

DRAFT

The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council

Mission

The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council's mission is to serve as a non-partisan forum for public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders interested in economic growth to better coordinate their efforts.

Overview

Wisconsin's economic development kitchen has more than a few cooks. There are 20 or more statewide organizations, and dozens of regional and local groups, with a hand in improving Wisconsin's economy. That's good. Wisconsin needs the help of every interested citizen and organization as it builds a 21st century economy founded on high-wage jobs. But it also needs to coordinate those good intentions so that Wisconsin's many talented cooks aren't crashing into one another in the kitchen, or all preparing appetizers and desserts when they should be focusing on the main course.

It is time for Wisconsin's economic development players, public and private, statewide and local, to collaborate in an unprecedented way. The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council (WECC) can accomplish this goal – with the help of the many leaders and organizations that are working to strengthen Wisconsin's economy.

The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council will exist for one reason: To serve as a non-partisan forum for public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders interested in economic growth to better coordinate their efforts. Today's challenges include duplication of effort, lack of communication, overlapping missions, goals and strategies, some turf protection, and, in a few cases, a lack of trust. It is not a lack of talent or ideas that is holding back Wisconsin in its quest for a stronger economy – but the lack of a coordinated effort.

That effort must be driven by the private sector, as Wisconsin businesses, unions, and trade associations are closest to the problem. And it can be facilitated by the public sector, which often has the perspective and resources to pull people together. That's why the Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council will be all-inclusive. There will be a place at the table for all who wish to come – so long as they are willing to stay on common ground and to suggest ways to collaborate.

The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council's intent is not to create another organization or bureaucratic process – rather, to better coordinate those resources already focused on economic growth. It should take inventory of what's already being done, make observations about areas where better coordination is needed, and ask that existing groups take steps to better perform their jobs in conjunction with others.

As the Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council does its job, it will meet, make recommendations, have the existing players take action, and provide a platform for ongoing collaboration. The council's goals are to create a more collaborative economic development climate, enrich the flow of information and communication among the economic development organizations, and build consensus around key economic growth strategies.

Proposed Objectives

To meet these goals, the Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council is proposing to fulfill the following key objectives:

1. Provide a platform for developing common ground around regional and statewide economic growth strategies and helping to clarify priorities and key next steps.
2. Take inventory of what economic development strategies are currently working. What organizations and tools are in place?
3. Collect and share information that can be of use to everyone.
4. Identify "best practices" by existing economic groups and spread the word about what works.
5. Identify obstacles to working together and recommend ways to overcome those obstacles, whether they are structural or cultural.
6. Propose and recommend incentives to collaborate, and/or encourage others to create those incentives.
7. Show people why it's important to collaborate at the federal, state, regional or local level. Some success stories include the industry consortiums created through the UW-Madison College of Engineering, the state's Technology Zones initiative, and the efforts of regional economic groups, such as Momentum Chippewa Valley.
8. Provide public forums for collaboration. When people see other people working together, they tend to follow suit.
9. Provide a forum for creating collaboration and synergy between regions and regional growth strategies.
10. Explore the idea of becoming the organizational entity that plans, organizes and sponsors the annual economic summit (currently being organized by the University of Wisconsin System).

The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council will be structured as a regular open forum, with each meeting designed around acting on the goals and strategies listed above.

The Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council has been initially endorsed by Competitive Wisconsin, Wisconsin State AFL-CIO, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, Wisconsin Supplier Development Network, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Economic Development Association, Wisconsin Technology Council, Wisconsin Biotechnology Association, Wisconsin Technical College System, University of Wisconsin System, Forward Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA) has agreed to temporarily facilitate communication as the Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council is being formed. Please email council@weda.org if you have any questions or need additional information. Also, check WEDA's website for additional information as it becomes available.

10/9/02

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Statement of Interest

Please check one

- I/my organization is committed to being actively involved in the Wisconsin Economic Collaboration Council.
- I would like to know more. Please keep me informed of developments. I/my organization may be interested at a future date.
- I/my organization is not interested at this time.

Contact Information

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____

Email: _____ (important)

Comments