

## **Agenda Item #6**

2004 Needs & Issues Ranking Process

Recommended Changes to Process

July 7, 2004

The Needs & Issues subcommittee of the Lane Economic Committee felt that the process operated reasonably well this year but has the following suggestions for improvement to the process:

1. The limitation on projects imposed this year helped to streamline the process. We allowed local communities to submit an unlimited number of projects but stipulated that only the top five projects would be reviewed by the LEC. We should continue this limitation of five projects per applicant.
2. LEC members sometimes were not able to make a fully informed decision about some of the projects. We should continue to invite project applicants to the LEC during the several months before the start of the Needs & Issues process. Applicants will be asked to briefly discuss upcoming projects which are likely to be on their local Needs & Issues priority lists.
3. LEC members sometimes were not able to make a fully informed decision about some of the projects. After receipt of project application forms next year, each LEC member could be asked to contact approximately 5 project applicants to ask additional questions and obtain additional information regarding the project. A brief comment sheet based on this interview could be added to the application for review by the LEC ranking subcommittee.
4. Project applications often include a list of other funding sources which will be leveraged by the project. Additional effort should be expended to verify the validity of these other funding sources.
5. A rating scale of 1 to 3 was used for several of our ranking criteria this past year. A scale of 1 to 5 or more would help to better differentiate quality projects.
6. There is currently no easy way to determine the outcome of projects which were ranked in prior years. It would be helpful if the new State database incorporated a field for the ultimate outcome of the project.
7. Local incorporated communities do a local review of their projects and submit a Local Priority worksheet which is used by the LEC. Unincorporated communities and non-profit organizations do not perform a detailed local review prior to receipt by the LEC. We could review and rank each of these two types of applications separately. Then we could attempt to consolidate the two lists. This may provide a more objective method to evaluate the two different types.
8. The Local Priority lists of some local incorporated communities are approved by the elected officials of that relevant community. We could require that all local incorporated communities obtain the approval of their relevant elected officials. Unincorporated communities and some nonprofit organizations may not be able to obtain approval from elected officials. We should attempt to identify some other means of ensuring local review prior to LEC analysis.
9. Many projects are of critical importance to a community but have only a tenuous or long term link to economic development. This includes projects such as water, sewer and other infrastructure. We should add a ranking criterion for "Community Impact" in order to make sure that we appropriately capture the importance of these projects.