

JOB TITLE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Full-time, Exempt

Primary Objective: Provide leadership to the Wood County Economic Development Commission ("EDC") and its constituent organizations in the achievement of county-wide community and economic development goals resulting in employment and per capita income growth greater than the national average.

Reports To: County Judge

This is a staff position with the County serving as **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** for the EDC.

Responsibilities & Activities

Organizational Leadership: Provide leadership to the EDC through collaboration with other economic and community development entities, utilities, businesses and industries, educational institutions and regional, state and federal agencies.

Community Development: Focus on future and sustainable growth for the County in the areas of education, transportation, government affairs, finance, health and human service, arts and parks, infrastructure, industrial site development, technology access and upgrade, and job training reflective of future county wide needs.

Finance: Identify and assess funding opportunities for both economic and community development. Identify opportunities, challenges and the ability to support organizational growth to ensure the viability of the organization and supporting sustainable growth within the community.

Communication/Marketing and Sales: Build support, both internally and externally, for the organization. Develop a well-defined strategy for marketing the community to commercial, retail, tourism and industrial prospects. Work with prospect companies to attract their investment and location to our county. Work closely and communicate with the staff and boards of partnering entities. Provide activity status reports to the County Judge and EDC Board monthly.

Business Retention and Expansion: Identify issues and opportunities relative to existing businesses, their sustainability and expansion, and formulate plans to address them.

Analysis: Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the community and area economy on an annual basis and develop strategies that will capitalize on the strengths and eliminate or reduce the weaknesses.

Community Engagement: Assume an active role in organizations, institutions and activities existing within the county, as well as with any newly formed organization, institutions, or activities. Be visible and an accessible personality within the community.

Key Tasks and Abilities

The Economic Development Executive Director/CEO must be able to perform or manage the following tasks or have the stated abilities in order to effectively fulfill the aforementioned responsibilities:

- I. Planning: Develop a strategy, defining long and short term objectives of the organization, setting priorities for resources, anticipating problems, formulating and adjusting policies, and revising planning efforts as necessary.
- II. Decision Making: Demonstrate self-motivation and initiative with the ability to work with the County Judge and Commissioners, EDC Board, and partnering entities. Make judgments on disputed issues, decisions under time pressures that reflect adequate evaluation and consultation with others, resulting in positive impacts on the community and the welfare of our residents.
- III. Marketing: Develop strategic and proactive plans annually that positively represent the county. Proactively present the county, location opportunities and the area's economic benefits to existing and prospective employers. Make strategic contact with existing and prospective employers within and outside the community in order to assist them in their decision-making relative to location, relocation and/or expansion.
- IV. Relationship Building/Public Relations: Officiate at public ceremonies and in other venues, informing the general public about the EDC's activities, speaking publicly, representing the EDC and/or County Organization at trade shows and similar events. Establish rapport with new contacts and a network of allies. Work closely with the EDC Board, staff and members of local organizations and agencies.
- V. Written Communications: Prepare required written reports and other documents as necessary in a timely and easily understandable manner. Prepare grant applications or assist others in the grant writing process. Write for the public audience to create interest in the EDC and the County and its efforts. Prepare an annual report for dissemination by the County Judge to the Commissioners, partners and public. Also prepare or facilitate formal correspondence as needed.
- VI. General Administration and Budget Preparation: Provide necessary leadership to ensure that the organization is managed in an efficient and effective manner; draft for consideration and then administer the approved annual budget.
- VII. Information Management: As necessary, prepare, summarize and/or analyze statistical and narrative information. Estimate risks of alternative courses of action. Prepare cost and time estimates, capture and communicate complex numerical data in a business context; and edit and integrate written material.
- VIII. Cooperating/Acting as a Liaison: Assist partner organizations in achieving goals. Promote cooperation among partner organizations and others, particularly on a regional basis by acting as a liaison with other organizations such as the Governor's Office for Economic Development; work with the EDC Board in keeping partner organizations and local government officials and legislative bodies duly informed of general activities of the EDC and the County.

IX. Influencing/Advising: Advise the County Judge and the EDC Board on policies and activities, making an effective case for action, and advising on points of procedure.

X. Evaluating: Assess the feasibility of proposed economic development projects. Monitor progress of projects and check adherence to schedules. Evaluate written reports, numerical data, and project costs; identify problems and suggest new ideas and alternative approaches and solutions to challenges. Assess the probability of success of a course of action, and evaluate alternative methods.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE WILL DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING:

Have the ability to continually focus on achieving positive, concrete results that contribute to the business success of the organization;

Seek ways to overcome competitive challenges and develop opportunities;

Proven consensus builder managing diverse viewpoints to an effective, positive solution;

Maximizes collaboration and shares credit and successes among partners and stakeholders;

Skilled in idea generation, is committed to achieving outcomes, and consistently produces results based on those ideas;

Networker that builds collaborative and productive relationships with other both inside and outside economic development organizations, and maintains a wide network of contacts that can be leveraged on behalf of the organization goals;

Strategic visionary thinker who is able to set sights on a new future, constantly identifying the challenges, threats and opportunities that exist in the environment, able to think differently about how the environment and businesses operate and look for new ways to solve these problems;

Communication skills: Experienced public speaker, an excellent listener, outstanding writer, and strong interpersonal communicator to small and large group settings. Must be comfortable interacting with the news media and proactive in seeking good publicity for the organization and the region;

Must have the ability to work toward successful solutions without being political; and,

Knowledgeable in current and possible future practices, trends, and other information affecting the business sector. Understands competitive and economic issues; is aware of the political landscape for change and how collaborative strategies amongst organizations work in the marketplace.

Candidate Evaluation Criteria

Critical to the success of the Economic Development Organization is an Economic Development Executive Director/CEO who has the relevant educational and career background to meet County Judge

and Board expectations. For a candidate to be successful in assuming the role of Economic Development Executive Director/CEO, the following criteria will be taken into consideration:

- A Bachelor's or advanced degree in a relevant field of study;
- Certification or approaching certification (within 1 year of hire) as a Certified Economic Development Director (CEDD) or Professional Community and Economic Development (PCED);
- A minimum of 5 years' experience in community and economic development in a senior management position;
- A record of success in economic development projects;
- Political astuteness and knowledge of state and federal economic/community development agencies and program;
- Understanding of an experience with a multi-partner, "matrix" organization which includes government entities;
- History of involvement in the community through civic clubs, non-profit agencies, etc;
- Hands-on knowledge of current communications and technology applications;
- Excellent interpersonal and group facilitation skills;
- Job and personal satisfaction derived from employment in a position such as this in a community with the quality of life opportunities available in our area.