Regional Strategies for Economic Development

TRI-CITY AREA ECONOMIC FORUM

 Marks Nelson
 Certified Public Accountants and Business Advisors
Meet MarksNelson

Certified Public Accountants and Business Advisors

MarksNelson is dedicated to helping our clients, the firm, our professionals and the community to **Move Forward**.

- **Year Established:** 1968
- **Number of Employees:** 174
- **Location Strategies Practice:**
  - Community Consulting
  - Corporate Site Selection
  - Strategic Planning

MarksNelson is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest firm in Kansas City, the 13<sup>th</sup> largest firm in the Midwest, and the 161<sup>st</sup> largest firm in the country.

- **#1 Largest locally owned firm in Kansas City**
- **26 Partners**
- **174 Full-time professionals**
- **17<sup>th</sup> Fastest-growing firm in the country 2017**
Why Work Together as a Region?
Reason #1: Businesses View You as a Region
Reason #2: Successes & Failures Are Shared Regionally
Reason #3: Competition for Businesses is Intense
Why Work Together as a Region?

✓ Businesses view you as **REGIONS**

✓ Success/failure is shared as **REGIONS**

✓ Pooling resources as **REGIONS** is necessary in the face of intense competition

*(Just to name a few!)*

**Economic development efforts should be REGIONAL**
Merits of Strategic Planning
If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on it, I would use the first 55 minutes determining the proper questions to ask.

Albert Einstein
What is a Regional Strategic Plan?

Summary Background

SWOT

Vision

Goals

Measurable Objectives

Specific Initiatives

Evaluation Metrics

Strategic Direction & Action Plan
What is a Regional Strategic Plan?

A tool for...

✓ Clarifying direction
✓ Tackling BIG goals by aligning many smaller efforts
✓ Making resource allocation decisions

It is...

✓ Continually evolving
✓ Action-inducing
✓ Broadly accessible
A Tool for Clarifying Direction

First things first!

Example:
The Confused Company ("To Grow or Not to Grow?")

Example:
The Unintentional Competition (City vs. Economic Development)
A Tool for Identifying Priority Issues

- **Strengths**
  - Pursue: Strengths align with opportunity

- **Weaknesses**
  - Address weaknesses if possible to open opportunity

- **Opportunities**
  - Identify options to utilize strengths to minimize threats

- **Threats**
  - **Vulnerability**: Establish a defensive strategy

**Examples**:

- **County w/o Real Estate**
- **City w/o Labor Force**

**Identifying threats WEAKENS them**

**Identifying opportunities STRENGTHENS them**
A Tool for Tackling BIG Goals with Smaller Efforts

Example: Where did this housing forum come from?

Example: A high school assembly, really?
A Tool for Making Resource Allocation Decisions

- Vision
- Goals
- Measurable Objectives
- Specific Initiatives
- Evaluation Metrics

Strategic Direction & Action Plan
What it is NOT

A lengthy book collecting dust on a shelf

A collection of isolated components

A once every five years process

A report prepared by “someone else”

Well crafted but overly complex language void of real meaning
“A hallmark of true expertise and insight is making a complex subject understandable.

A hallmark of mediocrity and bad strategy is unnecessary complexity – a flurry of fluff masking an absence of substance.”

- Richard Rumelt (“Good Strategy, Bad Strategy”)
Effective Strategies
Key Industry Targeting & Clusters

• Requires awareness of existing industry strengths
• Ability to prioritize use of scarce resources
• Kansas City a great example
Workforce Training Partnerships

Example: Rural workforce training with no budget
Focus on Entrepreneurship

Confidential County Jobs by Type of Establishment

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Opportunity Zones
Public-Private Collaboration
Public-Private Collaboration

“I have way too much invested, both personally and professionally, in this community to be complacent about its future. We’ve all seen what can happen to communities that rely on organic growth and hope for positive trendlines. I, for one, have too much to lose.”

Local Business Owner & Founding Member of a Local Economic Development Effort
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What is Economic Development?

Basic Concept of Primary Businesses

Goods & Services

External Market

Local Market

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