

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BRAINSTORMING

(1-18-07 DRAFT)

The Governor established the Office of Rural Policy by Executive Order in April of 2004. This office has received financial assistance from the US Department of Interior, Economic Development Administration to review current rural economic development policy concepts and review the potential for a revised Needs and Issues program. As funds become less available, it is imperative that we find efficient ways to deliver the remaining resources.

It is intended to have local meetings to discuss rural economic development program concepts. Local leaders, agency staff, tribal representatives, private funding resources, and the public are encouraged to discuss their experiences with rural economic development programs and projects

The following questions are intended to initiate discussion or thoughts about rural economic program concepts?

- What remaining “N & I”, project prioritization practices exist today?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of current practices?
 - What funding programs accept current lists of priority projects?
 - Are there areas of the former program that were not needed?
 - Should the State restore a collaborative process to identify rural projects?

- Should the policy defining geographical implementation of a new program be statewide, regionally-based, place-based, consistent with other jurisdictional boundaries, or based on local government boundaries?

- Are local federal, state, tribal and private funding agencies willing and able to collaborate earlier and more frequently on multi-agency economic development projects?

- What are the elements of a successful economic development program?
 - A data base?
 - Workforce Development?
 - Education?
 - A consensus Mission Statement or Vision?
 - An annual or biennial plan?
 - Downtown redevelopment and preservation?
 - Review annually, biennially, or _____ ?
 - A focus on target issues? Specifically, defined economic issues and needs,
 1. Should there be a classification for short term projects in response to a major employer to a region?
 - Geographic boundaries?

- Re-certifying or confirming unresolved issues or unfunded project lists?
 - A pre-application? A reasonable processing time to review a pre-application is _____ days.
 - How often should project lists be developed or reviewed?
 - Other _____
 - Other _____
- What are the non-economic rural issues or factors that may directly or indirectly affect community direction?
 - Recruitment and retention of professionals?
 - Migration?
 - Regional Leadership Training?
 - Mega trends
 - An industrial or economic luster
 - Job retention – should the state invest in job retention?
 - What should be the State’s role?

Written comments and/or attendance at other locations in the series of meetings are welcome.

Written comments may be sent to: **Jim Azumano, Director**
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