



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
RESEARCH PARTNERS

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*International Economic  
Development Council*

# Championing Economic Development

Downtown Association phased out following funding cut from city

Economic development needs more structure

County cuts funding to outside organizations

board faces uncertainty after funding fizzles

New Audit Finds State's Economic Development Agency Gives Lots of Goodies But Fails to Measure Results

**In some communities, the value of EDOs is being called into question**

City Council questions chamber's purpose while addressing funding request

State audit: Tourism agency needs more transparency

State economic development agency needs to be more transparent,

Chamber Grant Axed

City cuts Chamber budget

2 Council votes to cut chamber funds 20 percent



About a third of IEDC members who responded to a survey reported facing public opposition to their work during the past few years

# Common Misconceptions

- What ED is and what it encompasses
- Expectations of what ED programs can achieve
- ED is corporate welfare
- Too much secrecy – back room deals, personal benefit from projects
- Favors big biz over small



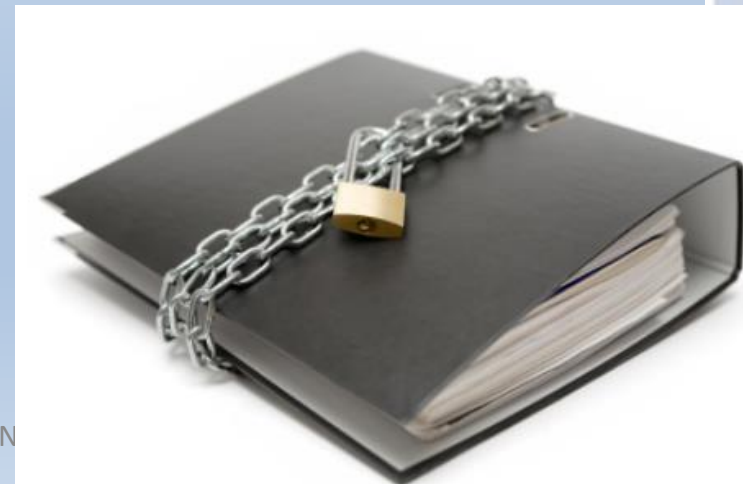
# Other Issues

- ED will happen anyway, so why is EDO needed?
- Same as chamber of commerce, so why have two organizations?
- Government/taxpayer dollars shouldn't be involved in the market/private sector biz decisions
- ED brings growth we don't want or need
- ED favors some groups (or parts of town or region) at the expense of others



# A Few Takeaways About Incentives...

- EDO use performance-based incentives? No – 34%
- EDO 'clawed back' incentives? Yes – 33%
- If you have had a major inward investment in the last two years, has your offer package ('the deal') been made public? No – 55%
- Should deal details be made public? No – 30%
- Do you provide a publicly available report of the incentives you offer? No – 60%



# ...And Other Questions About Transparency and Accountability

- Benchmark against other EDOs? No – 57%
- Limits placed on the public sector portion of CEO's pay? Yes – 8%
- Ensure that CEO's annual pay rate is competitive but not excessive? No - 32%
- Received FOIA requests in the last year? Yes – 45%
- Board/annual meetings open to the public? No – 31%



# This project aims to answer...

- What practical steps can economic developers take to transform doubters into champions of economic development?
- How can we engage partners and allies to help communicate the value of economic development?
- What best practices should we adopt to better address some of the issues raised in these attacks?





# Project Status:

## What we've done so far

- Four focus groups held during Leadership Summit in Jan. 2018
- Member survey conducted summer 2018 – 379 responses
- Launched “What is ED” brochure at today’s plenary session
- Video interviews with board members
- Interviews with survey respondents
- This conference session

# Project Status: What's to come

- Research paper and toolkit
  - Best practices on communicating value
  - Best practices on responding to attacks
  - Videos, infographics, brochures, customizable templates, and other tools
- Outreach to national ED partner organizations re: demonstrating value
- Mini-website
- Economic Development Week 2019

# For example...Grow Wabash County





# We want to hear from you!

- What challenges to ED have come up in your community?
- What are some effective ways that you have responded?

Please share!

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