

Oregon Statewide Economic Development Needs Assessment: A Survey of Economic Development Specialists

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About the UO EDC

The University of Oregon Economic Development Center is a partnership between the Community Service Center, the Center for Sustainable Business Practices, the Sustainable Cities Initiative, and UO faculty. The UO Center provides technical assistance to organizations throughout Oregon, with a focus on rural economic development. The UO Center seeks to align local strategies to community needs, specifically with regards to building understanding of the benefits of sustainable practices and providing technical training to capitalize on economic opportunities related to those practices. The EDC is partially funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a statewide economic development needs assessment of Oregon communities. The primary objective of the needs assessment was to better understand economic development professional's perceptions of the following: key assets and barriers to local economic development, the relative emphasis and perceived effectiveness of economic development strategies, the extent and impact of organizational coordination, and technical assistance needs.

The U.S. Economic Development Administration provided funding for the statewide economic development needs assessment (as part of the EDA's University Center program). The primary research tool for the needs assessment was an online survey of economic development professionals throughout the state. The University of Oregon Economic Development Center partnered with the Oregon Economic Development Association to conduct the needs assessment survey in June and July of 2010. The survey focused on economic development professionals' perceptions regarding physical, political/programmatic, and community factors of economic development.

Key Assets and Barriers to Economic Development

Many physical, political/programmatic, and community elements influence a community's ability to pursue economic development strategies. Figure A-1 lists the key assets and barriers to economic development in local communities.

Elements related to land base and infrastructure, such as the availability of large industrial sites, transportation infrastructure, and infrastructure financing received mixed responses, representing assets in some communities and barriers in others. This situation suggests that local land supply and infrastructure conditions vary depending on jurisdiction. Similar results were found for perceptions of land use regulations, state tax structure, and land use permitting processes. Geographic analysis of survey results suggest regional differences between communities dependent on industries constrained by natural resource regulations and those that are not.

Communities that leverage traditional assets related to land and infrastructure and emphasize unique environmental, social, recreational, educational, and other amenities may develop compelling advantages over alternative locations.

These findings suggest that it will continue to be important to support and strengthen organizations that provide business support. Communities must focus on businesses if economic development strategies are to succeed. Political and community support is critical. To strengthen the efforts of these organizations, coordination among all organizations that conduct economic development activities will be important.

Figure A-1. Key assets and barriers to economic development to economic development in Oregon communities, 2010



Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

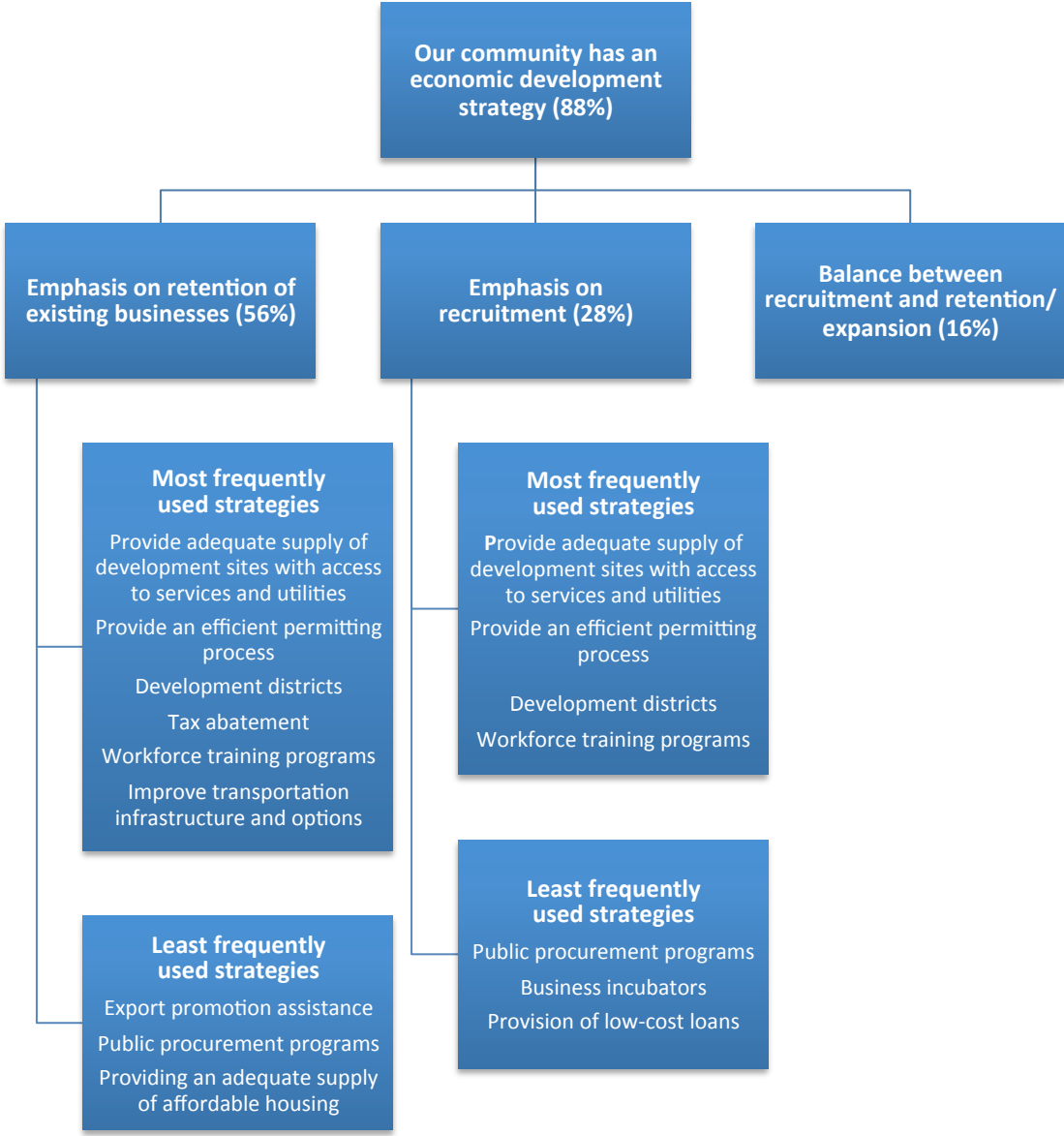
In addition, a focus on infrastructure planning and funding will be critical for the economic health of Oregon communities. Without infrastructure in at the right place at the right time, economic development opportunities will be missed. The costs of building and maintaining infrastructure are straining the capacity of many local governments that have inadequate revenues to fund needed improvements.

Cities should focus on building quality communities if they hope to compete for highly skilled workers. Highly skilled workers (and the employers that employ them) value parks, schools, quality urban design, and easy access to jobs, housing, shopping, and recreation. Affordable housing is an important component of building quality communities that all communities should address.

Strategic Emphasis and Effectiveness

A primary goal of our needs assessment was to better understand local economic development strategies in use, as well as their perceived effectiveness. Although not every community in Oregon has an economic development strategy, 88% of respondents indicated their communities do have a strategy as shown in Figure 2. Figure 2 also shows the most common emphasis of the strategy and strategies used by economic development organizations.

Figure A-2. Strategic emphasis of economic development strategies in Oregon communities, 2010



Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

A majority of respondents (65%) consider the local economic development strategy to be at least moderately effective and an equal proportion of respondents consider the strategy to be successful at achieving objectives. However, respondents associated with an evenly balanced approach between recruitment and retention were more likely to consider the strategy very effective or very successful than respondents associated with a recruitment-oriented or retention/expansion-oriented approach.

Perceptions regarding economic development strategies generally indicate the importance of implementing a relatively balanced approach between recruitment and retention/expansion of businesses. Although Oregon communities are predominantly focused on retention/expansion approaches to economic development, communities that appropriately emphasize recruitment and retention within the overall approach and use multiple strategies in support of each approach tend to perceive higher levels of strategy effectiveness and success on average.

Development of an appropriate blend of recruitment and retention/expansion should be based on thorough “evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the area economy and the organizational capacity of the local government and potential partners” to implement the strategy (Moore et al., 2006). Communication between local government and local businesses, if not formal partnerships, can lead to greater understanding of business needs, perceptions of local government, and upcoming changes or expansions (*Ibid*). Collaborative approaches fostering partnerships between communities within a region can increase community capacity, improve efficiency through partnerships and networks, and reduce local competition to increase wealth generation for the region as a whole (Moore et al, 2006; Bradshaw and Blakely, 1999).

Organizational Coordination and Effectiveness

Coordination between organizations engaged in economic development can influence individual organizational capacity to address local needs and implement strategies. Analysis of survey results assessed the degree of coordination occurring in Oregon communities among organizations and actors, operating at multiple scales, as well as the perceived effectiveness of organizations at achieving economic development objectives.

Survey results indicate that organizations in general are perceived to coordinate to meet economic development objectives in Oregon communities. Among organizations operating at multiple geographical scales, municipal government operating at the local level and Economic Development District organizations operating at the regional level are perceived to engage in a higher degree of coordination than other groups. Conversely, the fewest proportion of respondents identified tribes, citizen groups, and the Federal Government to be engaged in a high degree of coordination.

Respondents indicated that organizations are generally effective at achieving economic development objectives. However, only 10% of respondents perceive organizations to be very effective. Perceptions of organizational effectiveness for each strategic emphasis category indicate greater variability in organizational effectiveness among recruitment-oriented communities; less variability, but slightly lower levels of organizational effectiveness among retention-oriented communities; and the lowest variability and highest levels of organizational effectiveness among communities with an even balance of recruitment and retention strategies.

Economic development organizations should look for more opportunities to coordinate. Coordination between organizations is important. Coordination can

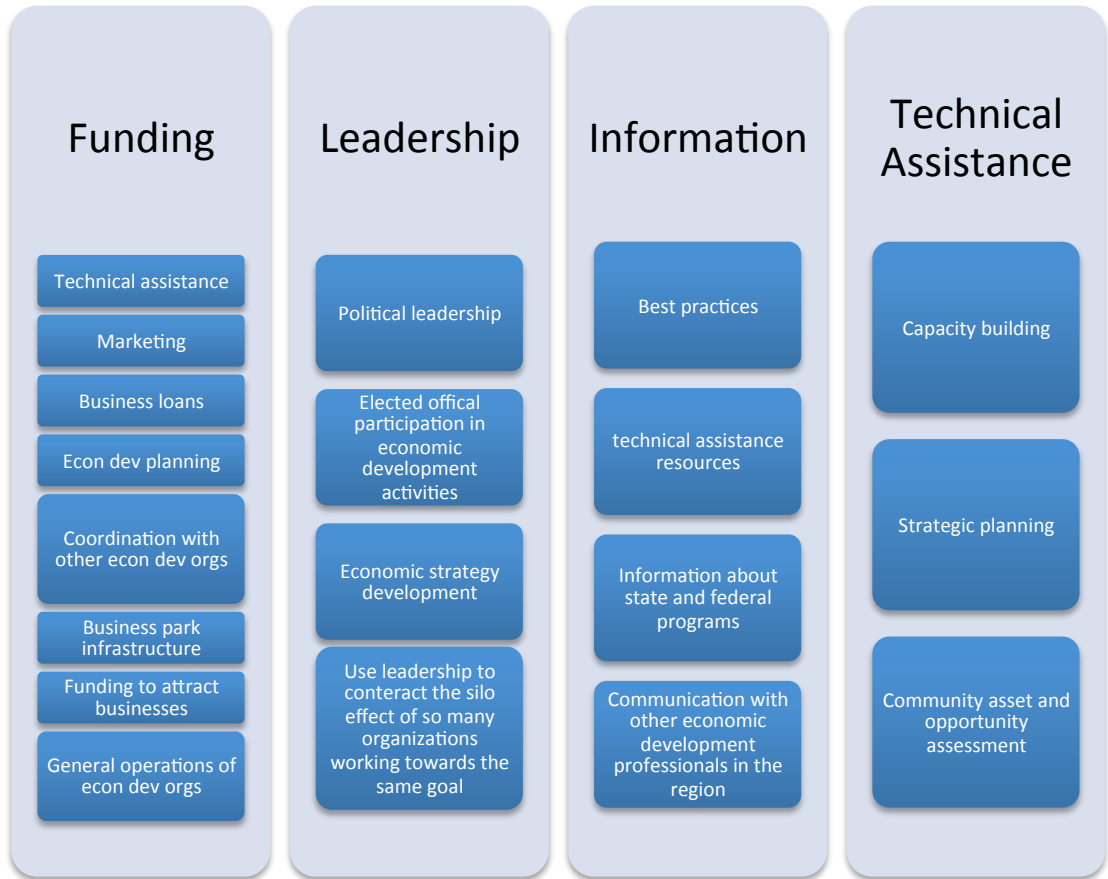
reduce duplication of efforts, increase effectiveness, improve efficiency, and take advantage of opportunities that one organization might not be able to do on its own. In addition, organizations that coordinate often wield more influence when asking for resources from local and state legislators.

Coordination can occur on a variety of levels. First, organizations must find ways to communicate with each other so that they understand what each organization is doing. Then, the organizations should evaluate their goals, objectives, and strategies to identify opportunities to work together towards common goals, and areas where they could increase coordination to attain common goals. Finally, organizations should look for opportunities to do new work (such as research, training, or other programs) to increase economic development opportunities in their communities.

Technical Assistance Needs

Of key interest to the University of Oregon Economic Development Center are the technical assistance needs of Oregon communities. Funding, leadership, information, and organizational technical assistance were the top rated technical assistance needs for economic development professionals, as shown in Figure A-3. Respondents indicated they would like more workshops and trainings to learn about funding, leadership training, and technical assistance, and that newsletters, listserves, and blogs would be helpful to disseminate economic development information.

Figure A-3. Technical assistance needs for Oregon communities



Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

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CHAPTER I. BACKGROUND

This report presents the results of a statewide economic development needs assessment of Oregon economic development professionals and their communities. The primary objective of the needs assessment was to obtain a baseline of information from perceptions regarding the following:

- Key assets and barriers to local economic development
- Relative emphasis and perceived effectiveness of economic development strategies
- Extent and impact of organizational coordination
- Technical assistance needs of economic development professionals

Introduction

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the University of Oregon a three-year grant to establish a University Economic Development Center. The UO Center is one of 70 university centers nationwide. The intent of the EDA program is to link the expertise of universities with economically distressed communities.

The mission of the University of Oregon (UO) Economic Development Center is to link UO resources with communities for the purpose of enhancing regional sustainable economic development. The primary emphasis of our program is providing technical assistance to distressed communities throughout the state of Oregon. The focus of the program is creating sustainable local economies through capacity building, applied research, and partnerships. The program is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), the University of Oregon, state and local government, and private industry.

A key initiative within the Center is to conduct research that has statewide relevance. Part of our research agenda is to better understand what communities in Oregon need to achieve their economic development objectives. Moreover, we are interested in what economic development professionals perceive as assets and barriers to economic development. The statewide economic development needs assessment is our initial effort to answer these questions.

Purpose and Methods

The primary purpose of our needs assessment was to establish a baseline of information regarding perceptions of assets, barriers, needs, and opportunities for economic development in Oregon communities. The needs assessment is based on a survey of economic development professionals from a range of organizations and locales throughout the state. The survey included four focal areas:

1. What are the key assets and barriers to economic development in Oregon communities?
2. What emphasis do communities place on recruitment strategies relative to retention and expansion strategies and how effective do economic development professionals perceive each set of strategies to be at achieving economic development objectives?
3. To what degree is coordination occurring and what is its impact on the achievement of economic development objectives?
4. What types of technical assistance would be most useful to economic development organizations in achieving their goals?

We used an online survey instrument to collect the perceptions of economic development professionals working throughout the state of Oregon. Members of the Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA), with 87 members (including city, county, state, federal, non-profit, private, and University of Oregon affiliation), and representatives of Oregon's Economic Development Districts (EDDs),¹ with 12 member organizations, were invited to take the needs assessment survey. While the survey sample does not include every economic development professional at work in the state, it consists of a targeted group of individuals with relevant, professional, local and regional economic development experience.

We received 80 complete responses to the survey. Local government and economic development organizations are most represented among survey respondents (see Table 1-1). In general, survey respondents represent a group of professionals from a variety of government, non-profit, and other organizations, with significant experience in terms of years of involvement with both local and regional economic development.

¹ Three members of OEDA are employees of Economic Development Districts.

Table 1-1: Respondents by organization type and location

	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Total	
	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total
Organizational representation								
County government	1	4%	4	16%	4	13%	9	11%
Local government	5	22%	12	48%	7	22%	24	30%
Tribal government	0	0%	0	0%	4	13%	4	5%
Chamber of commerce	1	4%	1	4%	0	0%	2	3%
Nonprofit organization	4	17%	1	4%	3	9%	8	10%
Economic development organization	3	13%	3	12%	10	31%	16	20%
Citizen or community group	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Elected official	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other (please specify)	8	35%	4	16%	4	13%	16	20%
Total respondents	23	100%	25	100%	32	100%	80	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Organization of this Report

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

Chapter 2: Analysis of Assets and Barriers describes survey results pertaining to physical, political/programmatic, and community elements perceived as assets or barriers to local economic development. It highlights specific elements listed as the most important assets and greatest barriers to economic development in Oregon communities.

Chapter 3: Economic Development Approaches examines perceptions of the relative emphasis communities place on recruitment and retention/expansion strategies and the perceived effectiveness of each set of strategies at achieving economic development objectives.

Chapter 4: Coordination examines the degree of coordination occurring in Oregon communities among multiple organizations and actors, as well as the perceived effectiveness of organizations at achieving economic development objectives.

Chapter 5: Technical Assistance examines the types of technical assistance and information needed by respondents to further economic development efforts in their communities.

This report also includes 2 appendices:

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Appendix B: Summary of Written Comments

CHAPTER 2. EVALUATION OF ASSETS AND BARRIERS

This chapter examines physical, political/programmatic, and community elements considered to be assets and barriers to local economic development in Oregon communities.

Findings

A primary focus of this study was to determine key assets and barriers to economic development in Oregon communities. Elements indicated to be assets or barriers were grouped into five categories: (1) land base; (2) infrastructure; (3) regulatory framework; (4) access to capital; and (5) community characteristics.

Table 2-1 shows responses related to land base elements. The availability of buildable industrial sites and buildable commercial sites were perceived to be assets to a majority of respondents. However, the availability of large industrial sites, while a major asset for some, appears to be a major barrier to a significant proportion of respondents. Not surprisingly the results are highly variable depending on jurisdiction and the availability of buildable, industrial land within the local urban growth boundary.

Table 2-1: Assets and barriers associated with land base elements

Element	Major		Neither		Major	Don't
	barrier	Barrier	nor asset	Asset		
Availability of large (> 10 acres) buildable industrial sites in your community's urban growth boundary for economic development	23%	16%	7%	20%	32%	3%
Availability of small (< 10 acres) buildable industrial sites in your community's urban growth boundary	7%	19%	11%	33%	29%	1%
Availability of buildable commercial sites in your community's urban growth boundary	5%	20%	19%	25%	29%	1%
Availability of buildable land for residential use	7%	15%	37%	29%	9%	3%
Total responses	75					

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Like land base elements, responses to infrastructure elements had mixed results. While a majority of respondents indicated most infrastructure elements were assets in their communities, the number of respondents identifying it as a barrier suggests significant infrastructure deficiencies exist in many communities. Elements with the highest percentage of respondents indicating barriers were infrastructure financing (44%), freight infrastructure (43%), and services to vacant commercial and industrial sites (36%).

Table 2-2: Assets and barriers associated with infrastructure elements

Element	Major barrier		Neither barrier nor asset	Major asset		Don't know
	barrier	Barrier	Asset	asset		
Vacant commercial and industrial sites have adequate access to services	12%	24%	7%	32%	24%	1%
Capacity of water and sewer systems adequately serve the needs of the community or accommodate employment	5%	17%	8%	32%	35%	3%
Capacity of utilities meets community needs (e.g. electrical and telecommunications systems)	3%	16%	8%	33%	37%	3%
Quality and capacity of the road network	8%	23%	13%	35%	21%	0%
Infrastructure for freight transportation (e.g. roads for trucking, rail transport, etc.)	11%	32%	4%	33%	20%	0%
Availability of public transportation	7%	25%	20%	32%	16%	0%
Alternative transportation options (e.g. bicycle, pedestrian and other alternative modes of transportation)	1%	17%	45%	28%	7%	1%
Access to infrastructure financing	16%	28%	20%	21%	11%	4%
Total Responses	75					

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Table 2-3 summarizes responses related to regulatory framework elements. A majority of respondents reported political and community support for economic development as an asset. Significant minorities, however, reported that political and community support is a barrier. Land use regulations, the state tax structure, and land use permitting processes were generally not considered to be assets by respondents – more respondents indicate regulations of public lands, the state tax structure and local permitting processes to be barriers to local economic development than those that perceive such elements to be assets.

The negative perception of regulations, tax structure, and local permitting process may be partly explained by geography—respondents in regions of the state with significant industry activity in natural resources (agriculture and forestry) were more likely to indicate these factors as a barrier than respondents located in more urban areas. The responses also suggest that local planning departments may not be able to act on permits in a timely fashion. The current economic crisis has hit the housing market especially hard. Many local governments have had to reduce permit staffing, which was funded partially through permits for residential development. These cuts may affect the ability of local staff to handle permits in a timely fashion.

Table 2-3: Assets and barriers associated with regulatory framework elements

Element	Major		Neither		Major asset	Don't know
	barrier	Barrier	barrier nor asset	Asset		
Political support for economic development among elected officials	9%	8%	12%	47%	24%	0%
Community support for economic development	3%	15%	17%	44%	21%	0%
State tax structure	21%	28%	24%	15%	5%	7%
Local land use permitting process	16%	28%	21%	25%	7%	3%
Public land regulation of natural resources	17%	31%	29%	13%	3%	7%
Land use regulations that limit use of farm and forest lands	11%	23%	40%	15%	4%	8%
Total Responses	75					

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Table 2-4 presents results on access to capital elements. The results of this section suggest that access to capital is a key barrier – more than other categories. In short, lack of access to capital for entrepreneurs, large and small employers, and municipalities appears to represent a common hurdle to economic development in many Oregon communities.

Table 2-4: Assets and barriers associated with access to capital elements

Element	Major		Neither		Major asset	Don't know	Total responses
	barrier	Barrier	barrier nor asset	Asset			
Access to capital for individuals	13%	47%	16%	11%	5%	8%	75
Access to capital for small businesses	28%	38%	11%	11%	8%	4%	74
Access to capital for large businesses	15%	36%	25%	15%	7%	1%	75
Access to capital for municipalities	12%	28%	27%	15%	8%	11%	75

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Table 2-5 shows responses to survey questions regarding community characteristics. The results indicate that labor availability is considered an asset by a majority of respondents. Respondents, however, indicated the availability of jobs in general and family-wage jobs in particular to be serious barriers to economic development. Consistent with secondary data sources such as the Census, the responses suggest that the jobs that are available in many communities do not provide adequate income or opportunity to support local residents and their households. Responses also indicate that the availability of affordable housing is considered a barrier in a majority of respondents' communities.

A number of community amenities were perceived by a majority of respondents as important assets to economic development. Assets included access to parks and recreation facilities, schools, access to workforce

training programs, and active community organizations supporting workforce training and local economic development.

Table 2-5: Assets and barriers associated with elements of community characteristics

Element	Major barrier		Neither barrier nor asset		Major asset		Don't know	Total responses
	Barrier	Barrier	asset	Asset	asset	asset		
Availability of jobs	26%	44%	5%	10%	15%	0%	73	
Availability of family-wage jobs	41%	34%	3%	7%	15%	0%	73	
Availability of labor	7%	19%	11%	45%	18%	0%	73	
Diverse employment opportunities	8%	44%	19%	17%	11%	0%	72	
Availability of skilled labor	8%	28%	17%	26%	21%	0%	72	
Responsible workforce	8%	22%	19%	33%	18%	0%	73	
Availability of affordable housing	15%	35%	15%	25%	10%	0%	72	
Access to parks and recreation facilities	1%	4%	22%	36%	37%	0%	73	
Access to educational resources and training programs that provide the local workforce with the necessary skills for employment in local or regional businesses	3%	11%	11%	42%	32%	1%	73	
Schools	3%	16%	15%	44%	21%	1%	73	
Community organizations actively involved in local workforce training	0%	8%	18%	53%	19%	1%	73	
Community organizations actively support economic development in the community	1%	14%	11%	45%	29%	0%	73	
Businesses feel they have a supportive business environment	4%	29%	15%	38%	10%	4%	73	
Informal economic activities (e.g. local barter system, including shared services like childcare and transportation, or shared goods like food or materials)	4%	10%	38%	16%	3%	27%	73	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

While the preceding analysis addressed a broad range of specific elements, we were also interested in which elements respondents perceived to be the biggest assets and barriers in their communities. Respondents were asked to list the two most important assets and the two greatest barriers to supporting business in their communities. Table 2-6 and Table 2-7 below summarize responses regarding key assets and barriers respectively.

The most frequently listed assets related to organizational and program support for economic development. Respondents listed either specific organizations or programs as the most important asset to economic development in their community. The second most frequently mentioned asset was infrastructure, with reference to either infrastructure in general or specifically to transportation, utilities, and access to telecommunication systems. Land base elements, such as industrial lands and vacant building space, and leadership or political support represent two other key assets.

We also evaluated responses concerning key assets and barriers for three subareas: the Willamette Valley, Portland Metro, and the rest of the state.

- Willamette Valley respondents most frequently cited land base and land use assets as the most important to economic development, while land use regulations and infrastructure elements represent key barriers to the region.
- Portland Metro respondents indicated organization/program support for economic development as the most important asset and infrastructure as the greatest barrier to the region. Types of program support mentioned by respondents include city government, county government, chambers of commerce, business alliances, and other technical assistance. Comments related to barriers focused on the system development charges related to infrastructure improvements, suggesting that new financial solutions are needed for overcoming this barrier.
- Rest of the state respondents indicated organization/program support as the most important asset, but also cited housing, land use regulations, land base, and labor/workforce issues as major barriers. Comments related to housing focused on issues of affordability and availability for employees, who struggle to live and work in the same community. One respondent mentioned that, “much of the existing workforce lives outside the community,” while indicating a labor shortage and a shortage of housing options to enable an influx of labor.

Table 2-6: Key assets that support businesses in respondents’ communities, by region

Asset	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Total	
	Responses	% of respondents	Responses	% of respondents	Responses	% of respondents	Responses	% of respondents
Total respondents	19		20		28		67	
Organization/program support for economic development and businesses	3	16%	9	45%	13	46%	25	37%
Infrastructure/transportation/communication	3	16%	3	15%	8	29%	14	21%
Leadership/political support	3	16%	4	20%	3	11%	10	15%
Land base/site preparation/land use	5	26%	3	15%	3	11%	11	16%
Funding/access to capital	0	0%	3	15%	3	11%	6	9%
Education/training opportunities	2	11%	1	5%	3	11%	6	9%
Public support or perceptions	2	11%	0	0%	3	11%	5	7%
Local or regional amenities/location	1	5%	2	10%	2	7%	5	7%
Collaboration between organizations	2	11%	1	5%	2	7%	5	7%
Labor/Workforce	3	16%	3	15%	0	0%	6	9%
Land use regulations/permitting process/regulatory agencies	2	11%	2	10%	0	0%	4	6%
Total responses	26		31		40		97	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Note: Respondents could choose more than one asset.

Table 2-7 summarizes the elements most frequently listed as barriers to economic development. Responses regarding key barriers identify a mixed set of elements hampering economic development in Oregon communities. The greatest percentage of responses referred to infrastructure elements. While many respondents recognize available infrastructure in their

community as an asset, many respondents perceive a lack of adequate infrastructure or service capacity in their communities. A significant number of respondents perceive land use regulations, regulatory agencies, and the local permitting process to be key barriers. Other key barriers include funding and access to capital, land base elements, housing (comments mostly associated with issues of affordability), labor, leadership, and jobs.

Table 2-7: Key barriers to supporting business in respondents' communities

Barriers	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Total	
	Responses	% of respondents	Responses	% of respondents	Responses	% of respondents	Responses	% of respondents
Total respondents	19		20		29		68	
Housing	2	11%	1	5%	7	24%	25	37%
Land use regulations/permitting processes/regulatory agencies	5	26%	3	15%	6	21%	14	21%
Labor/workforce	2	11%	0	0%	6	21%	11	16%
Land base/site preparation/land use	1	5%	5	25%	6	21%	10	15%
Infrastructure/transportation/communication	5	26%	8	40%	4	14%	6	9%
Funding/access to capital	4	21%	5	25%	4	14%	6	9%
Public support or perceptions	1	5%	3	15%	0	0%	6	9%
Employment opportunity	1	5%	1	5%	4	14%	5	7%
Leadership/political support	2	11%	2	10%	3	10%	5	7%
Education/training opportunities	0	0%	2	10%	1	3%	5	7%
Local purchasing/support for local business	3	16%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%
Total responses	26		30		41		97	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Note: Respondents could choose more than one barrier.

Summary

The asset and barrier results imply multiple opportunities and challenges for economic development in Oregon communities. The results suggest programmatic, leadership, and physical assets exist in most communities. Yet, infrastructure capacity, funding for programs, access to capital for businesses and individuals, employment sites, and employment opportunities were consistently identified as barriers. Following is a summary of key findings from the assets/barriers analysis:

- Considerable variation exists from city to city both within regions and outside regions. This is not a particularly surprising result; each jurisdiction has unique attributes.
- Respondents identified the most important assets as: organizations and programs actively addressing economic development; infrastructure (transportation, utilities, and access to telecommunication systems); land base elements (industrial lands, commercial sites, and vacant building space); and leadership and political support. Respondents outside the Willamette Valley most frequently identified active organizations and programs as key

assets to economic development. Willamette Valley respondents, by contrast, identified land base as most important.

- Respondents identified many barriers including: lack of adequate infrastructure or service capacity; land use regulations, regulatory agencies and the local permitting process; funding for programs and projects, and access to capital; land base elements (availability of large industrial sites); housing (issues of affordability and availability); and availability of well-paying jobs. Infrastructure represents the most frequently cited key barrier for respondents in the Willamette Valley and Portland Metro regions, while respondents from the rest of the state pointed to housing affordability and availability as the greatest barrier to economic development.
- A majority of respondents cited job availability, family-wage jobs, and access to capital for individuals and small businesses as economic development barriers.
- Respondents frequently cited quality of life resources such as parks, recreation facilities, and schools as important assets for economic development. Active community organizations supporting workforce training or local economic development were also identified as assets by a majority of respondents.

CHAPTER 3. ANALYSIS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

A primary goal of the needs assessment was to better understand local economic development strategies and their perceived effectiveness. This chapter examines perceptions regarding the relative emphasis communities place on recruitment and retention/expansion strategies and the perceived effectiveness and success of each set of strategies at achieving economic development objectives.

Findings

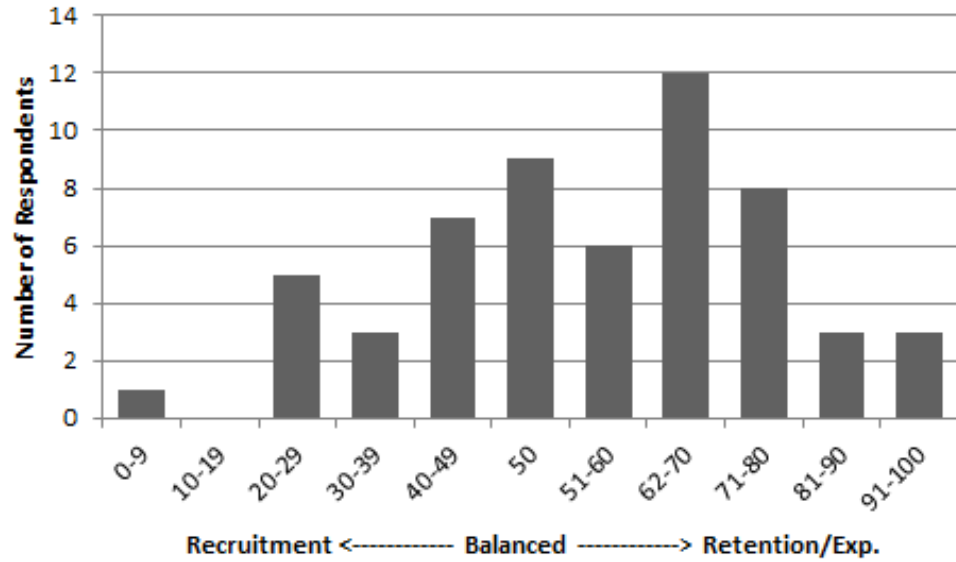
The second principal area of research explored the economic development emphasis or approach in use by Oregon communities. Respondents were asked to note the relative focus of economic development in their community between the two core strategies of recruitment and retention/expansion.

We started by asking respondents if their community has a local or regional economic development strategy. Not surprisingly, a large majority (88%) of respondents answered affirmatively, with 90% of respondents with a strategy indicating that the strategy has been formally adopted. All of the respondents reporting that their communities do not have an economic development strategy indicated that they want a strategy.

Responses analyzed by region do not show significant variations. When asked if their community has a local or regional economic development strategy, 79% of Willamette Valley respondents, 91% of Portland Metro respondents, and 90% of respondents from the rest of the state answered affirmatively. Considered by organization, 92% of respondents representing government, 86% representing economic development districts, and 80% representing other organizations answered affirmatively. Likewise, nearly 80% of responses in each region and over 80% of responses in organizations other than government indicated that the strategy has been formally adopted. Nearly 75% of government responses indicated that the strategy has been formally adopted.

The survey results suggest that the relative focus of economic development in communities throughout Oregon generally combine strategies of recruitment and retention of businesses with a slight emphasis towards retention and expansion of existing businesses (Figure 3-1). Respondents were asked to scale their strategy from exclusive recruitment strategy to an exclusive retention/expansion policy on a scale of 0 to 100. The average value of all responses was 58 out of 100, indicated that most respondents consider their strategy to be a mix of recruitment and retention/expansion approaches.

Figure 3-1. Relative focus of economic development strategy, recruitment vs. retention

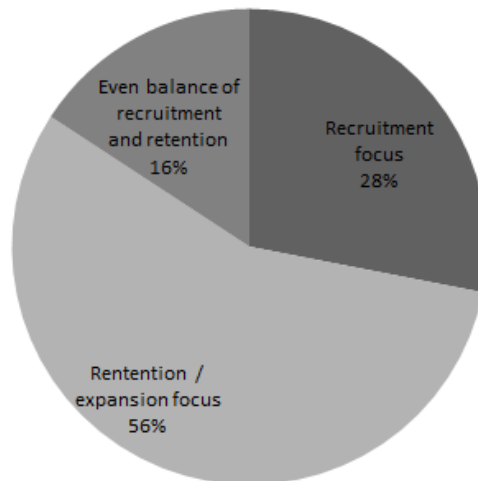


Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Note: 0=exclusive recruitment emphasis; 100=exclusive retention emphasis

When responses were split into three categories representing an emphasis on recruitment, retention/expansion, or an even balance of recruitment and retention/expansion, a clear majority of communities were shown to emphasize a retention/expansion approach (see Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-2. Relative focus of economic development strategy



We included a discrete choice question that required respondents to select the dominant economic development approach in their community. A majority of

respondents (78%) indicated that retention of existing businesses is the dominant approach, while 22% indicated an approach centered on recruitment to be the dominant strategy.

We also analyzed responses concerning the dominant approach by region and by organizational categories on a scale of 0-100 (see Table 3-1). Respondents from outside the Portland and Willamette Valley regions tended towards a retention/expansion emphasis (average response value of 62), the most retention-oriented emphasis of the three regions analyzed. While the average value for the Willamette Valley region (52) represents a relatively balanced approach, more respondents from the region indicated a strategic emphasis on recruitment. Respondents representing economic development district organizations indicated an emphasis on retention/expansion (average value of 65). A small majority of respondents representing other organizations indicated a strategic emphasis on retention/expansion, with a significant proportion indicating a focus on recruitment. Across the board, most respondents consider business retention/expansion to be the more important approach to local economic development.

Table 3-1. Relative focus and importance of strategic approach by region and type of organization

Response category	Relative focus			More important approach		
	Average value	Recruit	Retain/expand	Even balance	Recruitment	Retention
Willamette Valley	52	43%	36%	21%	25%	75%
Portland Metro	58	26%	58%	16%	20%	80%
Rest of state	62	21%	67%	13%	22%	78%
Government	57	28%	53%	19%	28%	72%
Econ. dev. district	65	10%	73%	18%	17%	83%
Other organizations	56	43%	50%	7%	13%	87%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

The next line of questioning asked respondents to evaluate the effectiveness of their economic development strategies. The responses suggest that economic development strategies are perceived to have at least some level of effectiveness. Seventeen percent of respondents indicated their strategies were somewhat effective; 52% moderately effective; and 13% very effective. No respondents indicated their community’s economic development strategy as “not at all effective.”

Considering the breakdown of effectiveness responses for each relative focus category, some interesting comparisons emerge. Table 3-2 shows that more respondents in the recruitment focus category (69%) perceive the strategy to be moderately effective or very effective than respondents in the retention category (63%) and even balance category (56%). Additionally, even balance category responses indicate a somewhat effective or better overall strategy.

Table 3-2: Effectiveness of economic development strategy by relative focus category

Level of effectiveness	Recruit	% of total	Retain	% of total	Even	% of total
	focus	recruit	focus	retain	balance	even balance
Not at all effective	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Slightly effective	3	19%	4	13%	0	0%
Somewhat effective	1	6%	7	22%	3	33%
Moderately effective	9	56%	17	53%	3	33%
Very effective	2	13%	3	9%	2	22%
Don't know	1	6%	1	3%	1	11%
Total responses	16	100%	32	100%	9	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

We also analyzed perceptions of effectiveness by region, organization, and economic development focus. Table 3-3 shows that the greatest percentage of respondents in each group considers their community’s strategy to be at least moderately effective. However, the Willamette Valley region contains the largest proportion of slightly effective responses of any region at 25%. Likewise, 33% of respondents representing organizations other than government or economic development districts indicated their community’s strategy to be slightly effective.

Table 3-3: Effectiveness of economic development strategy by region and organization

Strategy effectiveness	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Government		Econ. Dev. District		Other Organizations	
	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total
Not at all effective	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0
Slightly effective	4	25%	1	5%	3	6%	2	6%	1	8%	5	33%
Somewhat effective	2	13%	6	30%	3	17%	6	17%	3	25%	2	13%
Moderately effective	8	50%	9	45%	16	56%	20	56%	7	58%	6	40%
Very effective	2	13%	3	15%	3	14%	5	14%	1	8%	2	13%
Don't know	0	0%	1	5%	2	8%	3	8%	0	0%	0	0
Total	16	100%	20	100%	27	100%	36	100%	12	100%	15	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Considering strategy effectiveness by respondents representing various geographic levels suggests that respondents that have regional strategies perceive them to be more effective.

Table 3-4: Effectiveness of economic development strategy by local or regional focus

Strategy effectiveness	Local econ. dev.		Regional econ. dev.		Local & Regional Focus	
	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of total	# of Resp.	% of Total
Not at all effective	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Slightly effective	3	12%	2	33%	3	9%
Somewhat effective	7	28%	0	0%	4	13%
Moderately effective	10	40%	1	17%	22	69%
Very effective	2	8%	3	50%	3	9%
Don't know	3	12%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	25	100%	6	100%	32	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Beyond establishing the perceived effectiveness of each relative focus category, this study sought to identify the frequency of use of specific strategies associated with business recruitment and retention/expansion of existing businesses. Respondents who indicated business recruitment as more important to their community's economic development also identified which strategies are being used to recruit businesses. Similarly, respondents who consider retention/expansion of existing businesses to be more important to their community's economic development identified strategies being used to retain or expand existing businesses. Table 3-5 depicts the frequency of responses for each recruitment strategy.

Table 3-5: Recruitment and retention/expansion strategies in use

Strategy	Recruitment		Retention	
	Recruit responses	% of total recruit respondents	Retain responses	% of total retain respondents
Total respondents	14		49	
Provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities	11	79%	36	73%
Provide an efficient permitting process	11	79%	33	67%
Development districts (e.g. enterprise zones, renewal districts, etc.)	11	79%	39	80%
Workforce training programs	10	71%	40	82%
Marketing of the community's quality of life	9	64%	n/a	n/a
Develop telecommunications infrastructure	9	64%	19	39%
Tax abatement	8	57%	31	63%
Improve transport. infrastructure and options	7	50%	33	67%
Provide adequate supply of affordable housing	6	43%	13	27%
Provide low-cost loans	3	21%	24	49%
Business incubators	3	21%	n/a	n/a
Public procurement programs	0	0%	11	22%
Small business mentorships	n/a	n/a	22	45%
Export promotion assistance	n/a	n/a	8	16%
Other	3	21%	17	35%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

The results show interesting, but logical differences. For example, respondents with recruitment strategies tend to focus on approaches that are useful for recruiting businesses: land supply, permitting, incentives, and training were used by a large majority of these respondents. Retention/expansion policies use some of the same techniques but tend to focus on approaches like infrastructure that are more responsive to existing businesses. Additional strategies written in by respondents being used to retain existing businesses include: business training and assistance, enterprise facilitation, loans, support for entrepreneurs, economic gardening, main street or downtown development programs, and transportation infrastructure.

When considered by region, recruitment and retention/expansion strategies in use reflect differences in regional assets and capacity. Willamette Valley respondents frequently indicated the use of providing development sites and development districts for both approaches, whereas Portland Metro and respondents in the rest of the state frequently cited providing an efficient permitting process and workforce-training programs, in addition to development districts. Rest of the state respondents more frequently indicated the use of transportation infrastructure improvement, workforce-training programs, and developing telecommunications infrastructure for both recruitment and retention/expansion (see Table 3-6).

Table 3-6: Recruitment and retention strategies by region

Strategy	Recruitment strategies			Retention strategies		
	Willamette Valley	Portland Metro	Rest of state	Willamette Valley	Portland Metro	Rest of state
Total respondents	4	4	6	12	16	21
Provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities	100%	50%	83%	75%	69%	76%
Provide adequate supply of affordable housing	50%	25%	50%	25%	31%	24%
Provide an efficient permitting process	50%	75%	100%	67%	81%	57%
Development districts (e.g. enterprise zones, business incubators)	75%	75%	83%	83%	88%	71%
Tax abatement	25%	0%	33%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provide low-cost loans	25%	50%	83%	75%	63%	57%
Public procurement programs	25%	0%	33%	17%	38%	76%
Workforce training programs	0%	0%	0%	17%	25%	24%
Improve transportation infrastructure and options	25%	75%	100%	75%	75%	90%
Develop telecommunications infrastructure	25%	0%	100%	50%	75%	71%
Marketing of the community's quality of life	50%	25%	100%	42%	19%	52%
Small business mentorships	50%	75%	67%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Export promotion assistance	n/a	n/a	n/a	50%	38%	48%
Other (please specify)	n/a	n/a	n/a	17%	19%	14%
	25%	0%	33%	50%	25%	33%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Considered by organization, most government respondents indicated that strategies they used included providing development sites, providing an efficient permitting process, and development districts. Economic development district respondents frequently cited workforce-training programs, marketing the community's quality of life, providing low-cost loans, and improving transportation infrastructure. Respondents representing other organizations indicated the most frequent use of workforce training programs for both recruitment and retention/expansion approaches (see Table 3-7).

Table 3-7: Recruitment and retention strategies by organization

Strategy	Recruitment Strategies			Retention Strategies		
	Gov't.	Econ. Dev. District.	Other Orgs.	Gov't.	Econ. Dev. District.	Other Orgs.
Total respondents	10	2	2	26	10	13
Provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities	90%	100%	0%	77%	80%	62%
Provide adequate supply of affordable housing	50%	50%	0%	23%	30%	31%
Provide an efficient permitting process	90%	50%	50%	81%	40%	62%
Development districts (e.g. enterprise zones, renewal districts, etc.)	80%	100%	50%	81%	80%	77%
Business incubators	20%	0%	50%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Tax abatement	60%	50%	50%	73%	40%	62%
Provide low-cost loans	10%	50%	50%	42%	80%	38%
Public procurement programs	0%	0%	0%	19%	30%	23%
Workforce training programs	70%	50%	100%	77%	90%	85%
Improve transportation infrastructure and options	60%	0%	50%	69%	80%	54%
Develop telecommunications infrastructure	70%	50%	50%	31%	60%	38%
Marketing of the community's quality of life	70%	100%	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small business mentorships	n/a	n/a	n/a	31%	60%	62%
Export promotion assistance	n/a	n/a	n/a	12%	20%	23%
Other (please specify)	30%	0%	0%	35%	30%	38%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

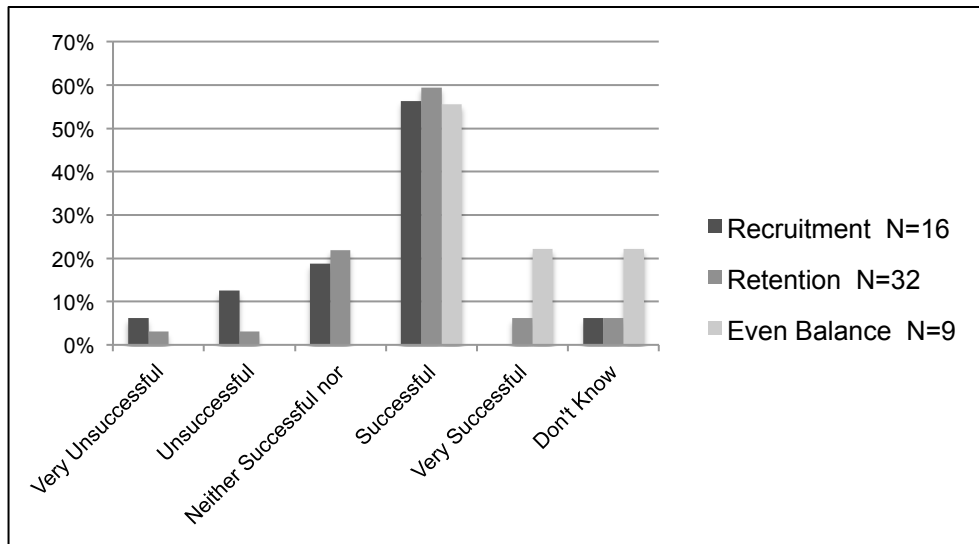
We next asked respondents whether their community's strategy includes target industries and, if so, to identify the three most important target industries. Over 80% of respondents indicated an emphasis on target industries, including 50% of Willamette Valley respondents, 95% of Portland Metro respondents, and 88% of respondents from the rest of the state. Specific industries frequently mentioned in each region include the following:

- **Willamette Valley:** renewable or alternative energy, food processing/agriculture, technology manufacturing
- **Portland Metro:** clean technology, high tech, advanced manufacturing, renewable industries, metals, professional services, apparel, distribution and transportation
- **Rest of State:** value-added agriculture and wood/forest products, manufacturing, high technology, aviation, recreational equipment, renewable energy, and small businesses

Another indicator used to assess respondents' perception of the economic development strategies in use in their communities, aside from strategy effectiveness, is respondents' perception of the strategy's level of success. Although effectiveness and success are similar terms, they have specific meaning for the purpose of this study. For instance, a strategy can *effectively* address economic development objectives with positive results prior to *successfully* attaining community goals for economic development. Using both effectiveness and success provides a more complete measurement of respondents' perceptions regarding strategies in use that are working and have yielded positive results.

Overall, a majority of respondents consider their community’s economic development strategy to be successful (57%) or very successful (8%). However, some respondents consider their community’s strategy to be unsuccessful (5%) or very unsuccessful (3%). Figure 3-4 illustrates that no respondents in the recruitment focus category indicated a very successful overall strategy. Approximately 65% of respondents in the retention focus category consider the strategy to be either successful or very successful. Most telling, however, is that all respondents in the evenly balanced category who indicated a level of success consider the strategy to be either successful or very successful.

Figure 3-4: Level of success by economic development strategy



Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Table 3-8 compares respondents’ perceptions of success by the emphasis of their economic development strategy. The results show that a larger majority of respondents in the retention category (65%) perceive their community’s economic development strategy to be successful or very successful. Similarly, more respondents in the recruitment focus category (18%) than respondents in the retention category (6%) perceive the strategy to be unsuccessful or very unsuccessful. An evenly balanced approach, when compared to recruitment or retention, is most associated with very successful overall strategies.

Table 3-8: Level of success by relative focus category

Level of success of overall strategy	Recruit	% of total	Retain	% of total	Even	% of total
	focus	recruit	focus	retain	balance	even balance
Very unsuccessful	1	6%	1	3%	0	0%
Unsuccessful	2	13%	1	3%	0	0%
Neither successful nor unsuccessful	3	19%	7	22%	0	0%
Successful	9	56%	19	59%	5	56%
Very successful	0	0%	2	6%	2	22%
Don't know	1	6%	2	6%	2	22%
Total	16	100%	32	100%	9	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Although many respondents indicated that it is too soon to measure strategy success due to recent plan/strategy adoption, many comments describe efforts to support small businesses, improve infrastructure, recruit firms, develop manufacturing sites, re-establish enterprise zones, and shift emphasis from natural resources to high technology. One respondent associated strategy success with “a diverse economic base, quick permitting time frames, coordination with regional and State partners, [and] strategically invested infrastructure dollars to facilitate industrial development.”

A significant proportion of comments, however, indicate challenges to strategy implementation and success. A respondent whose community is linked with the timber industry explained, “We need to diversify our local economy, but companies outside of Oregon have chosen other locations for various reasons. We have a semi-skilled and low skill workforce, not a lot of college grads and combined with the fact that we are a rural area we are not attracting the bigger projects.”

Respondents indicated that strategies would be more successful with increases in investment and committed leadership. In addition, respondents suggested coordination between partner organizations must also improve, as one comment explains, “Challenges exist in developing county and regional economic development strategies that require coordination and concurrence among a large number of local entities.” Another respondent claims that, “organizations and governments are not working together as well as they might to be more effective.”

Summary

Overall, analysis of perceptions regarding strategic emphasis, effectiveness, and success indicates the following:

- A majority (88%) of respondents indicated their communities have a strategy. About 90% of respondents that indicated their community had a strategy said that it was formally adopted.

- Fifty-six percent of respondents indicated a strategic emphasis on retention of existing businesses and 78% consider retention to be more important to local or regional economic development.
- Respondents indicated the following recruitment strategies as the most frequently used: provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities, provide an efficient permitting process, development districts, and workforce training programs. Conversely, public procurement programs, business incubators, and provision of low-cost loans are less commonly used strategies.
- Respondents indicated the following retention strategies as the most frequently used: provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities; provide an efficient permitting process; development districts; tax abatement; workforce training programs; and improve transportation infrastructure and options. The least frequent retention strategies include export promotion assistance, public procurement programs, and providing an adequate supply of affordable housing.
- Sixty-five percent of respondents consider the local economic development strategy to be at least moderately effective and an equal proportion of respondents consider the strategy to be successful at achieving objectives.
- Respondents associated with an evenly balanced approach between recruitment and retention were more likely to consider the strategy very effective or very successful than respondents associated with a recruitment or retention emphasis.
- Nearly 80% of respondents indicated that their community's strategy includes target industries.

CHAPTER 4. PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION

This chapter examines the degree of coordination occurring in Oregon communities among multiple organizations and elected officials, as well as the perceived effectiveness of organizations at achieving economic development objectives.

Findings

To assess the level of coordination occurring in Oregon communities and the importance of coordination to the achievement of local economic development objectives, survey respondents were asked to consider the degree of coordination among several actors working toward economic development in their community. Respondents indicated the degree of coordination currently occurring in their community among federal, state, county, and municipal government, Chambers of Commerce, non-profit groups, economic development districts, tribes, citizen groups, and elected officials (see Table 4-1).

Table 4-1: Degree of coordination among organizations and elected officials

Organization	No coordination		Low degree		Mod. degree		High degree		Don't know / na		Total response count
	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	
Federal Government (e.g. EDA, USDA)	6	9%	22	32%	25	37%	12	18%	3	4%	68
State Government	3	4%	10	14%	26	38%	29	42%	1	1%	69
County Government	6	9%	15	22%	19	28%	25	36%	4	6%	69
Municipal Government	0	0%	7	10%	20	29%	38	56%	3	4%	68
Tribes	14	22%	8	13%	15	23%	5	8%	22	34%	64
Chamber of Commerce	4	6%	11	16%	25	37%	24	36%	3	4%	67
Non-profit organizations	2	3%	14	21%	22	33%	22	33%	7	10%	67
Economic development dist	1	1%	5	7%	21	31%	32	48%	8	12%	67
Citizen or community groups	9	14%	14	22%	29	45%	9	14%	3	5%	64
Elected Officials	2	3%	11	16%	29	43%	25	37%	0	0%	67
Other	0	0%	2	22%	2	22%	3	33%	2	22%	9

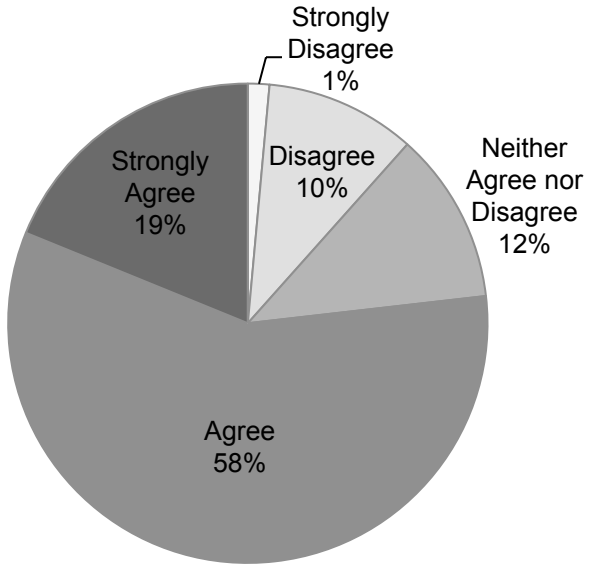
Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Of all the organizations included in the analysis, only municipal government and economic development district organizations (EDDs) were indicated by a majority of respondents to engage in a high degree of coordination. Considering organizations perceived to engage in a moderate or high degree of coordination, municipal government (85%) received the most responses, followed by state government (80%), elected officials (80%), EDDs (79%), Chambers of Commerce (73%), and non-profit organizations (66%). In fact, the only organizational category that did not receive a majority of responses indicating a moderate or high degree of coordination was tribes. More respondents indicated tribal coordination as non-existent, not applicable, or unknown than any other category.

Organizations perceived to engage in coordination to a lesser extent include federal government, citizen or community groups, and county government. Although the number of organizations and degree of coordination among organizations may vary between communities, it is clear that multiple organizations, mostly local or regional organizations and elected officials, are actively engaged in coordination for economic development in Oregon communities.

Respondents also indicated whether organizations, in general, coordinate to achieve economic development objectives. Figure 4-1 shows that approximately 77% of respondents agree or strongly agree that organizations coordinate to meet economic development objectives compared to 11% that disagree or strongly disagree.

Figure 4-1: Do economic development organizations coordinate to meet community objectives?



N=69

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

We also analyzed perceptions of organizational coordination by region and organizational category. Table 4-2 shows that a majority of respondents in each group acknowledge that organizations coordinate to meet objectives in their community. The most respondents that strongly agree that organizations coordinate represent the Portland Metro (20%) and Rest of State (20%) regions.

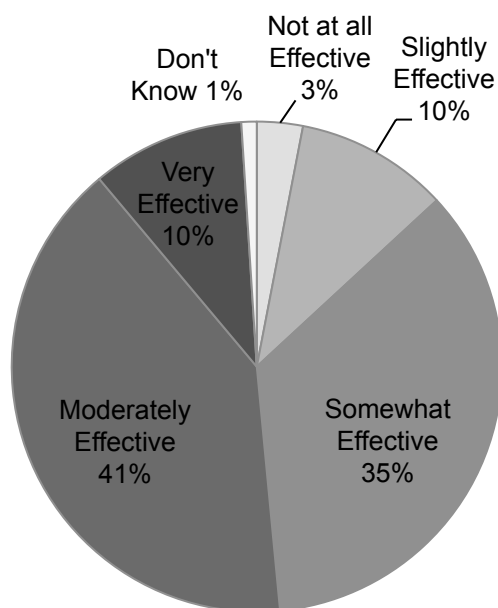
Table 4-2: Organizational coordination by region and organization

Organizations coordinate to meet objectives	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Gov't		Econ. Dev. District		Other Orgs	
	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total	# of resp.	% of total
Strongly disagree	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0
Disagree	3	16%	3	15%	1	3%	5	14%	0	0%	2	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	11%	3	15%	3	10%	5	14%	1	7%	2	11%
Agree	11	58%	10	50%	19	63%	19	51%	11	79%	10	56%
Strongly agree	3	16%	4	20%	6	20%	7	19%	2	14%	4	22%
Don't know	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total respondents	19	101%	20	100%	30	99%	37	101%	14	100%	18	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

To some extent the importance of coordination to economic development is based on respondents' perceptions of organizational effectiveness at achieving economic development objectives in their communities. Figure 4-2 shows that a minority of respondents perceives their community organizations to be very effective, while a similar number perceives these organizations to be only slightly effective at achieving objectives. The majority of respondents indicate that community organizations are somewhat or moderately effective.

Figure 4-2: How effective are organizations at achieving economic development objectives?



N=68

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Table 4-3 shows perceived organizational effectiveness by region and type of organization. Most respondents among regional categories perceive organizations as somewhat effective; however, 42% of respondents from the Willamette Valley regarded organizations as moderately effective. A majority of respondents (64%)

from economic development districts felt their organizations were moderately effective.

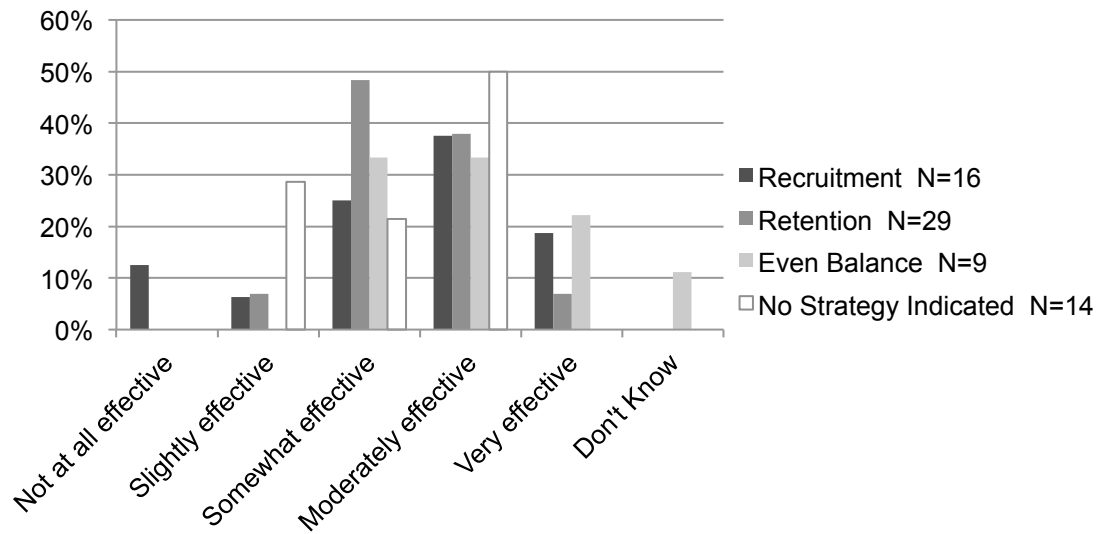
Table 4-3: Organizational effectiveness at achieving objectives by region and organization

Organizational effectiveness	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Government		Econ. Dev. District		Other Orgs	
	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total	# of Resp.	% of Total
Total respondents	19		20		29		36		14		18	
Not at all effective	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	11%
Slightly effective	5	26%	1	5%	1	3%	4	11%	0	0%	3	17%
Somewhat effective	1	5%	9	45%	14	48%	15	42%	4	29%	5	28%
Moderately effective	8	42%	7	35%	12	41%	11	31%	9	64%	7	39%
Very effective	3	16%	2	10%	2	7%	5	14%	1	7%	1	6%
Don't know	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Total responses	19	100%	20	100%	29	100%	36	100%	14	100%	18	100%

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Respondents' perceptions of organizational effectiveness were also considered for each relative economic development focus category. Figure 4-3 shows that most respondents indicated that their organization was at least somewhat effective. About 20% of respondents with a recruitment or mixed-strategy focus indicated their organizations were very effective. Surprisingly, 50% of the respondents that did not indicate a strategy perceived their organization as moderately effective.

Figure 4-3: Organizational effectiveness by relative focus category



Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Summary

- Survey respondents generally think that their organizations are doing an effective job of coordinating (achieving) economic development activities in Oregon communities.
- Cities and Economic Development Districts are perceived to engage in a higher degree of coordination than other groups by the most respondents. Conversely, fewer respondents think tribes, citizen groups, and the Federal Government as engaged in a high degree of coordination.
- Respondents indicated that organizations are generally effective at achieving economic development objectives. However, only 10% of respondents perceive organizations to be *very effective*.

CHAPTER 5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Of key interest to the UO economic development center are technical assistance needs of Oregon communities. This chapter examines the types of technical assistance and information needed by respondents to further economic development efforts in their communities.

Findings

To determine technical assistance needs among Oregon economic development agencies, survey respondents were first asked what these needs were. Respondents' biggest needs are related to funding, leadership, technical assistance, labor, and other needs (see Table 5-1).

Table 5-1. Greatest need(s) for economic development as rated by survey respondents

Greatest needs	Responses	% of Respondents
Total respondents		68
Funding	51	75%
Leadership	31	46%
Technical assistance	19	28%
Other (please specify)	17	25%
Labor	15	22%
Total responses	133	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Nearly 75% of respondents identified funding as their greatest need. Respondents indicated that funding is desired for technical assistance, marketing, business loans, economic development planning, coordination with other economic development organizations, business park infrastructure, funding to attract businesses, and general operations of economic development organizations. In addition, respondents mentioned funding could come through public-private partnerships.

Slightly less than half of respondents indicated that leadership is a significant need. This need included needs for political leadership, elected official participation in economic development, economic strategy development, and the need to use leadership to counteract the silo effect of multiple organizations working towards the same goal. Technical assistance was identified by 28% of respondents as a need, while labor and other responses were less commonly identified. These other responses included land use needs, training, and other topics. These findings suggest that while funding is an important need, there are other areas that could also be served through improved technical assistance and leadership.

We also analyzed needs by regional, organizational, and economic development focus categories. Table 5-2 shows that funding is considered to be the greatest need by all groups. Economic development districts in particular identified the need for increased funding, while government and other organization respondents identified funding at a slightly lower rate.

Respondents from the rest of the state identified needs for labor and technical assistance more frequently than in the Willamette Valley and Portland Metro. Leadership was identified as an important need throughout the state. Government respondents identified a greater need for leadership than respondents from other organizations, while economic development districts also identified an important need for technical assistance.

Table 5-2: Greatest need(s) for economic development by region and organization

Greatest needs	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Government		Econ. Dev. District		Other Organizations	
	Responses	% of Respondents	Responses	% of Respondents	Responses	% of Respondents	Responses	% of Respondents	Responses	% of Respondents	Responses	% of Respondents
Total respondents	19		19		30		36		14		18	
Funding	15	79%	15	79%	21	70%	25	69%	13	93%	13	72%
Leadership	7	37%	9	47%	15	50%	20	56%	3	21%	8	44%
Labor	2	11%	1	5%	12	40%	9	25%	4	29%	2	11%
Technical assistance	4	21%	3	16%	12	40%	9	25%	5	36%	5	28%
Other (please specify)	7	37%	4	21%	6	20%	6	17%	4	29%	7	39%
Total responses	35		32		66		69		29		35	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Table 5-3 shows needs for economic development by the primary geographic focus of their strategy. All organizations identified funding as the greatest need, though more organizations with a local and regional focus identified funding as a need (82%) compared with organizations with only a local or regional need (69% and 67% respectively). Organizations with a regional economic development focus, in particular, identified the need for leadership (67%), more so than organizations with an exclusively local or local and regional focus (38% and 48%, respectively). Labor, technical assistance, and other needs were identified at similar rates across organizations with the three types of focus.

Table 5-3: Greatest need(s) for economic development by local or regional focus

Greatest needs	Local econ. dev.		Regional econ. dev.		Local and regional focus	
	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents	29		6		33	
Funding	20	69%	4	67%	27	82%
Leadership	11	38%	4	67%	16	48%
Labor	7	24%	1	17%	7	21%
Technical assistance	9	31%	1	17%	9	27%
Other (please specify)	9	31%	1	17%	7	21%
Total responses	56		11		66	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Next, the survey asked about types of information that would aid in economic development (Table 5-4). Respondents were particularly interested in economic development best practices (62%), economic development technical assistance resources (53%), and information about state and federal programs (49% and 46%, respectively). Forty-six percent of respondents were interested in communication with other economic development professionals in the region. One respondent commented on the pertinent need for communication by stating, “The issues and concerns of our community are not isolated ones. Many communities battle the same ones we do. However, it appears the wheel must be re-created in each community because there is little sharing of successes and ‘what’s working’ to be found.” Some respondents also indicated interest in access to demographic information (37%). Other information needs indicated by respondents were information about the state process and regulatory reform.

Table 5-4. Rating of information assistance needs

Type of information assistance	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents		68
Information about economic development best practices	42	62%
Information about available resources for economic development technical assistance	36	53%
Information about state programs	33	49%
Information about federal grants and programs	31	46%
Communication with other economic development professionals in the area	31	46%
Demographic data to create a community profile for marketing	25	37%
Other (please specify)	13	19%
None	4	6%
Total responses	215	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Interest in information about federal grants and programs was higher in the Willamette Valley (53%) and Portland Metro (58%) than in the rest of the state (33%). Respondents in Portland Metro were also particularly interested in information about state programs (63%) and information about available resources for economic development technical assistance (63%), more so than the other regions of the state. Respondents from the rest of the state specified other information assistance needs, including marketing information and understanding state process. Overall, respondents from Portland Metro identified more information assistance needs than respondents in other regions.

Table 5-5: Rating of information assistance needs by region and organization

Informational need	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Government		Econ. Dev. District		Other Organizations	
	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents	19		19		30		36		14		18	
Information about economic development best practices	10	53%	15	79%	20	67%	22	61%	11	79%	9	50%
Information about available resources for economic development technical assistance	10	53%	11	58%	10	33%	15	42%	9	64%	7	39%
Information about state programs	9	47%	12	63%	12	40%	18	50%	10	71%	5	28%
Information about federal grants and programs	8	42%	12	63%	16	53%	21	58%	8	57%	7	39%
Communication with other economic development professionals in the area	6	32%	9	47%	10	33%	15	42%	5	36%	5	28%
Demographic data to create a community profile for marketing	8	42%	11	58%	12	40%	17	47%	7	50%	7	39%
Other (please specify)	3	16%	1	5%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	3	17%
None	3	16%	2	11%	8	27%	8	22%	1	7%	4	22%
Total responses	57		73		88		117		51		47	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

We also analyzed results by the geographic focus of the organization (see Table 5-6). Organizations with a regional economic development focus in particular identified the need for information about economic development best practices (82% of respondents). These respondents were also particularly interested in demographic data to create a community profile for marketing. In general, respondents with a local and regional focus indicated the highest levels of informational assistance needs across all need categories.

Table 5-6: Rating of information assistance needs by local or regional focus

Informational need	Local econ. dev.		Regional econ. dev.		Local and regional focus	
	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents	29		6		33	
Information about economic development best practices	15	52%	5	83%	22	67%
Information about available resources for economic development technical assistance	13	45%	3	50%	20	61%
Information about state programs	12	41%	2	33%	17	52%
Information about federal grants and programs	12	41%	3	50%	18	55%
Communication with other economic development professionals in the area	12	41%	2	33%	17	52%
Demographic data to create a community profile for marketing	10	34%	4	67%	11	33%
Other (please specify)	7	24%	3	50%	3	9%
None	1	3%	0	0%	3	9%
Total responses	82		22		111	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Respondents identified the types of technical assistance that their community needs to assist economic development (Table 5-7). The most common response was capacity building for the economic development organizations themselves, with 55% of respondents identifying this need. In addition, respondents identified strategic planning assistance (43%) and community asset/opportunity assistance (42%) as needs for their municipality or county.

Table 5-7. Rating of technical assistance needs

Type of technical assistance	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents		65
Capacity building for economic development organizations	36	55%
Strategic planning assistance	28	43%
Assistance in assessing community assets/opportunities for economic development	27	42%
Grantwriting	19	29%
None	6	9%
Other (please specify)	6	9%
Total responses	122	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Expressing the need for planning, one respondent explained the importance of a “big picture view, augmented with tactics and strategies and steps that are achievable in defined periods of time, with champions for actions and a measurement system to document and publicize each success along the way in order to build momentum and enthusiasm for the future next steps.” Another respondent urged for the “adoption of an agreed upon direction by city, county and private entities,” while yet another commented on the need for “improved regional collaboration,” and the development of common goals and strategies. Fewer respondents identified grant writing assistance as a need (29%). A few respondents indicated that they do not require technical assistance (9%). Some other types of technical assistance that respondents identified as a need include day-to-day execution of economic development strategies and connecting to others in the northwest.

We analyzed technical assistance needs by region and organizational type (Table 5-8). Respondents across all regions identified capacity building for economic development organizations as the greatest technical assistance need. About half of Willamette Valley respondents and respondents from the rest of the state (excluding Portland Metro) identified the need for strategic planning assistance and assistance in assessing community assets and opportunities for economic development, while about a quarter of respondents from Portland Metro identified this need. More respondents in the Willamette Valley identified the need for grant writing assistance (42%) than in Portland Metro or the rest of the state (29% and 21%, respectively).

Table 5-8: Rating of technical assistance needs by region and organization

Technical assistance need	Willamette Valley		Portland Metro		Rest of State		Government		Econ. Dev. District		Other Organizations	
	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents	19		17		29		34		14		17	
Capacity building for economic development organizations	12	63%	9	53%	15	52%	17	50%	10	71%	9	53%
Strategic planning assistance	10	53%	4	24%	14	48%	14	41%	7	50%	7	41%
Assistance in assessing community assets & opportunities for econ. dev.	9	47%	4	24%	14	48%	12	35%	7	50%	8	47%
Grantwriting	8	42%	5	29%	6	21%	7	21%	6	43%	6	35%
None	2	11%	2	12%	2	7%	2	6%	1	7%	3	18%
Other (please specify)	2	11%	1	6%	3	10%	3	9%	0	0%	3	18%
Total responses	43		25		54		55		31		36	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Analysis of technical assistance needs by organization focus (Table 5-9) shows organizations that focus on regional economic development identified much higher needs for capacity building (80%) than organizations focused on local or local and regional economic development (61% and 47%, respectively).

Table 5-9: Rating of technical assistance by local or regional focus

Technical assistance need	Local econ. dev.		Regional econ. dev.		Local and regional focus	
	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents	Responses	% of total respondents
Total respondents	28		5		32	
Capacity building for economic development organizations	17	61%	4	80%	15	47%
Strategic planning assistance	12	43%	2	40%	14	44%
Assistance in assessing community assets & opportunities for econ. dev.	10	36%	2	40%	15	47%
Grantwriting	9	32%	2	40%	8	25%
None	2	7%	0	0%	4	13%
Other (please specify)	0	0%	1	20%	5	16%
Total responses	50		11		61	

Source: OR Economic Development Needs Assessment Survey, University of Oregon, Community Service Center, 2011

Summary

- Respondents identified their greatest needs for economic development as funding and leadership.
- Respondents' greatest informational needs are economic development best practices, information about technical assistance resources and information about state and federal programs, and communication with other economic development professionals in the region.
- Respondents are most interested in receiving technical assistance related to capacity building, strategic planning, and community asset and opportunity assessment.

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APPENDIX A. SURVEY INSTRUMENT

We need your help!

We are conducting a survey of economic development professionals to better understand the assets and needs of Oregon communities. Your responses to this survey will improve our understanding of the economic development needs and opportunities of communities in Oregon.

This survey is being conducted by the University of Oregon Economic Development Center. The Center provides technical assistance to distressed communities in Oregon with the purpose of creating sustainable local economies and enhancing regional sustainable economic development through capacity building, applied research, and partnerships.

The Economic Development Center will use the survey results to identify priority areas in which to conduct more in-depth community projects geared towards sustainable business development. The survey will take approximately twenty minutes. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you may stop at any time. While we cannot guarantee confidentiality, we will not associate personal information with your survey responses in the final report. Completing this survey is your agreement to participate.

If you have any questions regarding this research, contact Scott Turnoy at (503) 548-7846, or Robert Parker at (541) 346-3801. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office for Protection of Human Subjects at the University of Oregon, (541) 346-2510. Thank you for your participation.

In the first section of the survey we would like to learn about your professional role in economic development in your community. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. While we cannot guarantee confidentiality, we will not attribute personal information to survey responses and individual responses will be kept anonymous.

1. First, please tell us about yourself:
 - a. First Name
 - b. Last Name
 - c. What is your email address?
 - d. Name of your Agency/Organization
 - e. Work Address
 - f. City
 - g. Zip Code

2. How many years have you worked in economic development?

3. What type of organization/agency are you representing as you fill out this survey? *(Please select one)*

- County Government
- Local Government
- Tribal Government
- Chamber of Commerce
- Non-Profit Organization
- Economic Development Organization
- Citizen or Community Group
- Elected Official
- Other (please specify)

4. Which best describes the focus of your economic development work? *(Please select one)*

- Local economic development
- Regional economic development
- Both local and regional economic development

5. How important do you consider economic development to be to the overall quality of life in your community?

- Not At All Important
- Slightly Important
- Moderately Important
- Very Important
- Don't Know

In this section of the survey we want to understand your perceptions of assets and barriers to economic development in your community or region. For each item, please choose one of the options along the scale (major barrier, barrier, neither a barrier nor an asset, asset, major asset, or don't know).

6. Please indicate whether you think each of the following physical elements is an asset or barrier in your community.

	Major Barrier	Barrier	Neither a Barrier Nor an Asset	Asset	Major Asset	Don't Know
Employment Land Base						
Availability of large (> 10 acres) buildable industrial sites in your community's urban growth boundary for economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of small (< 10 acres) buildable industrial sites in your community's urban growth boundary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of buildable commercial sites in your community's urban growth boundary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of buildable land for residential use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Infrastructure	Major Barrier	Barrier	Neither a Barrier Nor an Asset	Asset	Major Asset	Don't Know
Vacant commercial and industrial sites have adequate access to services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capacity of water and sewer systems adequately serve the needs of the community or accommodate employment growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capacity of utilities meets community needs (e.g. electrical and telecommunications systems)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality and capacity of the road network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infrastructure for freight transportation (e.g. roads for trucking, rail transport, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of public transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative transportation options (e.g. bicycle, pedestrian and other alternative modes of transportation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to infrastructure financing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Assets and barriers (cont.). For each item, please choose one of the options along the scale (major barrier, barrier, neither a barrier nor an asset, asset, major asset, or don't know).

7. Please indicate whether you think each of the following policy and programmatic elements is an asset or barrier in your community.

Regulatory Framework	Major Barrier	Barrier	Neither a Barrier Nor an Asset	Asset	Major Asset	Don't Know
Political support for economic development among elected officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community support for economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State tax structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local land use permitting process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public land regulation of natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land use regulations that limit use of farm and forest lands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Access to Capital	Major Barrier	Barrier	Neither a Barrier Nor an Asset	Asset	Major Asset	Don't Know
Access to capital for individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to capital for small businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to capital for large businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to capital for municipalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Assets and barriers (cont.). For each item, please choose one of the options along the scale (major barrier, barrier, neither a barrier nor an asset, asset, major asset, or don't know).

8. Please indicate whether you think each of the following community characteristics is an asset or barrier in your community

Community Characteristics	Major Barrier	Barrier	Neither a Barrier Nor an Asset	Asset	Major Asset	Don't Know
Availability of jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of family-wage jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of labor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diverse employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of skilled labor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responsible workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to parks and recreation facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to educational resources and training programs that provide the local workforce with the necessary skills for employment in local or regional businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community organizations actively involved in local workforce training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community organizations actively support economic development in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Businesses feel they have a supportive business environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informal economic activities (e.g. local barter system, including shared services like childcare and transportation or goods like food or materials)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Please name the two most important assets that support businesses in your community:

10. Please name the two greatest barriers to supporting business in your community:

Please tell us about your community's economic development strategy.

11. Does your community have a local (or regional) economic development strategy?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

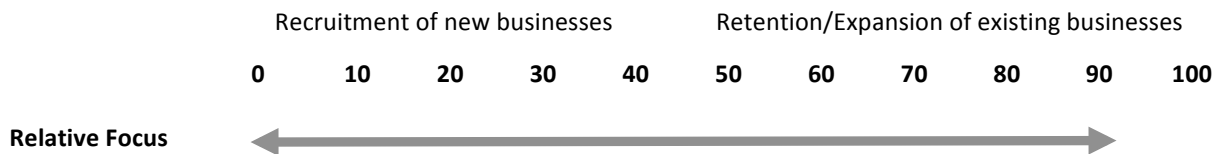
11A. Has the strategy been formally adopted?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

11B. Does your community want an economic development strategy?

- Yes
- No

12. What is the relative focus of economic development in your community? *(Please select the point along the scale that best represents the relative focus for each approach)*



13. In your opinion, which approach is more important to your community's economic development strategy?

- Recruitment of businesses
- Retention (or expansion) of existing businesses

14A. What strategies are being used to recruit new businesses to your community? *Check all that apply:*

- Provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities
- Provide adequate supply of affordable housing
- Provide an efficient permitting process
- Development districts (e.g. enterprise zones, renewal districts, etc.)
- Business incubators
- Tax abatement
- Provide low-cost loans
- Public procurement programs
- Workforce training programs
- Improve transportation infrastructure and options
- Develop telecommunications infrastructure
- Marketing of the community's quality of life
- Other (please specify):

14B. What strategies are being used to retain (or expand) businesses in your community? *Check all that apply:*

- Provide adequate supply of development sites with access to services and utilities
- Provide adequate supply of affordable housing
- Provide an efficient permitting process
- Development districts (e.g. enterprise zones, renewal districts, etc.)
- Tax abatement
- Provide low-cost loans
- Public procurement programs
- Workforce training programs
- Improve transportation infrastructure and options
- Develop telecommunications infrastructure
- Small business mentorships
- Export promotion assistance
- Other (please specify):

15. Who provides information to you that you have found to be important in helping you advance your community's economic development strategy? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Federal agencies
- State agencies
- County agencies
- Local government
- Tribes
- Chamber of Commerce
- Non-profit organization
- Economic development district organization
- Citizen or community group
- Elected Officials
- Colleagues
- Private consultants
- Other (please specify):

16. Does your community's economic development strategy include target industries?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

16A. Please list the three most important target industries in your community's economic development strategy:

17. Which of the following sectors are focal points of your community's economic development efforts? (Check all that apply)

- Natural resources
- Agriculture
- Utilities
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Services
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Transportation and warehousing
- Information
- Public administration
- Other (please specify):

18. Who are the key partners for economic development in your community? (Check all that apply)

- Federal Government (EDA, USDA, Others)
- State Government
- County Government
- Municipal Government
- Tribes
- Chamber of Commerce
- Non-profit organization
- Economic development district organization
- Citizen or community group
- Elected Officials
- Other (please specify):

19. In your opinion, how effective is the current economic development strategy at achieving community economic development objectives?

- Not At All Effective
- Slightly Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Moderately Effective
- Very Effective
- Don't Know

20. In your opinion, please indicate the level of success of your community's economic development strategy:

- Very unsuccessful
- Unsuccessful
- Neither successful nor unsuccessful
- Successful
- Very successful
- Don't know

Please explain your response to the previous question regarding the success of your community's economic development strategy:

21. What are the two greatest obstacles to your community's economic development strategy?

22. What would make the strategy more successful?

23. Is your community's economic development strategy different than it was 5-years ago?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Please explain your response to the previous question:

24. Do you think your community's economic development strategy will be different 5 years from now?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Please explain your response to the previous question:

We are interested in the level of coordination between economic development organizations and their ability to achieve regional economic development objectives.

25. Please indicate the degree of coordination for each of the following organizations regarding economic development in your community. *(Please select one option for each item)*

	No Coord'n.	Low Degree of Coord'n.	Moderate Degree of Coord'n.	High Degree of Coord'n.	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Federal Government (EDA, USDA, Others)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
County Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Municipal Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chamber of Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonprofit Organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic development district organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizen or community groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elected Officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding economic development in your community. *(Please select one option for each statement)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Economic development organizations coordinate to meet community objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic development organizations use consistent strategies to promote economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. In your opinion, how effective are the organizations in your community at achieving economic development objectives?

- Not at all Effective
- Slightly Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Moderate Effective
- Very Effective
- Don't Know

The following questions will give you the opportunity to tell us about your community's economic development needs.

28. Name the greatest need(s) for economic development in your community (*select all that apply*):

- Funding
- Leadership
- Labor
- Technical Assistance
- Other (please specify):

Please explain your response to the previous question regarding the greatest need for economic development in your community:

29. What kind of information does your municipality or county need to assist economic development? (*Select all that apply*):

- Information about economic development best practices
- Information about federal grants and programs
- Information about state programs
- Information about available resources for economic development technical assistance
- Demographic data to create a community profile for marketing
- Communication with other economic development professionals in the region
- None
- Other (Please specify):

30. What kind of technical assistance does your municipality or county need to assist economic development? (*Select all that apply*):

- Assistance in assessing community assets/opportunities for economic development
- Strategic planning assistance

- Grant writing
- Capacity building for economic development organizations
- None
- Other (Please specify):

31. What type of capacity building training would be most beneficial to economic development efforts in your community?

32. Is there a question that we should have asked about economic development in your community that we did not? *(Please write the question in the space below)*

33. Please write any other comments you have in the space below:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

APPENDIX B. SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

This Appendix examines the written comments included in response to some questions in the survey. It summarizes the key points raised in the comments, rather than transcribing these comments.

Important Assets

When asked to name the most important assets that support businesses within their communities, respondents discussed a variety of organizations. Many organizations were traditional economic development organizations, such as chambers of commerce. Others mentioned political institutions, such as city council and other city efforts. Respondents also mentioned the importance of collaboration between these groups. Some respondents pointed out that the organizations most important to them were those that were willing to collaborate and work with other groups.

Some respondents mentioned infrastructure as the most important assets, such as access to rail and interstate and reliability and pricing of utilities. A few respondents mentioned various providers of technical assistance as important assets that support businesses. Other respondents mentioned the communities themselves and local quality of life as important assets in economic development.

Important Barriers

Respondents also named the most important barriers to business within their communities. Many respondents mentioned lack of industrial and commercial land. They also mentioned land use regulations and the tax structures at the state and local level as important barriers. Other respondents mentioned the lack of funding for workforce training and access to loans for businesses. Some respondents mentioned the lack of political support. Infrastructure issues were also discussed as a barrier. These included transportation, electricity rates, and proximity to rail and interstate.

Capacity Building Training

Respondents indicated what type of capacity building training would be beneficial to economic development efforts. They mentioned wanting training in the following areas: understanding the needs of targeted industries, exploring funding options, engaging in consensus building, identifying partners, business viability evaluation, and analysis of large-scale economic trends. One respondent indicated a need for training to determine “[w]hat kind of manufacturing can we attract that supports families and residents with wages in the private sector.” Respondents repeatedly alluded to the need for consensus building, at times rhetorically: “What do you do when the communities in your county just don't want to work together?” Some respondents indicated they wanted a toolkit-based and model-based training approach. They are interested in toolkits for economic development inquiries, recruitment models, and project development best practices. Other respondents suggested the need for higher level analysis prior to addressing specific capacity building tactics: “I think before we talk about capacity building there needs to be an analysis of who's doing what,

how effective they are and what an optimal structure would be. Once that structure is determined and implemented, only then we could begin to look at capacity building.”

Respondents also mentioned that capacity building training about economic development for other organizations in the community who are involved in but not focused on economic development would be useful. Other respondents indicated that they feel sufficient technical assistance is already available to them.

Economic Development Strategy Successfulness

In this question, respondents explained why they gauged their economic development strategies as successful or unsuccessful. Many respondents said that their strategies had become successful in the last three to five years. Others described their strategies as too new to gauge their success. Few respondents indicated that strategies were successful over a longer time frame. Some respondents explained that the success of their strategies depends on coordination between economic development organizations. Without this coordination, the strategies would not be successful.