9, 2018 | Saratoga County, NY
Harnessing Emerging Semiconductor Markets
saratogapartnership.com 

Op-ed articles

This article was written by Terrell Ellis, executive director of Advantage Valley Inc. (West Virginia), and published in the *Charleston Gazette-Mail* on August 11, 2018.

Source: https://www.wvgazettemail.com/opinion/gazette_opinion/op_ed_commentaries/terrell-ellis-roads-to-prosperity-economic-opportunity-for-metro-region/article_84cfdae5-d314-5b6c-885f-ea0e169703f6.html

Charleston
Gazette-Mail
A Pulitzer Prize-Winning Newspaper



NEWS BUSINESS OPINION SPORTS LIFE A & E OUTDOOR PURSUITS BLOGS OBITUARIES DAILY MAIL WV PUTNAM REVIEW METRO CELEBRATIONS

Terrell Ellis: Roads to Prosperity economic opportunity for metro region

By Terrell Ellis Aug 11, 2018



Terrell Ellis

With the start of the Roads to Prosperity highway construction, Advantage Valley — the regional economic development organization promoting the Charleston to Huntington metro region — aims to assist small businesses that provide materials and services within the road and bridge construction sector to grow and expand. The state's new highway and transportation infrastructure investment program represents a tremendous opportunity to support West Virginia businesses and create jobs.

Infrastructure development is a major economic driver in both the Advantage Valley region and the United States, representing an industry that generates over \$78 billion in annual revenue. A growing economy and expanded infrastructure investments present opportunities for prospective entrepreneurs and small business owners to start or expand businesses in this industry in Advantage Valley.

According to Advantage Valley's recently completed market analysis of the best business development opportunities in the region, the built infrastructure industry is represented by 17 businesses in the region realizing over \$9 million in annual profit. Though the industry is strong, only 39 percent of the almost \$90 million regional demand is met in-region by existing businesses, demonstrating the significant market opportunity for Advantage Valley companies to capture additional revenue.

The data does not even yet include the expanded industry demand due to the federal FAST Act and Roads to Prosperity and the Roads to Prosperity infrastructure programs. Jobs within this sector are generating strong average regional earnings of \$64,620.

A quick look at the source of materials for the West Virginia Department of Highways reveals that most products procured for highway construction are from out-of-state companies. In order to ensure that companies in the region understand this opportunity, Advantage Valley — in partnership with the Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) Appalachian Hatchery Project and the Contractors Association of West Virginia — is hosting a West Virginia Division of Highways Vendor Fair from 1 to 4 p.m. Aug. 23 at Valley Park Conference Center in Hurricane.

By hosting this event, we will educate small to medium-sized businesses on the West Virginia Department of Transportation's procurement process and the materials, services, supplies and commodities required for the day-to-day operation of the West Virginia Division of Highways. They will also gain an understanding of the buying process for the transportation infrastructure industry and economic drivers in the community, where along the buyer journey they are most likely to get stuck, and what assistance and information can be provided to help get them unstuck and propel them forward in the procurement process. Attendees can register for this free event at: www.rcbi.org/go/workshop2.

The DOH Vendor Fair is just the first in a series of vendor education events designed to link businesses in the region to the procurement process for our large economic drivers in the state and region. We recognize that nurturing locally owned businesses that employ local workers at decent wages means our community can become more sufficient and less dependent on imports.

A number of research reports have shown the profound economic impact of keeping money local when communities and regions promote buying local. At the most basic level, when goods and services are produced and bought locally and regionally, more money stays in the regional economy through salaries and increases in the tax base.

According to Michael Shuman, author of the book "Going Local," "Going local does not mean walling off the outside world. It means nurturing locally owned businesses which use local resources sustainably, employ local workers at decent wages and serve primarily local consumers. It means becoming more self-sufficient and less dependent on imports."

Advantage Valley Inc. is a private nonprofit regional economic development organization representing the over 600,000 people who reside in the Charleston and Huntington Metropolitan Statistical Areas. It is a prototype for how the state's economic development efforts can be regionalized to promote greater collaboration and efficient use of resources.

It is recognized that companies are looking for the best locations to invest regardless of political boundaries. Those boundaries are erased as they look at trade areas, labor sheds, educational ecosystems and infrastructure that connects them to their domestic and international markets. By marketing the entire region, Advantage Valley leverages the industries, workforce, training resources, educational facilities and other assets of the area to attract and retain private investment.

Terrell Ellis is the executive director of Advantage Valley.

Newsletters

Big Sky Economic Development (Mont.) publishes its "Take3" e-newsletter weekly. This edition is from August 30, 2017, and is available at

<https://send.boingomail.com/t/ViewEmail/r/5CA2638E351542D42540EF23F30FEDED>

No Images? [Click here](#)



TAKE 3

NEWS - EVENTS - MEMBER INVESTOR SPOTLIGHT

TAKE3 is Big Sky Economic Development's electronic newsletter designed specifically for our Member Investors, Board and Staff. Each Wednesday Take3 will arrive at your inbox, with the top three stories of the week, the next three events you need to know about and a Member Investor spotlight. If you have a contribution to this e-newsletter please contact Melanie Schwarz, melanie@bigskyeconomic.org

TAKE 3 NEWS

ECONOMIC PULSE

DATA COME TO TAKE3


I can hear all of you data geeks out there cheering now. Here at Big Sky Economic Development we are constantly looking at data points that are relevant to our work and the community, we call it Economic Pulse. We are excited to start sharing this data with you as part of TAKE3. Also know, that any time your business needs data specific to your business or our community just email allison@bigskyeconomic.org and she can help you find accurate and current information.

- Year to date (August 30th) new construction permit values for commercial development are up 12% over last year.
- Year to date (August 30th) overall new construction permits are down 13% in dollar amount, the difference is largely attributed to no new hotels development in 2017. In 2016 YTD (August 30th) just over 15 million in hotels permits had been issued.
- The average worker in Yellowstone County, Montana earned annual wages of \$45,439 as of 2017Q1. Average annual wages per worker increased 2.0% in the region during the preceding four quarters. The annual wage is 15% lower than the US average while the Yellowstone County cost of living is just 5.1% lower than the US average.

SBDC Success Story - The Yarn Bar
by: Lorene Hintz, SBDC Business Advisor


The Yarn Bar is a retail yarn store started by Sue Baker and Linda Heins of Billings. Acquaintances through the "mom circuit", Linda and Sue first teamed up as part of the staff at a local yarn shop. Six years later, they have created an official partnership in Yarn Bar LLC. These two energetic women worked with our Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to plan their business strategy. Their unique shop sells yarn and notions as well as offering classes, "knit at the movies night" and other interesting events. They encourage all levels of talent from beginning, enhanced & expanded skills to knit with "intoxicating fibers" offered at the Yarn Bar.

The business is located on 1940 Grand Ave, Suite A and you can find them on Facebook or on their website at <https://yarnbar.com>. They welcome everyone to their Grand Opening Celebration on Sept 8 & 9. Congratulations to SBDC clients Sue and Linda!

Billings Urban Frontier House wins LEED Platinum Certification

The house of Randy and Janna Hafer has received the top honor of LEED Platinum Certification. This one of its kind house in our downtown corridor is innovation at its best. Watch the video below courtesy of KTVO.



TAKE 3 EVENTS

Newmark Knight Frank, New Member Investor Meet & Greet Breakfast
Thursday, September 7, 2017
7:30AM - 9:00AM
1537 Avenue D
[Click Here to RSVP](#)

Reception for the USS Billings Crew, Zoo Montana
Thursday, August 31, 2017
4:00PM




Moving Up — New Manager Training Program

September 2017 - January 2018 (First Thursday of each month)

Program Description

Moving Up - New Manager Training is a low impact program that takes place once per month for five months and promises to help individuals develop the knowledge and skills to be an effective manager. You'll have an opportunity to build a network with peers, to share and learn from each other and apply what you learn to your organization. Space is limited to 25 participants.

Who Should Enroll

- Individuals who have been recently promoted to a management position with staff supervisory responsibilities.
- Individuals who are considering applying for a management position.

Applied

Sessions are designed to provide maximum opportunity for experiential learning that can be applied to the participant's personal development and organization.

Convenient

Sessions are held once per month for five months. This allows for ease of scheduling and low impact on participant's work schedule.

Top-notch Instructors


Our instructors include university professors and experienced managers.

Persons who currently hold a manager position looking to enhance their knowledge and skills dealing with people and building a more supportive work environment.

Security that have procedures relating to many organizations along with Chamber staff and industry professionals.

msubillings.edu/extendedcampus
406.896.5890

TAKE 3 SPOTLIGHT



This weeks spotlight is the crew from the USS Billings. Since they arrived on Monday, Billings has rolled out the red carpet for the crew that will be at the helm of the ship with our city's name. Thank you to the City Council for their declaration at Monday's meeting and all the city partners for welcoming them to Billings. The crew will be at the Zoo on Thursday evening for a meet and greet starting at 4:00pm. Stop by and meet this incredible group of men and women from the USS Billings.

#buildingremarkable

Thank you to our 2017-18 Building Remarkable Sponsors



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Press Releases

The Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, announces a groundbreaking new project in a press release, including information about the project's goals, the context for the investment, and includes contact information for the developer, the EDO, and the state economic development corporation. ([Access the press release at https://www.southwestindiana.org/southwest-indianas-largest-regional-cities-project-the-post-house-just-broke-ground/](https://www.southwestindiana.org/southwest-indianas-largest-regional-cities-project-the-post-house-just-broke-ground/))

SOUTHWEST INDIANA'S LARGEST REGIONAL CITIES PROJECT THE POST HOUSE JUST BROKE GROUND!

Monday, August 13, 2018

Evansville, IN August 13, 2018) – The Post House, a \$40 million mixed use development in downtown Evansville, officially broke ground and will move toward an early 2020 opening. [Scannell Properties](#), one of the country's premier real estate developers, is spearheading the project. The Post House will provide real-time research for smart energy technologies and is being built on the remaining property adjacent to the historic Greyhound Bus Station, which is now home to the Bru Burger restaurant.

The Post House will be a "living laboratory" for [Vectren](#) Energy Delivery (Vectren) to test and utilize smart energy products, behavioral energy usage programs and clean energy generation technologies. These products will include rooftop solar panels, small-scale battery energy storage, various smart appliances and smart home automation features, electric vehicle charging stations and ultra-efficient heating and cooling systems.

The Post House defines a spirit of research, smart building technology, energy grid component, campus-like atmosphere and sense of place incorporated to fit within Evansville's recently updated comprehensive downtown master plan. Intended to be a destination built on connectivity, convenience and sustainability, the livability and vibrancy of downtown Evansville is one of the project's highest priorities along with incorporating a linear park or flexible open space to play, gather and host events. The Post House will serve as a design standard for future housing developments in Southwest Indiana.

Southwest Indiana was one of three Indiana regions selected to receive state funding through the [Regional Cities Initiative](#), which will allocate a total of \$126 million toward 100 quality-of-place projects totaling more than \$2 billion in combined state, local, and private investment in order to retain and attract top talent to the Hoosier state.



Fact sheets

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority in Virginia has dozens of fact sheets at its website. This one is titled “Business Diversity: Minority-Owned Businesses” (source:

https://www.fairfaxcountyeda.org/sites/default/files/pdf/business_diversity.pdf). Other FCEDA fact sheets are available at <https://www.fairfaxcountyeda.org/media-center/fact-sheets>.

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Business Diversity: Minority-Owned Companies



Fairfax County is home to the largest number of minority-owned businesses in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These businesses make significant contributions and play an important role in Fairfax County's economic growth and prosperity, and make up 41 percent of all county businesses.

Fairfax County Minority-Owned Business Statistics



MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES BY INDUSTRY SECTOR



*Note: "Other" includes Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Finance and Insurance; Information; Wholesale Trade; Manufacturing and Agriculture.

MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY SECTOR



*Note: "Other" includes Wholesale Trade; Educational Services; Manufacturing; Finance and Insurance; Real Estate and Rental and Leasing; Transportation and Warehousing; Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Agriculture.

Source: 2012 U.S. Census Bureau Survey of Business Owners

Selected Minority-Owned Firms Headquartered in Fairfax County

Acceleris Solutions	www.accelerisolutions.com
Actionet	www.actionet.com
Advanced Computer Concepts	www.acconline.com
Ampcus Corporation	www.ampcus.com
Aureon, Inc.	www.aureon.com
Best Medical	www.bestmed.com
THE CENTECH GROUP, Inc.	www.centechgroup.com
Communication Technologies	www.comtechtechnologies.com
CDComputing Technologies, Inc.	www.cdcs.com
Coyanosa Gas Services	www.coyanogaservices.com
DEYS	www.deys.com
Dynentum Health	www.dynentumhealth.com
Enterprise Information Services	www.eis.com
Four, Inc.	www.fourinc.com
Geological Corporation	www.geological.com
HumanTouch	www.humantouchllc.com
Inscope International	www.inscopeinternational.com
K. Ho Military Acquisition	www.khomac.com
Mietars Incorporated	www.mietars.com
MicroHealth	www.microhealthllc.com
MicroTech	www.microtech.net
NJVC	www.njvc.com
Octis Consulting Group	www.octisconsulting.com
Pragmatic	www.pragmatic.com
Priority One Services, Inc.	www.priorityoneservices.com
PSI International	www.psiint.com
SCI Consulting Services, Inc.	www.sciworld.com
Sensitac	www.sensitac.com
Solbrain, Inc.	www.solbrain-inc.com
Strategy & Management Services Inc.	www.getsmn.com
Strategic Resources, Inc.	www.sri-hq.com
TCA Associates, Inc.	www.tcaassociates.com
Thompson Hospitality	www.thompsonhospitality.com
VARCOM Solutions	www.varcom.com
Zamtech IT	www.zamtech.com

Sources: American Express OPEN, Black Enterprise, Systems for Social Management, Hispanic Business, Hispanic and FCDA

Fairfax County is home to the largest number of minority-owned businesses in Virginia.

FAIRFAX COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

8000 Boone Boulevard, Suite 400, Tysons Corner, Virginia 22182 • 703.790.0600 • info@feda.org • www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org

Project announcements

A press release from the St. Tammany Corporation (La.) on Dec. 18, 2018, announces a new investment. Source: <https://www.stpdd.org/index.php/2018/12/18/st-tammany-corporation-welcomes-new-u-s-headquarters-of-major-manufacturing-company-to-slidell/>



Doing Business Here Living Here

St. Tammany Corporation welcomes new U.S. headquarters of major manufacturing company to Slidell

Slidell, LA – The Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) on Monday voted to uphold the \$250,000 Economic Development Award Program (EDAP), completing the last official action to bringing the new U.S headquarters of Advanced Sinter Metal Technologies, Inc. (ASMT) to Slidell. Other state economic development incentives include over \$515,000 for Quality Jobs.

ASMT, Inc. will mass manufacture metal parts using a metallurgic process called “sintering,” which involves compacting powder and further heat treatments. ASMT’s new manufacturing facility in Slidell will initially create 15 new direct jobs including benefits for an annual payroll of over \$800,000. The total capital investment by ASMT, Inc. into the region will be \$5 million by the end of 2019.

“We are thrilled to welcome ASMT to the Slidell business community,” said Slidell Mayor Greg Cromer. “My team and I have worked closely with the company to ensure their successful entrance into our area and I am excited for ASMT, Inc.’s operations to begin in the new year. This announcement is another testament to the opportunities for business expansion in Slidell.”

“We are proud to be the new home of Advanced Sinter Metal Technologies, Inc.,” said Pat Brister, St. Tammany Parish President. “Mayor Greg Cromer of Slidell and Chris Masingill, the new CEO of St. Tammany Corporation, have done an excellent job of showcasing Slidell, and St. Tammany Parish, as the ideal place for businesses to locate or expand. Slidell has a highly educated workforce, a superior quality of life, a very accessible location, and with our amazing school system, it’s the perfect place to do business. When economic development and government work together, great things are accomplished.”

In late November, the council of the City of Slidell unanimously granted a conditional-use permit to ASMT Inc. for the renovation and operation of the former Textron site on Front Street near Cleveland Avenue in Slidell. ASMT is leasing a 26,000-square-foot portion of the former Textron site to set up its production line. The company will initially have 10 to 15 employees, but that total could grow if the company expands.

“ASMT, Inc. is very excited to bring its US headquarters to the St. Tammany / Slidell region”, said ASMT Manager Andrew Herrington and Sinter Metal coCEO Rudolf von Liechtenstein. “We are especially grateful for the strong leadership of Mayor Cromer and St. Tammany Corp, without their assistance, the

logistics and challenges we faced could have been overwhelming. Everyone throughout the community has been very welcoming and we look forward to being part of the community.”

The projected economic benefit of ASMT’s new facility to the state of Louisiana is a gross revenue of \$1,324,101 minus the \$250,000 EDAP and \$515,207 for Quality Jobs, which would give the state a net revenue of \$588,894.

Thank you to our economic development partners Greater New Orleans, Inc. (GNO, Inc.) for all of their efforts in recruiting ASMT to the region and to Louisiana Economic Development (LED) for their continued work on anchoring ASMT in Louisiana.

For news and updates on the ASMT site and other economic development projects in the area, follow St. Tammany Corp. on Facebook and Twitter @StTammanyCorp.

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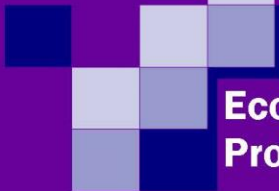
About St. Tammany Corporation

St. Tammany Corporation is the lead economic development organization for St. Tammany. We seek to preserve and promote the quality of life by strengthening and supporting vibrant economies. Learn more at www.sttammanycorp.org

Incentive fact sheets

A 2-page flyer from the City of Lowell, Mass., explains the incentives available through the Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP).


Source: <https://www.lowellma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2574/EDIP-flyer>



City of Lowell

Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP)

Overview:
Established under Chapter 19 of the Acts of 1993, the **Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP)** is a tax incentive program designed to stimulate job creation, private investment, and economic development in targeted areas within Massachusetts where the need for such development is most critical. The City of Lowell has been an active participant in the EDIP since its inception and has used the program to successfully attract new businesses to Lowell and encourage existing businesses to expand and invest in the City.




How to qualify:
Participating companies in the EDIP may receive state and/or municipal tax benefits in exchange for significant private investment, job creation and/or retention and generating significant sales outside of the Commonwealth. The State's governing body of the EDIP, the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) has established five categories of **Certified Projects: Expansion Projects, Enhanced Expansion Projects, Manufacturing Retention & Job Growth Projects, Job Creation Projects and Local Incentive Only Projects** (see back of the page for minimum eligibility requirements under each category).

Tax Incentives Available:

- ◆ State's Investment Tax Credit (ITC)
- ◆ State's 10% Abandoned Building Renovation Deduction*
- ◆ Up to \$5,000 per new job created in a gateway community, such as Lowell, capped at \$1,000 million- for "Job Creation Projects" (JCP) only— see back of the page for details
- ◆ Local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) - real estate tax exemption on the incremental value of the property due to the significant investment as a result of the project


*Abandoned building has been defined as a building being at least 75% vacant for 24 months or more.

Cross Point, Lowell MA
Photo Credit: Jim Higgins



For more information on the EDIP Program, please contact:
City of Lowell— Department of Planning & Development
Phone: 978-674-4252
economicdevelopment@lowellma.gov
www.lowell.org

There's a lot to like about



Alive. Unique. Inspiring.



Category	Job Creation	Capital Investment	Industry Requirement	Geographical Requirement	Substantial out-of-state sales	Municipal Involvement
<i>Expansion Projects (EP)</i>	No minimum or maximum number of full-time jobs that must be created.	The Applicant must be making a significant capital investment to utilize the EDIP Investment Tax Credit.	None	The project can be located in any of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns. A project that is applying to be located in a Gateway City such as Lowell, will receive preference in the awarding of EDIP-ITC.	The project site must generate substantial out-of-state sales.	Projects must have an approved & executed municipal real estate property tax exemption-Tax Increment Financing Agreement (TIF).
<i>Enhanced Expansion Projects (EEP)</i>	The Applicant must create a minimum of 25 full-time net-new to MA full-time manufacturing positions and/or retain a minimum of 50 full-time manufacturing jobs.	The Applicant must be making a significant capital investment to utilize the EDIP Investment Tax Credit.	None	The project can be located in any of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns.	The project site must generate substantial out-of-state sales.	Projects must be supported by the municipality of the project; however the municipality is not required to offer a local incentive.
<i>Manufacturing Retention & Job Growth Projects (MRP)</i>	The Applicant must create a minimum of 100 full-time net-new to MA jobs within 2 years of approval by the EACC.	The Applicant must be making a significant capital investment to utilize the EDIP Investment Tax Credit.	The Applicant must be a manufacturer as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue 830 CMR 58.2.1 . Additionally, the project site must be a manufacturing facility.	Must be located in a Gateway City, such as Lowell.	The project site must generate substantial out-of-state sales.	Projects must be supported by the municipality of the project; however the municipality is not required to offer a local incentive.
<i>Job Creation Projects (JCP)</i>	The Applicant must create a minimum of 100 full-time net-new to MA jobs within 2 years of approval by the EACC.	A significant private investment is not required.	None	The project can be located in any of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns.	The project site must generate substantial out-of-state sales.	Projects do not require a local incentive.
<i>Local Incentive TIF only Projects</i>	Job creation requirements are at the discretion of the City of Lowell.	The applicant must be making a significant capital investment that increases the assessed value of the real property.	Industry requirements are at the discretion of the City of Lowell.	The project needs to be located in the City of Lowell.	Not applicable.	Tax Increment Financing Agreements are municipal property tax incentive agreements that must be approved by the Lowell City Council prior to review by the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC).



For more information on the EDIP Program, please

contact:

City of Lowell– Department of Planning & Development

Phone: 978-674-4252

economicdevelopment@lowellma.gov

www.lowell.org

Or:

Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD)



Phone: (978) 970-1193

www.mass.gov/mobd



A document from the Calvert County, Md., Department of Economic Development explains multiple incentives available at a business park.

Source: https://www.ecalvert.com/DocumentCenter/View/222/PBP_Incentives?bidId=



DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Calvert County Department of Economic Development
205 Main Street
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
410-535-4583
301-855-1880
info@ecalvert.com

Calvert County, Maryland, offers a variety of innovative incentive programs to help attract and expand business opportunities.

Economic development representatives are available to coordinate a variety of state and local incentive programs.

Tax Credits

Patuxent Business Park is a Calvert County Commerce Zone, a designation that extends tax credits to qualifying new and expanding businesses. The Patuxent Business Park Commerce Zone real property tax credit is calculated on the value of the qualifying, new construction. To qualify, businesses are required to construct new premises or expand existing premises. The real property tax credit is for taxes imposed by the county for 10 years.

The tiered tax credit structure is:

Years	Tax Credit
1-5	50%
6-7	25%
8-10	15%

Federal Opportunity Zone

Opportunity Zones provide a federal tax incentive for taxpayers who reinvest unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds, which are specialized vehicles dedicated to investing in Opportunity Zones. Opportunity Zones offer investors the following incentives for putting their capital to work in these communities:

- Investors can roll existing capital gains into Opportunity Funds with no up-front tax bill.
- A 5-year holding increases the rolled-over capital gains basis by 10 percent; a 7-year holding increases the rolled-over capital gain investment basis by another 5 percent for a total of 15 percent.
- Investors can defer their original tax bill until Dec. 31, 2026, at the latest, or until they sell their Opportunity Fund investments, if earlier.
- Opportunity Fund investments held in the fund for at least 10 years are not taxed for capital gains.

PATUXENT BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Incentive Fund

The Economic Development Incentive Fund is available to companies looking to expand or locate in Calvert County. The fund, provided by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), provides assistance through loans or grants, or a combination of both, to qualified companies that can show significant economic impact within the county's business community and can demonstrate that they are within the county's specific target industries.

Criteria

The interested party should be able to demonstrate that they are establishing new operations or facilities within the county or plan to significantly expand existing operations. The company must also:

- Create 10 new full-time jobs or full-time equivalent jobs
- Make a capital investment of at least \$1 million
- Remain in Calvert County for at least five years

Note: The request must be consistent with the county's Comprehensive Plan. The Incentive Fund is provided at the sole discretion of the BOCC. Terms and conditions vary.

Loan Fund

The Calvert Economic Development Loan Fund is a revolving loan that provides an alternative funding source for business expansion in Calvert County.

Criteria

Businesses may be eligible if:

- primary sales/activities are manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, and/or business services
- the business is a legal entity qualified to do business in the State of Maryland, and
- the business has a minimum two-year operating history with a completed business plan.

Selected business startups may be eligible. Help in preparing a business plan is available. The maximum loan request is limited to \$100,000; the minimum loan request is \$2,500. Loans considered desirable are those that are used to purchase fixed assets, equipment, inventory and finance contracts as well as loans to expand business in Calvert County. The fund may not be used for debt refinancing.

State Economic Development Partner

The Department of Economic Development can assist in negotiating financing opportunities in your effort to locate your business in Calvert County. The department will help businesses determine which state or local financing alternative is most appropriate for your business, work confidentially with you to help clarify your needs, and assist in preparing applications to state and federal agencies. For more information about Maryland's economic development financing programs, visit the [Maryland Department of Commerce](#) for an array of state economic development incentive programs.

PATUXENT BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Fast-Track Permit

Fast-track permitting provides an accelerated development review process to reduce the turn-around time in the county's development approval process. Qualified projects receive the highest priority from county staff.

To qualify, projects must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Town Center Master Plans, and county Zoning Ordinance. Consideration will be given to any ancillary or complimentary industries that may accompany the project.

Business Counseling

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers business counseling services to county businesses at the local office in Prince Frederick. Most services are free of charge. Whether you are just thinking about starting a business or would like to expand your current business, the SBDC can help guide you through the steps necessary to be successful.

To take advantage of this service, please contact the SBDC at 301-934-7583. For more information on the SBDC, [visit online](#).

Financing

The Department of Economic Development can assist in negotiating financing opportunities in your effort to locate your business in Calvert County. The department will help businesses determine which state or local financing alternative is most appropriate for your business, work confidentially with you to help clarify your needs and assist in preparing applications to state and federal agencies.

For more information about the state's economic development financing programs, please visit our state economic development partner, the [Maryland Department of Commerce](#), for an array of state economic development incentive programs.

Workforce Housing

The House Keys for Employees program provides the county's working population an additional opportunity for affordable home ownership. It is an employer partnership initiative that matches funds for closing costs and down payments for eligible employees to purchase a home.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible employees are those who have not owned a principal residence in the last three years and meet specific eligibility requirements. Local match for private-sector and public-sector employees could total up to \$5,000, equivalent to the state benefit/contribution.

The county government is also a participating employer in the program and provides matching funds for eligible county government and public school system employees.

Case Study: Leveraging High-Profile Deals

Once it was a finalist, the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation developed a case study brochure that described its response to the Amazon search.

Amazon Publicly Launches Site Search for HQ2

- 50,000 jobs
- \$5 billion capital investment
- 8.1 million square feet

Metro Denver EDC Convenes Stakeholders and Develops Action Plan

- Strategizes with Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) within hours of release
- Within four days of Amazon's announcement, Metro Denver EDC releases communication strategy and action plan to deliver competitive proposal for HQ2.

Private Sector Drives Colorado's Bid

- Presents and discusses HQ2 project opportunity to Metro Denver EDC Executive Committee
- 110 business leaders unanimously vote for Metro Denver EDC to compete for project
- Metro Denver EDC Executive Committee deploys \$150,000 in funding to create Colorado's bid
- In addition to project response, funding used to launch public campaign www.ColoradoLoves.com

70 Cities, 9 Counties & State Collaborate to Provide a Single Cohesive Response

- The Metro Denver EDC considers more than 30 sites submitted and hundreds of supporting documents
- External advisory board of economic development professionals peer review most competitive sites that meet and exceed HQ2 criteria
- Metro Denver EDC creates one comprehensive proposal highlighting eight competitive sites from throughout the region

Welcome to Your New Frontier:

RFP response delivered Oct. 18, 2017

- Hard-cover book to reflect Amazon's roots with 23-page proposal
- Amazon Kindle Fire 8 with welcome video and digital proposal
- Delivered in a custom wooden case to reflect Colorado's spirit of imagination. All contents crafted by Colorado artists.

ColoradoLoves.com Launch

- Microsite launches to collect community-generated content including video, pictures, quotes, and blogs
- 30+ key influencers submitted videos ranging from Gov. Hickenlooper to CEOs to Denver Broncos' players
- Multi-purpose marketing to Amazon, while uniting Coloradans through this platform. Content will be used for future attraction efforts.

Metro Denver Makes the Cut

- Amazon cuts 238 proposals down to 20 and proceeds to second round. The Metro Denver EDC's proposal is one of 20 under consideration for HQ2.



On Sept. 7, 2017, Amazon launched the search for a second North American corporate headquarters known as HQ2. As states, cities, and economic developers frenzied over the prospect of being home to 50,000 new jobs, the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (Metro Denver EDC) was already at work.

HQ2's criteria includes proximity to a major international airport, a metropolitan population with a highly-educated workforce, and real estate to support the major investment.

Within hours of the RFP being publicly released, the Metro Denver EDC was in contact with the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) and developed a communications strategy and action plan that guided completion of the response ahead of Amazon's schedule. The action plan included a comprehensive site search and information curation on talent, global accessibility, and business ethos.

The Metro Denver EDC serves as the liaison between Amazon, the state of Colorado, and all of the individual communities in the region.

