Introduction to LDRC
Community Development Society
July 23, 2012
LED Eight Strategic Focus Areas

- Improve state economic competitiveness
- Enhance community competitiveness
- Cultivate top regional economic development assets
- Focus on business retention and expansion
- Develop national-caliber business recruitment capacity
- Cultivate small business, innovation, and entrepreneurship
- Develop robust workforce solutions
- Tell our story
Louisiana’s Community Development Initiative

Collaboration

A strategic initiative resulting from strong partnerships – now and in the future.

- AEP/Southwestern Electric Power Company
- CLECO
- Entergy
- Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives
- Regional Economic Development Organizations (8)
- LSU Ag Extension
- SU Ag Extension
- Louisiana Municipal Association
- Police Jury Association of Louisiana
- University of New Orleans
- Louisiana Industrial Development Executives Association
Louisiana Development Ready Communities (LDRC) Program - Background

- State wide survey of 1600 private and public sector individuals to identify issues and needs - #1 was lack of planning
- Eight focus group meetings to develop approaches and solutions
- Development of a web site with tools and resources
- It became evident that there was a need to develop a structured program to assist communities work through the planning process Hence LDRC
- LDRC was launched as a pilot with 11 communities in 2009 and again in 2010 with 8 communities.
- Full blown LDRC launched in 2011 with 8 communities and continues in 2012 with 4
LED Objectives for LDRC

- Overarching goal is to enable a set of communities that LED can take to the global marketplace and compete to win new investment and jobs!

- Support, advise, and coach communities through the community development process of 6 months planning and implementation for at least three years.
Beginning with the Sustainability in Mind:

- LDRC is an ongoing statewide “readiness” program
- Goal is to make Louisiana’s communities more competitive – need to find/make the differentiators – thru leveraging assets
- Success will involve the understanding that both economic and community development work hand in hand
- A strategic plan is just a plan – Sustained implementation and communication of success is what keeps everyone engaged
Application Process

- Requires:
  - City council resolution
  - Identification of project leadership including the:
    - Steering/Sustainability committee’s and other committee’s co-chairs & their signatures
  - Dedication of an identified project manager
  - Signature of LED representative
  - LED interview and signed agreement
Application Process - continued

- Reviewed by a team of 7 community/economic development individuals from outside Louisiana Economic Development

- Scoring is objective in round one, more subjective in round two taking into account geographic location, community size and other factors such as the election cycle, unusual situations

- Selection is by consensus of the majority

- Number of communities selected for each year depends upon the resources available to provide support
Roadmap to Readiness Guidebook

- Step by step guidebook including:
  - Introduction
  - Getting Organized
  - Assessment Process
  - Strategic Planning
  - Leadership
  - Marketing
  - Appendix (Reference materials)
  - Notes
Resources

- Dedicated Resource Team & LDRC Mentor
- Training for community’s stakeholders
- Commitment and sustained engagement from the application process through assessment and planning and on to implementation
- Data Assistance
- Survey tools
- Site Selector Visit
- More tools!
Additional Resources

- **www.LouisianaCommunityNetwork.org** is a site housing reference materials (manuals on topics such as leadership, setting up an economic development organization, communication and marketing, etc), resource and program descriptions links
  - State-wide survey results and focus group minutes

- **www.ladrc.com** is a Sharepoint site designed to:
  - Provide a location for general purpose documents relating to the LDRC program
  - Calendar of events
  - Monthly status reports by the community
  - Each community has a folder containing assessment data and results, committee meeting notes, survey and town hall meeting results, vision statement, publicity, pictures and strategic plan documents
LDRC - Expectations

- Community Assessment
  - Internal via demographic data comparing the city to the parish (county) and state of Louisiana
  - Citizens surveys – typical response is 5 – 15% of population
  - Business surveys – usually administered by the chamber, local economic development organization or main street program
  - Town hall meetings – a minimum of two
  - External from the eyes of a site selection consultant who visits the community for ½ day for a windshield tour, meeting with business leaders, community leaders and elected officials
  - Competitive assessment via SWOT
LDRC - Expectations

- Comprehensive Community and Economic Strategic Plan that includes (at a minimum):
  - Education
  - Workforce Development
  - Economic Development
  - Infrastructure
  - Leadership Development Plan
  - Internal/External Marketing and Communications Plan

- Implementation of 6 “Quick Wins”

- Participation in Celebration Events
Strategic Planning

- Community Visioning (10 years)
- Priorities and Goals
- Strategic Planning (5 years) focused on sustainability and implementation
  - Sustainability Committee formed/sustained
  - Plan adopted by the city council
  - Quarterly Status Reports – to LED and council
  - Annual Review and Revision
Louisiana Development Ready Communities Program

Source: Census, LED analysis
What has been accomplished?

- Public/Private leadership understanding of economic development process
- A better (and more complete) awareness of a communities competitive position
- New ability for the communities to market themselves
- Improved capacity to respond to requests for proposals (RFP) and to gain competitive advantage when applying for grants
- Sense of pride and accomplishment and responsibility for implementation – typical direct citizen involvement in the 6 month planning effort is 25 – 50 people
- Increased capacity and frequency of communication between citizens and public officials
- Sharing of ideas between LDRC communities to address common concerns
Role of Colleges/Universities in LDRC

- LED's community development initiatives steering committee membership
- Many universities and colleges around the state have been involved with their community's strategic plan especially related to education and workforce development goals and strategies
- University-designed leadership development course being used as best practice
- LDRC collaboration with university-based economic development initiative Strengthening Economies Together (SET)
Conclusion

- Thank you for listening and hopefully take home with you some ideas for sharing with your communities.

- Please feel free to contact me at any time:

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Thank you!
LouisianaCommunityNetwork.org