Case Study #1: SEDI (Sustainable Economic Development Initiative) -- A Rural Northern Arizona Case Study of an Economic Development Collaborative Partnership:

http://www.sedinaz.org/

Background

Description

- The Coconino County Sustainable Economic Development Initiative (SEDI) is a non-profit organization working to develop and implement long-term strategies for economic development in northern Arizona communities. SEDI brings together businesses, non-profits, governments, and educational institutions to collaborate on one common goal – sustainable economic development. To accomplish this goal, SEDI operates as a coordinator for entities working on sustainability-based initiatives especially in the areas of local energy and resource development; tourism; business and workforce development; local agriculture; and P-20 education programs.

- Through this work, SEDI helps minimize duplicate and overlapping sustainable development efforts by maximizing collaboration among independent entities working toward the same goal. At the same time, SEDI facilitates the development of a long-term strategy for resilient and self-supporting regional economic growth. SEDI also has played an important role in increasing the general awareness of sustainable practice. As such, SEDI provides a unique case study of successful collaboration in the area of economic development. This report describes a brief history of SEDI, an overview of its accomplishments, and a discussion of SEDI’s organizational structure and strategy.
Mission

- Advance sustainable economic development in northern Arizona by providing enabling, facilitating, and collaborative support to businesses, educational and government entities, and other organizations that are working to increase social equity, economic prosperity, and ecological health in the region.

Goals

- Achieve awareness, understanding, and support for the economic, social, and environmental value of sustainable development among public, private, and nonprofit entities.
- Become a recognized center for sustainability policy and practice.
- Establish a culture and regulatory environment that support sustainable economic development.
- Attain integration of sustainability concepts and practices into business, educational, and workforce development entities and institutions.
Tactics

- Develop, implement and support strong education, marketing, and communications programs, processes and products to widely disseminate relevant information about sustainable economic development resources and opportunities.
- Recognize and reward significant achievement in sustainable economic development.
- Champion the practices of organizations that contribute to achieving our goals.
- Provide consultation and other organizational support for sustainable economic development.
- Develop and utilize appropriate metrics in order to effectively monitor and advise regional economic development activity.
- Identify and promote enhancements to public policy and regulations that support sustainable economic development and work with public, private, and nonprofit entities to implement them.

History

- In 2004, a report from the Battelle Memorial Institute concluded that sustainability and technology-based industries are critical to building Arizona’s innovation and technology capacity and are the wave of the future for the state’s businesses, educational institutions, and communities. Governor Janet Napolitano responded with the Moving Arizona Forward initiative that urged Arizonans to take immediate action to build this capacity.
- In 2006, a small group of Coconino County leaders took action by initiating a series of discussions, meetings and brainstorming sessions that revealed many people who were searching for “green” opportunities centered on sustainability. The group decided to organize the State of Arizona’s first regional sustainable economic development effort as the Coconino County Sustainable Economic Development Initiative, or SEDI. With few relevant models to draw from, the organizers began by simply inviting potential partners to the table. Representatives from all incorporated and unincorporated communities, Coconino County, Native American communities, state and federal agencies, educational institutions, conservation groups, and the business community were enlisted early in the process.
- At the first full gathering of the partners, SEDI’s vision and mission were defined. A process was created that melded research, planning, and stakeholder and public involvement within a project timeline. SEDI soon identified five “high yield” areas that offered significant opportunities for sustainable economic development: resource-based industries, energy efficiency and renewable energy, sustainable materials and products, sustainability-based tourism, micro-enterprises. Focus teams were organized for each of these areas, and the teams...
presented goals and strategies to its partners in May of 2006 and to a broad array of stakeholders at the 2006 Stakeholders forum.

- In September 2006, over 150 stakeholders representing over 70 organizations attended a one-day summit to learn more about SEDI and to contribute to its process. A steering team was formed to coordinate the work of the focus teams and to develop and implement a strategic action plan. A smaller mobilization team was created to incorporate SEDI as a non-profit to expand its funding-raising capacity. The IRS approved SEDI’s 501(c)3 status in 2007.

**Green Triangle Model (education, workforce training, business development support)**

![Diagram of Green Triangle Model]

**Analysis & Inventory**

- In January of 2008, the SEDI Board of Directors and many stakeholders gathered for a retreat to focus on strategic goals and high priority next steps for its action teams. Three interconnected factors were identified as critical to the success of sustainable economic development in northern Arizona: green education, green workforce training, and support for green business development. SEDI Board Member Nat White proposed the Green Triangle as a model to demonstrate the relationship between these three critical components. **Green education, green workforce training, and green business development constitute the points of the triangle**; the sides of the triangle describe the critical relationships between each component.

- Following the 2008 Board Retreat, SEDI developed an inventory of existing organizations, programs, and resources associated with each point of the triangle. An analysis of the inventory revealed where the region was lacking organizations, programs and resources, and also where effective coordination was needed to minimize redundancy and help increase efficiency and effectiveness. The “Green Triangle” concept was further developed at SEDI’s November 2008 Conference and became an organizing principle of the next stage of SEDI’s work.
SEDI Projects

- **ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY (EE&RE)**
  EE&RE supports the creation of new jobs and business opportunities that reduce energy demands and costs, increase energy efficiency, and promote the production and use of renewable energy.

- **SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION INITIATIVE (SEI)**
  The 21st century will reward students who recognize early in their academic careers that there are tremendous opportunities in the rapidly emerging green economy. This project organizes and infuses sustainability concepts and practices into the educational system and recognizes achievement in sustainability education.

- **NORTHERN ARIZONA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & WORKFORCE TRAINING CENTER (NAEDWTC)**
  Based on a study of the demand for a “regional entity for sustainability, prosperity, equity and vitality,” this project is a long-term (5 year) effort that when completed will provide customized job training and co-location for economic development and workforce training organizations in northern Arizona. The focus is on training and certification for the green jobs of today, as well as for the emerging green economy.

- **GREEN BUSINESS NETWORK (GBN)**
  GBN consists of a GBN WEBSITE that connects consumers to sustainable businesses, the GREENING THE BOTTOM LINE (GBL) seminar series for northern Arizona businesses interested in incorporating sustainable business practices to enhance branding and save money and GREEN DRINKS, a monthly social networking opportunity to discuss sustainable trends in the economy in a casual atmosphere.

- **REGIONAL FOOD PRODUCTION & SECURITY (RFPS)**
  This project facilitates the activities of a regional collaborative of agricultural and food organizations in developing a system that will help ensure a greater level of food production, safety and security while enhancing sustainable job creation and business development.

- **SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (SEEDS)**
  SEEDS directly creates jobs and new business opportunities by enabling collaborative and local purchasing, and by creating a broad support structure to enhance new business success.

- **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY INDICATORS PROJECT (SCIP)**
  SCIP is defining regional measures of prosperity, sustainability, and quality of life in order to gauge progress toward broad regional goals and support effective government policies.

- **SPRING EVENT**
  This task force is creating and coordinating a multi-day entrepreneurship event in April of 2011. The event will feature sustainable entrepreneurship awards, guest speakers representing...
successful community entrepreneurship programs, training programs for entrepreneurs, and a competition for new business innovations.

- **RESOURCE BASED INDUSTRIES TEAM (RBIT)**
  RBIT is currently concentrating on developing collaborations that will help to identify and value the ecosystem services provided by the conservation efforts of major landscape-scale property owners as a way of enabling those stewards to remain on the land and continue making their contributions to local communities and environmental sustainability.

- **SEDI Leadership**
  SEDI is governed by a diverse Board of Directors representing regional leaders in government, education, business, and non-profit sectors.

- **“How Green Are You?” Sustainable Tourism Checklist (Completed)**
  In 2009, SEDI’s Sustainable Tourism Action Team completed the “How Green Are You?” Checklist sets sustainable criteria for the categories of lodging, events, food service, tour operating, transport, and activity attractions. This SEDI/STAT product in its current form can be downloaded (PDF – 2.6Mb) for beta testing.
Case Study #2: Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation Case Study of an Privately Funded EDC for Business Growth, Attraction & Retention:

http://www.coloradosprings.org/default.aspx (main home page)

http://www.coloradosprings.org/ExpansionResources.aspx (CASE SENSITIVE!)

Background

Description

- The Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation (CSREDC) is a privately-funded (see detail below) organization whose sole purpose is to provide primary employers with complementary, comprehensive relocation and expansion services. These include info on building, land, and build-to-suit facility availability; site visit assistance like site tours, interviews with local agencies or potential employees; planning and permit meetings with city officials; and incentive analysis preparation (identification of potential benefits from enterprise zone credits, financing options, etc.).

- CSREDC promotes these target industries:
  - Software and Information Technology
  - Aerospace, Defense, and Homeland Security
  - Clean Tech - Renewable Energy
  - Sports, Health and Wellness
  - Emerging Industries & Entrepreneurs

- CSREDC, a private not-for-profit corporation, depends on private investor and public support (mostly from Colorado Springs Utilities) for funding. Private support includes the housing and building industry. Taxpayers provide less than 7% of CSREDC’s revenue, the Utilities an additional 17%, and the private sector the rest. Public support from 1990-2009 was "less than $4 million".

Mission

- To attract, retain and create quality jobs and investment in the Pikes Peak region.

2011-2015 Strategic Plan Emphasis

- Entrepreneurial job growth will have a renewed focus. CSREDC must nurture the entrepreneurial ecosystem, the environment affecting local and regional entrepreneurship.
• **Business Attraction** efforts will expand to include not only high growth companies but also headquarters and companies with significant capital investments such as data centers.
  
  o **Relationship building** with executive teams of companies.
  o **Aggressively marketing the region’s “quality of life”** to companies within the target sectors.

• **Business Retention** efforts will include a “Think Local” initiative and more business-to-business connections that foster growth of existing industries.

**Goals**

• **#1: Job Attraction** in target industries
• **#2: Job Retention** in high growth industries
• **#3: Entrepreneurial Job Creation** through inventory and analysis of needs; partnership with other organizations.
• **#4: Strategic Initiatives as Identified by the Board** -- generally long-term infrastructure or key local legislative initiatives that make the region more business friendly and competitive for the attraction and retention of quality jobs and employers. Current initiatives are Infrastructure Investments:
  o Rail Yard Business Park
  o Community (public/private) Venture Fund
  o Federal Court House
  o Downtown Revitalization Plan - based on abundant public investment
  o Expansion of Peterson AFB - To entice federal growth opportunities
  o High Speed Transit Link to Denver - Start the process
  o Branch Medical Campus of the CU Medical School
  o Legislative Initiatives:
    o Renewal of the RTA - 10 more years of Essential Capital projects
    o Phase out the Business Personal Property Tax
    o TABOR Time out/Fix the Local Ratchet
• **#5: Capital Investment** target high capital investment industries such as data centers and renewable energy companies to bring in outside dollars and secondary jobs.
Online Business Expansion & Retention Toolbox -
http://www.coloradosprings.org/ExpansionResources.aspx

- CSREDC & the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), created a Business Expansion & Retention Toolbox to assist other Colorado economic developers with their business expansion and retention efforts. It includes "best practices" that can enhance their current programs, and offers resources to help these organizations take a more proactive approach to expansion.
- Components available online:

  1) Executive Summary
  2) Business Retention & Expansion Task Force
  3) Company Visits
  4) Program / Process for Identifying Companies at Risk
  5) Database Resources and Visit Questionnaires
  6) Issue Resolution
  7) Volunteer Usage
  8) Project Scout
  9) Economic Gardening
  10) Colorado Office of Economic Development & Int'l Trade
11) Enterprise Development Program

12) Industry Associations

13) Advisory Councils

14) Community Initiatives & Collaboration

15) Events, Forums, Awards, Recognition & Media Assistance

16) Recruitment and Training Resources

17) Local, State and Federal Resources

18) Social Networking

19) Colorado Springs Regional EDC Contact Information

20) Acknowledgements