



**WEDA Strategic Plan**  
**By Robert Barnes**

The Wyoming Economic Development Association (WEDA) will be focusing much of their attention in the near future on narrowing their strategic plan. Community economic development needs to be focused and have a vision in place for what the community wants to become in the future. This will be the goal of WEDA over the next few months.

“When you’re dying of thirst, it’s too late to think about digging a well.” This quote is a Japanese Proverb which sums up why strategic planning is a necessary aspect of any organization. Creating a strategic plan allows members to select and agree on common goals. It allows them to find out how much time, money, and other resources are needed to create change. Furthermore, it ensures all of that time, money, and resources are best utilized to focus on the key priorities of a community. This process helps obtain increased productivity and efficiency to help solve community problems as quickly and economically as possible.

Strategic planning is an important aspect of creating an effective economic development organization. Our planning process, which was started some years ago, will continue with the August WEDA board meeting to be held in conjunction with the WEDA Conference. The board will review and discuss the strategic plan already in place. Additionally, they will be discussing their desire for the plan to become more focused on those things which are key to economic development success and what WEDA already does well.

One of WEDA’s key topics is their relationship with the Wyoming legislature. WEDA has been focused on gaining the support of our State government by keeping them informed on their endeavors and demonstrating how important economic development is to Wyoming. Additionally, WEDA has been working diligently to ensure new business is being introduced to our state.

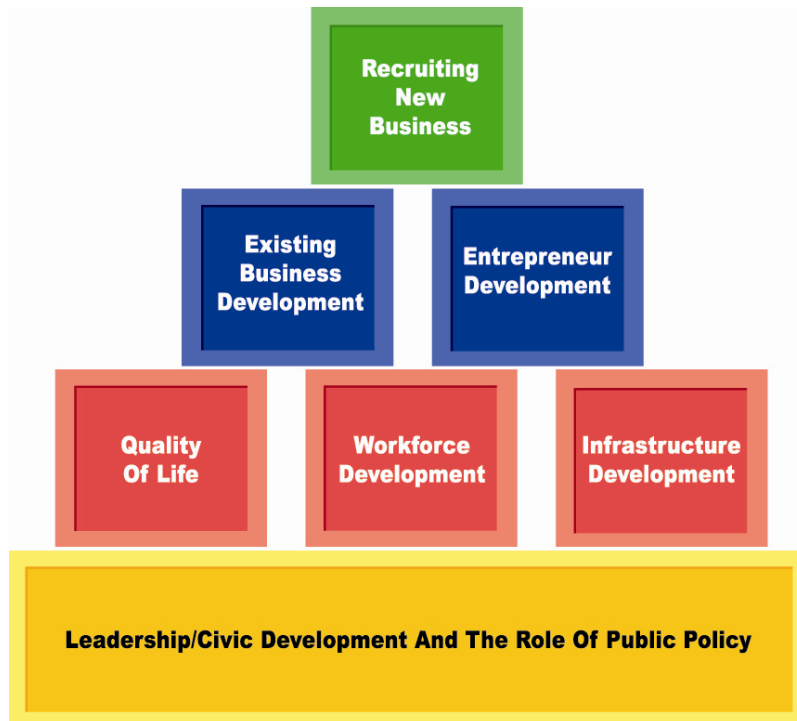
WEDA plays an important role in professional development and training. WEDA strives to provide training to economic developers through various means. Not only does WEDA provide conferences and training opportunities, it supports conferences hosted by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). Furthermore, WEDA provides scholarships for these training opportunities to ensure individuals are able to participate.



The third topic that will be discussed is our communications plan. WEDA is exceptional at communicating our economic development issues to the business community. They do this through newsletters, success stories, and Economic Development 101.

Economic Development 101, created by WEDA and the Wyoming Business Council staff, focuses on the “building blocks” of economic development. Each block in the foundation supports subsequent blocks. WEDA uses this model to educate individuals on how economic development works, and what is necessary for its success.

Strategic planning is very beneficial to an organization for many reasons. Once WEDA is able to narrow down their strategic process by focusing on their strengths, they will be able to better implement chosen strategies. This phase of the process will ensure that our state and organization can move forward towards its goals and projects by prioritizing actions, developing a realistic time frame, and actually implementing the objectives outlined in the strategic plan.



The Economic Development 101 “Building Blocks”