

Introduction

It takes more than good intentions or love of community to effectively lead and support economic development.

Congratulations! I want to be among those acknowledging your recent election or appointment to the important leadership position you now occupy in your community or region.

As a newly elected public official or recently appointed member to one of your community's prominent economic development organization boards, I know you are excited by the opportunity to improve your region's economy and to "make a difference." It may be something you always wanted to do and now, at this stage in your life, you are positioned to have a positive impact on your community, region, or state.

You have known for a long time that the future of your community depends on the successful efforts of those engaged in economic development. You do not have to be convinced of the importance of effective, pro-active economic development goals, plans, strategies, and actions. You read the daily paper religiously and know the local organizations and players who are working to develop the regional economy. You may regularly read *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, or similar publications and have a good grasp of recent trends and a sense of how the economy works. You understand the business cycle and know some basic facts about unemployment, balance of trade, and the federal deficit. You are also familiar with the local economic development organizations

