



**Ohio Economic
Development Association**

Advancing Ohio's economy together

2015-2017 STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted November 17, 2015

INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan of the Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA) outlines a series of priorities, goals and strategies that will be achieved by the organization over the next three years. The contents of this document were developed by the Board of Directors during annual retreats that were held July 24-25, 2014 and July 23-24, 2015, and approved by the board of directors November 17, 2015.

This strategic plan is intended to guide the organization in relation to program development and member services, operational capacity and growth, and member engagement. The goals and strategies included in this plan are those the board of directors believes are most pressing, will yield high impact results, and position the organization for sustained growth.

OEDA Mission Statement

The mission of the Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA) is to increase economic prosperity in the State of Ohio by working together, on a non-partisan basis, with state, regional and local development partners to advance Ohio's economy through advocacy, networking and training.

Previous mission statements:

- From the OEDA Code of Regulations: the main purpose of OEDA is to provide leadership for the economic growth of Ohio.
- From the OEDA web site: Working together to advance Ohio's economy by advocating, training, networking and workforce development. The OEDA advocates on behalf of economic development issues important to growing the Ohio economy and is non-partisan.

OEDA Core Values

OEDA members are economic development professionals who work within a Code of Ethics to support all those who strive to increase the quality of life in Ohio by improving economic prosperity. We are ambassadors for Ohio committed to constant learning, collaboration, respect, confidentiality, honesty and fair play.

2015-2017 OEDA Strategic Plan

Strategic Direction

Over the next three years, the organization will transition from a board-led volunteer-based organization to one with an executive director. This document serves as a three-year road map to guide the organization through the transition, strengthen member services, and accelerate its position in the state. To that effect, the strategic plan is focused on the following:

- Increase member engagement and the value of member services.
- Position the organization for long-term growth.
- Create new professional development opportunities for economic developers and affiliated partners in the state.
- Elevate the organization's presence within the state.

Goals of the plan, suggested objectives, strategies and immediate actions needed to achieve each goal are outlined below.

Items italicized are suggestions proposed by retreat facilitators.

GOAL 1: Increase annual membership by 5% per year.

Goal Objectives:

- *Increased membership base by 5%.*
- *Greater percentage of membership renewals as result of effective outreach.*

2015

Strategy 1: Assess the composition of current membership. Data to be analyzed: types of members (individual, organization, other), membership renewals, churn rate, geographic location.

Strategy 2: Establish targets for membership retention and new membership.

2016-2017

Strategy 3: Explore models for membership-driven organizations.

Strategy 4: Develop a three-year membership recruitment and retention plan and instrument to track progress on membership metrics.

Strategy 5: Create member recruitment materials that outline the benefits of membership.

Short-term action items:

- *Compile profile by December 2015.*
- *Modify member database to better track and monitor trends in membership.*
- *Membership committee to propose a series of targets for member recruitment and retention.*
- *Develop a comprehensive list of economic development stakeholders in the state.*

GOAL 2: Elevate the position and presence of OEDA with state and regional stakeholders.

Goal Objectives:

- *Increased annual membership by 5% per year.*
- *Increased awareness of OEDA throughout the state.*
- *Greater participation of members and non-members at OEDA-sponsored events.*

2016

Strategy 1: Disseminate a quarterly newsletter that informs members and partners of organizational news and industry updates.

Strategy 2: Develop a communication and marketing plan targeting organizational members and external stakeholder audiences.

2017

Strategy 3: Launch a branding initiative and implement the marketing plan.

Short-term actions:

- Work with executive director to identify immediate capacity issues related to marketing and communication.

GOAL 3: By December 2017, become a primary source for the tracking and education of economic development policies In Ohio.

Goal Objectives:

- *Increased coordination and communication between OEDA and other stakeholders.*
- *Elected officials informed of economic development policy.*

2015-2016

Strategy 1: Track economic and workforce development policy in the state to inform members of proposed policies and advocate as an organization, where necessary.

Strategy 2: Increase organizational presence with relevant Ohio House and Senate Committees.

Strategy 3: Continue efforts to produce policy position papers and advocate for beneficial economic development policies at the state level.

Strategy 4: Convene economic development legislative days. As part of legislative day, incorporate a professional development training component for members, such as “making the policy pitch.”

2017

Strategy 5: Deliver an educational program for state legislators. Topics may include: economic development 101, state of economic development in Ohio, coordination/intersection of workforce and economic program and practice

Short-term actions:

- Revisit and evaluate contract with Bricker & Eckler. Provide contractor with specific policy issues to track and associated timelines. (Task will occur after executive director is hired)

GOAL 4: Create a credentialed professional development program for economic development professionals in Ohio

Goal Objectives:

- *Provide a rigorous credentialed curriculum-based program tailored for economic development professionals working in the State of Ohio.*
- *Elevate the economic development industry within Ohio.*
- *Provide education to executive leaders and staff of economic development entities in Ohio.*
- *Generate a new revenue stream for the organization.*

2016

Strategy 1: Develop an implementation plan for a state credentialing initiative. The plan will incorporate a vision, program guidelines, curriculum, desired outcomes, annual milestones and sustainability.

Strategy 2: Develop a marketing plan for the professional development program.

Strategy 3: Launch Phase 1 of the program, including the first two of at least four courses, including Marketing and one of the following: Finance, Site Development or Recruitment

2017

Strategy 3: Launch Phase 2 of the program, repeating the first two courses and the launching following additional courses: Retention and Expansion, Site Development or Recruitment or Finance.

Short-term actions:

- Revise JobsOhio training grant
- Finalize curriculum
- Identify sponsorship and/or partnering opportunities.

GOAL 5: Expand organizational capacity to position the organization to grow member services and other programmatic areas.

Goal Objectives:

- *Increase new revenue by 5% annually.*
- *Expanded executive leadership capacity responsible for carrying out the strategic direction of the organization.*

2015

Strategy 1: Hire an executive director

Strategy 2: Consider an executive director compensation plan that incentivizes performance and achievement of goals and metrics outlined in the strategic plan.

2016-2017

Strategy 3: Develop a fundraising/development plan that includes milestones and targets to achieve a balanced portfolio of self-generated income, grants, member fees, and small and large donations.

Strategy 4: Increase new revenue by 5% annually in 2016 and 2017.

Short-term actions:

- Complete the executive director search process.
- Determine compensation plan for executive director.

Plan Implementation

For each strategy, committee members should establish measurable objectives for each goal statement. In addition, committee should work to develop a series of action steps and associated responsibilities, timelines, and resources needed to successfully execute the plan. Appendix B includes an implementation worksheet to guide committees in developing action steps and tracking progress.

The plan is intended to be a road map and operational plan that can be used as a tool to align resources and efforts, and guide communication between the board of directors and executive staff of the organization. The plan is intended to be a working document that informs decision making and actions the organization will take over the next three years. In doing so, the following are suggested:

- Review implementation progress of the plan during Board and executive committee meetings to inform all parties of progress and refine tasks and responsibilities, when needed.
- Link metrics and goals to annual performance review of executive staff.
- Use the plan as a guide to measure and benchmark performance.
- Ensure the annual budget accounts for priorities established in the plan.
- Communicate the goals of the organization to current and potential members, and other organizational stakeholders.

Committee Structure

The board of directors will organize in a committee structure to work with executive staff to implement actions and evaluate performance of the strategic plan.

The committees are as follows:

This section to be completed.

- Membership:
- Professional Development:
- Communication and Marketing:
- Legislative:

Appendix A: Findings from Prior Board of Director Planning Efforts

Appendix A includes a summary of analysis performed by the Board of Directors at the July 2014 board retreat. Information included should be used as guides to benchmark organizational growth and impact. It also serves as a snapshot of member needs and industry trends during that time period. Annual member surveys should also be referenced in continued planning efforts as results serve as an indicator of member needs and satisfaction with member services.

OEDA Primary Stakeholders *(developed July, 2014)*

Who do we primarily serve with our mission?

1. All persons whose business or volunteer interests are concerned with economic development are eligible for OEDA membership.
2. Economic development professionals
3. Legislators and local government officials
4. Residents of Ohio
5. Utility companies
6. JobsOhio

7. Ohio Chamber of Commerce
8. International Economic Development Council
9. Regional network partners and regional planning organizations in Ohio
10. Construction companies
11. Ohio Department of Transportation
12. School districts
13. Council of Development Finance Agencies

OEDA Strategic Imperatives *(developed July, 2014)*

What are the critical issues that the OEDA must address to fulfill its mission?

1. People enter the profession with divergent experience, knowledge and training needs.
2. The profession is more complex than ever, it is more difficult for economic development professionals to keep up, and this creates a need for more.
3. There is a growing need for economic development professionals to be certified.
4. There is a growing need to elevate the profession so the public understands its value.
5. Global development creates more competition, workforce development challenges, and investment issues.
6. Employers have increasing workforce challenges.
7. Economic Development Incentive Programs – there is a need to study return on investment and to have best practices.
8. Lower salaries for economic development professionals in Ohio than some other equivalent states.
9. Redevelopment of underutilized and underdeveloped properties.
10. Tendency to seek large companies only and overlook other businesses.

OEDA Strengths, Weaknesses & Member Needs

Planning participants considered OEDA’s current situation with an awareness of resources and changes in economic development.

Strengths as of July 2014:

1. Professional development offerings
2. Information available to members and stakeholders
3. Advocacy for economic development and for the profession
4. Membership potential – economic developments professionals, workforce development leaders, chambers, construction companies and developers, local governments, real estate industry, public finance professionals, law firms.
5. OEDA leaders are very good and committed.

OEDA Weaknesses as of July 2014:

1. Volunteer Board members are doing much of the operational work. Board capacity is limited so new program development is slow.
2. Better job descriptions are needed for board members and committee leaders.
3. OEDA financial health is growing but still limited.
4. Membership recruitment should improve.
5. Need more diversity of membership.
6. Need ability to take calculated risks.
7. Fuzzy brand identity and message; need spokespeople.
8. Awareness of OEDA and the value of economic developments professionals needs to be stronger throughout Ohio.
9. Better recruitment and training of future leaders is needed.
10. Information sharing via the web site and cloud file sharing are needed.

OEDA Member Needs as of July 2014:

1. Education, training
2. Better information, communication, and comprehensive database on the industry in Ohio (including case studies, research, etc.)
3. Advocacy, lobbying
4. Ohio economic development standards
5. Competitive salaries
6. Workforce development
7. Networking
8. Recognition – economic development professionals want to be more valued themselves and want their profession to be more valued by citizens.

Appendix B: Implementation Worksheet

Goal: _____

Objective: _____

Strategy: _____

Action	Who is Responsible?	When will it be completed?	What resources (financial, human capital) are needed?	What is the desired result?