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**Innovation and Collaboration:
Our Role in Strengthening the Rural Economy**

Thomas Guevara

EDA

U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

USDA 2015 AgOutlook Forum

Innovation and Collaboration: Our Role in Strengthening the Rural Economy



Guiding Framework:

Economic development has changed significantly in the 50 years since EDA was created, and in order to do its job effectively, the agency must also adapt to reflect the current needs of the regions and communities it serves.

Economic Development creates the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life by expanding the capacity of individuals, firms, and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services.

Economic Development requires effective, collaborative institutions focused on advancing mutual gain for the public and the private sector.

Economic Development is essential to ensuring our economic future.



Our Time-tested Approach

Empowering regions to develop their own plans that will transform their communities into globally competitive regions and ultimately improve the quality of life for their residents.

★ **For example, FY 2016 budget aligns with the Department's "Open for Business Agenda" by:**

- ★ Enabling key investments in programs that promote exports; strengthen manufacturing; support 21st century economic development and the digital economy; spurring innovation; improving resilience planning; and enhancing data for the public.
- ★ Integrating resources more effectively meets the complex needs of regions suffering from economic distress.
- ★ Outcome for communities and taxpayers that allow communities to address what are typically multiple causes of economic distress.
- ★ **Historically, well over 50% of EDA's grants fund rural projects.**





U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

INNOVATION. REGIONAL COLLABORATION. JOB CREATION.

EDA Headquarters

Seattle

Denver

Austin

Chicago

Atlanta

Philadelphia

Atlantic Territories:
Puerto Rico
Virgin Islands

Pacific Territories:

- America Samoa
- Guam
- Marshall Islands
- Micronesia
- Republic of Palau
- Northern Mariana Islands



EDA Investment Programs

PROGRAMS



Public Works



Local Technical Assistance



University Centers



Economic Adjustment



Planning



Research & National Technical Assistance



Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms



Regional Innovation Strategies (America COMPETES)

Partnership Planning Program

- ★ The Partnership Planning program is **a critical component of EDA's overall portfolio**, as it provides funds to help Economic Development Districts (EDDs) and Indian Tribes (380+) develop and implement strategic economic development plans.
- ★ **The majority of districts serve rural areas.**
- ★ The FY 2016 Budget request would provide funds to fully fund all EDDs, and resources to conduct a **one-time “rapid refresh” of community’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs)**,
 - ★ Reduces the time to fully refresh from 5 years to 4 years
 - ★ Objective is to incorporate important elements of EDA’s new CEDS guidelines such as economic resiliency and the integration of other Federal, state and local resources into their plans.

CEDS CONTENT GUIDELINES

What are the content recommendations?

1. Linking the sections to improve CEDS focus and measurable impact
2. Including key elements such as workforce, broadband, energy, etc.
3. Emphasizing measurable goals/strategies rather than a stand-alone list of projects
4. Integrating/leveraging other planning efforts and resources
5. Infusing economic resilience into the CEDS

CEDS CONTENT GUIDELINES

1. Linking the sections to improve the CEDS focus and measurable impact

Elements of the CEDS content should build upon and/or shape each other to result in a coherent, targeted document -- SWOT section is key

- The demographic data in the summary background section should be limited to those items and key findings that are **relevant** to 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 (as identified in the SWOT) and its role in capacity building
- The evaluation framework, with its associated measures and timelines, should **cascade** from the strategic direction (and its *measurable objectives*) and action plan which in turn flow from the initial SWOT analysis

CEDS CONTENT GUIDELINES

2. Including key elements such as workforce, broadband, energy, etc.

The SWOT section recommends assessing a wide variety of regional attributes, including:

- State of the regional economy, clusters, partners and resources for economic development
- Global competitiveness/FDI/exports
- Workforce/Job-Driven Training
- Spatial efficiency/sustainability
- Broadband
- Energy
- Natural hazards
- Equitable development

CEDS CONTENT GUIDELINES

3. Emphasizing goals, measurable objectives and strategies rather than a stand-alone list of projects

The strategic direction and action plan are the heart and soul of the document

- 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 result in a prioritized, measurable collection of capacity building activity areas
 - ✓ The action plan, however, should NOT simply be a list of projects
 - ✓ Action plan should NOT exclusively reflect those activities which EDA alone could potentially support

CEDS CONTENT GUIDELINES

4. Integrating/leveraging other planning efforts and resources

Look for opportunities to “cross-pollinate”

- CEDS should integrate other regional planning efforts
- CEDS should identify opportunities for the integrated use of other local, state, private and federal funds

CEDS CONTENT GUIDELINES

5. Infusing economic resiliency into the CEDS document

“...each CEDS must promote Regional resiliency and be unique and responsive to the relevant Region.”

- Economic resiliency = An area's ability to withstand, prevent, or quickly recover from major disruptions (i.e., 'shocks') to its underlying economic base.
- CEDS serves as a critical mechanism to help regions identify vulnerabilities and withstand or recover from disruptions.
- Integrating resiliency into the CEDS can take multiple forms (need to identify assets and vulnerabilities regardless)

RESILIENCY OBJECTIVES

- Steady-state initiatives: longer-term efforts that seek to bolster a community's ability to withstand or prevent a shock
- Responsive initiatives: establishing capabilities that allow an organization/region to be responsive to region's recovery needs following an incident
- As a baseline, EDA suggests regions undertake a *two-pronged approach*:
 - 1) Implement **specific goals or actions** to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region (*steady-state*)
 - 2) Establish **information networks** among the various stakeholders in the region to facilitate active and regular communications between the public, private, education and non-profit sectors to collaborate on existing and potential future challenges (*responsive*).

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THANK YOU!