

# Office Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) Guidelines for Strategic Economic Development Plans

## MINIMUM TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Clear easily readable maps, photographs, charts and tables sufficient to illustrate the critical elements of the planning document
- Clear concise readable text with a minimum of professional jargon
- Sources clearly indicated in tables and/or by footnote in text

## ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

Below is an outline of elements that should be included in the final plan:

### A. INTRODUCTION

- Who commissioned the plan
- Events that led to the planning process
- Purpose of the plan
- Scope of the plan
- Process used in developing the plan
- Background of the community
  - Population analysis
  - Community setting
  - Trends and projections
  - Economic issues and factors

### B. EVALUATION OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### 1. *Economic Base Assessment*

- Analysis of the economic base and its positioning within the region including:
  - Businesses within the community
  - Local trade sector
  - Local retail, commercial and governmental services
  - Industrial base of local economy

#### 2. *Community Assets Assessments*

- Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the community/communities and how they impact the economic situation
  - Community capacity and infrastructure
  - Comparative advantage
  - Community values and vision trade-off assessment
  - Labor force, education and training

3. *Economic Opportunities Assessment*

- Analysis of the industrial clusters, supply chain factors, labor force and skills base, and overall strengths and weaknesses to assess the advantages for attracting certain industries
  - Business growth and formation potential
  - Land use constraints and opportunities

4. *Development Opportunities Assessment*

- Analysis of existing assets and recommendations to sustain and improve long term viability of these assets

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION AND STRATEGIES

- Guides the creation and evaluation of economic strategies
  - Vision for the local economy
  - Economic development goals and objectives
  - Economic development strategies

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Discussion of predominant ideas, guiding principles and general recommendations of the following:
  - Economic diversity
  - Business development potential
  - Redevelopment and revitalization
  - Labor force, education and training
  - Regulatory processes
  - Urban growth area
  - Resource areas and critical areas
  - Compliance with comprehensive plan elements

E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

- Present specific action plan to implement the Economic Development Strategy
  - Community infrastructure
  - Business assistance
  - Business retention, expansion, formation, and recruitment
  - Process and regulation
  - Communication, marketing and promotion
  - Management, monitoring and accounting
  - Financing and incentives
  - Timeframes and mechanisms for evaluation, monitoring and updating the plan

F. APPENDICES

- Appropriate supporting documentation