

**Golden State Finance Authority**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Contract Services  
For  
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**

**Colusa County  
And  
Inyo/Mono/Alpine (Combined) Counties**

Proposals Due: Wednesday, November 16, 2022

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY**

Golden State Financing Authority (hereinafter “GSFA”) is requesting proposals from qualified Respondents for the development of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in compliance with requirements of the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA). Proposals for the development of two CEDS are covered by this RFP – one for the county of Colusa, and one for (combined) Inyo, Mono, and Alpine counties.

Economic development planning, as implemented through the CEDS, serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. The CEDS provides the capacity-building foundation by which the public sector, working in conjunction with other economic actors (individuals, firms, industries), creates the environment for regional economic prosperity.

Qualified Respondents may provide proposals for one or both of the CEDS covered by this RFP. GSFA, together with representatives of the counties to be covered by each of the CEDS, will review, rate, and select the Consultants for these projects.

**BACKGROUND**

Golden State Finance Authority (GSFA) is a California Joint Powers Authority and a duly constituted public entity and agency that was established in 1993. It is governed by a Board of Directors that is comprised of an elected member of the Boards of Supervisors from each of its 39 member counties. GSFA structures, develops, and administers programs that create community resiliency through home ownership, community and economic development, and infrastructure investment.

In September 2021, GSFA, in collaboration with its member counties, applied for a grant from EDA under the Economic Adjustment Program funded with an allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act. In August 2022, GSFA received notification that the application had been approved for funding. Included in the grant was a request for funds to develop two CEDS – one for Colusa County and one for(combined) Inyo, Mono, and Alpine counties. Funds available for each of the CEDS shall not exceed:

Colusa County	\$50,000
Mono/Inyo/Eastern Alpine Counties	\$80,000

GSFA will provide project management and grant administration services. Each County has committed to providing a point of contact with whom the consultant will coordinate required community outreach and stakeholder engagement.

**SCOPE OF WORK/SERVICES**

The Scope of Work will include (from regulations governing the development of CEDS, the

following sections must be included):

- Summary Background: A summary background of the economic conditions of the region;
- SWOT Analysis: An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- Strategic Direction/Action Plan: The strategic direction and action plan should build on findings from the SWOT analysis and incorporate/integrate elements from other regional plans (e.g., land use and transportation, workforce development, etc.) where appropriate as determined by the community/region engaged in development of the CEDS. The action plan should also identify the stakeholder(s) responsible for implementation, timetables, and opportunities for the integrated use of other local, state, and federal funds;
- Evaluation Framework: Performance measures used to evaluate the organization’s implementation of the CEDS and impact on the regional economy.

In addition to the sections noted above, the CEDS must incorporate the concept of economic resilience (i.e., the ability to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters, the impacts of climate change, etc.). Economic resilience can be addressed as a separate section, distinct goal or priority action items, as an area of investigation in the SWOT analysis, and/or infused throughout the CEDS document. Additionally, the CEDS should focus on strategic approaches based on regional visioning, goals, measurable objectives, and prioritized actions rather than the CEDS serving as an inventory of programs and projects already in process.

**DELIVERABLE**

Stakeholder-driven CEDS for (1) Colusa County and (2) (combined) Mono/Inyo/Alpine counties to be completed by April 30, 2023. Completion shall include a presentation of the final CEDS to the Board of Supervisors of each county covered by the respective CEDS, as well as submittal and acceptance of the CEDS from EDA.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

GSFA will serve as the project manager and grant administrator. Adherence to project timelines, deliverables, payments, and grant administration will be managed by GSFA.

Identified individuals in each county will serve as the point of contact for the selected Consultant and will assist in community outreach, stakeholder engagement, and be available to provide local/regional input and direction as CEDS is developed.

**COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

Compensation for the services listed in the proposal shall not exceed:

Colusa County CEDS	\$50,000
Mono/Inyo/Alpine Counties CEDS	\$80,000

Respondent shall submit for review and approval invoices detailing the services provided during each invoice period. The invoice shall be presented in a manner and format that is agreed upon by GSFA.

The final invoice shall represent 10% of the total project costs and will be payable only upon (1) presentation to the represented county(ies) Board of Supervisors, (2) receipt of the final complete work product, and, (3) with EDA's acceptance of the CEDS.

### **PROPOSAL CONTENT**

In order for GSFA and its CEDS member county representatives to compare and evaluate proposals effectively and efficiently, all proposals shall be organized in the specific format outlined below. (Failure to comply with this requirement may cause disqualification.)

The proposal shall include the following as a minimum:

#### **Cover Page**

Include firm name, title of proposal, and date of proposal.

#### **Transmittal Letter**

Shall include the legal name of the agency or organization making the proposal, business address, name, title, address, email address, and telephone number of person(s) authorized to negotiate and contractually obligate the Respondent firm and the contact person(s) authorized by the firm to be contacted for clarifications. The letter shall be signed by a principal or officer of the firm.

#### **Scope of Work/Services**

Present the Respondent's scope of services, objectives and intended results of the services to be provided including a list of all deliverables (i.e. number/type of anticipated community stakeholder meetings, critical components listed above, guarantee of an accepted CEDS by EDA).

Should summarize how the proposal meets the RFP requirements and why the Respondent is best qualified to perform these services including the Respondent's financial and technical resources.

Should also describe how the Consultant(s) foresees inclusion of regional Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF) conversations being incorporated into the CEDS process and final documents – understanding that the completion deadlines for the CEDS and the regional CERF planning discussions may not align.

#### **Staffing**

List of personnel who will be directly assigned to provide services, together with a discussion of

each member's responsibilities and applicable expertise and background. Also identify the extent of GSFA and County personnel involvement deemed necessary, including number of estimated hours required and expertise required of GSFA and the Counties.

#### Statement of Experience and Qualifications

Description of the nature of the Respondent's present work, including a comprehensive list of current and past work on similar projects, staff who worked on those projects, and corresponding client's names, titles, addresses and phone numbers. For any projects referenced in the Statement of Experience and Qualifications, list the involvement of the proposed staff members. Include evidence of any special licensing or qualifications required to perform the work.

#### Statement Acknowledging Acceptance of Sample Agreement

A statement that the Sample Agreement (see Exhibit A) has been reviewed by the principal or officer of the firm, and a list of any exceptions or changes that are requested prior to execution of the Agreement. The specific services to be incorporated into the agreement will be based upon the RFP as well as the responses prepared by Respondents and may include those negotiated items between GSFA and the successful Respondent(s).

No requests for changes to the Agreement will be entertained other than those presented in the proposal.

#### Cost Proposal

A detailed, task-related cost proposal based upon anticipated hours for services is to be provided, including hourly rates for each assigned employee, supplies and equipment costs, travel, office support, all other overhead costs and any reimbursable expenses. Basis for charging on a time and materials basis for preparation of optional elements should be listed and fully explained. The Respondents shall submit a detailed budget that includes without limitation, costs of required staffing and all associated costs to complete the CEDS. **Under no circumstance will a proposal be accepted where the Cost Proposal exceeds the amount presented in this RFP for each respective CEDS.**

#### Compensation

Respondents should propose compensation schedule for services required by the Agreement.

In all cases, the final 10% of the project costs shall be shown to be paid upon (1) presentation of final CEDS to the respective Board(s) of Supervisors, (2) receipt of final work product, and, (3) upon review and acceptance of CEDS by EDA.

#### Project Schedule

The Respondent shall submit a proposed schedule identifying all tasks and projected dates of completion for project milestones. Respondent should use April 30, 2023, as date for project completion.

### Work Plan

Detailed description of the approach and methodology to be used to meet the objectives of the project. Include general descriptions and goals of meetings to be held, and types of groups or individuals to be contacted reflecting the different stakeholders for the work, specific needs as required, etc.

### **PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL**

Proposals submitted must meet the following criteria to be acceptable for consideration regarding this project:

Submit one (1) original signed proposal marked "Original", four (4) bound proposal copies, and one (1) electronic copy no later than Wednesday, November 16, 2022 to:

Barbara Hayes, Chief Economic Development Officer  
Rural County Representatives of California  
1215 K Street, Suite 1650  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[bhayes@rcrcnet.org](mailto:bhayes@rcrcnet.org)

Normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Please note that Friday, November 11, 2022, is Veteran's Day and the RCRC Office will be closed.)

The proposal must be submitted in an envelope clearly marked with the name and title of the proposal. The Respondent's return address and the proposal number (RFP 22-01) must appear on the outside of the envelope.

Proposals received incomplete or late, for any reason, will not be accepted.

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of GSFA and will not be returned. The proposal itself shall not constitute a contract, but will, if accepted, be incorporated into the contract between the GSFA and the selected Respondent.

Proposals submitted to GSFA become public documents subject to disclosure once the proposal is awarded. If the Respondent considers any portion of their proposal to be confidential, the Respondent must label each and every page of the confidential portions as: "Trade Secret", "Confidential" or "Proprietary." The Respondent must also list the confidential material at the beginning of its proposal and provide justification for not making such material public. GSFA shall have the sole discretion to disclose or not disclose such material, subject to any protective order that the Respondent may obtain, but it is incumbent on the Respondent to assert its rights to confidentiality.

Please note: The successful Respondent shall be expected to fully meet all representations made in its proposal, including demonstration of the requirements outlined in this RFP.

Respondents may withdraw their proposals at any time prior to the RFP submission deadline. A signed withdrawal request by the Respondent's duly authorized representative must be provided to GSFA.

### **EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

We expect that you may have questions as you prepare your response to the RFP. To handle questions most effectively and to ensure that everyone has the same information, we request that you promptly send your question(s) to Barbara Hayes at [bhayes@rcrcnet.org](mailto:bhayes@rcrcnet.org).

Questions must be received no later than Close of Business, Wednesday, November 9, 2022. Every effort will be made to provide responses to all within 24 hours of this deadline.

Respondents are specifically directed not to communicate with or make attempts to influence any members of the GSFA Board of Directors or Board of Supervisors for the counties of Colusa, Inyo, Mono, or Alpine, or other staff representatives involved in the selection process that would create a conflict of interest or unfair advantage.

Failure to adhere to this instruction may result in disqualification of the Respondent.

### **EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

Review, evaluation, and selection of Consultants shall be performed by GSFA and representatives from each county included in the respective CEDS proposals (Colusa and Inyo, Mono, Alpine).

Proposals shall be opened and examined to ensure that each complies with the requirements of the RFP. The absence of required information may render the proposal non-responsive and may be cause for rejection.

Prior to final selection, a short list of qualified and responsive Respondents may be requested to participate in an interview and/or be asked to submit additional information for clarification. The purpose of the interview and acquisition of additional information will be to provide an opportunity for each Respondent to present their qualifications and proposals in person and/or to answer any questions that GSFA or member county representatives may have regarding the Respondent's submittals. If interviews are to be held, the time and place of the interview will be arranged after the short list is compiled.

GSFA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and the successful Respondent will be required to comply with the provisions of Federal Executive Order 11246 and applicable state and federal laws. Respondents should be familiar with the Employers' Practical Guide to Reasonable Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act as published by the Job Accommodation Network, a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy.

All proposals are evaluated to determine they meet all the requirements of the RFP. Responses

are individually scored as assigned to a category. Individual scores are averaged and entered into that category column. Each category is assigned a weight and the result is a weighted score. Each category is assigned a point range of 0 to 25 (0 = Non-existent; 5 = Poor; 10 = Marginal; 15 = Acceptable; 20 = Very Good; 25 = Excellent).

Qualifications, experience, and cost proposals will be discussed with short listed finalist(s) during interviews, if conducted. In accordance with 2 CFR 200- Title 2 Vol I-part 200 section 200.320, an award will be made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the rating scale and criteria listed below:

<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>Max. Points</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Score</b>
Proposal Quality and Responsiveness	20	15%	_____
Scope of Work/Services	25	30%	_____
Experience and Qualifications of Team	25	25%	_____
Project Schedule & Work Plan	20	20%	_____
Cost Proposal (Exceeds Stated Amount – Disqualified)	10	10%	_____

GSFA and member counties represented by this RFP seek a firm(s) that offers experience developing economic development strategies, particularly in rural areas. The firm that best meets the selection criteria will be selected for this project(s). Specific evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding of the project as identified by GSFA;
- Basic understanding of the specific project areas and their economic opportunities or challenges;
- Understanding of and relevant experience providing the services required, especially for counties in rural areas;
- Experience and qualification of staff assigned to the project;
- Experience of the project manager;
- References and relevant work performed for those references;
- Accessibility of key personnel to GSFA and member county project staff;
- Budget and fee structure;
- Willingness and ability to meet deadlines; and,
- Ability to comply with insurance requirements.

**TERMS OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Acceptance of Proposals**

GSFA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality, technical defect, or clerical error in any proposal and to request additional information from all Respondents. This RFP is not an offer to contract. GSFA reserves the right to request clarification of any information submitted, interview firms and/or request additional



information during interviews. GSFA further reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more firms and/or enter into multiple contracts and/or not award a contract.

#### Oral Communications

Any oral communication between GSFA and the Respondent is not binding, nor will it modify the RFP in any way.

#### Proposal Cost

The cost of developing the proposal is the sole responsibility of the Respondent; GSFA is not liable for any costs incurred by those submitting proposals.

#### Proposal Submission

Respondents may submit proposals by any means (e.g., U.S. Mail, Fed Ex, Courier, etc.). Proposals must be received at the physical address noted by the deadline.

#### Basis for Proposal

The RFP and any amendments to it represent the most definitive statement GSFA will make concerning information upon which proposals are to be based. Respondents will be assumed to have thoroughly examined these documents.

#### Deliverables

If this Proposal is awarded and the successful Respondent fails to sign and return to GSFA within five (5) days (i) the Contract and (ii) the required insurance certificates as specified in the Sample Contract/Agreement information and documents with an insurer satisfactory to GSFA, GSFA may, at its option, determine the Respondent has abandoned the Contract. In that case, the Proposal and the acceptance thereof shall be null and void.

#### Right to Negotiate

GSFA reserves the right to negotiate any fee or any provision, accept any part, or all parts of any and all Proposals whichever is in the best interest of GSFA. GSFA intends to negotiate only with those firms whose Proposals meet the requirements as stipulated in this document.

#### Verbal Agreement or Conversation

No prior, current, or post award verbal conversations or agreement(s) with any officer, agent, or employee of GSFA shall affect or modify any terms or obligations of this RFP, or any contract resulting from this RFP.

#### **PROTEST PROCEDURE**

Respondents may file a written protest with GSFA not later than five (5) working days after the date of evaluation notification by GSFA which may be by telephone, letter and/or email.

The protest shall be delivered or sent by registered mail to:

Barbara Hayes, Chief Economic Development Officer

Rural County Representatives of California  
1215 K Street, Suite 1650  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The protest must include:

- Name, address, and business telephone number of the protestor;
- Identify the project under protest by name, RFP number and RFP date;
- Contain a concise statement of the grounds for protest including alleged violations of Federal, State, or local law; provided, however, RFP process and procedures, including evaluation criteria, shall not be proper grounds for protest. Concerns related to those issues should be raised and addressed, if at all prior to the proposal due date to allow adjustments before evaluation of proposals and;
- Provide all supporting documentation, if any. Documentation submitted after filing the protest will not be considered during review of the protest or during any appeal.

#### Protest Review

Upon receipt of a protest, GSFA shall review all the submitted materials and shall create and retain a written record of the review. GSFA shall respond in writing at least generally to each material issue raised in the protest not later than fifteen (15) working days after receipt of the protest.

If the protested procurement involves Federal or State funds, GSFA shall give notice to the interested party that he or she has the right to appeal to the appropriate Federal or State agency which shall be identified by name and address. An appeal hereunder shall be filed with the appropriate agency within five (5) working days of the dispatch of notification to the interested party(ies).

#### EXHIBITS

- A: Sample Consulting Services Agreement
- B. CEDS Content Guidelines dated 01/09/20

\*All exhibits annexed and attachments hereto are expressly made a part of this RFP as though fully set forth herein.

## CONSULTANT SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Consultant Services Agreement (“Agreement”) is made as of \_\_\_\_ 2022, by and between Golden State Finance Authority, a California Joint Powers Authority and a duly constituted public entity and agency (hereinafter "GSFA") and \_\_\_\_\_ ("Consultant"), who agree as follows:

1. Services. Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement, Consultant shall provide the consulting services described in GSFA Request For Proposals No. 22-01, attached hereto as Exhibit “A”, and those portions of Consultant’s Proposal attached hereto Exhibit “B”, both incorporated herein by reference. Consultant shall provide these services at the time, place, and in the manner specified in Exhibit B. Consultant agrees to work closely with GSFA in the performance of the services hereunder and shall be available to GSFA at all reasonable times as mutually agreed between GSFA and Consultant.

2. Payment. GSFA shall pay to Consultant for services rendered pursuant to this Agreement at the times, in the amount and in the manner set forth in Exhibit “C”, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The payments specified in Exhibit C shall be the only payments to be made to Consultant for services rendered pursuant to this Agreement. Consultant shall submit all billings for services to GSFA in the manner specified in Exhibit C.

3. Facilities, Equipment, and Other Materials. Consultant shall, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all facilities, equipment, and other materials, which may be required for furnishing the services pursuant to this Agreement.

4. General Provisions. The general provisions set forth in Exhibit “D” are attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. In the event of any inconsistency between said general provisions and any other terms or conditions of this Agreement, the other terms or conditions shall control insofar as it is inconsistent with the general provisions.

5. Notices. Any notice permitted or required under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be effective when actually delivered in person or five days after being deposited in the U.S. mail, registered or certified, return receipt requested, postage prepaid and addressed as follows:

TO GSFA:                      Golden State Finance Authority  
   Attention: Barbara Hayes  
   1215 K Street, Suite 1650  
   Sacramento, CA 95814

To Consultant:                      \_\_\_\_\_  
   Attn: \_\_\_\_\_  
   \_\_\_\_\_  
   \_\_\_\_\_

6. Exhibits. All exhibits referred to herein are attached hereto and are by this reference incorporated herein. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of the main body of this Agreement and any attached Exhibit(s), the main body of the Agreement shall take precedence.

7. Time for Performance. Time is of the essence in the performance of this Agreement.

Failure of Consultant to perform any service within the time limits set forth in Exhibit B shall constitute a material breach of this Contract.

8. Term. This Agreement shall commence as of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022, and terminate on \_\_\_\_\_ unless earlier terminated by the parties as set forth herein.

9. Key Person. \_\_\_\_\_ shall be assigned the personal responsibility for directing consultant's work on behalf of GSFA hereunder, and shall remain in personal charge of such work for the duration of this Agreement.

10. Mandatory Federal Provisions.

A. Cost Principles and Administrative Requirements

- i) Consultant agrees that 48 CFR Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures shall be used to determine the allowability of individual terms of cost.
- ii) Consultant agrees to comply with Federal procedures in accordance with 2 CFR, Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
- iii) Any costs for which payment has been made to Consultant that are determined by subsequent audit to be unallowable under 48 CFR Part 31 or 2 CFR Part 200 are subject to repayment by Consultant to GSFA.
- iv) When a Consultant or subconsultant is a Non-Profit Organization or an Institution of Higher Education, the Cost Principles for Title 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards shall apply.

B. Debarment and Suspension Certification

- i) The Consultant's signature affixed herein shall constitute a certification under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the Consultant or any person associated therewith in the capacity of owner, partner, director, officer, or manager: 1) Is not currently under suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion, or determination of ineligibility by any federal agency; 2) Has not been suspended, debarred, voluntarily excluded, or determined ineligible by any federal agency within the past three (3) years; 3) Does not have a proposed debarment pending; and 4) Has not been indicted, convicted, or had a civil judgment rendered against it by a court of competent jurisdiction in any matter involving fraud or official misconduct within the past three (3) years.
- ii) Any exceptions to this certification must be disclosed to GSFA. Exceptions will not necessarily result in denial of recommendation for award, but will be considered in determining responsibility. Disclosures must indicate the party to whom the exceptions apply, the initiating agency, and the dates of agency action.

- C. Remedies. The duties and obligations imposed by the Agreement and the rights and remedies available hereunder shall be in addition to and not a limitation of any duties, obligations, rights and remedies otherwise imposed or available by law. No action or failure to act by GSFA or Consultant shall constitute a waiver of any right or duty afforded any of them under the Agreement, nor shall any such action or failure to act constitute an approval of or acquiescence in any breach thereunder, except as may be specifically agreed in writing.
- D. Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act. The provisions of this section are applicable only where the amount of the prime contract exceeds \$100,000. As used in this paragraph, the terms “laborers” and “mechanics” includes watchmen and guards.
- A. Overtime requirements. No Consultant or subconsultant (s) contracting for any part of the Contract work which may require or involve the employment of laborers or mechanics shall require or permit any such laborer or mechanic in any workweek in which he or she is employed on such work to work in excess of 40 hours in such workweek unless such laborer or mechanic receives compensation at a rate not less than one and one-half times the basic rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in such workweek.
- B. Violation; liability for unpaid wages; liquidated damages. In the event of any violation of the provisions set forth in paragraph (i) of this section, the Consultant and any subconsultant responsible therefor shall be liable for the unpaid wages. In addition, such Consultant and subconsultant shall be liable to the United States for liquidated damages. Such liquidated damages shall be computed with respect to each individual laborer or mechanic, including watchmen and guards, employed in violation of the provisions set forth in paragraph (i) of this section. in the sum of \$10 for each calendar day on which such individual was required or permitted to work in excess of the standard workweek of 40 hours without payment of the overtime wages required by provisions set forth in paragraph (i) of this section.
- C. Withholding for unpaid wages and liquidated damages. GSFA or its designee shall upon its own action or upon written request of an authorized representative of the U.S. Department of Labor withhold or cause to be withheld, from any moneys payable on account of work performed by the Consultant or subconsultant under any such Contract or any federal contract with the same prime Consultant, or any other federally-assisted contract subject to the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act, which is held by the same prime Consultant such sums as may be determined to be necessary to satisfy any liabilities of such Consultant or subconsultant for unpaid wages and liquidated damages as provided in the provisions set forth in paragraph (ii) of this section.
- D. Subcontracts. The consultant or subconsultant shall insert in any subcontracts the clauses set forth in paragraph (i) through (iv) of this section and also a

clause requiring the subconsultant to include these clauses in any lower tier subcontracts. The prime contractor shall be responsible for compliance by any subconsultant or lower tier subcontractor with the clauses set forth in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section.”

- E. Equal Employment Opportunity. Except as otherwise provided under 41 C.F.R. Part 60, all contracts that meet the definition of “federally assisted construction contract” in 41 C.F.R. § 60-1.3 must include the equal opportunity clause provided under 41 C.F.R. § 60- 1.4(b), in accordance with Executive Order 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity (30 Fed. Reg. 12319, 12935, 3 C.F.R. Part, 1964-1965 Comp., p. 339), as amended by Executive Order 11375, Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity, and implementing regulations at 41 C.F.R. Part 60 (Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity, Department of Labor). See 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Appendix II, ¶ C. Consultant shall not discriminate on the employment of persons on any basis listed in subdivision (a) or (d) of Section 12955 of the California Government Code, as those bases are defined in Sections 12926, 12926.1, subdivision (m) and paragraph (1) of subdivision (p) of Section 12955, Section 12955.2 of the Government Code, California Labor Code sections 1101, 1102, and 1197.5; and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008. In addition to the foregoing, Consultant shall not discriminate against any subconsultant, employee, or applicant for employment because of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, political belief, organizational affiliation, or marital status in the recruitment, selection for training (including but not limited to apprenticeship), hiring, employment, assignment, promotion, layoff, rates of pay or other forms of compensation. Nor shall Consultant discriminate in the provision of services provided under this contract because of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, political beliefs, organizational affiliations, or marital status.

- F. Procurement of Recovered Materials. Consultant shall comply with Title 2 CFR section 200.323 and section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The requirements of Section 6002 include procuring only items designated in guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at [40 CFR part 247](#) that contain the highest percentage of recovered materials practicable, consistent with maintaining a satisfactory level of competition, where the purchase price of the item exceeds \$10,000 or the value of the quantity acquired during the preceding fiscal year exceeded \$10,000; procuring solid waste management services in a manner that maximizes energy and resource recovery; and

establishing an affirmative procurement program for procurement of recovered materials identified in the EPA guidelines.

- G. No obligation by Federal Government. The Federal Government is not a party to this contract and is not subject to any obligations or liabilities to the non-Federal entity, Consultant, or any other party pertaining to any matter resulting from the contract.
  
- H. Program Fraud and False or Fraudulent Statements or Related Acts. “The Consultant acknowledges that 31 U.S.C. Chap. 38 (Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements) applies to the Consultant’s actions pertaining to this contract.

Executed as of the day first above stated.

**GSEA:**

GOLDEN STATE FINANCE AUTHORITY

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSULTANT:**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its: \_\_\_\_\_

EXHIBIT B

SCOPE OF WORK

[INSERT THOSE PORTIONS OF CONSULTANT'S PROPOSAL AS DIRECTED BY GSFA]



EXHIBIT C

TIME AND MANNER OF PAYMENT

Compensation:           Consultant shall be paid [INSERT BASIS AND RATE OF PAYMENT].  
Except as expressly provided herein, this amount is inclusive of all  
compensation, reimbursement, costs, or charges due to Consultant for  
services provided under this Agreement.

Expenses:                [INSERT EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PROVISIONS, IF ANY. NOT  
APPLICABLE TO FLAT FEE AGREEMENTS].

The Maximum Compensation payable under this Agreement, including any expense  
reimbursement, shall not exceed \$\_\_\_\_\_, unless otherwise agreed to in a written  
amendment to this Agreement executed by both parties.

Consultant shall submit monthly bills for services rendered and costs incurred. Consultant  
shall submit bills that reflect the work performed and the date of the work together with any  
reimbursable expenses (if expense reimbursement is provided for under this Agreement). Such  
bills shall conform to the general requirements for invoices to GSFA and Exhibit A, and shall be  
paid by GSFA under its normal invoicing procedures. GSNR will remit all undisputed amounts to  
Consultant within fourteen (14) days of receiving an invoice in compliance with this paragraph.

EXHIBIT D

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Independent Contractor. At all times during the term of this Agreement, Consultant shall be an independent contractor and shall not be an employee of GSFA. Nothing in this agreement is intended nor shall be construed to create a partnership or a joint venture relationship. GSFA shall have the right to control Consultant only insofar as the results of Consultant's services rendered pursuant to this Agreement; however, GSFA shall not have the right to control or direct the means by which Consultant performs services rendered pursuant to this Agreement. Consultant shall set its own hours and location of work, provided the results described herein are accomplished. Consultant warrants that it is responsible for paying payroll or any other kind of taxes resulting from compensation paid to Consultant hereunder. Consultant further warrants and represents that each of the following is true and correct:

(i) If any work hereunder is performed in a jurisdiction that requires Consultant to have a business license or business tax registration, Consultant shall obtain and maintain the required business license or business tax registration as required by law during the term of this Agreement.

(ii) Consultant maintains a business location that is separate from the business or work location of GSFA.

(iii) Consultant is customarily engaged in an independently established business of the same nature as that involved in the work performed hereunder.

(iv) Consultant actually contracts with other businesses to provide the same or similar services and maintains a clientele without restrictions from GSFA.

(v) Consultant advertises and holds itself out to the public as available to provide the same or similar services.

(vi) Consultant provides its own tools, vehicles, and equipment to perform the services.

(vii) Consultant can negotiate its own rates.

(viii) Consultant can set its own hours and location of work, consistent with the nature of the work.

(ix) Consultant is not performing the type of work for which a license from the Contractors' State License Board is required.

By initialing this Agreement in the space provided immediately below, Consultant acknowledges that this Agreement is complete, that it does not create an employer-employee relationship between GSFA and Consultant or any person performing services hereunder on behalf of Consultant, and that this Agreement cannot and will not be modified by any oral representation of employment. Consultant further acknowledges that he is responsible for paying payroll or any other kind of taxes resulting from compensation paid to Consultant hereunder.

Consultant's Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Personnel. Consultant acknowledges that the services of the Consultant personnel assigned as of the effective date of this Agreement are essential to the performance of

Consultant's obligations hereunder, and that no substitution of Consultant's personnel so assigned may be made without the prior written approval of GSFA. Consultant shall not subcontract or assign any portion of the services provided hereunder without the prior written approval of GSFA

3. Licenses; Permits; etc. Consultant represents and warrants to GSFA that it has all licenses, permits, qualifications, and approval of whatsoever nature which are legally required for Consultant to practice its profession and provide the services hereunder. Consultant represents and warrants to GSFA that Consultant shall, at its sole cost and expense, keep in effect or obtain at all times during the term of this Agreement any licenses, permits, and approvals which are legally required for Consultant to practice its profession and provide the services hereunder at the time the services are performed.

4. Time. Consultant shall devote such time to the performance of services pursuant to this Agreement as may be reasonably necessary for satisfactory performance of Consultant's obligations pursuant to this Agreement. Neither party shall be considered in default of this Agreement to the extent performance is prevented or delayed by any cause, present or future, which is beyond the reasonable control of the party.

5. Indemnification and Insurance. Consultant shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless GSFA and its affiliates (including without limitation the Rural County Representatives of California and Golden State Connect Authority), and their respective officers, agents, attorneys, employees, from any and all claims, causes of action, damages, losses, expenses, fines, penalties, judgments, demands and defense costs, whether in law or equity (including, without limitation, actual, direct, out-of-pocket costs and expenses and amounts paid in compromise or settlement and reasonable outside legal fees arising from litigation of every nature or liability of any kind or nature including civil, criminal, administrative or investigative) (collectively, "**Claim**") arising from or related to the services performed by Consultant under this Agreement or accruing or resulting to any and all contractors, subcontractors, materialmen, laborers and any other person, firm or corporation furnishing or supplying work, services, materials or supplies in connection with the performance of Consultant's duties and services hereunder, except such loss or damage that was caused by the sole, active negligence or willful misconduct of the Client. Consultant shall, at its own expense, defend any suit or action founded upon a claim of the foregoing. GSFA shall promptly notify Consultant of any claim made in connection with the performance of services rendered hereunder.

In order to insure Consultant's obligations hereunder, Consultant shall maintain insurance as follows:

a. Consultant shall maintain a commercial general liability insurance policy in the amount of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence, and not less than two million (\$2,000,000.00) in the aggregate, from a carrier with a Best rating of not less than A-  
;

b. Comprehensive business or commercial automobile liability coverage, including non- owned and hired automobile liability, in the amount of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) from a carrier with a Best rating of not less than A-;

c. If Consultant has employees, Consultant shall maintain Worker's Compensation Insurance as may be required by the California Labor Code for coverage A (statutory limits) and not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) for coverage B (employer liability limits) from a carrier with a Best rating of at least a B+;

d. All such policies shall remain in force during the term of this Agreement and shall be payable on a "per occurrence" basis unless otherwise accepted by GSFA, and shall be in form acceptable to GSFA and its insurance advisors. GSFA shall be named as an "additional insured" on any policy as may be requested by GSFA, and Consultant shall provide certificates of insurance and any endorsements required signed by Consultant's insurer prior to the commencement of Consultant's services hereunder. Any such policies or endorsements shall provide for thirty (30) days prior notice to GSFA in the event of any termination or reduction in coverage of such insurance.

e. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as or constitute a limitation of Consultant's liability or Consultant's responsibility to indemnify and hold harmless from any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses that may arise by reason of Consultant's willful misconduct or negligence.

5. Consultant Not Agent. Except as GSFA may specify in writing, Consultant shall have no authority, express or implied, to act on behalf of GSFA in any capacity whatsoever as an agent. Consultant shall have no authority, express or implied, pursuant to this Agreement to bind GSFA to any obligation whatsoever.

6. Assignment Prohibited. The parties understand and agree that this Agreement is entered into because of the personal expertise of Consultant. No party to this Agreement may assign any right or obligation pursuant to this Agreement. Any attempted or purported assignment of any right or obligation pursuant to this Agreement shall be void and of no effect.

7. Personnel. It is anticipated that Consultant shall perform all services required under this Agreement.

8. Standard of Performance. Consultant shall perform all services required pursuant to this Agreement in the manner and according to the standards observed by a competent practitioner of the profession in which Consultant is engaged in the geographical area in which Consultant practices its profession, and in accordance with all applicable local, state and federal laws, rules and regulations. Consultant shall be liable for all violations of such laws and regulations in connection with the performance of the services hereunder and shall be solely responsible for all costs arising therefrom. Consultant shall defend, indemnify and hold GSFA, its officials, employees and agents free and harmless from any claim or liability arising out of any failure or alleged failure to comply with such laws, rules or regulations. All products of whatsoever nature which Consultant delivers to GSFA pursuant to this Agreement shall be prepared in a

substantial first class and workmanlike manner and conform to the standards or quality normally observed by a person practicing in Consultant's profession.

9. GSFA Representative. The President or their designee is the representative of GSFA and will administer this Agreement for GSFA. GSFA's initial representative shall be Barbara Hayes, Chief Economic Development Officer. GSFA may change its representative at any time upon notice to Consultant.

10. Termination for Cause and Convenience. This Agreement may be terminated by the following:

- i) Termination for Convenience. Either party may terminate this Contract upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party for any reason without penalty.
- ii) Termination for Cause. GSFA may terminate the Consultant for cause if the Consultant: 1) Refuses or fails to supply the proper labor, materials and equipment necessary to provide the services outlined in the Agreement; 2) Disregards Federal, State or local laws, ordinances, regulations, resolution or orders; 3) Otherwise commits a substantial breach or default of any provision of the Agreement. In the event of a substantial breach or default GSFA will provide the Consultant written notice of said breach or default and allow the Consultant ten (10) days from the date of the written notice to cure such breach or default (if curable, otherwise GSFA shall have the right to immediate termination). If said breach or default is not cured within ten (10) days from the date of notice, then the Agreement shall terminate.

In the event GSFA shall terminate this Agreement:

i) Consultant shall deliver copies of all writings prepared by it pursuant to this Agreement. The term "writings" shall be construed to mean and include:

handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, and every other means of recording upon any tangible thing any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, or symbols, or combinations thereof.

ii) GSFA shall have full ownership and control of all such writings delivered by Consultant pursuant to this Agreement.

(iii) GSFA shall pay Consultant for services rendered by Consultant pursuant to this Agreement based on the rate for services under this Agreement up to the effective date of termination.

11. Non-Discrimination. Consultant shall not discriminate in employment of persons or performance of services under this Agreement on account of any basis listed in subdivision (a) or (d) of Section 12955 of the Government Code, as those bases are defined in Sections 12926, 12926.1, subdivision (m) and paragraph (1) of subdivision (p) of Section 12955, and Section 12955.2 of the Government Code.

12. Intellectual Property. GSFA shall own all right, title and interest in and to the Deliverables. For purposes of this Agreement, the term “Deliverables” shall mean any and all materials or documentation developed under this Agreement, or otherwise created by Consultant during the performance of services under this Agreement, including without limitation all documents, drawings, estimates, notes, reports, work sheets, electronic storage media, plans, specifications, professional and technical information, and related data. Consultant hereby assigns to GSFA all rights, title and interest in and to any and all intellectual property whether or not patentable or registrable under patent, copyright, trademark or similar statutes, made or conceived or reduced to practice or learned by Consultant, either alone or jointly with others, during the period of Consultant’s agreement with GSFA or result from the use of premises leased, owned or contracted for by GSFA.

Consultant acknowledges that all original works of authorship which are made by Consultant (either solely or jointly with others) within the scope of this Agreement and which are protectable by copyright are “works made for hire,” as that term is defined in the United States Copyright Act (17 U.S.C. Section 101), and shall belong solely to GSFA. Consultant agrees that GSFA will be the copyright owner in all copyrightable works of every kind and description created or delivered by Consultant, either solely or jointly with others, in connection with any agreement with GSFA.

Consultant represents and warrants for the benefit of GSFA and its users that, to its knowledge, as of the effective date of this Agreement, Consultant is the exclusive owner of all rights, title and interest in the Deliverables and/or services provided pursuant to this Agreement. Consultant shall defend, indemnify and hold GSFA harmless against any claim, action or litigation (including but not limited to all judgments, costs, fees, and reasonable attorney’s fees) by a third party alleging the Deliverables and/or services provided pursuant to this Agreement infringe upon any intellectual property rights of third parties. This indemnity and duty to defend is in addition to and does not supersede the requirements stated in 5 of this agreement.

14. Entirety of Agreement. This Agreement contains the entire agreement of GSFA and Consultant with respect to the subject matter hereof, and no other agreement, statement, or promise made by any party, or to any employee, officer, or agent of any party, which is not contained in this Agreement shall be binding or valid. No supplement, modification, or amendment of this Agreement shall be binding unless executed by all parties in writing.

15. Counterparts. The partners may execute this Agreement in two or more counterparts, which shall, in the aggregate, be signed by all the parties; each counterpart shall be deemed an original instrument as against any party who has signed it.

16. Governing Law. This Agreement is executed in the State of California, and the laws of that State shall govern its interpretation and effect (excepting any conflict of laws

provisions which would serve to defeat application of California substantive law). Venue for any action arising from this agreement shall be in Sacramento County, California.

17. Successors. This Agreement shall be binding on and inure to the benefit of the respective successors and assigns of the parties, except to the extent of any contrary provision in this Agreement.

18. Severability. If any term, provision, covenant, or condition of this Agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, void, or unenforceable, the remainder of the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect and shall in no way be affected, impaired, or invalidated.

19. Records and Audit. Consultant shall maintain current and complete books and records relating to this Agreement, including, but not limited to, documents supporting all bids, income and expenditures. Books and records kept shall be original entry books with a general ledger itemizing all debits and credits for work performed hereunder. In addition, where applicable, Consultant shall maintain detailed payroll records including subsistence, travel and field expenses, and canceled checks, receipts and invoices for all such items. Consultant's documents, books and records shall be retained for at least five years from the date of completion of this Agreement, and Consultant shall permit access to audit its books, accounts and records relating hereto, and such records of all business entities controlled by Consultant who participated in the performance of this Agreement, Any audit by GSFA may be conducted on Consultant's premises, or at the option of GSFA, Consultant shall provide all such records to GSFA for such audit elsewhere. Consultant shall refund any moneys erroneously paid; if Consultant has erroneously billed for an amount exceeding 5% of the compensation paid hereunder, Consultant shall also be liable for the cost of audit in addition to any other penalty.

20. Disclosure. Consultant agrees to make any necessary disclosures and filings required of Consultant under the California Government Code, if applicable.

21. Authority. Each party executing this Agreement and each person executing this Agreement in any representative capacity, hereby fully and completely warrants to all other parties that he or she has full and complete authority to bind the person or entity on whose behalf the signing party is purposing to act.

22. Conflict of Interest; Confidentiality. Consultant covenants and represents that he presently has no material investment or interest which would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of the services hereunder. In the event that any services otherwise within the Scope of Work set forth in Exhibit B may pose a conflict between the interests of GSFA and the interests of any of Consultant's other clients, Consultant shall inform GSFA, and GSFA will not assign Consultant to perform those services. During the term of this Agreement, Consultant shall disclose to GSFA any new contracts for consultant services or employment that Consultant may enter into during the term of this Agreement that may in any way conflict with consultant's performance of services hereunder. If GSFA believes that the contract may pose a conflict of interest, direct or indirect, financial or otherwise, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, GSFA may give notice of termination of this Agreement.

Consultant understands and agrees that all documents, information and reports developed in the course of performing its obligations hereunder shall be the property of GSFA. Consultant agrees to exert its best efforts in the production of such work product of this Agreement. Consultant may retain copies of materials collected or produced hereunder during the term hereof, but in the event of termination of this Agreement, Consultant shall promptly deliver any such materials to GSFA without exception or reservation.

Consultant agrees that it will maintain the confidentiality of strategies and objectives developed by GSFA and other matters not generally available to the public and will not disclose such information without the express written consent of GSFA's Executive Director. If, in the course of performing its obligations hereunder, Consultant comes into possession of information known or reasonably expected to be confidential information from any source, Consultant will respect and maintain such confidentiality, whether under state, federal or common law, and be solely liable to any injured person in the event of its wrongful distribution of such confidential material.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Consultant specifically covenants and agrees not to, except as otherwise set forth herein, disclose, reveal, publish or release Confidential Information to any third party. Consultant further agrees that it will not, at any time, use the Confidential Information except to the extent necessary for (a) its evaluation, negotiation, and/or consummation of the Transaction; and (b) any purpose GSFA may hereafter specifically authorize in writing. "Confidential Information" referred to in and protected by this paragraph shall mean all confidential or proprietary information, data or knowledge relating, directly or indirectly, to GSNR and its business or the project which is delivered, disclosed or furnished in connection with the services performed by Consultant hereunder by or on behalf of GSFA or its affiliates (including without limitation the Golden State Connect Authority and the Rural County Representatives of California) to Consultant or its representatives, on or after the date hereof, regardless of the form or manner in which it is delivered, disclosed or furnished, and shall also be deemed to include all notes, analyses, compilations, studies, forecasts, interpretations or other documents prepared by Consultant which contain, reflect or are based upon, in whole or in part, the information furnished to Consultant or its representatives pursuant hereto. The term "documents" includes, without limitation, any writing, letter, memorandum (internal or otherwise), facsimile, tape, diskette, CD-ROM or other recording or memorialization, chart, graph, blueprint, picture or financial statements or data.



Exhibit E

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

*Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 1352 (as amended) Contractors who apply or bid for an award of \$100,000 or more shall file the required certification. Each contracting tier certifies to the tier above that it will not and has not used Federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with obtaining any Federal contract, grant, or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. § 1352. Each tier shall also disclose any lobbying with non-Federal funds that takes place in connection with obtaining any Federal award. Such disclosures are forwarded from tier to tier up to the recipient who in turn will forward the certification(s) to the awarding agency. Contractors must sign and submit to GSFA the following form:*

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- 1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
- 2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
- 3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

The Contractor, \_\_\_\_\_, certifies or affirms the truthfulness and accuracy of each statement of its certification and disclosure, if any. In addition, the Contractor understands and agrees that the provisions of 31 U.S.C. Chap. 38, Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements, apply to this certification and disclosure, if any.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Date]

Signature of Contractor's Authorized Official Name and Title of Contractor's Authorized Official

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines:

## *Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS*

---

### Contents

1. Overview .....	2
2. Content.....	4
A. Summary Background: A summary background of the economic development conditions of the region .....	4
B. SWOT Analysis: An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats .....	7
C. Strategic Direction/Action Plan: Strategic direction and an action plan (flowing from the SWOT analysis), which should be consistent with other relevant state/regional/local plans. ....	13
• Strategic Direction: Vision Statement and Goals/Objectives .....	13
• Action Plan: Implementation .....	15
D. Evaluation Framework: Performance measures used to evaluate the organization’s implementation of the CEDS and its impact on the regional economy. ....	16
E. Economic Resilience:.....	18
• Planning for and Implementing Resilience .....	20
• Establishing Information Networks .....	21
• Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning.....	22
• Measuring Resilience .....	23
3. Format.....	24
4. Preparation.....	25
5. Equivalent/Alternative Plans.....	27
6. Opportunity Zones.....	29

## 1. Overview

***These guidelines have been developed to assist economic development practitioners with the development or update of a CEDS. As a collection of tools and examples, they are intended to be aspirational in nature and should not be construed as additional requirements.***

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) contributes to effective economic development in America’s communities and regions through a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process. Economic development planning – as implemented through the CEDS – is not only a cornerstone of the U.S. Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) programs, but successfully serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. The CEDS provides the capacity-building<sup>1</sup> foundation by which the public sector, working in conjunction with other economic actors (individuals, firms, industries), creates the environment for regional economic prosperity.

Simply put, a CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. A CEDS is the result of a regionally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region.<sup>2</sup> It is a key component in establishing and maintaining a robust economic ecosystem by helping to build regional capacity (through hard and soft infrastructure) that contributes to individual, firm, and community success. The CEDS provides a vehicle for individuals, organizations, local governments, institutes of learning, and private industry to engage in a meaningful conversation and debate about what capacity building efforts would best serve economic development in the region. The CEDS should take into account and, where appropriate, integrate or leverage other regional planning efforts, including the use of other available federal funds, private sector resources, and state support which can advance a region’s CEDS goals and objectives. Regions must update their CEDS at least every five years to qualify for EDA assistance under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. In addition, a CEDS is a prerequisite for designation by EDA as an Economic Development District (EDD).

This guidance is primarily intended to assist in efforts to develop the *content* of a CEDS document. It suggests how to develop the document’s format and substance to make the strongest, most useful and effective CEDS possible. The focus on content in these guidelines does not diminish the importance of the process used to develop a CEDS. A well-led, broadly inclusive process is vital to the creation of a relevant and effective document. It also serves to build leadership, enhance cooperation, and foster public ownership and enthusiasm. While the

---

<sup>1</sup> The terms “capacities” and “capacity building” refer to the public sector’s role in investing in new ideas, knowledge transfer, and infrastructure to build a foundation so that the private sector can flourish (i.e., enable economic development to promote regional prosperity).

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of these Content Guidelines, the terms “area,” “region,” and “community” are often used interchangeably to refer to an appropriate political, economic, or geographic entity for addressing economic development.

high-level steps required to prepare a CEDS can be found in the Preparation section of this document, EDA suggests contacting the appropriate EDA regional office (specific points of contact can be found on EDA's website at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov)) to learn more about the overall CEDS process and additional resources and guidance available.

From the regulations governing the CEDS (see 13 C.F.R. § 303.7), the following sections *must* be included in the CEDS document:

1. Summary Background: A summary background of the economic conditions of the region;
2. SWOT Analysis: An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (commonly known as a “SWOT” analysis);
3. Strategic Direction/Action Plan: The strategic direction and action plan should build on findings from the SWOT analysis and incorporate/integrate elements from other regional plans (e.g., land use and transportation, workforce development, etc.) where appropriate as determined by the EDD or community/region engaged in development of the CEDS. The action plan should also identify the stakeholder(s) responsible for implementation, timetables, and opportunities for the integrated use of other local, state, and federal funds;
4. Evaluation Framework: Performance measures used to evaluate the organization's implementation of the CEDS and impact on the regional economy.

In addition to the sections noted above, the CEDS must incorporate the concept of economic resilience (i.e., the ability to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters, the impacts of climate change, etc.). The EDD or community responsible for the CEDS can address resilience as a separate section, distinct goal or priority action item, and/or as an area of investigation in the SWOT analysis. It may be most effective, however, to infuse the concept of resilience throughout the CEDS document. As a baseline, EDA suggests regions undertake a two-pronged approach to help identify and counter the vulnerabilities that each region may face (see section on Economic Resilience for more information).

This document provides recommendations on what should be included in each of the sections required by EDA's regulations, and suggests tools, resources, and examples to help in each section's development. As a collection of tools and examples, it is intended to be aspirational in nature and should not be construed as additional requirements. This guidance stresses the importance of linking the sections (e.g., using background information that is relevant to the SWOT) to improve the CEDS focus and impact. Moreover, it emphasizes strategic approaches based on regional visioning, goals, measurable objectives, and prioritized actions – rather than the CEDS serving as an inventory of programs and projects already in process in regions. In addition, this guidance underscores the need to think beyond traditional job creation and embrace capacity building and broad-based wealth creation when developing goals, measurable objectives, actions, and performance measures. It also highlights the need to undertake an asset-based approach (i.e., efforts that focus on the strengths of a community or region) while considering the interdependencies between regional economic prosperity and other topics such as job-driven workforce development, natural resource management and development and

sustainable land use. Finally, this guidance provides practical recommendations about formatting a CEDS that will result in an engaging, technically-sound strategy for guiding regional development.

**Please note, however, that the CEDS examples recommended in this document are intended to be informative and a source of inspiration, and should not be replicated wholesale for the CEDS section or area referenced.** Each region's unique assets and challenges may make the use of another region's section structure and/or content ineffective.

## 2. Content

A CEDS should be developed with broad based community participation and result in a document that is readily accessible to regional stakeholders. Potential partners for developing a CEDS could include government agencies, private sector interests, education providers, non-profits, community and labor groups, workforce boards, utilities, etc. Stakeholders should be able to use it as a guide to understanding the regional economy and to take action to improve it. The CEDS should take into account and, where appropriate, incorporate or leverage other regional planning efforts, including the use of available federal funds, private sector resources, and state support which can advance a region's CEDS goals and objectives. Its quality should be judged by its usefulness as a tool for regional economic development decision-making.

There are four main elements of a CEDS: 1) summary background, 2) SWOT analysis, 3) strategic direction/action plan, and 4) evaluation framework. The background should provide an overview of the region's economic situation. Building on data from the summary background, the SWOT analysis should assess the state of the regional economy, including the opportunities and threats posed by internal and external trends and forces, and the availability of resources for economic development. The region's vision, goals, and measurable objectives, together with an appraisal of the region's competitive advantages, should form the basis of the strategic direction and action plan. The evaluation framework should establish criteria and performance measures for evaluating the region's implementation of the strategic direction and progress toward goals and measurable objectives. The elements of the CEDS, seen through a lens of economic resiliency, should logically build upon and/or shape each other to result in a coherent, targeted document.

***Recommended Resource:*** See *South Florida's 2012 CEDS with the "six pillars" statewide framework which provides a clearly articulated, unifying framework across EDDs in the state:* <http://www.sfrpc.com/CEDS/SouthFloridaCEDS2012-17.pdf>.

Below are recommendations for what should be included in each of the required sections, and suggested tools, resources and examples to help in each section's development:

### **A. Summary Background: A summary background of the economic development conditions of the region**

A background summary of the region should answer the question, “What have we done?”, and present a clear understanding of the local economic situation, supported by current, *relevant* data. The information should be presented in the CEDS in a clear and concise manner, and be easily understood by the general public. Data featured in the summary background section should be presented in a way that allows for clear and relevant connections to the SWOT analysis and strategic direction. For example, data analysis revealing that a region’s population is significantly older than the state or U.S. population as a whole is an important finding because it could impact workforce availability. However, it is not necessary to create multiple, detailed tables that break down population by age to prove that point—conserve space in the CEDS by moving that sort of information to an appendix.

Relevant information should be gathered in the following areas that affect the regional economy, *as appropriate*. In other words, not all of these items need to be addressed at length, especially if they are not relevant to regional conditions or needed to define or substantiate goals, measurable objectives, or specific actions. Identify key trends, make the points briefly and clearly for a summary section, and move other supporting data to an appendix. Relevant information may include:

- Demographic and socioeconomic data, including the human capital assets of the area and labor force characteristics such as the educational attainment of the working age population;
- Environmental, geographic, climatic, and cultural (including historic preservation) and natural resource profiles (e.g., mining resources, timber, fisheries, aquaculture, eco-tourism, etc.). Ideally, an environmental baseline for the area should be developed that identifies any environmental elements that may affect and/or constrain the regional economy. Relevant published literature for the region should be researched and dialogues established with the environmental regulators at the local, state and federal levels (for example: the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (UFWS), state environmental agencies, etc.), as well as the State or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. Please contact the appropriate EDA regional office for more information and guidance.
- Infrastructure assets of the area that relate to economic development including water, sewer, telecommunications/broadband, energy distribution systems, transportation modes, etc.;
- Emerging or declining clusters or industry sectors – and their past, present, and projected impacts on the region’s competitive advantages and ability to build capacity for economic development;
- Relationship of an area’s economy to that of a larger region or state (including global perspective), with particular regard to local advantages or disadvantages;
- Factors that directly affect economic performance in the area such as workforce issues; innovation assets; industry supply chains; state and local laws; financial

resources; transportation systems; energy costs; business, personal, and property taxes; bonding capacity; land use patterns; and

- Other factors that relate to economic performance in an area such as housing; health services; educational, cultural and recreational resources; and public safety.

The CEDS should be a vehicle for promoting integration between economic development and other regional plans (including other federally-funded plans), which could include, but not be limited to, sustainability, transportation (e.g., Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program), land use, housing, environmental protection, natural resource management and development, workforce development, disaster resilience, or others.

The CEDS should also identify opportunities for the integrated use of other local, state, private, and federal funds. The nature and extent of the integration between regional plans and funding streams will vary based on the unique circumstances of each CEDS region, but every effort should be made to leverage scarce resources to avoid duplication and increase impact.

In addition, the research should include a review of the long-term trends of the area to gain a more complete understanding of how the region's current economic situation has been shaped over time by national and global forces.

***Recommended Resources:** Data sources include the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (<http://bea.gov/>) and the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>). In particular, the Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program provides information combining federal, state and Census Bureau data on employers and employees (<http://lehd.ces.census.gov/>). It includes statistics on employment, earnings, and job flows at detailed levels of geography and industry and for different demographic groups. Census' OnTheMap tool (<http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>) is a web-based mapping and reporting application that shows where workers are employed and where they live. It also provides companion reports on items such as age, earnings, industry distributions, and educational attainment. In addition, for communities with a focus on manufacturing, Census' Investing in Manufacturing Communities Data Tool provides information on supply chains, workforce, research and innovation, and trade assets (<http://www.census.gov/fastfacts/imcp/>).*

*Other sources include the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://bls.gov/>), including the Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>); state, tribal, and local governments; and universities. EDA-funded University Centers may serve as valuable resources in providing and analyzing the necessary data as well. In addition, this section may benefit from leveraging EDA-funded data tools, such as the U.S. Cluster Mapping Tool (<http://www.clustermapping.us/>) and STATS America (<http://statsamerica.org/>). Most EDD regions do not align with standard, federally-defined regions, such as metropolitan statistical areas. Most EDD regions are pre-loaded into STATS America, which makes collecting and aggregating data for multiple counties unnecessary. Information should also draw from any relevant and recent studies available.*

## **B. SWOT Analysis: An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**

A SWOT analysis of the regional economy should answer the question, “Where are we now?” by using the *relevant* data (see above) and background information to help identify the critical internal and external factors that speak to the region’s unique assets and competitive positioning. The SWOT is a strategic planning tool used by organizations to ensure that there is a clear objective informed by a comprehensive understanding of a region’s capabilities and capacity. A SWOT analysis identifies the region’s competitive advantages—those indigenous assets that make the region special or competitive in the national and global economies—juxtaposed against those internal or external factors that can keep a region from realizing its potential. Determining and analyzing what the region already possesses that could be leveraged better to build the capacity for growth, including competitive cultural, economic, technological, intellectual and physical assets, is critical to developing the strategic direction and implementation plan to promote regional economic vitality. Leveraging assets refers to using the activities and engagement of business, government leaders and other stakeholders to maximize the economic potential of a region.

In addition, the SWOT analysis should consider economic resiliency. Specifically, what factors and/or elements are in place (or need to be put in place) to ensure the long-term success, viability, and durability of the regional economy?

***Recommended Resource:*** See NADO’s 2011 report *Mobilize Maine: Asset-Based Regional Economic Development* at [http://www.knowyourregion.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NADO\\_MM\\_FINALlores.pdf](http://www.knowyourregion.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NADO_MM_FINALlores.pdf) for an example of an asset-based strategy.

SWOT analysis elements are commonly understood in the following terms:

- **Strengths** are a region’s relative competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail, and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders) and often are internal in nature;
- **Weaknesses** are a region’s relative competitive disadvantages (e.g., a risk-averse or change-resistant regional culture), also often internal in nature;
- **Opportunities** are chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress (e.g., expansion of a biosciences research lab in the region), often external in nature; and
- **Threats** are chances or occasions for negative impacts on the region or regional decline (e.g., several companies in the region considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), also often are external in nature.

***Recommended Resources:*** *The SWOT should assess a wide-variety of regional attributes and dynamics. Specific areas and potential tools to facilitate their analysis are identified below:*

- *State of the regional economy. What are the strengths and weaknesses? What are the strong existing and growth sectors? Which areas are most distressed? What is driving*



*job creation or loss and the state of economy in general? What are the region's assets? See the Regional Innovation Accelerator Network (RIAN) at <http://www.regionalinnovation.org/assets.cfm> for more information on identifying and measuring asset categories (i.e., tangible, intangible, and business climate assets).*

- *Regional clusters. Which clusters, and industries and occupations within the cluster, are growing and declining, and why? EDA defines clusters as a geographic concentration of firms, workers and industries that do business with each other and have common needs for talent, technology, and infrastructure. See the U.S. Cluster Mapping Tool (<http://www.clustermapping.us/>) for more information on clusters and the promotion of clusters.*
- *External trends and forces. What are the opportunities and threats? How is the region positioned to succeed in the national and global economies? What sources of exports and tourism, as well as foreign direct investment, can bring new wealth to the region? What industry sectors and clusters have growth potential through international trade and investment, and what are the region's target foreign markets based on these industries? What local public, private and nonprofit partnerships have been developed to promote exports and increase the region's export base? What are the strategic needs or gaps to fully implement an export promotion and investment attraction program (e.g., foreign outreach events, marketing materials, and research; and regional transportation infrastructure or regulatory issues)?*

*Helpful resources for information on global competitiveness and positioning include the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration's (ITA) program for investment attraction, SelectUSA (<http://www.SelectUSA.gov>), and local export promotion contacts, U.S. Export Assistance Centers/U.S. Commercial Service (<http://export.gov/eac/index.asp>). The following web resources also provide useful tools for analyzing a region's export trends: a) the U.S. Census Bureau's USA Trade Online (<https://usatrade.census.gov/>) provides monthly and annual trade statistics for goods at the district and port level, as well as state exports and imports; b) ITA develops state-level (<http://www.trade.gov/mas/ian/statereports/index.asp>) and metropolitan statistical area-level factsheets (<http://www.trade.gov/mas/ian/Metroreport/index.asp>) and TradeStats Express state (<http://tse.export.gov/TSE/TSEhome.aspx>) and metro (<http://tse.export.gov/metro/SelectReports.aspx?DATA=Metro>) databases with information on exported products, the number of exporting companies by state, and jobs supported by exports by state.*

- *Workforce considerations. Are the region's community colleges, workforce boards, economic development agencies, and industry groups aligned and working together? Is the region's workforce strategy aligned (and not in conflict) with the workforce strategy of local elected officials, the Workforce Investment Board, and education providers? Is there active engagement by leading businesses, industry associations, and labor organizations in such activities as developing training curriculum, or*

*providing work-based learning opportunities? Are training programs informed by employers' skill needs, labor market and career information, and do the programs have clearly understood outcomes with demonstrable job and career results? Are there occupations or workforce skills that are critically important to the region's economic growth strategy, and if so, how can they be leveraged as competitive assets? What short and long-term human resource challenges exist for the local economy along the region's proposed development path?*

*Does the workforce strategy include education and training programs that are part of a continuum of education and training that leads to good jobs, increased earnings, and career advancement as evidenced by career pathways and industry-recognized, stackable credentials? Are work-based learning opportunities such as on-the-job training, paid internships, job shadowing, and registered apprenticeships provided? Are there program evaluations and an approach to continuous improvement associated with workforce development? Has the local or regional Workforce Investment Board been engaged in the development and/or review of the CEDS? Helpful resources include the Administration's Job-Driven Training Checklist ([http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/skills\\_report.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/skills_report.pdf)) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://bls.gov/>) website, including the BLS Occupation Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>).*

*The following web resources also provide useful information for workforce considerations: (a) state and local workforce contacts can be found at [www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org) by searching for Workforce Investment Boards under the "Workforce Systems Contacts" link; (b) state labor market information can be found at [www.careerinfonet.org](http://www.careerinfonet.org) by clicking on the "State Information" link; and (c) state occupational projections can be searched at [www.projectionscentral.com](http://www.projectionscentral.com). Another useful site is STATS America's Occupation Cluster section of the Innovation Data Browser (<http://statsamerica.org/innovation/anydata/index.asp?T1>). Also, for a good example of a workforce strategy in a CEDS, see the Centralina Economic Development Commission's latest document (<http://www.centralinaedc.org/documents/WorkforceEducationAlignmentReport12-6.pdf>).*

- *Institutions of Higher Education/HBCUs. What institutions of higher education exist in the region? What resources are available within those institutions that can support regional resilience and economic development? Does the region have any EDA-funded University Centers and, if so, what services are provided by those institutions that can be leveraged? Are there Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), that can assist in the planning process with resources related to economic development decision-making, workforce development and training, entrepreneurial and innovation efforts, and research and business assistance? How can these institutions help in the planning process, including assisting with data and analytics? Are there existing relationships between these institutions and other economic development partners in the region*

*that can be strengthened to further support regional economic development objectives?*

*EDA-funded **University Centers** are focused on using university assets to build regional economic ecosystems that support innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship, resiliency, and inclusiveness. Specifically, they provide expertise and technical assistance to develop, implement, and support regional strategies. Expertise and technical assistance can be focused on workforce training programs, applied research centers, technology commercialization, feasibility studies, market research and data analysis, and economic impact analyses training among many other types of activities. The following web resources provide some examples of ways in which University Centers have supported regional economic development goals: (a) EDA's University Center Program webpage (<https://www.eda.gov/programs/university-centers/>), (b) NCGrowth, a University Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, helps businesses and communities create jobs and equitable opportunities through applied research and technical assistance (<https://ncgrowth.unc.edu/index.php/what-we-do/>), and (c) Purdue Center for Regional Development, a University Center at Purdue University, develops and improves online data tools, produces regional economic profiles and other informational resources, engages key stakeholders in mapping regional assets and opportunities, and strengthens regional collaboration and innovation networks (<https://www.pcrd.purdue.edu/signature-programs/eda-university-center.php>).*

***HBCUs** invest strategically in institutions and individuals at the local level to actively pursue innovation and entrepreneurship that can help more Americans improve their connectivity to and productivity within the 21st century. HBCUs have made significant contributions to the general welfare and prosperity of the United States while producing many leaders in business, government, academia, and the military. The most visible example of EDA's ongoing partnership with the HBCU community consists of those that have been designated as EDA University Centers (<https://www.eda.gov/programs/university-centers/hbcu/>).*

*HBCUs working with local ecosystems and communities can build processes by which innovators, students, current and prospective employees and employers, and entrepreneurs can better develop and launch solutions to solve real-world problems and maximize real-world opportunities. Today, there are 101 accredited HBCUs, public and private, concentrated in 19 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The economic returns produced by HBCUs are particularly evident at the state level, generating billions in total economic impact and thousands of jobs for their local and regional economies (<https://unconf.org/programs/hbcu-impact>). Across the states and territories where HBCUs are located, they annually provide an average of 6,385 jobs in each state and generate an average of \$704.7 million in total economic impact (<https://unconf.org/pages/hbcus-punching-above-their-weight>).*

*Of the many contributions that HBCUs make to the communities and regions in which they operate, one of the most compelling is workforce development. HBCUs often*

*leverage specialized degree programs and students to support local business needs – including the increasing number of companies looking to diversify their workforces. Local economies are positioned to succeed in the global economy by possessing a highly trained, technically skilled workforce, and HBCUs generate talent that regularly feeds these local ecosystems. In particular, HBCUs have implemented proven practices to assist students in STEM (i.e., science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields to obtain significant professional experiences, research opportunities, and mentorships. It is estimated that the United States will need nearly 1 million STEM professionals in the next few years, and HBCUs are leading the charge by producing 27% of African American students with bachelor's degrees in STEM fields. In addition, 21 of the top 50 institutions for educating African American graduates who go on to receive their doctorates in science, math, and engineering, are HBCUs (<https://www.edi.nih.gov/blog/communities/top-10-stem-historically-black-colleges-and-universities>).*

*Current examples of workforce-focused partnerships between regional planning organizations and HBCUs include a collaboration between Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) and North Carolina Central University to research law enforcement recruitment, training gaps, and potential candidates in the region and provide departments with data-driven recommendations to improve their local recruitment efforts. For more information, see <https://www.tjcog.org/partnerships/regional-recruitment-partnership>. In addition, the Gulf Coast Economic Development District (GCEDD) partnered with Prairie View A&M University to establish the Rural Workforce Academy that provides skilled trades training certification and job placement to rural counties impacted by disasters. For more information, check out <https://www.pvamu.edu/cahs/rural-workforce-academy/>.*

*In addition to workforce-related collaborations between EDDs and institutions of higher education/HBCUs, there are other ways certain EDDs have acknowledged and leveraged these institutions as key regional assets and contributors to a regional planning process that is innovative, competitive and inclusive of all interests who stand to benefit from strong local economies . EDDs that include university/HBCU administrators on their CEDS Strategy Committees and/or EDD boards are benefiting from the local insights and community knowledge that these institutions bring to the planning process for economic development capacity building (see the Piedmont Triad Regional Council at <https://www.ptrc.org/services/economic-development> and the Capital Region Planning Commission at <https://crpcla.org/economic-development>).*

- *Spatial efficiencies/sustainability. How can land use, housing, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure planning be better integrated to support regional prosperity? Are there opportunities to redevelop brownfields and vacant industrial space? Can the region's workforce easily access the jobs and housing options in the area? (see the Partnership for Sustainable Communities at <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/> for more information on the important*

*linkages between land use, housing, transportation, and the environment in promoting economic competitiveness; and see this report on the economic benefits of livability at <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/building-better-budgets.pdf>. Also, see EPA's Smart Location Database for a useful tool comprised of interactive maps and data for measuring spatial efficiency at <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smartlocationdatabase.htm>).*

- *Broadband needs. Do communities, institutions and businesses agree as to the broadband and telecommunications needs of the region? Has the region discussed ways to leverage strong broadband infrastructure to support business retention and expansion, as well as its applicability to health, education, public safety, energy and civic life? The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) resources on broadband mapping, planning, adoption and implementation can be found at [www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa) (see NTIA's [www.broadbandmap.gov](http://www.broadbandmap.gov) for information about current availability; also, check with the state economic development office to find out whether your state has data on underlying infrastructure or more granular broadband availability/use data).*
- *Energy needs. Are the energy needs of the region – and the importance of reliable energy security – understood? Have the methods of production, transmission, and distribution been analyzed in relation to regional economic development efforts (e.g., utility siting)? In particular, have opportunities for distributed and advanced energy been considered and addressed? Have utility companies been consulted and included in discussions about economic resilience and overall regional development? Have future energy needs been considered and planned for in light of changes in demand and climate? For information on Smart Grid see <http://energy.gov/oe/articles/economic-impact-recovery-act-investments-smart-grid-report-now-available>.*
- *Natural hazards. Does regional hazard mitigation planning take into account future as well as current risk from events such as droughts, floods, storm surges, and wildfires? Does the region's climate adaptation and hazard mitigation planning integrate land use and workforce planning to ensure a resilient and prosperous region under the effects of climate change? How might climate change impact flood risk, water supply, wildfire risk, sea levels and storm surges, extreme heat, extreme precipitation, and other extreme weather events into the future?*

*Helpful resources include the National Association of Development Organization's report, "Resilient Regions: Integrating Economic Development Strategies, Sustainability Principles and Hazard Mitigation Planning," available at <http://www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/NADOResilientReport.pdf>. For information on future climate conditions, resources include the National Climate Assessment (<http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>) and regional climatologies (<http://scenarios.globalchange.gov/regions>).*

- *Equitable development. Is there active engagement from the region’s vulnerable and/or underserved populations (e.g., low-income families, seniors, ethnic minorities)? Have those populations been provided appropriate access to and inclusion in the planning process and has their input into the final product been actively encouraged? Has the region used technology-based tools to widen the distribution of information and increase the potential of feedback from residents?*
- *Partners for economic development. Who are the influential actors in the region? These may include organizations, businesses, or individuals that represent important issues, including those that may be less familiar to the economic development organization such as social service delivery and natural resource organizations.*
- *Resources for economic development. What relevant groups, organizations or individuals are located in the region? Who – including other federal agencies beyond EDA – can provide support and funding to build capacity for economic development activities? How can the CEDS leverage federal, state, and private sector funding resources in pursuit of its economic development objectives?*

*Also, for an example of a relevant SWOT section of a strategy, see <http://arcreativealliance.com/resources/Southeast+Arkansas+Growth+Initiative+-+Regional+Plan+for+Economic+Development+-+Draft.pdf>*

**C. Strategic Direction/Action Plan: Strategic direction and an action plan (flowing from the SWOT analysis), which should be consistent with other relevant state/regional/local plans.**

The strategic direction and corresponding action plan contained within the CEDS are the heart and soul of the document. They should answer the questions “Where do we want to go?” and “How are we going to get there?” by leveraging the analysis undertaken in the SWOT. The strategic direction and associated action plan should logically flow from the critical internal and external factors that speak to the region’s assets and limitations and its role in capacity building. The strategic direction should evolve from a clearly defined vision with prioritized goals and measurable objectives. A successful action plan should then focus on those regionally-driven strategic priorities that will be undertaken to bring the prosperity aspirations of the region’s stakeholders to fruition.

- **Strategic Direction: Vision Statement and Goals/Objectives**

The vision statement, goals, and objectives should respond to the analysis of the area’s development potential and problems (i.e., SWOT analysis). The goals should reflect the desires of most regional

**Sample Vision and Goal/Objective:**

**Vision** - Increase regional prosperity by being a globally competitive, business-friendly region, comprised of healthy communities that sustain a high-quality of life.

**Goal 1** – Enhance emerging health care cluster

**Objective 1** – Expand rural health care workforce development by increasing the percentage of people age 25+ with a completed postsecondary degree by 10% over the next five years

stakeholders and should also be realistic and limited to a manageable number. Some should address things that can be realized within a short period of time, while others require a longer period for implementation. The vision, goals, and measurable objectives will provide a strategic framework for public and private decision-making and serve as the basis for the formulation and focus of the action plan.

The **vision statement** should answer the question “Where do we want to be in the next ten to twenty years?” The most common method for developing a vision statement is through a series of sessions or workshops. Regardless of the method used to form the vision statement, the visioning process should include broad community participation. A draft vision statement (and the associated goals and objectives) should be widely circulated for review and comment to ensure maximum stakeholder engagement.

**Goals and objectives** provide the basis for formulating the action plan and serve as milestones to evaluate regional progress. *Goals* are broad outcomes or general intentions that build upon the vision and are often intangible. Each goal should have a rationale that is clearly understood and publicly supported. *Objectives* are more specific, measurable, concrete, and support the obtainment of the goals. Goals and objectives provide benchmarks by which area officials, economic development stakeholders, and the community can measure performance. The goal and objectives should be consistent with community aspirations for economic prosperity.

The goals and objectives should be prioritized to provide a basis for decisions on the use of available resources. Establishing priorities at the goal-setting stage is a critical step toward formulating the CEDS. The following factors should be considered:

- The effect that achieving each goal will have on the development potential or problem.
- Actions related to the goals and objectives that are already underway or planned.
- The relationship of this goal and objective to the accomplishments of the other goals and objectives.

The successful establishment of a vision with corresponding goals and measurable objectives—properly prioritized and based on a reasonable view of the region’s strengths and capabilities—will result in a well-defined strategic framework that will drive overall implementation of the CEDS.

**Recommended Resource:** See *North Central Florida RPC’s CEDS* ([http://ncfrpc.org/Publications/CEDS/NCFRPC\\_CEDS\\_2013-2017.pdf](http://ncfrpc.org/Publications/CEDS/NCFRPC_CEDS_2013-2017.pdf)) or the measurable aspects of the Mobilize Maine strategy: <http://mobilizemaine.org/goals-accomplishment/>.

- **Action Plan: Implementation**

The action plan answers the question “How do we get there?” and is based primarily on the prioritized goals and objectives of the strategic direction. The action plan distills the vision, goals and objectives into concrete, specific actions to achieve the aspirations of the region’s stakeholders. Building on the well-defined strategic direction, the action plan should explicitly describe how the region will work together to achieve its goals and measurable objectives, including activity ownership, timetables, and committed resources.

*The action plan, however, should NOT simply be a list of projects. Nor should it exclusively reflect those activities which EDA alone could potentially support.*

The action plan should include a wide-range of activity types (housing, transportation, broadband, environmental, sector specific or cluster asset-leveraging efforts, etc.) and must be clearly linked to the goals and objectives from the strategic framework. A limited number of activities with the highest priority and potential for regional impact should be identified and described. Descriptions of these high priority activities of regional significance should include:

- a) An outline of the steps required to take each selected high-priority activity from inception to successful completion;
- b) A roster of the key individuals and institutions that will be responsible for implementing and supporting these steps;
- c) A reasonable estimate of the costs associated with implementing the activity;
- d) A list of the integrated funding sources (public, private and nonprofit) to support the costs; and
- e) A realistic time frame for execution (i.e., implementation schedule), with relevant benchmarks and performance measures that speak to overall impact.

A detailed, well-considered action plan increases the overall value of the CEDS, and makes it relevant and useful. While the action plan should provide a guide to prioritizing resources and efforts, it should not be used to limit the identification and implementation of other activities that support the strategic direction that was established as part of the development of the vision, goals and objectives within the CEDS.

Identification of priority activities should include broad-based participation from regional stakeholders, involving those affected by the proposed activities and those that can ensure their success. Partnerships with a variety of organizations and the private sector in the region are a key to successful implementation. Identifying elements for action may be undertaken using the following questions for guidance:

- What are the activities and what are their expected benefits?
- Which activities address the area’s greatest need or best enhance the region’s competitive advantages?
- Do these activities represent the best use of limited resources?



- Will the activities have positive economic, environmental, and social impacts and how can these be measured?
- Will the activities contribute to the overall economic resiliency of the region?

**Recommended Resource:** For example, see the Action Plan in Southeastern Utah's CEDS at <http://seualg.utah.gov/EDD/SEUEDD.htm>.

#### **D. Evaluation Framework: Performance measures used to evaluate the organization's implementation of the CEDS and its impact on the regional economy.**

The evaluation framework serves as a mechanism to gauge progress on the successful implementation of the overall CEDS while providing information for the CEDS Annual Performance Report (see section on Preparation), as required by EDA. These regular updates keep the strategic direction and action plan outlined in the CEDS current and the plan as a whole relevant. The evaluation framework is an important element of the ongoing planning process and should answer the questions "How are we doing?" and "What can we do better?" The evaluation framework, with its associated measures and timelines, should cascade from the strategic direction and action plan, which, in turn, flow from the SWOT analysis.

Performance measures should be identified to evaluate the progress of activities in achieving the vision, goals and objectives. EDDs and communities should consider traditional (e.g., jobs created and/or retained, private investment) and non-traditional (e.g., wealth creation such as GDP per capita, household income, per capita income, wages, net worth) performance measures for evaluating regional impact.

Although important, job creation/retention is just one element in determining whether a region is building the appropriate capacity to help the private sector flourish and the region, as a whole, prosper. Job creation is the result of successful economic development investments and should be linked with broadband availability and adoption, quality of place, established entrepreneur networks, supply of skilled workers, increases in workers' earnings and wages, a climate of innovation, and/or other strategic investments.

The measures that are ultimately selected should be based upon what is important to the region, what conditions the region needs to reverse or create, and what regional assets can be leveraged. In effect, the measures should reinforce the *relevant* data and background information collected, SWOT analysis undertaken, and strategic direction and action plan developed to help identify the critical internal and external factors that speak to the region's assets, limitations, and overall ability to build capacity.

**Recommended Resource:** See NADO's *Performance Metrics Matter: Go Beyond Counting Jobs to Create a Highly Effective Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* at

*<http://www.nado.org/performance-metrics-matter/> for more information on performance metrics can be used to create a more effective CEDS.*

There are numerous options to consider (depending upon regional priorities, as noted above) when thinking about how to measure regional capacity building and prosperity. However, the concept of wealth is one that should be highlighted because of its natural alignment with asset-based strategies and approaches. More than just jobs and income, regional wealth is represented by intellectual, individual, social, natural, built environment, political, financial, and cultural assets. These assets, when invested in, nurtured, and leveraged appropriately, can reflect the true level of a region's economic (and social) well-being. Finding ways to better identify, foster, and measure these assets can help a region towards a more lasting prosperity since a focus on wealth creation and retention can build a region's resiliency and long-term sustainability.

**Recommended Resource:** See [www.wealthworks.org](http://www.wealthworks.org) for more tools and information on building and measuring regional wealth.

When developing measures of any kind, some key questions to ask that may help determine the quality and applicability of the measures include:

- Can the measures be evaluated in an objective, timely, and cost-effective fashion?
- Are the measures focused on an outcome or result (i.e., data and information on the success of a specific process or engagement) rather than an output or activity (i.e., data or information on activities to help achieve an outcome)?
- Do the measures include a clear statement of the results expected?
- Do the measures support regional goals?
- Do the measures allow for meaningful trend or statistical analysis?
- Are the measures challenging but at the same time attainable?
- Are assumptions and definitions specified for what constitutes satisfactory performance?
- Have those who are responsible for the performance being measured been both identified and fully involved in the development of the measures?
- Are the measures tracking trends that are completely within the region's control or will national or global developments impact performance?

If a desired result from a strategic direction contained within the CEDS is not achieved, measures can help identify specific weak points and/or identify better approaches. In addition, while the CEDS evaluation is the responsibility of the economic development organization's professional staff, an outside party (e.g., staff from another EDD), a university center, or a consultant, may assist in the evaluation. For EDA investments in projects listed in the CEDS, the outcomes of the projects should be tied clearly to the performance measures in the CEDS (i.e., how did the grant-funded project help achieve a goal and measurable objective in the CEDS?). The evaluation should document where actual results met, exceeded, or fell short of projected outcomes.

Jobs and private investment will remain critical evaluation factors for CEDS plans and EDA-funded projects. Nonetheless, jobs and private investment do not tell the whole story about

the impact of EDDs and implementation of CEDS. Take a comprehensive view of performance measures when communicating the results of CEDS implementation.

## E. Economic Resilience:

It is becoming increasingly apparent that regional economic prosperity is linked to an area's ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions (i.e., 'shocks') to its economic base. Many definitions of economic resilience limit its focus on the ability to quickly recover from a disruption. However, in the context of economic development, economic resilience becomes inclusive of three primary attributes: the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether. Establishing economic resilience in a local or regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity. Often, the shocks/disruptions to the economic base of an area or region are manifested in three ways:

- Downturns or other significant events in the national or international economy which impact demand for locally produced goods and consumer spending;
- Downturns in particular industries that constitute a critical component of the region's economic activity; and/or
- Other external shocks (a natural or man-made disaster, closure of a military base, exit of a major employer, the impacts of climate change, etc.).

At the regional or community level, economic development practitioners are instrumental in building the capacity for economic resilience. Economic development professionals and organizations often become the focal point for post-incident coordination, information dissemination, responding to external inquiries, and the lead grant administrator for federally-funded recovery initiatives.

In building economic resilience, it is critical that economic development organizations consider their role in the pre- and post-incident environment to include **steady-state** and **responsive** initiatives.

Steady-state initiatives tend to be long-term efforts that seek to bolster the community or region's ability to withstand or avoid a shock. Responsive initiatives can include establishing capabilities for the economic development organization to be responsive to the region's recovery needs following an incident.

Examples of *steady-state* economic resilience initiatives include:

- Engaging in comprehensive planning efforts that involve extensive involvement from the community to define and implement a collective vision for resilience that includes the integration and/or alignment of other planning efforts (e.g., hazard mitigation plans) and funding sources;
- Undertaking efforts to broaden the industrial base with diversification initiatives, such as targeting the development of emerging clusters or industries that (a) build on the

- region’s unique assets and competitive strengths; and (b) provide stability during downturns that disproportionately impact any single cluster or industry;
- Adapting business retention and expansion programs (e.g., economic gardening or other enterprise supports) to assist firms with economic recovery post-disruption;
  - Building a resilient workforce that can better shift between jobs or industries when their core employment is threatened through job-driven skills strategies and support organizations;
  - Maintaining geographic information systems (GIS) that link with municipal business licenses, tax information, and other business establishment data bases to track local and regional “churn” and available development sites. GIS can also be integrated with hazard information to make rapid post-incident impact assessments;
  - Ensuring redundancy in telecommunications and broadband networks to protect commerce and public safety in the event of natural or manmade disasters;
  - Promoting business continuity and preparedness (i.e., ensuring businesses understand their vulnerabilities—including supply chains—in the face of disruptions and are prepared to take actions to resume operations after an event); and
  - Employing safe development practices in business districts and surrounding communities. Strategies may include locating structures outside of floodplains, preserving natural lands that act as buffers from storms, and protecting downtowns and other existing development from the impacts of extreme weather.

Some examples of *responsive* economic resilience initiatives include:

- Conducting pre-disaster recovery planning to define key stakeholders, roles, responsibilities, and key actions;
- Establishing a process for regular communication, monitoring, and updating of business community needs and issues (which can then be used after an incident) ;
- Establishing/using a capability to rapidly contact key local, regional, state, and federal officials to communicate business sector needs and coordinate impact assessment efforts; and
- Establishing/using coordination mechanisms and leadership succession plans for short, intermediate, and long-term recovery needs.

The CEDS provides a critical mechanism to help identify regional vulnerabilities and prevent and/or respond to economic disruptions. Therefore, embracing economic resilience must be a key component of the CEDS document.

Integrating resilience into the CEDS should be undertaken as part of a two-pronged approach:

- 1) **Planning for and implementing resilience** through specific goals or actions to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region (**steady-state**), and
- 2) **Establishing information networks** among the various stakeholders in the region to encourage active and regular communications between the public, private, education, and non-profit sectors to collaborate on existing and potential future challenges (**responsive**).

**Recommended Resource:** See NADO’s CEDS Resiliency Library (<http://www.nado.org/resources/ceds-library/>) for catalogued examples of how EDDs are currently addressing resilience. The library allows users to browse CEDS that incorporate resilience by state and topic.

- **Planning for and Implementing Resilience**

All communities, whether those in locations likely to experience significant natural disasters or those dealing with immediate or pending economic shifts, must be able to recognize their vulnerabilities. They should then develop goals, strategies, and actions that can mitigate the effects of an economic incident and support long-term recovery efforts. While there is no universal blueprint for building regional economic resilience, the following items may help in establishing a general framework or identifying specific activities/projects:

1. *Identify persistent economic challenges or deficiencies:* What are the region’s economic “weak spots” (i.e., vulnerabilities)? Is there a specific asset deficiency (e.g., poorly educated workforce, excessive dependency on a single employer or industry, lack of transportation access/options, low levels of broadband availability and/or adoption, impediments hindering a firm’s ability to gain access to the financial resources required to advance its business, major employers located in vulnerable areas)? Has a “planning horizon” been established (e.g., 10 to 15 years) for assessing economic vulnerabilities?
2. *Prepare for disruptions by identifying “early-warning” tools:* Does the region have an “anticipatory focus” that will help it react quickly when confronted with potential disruptions and challenges? Do community economic development professionals work with their local/regional emergency managers to address the risks identified through hazard mitigation planning? Do community leaders employ mechanisms (e.g., scorecards, state of the region reports, economic dashboards) that offer a regularly updated assessment of the regional economy?
3. *Build mechanisms that create flexibility:* Do the local governments have detailed and tested disaster response and recovery plans? Do the local governments and major employers have access to “surge” capital/credit resources? Does the region have a good handle on its assets to help identify emerging economic sectors that may lead to a diversified economic base? Has the region established mechanisms to realign and retrain its workforce post-disruption?
4. *Promote a positive vision for the region:* Is the messaging about the region’s assets and opportunities positive (to encourage investments in both times of tranquility and disruption)? Do stakeholders understand that actions that build resilience are good for the regional economy whether or not an economic shock occurs, and have they reached consensus on a set of actions they can take proactively? Are economic shocks used as an opportunity to “re-vision” (i.e., reassess) the region’s economy?

Regardless of the specific steady-state approaches considered or undertaken, the CEDS, *at a minimum*, should include an identification of the region's key vulnerabilities and resilience-building goals, measurable objectives, and/or projects in the action plan.

***Recommended Resource:*** See *Southeastern Vermont CEDS* (<http://seveds.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/FINALCEDSReport.2013.pdf>) for a good example of how to effectively describe a region's economic vulnerabilities and recommend a strong set of measurable objectives and actions to address the challenges.

- **Establishing Information Networks**

In addition to identifying regional vulnerabilities and specific actions to address them, the region should establish mechanisms to facilitate active and regular communication between the relevant sectors to collaborate on common challenges. The economic development organization should be prepared to serve as a responsive participant in economic recovery efforts. The region should also be prepared to serve as an information hub by collecting data and convening the appropriate players to facilitate recovery post-disruption. The effectiveness of a region's response to a major economic disruption is often enhanced if the public, private, education, and nonprofit sectors are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities – particularly as they pertain to recovering from economic shocks. Established communication networks and information collection protocols coupled with broadly understood knowledge of key elements (such as supply-chain relationships) can help speed a region's response. Once the networks are established, participants can be called upon in times of crisis to provide services and support in the case of a disruption.

More experienced economic development organizations will find opportunities to enhance and expand their business retention and expansion programs as a vehicle to mobilize action and facilitate information sharing. Other networking examples include the establishment of Business Emergency Operation Centers (BEOC) or Business Recovery One-Stop Centers. Among other actions, BEOCs serve as a hub of business-to-business collaboration and communication to connect private sector organizations with each other and with emergency response and recovery efforts while interfacing with local and federal emergency operations centers to ensure assistance and resources are being directed to businesses in need.

***Recommended Resource:*** Information on establishing a Business Recovery Center can be found at <http://restoreyoureconomy.org/recovery/business-recovery-center/>. Several states operate BEOCs, including Louisiana, Rhode Island, Missouri, and New Jersey. They take a variety of forms: state funded, state and university partnerships, and privately organized collaborations with universities. There is also a National BEOC operated by FEMA (see [http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1852-25045-2704/fema\\_factsheet\\_nbeoc\\_final\\_508.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1852-25045-2704/fema_factsheet_nbeoc_final_508.pdf)).

Regardless of the specific responsive approaches considered or undertaken, the CEDS, *at a minimum*, should demonstrate how the region serves as both a source for information to deal with an economic challenge and as a convener of regional stakeholders to gather data and encourage collaboration post-disruption.

*A note on structure:* The two-pronged approach to resilience noted above can be included in the CEDS as a separate section. However, resilience could also be addressed by weaving the concept throughout the document (e.g., identifying a region’s vulnerabilities in the SWOT section, then developing specific goals or action items to counter those vulnerabilities in the strategic direction/action plan, followed by an exploration of ways to measure success in the evaluation framework). Regardless of how resilience is included in the CEDS, it is critical for regions to identify vulnerabilities and, where possible, bolster the capacities that may lead to economic resilience as part of regional planning efforts.

***Recommended Resource:*** *The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council’s Economic and Disaster Resiliency Study* ([http://ncfrpc.org/Publications/EADRS/NCFRPC\\_EconomicAndDisasterResiliencyStudy.pdf](http://ncfrpc.org/Publications/EADRS/NCFRPC_EconomicAndDisasterResiliencyStudy.pdf)) *assesses the vulnerability of the region’s industries, critical infrastructure, housing, and other economic assets to hurricanes, and models the effects of a catastrophic event. This type of assessment could be used to inform the SWOT analysis.*

- **Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning**

It should be noted that a number of regions, particularly those that are prone to natural disasters, have engaged in resilience planning by focusing on the development of disaster recovery strategies. Developing and implementing a strategy for disaster recovery is often a good first step in establishing resilient regions. Specifically, certain regions have integrated economic development strategies, sustainability principles and hazard mitigation planning to ensure such activities are undertaken in a complimentary fashion. Examples of the benefits from this “cross-pollination” planning include promoting local procurement and hiring, the pre-prioritization of the resumption of major employers, and the siting of new commercial and industrial development in locations that are out of harm’s way.

In addition to providing a vehicle to approach resilience in a comprehensive fashion, a CEDS can often fill an important role in ensuring that disaster mitigation efforts are well-coordinated across municipal and county-lines to shape stronger, more resilient regions. Regardless of focus (i.e., broader economic resilience or a more directed look at disaster recovery planning), the CEDS should still include the two primary elements: 1) “steady-state” initiatives that seek to bolster the community or region’s long-term ability to withstand or avoid a shock and, 2) “responsive” initiatives that establish and utilize capabilities for an economic development organization to be responsive to the region’s recovery needs post-disruption.

***Recommended Resources:*** *See the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation’s appendix on disaster and economic recovery and resilience in its most recent CEDS at <http://www.epedc.com/brochures/full2012-2017CEDS.pdf>. Other examples include South Florida RPC’s CEDS (<http://www.sfrpc.com/CEDS/SouthFloridaCEDS2012-17.pdf>), Iowa Northland Regional COG’s CEDS ([http://www.inrcog.org/pdf/2012\\_CEDS.pdf](http://www.inrcog.org/pdf/2012_CEDS.pdf)), and Mountainland EDD’s CEDS (<https://mountainland.org/site/webroot/images/upload/files/ED/Mountainland%20Full%20CEDS%2012-19-14-1.pdf>).*

*The Northwest Oregon CEDS quantifies the region's economic vulnerability by measuring the number of businesses and jobs located in flood zones, total and by industry, and the number of critical facilities in flood zones*

*([http://www.nworegon.org/Assets/dept\\_2/PM/pdf/2014-2018ceds-final.pdf](http://www.nworegon.org/Assets/dept_2/PM/pdf/2014-2018ceds-final.pdf)).*

*EDA, working with the State of Colorado, has developed an Economic Resilience Planning Evaluation Tool ([http://www.eda.gov/about/files/disaster-recovery/EDA\\_CO-Economic-Resilience-Planning\\_Oct2014.pdf](http://www.eda.gov/about/files/disaster-recovery/EDA_CO-Economic-Resilience-Planning_Oct2014.pdf)) that contains a list of economic mitigation, preparedness and/or recovery components that could be used in infusing resilience into a CEDS.*

*A number of tools exist to help regions craft robust disaster resilience strategies. The Infrastructure Security Partnership's 2011 Regional Disaster Resilience Guide for Developing an Action Plan (RDR Guide) provides a practical, "how to" approach to help communities and regions develop a useable disaster resilience strategy along with a number of key lessons learned from recent disasters and events. (see the RDR Guide at <http://tisp.org/index.cfm?cdid=10962&pid=10261>). Also see Florida's guidebook Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning: A Guide for Florida Communities at <http://www.floridadisaster.org/Recovery/IndividualAssistance/pdredevelopmentplan/tools.htm#guidebook>. The guidebook is intended to assist communities developing post-disaster redevelopment plans during pre-disaster periods. It provides best practices for planning and implementation based on research and pilot programs associated with the initiative led by the Florida Department of Community Affairs and Florida Division of Emergency Management.*

*NADO's publication titled [Resilient Regions: Integrating Economic Development Strategies, Sustainability Principles and Hazard Mitigation Planning](http://www.nado.org/resilient-regions-integrating-economic-development-strategies-sustainability-principles-and-hazard-mitigation-planning/) (<http://www.nado.org/resilient-regions-integrating-economic-development-strategies-sustainability-principles-and-hazard-mitigation-planning/>) highlights how several regional organizations are incorporating disaster mitigation and sustainable development approaches into their economic recovery and resilience work.*

*In addition, [RestoreYourEconomy.org](http://restoreyoureconomy.org/) (<http://restoreyoureconomy.org/>) contains a wealth of information to help regions impacted by disasters, as well as a number of tips and techniques to support overall economic resilience (see "[Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency](#)"). The site is a one-stop shop for disaster preparedness and post-disaster economic recovery resources, tools, event announcements as well as opportunities to connect with peers through social media groups.*

- **Measuring Resilience**

Measuring the economic resilience of a community or region, including the actions taken to foster resilience, will vary depending on the assets and vulnerabilities of each region. Two common measures are the degree of regional income equality (i.e., how evenly income is distributed across a regional population) and the degree of regional economic diversification (i.e., degree to which economic activity is spread across sectors). Regardless of the specific types of data collected and measures used, it may be helpful to benchmark data collected



against national averages to help identify trends and better inform the development of key strategies.

**Recommended Resources:** See the University of Southern California and the University of California Berkeley's Network on Building Resilient Regions at <https://dornsife.usc.edu/perc/building-resilient-regions/> for general information on resilience and specifics on measuring resilience through the Resilience Capacity Index (RCI). As a means to gauge a region's ability to effectively respond to a future stress, the RCI identifies regional strengths and weaknesses, and provides regional leaders with the ability to compare their region's capacity profile to that of other metropolitan areas. In addition, see the Economic Diversity in Appalachia tool at <http://economicdiversityinappalachia.creonline.org/> for one method of determining industry, employment, and occupational diversity by region across the United States.

### 3. Format

While the content of a CEDS is critical, the structure and presentation of the information contained within the document is also important. The following suggestions should help:

**Keep your audience in mind.** A CEDS must be a technically sound plan, but plans do little good if nobody reads them. Consider how your readers consume information. For example, a target of approximately 25 to 30 pages—with a three to five page executive summary containing key findings, opportunities, and initiatives—is a reasonable expectation for keeping a general audience engaged. Extremely busy readers, such as elected officials or business owners, may require a shorter version of the document as an overview, with a reference explaining where to go to find the more complete version. For professional planners, the full technical version of the CEDS may be appropriate. An executive summary, in particular, is an important and useful element since the general public, local officials, federal policy makers, and other senior level executives will generally seek information in a brief, easily digestible form. Decision makers, in particular, need an executive summary to make informed choices based on a short yet useful synopsis.

**Recommended Resource:** See North Central Florida RPC's "strategy" and "technical" versions of the CEDS: [http://ncfrpc.org/Publications/CEDS/NCFRPC\\_CEDS\\_2013-2017.pdf](http://ncfrpc.org/Publications/CEDS/NCFRPC_CEDS_2013-2017.pdf). The Florida RPCs adopted this format as part of their statewide coordinated CEDS development.

In addition, data that do not directly link and support the strategy should not be featured prominently in the main part of the document. Too much data can be a distraction, especially if it interrupts the flow of the narrative. Use appendices for data that cannot be tied directly to the vision, goals, measurable objectives, and strategies.

**Communicate creatively.** While the content of a CEDS is clearly the most significant factor, the region or organization developing the CEDS does itself a disservice if the document does not have a professional and appealing look and feel. Many groups, especially those unfamiliar with EDA, will look to the CEDS as an indication of the organization's or region's capabilities and

overall commitment to effective economic development. Also, the CEDS should make extensive use of charts, graphs and professional photos to draw attention to and bolster the messages within the CEDS.

In addition, the CEDS should be crafted in whatever format provides the best medium for communicating the strategies within the document. Regions are encouraged to experiment with hard copy reports, web-based CEDS, or even mobile apps for phones or tablets if that is appropriate and of interest to the region. In some instances, a CEDS may be best developed in a traditional word processing format. However, many strategy documents are now being developed using other mediums. Different formats should be researched to widen the possibilities. Recent strategy documents from consulting firms, research organizations and university centers may provide ideas on creative formats.

***Recommended Resource:** For an example of a creative format, see [http://nyworks.ny.gov/themes/nyopenrc/rc-files/southerntier/CU\\_RegEcoDevRprt\\_loR.pdf](http://nyworks.ny.gov/themes/nyopenrc/rc-files/southerntier/CU_RegEcoDevRprt_loR.pdf).*

**Think beyond the document.** When crafting the CEDS, a community should think creatively about how the document (or specific portions) may be used as a vehicle to engage stakeholders in a meaningful conversation and debate about their region. Consider how the CEDS can be used in social media – podcasts, blogs, videos, etc. How can the CEDS, or parts of it, be showcased on a website?

***Recommended Resource:** Two examples of economic development organizations that have created engaging websites to complement their strategy documents include <http://pennyrilefuture.com/> and <http://ceds.alabama.gov/>.*

## 4. Preparation

The following is an overview of the steps required to prepare a CEDS, including recommended participants and the role of EDA. For more information on any step in the process of preparing a CEDS, please contact your appropriate EDA regional office (see <http://www.eda.gov/contact/>).

The preparation of a CEDS will depend on local circumstances, the organization’s staff capacity, and level of resources of the region. The time it takes to develop an effective process will vary depending on the area’s experience with economic development, the complexity of its problems, and the degree of coordination and cooperation among the participant stakeholders.

A key element in the process is the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee (Strategy Committee).<sup>3</sup> Established by the planning organization, the Strategy Committee is the principal facilitator of the CEDS process and is responsible for developing and updating the CEDS. The Strategy Committee should broadly represent the main economic interests of the region.

---

<sup>3</sup> Establishment of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee is a requirement only for EDA funded EDDs and Native American tribes.

## Stakeholder Engagement

As previously noted, a CEDS emerges from a continuing planning process developed with broad based and diverse stakeholder participation that addresses the economic problems and potential of a region. The CEDS should include information about how and to what extent stakeholder input and support was solicited. Information on how the planning organization collaborated with its diverse set of stakeholders (including the public sector, private interests, non-profits, educational institutions, and community organizations) in the development of the CEDS and the formation of the Strategy Committee should be documented. For updated CEDS, information on how these critical stakeholder groups contributed to the plan's implementation should be noted. Documented evidence of these strategic partnerships strengthens a CEDS by demonstrating the commitment of local partners to coordinate work and investment across the region, helps to effectively target local funds and private sector resources, and legitimizes the CEDS as a product representing the region as a whole. Information should also be included that describes the planning organization's efforts to regularly engage partners and stakeholders on monitoring progress on the CEDS and to keep the plan both current and relevant.

Planners should take care to build stakeholder participation and buy-in for long term planning initiatives. Stakeholders need to understand how they fit into the picture of regional economic competitiveness and, more important, how engagement in a CEDS process will benefit their communities and organizations.

Consider using the CEDS as an opportunity to illustrate how the region's stakeholders are linked together. Illustrate the business to business linkages (clusters, supplier networks, value chains) and the social connections (social networks, places of worship, investor relationships). In addition, consider identifying opportunities for short-term, medium-term, and long-term activities in the CEDS. Stakeholder engagement can be maintained effectively and expanded to new stakeholders through short-term "wins."

***Recommended Resource:*** *Innovate Kansas* <http://innovatekansas.org/>.

The steps below apply only to EDA-funded planning grantees (e.g., EDDs and Native American tribes):

Step 1: Establish and maintain an Economic Development Strategy Committee (Strategy Committee) to oversee the CEDS process. It is recommended that members of the Strategy Committee be listed in the CEDS.

Step 2: Define the Strategy Committee's role and relationships.

Step 3: Leverage staff resources.

Step 4: Adopt a program of work.

Step 5: Seek stakeholder input. Craft the initial CEDS document and solicit and address public comments (per 13 C.F.R. § 303.6).

Step 6: Finalize CEDS document.

Step 7: Submit a CEDS Annual Performance Report.

Step 8: Revise/update the CEDS (at least every five years).

You can and should contact your EDA regional office staff at any point in this process for general technical assistance and advice. The regional office staff can help with EDA approval of the CEDS and with the annual reports.

Economic development organizations are encouraged to work with and make use of other EDA programs such as University Centers, Local Technical Assistance, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Economic Adjustment Assistance. EDA regional office staff can provide current information on accessing these programs, as well as other non-EDA programs and that may be useful in the development and implementation of the CEDS.

## 5. Equivalent/Alternative Plans

As noted earlier, a CEDS should serve as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional economic collaboration.

However, a region does not have to develop a CEDS if a strategy has already been prepared or is being crafted for an alternate but complimentary purpose, for example, a regional sustainability plan. In the absence of an EDA-funded CEDS, and in an effort to reduce duplication and foster cross-agency collaboration, EDA may accept as a CEDS any regionally prepared plan, including plans prepared under federally or state supported programs. All that is required is that

- the alternate plan is current (developed or updated within the past five years and shows relevancy through actions such as public posting and/or active use)
- its preparation and contents address EDA's regulations (13 C.F.R. § 303.7)
- the plan is consistent with these guidelines – containing at least a summary background, analysis, strategic direction/action plan, and an evaluation framework
- alternate plans should clearly define the area that the plan will serve and provide evidence of a robust participatory process (broad-based and inclusive community engagement)

Those plans submitted as a CEDS alternative or equivalent that are *not* accepted by EDA often lack one or more of the elements noted above. Many plans that are not accepted do not include a robust action/implementation plan (with well-defined priorities), or the plans may not have a sufficient evaluation framework (with clearly defined measures). The equivalent plan must also include a mechanism for regular updates and “check-ins” that will keep the strategies and

activities outlined in the plan current, and ensure that the plan as a whole continues to be relevant.

When crafting a regional plan that will also serve as a CEDS alternative or equivalent that covers a geographic area already covered (in part) by one or more CEDS, those previously approved CEDS should be folded into (sometimes called “nesting”) the new plan. The existing plans and evaluation frameworks can be effectively used to strengthen the newer plan. At a minimum, the organization(s) (for example, the Economic Development District) that prepared the previously approved CEDS should be consulted. Including key elements from the previously approved CEDS will ensure that the larger regional plan continues to address more local needs and requirements.

One model of “nesting” is the statewide CEDS (EDA encourages regions to collaborate across regions and at the statewide level on CEDS plans). A number of states have (or are in the process of) rolling-up the work of their regions’ individual CEDS

- to more effectively address larger, cross-cutting needs and priorities or
- to attain benefits that accrue beyond regional boundaries and that may require economies of scale to implement.

***Recommended Resource:*** See this example of a statewide CEDS:

<http://ceds.alabama.gov/>). Examples of successful alignment between the CEDS and HUD’s Sustainable Communities Planning Grant include Central Minnesota: <http://resilientregion.org/> and the Centralina region in the Charlotte area: [http://www.centralinaedc.org/2012\\_CEDS\\_Update.php](http://www.centralinaedc.org/2012_CEDS_Update.php)

It is critical that you begin the process of developing a regional plan that can also serve as a CEDS alternative document by engaging the appropriate EDA regional office and that region’s point-of-contact for your state (<http://www.eda.gov/contact/>).

The EDA regional office staff can help guide the process and ensure the new plans meet the basic requirements noted above. They also may be able to point out examples where such approaches have been undertaken successfully. Moreover, they may be able to help align schedules and increase coordination while preventing duplication in the development of multiple regional plans.

It should also be noted that EDA does not formally “approve” these alternate/equivalent plans. Rather, the EDA regional office will accept or deny the plan when the community or region applies for an EDA-funded project.

## 6. Opportunity Zones

### Opportunity Zones Overview<sup>4</sup>:

Opportunity Zones, created under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, are a federal economic development tool focused on improving the outcomes of communities across the country, especially in areas that have suffered from disinvestment over many years. Opportunity Zones are designated low-income census tracts where tax incentives are available to groups or individuals who invest in an Opportunity Fund (i.e., an investment vehicle for injecting money in an Opportunity Zone) and hold their capital gains in Opportunity Zone-related assets or property. There are over 8,700 Opportunity Zones (representing 12 percent of all census tracts), with nearly a quarter (just over 23%) in rural areas. By investing in Opportunity Zones, investors stand to gain a temporary deferral on their capital gains taxes if they hold their investments for at least 5 years, and a permanent exclusion from a tax on capital gains from the Opportunity Zones investments if the investments are held for 10 years. For more information on the basics of Opportunity Zones and Opportunity Funds, visit <https://opportunityzones.hud.gov/> or see <https://www.cdfifund.gov/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx>.

### Opportunity Zones and the CEDS:

#### Purpose

To effectively position themselves for investment through Opportunity Zones, communities need to have a strong economic development plan in place that can send a signal to the private sector that the area has established a clear vision for the future, identified its important assets and challenges, and engaged key stakeholders. EDA believes that encouraging the desired private sector investment requires an understanding of the Opportunity Zones and the communities in which they reside from a regional perspective. Many of the assets touted within an individual community as reasons to invest in a particular Opportunity Zone are, in fact, regional assets. By placing a community's assets and strengths in a regional context, the advantages of the entire region can further incentivize investment. The inherently regional focus of the CEDS therefore provides a unique platform to capture and promote the advantages of Opportunity Zone communities within a distinct economic region by highlighting and emphasizing the linkages among the key regional assets.

Many of the current recommendations on how communities should make the most of their Opportunity Zones (see the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Opportunity Zones Community Playbook at <http://www.lisc.org/opportunity-zones/community-partners-playbook/>) highlight the importance of planning and stakeholder engagement – convening key players, gathering economic and demographic data on the area, identifying economic assets and challenges, etc. – all of which are important existing elements of the CEDS planning process. As such, the CEDS is well-positioned to inform a deeper dive into the Opportunity Zones within each region. Moreover, including Opportunity Zone-content in (or appended to) the CEDS

---

<sup>4</sup> The information contained herein is general in nature and based on authorities that are subject to change. It is not intended and should not be construed as legal, accounting or tax advice or opinion.

serves as a mechanism to further promote the economic attractiveness of each region by emphasizing Opportunity Zones as key investment ready locations.

**Recommended Resource(s):** *In addition to LISC, other great Opportunity Zones sources of information and tools include: the Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) at <https://www.cdfa.net/cdfa/cdfaweb.nsf/resourcecenters/OZ.html>; Novogradac at <https://www.novoco.com/resource-centers/opportunity-zones-resource-center>; Milken Institute at <http://milkeninstitute.org/programs/opportunity-zones>; and the Economic Innovation Group (EIG) at <https://eig.org/opportunityzones>. EIG, in particular, has launched an interactive online portal (sourced from local press and public announcements) highlighting many innovative and impactful Opportunity Zone developments.*

Similar to EDA and the CEDS, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires many of its grantees to develop a three- to five-year Consolidated Plan (Con Plan). EDA believes that a better alignment of the CEDS and the Con Plans will allow grantees receiving funds from both agencies to optimize the investment of Federal, state and local resources for sustainable, innovative economic and community development projects. Grantees are strongly encouraged to coordinate their CEDS and Con Plan processes to the greatest extent possible and to align these separate plans to maximize the community's ability to attract and support Opportunity Zone investment and achieve sustainable community revitalization (see <https://www.eda.gov/edi/planning/> for more information).

### **Content/Structure/Format**

The Opportunity Zones content and structure within each CEDS may vary based on the needs, regional focus, and capacities of each EDD or community or tribal organization. For those regions that encompass one or more Opportunity Zones, the new content may be as straightforward as an overview of regional Opportunity Zones in relation to CEDS-identified goals, objectives, and/or projects, or it could take the form of an appended, in-depth “regional investment prospectus” aimed at potential investors. **Like the CEDS itself, how and to what extent Opportunity Zones are incorporated into economic development planning may vary based on the needs and focus of each region.** Either path – a separate section within the CEDS or an appended regional prospectus – is a viable way to help make the most of a region's Opportunity Zones from a planning perspective.

### ***CEDS Section***

For those EDDs looking to establish an Opportunity Zone-focused section within the CEDS, there are three basic elements that we recommend be included to enhance the economic attractiveness of the region:

1. **Inventory/map the Opportunity Zones in the region:** Provide a general overview of the Opportunity Zones (including the distinct census tracts) within the larger regional context, while adding information on the communities in which the Opportunity Zones reside. While each Opportunity Zone may have its own unique character, consider

identifying common attributes that allow the Opportunity Zones to share a common typology within the region. These groupings (i.e., urban/rural, industry cluster, proximity to anchor institutions, etc.) may help gauge the compatibility of potential Opportunity Zone projects within the existing environment (see both [www.statsamerica.org](http://www.statsamerica.org) and the U.S. Census Bureau On the Map Tool, <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>). Also, consider mapping the location of the Opportunity Zones among existing local and regional assets and typology to provide an overall spatial context (see the public edition/open map of [www.policymap.com](http://www.policymap.com)).

2. **Identify key partners/collaborations:** Provide an overview of local/regional stakeholders involved with Opportunity Zones, including public/private/nonprofit organizations actively involved in the planning and implementation of community and economic development. This may include Community Development Corporations, community groups, state and local governments, leaders of anchor institutions, and philanthropic organizations. Identify any local or regional “champions” of Opportunity Zones – including regional consortiums (see below) that may have been established specifically to leverage Opportunity Zones – as touchpoints and points-of-contact for potential investors. Highlight specific local or state incentives that may be available (see below for more on incentives). A focus should also be given to economic inclusiveness, and how the Opportunity Zone effort is working to maximize economic benefits for people in low-income communities.
3. **Recognize linkages with the data, goals/objectives, and priority projects within the CEDS:** Re-emphasize key data elements (including socio-economic data points and trends) from the CEDS that have a direct linkage to or impact on the individual Opportunity Zones as investment-ready locations. Key data on population, higher education enrollment, workforce, and major employers may be particularly ripe for inclusion. Identify any SWOT-related linkages, including market strengths and specific assets (e.g., infrastructure highlights) that may be key to driving investor interest. Highlight specific goals or objectives within the CEDS that have a connection to the Opportunity Zones, and identify specific priority projects that may address asset gaps in each of the Opportunity Zone communities. On the flip side, incorporating Opportunity Zones in the CEDS may require specific updates to the SWOT, a revision of the goals and/objectives, and a change to the priority projects as part of an annual update or five-year revision of the CEDS (if applicable/pertinent to the overall economic development strategy of the region).

***Recommended Resource:*** *Statsamerica.org has established an Opportunity Zones mapping tool (<http://www.statsamerica.org/opportunity/>) that will allow users to see Opportunity Zones in relation to boundaries and information specific to each EDD, which can be helpful when developing Opportunity Zone-related content for the CEDS.*

### ***Regional Prospectus***

Beyond the basics noted above, certain regions may wish to develop (in addition to or in place of a separate section in the CEDS) a “regional investment prospectus.” This prospectus can be used



to describe and communicate regional (and specific local) competitive advantages, community partnerships, and projects that are ready for public and private investment. Intended for regions that want to put a high-profile emphasis on their Opportunity Zones and the potential associated benefits, the regional investment prospectus can specifically help:

- market their Opportunity Zones to local, regional, and national investors
- highlight their regional assets to have maximum economic impact
- coordinate stakeholders around a common vision of inclusive growth

A regional prospectus may include, in addition to the elements noted above:

1. Purpose of the prospectus/introduction to Opportunity Zones: Point to the prospectus as a marketing strategy, economic development policy brief, and a “way-finding” mechanism to help potential investors find and explore the region. Consider noting how Opportunity Zones can facilitate and integrate investments generated by the new tax benefit to complement current and future economic development activities, helping to define or emphasize the region’s economic development vision for the future. Also, provide an overview of the Opportunity Zones program and where more detailed information can be found.
2. Key partners/collaborations: As noted above, identify the organizations and groups involved with Opportunity Zones, particularly any local or regional partnerships or consortiums that have been established specifically to bolster Opportunity Zone efforts.
3. About the region/region by the numbers: Use this portion to orient investors to the region, highlighting socio-economic data and related trends. Provide an overview of population, employment, workforce/talent, and other data and information that emphasizes what makes the regional special. Use both quantitative evidence and qualitative regional knowledge. Make sure the information provided links to the key background information in the CEDS as applicable.
4. Market strengths: Summarize what gives the Opportunity Zones in the region market traction and are good targets for investment. Identify regional assets (including transportation) and how they enhance or link to specific Opportunity Zone characteristics. Note any anchor institutions (major employers, universities, hospitals, etc.) and the capital investments they recently made or are planning to make.
5. Institutional capacity: Highlight applicable financing tools (zoning, joint ventures, tax credits, etc.). Identify public and private initiatives (including existing economic development projects and programs) already undertaken, both regionally and locally, that will impact the Opportunity Zones. Determine specific local and state incentives that may be available (see more on incentives below).
6. Opportunity Zones in the region and typology: Identify the specific location of the Opportunity Zones in the region, including the census tracts that comprise the Opportunity Zones. As noted above, consider identifying common attributes that allow the Opportunity Zones to share a common typology within the region. Map the location of the Opportunity Zones within the region, including in relation to other regional assets (major transportation networks, waterways, etc.) to provide context and spatial linkages.
7. Individual community profiles: Provide specific information and data on the individual Opportunity Zones and the communities in which they reside. This should include the

types of projects and the economic (and social) impact goals of each community, with linkages to the region and the CEDS. Consider profiling specific projects that are both investor ready and community enhancing. If individual county or community prospectuses exist, include them here (see below for more information).

**Recommended Resource(s):** *Accelerator for America has developed a “how-to” guide for localities to develop an investment prospectus (see <http://www.acceleratorforamerica.com/OZGuide>). While aimed at individual communities, the suggestions can easily be “scaled-up” in the development of a regional prospectus. As of late-2019 over two-dozen individual investment prospectuses have been developed and can be accessed at <http://www.acceleratorforamerica.com/tools>.*

*In addition to the example prospectuses identified at Accelerator for America, check out the city of Montrose’s (Montrose, CO) prospectus for a smaller city/town perspective that may be helpful in scaling-up smaller communities in an EDD into a regional prospectus:*

*<https://www.cityofmontrose.org/DocumentCenter/View/39168/Montrose-CO-Opportunity-Zone-Invitation-To-Invest?bidId=>*

A number of cities that contain Opportunity Zones have already developed (or are in the process of developing) an investment prospectus. If individual, locality-based prospectuses exist within your region, a regional prospectus effort may simply consist of compiling and linking/integrating the individual city prospectuses and highlighting detailed local strengths through a CEDS-driven regional lens. If no local investment prospectuses exist, the regional prospectus effort provides an opening to reach out and help communities that have Opportunity Zones promote their local and regional advantages. Specifically, individual prospectuses may provide an opportunity to take a more detailed look at the assets found in each community. Part of this process should include developing an asset map for each community that not only identifies each communities' strengths but also identifies critical asset gaps, and which planned projects may address the specific local (or regional) asset gaps.

**Recommended Resource(s):** *Check out the Acadiana Planning Commission’s (APC) Opportunity Zone regional prospectus, templates for local opportunity zone prospectuses, and a regional Opportunity Zone website at <https://investacadiana.org/>. APC’s Strategic Regional Opportunity Zone Initiative is focused on long-term reinvestment and cultural preservation and advances the goals and objectives of Acadiana’s CEDS.*

*In addition to the excellent regional prospectus developed by APC, a number of other planning organizations have begun engaging in Opportunity Zones activities in their regions, in different ways and at different levels. For example, the Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission in Michigan has created an online mapping tool that can be used to better understand the infrastructure surrounding the census tracts designated as Opportunity Zones in the region (see more at*

*<http://euprpd.com/maps/arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=01049e08b82349a0aee9d789446ad7fd>). The Isothermal Commission in North Carolina has developed a number of online*

*resources and drafted a prospectus template and an individual prospectus for each of the region's Opportunity Zones (see more at <https://regionc.org/opportunity-zones/>).*

Like the CEDS itself, the regional prospectus is an opportunity to put a “best foot forward” to attract investors and effectively market the region. Therefore, the look and feel of the regional prospectus is critical and should be structured in a way that compellingly communicates its concepts to key stakeholders. Creativity, coupled with a professional and appealing format is highly recommended. Charts, graphs and professional photos should be used extensively to draw attention and bolster the document's primary messages.

### **Other Key Opportunity Zone Elements:**

In addition to the recommended components noted above, additional elements may be included in an Opportunity Zone-focused section of the CEDS or in a separate regional prospectus as applicable:

#### **Incentives**

As part of an overall institutional capacity (see above), a number of states and localities have created or are leveraging specific incentives to help generate investor interest in Opportunity Zones. This information should be investigated and highlighted in the CEDS or regional prospectus since the pairing of Opportunity Zones with additional incentives (i.e., “incentive stacking”) is proving to be a key factor in attracting investors. For example, New Mexico's incentive program for Opportunity Zone (OZ) projects offers \$1 million bonus to investments that meet certain benchmarks ([www.nmopportunity.com](http://www.nmopportunity.com)) and Ohio gives investors an additional 10% tax credit if they invest in one of Ohio's Opportunity Zones (<https://opportunityzones.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/ooz/home>). Maryland has an interactive tool to help identify incentives by Opportunity Zone location (<https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1cc479d2dc3948239f0c47bda8b6967e>).

In addition to state and local incentives, the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council has identified over 190 federal programs where targeting, preference, or additional support could be granted to Opportunity Zones:

([https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/OppZone\\_Agency\\_Completed\\_Actions.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/OppZone_Agency_Completed_Actions.pdf)).

EDA, in particular, has added Opportunity Zones as one of its five Investment Priorities to help significantly increase the number of catalytic Opportunity Zone-related projects funded by EDA, and made Opportunity Zones eligible for funding from EDA through its special needs category – even if the area would not meet EDA's regular economic distress criteria.

## Consortiums

States and localities have also begun to form consortiums to organize and drive Opportunity Zone-related activity and, particularly, to serve as an early entry point for investors. Check out examples such as Opportunity Cleveland (<https://www.opportunitycle.com/>) and Opportunity Investment Consortium Indiana (<https://www.opportunityinvestmentconsortium.com/>).

These consortiums are focused on a number of different activities including:

- providing training and technical assistance on Opportunity Zones to various public/private/nonprofit stakeholders
- establishing an online presence (see below) for Opportunity Zones that can serve as source of information, a marketing tool and as a deal portal for both businesses and investors interested in Opportunity Zone projects
- pressing states and localities for increased or additional incentives related to Opportunity Zones.

Consortiums, as well as any related public, private, or nonprofit groups organized around the issue of Opportunity Zones, should be noted in the CEDS section or the regional prospectus focused on key partnerships and collaborations.

***Recommended Resource(s):** Check out the Rockefeller Foundation, which, through its Community Capacity Building Initiative, will channel financial and human resources support to six cities, including funding for a Chief Opportunity Zone Officer embedded in city government. The Rockefeller Foundation has also helped launch (along with Smart Growth America) an Opportunity Zones National Academy—for Chicago, Seattle, Miami, Pittsburgh, and Norfolk—to build capacity and foster inclusive economic development focused on Opportunity Zones (see both <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/our-work/initiatives/opportunity-zones/> and <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/new-national-opportunity-zones-academy/>).*

## Marketing/Online Presence

The creation of an online presence, including an interactive website, can be a critical tool in helping investors identify the various Opportunity Zones within a particular region and assess the resources, incentives and project possibilities that may exist. Much like a regional prospectus, a creative, data-driven online presence can serve as an early entry point or “way-finding” mechanism to help potential investors find and explore the region, while providing a platform to potentially start marketing projects to Opportunity Funds. For example, check out Erie, PA’s “Flagship Opportunity Zone” site at <https://www.flagshipopportunityzone.com/>. Also see the “Opportunity Exchange,” an online marketplace for Opportunity Zone projects seeking investment (<https://www.theopportunityexchange.com/>).

## **Measures/Outcomes**

While no federal reporting requirements currently exist related to Opportunity Zones, regions are highly encouraged to measure and report on the outcomes of their Opportunity Zone efforts in a transparent and accessible manner. Measuring and reporting on these outcomes will help to demonstrate that Opportunity Zones are providing tangible benefits to regions and communities, helping to drive positive social and economic change.

***Recommended Resource:** Again, check out LISC's Opportunity Zones Community Playbook at <http://www.lisc.org/opportunity-zones/community-partners-playbook/>, particularly the section on developing impact metrics. LISC identifies a number of organizations that have begun to craft metrics, as well as recommendations on types of outcomes that should be measured.*