

Strategic Planning Made Simple for the Local Economic Development Agency

The Community Action Plan program is designed to meet the need of the local development agency for a concise, focused plan of work. Using a facilitated 8-hour program structure, the Action Plan allows local economic development decision-makers to plan for the future, via a review of past successes and a realistic assessment of local opportunities and challenges. The outcome of the Action Plan program is a specific work agenda for the local agency, including specific action items, with distinct tasks assigned to named individuals and timelines for the completion of each action.

The Community Action Plan program is geared for communities that have an active and ongoing economic development program. Local participants in the Action Plan process should include agency board members and staff, elected officials, and key partners in business, utilities, and education. The community may elect to accomplish the program in a single 8-hour day, or to divide the program into two 4-hour segments with each half on a different day.

The Department for Existing Business Development provides a team of trained facilitators from Cabinet staff and other Kentucky economic development professionals to conduct each Action Plan program. The department works with each community to identify the best schedule and local venue, and to ensure that all necessary materials are provided. Following the conclusion of the Action Plan exercise, a written report is prepared by the department to provide the community with a record of its plan of action.

Components of the facilitated action planning exercise:

- Discuss expectations for the planning process
- Review recent history of local economic development activities
- Describe the vision of future economic development success
- Build a consensus vision statement for the local work plan
- Discuss strengths and weaknesses that impact future work
- Define the recommended actions and assign tasks

Process Overview

Department representatives will meet with local economic developers to discuss the Action Plan program and to review the development agency's existing program of work. If the Action Plan program is applicable, then a meeting is scheduled with local economic development decision-makers to discuss the program in detail and secure the full participation commitment of all local players. Once the local commitment is obtained, dates and times are established for the facilitated Action Plan exercise. Department staff will work with the community to arrange all meeting logistics, and to provide the written Action Plan report within a couple of weeks after the conclusion of the planning exercise.

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