

Charting Wasilla's Economic Development Future

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Steering Committee Meeting

November 21, 2022

PREPARED FOR:



Agenda

-
- Introductions
 - Role and Expectations of CEDS Steering Committee
 - Brief Overview of the CEDS Process
 - Preliminary SWOT Findings and Committee Input
 - Discussion of Vision Content
 - Next Steps and Meeting Schedule

Introductions

- ✓ Name, Organization
- ✓ Background on interest in the economic development in Wasilla

WHO ARE WE?

-
- McKinley Research Group
 - Role: Project Lead
 - Project Manager: Donna Logan
 - Huddle AK
 - Role: Subcontractor responsible for community engagement and communications
 - Lead: Holly Spoth-Torres

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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- Berkley Tilton, Owns Rentals
 - Stacey Coy, Northern Dame Construction
 - Todd Smolden, Governor's Office
 - Jessica Viera, Wasilla Chamber of Commerce
 - Jeremiah Benson, Commercial Real Estate
 - Mike Brown, Mat-Su Borough
 - Simon Brown, Wasilla City Council
 - Jenny Willardson, Commercial Real Estate
 - Dimitri Fonov, General Contractor
 - Sami Spies, Collins Construction
 - Ina Mueller, Lakeshore Entertaining
 - Terry Ellis, Commercial Real Estate
 - Doug Miller, Wasilla Resident
 - Kibe Lucas, Real Estate

ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS

-
- Provide insight to and oversight of CEDS process
 - Eyes and ears of the city
 - Conduct key informant interview with CEDS research team
 - Expectations from this process and use of CEDS
 - More detail on SWOT
 - Economic development priorities
 - Participated in 3 work sessions (including this one)
 - Recommend other key informant interview candidates
 - Review draft documents
 - Be available at request for media (social) stories or interviews

Creating a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

CEDS Purpose

- Strategy-driven plan for local economic development
- Designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of Wasilla
- Vehicle for alignment between economic development and other Wasilla city plans
- Provides an avenue to engage community about what capacity building efforts would best serve economic development in Wasilla
- Updated at least every 5 years to qualify for EDA assistance under Public Works and Economic Adjustments Assistance programs
- Prerequisite for designation by EDA as an Economic Development District, if desired

CEDS Logic

Vision Statement

Where do we want to be in the next 10-20 years?



Where are we now?

Where do we want to go?

What needs to happen to get there?

How do we get there?

How are we doing?
What can we do better?

CEDS Methods

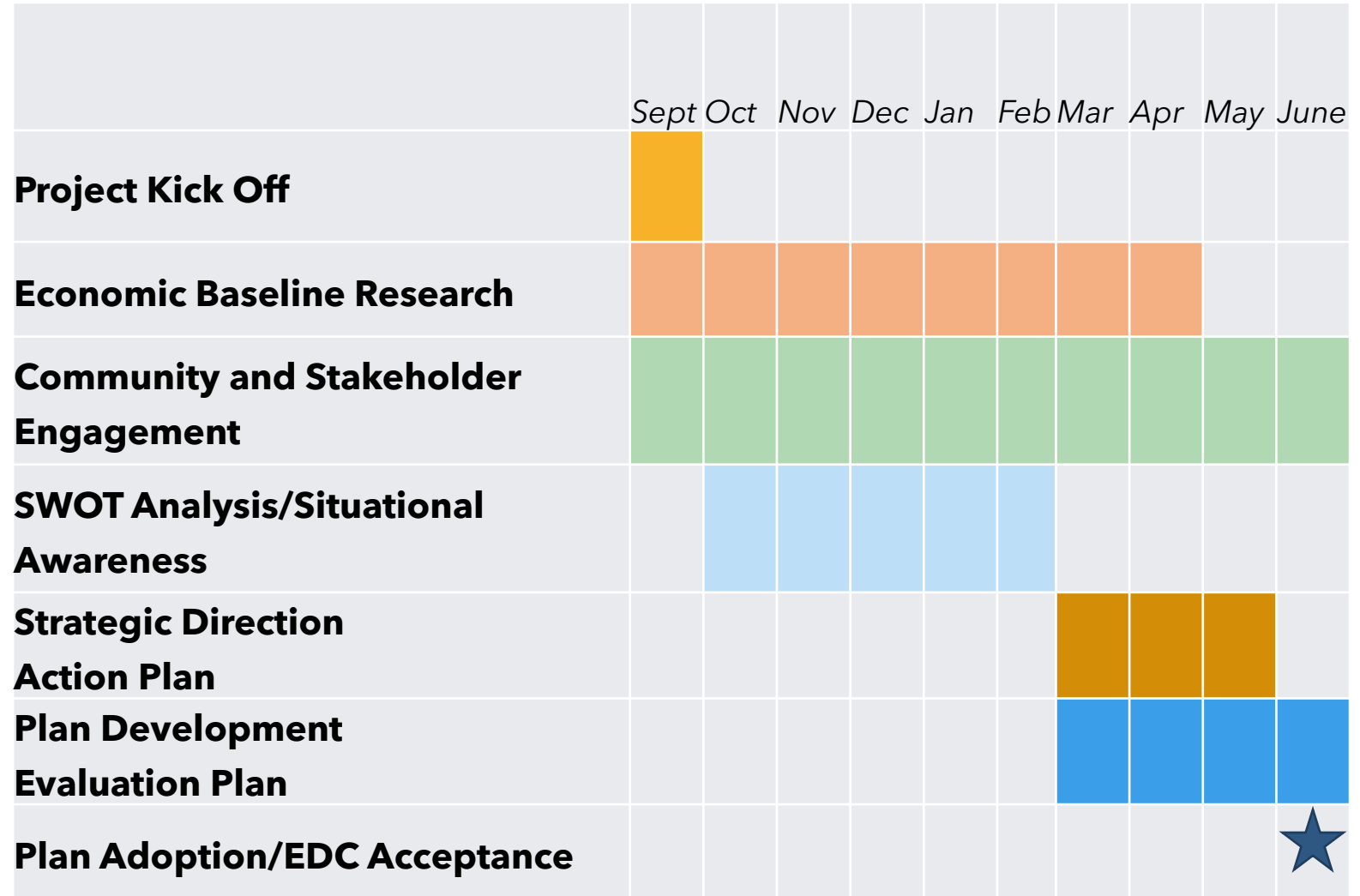
Economic Baseline Research
(socioeconomic data collection and analysis, review of existing planning and other documents)

Community and Stakeholder Engagement
(stakeholder interviews, project website/online survey, social media/media)

SWOT Analysis and Strategic Action Planning

CEDS Report Development

CEDS TIMELINE



Preliminary SWOT Findings



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Process so far...

114 Strengths
EXISTING INTERNAL ADVANTAGES

88 Weaknesses
EXISTING INTERNAL DISADVANTAGES

75 Opportunities
POTENTIAL EXTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS

75 Threats
POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS

TOP STRENGTHS

LOCATION

Geographic hub, strategic location, access to major services

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

pro-business, open for business, permitting process

FINANCIAL STRENGTHS

cost of living, no debt/lots of cash, financial independence

TOP WEAKNESSES

TRAFFIC/ROADS

Parks Highway, lack of transportation continuity,
stressed transportation infrastructure

LACK OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Lack of downtown area, underutilized
airport/port/railroad

CITY PLANNING

Lack of development planning, lack of strategic growth
plan

TOP OPPORTUNITIES

AIRPORT

Commercialization, regional airport development

TOURISM

Hotel, destination marketing

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING

Sewage treatment, infrastructure/connectivity, master plan

TOP THREATS

OVER-REGULATION

Federal restrictions against resource development

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

PFD impacts, Biden

ONE ROAD IN/ONE ROAD OUT

One access road, transportation isolation

VISION CONCEPT EXERCISE

Where Do You Want Wasilla In The Next 10-20 Years?

NEXT STEPS

-
- Continue driving stakeholders to the online survey
 - Conduct interactive small group discussion throughout the community
 - Develop interview candidates list and conduct interviews
 - Continue development of Economic Baseline
 - Next CEDS Committee Meeting – schedule for late February/early March
 - Finalize Vision Statement
 - Discuss Goals and Strategies

Looking forward to working with you!



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