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## **Community Economic Development Preparedness Index\***



April 2004 A Publication From:



The Center for Community Economic Development 610 Langdon Street Madison. WI 53703-1104



## Community Economic Development Preparedness Index\*

4-21-2004

The purpose of a preparedness index is to help you analyze your community's strengths and weaknesses *before* you develop a plan to improve economic development opportunities in your community.

The index is based on your perception of activities and conditions in the community; over which you *may* or *may* not have some level of control.

Your compiled responses will provide a reflection of your community's readiness to:

- Retain existing businesses
- Attract new businesses and residents, and
- Grow small businesses within your community

To complete the form, please check a circle that best reflects your level of agreement with the stated item. If you "strongly agree" with the statement, or the answer is "yes", check the far left circle. If you are not as strongly in agreement with the statement, check one of the boxes on the right side of the scale. If you don't know the answer, check the far right circle.

## I. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 1. Our city council/village board has a pro-business attitude and the board actively supports economic development activities through funding, policies and programs.
- 2. Key local business leaders are actively involved in:
  - a. The governmental process, and
  - b. Economic development efforts
- 3. Our community has an effective local economic development corporation, commission or committee responsible for economic development activities.
- 4. The organization that is <u>most</u> responsible for economic development in our community has adequate representation from <u>both</u> public and private sector members.
- 5. Our community is a member of a regional organization actively engaged in economic development efforts (county or multicounty).

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0 0	0 0	0
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
6.	Our community has (or has access to) a knowledgeable economic development professional.	0	0	0	0	0
7.	Our community leaders work together with other economic development related professionals or organizations (such as regional planning commissions, UW-Extension, state agencies, utilities, WI technical colleges).	0	0	0	0	0
8.	Residents in our Community have access to a community-based leadership training program.	0	0	0	0	0
II.	STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
9.	The community has an operating comprehensive land use plan.	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Our community has a zoning ordinance that designates an adequate supply of residential, commercial and industrially-zoned land for future development.	0	0	0	0	0
11.	Our community has a current written economic development plan that was prepared by an economic development committee, formally adopted by local government, and reviewed on a regular basis	0	0	0	0	0
12.	Subcommittees work on projects outlined in the economic development plan on a regular basis.	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Our economic development plan is sufficiently part of a larger area economic development plan (multi-community, county or regional).	0	0	0	0	0
14.	The community has identified the types of businesses that fit the needs and are desired by our communities.	0	0	0	0	0
15.	The community has an active program to encourage and support existing businesses.	0	0	0	0	0
16.	We have a marketing plan that targets businesses that are most likely to locate in our community.	0	0	0	0	0

#### A. EXISTING BUSINESS RETENTION Disagree Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Agree 17. An up to date formal business retention and expansion study 0 0 0 0 О exists. 18. The chamber of commerce or the economic development 0 0 О 0 organization makes regular visits to businesses. 19. An adequate number of business recognition events are held in 0 0 0 0 0 the community... 20. The community has an active downtown program to support 0 0 0 $\bigcirc$ 0 downtown development and revitalization. 21. Local government is usually responsive to the problems of 0 0 0 $\bigcirc$ 0 existing businesses **B. NEW BUSINESS FORMATION** 22. Our community has an active business development program to 0 0 0 0 0 assist new businesses with their start-up issues (e.g. business plan preparation, financing, recruitment of people, management, accounting, production and marketing). 23. Our community has a systematic program to check on the 0 0 0 0 0 progress of new businesses to see if they need help before they get into serious trouble. 24. Adequate financing can be found for new business start-ups and 0 $\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$ $\circ$ 0 small business expansions. C. ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES 25. We have a marketing program targeted toward industries that 0 0 0 0 have been researched to determine the likelihood of locating in our community. Our community actively recruits targeted industries. 26. 0 0 0 0

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
27.	We have an organized, trained business attraction team comprised of people from both the private and public sectors.	0	0	0	0	0
28.	The existing businesses in our community are helpful in recruiting new firms to the area.	0	0	0	0	0
	D. TOURISM	_				
29.	The community has completed an up to date tourism assets and marketing analysis and reported the results to local businesses.	0	0	0	0	0
30.	The community has an active tourism promotion program.	0	0	0	0	0
31.	The community has an active chamber of commerce or visitor and convention bureau that focuses on tourism development.	0	0	0	0	0
32.	We have a regular calendar of promotion activities (e.g. monthly trade days, main street programs, arts and crafts, festivals).	0	0	0	0	0
	E. Downtown Merchants					
33.	The community has an active organization working with downtown merchants.	0	0	0	0	0
34.	The downtown organization completed a physical renovation plan within an adequate timeframe (i.e. the past 10 years).	0	0	0	0	0
35.	The community has conducted a retail market analysis within the past three years.	0	0	0	0	0
36.	Retail merchants have coordinated and/or store hours which match consumer preferences.	0	0	0	0	0
37.	Parking adequate in the downtown.	0	0	0	0	0

#### III. INFORMATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Disagree Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree Agree Our community has completed a "Community Profile" (fact 38. 0 0 0 0 O sheet) that includes basic information about the community (e.g. major employers, education, health care, population, services). 39. We have a "promotional" brochure to use with tourism, 0 0 0 0 0 relocation packets and recruitment of new businesses that has been updated on a regular basis. 40. All information contained in the community profiles and in 0 0 0 0 0 promotional materials is available on the Internet. 41. The community maintains a current database of available 0 $\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$ commercial and industrial buildings and sites. IV. LABOR FORCE 42. Our community has access to current (less than 3 years old) labor force information on the following: wages and benefits $\bigcirc$ 0 0 $\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$ labor supply by occupational categories b. 0 0 0 0 0 productivity of the workforce c. 0 0 0 0 0 training opportunities d. 0 0 0 0 0 employment data (employment, unemployment, 0 0 $\bigcirc$ 0 0 underemployment and turnover rates) 43. A positive relationship exists between labor and management in $\bigcirc$ 0 0 0 $\bigcirc$ our local businesses/organizations. The wages in our community are at a high enough level to help 44. 0 0 0 0 $\bigcirc$ retain our existing work force and attract new labor to the area. 45. Training opportunities exist within the community to 0 0 O O 0 meet existing and prospective employer training needs. Our community has resources to help businesses hire and train a 46. 0 0 0 0 0 diverse work force

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
47.	New or expanding employers would be able to find adequate numbers of qualified employees in our labor area.	0	0	0	0	0
V.	INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY					
48.	Our community has an infrastructure capital improvements plan for the next five years.	0	0	0	0	0
49.	Enough (i.e. 40 acres) of industrially zoned land is owned or optioned by the community for an industrial park, or is being developed by a private developer.	0	0	0	0	0
	a. A copy of site restrictions and covenants is readily available.	0	0	0	0	0
	b. There is adequate water (10" or more) and sewer lines (12" or more) to the property line.	0	0	0	0	0
	<ul> <li>c. An environmental assessment has been completed for the industrial park property.</li> </ul>	0	0	0	0	0
	d. Soil test borings have been made on the industrial site.	0	0	0	0	0
50.	We have sufficient numbers of vacant industrial buildings to attract the interest of potential new businesses.	0	0	0	0	0
51.	There is a creditable business incubator in the community.	0	0	0	0	0
52.	The highways serving our community are adequate for most manufacturing and distribution operations.	0	0	0	0	0
53.	We have adequate common carrier trucking services for most manufacturing and distribution operations.	0	0	0	0	0
54.	Active rail lines effectively serve at least a portion of our industrial sites.	0	0	0	0	0
55.	Our community is within a reasonable (i.e. one hour) drive of an airport with scheduled commercial air service by at least one of the major airlines.	0	0	0	0	0
56.	We have enough excess water capacity (gpd and bod) to serve the requirements of most new manufacturing operations.	0	0	0	0	0

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
57.	We have enough sewage treatment capacity to serve the requirements of most new manufacturing operations.	0	0	0	0	0
58.	The community has satisfactory access to or control of an environmentally sound waste disposal site for at least 5 years.	0	0	0	0	0
59.	Our electric and natural gas rates are competitive.	0	0	0	0	0
60.	Our community has access to adequate future supplies of electric and natural gas to satisfy expansion and attraction activities for the next 5 years.	0	0	0	0	0
61.	Our community has, or shortly plans to implement a broadband high speed fiber optic cable system	0	0	0	0	0
62.	Our community has, or shortly plans to implement digital switching capability.	0	0	0	0	0
VI.	FINANCIAL RESOURCES					
63.	Adequate financing can be found in our community for new business start-ups and business expansions.	0	0	0	0	0
64.	Our community has an accessible group of local investors who could assist in financing a speculative or build-to-suit building	0	0	0	0	0
65.	Our economic development organization helps businesses acquire financing.	0	0	0	0	0
66.	Local government is aware of, and has usefully implemented, municipal financing vehicles to assist economic development efforts such as Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), Business Improvement Districts (BID) and Industrial Revenue Bonds IRBs).	0	0	0	0	0
67.	Our community has submitted proposals for state and/or federal funding for development programs, for housing and/or for infrastructure development.	0	0	0	0	0
68.	Local or county government has created a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF).	0	0	0	0	0

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
69.	Local banks effectively support community economic development.	0	0	0	0	0
70.	Local lenders made small business administration and/or other guaranteed loans on a regular basis.	0	0	0	0	0
VII	QUALITY OF LIFE				_	_
71.	The people in the community are generally proud of the quality of life here.	0	0	0	0	0
72.	Property in our community is generally well maintained.	0	0	0	0	0
73.	Our central business districts and shopping areas are attractive, clean landscaped, free of trash, painted and well cared for.	0	0	0	0	0
74.	Our community is served by a shared ride-taxi service.	0	0	0	0	0
75.	We have a public transportation system.	0	0	0	0	0
76.	Our community has a good variety of available housing – different prices, styles and locations.	0	0	0	0	0
77.	We have a good supply of moderately priced housing in our community which is affordable to entry level workers.	0	0	0	0	0
78.	We have an adequate supply of housing suitable for seniors and/or special needs populations.	0	0	0	0	0
79.	The community banks support housing initiatives through home financing and/or first buyer programs.	0	0	0	0	0
80.	Our K-12 schools compare favorably with top-quality schools elsewhere in the state.	0	0	0	0	0

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
81.	Our schools are of sufficiently high quality to be acceptable to highly educated executives and managers who may move to the area.	0	0	0	0	0
82.	Our community has a technical college within a 30 minutes drive.	0	0	0	0	0
83.	Our vocational programs are keyed to the needs of local					
	employers.	0	0	0	0	0
84.	Our community has an accessible two or four-year college or					
	university within a 30 minute drive.	0	0	0	0	0
85.	We have a research university within an hour's drive.	0	0	0	0	0
86.	Our local educational institutions are graduating students with the skills and knowledge that meet the needs of existing employers.	0	0	0	0	0
87.	Our local educational institutions are graduating students with					
	the skills and knowledge required by employers using high technology applications.	0	0	0	0	0
88.	We have a hospital in our community or affiliated clinic that					
	provides quality specialized care including the latest diagnostic and treatment equipment available.	0	0	0	0	0
89.	Our hospitals or affiliated clinics offer adequate hours of					
67.	emergency service.	0	0	0	0	0
90.	Our community has a sufficient number of child care facilities					
	available for parents who work.	0	0	0	0	0
91.	Most of our childcare programs are well managed and highly					
	rated by parents who use them.	0	0	0	0	0
92.	Our community has adequate public parks for citizen and tourist	0	0	0	0	
	recreational needs.		)		)	

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagre	Strongly Disagre	Don't Know
93.	Our community's recreational facilities and programs compare favorably with state and national standards.	0	0	0	0	0
94.	Our community offers a variety of cultural programs and activities for different ages and tastes.	0	0	0	0	0
95.	We have a variety of active service organizations in our community.	0	0	0	0	0
96.	Crime rates are low in our community.	0	0	0	0	0

### Dealing With Your "Don't Know" Responses:

Now that you have completed the assessment, go back and list the items below where you checked the "Don't know" box, and indicate who in the community might have detailed information on this particular indicator (follow the first example which focuses on the issue of crime rates):

indicator (ronow the first example which rocuses on the issue of crime rates).						
Question #	Contact Name	Position/affiliation				
#89	Deputy Barney Fife	Deputy Sheriff				

## **Prioritizing your "no" Responses:**

If you have identified a number of deficiencies ("strongly disagree"), you might want to consider prioritizing these issues. Go back and review the questions where you responded "strongly disagree" and then list the top 3 issues that you think needed to be addressed by the Community:

Question #	Issue:

## **Action Planning Steps:**

While you may not have time to do this for each of the three priorities that you identified in the last step, begin to think about an action plan for addressing your top three priorities needing additional attention by the Community. Your action plan will require you to think about the issue in a series of steps/tasks:

Task	Time Line (By when?)	Who	Will Do What	Indicator of Success

<sup>\*</sup> This index is based in part on the Community Economic Preparedness Index that was jointly produced by the Wisconsin Department of Development, Wisconsin State Rural Development Council, and the Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin-Extension. It was later modified by Mary Cole Laub of Alliant Energy and further revised by Andy Lewis, Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin Extension. This version was made possible by funding from the Northern EDGE initiative with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.

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