

STEPS TO CREATING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

SO WHAT IS IT?

An economic development corporation is a legal entity/organization directed by a board of directors and/or members, for the purpose of creating new jobs and income growth. This is one of many tools, which have been used by numerous communities, counties and regions. This particular resource is an outline that describes the process for creating an economic development corporation.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

Most communities are not completely satisfied with their local economy. Some want more job opportunities or income growth for all their citizens or for specific groups such as displaced farmers, women, minorities, or youth. Many people are concerned about rising unemployment rates, lower than average incomes, an over reliance on a particular sector, or the emergence of an industry cluster or other opportunity. Many public officials are concerned about increasing the tax base to share the local tax burden. When a community lacks an organizational structure for addressing economic development issues, this outline could serve as a valuable educational tool for helping a committee understand how to create an organization with an economic development focus.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Most economic development corporations are formed by a steering committee made up of persons who have expressed an interest in providing some level of leadership in economic development. A group of 5-6 individuals might be large enough to begin exploring organizational structure options. A general outline for discussion might include:

- Step 1: Read the outline titled "Steps to Creating an Economic Development Corporation"
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/economic_dev_corp_steps.htm
- Step 2: Read the additional resources that are linked from this web site (Sample bylaws, list of economic development corporations in the state, surveys of economic development corporations, etc.)
- Step 3: Create a steering committee interested in forming a corporation
- Step 4: Share organizational options with the steering committee
- Step 5: Talk with executive directors of other economic development corporations
- Step 6: Pursue an organizational structure that best fits the need of the area/community
- Step 7: Create an economic development corporation using the resources listed at:
http://www.uwex.edu/li/learner/sites_start.htm

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Andy Lewis
Community Development Specialist
Center for Community Economic Development
608-263-1432
andy.lewis@uwex.edu

Patrick Nehring
Community Resource Development Educator
Waushara County
920-787-0416
patrick.nehring@ces.uwex.edu

Jeff Hoffman
Community Resource Development Educator
Green Lake County
920-294-4032
jeff.hoffman@ces.uwex.edu

Wisconsin Economic Development Association, <http://www.weda.org/>
Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Area Development Manager, <http://commerce.wi.gov/BD/MT-FAX-0901.html>
Economic Development Manager for the local electric utility, See, Wisconsin Utilities Association:
<http://www.wiutilities.org/>